

If my story saves  
someone's life,  
I hope there was sense  
to it happening...

5A



Dear mom and dad:

Do you remember when I came to visit at Christmas?

It has been exactly 15 years. You decided to help me out and sold your home – the very one that dad had spent years slaving over, working with old bricks – and you spent the evenings cleaning so you could pay for my football. I don't even know when it started. Perhaps I felt too inexperienced and wasn't good at telling jokes, so I drank more. I got expelled from school, and dad said I was a lazy drunk. I slammed the door behind me and went to work as a bartender. I worked a lot of overtime, but I wasn't earning as much as I hoped. And at the same time, I lost my driver's license. Well, I had a few shots and....bad luck. It seemed that nothing was going right. One day a friend of mine invited me to a party, and I had a snort of heroin. I liked the blissful feeling of relaxation and relief from my worries. And so I started with an occasional snort here and there. At another party, there were syringes, and I didn't even know whose they were. Getting rid of remorse and sinking into relieved oblivion... I was fired. I tried my luck at the slot machines using my last bit of money. Sometimes things worked out but I was borrowing more and more money. It was harder to find the money for my dose. But I never stole anything, really. Even though the police might be telling you something else. Then my friend Peta visited me and introduced me to his friend, who was a hotel owner. He let me stay there with its heated swimming pool and 30 rooms – all for me. He was on the road a lot and always brought me back expensive presents. He only wanted a small favor from me – sex without a condom. He was really nice to me, and when he organized a party, we all had our own syringes. There was no sharing. Then he fell ill and was the first to be diagnosed with HIV. He had pneumonia, but nothing helped. One month later, I had the same...and I was shocked. Now I am in rehabilitation, and I really want to make it. But apparently the virus will always be inside of me. We broke up. Sometimes I sit on a bench in the park, guessing what the shapes of the clouds above my head are, just like when Peta and I were small, enjoying the smell of Sunday lunch coming out of the kitchen. And imagine your eyes filled with tears. I know that I let you down, but I have never stopped loving you. Do you believe me?

Yours,

Martin