Trauma Narrative by Safari  
I have known ------ since I was 11. Just last Fall we reconnected, he needed advice on a girl and with my kind heart I reached out. At this point ------ was open to his feelings on the surface as well as showing vulnerability. As the school year progressed, we grew closer, developing a very tight friendship. Hanging out often, so often he would begin to come home with me every day. Our friendship was balanced, we both had each other’s back and were an ear to listen. ------ was invested in building a strong friendship; at one point he had his Father drive him from Naples to spend the day with me and my Mom which is unheard of in the future. He was just like any other guy friend except we had a much more personal connection. One day it just happened he kissed me which sparked feelings that I didn’t know I had. A mutual friend made it clear our connection was meant to be so as uneasy as it felt I gave into feelings and said yes to a relationship. At this point ------ was considerate, kind, responsive, respecting and understanding. Little did I know he was the face of someone much different. Here’s where I began to fall for a person who was putting on a show of himself but not actually who he was.    
After some time passed, I made a point to talk to him about something that was important to me; I needed to know if he trusted me and he clarified that with me when I looked him in the eye and believed him. I didn’t want to feel untrusted but at the deep bit of my stomach something I realized later is that he lied to me with no signs of anything which left me unable to look him in the eye as time went on it was a new type of fear a beginning of me being fearful. In some ways over the Summer we grew apart and for ------ this separation was a loss. So, he overcame that by isolating me from my friends, the outer world, which lead to the uneasy feeling that he didn’t trust me. Everything became a threat to him because he would control me. When we were together, he didn’t want to go out or be social, our relationship had no connection with the world. He started becoming depressed solely negative leading to our conversations being about him only his successes his wants, it was like a boost to help him hide in his depression, but it was what’s best. He started obsessing about his look and talking about how other girls noticed him which was hurtful. I never had a say, he secluded me from myself, taking full control of who I was to eliminate threats. His negative energy was so draining, and his words were nothing short of a hypocrite. I lost who I was, I was so confused.    
A whole new set of problems arose. People started to get into ------ head about trust causing him to question my loyalty even more. ------ changed so much in a period of 3 months he became a monster from a nightmare. He was so consumed in his ego and perception of how others saw him. He got a hold of me; our relationship became intimate and that’s how he took me from me he had me on a leash, so he could control how much distance was between us. I couldn’t take the constant manipulation and his impossible fantasies, so I took the opportunity to confront him and set the tone. Set my boundaries. Everything was about him and for once, I just needed him to respect my feelings. Well he fooled me, after telling him he changed for the worse his behavior was wrong, and he wasn’t who I thought I fell for he showed some emotion but that was just part of his show his game. He began questioning my loyalty to him, but he twisted it so subtly that I fell back to him. He managed to turn the confrontation into a blame game and it was my fault. He was incapable of excepting himself for who he really is. ----- got me second guessing myself making me feel like I wasn’t enough. His deceiving behaviors and egotistical lifestyle ate away at me. I was trapped, stuck but I couldn’t escape. I felt obligated to be with him like it became my job. I pushed my feelings aside for him, so he could use me to boost his miserable self. He changed me to be just like him, since he knew I’d always listen always give him another chance. He new his limits and pushed them to the max turning me into thinking I was the bad guy.   
------ became always angry. He used that emotion and negative thoughts to fill the void, replaced what needed to be filled. He wasn’t getting enough attention at home and even I couldn’t fill that hole. He turned at the flip of a switch. I didn’t notice this really until after a tough loss his football team had. He lost it, blew up. But there was more to his anger than just the loss, that was just the surface. Whatever the root if it was, everything just fell on him. He was vulgar, making threats disrespecting his stepmom. I tried my best to help him get to the root of his anger, but you can reason with a narcissist. This is where he started to play the blame game... Everything was never his responsibility, always everyone else. He relied on blaming everyone else for things yet still needed everything to his way, he couldn’t choose; like his bi-polar behaviors. After his anger blew off, he was normal, somewhat kind. This became a major eye opener, he showed me truly what he is capable of. Scary at the least, he was so unpredictable I couldn’t get out, I just had to do my job, stay and be supportive to keep him at bay. There was no out, I was stuck. He had me convinced to stay and with growing rage and hate, the risk wasn’t worth it to try and get out.   
October 15th, the day I found out ------ betrayed me, broke me, embarrassed me, the day where it became apartment that he took everything from me. He had made the conscious decision to take a video of me during something, not giving details but a close friend informed me that he had showed some boys on the team. Now it was Homecoming night and I couldn’t risk my Mom finding out, so I told myself to suck it up and handle it later. Feeling sick to my stomach, I decided not to drive since if I drove, I may not have made it home. So, I had a guy friend drive me. Shortly after, word had gotten out that I was with a few guys and some girlfriends… ------ decided to bash me in a text despite telling him earlier that we need to talk. I tried clarifying the situation, but it wasn’t enough, it was never enough not for him, he was impossible to please. Later that night I called him in anger, disbelief, disgusted…. My tone was clear, and I asked him if he did what I heard, and he played the I don’t know game since he was in the middle of something with his Dad. Liar. He finally admits to it but can’t see the big deal that is. It was hard, I had to fake a smile, act like everything was fine even though I was far from okay. Me and ------ talked somewhat normal the next few days since I was scared to say anything. This all changed when my Mom had me open up. October 19th, I told her… one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. She told me she would get it handled, get the right people involved. At this point, me and ----- started arguing as I showed strength and courage to pursue consequences, get the justice I deserved, while he begged me to not to tell my parents. Too late. He tried to further manipulate me with sweet texts, empathy, but it was a game, a predictable game. The game was over, and he lost. No more total control over me, I was free. But not free from embarrassment, hardship, betrayal. ------ was unable to see that what he did was wrong, what he took from me, he couldn’t see it. He took from me my loyalty, my voice, my trust, he took everything. The best he could do was sarcastically apologize. He tried to lie and play his way through it to try and win me back, but I was free. The hole ------ created in me, separated me from myself, my family and friends. He made me feel like I was to blame because remember, nothing was ever on him. He lacked empathy for the situation, he didn’t care about my heart, my feelings at all. He just cared about not getting caught. He didn’t care that he hurt me but still wanted to be with me. He was so twisted, his words, his every motive… this situation gave light into who he was, giving him no more changes but giving me my only true out that I couldn’t pass up.    
I took my out and I owned it. Despite being sick and depressed and broken, I decided from then on out to take this opportunity and change it into a good thing, but not let it define my future me. It was a long journey, months of heartache, hard conversations, tough situations but I broke through. I wanted this; to heal, to get better, to come out and breathe on the other side. I took counseling as my opportunity, giving me the tools and resources, I needed to become who I am today. From the beginning, I had to learn how to accept and move past the previous thoughts, saying I was at fault, I was to blame, because I wasn’t. I opened my own heart to forgive, to move on from the past but not forget. Even though it was hard to see ------ as troubled since I was so angry, I looked past the anger and turned it into empathy… He can’t control who he is, he’s mentally and emotionally troubled for various reasons which I understand and can see why he is the way he is, even though it is wrong. I can’t change him, and I no longer see it as my job, only we can change ourselves. Which is what I did. I now thank God for this, it was his plan to build me into the woman I am today and thank my Mom for making me realize that was my out, because guess what I took the out and, in the end,  I didn’t let it define me, I defined it. ------, you no longer define any part of me and I forgive you for it all. Thank you for helping me discover who I am today.