

We responded to a motor vehicle collision. When we arrived, we found we didn't need the jaws of life to gain access to the injured because the right side of the car was torn open. An 8 year old boy was lying on top of his 35 year old dad. Both of them were on the floor in the back seat. Both were dead.

Several days later, a police officer who had worked on the case told me more. After the crash, the police went to the small apartment where the man and his son lived to deliver the news to the wife. The woman couldn't speak English, so the police had to find someone to translate. Two hours passed before the translator arrived.

You could see the fear in the woman's face because she didn't have to be told, in her native tongue, that something was terribly wrong. She took the news very hard. Who wouldn't? The police learned that the family had arrived from Poland several months earlier and that the bereaved woman didn't know a soul in the city. Her husband and only child were dead, and she was alone.

Toxicology tests revealed that the man's blood alcohol had been 4 times over the legal limit. I couldn't help but think about the horror the boy must have felt right before the crash. Fortunately, he died quickly.

Put yourself in the mother's shoes. The people you love the most are dead, and here you are, not knowing a soul, unable to speak the language, having no money to pay for a funeral and being totally alone at Christmas.

For most of us, the statistics about the people who die each year because of drinking and driving are just numbers printed on a sheet of paper. Sometimes we read the stories about these numbers in the newspaper.

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The father and son I tried to help had instantly gone from living, breathing human beings to numbers – statistics. For the poor woman who was left behind, her husband and child were more than just numbers; they were family. They were all she had.

 ... AT ALL TIMES!