

# 20 Years of Pain

*Abi and Moon had been married for 20 years. They had four children. Then one day, Abi killed Moon.*

*Read the story and find out:*

*Why did she murder her husband?*



Abi L. is a small woman with a gentle smile. She speaks quietly and politely. She seems like the nice woman who lives next door, not the kind of person who is in prison for murdering her husband. Abi tells her story carefully, how the problem began, how after 20 years of pain she finally killed her husband.

Abi explains: "Before we were married, Moon was the nicest, most gentle man I had ever met. Maybe that is why I married him. He was so kind. The first two years were wonderful. But then something happened. He started working late, not coming home, and drinking a lot."

She continues, speaking softly, "At first, when he was angry, he just pushed me. Then later he kicked me or slapped my face a few times. After a while he started to beat me badly. Once he choked me so hard I thought I was going to die."

Abi looks down at her hands. They still have

scars from the time her husband pushed her through a window.

The hands are small but strong enough to reach for a kitchen knife and stab her husband to death. This is what Abi did last June when her husband began to beat her again.

**Wife-beating happens more often than most people know.** Not just here, but all over the world. In some societies, men believe it is their right to beat their wives. And though there are laws against attacking people, most men who hurt their wives are not punished.

The reason? **Most women say nothing when beaten.** Abi did not tell her relatives or friends. She did not even call the police. Abi explains: "The police do nothing. If a woman calls the police, her husband can just give them money, and they'll leave. Then he'll beat his wife more and more."

Abi is now in prison, awaiting trial for murder. Her friends say she should go free. They believe she killed Moon in self-defense. Others say she must pay for her crime with her own life.

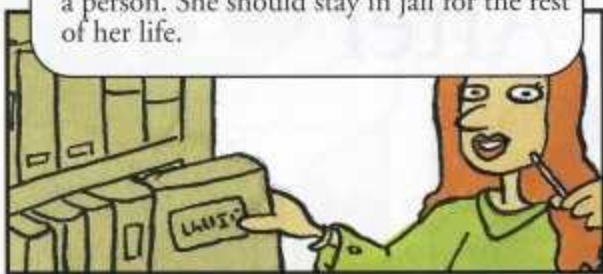
Abi's eyes are sad and tired. "I don't know what will happen now. All I know is that I killed my husband because I didn't know what else to do."



**WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

What do you think should happen to Abi?  
Check the opinions you agree with.

She suffered a lot, but it is wrong to kill a person. She should stay in jail for the rest of her life.



She killed her husband in self-defense, so she should not be punished.



She suffered long enough. She should go free.



It was right for her to kill her husband. He deserved to die.



It's simple. Abi killed her husband, so she should pay with her life.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

**TURN TO PAGE 85 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.**

**LOOKING AT THE ISSUE**

Which of these ideas can help to stop violence by men against women? Which will not? Why or why not?

	will help	won't help
There should be strict laws to protect women.		
Women need to learn how to defend themselves. They need to fight back when they are beaten.		
Men who beat women should go to jail for a long time.		
Men need to be educated about violence to change their thinking and behavior.		
We need to stop violence all over the world, not just between husbands and wives.		
How can we reduce violence in the world? For example, stop showing violent scenes on TV.		
1.	2.	3.