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## Thoughts I Had While Driving Home Last Night

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## Thoughts I Had While Driving Home Last Night

Haley Keener

I was driving home the other night when a car began driving closely behind me. The headlights were blinding as they bounced off my rearview mirror. They were so bright, in fact, that it became hard to see where I was going.

Life is a lot like that moment. Those moments when the pain, mistakes, and regrets of the past rear their ugly heads. The memories consume your every thought until the path ahead becomes unclear, obscured by shame and embarrassment. Like a cancer or parasite, the shame consumes the hope and joy of the journey and robs you of the hope and joy of a brighter future.

Or maybe the past seems brighter. Maybe the happy moments from before outshine what lies ahead. Before he left without more than a note, before she said those words that play on repeat in your brain like that one record in my grandpa's jukebox, before his fists became more familiar than his love. In those moments, it's easy to succumb to the lights, to stop moving forward, to become paralyzed; In those moments it's easy to become blinded to the potential happiness the future could hold.

But, there's a small tab on the bottom of that rearview mirror. A tab no one talks about. A tab no one taught me the function of until I stumbled across it one rainy, summer evening. When you flip that tab, the headlights behind you become dimmer, and your own headlights can once again be seen casting light on the darn asphalt of the road that lies ahead.

Sometimes I forget that tab exists. If I can remember, though, if I consciously choose to flip the switch, I may finally find some peace in the expansive road that lies before me.