

## In the Boots of a Survivor

Curriculum Storyline #2: Airman First Class Lionhart

Not everyone may know where to report a sexual assault.

For help you can call the Safe Helpline 24/7 at 877-995-5247 or get more information at [www.safehelpline.org](http://www.safehelpline.org).

Your call to the Safe Helpline is confidential and anonymous.

### ***Content Warning***

***This statement is provided as a precautionary measure.***

***“Some of the material presented in this lesson could potentially trigger upsetting emotions. To prevent this from happening, should you feel the need to leave the class, you may do so at any time. If you need assistance, please inform the assistant instructor and help will be provided.”***

### **Airman First Class Lionhart**

After Annual Training, a group of us went to the club for a bite to eat and a few drinks. It was such a hot day and we had worked hard. We were having a good time, but I started to feel nauseous, and my head hurt. I decided I was probably dehydrated and went to get some water. This is the last thing I remember before waking up in the middle of the street. It was dark out. I was so cold, and my head was pounding. I couldn't think. My shirt was ripped, and my pants were down around my knees. Something bad had happened; I was so confused.

I called my friend Fireborne. She was frantic when she picked me up. Fireborne said I left the club without saying goodbye, but because I had complained about my headache, she assumed I just went back to the dorms. We tried to piece together what could have happened. At the club I only had two drinks and started to feel terrible. We decided I was probably drugged. Fireborne thought I should go to the hospital, and I agreed. Fireborne encouraged me to call the Safe Helpline too. Through the Safe Helpline I was able to get contact information for a Victim Advocate in my local area.

When I got to the hospital, they checked me over and they drew labs right away. The nurse asked me if I felt like I had been assaulted. My head was pounding, and I couldn't think. The whole night was a blur.

Soon, the Victim Advocate, Dragonia arrived and explained to me everything we talked about was confidential. She said, if I wanted, a specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) could perform a Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE). She explained the nurse typically would ask about the details of the assault to try to identify potential areas of injuries and may collect the clothing I was wearing as there may be DNA evidence on them. The nurse would then do a head-to-toe exam and would collect samples where there would possibly be DNA and take pictures of any injuries I may have. The nurse could also provide me preventative treatment for possible sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy prevention.

- **Go to Reporting Options on page 20.**

\* Army equivalent of Airman First Class (A1C) is "Private First Class (PFC)."

### **Military Protective Order #1**

The thought of Staff Sergeant (SSgt) Nightshade taking advantage of me when I was completely incapacitated made me sick. I tried to think back to my interactions with him at past drills and at the club on the night of my assault. He was just a regular guy and I'd never had any red flags about him. How could I have misjudged him? These thoughts only amplified my fears and anxiety. I decided I would get a Military Protective Order in place, so SSgt Nightshade will be ordered by Command to stay away from me at drill. I also considered filing for a Civilian Protective Order too, as the Military Protective Order only supports me while I am on duty and has little impact on members while they are not in a military status.

My SVC, Captain (Capt) Zethrax, was helpful through the process and made it very easy for me. I stopped by my unit's office to talk with the full-time staff. I wasn't sure if the staff knew what was happening with me or not. My readiness Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) was her same old positive self. She really brightened my day and made me feel like it was going to be okay to come back to drill. It was coming up next weekend, and I had been dreading it.

- **Go to Drill with the Military Protective Order on page 15.**

\* Army equivalent of Staff Sergeant (SSgt) is Sergeant (SGT).

### **Convert to Unrestricted Report**

I told Dragonia I was ready to change to an Unrestricted Report. I met with her to review my original DD Form 2910 (Victim Reporting Preference Statement) and I signed it again to convert from Restricted to Unrestricted. It was empowering to write my reasoning for converting my report. I wanted to make sure that this doesn't happen to other Service members. Dragonia then contacted the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), who took the information about my case and contacted my Commander, Col Brightwing.

