

When the Link Breaks

Tyler

After finishing all the boxes, Tyler decided to sit down. He looked at his dorm; even though it wasn't an enormous dorm room, it felt spacious and lonely. Tyler kept remembering his final day in high school. When he was so excited to go to college with his best friend that he had been with for almost all his life, how his heart felt, how his emotions just turned after Paul had told him that he had chosen a different college, the feeling of betrayal he couldn't get over it. It felt like that feeling would be with him for the rest of his life. What sucked most about this was that he had waited so long to tell him. If Tyler had known earlier, he would have gone to a college that benefited him. It felt like Paul destroyed his future just for the benefit of succeeding.

"Tyler. Tyler. TYLER!" Donnie repeated.

"Uh-yeah, sorry, what?" he finally answered.

"You want to get some food? I haven't eaten at all."

"Y-yeah," Tyler answered, and they walked out the door.

On their way to the restaurant, Tyler was thinking about Donnie, his new roommate, who he had just met a month before college started. Even though it wasn't Tyler's first option, he still thought he was cool. They had a lot in common, and he was hopeful of what this relationship could become in the coming years.

“Well, here we are,” Donnie announced.

They both sat down as they waited for their waiter to come. Donnie tried to make conversation, but Tyler wasn't feeling it.

After they ate, they returned to their dorm, where they instantly went into their rooms. Not a single word was exchanged. It wasn't a good night for Tyler either. He could barely sleep; so many things were going through his mind, and realizations on how different it would be from what he thought.

Paul

Paul was already set up nicely in his dorm. It was luxurious. He was happy about almost everything, but there was one thing that he couldn't get off his mind. Paul's high school friend Tyler had gone to a college nearby, and he couldn't deal with the idea of them ever meeting. He could deal with what Tyler would think of him if he even talked to him if he saw him. So many possibilities. He didn't care much, though, as he believed he needed to start talking to people around him and create a new life for himself. He had already met Donnie, who went to Tyler's school, so at least he had a friend to talk to.

Paul lay down in his bed and began to ponder his relationship with Tyler again. He believed he set himself on a perfect path to success while ruining a perfectly built relationship just for his

sake at a bigger chance to have a promising career. But even though one sounded better than the other, he was questioning whether he had made the correct decision.

Donnie

At first, Donnie was a little scared of going to college. Since he wasn't from here, he wouldn't know anyone. It was going to be a different environment, but he guessed that was just a part of college. Everyone was going to be different. What scared him the most was that he might not have friends to hang out with and that his roommate would be a jerk. But that quickly ended. Donnie met Paul through a state-wide science fair a few weeks earlier. When he discovered that he was also going to a nearby college, All those worries disappeared.

Donnie thought that if he could make both Paul and Tyler friends, he could start a friend group that would last him throughout college. He planned for them to meet at a park right around the middle of the two colleges. He wanted it to be a surprise because he had never had two friends who had never met, so he told each of them separately.

“Hey, I thought we could hang out at the park this weekend,” Donnie asked Paul.

“Sure, that sounds great!” Paul answered.

When he returned from school, he planned to ask Tyler about it too.

“Hey, Tyler,” Donnie said.

“What's up?” Responded Tyler.

“I was wondering if you wanted to go to the park on the weekend. I have nothing to do?” Donnie asked.

“I don't know. I would rather do work or something.” Tyler said unenthusiastically,

“It wouldn't be that long, just 45 minutes.” Donnie pleaded.

“Come on, please,” Donnie begged.

“Alright, fine, whatever.” Tyler finally said.

Later that day, when they got to the park, he texted Paul.

“Hey, you're gonna be here soon.”

“I'm about to be there,” Paul responded.

As Paul walked over, he was frozen with fear and despair. He was confused; he didn't understand why Tyler was there and why he was even talking to Donnie. Paul wanted to turn around and walk away, but he couldn't. He felt as if he couldn't move.

“Paul over here.”

He started to turn around and walked away into his car. Donnie was too late. Now Tyler was questioning him.

“Why are you friends with him?”

“Why was he here?”

“How do you even know him?”

“I-I don’t know,” Donnie answered.

Donnie, confused about the whole situation, didn’t know how to answer.

He went back to his dorm. He kept trying to call Paul, but he wouldn’t answer. So he decided to drive to Paul’s dorm and figure out what was happening. While driving, he still decided that he was going to keep calling him. He didn’t respond, but finally, he texted.

“I’m sorry I couldn’t help it. I can’t talk to Tyler. I just had to leave.”

As he was reading the text, he got distracted from the road, and all he heard was the loud honk of a truck coming at him.

Tyler

Everything changed significantly after he knew he was the friend Donnie was always talking about when he saw Paul. He felt somewhat betrayed by Donnie, but he didn’t have a good reason to. Donnie didn’t know about their past and what had happened before they were in college. He didn’t want to ask Donnie where he went or where he was. So he just sat in the dorm waiting for him. He had so many questions, and he needed answers. After a couple of hours passed, he started to get confused about why he hadn’t been back. It was pretty late now, and still, he wasn’t back. Tyler decided to give him a call, and it went straight to voicemail. After the 5th call, someone finally answered.

