

HEROIN,

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Heroin is a liar. She lies to families.

She tells them, "It won't happen to my family." "My child/mother/father/sibling/friend would never do something like that." "I have to give them money or they'll die." "I'm keeping them alive by providing somewhere for them to live." "If I set boundaries, they will hate me forever." "It hurts me too much to see them in pain, so I'll enable them to continue to use."

She also lies to the person using.

She says things like, "I'm not as bad as them." "I can control this." "I'll only try it once." "I can't live without it." "I deserve to live like this." "Nobody understands what I'm going through." "I can't live without it."

Heroin lied to me. Heroin lied to my friends and my family. I can only speak from experience, so here is my story of becoming a prisoner and, thankfully, breaking free.

So why try it?

At first it was a test, a sample, a "who cares, why not?" moment based on a belief that dependency and addiction couldn't happen to me.

Besides, why worry about your life, consequences and eventual, long-term effects



Samantha Nixon

when you don't really care about yourself anyway?

I was not lacking knowledge. I was not lacking support. I was not lacking a plethora of accomplishments, academic achievements and superficial successes.

I came from a good family. I was lucky enough to live in a nice house, in the nice part of town, with a family who loved me and provided more than I needed. We had a boat. We had a cabin. We had a hot tub and a fire pit and a gigantic TV. I had a collection of designer clothes and pretty little things. I was not lacking anything on the surface.

So what was I lacking? I was lacking the ability to think ahead, to weigh the decisions I made against the consequences. But most importantly, I was lacking self-esteem, self-awareness and self-worth.

I didn't know who I

was. I didn't understand the underlying issues that were contributing to my perpetual feelings of gut-wrenching agony and unhappiness.

I wasn't lacking self-centered thinking and a desperate desire to escape my reality.

Inside I was dying, and what's worse, I didn't know why. I needed to find a fix; I needed to find a cure for the pain.

She finds me

When I was introduced to heroin, I found a way to self-medicate that had the potential side effect of death, which was honestly my passive intention. I found a slow way to kill myself – an easier, softer way to go away.

But initially, the decision to try it was impulsive and without much thought.

I thought, I can try it once. I'll be fine.

Upon my first ingestion I was catapulted into an alternate universe where all of the sudden, everything was going to be okay.

My body was flooded with warmth and contentment. Nothing scared me anymore. All my fears disappeared and my worries and cares and feelings were completely eliminated.

I was numb to everything,

which was exactly what I wanted.

I thought, I want to do that again.

"It doesn't have to be the end."

And thus, the imprisonment began. I was tied to Her, a beautiful seductress who whispered in my ear: "You need me. I take away your pain. You want me. Come visit me again."

And I did. Again. Again. Again. Again. Again... Again... Again...

The destruction of things worthwhile

I shattered my family's trust. I shattered what was left of my identity. I lost everything superficial, everything worthwhile, everything I loved and my interest in basic needs like food, shelter and water.

My family decided, very intelligently, to stop enabling me and kicked me out of their house. They refused to support me as I killed myself.

I didn't care. I rode my bike around with my belongings on

my back, caring about only one thing that consumed my mind completely, obscuring my sight, creating tunnel vision that led to one thing:

Her. I ran out of money. I overdosed. I lost everything I'd worked so hard for – college, transportation, financial security and, above all, my relationships. I lost it all. Her power made none of it matter.

My solution stops working

Soon, heroin's "healing" magic lost its power. I needed more and I didn't have a way to get it. Fortunately, I didn't have to resort to means that many people who are trapped in Her sickening cycle of self-destruction and complete dependence have to do to stay well.

But only by the grace of something bigger was I spared, because I was no better and no different than them. I would have gotten there quickly, because I would have done anything for Her. But I was spared. I received help; I was given another chance.

Saving grace

By the grace of whatever power is out there, my family (bless them) intervened and

I was removed from Her clutches. I am proud to say I haven't used heroin in 1,292 days and I never plan to do so again. I escaped Her power and found another as of July 8, 2012.

In the time between then and today, I have seen countless other people who were bound by addiction recover. I have also seen beautiful, kind, joyful, hilarious, sweet, dear souls lose the battle and move on to whatever is waiting for us on the other side.

I want everyone to know that it is not impossible to stop. Heroin is a liar. Don't believe her. Don't get involved with her. And if you already are, I promise, I *promise*, freedom is out there. You can be freed.

I was freed. People with more difficult circumstances and less advantages than me have been freed.

It doesn't have to be your demise. It doesn't have to be the end.

To families: I am so sorry for the pain that comes with battling a loved one's addiction. There is support out there for you, too. There is always hope.

To everyone: Stop believing heroin's lies. You are worth much more than anything she could ever offer. Hope is not lost. Help is out there.

POT,

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U-Haul over near Lockhaven and McLeod Lane NE.

According to a release from the KPD, Goodman could smell the overwhelming odor of marijuana coming from the van as he encountered Nicholson. Nicholson told Goodman he had more than a pound of marijuana in the

vehicle with him.

Technically, Nicholson was accurate because he did indeed have more than a pound of marijuana with him – 77 pounds, to be exact.

Goodman found Nicholson was transporting six large plastic bags filled with useable marijuana. Nicholson told Goodman he's a grower for the Oregon Medical Marijuana program and provided his Oregon Health Authority Grower Identification Card.

Nicholson also noted he was transporting the marijuana to a location for extraction and processing.

During a search of the van, officers found a loaded semi-automatic .32 caliber handgun concealed in the cab area in addition to the bags filled with useable marijuana, all of which were seized.

Nicholson was arrested without incident for unlawful possession of a firearm and unlawful possession

of marijuana or marijuana product.

He was also issued a citation for speeding and was transported to the Marion County Correctional Facility.

According to state law, useable marijuana means the dried leaves and flowers of the plant Cannabis family Moraceae and any mixture or preparation thereof that are appropriate for medical use as allowed under state statutes. Useable marijuana does not

include the seeds, stalks and roots of the plant.

Each of the six bags found in the U-Haul were weighed and determined to be more than 77 pounds.

KPD deputy chief Jeff Kuhns said that's the largest haul of marijuana he can recall in his 27 years with the department.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Goodman at 503-390-3713, extension 3470.

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