

TARGETED

Stuart, late 30s, an owner of a chain of family restaurants in the Midwest was accused of raping and beating Leslie, 20s. He was found not guilty due to insufficient evidence and several technicalities. This is not the first time he has been charged with this sort of crime. The incident, and more recently the verdict, have devastated Leslie, a young mother who was trying to improve her life before the rape occurred. She lost her husband, her job, and her will to finish school. It's been two weeks since the end of the trial, and Stuart is heading into the parking lot of an abandoned warehouse.

STUART: *(Turns around quickly startled.)* Where'd you come from? I didn't see you.

LESLIE: I was back there. *(Points.)*

STUART: In the woods? *(She looks at him.)* Now, look, I don't want any trouble here.

LESLIE: Who said anything about trouble? I just want to ask you a few things.

STUART: The case is over. There's nothing to discuss. It's late. I'm goin' home.

LESLIE: *(Moves in front of his car door.)* I could visit your mother instead?

STUART: Don't even think about it.

LESLIE: Or what?

STUART: *(Looking around.)* The case is over now. It's all over. I didn't do it.

LESLIE: You said that already. I have friends hiding in the woods if that's what you're looking for. No, they aren't going to attack you. Yet. I just have some questions.

STUART: I'll get a restraining order if you start harassing me.

LESLIE: Get one. I have nothing to lose. I've already lost everything

important to me. Besides, it's your word against mine. Just like you pulled in court.

STUART: I didn't pull anything in court. Nothing, lady. I told the truth.

LESLIE: You didn't tell the truth about what you did to me.

STUART: I know someone did that to you, okay, but it wasn't me.

LESLIE: Oh, how sweet of you. To agree that something did happen to me after all the specialists agreed and after the bruises and the black eye and the broken wrist and the many, many pictures of every orifice of my body. That's so sweet of you to agree.

STUART: I don't know why you've gotten it in your head that it must be me who did this to you, lady, because it wasn't. I don't know who the crazy person is who did.

LESLIE: Well, let's think about why. There're many reasons. Maybe the prior offense for one?

STUART: I don't have any.

LESLIE: Not proven anyway.

STUART: I don't have to defend myself to you or anyone.

LESLIE: The woman wanted it, right? She wanted the bruised thighs and the Coke bottle up the—

STUART: I don't have to listen to this.

LESLIE: Why is it disgusting you?

STUART: I have nothing more to say to you. *(He starts to go for his door.)*

LESLIE: She lives at 637 Cherry Road, right? Nice place.

STUART: How'd you know that?

LESLIE: Your mother keeps a very neat garden. I love yellow roses.

STUART: You leave her alone. She's a sixty-seven-year-old lady.

LESLIE: Does she know about that woman—how you dumped her in the alley? With two black eyes?

STUART: That was a completely different story.

LESLIE: Oh, I know. She was a party girl who wanted it rough.

It was a date. Not at all like me. I was hurt by some mysterious person—who wanted my eyes all black too.

STUART: (*Points.*) See that window? My accountant is still working there. All I have to do is wave at him. He'll be here in a second. I don't want to do this, Miss Miller, but I will call the police if you keep this up.

LESLIE: Your "accountant" went home an hour ago. Of course, I don't believe for a minute he's your accountant—dealer more likely. How many accountants do you know who work in abandoned warehouses? Huh?

STUART: You got a problem?

LESLIE: No, you got a problem. Are you getting angry?

STUART: (*Shaking his head.*) No. You seem to be shaking yourself.

LESLIE: Not really. Of course it's easy to get shaky when you face someone who disgusts you so completely. (*Beat.*) Did you get coked-up in there? (*He looks at her.*) You seem nervous.

STUART: I'm not nervous. No reason to be. I just don't need this right now. Okay?

LESLIE: Did you think you'd get off again?

STUART: (*Yelling into the woods.*) Whoever you are out there—I will call the cops. I do know lots of people in the area. There are surveillance cameras out here. So get out!

LESLIE: What are they surveying? Your drug deals?

