

# DON'T DRINK THE WATER

He spikes drinks and takes unconscious women home. He looks just like you – and fancies the same girls. But before you can catch him, you need to understand him. We tell you how to spot the rapist in a crowd

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**“Y**OU HAVE TO GIVE HER the drink near to where you want to have sex with her. If she passes out and you have to carry her then people will get suspicious,” says Kevin.

This makes perfect sense if you think about it. So bars are no good. Girls get drugged in bars, but only by amateurs. A friend of mine was found – after one drink – hunting for her earring in a urinal while it was still on her ear. But she was scooped up by a friend without incident.

**“The sex is not about enjoyment. Not really,” he says with a mulling tone. “It’s about punishment”**

This wouldn’t have happened with Kevin, who has spent years with his mates strategising, drugging and raping hundreds of women. Between six and 10 girls a month over a six-year period.

The trouble is even now he can’t disguise his pride. It dribbles out of his lips as he tells me where, when, how many. He’s 27 years old and says to have been “transformed” for six years. “I’m friends now with one of the girls we did those things to,” says Kevin, who rarely says the word “sex” and never the word “rape”. He speaks about his career as a serial drugging rapist as a phase in his life that he’s left behind. A phase in his life. Some guys took drugs, but him and his four friends dished drugs out – and then raped the same girl.

It was a network of friends who were motivated by revenge. It was the girls who rejected them that they were after. If a girl shunned one or embarrassed another of the group – especially a “middle-class or Christian girl” – then a few calls would bring the collective of five together so they could strategise. What was the plan? If the girl didn’t go to bars, but had a penchant for Fanta Grape from the local shop, then no problem. All it would take was a quick cruise, some tampering with a cooldrink and a smile from Kevin (who claims he was the charmer of the group, “an angel” with the girls).

These guys need to be hunted down, but how are you going to do it? Kevin hasn’t gone to jail – not one girl during his “raping

phase” pressed charges, or plans to. The girl, especially if she has a scattered or blacked out memory from the drugs, tends to think she brought it upon herself. Her reasoning is that she didn’t have to accept the drink. Here we load you up with enough info to spot guys like him – what you do after that is up to you.

### REFORM A RAPIST

A woman who works at People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) told me in disbelief that she didn’t understand why you would have sex with someone while they were

unconscious, it couldn’t be enjoyable.

“The sex is not about enjoyment. Not really,” says Kevin, with a mulling tone. “It’s about punishment,” he says.

Kevin, when you speak to him, sounds neither threatening nor remorseful. He’s pragmatic – it’s the socialisation of men, he keeps saying, in his defence. He had an abusive step-dad and grew up in a poor area of Johannesburg. Still, he’s got a matric and he went to college. “Everyone has a different experience growing up,” he says.

His particular experience of growing up involved “more girls than I can count”. He and his friends were going for the numbers. When I ask him if he’s been tempted to return to his old life since quitting – he has a girlfriend and plans to have a family – he says no. When I ask him if he’s worried about the hundreds of husbands, brothers and fathers that would surely be heroes if they managed to castrate him, he remains unperturbed. “I don’t worry, but it does make me think that there are repercussions for your actions,” he says. Like jail, right? Chemical castration? The electric chair? Surely, no matter how gruesome his upbringing, or how broken his home was, drugging and raping hundreds of women deserves punishment?

“There is no case unless the victim presses charges,” says Supreme Mfalapitsa, counsellor and lecturer for EngenderHealth South Africa (an organisation that deals with men’s attitudes to gender and violence).

Without the signed affidavit of the victim there’s no case – and this becomes Loch Ness Monster-rare when dealing with a drink spiking case, because the victim often believes the incident to be her fault.

I met Kevin through EngenderHealth. They imposed a strict agreement of confidentiality, so I could never meet Kevin in person, but only speak to him on the phone. Mfalapitsa insists that they aren’t

taking the law out of the picture by holding Kevin’s identity in confidence (from me or the police).

He is adamant that these men do not necessarily change in jail and that a safe counselling place is the best way to transform them.

Mfalapitsa works at rehabilitation – with prisoners and free men all the same. It’s called restorative justice: it’s every bleeding-heart liberal’s dream of how the system should work – don’t punish, but cure. At least this is the dinner-party theory, until it happens to your daughter. However, if a victim does come forward, the organisation will help to make sure the rapist is convicted. They will sweat over extending his sentence and keeping the police involved. So there is a contradiction between old-fashioned prison time and restorative justice. Primarily though, they help rehabilitate men like Kevin so they can have proper relationships. “If they

relapse after approaching us and commit a fresh crime then we'll call the police," Mfalapitsa says – but what is in the past is left there.

