

TARGETED AND TRIGGERED

Written by

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Targeted by malevolent spirits, a love-struck and insecure teens worse nightmare is realized when her boo since the sixth grade breaks up with her through a text. This unleashes her most passionate and fatal desires.

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FADE IN:

CAPTION:

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12

EXT. TRACT HOMES - MORNING

A blood-red sun rises above shaded mountains. Dogs are barking. Birds are singing.

COMMUNITY ENTRANCE

Looking like it was created by a child, a quail is painted on the brick wall. "Quail Run" is written below.

Up the inclined street are identical wood-framed tract homes.

EXT. NIKKI'S HOME - DAY

The muffled sound of a love song plays.

EXT./INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

Looking from the backyard into open windows, a peppy youngster of a woman, NIKKI 20s, wiggles and shakes corny dance moves from the kitchen to the dining room and back.

She freezes her moves, tips her pink rose-colored shades down to peek over her nose, and picks up her phone.

SNAPSHOT

Sound of a shutter snapping a selfie.

Cute selfie of Nikki.

KITCHEN

Dishes are piled in the sink; cereal, milk, orange juice, and a bowl of cereal sitting on the counter.

CELL PHONE:

Cutesy pink nails slide to tap out a message on a glitter cased cell phone to "Brendan My Boo." Hearts surround his name. Nikki trembles voice-to-text.

NIKKI (V.O.)

I, I was so afraid, but I should
have known you'd forgive me after
all the crap you've done.

Nikki sighs.

NIKKI (V.O.)

Besides, it was only a kiss.

Nikki ends call and returns to dancing.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Menacing dark clouds on the horizon.

Rock-strewn gully from the view of invisible ENTITIES. They rise above ground level and the desert floor stretches out in to the horizon.

SKY

Below are multiple views from the entities as they zoom over the desert floor, scrub brush, and Joshua trees.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

As if she heard something, Nikki stops dancing, taps the music off, freezes, then whips her head around. She looks up.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Flying up and above the desert, menacing dark clouds form on the horizon.

BELOW

On the desert floor, shrubland, littered with tumbleweeds and oddly shaped Joshua trees blaze past.

INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

Nikki stands frozen, then taps the music back on.

She returns to dancing.

Nikki does a number of silly, some awkward, some precise, dance moves.

She stops and looks at her cell.

CELL

Pink nails tap and swipe Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram.

NIKKI

She laughs and giggles at what she sees.

KITCHEN

She spoons up cereal and sips on orange juice. A notification DING echoes.

Looking closer,

CELL

New message from: "Brendan My Boo." Hearts surround his name. Nikki's eyes get big.

SERIES OF MESSAGES:

I keep thinking about it.

Like a hoe, you let him kiss you.

No. We not good. Thought you were better than that.

You ain't--

The cell falls from her hands.

NIKKI (V.O.)
What-the-Fuck!

Her speakers disconnect but the music keeps playing. She does a puzzled double-take at the disconnected speakers and swallows.

NIKKI

Stop!

The music stops, she dashes to the sink, leans back, her eyes roll back showing on the whites. Grabbing the counter she folds over, throws up, snatches a paper towel, wipes her mouth, then returns to her phone.

CELL

Nikki speaks clear and loud. The text appears on the screen as she speaks.

NIKKI (V.O.)

We've been together since the 6th grade.

She pokes the send button, then more text to speech.

NIKKI (V.O.)

It was only a kiss, exclamation point! He kissed me, exclamation point.

She pokes the send button.

NIKKI (V.O.)

You fucked those girls, exclamation point, exclamation point, exclamation point, exclamation point.

She smashes the send button with her knuckle.

NIKKI

She waits--

No response.

Snatching her cell up, Nikki paces between the kitchen and dining room. She glares at the phone in her hand.

NIKKI

Should I have told him? Did I screw myself?

Slamming her cell HARD on the counter, Nikki opens a cabinet with medicines to rummage and retrieve a prescription.

