

IT'S COMPLICATED - I NEVER GAVE MY CONSENT TO SEX

Programmanus



Sometimes in life, you may find yourself in the middle of something new and unknown, a complicated event concerning love, sex or a friendship.

“Couldn’t you tell?”

“What?”

“That I didn’t want to.”

You are listening to *It’s Complicated*, a podcast from UR focusing on exactly those situations and each episode is about a complicated event in a young person’s life.

“And even like afterwards he helped me put my clothes back on.”

First, you are going to hear an acted scene based on real events, but where details and names have been changed. Later on, you will hear the real interview that the scene is based upon.

/// DRAMA ///

EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON
Students can be heard in the background. Leaves are blowing in the wind and crows chirp at the atmosphere.

NATHALIE deeply exhales...

NATHALIE
Hello? Yeah... I see him.

NATHALIE



Mmm, yeah... Listen, am I doing the right thing here?

NATHALIE
Alright... Alright, I'll call you later, yeah?

NATHALIE
Thank you, Aisha... Really... Yeah, later...

click
Nathalies takes a deep breath and walks over with determination in her footsteps.

NATHALIE
Hey...

CHRIS and his friends are walking and talking.

NATHALIE
Hey, Chris... **Hey!**

Footsteps cease.

CUT TO:
EXT. SCHOOLYARD - AFTERNOON
Leaves blow in the wind..

CHRIS
Oh... Nat! Hey, what's up?

NATHALIE
I need to talk to you.

CHRIS
Oh, okay... About what?

NATHALIE
Brandon's party.

CHRIS
Uh-huh... Oh, yeah! Right! What's good?

NATHALIE
Wh- *exhales*... What do you think happened?

CHRIS



I dunno what you're talk

NATHALIE

In Brandons bedroom. What do you think happened?

CHRIS

Oh! We... Had a good time? Talking about photography n' stuff?

NATHALIE

Yeah? And then?

CHRIS

Uh... Guys, I'll catch up with you later, alright?

CHRIS' FRIEND

No, no, we'll stay.

CHRIS

Cool...

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Sorry Nat, you were sayi

NATHALIE (PROMPLTY)

Was it fun for you?

CHRIS

... Yeah, I mea

NATHALIE

Do I need to spell it out for you!?

CHRIS

...

NATHALIE

I'm... I'm not comfortable with what happened.

CHRIS

But... We had a vibe, right? Didn't we?

NATHALIE

Right, a *vibe*... You never felt any hesitation from me?

CHRIS
Not really... I mean, you did mention your friend

CHRIS
Right... Aisha...

NATHALIE
And then what did you say?

CHRIS
... That she could join?

NATHALIE
That she could join...

CHRIS
Yeah? I mean it was sort of a heat-of-the-moment thing.

NATHALIE
Heat of the- Do you think that's alright??

CHRIS
I wasn't really think

NATHALIE
She's 15, Chris!

CHRIS
Oh... Okay look, I didn't know that... I'm sorry, that must've been weird.

NATHALIE
Yeah, weird...
Nathalie gives off a flustered chuckle that reveals her agitation.

NATHALIE
And what about what you did to me?

CHRIS
What'd you mean what I did to you?

NATHALIE

Chris... *exhale* You...

CHRIS
What, Nat? You're gonna say I

NATHALIE
You!- ... Couldn't you tell?

CHRIS
What?

NATHALIE
That I didn't want to??

CHRIS
Oh... You serious? ... Right here?
Like this??

NATHALIE
What d'you

CHRIS
'Cause no! You don't get to just
run up on someone a
nd throw this shit
at them!

NATHALIE
What else was I supposed to d

CHRIS
Just leave it! Alright??

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Come on guys, let's go.

NATHALIE
Chris! You can't just
Chris' voice fades as he walks away.

CHRIS
See you around, *Nathalie!*
A pause...

NATHALIE begins to sob and struggles to keep her breath
steady. Under her breath she let's out a sad, but
angry...

NATHALIE

Fuck you, Chris.

///END.///

Nathalie watches Chris, as he and his friends walk back to their schoolyard. She follows them until they are just small dots, and then they are gone. Minutes pass, she stands still, it's like her body is glued to the ground. She stares down at the pavement. The grey stones are dark from the rain. As she looks up again, she realizes that she is crying. Nathalie doesn't know what to do, but she knows that she never wants to feel like this again.

