



What's Your Choice?

By
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IMAGINE THIS. You're driving around with all your close friends. Laughing, smiling, and having the time of your life. You wouldn't want to be anywhere else. You wouldn't want to change a thing. I mean these people are your best friends, right? You are having a blast, aren't you?

An hour passes and everyone is starting to calm down. You don't want the night to end early. So you feel a little better when one of your friends takes a bottle of vodka out of her purse. She takes a shot then passes it on. The bottle is coming your way. What do you do, pass it on or take a drink? You were always told not to drink and drive, but everyone is doing it. You have a perfect record, and you're a great driver. What could really happen? "One won't hurt," yells one of your friends. So, of course, you take the shot. You wouldn't want your friends to think you're lame. A half hour passes, and, finally, the bottle is gone. You are feeling pretty good. Everyone seems happy. Life is perfect!

Another half hour goes by, and the guy you think is so cute pulls out something that looks like a cigarette. You never knew he smoked, but he is still cute. Looking confused, you wonder why they are passing it around. It smells funny. When it is your turn, everyone says, "Just try it. It will help you relax." So you do. It keeps going around a couple more times, and before you know it, you feel different. You can't feel your legs, and your arms feel like they weigh a ton. Swerving from left to right, you can barely keep the car on the road. You don't want to say anything because your friends might laugh, and you don't want that. You are having the time of your life though, aren't you?

Yeah, that's more like it. Think happy thoughts. No need to worry about something bad happening. Just driving along singing to your favorite song, maybe even dancing a little. When suddenly, out of nowhere, the road comes to an end. You try and turn but you're going too fast.

Your tires hit the gravel at the side of the road and the car starts to roll into the ditch. Everyone is screaming. That's the last sound you remember.

You wake up a few hours later in the hospital. Your leg is in a cast and you can't turn your head because of the neck brace. Confused, you ask your mom what happened. She tells you how you rolled your car twice and how the passenger went out the window and probably won't live. She tells you how the rest of your friends are in critical condition. All you can say is sorry, but you know that won't change anything. Your mom says, "It's not your fault. It was an accident." It wasn't an accident taking those shots or smoking that joint, you think. This IS your fault. You drank that vodka and you smoked that weed. Now, you're the reason your friends are in the hospital. There is no one to blame other than yourself. How do you live knowing you are responsible for injuries of all your friends?

Now, if you could start all over, would you? Or would you still find the need to fit in with the people who are supposed to be your friends? I mean you were having the best time of your life, weren't you?

Drugs and alcohol are becoming a bigger problem every day. It goes from underage kids trying to fit in with the rest, all the way to adults going out for a casual drink. Making bad decisions is something you do all by yourself. But with the right friends and peers it doesn't take much to make the right decisions. So next time, do us all a favor, and leave the alcohol and weed at home. 🚫

ALERT SCHOLARSHIP

Mariah Prosser is a high school senior from North Dakota. *Alert Magazine* congratulates her for winning the Alert Scholarship and we encourage her in the pursuit of her academic goals. We would also like to encourage future seniors to participate in our scholarship program.