

Choices

By Elizabeth Harrington

In this ending, there is no light to guide her home. There is no relief. There is no peace. There is only realization and agony. Her choices have led her here, to this dark and desolate ending.

She has lost everything. She has thrown away her chances. And it is all because she drove drunk.

Some say you see your life and your memories in the moment just before you die. Instead, she sees what should have been the future. She witnesses a lifetime in the time it takes to draw one last breath. She sees everything she could have been, and everything she will never be.

First, she sees herself as a college student. She would have blossomed. She would have found her home and discovered a sense of belonging. She would have made loyal, lifelong friends. She would have become an advocate of her beliefs and brought positive change to herself and others. She would have charted a path to self-discovery and success. Her community, and the world, would have benefitted from her bright existence.

Next, she sees herself entering her career. She would have become a doctor, and she would have saved lives. Her warmth and care would have brought happiness and laughter to the sickly. Her knowledge and dedication would have discovered the cure for a deadly disease.

Then she sees herself as a mother. Her three kids, two boys and one girl, would have cherished her and looked up to her. Her daughter would have taken after her, with a love for kindness and a passion for science. She would have become a doctor as well. The two boys would have taken after their father, who would have been loving and supportive. They would have lived in a big house with a big yard for the family dog to play in. Her family would have been happy.

She sees herself as a grandmother. She would have spoiled her grandchildren, and they would have loved her dearly. In her elderly years, she would have lived in happy tranquility, taking a well-deserved rest after many years of hard work and dedication.

If this had been her life, she would have died with a content smile on her face.

Instead, she will die with her body covered by shattered glass and her mind taunted by a deep agony. She cries out as she realizes that, because of her choice to drink and drive, she will never realize her dreams. She will never go to college. She will never become a doctor. She will never find love. She will never build a family. She will never have grandchildren. She is filled with regret. She should not have gone to that party. She should not have drunk alcohol. She should have brought a designated driver. She should not have gotten behind the wheel of her car. She should have listened to her friends, who told her she was too drunk to drive. There are a thousand choices that could have saved

her life, but her fate is decided by one condemning choice. Her last words come out as a weak and feeble whisper. "I never thought it would happen to me."