This is *It's complicated*, a podcast from UR. What we just heard was an acted scene based on real events, but now we are going to hear the real Nathalie and listen to her side of the story. For those listeners who are sensitive, we warn you that parts of this story might be unpleasant to hear. Nathalie, Chris and all the others are called something else in real life.

Nathalie: I really like to read. I've actually read almost a hundred and seventy books this year.

Nathalie has always loved books. She likes the feeling of understanding the world through someone else's perspective, she likes being caught up in words and stories. However, even though she loves to read, school hasn't always been easy for her. When Nathalie was younger, she preferred to be home alone, but with age social contacts have become easier. When she was seventeen, she went to a party with her friends. It was a Friday night close to Christmas.

Nathalie and her friend Aisha are mingling. Since Nathalie didn't go to school for one year, most of her friends are a bit younger than she. Aisha, for example, is only fifteen.

Nathalie: So, at that time, my friends were a year or two younger than me, like I was always the oldest and there was this guy at the party who was my age and I was like, Oh wow, finally, someone I can relate to. And we were in my friend's bedroom who was

hosting the party, and we were just... um just talking about like photography and stuff. And then my friend I came with was going to go get KFC. And it was December so I was like, No, you can go. It's...it's cold. I'm staying here.

Aisha goes out to buy fried chicken, while Nathalie stays in the bedroom with this guy she just met. His name is Chris, and they are sitting opposite to each other on the floor. For a while they talk about their favourite photographers, then they talk about films. Downstairs the party is getting more intense. People are laughing loudly, and a new song is playing. The story you are going to hear now is from Nathalie's perspective, and it is her experience of the situation. She says that suddenly, out of nowhere, Chris leans towards Nathalie and looks at her from head to toe.

Nathalie: Like, out of nowhere, he was like, "Oh, do you want to take your top off?" Like completely out of the blue. And I said, "No, not really, like why?" And then he started to kiss me, and at that point I was like, OK, it's just kissing, you know, it's fine. And then it got more rough and more clothes started coming off.

They move from the floor to the bed. Nathalie thinks that the kissing is a bit too much, and she tries to slow things down. "Maybe we should stop if my friend comes back", she says. But Chris continues to kiss her and at the same time he is beginning to pull off her clothes.

Nathalie: But then after a bit, I was completely naked, like he'd taken my clothes off.

Nathalie can hear the party going on downstairs. She can hear the music, the voices... She can see the lamp in the ceiling. She can also feel Chris' breath against her ear but it's like she is not there. It feels like she is paralyzed, like her body has frozen to ice, and she can't speak or move.

Nathalie: I went for the mode of the fight or flight response, mine was just to shut down.

Chris is touching her everywhere, in places that she doesn't want to be touched at all.

At one point Nathalie thinks she can hear the door open and close. The only thing she can think about is what if Aisha comes in and he would do the same thing to her. She tries to stop Chris again.

Nathalie: I said, "My friend will... my friend is coming back soon". Like, I'm going to have to leave. Um...and all he said was she can join in. At the time she was 15 because like I said, my friends were younger than me and at the time that was what grossed me out the more, because she was younger than me, I was like, so protective

For some reason, this concern about Aisha is easier to take in than what is just happening. Chris is still touching her body in a way she doesn't want him to, and he still has all his clothes on while she is now naked.

Suddenly it's like Nathalie is back in reality and she starts crying. She puts her hand over her face, scared to show the tears.

Nathalie: And at one point he asked me if I was enjoying it. And if you'd looked at me, you'd probably would have said she's definitely not like enjoying it at all. Um, but yeah, then halfway like through I tried to leave by saying my friend's going to be back soon, I have to leave, and that's what I said before.

But Chris doesn't stop. After what feels like a lifetime, he moves away from Nathalie. She looks at her hand that has begun shaking. Then she looks down at the floor. Chris starts collecting her clothes and gives them to her like nothing has happened.

Nathalie: And even like afterwards, he helped me put my clothes back on. And I was like shaking because at the time I was wearing skinny jeans with the holes in them and like my foot kept going through the holes because I was like shaking so much. And then he went downstairs, outside into the garden with his friend, and I was trying to find my friend after this because like I said, she went to go get food and I was sobbing after that because I was like, No, this doesn't feel right. Like, I'm not quite sure what happened at the time, but it felt wrong and like, I couldn't comprehend it.



