

## it takes a monster

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/21048221) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/21048221>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Mature</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Rape/Non-Con</a>
Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">On My Block (TV)</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">Cesar Diaz</a> , <a href="#">Oscar "Spooky" Diaz</a> , <a href="#">Original Male Character(s)</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Past Attempted Rape/Non-Con</a> , <a href="#">Angst</a> , <a href="#">Canon-Typical Violence</a> , <a href="#">(because i believe oscar would go above and beyond to protect his little brother)</a> , <a href="#">Original Character Death(s)</a>
Language:	English
Collections:	<a href="#">One shot fics I've read</a>
Stats:	Published: 2019-10-15 Words: 4,970 Chapters: 1/1

# it takes a monster

by [starrywrite](#)

## Summary

“[Oscar]’s protected me my whole life.” - 2x01

## Notes

so @euphoriaspill wrote a Damn Good fic called “the come up” and there was a scene in said fic that i literally couldn’t stop thinking about for many days after i read it, which resulted in this! so...

1) make sure to read their fic before proceeding with this one!! just for context and whatnot and 2) certain aspects of this fic (the santos oc for example) were created by anna and therefore are credited back to them as the owner of, and i am not trying to claim it as my own! i was simply inspired by this amazing author and i have to give credit where credit is due! consider this a fanfic of a fanfic i guess!

**BIG DISCLAIMER** this fic centers on child molestation/sexual abuse (nothing overly graphic but there’s a lot of implications) and there is some internalized victim blaming and it could be triggering so please read with caution and exercise self care before, during, and after reading this <3

\*\* there is certain language used in this fic and it does not represent my views/thoughts/feelings \*\*

title comes from the quote “it takes a monster to destroy a monster” ((disclaimer: i’m not implying oscar is a monster but.....))

& as always i have to give love to my actual soulmate tianna for believing in me more than i could ever begin to believe in myself <3

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

- Inspired by [the come up](#) by [blossominribcage](#)

He hates the color gold.

Cesar tries not to hate anything or anyone; would rather not waste the energy on something so negative. Yet he can't help but vehemently detest the color gold, going as far as wishing that the shade of yellow never existed to begin with. He knows he's being dramatic. Knows that having such strong feelings towards a fucking color of all things is ridiculous. But whenever Nacho smiled too big, his gold molars revealed themselves.

It would probably make more sense to hate Nacho rather than the unfortunate color of his teeth -- and he certainly does. He hates the pervertido. But he really just hates the way he'd smile whenever he was around him. Like it was funny, like it was a fucking joke, like being the reason a child was lying on the floor with a crotch thrust at him was something to smile about.

Fucking Nacho and his fucking gold molars.

Cesar hates the color gold.

\* \* \*

Ever since That Day, as he refers to it in his mind in order to give it as little power over him so he can work towards forgetting it, Cesar makes it his mission to make sure he isn't alone with Nacho. And for the most part, he succeeds; he hangs out around his house much too often for Cesar's liking, but there's always a group of them and Cesar's good at blending in among the others to keep Nacho at bay. Otherwise, he locks himself in his bedroom or leaves the house altogether. Does whatever he has to do to keep himself away from el monstruo. He never wants to be his prey again.

Unfortunately, predators like Nacho are much too good at just that: being predators.

Everyone's out in the yard, someone grilling in a way that would make Oscar wince if he were around to see the blackened meat on *his* grill. Cesar goes inside after a while, no one noticing or caring that he left the party, and heads towards the kitchen, looking in the cabinets for something edible and not burnt. Not too long after, he senses something, someone, behind him, and he turns around quickly, his heart nearly stopping in his chest when he does. Nacho has him cornered, both hands on either side of him, resting on marble while Cesar's back is against the kitchen counter with the other's body much too close for comfort. "I'll scream," he warns him and Nacho laughs. He actually laughs.

"You think those cabrones gonna hear you?" he asks, shaking his head a little, almost as if he pitied Cesar. "You think they gonna give a shit?"

Fear twists into his gut like a knife. He doesn't say anything. He can't breathe, can't think. He chokes out, "What do you want?" He makes his voice as steady as he can, not wanting to give Nacho the satisfaction of knowing how terrified he is of him.

