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It's All My Fault

3...2...1. Time is up. The crowd is cheering but not for me. The soccer ball was just inches out of my reach and if my positioning was better, I could have saved it. My heart drops as the scoreboard shines that we have lost. The season is over, we aren't going to the state championship, and it's all my fault.

How could I let this happen? I think to myself as I am driving home. There isn't any music playing, but the silence is loud enough. Tears fill my eyes as I replay the faces of my teammates when the clock hit zero. The crying and pain that I caused in every single one of them makes me want to never show my face again. My chest feels tight, I can't breathe. My hand hurts from taking my anger out on the top of my steering wheel, hitting it until it almost breaks. My brain, completely disassociated from the car, keeps reliving that moment over and over again.

The tears are now uncontrollable. The traffic lights become streaks of red, yellow, and green all blurred into one. Cars pass by but I don't notice. As far as I can tell, I'm the only one on the road. I can't think straight, my eyes move away from the road while numerous thoughts enter my mind. *That was my last high school soccer game ever. What will college recruiters think? How am I going to go to school tomorrow without crying? What will mom and dad say to me when I get home?* I guess I thought too far ahead because that night, I never made it home.

I wake up to the sound of beeping machines and the smell of faint blood. Suddenly, losing a soccer game has become the least of my problems. My head is throbbing and every time I blink it hurts. My neck spasms as I look down to see bloody bandages and wires attached to me. A nurse comes in. "What happened? Why am I here?" I exclaim. She begins to explain that

my car was “t-boned” in the middle of an intersection and all of a sudden, I remember. The brakes squealing, the glass shattering, the screaming, the blood. It all comes back. I didn’t pay attention and ran through a red light, causing another car to crash into the side of mine. The nurse describes the state that the innocent passengers from the other car are in. “One patient has suffered severe injuries that could be fatal”. *Fatal?* I think. *I don’t even know this person and I may have just ended their life.* “Oh god.” I say as I bury my face into my shaking hands, “it’s all my fault”.

One mistake and your life could be over. It is as simple as that. Everyday is a gift and tomorrow is not promised. So why take that chance in a car? There are too many lives that have been taken away from distracted driving, it needs to stop. Whether you are the driver or the passenger, every time you get into a car, you make a decision. No matter the consequence, no matter the cost, do what’s right and make the smart decision to arrive alive.