

The best outfit for a... spring weekend

Tote bag,
£79.99,
zara.com



Wide brim hat, £5, **George at Asda**: 0500 100 055



Gingham pumps, £60,
theoutnet.com

Polka dot
dress,
£54.95,
joules.co.uk



Styling: ELIZA SCARBOROUGH

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

I thought he would break it. I was only six, I didn't know how to speak out.

We moved to the other side of Bradford that year. He didn't come by as often and my new bedroom had a lock on the door. Perhaps he'd got bored of me, or found someone else, but he didn't bother me again. After my father died of cancer in 1999, when I was nine, I never saw the man again.

Psychologically, however, serious damage had been done. I took six overdoses throughout my teens, yet still I told no one.

When I was 16, one of my friends was raped, and I wondered whether to finally speak out. Her rapist was arrested but the case was dropped and the police effectively accused her of bringing it on herself.

She changed from a confident person to a weak and frightened girl. I knew I wouldn't be able to handle that happening to me, so I kept quiet.

I met my boyfriend, Jason, at college when I was 16. He was the first person I confided in and his support has helped immeasurably.

My rapist destroyed my life and I bitterly regret not reporting him — for all I know he could have gone on to abuse other young girls like me, and that thought is almost too difficult to bear. But I was so little. I didn't even know who the police were, and by the time I understood it was too late.

I don't know where he lives now, or even if he's still alive. But I would kill him if I saw him again.

TESSA SKOLA, 52, a yoga teacher from Fowey, Cornwall, was raped by a boyfriend in July 2001, when she was 41. She says:

I MET him in June 2001 in a shopping centre in West London, where he worked as a shop manager. He was 6ft tall with beautiful manners and expensive suits. I thought he was the ultimate gentleman.

He was the same age as me and a bachelor. I was single too, having spent the previous 20 years working around the world as a cabaret dancer.

After two weeks, he invited me round for dinner. We had a blissful evening after which he walked me home and kissed me goodnight.

Yet the following evening he turned up at my West London flat totally unannounced. My initial delight quickly turned to shock and horror as he threw me down in the corridor, lifted up my dress, tore off my pants and raped me.

There was a glazed look of intent on his face — the personable man I thought I knew had completely disappeared. When I tried to scream he shoved my head back, smashing my jaw on the side of the radiator.

I found my voice as he did up his trousers and told him to get out. His nonchalant response was that maybe he'd see me around. There wasn't a shred of remorse or even realisation that he'd done anything wrong.

I showered immediately, desperate to get every trace of him off me. I felt sordid and stupid, numb with disbelief that this could happen to a sensible woman of my age. I didn't see any point in reporting it. I had dated this man, and it had happened in my own home. It wasn't as if I had been dragged down a secluded alley. Who would believe me?

The next day I went to my local health clinic where I was given tests for STDs and the morning after pill. When I told the nurse what had happened, she was so matter-of-fact I got the impression I wasn't the first woman she'd seen under these circumstances. But to be honest, I'd already made up my mind not to report him.

A few weeks later I sold my flat and

I begged them to stop but the more I pleaded the more they laughed. They were crazed — high on power and drugs

moved to Cornwall, but was plagued by depression. It was only meeting my husband, Christopher, in January 2002, that made me smile again.

I told him what happened after around a year together. He was shocked and upset, but also supportive. We married in September 2010 and I have put the past behind me. I'd like to think that, if I was raped again, I would report it. But I know that is easier said than done.

BARBARA BRIGHTMAN, 50, a writer from Camberley, Surrey, was raped by her husband Joseph throughout their 12-year marriage. They have three children together aged 26, 19 and 17. She says:

Who knew?

Rape was legal within marriage until 1991, when the law was finally changed. The recent survey found that in 66 per cent of cases the women knew the man responsible

I WAS instantly taken by Joseph when we met in a Hong Kong nightclub where I was working in March 1985. He was a handsome and successful American naval officer and quite a catch.

He proposed that May. By the time I fell pregnant two months later we were living together, but Joseph was showing a very jealous and mistrustful side.

At first I put it down to heightened passion and brushed it off. But one night, that autumn, when I wasn't in the mood for sex, Joseph suddenly changed.

He undid his belt and lashed me until my skin bled. He then pushed me on to the bed and raped me with such force that I sobbed in shock and fear.

The following day I told him I didn't want to marry him, and he threatened to kill me and confiscated my passport. I was three months pregnant and a foreigner in a strange country. I had nobody to confide in and no way out.

