

After the accident, and the loss of my grandmother, my life has change drastically. Right after it happened I had a few sleepless nights and they weren't the last. These sleepless nights still occur and I don't know if they will ever stop. Every now and then I have flashbacks of the condition my grandmother was in after the accident, rolling over to see the passenger side seat to see if I was still alive, and sleep is impossible. The wreckage from the accident was traumatizing and shocking experience. The ambulance ride; the cuts, scrapes and bruises on my face; the useless hope that my grandmother may be alive as I'm headed to the hospital, hoping I would have something more than just ashes to hold at Christmas.

Ever since the accident there's been a hole in my life that just hasn't, and never will be filled.

At our family gatherings it doesn't seem like everyone is as connected as they used to be because my grandmother is gone. Every year we have a pumpkin carving day where our whole family gets together on Halloween and have a potluck and carve pumpkins. And it's not as important to me or anyone else because she's not there.

I resent having to celebrate Christmas every year.

Ever since I could remember she spent Christmas Eve and Christmas morning with my family and she made Christmas for me. Now that she's gone I hate putting up the tree without her, and opening presents, and the whole process of Christmas depresses me.

This depression carries on throughout my life daily, I've been told that I haven't looked truly happy since the day of the accident by people I care about the most and it makes them sad for me and I'm sure it makes them feel unappreciated. At school there are days where something reminds me of that day, something as simple as a sandwich or someone talking about a family reunion, and I cry because of my experience. Every year there are presentations about drunk driving at my school. One presentation tried to show the wreckage and damage that drunk driving can do to people. This was like my own personal hell. Stuck in a gymnasium, watching several images of "accidents" that looked exactly like the one that killed my grandmother, the one I was in, over and over again. I broke down crying, sitting in the middle of a crowd of 1800 of my peers. I was shaking, hyperventilating, and had to get out to be sick because I couldn't handle it anymore. My marks have gone significantly down because of the sleepless nights, missing school to go to court, hoping that eventually I would finally see justice served for what was taken from me, my family, her friends, co-workers, and even the cancer patients at the hospital who looked forward to her daily visits.

I miss the little things:

It's funny the things you miss when you lose someone. I miss her calls that happen two days after my birthday because she couldn't remember if it was the 17th or 19th. I miss spending weekends with her and doing things that I'm sure she hated, just so she could spend time with

her grandson. I miss taking care of her if she was sick and I miss her little car she was so proud of and basically could live out of if she needed to.

That little car that was crushed instantly, along with my grandmother.

Being 16 when the accident happened, I just received my driver's licence two weeks before the accident. I took the driver's education course and opted out of learning to drive a standard vehicle. I'm thankful in more ways than you can imagine for this decision. I would have been the one killed in the accident if that were the case because I know my grandmother was excited to hear that I passed my driving test. She would have let me take that wheel and wanted to see me growing up, right before I would have died.

I'm grateful to be alive.

I feel like I can't waste one second of my life because it could be taken away from me in the time it takes to snap your finger. I'm shocked that I am alive and didn't receive any major injuries physically from this accident. Seeing the condition that car was in and knowing that somehow I managed to make it out alive is more than a miracle to me.

I travel very differently then I used to.

Whether I am driving or a passenger I cannot stop thinking that there is going to be a car come into my lane and kill me at any moment. I still have dreams about the day that it will happen to me. Oncoming traffic scares me more than I could describe, especially trucks and transport trucks. I've seen what happens when a bigger vehicle hits a smaller one more than once in my life. It results in death.

Overall I feel like I was forced to experience what it was like to be violently robbed a grandparent. See what it's like to see someone you love with the back of their head missing; to see their jaw torn off on one side and just hanging there. To see her flesh ripped apart, her legs crushed and her throat sliced apart because the seat belt dug into her so deep she couldn't breathe. And taking her last breathes trying to see if I was okay and alive. That image plays in my head at least once every day; usually more. No amount of counselling could ever fix that. No one should have to see that, and I hope to god that no one has to see a loved one, a member of their family, in the condition that I've seen my grandmother. No one deserves that kind of traumatization.