

4th of July Nightmare

It was the July 4th, a hot sunny afternoon at Higgins Beach. The beach was packed, children and parents lined the street to watch the annual parade. Up the street at the cottage was where the cribbage tournament was held. Cards played, take a sip, cards played, take a sip. Adults enjoyed numerous beverages while older children tried to sneak a few drinks.

Surrounded by family and friends, drinks were offered to me and I accepted. Knowing in the back of my mind I was told that I need to drive home, I continued anyways. Everyone else looked like they were having so much fun, so why couldn't I? As the buzz started to kick in, the time to leave grew closer and closer. My mind was going a million miles a minute. I kept telling myself, "Jill you need to drive in an hour, Jill you need to drive in an hour." The hour flew by, and I was in no state to drive.

I couldn't tell my parents that I had drank, so I decided to try my hardest to drive home and act like nothing happened. The car door opened, my seatbelt clicked, I turned the key and was visualizing myself arriving home safely. I started down the beach road, and took a very slow left turn to head back towards Gorham. I was going slowly through the winding back roads of Scarborough when suddenly I started panicking. My vision was starting to get blurry, my head was pounding, I knew something terrible was going to happen. The car began to swerve, I was unaware of what was happening. Headlights quickly flashed, and then there was a sudden stop followed by great silence. Dazed and confused I had numerous paramedics surrounding me and my family. All I could focus

on was the dark night sky, and the glass poking into every spot on my body. As I fully came back to, I was told that there had been a head on collision. I overheard the firefighters explain that there was one DOA, "one DOA they said." Knowing exactly what DOA meant, I immediately felt sick to my stomach. I killed someone, I killed someone, I was the reason someone isn't returning home tonight.

A week following the accident, I was informed that I had killed a senior athlete from a neighboring school. This was the most traumatic news I have ever received. Her parents will never see their daughter graduate, they will miss her senior night for soccer, they won't get to move their daughter in for college, and so much more. I have ruined their lives, their family, I can't do this. I am responsible for taking this innocent girls life. If I had never taken a sip, this all wouldn't have happened, she'd be laughing with her friends on the field, and walking across the stage in June.

For the rest of my life, I will live with the guilt and shame of my actions. The simplest thing that can be done is, do not drive impaired. Think long and hard before you make any decisions regarding this topic. Think smart, drink smart, and arrive alive.