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HOW TO CHANGE THE HEADLIGHT BULB IN A 2015 CHEVY TRAVERSE

Gabriel Welsch

Start by asking your husband why the lights are so dim. Listen as he tells you they're just dark sometimes. Like when it's cloudy. It's fine.

Drive to get your daughter at daycare and get there late because he forgot and you had to leave work in a hurry. Pull up to the building and see that only one light reflects back at you in the windows. Leave the car on after you park, walk around the front, and confirm: the light is burnt out. Tell your husband when you get home. Listen as he says huh, must have been recent. But hard to tell. Those lights have always been dark.

Ask him if he will be able to get to it. Say you can take care of it, knowing he is pretty busy. You have a few things yourself to deal with, including getting a digital campaign into market, but it's not super-deadline driven or anything. Listen to the quiet as he thinks about it, the news describing the horrors of a mile-wide tornado. I can probably get to it this weekend.

Stand at the whiteboard calendar and weigh whether or not to write headlight on Saturday. Sunday already has dinner with his parents. Unwritten is his brother's presence there, new girlfriend, ex-wife suddenly vaporized even though you know she is living one county over with an old college friend. Opt to write HL on there. Listen as he takes a call and talks one of his employees down from a freak-out. It will be fine, he says, deep, rich, a voice that has promise in it, even affection. You hear the man on the other end laugh loudly.

Leave work a little early the next day, knowing the cop that always sits under the offramp bridge near the mall has been pulling people over. Probably for speeding, but with a light out you'd rather not get the ticket. No sense aggravating things. At home, offer to pick up the parts necessary—you pass an AutoZone every day. Listen as he says, I think we're going to have to drop it off with Ron. Need to have a mechanic do that these days. Cars have too many computers. You just can't fix them yourself anymore.

Lower the volume almost to nothing on your phone. Search YouTube for "how to change headlight 2015 chevy traverse." Watch a 97-second clip of a 5-minute video. Note that you think there is a torque bit in the garage, and a couple bungee cords. Listen as your husband makes your daughter giggle and then hear her whimper when he decides he is finished with that. Listen as he says do we need to feed her now?

Before leaving for work in the morning, put the Ryobi drill and the torque bits on the passenger seat. Tell your boss you'll be a little late arriving. Stop at AutoZone and get the lightbulb. Watch the video three more times during the day and think about where you can park to make the repair. At lunch, look for cardboard in the recycling area at the office and get the biggest piece you can. You will need it since you will still be in work clothes when you make the repair and need something to kneel or lay on. Listen to your husband ask should I get any groceries or whatever since you'll be later than usual? Need me to start anything? Listen to him muffle the phone and say something when you say you won't be that late.

In the parking garage, congratulate yourself for the foresight of parking far from the elevator, on a floor largely empty by the time you put the cardboard on the ground. Find the wheel well screws give little resistance. Bungee back the hard plastic case and easily remove the dustcover. Nod at confirmation that you purchased not only the correct bulb, but the correct color as well. Press the clips to remove the old bulb. Snap in the new. Twist it back into the housing and replace the dust cap. Take another 45 seconds to re-attach the wheel well guard. Stand and kick the cardboard aside before picking it up. Note that it took you less than seven minutes.

Listen as your brain sings to you again and again a song with words you've known as long as you can remember. Listen as it swells, a soundtrack to a movie you're tired of starring in. Listen as you are reminded why a light bulb means a new idea.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gabriel Welsch is the author of a collection of short stories, *Groundscratchers* (Tolsun Books), and four collections of poems, the most recent being *The Four Horsepersons of a Disappointing Apocalypse*. His work appeared widely, in journals including *Ploughshares*, *Southern Review*, *THRUSH*, *Moon City Review*, *Lake Effect*, *Mid-American Review*, and *Red Rock Review*. He lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with his family, and works as vice president of marketing and communications at Duquesne University. He also drives a 2015 Chevy Traverse and has found YouTube quite helpful for repairing the thing.



BACK TO
TOP