

How long did we spend together? A few minutes? Maybe 30 or so? Not long enough for you to even find out what my last name was.

You don't know me, but you've been inside me, and that's why we're here today.

Around the second or third week of college, I decided to go out to a fraternity party with some friends. The fraternity hosting was supposed to be "different," they were supposed to be the good guys. I was 18, I had just moved two states away from everything I'd ever known. I had practically no experience with alcohol and drugs. Just wanting to try out college, my friends and I took some shots, smoked some weed and headed out the door. It was a neon-themed party and I wore white shorts and an electric green tank top. I could barely stand up by the time I got to the party. I remember saying hi to a friend and tripping over the stairs, falling into her. She asked if I wanted to go home but I said no.

My friends and I danced to blaring rap music, took dumb pictures and laughed about how intoxicated we all were. And then you and I made eye contact. One of us approached the other one, I don't remember who, but that's beside the point. You told me your name was Scott and you were from Arizona, I assume I told you the same about me, and somewhere in the night we exchanged phone numbers. That's about all I remember from the party.

The party ended and you mentioned wanting to hangout. My roommates and I had plans to continue our party in my dorm, so I invited you there, but you suggested we go for a walk instead so we could get to know each other better. You know, a nice 2 a.m. stroll alone with a girl who's so drunk she can barely walk on her own. Sounds like a great way to get to know someone.

The next part of the story is where you and I seemed to have vastly different versions of events.

You met me outside of my dorm in the LLC and we walked south down Old Main Hill. At some point, we sat on the ground and started talking about nothing. The next thing I remember, you were on top of me, kissing me. The next thing I remember after that, my clothes were scattered across the hill and my naked body was spread apart on the wet grass. At some point, your fingers were inside of my vagina, and then your penis was in my mouth. I remember feeling gross and violated but being both physically too drunk and too scared to say anything. Here I was. Alone on a hill at 2 a.m. with some man I just met. No one would've heard my cry for help. No one was around to say "hey, get off her, this is wrong." I told you I wanted to go home and I remember you telling me "just a little longer," like I was a kid on a long road trip. "Just a little longer" still rings in my nightmares. I was flopped on the ground like a dead fish, but you said I looked like I'd sobered up. What part of my actions made you think that was the case? Was it the fact that I could barely walk without your help? Was it that I couldn't form a coherent sentence? Maybe it was that I had agreed to go on a walk at 2 a.m. with a man I just met.

After you trying to convince me I was sober, the next thing I really remember is you asking if I had condoms. I'm not sure what part of me saying "I don't want to have sex" you didn't understand.

And at some point, you put your penis inside of my vagina. I remember telling you to stop and you ignoring me, several times, until I told you I didn't want to get pregnant, then you finally stopped. Why did it take me scaring you into having to take responsibility for your actions to stop? Why didn't you just respect me when I said no the first time? When you finally stopped, I remember feeling physically ill, violated, scared. I remember struggling to put my shorts back on.

But your story was different. And not just different at first. Different pretty much every time some part of it was told. First we didn't have sex at all and I pushed for everything that happened. And then we tried to have sex but it didn't workout. And then I was so drunk I couldn't possibly have remembered anything, and then I wasn't actually that drunk at all and therefore I consented. Your attorney once wrote that you and "went on a romantic walk." How cute. When I want to get to know someone, I take them on a romantic, 2 a.m. walk down a dark, empty hill and force them to have sex with me. It's very romantic.

All the while, you were just an 18-year-old kid who couldn't possibly control himself. You were completely innocent, minding your business, and I was tempting you. That was one theme I saw over and over. You just couldn't help yourself.

I went the next year and a half telling only a few close friends. I buried the pain with me along with the green tank top and white shorts I wore that night. While you were dating girls and having healthy relationships, I had a hard time even communicating with men. While you were joining a fraternity, I was trying to live another day without committing suicide. While you were getting an education, I was failing all of my classes because I couldn't get out of bed in the morning.

My innocence was stolen. The sweet, outgoing person I've always been was replaced by a person who could barely get out of bed in the morning. You once told me you couldn't sleep for days because you felt guilty. Try not sleeping for years. Try having nightmares every single night.

After one of the worst years of my life, I finally started to open up about the experience. I saw a therapist, I told my parents. And then I went to the police. I remember freezing when you picked up the phone, but talking to you about what happened felt like closure in a way. That is until you told me about the video. The one where you secretly recorded us walking back from the hill, where you try to trick me into saying I'm both completely sober and completely ok with what just happened. And since you didn't do anything wrong, I was all over you, I consented, the video makes perfect sense, right? I know when I haven't done anything wrong, I secretly record whoever I'm with just to *make sure* of it. You know, just in case it comes out that maybe I did do

something wrong, this secretly-recorded video in which you can't even hear anything will save me.

Do you know how disgusting I felt sitting in the police station on the phone with you, trying to hold it together while I find out you've recorded this video of us and you think that will straighten things out? I felt physically ill for the rest of the day.

But when you admitted what you had done to the police, you told me you wanted to drop off a "sorry" card, you said you felt guilty and I believed you. But then the card never came, and I found out you'd tried to hide from police. But I guess that's normal. I didn't think much of it. When they found you and finally filed the charges, I thought "great. I think he really is sorry. He'll plead guilty soon and we'll all move on with our lives."

