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Chapter 53
**Good Sex After Bad
Rape and Abuse**

from the
Guide To Getting It On!
Tenth Edition

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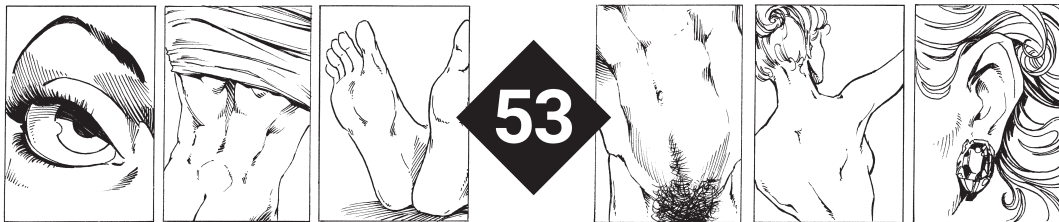
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Rape & Abuse: Good Sex After Bad

Some sexual acts are uninvited and forced, leaving pain and confusion in their wake, especially when the person involved is an otherwise kind and important figure in your life. This chapter looks at the aftermath of abuse and rape with an eye on learning to have good sex after bad. The information it provides is a small drop in a large and sometimes difficult bucket.

While sexual assault is not unique, you are. What works for someone else might not work for you. Be diligent in finding information that is helpful and be cautious when self-described experts tell you what you should do instead of giving you a wide platter to choose from.

The first part of this chapter assumes that the person who experienced the assault or abuse is female and that the perpetrator is male. That's how it usually is, but not always. The last part of the chapter is for straight guys who have been raped by other men, although gay men get raped as well.

Rape Versus Abuse

Rape and abuse are often lumped together, as if the experiences are the same because they are both sex crimes. Depending on who you are and what happened, this may or may not be true. Let's consider two women whose only similarity in life is that both had sex forced on them:

The first woman grew up in a safe and loving home. Her parents were always there for her. The men she chose for lovers were respectful and decent. In times of stress and tumult, her family was a resource she could fall back on. When she was raped at age 24, her family and friends circled the wagons and stood by her. When she was trying to rebuild her sex life after the assault, she had the memory of many satisfying nights with loving men to help her recall that sex could be wonderful as well as wicked.

The second woman had a very different family. The man her mom remarried had sex with her from the time she was 8. When her grades began to drop and she started to become isolated at school, her mom chalked it up to “growing pains.” Troublesome signs that a less chaotic parent would have picked up on went ignored. While the house was well maintained and she was fed, clothed, and clean, home was not a safe place. As she grew into a young woman, her choice of partners reflected the chaos she grew up in.

These two women show that the challenges sexual assault victims face are not the same. The second woman has no memories to fall back on of sex being wonderful and loving. There was constant emotional abandonment that has become part of the mortar that binds her entire psyche. This is very different from the first woman’s challenge regarding her rape, which is to deal with an assault that occurred in minutes as opposed to years.

There is also no way of predicting which victims of abuse or rape will have sexual and relationship issues. Some of it has to do with a person’s temperament and constitution. It might also have to do with whether there is something good that she can hold onto in her mind.

Sexual Confusion in a House of Abuse

For some women who experienced childhood abuse, the times they were abused might have been the only times they were treated with tenderness. Think of how confusing this must have been. For other women who experienced childhood abuse, the family member who abused her might have otherwise been an important and loving part of her life. This can make sorting things out incredibly difficult and confusing.

Equally difficult are situations in which the girl’s own mother was jealous of her, as if she were in a competition for the woman’s husband or boyfriend. The sons who are growing up in families where a girl is being abused can also find it difficult to process what is unfolding around them, even though they were not abused. Some are isolated and depressed. Others grow up finding it a challenge to respect the sexual rights and emotions of others.

Learning to Have Good Sex After Bad

Women who have been raped or abused sometimes report that their bodies are betraying them. Perhaps it’s just that their bodies are trying to

protect them, and the nerves and muscles beneath their skin have no way of knowing that the danger has passed.

