

Jordan Blakeslee

Stein P3

October 30th, 2020

### Journal Entry 1

My therapist told me that I should try journaling. So I guess that's what I'm attempting with this. Today was my first day back at school since the accident. When I got there I stood staring at the front door with thousands of thoughts flooding through my head, 'I shouldn't be here' 'everyone is going to be watching me, asking me questions' 'the teachers are going to baby me' 'I just want everything to be normal'. I shook the thoughts out of my head and mustered up enough courage to go in. I knew it was going to be a long day.

Just for a backstory so you can understand my future journal entries better, I was in a car accident a little over a year ago, 13 months to be exact. My recovery took a long time, due mostly to a spinal cord injury. I had some other minor injuries, such as a concussion and a few fractured bones.

Last summer three of my friends and I decided to go to the beach on a hot weekend in August. I remember feeling the warm summer breeze blow gently across my face and run through my hair as the music was blasting through the car's speakers. I could hear Mia and Olivia talking in the back about a party happening that night. I glanced in the rearview mirror to ask them about it. Zoe was in the passenger seat and was on the phone with someone laughing as we drove down a road known for being winding. My phone lit up and I saw I had gotten a text from the boy I liked. I got excited

and immediately grabbed my phone to read it. Still trying to make sure to watch the road, I flashed my eyes up at the road and then back down to read the text. The last thing I can remember was hearing Zoe scream "Watch out!!" when I looked up to see that my car was headed for a large grouping of trees. I tried to jerk the wheel back in the direction of the road but the tire had already caught in the sand on the side of the road and it was too late.

The way the car hit, the passenger side was wrapped around a tree which caused the death of Mia who was a passenger in the back seat. Olivia was injured badly like me and is also recovering. Zoe's case is very complicated, she is paralyzed from the waist down and had major brain damage and she lives in an assisted care facility now.

I wish I could describe the heavy weight of guilt and sadness that I feel all the time. If I had just waited or asked Zoe to read it... it was all my fault. I will have to deal with the consequences of taking two people's lives away from them. This lifetime of pain and trauma felt by whole families and communities, just because I made the split-second decision to look at my phone while driving.