She walks around in the garden looking for Aisha. Her tears are now cold against her skin. There are Christmas lights in the trees. Nathalie turns her eyes away from the lights, they feel too strong and hard. She looks everywhere for Aisha.

Nathalie: And as I was looking for my friend, I bumped into this other girl and her friend and they could see I was crying and they made me go back upstairs with them just so like I could tell them what happened. They're very nice about it. They were like, "Oh, what?" Like, "What happened?" And I told them, and they were like, "That's really fucked." Like, "You have to do something about that."

Nathalie doesn't know what to do, it's like what just happened is a part of someone else's life. She goes downstairs again and drinks some water. She watches her friends dancing, drinking, and singing along to the music. After a while Aisha finally comes back. Nathalie tells her what happened and then they go home.

Nathalie: I think for that first night, I was just really confused, and I felt dirty and just really bad about myself, like I couldn't really speak. It was more of, like I just shut down for a bit.

Days go by. Nathalie keeps thinking about what happened. Glimpses of her lying naked on the bed flashes by. She keeps on seeing Chris' face in front of her. She can't sleep at night. After a few days she decides to tell her friend Brandon who hosted the party about the incident.

Nathalie: Because I was like, I feel like I should tell him because it was his house, it was his bed like, I'd want to know.

Brandon looks at Nathalie and says he thinks she has been sexually assaulted.

Nathalie: And I was like what?! And this was like...I hadn't really put two and two together.



It's getting closer to Christmas, and Nathalie soon turns eighteen. She feels confused about everything. A week after talking to her friend Brandon, he calls her up. Since it was his party, he feels a bit responsible for the whole situation and tells her that there is something she needs to know. There is another girl from another school who has experienced a similar incident with Chris.

Nathalie: Someone had said that this girl had accused the guy of something, but no one was quite sure if this girl was telling the truth. But once I told him it was this guy, he put two and two together and then me and the girl got in contact with each other.

Nathalie and the other girl talk to each other. It's good to hear her story, because it makes Nathalie feel less alone, but at the same time, she feels like she needs to do something about it.

Nathalie: Like I'm very much more protective of other people than myself. So, it was a... well, I don't want this to happen to anyone else.

She knows that since everybody is going on holiday soon, she must do it now. One day she decides to go to Chris' school to talk to him.

Nathalie: Like, I just wanted to see him because I thought if I saw him, then I'd know what to do. Like, should I report it, should I not? So, what happened was I ended up yelling at him....um when I finally saw him and he didn't deny anything. He apologized, but I was like, that's not good enough. It was more of a...he didn't even apologize for what he did. It was apologizing for saying that my younger friend should join in, and he was with other people, and they were just staring at me while I yelled at him.

Nathalie doesn't know what exactly she wanted Chris to say or do, but she knows it wasn't this. She stands still for a minute. Seeing Chris and his friends disappear in the school yard makes her feel even more alone than before. Does he not care about what he's done? Why is she the one who feels ashamed and not him? He can go back to his



life and his friends, and she is stuck here with tears pouring down her cheeks. Then she goes home and makes up her mind. She is going to report what happened to the police.

Nathalie: I actually went to the police station the day before my birthday, and I remember going and then that night I had to go to a surprise party that my friends...who obviously didn't know...had...did for me and my friends, we're like a birthday a day apart. I remember the entire time I was just sitting there like; I reported a rape this morning and now I'm celebrating my birthday. Like, it just felt unreal.

It's not just her birthday that feels weird now. Life feels weird. Everyday stuff like eating breakfast or buying a new shirt feels weird. In the back of her head, Nathalie still thinks about whether reporting the situation was the right decision or not. Having to repeat everything again and again to the police and answering all the questions was also difficult. But finally, she knows that it was the right thing to do.

Nathalie: Then the more I started telling my friends, the more they also had stories of like other people, you know, having same experiences, and I was like, Well, I don't really want anyone else to go through this at least with this one person. And that's why I reported, it wasn't really for myself. It was for other people.

In the end, the case did not lead to a sentence, and after some months, the investigation was closed due to lack of evidence. Nathalie would have preferred a fair trial and a sentence, but she still thinks it was worth going to the police.

Nathalie: I think I would have preferred obviously for him to have been charged or at least...something. Because he went off to go to university and then I was stuck dealing with everything that came after.

Today, Nathalie still thinks about what happened, and it's something she is dealing with on an everyday basis, but she is happy she took herself seriously enough to report it.