

Sean Walters
2/21/18
CSB
WSIA 3
Commas

There was once a chance I didn't take. I was only fourteen years young—a freshman in high school. Everything went on as usual so it just seemed like another day to everyone. Go to school, see your friends, learn some new things, and go home. It wasn't until our last period where everything would begin to crumble. I was in room 32, my homeroom, catching up on classwork with twenty minutes left until the bells would sound and freedom would come to greet us. My hand raises and I leave for the bathroom. After I finish, I take the same route back, walking at my depressed pace down the hallway. A quick beat of gunshots blast from a room right below my feet. My pace quickens as more ear-piercing shots blare out from under me. In just a few short seconds, every room on my floor seals up as their doors all slam shut around me and leave me a lost being. Another clip of heavy gunshots sound from below, this time closer towards the stairwell. My eyes rapidly scan for an escape and catch an open door on my left—my legs break for it without hesitation. Shrieks flood the atmosphere and fear submerges into my body as I swiftly slip through the doors sliver and disappear into the pitch-black closet. I slowly close the door and lie down with my heart hastily slamming on my chest, knocking to ask me the question of “life or death?” The shots pause. My brain heightens. Breathing accelerates. Quick feet begin to ring their unclear notes down the hallway at the stairwell and instantly sprint closer. I peek under the door for the culprit's presence but before they could get any closer, nearby spine-chilling gunshots reverberate and their almost lifeless body struck the tile floor right in front of me. It was one of my good friends. I try to hold back the tears as his body twists and his eyes adjust onto mine. It was like he could see me in that darkness. The bright red blood thickly spills out from his body and pours towards me, as if screaming for help. Faint steps start to creep closer from behind him. The empty magazine, blazing hot with tension, slides out of the gun and crashes into the floor. A new one is loaded in. Their black army boots come into frame under the door and freeze. They must've stared at their latest victim right there in front of me before pulling the final, deadly trigger. I was cemented to the ground waiting for it with my panicked heart howling, but still, nothing. Instead, their boots shifted towards me. They must've noticed the stare of my friend. The door handle slowly turned. My everything began to scatter. Lungs uncontrolled. Mind animated. I was done. I was ready for it to all end. The handle was fully curled, but just as the door began to grow open, sirens wailed in the background and helicopters cried out from above. The door was briskly closed shut and the boots slammed into the floor until they finally faded away. They were most likely gone, but I still sat there in that closet in shock. I was almost killed but by the grace of God, I can continue to live my life. I can live to grow up. I can live to go to college. I can live to get a job and have a family. And as thoughts were tied up and time darted by, I began to remember my friend again. I emerged from the darkness after what felt like a lifetime to come out and save him, but it was too late. While I was in there thinking of myself, he was out here waiting for me, dying. I could've saved him, but instead just sat there thinking about how lucky I was to still be alive. Thinking that I will be able to keep living and have my own family while he won't ever be able to see his family again. “Why,” I asked myself, “why did you make such a vital mistake?” I sat there in that confined space scared that the shooter may come back for my life—and sometimes I wish that they did. I was thinking that I can live to do all these things while my friend won't be able to live their life at all. I could've done something, anything, but I sat there. I could've saved him dammit, but it was just a chance I didn't take.