# WORST NIGHT OF MY LIFE

“I was at sleepover at friend's house one night when I got an email from an online gaming buddy on my phone warning me about a video that looked like me. I clicked on the link, logged into my Instagram account only to see that it was a very blurry video in a club. Definitely not me, didn’t even look like me – phew! For some reason I couldn’t get into Instagram, it kept rejecting my password. I tried resetting it, but then I noticed it asked me to log in to my email account again as well. Things just started getting weirder from there. That’s when I realised – I was locked out of all my accounts.

Went home to see if my parents could help me figure this out. They completely freaked out when they saw me – hugging me, crying – saying they’re so glad I’m ok. I didn’t understand what was going on until they told me about the DM’s they received from my Instagram account since last night. Someone was texting them, pretending to be my friend. She said I was in an accident and that we were at a hospital. She needed to fill in all the forms before they would operate on me – she got my parents to send all our details, my name, ID number, address, even photos of my parent’s IDs, where they work – everything. When she asked them to pay a deposit so the doctors could see me, they started getting suspicious (because we have medical aid) and they phoned the hospital. The emergency room staff didn’t know anything about it and told my parents it sounds like a scam.

We were so relieved they didn’t make the mistake of paying the money. After quite a bit of work and research, I also managed to get my email and social media accounts back. We thought we sidestepped the worst of it. Little did we know, it was only the start of our nightmare. Two months later, the cops rocked up at our house wanting to arrest my dad. Someone had been using his details to buy cars – then they disappear and never make any payments. They even used our medical aid details to get loads of medicine – completely drained all our funds. The worst was when I couldn’t get into university because my parents were blacklisted from all the bad debt these criminals made. It took two years to clear our names.”