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Everything You Have to Lose

Drunk driving stories are published for a reason - to evoke feelings of tragedy, anger, and a need for change. That it could happen to you, your spouse, your children. The story that finally opened my eyes to this horrific epidemic is that of the Kincaid family of California: expectant mother Krystil who, along with her unborn daughter, Avalynn, was murdered when her minivan was hit head-on at 85 miles an hour by an intoxicated driver. Krystil left behind her husband Zach with four children to raise without their mother. The picture Zach shared of himself saying goodbye to his unconscious wife for the last time is something that should never occur under such heinous circumstances. The idea that a family with such joy and anticipation of new life was destroyed by a man who will ultimately walk free is sickening.

I am lucky enough to have never felt the impact that surviving a car accident has on a person, but I have experienced loss. I've said goodbye countless times, but never once was it at the hands of another human being. For an action so frivolous. Texting, drinking. Neither are required to sustain my life, your life, or the ones Marcos Forestal stole from the Kincaid family the night of September 9th, 2018.

I believe the power of the media to be very effective in creating change. It's stories like that of the Kincaids' that will force us to imagine our own mother's face in Krystil's, our children's faces in those she left behind, us in Zach's shoes, kissing his wife goodbye after what

should have been a drive home, a mundane reunion completing a normal day. Stories like these that absolutely have the power to evoke change, if we speak up and the judicial system has the willingness to listen.

At the time of the murder, Marcos Forestal's maximum sentence was ten years in jail for killing Krystil and Avalynn. According to the state of California, no intent was displayed, and the Kincaids' 36-week-old unborn baby was not considered a victim, or even a person. In my mind, it's unfathomable why this is not being addressed - there must be legal obstacles that I don't understand in place to prevent this sentence from being elongated. The duties shift to us to see the stories like the Kincaid's and feel terrified for everything we have to lose. Finally, I believe the ultimate power lies in our voices through every type of communication we have in today's world. If we speak loud enough, they will someday listen.