

FAKE ME.

I was well aware that a lot of things could be stolen, MATERIAL things, not something as basic as an identity is, MY identity. It's not that I was never taught how conscious I should be on the internet, it's just that I never thought that bad things could happen TO ME.

Well, I better start from the beginning, the beginning of FAKE ME.

My name is Marta and I'm sixteen years old. I have had a Tiktok account since I was like 13, a private account, until the beginning of this year, when I decided to make it public. I didn't pretend to be an influencer, I just thought that if more people wouldn't be bad, and obviously I didn't think that would be dangerous. But what I thought was as far from reality as it could be.

I didn't realize there was an account posting my content until some of my friends started asking me if I had changed my account (which didn't really make sense considering I've had my account since I first downloaded the app), it was weird, I mean, I was not famous- and I still ain't.

I didn't really want to bother my parents, I was kind of scared of their reaction, so I just chatted with the account owner- via that account. It was way easier than I had imagined, I just asked to take my videos down, and after a slight discussion they accepted. I thought this was going to be the end of all this drama.

The months passed by and nothing worrying happened, until it did.

I discovered there was an instagram account using my name, my videos, my everything. At first, I just asked to take my content down, but this time the account owner just blocked me. I realized it was time to tell my parents. I was preoccupied about their reaction, but they turned out to be more comprehensive than I had thought- I'm not saying that they weren't disappointed or angry, because believe me, they were, but they understood the situation.

The next morning we went to the police office. I started to feel too ashamed and scared, to even try to hide, and I guess the policeman saw my frustration, because he immediately told me that everything was going to be fine. I didn't really believe him, so I just gave him a fake smile, and a trembling "Thank you."

From then on every tear I dropped, every smile, every everything, was fake. Not because I didn't mean them, because I didn't feel like me, I felt fake, I FEEL fake.

I don't really know what made me change, maybe the feeling that something worse could have happened, maybe disappointing my parents was the worst thing, or maybe the thought that I had failed them. Whichever was the reason why, the Marta that entered that police office was not the same that came out from there.