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https://www.losaltosonline.com/community/how-abusive-husband-seemed-omnipotent-and-drove-wife-to-edge-of-sanity-confronting-domestic-violence/article_6b391f16-5668-5c6e-8b72-736796e90646.html

How abusive husband seemed omnipotent and drove wife to edge of sanity: Confronting Domestic Violence

Ruth Patrick
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This is the second in a six-part series on domestic violence and technological abuse. Names, professions, history and other personal identifying features have been changed to create a composite character to protect confidentiality. In Part 1, after leaving Ed, her abusive husband, Beth discovers that he has been using technology to stalk, frighten, control and discredit her. To read Part 1, visit [losaltosonline.com](https://www.losaltosonline.com).

After Ed moved out, Beth changed the locks back to the old-fashioned, key-in-keyhole kind. But even though Ed was no longer living there, he still seemed to know everything that she was saying and doing, no matter where she was inside or outside of the house. And sometimes important documents or personal possessions would disappear, get tampered with or reappear in different places.

Beth began to feel as though her husband had developed superhuman powers – all-seeing, all-knowing. Knowing that was impossible, she began to feel that the simplest and therefore likeliest explanation was that she must be going crazy.

Her initial, frantic attempts to seek help; her description of unseen eyes on her at every corner (in her house, on the street, in her car); her inability to string together a coherent narrative; her confused, scattered, hypervigilant, frightened, disturbed demeanor; her stories of things disappearing and reappearing inside her house – all of this behavior conspired to validate her husband's claims that she was probably disturbed and quite possibly paranoid.

Friends began to distance themselves. Her sister who lived in another state began sending her critical, hostile texts blaming her for the breakup. Even her therapist seemed to be pulling away, doubting her, wondering how much of what she was experiencing was real and how much was due to her overwrought mental state.

In a final act of desperation to prove to herself and to the authorities that she was not completely crazy, Beth hired a private investigator to “sweep” her house and car.

In Part 3, we’ll learn what the investigator uncovered.

Ruth Patrick, M.A., is a local resident and domestic violence outreach specialist. Her program WomenSV is a Town Crier Holiday Fund recipient. For more information, call 996-2200.

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