Future Consequences

Glass shattered on the floor. A variety of liquids flowed out as people shouted about how expensive that was for their parents and how hard they tried to steal it from the liquor cabinet. That was my first time at a party and honestly, it was going pretty well. My friends almost dragged me to this party. From the beginning it was off to a bad start. My two friends that I was sitting around with started to drink throughout the night and I had told them repeatedly, "You guys can't be drinking, one of you is driving us out of this place".

After what seemed like hours, they decided it was time to get home. I knew that I couldn't drive because I had failed my first two driving tests and hadn't gotten my license. I wasn't a good driver by any means. On the other hand, my best friends had been drinking so much alcohol that you could smell it on their breath easily. It wasn't safe for them or me to drive. I tried talking to both of them about calling our parents and having them pick us up. Even though we would all get grounded until we were in our 30s. I thought that would be the safest way for us to get home. They, on the other hand, disagreed with me. They shouted and tried to convince me that I was a good driver and that I could do it. "It's only a short drive - we'll be fine," one of them told me. The impulsive part of me agreed and before I knew it, I was on the way to the car, keys in hand.

Suddenly sitting in the driver's seat, I thought to myself, "god something bad is going to happen". My worried voice lowered between the shouting match of my two buddies in the back seat. Erratic and conversational. Yelling about how seat belts are so stupid and unnecessary. I yelled back, "Guys put your seatbelts on please. We have to be safe even if you are insane for making me do this". They weren't. I proceeded to start up the car, and pay attention to the road.

Around 10 minutes later, they acted crazy, grabbing the steering wheel away from me thinking it's the greatest joke ever. I turned my head sharply, and yelled at them to stop, but they didn't and out of nowhere one of them grabbed the steering wheel and jerked it hard to the right. Before we knew it, we headed straight for a tree at what felt like a rollercoaster ride. It had come out of nowhere. At one point we were on the road and then it was just there. Waiting for a tragedy, a nightmare maybe.

I remember sitting there thinking, "how did that happen so fast". Then the police showed up, and ambulances too. They dragged away my friends, the ones that didn't wear a seatbelt. I never got the chance to see them because I faced forward in shock. Although, from the way the paramedics talked, I just knew it was bad. I just knew they should have worn that seatbelt and had called our parents. They would have still been here…

When I sit here and talk to my son about that day 16 years ago, I warn him about the dangers of driving that I learned. While he is on his way to his first party. Trying to keep him and others safe. I told him about the guy who was afraid to call his parents for a ride. About how my best friends didn't want to buckle up and wanted to risk their lives, and risk having someone who didn't have a license drive the way home. Driving without a license is the dumbest thing I ever did. And letting myself be distracted while driving too. Anything can happen in an instant. All it takes is one foolish decision.

One more thing I told him was if there is anything you remember out of my experience; drive safely, legally, and always remember to 'Arrive Alive'.