Nacho smirks. Cesar thinks it makes him look like a horror movie clown, smiling when there's no reason to be smiling, smiling but causing fear at the same time. His voice is low as he speaks, whispering in his ear, telling Cesar exactly what he wants. For insurance, Nacho casually reaches towards the stove, only a foot or two away from them, and turns the burner on, the flames immediately reaching towards the sky. He doesn't say anything, neither of them do; they both know what'll happen if Cesar so much as breathes too loud.

Nacho pats him on the cheek, murmurs, "Ese es un buen nino," and Cesar makes himself still as a statue, closes his eyes so he doesn't see Nacho taking himself out of his shorts. He forces himself to think of anything other than this so he doesn't hear the familiar sound of his breathing getting heavier, the gross noises made from his hand touching himself. Tries to block out Nacho whispering "te gusta esto, sé que lo haces." Doesn't even bother telling him he doesn't because he knows Nacho won't listen or care. It doesn't take long before he's willing himself not to throw up when the front of his shirt and shorts are suddenly damp and sticky and Nacho's grunting expletives in his ear.

He feels dirty, violated. But he figures he shouldn't; Nacho didn't touch him this time, didn't make him touch him. Cesar's not dumb. He knows what rape is. Knows that it isn't always just a creeper in an alleyway, lurking in the shadows, waiting for someone to pass him by so he can attack. But he knows what it isn't. And being cornered in his kitchen while his primo gets himself off in front of him may be disgusting and pervy, but it isn't rape. Technically. He supposes he should be grateful.

It feels like an eternity later, but Nacho finally flicks the burner off, then brings that hand up to his mouth, index finger over his lips. He smirks and winks at Cesar, and just as quickly as he had appeared, he was gone.

\* \* \*

He's overreacting, he's sure of it. But Cesar burns the clothes he wore that day in the middle of the night when he has nightmares about his kitchen and guys with gold teeth.

\* \* \*

If he tries hard, really, really hard, he can uncover a memory hidden away in the depths of his mind that taunts him to this day, telling him he really shouldn't be surprised that it happened in the first place.

It was a random afternoon, after he had gotten home from school. Nacho was in his front yard, reeking of a smell that was all too familiar to Cesar; he didn't even wince or cough when he got close enough to him. He had started to mumble a "hi" just for the sake of being polite but was silenced the moment Nacho grabbed his hand as he went to pass him.

Cesar felt like a dog on a leash, abruptly yanked backwards into a sudden halt. He looked at Nacho, curious and confused, eyebrow raised. "You good?"

"S'all good, C," he told him. Cesar always thought his voice sounded like broken glass, his smile sharp like a knife. Everything about him was a recipe for hurt. "S'all good," he repeated, softer, slower. His eyes lingered. Nacho looked at him, different than how he's

looked at the other Santos or even the hynas that hang out around the house, and Cesar had to look away, his stomach in knots; not like how he felt around Ruby or Monse, there were no butterflies, but large moths and they were gnawing holes inside of him. “Tu lindo,” he said in a low voice, meant only for Cesar to hear. Not that there was anyone around to hear him in the first place; their front yard was uncharacteristically vacant. Cesar’s face felt hot, and not just because he wasn’t used to being complimented like that, but because there was something about how it was said that made every warning alarm go off in Cesar’s mind.

“I -” he stopped himself, swallowed, quickly berated himself for stuttering every single time he got too worked up to compose a thought, then softly said, “I have homework to do.”

Nacho chuckled. “Yeah, m’sure you do. You real smart, C.”

“I guess,” Cesar mumbled, uncomfortable with all of this attention. He stared at the front door. How long did it take to take a piss or grab something to eat or whatever it was the guys were doing inside?

“Nah,” Nacho’s grip on his hand tightened, forcing Cesar to look at him. They locked eyes and he repeated “You’re smart. Ain’t you, C?” Now he knew exactly what Nacho was saying. He quickly nodded his head and it was only then that he let him go.

\* \* \*

He was overreacting, he was sure of it. But he didn’t like how Nacho had made him feel. The next day he stole some money from Nacho when he wasn’t looking and went to town to buy a simple chain lock. Borrowed tools from Ruby’s dad he barely knew how to use in the first place and immediately got to work putting it on his bedroom door.

