

1-30-2024

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Jase Graves

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eCommons Citation

Graves, Jase, "When Memory Flails" (2024). *Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop Blog*. 81.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/ebww_blog/81

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Tuesday January 30, 2024

By Jase Graves

Now that my age has surpassed the mid-century mark and I'm more ancient than virtually all professional athletes, everyone in my department at work, and even my pastor at church, I've noticed that the old memory is not what it used to.... Wait. What was I writing about again?

My cognitive decline became all too obvious the other day when I was at the Verizon store upgrading to one of those newfangled iPhone jumbo-large-print editions with a camera powerful enough to take photos of the porta potty on the International Space Station. (I mostly wind up just taking close-ups of my nose hairs—sometimes by accident.)

As I proudly strode to my car after my purchase, trying to ignore the fact that I'll be making payments on the phone until approximately ten years past my life expectancy, I noticed that the "unlock" button on my key fob wasn't working. Therefore, I took the most logical next

step. I began frantically and fruitlessly yanking on the door handle, calling down elaborate curses on the car itself and whoever holds the patent on the locking mechanism.

The situation worsened when I noticed two large dings (complete with chipped paint) in the driver's side door of this relatively new car that my wife and I had recently purchased for our youngest and quietest daughter so that she could traumatize curbs throughout the city with confidence and style.

As I began to turn back toward the store in defeat so I could phone my wife for help (as usual), I caught a glimpse of the car's interior out of the corner of my eye. I noticed a can of Mr. Pibb in the cup holder and what appeared to be one of those vaping pen/pipe/bong/e-cig/poisonous cloud spewer-type thingies lying on the console.

It then struck me that this was not my vehicle! I mean, I'm not the healthiest dude on the planet, but I would never resort to drinking Mr. Pibb!

As I backed away, praying for forgiveness about the cursing, hoping that nobody was watching this pathetic spectacle, and concerned that I was about to be assaulted by the vehicle's owner (who clearly has horrible taste in soft drinks), I then noticed that not only was this not my vehicle, but it wasn't even the same make—and only vaguely resembled the color.

"What is happening to me?" I still wonder. "What's next? Mistaking Preparation H for my toothpaste?"

This wasn't even the first time I've tried to unintentionally invade the sanctity of someone else's luxury upholstery. The first time it happened, I didn't look up from my Walmart buggy in time to notice that there was a lady in the driver's seat of a vehicle that was almost identical to mine—minus the grandmotherly driver who was probably considering vehicular homicide as I tugged on her door handle. Luckily for me, she just laughed hysterically instead of running me over or filling my face with buckshot.

My sweet wife assures me that I just have too much on my mind, but I'm pretty sure she's thinking about having me microchipped at this point.

I guess this is all just part of getting older, and I might as well laugh and enjoy the ride (as long as I'm doing it in my own car).

—Jase Graves

Jason (Jase) Graves is a national award-winning humor columnist, a married father of three daughters, a lifelong resident of Longview, Texas, and a Texas A&M Aggie. He writes about home and family issues from a humorous perspective for the Cagle Cartoons syndicate and [his blog](#). Other than writing, his primary hobby is sleeping as late as possible. His winning [Nickie's Prize for Humor Writing](#) essay, "The Sisterhood of the Giggling Rants," is

included in *Sisters! Bonded by Love and Laughter*, published by the Erma Bombeck Writers' Workshop. His piece, "Victoria's Worst-Kept Secret," is included in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: My Crazy Family*.