



Marital Rape and Domestic Violence - sought help, found more pain

I was the careful and reserved type. A hopeless romantic that wanted to share everything with my one and only. I had been duped into thinking I found a kind and loving man to spend my life with. The 'love' and 'adoration' he showered on me while he was pursuing me, was enough to blind me and leave me in a fog thick enough to tolerate almost a decade of severe abuse.

I was too in love and too trusting to understand that I had been preyed upon by a predator, and I had been violated many times over before I was even engaged to this man.

We married. Our wedding night was traumatizing. I had been raped by my husband, but did not understand that this could even be possible after getting married, let alone on our wedding night. I was in extreme pain and repeatedly told him to stop, but he did not care. This set the tone for our marriage, and there would be plenty more of where that came from.

Jealousy and isolation. Power and control. Raging, threats and beatings. Dominance and sexual violence. Mind games and projection. Heartbreak and pain. Complete and utter FEAR. Non-stop. I completely lost myself. I was terrorized on a daily basis. There never seemed to be enough time for me to process what had been happening, and 7 years later I had cracked and reached my breaking point - I didn't fully understand what had been happening to me, but my instinct kicked in, and I knew my life and our children's lives and well-being were at risk.

After a 7 year marriage, without even realizing the permanency of it, my survival instincts led me out the door with our two precious preschool aged children. My spirit was broken, but I knew that I would have been killed if I stayed.

I was in total shock. I still felt bonded and connected to my abuser (my husband). Yet I feared him and couldn't ever go back.

I tried to get help - anywhere I thought I could get it. I tried to speak to the police, but I suppose I wasn't anywhere near ready...I could hardly think or speak. Memories escaped me, thoughts were unfocused, words were not found. I knew I needed protection, but found myself protecting him. I was a shell of my former self at that point.

Then time passed and it became clearer to me, that my word was in question with so many...another lost woman. It was easier for others to believe this didn't happen than to believe the trauma was real. His inability to feel empathy and take accountability continued. He readily proclaimed a victim status for himself. Someone I had known as calculating, vindictive and sadistic, yet again, did as he had always done. The abuse has continued and I am re-living the pain.

I only managed to share a minor fraction of the abuse I suffered, but even that was questioned. I have sought help but feel doors closing in every direction. I lost my voice. The fear and pain is kept fresh. I am trying to progress in my journey, yet I struggle to get closure. I am afraid that he



continues to feel fuelled by my pain and fear, and has an unwavering fury for me, especially now that I have left and sought help. His retaliations are coming. The more desperate I am to reveal the truth, and why I am scared for myself, the children, and for others, the less I am heard.

It is just as I was in the marriage - guilty, blamed, vilified.

I hold on to my spirit as I refuse to be completely crushed. I will stay strong for the children, and trust in God to help me get through this struggle and that I will receive His protection.

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