My Journey into the Story,

As a child growing up in a one parent family, my earliest years, I can remember my mother suffering domestic violence at the hands of a partner, I don't remember much at that young age, but I do remember that incident, it left an indelible mark on me, one that stayed with me up until this day, and as a young man like any young man growing up in a one parent family was to make sure no one hurt my mother. Since a child I have been passionate about Domestic Violence, growing up in South London, I was privy to stories and situations involving people's relationships, and what many women have had to endure at the hands of some men.

But the real eye-opener for me was working as a 999 operator in London, here I witnessed first-hand the scale of the problem people were facing, over the years I have had some horrific calls concerning domestic violence, the countless women I would have to stay on the phone with until the police arrived, while they locked themselves in the bathroom or the bedroom, frightened and scared, all the while hearing the violent partner in the background trying to smash down the door, not to mention the kids crying scared for their life, while things are being thrown around and threats being made. The countless stories of females living in fear, petrified of what they will face if their partner finds out they have made a police report, many having to flee for their life with nothing but their children and a suitcase of clothes, leaving everything behind to escape a crazy husband or partner,

I have lost count of the women who have confided in me that this was the first time they were reporting domestic violence, but not the first time it had happened, but it has been going on for years, Women who have been living in total seclusion no one aware of what they were facing behind closed doors, the many women who have made reports, but then have called back wanting to withdraw their statement, somehow blaming themselves for what had taken place and making

excuses for their partners violence towards them, some stories have even sadly resulted in death of some females.

Working as a minister I have had women, who have lived with domestic violence, while serving in ministry, their husband may have sometimes held a high position and on the outside everything appears fine in fact to others they may seem like the model couple, but the reality is far from what appears. Minister's wives who have been afraid to report the matter due to the damage the truth may be caused to their family and the church. The paradox women in these positions have faced has been frustrating and heartbreaking, I have spoken to women who lived for years in violent conditions sometimes until the children are adults before they have broken free from their abuser.

No man has the right to put his hands on a woman, for any reason. No woman should be living in fear for her life of what could happen to her when she comes back through her doors.

I have also in my time received calls from men who have suffered domestic violence, often a little embarrassed to report, some of their stories and injuries have been just as violent as the females but in contrast to women victims it does not come close.

What I have witnessed first-hand is not confined to any one race, ethnic group or people, this problem is cross cultural, all ages, and the stories are all similar.

I wrote this story a number of years ago, and performed it in a local church, the reception far exceeded my expectation, people confided in me that this was their lived experience, and pleaded with me to not stay silent regarding the matter, that people needed to see experience the production, I have since revised the play and adapted it to a larger audience. The production is not based on anyone's particular story but people who have had to face domestic violence will be able to relate to the issues raised in the play.

I am passionate about this topic, and even more passionate to see this production come to fruition.

This is why I have written "You Used to Buy Me Flowers."

SOME STORIES HAVE TO BE TOLD

Kevin Treasure

