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### It could happen to you

The night everything changed was the downfall of my entire life—a simple fight, saying the wrong things, running out on my problems. If I never got into that fight with my mom, she would still be here right now. Life is such a precious thing that I never took seriously. Your whole life could change with a snap of a finger, and nothing can go back to the way it was. I wish that I could travel back in time to that night, and do everything differently, and change how it ended between us.

It was Thursday, October 12th, 2013, and the cold October air was finally setting in. I was over at my friend's house deep in the country; trees surrounded her home. I knew I wasn't supposed to be over at her place tonight because I had school in the morning, but I didn't care. I never cared. I was simply a careless teen, rebelling against my mom because I wanted to be in charge of my own life. I was sick of being told what I had to do. I just wanted my freedom, or that's what I believed I wanted.

I didn't end up driving to my friend's house because I didn't want my mom to see that my car wasn't at home in the driveway. I didn't believe that she would look for me. However, I don't think things through very well. Possible outcomes of the situation didn't come to mind. Around 8:30 pm, my phone started ringing, and I looked down and read the caller ID. It was my mom.

When I'm slowly picking up my phone, which is blaring with a piercing ring, my thumb taps the accept button. I knew that I was about to be in so much trouble. That's when the cutting of her yells shot directly into my right ear. In the back of my head, I knew I deserved what she

was yelling at me for, but I wasn't about to let her win this. The yelling between us went back and forth, taking hard digs at each other. I knew that she wasn't going to continue to let me stay with my friends, and she was going to come to pick me up. I screamed into the phone that I would stay with my friends and there was no point in coming to get me. Then I hung up the phone, and that was the last time I heard my mother's voice. The last time I would have spoken to her. That was the final goodbye, and I didn't know it at the time.

My phone continuously rang throughout the next thirty minutes, but then suddenly stopped after a while. The silence made me assume she had given up, and that meant I won the argument. Her defeat satisfied me. I finally had won. However, the price of my winning was my mother's life. I lost the most caring, supportive women in my life. The news came rushing toward me at seven o'clock the next morning.

There was a loud bang on the front door that sent chills down my spine. The continuous tap at the door finally got me out of bed. I slowly stalk down the stairs to find my friend's mother holding open the front door and talking with the police. The chill of the morning air rushed past me. The next moment happened in slow motion. The news being shared from one life to another, the police to my friend's mom. The words rolled off his tongue like this was so easy for him. The next words that came out of his mouth were, "she was trying to get a hold of her daughter while driving. We pulled up the phone records. She was texting and driving when she lost control of the steering wheel and ran off the road straight into a tree. She sadly didn't make it." That's the moment the world started to spin. I'm being thrown through a continuous loop of pain.

Everything I did to her, I couldn't just listen. My body told me I had to fight against my mom to win this argument. If I listened, my mom would be here. She wouldn't have tried to call and text

me while driving. I could have prevented her from running off the road into a tree. The accident was my fault.

Every day I now wake up with a sense of emptiness. There isn't a moment when I don't think about what occurred on the night of October 12th. Now I never look at my phone while driving. The thought of picking it up has me terrified and gets me imagining how my mother felt in the last moment of her life. Please, never text and drive. This could easily happen to anyone. Learn from my mistakes, arrive alive.