

# *Never Reject a Psychopath*

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Walking home together, side by side, people sometimes found it a little hard to tell us apart. If it weren't for the fact that I was flat chested and she wasn't, people would automatically think us identical. But once one looks a little closer, they'd realize that she was more feminine and I was more masculine. But we were still identical, nonetheless.

I held my cell phone out, reading the text message from the college senior we'd been living with the past four years since our parents divorced and fled to separate countries. We chose to move in with our cousin on the other side of our current neighborhood instead of choosing which parent to follow to whatever country they chose.

The message from our cousin read: im not guna b home wen u 2 get home frm skool. went 2 da store. ily!! I stared at the thing, puzzled and slightly concerned. "Hey, Kira, take a look at this..." I showed the text to her, and after reading it, she looked a little confused as well.

"Who sent this?"

"Lexi."

"Erik, she never texts that way. Who really sent it?" She sounded skeptical, and I understood why. It's not a shock for most that we generally share the same thoughts.

I shook my head, a slightly saddened smile on my face. "Exactly." We glanced at each other, then instantly broke into a sprint for our house.

When we got there, she slowed just a little to let me go ahead, taking over the role of the protective older brother, even if we are only minutes apart. I casually unlocked and opened the door, but found our little cottage-like house the way we left it this morning. "Lexi...?" I called out. Kira crept in, close behind me, and I could feel her warm breath on the back of my neck. "Alexis?" I called out again as we left the living room and headed into the kitchen. We found no sign that Alexis was there at all that day. I shrugged, and my sister just looked around, worried. I went to my room, and she headed to hers. We occupied the two small rooms found on the first floor, and Alexis converted the small attic into a "cute" bedroom for herself.

We both left our rooms at the same time. "Nothing," she said as I shrugged. Without another word, we both headed up the cramped stairs to the attic. Looking around, we found nothing out of place, but still no sign of Alexis. "What happens if you text her back...?" she asked, curious now. I sat on our cousin's bed as I pulled out my cell again. I found her text message and replied to it, saying: ight. how much longr u guna b? I sent the message and looked up at my sister, who was watching me. We simply sat there, not knowing what else to do. After about five minutes, my phone vibrated. I picked up my phone and flipped it open, my sister looking over my shoulder. I could hear her slightly shaky breathing. I opened the text and we read it together. lol idk. i got distrctd... hehe lol. ill b hom... um, idk. may b u culd go 2 a frends house. i mite not b bak til 2mrw, if u no wat i mean ;)

Kira didn't know what to think about the message. "Maybe she's having a hot night with a new boyfriend, and she doesn't have time to text back," she wondered in a suggesting voice.

I shrugged. It was possible. I then smiled a little. "Our little Alexis, finally grown up?" I mocked. "I highly doubt that," I added, skeptical.

She nodded, looking down. "Well, yeah, I know... She wouldn't have that kind of night with a guy she just met. Lexi isn't like that." She suddenly looked up at me, and I could see the worry thick in her eyes, but she tried to hide it. I knew she could see the same in mine. "What if..." she

started, but I stopped her. I pushed her up off the bed and stood. I directed her down the stairs and followed closely after.

"There's obviously a reason why she suggested we go to a friend's house. Um..." I paused a minute to think.

"I'll call Miranda." Naturally, she'd choose to stay with her friend since kindergarten.

I nodded. "I'll be at Chris's."

She forced herself to laugh a little to lighten the mood. "Of course you just barge in, not asking or anything."

"Kira, don't you think that if you just walked in to Miranda's house, she'd be okay with it?"

She shrugged. "Maybe... Probably... But you guys are just more... Pushy with each other."