Col Brightwing called me right away and asked me how I was doing. I talked with him about the terrible time I had been going through and he was very supportive. He told me he was required to contact law enforcement to report what had happened to me. He also told me if the applicable criminal investigative agency declines to investigate the case, he can ask The Adjutant General to request the National Guard Bureau Office of Complex Investigations to conduct an administrative investigation of the sexual assault since I made an Unrestricted Report. Col Brightwing also explained to me that it was my choice whether or not I wanted to participate in an investigation and that an investigation could still be conducted without my involvement. He explained that DoDI 6495.02, outlines that "Details regarding the incident will be limited to only those personnel who have an official need to know. The victim's decision to decline to participate in an investigation or prosecution should be honored by all personnel charged with the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases, including, but not limited to, commanders, DoD law enforcement officials, and personnel in the victim's chain of command." We talked for a bit more and he reminded me I could contact him if I needed anything.

- **Go to Investigation on page 11.**

\* Army equivalent of Colonel (Col) is Colonel (COL)."

### **Law Enforcement**

Officer Fyralon called me to set up an interview. I called Dragonia and asked if she was available to come along with me and she agreed. We met with Officer Fyralon at the police station. He made me feel very comfortable, and just asked me to explain what I remembered from the night of my assault. I told him everything I remembered, which wasn't a lot. He asked me some follow up questions and then I was done. It was a lot easier than I thought it was going to be. When I left, I felt like a giant weight had been lifted off my shoulders.

Two weeks later Officer Fyralon called to let me know they had a suspect in my case. I couldn't believe my ears when he told me it was Blake Nightshade. SSgt Nightshade is in my unit and was at the club with us the night of my assault. I have known him for years and would never expect him to do something like this. Although I was in disbelief, I was scared. He knows where I live, he knows where I go to school, he knows where I work, and I am going to have to see him at our next drill.

I called and told Dragonia what Officer Fyralon told me as well as my concerns. She explained to me I am eligible to receive an expedited transfer which would allow me to change units and a Military Protective Order. I didn't want to leave my unit. I have so many friends there, so why should I have to switch units? The thought of a Military Protective Order requiring SSgt Nightshade to stay away from me while on duty sounded like a good option. I will give additional thought to it.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Choose to get a Military Protective Order, go to Military Protective Order #1 on page 3.**
- **Choose not to get a Military Protective Order, go to No Military Protective Order on page 22.**

### **Speak With Victim Advocate**

I called Dragonia and we met for coffee. I told her I'd been struggling with not knowing what happened to me. We talked about my increasing anxiety and the trouble I had sleeping. Dragonia helped me realize these were normal reactions to the trauma I had experienced. I told her I had been thinking about changing my report to an Unrestricted Report, but I wanted to know what it entailed.

Dragonia was great at explaining the process of converting my report to Unrestricted, and Law Enforcement and my Command team would be contacted. Law Enforcement would conduct a full investigation and they would also be able to use the evidence from my sexual assault forensic exam. Dragonia also explained it was my choice on whether I wanted to participate in the investigation.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Keep Restricted Report on page 17.**
- **Go to Convert to Unrestricted Report on page 4.**

### **Special Victims' Counsel #1**

I met the next day with Maj Amberclaw. She is a specially trained Judge Advocate for the National Guard, called a Special Victims' Counsel. I told her I'd been struggling with not knowing what happened to me. I had been thinking about changing my report to Unrestricted, but I wanted to know what it entailed. Maj Amberclaw first explained to me that she works to support me, and anything said between us will be kept confidential, as it's covered by attorney-client privilege. She also explained if I converted my report to Unrestricted, Law Enforcement and my command team would be contacted.

Law Enforcement would conduct a full investigation and they would also be able to use the evidence from my sexual assault forensic exam. She said military resources like Mental Health services, and Chaplain services, as well as community resources like peer support groups and more would be available throughout the process. Maj Amberclaw also said if my perpetrator was found, and was also a Service member, the military may take additional actions against the perpetrator.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Keep Restricted Report on page 17.**
- **Go to Convert to Unrestricted Report on page 4.**

\* Army equivalent of Major (Maj) is "Major (MAJ)."

