IT HAPPENED TO ALICE

HOW SHE FACED A DRINKING PROBLEM
ALICE WORKS AS A NURSE IN DR. HAYSBERT’S OFFICE...

WELL, I THINK WE’VE GOT OURSELVES A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED COLD HERE.

...AND KEEPS A HOME FOR HERSELF AND HER TWO CHILDREN, STEPHANIE AND DANNY.

NOW HE’S ONLY FOUR YEARS BEHIND ME!
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF DEBT BEFORE THE CUSTODY HEARING.

SURE, SURE. I CAN BE IN EARLY TOMORROW.

I'LL HAVE TO GET SOMEONE TO TAKE THE KIDS TO SCHOOL.
JUST ONE MORE!

I THOUGHT MOM WOULD BE HOME....

HEY, STEPHANIE- LOOK AT THIS!

OCCASIONALLY, LIFE'S PRESSURES BUILD AND ALICE CUTS LOOSE. SOMETIMES THIS CAUSES HER TO MISS IMPORTANT APPOINTMENTS.
ALICE, YOU KNEW ABOUT THAT TEACHER’S CONFERENCE FOR WEEKS.

I KNOW, MOM. IT WAS JUST THIS ONCE, Y’KNOW.

I JUST WENT OUT FOR A LITTLE FUN. IT’S NOT LIKE I DRINK AT WORK OR ANYTHING.

GET OFF MY CASE....
LIKE MAKING PAYMENTS ON TIME IS THE REAL PROBLEM HERE, ALICE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU, NEVER HELPING WITH THE BILLS?

YOUR DRINKING IS GETTING OUT OF HAND.
WEEKS PASS AND ALICE’S NIGHTS OUT OCCUR MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY.

HEY, C’MON, ALICE. UPSIE-DAISY.

WE CAN’T LET HER DRIVE....

I’LL DRIVE HER HOME.

...AND HERE WE ARE.

LET’S GET YOU PUT TO BED, OK?

...MMM. THANKS...

...MMM. S’ SWEET OF YOU... (giggle)
MOMMY, UM, IT'S TIME TO GO TO SCHOOL.

hmmm? wha'? ooh, what time is it...?

HOW DID I GET HOME?

HI, STEPHEN? YEAH, UM, WE NEED A RIDE... UH-HUH, MY CAR'S ACROSS TOWN.

SIGH. YES. YEAH, I KNOW.

I HOPE I'M NOT GONNA BE LATE....
C’MON, KIDS. DADDY’S GOING TO GIVE US A RIDE.

MOMMY, WHERE’S OUR CAR?

IT’S, UM, OVER AT A FRIEND’S HOUSE. C’MON....

I HOPE HE DOESN’T GIVE ME ANY STATIC.

C’MON, KIDS. DADDY’S GOING TO GIVE US A RIDE.

MOMMY, WHERE’S OUR CAR?

IT’S, UM, OVER AT A FRIEND’S HOUSE. C’MON....

I HOPE HE DOESN’T GIVE ME ANY STATIC.

OVER AT A FRIEND’S HOUSE, HUH?

ALICE, THIS HAS GOT TO STOP. I AM GOING TO TALK TO MY LAWYER ABOUT THIS BEFORE THE CUSTODY HEARING.

KEYS, KEYS... WHERE ARE MY DAMNED KEYS?

OH, PLEASE, STEPHEN, NOT NOW....

I CAN’T BELIEVE THIS. NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE....
AN INCIDENT LIKE THIS IS PRETTY SERIOUS, ALICE.

HOW SERIOUS?

WELL, IT CERTAINLY COULD MAKE A MESS OF CUSTODY.

YOUR HUSBAND’S LAWYER CALLED ABOUT YOU LOSING YOUR CAR...

OH, NO, WHO ELSE KNOWS ABOUT IT?

AN INCIDENT LIKE THIS IS PRETTY SERIOUS, ALICE.

ALICE, I KNOW THIS IS REALLY PERSONAL, BUT HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS?

