

When I was growing up, my father was an alcoholic; he would drink from the time he got home from work until the time he went to bed. He would drive when drunk without hesitation and even allow me to ride with him while he was driving drunk. As a kid, I did not realize how bad it was to drive while intoxicated; my dad was always my hero, so everything he did seemed okay in my eyes. I did not realize how dangerous it was.

One night, my dad and I were going home from his best friend, Walter's house. Dad had drunk quite a lot, but insisted he was okay to drive. I was about thirteen and, even though at this age I knew people were not supposed to drink and drive, if my dad said he was okay to drive, I figured he was probably right. Walter only lived about three miles from my parent's house, but this night in particular, the roads were bad. It was mid January and there was a blizzard outside. Visibility was low and the road itself was slick with ice. Dad's truck tires were bald as well.

He made a turn too fast and too sharp; his truck ended up rolling over, crashing down over a hill into the woods. Dad was not wearing a seat belt, and he flailed around the cab of the truck as it rolled; when we finally settled at the bottom of the hill, the truck was on its roof and Dad was groaning in pain. He told me he thought he had broken his leg and that I needed to go get my grandfather to come pull the truck out.

I did as I was told, bringing my grandfather back to where we crashed to help Dad get out of the woods and then pull the truck out. Dad- in his drunken state- insisted that we had to bring the truck home before he would be willing to see a doctor. We brought the truck home and tucked it into the garage- later on, I would

take the blame and tell my mother I had been driving because Dad was drunk. I told her I drove the few miles to get home and rolled the truck upon hitting a patch of ice.

Finally, we got Dad to the emergency room where they did X-Rays and found he did indeed have a fractured leg. Dad avoided any legal trouble, because I had claimed I rolled the truck, but he was in a cast for what seemed like a very long time- too long for his active self. This kept him out of work for the length of time he was in the cast.

This was only one incident of many that I remember having to take care of my father because of his bad decisions he made while drinking. He was also an abusive drunk and would pick fights with me when he would get too drunk. It wasn't until my mother threatened to leave him that Dad stopped drinking.

Since my father has not been drinking, he has had no driving issues; he also is much easier to get along with. Dad and I have become more inseparable than ever since he has been sober. These days, I would trust him behind the wheel of any vehicle, but people need to realize that drinking and driving is never okay. My dad hurt himself that night, but he did not think about the fact that he had me- his son- in the truck and that if things had gone differently, he, myself, someone we did not even know, anyone really could have been hurt badly or killed, and then he would have had to live with that for the rest of his life. And if he had died, I would have finished growing up without my father because of the stupid choice to drink and drive. Anything could have happened and though my story is not one of death and heartbreak, it really opened my eyes to what COULD happen if you drink and drive. Please do not do it!