

Dealing with alcoholism

Literature



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Dealing with Alcoholism “ MY FATHER DRANK. He drank as a gut-punched boxer gasps for breath, as a starving dog gobbles food, compulsively secretly, in pain and trembling. I use the past tense not because he ever quit drinking but because he quit living” (Sanders 100). This is the first lines of the first paragraph of Scott Sanders essay titled Under the Influence. This essay interests me because it reminds me of my father’s brother. Although not dead, my father’s brother is a complete drunkard. Drinking alcohol is a full time activity for him. Sanders explains his adversities and gives his opinions about the fact that his father was a drunkard. Sanders states that the story just ends that way for his father, at age sixty-four and heart busting. This was the story for his sister, mother and him and will be the memory that he will have for long. My father’s brother has left his family in deep problems and all his wife and children can remember about him is a drunkard man who cannot provide for his family. Just as sanders remembers his father coming out of any of the cars in the garage from his drinking den, my cousin John normally tells me that when his father comes home, they always stop playing and look at him as he goes into the house, slump into his favorite chair and fall asleep. He never cares about what went on during the day, how the children are or where they are. All they know are the frustrating voices of her mother yelling at him every night because of his drinking, yet he does not change. As sanders says, “ Whatever my brother, my sister and my mother may be thinking on their own rumpled pillows, I lie there hating him, loving him, fearing him, knowing I have failed him” (Sanders 102). My cousin, who is 20 years, tells me that he does not understand what to feel about his father because they are distant. He does not even know what his mother and siblings think of him anymore. He tries to handle everything the

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acceptable way including passing exams in school to make his father recognize this but he does not. Sanders considers the many synonyms that are used to describe drunk people, such as tipsy, pickled, soused, stoned and stewed and lubricated and inebriated. All these terms are a humorous lexicon that is used to refer to drunks. The fact that his father was a drunk brought a shame to his family. This is the similar encounter that my cousin and his brothers have to deal with because of his father's drunkenness. It is a shame to them. Their neighbors and peers make jokes from their father's drunken condition. Sanders says, " My father, when drunk, was neither funny nor honest, he was pathetic, frightening and deceitful... he would never admit that he had touched a drop, not even in his last year" (Sanders 103). I have had the chance of meeting my father's brother when he is drunk and he is exactly what Sanders says of his father. The words that come out of his mouth are pathetic and dishonest. For instance, one day, he saw me and said that he loves his family and spends the whole day with them, yet he had spent the whole day not anywhere near the house drinking. Just like Sanders observes, my uncle became a stranger when he was drunk. He spoke meaningless things and was quick-tempered to the extent that he scared everyone that nobody talked when he was in the house, not even when asleep in his chair. The drunkenness of Sanders' father made him responsible for his father's alcoholism. Sanders thought that he had something terrible to make his father a drunk. However much he tried to do everything right, his father went much into drinking. Now my cousin feels as if they are the ones responsible for his father's alcoholism. Thus, he tries in every way to make his father stop drinking perhaps to alleviate the shame that he has created in the family but it seems not to help. As Sanders points out, he wrote the <https://assignbuster.com/dealing-with-alcoholism/>

pages because his own son, who is ten, takes responsibilities for the griefs of his father. When his father is sad, he feels responsible (Sanders 110). This is about fear, guilt and shame brought about by certain actions of parents. As Sanders points out that he shies away from all contexts that exposes him to alcohol. Despite the fact that he can take a glass of wine, a can of beer and nothing stronger, the issue about his father rings in his mind. My cousin has sworn not to touch alcohol because he would not want his family to undergo through the same shame, guilt and fear that his father's alcoholism has exposed them to. He does not want anybody to take responsibility for his own actions but rather take those responsibilities himself by ensuring that he does not take alcohol. Work Cited Sanders, Scott. "Under the Influence." 1989. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*. Ed. Linda H. Peterson and John C. Brereton. 12th ed. New York: Norton, 2008. 100-10. Print.