



I Will Find You: A Reporter Investigates the Life of the Man Who Raped Her

By Joanna Connors

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“This is it. My rape. I knew it was coming. Every woman knows. And now here it is. My turn.”

When Joanna Connors was thirty years old on assignment for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* to review a play at a college theater, she was held at knife point and raped by a stranger who had grown up five miles away from her. Once her assailant was caught and sentenced, Joanna never spoke of the trauma again, until 21 years later when her daughter was about to go to college. She resolved then to tell her children about her own rape so they could learn and protect themselves, and she began to realize that the man who assaulted her was one of the formative people in her life.

Setting out to uncover the story of her attacker, Connors embarked on a journey to find out who he was, where he came from, who his friends were and what his life was like. What she discovers stretches beyond one violent man’s story and back into her own, interweaving a narrative about strength and survival with one about rape culture and violence in America.

I Will Find You is a brave, timely consideration of race, class, education and the families that shape who we become, by a reporter and a survivor.

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Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #434813 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-04-05
- Released on: 2016-04-05
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *I WILL FIND YOU*:

“A searing narrative that plumbs both emotional and political depths . . . Connors’s forthright exploration of race and poverty enlarges her personal story, turning it into a richer, more complex and ultimately more harrowing account of interwoven traumas . . . What’s miraculous about this memoir is Connors’s ability to identify, in clean, lucid prose, evidence of hope—and even beauty—amid such an abundance of misery . . . [it is] powerful evidence of our society’s failure to address the causes and consequences of sexual violence.”
—*New York Times Book Review*

"Twenty-two years after she was raped by a stranger, Connors sets out to explore the life of her attacker. In doing so, she not only unpacks her own trauma but also confronts issues of race, class, and gender. It’s heavy stuff. But with emotional honesty and profound questioning Connors deftly turns her victimization into a considered meditation on how we treat others." —*Cosmopolitan*

"Deeply humane and harrowing." —*Boston Globe*

“A terrific book . . . [Connors is] a beautiful writer and often manages to be wry, funny and transcendent as she deals with an immensely serious topic.” —*New York Times*

"Readers come away with a sense that, through researching and writing *I Will Find You*, Connors has been able to banish some demons and start down a healthy path—one that leads to finding her own new self. Her book is a study in healing and courage and should prove to be a resource for many of those touched by these terrible crimes." —*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Brutally affecting . . . powerful . . . [Connors] has an everywoman quality: she could be you . . . [she] illustrates how inextricably our lives—and those of our children—are entwined with the lives of others.”
—*Guardian*

“Weaving together memoir and journalism, the book offers a deeply moving, personal story while examining issues of race, class, and violence against women . . . *I Will Find You* is more than just Connors’s personal story. As a journalist, she manages to stay amazingly objective, even while tackling such a deeply emotional topic, resulting in a chilling, eye-opening combination of memoir and reportage . . . Connors’s honesty and openness are stunning and inspiring. Her careful and thoughtful examination of her own suffering, as well as her willingness to look deeper at the man who hurt her, make this one of the most compelling, unique books of the year.” —*Chicago Review of Books*

"A must read for every woman who has ever been raped, who has feared being raped, or who has never even thought about being raped. And for every man who wants to understand or who cares about the women in his life—mothers, sisters, wives, or daughters. Because it is more than a story of rape. It is a story about our divides—of race, of education and opportunity, of prison, and of family." —*Daily Kos*

"Connors unflinchingly uncovers the grim life of the man who raped her." —*Vanity Fair*

"Raw, revelatory . . . both an unflinching portrait of trauma and an act of journalistic courage." —*Telegraph*

"Compelling . . . Through Connors' thoughtful and intrepid search, she confronts weighty truths about race and sexual violence. She doesn't shy away from the personal details and, in doing so, ensures the reader sees a raw and honest account of her life before, during and after the rape. Although the subject is heartbreaking, this profound work will keep readers thinking long after the book is complete." —*Green Bay Press-Gazette*

"Filled with an unrelenting honesty about sexual violence, race in America, and the realities of incarceration and poverty . . . it is necessary reading for a culture that seems unable to talk reasonably and openly about sexual violence . . . Read this book, talk about it. You might create a public space for others to talk about what has happened to them." —*Yes! Weekly*

"A book both brutal in its honesty and beautifully told." —*New Zealand Herald*

"Harrowing, tragic, and moving. Connors bravely recounts the challenges she faced." —*Bookish*

"[A] powerful work of non-fiction, recounting a journey animated not by revenge or a quest for closure, but profound curiosity." —*The National Book Review*, one of 5 Hot Books

"Connors' riveting, soul-searching book deserves a wide audience; it presents an unusual first-person perspective on critical issues of race, class and crime in America." —*Book Page*

"Raw and unnerving . . . If a reader is looking for the most candid, most powerful true book about rape, let Connors' be the one." —*Booklist* (starred review)

"Gripping . . . a powerful story of exposing and confronting emotional scars in order to move forward...Connors's astute reflections on race, gender, and the personal plight of victimhood make this book a must-read." —*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"Powerful and compelling, the book is a highly personal examination of the volatile intersection of race, poverty, and violence. The author insightfully reflects on the idea that the greatest monster anyone, including victims of violent crime, must face is the monster within. A courageous and unsettlingly forthright memoir of overcoming trauma." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"'I will find you' vowed the man who raped Joanna Connors should she tell anyone. In this perturbing, irresistible memoir, Connors writes that her attacker's threat haunted her for the next two decades—a diabolical punishment, she learned, inflicted on most rape victims. 'Why do we feel this shame?' she wondered. 'What do we do with it?' Connors answers these questions with wry eloquence and surprising compassion in this magnificent, necessary, unflinchingly honest book." —**Jon Krakauer**, author of *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town*

"Joanna Connors' unflinching attempt to understand the circumstances behind the most brutal and humiliating moments of her life makes for a powerful and compelling read. Ultimately, Connors unravels the raw and disturbing details, not just of her attack and young man who forever changed her life, but she also gets to the heart of some unspeakable truths regarding race, incarceration, and the culture of sexual violence in modern America." —**Gilbert King**, author of the Pulitzer prizewinning, *Devil in the Grove*

"Is it possible to call the story of a violent rape and its haunting aftermath a thing of beauty? In the hands of Joanna Connors, this lucid, powerful memoir becomes its own form of redemption, as a seasoned reporter

turns her gaze on her own life and that of her rapist's. I found this to be a profoundly moving, important and, yes, beautiful book." —**Dani Shapiro**, author of *Still Writing*

"The most important book on rape since Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will*. Honest and strong, riveting and terrifying, heartbreaking and utterly unsentimental. This book will change lives and minds." —**Mary Doria Russell**, author of *The Sparrow*

"A hard-to-read book that is impossible to put down. I am in awe of Connors's courage and inspiring compassion. A testament to the power of forgiveness and a hard-earned grace." —**Thrity Umrigar**, author of *The Space Between Us*

"At a time when rape culture threatens the lives of too many American women, journalist Joanna Connors's *I Will Find You* is a sobering, masterful, and meticulously researched exploration of the crime but with a twist: Connors plumbs the depths of her attacker and the culture of violence that made him a rapist. In giving a voice both to her own tragedy and to her perpetrator's, she contributes boldly to the conversation surrounding one of the country's most pressing and little-explored social problems. Understanding radiates from every page in prose that is crisp and full of unexpected notes of grace." —**Beth Macy**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Factory Man: How One Furniture Maker Battled Offshoring, Stayed Local—and Helped Save an American Town*

About the Author

Joanna Connors is a reporter for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dwight Case:

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Louis McCarthy:

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