

The hour it all changed

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9:00

Pounding head. Ringing ears. My whole body was cold except for something warm running down my face. Blood. I was confused but I knew one thing, this is not how my night was supposed to end.

8 Hours before...

Gold balls, bright blue streamers bedazzled the bus. Signs with our names and numbers are plastered onto the windows. Everyone was excited and nervous, it was finally the playoff season. We load the bus, and once we are settled in our parents wave and cheer us off.

9:01

The ringing will not stop, I need to call my mom, my dad, anyone. I try to move but the pain shoots up through my body. I wince and lay there defeated unsure of my next move.

7 Hours before...

Arriving at our rival's school, I began to focus. If we can beat them we can advance to the state champs, which in full confidence I believe we can win. As we unpack on the field, I begin my pre game rituals.

1. Double knot shoes
2. Eat a gogo squeeze
3. Dance out the nerves

9:05

Turning my aching body, I notice I am not alone, there is another car. Suddenly my heart starts to beat faster. I started to process what had happened. That car hit me.

6 ½ hours before

We begin warmups. I stay focused, smooth, and composed. Nothing is going to stop me today, this is my game. I want to make everyone proud. My coach, family, friends, teammates, so many people are

watching. I plan to win for every single one of them. My heart starts to beat faster, it's the nerves kicking in. But I just tell myself I am excited.

6 hours before

It's gametime here we go! Adrenaline sweeps throughout my body as I pass the ball back to my teammate. The cheering gets louder and louder until it stops, and it's just my teammates and I.

9:15

The loud walling of the sirens are somewhere in the distance but I can hear them getting closer. They get louder and louder until they finally stop a few feet away.

5 hours before

In the last few minutes of the game we took a 2-1 lead. This is where I must remain calm and composed. I will not be going into overtime.

9:18

I feel claustrophobic as if the car is getting smaller and smaller. My breaths start to become shallow. What if this is it, what if I do not get to play in the state game. What if I never see my parents or family again. I know I must remain calm and composed, but panic creeps through me.

5 hours 45 minutes before

5...4...3...2...1... the buzzer goes off, WE WIN! Adrenaline rushes through my veins. I jump up and hug my teammates. I couldn't contain myself, happy tears fell from my eyes.

9:20

Tears stream down my face. The smell of blood, gasoline, tears, sweat, made my stomach turn. The officers looked calm but in their eyes I could see the fear.

2 hours before

I return home and go out to celebrate with my teammates. Buffalo Wild Wings here we come!! I was so hungry and just the smell of buffalo wings made my stomach grumble. It was honestly the best night of my life. But I was exhausted and ready to go home. After enjoying my meal and celebrating, I paid my part of the check and went out into the cool night eager to get home.

The driver

Buffalo wild wings, cold drinks, and friends. This is the night I needed after a long week of work. I pay the check, hug all my friends goodbye. As I stand it takes me a second to regain my balance. I only live a few minutes away, I will be fine.

9:23

Sirens walled, officers barking orders, and yet it was so quiet. They finally managed to get me out of the car. Someone was talking to me, I wanted to respond but my eyelids felt heavy. I was exhausted.

1 minute before

As I am driving home I keep replaying the win in my head. The memories of everyone running up to me after the game was over, the laughter and joy. Then suddenly as I cross the intersection. BANG! Everything slows down, I am flying. My eyelids feel heavy as I struggle to understand what has happened.

The driver

I can feel the alcohol slowly flowing through my body, regret sinks in. I try to keep focus. I look up ahead of me. Is that a stop sign? Do I stop right now? BANG! Blood trickles down my check. What have I done? Now with adrenaline flowing through my body I get up and try to run to the other car. Oh my god, oh my god. I call 911. They try to calm me down but I am screaming, I am so sorry, I didn't mean too! The adrenaline wears off and everything goes black.

9:58

I woke up in an unfamiliar bed. The white sheets and bright lights are blinding. The hospital scent burns through my nose and makes my stomach turn. I hear my parents rush to get a doctor. They then fill me in on what has happened. As I was driving home I got hit by a drunk driver. I will be alright, but I have broken ribs and a broken leg. My heart sinks as I hear this news. With states being three days away, my dreams have been crushed. There was no way I would recover intime to play in my very last field hockey game.

Don't be the reason someone's dreams are crushed. Make good choices, you do not want to live with regret and the guilt of hurting someone. Drive home safely.