




As We Grieve Together, We Shall Overcome

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After experiencing a multitude of losses living in both urban and rural areas, I can say with positivity that when a smaller town experiences a tragedy, it feels the most pain. When someone beloved by all passes, their loss is felt throughout the entire community.

And although Edwardsville can be argued by some to not be a small town, its heart still is. Which is why the sudden tragic departures of three influential residents in less than a year in our community has left an ache that reverberates throughout the whole town.

Just like a multitude of people in the Edwardsville community, I knew the three victims of these crimes personally. Therefore, I know I'm not the only one who feels like we were just beginning to heal from one horrific event, only to be heartbreakingly blindsided by another.

Any loss of life is an extremely miserable part of the human experience to have to endure. We never expect people in our lives to be taken away from us so suddenly or so soon. The pain that comes with loss is felt excruciatingly more when the most vibrant among us, the ones with the infectious smiles and enormous hearts are the ones that go before their time. Their departure affects us far deeper than others because not only do you grieve for the memories of the person but, you also grieve for what they still could have accomplished. And with these cases we also have to grieve how our town has changed. These tragic losses have shown us that we are no longer immune from issues that plague larger communities.

As much as we are all hurting deeply and feel a sense of fear that wasn't there before, there is hope. As we grieve together, the collective pain will make us love one another more. For you see, towns like Edwardsville have their own heartbeat – their own life and breath. Just like its residents, the town has its ups and down, its good times and bad. And because of that, Edwardsville will survive these tragedies and emerge stronger, better and more loving.