



My War

By Taylor Sauer

LAID ON THE hospital bed at Mercy medical, falling in and out of sleep. There was an occasional pricking in my arm from the IV, and the bitter taste of charcoal lingered on my tongue. Nurses were scrambling in and out of the room, along with my mom, dad, aunts, and uncles. I remember the day precisely; it was July 22, my brother's birthday, the day I overdosed on Tylenol PM.

I had always been a girl that people looked up to, someone that could be relied on to always help. I have attended church all my life and have been raised in a sturdy home by parents that instill high morals. I thought I was strong, someone that would never succumb to ruthless behaviors, then the summer after my sophomore year rolled around.

I had just been through a bitter break up with a boy I thought I loved, and he was quick to move on to other girls. During the dreadful months that passed, I became very depressed and began to crave one thing: recklessness. Partying became my favorite activity and I made sure to always incorporate it into my summer life. One night I became so drunk that I cried until I passed out and spent the next two days in bed, leaving only to puke every hour. I thought I had hit rock bottom.

After a deep conversation with someone I thought was my friend, I was asked to go get high off of marijuana with him. I had made the plans with the drug dealer and was ready to spend my night unaware of what was happening around me. I never made it to my date with the drugs. That day something better caught my eye—Tylenol PM sitting right under the drug cabinet. I was shaking as I popped the cap off of the bottle and one by one swallowed all of the pills. Waiting for them to kick in, I went to the store with my parents.

I walked up and down the aisles trying to stay upright. I began to get dizzy and lightheaded and it was hard for me to keep my eyes open. My dad turned and looked to see me struggling to remain conscious. He panicked and raced towards me shaking me, telling me to explain myself. I was able to mutter out, "I think I need to go to the hospital. Overdosed. Tylenol PM."

Quickly, my parents rushed me to the car. I only remember bits of the screaming and crying that my mom was uttering at me. The next thing I remember was being on a hard, cold bed in the hospital. The doctor kept urging me to drink the two cups of charcoal that were next to me. After getting one cup swallowed, I fell asleep, only to be

awoken by the charcoal coming back up out onto my lap. I struggled to remain awake and drink those cups. People kept telling me that if I didn't finish it then my liver would be damaged and I could die. I continued to try my hardest, but I just couldn't do it. That high feeling was still in charge of my body and I couldn't do anything to fight it.

I remember waking up around 2:00 a.m. with my dad asleep in the chair and my mom leaning over me. She summoned the doctor and he came in to tell me that everything would be alright. I never finished the charcoal, but miraculously my Tylenol levels went down and my liver didn't have any damage. It was then that I realized I wasn't the person I used to be, the great girl who could never be tempted. I was now the girl that my friends and I avoided, the girl who did drugs and landed herself in the hospital.

I learned so much from that incident. I learned that no matter how far you fall in life, you can always come back and rise to be a better person. Now, senior year, I am back to my old self, and although my encounters with alcohol continued past that night, I am now proud to say that I am no longer tempted to try any drugs or alcoholic drinks. I have become a fighter and someone who is even stronger now because of what I have overcome. I think that the situation was handled very well. I was saved because of parents' concern and I was able to realize that my full potential laid far beyond drugs and the "high" feeling you get. I have lost many friends over the years to drugs, and I know that with the continuous support of friends and family, they can overcome the trials, just like I did. 🙏

ALERT SCHOLARSHIP

Taylor Sauer is a recent high school graduate from Idaho. Alert Magazine congratulates her for winning the Alert Scholarship and we encourage her in the pursuit of her academic goals. We would also like to encourage future seniors to participate in our scholarship program.