## **Military Protective Order #2**

The thought of seeing him made me sick to my stomach. I explained my feelings about seeing Nightshade and spoke with my Victim Advocate about it. She shared that I could pursue a military protective order (MPO). An MPO would be a direct order from my Commander to the subject (my perpetrator) to stay away from me while in a military status. My Victim Advocate made sure to tell me that an MPO would not protect me when I am not in a military status, and I could look into obtaining a civilian protective order. I decided my best option would be to get the MPO. The process was easier than I expected. My Victim Advocate contacted the SARC, the SARC contacted my Commander, and Col Brightwing issued the MPO requiring SSgt Nightshade to stay away from me while in a military status. Col Brightwing also decided it would be in everyone's best interest for SSgt Nightshade to split drill during the week. This helped ease my concern of running into him.

We drill the following weekend. While I was walking down the hallway in the Munitions Maintenance Shop, Senior Airman (SrA) Quirky walked up to me. I could tell by the look on his face he was not happy. He told me I was making a big mistake talking with law enforcement, and it was in my best interest to drop the case. He said SSgt Nightshade is a good guy and what I was doing was going to ruin his career. He went on to say if I did not drop the case there would be consequences. I was in disbelief, I couldn't talk. Thankfully, my friend Fireborne was walking by and could see the look on my face and stopped.

As soon as Fireborne stopped, SrA Quirky turned and left. The whole situation left me shaking. What was going on? SrA Quirky and SSgt Nightshade were good friends, but I thought we were friends, too. What did he mean there would be consequences? I didn't know what he meant by consequences. Did he mean he is going to hurt me or try to ruin my military career if I didn't drop the report? I was scared. What am I going to do?

I remembered a previous conversation with Dragonia about retaliation. She told me Retaliation is an act that wrongfully takes (or threatens to take) an adverse personnel action against any person; or wrongfully withholds (or threatens to withhold) a favorable personnel action with respect to any person for making or preparing to make a protected communication (DoDI 6495.02, Vol. 3). I will bring this issue up to Dragonia for guidance on how to proceed.

### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Drop the Investigation on page 16.**
- **Go to Continue Investigation on page 25.**

\* Army equivalent of Senior Airman (SrA) is "Specialist (SPC)."



### **Conclusion #1**

My Commander continued to be super supportive. He allowed me to drill from home for a few months and complete some distance learning projects. He kept me updated on the military processes which were taking place. Dragonia also checked in on me and was available whenever I needed her. She understood the grief I was going through and helped to remind me I had resources available to me. I felt a sense of relief knowing there were resources available to me beyond the military such as Mental Health services, peer support groups, local faith groups, the Department of Defense Safe Helpline I can call anytime. Sometimes my brain felt like mush, so I really needed someone to help me keep going.

My SVC, Capt Zethrax, contacted me monthly to give me updates. It took about five months, but I was happy when it was all over. Civilian law enforcement had dropped the case as I requested. Then the military team took over and used the evidence collected to administratively process SSgt Nightshade. SSgt Nightshade received an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions discharge from the National Guard.

It took quite a while, but I did eventually get my E4 (Senior Airman). I was back to work and after lots of counseling, I was able to live alone again. Things were better day by day. After my Commander moved on, I decided to do the same. I requested to transfer to a unit a few hours from home and it was good to have a fresh start. Some days are still difficult, but I feel grateful for the support I have and am proudly still serving!

### **Additional Information from the Rape, Assault & Incest National Network (RAINN)**

“I’ve been told my entire life that it was impossible for this kind of thing to happen to me,” said Johnathon, a survivor of drug-facilitated sexual assault and RAINN Speakers Bureau member. “When I was raped, I was 6’4” and 220 lbs. I truly believed that I could go anywhere I wanted, and no one would bother me.”

- Alcohol is the most commonly used substance in drug-facilitated sexual assault.
- Prescription drugs like sleep aids, anxiety medication, muscle relaxers, and tranquilizers may also be used by perpetrators.
- Street drugs, like gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), rohypnol (“roofies”), ecstasy, and ketamine can be added to drinks without changing the color, flavor, or odor of the beverage.

### **Restricted Report**

Dragonia explained a Restricted Report allowed me to utilize many military and civilian resources while keeping my case private. She said my Restricted Report will remain confidential, and my Chain of Command wouldn't find out. She explained a Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) was available to me and could better explain the legal processes. She said meeting with the SVC often provides victims with information to help them realize what an Unrestricted Report and investigation entails.

