

The Morning After

A mother and daughter discuss the daughter's encounter

with violence on a date the night before. One out of four women experienced physical or psychological violence in a dating relationship.

Mom: Carrie, can you give me a hand with this salad?

[*Carrie comes over*]

Mom: Entertaining is fun, but it's a lot of work too—and a lot of food! Our Sunday School class sure can eat!

Mom: Wait, honey. If you'll just tear the lettuce instead of cutting it, the edges look a lot better.

Carrie: It's just lettuce, Mother! Since when are we running a five-star restaurant!

Mom: I didn't mean to upset you, dear. I was just....

[*Carrie begins to sob, quietly*]

Mom: What is it, Carrie? Are you alright?

Carrie: Oh, mom... (*her mom embraces her*) Something happened last night... And I just....just...don't know what to do....

Mom: Tell me about it, honey. Tell me what's bothering you. You went to a movie with Alex last night, right?

Carrie: Yes. That's what we did first. Then we went back to his house...and his parents weren't home...and....

Mom: Oh, honey. Just talk to me about it.

Carrie: Well, one thing led to another, and he started treating me...kind of rough.

Mom: What do you mean, dear?

Carrie: He was wanting to be closer to me than I wanted and then he started saying things to me...

Mom: But he's such a nice boy...

Carrie: That's what I thought, too. And everybody at school thinks I'm so cool for going out with the big sports dude and star of the junior play. They don't know....

Mom: Did he hurt you—last night, did he hurt you?

Carrie: He just held me too hard till I pushed him away and ran out the door. (*pulling up her sleeve*) I think I have a bruise...

Mom: Let me see. Oh! You do—that must hurt! Did he hurt you....in any other way?

Carrie: No, except that he said if I didn't play along with him he could make me look real bad at school.

Mom: How could he say something like that?!

Carrie: Don't worry about it. Anybody I really care about knows me—and knows I'm not like that. I'm just glad I found out what he's really like.

Mom: I'm so proud that you knew how to take care of yourself in a situation like that, Carrie.

Carrie: We've been talking about things like this in youth group, and on the retreat last fall the boys and girls had separate sessions on dating violence. The one thing I remember from that day is that every person is special in God's eyes, and should never put up with being treated badly by someone else. And you and dad have always made me feel like be anything I want to be. I'm not going to take a chance on ruining my future over some creepy guy at school.

Mom: What about other girls who might go out with Alex?

Carrie: Yeah, I was thinking about that too. I think I need to go to the guidance counselor at school, and see if there's a way for Alex to get some help. O.k., let's see if I can take my frustrations out by tearing up some lettuce rather than yelling at my mother. Thanks, mom. I feel lots better. I'm going to be fine.

Mom: I know you are, honey. You're such a special young woman.

[*they embrace*]

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