

# *Choices and Consequences*

## **Chapter 2**

Newton's third law of physics asserts that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. In life, every choice has a positive or negative consequence. When we comprehend that our choices significantly impact our lives and the consequences of those choices greatly influence the path we follow, our journey in life gets easier. Graham Brown, a writer for *Criminal Minds*, provided this quote, "Life is about choices. Some we regret, some we're proud of, some will haunt us forever, the message of it all is we are what we chose to be."

If we agree with Brown's perspective, the power of choice becomes a defining factor in our past, present, and future. Our ability to choose is a precious gift, a compass that guides us through life's complexities and uncertainties. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that our situations often influence our choices. These situations, whether favorable or challenging, can significantly impact the choices we make and the consequences that follow.

Decision-making, particularly in complex situations, can be overwhelming. We are often inundated with information, making it challenging to determine what is relevant for making the best possible choice. When we are presented with the opportunity to choose, we momentarily hold the reins of our destiny and potentially influence the trajectories of others connected to our choices. Consider this: even seemingly trivial choices, such as selecting a brand of wet wipes or choosing a type of dip for a gathering, can yield favorable or adverse outcomes. Opting for an unfamiliar brand of wet wipes may result in skin irritation due to allergic reactions to its components, or conversely, it could turn out to be the perfect fit for personal hygiene. Similarly,

the choice of dip for a party could be a resounding success or trigger a severe allergic reaction in one of the attendees. The bottom line is that each choice we make, irrespective of its scale, can directly impact our lives and those of others. For instance, let's look at this from the perspective of Drac and Rosemary's journey in life.

### **Who's Journey: Rosemary or her Gift.**

#### **(Part 2 – The Young Man Who Vanished)**

Nineteen-year-old Percy Howard, also known as Drac, consistently made questionable choices. His affinity for poor choices stemmed from his misguided desire to lead an extravagant and eccentric lifestyle. Drac firmly believed that his sole purpose in life was to attain either fame or fortune; to him, it was a way to gain validation as a young black man from a disadvantaged background. He was driven by the ambition to break free from his impoverished circumstances. Drac was raised in a small rural Southern town. His upbringing was far from easy. Raised by his single mother in a government-funded three-bedroom project home along with his four siblings, he faced numerous challenges from a young age.

Drac's mother worked tirelessly as a cafeteria worker at a middle school, earning minimum wage. Despite her efforts, it was challenging to make ends meet, and they relied heavily on welfare assistance to survive. He and his siblings had different fathers who were nowhere to be found. Growing up in such circumstances forced Drac to mature quickly. With his mother often busy working or seeking solace in adult-only places and his siblings trying to survive themselves, Drac had no one in his life to care for his well-being directly.

Every day presented Drac with new challenges, yet he persisted, determined to create a better life despite overwhelming odds. Growing up in a cramped household with limited

resources, he learned to adapt and develop independence and resilience. With a home shared with family members and occasional guests, Drac often slept on the floor.

On one occasion, at the age of eleven, Drac returned home early from school to find his mother in a disoriented state, partially unclothed, lying on the sofa with an unfamiliar man next to her. Drac, concerned about his mom, rushed to try to get her up, but the man became aggressive towards Drac's action. This led to a sad and violent encounter between the man and Drac, leaving Drac with a bloody nose, not from the man but from his mother. This event marked a significant shift in Drac's perception of his mother and his hatred for the choices she made in her life. It prompted him to question her ability to make sound choices, ultimately shaping his future actions and choices.

Who was Drac? He was a skinny, tall, dark, goofy kid who did not quite fit into the hand-me-down clothes his mother would bring home from Goodwill. Drac grew up with a very dynamic family; his older brother was a bit of a hustler, and one of his sisters was a master manipulator of men. His other two siblings were no saints, thus placing Drac at the tail end of an exciting environment surrounded by drugs, crime, and sex.

After the event with his mom, Drac, at the tender age of eleven, chose to pursue the extravagant lifestyle of a high-profile hustler. Drac immersed himself in the multifaceted world of his inner-city neighborhood. He dabbled in various roles, from serving as a lookout for local drug dealers to orchestrating drug transactions, and even resorted to theft by pilfering construction equipment for quick profits. Despite his illicit activities, he evaded legal repercussions and navigated life with relative freedom.

At eighteen, Drac, for some strange reason, decided it was time to leave his hometown to find a new path to travel on his journey in life. He left Louisiana and moved to Atlanta. Once

there, he swiftly secured a job as a stock boy in a prominent liquor store on the south side of ATL. Not content with his earnings, he soon climbed the ranks to become a cashier, improving his lifestyle with better clothing, food, and shelter. However, Drac's ambition didn't stop there; he relentlessly pursued advancement, leading to his promotion to Assistant Manager within a year.

