



CHOICES

JASMINE, TYRIQ AND HASAN
ARE ALL GOOD FRIENDS.

THEY ALL GREW UP TOGETHER ON
THE SAME ESTATE IN LUTON AND
WENT TO THE SAME HIGH SCHOOL.

After school and at weekends they like to go for food,
to the local park and just hang out together.



Check it out <http://choicesluton.com/>

JASMINE

Jasmine is 16 years old, lives with her mum, dad and older brother. Her parents work a lot and money is tight.

Jasmine spends a lot of her time out with friends.

Jasmine likes to post on Snapchat and Instagram. She struggles with her confidence and feels better when she is in a group.

She is talented at sports and wants to be a PE Teacher. She gets on really well with Miss Hill, her PE teacher at school.

HASAN

Hasan is 15 years old and lives with his mum. He is the oldest of 5 children.

He has a big family that live all over Luton. Most people of his family.

He spends a lot of time with his cousin Dylan, who is also 15.

Hasan can be pretty-loud and is 'the joker' of the group. Hasan finds school difficult and often kicks-off in class. He is now going to an alternative provision during the week to help with his Maths and English.

TYRIQ

Tyriq is 16 years old. He has lived with his foster carer, Andrea, for more than 5 years. It is just the two of them and they get on well.

Tyriq doesn't really see his family. He is a Child Looked After and often has meetings with Social Workers.

Tyriq is a huge football fan; always watching, playing and talking about football. He gets on well with his football coach.

Tyriq works part time in the local Nisa and this has helped his confidence. He gets on okay at school and is a chilled person.

But does smoke a lot of weed.

CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

One night Jasmine was out, she went into the local take away for some dinner. Inside, there were a group of older boys sat down who she recognised from the estate. She started talk to them and they paid for her food. *"Nice, that's pretty decent"* she thought.

Jasmine gave her Snapchat username to one of the boys. She chatted to them for about an hour before going home. The next morning, Jasmine got a Snapchat from one of the boys.

BIG ££££ – two hours work – DM Me

Jasmine needed new clothes, trainers and phone credit. She started to save posts on Instagram of things she wanted. Jasmine mentioned the Snapchat message to Tyriq and Hasan, they shrugged it off.

"I could really do with some money" she thought. *"Those trainers, wow, but they are £395, no way mum and dad can afford those."*

Later that day, Jasmine went back to the take away. The group welcomed her back into the shop *"Ayyy Jasmine .. Here she is"* they all joked. They ate food together. Then they all smoked weed outside, which she didn't normally do.

One of the boys gave Jasmine some money for phone data. *"So what if they are a bit older than me, they are more fun than Hasan and Tyriq; plus free food and phone data"* Jasmine thought.

Jasmine showed the boys some of the posts she had saved;

One said *"I can help you get those trainers you know...*

and that busted iphone screen fixed!" The group

laughed and Jasmine was embarrassed.

The boys told Jasmine that they would give her £500 for taking a ruck-sack on the train to Northampton. She would have to give it to one of their boys when she got there ***"but don't you dare look in it Jas; trust me, I'll know if you have"*** they threatened.

WHAT OPTIONS DOES JASMINE HAVE?

1) TAKE THE BAG

Take the bag to Northampton, do the drop off, come back to Luton and get paid.

"Light work. Everyone is going country nowadays, then can order bare stuff online"

2) SAY NO

Say No to going country; but what would the boys think?

"What will happen if I don't do it? Maybe I should talk to my brother about this?"

3) SOMETHING ELSE

Something else...



YOUTH VIOLENCE

It was the first week at the alternative provision for Hasan. He found it okay. It was a 20 minute bike ride from his estate, this meant he had to go-through the town centre. Hasan didn't feel safe as he heard there had been fights recently and possible beef in the town.

Hasan text his cousin Dylan *"just finished school, come meet me"*

When Dylan arrived, Hasan said *"Come let's go back to the ends... lets avoid town though"* Dylan told Hasan it was calm; as he was carrying. Hasan and Dylan were half way home. They heard shouting as they cut through an alleyway. Three boys were facing them. One boy from another postcode was coming towards them

"You ain't from around here; did I say you could pass through? Come here fam" Hasan tried to joke *"its calm bro we just cutting through, we're going"* Dylan jumped off his bike and went towards the group, reaching into his waistband.

"Come Hasan, back me man."

Hasan felt scared but the adrenaline took-over, his body was shaking and tingling. A fight started. Hasan watched Dylan wrestle with the other boy. Dylan dropped his knife. The other boy grabbed it and stabbed Dylan in his lower back as Dylan tried to get away. Dylan fell to the floor. Hasan was shaking and called an ambulance, using his coat to push down on the wound in Dylan's back. Hasan went to the hospital with Dylan. Dylan survived but he had serious injuries.


Hasan hasn't been able to sleep, eat or talk about what happened.

Hasan has been having 'mad flashbacks' and has been smoking more weed since it happened. Hasan has been less of a 'loud joker'.

