



R. P. Stoney

R.P. Story

Growing up in a tight-knit family in a small town, I've always been someone who sees the best in people. It's a trait that, I've discovered, can also make you too trusting. I love connecting with others, learning their stories, sharing mine. When I arrived as a freshman at college, I was eager to form new friendships, immerse myself in new experiences, and grow into my own. Then came that one night that altered my life forever. I'd met a guy at a party. He was charming, funny, and seemed kind. Trusting him came naturally to me. We went out on a date, but it ended in the worst way imaginable. That was the night I experienced date rape.

The weeks following were a blur. I felt numb, devastated, lost. My world seemed to crumble overnight. Self-blame seeped in, and my self-esteem plummeted. I withdrew from those I loved, my shame building a wall between us.

But beneath the pain, a fighter in me stirred. One day, I found the courage to seek help. It was no easy journey. There were countless tears, sleepless nights, and moments when giving up seemed the only option. But I didn't surrender. With the help of therapy and support groups, I began to heal slowly.



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I started to understand that the fault was not mine, that I didn't deserve the assault, and that my attacker was the only person to blame. Step by step, I began to reclaim my life, my self-worth, my strength.

I realized that sharing my story might help others in similar situations. I decided to pen my journey, the heart-wrenching lows, and the empowering highs of healing. I wrote with the hope that others could find solace in my words could realize they were not alone.

Writing in my journal allows me to process my trauma, express my feelings, and let the healing continue. It also became a beacon of hope for others who had gone through sexual assault, a testament to the strength and resilience of survivors.

Now, as I sit here staring at the horizon, I understand that my journey is far from over. There are still days when the pain washes over me like a tidal wave and nights when I wake up, the past haunting me. But I am stronger than my pain, braver than my fear, and I will continue to heal, grow, and support others.

Closing the book, I take a deep breath and make a vow to myself. "I am Rhonda. I am a survivor, unbroken, untamed, unashamed. And no one, not even the darkest night, can take that away from me."