Hands shaking, she shakes out a couple of pills, looks at the label:

LABEL

TAKE 1 PILL AS NECESSARY EVERY 6 HOURS FOR ANXIETY,

NIKKI

She sighs, plops them in her mouth, and washes them down with gulps of orange juice straight from the bottle.

Slamming the bottle down, she grabs the counter and braces herself, takes some deep breaths, picks her phone back up, and glares at it. She looks confused.

CELL

The phone prompts for the deletion of Brendan. "Are you sure you want to delete this contact?"

NIKKI

Even the phone is on my side. I don't believe this. No.

COMMUNITY ENTRANCE

Entities view of the "Quail Run" drawing as they fly towards and over it.

EXT. NIKKI'S BACK YARD - DAY (ENTITIES P.O.V.)

Watching from outside her home, the ENTITIES lower past her bedroom window to hover outside her patio door. A shrill voice speaks

ENTITY ONE (V.O.)

There she is.

The CLOP-CLOP-CLOP of her shoes resonates.

INT./EXT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

Inside, Nikki paces back and forth. She keeps looking at her cell phone then stops and peers out the patio door.

ENTITY TWO (V.O.)

Our merciless mission begins. Get into their heads!

Eerie laughing.

The entity's view moves toward the glass.
Pulled by Nikki, the blinds shut in front of them.

DING! A notification tone sounds.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Nikki looks down at her cell.

ABOVE

The entities looking down on her.

PHONE

Nikki scrolls through a series of bubble messages.

Nikki:

"I love you."

"It was only a kiss. He kissed me."

Brendan:

"I can't get past this babe."

Nikki:

"It was a sneak attack. You know how men do."

DING! New Message appears: "I told you, this is not going to work."

She peers at her cell then begins to pace back and forth, breathing deeply, she is almost in tears.

ENTITY THREE (V.O.)

He never cared. Just used you and
slept around. Stupid you forgave
him and trusted him--

NIKKI

--Again and again. I still don't
believe this crap! Breaking up with
me, in a text. After what he's he
put me through. Son-of-a-bitch.

She walks past plants, the closed patio curtains, and bookshelves. She spins around and starts again.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Hell of a freaking no! He cheated
on me.

She stops, hyperventilates, texts a message:

CELL PHONE

I didn't do anything. YOU need to take me back.

Nikki taps contacts and selects Jewell.

A photo of a woman's nails manicured with shiny stones
appears.

Nikki taps "Call."

JEWELL (BFF), 20s, answers. INTERCUT Nikki and Jewel's
conversation.

JEWELL (V.O.)
Hey girl! What's up?

NIKKI
I told him.

JEWELL (V.O.)
No!

NIKKI
Yes. I know you told me not to--

JEWELL (V.O.)
--That's what I said. And not to
take him back -- years ago. Now
he's gonna turn it around on you. I
told you.

NIKKI
I wanted to be honest.

JEWELL (V.O.)
Good luck with that. Sorry, I gotta
go.

Before she can reply, the cell displays "Call ended."

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

The drive-thru entrance to the classic budget hotel.

The curtains are drawn on room 111.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The glow from a cell phone barely illuminates the silhouette of a woman huddled in the corner.

She cradles the phone in her hand.

CELL PHONE

On the screen, Jewell's stoned studded manicured fingers swipe through texts between Nikki and Brendan. Finger taps "settings". The "Block number" option pops up. Finger taps "Block number." The prompt displays:

"Delete all messages from this number?" Gentle finger tap to "Yes." A toilet flushes. The screen goes black.

INT./EXT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

ENTITY FOUR (V.O.)

(whispering)

You can not trust men. You can not trust anyone.

NIKKI

I thought he was different. Damn, I thought she was different. That she would be there for me. Isn't that what friends are for?

(beat)

I thought he might do this, this kind of crap. I should have never told him.

She angrily walks over to a hanging plant.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Do you have something to say?