### IS YOUR GIRL A TARGET?

Kevin is 19 years old and sitting in a parked car with his four best mates. They're chatting, waiting, planning. One of them had met a married Christian girl yesterday. "One day your Jesus will be away," he jokes from the backseat. Tonight her Jesus and husband are both away – that's why they're parked outside her house.

The girl comes out – she's attractive (the first criteria) and she'd shunned one of the guys the previous day (second criteria). Kevin leans out of the car and asks her to a party. He names a few of her friends and says they'll be there. When the girl arrives her friends are absent. She takes a glass of punch and waits. Her friends will never arrive – and her life will never be the same again.

Kevin fully admits that drugging a girl is not the same as plying her with 10 tequilas in a club. You couldn't serve enough alcohol to get someone into the same state. "If she was at a house we'd make sure that she wanted to lie down. Get on a couch. We'd let her know that if she let us have sex with her then she'd be fine," he says, but by that stage she wouldn't be able to move either way. He never sourced or bought the drugs – his friends did – he just knew that it took two white pills to put a girl to sleep.

The options, though, for a drink spiker, are extensive. "They can use eye drops," says Mfalapitsa. If mixed with an alcoholic drink it augments the effect, makes a girl dizzy and gives her involuntary spasms. In reality the best chance of a spiker being caught is if the substance he's using is illegal and he has enough in his possession to be considered a dealer. This isn't possible with eye drops. "Brake fluid from a car, if smeared around the inside of glass will leave her comatose," says Mfalapitsa. Horse sterilisation medicine could be used if you have such connections – this would be powerful enough to wipe her memory entirely, for up to 12 hours before she sipped it. On occasion it could leave her permanently sterile.

But Kevin never got involved in the technical side. "I wanted to show her that I was a man. That you pee sitting down and I pee standing up, you know?" he says, like an old jock re-living his glory days. If they saw a victim out on the town at a later date, they'd feel warm and fuzzy knowing that they'd been with her – possibly without her even knowing. If she was with a new guy it would get better, then they would yell out that she

was weak and mock the guy she was with. Kevin and his boys wanted to own every woman in the world. With little prompting he starts to flip through his memories of girls like a Rolodex.

"Poor girls would be easy – no need to drug them. You could just buy them some moisturiser as a present. It was the middle-class girls we were after, the ones who thought they were better than us," he says. Mfalapitsa tells me that it's all self-esteem issues, that guys like this have no confidence in having sex with a girl in a consensual (or legal) way, but they still need the affirmation.

The victim would wake up with her clothes slipped back on her body, be told that she'd fallen asleep and so she would shuffle home on her own. "Meeting her the next day wouldn't be easy," says Kevin, who remembers several occasions when he'd bump into

**"It was the middle-class girls we were after, the ones who thought they were better than us"**

a victim on the street. There'd be a question of how much she could remember. If a memory of the night before was poking through, would she be confident enough to tell anyone?

### MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR GUILT

When pushed for reasons, Kevin doesn't talk about the allure of women or even a sexual drive – he talks about his mates, how they weren't shy to be naked around each other and that the bond was strong because they were "protecting each other's secret". The theory was if you did this alone then you'd get caught. This shows that they understood, through all that gruesome upbringing, that what they were doing was wrong.

The only people conscious during most of Kevin's sex-life have been his male friends, queuing up behind him like frantic monkeys. He pulls out the explanation of "peer pressure" and that he wanted to quit, as if he was a drug addict. His friends were angry and so he persisted, not wanting to show a sign of weakness – "because men don't do that". Kevin, who has broken contact with his mates, is full of the pressures of what it

### KNOW YOUR ENEMY

*Men's Health* specialist psychology editor Rafiq Lockhat says that there are three types of men who spike drinks.

- 1** The pure psychopath, a man who has no conscience whatsoever.
- 2** A man with low self-esteem, but this alone doesn't guarantee him to be a spiker. "You get poor people who steal and poor people who don't," says Lockhat. To spike drinks you need a strong delusion over what is right and wrong.
- 3** The guy who does it because his mates are egging him on – so peer pressure isn't an excuse, but is considered a reason.

means to be a man. “Male weakness”, “peer pressure” and “the wrong crowd” are the phrases of a man that has been through the therapy mill. There are support groups like EngenderHealth SA for men like Kevin – in much the same way that networks exist to help men whose wives have been raped, there are groups for men who’ve raped plenty of women. They sit and discuss what they’ve done – I imagine with serial killer detail. “I wanted to have peace so I started talking. And I can only talk about it now because I’ve got peace,” Kevin says.