Think of what happens in your body when a loving partner is tenderly kissing the sides of your neck. As you are becoming sexually aroused, your heart beats faster, you breathe more quickly, and your skin starts to perspire. You might not be consciously aware of it, but your hearing and vision also become more acute.

A woman who has never been abused might experience these body sensations as a sign of the good things to come. But for a woman who has been abused or assaulted, her body is apt to confuse these signs with danger. Far from trying to confuse her or deny her pleasure, her body might be trying to protect her. Her nerves and muscles prepare for combat rather than for relaxation and pleasure.

One of the things a woman who has been raped or abused might try to do is become more aware of the types of sexually-charged situations that cause her body tone to go from “Oh boy!” to “Yikes!” or that make her feel numb or disassociated.

For one woman, the trigger might be a quick, admiring glance from a man in a restaurant. Another woman’s body might be totally into having sex until she feels her lover’s penis enter her vagina.

As a woman begins to recognize these triggers, she can become more proactive. One woman might find it helpful to stay with the bad feeling and observe how it unfolds within her. Another might remind herself the situation isn’t the same dangerous one that her body is confusing it with. If it happens during lovemaking, she and her partner might have a signal so they change positions or stop. Maybe her lover can say something reassuring to her, or perhaps they can switch on a light so she can physically see his face in addition to hearing the sound of his voice. It might also be helpful if there are comforting environmental cues at the start of their lovemaking, such as certain music, a particular light, or having a special object that she can feel or grasp that helps her feel safe enough to stay in the here and now.

“Initially, my now-husband had to learn how to stop and comfort me when I had flashbacks during sex. Thankfully those no longer occur.

I really need to have music on, or something to concentrate on that adds to the sex. If it is silent, or we have relaxing sex without music or awesome satin sheets or something that provides other sensations, then I will have a lot of trouble not disassociating.” *female age 27*

The Unfortunate Trivializing of Triggers

When someone has PTSD, the events that caused the PTSD feel like they are happening all over again in real time. Their mind hasn’t been able to process and digest those traumatic events, so it feels like they keep happening over and over instead of becoming past tense.

It’s very unfortunate that snowflake college students have hijacked the term “trigger” and started using it when someone presents a point of view they don’t agree with or makes a ripple instead of coddling them. As a result, they have trivialized something that is very real for people who truly have experienced traumatic events.

If your partner has experienced sexual abuse and tells you there are triggers that cause her to dissociate or feel terrified, believe her. *And please read carefully the women’s comments at the end of the chapter. They are very real and they will help guide you in how to be the man a woman who has been sexually abused needs you to be.*

Masturbation to the Rescue

For some women who have been sexually abused or assaulted, masturbation can provide an important bridge to healthy sexual enjoyment. Masturbation can help her retrain her body to anticipate a good sexual outcome. For a woman who has never had a good sexual experience, masturbation can be the first step in learning how good sex can feel and it’s something that she totally controls. For a woman who has had good sex in the past, it can be a safe way for her to remember how good sex used to feel.

If she has a trusting, loving relationship with a partner, it might be a huge step for a woman to pleasure herself while he holds her. Hopefully, he can understand how big of a step this can be and not feel like she’s rejecting him because the sight of his hard penis throws her into a panic. All things in good time.

Her partner will also need to be comfortable with masturbation himself, as there may be times when she suddenly needs to put the brakes on during lovemaking. He needs to have the option of getting himself off by hand. Hopefully they can talk about this, she can appreciate and respect his need to get off, and he can appreciate and respect her sudden need for space.

“I was a frequent masturbator before the rape, but for a while after I didn’t really want any sexual things at all. Masturbating helped me to start enjoying my body again.” *female age 19*

“Masturbation had lost a lot of its fun. Isn’t that terribly sad? I’m finding it again now, and it makes me proud of myself.” *female age 27*

[After being raped at age 12] “I was 14 and my older friend was telling me about how she could have orgasms in the shower. I tried it, and the experience was so amazing and so all-my-own that I began to feel a lot better about what sex and sexuality should be.” *female age 18*

“Fantasy men were always nice to me—patient, kind, concerned about me, etc. Not like in real life. In a weird way, it taught me what and who to look for in real life.” *female age 30*