STUART: What do you want? What do you want from me exactly? Money?

LESLIE: No. To ask a few questions.

STUART: So ask.

LESLIE: Did you rape me?

STUART: Do you really think you could stand here talking to me if I were the one who did that to you?

LESLIE: You didn't answer the question.

STUART: If I were the one, I'd probably be smashing you up against the car right now, and smacking the hell outta you. Those kind of people just lose it.

LESLIE: You seem to know a lot about those kind of people. Are you on your best behavior? Wouldn't want to tarnish your reputation. Couldn't keep the restaurant chain going smoothly if there were more trouble, right?

STUART: I understand you wanting to get even with this person. I sympathize with it even. I'd want to get 'em too, but I'm not going to lead you to believe that I had anything to do with it.

LESLIE: So why did you offer me money a few minutes ago?

STUART: I didn't offer it. I asked you if that's what you wanted.

LESLIE: And what if it was? Were you going to offer it then?

STUART: No.

LESLIE: Good, because it's not your money that I want.

STUART: Is that a threat? Is this an attack on me?

LESLIE: I don't know. Is it? Why don't you answer the question already—directly?

STUART: Look, I'm sorry that you were harmed in that manner, but like I have said over and over—

LESLIE: "Harmed in that manner?" I was raped and beaten and had a Coke bottle shoved up my . . . you're a weasel. You're a disgusting, little, pointy-headed weasel, you know that?

STUART: I wasn't there. I told you that from the beginning. And you can't prove I was. You said it yourself in court. You had a coat over your head the whole time.

LESLIE: I'd recognize your smell anywhere. It makes me sick.

STUART: It's over now! The case is over! There's nothing more to prove because it's over!

LESLIE: Over for you maybe. I've lost everything. My job, my marriage, any scrap of hope I had of pulling things together. I was trying to go back to school for my daughter. I just wanted to get a decent job. It's not over for me because I live in fear every day. I fear walking down the street. I fear parking lots and alleys and men—like you.

STUART: You're not so afraid. (*Nervously rubbing his hands*

together.) Not enough to stop you from talking to me right now.

LESLIE: This is sheer willpower. *(Noticing how Stuart rubs his hands.)* Is it the coke that makes you nervous like that? *(He doesn't react. Beat.)* That's how I knew for certain.

STUART: You don't know anything.

LESLIE: I might not have been able to see, but I could hear the sniffing. You sounded just like the coke addicts at the rehab where I worked. The day when they were interviewing you at the station, I noticed. I noticed the bleeding. Your nose was bleeding from coke.

STUART: Nah. It was just dry from the heat.

LESLIE: Why can't you tell the truth now? That's all I want.

STUART: I'm sorry, Miss Miller, but it wasn't me who did this to you. Okay? Not me. *(Starts to walk toward his car.)*

LESLIE: *(Blocks his path.)* You think because the jury found you not guilty that I don't know? Three witnesses put you in that parking lot seconds before it happened.

STUART: And three witnesses put me elsewhere.

LESLIE: People you paid off. How many times you think you can do this and get off, you son of—

STUART: I'm not getting off. It's the truth. I'm getting targeted. I have a little money. Women like yourself see that and try—

LESLIE: Are you saying I'm making this up?

STUART: I'm not saying you're making this up. I'm saying you decided to blame me because it's very convenient—

LESLIE: Convenient?! Why is it only you then? Why does it keep happening to you? What's special about you? You just keep ending up in dark parking lots? Do you think you're the only rich man to be taken advantage of?

STUART: I don't know why it keeps happening.

LESLIE: Well, maybe it keeps happening to you because you keep raping women and beating the crap out of them. And then going to your police buddies and uncle and asking them—maybe paying them—to fix things up. Do you think

that might be why? And then you conveniently forget what's occurred.

STUART: Obviously, there is no discussion here. You just want to put all this crap on me. I suggest you don't follow me, or I will call the police. I'll go straight to my mother's so if you plan to make a surprise attack on her, that's where I'll be tonight. Now, I'm out of here, honey.

