



## Severe Victim Blaming

This only happened four months ago.

I was locked out of my apartment after coming back from a punk show and it was late at night. I texted a few of my friends who live nearby to see if I could go to their place to get safety and shelter until my boyfriend got home from work. A friend of mine, let's just call him Joe, who lives down the street got back to me saying I was welcome to go to his place.

We hung out then he went out to do something and while he was out, I fell asleep. When he came back, he kept bothering me and asking me weird questions like if I wanted to wear shorts. All I wanted to do was sleep.

I'm not sure how much time had passed while I fell back asleep, but I woke up to him groping my ass and my thighs. I had to tell him to stop multiple times. And even after demanding he stop, he still propositioned me for sex. Gross.

I have been incredibly angry and disgusted ever since he did that to me. I was looking for safety and he completely took advantage of me. He was my friend and he violated my trust.

Unfortunately, that's not where it ends. Later on when I had the opportunity, I told some of our mutual friends what he did. Apparently, he had been telling them that we had sex. Consensually. They blindly believed his allegation even though they know that I have been with my boyfriend for more than five years and have never cheated on him.

I told them that this was a lie and they had the nerve to say that I was lying. They came up with their own bullshit story that Joe and I had sex and then the next time that Joe and I hung out is when he sexually assaulted me but it's not that bad because he didn't actually rape me.

I was livid and called them out for victim shaming me and excusing his disgusting behavior. They accused ME of treating THEM poorly and told me I was being irrational.

I have really been trying to heal from the abuse that Joe had inflicted upon me. But it has made it a hell of a lot harder, when people victim shame and have his back instead of mine.

I ended up finding out from 2 other women in confidence that he had done the same to them. With one of them, he bragged to some friends about messing around with her even though according to her, she wanted nothing to do with him. I found out about these two, but he clearly has a pattern and there's a possibility he's hurt a lot more. He's been doing this for a long time right under everybody's noses.

I am going to do everything in my power to get better. I decided to do this because I understand how lonely, hurtful, disturbing it is to be victim shamed. It is the last thing that the victim needs and makes them feel even worse when they're already wrecked inside. This whole experience has been extremely painful and I have needed support. It has helped a little bit to know that I'm



not alone, that I'm not crazy. My thoughts and reaction to the situation are valid. This is something that is constantly happening to women.

People who have shared their stories have lifted me up a little bit, making me feel like there is some hope, that it is possible to heal, to live a fulfilling life and to use my voice about my experience to give hope to others. And that's why I do this. I want people to know that they're not the only ones being victim blamed. If you're reading this and something similar happened to you, you're valid. You matter. You didn't deserve what happened to you. You deserve the best that life can give.

We do **NOT** give permission for posts to be reproduced, translated or otherwise published elsewhere. We will not contact people who submit their personal experiences on behalf of journalists, bloggers or other third sector organisations. These testimonies remain the intellectual copyright of their authors and must be treated with the ethical guidelines used by academics for research involving human subjects. Our full guidelines can be read [here](#).