

Lucky Brake?

by Kieran McGovern English language level: Intermediate B1

On a quiet street a **mechanic** is working on a Nissan Micra. The car is parked front of a **garage**.

The mechanic goes back inside the garage. He does not **lock** the car and leaves the keys in the **ignition**.

Easy?

A 24-year-old thief named Alex watches from the window of his third-floor apartment. Alex is talking to his friend on the phone. 'The idiot has just left the car unlocked,' he says. 'This is my lucky day!'

Alex rushes down the stairs. He hurries across to the car. The mechanic is still inside the garage.

Alex gets into the driving seat. The hand-brake is off. Alex turns the ignition key. The car starts first time.

Glancing in his rear mirror, Alex drives out into the road. He looks in the mirror again. Nobody is following the stolen car!

Alex puts his foot down on the accelerator. He is beginning to relax. With one hand on steering wheel he texts his friend: *I've got the car!!!*

At the first **junction**, there are **traffic lights**. They turn red. Alex tries to brake but his foot goes straight down to the floor. The car does not slow down.

Not so lucky?

Unfortunately for Alex, the brakes of the Nissan are not inside the car. They are in the hands of the mechanic working in the garage. He has taken them out of the car to repair them.

This is why Alex cannot stop the car going through the red **traffic light**. 'Oh no!' he cries.

A police car is crossing the **junction** from the side. It crashes into the Nissan Primera.

A policeman gets out of the police car. Alex wants to run. But he is trapped by the Primera's air bag. His phone falls out onto the road.

'What were you doing?' asks the policeman. 'Why did you get through a red light?'

He picks up the phone from the road. There is a new message from his friend.

Well done, Alex! It's your lucky day.

But it is not Alex's lucky day, **after all**. He spends the rest of it in a police cell

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Vocabulary

Brake - slow or stop a car

Break - a chance/opportunity

Lucky - to have good fortune

Mechanic - repairs cars

Ignition - starts car

Garage - place to store car

Lock - close & secure

Traffic Lights - see *right*

Junction - where roads meet

After all - in the end

Break & Brake sound the same sound but have different spellings and meanings.

1. Why do you think this story is called Lucky Brake?
- II. Is Alex lucky? Why?/Why not?



Quick Check: True or False?

1. Alex notices a man working on a car
2. The mechanic drives the car away
3. The brakes do not work
4. The mechanic drives the Nissan away
5. Stealing the car is easy
6. A police car chases Nissan
7. Alex goes through a red traffic light
8. It is Alex's lucky day