I smiled and nodded a little. "Yeah, I suppose you can say that." As I headed into my room, I pulled out my cell and quickly texted Lexi, to make it look good. There was a reason she wanted us gone, and I wanted to find out that reason. Our back yard was perfect for hiding and watching the house. Kira had a stalker once that helped us figure that one out. Regardless, I had to make it seem like I was just causally following her orders. I replied to her message with: ight. im hedin 2 chriss 4 de nite. ill c u tmrw aftr skool. ly nite. I slid my phone back into my pocket and threw some clothes into my backpack to fool my sister as well. Though I planned on heading back to the house, I didn't want her to know, or get involved. Just in case this turned out to be something worse than we were imagining.

After sitting at the kitchen table for a few minutes, Kira came out with her pink drawstring backpack held in one hand. She held her cell phone, the same model as mine simply with a pink casing, in her hand, staring at it. It vibrated as she shut her door. After quickly reading it, she slid the thing into her pocket. "I told Lexi where I was gonna be."

My own cell vibrated then, and I read the message sent by Lexi. She was okay with it, as I'm sure she was with Kira's plans. "I'll walk you there, since it's on my way. If anything weird happens?"

She smiled, suppressing my worries. "I know, I'll call you. Gosh, you know, just because you're a few minutes older than me, it doesn't mean you can boss me around, hun."

I shook my head at her 'hun,' but said nothing more. I led her out the front door, my hand on her shoulder, looking around like a paranoid idiot. She sighed, obviously knowing what I was doing.

I left her when we passed Miranda's house. She waved at me, and Miranda ran outside to greet her. She smiled and waved at me, but didn't say anything until I was far enough away. I glanced over my shoulder for a minute and saw her hugging Kira.

I wandered around town, my backpack slung over my shoulder, until it got dark. I glanced at my cell to confirm the time. Just past eight. I started heading back, but took the long way that lead to the back of the house. I snuck my way into the rather cutely organized mess of brush, trees, bushes and flowers, and dropped my backpack, making myself comfortable while keeping the house in view.

A few minutes later, I heard rustling, and I started to freak out a little, but then braved up and looked for the source. I sighed heavily when I found my sister. “Kira... What are you *doing* here?”

She smiled, crossing her arms. “Erik, I know you better than that. Do you think I’d let you investigate this on your own?”

I shook my head, pulling her down a little lower as I repositioned myself. She got comfortable next to me, with her feet up near my head. It was around midnight, and I was nearly asleep, when Kira kicked my arm and I realized there was a car parked in our driveway. I could hear it idling, and the headlights shone past us, just barely missing Kira’s head. A light suddenly turned on in the attic and caught my eye, so I quickly pulled out my cell phone. When I noticed Kira was already dialing 911, I slid it away, and crawled out of the brush. “Erik, don’t,” she tried to demand, but stopped quickly and began reporting the emergency to the person on the other line.

I ignored her and ran crouched towards the house. I threw myself up on to the wall under my bedroom window, grabbing the sill, and climbed in, knowing my window was unlocked. I silently let myself down on the floor and closed the window. Throwing myself as close to the floor as I possibly could, I peeked under my door, and saw the glow of a flashlight, and a person pacing. He seemed rather nervous. I pushed myself up, but just in time, because a split second later, the door busted open. “Kid, you should learn to open and close the window a *little* quieter.” His accent identified him as a man from the city. I threw up my foot in attempts to kick his side, but he caught me and sent me crashing to the floor. “Where’s your sister?”

As I tried to stand, confusion and anger overtook me. “My... sister?” I stuttered, completely taken by surprise.

“Did I stutter? Where’s the bitch?”

I growled a little, and threw myself up at the man. He took something off my desk, possibly a candle Kira insisted I used to cover up the “smell of guy” in my room, and smashed it against my head. The already-dark room turned darker, and I fell to the ground.

A gunshot rang through the air, jolting me awake. As I sat up, I felt completely disoriented and a little dizzy. Then I realized that the gunshot I heard was not in my head like I was starting to believe. It was real. Screams from Alexis confirmed that. I looked around, and through the window to my right, I saw that it was daylight, but after looking around the room, I found nothing to tell me what time or day it was. There was only the bare mattress beneath me and a wooden chair in the corner in this large closet. The door next to the chair was closed. As I got up and looked out the window at a completely unfamiliar wood, I heard another gunshot. This time, I heard Kira’s voice crying for them to stop. She sounded like she was in pain.

