



# I Didn't Run Into You; *I Was Pushed*

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VQ-3

All appeared to be right with the world. I had successfully finished my NAVFLIRS class in San Diego and was getting ready to return home to Tinker Air Force Base. I was leaving in the morning and needed to get to the bank before closing time. I hopped into my rental car, fastened my seat belt and readied myself for the “fun” of the California highway system.

A drizzle had left the pavement wet, so I was trying to be extra careful. Soon I had the suspicion that everything may not be right with the world after all. I noticed that traffic had come to a stop, not unusual in San Diego

I finally turned off Interstate 5 onto Highway 162, then sat patiently in my little blue Hyundai Accent behind a van and listened to the radio.

Suddenly, I heard a loud crash and felt a terrific jolt. Glass flew everywhere. My car slammed into the back of the van, bounced off it and ended up on the side of the road.

Sitting in my car shocked, shaken and scared, I finally realized that a full-sized truck had hit me from behind. The driver had been doing about 50 mph and

didn't even brake. He also never paused or looked back as he drove to the shoulder and sped away. As luck would have it, an off-duty firefighter and his wife witnessed the whole thing. They took down the license number of the truck as it zoomed past, so they could report him to the police.

I got out of my car and was confronted by the angry owner of the van, demanding to know why I had just run into the back of him. I explained to him that it obviously wasn't my fault. All he had to do was see my car, which was crumpled in the front and back, and watch the truck disappearing down the shoulder of the road.

I was upset about the way the van driver was acting. After all, now everything was ruined. I'd never get to the bank and would have to go through the hassle of explaining to the rental-car and insurance companies about this wreck. Then I began to see the good side of this. I was standing there listening to this man, not lying on the ground under a sheet or in a crumpled heap on the floor of my car. Thank goodness I was wearing my seat belt. ▣