His friends and his family are worried about him.

Dylan has been thinking a lot about what happened. People have been calling him 'moist' on Snapchat and Instagram. A month later, Dylan phoned Hasan and was angry, shouting at him

"yo bro, I know where that man who shanked me is right now, come let's go."



WHAT OPTIONS DOES HASAN HAVE?

1) HOOD UP

Hood up, grab a bike and grab a weapon and go meet his cousin.

"That's my cuz, I got his back ... might help my mad thoughts to put this to rest"

2) SAY NO

Say no to going.

"What will happen to Dylan if I don't go? He already has injuries, it could be worse. Maybe I should talk to someone about this"

3) SOMETHING ELSE

Something else...

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Tyriq heard about a house party on the estate. His foster carer, Andrea, wasn't keen for him to go but agreed. She said be back by midnight. Tyriq decided to pass through with a new boy who moved in next door; 17 year old Josh.

They reached the party and went into the kitchen to pour a drink. The drill music was playing loudly and the air was cloudy from all the weed being smoked.

"My kinda vibe" thought Tyriq.

Josh started chatting to girls. After a couple of drinks, Tyriq's confidence grew and he started talking to them too. He continued to drink and smoke for the next hour and didn't notice when Josh was gone.


Around 11.30 pm, Tyriq started to look around the house. He found Josh in a bedroom with two other boys and a girl, Ella, he knew of from the estate.

"Get in here Ty" Josh called him in. The boys encouraged Ella to give Tyriq oral sex, which she did. Tyriq was pretty wavy, but wasn't too keen to do this.

"I don't even really know this girl" Tyriq thought; the other boys were cheering him on. Josh laughed and joked, patting Tyriq on the back. Josh also filmed it on his phone. Ella asked Tyriq for some cannabis and money for a taxi home, which he gave her.

They walked downstairs, Josh put his arm around Tyriq and tapped him with his phone. *"Bro, your first line up!! Congrats!"* Tyriq wasn't sure what to say to Josh.

Josh continued *"You know Ella is 13 years old right?! I heard her big brother is a MAD-MAN! You don't want him knowing about this. Go grab me a drink and we can talk about what I do with this video."*



WHAT OPTIONS DOES TYRIQ HAVE?

1) TALK TO JOSH

Talk to Josh, tell him to allow it.

"Do what you want with that video still. I was just on a good vibe at the party. Everyone was doing it, and more. I ain't afraid of her brother, I brought you here to meet people from the ends"

2) LEAVE THE PARTY 3) SOMETHING ELSE

Leave the party, head home and the next morning talk to Andrea / football coach.

"Mad this girl is 13 still. I didn't even really want to do it. Is she okay? What will happen to me if her brother finds out? What if the Police find out? Maybe I should talk to someone about this"

Something else...

KAI
AGED 30. LUTON RESIDENT.
HIS STORY IN HIS WORDS.

“You’ve got to turn this around. Now is the time and you can totally do it.. You got this.”

This is what my YOT worker told me in the kitchen of the hostel I was staying at. I was 17 and had just been discharged from the L & D hospital after being stabbed.

If I’m honest, I’d be running round mad since I was about 12 or 13. Usual kind of stuff, not going to school, smoking. Typical road life.

Jamal, one of the elders from my ends, took me under his wing. Showed me how to make quick money.

Looking back now, why would a 20 year old man want to chill with me, at like 14? Drive me around and get me trainers and that?!

I was dealing and carrying all sorts, all over town, every day. I soon got a criminal record and it was hard to see who and what my identity was.

I had some good workers around me, education and health worker, YOT, social worker, hostel staff. I’m not gonna lie, I didn’t really trust anyone but this was a wake up call - man didn’t want to die. I knew something had to change. I didn’t want to reach out, ask for help; but I did, it was worth it. Some of my workers were so supportive and helped me make a plan and listened to my view.

A few weeks went by. I was trying to distance from my old lifestyle, but some times were hard and I was proper tempted to go back to what I knew.

I thought about my skills and **what I was good at.**
Sales, negotiation, communication.

I’d done a few courses and was keeping out of trouble. When I was 18, one my key workers helped me apply for a job. This was in a local estate agents. I wore my ‘court suit’ to the interview. I was so gassed when they called me and said ‘you’ve got the job’



That was over 10 years ago. I get paid a good wage every month and it's legit money. I have holidays, decent clothes and a nice car, all without worrying the police are going to raid my yard at 6 am.

I've started doing outreach work to encourage the young people of Luton to believe in the skills they have.

The abilities some of these young people have are crazy, they need support and belief to see their potential.

I'm not here to preach my story but I want you to see there are people out there who will exploit you, it's as simple as that.

But please think on this, **there is help around you and people who want the best for you and your future.**



A Partnership between Bedfordshire Police, Luton Borough Council, Luton Clinical Commissioning Group, Luton Health & Wellbeing Board & the National Probation Service