

'I WAS STALKED!'

CELEBRITIES are not the only ones!



STALKING is something that only happens to famous celebrities, right? Like that time Keanu Reeves found a naked woman in his swimming pool, or when Gwyneth Paltrow was mailed flowers, porn and pizza. But stalking from an obsessive pursuer can happen to anyone. It can even happen to you. Here's one reader's story – and more about what to do if you are being stalked.

Angie was 21 when she found herself being stalked by an unknown man. Here is her story.

"I would get phone calls from an unknown number with just heavy breathing; it turned into him phoning me and saying he knew what I was wearing. Then he started saying he loved me and said how we were meant to be together," says Angie.

Her stalker always called from a private number and didn't tell her who he was. This was the point where Angie went to the police.

They didn't act on the calls, and she confided in her best friend. "I turned to my close friend: He was a pillar of support."

She never put two and two together until her best friend confessed: He was her stalker.

"The day he confessed, I lost it. We were in a public shopping mall and there was a huge scene."

Angie was lucky: her stalker didn't contact her again after the public scene in the mall. But it taught her to be careful of whom she trusts.

THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF STALKING

WHAT should you do if you are being stalked by a friend, ex-lover or unknown creep? "Go to court and apply for a protection order," says Inger Jansen of Jansen & Associates Attorneys (Cape Town).

"Try to have some details of the person as the interim protection order will need to be served."

If the person can't be found, an attorney can be asked to appoint a tracing agent to find the respondent.

"There is new case law to say documents can be served via Facebook, but this is a last resort," says Jansen, adding, "Always be careful of the details you release on social media and change your routine regularly. Blocking the person may anger them, but if you are left with no choice, do that. If you suspect the person is physically following you, lay a charge of harassment or intimidation." Once a protection order has been granted, Jansen notes, no contact would be permitted.