Things That Some Women Have Found Helpful

There isn’t a right or wrong way to have sex after you have been raped. There are different options, and only you can decide what’s right for you. Here are some things other women have found to be helpful:

Setting Limits & Feeling Safe: If the places and situations where you used to date and have sex no longer feel safe, see if it helps to treat yourself like the nervous parents of a teenager. Set the kind of limits for yourself that they would for their child. Should you be home by 10 or midnight? What about only double-dating with a trusted friend? Don’t go to a party without a friend. If you are in a social situation and start to feel unsafe, don’t stick around. Go home. If a guy you like asks you to have a beer, there’s no reason why you can’t say, “Not now, but coffee on Sunday would be really nice.” Decide ahead of time how much physical contact you are going to allow—a handshake, a kiss, a feel above the waist, a feel below...

But as the women of the *Seattle Institute for Sex Therapy* so aptly note, note, if you discover that you are exclusively selecting men to date who you feel safe with but who you don't feel sexually attracted to, or it's been a long time and you're still not able to get as sexually excited as you used to, it might be a good idea to seek some counseling.

Reclaiming Intimacy: If you are planning on having sex with a guy, and you need special reassurance or are concerned that you might need to stop midway, it's best to tell him that you were sexually assaulted. Most guys will be very understanding and will try to help in any way they can once they know what's going on. It's perfectly fine to say, "The old me might have been pulling your pants off by now, but with the new me, it could be a couple of months before you even get to feel under my bra. I have no idea how it's going to go, but I need to be able to trust that if I say stop, you'll stop at that very moment." You should also warn him that you might have days when you can't get enough of him sexually and other days when you have the sexual sensibilities of a 90-year-old nun.

On the days when you need to send him off to the bathroom to masturbate, let him know that it still might be really important for the two of you to do something romantic together, like taking a walk, going to the bookstore, watching a movie, flying a kite, or doing any number of things together that couples like to do. On those days when you need physical contact but want him to keep his penis in his pants, talk to him about cuddling together, holding hands, or exchanging back rubs. If it's not too much for him or you, a warm bath together or a dip in a hot tub might feel great.

If You Have a Partner: Your partner isn't the man who raped you, but he can be almost as affected by the rape as you are. One of the first challenges is that he might try to seriously hurt the rapist. That's to be expected when someone intentionally harms a loved one, but let him know it won't make things any better and it could actually make things worse for you. He will need to be aware that it might take a few months before sex returns to normal and that patience will have its rewards. Hopefully, he will read all he can and educate himself about the reactions that victims of sexual assault can have, and learn how to be an ally of the healing process.

Flashbacks: Some women who have been sexually assaulted have flashbacks; others don't. You and your partner need to be aware that flashbacks sometimes happen when you are at the peak of sexual excitement and are having an amazing orgasm. Your partner needs to understand that flashbacks are not because he is doing anything that's wrong. Learn about the things that trigger flashbacks and come up with a strategy for dealing with them. Have faith that they will decrease with time.

Don't Confuse the Female Body's Protective Mechanism with Being Turned On

Researchers have discovered that it is not unusual for a woman's vagina to lubricate in situations where she is frightened or terrified. This will protect her vagina from tearing if intercourse is forced upon her.

This primitive reflex can be very confusing for a woman who has had sex forced on her. For instance, if she had an orgasm while being raped, she might wonder if she has a secret thing for violence and somehow invited the rape. She should understand that other women who have been raped have had orgasms, and those orgasms are the product of a body in terror that's spewing out a flood of adrenaline while pressure is being placed on her genitals. This kind of reaction is not limited to women. Erections are no stranger to the gallows. It's been known for centuries that men who are executed by hanging often die with erections, and some even ejaculate. While this may have something to do with the body's response to asphyxiation, terror also plays a role. These men were no more sexually turned on by being in the gallows than a woman who was being forced to have sex that she didn't want.

Building Strength: Protecting Herself

It is important for a woman who has been raped to be proactive in protecting herself going forward. However, women who have been raped sometimes go overboard in trying to avoid situations that cause them anxiety. The extreme avoidance can reinforce anxiety and stress instead of helping to ameliorate them. So it's also important to conquer the temptation to avoid too much. The key is in using common sense. Do a browser search for practical ways to help prevent rape. Some women find it can be healing to take self

defense courses from an organization like *IMPACT Self Defense*. Other women believe that teaching women who have been raped or abused to defend themselves is a form of victim blaming.