I convinced myself the incident was a one-off. We married a month later and

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IF YOU HAVE ONLY ... 5 MINUTES

**Instead of just throwing away your old m...
soap and water. It can then be used on its c...**



Living nightmare: Terrie was raped by a former schoolfriend, Becky, inset, by a man she met on a school trip

face them. The idea of having a relationship was too horrific until, when I was 20, I met my boyfriend James who is 30. He was gentle and helped me enjoy sex again. Our daughter was born last October. Shortly afterwards I told my dad. He was devastated and angry. I, meanwhile, am full of remorse for not reporting them when their DNA was on me. I have to live with the knowledge they could have gone on to rape again. I still have nightmares about that morning. I wake up sweating and screaming, convinced it is happening to me again. But I'm stronger now, and look to the future with hope.

BECKY JOHN, 35, a businesswoman from Southampton, was raped in December 1991, aged 15, by a man she met on a school trip. She says:

I WAS still a virgin when it happened. I was on school trip to London from my home town of Bridgend. We were in a toyshop when one of the men working there chatted me up. He was 19. I don't remember his face.

We swapped numbers and, a couple of weeks later, he asked me to stay at his London home. He said we'd see the sights and I could sleep in his sister's room. Of course, my mother, a personal assistant, was worried and didn't want me to go, but I was determined and in the end she relented.

We met outside a Tube station. I can't explain why, but as soon as I saw him I felt uneasy. The feeling grew as he led me to his deserted flat on a rough estate. As soon as we stepped inside, he said we weren't going to go out after all, and I realised something bad was going to happen.

Over the next 24 hours he raped me repeatedly. In between, he ordered pizza and chatted as if nothing was wrong. I was terrified and in pain but I knew nothing about sex and didn't understand what was happening. I couldn't leave because I didn't know where I was.

When we finally left the house the following afternoon, I caught the train home. I think my mum realised what had happened as soon as she saw me, but we didn't talk about it.

Somehow I thought it was my fault. Nor did I tell the police. I was so naive that I simply hadn't yet realised that what had happened was rape — even though I knew it was wrong.

Luckily, a pregnancy test came back negative. I didn't tell anyone for 15 years. I sought solace in my studies, excelling at school and later going to university. But I also escaped my emotions by drinking and sleeping around — anything to detract from the pain I felt — fitting from relationship to relationship. My self-esteem hinged on men's opinion of my body.

In September 2005 I contacted my local Rape Crisis centre in Southampton and had counselling. It was an enormous turning point. I realised I was allowed to be happy and began to let go of my past.

I don't want to waste energy being angry with my rapist. Do I wish I'd reported him? I'm not sure. I did talk to the police some years after it happened, I don't recall when, but they told me if I was to officially report it, I would have to risk seeing him again, which I couldn't bear.

I asked the officer to run his name through their system. If it suggested he'd raped again, I would have reported it. But it didn't.

It's still painful to talk about. But knowing that so many others are suffering in silence makes me determined to speak out. If I can help just one girl or woman who is going through what I did, it will be worth it.

Four years ago I set up a business to train disadvantaged women make clothes. Helping support others the way I'd been supported by Rape Crisis was enormously rewarding and helped me look to the future with hope.

www.rapecrisis.org.uk
Becky's clothes business is on Twitter: @whomadeyour

TERRIE RILEY, 23, a mother of one from Manchester, was attacked by three men in June 2006, aged 16. She says:

BEFORE it happened, I gave everyone I met the benefit of the doubt. So when three lads I knew from school asked me to spend the day with them, I agreed. I told myself that it didn't matter that they'd got in with a bad crowd, or that I'd heard they were taking drugs. We were going to spend the day watching television and playing computer games.

But I'd barely closed the door of their Silver Fiat one Saturday at 8am when the two sitting in the back seat lunged at me. They tore off my T-shirt and pulled down my jeans, while the driver — the boy I'd thought was my closest friend — raped me.

Gasping for breath, I begged him to stop. But the more I pleaded, the more they laughed. They were crazed, high on power and probably drugs, too. I'd had sex before but this was brutal and painful.

Afterwards they let me go and I ran away with my jeans half way down my legs. I lived with my dad — he and mum are separated and she and I don't get on — and was too ashamed to tell him. Instead I went to a friend's house, scrubbed myself in the shower, and borrowed her clothes.

That evening, all three boys came to my house. They said if I went to the police they would kill me. I shut the door in silence knowing they meant it. Besides, I thought I wouldn't be believed: my attackers were teenagers. They were friends. I had willingly got into their car. I felt angry and betrayed, but also stupid and naive.

For weeks I was too scared to leave the house, traumatised by the idea of bumping into my attackers. After four months, I quit my job as a sales assistant and moved to London to live with a cousin. When I returned to Manchester, the following year, I moved to a different area so I wouldn't have to

How to... steal Carol's style



BEING a maths buff, Carol Vorderman knows a thing or two about shapes, and now she's mastered one more: the peplum.

Peplum is a gathered strip of fabric around the waist which forms a free-standing umbrella-like structure over the hips. The shape first swished into view in the Forties when it appeared on coats and dresses to draw attention to tiny waists.

