

Red lipstick

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It was Friday afternoon. It was a very hot and boring day. I received a call from my friends telling me that we were going out tomorrow to my other friend's house. Actually, it was not my friend but someone I knew—we used to attend the same school and sometimes we met on the street or at malls. So this guy was hosting a party—a sort of a braai.

I am one person who is not into clubbing and partying, but because my friends would be there I also had to be there. I did not know what to wear but one of my friends suggested I should wear something nice and short. I went to my wardrobe and started looking for an outfit. I searched for something glamorous. I chose a red dress and tried it on with orange shoes. I looked at myself in the mirror. It was not good at all.

Next morning was sunny with a cool wind. I went back to my wardrobe to check for something to wear. I was confused. Finally I picked a black short skirt and a leopard print shirt. With red heels, my red lipstick, my small hand bag, my curly hair I went straight to the bus stop to catch a taxi to Alexandra. Everyone on the street was like 'Wiiiiii, wiiiiii !', admiring my outfit.

So there we were, Saturday afternoon around 4 p.m. We were late, we were supposed to be there at 12. So everybody was like 'you guys are late, but you look beautiful.' I could not see myself as beautiful because of the things I did not like in the first place. I forced myself to be at a place I did not want to be at. I did not feel so comfortable wearing these clothes, but I did not want to let my

friends down because everyone will be wearing nice and short, everyone will be happy and happening.

There was food, and then around 10.30 or 11 p.m. there comes the drinks. I had to drink that night to look wow and to take away my shyness and uncomfortable feelings. The DJ changed the music. We danced and sang. The music was loud like dush ...dush...fast dush dush du du du dush. I danced and drank like never before.

This guy came and gave me a cigarette. I said no and everyone was like 'You trying to be cool, like really now?' Then outside these other guys were smoking hubbly bubbly. I smoked the pipes and while I was smoking and dancing this guy was watching me. A tall guy, coffee in complexion, with a heavy black blazer. After a couple of minutes the guy was dancing with me. And when I went outside he followed me. I sat down. He grabbed my hand and said 'can I dance with you?' I was like 'Heeh .. what?' because the music was so loud. He shouted 'can I dance with you?' I replied 'Yeah, why not?'. He seemed innocent, cool and charming. I did not have second thoughts about him.

He told me his name but I don't remember it. He suggested we go clubbing elsewhere. I, being high said 'Yeah, why not.' The guy took advantage of that. He took advantage of me. He drove to Joburg. Remember the party was at Alexandra. After some time I felt cold hands at my neck, I smelt strong perfume between my lips and nose. I realised I am in a car in Joburg, outside a hotel.

The guy told me 'stay in the car, I am coming just now'. I watched him walking towards a hotel and I began to realise that he was booking us into the hotel. After some minutes he came back and asked for my phone. I panicked. I asked 'What for?' He shouted 'Your phone. Now!' I was scared and shaking. I looked at the clock and saw it was past 2 a.m. It was cold and I was freezing. He pulled me out of the car and I had no choice but to walk with him towards the hotel. He grabbed my hand and looked me in the eye. 'Behave'.

I did not know what to do, where to run to. We had to cross the street just before the hotel. It was dark, no cars were passing by. On my left I saw the lights of a car but they seemed far from us. On my right this heavy black blazer guy was still holding my hand. I tried to move slowly, hoping the distant lights would come closer. Suddenly the car passed in front of us. It was a police car. I wanted to scream but it passed by too fast. We crossed the street silently. Walking towards the hotel entrance. Other cars were parked just before the main door. Another police car came by. Oh Gosh! I ran straight to the police car, right in front of it. It nearly knocked me over, and the two police guys were like 'Hey you! Are you mad or crazy?'

I screamed 'Help, help please! I don't know where I am and I don't know this guy. Maybe he is trying to hurt me or kidnap me or do something bad'. The one police guy looked at me and asked 'he is not your boyfriend?' He asked the guy if he knows me. The guy claimed he was my boyfriend but fortunately for me when the police asked him he did not know my name. The police said if she is your lady you just have to fetch her at the police station. The guy went to his car. I thought he was following us to the police station. But hell, he ran away. The police took me to the Alexandra police station. The police dog barked all the way, and both the police guys kept shouting at me. I was confused. I did not know which one to listen to. I was scared of my parents and I did not even have my phone because the guy took it. I was busy crying. The one policeman said 'Shut up. Who sent you there anyway? In fact you should pay us. But because we work for the people you are lucky.' They drove to Alex and dropped me at the police station around. It was now around 4 a.m.

I wondered where are my friends? Do they know what happened to me? I cried telling myself that I would never do anything to impress other people. There are heartless people out there, especially men. I wished I had not been so scared and that I was able to stand up

for myself. I got home around 8 that Sunday morning and I made sure my parents did not notice anything.

I urge every young women out there to stand for themselves no matter how hard it may be. Don't give up. If it were not for the police I don't know what I would have done. I did not have that power to stand for myself and say no.

I learned from this experience and I told myself that no man will overpower me. Never again. And I shall not give up. To all young women out there who are being over ruled and abused because of low self-esteem, we have power and we can make it. We may make mistakes and we do want to have fun and enjoy life. We want freedom but it still does not give a man the right to take advantage of us and take us for granted. Not even if we wear red lipstick! No!