Dragonia said I could also speak confidentially with a Chaplain and with a Mental Health Provider. She explained that Chaplains have absolute privilege and are able to keep everything I tell them to themselves. She further explained the Mental Health Provider is there to assist me with the emotions that I've experienced since my assault and that our conversations would be kept confidential, except if I mention hurting myself or another person.

Because I selected Restricted Report on the DD Form 2910, I couldn't request a Military Protective Order or an Expedited Transfer. Both of these options would allow for additional individuals to have limited access and knowledge about my experience to assist me with either or both options. I didn't know who did this to me, but I thought these would be great options if I did. Dragonia also mentioned that situational convalescent leave may be an option, whether I make a Restricted or Unrestricted Report.

Dragonia asked if I'd like to participate in the CATCH program, a database that interfaces with law enforcement systems and allows the victim to enter information about their perpetrator. If more than one victim reports the same perpetrator a match will be made, and the victims will be asked if they'd like to pursue an investigation at that time. I will give this option some thought.

Ever since the night of my assault, I haven't been sleeping. I get terrified at night and whenever I must go out of my house alone. My parents have been taking turns staying with me and my friend Fireborne has been so thoughtful. She checks in with me all the time. It's been three weeks though, and I feel like my fear and nervousness is getting worse. I started having nightmares. I knew I needed to talk with someone. I called Dragonia and she helped me set up some appointments.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Speak with Victim Advocate on page 6.**
- **Go to Special Victims' Counsel #1 on page 7.**

### **Investigation**

Officer Fyralon called me the next day to set up an interview. I called Dragonia and asked if she was available to come along and she agreed. We met with Officer Fyralon at the police station. He made me feel very comfortable and just asked me to explain what I remembered from the night of my assault. I told him everything I remembered, which wasn't a lot. He asked me some follow up questions and then I was done. It was a lot easier than I thought it was going to be. When I left, I felt like a giant weight had been lifted off my shoulders.

Two weeks later Officer Fyralon called to let me know they have a suspect in my case. I couldn't believe my ears when he told me it was Blake Nightshade. SSgt Nightshade is in my unit and was at the club with us on the night of my assault. I have known him for years and would never expect him to do something like this. Although I was in disbelief, I was scared. He knows where I live, he knows where I go to school, he knows where I work, and I am going to have to see him at our next drill. I called and told Dragonia what Officer Fyralon told me as well as my concerns. She explained to me I am eligible to receive an Expedited Transfer which would allow me to change units and I could obtain a Military Protective Order. I didn't want to leave my unit. I have so many friends there and why should I have to switch units?

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Choose to get a Military Protective Order, go to Military Protective Order #2 on page 8.**
- **Choose not to get a Military Protective Order, go to No Military Protective Order on page 22.**

## **Conclusion #2**

Col Brightwing continued to be super supportive. He allowed me to drill from home for a few months and complete some distance learning projects. He kept me updated on the military processes taking place. Dragonia also checked in on me and was available whenever I needed her. She understood the grief I was going through and helped to remind me I had resources available. I felt a sense of relief knowing there were resources available to me beyond the military such as Mental Health services, peer support groups, local faith groups, and the Department of Defense Safe Helpline, which I can call anytime. Sometimes my brain felt like mush, so I really needed someone to help me keep going.

My SVC, Capt Zethrax, contacted me monthly to give me updates. It took several months but eventually they had enough evidence to prosecute SSgt Nightshade. The court case was challenging to go through, but he was sentenced to 5 years in prison. I didn't feel like it was enough for all the pain he caused me, but I was happy to know it was finally being dealt with properly.

The military also administratively discharged him. He received an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions discharge. I was happy to see him leave our organization.

Throughout this process I learned to appreciate the support systems in place. I decided to become a counselor and am finishing up my clinic hours this year. I'm excited to turn such a terrible time in my life into something positive! I have also stayed with the Guard and am supporting others as a Victim Advocate.

