



# The Chaos He Has Caused

By Ashton Bisner

**M**y father has had many different encounters with drugs throughout his life. While in high school, he obtained a lot of marijuana through friends and acquaintances. This obsession with getting high led him to resort to stealing, lying, and attempting stronger, more intense drugs such as meth and heroin. My father has remained outside of my life and he will continue to stay out of my life until he can prove to me that he can stay sober and maintain a stable job. My father cannot live life without getting a euphoric high from drugs. The violent acts he has committed in his desperate attempts to obtain drugs have shown my family and I that it is unsafe to have him around.

Unfortunately, my grandfather was not motivated enough to assist my father to help him get his life back on track. I have talked to my grandfather one time, and it is clear that he does not have the drive or ambition. You cannot blame my grandfather for the drug abuse my father possesses, but the absence of a healthy home life and a supporting father was no help in the recuperation of my father's well-being. My father has had the support of other relatives, however; he dug himself too big of a hole for any outside help. He's gone through multiple rehabilitation programs but fails to stay sober for

more than a month each time he is released.

With the extensive amount of opportunities my father was given, there is no excuse for him to still be breaking the law. He has stolen drugs, people's personal goods, gotten in fist fights, threatened innocent people, and stolen cars all before I was even born. Judges have released him, only giving him community service hours for his wrong doings. At some point, my father needed to realize that he cannot count on people to save him. He had, and still has to take his life into his own hands. Because of the chaos he has caused, my mother told him that he cannot be a part of my life until he can prove to her that he can stay sober. My father was put into prison in 2016 for violating probation and is not scheduled to be released until 2022.

I have never met my father, and barely knew what he looked like until recently since he started writing me letters and sending me photos from prison. The way he writes makes him sound like a child. His past actions have permanently affected the way he thinks. When I read his letters, it is challenging to picture an adult man behind the piece of paper. The topic of himself also comes up in every letter I have received. I was hoping that he would be more curious about me rather

than try to win me over by proving to me how well he is doing in prison. While in prison, my father has taken a carpentry class and a writing 121 class to hopefully give him a foundation to build off of when he is out of prison. My mother and I are taking his letters with a grain of salt since we cannot know for sure whether or not he is saying these statements because he is genuinely excited for a positive change or he wants us to open up our minds to the idea of him being a part of our lives. Like most drug users, my father is very manipulative and begs for forgiveness because he's afraid of being removed from the family. Luckily when I was born, my mother made the choice to tell him he could not be with us until he could get clean. Hopefully being able to talk to me after seventeen years gives him more strength to be able to quit his addiction.

It has been a long, repeating journey for my father. He must take full responsibility for his actions, however; if he had a better support system from his family at the beginning of his addiction, I feel as if there could have been a different outcome. If my grandfather was more involved in my father's life, he could have helped my father stay clean in the long run. The consequences my father received in court could have also been more strict and enforcing. By addressing the problem early on, my father could have been able to realize his life was crumbling. If his actions resulted in a larger consequence rather than a few hours of community service maybe his issues could have been addressed earlier. It's difficult to say, but I'm glad my father is currently in prison because he needs to understand that what he's been doing for the past two decades is disgraceful. 🚫

## ALERT SCHOLARSHIP

Ashton Bisner is a high school senior from Oregon. *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.