With a salary affording him the luxuries of Atlanta's nightlife, Drac's life improved. One night out on the town, Drac dressed to impress, looking sharper than a two-dollar bill. In the club, buying drinks for a few of his homeboys, Drac was laughing, enjoying spending his hard-earned money, doing what he did best, showing off. Suddenly, the front door swung open, and in walked this banana pill complexion, young lady. She immediately caught Drac's eye—she was sexy as hell and represented Georgia, a lovely fresh peach who made Drac's mouth water. As she passed by, their eyes locked, and she gave the country boy a quick smile and a wink. From that point, Drac was hooked.

The rest of the night Drac spent wining and dining this Georgia peach; he wanted her so bad he spent his rent money to impress her. After spending all his funds and putting on a show for the young lady, his wish came true at the night's end; the young lady provided Drac with a courtship he would never forget. From that point, Drac worked, borrowed, and stole to continue the false status as a high roller to win the young lady's heart.

As Drac's life moved on with his new flower, he began to rack up debt—he lost friends due to being unable to pay back the funds he borrowed, all because his new flower was more concerned with materialistic items than Drac's love. Two years after the romance with the latest flower, Drac made a choice that systematically halted his journey in life. On the twelfth day of October, Drac, desperate to live a lavish lifestyle and to achieve a misguided goal to please his

flower and to keep her love, put into motion a sinister plan with his homeboy from around the way.

*ATL Urban Times News Article*

In the article, the headline reads, "ATL's Most Prominent Urban Liquor Store Manager Robbed at Gun Point in Parking Lot."

*At approximately 10:15 a.m. on October 12, 1987, the Owner of the liquor store on the corner of South Johnson Drive and Nodaway Road became the victim of a robbery. As the owner attempted to enter her car to take the store's deposit to the bank, she was overtaken by a tall, dark figure who snatched the bag from her hands. The bag of cash stolen from the Owner contained around \$30,000. Is there no place safe as crime sprees increase?*

The consequence of this choice by Drac ended with him being confined to a cell, where he spent time contemplating his past situations. He felt all the experiences from those situations again, and it left him regretting the outcomes of the choices he made within those situations. He soon realized his choices led to this unfortunate consequence. One night, as he lay in his cell reflecting on his choices, he realized one of the most devastating choices he had made, and this prompted him to write a long-overdue letter to someone he realized loved him more deeply than anyone ever had.

***Drac's Letter:*** *I sit here in this cold, dark room, where my freedom is non-existent, and all I have as companions are my thoughts and memories, mainly of you, my Rose. All I can think of is your beautiful light brown eyes, those blush full lips, your soft smooth brown skin, those curves that flow over your body like a winding road surrounded by all of nature's beauty, oh and that booty, yeah, that juicy, thick, tight booty, I miss it all and wish I would not have made the*

*choice I made on that day when you told me the news that resulted from the unique connection we had in the back of my uncle's Ford truck. I am writing to you to express my sorrow and pain. I am haunted by the truth of my deception. This sorrow and pain are not of what I have done to get me in this 6 by 8 room, but instead, it is for me having to face the fact that I betrayed your love. I left you when you most needed me, I snatched my heart out of your hands and placed it in the hands of another after you provided me with one of the greatest gifts any man could wish for in life. I left you to raise our child alone with no reason why, no excuse other than my misunderstanding of what love meant. I am sorry, my love; I know it may be too late, but I now realize you and my child are my true happiness, and I gave that away. I hope you can forgive me for the pain and sorrow I have caused you, and I pray that you raise my child well. Assure my child is a better person than me, show him how to appreciate the greatest gift a person could have, the love of a parent, God's gift to a child. My Rose, I know you have a ton of questions, and hopefully, one day, I can answer them; please, if you have any love left for me, write me back during this time of darkness.*

*Your true love forever and always*

*XOXOXOXOXOX*

*"Drac"*

In life, our choices often wield a double-edged sword, capable of both enriching and depriving us of what we cherish most. This paradox stems from the unpredictable nature of existence, where the path we deem right may not align with our long-term well-being. Despite the illusion of control, life's currents often flow beyond our grasp, leaving us to navigate the chaotic waters of choice. The freedom to choose is undoubtedly a privilege bestowed upon us,

yet its exercise can be dangerous. While we bask in the autonomy to sculpt our destinies, we must confront the sobering reality that our choices can sow seeds of disruption and heartache. It is a testament to the complexity of human existence that the very power that empowers us to shape our lives also harbors the potential to unravel them.

When faced with the burden of decision-making, we hope to emerge unscathed, guided by the promise of favorable outcomes should we tread the right path. However, the harsh truth of life dictates that even the most judicious choices can yield unforeseen consequences. Thus, the delicate balance between cause and effect remains elusive, reminding us that certainty is a luxury rarely afforded in the realm of choice. Ultimately, the dichotomy of choice reminds us of our vulnerability in the face of what it means to exist. While we strive to wield the power of choice as a beacon of empowerment, we must tread cautiously, mindful of its capacity to elevate and undermine our existence. In this puzzling dance between fate and free will, we are tasked with navigating the labyrinth of choice, guided by hope yet tempered by the sobering reality of its inherent unpredictability.

# The End



Signature: Randy LeSh

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