



## Serial abuser of women

This week, I was badly triggered by the drama "This is England '90", in which a character was drugged and then raped by a group of men. Something similar happened to me, when I was drugged and raped by an acquaintance who works in the music industry; someone well respected in his field. We were chatting after a gig and although I'd been drinking, I'd only had a few and was perfectly lucid. Suddenly, however, I could barely stand. I'm certain he put something in my drink and then once I was under the influence, offered to "look after me" by taking me back to our hotel (we were staying in the same one). I trusted him as he was an acquaintance and we had met socially numerous times before. He took me back to my room, where I was raped. I was unconscious, therefore not capable of consent. He physically hurt me during the rape, as the next day I was covered in bruises. I'm still traumatised by the memory of waking up and realising I'd had sex with him - by the time I woke up, he had gone back to his own room (and his girlfriend!) When I saw him again a few months later - an unplanned meeting - he grabbed hold of me from behind, put his tongue in my ear and told me he wanted violent sex with me again. I was horrified and pushed him away. Since then, I've avoided the town where he lives, in case I see him again. This feels unfair as it's my home town too. I was appalled when I learned he had done a gig in the city where I now live, at a venue very close to where I work. Knowing he'd been near me made my skin crawl and I started having panic attacks.

For a long time afterwards, I blamed myself. I thought that because I'd had a few drinks, I'd put myself in a vulnerable position. I now know that the guilt and responsibility is his alone - because I was raped.

Since the rape, I have spoken to other women who have been abused by this man, whether financially, sexually, or both. I've learned that he grooms women by appearing like the most pleasant, charming and likeable person around, when the truth is he's a serial abuser of women and a sexual predator.

Personally, I'm now having counselling, which is helping but watching This is England the other night triggered further flashbacks and panic attacks. I don't know if a content warning was aired before the programme, but if there wasn't, there should have been.