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Nathaniel F-34. My sweet boy

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To whom ever would take the time to read and advocate for our precious loved ones who were lost by this God forsaken poison, Fentanyl!!!

My son Nathaniel was on this Earth 34 years. God loaned him to me to bring joy into my life. He was my first born of two children. He was a happy go lucky little boy. Always had a smile on his face. Everyone who came in contact with him, his Sunday school teachers, teachers, coaches, his friends parents etc. would always tell me what a sweet helpful boy he was. He was such a wonderful brother to his younger brother by 22 1/2 months. He was always there to protect him. Don't get me wrong, there were times when he didn't want his brother around when he was hanging out with his friends but you would always find them together.

I left there abusive alcoholic father when my boys were very young, 2 years old and 5 months old. I had to live in a womans shelter for several years until their father left the area because their father was threatening to kill me. I didn't want them living in that abuse. I wanted a better life for my boys. While I put myself through nursing school while in the woman shelter Nathaniel at a young age learned to be a loving protective brother.

Growing up Nathaniel was very smart and athletic. He did well academically. My boys played baseball, football and wrestling. They both played on the same teams lettering in all sports all 4 years of high school. But in the back of my mind I always worried that they would inherit there fathers addictive trait. Don't get me wrong, being jocks, they dabbled in drinking alcohol in high school with there friends after their games. Which was a concern to me because their father was a alcoholic. But once Nathaniel went to college after a couple of years, alcohol really didn't interest him. Even one of his friends spoke at his celebration of life of how Nathaniel rescued him on multiple occasions from a drunken debacle.

Being a single mom I couldn't afford college for Nathaniel. He did the smart thing and went to a community college for the first 2 years and got his associates degree. He then went to The State Ohio University because they offered the degree he wanted as a computer engineer. Cisco in San Jose, California offered him a job in January before he even graduated with his degree. He and another applicant out of hundreds of applicants were offered jobs. I was so proud of him!!! He moved out to California in June after he graduated. He was so happy and proud of himself. While he was out there medical Marijuana was legal and he got a Medical Marijuana card. They put him on it for social anxiety. He got very anxious in large crowds. After a few years in California, after my mom, Nathaniel's grandmother was diagnosed with cancer he decided to transfer to the Cisco Cleveland office to be close to my mom and family.

At the age of 27 is when the nightmare started. He was playing baseball on an adult team and injured his shoulder pitching. He was placed on Percocet. It wasn't bad at first but when he could no longer get them from the doctor he bought Percocet off the streets. When that got to be to expensive to support his use he turned to heroine. My mom had passed away from her cancer which sent him into a tail spin. He was very close to my mom. At this point Nathaniel lost his job. He lost everything. He lost his girlfriend, his house and the right to see his 3 year old daughter. He was living with my dad after my mom died. My dad had Fentanyl patches for chronic pain from chronic back issues and Fibromyalgia. Of course he was using them. 2 months after my mom died, my dad was diagnosed with the same rare cancer as my mom. My dad died 4 months later. My parents died 6 months apart.

Hospice was there the last month before my dad died and he was given some kind of pain drops which of course my son was taking.

Nathaniel was so far into his addiction he didn't care who he hurt. He would water down the pain drops. He stole jewelry to feed his addiction. I'm sure he felt guilt and remorse but couldn't stop using. Nathaniel was very smart. He never got into trouble with the law during his time of using. He kept to himself. He hid it very well. I could never really tell when he was using.

It hurt to see my son struggling but I was was grieving the loss of my mom and dad as well and didn't know how to help him. His brother also got addicted to Percocet after he sustained a leg fracture playing college football. Both of my boys were in active addiction when both of my parents passed away. I was reeling. I was grieving and I know my boys were covering up there pain with drugs. I was able to get Nathaniel into treatment but unfortunately he was not ready or serious about getting help and left the program early. He was in and out of treatment. It was breaking my heart to see my son like this!! I was enabling my son. I was spending a lot of money in what I thought was supporting him with money for food, gas or housing but I was in denial, believing every word he told me. He was very convincing but they were all lies. He did actually get a good job with the Cleveland Clinic working in there computer department. That job was short lived. I finally stopped enabling him. It was the hardest thing I had to do. It was a living hell. I can't put into words what it was like to see my son struggling and in pain. Remembering how happy he was. He had everything going for him before he got addicted to these pain pills.

At the age of 33 Nathaniel finally had had enough and was serious about treatment when he found himself living on the streets of Cleveland in his Mercedes. Nathaniel was in treatment for 4 months. He turned 34 while in treatment. He finished treatment which he had never done before. He then went into a sober living facility from the treatment center. I drove out for a visit. We spent a couple days together. I was so proud of him. He had a plan. He had a second interview coming up that week working in his field with a good company. He said once he got back on his feet he was going to fight to get his daughter back. We talked about what his plan would be if he should relapse. He said he would just go right back into treatment. He really wanted to succeed. Little did I know when I dropped him off at the sober living facility, it would be the last time I saw my son alive. Giving him a hug and a kiss goodbye, telling him I was so very proud of him watching him in my rear view mirror waving goodbye. Oh, the pain of that memory. Two weeks later he succumbed to the temptation to use not knowing he was taking pure Fentanyl. His toxicology showed no other drugs in his system. I will never see my son again. His daughter will never see her daddy again. His brother will never see his brother again and it is ripping him apart. Nathaniel saved him from an overdose as he was always there for his brother. Joshua blames himself for not being there for him. This poison has destroyed so may lives. This Fentanyl coming into our country from China and Mexico via the borders, shipping yards and airways needs to be stopped before it destroys more families!!!