Instead I found out you hired an expensive attorney and that we'd be having a preliminary hearing. I thought this was weird, since you'd already admitted to what you did and you seemed pretty willing to take responsibility.

But any hope I had of you being sorry went out the door at that hearing. The questions I had to endure up here all by myself with no help made it one of the most painful experiences of my life.

"What were you wearing?" "how much did you drink?" "What did you drink?" "How much did you smoke?" "What did you smoke out of?" "Whose pipe was it?" "Could it have been yours?" "Are you sure?" "What time did you do this?" "What time did you do that?" "Why can't you remember?" "is it because you were too drunk to remember or because you're making this up?" "How many boys did you kiss at the party?" "Do you often kiss boys at parties?" "Did you think Scott was cute? You must've thought he was cute." "Are you aware that underage drinking is a crime? So is possession of marijuana. They're both class B misdemeanors, punishable by up to six months in jail." "did the prosecutors ever talk to you about that?" "No, well they should have?" "What were your grades like your freshman year?" "Did you skip class often?" "Did you receive any help from the university for reporting this?" "What kind of help?" "Could you have exaggerated this to get help for your bad grades?"

Questions about my personal life. My relationship. My schoolwork. My use of dating apps. Places I've lived. Work I've done. I think I was asked maybe two questions about the rape itself, the rest just felt like a theatrical show. I was attacked with horrific and personal questions to try and deflect from a guy who didn't even know my last name. By the end, it seemed the narrative was to say "see, she barely remembers anything. What she does remember really isn't a big deal and what she does remember probably isn't true. She's practically an alcoholic and a drug addict and she must've made this whole thing up so she could get some help for bad grades." And as I sat up there and got bullied to tears, I remember looking over at you and seeing you smirk, as if you had won some battle between us. As if this was entertaining to you.

It felt like a back and forth game of ping pong where one a pro, firing ball after ball and the other person is barely keeping up. This went on for what must've been a good hour when your attorney said "you wouldn't have any objection to me getting your school record, would you?" At that moment, I snapped and cried and uttered "it's my student record and it's supposed to be private."

Only at that moment did I get some sigh of relief. After I had been interrogated to tears as if I was the one in trouble.

The next several months became a battle for my student record. It felt like at least once a week I was getting a call from someone with some new update over this mess. There was always some new motion filed, some amendment to something, some hearing that had to be had all for what? So you could see how bad my grades were and try to prove that I made this up for help in school?

As if fighting for my personal record wasn't enough, you filed a Title IX complaint against me. You thought you could turn the tables on me. Suddenly you were the victim and I had caused you the trauma. Interesting that this had never come up during our initial police interviews. You must've forgotten until you were in real trouble.

I wish you never did this to me. I wish I could go back to being the person I was before I was tainted with trauma. I wish I could know what college was like without having to carry this burden around, but I don't. I'll never have the "normal" college experience, because you took that from me. You stole it and threw it out. You can't change the past, but I also wish you didn't make me wait this long to tell you I wish you didn't do this to me. I wish we didn't spend almost two years fighting for what should've been over before it started.

But here we are today. We're here because you've finally given up. You've finally taken some real responsibility for what you did to me. I will never have my life back. I'll never have a normal relationship or a normal day where I get to work and go to school and live my life without thinking about that time a man I just barely met forced his penis inside of me on the side of a hill.

You have your whole life ahead of you. You're a young, white male whose family could afford to hire an expensive attorney and we're in Cache Valley, so whatever punishment you're given for this probably won't be anything too awful. I hope you use the rest of your life to better your actions. I hope you think about this everyday and I hope you use it to become a better individual.

As for sentencing, I don't think Scott is a bad person. I think he did a very bad thing. I don't think he deserves to spend his life in prison, but I think some incarceration is appropriate, considering my life will never be the same. I hope he can also get the appropriate therapy, do the community service and really be educated on his behavior. As this is a first offense, I can see

where lenience is deserved. On the other hand, rape is not a petty crime that deserves a slap on the wrist. We, as a society, need to send a message that this is a problem. I trust that Judge Allen will make the appropriate decision.

Lastly, I'd like to say thank you. First to my father, who has flown out from California for every single hearing. Next to my counselor, Jenny, who has shown me more love and care than I could possibly put into words and is the reason I had the courage to get up here today. Then to Sgt. Jessica Vasholtz, who convinced me that I am braver and stronger than I ever thought I could be. Then to Tony Baird, who made me feel like more than just a number on a list of victims. To my best friend Gorety, the only person who has been there right by my side since this happened. To my bosses and coworkers who understood when I had to leave early because of a panic attack. To my sorority sisters, who've given me so much love and support and confidence. To the men of Sigma Phi Epsilon, who've become some of my closest friends and biggest supporters when they could've ignored this as a stain on their reputation. To the USU administrators who've cared about me and making sure I stay in school and reach my potential. But most importantly, to the thousands of other victims who've given me strength and courage and solidarity.

And finally, to victims around the world, I am with you. I believe you. When you're dismissed, ignored, bullied, broken down. I'm with you. When you think you've reached a point where you can't possibly go on, I'm living proof that you can. On your dark days and your sleepless nights, I'm with you. Thank you.