

Paper: Daily Mail, The (London, England)

Message: Daily Mail: He lost his house, his job, his liberty. But though innocent, he says

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Date: March 2, 2005

WHEN six uniformed policemen knocked on Leslie Warren's door one summer Sunday afternoon in 2002, he thought it was a joke organised by his ex-girlfriend Linda (not her real name) who had a taste for elaborate game playing.

Within minutes, it became clear that this was no joke. Linda was about to ruin his life. She had accused him of rape, of threatening to kill her and attempting to suffocate her. 'It wasn't until they handcuffed me and took me outside to the police car that I realised "this is for real",' Warren says now. 'I felt a cold shiver down my spine. My life was suddenly a surreal nightmare.

I really couldn't believe that this was happening to me.' Warren protested his innocence.

Yes they'd had sex, twice that day, but Linda had consented, he told the police. In fact she had demanded it; she was insatiable.

Warren was arrested, charged and in January 2003 sentenced to four years in prison. Now, his nightmare is over and he must rebuild his life and relationships - especially with his daughter, Elizabeth - from scratch.

SPEAKING exclusively to the Mail yesterday, he said: 'I try not to be bitter, but I can't help be angry that I've been identified and that she has retained her anonymity throughout.

'The fact that all the people I went to school with, all the people I worked with, thought I was a convicted rapist and sex offender - I had to register as a sex offender when I was released on bail in January pending the appeal - was utterly, devastatingly humiliating.' Warren concedes that his highly colourful sex life with Linda will shock many and his behaviour towards the women in his life has not always been exemplary.

'I know I was unfaithful to my ex-wife and even a cad. But that doesn't make me a rapist. And the one consolation throughout this horrific experience has been the incredible and humbling support from my family and friends. They knew I was innocent.' With hindsight, Warren admits his relationship with Linda was bound to end in trouble.

She told him she'd been taken into care at 15, but ran away to London, where she lived with a drug addict and worked as a stripper and lap dancer.

Warren, now 39, has no way of knowing if any of this is true, but he didn't care. 'I found it all the more exciting,' he says ruefully.

His background was very different. He was born in Redland, Bristol, into a respectable middleclass family, with two older sisters.

His mother managed a cake shop and his father was area manager for a bus company.

He left Chipping Sodbury Gaunts School in 1982 with just four O-levels. But after a succession of sales jobs, he joined Christian Salvesen Logistics in Gloucester and worked his way up to become a regional sales manager.

Warren's personal life was not so successful. He married his teenage sweetheart in 1991 after they'd dated for ten years, and had a daughter, Elizabeth, now aged 11, to whom he is devoted.

But the marriage broke up when Warren left his wife for another woman with whom he had a daughter, now aged ten.

That relationship lasted just three years and ended acrimoniously. He has no contact with this child, although he sends her Christmas and birthday presents.

Warren met Linda, then aged 21, in July 2001. She was a credit controller at the same company but based in another office. They exchanged emails on professional matters, but that soon changed.

'We'd flirted shamelessly by email for months before we met,' says Warren.

'I suppose you could call it "virtual sex" and I was intrigued. I had a reputation as a bit of a ladies' man. I flirted with a number of female colleagues, including Linda, and she flirted with other men.' EVENTUALLY they agreed to meet and Warren was bowled over. 'We arranged a drink over lunch and we got on fantastically well,' he recalls. 'She had short, fair hair and trim figure and this air of mischief.

'She was great fun. Within 45 minutes of meeting we were being intimate in my car. It was incredible.' They were soon immersed in a stormy affair in which sex was the dominant and - for Warren - addictive factor.

In his police statement, he admitted their love life was 'wild', that Linda had a voracious sexual appetite and liked 'rough sex'.

She also had a penchant for short skirts, low-cut tops and thighlength boots. Warren was shocked - and delighted.

'I came from a rather staid background. I'd been with my ex-wife for over a decade, and then in a couple of long-term relationships with "normal" women.

Linda was liberated, adventurous and unpredictable. She was amazing.

'I had never known such a highlysexed woman. I'd never had a partner ask me to tie her to a tree or pull her hair as we made love. I'd never even seen a pair of handcuffs before I met Linda.

'I have to admit that I found the seedy side of it all exciting and I enjoyed the variety.' Linda moved into Warren's house and early in their relationship got pregnant.

'I told her I would stand by her whatever she chose to do. That if she wanted to have the baby, we should get married. But if she wanted an abortion, I would pay for it. She decided to have an abortion so I went with her,' says Warren.

Almost immediately, he had regrets. 'I told Linda "We've just killed a child"'. She was understandably upset and we split up for a while. But she came back.' When Linda became pregnant again, she insisted on another abortion. 'She was treating it as a form of contraception and it was then I decided enough was enough.' They split up, but Linda stayed on in Warren's house as a lodger.

'Foolishly, and to my shame,' he says, 'we continued to have sex. It was so damned wild.' At the end of 2001 Warren got a new job with Ryder Logistics, a transport company, and was earning GBP40,000.

He was able to work from home, had a Series 3 BMW and a 1,000cc Suzuki in the garage and began taking helicopter flying lessons.

Life was good and Linda was due to move out.

Then he met another woman - someone very different from Linda.

'She was very ladylike and cultured but also full of fun and I fell for her.

But Linda found out.' Just three days after this, on Sunday, July 7, 2002, Linda made the allegations.

She'd spent the night in his bed and they'd had sex in the morning and again in the afternoon. Later, Warren told police that when he went upstairs to ask if she wanted a cup of tea, she was lying in a provocative position on a bed in the spare room and demanded sex.

AFTERWARDS he went downstairs to watch the Grand Prix on TV. Linda locked herself in the bathroom, telephoned the police and claimed that Warren had viciously assaulted her.

Soon after 3pm the police arrived.

Linda told the police that Warren had become aroused by seeing her in a flimsy nightdress and that she had changed her clothes a number of times during the morning to deflect his interest.

She also claimed Warren became angry when she interrupted him as he was watching TV, that he threatened to kill her and attempted to suffocate her by holding a cushion to her face. When she revived, she said, he followed her upstairs and raped her.

Warren does not know why she accused him. 'The only explanation I can think of is that she was jealous of my new girlfriend. Maybe she is just malicious.

As we now know, she has done this and made money from it before. All I know is she is dangerous and a menace to men.' He did not seek to hide his emotion - and his anger yesterday as he left the appeal court.

'At last I have cleared my name.

To have been convicted as a rapist, a violent sex offender, was the most grotesque travesty of justice. I lost everything and spent two years in Dartmoor for a crime I did not commit.

'I still feel in turmoil. Two years of my life have been stolen. Now I want to start my life again. I have had a few dates since I came out of prison, but I found the prospect of being intimate with a woman again too frightening for words.

'How do I know it isn't going to happen to me again? I hope this feeling will pass and I can one day trust a woman again.'

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