

DID HE KNOW HE WAS GOING TO DIE?

A father's journey

Robert's 21-year-old son Kevin was killed by a drunk driver in 2015

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The hardest time of day is evening

A bereaved mind that isn't a busy mind is a painful mind. The more you can keep occupied with something, the less you will dwell and relive the loss of your child over and over and over.

For me, the hardest time of day is the evening. I can be so busy during the day with work concerns that I don't have a minute to linger on my loss of Kevin. But later in the evening while sitting in bed, mindlessly flipping channels on TV, is the hardest time. It's when my mind starts to wander and I think about it.

Some nights I relive the car crash in my mind. I start reliving the accident, even though I was not there. My son was in the front passenger seat of the PT Cruiser that night, headed to a Publix supermarket after a busy fantasy football draft. I had sent him a text about the Miami Dolphins and a news story that I knew he would be interested in and that I believe he was reading. The driver of the second vehicle flew down the street with a blood alcohol level more than three times the limit. He was driving over 100 miles per hour on a city street with a 40-mph posted speed limit. I keep

wondering and reliving in my head this movie of the accident—again, one that I did not see. Our kids' car turned left at the light and the Challenger, moving like a bullet, hit them broadside (T-bone) on my son's side.

The coroner said Kevin was immediately unconscious and died quickly. That's supposed to be comforting. I know he had his seat belt on, he was adamant about that. But did he feel anything? Did he know he was going to die? Did he cry out for his mom or dad?

Kevin was stuck in the car for hours, long declared dead and covered with a blanket. Did anyone see him? What about his friend, did Kevin say anything to him? The people who filled out witness statements described running up to the car and seeing everyone unconscious. Perhaps they didn't suffer; perhaps it was over in a flash, but it is something I play over and over in my head every day.

