

*Dear Mom and Dad,*

*I cannot express how truly sorry I am. I have let both of you down, and now I will never have the chance to make it up to you. You both were always great examples and role models for me. I never once saw you even flinch in reaction to the buzzing of your phone. Now you are wracked with guilt. Mom, I see the way you look at Dad, like he was supposed to know that I was driving and that I would check the text that he sent me. It's not his fault. It's not anyone's fault but my*

own. I should have known better. I should have realized that taking my eyes off the road for even a split second would put me in danger.

When I looked up from that simple text. "How are you?" all I could see was that guard rail. I overcorrected and missed it, thinking I was in the clear, but I was wrong . . . out of nowhere that tree popped up and engulfed me. The impact was hard; there was nothing peaceful about what took place. My entire body screamed, except for

the lower half which said nothing. As my body grew cold, all I could think of was you guys.

My mind flashed to that trip we took last summer. I remember how nice it was to get away from all the madness of life and spend some quality time together. Whether it was hiking, kayaking, swimming, or even talking, we always made sure to find time for one another. We even left our cellphones behind that weekend. I survived without mine . . . I knew it was possible to do, so I don't know why I felt like I needed to check

my text messages while I was driving. When my phone was in arms reach and I could see it light up, it was like a predator luring me, the poor prey, in. I should not claim to be a victim, though, for there is no one to blame but myself for reaching across the front seat to grab the lit up device.

Now I can no longer make time for you guys; I will never again go hiking with you or talk to you by the light of the campfire. I believe I have now tainted those things for you, because of my own

*stupid decision I have flawed everything I was connected to in your eyes. I am sorry.*

*Dad, if I had answered your text I would have said that I was happy, that I would be home soon, and that I love you. Now, I will never get the chance to say those words to you. I will never get to hug either of you or tell you everything is okay. In truth, none of this is "okay". I have single-handedly ruined your lives and I have left you behind to take the blame. You will never read these words that I write; the postman doesn't stop*

*here. I would give anything to take your pain  
away . . . but I can't. I prioritized my cell over  
safety, and . . . it cost me my life.*

*- Love Always, Your Daughter*