



Sara Reedy remembers clearly the start of her ordeal, and how surprisingly painful it was to have a gun jammed to her temple. Then her attacker demanded oral sex, saying he would shoot her if she refused. She was shaking, gagging.

"I had images of my family finding me dead," she told the Observer. "I closed my eyes and just tried to get it over with." Reedy was 19 when the man entered the petrol station near Pittsburgh where she was working to pay her way through college and pulled a gun. He emptied the till of its \$606.73 takings, assaulted her and fled into the night.

But the detective who interviewed Reedy in hospital didn't believe her, and accused her of stealing the money herself and inventing the story as a cover-up. Although another local woman was attacked not long after in similar fashion, the police didn't join the dots.

Following further inquiries, Reedy was arrested for theft and false reporting and, pregnant with her first child (by her now ex-husband), thrown in jail. She was subsequently released on bail, but lost her job. More than a year after attacking Reedy, the man struck again, but this time he was caught and confessed to the earlier crime.

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