



Tragic: 21-year-old Louise Cattell
Fashion show
organiser found
dead in flat

Benedict Moore-Bridger

Death riddle of fashion girl



Louise Cattell was found in her bath

DETECTIVES are investigating the death of a fashion show organiser who went to the same school as Sienna Miller and Gemma Khan.

Louise Cattell, 21, who was found dead in her bath, is believed to have had a heart attack and drowned. Four people believed to have been at the flat just before her death were arrested in connection with alleged drug offences.

A 22-year-old woman was arrested on suspicion of the horse tranquilliser ketamine, while three men held on suspicion of possession of the drug. They were released on bail without charge until April 11. Miss Cattell, described

By John Tuomey

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66 Ketamine killed my best friend 99

On 2 March 2011, Louise Cattell, 21, was found dead in the bath after taking ketamine. In an exclusive interview her friend Lara*, tells *Company* how the drug threatened to destroy all their friends' lives – as well as her own

66 Louise and I should be enjoying Glastonbury together this summer, or at least belting out *Cabaret* on karaoke. But instead, I'll be singing at her memorial service on London's Primrose Hill.

I met Louise on the dancefloor of a club when I was in my first year at university. She was dressed up for Halloween, and she put everyone else in the room to shame. I loved dancing, like she did, and instantly wanted her to be my mate. She was all about dressing fabulously and she DJed too, which I was really impressed by.

I was three years older, but not half as cool. Every time we went out she'd turn up in something amazing and always looked better than me! It'd be easy to hate her, if

she wasn't so lovely and funny. No one else I knew had auditioned for *The X Factor* (and got through the first two rounds!). I'm happy to admit I had a bit of a girl crush on her.

DISCOVERING DRUGS

I'd always been totally against drugs and hardly even drank alcohol, when a friend at uni tried coke, I was angry with him for a month. But in my second year, I met some guys out clubbing who were throwing an after-party. A few people there were taking drugs, and I was curious. I'd been told that ketamine was pretty harmless, with no long-term side-effects, and that you couldn't overdose or get addicted to it. I figured it was the safest drug to try. So a ▶



friend gave me a bit to snort, then laid me down on a duvet on the floor to feel the effects. Suddenly, I was swimming across the duvet and, to be honest, it was fun. People thought I was hilarious and it made me feel popular.

After the high, I was sick, but my mates said that was normal for first-timers. I walked home in the morning

“Within six months I tried mushrooms, speed, coke and acid”

and went to bed. I realised that a lot of people my age took ketamine regularly. As poor students, it was cheaper than alcohol, so I started taking a little bit on most nights out.

Dealers were fellow students, so it wasn't about meeting dodgy people in alleyways. Within six months I tried mushrooms, speed, coke and acid – it's incredible how quickly you can go from being anti-drugs to 'just trying' the next thing. I justified it to myself by saying I wasn't taking junkie drugs like crystal meth, just 'party drugs'. My grades

hadn't suffered, and I'd even met professionals like doctors and teachers taking ketamine, how bad could it be?

DOWNWARDS SPIRAL

I would wake up from a night out and not remember being sick. I gained a reputation for rolling around the floor looking like I was having a seizure, my now-warped head thought it was hilarious. When everyone was running out of drugs we'd mix everything we had left together to make a 'megamix'. God knows what was in it because you'd do a line and it felt awful. But I still did it, playing Russian roulette with my life, while Louise focused on her DJ-ing and work.

After nine months I started being sick every time I took drugs. I'm also ashamed to say I'd put myself in vulnerable situations with men. I'd get severe cystitis and be sat on the toilet for hours – I now know that ketamine causes bladder problems. Some users have to have their bladder replaced with a colostomy bag – so much for being harmless.

Men I dated were often broke, and I realise now that they used me to get ketamine. I even ended up selling pills at a club night to fund my habit, despite the risks of being caught.

SHOCKING NEWS

Thankfully, two years ago I graduated, got a proper job and started seeing Pete*. He wanted to hang out with me sober – he liked me for me. When I took ketamine mid-week whilst watching a film, he questioned me. It was a wake-up call, I was being an idiot. Although I continued to take it occasionally on nights out, I curbed my habit. I never really worried about Louise, though. I knew she experimented a little, but she was always sensible, going home instead of to after-parties.

Then came the news of her death. Just the week before I'd cooked for us both and we'd played card games. We'd laughed so much, high on nothing but food, chatting about the art course Louise was about to apply for.

I was told that, before she died, Louise made supper for some friends, took some ketamine and watched *Never Mind The Buzzcocks* on her laptop in the bath. It's the sort of night in I'd have had myself, before I met Pete. Now my friend had been taken too soon. For what? A cheap high?

I realise how lucky I've been. I'll never take that risk with my life again and I don't want other young women to. Most of my friends and I are now clean, and we have a much more real friendship than before. I can't believe Louise isn't here to share that with us – we miss her every day. Ketamine stole Louise from us, don't let it steal you from your mate too."

● Visit www.louisecattell.com or www.angelusfoundation.com



Ketamine: The Facts

● Ketamine is a powerful general anaesthetic used by vets and surgeons, which depresses the nervous system and causes a temporary loss of body sensation. This means you can injure yourself badly and not even realise.

● Ketamine has powerful hallucinogenic qualities and you can become psychologically dependent on it.

● Users may be physically incapable of moving while under the influence.

● Ketamine can cause panic attacks, depression, and can make existing mental health problems worse.

● High doses, especially if taken with alcohol, can suppress breathing and heart function, and can lead to unconsciousness.

● Ketamine is a Class C drug. Possession can get you two years in prison and an unlimited fine. Supplying can get you 14 years in jail and an unlimited fine.

● Serious bladder problems have been found in ketamine users.

● For more information, visit www.talktofrank.com