The support groups don’t often encourage the rapists to turn themselves over to the police, although Kevin went to speak to a girl in 2005 to eke out a little redemption. The girl he approached was angry. She had been drugged and raped again by a different band of cronies a few years later. She was convinced that she had been born to fulfil this role of a victim in the world. “It took a lot of courage for me to approach her,” Kevin says. It’s usually when these guys make the connection between their own sisters or mothers and the women they’ve hurt that the guilt seeps through. There’s a realisation that this could happen to a woman they love. Either that, or they get caught.

## EMBRACE THE LAW

**Attorney Neil Johnson knows the law – here’s where you stand when it comes to drink spiking, rape and suspecting a criminal**

**QUESTION 1** If you know that someone has committed a rape, but the victim does not come forward. Can you report the incident?

There is now a legal duty on every person to report any form of sexual abuse against a child or mentally disabled person immediately. Fail to do so, and you can be prosecuted and face up to five years imprisonment.

Where the matter relates to a rape committed on an adult, there is no legal duty to report it, but arguably a moral and ethical duty. It would, however, be difficult for the state to prove its case without the subsequent cooperation of the victim.

**QUESTION 2** How long after a rape can a victim come forward?

In terms of section (18) of the Criminal Procedure Act, all offences prescribe after 20 years, except murder, treason, robbery with aggravating circumstances, kidnapping and rape. There was recently a case where the victim had identified her rapists, by chance, in the street 28 years after the fact. They were

convicted and sentenced. This was confirmed by the Appeal Court and the Constitutional Court.

**QUESTION 3** How much jail time will a person do for rape?

The court has no option but to hand down a life sentence where:

- A) The rape is committed by more than one person.
- B) You are convicted of more than one rape and are to be sentenced for them simultaneously.
- C) You rape a person while knowingly being HIV-positive.
- D) Where the victim is under the age of 16 years.
- E) Where the victim is mentally or physically disabled.

The prescribed sentence for a first offender is 15 years and for a second offender is 20 years imprisonment.

**QUESTION 4** Do they attack rapists in jail or is that a myth?

All convicted persons are vulnerable to attack in prison regardless of the offence. Rapists are attacked no more than other offenders. Persons who commit sexual crimes against children are, however, regarded to be a little lower on the food chain.

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Kevin didn't stop spiking drinks from a crushing guilt, but a miscalculation in the dosage. A girl – much like any other – trudging back home (this is when Kevin was 20) and was met by her parents while she was still groggy with medication.

Fathers were involved (his and hers), but charges weren't pressed. Kevin was kicked out of home and sent to college – so he lost touch with his mates. Lost a taste for his life, grew out of it and moved on to women who stay awake during sex, with no other men in the room.

### THE HANGOVER EFFECT FOR YOU

Men like Kevin have added a savage dimension to buying a girl a drink. For all of us in every club or bar. When she puts her lips to a glass, she'll hesitate and smell the liquid. It's a vodka and Coke, just like she asked. You only met her 10 minutes ago, but you bought her a drink. That's the kind of guy you are. She smiles a little as if bracing herself. While pretending to sip the drink you just bought her, she has to suss out not only if you're attractive, have a job, a decent haircut, but also if you have access to prescription drugs and if her friends are nearby.

Kevin still lives in a world where having sex with dozens, even hundreds, of women is considered pretty cool. We are obsessed with convincing and “tricking” women into bed, from manipulative eye contact to sentimental presents. We'll feed her food that we believe to be an aphrodisiac or buy her expensive wine so she'll drink more of it.

The frightening part is all Kevin had to do to adjust was to stop buying and using the drugs. He still holds his tally of women with a certain glee and girls who believe in his reform (or who never discover his past) will date him. Have sex with him. He is repackaged, ready and drinking at a bar near you.

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### SPOT THE GIRL WHO'S DRUGGED, NOT DRUNK

Supreme Mfalapitsa, counsellor and lecturer for EngenderHealth South Africa, says that busy, dark clubs with plenty of noise are prominent drink spiking targets, but a house party or even a park are good enough targets. Symptoms normally come on within five to 20 minutes, and can last as long as 12 hours. Keep a look out for the following signs:

- › Dizziness and difficulty with walking.
- › Confusion or a feeling of disorientation.

- › Difficulty speaking or slurred speech.
- › Nausea or vomiting.
- › Tiredness and fatigue.
- › Visual problems, particularly blurred vision.
- › Paranoia, a feeling of fear or distrust of others.
- › The next day she'll have amnesia and may experience a blackout of events – not being able to remember large sections of the evening.