### **Additional Information from the Rape, Assault & Incest National Network (RAINN)**

"I've been told my entire life that it was impossible for this kind of thing to happen to me," said Johnathon, a survivor of drug-facilitated sexual assault and RAINN Speakers Bureau member. "When I was raped, I was 6'4" and 220 lbs. I truly believed that I could go anywhere I wanted, and no one would bother me."

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### **Unrestricted Report**

I thought opening a case and having an investigation done might help answer so many of the questions running through my mind. Dragonia helped me get through the required paperwork to open an Unrestricted Report. She explained that my report would not be official until I signed a DD Form 2910, "Victim Reporting Preference Statement". She then contacted the SARC who took the information about my case and contacted my Commander.

My Commander, Col Brightwing called me right away and asked me how I was doing. I talked with him about how scared I was about having something like this happened to me at the unit. I felt like I should have been safe there. He listened to me until I was all talked out. He told me he was required to contact law enforcement to report what had happened to me. I told him I understood and was hoping to get some answers. He also told me if the applicable criminal investigative agency declines to investigate the case, he can ask The Adjutant General to request the National Guard Bureau Office of Complex Investigations to conduct an administrative investigation of the sexual assault since I made an Unrestricted Report. We talked for a bit more and he reminded me I could contact him if I needed anything.

Before I left, Dragonia talked with me about resources available through the military and civilian side. She told me with an Unrestricted Report I could receive services from the Chaplain, mental health provider and Special Victims' Counsel.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **To visit a Behavioral Health Provider, go to Behavioral Health Provider on page 24.**
- **To meet with the Chaplain, go to Chaplain on page 26.**
- **Talk to the Special Victims' Counsel, go to Special Victims' Counsel #2 on page 14.**

### **Special Victims' Counsel #2**

I had no previous legal experience, so I decided to take advantage of the Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) resource and asked Dragonia to schedule an appointment.

Capt Zethrax was assigned to be my SVC. He explained as my SVC it is his job to prepare me for what to expect next, be with me throughout the duration of the process, answer my questions and he addressed additional concerns I had regarding my case. Capt Zethrax explained that as my SVC all communication between us is privileged, meaning that it will be kept confidential. He is specially trained in the military legal process and can support Service members who've been impacted by sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic abuse. I felt empowered learning a resource like this exists.

I am glad he will be there for legal support throughout the case. He warned me this process from start to finish could take quite a while because it can be very complicated. He advised the lengthy process can be very frustrating. Thinking about the whole process was overwhelming but I still wanted to continue with the investigation.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **If you haven't already, go to Chaplain on page 26 or Behavioral Health Provider on page 24.**
- **If you've already seen them, you are ready to go to Law Enforcement on page 5.**

### **Drill with the Military Protective Order**

Arriving at drill definitely had my heart pounding. My friend Fireborne knew everything going on, and she drove to drill with me. My Commander contacted me last night to make sure I was feeling up to drill. He let me know SSgt Nightshade would not be at drill. He asked if I became overwhelmed to let him know, and I could be excused. He had also set up the Chaplain and behavioral health provider to be present over the weekend, so I had some added support.

As we walked into first formation, everything seemed pretty normal, and I felt a wave of relief. My military career was important to me, and I had questioned whether or not I'd be able to put on my uniform again. I was proud of myself for taking these steps forward.

I made it through opening formation and went to the classroom for our first presentation. It was great to see everyone. As I sat in the class, someone passed me a note. I didn't see who it originated from. When I opened it, I was stunned. My eyes filled with tears as I read it: "Drop the investigation or you'll get it again."

I went into a full panic mode and ran out. I went straight to the Chaplain's office and thank goodness he was there. With my permission, he called my Commander, and helped me to understand I was in a safe place. My Commander called the investigator, Officer Fyralon, and my SVC, Capt Zethrax. Officer Fyralon came right away, collected the note, and recorded my statement about who had given it to me. He took a copy of the attendance roster and spoke with my Commander about who in our Squadron unit would have contact with SSgt Nightshade.

I called my Victim Advocate and let her know I was thinking about dropping the investigation. I didn't know what to do!

