A Lost Friend

Today, I was sitting at my desk drinking my morning coffee. Same routine I’d gone through for the last 3 years. My L-Shaped desk sat directly behind the front window of my small, three-bedroom house. It was a very average view of the heart of small-town Pima, Arizona. My laptop open, playing one of my favorite sports morning shows, The Pat Mcafee Show in the other tab as I scroll through Twitter. As I’m taking a drink of my espresso, I see a young boy walking down the sidewalk with a backpack on. He was clearly on his way to school. He was a taller kid with curly hair with blue tennis shoes on his feet. It was warm outside despite a slight breeze flowing through the trees. He reminded me much of myself as a young kid. Walking home from school without a worry in mind. No rent to pay, no exams to study for, no people to please. Just me, myself, and my inner thoughts. Those were the best days.

Like a young boy walking down the cracked and broken sidewalk, not stepping on a single line for his mother's sake. A long day of multiplication tables and recess can really take it out of a kid. He was not the smartest kid but was not the dumbest, he tried his hardest and pulled a B average. His favorite activities at school were playground football and dodgeball. He liked dodgeball because there was always the fear of getting out. You could not get back in the game in dodgeball, when you were out, it was over for you. The boy's good friend was not at school, so he played with another group of kids instead. It was fun but was not the same as his ultra-competitive games he had with his best friend. They played almost every day at school, after school, on the weekend, and even had sleepovers at each other's houses. They were two peas in a pod. The boy lived close to school, so he was home quick. He walks in feels tension in the house. He sees his mom and dad sitting on the couch, with a look of distraught on their face. “Sit down Sweetie.” His mother regrettably says to her son. He sits down with his knees close as he was extremely uncomfortable and nervous as to what his parents needed to tell him. He thought to himself, “Did I do my chores?”. His father then looks up and, with a tear running down his face, said “Son, \*\*\*\*\*\* was killed by a drunk driver last night.”



He could not wrap his head around it. He doesn’t know what this means. No kid that age can conceptualize what death really is. All he knows is his favorite person he knows is no longer here. He does not know whether to feel sadness or anger, or both.

His parents tell him the funeral is Saturday, all he can think about is when is he coming back? He can’t just be gone. He was supposed to ride his bike to the park with him tomorrow. He asks his mom, “Will \*\*\*\*\*\* be at the funeral.” His mom, with a tear running down her cheek kneels and says, “No son, he won't be coming back to play anymore.” This frustrated him very much. Why wouldn’t he come play with me? Why isn't he coming back? Why did the driver drive that car?

That weekend at the funeral, the boy sees his friend's mom talking at the front of the church. His father, sister, and younger brother all in the front row. Crying. He then scans the front of the church and sees a big box, with his friend laying inside. A slight moment of happiness hits him, until he realizes it. Seeing his best friend up there, lying motionless, it finally hits him. He starts to remember all the games they played and good times they had had. He remembers all the late nights making prank calls to their other friends. Watching SpongeBob in basement after school. He never even knew that last time, it was truly the last time. Like the dodgeball games, his friend got hit by the ball. His friend is gone, forever.



“Every day, 29 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver.1 This is one death every 50 minutes. Behind distracted driving, drunk driving is the number one cause of most car accidents in the US and, by far, the deadliest. Alcohol physically changes the brain's chemistry and inhibits common sense, fear, and motor skills. Put that combination behind the wheel of a two-ton metal battering ram capable of going 100 miles an hour, and you have a recipe for disaster. Both young and old are susceptible to the belief that "only one drink won't hurt," as the data will show. Buzzed driving is drunk driving, and it is dangerous.” (Taylor Covington)

Works Cited

“Drunk Driving Statistics + Facts (Including a 2021 Survey): The Zebra.” *Drunk Driving Statistics + Facts (Including a 2021 Survey) | The Zebra*, www.thezebra.com/resources/research/drunk-driving-statistics/.