THE FOLLOWING WEEK IN HER ATTORNEY’S OFFICE....

THEY HELP AN AWFUL LOT OF PEOPLE.
IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOW, ALICE TRIES TO HIDE HER ESCALATING DRINKING PROBLEM. MOMMY, YOU PROMISED!
SOON, HOWEVER, HER DRINKING BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE TO HIDE.

ALICE, THIS HAS TO STOP.

I'M TAKING STEPHANIE AND DANNY....

MOMMY?
ALONE IN HER APARTMENT, ALICE RECALLS HER ATTORNEY’S WORDS.

HELLO? ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS?

YES, MY NAME’S ALICE AND, UH, I NEED SOME HELP...
THE FOLLOWING NIGHT...

...ALICE ATTENDS HER FIRST A.A. MEETING.

...TAKE YOUR COAT?
ALICE FINDS MANY RECEPTIVE AND FRIENDLY PEOPLE...

HELLO, MY NAME IS DAVE.
WELCOME!

HI, MY NAME’S TRACY.

H-HI, I’M ALICE....

WOULD YOU LIKE COFFEE?

...AND LEARNS ABOUT A.A.

ALCOHOLISM IS AN ILLNESS, AND FOR US A.A. IS THE SOLUTION.
ONLY YOU CAN DECIDE, BUT WE WILL ALWAYS BE THERE IF YOU WANT US.

WE HAVE NO DUES, AND ALL YOU REALLY NEED IS A DESIRE TO STOP DRINKING. WE TALK ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS ONLY WITH YOU.

WE HELP YOU, BECAUSE IT HELPS US.
Be sure to get lots of phone numbers. We are always happy to hear from other members.

We'll give you some literature so you can learn more about the program.

You just need to call one of your A.A. friends—day or night.

You may find yourself having an urge to drink.
In the coming weeks, Alice attends A.A. meetings regularly. One day she sits down to discuss it with her family.

I've really learned a lot about this illness. I've been giving it a real try.

And with the help of my friends in A.A., I'm going to keep on trying, one day at a time.

That sounds great, honey.

I'm glad you're happier, Mom.

Yeah, Mommy.

That sounds great, honey.
LATER THAT SAME WEEK….

STEPHEN, IF YOU’D JUST LISTEN…

I AM THROUGH LISTENING TO YOU! I’M COMING OVER. (click)

OH, GREAT.

...WE’LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT!
I JUST CAN'T HANDLE THIS.

OH, NO. NOPE, THAT'S JUST HOW IT STARTS.

I'M NOT HEADING THERE AGAIN. HERE'S THAT NUMBER....

MAYBE IF I HAVE A GLASS OF WINE, I COULD TAKE THE EDGE OFF....

Dawn? Hi, it's Alice from the meeting.

Yeah, you said I should call if....

Could you? Oh, that'd be great.
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND. I'VE HAD THAT KIND OF NERVOUSNESS BEFORE.

THIRTY MINUTES LATER AT A COFFEE SHOP CLOSE BY....

...RIGHT THING TO CALL.

I MUST ADMIT I WAS A BIT NERVOUS.

WHAT YOU LEARN, THOUGH, IS THAT DRINKING'S JUST THE WRONG WAY TO DEAL WITH THEM.

LIFE'S PRESSURES AND ANXIETIES DON'T GO AWAY WHEN YOU'RE SOBER.
WHEN ALICE RETURNS, SHE FACES HER PROBLEMS.

YEAH.

YEAH, I SEE THAT THINGS’VE CHANGED....

AS TIME PASSES, ALICE FEELS MORE LIKE A MEMBER OF HER GROUP.

THESE ARE MY CHILDREN—THE BEST KIDS IN THE WORLD.

THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL....
ONE AFTERNOON THAT SPRING, ALICE GETS A CALL FROM AN OLD FRIEND.

ALICE? DEBORAH... HEY, WHAT’S WRONG?

OH, I DON’T KNOW.... SAY, COULD YOU STOP BY?

