

Why she loves the worst rapist in Britain

He was described as the most depraved sex offender in the UK, but to his wife he is still the perfect family man...

Flicking through Jennifer Grant's family album, there is photo after photo of her seemingly devoted husband Delroy looking every inch the proud dad and protector.

In one he cradles his baby son, in another he larks about on a family camping trip. In every respect he looks the model husband and father. Yet Delroy has been dubbed Britain's most depraved sex offender.

Even as these photos were taken, Delroy, 53, was leading a twisted double life – the dutiful family man by day and a crazed sex attacker by night.

Wearing a balaclava, he would creep into elderly people's homes and subject them to degrading and humiliating sexual assaults, sometimes for hours. His oldest victim was 89 and many were blind, deaf or had conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

It seems incredible but, up until his arrest in November 2009, wife Jennifer insists she knew nothing of her husband's crimes. And even now, after he was sentenced in March to 27 years in prison, she has vowed

to stand by the man many feel nothing but utter revulsion for.

Speaking exclusively to *Best*, Jennifer, 47, recalls the day the police revealed her husband had been charged with raping and abusing dozens of elderly people over almost two decades.

Shocking news

She says: "Our son Louis woke me up about 8am to tell me the police were at the door.

"Delroy's job as a taxi driver meant he often worked late, but he'd always be beside me in bed by morning, so my first thought was that he'd had an accident.

"I suffer from MS, so the police had to come into my room as I lay there in my nightie. An officer said: 'We have reason to believe your husband is the Night Stalker and has been carrying out dozens of sexual assaults for many years.'

"I'd read about the Night Stalker in newspapers and said: 'What are you talking about? You've got the wrong man.' It didn't sink in and still hasn't. I can't believe my Delroy could be the same man they wrote about. It's just not possible."

From the moment Jennifer met Delroy at a music festival



Convinced

Despite the evidence, Jennifer is supporting the man she married

in London 26 years ago when she was just 21, she was smitten. By then, he was divorced from his first wife, Janet Watson, 54, and had six children, but Jennifer immediately fell for his

'nice guy' image. She says: "My friend wanted to talk to Delroy's friend, so I walked over with her. I was struck by how handsome he was. He offered me some sugar cane. I was really happy



he was talking to me because all the girls were flocking round him.

"After that we'd see each other at parties. He'd tell me I was pretty and a good dancer. Before long we talked about previous relationships. He told me he had kids, but it didn't make any difference to me. "Eventually he met my twin girls. They were three at the time and just took to

him. He was natural with kids."

Five years later, lovestruck Jennifer discovered she was pregnant with their first child, Jason, now 21. She recalls: "Delroy was thrilled. We met a friend in the street and Delroy laughed: 'I have a surprise! He affectionately rubbed my tummy and said: 'It's in there!'"

The couple had a big, Caribbean-style wedding. "It was the perfect day," gushes Jennifer. But behind his lovable facade, Delroy had begun his 17-year campaign of terror.

Using his taxi driver job as a guise, he would target elderly

victims who lived alone in or near south London, breaking into their homes, ripping out telephone wires and disabling the lights so they couldn't escape.

The first rape he was accused of, in 1992, was so brutal that the 89-year-old woman almost died. Then, after a lull of five years, his DNA began turning up at crime scenes again. In 1997 he carried out a spate of assaults – sometimes up to five a week. His brutality increased. One 88-year-old victim was so violently raped he perforated her bowel.

In his other life, he and Jennifer went on to have their second son Louis, now 12. "We were just normal," says Jennifer. "Delroy arranged summer trips to Folkestone. He loved BBQs and playing with the kids."

When Jennifer was diagnosed with MS at 35, Delroy took on the role of carer without a word of complaint. "He was a mother, father, husband and wife," says Jennifer. "He did everything – bathing me, washing me, cleaning the house, shopping and looking after the children."

Grant's disgusting crimes caught up with him in August 2009, when he was captured on CCTV using a victim's cash card. Eventually, he was pulled over when the police were able to match film footage to his car. Inside his car police found the Night Stalker's 'rape kit' – a grey balaclava, blue cagoule, a grey fleece and a crowbar.

After her husband's subsequent arrest in November, Jennifer was told to leave their family home within two hours to give the forensic team access.

She was allowed a few phone calls with Delroy, but only saw

him the following January. In his initial phone call, he'd convinced her of his innocence. "I only had a minute, but he said he was innocent and was more concerned about how I was coping."

Following her instinct

Later, a visit to him confirmed her faith in his claims. "Seeing him face-to-face, I asked him if he did it. He looked me straight in the eye and said: 'No, Jennifer, do you really think I could do something like that?'"

"I always said that when I looked him in the eye, I'd know – and I did. When I'm asked where my husband was on each night, I believe he was driving the taxi to make extra money."

Jennifer didn't attend the trial. In his defence, Grant even made the absurd, false claim that his ex-wife had stored his semen in 1977, then waited 15 years to frame him for the crimes. Eventually he was convicted of three rapes, one attempted rape,

six indecent assaults, one sexual assault, 16 burglaries and two attempted burglaries, although police believe the actual number of attacks is nearer 500. Judge Peter Rook QC said: "Your utter depravity knows no bounds. It is a matter for the parole board if you will ever be released."

Jennifer says: "I feel awful for the victims. I could barely read some of the things said, but Delroy isn't capable of them.

"Louis has had to leave school because of all that's happened. Jason is standing by his dad with me, and none of us associate the man portrayed in the media with the man we know and love. I would only believe he's guilty if it came from his lips. Until that day, I will stand by him."



Tormented

Friends and family believe Cynthia Stephens, 93, lost the will to live after Grant assaulted her in her home in June 2009. Once-feisty Cynthia died a few months later

How could she? An expert analysis

The horrifying revelations seem to have come as such a shock to Jennifer that she has disassociated from the situation," says forensic clinical psychologist Michael Berry.

"Unable to cope with the truth, as a subconscious defence mechanism, her mind has cut off from reality by protesting her husband's innocence. And look at Josef Fritzl's wife, Rosemarie. Although her husband was convicted of imprisoning their own daughter in the

cellar of their marital home and sexually abusing her for years, she has maintained she knew nothing about it.

"This is usually a short-term reaction; eventually reality comes back to haunt them. When this happens, they may undergo episodes of anxiety, flashbacks, depression and isolation.

"As they start questioning and doubting themselves, they will be plagued with guilt, humiliation, self-judgement and a sense of: 'how could I not have known?'"

THE SMILING FACE OF A FIEND



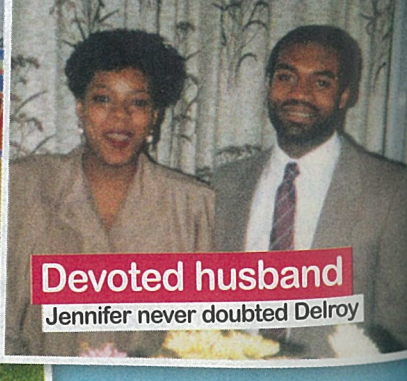
Family man

Grant always seemed to be there for his kids



Holiday fun

He loved to take the family camping



Devoted husband

Jennifer never doubted Delroy