

NOTES

In her realistic first-person narrative, Shirlee Wright introduces us to a young woman, who, after a series of events, finds herself serving in-school suspension (ISS), and it is *in* detention that she must write a paper detailing the choices she could have made to avoid *being* in ISS. This selection should be performed by a female and may be entered in either Prose Interpretation or Dramatic Interpretation. If used in Prose Interpretation, the drama mask icons are visible to show the performer when to turn the pages of her manuscript.

Yesterday, I had my head slammed into a wall in the math hallway, and now I'm sitting here in in-school suspension where I'm supposed to reflect upon my actions that put me in here. My first assignment is to write a paper in which I am to figure out what I could have done differently, so that this situation would not have occurred. When the teacher on duty gave me the assignment, she had the smuggest expression on her face. She acts like making me write this paper is going to somehow change my life. Teachers can be really stupid sometimes.



Well, if I have to write this paper, I might as well go through all of the things that I could have changed. My parents have told me that it's not my fault, but I have been carrying around this weight in my chest ever since that night—the night of the party. In my mind, I keep going over and over all of the things that I should have done. Even though I know it's not my fault, it sure feels like it sometimes.

I guess the first thing that I could have done differently was not to *go* to the party to begin with. If I would have chosen to stay home or try to talk a few of my friends into doing something else, then I wouldn't have been at the party at all. If I wasn't at the party, then there would have been no way for it to turn out the way it did. But who am I kidding? I've gone to hundreds of parties during high school, and nothing like this had ever happened before. I'm a senior, and going to a party at one of my friend's house shouldn't be that big of a deal. So, even though I could have chosen not to go to the party, I doubt that I would have changed that decision.



The next thing that I could have done differently was not talk to him at school. I knew that he had a girlfriend. They had been going out for something like four months. I knew from talking to her that she thought that it was pretty serious; however, I had had a crush on him for what felt like forever. When he went out of his way to talk to me in the hallways, I have to admit—I liked it. When he stopped me in the hallway earlier in the day and told me that he had broken up with her and would really like to spend some time with me at the party later that evening, I didn't question anything. I liked him, and he was giv-

ing me every indication that he was into me, too. Even though my gut told me that he might be lying about the girlfriend thing, I was so into him that I chose to believe what he told me. I wanted him to want me—to choose me instead of her. I shouldn't have listened to him.



When I got to the party, of course I grabbed a beer. I know that legally I'm not supposed to drink, but I just needed to calm my nerves and let my body relax a little bit. In hindsight, maybe I shouldn't have had anything to drink at all. Maybe, I would have been able to prevent what happened if I was more alert— both mentally and physically.



I had been at the party for a little while and had consumed a couple more beers before he walked in. I could have stayed with my friends. I could have made sure that we were always with a group of people. I could have listened to some of the other girls at the party who told me that they didn't think that he had really broken up with his girlfriend, but I didn't do any of those things. When he walked over to me, slid his arm around my waist and whispered in my ear that he would really like to talk to me somewhere private, I didn't hesitate. I remember grinning up at him and almost floating out of the living room. He grabbed a couple more beers, and we made our way to one of the bedrooms in the back of the house. I do remember hesitating before walking into the bedroom. I remember asking him if we shouldn't go somewhere else— maybe outside and sit somewhere private, but he said that he only wanted to talk. Besides, he said it looked like it might rain outside. So, I believed him.



Once we were alone, I knew he wanted to do more than just talk, and to be honest, I had wanted to kiss him for so long that I didn't hesitate for a moment when he wrapped his arms around me, looked me in the eyes and told me how much he wanted to kiss me. He went on to tell me how much he liked me, how he never really liked that other girl, and how he had wanted to go out with me for a long time but thought that I was into someone else. With every word he said, I felt my heart melt even more. I thought that I was finally going to have the guy of my dreams. Little did I know that this dream would soon turn into a nightmare.

We were kissing, and I liked kissing him. When I realized he wanted to do more than just kiss, I whispered that I wasn't comfortable with doing anything other than making out. He told me that all girls say things like that—but that I should just relax. I remember trying to scream, but he just kept covering my mouth with kisses. I finally broke away and screamed for him to "Stop!"

