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### One Phone Call Away

Twas' a frigid December night in 2020, with the snow falling gracefully and frost beginning to form on the windows. My hands were becoming numb when wiping away the dusting off of my windshield. My parents had told me "no later than 12, we will be waiting for you," knowing they were serious. The plan was to spend the night because it was Christmas vacation, but my parents insisted "you sleep in your bed tonight" because we would be going to my grandparents in the morning. I told them it was stupid because it was a party and now it wouldn't be as fun. They told me that they could give me a ride, but refused, and decided to drive my own car.

When arriving at the party I went to hang out with my friends who were drinking. There was loud music playing in the background, and the room was dark, but lit by different types of string lights. It was easy to tell they were already a few in, when Tommy said "halve some plunch" already slurring his words. I decided against it at first, remembering my parents needed me home at 12, however they were persistent and I folded. Thinking to myself that having 2 drinks would be fine to drive home. After a while I began to become famished, and needed food in my system ASAP. When approaching the snack table I was greeted by an array of junk food - my favorite. Grabbing some chips, a cookie and 2 brownies, didn't last long on my plate.

After refueling the music was pulling me to go back with my friends, who were now playing drinking games. Playing beer pong with my friend without drinking was actually pretty fun. After playing for a while I had overheard some friends talking about edibles and didn't think much of it at first. That was until realizing that I had eaten some food earlier, so me being

curious, asked Bill, “hey do you know which ones the edibles are so I don’t eat them?” Bill responded “yeah they are the brownies bro, they hit different”, my stomach dropped. Knowing it was urgent to get home fast before it was too late, I gathered my things and went as fast as possible.

When saying goodbye to everyone while rushing outside to my car; there was one problem. The snow had picked up significantly and needed to get wiped off of my car. Not having a shovel and not wanting to go back inside and ask for one; the best option was to just use my hands. After wiping all of the snow off I was ready to roll, although unable to feel my hands. Knowing that my house was about 15 minutes away, speeding should be fine. When starting up the car I blasted the heat, because it was freezing. While backing out of the slanted driveway, I noticed my big F150 sliding down the black ice, which concerned me a little, but continued anyway. While driving down the windy roads it was beginning to feel a little different, trying not to focus on it too much, I hurried back as quickly as possible. Beginning to feel nauseous and dizzy, and only seeing through tunnel vision, nerves entered my body. That was until everything went dark, numb, and cold.

The last thing I remembered was leaving the party and waking up in a hospital bed. No one was around me but my chest and arms felt sore. I thought it was strange that my legs wouldn’t be hurting, however while trying to move them, I had no luck. Beginning to panic and scream, out of nowhere a nurse came running in “he’s awake!” she said “call his parents.” Confused and scared thinking to myself “how long have I been gone for” and “am I going to ever be able to walk again”. When my parents arrived they were so happy to see me alive and awake, and they were crying “it’s a Christmas miracle” my mom said, to which I asked “so I was only out for a couple weeks?” To which she and my father started balling, saying “You were gone for

a year, we didn't know if you were going to make it!". I began crying, knowing that I had just lost a valuable year of my life, and the ability to walk, and it all could have been prevented with one phone call to my parents.