

26th March, 2009

### YOU THINK YOU KNOW SOMEONE...

DEAR DIARY, when I was younger, I think was in secondary school, I met for the first time and most certainly not the last, a young man. He was around 18 years old. His name was Kirk. He was a good friend of two members of my close-knit extended family; Mike and Rayon. He then grew close to other members of the family like parents, other siblings, cousins etc and soon he was a regular face in and out of our lives and houses.

I remember him being handsome, well built, tall and charismatic. He was a little bit shy as well as good looking which is a great combination - most females want to snag a gorgeous man who's not vain about it! Who needs a man who sends himself Valentine cards and kisses the mirror and tells the world that his own reflection makes him horny!

I must say, I wasn't the only person in the family to have a crush on Kirk; I think my mum, aunties, cousins, sister and dad had a crush on him too. But that soon subsided when the crush wasn't reciprocated and everyone's feelings went back to normal and he then became a member of the extended family and all thoughts of crushes soon disappeared.

Time passed and we grew up and left our family homes and the area we all grew up in and people went their separate ways. People got married or had babies or both and I didn't see Kirk for years. That was until I saw his photograph, in full living colour on the TV yesterday. It was an evening news report. The report said that Kirk had been arrested for having committed a string of sexual attacks in South London. I can't tell you how shocked I was. In fact, I thought I was going to faint. I was busy folding the laundry when the news came on, but when I saw who and what it was about; I had to sit down on the bed. While the news was on, I received about four phone calls from my friends/family (including my mum) telling me to watch the news RIGHT NOW!

The last time I saw Kirk was about two years ago. He was walking down my street which is in the same vicinity as his house. He said he had a rental property nearby and also asked me how my cousins, brothers and sisters were doing and we said our goodbyes. He seemed quite business like for someone who I hadn't seen in a long time. I sort of expected a warmer hello, a longer chat, a "how you doing" for more than five minutes type of thing. He was in a hurry so I said goodbye and didn't think much more about our meeting or the brevity of it.

# The AUGUST MAYFIELD Diaries

I'm still in shock that our family friend Kirk is a SEX ATTACKER and RAPIST. If some of what I've read in the papers is correct, he could well have been raping from the day I met him many moons ago, right up until he got caught. I guess people want a rapist to at least show some kind of overt deviance or darkness but Kirk came across as a well spoken, mild mannered gentleman; someone your mum and dad would take to. Unfortunately, this same man would follow a lone woman, grab her from behind, cover her mouth with his hand, wrestle her down to the ground and either sexually assault or rape her.

I would never ever in a million years have guessed that he had a depraved side to his character. NEVER! This is how much I would have trusted him - if he asked to kip on my sofa because he was locked out or something of the sort, I would have said yes with no fear whatsoever!

Well these days, I'm afraid of walking down the street after dark alone, even though Kirk's behind bars. Are there really many Kirks out there just waiting to pounce on defenceless and unsuspecting women walking home, minding their own business and getting on with their life? After reading what some of his attackers have written, I'm afraid of my own shadow.

My heart goes out to the women affected by the trauma of a sexual attack and my heart also goes out to Kirk's family. His hunger for stealing sexual gratification caused irreparable trauma to many innocent people.

Unfortunately, prison might be just a pause in his behaviour – his rehabilitation will only happen if he's willing and by the grace of God.

*August Mayfield*