

INVESTIGATION OF A RUTHLESS RAPIST

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Prior to the advent of effective legislation in South Africa governing the full utilisation of DNA evidence together with a national forensic DNA database as a criminal intelligence tool, DNA analysis was used to a limited degree. Though limited, DNA proved itself an invaluable resource by yielding a number of successful cases whereby offenders were apprehended for crimes that would have otherwise gone unpunished.

One such case involved the identification and conviction of Albert Morake, a ruthless serial rapist who committed 30 rapes between 2007 until he was caught in 2012. Pursued by a passionate young police officer in South Africa, Sergeant Numsa Masuku, Morake was further linked through DNA to several other cases with a similar MO. Unbeknownst to Sgt Masuku whilst investigating the cases, Morake narrowly escaped conviction several years earlier on an identical charge of rape and kidnapping — his two accomplice mysteriously dying days before giving evidence against him. This story is about the power of DNA, the passion of a dedicated police officer and the face of a ruthless rapist. Moreover with South Africa having one of the highest rates of recidivism in the world this story shows how DNA could have been used to identify this ruthless offenders at a much earlier stage of his brutal spree which would have saved many more women their lives.

With South Africa's new DNA laws in place, there is new hope that serial offenders such as Morake will be stopped earlier in their 'criminal career paths' as DNA in conjunction with a DNA Database works diligently as a silent weapon against violent crime.