

# “He was a **BI** powerful man He kicked me”

Michelle Molloy suffered so violently at the hands of her partner that she was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. This is her powerful story.

By **Kelly Mattison**

**Michelle Molloy cannot have any belongings from her ex-partner in her new flat or it brings on panic attacks. “I’ve got all my new things in it now and no one knows where I am apart from loyal close friends and family.”**

Three years ago Molloy\* was assaulted so badly that she cannot sit for more than half an hour or she is in severe pain.

She had experienced domestic violence from her ex-partner for the duration of their relationship. The night this injury happened he

returned home drunk to find her in bed.

“I had been out of hospital for three months recovering from breast cancer. My dog and I were in the bedroom. I was resting.” He staggered in and accused Molloy of being in bed because she was sleeping around. “I was in bed because I was ill and in pain.”

As he stumbled around he went to kick her dog that was sat “petrified” on her bed. As he did so Molloy dived on top of her dog and instead took the full blow of the kick.

“He was a big powerful man, six feet four and 17 stone. He would have killed her with one kick. Instead he kicked me.”

He kicked her just above her coccyx bone and it has not been right since. “I have two shattered vertebrae in my lower back which are non-curable.” When they fuse she will no longer be able to bend from the pelvis down. “But at least my dog is okay,

and more importantly alive.”

This was one of a number of physical assaults that Molloy had reported to the police. “At the time of the last attack he was out on probation and I knew something was building for about four weeks.”

It was May 2009. Her partner was drinking heavily and she was experiencing violent attacks almost twice weekly. One particular morning she was outside chatting to her neighbour and doing some gardening. At about 4pm she went upstairs to see her partner who she says was in a relatively good mood.

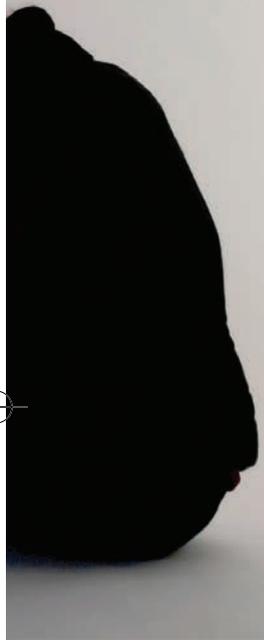
She found the back bedroom door shut. He had barricaded the door with a heavy filing cabinet. Molloy shouted to him to see if he was okay and he moved the cabinet only just enough to get his head round.

“Those eyes,” she says. “They were almost like a psychosis caused by drinking 24/7. I was terrified.”

She felt she knew she was going to

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be attacked. "I went downstairs to the kitchen panicking about what to do. I wondered whether to ring my mum and leave but it was my house and I was responsible for it. I was petrified."

Molloy was in fear not only of her own safety but her dog's safety too.

**"He appeared at the back door with a meat cleaver and threatened to kill us."**

She had been beaten before but this time she says she just knew it was going to be "horrendous".

She went next door, taking her dog, and explained to her neighbour what

had happened. "My neighbour had experience of dealing with people with alcohol problems," she says.

As she stood with her neighbour and dog in the garden her bedroom blind was suddenly torn down, and he threw the dog's bed and bowl out

of the window. "He then appeared at the back door with a meat cleaver and threatened to kill us."

They ran inside, locked the door and called the police. As two male police officers arrived Molloy watched as he threatened the police from the window with knives. As they shouted to him to give himself up more officers arrived with dogs and another van. Molloy then watched again in horror as the police kicked in her door and entered with their dogs.

"I was so ashamed because of the other neighbours. Some were out in the street and they were ordered back into their property for safety."

Her partner was arrested, still shouting obscenities to Molloy as they placed him into the police van. "I then went back into my flat. As I went into the kitchen I found knives of all shapes and sizes everywhere."

As he had assaulted Molloy on twice previously the police kept him in on remand. "He was also banned from my area and an alarm was installed in my flat directly connected to the police station." He received an eight-month prison sentence.

Molloy says she suffered mentally following the incidents. She couldn't bear to be in her flat on her own and experienced flashbacks and nightmares. Eventually she fell to pieces and after a visit to her GP she was referred to the psychology department at her local hospital.

"I was having panic attacks daily. I was on the floor and I couldn't do anything to stop the negative thoughts I was having. I couldn't be left alone 24/7 and I felt like I was having a nervous breakdown."

The doctors diagnosed her with post-traumatic stress disorder, normally associated with soldiers returning from war.

She says the doctor could not believe that at 38 years old she was still functioning after suffering a lifetime of abuse. Not only had Molloy experienced violence at the hands of three different partners, she had also been sexually abused by her father at age 11, an event she feels led her into the string of abusive relationships. She blames everything that she has gone through in her adult life on the abuse by her father.

"After this I became terrified and the little girl I was the day before my father abused me was left there and I still can't get her back."

The abuse was so terrifying that Molloy only felt safe from her father by sleeping at night with a chair wedged under her door handle. "He never knocked but I always stayed awake just in case. My mum had been away the weekend it happened and he bought me a bike as I promised to keep my mouth shut."

Molloy says that previous to the incident she was a confident child with a privileged upbringing; she grew up in a large detached house. "Up until that incident my life was okay," she says. After that she detested her father. "I couldn't handle rejection from anyone."

Following the attack by her ex-partner Molloy says she felt she had no choice but to move out of her flat away from her friends. "I just detested being in the flat, even two years after it happened."

She moved in March 2011 to a completely different area to start again. "At first I felt isolated and angry about what he had done, I felt like he had forced me to lose everything, but with time I'm slowly settling in. No one around here knows about the legacy he left so I now feel free." ■

\* *Not her real name*