(OSB) I JUST CAN’T GO ON LIVING LIKE THIS.

(SNIFF) I’D HEARD YOU HAD GOTTEN BOOZE OUT OF YOUR LIFE. DO YOU THINK A.A. COULD HELP ME?

DEBORAH, I WANT YOU TO MEET SOME OF MY NEW FRIENDS. I MET THEM AT ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. THEY HELPED ME AND CONTINUE TO HELP ME OVERCOME MY ILLNESS.
ONLY YOU CAN SAY THAT FOR SURE—A.A. WILL HELP YOU ONLY IF YOU WANT THEM TO HELP YOU.

BUT IT’S SOMETHING EVERYONE HAS TO DECIDE FOR HIM OR HERSELF. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO SOME OF MY FRIENDS. THE REST IS UP TO YOU.

DEBORAH DISCOVERS THAT A.A. IS FOR HER. LATER THAT SUMMER, SHE JOINS ALICE’S FAMILY FOR A DAY AT THE BEACH.

AND THEY BOTH TAKE THEIR RECOVERY ONE DAY AT A TIME.
1.  YES  NO  HAVE I TRIED TO STOP DRINKING FOR A WEEK OR SO, BUT COULD NOT DO IT?

2.  NO  HAVE I WISHED PEOPLE WOULD STOP TALKING ABOUT MY DRINKING?

3.  NO  HAVE I CHANGED DRINKS TO TRY NOT TO GET DRUNK?

4.  NO  DO I EVER NEED A DRINK TO GET ME GOING IN THE MORNING?

5.  NO  DO I ENVY PEOPLE WHO CAN DRINK WITHOUT GETTING INTO TROUBLE?

6.  NO  DOES MY DRINKING CAUSE PROBLEMS AT HOME?

7.  YES  NO  DOES MY DRINKING CAUSE PROBLEMS WITH OTHER PEOPLE?

8.  NO  DO I TRY TO GET EXTRA DRINKS?

9.  NO  HAVE I TRIED TO STOP DRINKING BUT STILL GOT DRUNK?

10.  NO  HAVE I MISSED WORK OR CUT SCHOOL BECAUSE OF DRINKING?

11.  NO  DO I HAVE BLACKOUTS—TIMES I CANNOT REMEMBER?

12.  NO  WOULD MY LIFE BE BETTER IF I QUIT DRINKING?
IF YOU HAVE SEVERAL **YES** ANSWERS, CALL ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. SOME OTHER PEOPLE WHO ANSWERED **YES**, TOO, WILL GIVE YOU SOME GREAT NEW FACTS ABOUT DRINKING.

LOOK IN YOUR TELEPHONE DIRECTORY FOR "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS," OR "A.A.", PHONE THEM OR GO TO THEIR ADDRESS.

OR WRITE TO:

**BOX 459**
**GRAND CENTRAL STATION**
**NEW YORK, NY 10163**

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT **WWW.AA.ORG**

THIS IS A.A. GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE.
IT HAPPENED TO ALICE—BUT IT COULD HAPPEN TO ANY WOMAN. A RICH WOMAN WITH TIME ON HER HANDS—OR A HARD-WORKING WAITRESS. A YOUNG GIRL IN A TOUGH CITY NEIGHBORHOOD—OR A HOMEMAKER IN AN ATTRACTIVE SUBURB. WHAT HAPPENED TO ALICE COULD HAPPEN TO YOUR RESPECTABLE UNMARRIED AUNT OR TO YOUR NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR, THE ONE WITH SIX KIDS.

IT COULD EVEN HAPPEN TO YOU....

ALMOST EVERYBODY HAS SOME TROUBLE IN LIFE. BUT ALICE, LIKE THOUSANDS OF OTHER WOMEN, HAD A SPECIAL KIND OF TROUBLE. THIS IS HOW SHE FOUND A WAY OUT. THIS IS HER STORY. COULD IT BE YOUR STORY, TOO? YOU ARE THE ONLY PERSON IN THE WORLD WHO CAN ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

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