\* \* \*

It’s different when Oscar comes back. At least, that’s what he tells himself. He tells himself that being around Oscar will keep him safe, so he becomes his big brother’s shadow; he’s never alone unless it’s just the two of them in the house. Once he gets out it doesn’t take long before things go back to the way they once were, before everyday’s a party and the Santos are constantly celebrating.

Tonight is no exception.

His brother and the guys don’t seem to care that he’s starting school again soon and still has to finish his summer reading essay -- not that he gives a shit about the Swiss Family Robinson, he mostly cares about getting an A in AP English. He ends up going outside even though he doesn’t really want to, but it’s too loud for him to even consider focusing on reading or writing anything. Figures if he makes a few rounds they’ll stop busting his balls about wanting to get his schoolwork done.

One of his primos slaps him on the back as soon as he joins the party, says something. His breath smells like lean and Cesar’s suddenly nauseous, mumbling something that can pass as a reply before going to find Oscar. He tries not to make it obvious that he’s hellbent on

staying by Oscar's side the entire time he's outside but he knows he isn't doing that good of a job, especially when Oscar motions for him to follow him inside, to the kitchen.

Cesar hoists himself up on the counter, legs dangling as he watches Oscar open the fridge and take out another bottle. "So," he says after opening it and taking a swig. "You wanna tell me what's goin' on with you?"

He stills for a moment, then asks, hopefully much more casual and nonchalant than he feels, "What are you talking about?"

"I know I've been away for a while," Oscar starts. "But I know you. How you've been acting lately, this ain't you. Something's goin' on and I'm just waiting for you to tell me."

Despite himself, Cesar shakes his head. "I don't know what you're talking about," he says with a forced smile. Oscar just stares at him, wordlessly, and Cesar squirms under his glare. "Oscar, there's nothing wrong," he insists. He looks away but can still feel Oscar's eyes on him, his silence speaking volumes, and he hates the way his brother can talk to him with without saying anything at all. "It's nothing," he says, then before he can stop himself, he stutters, "It - it's - it should be nothing. It was something but - but it was something a long time ago, and - and now it should be nothing. It is nothing." He bites down hard on his bottom lip to shut himself up because he's suddenly feeling like a can of soda all shaken up, everything is spilling out and he has no way to stop it. "It's nothing," he repeats quietly, hoping that his rambling would be enough to turn Oscar off of this entire conversation.

Unfortunately, he has no such luck -- which shouldn't surprise him. He's never had much luck to begin with. His brother walks over to him, leans against the counter and Cesar keeps his eyes on his hands, suddenly fascinated with the hem of his shirt. "So there is something?" Oscar asks.

"Was something," Cesar corrects him, then pinches his thigh for not being able to keep his mouth shut. The soda can carbonation continues to fizz over the edge. "While you were gone."

Oscar stills, abandoning his bottle immediately. "Something happened while I was gone and you ain't tell me?" He doesn't sound accusatory, more confused and concerned, and Cesar doesn't know how to deal with it. It makes his chest ache. "C?"

He realizes he's been quiet for too long and as a reflex, he repeats, "It was nothing."

"If it was nothing, why didn't you say anything?"

Cesar rolls his eyes, can't help it. "Because you were *gone*," he says in a very 'water-is-wet' tone. "I got an hour with you at most, I wasn't going to waste it telling you something you couldn't do anything about." Especially considering the subject of said conversation was occasionally with him during these hour long visits. Cesar often had nightmares of Oscar being taken away in the back of a cop car, again, because he knew about Nacho and if he can keep it from happening, he will.

Oscar raises an eyebrow at Cesar's tone, as if suddenly remembering he's a teenager and that in itself comes with a side order of smartass-ery. "Well, I'm here now," he retorts in a similar tone.

"Oscar -"

"We've got more than an hour to talk now. S'not like we're on a time limit anymore," he continues. With every syllable, Cesar can feel the moths coming back, nesting inside of him, their too-big wings flapping in a space much too small for them to occupy. It's harder to breathe, harder to think. Maybe that's why he just blurts it out.

"Because if I tell you what happened, you're going to lose your shit and I don't want you going back inside over this, okay?"

He's heard the saying about ripping off a band-aid, but for some reason, that doesn't seem applicable here. He didn't want to rip the band-aid off, he didn't want to say what he said. He can feel holes inside of him from the moths eating away at what's left of him and it hurts. He's scared and it hurts.

