



Jones' response, in an effort to protect the 10-year-old's innocence, says something that is perhaps as close to the truth as any white lie can be:

"He stole something from me."

On the 17th of April, a brisk Wednesday night, Jones opened the security door to her apartment building and stepped inside.

It was just before 10 p.m.

She was happy and unafraid. She had just returned from a friend's dance recital and was eager to call a classmate to make plans for the weekend.

As she started to unlock the door to her apartment, something made her stop.

Down the hall, a young man was stepping out of his door. He was in excellent physical condition, muscular and well-groomed. He was a friend.

She said hello. A friendly greeting, just like any other time she said hello to him.

He said something similar and asked if she wanted him to return a few items he was keeping for her. Jones agreed and walked down the hall to his apartment, stepping into the small foyer just behind his door.

He told her to wait while he got her things. She waited, the door still open next to her.

He returned with her things. She told him thank you and gave him a friendly kiss.

He kissed her again. And again. He did not stop.

At 10:20, Jones returned to her apartment and called her friend.

She never used his name. Not once. It was always "he" or "him." Never a name.

She seemed strangely detached when she first told her story. The attack sounded as if it had happened to someone she knew, instead of herself.

She was afraid of mirrors, as well.

While using the sink in the bathroom for months after the attack, she stood over to the side, refusing to look at her face. It was something that brought up too many feelings, too many memories.

Jones said she didn't know why she did those things. Her only explanation for her fear of mirrors is summed up in one word: ugliness.

"I know I'm not ugly, but what he did to me was," she said.

"I can tell the ugliness isn't on the outside. Other people don't see it, but the ugliness is still inside me."

She looked up at the ceiling and sighed. "And it won't go away."

Jones said she felt dirty, out-of-place in her own body, as if she never belonged where she was. Her body, try as she might to deny it or say she didn't care, was no longer only hers. It was his, as well.

Welcome to her world.

For more than a month afterward, Jones subconsciously worried if she were pregnant, but she refused to know.

She had been tested for sexually-transmitted diseases and pregnancy twice, coming up negative on all counts both times, but she had her doubts until her cycle finally started at the end of May.

The money for the tests came from Jones' own pocket — her medical coverage was paid by her father, and she did not want him to know about the tests.

"Three hundred dollars," she said callously. "That's how much it cost me. Just because some guy wanted to f—k me."

The jaded, annoyed attitude returned every so often, masking the pain and fear that was inside her head. At times it affected every aspect of her thought process, making it difficult for her to express herself clearly to friends and family.

"It's not like what you see on TV," she said. "I wasn't attacked or forced down or beat up. That's what I was trying to avoid. It's a decision I'll have to live with for the rest of my life, but it's what I did."

Dealing with the actual experience when it occurred never sounded as if it were a problem. She simply ignored it as it was happening, much as she sometimes ignores the feelings that surface during the course of her day.

"It's like when your mind goes someplace, where nothing can touch it," she said. "You focus on one thing — like a picture on the wall or something — and don't take your mind off of it. That's what I did."

"And I'll remember what his bedpost looked like for a long time."

The dress hung in Jones' closet for over a month after the incident.

"It was my favorite outfit in the whole world," Jones said. "You wouldn't believe how much I loved that thing. If there was only one thing in my whole wardrobe I could keep, it would've been that dress."

But Jones opened her closet one day, handed the dress to her mother and asked her to throw it away.

"I couldn't even look at it anymore," she said. "Every time I saw it, no matter how much I loved it, it brought the pain back."

She described the dress: a short, pink skirt with a tight-fitting blouse. A bit risqué, she said, but something she felt attractive in, and something she had received several compliments on.

"I hate pink," she said, "but in this dress, I loved it."

Jones stared at her shoes as she spoke. They

were brand-new white Vans low-tops, with lug soles and rubber toe caps. Clumsy-looking on their own, but petite and even elegant on her dancer's feet.

"These shoes would've gone great with them," she said.

She looked up, a tear trying to squeeze its way down her cheek. Her lips trembled slightly, but the tears didn't come. She wouldn't allow them.

"Never going to find out just how great now, though."

For hours after the incident, Jones walked nervously throughout her apartment, knowing that he was only a few feet away from her.

She did not cry. She did not scream. She did not shower.

She called her best friend.

Jones never said what she and her friend talked about during that conversation. Chances are Jones herself probably remembers very little of what was actually said, anyway.

The attitude of her friend, however, is a memory burned deep within her.

"She didn't care," Jones said. "She still doesn't. Her whole attitude was, 'Oh, well, just forget about it.'"

"She just doesn't understand that I can't do that."

Jones said she felt as if her friend was denying that it was rape, believing the whole thing was a terrible mistake.

That is a concept Jones indeed felt for the first few hours.

"I was pacing back and forth, saying, 'Oh my God, oh my God, I have just made the biggest mistake of my life.'" Jones said. "It took me a long time to calm down and think about it and decide I wasn't the one who did the wrong thing."

Unfortunately, no one close to Jones felt the same way at first, including the young woman she had become so close to.

Jones is suffering, and will continue to suffer for a long time, in Jones' eyes, her friend cannot deal with that suffering.

So now their friendship will suffer.

"She doesn't want to hear it," Jones said.

"She wants me to get over it and be the same person I was before, and I'm not going to be. Not ever again."

Her friend's attitude is apparent. Instead of pity or support for Jones, she offers only rage, anger at her friend for making her a part of a reality she doesn't want to know about.

She quit talking to her, quit going places with her. She no longer wanted to be near Jones when she needed someone to listen to her.

They are actions Jones regrets, but there is nothing she can do to change her friend.

"I love her to death, but I can't do anything," Jones said. "This is the path she's chosen, and I can't let it change the way I have to deal with this."

A month after the attack, in May, Jones' friend left Lincoln for the summer. Now, near the time of her return, she has only called twice, has not written, has barely asked how Jones is doing.

And for that apparent lack of concern, Jones is upset. It is not something she can change, though, and even she admits she was not responsive to any concern her friend might have shown.

She is not willing to forgive her friend's anger and apathy anytime soon, but for Jones there is a dull, aching feeling, and she knows why she feels it.

"I miss her," she said.

At a friend's house, Jones turned on the radio and closed her eyes. It was a head-bobbing, hip-grinding beat, a remix of some slightly popular Euro-dance song.

She stood in front of the stereo and swayed back and forth slightly, moving in time to the

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