

## That's Not Me

You know the stories. You've heard them from everyone. Ashley from down the hall was kicked out of her dorm. Bryan from your gen psych class is about to fail out. Your friend from home got a DUI just last week. The effects of underage drinking are right there on the fringes of your world. You know about them, but those things will never happen to you. You know what you're doing. You're too smart to get caught. You don't drink excessively like some other people might. Besides, it's college. Everyone's doing it, right? So what if you've got a few months, or even years, before you can legally drink. Everyone knows that's what you do in college: you drink at parties and have fun. That's how it's always been.

Ashley said the same thing. She wasn't worried about being caught because she knew drank underage. It's how you socialized. She had that pregame in her dorm because she knew she wasn't going to be caught, but she didn't take into consideration her neighbors complaining about the noise. She thought she'd hidden the bottles well enough, but the RA looked under the sink. Ashley has nowhere to live now, as a freshmen in college. She has to face the disciplinary board of not only her organization, but of her university as well. Ashley's college career might have ended long before it began. Ashley thought she was too smart to be caught. She just wanted to have fun.

Bryan never shows up to class. He misses attendance points and important information for tests and quizzes. Bryan's always hungover when he does come to class and can't pay attention. He actually missed all of last week because he was out doing community service. Court ordered community service. Bryan received a citation for possession of alcohol below the age of twenty-one. He had to fit 50 hours of community service into just last week because he'd put it off until the last minute. Too busy partying. Bryan's scholarship is in jeopardy. His GPA will drop and Bryan will be forced to drop out. Bryan didn't think he drank excessively either.

Your friend from home hadn't had too many, just a few. She felt fine to drive home and it was just around the corner anyways. She didn't see the cop parked on the corner of the intersection. He saw her though, swerving and speeding. Your friend has a DUI on her record as a minor. She's going to have difficulty applying for college, jobs. She thought it was safe to drive just around the corner because it was so close, but she'd had one too many. She's only seventeen.

Next time you think you're too smart, too collected, or too careful to get in trouble for drinking underage, think again. No one thinks it will happen to them, but it does. It happens to the most ordinary of people in the most normal settings. Deciding to drink underage can have a disastrous effect on you: present and future. You must take into consideration the consequences of your actions. You could lose a scholarship, your residence, the trust of your friends and family. Next time you decide to drink underage, think of Ashley, Bryan, or your friend from home. None of them thought they would get caught either.

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