



My Best Friend

By Josh Sinnott

TODAY I would like to share a story with you about my best friend. It all started at a very young age. In fact, our relationship began moments after I took my first breath. My best friend was among the first to hold my fragile body in her arms. Days after my birth she began reading to me her favorite picture books for hours upon end. As time went on, our relationship grew even stronger. Together, we would let our imaginations run wild, exploring the forest near my house we would find our very own magic spots, thinking trees, and a place we called the dark woods. We would pretend we were orphans and would have to provide food and shelter for ourselves. As the years passed, we found that our friendship had a much deeper connection. We were friends that laughed together, cried together, and most importantly, loved each other.

As teenage years came upon my friend, something sinister followed. In the beginning it was something new and fun to do with friends who shared the same curiosity as she did. But to say it was a wolf in sheep's clothing was an understatement. Her

use of drugs and alcohol started as it normally does for most teens on the Iron Range. Occasionally going out to drink or smoke some pot every now and then with some friends to find some sort of amusement for a time. But as I watched my friend slowly drift away, it seemed drugs and alcohol became more of a friend to her than I was. Drinking became more frequent for my friend despite the efforts of many to stop her. These people loved her dearly and knew what the sad outcome of this dangerous trend would be. Before long she was switching schools, not living at home and living a very unhealthy lifestyle that would soon become something she had no choice but to live with.

After barely graduating from high school, my friend's life turned into one big party and soon this provider of fun and entertainment became a cruel master. Her life revolved around drugs and alcohol. Every cent and every moment was consumed with how she was going to get her next high or buzz. By the age of nineteen, she was a full-blown alcoholic. And her chronic use of marijuana and prescription drugs seemed to be an

addiction as well. My heart was breaking for my friend because I saw her life starting to spiral out of control. At first it became difficult for her to hold down a job and then I saw her once healthy body start to crumble. Bags formed under her eyes, her skin looked pale, and her hair began falling out, and her once sharp mind was starting to seem dull. But worst of all, her heart was broken like mine. She was in a pit of despair that she could not find a way out of no matter how hard she tried. Drugs and alcohol, which was at one time a good servant, was all of a sudden a terrible monster that had her in its grips. She was so depressed, she thought her only way out was taking her own life. Thankfully she did not succeed and while in the hospital, she was able to get help.

My best friend happens to be my sister. The effects of drugs and alcohol on my sister has been torturous to watch for me, my family, and those who love her. She continues to struggle with them to this day. But I have hope for her and will continue to love my best friend. She is not the only person in my family who has been ensnared by drugs. Both my uncle and cousin have died due to the direct effects of drugs.

In conclusion, I am very passionate about preventing my friends and fellow classmates from making drugs a part of their lives. It starts off being fun and innocent but it can grow very quickly into an addiction that cannot be stopped or controlled and will eventually take their life like it did my cousin and my uncle—and almost my best friend. ☹️

ALERT SCHOLARSHIP

Josh Sinnott is a high school senior from Hibbing, MN. *Alert Magazine* congratulates him for winning the Alert Scholarship and we encourage him in the pursuit of his academic goals. We would also like to encourage future seniors to participate in our scholarship program.