

## From the Eyes of a Survivor

### *Living with PTSD*

There are no words to describe  
The feeling of a stranger's hands  
Exploring your body  
In ways no man has before.  
His hand prints have stained my skin.  
I can still feel the pressure on my body,  
The pain between my legs.  
I often wake up drenched in sweat  
With memories racing through my veins.  
My throat shrinks and my lungs collapse.  
His hand is around my throat again.  
I can't breathe.  
Help me.  
But I am alone.  
I am always alone,  
But he is always with me.

### *Who to Blame*

Maybe it was my fault  
For letting him in,  
For trusting him,  
For not screaming like my body was.  
Maybe it was society's fault  
For teaching him that he could do such horrors with no consequences,  
Because boys will be boys.  
Or maybe it was his fault  
For not stopping,  
For taking what he had no right to,  
For making me lose all sense of safety.  
For raping me.

### *Silly Girl*

Silly girl,  
You were not raped.  
You do not know what consent is.  
That skirt you have on,  
That is consent.  
That alcohol in your hand,

That is consent.  
That smile on your face,  
That is consent.  
Silly girl,  
You cannot change your mind.  
If you say yes once,  
You say yes forever.  
Silly girl,  
Do not lie.  
Sluts cannot be raped.

### *All the Things They Never Said*

All my life,  
People have told me how to avoid getting hurt.  
Dress appropriately.  
Stay in groups.  
Don't talk to strangers.  
But what if he wasn't a stranger?  
What if I trusted him enough to be alone with him?  
They're quick to tell you how to prevent it,  
But they never tell you what happens if you can't.  
They never told me that my virginity would be ripped away  
As if it was as disposable as the clothes he tore off my body.  
They never told me I would vomit every day for three weeks straight  
Because I could still feel him on me.  
They never told me vomiting would turn to heaving.  
Because at some point, I just stopped eating.  
They never told me that I would be labeled a lying slut.  
And they certainly didn't tell me I would start to believe it.