It re-emerged in the Eighties on body-con garments to add drama — and perhaps vie for attention with oversized shoulder pads. And this it is back in favour, with everyone from Stella McCartney, Moschino and Marc Jacobs to Chanel haute couture showcasing the shape.

The High Street has gone peplum-mad, too. Carol Vorderman's dress (pictured), worn recently on The Alan Titchmarsh Show, is from Dorothy Perkins.

A peplum adds flair, drama and glamour to your silhouette. It accentuates a natural hourglass and is best matched with a pencil skirt, a high neckline and sparse accessories. Just remember, ladies, it's all in the hips...

INDIA STURGIS



Spot dress, £30, dorotheperkins.com



Pink dress, £49, topshop.com



Colour block dress, £45, awear.com



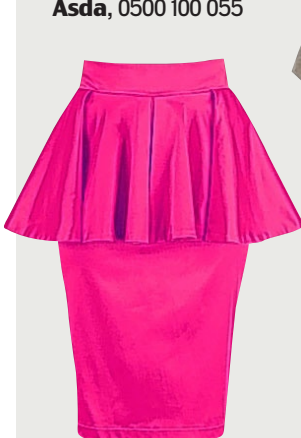
Top, £12, George at Asda, 0500 100 055



Floral top, £14, matalan.co.uk



Jacket, £65, Warehouse, 0845 122 2251



Pink skirt, £35, very.co.uk



Belted dress, £50, houseoffraser.co.uk



Lace skirt, £32, rarefashion.co.uk

Styling: ELIZA SCARBOROUGH



DANIELLE: Raped at the age of six by a family friend



TESSA: Brutally battered and raped by a boyfriend



BARBARA: Trapped in a sexually violent marriage

We kept our rapes a secret

AT FIRST glance, Danielle, Tessa, Barbara, Terrie and Becky appear to have little in common. Yet they share a devastating secret — they were all raped, but did not report it.

And, it would seem, they are far from alone. A survey earlier this month claimed that an astonishing one woman in ten has been raped.

Yet more than 80 per cent of the 1,600 women questioned by a British website for mothers said they did not report their assault to the police, while 29 per cent said they told nobody, not even a friend or family member, of their ordeal.

So could it really be true that so many women have been sexually assaulted without ever seeking

justice? Femail decided to find out, and was inundated with responses. Here, five women bravely waived their legal right to anonymity to reveal the harrowing stories of their rapes and tell ANTONIA HOYLE why they decided to stay silent.

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DANIELLE KENEHAN, 21, a university student from Bradford, was raped twice in 1997, aged six, by a family friend. She says:

I NEVER liked my dad's friend. He smelt of stale smoke and unwashed clothes. He was in his 30s, which

seemed really old back then, and would visit us all the time.

The first time he touched me was in 1995 when I was four. He climbed into my bed one evening after using the bathroom next to my room. All he did at first was hug me. Perhaps he was just being

friendly, I thought. But a couple of days later, he came upstairs again. This time he put his hand up my nightie. I didn't understand what he was doing and afterwards he said that nobody would believe me if I told them what he'd done, so I should stay quiet.

He started coming into my room several times a week. My parents worked alternate shifts as engineers, so the one who was at home was normally asleep. Nobody suspected anything as the abuse escalated.

He made me perform sex acts on him and afterwards I'd feel so violated that I'd gargle with mouthwash until my throat was on fire. He threatened to kill my cat or goldfish if I told anyone.

He raped me twice when I was six, clamping his hand so hard on my jaw to stop me screaming that

TURN TO NEXT PAGE

Speed read: Raffia

RAFFIA is always a hit when the sun starts to shine. Invest now and you'll be ahead of the game, especially since Burberry Prorsum (right), Michael Kors and Anya Hindmarch featured it heavily in their collections.

Raffia is a straw-like woven fibre made from palm tree leaves and is soft, pliable but strong. The rough texture gives a care-free, bohemian, crafty feel to whatever it decorates. Wear it this season and you can be sure you're barking up the right sartorial tree.

INDIA STURGIS

80ft

The length to which a raffia palm leaf can grow — the longest in the plant kingdom



HOW TO WEAR:

■ THIS material is most frequently used for accessories. A raffia hat, tote or wedges will strike the perfect tone for spring.

■ RAFFIA can be dyed almost any colour. Don't feel restricted to yellow-ochre. Try candy-coloured pastels which are big news this summer.

■ THIS is a statement fabric. Keep it simple with one raffia item per outfit.



SHOPPING LIST

From top left, clockwise: Zig-zag raffia belt, £22, warehouse.co.uk Orange trim raffia bag, £14, riverisland.com Striped raffia-weave skirt, £495, net-a-porter.com Charlotte Olympia, flamingo clutch, £295, net-a-porter.com Shilo strap raffia platforms, £65, topshop.com