She punches the plant. It shakes and swings.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I didn't think so.

Items on the bookshelf stare at her. Behind them are spiritual and psychological books.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A BIG BIRD toy with wheels.

A ceramic BUNNY.

A crystal bust of JESUS.

A crystal ANGEL.

LIVING ROOM

She looks at the bunny.

It glares back at her.

She looks into its eyes.

NIKKI

What are you freaking looking at?
You think I'm stupid? Do you?

The high pitch voice of the Bunny shrieks.

BUNNY (V.O.)

You are stupid. Bunnies don't talk.
Why don't you ask Jesus or the
Angel?

Nikki looks from the plant to her cell.

NIKKI

Smartass!

PHONE

Nikki taps the contact for Mother. She selects VIDEO CALL.

The Bunny laughs.

BUNNY (V.O.)

Yeah. Call mommy.

The call connects.

NIKKI

Shut-the-fuck-up!

At an ATM, Annoyed and offended, MOTHER 40s, musters some concern.

MOTHER

Nikki? Are you okay, I'm shopping.

FADE OUT.

INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

Nikki's cell stares up at her as she paces. INTERCUT MOTHER'S responses.

NIKKI

Mom, you're always doing some shopping. You should stay home sometime.

Her mom looks to the side. She hears whispers.

ENTITY (V.O.)

Your daughter thinks she is the parent.

Her mother frowns up.

MOTHER

Nik, are you okay?

Nikki shakes her head. Nikki's eyes frown.

NIKKI

Mom, I hate when you call me that. And you always call me that.

ENTITY (V.O.)

Your mother does not care what you think. She never wanted children.

Nikki sighs.

NIKKI

You should know how I am.

Nikki's mother smirks.

ENTITY (V.O.)

You are the parent. She is the child. Who is the boss here?

She looks back to Nikki.

MOTHER

You should know how I am. I am your mother. I'll be there later.

Examining Nikki's face on her cell, her mom squints.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Did you take your medication?

NIKKI
That medication doesn't work for me.

MOTHER
So you're the doctor?

NIKKI
Maybe you should come home now.

MOTHER
What are you talking about?

DING! New message. Nikki looks down. Hearts and Brendan.

"I'm sorry baby. I forgive you."

Nikki's eyes water up.

NIKKI
I'm okay, boyfriend problems, see you later.

Her mother starts to speak.

Nikki ends the call and texts.

Nikki's Text reply with hearts. "Really babe? I knew you loved me. (Heart emoji)"

DING! New message.

FUCK NO YOU STUPID WHORE! OH, AND YOU DANCE LIKE BIG BIRD.
YOU ARE BLOCKED

Nikki gasps and looks up. Big Bird, Bunny, and the Angel have turned around, their backs to her. Jesus faces her.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
That's freaking better! Stay in your places!

She glares at crystal Jesus.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
What about you?

Expressionless, Crystal Jesus looks at her.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Whatever.

Nikki presses the contact "Brendon". A VOICE MAIL RECORDING answers.

VOICE MAIL RECORDING (V.O.)
I'm sorry but the person you have
dialed has a voice mail that has
not been set up--

Nikki grunts "GRRRRRRRR" then taps "end call."

She looks up at the PLANT.

The plant gently sways.

NIKKI
What? You got something to say now?

The plant whispers.

PLANT (V.O.)
No. Stupid.

Nikki confronts the plant. She intently stares at it.

NIKKI
Hunh? What?

The plant abruptly stops swinging.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
That what I thought. Stay in your
place. I'll get back to you later.

As soon as Nikki turns, the plant returns to swing.

SECONDS LATER

Nikki returns with scissors.

FLOOR

Sounds of scissors snipping, LOUD THUMPS as leaves and stems
CRASH onto the hardwood floor.

ROOM

The plant is destroyed. All that remains is a few leaves.

NIKKI
How ya' feeling now?