Why Does It Take So Much Work for a Partner to Gain a Woman's Trust?

As you may have read in this book's Chapter 20 on Consent, the chances are much greater that a woman will be raped by someone she knows than by someone who leaps out of the shadows. That's one reason why it may take so much effort on your part to win a woman's trust after she has experienced acquaintance or date rape.

But it can be even worse when you hear what incarcerated rapists have to say about the way they operate. They do not pick a victim based on how she looks or how she is dressed. Their first criteria is not getting caught. So what a rapist is looking for is a highly vulnerable victim. He wants to be able to isolate her easily from others and to commit his crime without drawing the attention of others.

The sex offender's goal is to find ways to control a victim. He is good at getting women to engage in light forms of romance or sex play, not so much at their invitation, but in a way that she doesn't think to scream "STOP IT!" He manages to take her off guard by doing things that feel good enough so she gets confused. He will try to physically isolate her and emotionally confuse her. She is suddenly wondering, "Did I invite this?" If she didn't put a stop to it immediately, he will have invaded her personal space and personal boundaries, and then there's no stopping him. His goal is also not to get caught.

So if your partner has been through something like this, she may need several reminders that you are not that guy who took her off guard. It's not because she wants to drive you away. Quite the contrary, she, more than anyone, hopes you will be able to stand up to her fears.

How People Act After Being Raped

There is no manual for how to act after a sexual assault. Some people will be hysterical while others will be unusually calm. Some will be agitated; others will be numb. It is unwise to judge a person's emotional experience of a sexual assault based on their behavior following it.

Rape in Marriage

People assume that rape in a marriage isn't really rape and it's less serious than sexual assault that is caused by a stranger. But spousal rape might be even more devastating than stranger rape. The stranger never said, "To have and to hold, to love and to cherish, till death do us part." Women who are raped by their husbands are likely to be raped a number of times before finally leaving. The rape can be oral, anal, and vaginal. Dealing with it can be a particular challenge when a woman has children and leaving him will greatly disrupt their lives.

"But If She Was Raped, Why Didn't She Report Him?"

It's no secret that few rapes are actually reported. The percentage of reports is even lower in rapes where the victim knew the offender before she was sexual assaulted. There are reasons why women don't report. A common one is if the rapist is a member of her social circle or her mother's favorite relative. Or if he's her sister's husband or a popular guy at work or school. If it's his word against hers, she has to wonder what will happen if she isn't believed or she ends up being blamed. Some women believe that if they didn't put up a fight, the state won't consider it rape.

While it's easy for the rest of us to tell women why they absolutely should report a rape, there are plenty of women who did report and say that reporting ended up being as humiliating as the rape itself. (Hopefully if you are raped, you will report, especially now that the law is starting to listen. But it's understandable if you decide not to.)

Reporting—If He's in Your Social Circle

Reporting is socially easier if the rapist isn't part of a woman's social circle. If he is, she needs to be prepared for people taking sides, and not necessarily hers. On the other hand, if she doesn't report, he will know he thinks she is an easy target, and she will have to live with knowing he will most likely be victimizing others.

If he is someone from her social circle, it's best for her not to defend herself or say anything negative about him. The only people she should be speaking to about it are the police, the District Attorney, and her healthcare provider

or counselor if she has one. Keeping these boundaries will hopefully make it easier for her in the long run.

Reporting—If You Are in a Sorority

Hopefully, things in the Greek system have evolved. However, on some campuses, women in sororities have come to assume that sexual coercion is part of the deal, and they don't necessarily view it as rape.

If a sorority woman is raped by a fraternity member and she reports him to the police, his house brothers will likely feel that she reported all of them. Also, a sorority sister who had a secret crush on the guy could become her new worst enemy. That's why she should spend several hours in the psych library reading about what happens in dysfunctional families when a child reports that they've been abused. Knowing how strange it can get will hopefully help her maintain a sense of irony and perspective that could be necessary if the people in her social circle view her as the problem, rather than the bro who is a rapey dude.