Oscar doesn't say anything for a moment. Cesar begins going through all the stages of grief but just as he reaches bargaining, Oscar speaks up, "That's not something you need to be worried about, mano."

Cesar scoffs a little. "Of course it is," he says, then lowers his voice. He hasn't looked at Oscar once yet. "I don't want you to leave me alone with those guys again." The words spill from his lips before he can stop himself. He's fucked up, saying so much more than he should have said. As if the guys aren't in his front yard. As if Nacho isn't in his front yard. It's too late for him to say nevermind now, too late for him to even entertain the idea of Oscar letting the subject drop.

"The guys?" Oscar raises an eyebrow, genuine confusion etched into his features. He falls silent again before speaking up, "Something happen with them?" The way he asks it makes Cesar feel like he already knows the answer, or at least that there is an answer.

He can't help it can't stop it before it happens, but he's spiraling. Memories flash in his mind; memories of That Day, him lying on the floor with a stinging cheek and a crotch thrust at him, him vomiting until there was nothing left inside of him then shaking like a leaf in a storm, memories of Nacho jerking himself off onto his clothes like he was nothing more than a thing for him to use, memories of Nacho grabbing his hand, telling him he's cute and smart. They start to flicker through in images like a film being shown on a broken projector. There's no 'off' button. There's no forgetting.

He's vaguely aware of how quiet he's gone in response to Oscar's question and he knows he should say something, anything, especially if he wants Oscar to stop asking so many questions. But he can't think with his mind full to the brim with everything he wants to forget. The air feels different now, or maybe it's just him. But his chest is tight, too tight, and he has to force air out in harsh exhales until he's gasping, trying to breathe like normal. The whole room feels different now, too small, and he feels trapped, just like he was that day with Nacho in the kitchen. It hurts to breathe, it's hard to breathe. Oscar's hand on his shoulder

makes him flinch so bad he nearly stumbles off of the counter, his brother steadying him with his strong grip. He can barely make out Oscar's voice through the buzzing in his head but it sounds soothing, or he figures it's supposed to; he can't quite understand what he's saying but his voice slowly brings him back.

It takes him a moment to calm down and when he does, he's shaking and tears are in his eyes. His hand trembles as he brings his sleeve up to wipe his eyes and he stutters, "S - shit - shit - I'm - I'm sorry."

Oscar's hand is still on his shoulder, he hadn't even realized it, and his other gently grips his chin, raising his head, forcing him to look his brother in the eye. "You don't gotta say sorry for anything," he says. "But you do gotta tell me what's going on. Because it's not 'nothing' if you're getting all worked up like this." When he lets go of him, Cesar's chin starts to tremble. He can feel a fresh wave of tears welling up in his eyes, his throat constricting as he tries to swallow the urge to sob. "Talk to me, mano." Oscar tries. "What happened?"

That's when Cesar realizes how badly he wants to say it. He wants to tell Oscar. He wants someone, anyone, to know, he wants to scream it at the top of his lungs, he wants everything haunting him to be set free and the only way it will is if he opens his mouth and says something.

And so he does. He tells Oscar everything -- about Nacho picking him up from school, about him giving him lean even though he had no idea what it even was, about the two of them ending up on a couch together, about Nacho pulling him in his lap. He trips over the details because it's embarrassing as fuck to tell your older brother about one of his friends molesting you, stuttering and stumbling over words in between choked sobs and frantic apologies. He's gasping a little again, scared another panic attack is on the rise, and after talking more than he even thought he would, all Cesar can do is whisper, "I'm sorry," to Oscar. "I'm sorry, mano, I'm sorry. I didn't want him to - please don't be mad at me, I swear to god, I didn't want him to..."

Cesar's plea is cut short when he realizes he's talking to no one. He was half expecting Oscar to wrap him up in his arms and hold him close, kiss the top of his head and tell him that everything is going to be okay. In his mind that's how he pictured this scene going.

He didn't imagine this is the turn it would have taken.

The door is open, despite him being sure that he closed it behind him and Oscar when they first came inside, and the yard is both too quiet and too loud at once. There's the unmistakable sound of fist hitting face and it doesn't take Cesar long to figure out just where Oscar went.

In hindsight, he probably should've told Oscar all of this when Nacho wasn't several feet away from the two of them.

