

Hi and welcome back to The Victim 2 Victor podcast. My name is Anu and I am a writer, a mother, and an abusive relationship survivor. In previous podcast, I tell my story of abuse and I discuss “abuse” and toxic relationships. If you haven't listened to them already, you may find them helpful if you are in an unhealthy relationship and are looking for a way out.

In this episode of podcast, we will talk about the culture of Eve teasing along with that we will discuss its perilous implications, causes and aftermath. WE will also talk about what can be done to put an end to this trend.

Ever heard of roadside Romeo? Sounds familiar right? Well apart from it being a title of the famous animated movie that was released in 2008. It also tends to indicate/highlight a rather serious issue that resides at the very heart of our society. It represents the ever-rising trend of eve teasing. Behavior and gestures including staring, stalking, touching, making remarks or “passing a comment,” winking, and deliberately pushing one boy into another boy to “accidentally” push a girl. Email harassment, mobile phone harassment, and cyber-bullying, these all form the very crux of eve teasing. The most unfortunate part is that there are no bounds to these violations as they can occur anywhere at work, in schools, colleges, public transport, roads and any other form of public place. Plus, such gestures can be perpetrated by any number of men be it a single person or a group of men or boys and can be perpetrated by anyone be it strangers or people known to the victims, Sometimes people from “within the home.” More Importantly It can be dictated by any sense of intention sometimes lust or attraction while other times power.

We can all agree that Bollywood has repeatedly promoted eve teasing by portraying it in the most casual sense. As a result, men are positively motivated to replicate such actions on a day-to-day basis. You will find that movies have normalized the idea of stalking in the name of wooing the lady. Singing songs at her, following her, whistling at her or winking at her has been in cooperated as rather friendly standards of pursuing a woman. Clearly the concept of seeking permission has been corrupted

Well, for some it is a mere word in the dictionary while for others it conjures up certain traumatizing feelings, triggering painful memories.

Now you will say how can one incident in your life weigh so much that it haunts the rest of it. Well, let me explain the irony of it. It's true on a technicality basis such incidence last from a few seconds to a few minutes but the scars it leaves are everlasting & here I am not talking about the physical marks in case of physical contact but the one that are imprinted on your soul & your mind because every time you look at yourself in the mirror you get reminded of those snide remarks. Every time any sort of unknown or surprise body contact with your loved ones startle you. Every time you walk alone you fear of the previous time. All the time you try to Keep your-self constantly occupied to evade letting your thoughts be idle because the moment you allow your thoughts to flow freely, you end up in a loop of that very moment. It's like constantly being vigilant and leading life in a self-conscious state. It's like your every action is dictated by that moment be it choosing clothes to wear or which route to take .... everything. In more professional terms you can rule such feelings as symptoms of PTSD .... post-traumatic stress disorder. Apart from this it also tends to scar the identity of a women. For such hooligans it is a mere flirting gambit and thus they cross all sorts of boundry in the name of fun and games while it has dire consequences on the integrity of a women which is anyways constantly at stake

Now, in order to eradicate this problem of eve teasing from our society we need to learn the root cause of it as to why it exists. Well, the answer to this is not so simple because it largely depends on your mindset as to how you perceive the world. Because from what I see the World comprises of two sets of people the one who tend to evolve with the times while others who remain fixated. Now the ones who are not able to keep with the pace of changes in society are often the one who still believe in orthodox style of living so if you ask them, they will blame the culture of liberalization that award women the freedom to dress and behave the way they want to as the source of this issue. Because according to such people the clothes women wear are revealing and provocative plus they believe women should be tamed and should be subjugated to the status that of inferior to men hence should always be accompanied by men. I know I know this boils your blood as much as it boils mine because for once we the idealist and evolved members of society know that in reality the very origin of such horrendous acts & the courage to perform them comes from such typical stereotypes that continues to persist in society. The problem is that such conventional values are till date being imparted to younger members by elder members of the family. Hence the vicious cycle continuous. Thus, in my opinion the sheer corrupted social values & lack of revised version of family and moral education is the prime cause of eve teasing. With this I would also like to address that your education is not your character certificate because many men or people for that matter who are well versed with the fundamental laws of society also tend to prey upon women and part take in acts of eve teasing. Speaking of this. We know with education comes diverse knowledge of technology and with technology comes access to a lot of privileges like easy access to location which unfortunately has not helped much in case of exterminating cases of eve teasing in fact has rather fumed them. Apart from these I believe another profound cause is the ever-rising trend of Cool Boy Image. Among many who tend to the face the adversities of eve teasing are young teenage girls and mostly their perpetrators are young adolescent boys who often commit such acts to gain attention and be crowned as Cool Boy amongst their peers. What I don't get is How can hurling comments at a stranger or picking up on innocent people be something to be proud of. In what world can such actions positively reflect or define on their image or personality for that matter.

