

Growing up as a Canadian Jamaican, and having two immigrant parents work tirelessly to provide a safe and loving environment has been a wholesome experience. They taught me that kindness and respect are to be given to each individual no matter what they may look like or where they come from. Over these past 22 years, I have upheld these values and continue implement these teachings in my day-to-day life.

Being a Black Woman in Canada has its struggles, I've been stereotyped on multiple occasions more than I can count. Whether it be, being racially profiled as a retail employee follows me around the store assuming I'm going to shoplift, along with discrimination and systemic biases that are still prevalent in today's society. But never until February 11, 2021, on my own mother's birthday, did I have another human being completely disregard my right to decency and respect. While attempting to enter a Dollorama store, in the worst possible way I was racially targeted simply because of the dark brown complexion of my skin. An unmasked stranger, who felt as though my blackness was a menace to his presence, thought it would be okay to assault me. He locked eyes with me, approached me, and spat on my face and body, shortly after shouting "you nigger" and quickly again with more roaring anger and hatred in his voice, he repeated himself, "yeah, I called you a fucking nigger". The blare of his voice lingers in my head, and the image of his face cannot seem to evade my memory. The word "nigger" is not something that I savor or retain in my vocabulary. It carries centuries of anguish and hostility, towards people that came before me and who look just like me. The same racial slur used hundreds of years ago to offend Black people miserably draws and builds on historical oppression that evidently still lives on today.

This offense has impacted my life in ways that I did not know were possible. I've become paranoid and traumatized since this horrific incident, I have difficulties trying to complete daily activities without feeling anxious and panicked. I find myself constantly on edge scanning my surroundings in terror that this cruel encounter may happen again or worse. I no longer permit myself the freedom of shopping for necessities alone, either a family member or close friend that I trust accompanies me to the simple task of shopping. This crime replays in my mind over and over again, making me question what I did wrong that day to deserve such a violation, I have to frequently remind myself that I did not provoke nor instigate such an indecent offense. It has become impossible for me to shop at my local grocery store, just 3 minutes from my home in the community I grew up in and love, this is now a luxury I can no longer afford or feel safe doing. The simple things we expect to do freely without persecution as human beings and members of a diverse society, I am no longer secure doing. I now live-in fear of another unprovoked incident taking place, which no individual or group should have to endure. I have never experienced this degree of racism and hatred that is so degrading and vile. I am still wrestling with the effects of this traumatic experience which has left me with feelings of vulnerability, fear, and paranoia unlike anything I've ever felt before. I feel humiliated, dehumanized, disempowered, and silenced to this day.

These acts of hate should not be overlooked and must be addressed, I am asking for your assistance in identifying and locating the suspect so that extensive consequences can be applied. The aggressor believes it is okay to inflict harm and prejudice upon people of color, which we should not stand for. As I and my family suffer through this situation, your assistance is needed so that justice can be done and peace be attained.