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Stop the Investigation on page 18.**
- **Go to Continue Investigation on page 25.**

### **Drop the Investigation**

I thought about what SrA Quirky said to me for the rest of the day. If I dropped the case, this whole nightmare could be over for me. At least I'd hope so. Officer Fyralon explained to me, it was my choice on whether I wanted to participate in the investigation, but the investigation would continue without me. However, if I decline to participate as a key witness, it could impact the outcome of the investigation and SSgt Nightshade could possibly do this to someone else. I didn't sleep at all. The next morning, I called Dragonia and told her what had happened. She told me that what SrA Quirky did may have violated the protective order, and it may be retaliation and I could report it. I told her I was too scared and just wanted this all to stop. We discussed calling Officer Fyralon to see what my options were. I went to Dragonia's office, and she was there for me when I called the investigator.

The investigator was really kind. I didn't tell him about what SrA Quirky did, but just told him I wanted everything to stop. He said it was my decision to make and to give him a call if I changed my mind.

- **Go to Conclusion #3 on page 21.**



### **Keep Restricted Report**

I wasn't sure I wanted my Commander to know what I had been through. I was going to be coming up for E4 soon. I worried about my Command team doubting my stability as a leader. As time went on, all I could think about was who did this to me. I knew I needed to work through this and decided to call the behavioral health provider. Dr. Nelson was available right away to meet. I met her at her office and I'm so thankful I did. She helped me talk through what I was experiencing. Dr. Nelson taught me techniques to manage my anxiety. She listened and it relieved some of my stress.

We set up a few more appointments and she gave me some civilian resources as well. After I met with her, I decided I was ready for an investigation.

- **Go to Convert to Unrestricted Report on page 4.**

#### **Discussion points:**

- What are three military resources in place to support victims?
- How can each resource be helpful?
- What resources do you feel you would want to utilize?

(Available Military Resources: SARC, Victim Advocate, Chaplain, Behavioral Health Provider, Special Victims' Counsel, Military Protective Order (Unrestricted Report only), Expedited Transfer (Unrestricted Report only), CATCH program, Line of Duty (LOD)\* (\*may help to cover Medical or Behavioral Health costs).

Civilian resources are also available!

### **Stop the Investigation**

This was all too much for me. I felt like I was being violated all over again and I couldn't continue. I was supported by my Victim Advocate. The next day Dragonia went with me to talk with Officer Fyralon. We discussed my concerns, and he explained it was likely the State Attorney would not go forward with charging SSgt Nightshade if I was not interested in participating, but that it was my choice to continue or not. I decided to stop working on the case with Law Enforcement. The investigation continued without my participation. I had to take care of myself, and the pressure of a continued investigation was overwhelming.

- **Go to Conclusion #1 on page 9.**

### **Drill with No Military Protective Order**

Arriving at drill definitely had my heart pounding. My friend Fireborne knew everything going on and she drove to drill with me. My Commander contacted me last night to make sure I was feeling up to drill. He let me know SSgt Nightshade would not be at drill. He asked if I became overwhelmed to let him know and I could be excused. He had also set up for the Chaplain and Behavioral Health Provider to be present over the weekend, so I had some added support.

As we walked into first formation, everything seemed pretty normal, and I felt a wave of relief. My military career was important to me, and I had questioned whether or not I'd be able to put on my uniform again. I was proud of myself for taking these steps forward. I made it through opening formation and went to the classroom for our first presentation. It was great to see everyone. The morning went fine, and I was doing pretty well. I had a few waves of anxiety and I stopped in to speak with the Behavioral Health Provider. She listened and helped me work my coping strategies.

After lunch, we went out to the motor pool to conduct pre- and post-vehicle operations inspections on the trucks. I worked with Fireborne as my partner. We turned on some music and got to work going through the checklist. We were just about finished when I felt someone come up behind me. I had barely turned my head when I recognized SSgt Nightshade. He was standing right beside me. I was paralyzed with fear and couldn't get a word out. He smiled and said, "hey, how's it going? I had a good time the other night and I know you did to." Then his face changed to anger, "call off the police." I went into full panic mode. Was anyone else seeing this? I couldn't breathe, I couldn't speak. Fireborne immediately came around the Humvee. She grabbed my arm and pulled me towards the middle of the parking lot. He was gone and I was sobbing.

