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I I chose to speak up.
To speak up against rape.
To speak up against injustice.
To speak up and share my experiences with others.
I told the truth - no matter how uncomfortable or unflattering- to the Court.
The outcome does not affect the truth.
When I did speak up, I never fully understood our asymmetrical criminal justice system.
But I do now.



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I was required to tell the truth under oath over a week on the witness stand and was cross examined at length.

He was afforded the choice of staying silent in court.

Head down in a note book, completely detached.

He never faced one question in court about his story and the criminal charges.

I was required to surrender my telephones, my passwords, messages, photos and my data.

He was not required to produce his telephone, his passwords, messages, photos and his data.

My life was publicly scrutinised, open for the world to see. His was not.



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Many of you in the media, have been called out for labelling the last few weeks the "Higgins trial" but I don't blame you, because to me it is very obvious who has been on trial.

He hasn't had to be publicly accountable - for his actions or any part of his story.

This is the reality of how complainants in sexual assault cases are treated.

Their lives are torn apart, their families and friends called to the witness stand and the accused has the legal right to say absolutely nothing.

Like all women who experience sexual violence, I knew the odds were stacked against me from the outset.



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The criminal justice system has long failed to deliver outcomes to victims of sexual assault.

In the ACT during 2020, only 16% of sexual offences reported to police resulted in a charge.

And of that 16% - only half of that number again - resulted in a conviction.

That is to our national shame.

I want to thank the other women who came forward and shared their own experiences.

I believe you. You were with me every day I walked into that court room and faced him.



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I want to thank the people of Australia who have rallied behind me, those who chose to attend the March 4 Justice rallies and the journalists who helped amplify this issue.

Most importantly, I want to thank the workers in our mental healthcare system, without whom, I literally would not be here today.

Again, I'd like to acknowledge the DPP team, my family, my friends, Heidi Yates from the Victims of Crime Commission, Leon Zwier, Emma Webster and my wonderful partner David.



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