

# Alone

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I turn to the sink and strain the boiling water from the pasta. As I'm adding the sauce to the pot of pasta, Elaina comes downstairs into the kitchen.

"I'm leaving in 10 minutes, the party starts at 7:30 p.m. I want to get there early." She says as she grabs her keys off the kitchen table.

"Okay, when do you think you'll be home? Are you eating with me or at the party?" I ask as I grab the cheese out of the fridge and set it on the table.

"I'm not sure what time the party ends but, I'll text you when I'm leaving. I'm just going to eat when I get back, I'm not really hungry right now."

"Okay, sounds good. Remember that tomorrow's your dad's birthday so don't be out too late because we're going out to breakfast, okay?"

"Okay, I'm going to head out now. Bye Mom, love you!"

"Bye sweetie love you too! Have fun and be safe please!" I yell as she bolts out the door. I sit at the table and eat dinner by myself. Derrick should be home soon, but he could be out with his work friends for his birthday. He mentioned something about it this morning. Once I finish my dinner, I clean up the kitchen and head to the living room to watch tv. I put on *F.r.i.e.n.d.s* and relax on the couch for a little while. It's now 8:30 p.m and Derrick is still out and hasn't texted me. I assume Elaina should text me at around 9:00 or 9:30 p.m to let me know she is on her way home. Another 45 minutes has passed and I still haven't heard anything from either one of them. I text Derrick first since Elaina could just still be at the party. I ask him what he's doing and when he thinks he will be home. He texts me back fairly quickly and says that he's just out with some work friends and will head home in about 15 minutes. After about 20 minutes, Elaina texts me to tell me she's on her way home, so I started to heat up some food for when she gets here. Once I get back to the living room I see that Elaina is calling me.

"Hey sweetie, how was the party?"

"It was fun! Can you heat me up some food for when I get home please?"

"Yep, it's heating up right now!"

“Okay thanks Mom! I’m almost home I’m just turning onto our st—“

Her voice is cut off by a loud bang and the call ends. My heart drops into my stomach. I try calling her back but she doesn’t pick up. Just a few minutes go by and I start hearing sirens by the end of our street. Rushing outside, I see blue and red flashing lights out of the corner of my eye. As I’m running closer, I see that it’s Elaina’s car. I can’t feel anything; my hands and feet are numb. It feels almost like a nightmare. This can’t be real. The front of her car is completely caved in. The only thing I can feel is the warm tears streaming down my face. I can barely see out of my eyes. People are tugging at her door trying to get her out but it’s completely smashed. As I run over to try and see her, I notice the other car. It has fallen into the ditch by our road and it looks even worse than Elaina’s. Then I realize something... it’s Derrick. This can’t be happening. I watch as they try to flip over the car and as they finally get Elaina’s door open. She’s not moving. I fall to the ground as I watch them pull her from the car. They immediately try to save her and give her CPR but it’s not working. She’s gone. Then I turn to see Derrick and it’s not looking any better. Just a few minutes go by yet it feels like hours. My hands are still numb and shaking from the cold and tears are still flowing down my cheek. I can’t breathe. The cops come to me and tell me that they have both passed. They tell me that it appears to be that Derrick was drunk and was going almost two times the speed limit. Just like that. I was just talking to them. They were just here. And now they’re gone. I’ll never hear they’re voices ever again.

As I ran back to my house to grab my phone to call my parents and sister, all I feel is pain. It’s a different pain. One that’s worse than anything I’ve ever felt before. As I pass the kitchen, into the living room to grab my phone, I see Elaina’s pasta on the table ready to eat. Except now, it’s cold.

The danger of drinking and driving doesn’t stop at any age. It’s never safe.

Arrive alive.