We went straight to the Chaplain's office and called my Commander. My Commander called Officer Fyralon. Officer Fyralon came right away and collected my statement.

I didn't know what to do! Part of me wanted this all to go away. I was considering asking Officer Fyralon if we could stop the investigation.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **Go to Stop the Investigation on page 18.**
- **Go to Continue Investigation on page 25.**

### **Reporting Options**

It was comforting to have someone with experience there to help me. The nurse gave me some time to think about what I wanted to do. Dragonia talked with me and gave me a lot of really helpful information. She discussed my reporting options.

Dragonia started to explain the basics of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program and let me know if I had any questions I could ask at any time. Dragonia said as a Victim Advocate everything we talked about was confidential; however medical professionals are mandatory reporters in my State. Dragonia said, mandatory reporting requirements differ from State to State and to keep this information in mind when choosing my reporting options. I was grateful for this information prior to making my choice about my reporting options. She explained with a Restricted Report everything would stay confidential and told me about all the resources available, such as medical and mental health care, Special Victims' Counsel, a Line of Duty (LOD) determination, and possible availability of situational convalescent leave. She then went on to explain that with an Unrestricted Report, my Commander and Law Enforcement would be notified. She also explained the resources available with an Unrestricted Report, such as Medical and Mental Health, Special Victims' Counsel, an LOD determination, Expedited Transfer, and Military and Civilian Protective Orders. My memory of the whole night was still so foggy, if I did talk to the police, what would I even say? I decided I wanted to get a sexual assault forensic exam however I wasn't sure if I wanted to file a Restricted or Unrestricted Report.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **To file a Restricted Report, go to Restricted Report on page 10.**
- **To file an Unrestricted Report, go to Unrestricted Report on page 13.**

### **Conclusion #3**

One day my Commander pulled me into his office to tell me based on the report filed and additional evidence turned over by local Law Enforcement, the NG was separating SSgt Nightshade. Dragonia told me this could happen, but I never thought it would. I was so nervous, what if he came after me? What if SrA Quirky came after me?

I decided I needed counseling and Dragonia helped me find a counselor in the civilian sector. I really got along with my counselor, and she helped me immensely. I still found myself watching over my shoulder, but it became less and less as time passed. I struggled with dropping the case. At times, I considered contacting Officer Fyralon to see if I could reopen the case, but I was finally at a good place with my Mental Health. I wanted to keep moving forward.

### **Additional information from Rape, Assault & Incest National Network (RAINN)**

“I’ve been told my entire life that it was impossible for this kind of thing to happen to me,” said **Johnathon**, a survivor of drug-facilitated sexual assault and RAINN Speakers Bureau member. “When I was raped, I was 6’4” and 220 lbs. I truly believed that I could go anywhere I wanted, and no one would bother me.”

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- Street drugs, like gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), rohypnol (“roofies”), ecstasy, and ketamine can be added to drinks without changing the color, flavor, or odor of the beverage.

### **No Military Protective Order**

While I considered the Military Protective Order, I felt like it wasn't really necessary at this time. I am in college full-time and live in a different town from where my unit drills. A Military Protective Order isn't enforceable by civilian law authorities and are limited to enforcing behavior for members not in a military status, so I decided that I didn't need one at this time. My coping strategies had been helping me to feel more secure. I talked with my parents, and we thought it would be okay not to get the Military Protective Order right now. Capt Zethrax, my SVC, had assured me I could reconsider and request a Military Protective Order be put in place at any time.

- **Go to Drill with No Military Protective Order on page 19.**

### **Conclusion #4**

Col Brightwing continued to be super supportive. He allowed me to drill from home for a few months and complete some distance learning projects. My Commander kept me updated on the military processes taking place. Dragonia also checked in on me and was available whenever I needed her. She understood the grief I was going through and helped to remind me I had resources available. I could seek assistance from the Chaplain, Behavioral Health Professionals, Medical Professionals, and others. Sometimes my brain felt like mush, so I really needed someone to help me keep going.

The civilian criminal justice process seemed to take a really long time but eventually the case went to trial. I was so nervous, so it was nice Dragonia was able to come with me. I was devastated when the jury found him not guilty!

