

In 2008, 19-year-old Brandon Swanson's car went off the road in rural Minnesota. He called his parents for help, said he was walking toward a nearby town—and then disappeared without a trace. This Google doc looks into the strange events of that night and the questions that still remain.

This drive includes several ideas and theories from several different sources and ideas.

He was last seen leaving a friend's house. It was another Minnesota night, it was around 45-30 degrees fahrenheit. Sometime after midnight, his car turned onto a rural gravel road. Shortly after, his car went off the road, into a ditch outside of Taunton. He called his parents for help. That's when he made a choice that may have ended his life. He was going to try to walk to a nearby town.

He called his parents for help. That's when he made a choice that may have ended his life — deciding to walk toward a nearby town.

Brandon believed he was close to Lynd, Minnesota, but his car was actually found near Taunton, more than 20 miles away. Disoriented and alone in the dark, he walked into the unknown.

In the final moments of the phone call with his parents, he mentioned hearing a vehicle nearby — but then the call ended abruptly with a strange noise.

Despite extensive search efforts, Brandon was never found.

~12:30 AM – 1:15 AM

Brandon leaves a friend's house in Canby, MN, to drive home to Marshall. He takes back roads and gets disoriented.

~1:15 AM

Brandon accidentally drives his car into a ditch off a gravel road (outside of Taunton, MN).

He attempts to call friends first but doesn't get help.

1:54 AM

Brandon calls his parents, Brian and Annette Swanson.

He says he's stuck, uninjured, and thinks he's near Lynd, MN.

He asks them to pick him up.

They drive toward Lynd while staying on the phone with him.

Between 2:00–2:15 AM

After failing to locate each other, Brandon says he'll walk toward the lights of Lynd.

His father continues driving and talking to him, trying to find him by flashing headlights and honking.

Brandon remains calm and confident, describing surroundings like gravel roads and occasional landmarks.

Between 2:15–2:30 AM

Brandon says he is walking through fields and may mention a fence (this part is unconfirmed by police but repeated in online discussions).

He might've been crossing difficult terrain—farmland, ditches, or areas near water.

~2:30 AM

Brandon says something like “There’s a car coming,” or “I see headlights”.

His father thinks he might finally be reaching a road or getting close to someone.

Immediately After

Brandon suddenly exclaims: “Oh, shit!”

The call goes silent.

Brian tries speaking to him for several minutes, but Brandon doesn’t respond.

The call stays connected briefly, then disconnects.

After 2:30 AM

His parents try calling him repeatedly. No answer.

His phone rings for a while, then eventually goes to voicemail.

That’s the last known contact.

The Sudden Silence Problem

After Brandon says “Oh, shit!”, there’s no scream, no yelling, no scuffling, no rustling, no plea for help—nothing.

The phone doesn’t cut out immediately—it stays connected. His father, Brian, keeps talking for several minutes. There’s no response, but the call remains live.

This matters a lot. Let’s examine how it affects some of the leading theories:

Animal Attack Theory

If Brandon was attacked by a coyote, wild dog, or even something larger like a feral hog (rare in MN), you'd expect:

Yelling

Running

Sounds of struggle or growling/snapping

Even a startled reaction—"Get away!" or some kind of defensive noise—would be logical.

✗ Doesn't match the silence.

✗ Also: animal attacks on humans in that area are incredibly rare.

Foul Play / Human Encounter

If someone stopped and confronted Brandon, or picked him up, you'd expect:

A verbal interaction: "Who are you?" "Hey!" "What do you want?"

A struggle or scream

Something to indicate distress

✗ Again, total silence makes this hard to buy unless:

He was instantly incapacitated (e.g. hit from behind),

Or he slipped away or hid quickly and quietly—though then why didn't he speak again?

Accidental Fall or Drowning

This theory fits the silence best.

Brandon falls unexpectedly into a ditch, ravine, or body of water.

A sudden slip could trigger the “Oh, shit!” without time to yell again.

If water was involved, the phone might’ve shorted or stopped working instantly.

- ✓ Fits the “Oh, shit!”
- ✓ Explains no yelling or interaction
- ✓ Makes sense with terrain (especially if near Yellow Medicine River)

Still, no body or phone has ever been found—which keeps this theory unconfirmed.

Medical Event Theory (Less Popular but Possible)

Some believe Brandon could have:

Suffered a sudden injury (e.g. fell and hit his head),

Or experienced a medical event (like a seizure, though there’s no history of one).

- ✓ Could explain the sudden “Oh, shit!” and then nothing
- ✗ No strong evidence he had health issues
- ✗ Still doesn’t explain the car headlights comment

Summary:

Theory Sudden Silence Makes Sense? Notes

Animal Attack ✗ No struggle or yelling heard?

Human Encounter ❌ Would expect talking/yelling Unless instant ambush

Drowning/Fall ✔ Fits "Oh, shit!" + silence
Most consistent

Medical Event ✔ Plausible, but no history Less supported

Since Brandon being attacked is unlikely, it's likely most stories I've read mentioning headlights have been proven wrong.

DEEP DIVE:

I've decided to risk my phone to test whether or not dropping a phone from his height would make a noise (on a call) if it hit dirt. If this experiment shows that it doesn't, the slipping theory is very likely. (His dad never reported hearing a thud.)