

Overconsumption Can Steal Lives

My dear niece and nephews,

I remember the car. The car was spinning and I heard my mom scream my dad's name. He tried to swerve, but the spinning car crashed into us anyway. The last thing I said was, "Mom, Dad, please wake up!" Then I blacked out . . .

Maybe I was dreaming, but I like to believe this is what happened. I saw something that looked like blue fire and somehow I knew I might be close to death, but I wasn't scared. I remember thinking that I had to stay alive for you three. The last thing I remember was the voice saying, "Oh very well." Like I said, maybe I was just dreaming, but man was that weird. At the moment I knew I wasn't going to die, I became scared. When I woke up, the EMS lady helped me into the ambulance and was talking to me.

In the hospital, I noticed that the doctors kept me far away from the man that...well, the man that killed my parents. I knew he was having different treatments done. Unfortunately, the man that crashed into us was drunk.

I met this nice lady who talked to me. This was after—or maybe before—I had a scan done on my head and tummy. Both scans said I was a-okay, but the lady, who I think was a social worker, told me my dad had died in the accident and my mom was alive but not awake. Mom only lasted a few days longer before she left me, too.

The hospital identified me in the school records, and they also called my family doctor to get my medical history since I'm autistic and since some medicines don't agree with me. The social worker said that there is a law that states that no child can be left alone in a hospital if his or her parents are gone, so she stayed with me for a while. I asked her a lot of questions. In the end, I told her that she could call my aunt and my brother to come and take me home. My aunt gave me McDonald's hash browns to eat, and I liked that.

A while later, I had Christmas with my aunt and the rest of my family. Around that time, I was asked to write a paper for the court explaining what happened to me. This is the part I want all of you to remember. I feel angry and sad, to be honest, toward the man who killed my parents. My heart was like glass that someone just dropped and then broke. That's how I hurt, so I hope that your parents never end up like mine. That man should've fixed his problems somehow without drinking. Not only did his consequences hurt him, but other special people who needed love and care like me.

These chapters of my life are very special to me, but there are more chapters to tell. Life goes on. There are consequences for drinking and stuff like that, but as long as you live drug-free you can be anything and everything. Don't forget that!

Love,

Kayla (As told to Isabella Bailey)