Cesar rushes outside, heart racing in his chest as anxiety swims through his veins. He shoves his way through the crowd that's been created to find Oscar with the collar of Nacho's shirt in one fist, the other repeatedly hitting Nacho's face. "The fuck did you do to my brother, cabrón?" he shouts in Nacho's face between blows. "The fuck's wrong with you?"



“Lil Spooky’s been talking shit ‘bout me -” is all Nacho can say before Oscar’s beating on him again. No one dares to get between them, Oscar’s blind fury reminding everyone just why he’s called Spooky to begin with.

Nacho spits, blood flying to the dirt. “The little puto’s just embarrassed, s’all.” he says and Oscar shakes him by the collar of his shirt. Cesar feels as though there’s suddenly a spotlight on him, everyone torn between looking at him and the pummeling that’s unfolding just a few feet away. “Embarrassed about being a maricón. But he wanted it. Why else you think he was drinkin’ lean in my car?”

Oscar delivers another blow to Nacho’s face, letting go of his shirt so he falls to the ground, and snarls, “Get the hell off of my property. And don’t ever let me see your face around here again. Te arrepentirás if I do.” It takes him a moment but Nacho finally staggers to his feet and does the first intelligent thing he’s done in his life, he leaves. Oscar looks around, as if suddenly aware of the audience, and he barks, “¡Vete! All of you, now!” and like the shattered pieces of a glass bottle, they scatter. Oscar runs a hand over his face, then storms back inside.

“What were you thinking?” Cesar all but shouts as he rushes back inside after him. Isn’t sure if he’s referring to Oscar beating the shit out of Nacho or announcing to half of the neighborhood what he did to him. “Oscar!”

He doesn’t hear him, he’s mumbling to himself in Spanish under his breath, pacing so intensely he’s definitely burning a few calories. He doesn’t look at him, doesn’t even address or acknowledge him until Cesar blurts out, “You don’t believe him, do you?”

Oscar finally freezes, looks at him like a deer caught in the headlights. “What?”

“You - you don’t -- you *can’t* believe him,” Cesar’s voice shakes, as does the rest of him. “He - he’s wrong, I didn’t - I didn’t want him to do any of that.” He can’t stop himself from stuttering, from tripping over his words as he tries to choke them out. He’s so focused on trying to form a coherent sentence he doesn’t notice Oscar walking towards him. “I - I swear, Oscar, please -- you have to --” he’s cut off by a bone crushing hug, Oscar’s arms around him, holding him close and tight and it makes Cesar want to cry. “I didn’t want to,” he whimpers feebly into his shirt.

“I know, mano,” Oscar tells him, his voice thick and pained. He kisses the top of Cesar’s head. “I know.”

\* \* \*

He sleeps in Oscar’s room that night, something he hasn’t done since he was maybe five or six and since then he can count on two hands the number of times he’s been in his brother’s bedroom. But he can’t bring himself to detach himself from Oscar’s side, to separate himself from the feeling of safety he’s been craving for so long. Oscar’s bed is barely big enough for him but Cesar squishes himself up against him as tight as he can like maybe he wants to fuse himself into him, become some sort of hybrid with Cesar’s smarts and Oscar’s bravery and strength. Or maybe he just hopes being so close to his brother will alleviate the pain in his chest, the crushing weight and pressure that’s been settled on his sternum since this

afternoon. They lie back to back, like bookends, neither of them saying anything to each other, both of them pretending the other is asleep.

Oscar didn't say much when Cesar told him, not that he was expecting them to have a heart-to-heart telenovela moment. But Oscar's reaction, his silence, leaves him feeling unsettled. Like maybe he shouldn't have said anything in the first place because now everything is going to be different now. Like there's going to be a permanent elephant in the room no matter how hard they try to act as though there isn't one. Like Oscar's always going to look at him differently now. Think differently of him now.

So much time passes that Cesar is sure Oscar's actually asleep now, but he startles him by horsley whispering, "S'not your fault." Cesar lies as still as possible, unsure if Oscar is only saying all of this because he thinks he's asleep. "You -" Oscar starts, stops, then tries again, "You had nothing to apologize for. You have nothing to apologize for. You didn't do anything wrong. It wasn't your fault, mano."