LESLIE: Okay, good night. *(Pointing to his tires.)* Have a good trip.

STUART: Jesus! What'd the hell did you do? Slice 'em all?

LESLIE: Me? No, that wasn't me. *(Sighs.)* Damn. The kids in this neighborhood.

STUART: I'm pressing charges for this. This is ridiculous. I do not need to be terrorized.

LESLIE: *(Laughs.)* Terrorized? You're terrorized? *(Beat.)* Answer the question now—truthfully.

STUART: I'm not going to answer any Goddamn question.

LESLIE: Just say, "Yes, I raped you."

STUART: You and your friends are going to have to pay for these.

LESLIE: Did. You. Rape. Me?

STUART: You're a nutcase. You know that?

LESLIE: Did you shove the Coke bottle up me?

STUART: I won't put up with this. I do have friends myself.

LESLIE: I said, did you rape me?

STUART: I won't hesitate to call a few people if need be.

LESLIE: *(Screaming, grabbing his shirt to force him to look her in the eyes.)* Goddamn it! Do you hear me? I asked you a question! Did you rape me?!!!

STUART: *(Grabbing her arms.)* What if I did, whore? What are you going to do now? Huh? What are you going to do? *(She backs up and he lets go.)* Huh?

LESLIE: *(Beat.)* Kill you. *(Puts her hands on her hips deliberately—it's a signal.)*

STUART: *(Laughs.)* Yeah? Okay. You're tough. You're sexy too, Leslie. Only problem is—you're a whore. Right, little

whore? You're a whore, and your husband knows it. That's why it's over.

LESLIE: *(Pause.)* At least I'm not dead.

STUART: *(Looking around, reacting to the sound of a gun cocking.)* What's that?

LESLIE: Sounded like a gun being cocked.

STUART: Now, come on, I was just kidding. I was just stressed over this whole thing. I can make up for this. I can. I have a lot of money. *(Yelling.)* I have money! I'm gonna help you out! No problem!

LESLIE: I don't want money. I wanted you to admit what you did to me.

STUART: Okay, okay. I did it. I did it. You're right. I did it. Okay? Oh—

(Gun shot. Stuart's shoulder thrusts backwards.)

STUART: *(Grabbing his chest.)* Uh. Jesus. *(Looking at himself.)* What'd you do?

(Gun shot. His body thrusts forward. He grabs his stomach.)

STUART: What'd you do to me?! *(He collapses.)*

LESLIE: Nothing. *(Raises her empty hands.)* Just like you did to me. Right? Just a drug deal gone bad.

WITHOUT YOU

Marilyn, 70s, and Jim, 80s, were very happily married for fifty-two years. They have been blessed with six lovely children and nine wonderful grandchildren. This past year Jim died unexpectedly while in Marilyn's care. It is nearing the end of the Christmas season and Marilyn is having a difficult time. She's talking on the phone with one of her daughters who is checking in with her. Marilyn always insists that her children call when they get back home to let her know they are safe and sound.

MARILYN: *(On phone.)* I'm not being a worrywart!

JIM: Of course she is. But she can't help it. She's talking to one of our daughters.

MARILYN: The snow is falling in big clumps here. The reports say there are lots of accidents!

JIM: *(Beat.)* Isn't she beautiful?

MARILYN: I'm tired. I'm going to bed . . . I'm fine. I just feel the week went way too fast. I can't believe it's already the twenty-seventh. Can you? . . . It went too quick for me. Ahh, it always does.

JIM: Yes. And then the kids and grandkids all go home and there you are again . . .

MARILYN: I might take the pill to help me sleep. Sometimes when I'm so tired it's even harder to . . . What? Yes, of course. I'm fine! . . . I'm not depressed!

JIM: That's what she told me the first Christmas after her grandmother died.

MARILYN: It was nice—too short. And of course, I'm a little bluesy to see Sarah go back, but I know, I know. She has an early train to catch. She's got to get back to work . . . Yes, yes! I'm fine, honey. *(Sighs.)* I just miss him at times like this, when I'm alone here.