“Donnie, where are you?” he said.

“Donnie is in the hospital,” Paul said sadly.

“Who is this?” Tyler responded,

“Paul”

“Why are you- What happened to him?”

“H-He got into a car crash driving to my house,” Paul replied.

Tyler instantly hung up. He didn't know if to be angry or sad. So many things were happening simultaneously, and he couldn't blame anyone but Paul. After all, he was the one who ran away; he was the one who caused his friend to get into a car crash. But he didn't know if it was right to blame anyone for this. He went to get his car and started to drive to the hospital. When he got there, he walked in and sat next to Paul.

Donnie

While sitting in the hospital bed, all Donnie could think about was the moments before the accident, The glass crashing in on him, the tumbling of the car, and nothing. It was like going blank, with no sound, just darkness. It was as if he was stuck in a black hole, there was nothing he could do, and he wasn't in contact with the natural world anymore. There wasn't much he could have done to prevent the crash.

He was right near Paul's dormitory, so there were many spectators. Someone called the ambulance instantly. While in the ambulance with Donnie, Paul thought about how he may have caused the crash.

Donnie got woken up by screaming and shouting from Paul and Tyler.

"I-I don't know what to say, I texted Donnie, and then I heard a crash, that's all," Paul said,

" Why did you leave anyway?" Tyler asked.

"I just can't get over seeing you again and what I did," Paul answered.

"What you did was you ruined me. You made me go to a school you never even cared about, you promised me that you would go here, and then you switched up."

"I-I'm sorry, I just couldn't give up the opportunity," Paul said calmly

"So you didn't even have the guts to tell me ever!"

"My friend just got hit by a car, and all you want to do is argue!" Paul screamed

"He's my friend too, and you caused his crash!" Tyler screams.

Donnie woke up, and it felt like the car crashed again, but now it was in this room with words. He couldn't believe that he was watching his two friends fight. He couldn't think that a nice regular friendly meet-up could go sideways so fast. He heard them fight, screaming at each other, but when they noticed that he was awake, they calmed down and tried to act like that didn't happen even though he heard every word.

After a few days passed, Donnie found out that he had to stay in the hospital for a couple of weeks until he recovered and could return home. Paul and Donnie would visit him constantly throughout this month. Still, even though the process was painful and very slow, he felt happy

that this was happening because, as every visit passed, he felt like he wasn't the only one recovering. He paid attention to Paul and Tyler and how they started to talk more and more through each visit, so this felt like a group effort. If they didn't get better, he wouldn't get better, and although Donnie didn't know the whole story, he sensed this was very much needed.

After two weeks, Donnie was cleared to go home; he felt like all of them had surpassed their damages. Tyler and Paul were friendly again, and even though they were only there for a short time, it felt like their friendship had never left. When they got out, Tyler suggested that they would go and have a picnic, and even though the last time it didn't go as planned, they felt as if they were prepared enough to make it work. They all slept easy that night.

Artist's Statement

I decided which perspectives by choosing each view to cover the most in the story. That is why the story isn't in a regular pattern of Tyler, Paul, and Donnie the entire time. Whoever has the most area of the story going on in their life at the time will get the perspective.

My story engages in the essential questions of this unit by showing that family doesn't always have to be people that are related to you, but you can choose who you want your family to be. One's family might impact their identity by feelings toward a person that is a part of that group and how that can change them.

The technique I used to create dramatic Irony was I made it so that the audience knew that all three characters were going to meet, but they didn't know. This is shown in Donnie's first chapter. One thought shot I created is when Donnie thinks back to his car crash and what it felt like. "Donnie could think about the moments before the accident, The glass crashing in on him, the tumbling of the car, and nothing. It was like just going blank, with no sound, just darkness". I created a snapshot by freezing Paul in place and describing how he felt. "As Paul walked over, he was frozen with fear and despair. He was confused," I think this snapshot works because it was an excellent way to show how Paul reacted to seeing Tyler after what happened.

I chose dialogue because it was an excellent way to extend the story and make it more emotional. I think it affects the pace of the story. An example is when Paul and Tyler are fighting.

"I-I don't know what to say, I texted Donnie, and then I heard a crash, that's all," Paul said,

" Why did you leave anyway?" Tyler asked.

"I just can't get over seeing you again and what I did," Paul answered.

"What you did was you ruined me. You made me go to a school you never even cared about, you promised me that you would go here, and then you switched up."

"I-I'm sorry, I just couldn't give up the opportunity," Paul said calmly

"So you didn't even have the guts to tell me ever!"

"My friend just got hit by a car, and all you want to do is argue!" Paul screamed

"He's my friend too, and you caused his crash!" Tyler screams.

A recurring motif during the story was that they always had things in their minds and were always worried or anxious about something. I chose this to show how they were all disconnected initially, but they all felt connected by the end.