Nikki begins pacing back and forth again. The CLIP CLOP of her heels increases to a loud ECHO.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
 What am I supposed to do now? What
 am I supposed to do?

LATER

Nikki slumps in a stuffed chair, her phone in her hands.
 She reads the texts displayed on the phone.

NIKKI (V.O.)
 I love you. It was only a kiss! He
 kissed me, I didn't even kiss him
 back!

DING. A new message appears: "Kissing is like sex with your
 mouth. You're a cunt; a lip kissing, tongue licking hoe!"

NIKKI (V.O.)
 (wistfully)
 Just a day ago, I was his little
 pooh bear that could do nothing
 wrong.

Nikki pulls herself up to look at Jesus and the Angel.

NIKKI
 He kissed me. Was I really that
 bad? Was it? I told him to stop.
 Should I have slapped him? Kicked
 him?

JESUS (V.O.)
 Your sins are forgiven.

NIKKI
 Did I sin? Are you saying that was
 a sin? Is he right, I'm a whore?

JESUS (V.O.)
 No, it was a kiss. Sometimes the
 one who gives the kiss is the
 guilty one.

NIKKI
 Then Brendan should forgive me,
 right? Right?

JESUS
Forgive one another... I forgive
you.

Nikki begins pacing again. Abruptly stopping, she points at the Angel like he is on trial.

NIKKI
You! What do you have to say?

ANGEL
To err is human; to forgive,
divine.

Nikki shakes her head

NIKKI
That's the best you got? Nothing
original?

ANGEL
The quote is timeless.

Nikki sighs a deep breath and returns to pacing.

NIKKI
Freaking men don't forgive or
forget crap. They want your
forgiveness when they do shit but
be damned if you can squeeze a drop
of compassion out of them when it's
your turn.

She stops and stares.

ENTITY (V.O.)
(whispering)
He made you his bitch. You're going
to let him get away with this after
all you've done for him?

NIKKI
He's not going to get away with
this.

She reopens the curtains. The bright light illuminates her
tear-streaked face.

A surreal glow envelops her.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A neon thundercloud with thunder below glows above Nikki's bed. Pictures and photos depicting skulls, death, and sadness adorn her wall.

Nikki sits on the edge of the bed. Her hands shake as she pours way too many pills from a prescription bottle into her palm. She shoves them into her mouth as if she did not do it quickly she would not do it at all. Popping open a can of soda, she guzzles them down.

Tears form in her eyes.

The skulls, death, and sad photos appear to stare at her from the walls.

Nikki plops back on her be and closes her eyes.

NIKKI
Lord have mercy on me.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Dusk.

LATER

A dim lamp light displays a pale Nikki sprawled on her back in bed. Her eyeballs roll back showing the white; she takes a deep breath, exhales, but does not inhale.

Her arm hangs over the edge of the bed.

In her other hand, next to her face, is her cell phone.

The last text sent FROM Nikki at 10:45 displays:

"I love you! I didn't mean to hurt you. You were my life."

DING. A new message appears from Brenden, received at 1100:

"I love you too. I am sorry, I just got angry. I just needed some time. Thinking about someone kissing your sweet lips made me crazy."

Her lips are dry, pale, and lifeless.

DING. A new message appears, received at 1101:

I've been the whore. You've forgiven me so many times. Will you forgive me now?"

DING. New Message: "Hello?"

DING. New Message: "Hey baby, don't be like that."

DING. New Message: "You going to make me come over and beg???"

The time on her cell phone changes to the next minute.

EXT. MALL - DAY

Mother's sedan is parked in the lot.

INT. SEDAN - DAY

Mother's finger shakes when she taps the icon for Nikki.

The phone goes to voice mail.

NIKKI (V.O.)
Hey, it's me. Do what you know to do!

MOTHER (V.O.)
Damn teenagers. Sometimes I wish that girl was never born!

Nikki's heartbeat softly thumps.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In a fog, Nikki talks to the bust of Jesus.

