Cars are meant to take us places. They have wheels to move and engines to energize, windows to track progress and a steering wheel to guide.

I sat in the passenger seat on the way home from the airport, listening to the Washington rain spatter across the windshield, internalizing my week-long trip to our nation’s capital. The wipers clicked back and forth like a metronome, clearing the window of water residue and allowing my mother to see where she was going. I rested my weary head against the glass, watching the droplets collect in small clumps, then, together, trickle down the outside, pulled by the compelling nature of gravity.

Rain causes so many problems. When the roads are wet, cars must drive more slowly, and when the skies are fogged, seeing- in any direction- is a challenge. A car honked as we slid in front of it, almost missing the turn onto the freeway. I felt exhausted from the day of travel, and was ready to get home and truly, comfortably breathe, for the first time that day. Up ahead, cars collected- traffic had just begun. Frustrated, I glared at the rain, the sky, the wet roads, the vehicles, then tore a bit of paper from a shopping list floating along the floor of the car. I had so many thoughts about my adventures with the United States Senate Youth Program, but I also felt so confused. Everything - my senior year of high school, my college, my career, my relationships - seemed to be up in the air, undecided, inconclusive. So, torn by my choices, but inspired by my opportunities, I made one decision: to write a poem.

Insanity
Doing the same thing over and over, but expecting different results
   Freedom from insanity New,
      spontaneous, sane Fear
Hiding from the truth, hiding from yourself
   Freedom from fear Bold,
      real, fearless Confusion
Not knowing which is which, who is who
   Freedom from confusion
      Clarity?
   I don’t know who I am
I know this now, more than ever before
   That is okay
   Time will reveal my inner light
      Your inner light
We will shine with knowledge and wisdom
      Clarity
So unattainably beautiful Where
   is my clarity? Where is my
      gravity?
   It is there
      It is all there
We all have the power, just trust what you do not know
   And for now, we will grow Feel our
      feet on the ground Walk with a
         purpose Strengthen our legs, our
            minds Our hearts, too
Smile with grace Shine light on
   the past Make light of the
   present Bring light to the future
   I am still insane
   I am still fearful
   I am still confused
   But I will learn, and learn to lead
And feel the wind lift my heavy wings
The traffic was still thick. The rain, too, was unstoppable. Since I had first gotten in the car, nothing had really changed - nothing, except my attitude. As I wrote, my perspective shifted, and I thought more deeply. Why am I confused? More importantly, why do I so desperately yearn for clarity?

My mom threw her head in her hands, drained with the sluggish travel. The windshield wipers whipped back and forth, but the water stuck, and the misty fog rising from the ground obscured any line of sight we still had.

The car was stationary, humming and clicking. I leaned over and flicked the engine off, and with it, the wipers. We sat there in silence. I decided that clarity was beautifully unattainable, and today, we weren’t going to place too much emphasis on the destination, even on the drive. Instead, we would watch the rain roll down the windows, together, and relish in the confusion.