Until he heard those words Cesar had no idea how badly he needed someone to tell him that. He doesn't say anything, he doesn't trust himself to talk without sobbing. Tears slide down his face and onto Oscar's sheets. They both pretend that he isn't crying.

\* \* \*

Cesar awakes the next morning to an empty bed, Oscar's side of it cold, as if he had been up for hours. Before they both fell asleep last night, he asked, "So what now?" and Oscar had said, "I'll handle it, mano. You just focus on going back to normal now." Cesar didn't have the heart to tell him that he has no idea what his normal is anymore. Instead he asked, "What do you mean you'll handle it?" But Oscar hadn't answered and Cesar tried to convince himself that he had fallen asleep.

But when he finally drags himself out of bed he does what Oscar told him to do: he goes back to normal. Or at least, he tries to. Oscar isn't home and the house is oddly quiet; he looks out of one of the windows and notices that their yard is empty for the first time in a long time, not that he's surprised. He eats something for breakfast but doesn't really taste anything. He doesn't want to see his friends, he never told them about Nacho and he'd know they'd figure out right away that something's wrong with him but he's too exhausted to have that conversation again. So he floats around the house, finding little things to do to make the hours tick by a little faster. He feels like a little kid again, waiting around for Oscar to come home so he can bug him, not knowing what to do with all of the quiet around him. When he was younger he'd find ways to make his own fun, which usually lead to Oscar scolding him when he finally got home (how was he supposed to know drawing on all the walls was against the rules when Oscar only even got mad when he did it in the living room?). But now he isn't sure what to do. Pretending to be normal is a lot easier when there's a preface to what normal actually is.

It's night by the time he hears the familiar around of Oscar's impala pulling into their driveway. He waits, the minutes tick on and Oscar still hasn't come inside, so curiosity gets the best of him and he takes it upon himself to see what's taking him so long. His hand barely grazes the back doorknob when he sees what is taking him so long.

Nacho.

He gets out of Oscar's impala, making a turn for the house, causing Cesar to duck down but he's unable to look away. Oscar says something that Cesar can't make out but whatever he says has Nacho turning around instead. He can only imagine what the two of them are talking about; he can practically hear Nacho repeating his lament: "he wanted it" "why else you think he was drinking lean with me?" "why else you think he never said no?" "he's just embarrassed" "the little maricón's just embarrassed."

(Even if that isn't what's being said, it's everything Cesar's said to himself over the past few months, so much so that he's starting to believe it. He just hopes Oscar doesn't.)

He can tell that Oscar isn't saying much, but he's watching Nacho intently. Ice cold dread washes over him and Cesar finds himself frozen, heart pounding so hard in his chest it actually hurts. Neither of them seem to notice him watching through the window, they're both too engrossed in their conversation for that. He strains his ears but can't make out anything either of them are saying, can't even read their lips to try and make up anything. He hesitates, torn between turning around and going back into the living room, pretending he never saw anything in the first place. But then Oscar raises his fist and decks Nacho. Cesar flinches as if he's the one who's been hit.

With Nacho on the ground, he really can't tell what's going on anymore. Maybe that's why he sneaks outside, as quiet as can be, desperate to know what's being said. He crawls on his hands and knees once he's outside, then kneels down behind the impala, crouching and peeking around the corner of the car. Oscar's back is to him and Nacho is still on the ground, sprawled out the way Cesar was on That Day.

Oscar's voice is so low as he speaks that Cesar can't understand a word of it, just the tone that he's creating. He sounds angry, furious. And Nacho sounds terrified. He isn't sure why, until --

He can't see what Oscar's doing but he hears the cock of a gun and everything goes still.

Cesar's ears are ringing and their back and forth is muted. He can't make out anything Nacho is saying, other than desperate pleas. He can vaguely hear the word "mercy" spill from Nacho's lips.

Oscar scoffs, or maybe he laughs; Cesar can't tell. But he hears him utter, "*Sin piedad para los violadores.*"

The firing of his gun and the 'ping' of the bullet falling to the ground just moments after fill the air, but it's the silence that follows that is more deafening.

## End Notes

Millions of men in the United States have been victims of rape. As of 1998, 2.78 million men in the U.S. had been victims of attempted or completed rape. About 3% of American men—or 1 in 33—have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime. 1 out of every 10 rape victims are male.

Boys, you are not alone.

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