People join fraternal organizations with the hope of being a part of something that's bigger and better than they are. In accusing a fraternity man of rape, she is not only threatening the relationship between her sorority and his fraternity, but she is threatening the relationship between her sorority and every fraternity on campus. She is taking to task a system that has been the spawning ground of presidents, senators, and supreme court justices.

If you are raped by a fraternity member and your sorority sisters stand by you, understand you have found something truly precious. If you are in the Greek system and want to help it evolve, you could do worse than have your pledges read and recite parts of this book's *Chapter 20: Consent: Are You Good?* during hell week. That chapter is free at www.Guide2Getting.com.

When Straight Men Are Raped by Other Men

Most of us believe that rape happens to only women, gay or imprisoned men, altar boys, and Boy Scouts. We assume that any grown man who doesn't want to be sexually assaulted should be able to defend himself and fend off the attacker. But just because you are a guy doesn't mean you should be able to beat up a mugger or fend off a rapist. Rape is first and foremost about

violence, power, sadism, and hatred. The rapist didn't choose you because he thought you had a cute butt. He chose you because he thought he could dominate you.

When you've got a gun to your head or a knife to your throat, you suddenly have other priorities than to say, "Excuse me, Mr. Rapist, you've got it all wrong. I like girls!" Your job is to survive, and even if that means having to go down on the guy, you should do it and not think twice. Think of how many women have given you oral sex and didn't pass out!

A man can be sexually assaulted by a group of men he doesn't stand a chance against. Sometimes the rape can be the result of blackmail or of being drunk or stoned. The last thing a guy who is drunk is going to be able to protect is his rear end.

Male rape can happen in other ways, as well. Not long ago, a former National Hockey League Player revealed that he was sexually assaulted by one of his coaches when he was a teen. Unfortunately, a man who has been raped has fewer options than a woman who has been raped. Think about it: How many guys are going to find it cathartic to tell their friends they were raped? The chances are his drinking buds will assume it's a joke.

If you are a guy who has been raped, call a rape crisis center. Or even if you are the epitome of straightness, call a gay men's health center. They tend to be understanding and helpful about sexual violence against men.

It can be confusing if you became hard or came when you were being raped. Remember that it's not unusual to have an erection and orgasm when the body is under extreme stress or panic. (There are plenty of guys who have been coerced into having intercourse with a woman, so an erect penis is not always an indicator of desire.)

Some rapists are aware that you might get an erection. They will intentionally stroke you to orgasm just to mess with your mind even more. So what's the big deal if you did get hard and came? The important thing is in understanding that you were violently assaulted. We should all have erections and orgasms in such situations, and you have lived to think about it, which is a very good thing.

Men who are bisexual or gay sometimes worry that being raped or abused is what gave them their same-sex orientation. And straight guys who are sexually assaulted by other males might wonder if this will impact their sexual orientation. Studies have never shown that sexual abuse or rape influences a person's sexual orientation, yet this is a myth that persists.

While you might want to keep it all inside, it could be that the rape has been causing you to deal with intimate relationships in strange ways. What do you have to lose by speaking to a counselor about it for a session or two? As for reporting, how strongly do you feel that the attacker is able to do this to other men? It is likely that if he can, he will.

For men who were raped by older men when they were boys, perhaps this reader's account will feel familiar:

"When I was 6- to 8-years-old, my best friend's dad molested me. He would make me give him oral sex, and touch him, and he'd touch me... I try not to make too big of a deal about it. I have good relationships with women and like to think I am a relatively emotionally stable person. However, I still have frequent dreams about him abusing me, and sometimes I have sex fantasies about him as well. These disturb me because he abused me. I was so young that I think I repressed most of the negative thoughts. All I can remember is the way things felt." *male age 21*