My head swam a little, the confusion of the situation causing it, as I rushed to the door, but it was locked. I pounded on it, but a familiar voice yelled to me. “You’re staying in there where you’re out of trouble.” It wasn’t the man that attacked me last night, though. I had heard that voice long ago, but my head was pounding too much for me to put a face to the name.

Someone started slapping another, and I heard another man scream, "Stop that, bitch, or you'll regret it." That was the man that attacked me last night. I then heard a fierce growl of sorts, and I knew it was my sister. Of course, she'd be fighting. I imagined Alexis, afraid, crouching in the corner in a little ball. She was too petite and fragile to fight back.

I heard a slam against the wall, then the room went quiet. A minute later, that familiar voice said, "That's what you get. You know, at one point in time, I loved you. But you judged me for my looks. Karma has hit you in the ass, Kira." He said her name with such disgust and disrespect. I heard another slam against the wall, and a whimper from my sister. "You teenaged brats are so easy to manipulate. Reverse psychology... Feels good." There was something about the tone of his voice that made me shiver. I tried not to picture what the man was doing to my sister, but his voice practically painted a picture in my mind.

I heard Kira cry a little, though it was muffled. I imagined the man's hand was covering her mouth. The fact that I hadn't heard anything from Lexi worried me a little.

A long moment passed before I heard the clink of the door being unlocked. It swung open slightly awkwardly, and I flung myself at the man. "Hey!" he yelled. It was the bastard who attacked me before. He was actually somewhat small, and I knocked him down with ease this time, being able to see now. I threw a punch at him, then pulled him back up with me. He tried to hit me, but I grabbed his incoming fist and threw him back. When he charged at me, I stepped aside and tackled him into the wall. He pulled out his gun, and before I could get to him, he pulled the trigger. I moved enough for it to miss my chest, but it pierced through my skin and got stuck somewhere inside my arm. The torn skin around the wound stung, but not as much as I was thinking it would.

It was then that I started to hear sirens. I pressed my hand to the small bullet hole in my arm, and almost instantly, it was covered with blood. The short gunman swore, then opened the window before throwing himself out of it. He took off and was gone before I could realize what was going on.

I then decided to venture to find my sister and cousin. I heard a faint whimper, and I couldn't tell who it came from. Alexis and Kira could sound alike once in a while. I walked into the only other room on this floor, the doorway opposite the stairs. I nearly collapsed into the door frame, stunned by the sight. The only movement in the room was from the man's hand, petting my sister's hair. I could almost feel death in the room, and it was sick and heavy.

"What... the fuck...?" I questioned. It felt like forever that I just stood there, not able to tell if Kira was alive or not. I had just about forgotten about Lexi until I saw her out of the corner of my eye. It didn't look like she was moving until I focused on her, then I could see her shivering. As if she could feel my eyes on her, she threw herself up and ran at me. She wrapped her arms around me, and I focused on the psychotic man stroking her. He seemed oblivious to the police slamming a door above us open, and somewhat euphoric. Feeling like if I stared at his face for a second longer, I would have gone insane myself, I shifted my gaze to my sister. Her back was rising and falling ever so slightly.

The police finally found an entrance to the basement we were in, and rushed down the stairs. Hearing the voices and footsteps, the man became alert, and threw Kira off his lap as he stood

quickly. He was breathing heavily, and it was then that I realized it wasn't *Kira's* breathing that was causing her back to rise and fall.

I still just stood there, going numb from the fact that I had just become an only child. All because I was too stubborn to just let things go without shoving my nose into it. The police were swarming around us, but I could barely focus on any of them. My stomach was threatening to regurgitate whatever was in it, my upper arm was throbbing for a reason I couldn't remember at the time, and I felt as if I had killed my sister with my own bare hands.