

# Victim of circumstance

*In the emotional race to deal with the feelings family and friends have when someone close to them is raped, it is most often the victim who is left behind.*

Editor's note: The following is a true story reported over the last four months. It contains words and concepts of a sexual nature that may be offensive to some readers.

**J**ennifer Jones froze.

No screams. No tears. No escape.  
It had only taken seconds for him to unzip his pants and pull them off.

The door to his apartment closed.  
He kissed her repeatedly.  
Jones was afraid, too afraid to react.  
She said no and tried to push him away, but he did not listen.

He took her to his bedroom and sat her on his bed, reaching under her skirt and pulling off a brand-new pair of underwear. She didn't try to sit up when he pushed her down.

Alone, in the dark of his bedroom, he began to take her.

Before he finished, he got up to look for a condom — no doubt a "favor" in his mind. Jones' mind raced, wondering if she should scream, if she should run, if she should fight.

When he left the room, she got off the bed and gathered her things, bumping into him as she tried to slip out the door. He apologized for not finding a condom.

In an effort to get away, Jones said it was OK, wished him a good night and hurried back to her apartment down the hall.

For him, he wanted it and she didn't fight. There was nothing wrong.

For most of her friends and family, she didn't want it but didn't fight. There was nothing wrong.

For her, a friendly encounter with a neighbor turned into a dreadful nightmare from which she will never fully wake.

And there was nothing right about it.

**T**here are two girls sitting together; one is twice as old as the other, yet they have grown dependent on one another.

They talk about the smaller, inconsequential things of life. Why the older one doesn't eat the crown on her hamburgers. Why the younger one speaks in a barely audible voice. Why they both feel the need to be together now, when they did not know each other in May, only three short months ago.

Jones is 20 years old, a decade more than the child she watches during the day. She is a sophomore dance major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a good 10 years further in her studies than the child.

Jones is the victim of acquaintance rape, something she prays the child will never experience.

She prays that her guidance will help the child learn to make the right decisions in the right situations.

She prays the child will never be the one out of every four college women who experience such a thing.

She prays the child will not someday be one of the women who are raped every eight minutes in the United States.

Jones prays the child will not grow up to be her.

The two are in Jones' apartment, an apparently cozy, loving home. But Jones no longer connects those feelings with this place.

She wants to move from the apartment. Has to move. She cannot be alone there; her mind won't allow it.

"I don't have a home now," she says later. "It can't be home to me. It just doesn't feel like it anymore."

The girl, now a dear friend to Jones, allows her to be in the apartment and not be alone. Ever.

The girl knows Jones wants to move, but she wants to know why. Jones does not lie; she says she's been having problems with her neighbor.

"What kind of problems?" the girl asks.