From Female Readers Who Have Been Raped and Abused

"I was dating one guy for four years (I was 16 when it started). Over time he became more and more thoughtless during sex until the point where it had crossed the line into violence. If sex was painful he would not stop, and there was emotional violence. We started out using porn to enhance our sex lives, but after a while he would position us so he could ignore me during sex and just watch the screen. I did two years of being single without sex after that to pull myself together. When I began having sex again I had flashbacks and would panic. I used to be so sexually outgoing and playful. I would enjoy oral sex. Now I don't do that anymore. For a long time I could not joyfully

give my partners oral sex because of the negative associations with it, and sometimes I still have trouble not choking, even when it is barely in my mouth. Things are slowly improving, but I am worried it will never have that carefree way about it. It is hard to relax and not over protect myself. I've been married for a year now to a wonderful and gentle man that I've been intimate with for five years.... That's how long it's taken." *female age 27*

"I have been raped twice in my life by two separate men. The first was during my 16th birthday. After the party I went to my friend's spare bedroom to sleep. My then-boyfriend came in and laid next to me. We started fooling around but things started going too far. I asked him to stop but he didn't. He kept pressuring me, saying he wouldn't do anything serious. It ended with him just shoving himself in me while I was sobbing. That was how I lost my virginity. The saddest part is that I stayed with him for two more months. The second time I was at a friend's house. Drinking and playing Dungeons and Dragons. (Yes, girls are nerds too.) I drank far too much and laid down on a mattress that was sitting in the middle of the living room. All my friends went into the den to watch TV while this guy laid next to me. I should have figured it out then, but I was really drunk. I asked him to leave me because I was too drunk to be near anyone, let alone a guy with 'intentions.' He didn't leave. He started with the foreplay. I alternated between liking it and asking him to go away. It ended with him on top of me while I told him to stop.. Needless to say, the friendship ended there. Sex since then? I've never orgasmed. That may be due to the fact that I can't trust men. I'm never comfortable being naked around anyone. And to be completely honest, I don't really like sex. I think I'm just expecting men to mistreat me after having it. To just use me. Recently I have been in a relationship with a man who was a virgin before we had sex. His love and trust have gone a long way toward helping me believe that a guy might like me for more than just sex. It's helping me to enjoy myself more."

female age 20

"I was continually abused growing up (emotionally, spiritually, verbally, mentally, sexually), so much so I don't remember much of it. I continued the abuse voluntarily by getting involved with men who abused me. For instance, I have two kids as a result of 3 am encounters when I was three-quarters

asleep. I'm still pretty badly messed up and have a hard time seeing when someone is trying to be decent. I have never had normal sex. I discovered recently (in the past two years) that what I thought was normal was far from normal. I never knew that you were supposed to have feeling inside. I thought it was normal to be numb inside. My former partner could stick any number of fingers up inside me, and I could never tell him how many there were. He could even put a whole fist inside, and I didn't know. He could scratch and wiggle—nothing, nada, zip, zero, zilch. Still have that problem. Maybe I'll figure it out someday.” *female age 31*

“When I was in middle school and my body was just starting to mature, my step-dad was going through a rough time with work. He was pretty stressed. My mom was around, but she had a job so I was left alone with a man who I wasn't exactly fond of. He started getting a little too close and intimate for comfort. I told him I didn't like it. When he didn't stop, I told my mom. She didn't want to believe me. One night while she was out with her friends, I woke up and he was on top of me. I tried to scream. He stifled me. ‘It'll feel good, I promise,’ he told me. It didn't feel good. I screamed and flailed my body until I could get away. I ran and tried to hide. He found me and hit me so hard that I don't remember any more of that night. I was 12. I was ashamed of my body for a long time after that. But at the same time, I still really wanted the fellas who were my own age to take notice of me. I think I was looking for someone who would try to protect me. Eventually, I found myself in a good relationship that was much more about the emotional connection than a physical one. When we finally did get to that point, I felt so at ease with him that it was completely natural, pure, and honest [and way good!].” *female age 18*

“I was 9 years old. My karate instructor gave me a lesson in oral sex and other such matters. This was 32 years ago. I was not in a huge hurry to lose my *official virginity*. But then I had a great boyfriend for my *first time*, so it worked out. Get someone to talk to—a professional—and don't stop until you find one that helps you to release the pain or anger. It's possible to have good sex after bad IF you take it slow and find the right person. I think about sex not as something that is being done to me, but as something that I am giving to someone else.” *female age 41*

