

# Yellow Froth

Category: Drinking

written by Jessica Greenberg | November 29, 2019

He routinely slept through the day, sedating himself into a stupor with alcohol, benzodiazepine, hypnotics, and narcotic pills – some obtained legally from doctors, some bought on the internet from India – so the fact that he slept long into the afternoon did not alarm me much at first. I checked on him throughout the day just to make sure he was still alive.

But when I checked in the late afternoon, I noticed his breathing was different. There was a coarse bubbling sound. I counted his breaths: more than twenty-five per minute. I checked his pulse. One hundred and eighty beats per minute. My own heart started racing; a python began to wrap itself around my neck and chest. "Dad," I said loudly, then again, louder. I shook his shoulders and yelled his name. Nothing. I punched him in the shoulder. No response. I slapped him hard across the cheek and a small wrinkle of reaction flashed across his nose.

A thick, creamy, pale yellow froth spilled out of his mouth and pooled on the light blue cotton bed sheets as my teenaged frame shoved at his two-hundred-pound unmoving body, hands pushing into the warm flesh on the left side of his back until I had heaved the gigantic boulder onto his right side. I picked up the wireless phone again. "Okay, I did it," I said into the receiver, and described the new pool of yellow fluid. The python tightened its vise. But the emergency operator assured me I had done the best thing for him and that the ambulance was on its way.

The EMTs arrived within a few minutes after I hung up from the 911 call, and I led them upstairs to the slumbering rock. They pulled off the comforter, and, with the help of the bed sheet below him, they hoisted his body up and onto the stretcher, naked. The python's grip eased but my stomach felt heavy. I thanked them for coming and told them I'd follow the ambulance. "No problem," the woman said, looking at me. "I'm sure we'll be here again."

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