

HL: It's A Lot

SH: Sometimes the most notable part of the school day was before we even walked in

It was just a parking lot.

But, it's where I got the worst road rage. I'd never seen so many people be cut off in such a short amount of time. If an aunt or grandma or someone new tried to brave the parking lot, they'd be welcomed with 15 cars trying to squeeze into two exit lanes. There were two ways I could get out of the parking lot safely: I could either sprint out to my car the second the 2:40 bell rang, or wait around for 20 minutes in hopes that the traffic would die down by the time I went outside.

But hey, it's really just a parking lot, not necessarily good or bad. Just worn blacktop adorned by fading yellow lines.

The front of the lot was supposed to be the senior lot, but it was pretty much accessible to whoever got there first. If you got to school really early, you could even snag a pull through spot, undoubtedly the best kind of parking spot. Some people, also known as the truckline, got to school early, but still parked in the back.

It's where, naturally, we all sat in our cars before school started, avoiding going in, finishing the song, saying "I'll go in in three minutes" We never wanted to be late to school, but sometimes we didn't want to be early.

On Thursday's, the trash cans in the parking lot were littered with cups from Starbucks, Dunkin Donuts, QuikTrip, you name it. Just because we had a little more time to sleep, didn't mean we didn't need coffee. On those days, after our morning coffee fix, we joined our friends in their cars, choosing to catch up there, instead of inside, because we knew we couldn't leave the mall until 8:40.

Sitting in the parking lot, you could tell a lot about the people around you. Did the person next to you park badly? Was their car covered in dents or bumper stickers? Did they have anything hanging from the rearview mirror? A glance through a car window was like a tiny peek into someone's life. Sometimes the people who had it together the most were the people with messy cars.

Sometimes we found ourselves in the parking lot when school wasn't in session. In fact, there were many early Saturday's where it was hard to find a spot, the question was who was filling them up. The answer: journalism students, basketball players, ACT takers and theatre kids, to name a few.

Sure, it's just a parking lot. But it's where we started the day, whether it be with coffee, a pep talk, or an early morning jam session. We walked through the parking lot unsure of where the day would take us, but no matter what, one thing stayed consistent: we knew we had to walk through it again at the end of the day.