NIKKI (V.O.)
You said I was Forgiven? Really?

A bright light fills the space in front of her

JESUS (V.O.)
For every one that asketh
receiveth; and he that seeketh
findeth; and to him that knocketh
it shall be opened.

ENTITY (V.O.)
(whispering)
Do not listen to Him. You are
hopeless, helpless, and pitiful. No-
one loves you. Not your mom. Not
your boyfriend. No one.
(beat)
You don't even love you.

Tears run down Nikki's cheeks. She speaks in a weak whisper.

The thump of her heartbeat slows.

NIKKI (V.O.)
They don't have to care. They don't
have to love. I do.

MONTAGE - NIKKI HELPING OTHERS

Each scene evaporates before her as she reaches out to help.

--Nikki hands a breakfast meal to a homeless person.

--Nikki digs for a dollar giving it to a man at the curb.

--Nikki helps her mother carry the groceries in.

--Nikki pulls a woman back from the curb before a car hits her.

Without Nikki

--The man at the the curb rubs his stomach.

--The homeless man counts pennies in his hand.

--Her mother struggles with groceries.

--The woman steps out in front of the car.

Nikki softly whispers.

NIKKI

Oh my God, I won't be able to love
again.

(beat)

I want to live.

The thump of her heartbeat stops.

BLACK

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

She lay on her bed, below her hand the empty pill bottle.

EXT. NIKKI'S HOME - BACKYARD (ENTITIES P.O.V.)

Looking at Nikki's second-floor window. The entities speak

ENTITIES (V.O.)

Onto the next tragedy,
disappointment, setback, or
rejection.

The view of her window retreats and they travel between the
homes away from Nikki's house and past "Quail Run."

ENTITIES (V.O.)

There are thousands more like her
needing only a push over the edge
from those they call their loved
ones, friends, and us.

Hideous laughter fades.

BLACK

NIKKI
(screaming)
I want to live.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nikki's body twitches.

The POUNDING of Nikki's heart returns.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nikki gasps a deep breath and sits up, eyes wide open.

Mouth agape, she looks around, astonished.

Her heartbeat softens to a normal pace. The THUMPING fades out.

She cups her hand over her mouth, bounces up, and dashes out of her room. The sounds of her throwing up are heard, the toilet flushes, then water is heard running.

Dashing back to her bedroom, she glances down at the text messages from Brendan. She shakes her head.

Hands shaking, she presses hard and shuts down the phone. She sits, stretches, and opens the blinds. Sunlight floods in on Nikki, her eyes bright and wide, hopeful.

NIKKI
I choose life! And all the crap and
crappy people it throws at me.

She looks up.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Nikki looks at her wall. Unnoticed before, in the amid of the negativity on her wall,

She leans in to read a torn piece of paper pinned to the wall scribbled in her handwriting.

NOTE:

NIKKI (V.O.)
...on the contrary, it is rather
for you to forgive and to comfort,
lest by over abundant sorrow such a
one may be swallowed up; wherefore,
I call upon you to confirm love...
(2 Corinthians 2:7-8)

INT. NIKKI'S BEDROOM - DAYS

The old photos of death and doom have been replaced by motivational quotes. The cloud and thunder neon art is now a cute neon cat and neon art spelling out "hello love."

Nikki peers at a web page on her laptop. Her facing glowing, she types.

LAPTOP

Displayed on the screen is a suicide prevention website:
suicidepreventionlifeline.org states:

NIKKI (V.O.)
Everybody has a role to play in
preventing suicide, and the
Lifeline has lots of ways you can
take part. With your help, we can
spread awareness about suicide
prevention and mental health, and
save lives.

NIKKI'S FACE

She takes a big breath and

LAPTOP

Her finger clicks on "VOLUNTEER." She nods her head as if to say "finished."

Trendy music begins to play

INT. DINING ROOM -DAY

Nikki wiggles her trademark corny dance moves.

FADE OUT.