And if you are one of those people who try to dismiss the cruciality of circumstances by simply phrasing that boys will be boys then let me clear the air for you that adolescent boys or men are not the only community of people who go through hormonal changes or have a desperate sexual need or go through life crisis life because girls go through that transition too, women face midlife crisis as well but I am sorry I have never once heard of a woman venting her frustration by Bullying or harassing men or any person for that matter.

It may seem like I am targeting a particular section of society but I am merely stating the truth. In fact, factually speaking as per a random survey conducted by Saanjhi Dunia, a women rights organization revealed that nine out of ten women using public transport faces eve teasing on a regular basis. On a more holistic level about 93.75% of women who participated in the survey admitted that they face eve teasing almost on a regular basis.

If only the numbers were so soaring high for factors accounting to developmental index like literacy or employment but unfortunately, they indicate a rather sour truth of gender inequality that continuous to the dominate the World forum.

Now the question arises what can be done to obliterate the concept of eve teasing from the very core of society. The most common resort people turn to is that they demand/ expect women to learn self-

defense. I mean there is nothing wrong about the idea of learning self-defense as long as it is for the purpose of skill development because using it as a temporary refuge to avoid eve teasing is not the answer nor is carrying a pepper spray. The ideal solution is bringing a reform in the attitude of society towards women. The focus should be ensuring that such crime is not committed in the first place instead of looking ways as to how to dodge it. If only we had taught the male gentry of society as to how to control rather than ask women to inhibit, we wouldn't have landed at a Greivous stage like this.

Can you recall the devastating Gang Rape case that took place in Delhi, India in 2012 that left the entire country in a state of shock? Well, that is the most apt example of eve teasing being escalated leading to crime as atrocious as Rape. Although both these crimes have equally devastating consequences however it is the mostly eve teasing that anchors other offences mostly because in case of eve teasing if the perpetrator does not get the desired response then in order to seek the wanted satisfaction, they tend to create a state of much more aggressive harassment. Now, this has given birth to a new term 'Little Rape'

Have you ever been scolded by your mother even when you did nothing wrong? How did that make you feel? Angry? Helpless? Now imagine that same feeling magnified to an intensity thousand times more. This is how you feel when you suffer from harassment via eve teasing because it's not like we invite those thugs to come and torture our spirit. It's not like the way we dress is an indication of consent. Consent is verbal declaration and so any other form of consent is considered illegal in the eyes of law. Speaking of Law, we all know tons of amendments and Legal code for protection exist in our Constitution but its implementation is far from effective. As a matter of fact, Even the preamble declares that one of the fundamentals of the country is EQUALITY but all of this is a façade because only in paper are, we an exemplary model country else in practice such ideal enactments cease to exist.

I know now you will say that for the legal actions to be taken the offence needs to be reported first. Agreed, majority of the cases go unreported but ever wondered why. The answer lies behind several reasons that is given the stigma in society that a woman who faces any form of harassment becomes impure and unfit for society, creates a sort of fear, fear of shame, fear of being outcasted. That is what keeps a woman from reporting because instead of supporting the sufferer the society including the family members tend to blame them and put fingers on them. The other probable reason is the hefty fees demanded by lawyers or required as a part of court fee or even the fee for filing affidavits. Thus, considering that such processes are financially draining and not everyone has a strong financial background therefore, women often refrain from reporting because it's not like females belonging only to a particular class division faces eve teasing. The terror of eve teasing lies on every woman regardless of caste, class, ethnicity, religion and & what not. Well, another possibility could be ignorance in the eyes of society, for Eve teasing is often persuaded as a minor offence. The System fails to acknowledge the ravages of this offence. This in turn could create grounds of sheer lack of faith in the police system Because in reality the law enforcers often turn a blind eye and are biased against women in such situations in fact sometimes, they themselves are the assailant and hence misuse their power & authority to the dismiss the entire grounds of case. A constructive solution to this can be deployment of more female officers so that cases are no longer neglected & that offenders don't go uncharged. However, the most potent solution would be to put an end to this culture of eve teasing.

You know Often a person who has experienced eve teasing in their life are labelled as victims but in my opinion, they are not victims but survivors. Because living through those tormenting memories every

day of your life requires strength. In fact, those who commit such shameful act are the real victims, they are the victims of their own shallow thinking, their own insecurities that they are unable to work through. If anything, it shows their own weakness of not being able to accept their vulnerabilities or for possessing a fragile ego and not yours. On the contrary you are brave, brave enough to fight through it all no matter what life throws at you.

We know as humans we have the capacity to do anything, we set our mind to so let's put our heart and mind into creating a society free of such evils and look forward to a much brighter future.

With this our episode comes to an end but don't forget to read my book called Victim2Victor where I have shared my journey of evolving through travel, self-help and a determination to cast off my damaging past. It is my humble attempt to reach out to fellow survivors of abuse and to impact the lives of those who feel helpless. I am sure it will help others to find themselves just as I did.

I also have a 12-week self-development plan course that that is FREE and aims to guide you to find your higher self and I will add the link in the description below.

Do like the podcast and tag someone or share it with someone you know who is going through a similar situation or who needs help. I will be back with another podcast soon. Until then take care and keep fighting.