



Alicia's Cautionary Tale

When Alicia was 13 years old, she made headlines as the girl who was lured by an Internet predator—and survived.

Alicia was a shy girl from a close-knit family, but on New Year's Day in 2002, she did something completely out of character. She agreed to meet a friend she had been chatting with online for eight months.



Alicia says she hated the cold and never went outside alone after dark. "Yet it's the coldest, darkest iciest night of the year and I walk out my front door to meet a total stranger," she says. "That's something that's so out of my character and just shows you an example of how intense the brainwashing is."

"I can remember standing behind a tree and thinking, 'This is really stupid.' My senses came back to me for a second." At that moment, Alicia says she heard her name being called out and got into the car with 38-year-old Scott Tyree. "Once I got near him, something changed and I realized that this person's a monster," Alicia says.



Tyree drove Alicia to his home in Virginia. Over the next four days, Alicia says she was raped, bound in chains, shocked with volts of electricity and hung by her arms as her 13-year-old body was beaten.



"He tortured me," Alicia says. "He treated me like an animal—a dog. I basically did whatever I had to to survive. It's like I'm a whole entirely different person. That man did kill that little girl. He did. That girl's completely dead."

Tyree bragged to his friends about the girl held captive in his basement. He even videotaped her bound and chained and shared those images over the Internet.

One of the friends Tyree had been sharing his webcam videos with online saw Alicia's face in the newspaper and decided to turn Tyree in. "I suppose he got nervous that this was now going to be on his hands if [Tyree] murdered me," Alicia says.

After four days of sheer hell, Alicia was rescued by the FBI. She was found chained to the ground by lock and collar. "When I said he treated me like a dog, he did," Alicia says.

Alicia says she now realizes she was groomed by a child predator. "He groomed me, and in doing so, he brainwashed me. That sounds crazy, but he did. He took apart the 13-year-old girl that I was and created this creature that he wanted me to be."

To understand what it's like to be groomed, Alicia says to remember what it was like to be 13 years old. "There's days where the world's wonderful, and there's days where it seems like the world just hates you." The bad days are when Alicia says the predators step in. "There's somebody there, always there, to tell you that it's going to be okay."



Alicia says it was the simple things Tyree would say to gain her trust. "Like getting in a fight with your mom because you wouldn't clean your room. And he'd say: 'Oh, well, why would she treat

OPRAH is a registered trademark of Harpo, Inc. All rights reserved. © 2009 Harpo Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

you like that? You're an adult. It's her room, she'll clean it.' Or you get a bad grade in school and he'll look at the answer you gave and say: 'No, that's right. You're really smart. You think outside of the box. Your teacher is an absolute idiot.'

"After eight months of talking like that, it takes you apart," Alicia says. "It does. And he's always there, all the time."



When Alicia started her relationship with Tyree, social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook didn't exist yet. "That wasn't even around when this happened to me, so there's this whole other level of danger they need to be aware of, and it's sad. It's sad because it should be something wonderful connecting with your friends. That's something children should be able to do. But the world's so scary that they can't. There's so many bad people in it that they can't, and that's horribly sad."

Tyree pled guilty to charges of sexual exploitation of a minor and travel with intent to engage in sexual activity with a minor. He was sentenced to 19 years in federal prison.

Alicia is now fighting to keep predators like Tyree behind bars. A junior in college, she spends much of her time speaking at schools about her ordeal, and hopes to join the FBI so she can fight for other children.

From *The Oprah Winfrey Show* Lured at 13: Held Captive As a Sex Slave