

3 seconds.

Screaming fans filled the stadium ready to watch the state championship game. His whole life he had been waiting for this moment. The starting lineups were announced. But this time it felt different, his adrenaline was pumping more than ever and his legs felt weak. The referee blew his whistle and the game began. Right from the jump ball he could tell he was in a groove, hitting shots and making plays. The game was over in what felt like 3 seconds.

The celebration after was amazing, the amount of love he received from his friends and family and people he hardly knew. He was the town hero. His future was bright, winning the championship was his old goal and now he was committed to play at his dream school. Of course there was a party at his teammates house after, but being the good student he is he decided not to drink. All of his friends were drinking and tried their best to convince him to grab a beer. He refused and still had lots of fun. It was getting late and his mom texted him to make his way home. He hopped in the car, turned the keys and felt pretty safe knowing he had nothing to drink. The ride home from his friend's house was an easy 5 minute drive, he takes it almost every day. He went through the first light and noticed there were not many cars on the road. He then heard a buzz on his phone in the cupholder. He usually wouldn't pick up but there was nobody on the road and he grabbed his phone. Before he knew it he was headed off the road, he turned his wheel too hard that his car flipped. That was the last thing he remembered.

The next day he was in the hospital surrounded by his family. He was alive. But something was off. He couldn't feel his legs. The doctor came in and delivered the news. He was paralyzed from the waist down because he was crushed by the weight of the car. He immediately broke down and started crying. He would never be able to play basketball again. He got a call from his college coach stating that his scholarship was taken away. In that haunting moment, as tears blurred his vision, he realized that three seconds had irreversibly rewritten the script of his life. Robbing him of the game he cherished, crushing dreams beneath the weight of one single, fateful choice.

He only picked up his phone for what felt like 3 seconds.