My SVC, Capt Zethrax, continued to be there for me. He let me know the military law was different than civilian law. After some additional time, a military board reviewed the evidence and were able to process SSgt Nightshade out as an Under Other Than Honorable Conditions discharge. I was happy to see him leave our organization.

I continue to struggle with anxiety and fear. I've kept my support systems and even though the military was good to work with during my trauma, I decided to get out. I will be moving south this fall, attending college to be a Veterinarian Technician and try to start a new life!

### **Additional information from Rape, Assault & Incest National Network (RAINN)**

"I've been told my entire life that it was impossible for this kind of thing to happen to me," said **Johnathon**, a survivor of drug-facilitated sexual assault and RAINN Speakers Bureau member. "When I was raped, I was 6'4" and 220 lbs. I truly believed that I could go anywhere I wanted, and no one would bother me."

- Alcohol is the most commonly used substance in drug-facilitated sexual assault.
- Prescription drugs like sleep aids, anxiety medication, muscle relaxers, and tranquilizers may also be used by perpetrators.
- Street drugs, like gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), rohypnol ("roofies"), ecstasy, and ketamine can be added to drinks without changing the color, flavor, or odor of the beverage.

### **Behavioral Health Provider**

I had been having nightmares since the assault happened and it was really affecting my sleep. I have never been to a counselor before, but I needed some help dealing with the nightmares. I decided to set up an appointment with a Behavioral Health Professional.

I went to my first meeting not knowing what to expect. My counselor had training and experience dealing with sexual trauma. She told me living with unresolved trauma can be very detrimental. She also helped me to talk about how I was feeling about the unknown. We discussed the fear I faced being alone at night and when I left my house. She taught me techniques for anxiety, and we discussed ideas to help me feel safer when I was alone. She asked if I'd like to meet again, and I replied "yes". I found our meeting to really help me process my emotions. She told me that if I needed to talk with someone immediately, I could call the DoD Safe Helpline. It is anonymous and confidential. I can call them 24/7 and they can share available resources with me. Learning about the Safe Helpline made me feel more at ease about my feelings. We set up a couple more appointments and I left feeling a bit better.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **If you haven't already, go to Special Victims' Counsel #2 on page 14.**
- **To see the Chaplain, go to Chaplain on page 26.**
- **If you have already seen them, you are ready to go to Law Enforcement on page 5.**



### **Continue Investigation**

Initially I was overcome with fear and anxiety, but by the end of the day, I realized SSgt Nightshade had been victimizing me all over again. I was well supported, and I used my resources to help me feel empowered. I decided to continue with the investigation. I wanted to make sure he didn't get away with what he did to me.

#### **Flip a coin:**

- **Heads, go to Conclusion #2 on page 12.**
- **Tails, go to Conclusion #4 on page 23.**

### **Chaplain**

I was raised in a religious family and thought having someone to talk with about spiritual matters might provide some extra comfort right now. I made an appointment to speak with the Chaplain. I talked with him about how difficult it has been to not know what actually happened. I felt so violated. He was very patient and understanding. He took the time to pray with me, and asked God to provide me strength and healing as I go through this difficult process. He told me about a support group run by a nonprofit downtown and gave me some contact information. Before I left, he also told me he was available anytime by phone or in person if I ever needed assistance and reminded me our talks were completely confidential.

#### **CHOOSE Your Path:**

- **If you haven't already, go to Special Victims' Counsel #2 on page 14.**
- **For the Behavioral Health Provider, go to Behavioral Health Provider on page 24.**
- **If you've already seen them, you are ready to go to Law Enforcement on page 5.**

#### **Discussion Points:**

- **Who can a victim talk to confidentially?**
- **Who are some of the mandatory reporters in the National Guard?**

### Acronym list

Capt	Captain
GHB	Gamma-Hydroxybutyrate
LOD	Line of Duty
RAINN	Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network
SAFE	Sexual Assault Forensic Examination
SANE	Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner
SARC	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
SrA	Senior Airman
SSgt	Staff Sergeant
SVC	Special Victims' Counsel
VA	Victim Advocate