“I was molested by my dad and younger brother. It took years of therapy to overcome self-destructive behavior. The abuse took a seemingly wholesome, enjoyable act and made it ugly. I became psychotically self-destructive with sex, alternating between frigidity and promiscuity. I was able to find a good therapist and a good man who loves me. I can finally breathe and trust, relax, have fun, and enjoy sex. (We’re getting married later this year.)”

female age 30

“It was seven years ago. In my room. My cousin’s husband attacked me while I was sleeping. I never had sex before then. I look at sex as something that I don’t need. Sometimes it just brings back the night of the bad. My advice? Take control next time. You’d be surprised at how much better it can be the next time that way! If it’s happened to you, don’t hesitate to tell someone else. I didn’t, and I’m still paying for it. It took me four years to come to the reality of it. Don’t hide anything. If you’ve been raped, don’t think of sex as bad. Think of it as a way to better yourself.” *female age 20*

“Report it right away. My biggest regret is that I never did. The man who raped me raped others. Maybe if I had said something, they would never had to experience that. And get counseling. Don’t just sit there and blame yourself. Always remember it wasn’t your fault, and it doesn’t make YOU a bad person.” *female age 20*

“When I was about 7 or 8 years old, I was masturbated by an uncle. He gave me a dollar to ‘not tell.’ I never did. I began having sex at age 13 and was quite promiscuous. I believe I’ve had about 50 sexual partners, but only 6 or 7 of those in the past 10 or 12 years. I now realize that my behavior probably has something to do with the experience. I’ve learned to forgive and to realize that people are better than their worst moments.” *female age 33*

“I can’t imagine a single situation in which rushing out and boning the first willing, semi-attractive person with a pulse is a good idea to help you overcome an unfortunate sexual encounter.” *female age 18*

“Relax and take your time. My fiancée and I weren’t exactly rockin’ the first few times. I needed to build trust and security, and then I could relax and truly enjoy myself.” *female age 30*

Resources (Your state or county may have resources as well):

National Center for Victims of Crime
(855) 484-2846 or 855-4-VICTIM
Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network
(800) 656-4673 or (800) 656-HOPE
National Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 799-7233 or (800) 799-SAFE

Recommended Reading:

Evicting the Perpetrator by Ken Singer.

Principles of Trauma Therapy: A Guide to Symptoms, Evaluation, and Treatment by John Briere and Catherine Scott.

Child Trauma Handbook: A Guide For Helping Trauma-Exposed Children And Adolescents by Ricky Greenwald.

Treating Nonoffending Parents in Child Sexual Abuse Cases: Connections for Family Safety by Jill Levenson and John Morin.

Just Before Dawn: Trauma Assessment and Treatment of Sexual Victimization by Jan Hindman

Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse by Mike Lew.

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Praise for prior editions!

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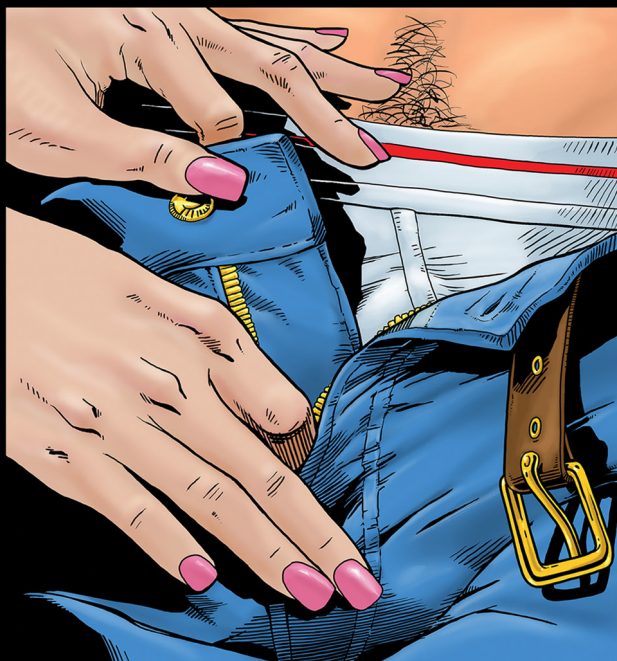
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