

████████████████████

Although I was attacked nineteen years ago, I can remember every detail of this traumatic experience.

1. How I felt at the time.
2. How I was treated at the time
3. The Court Case
4. After the verdict
5. How I feel now
6. My advice to anyone in my situation
7. Prevention
8. Help that I was offered
9. What impact this experience has had on me/family.

I can remember every detail of what happened to me that awful night. My friend and I, were at a local disco, she was drunk, but I only had a couple, we were dancing and enjoying ourselves. Although my friend was acting a little provocative there was really no harm in what she was doing. These two fellas had been sitting near us, and watching us all night.

They asked us to dance, the one I danced with was very well dressed in a suit and tie, that was all he told me he was a policeman and was able to tell me a good lot on the RUC at the time, I worked in a police station and never doubted him.

Anyway at the end of the night I had a taxi ordered but it never came, this man and his friend offered us a lift home. I was reluctant at first but trusted him as I thought he was a policeman.

He dropped my friend off first, and then his friend, and drove me home, everything was ok, he asked for me to bring him in, but I refused luckily enough. He then asked me to show him where ██████████, a local pub was. We drove there, he said he had to meet colleagues their on the Tuesday night, we had drove into the car park, he turned the car, as if to come out of the car park, and then stopped the car, we chatted and I had a smoke, suddenly everything changed and he was like an animal. It was awful and I swear I did nothing to lead him on, in any way.

My dress was ripped off and my underwear too. I was petrified as the attack took place. I tried my best to fight him off but he was a lot stronger than me. My nails were broken and I had blood up my arms, he then done things to me and really hurt me, he put his hands around my neck, until everything was going black, I really thought I was going to die, he then asked me to do a sexual act on him and I thought this is my chance to escape so as he was getting himself ready I got myself together and he tried to grab me, I don't know how I got the strength but I fought him off and got out of the car and run even though I was dishevelled I run and hid.

I ran to the nearest house with lights on. He was driving round looking for me, but I got to the house and a man answered he let me in, I explained what happened and he called the police.

To this day I feel very angry at the way I was spoken too by this policeman but I put it down to him not being properly trained. He said he thought I had made it up, and girls done this all the time, you only had to look at me to know I had been attacked.

I was taken to [REDACTED] Police Station, examined by a police doctor and I was in so much pain I thought I had just had a baby, I was also in deep shock. My clothes were taken to be examined by forensics, and a police woman then helped me and give a statement and a photofit.

My ordeal was front page headlines in the Belfast Telegraph, "Bogus Policeman in Rape Case" everyone soon got to know and I was the talk of the town, people were pointing and talking about me! I was made to feel guilty when I knew I was innocent and started to feel paranoid.

The court case was postponed a couple of times which was terrible, it then lasted a week, and I was made out to be a w---- which was awful as I did not consent or lead him on in any way. Rape Crisis and my family and friends all stood by me. The Rapist even stood within inches of me in the Courthouse and I was very scared!! The Prison Officers said he was a very bad boy. The court case lasted a week, I felt like I was the criminal and feel very sorry for any girl who has to go through what I did. I was put up on the stand and asked all sorts of degrading questions while he sat grinning. I thought it was very unfair, and worst of all he got off with it, [REDACTED]

After the verdict, I was very distressed and felt suicidal and to add to insult to injury he was making threats to my mother that he would kill me. I had a nervous breakdown which was awful and it changed my life big time. I went from being a funny, confident and bubbly person, to a nervous anxious girl and have suffered from bad depression ever since.

Because the threats I left Northern Ireland and went to Scotland, it was a big step for me, and I missed my mother and my family. I met my husband in Scotland, but what happened to me had a big impact on me, and affected my marriage badly. I was always depressed and nervous and had lots of problems eventually my marriage broke down.

I have two daughters who are now eleven, and fourteen and I worry about them, and really hope and pray that nothing like this ever happens to them.

I still suffer from panic attacks and have still nightmares, I really panic when I am alone and it is dark.

I would advise anyone to think about taking their rapist to court, as every day I regret it and think I was treated very unfairly and although things maybe have got better, I would be very dubious. I believe that girls should have respect for themselves and be careful but its hard to know who to trust.

I seen a psychologist which helped, and have been seeing another recently but I really feel I could do with a lot more help.

This experience will affect me for the rest of my life, I think it changed my life completely for the worse, and I know it broke my mother's heart but she doesn't talk about it. I will always feel as if I done something wrong when I know I didn't, but this is how society treats you, I hope I can help just one person by writing this letter.