

Justice is sweet

## **Please don't judge me, but I am taking a fair amount of pleasure in watching powerful men being publicly called out for their misdeeds.**

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The fact that women are vulnerable is not new to me. My dad was a cop, and when I started driving, he gave me the usual safe-driving talk. He also told me never to stop for a cop at night but to slow down, put on my blinker, and drive to a gas station or other public place. He knew what some cops did to single women drivers in the dark of night.

I was forewarned that some men abused power, and I needed to be vigilant. My supervisor at a temp job right out of college was a man in his late fifties. He often made suggestive comments to me, which was creepy, and after multiple pleas for him to stop, I went to his supervisor. "He is harmless; just ignore him," was his advice.

I did not stay long in that job because I did not feel safe; I had no power or protection. Every day now it seems that another powerful man is being called out for his dark deeds.

Please don't judge me, but I am taking a fair amount of pleasure in watching these men being publicly outed—and imagining other men worrying if they will be next. Men who believed their power or wealth could protect them are now having to face the fact that they are as vulnerable as the women they abused.

It feels like justice has finally found her way to our world, and I am delighted to welcome her.

I was raped by a man who had power. His advice? “Don’t bother to tell anyone because no one will believe you.” I knew he was right and so I kept quiet. Why subject myself to a process that was not going to bring me justice?

In the intervening years, I have wondered if he has raped again, and how many times. When there are no consequences for bad behavior, people tend to continue behaving badly.

The guy who raped me apologized a few weeks later (we worked together). I am pretty sure that the hatred in my eyes told him he was not forgiven. As if a few words of contrition could erase the damage he did to me—the damage it took years to repair.

I remember thinking this must be his M.O.—rape and then apologize. As if that let him off the hook.

Now, all these years later, I wonder if he is wondering if I and any others he raped will call for accountability. Is he worried his life will be shattered by his dark deeds? Just imagining him squirm brings me pleasure. The sweetness of it—that taste of justice.

Are we finally developing into a country where women matter? Will women no longer feel that we have to ignore or “get over” situations that feel unsafe? Do we now have credibility? Is the atmosphere changing so much that no abuser is beyond accountability?

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