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### The Joyride.

Bright lights from my phone shine on my drowsy face. It was Freddy, my friend since middle school.

The phone read, "Hey you wanna go for a joyride? I'm with Anastasia and Josh."

I responded with no hesitation, "Yeah I'm down."

"Alright be there in 10 minutes"

I grabbed a nice pair of black leggings and a hoodie. After spraying on some bath and body works perfume, I slid on a pair of Vans and got myself out the door. Freddy was at the end of my long driveway so my mom wouldn't see. I got in the passenger seat next to Freddy while Anastasia & Josh were in the back.

While driving through almost every town in our district, I scrolled on my Instagram with my foot on the dashboard, liking all of the memes and kitten videos. The sound of giggling came from the back seat. I turned my head to see Anastasia & Josh messing around and getting close. Laughing about how goofy they were, I turned my head back at Freddy. The look on his face seemed unusual. He came across angry. Something made me feel like he was jealous about Anastasia & Josh sitting together. I didn't think anything of it until I could feel the acceleration in the car go up. Looking to my left, I noticed the speedometer, say 70. We were on a 35 mile-per-hour road. One second later it said 80 and moved right up to 90. The laughter stopped. I could feel the sweat and stomach aches. Almost as if I was about to go on a first date, but this one was with the grim reaper.

"Can you slow down?" Anastasia asked, but Freddy acted like she didn't say a word.

"Did you not just hear what she said? Slow down!" Josh added on.

I also asked, "Can you please slow down?"

Suddenly everyone started pleading, "Freddy stop! Slow down! Slow down now!"

Looking in front of us, there was a tree. That was the last thing I saw. After that, everything was black and white. Could I hear? Was I alive? Time wasn't a thing to me at this point. The driver's seat was empty. The backseat? Well, that was unrecognizable.

My first immediate thought was getting out of this sandwich-ed vehicle. The door handles didn't work and the car was too crunched together. The only option was to smash open what was left of the windshield. With all my might, I kicked and stomped until I could feel the cold breeze hitting my face. I crawled out like a zombie from the Walking Dead. When I got out, the pain in my left leg was unbearable, but I managed to get to the closest house.

The closest house was a block away from the crash site. Without disturbing the whole neighborhood, I banged on the door closest to me. The stranger opened their door. Their faces looked like they had seen it all, it was almost a frightening reaction. Once the words, "car crash" came out of my mouth, the person ran immediately to their phone to call 911. I could feel myself falling backward and a loud *thump*. That was the last thing I could remember that night.

*Beep*. The sound of a monitor goes off. The smell of hand sanitizer and the dry air lingers around the hospital. I wake up to a man with a badge that says, Detective Roberts. He told me that he had questions about the crash. I explained who was in the car, the driver, and

the very last thing I could remember: the tree that changed my life forever. All of the questions he had for me, I answered thoroughly, but I had some questions for him.

“How is everyone?” I questioned.

“Well your friend Freddy got it pretty bad, but he is recovering. Same with Josh.” He answered.

“Well, what about Anastasia?” I was more worried about her because she wasn’t wearing a seatbelt.

A long pause hits the room. It felt like a cold breeze hit my back, and it wasn’t the freezing room.

“Unfortunately...she didn’t make it.”

My heart dropped. There were so many emotions in my head, why was she the only one? I felt like I was losing air in my lungs because she was my best friend. There was a point where I wanted to know why it wasn’t me. She shouldn’t have lost her life over someone’s decision. The more and more I cried, the more I realized she probably did not want me to be so upset. She knew this wasn’t my fault. All I could do at this point was realizing she was at peace.

Anastasia meant everything to me, she was my day one. I think about that day as if I went back in the past and watched it over again. With my music playing and making sure I look both ways, I stop and smell the roses. I will pick those roses and put them on the beautiful woman’s stone. They are as beautiful as her. After I spill the tea and have a heaven chat, I walk to my car. Before the engine starts, I make sure the *click* sound is made, then I put the car in drive and go for a joyride.