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It was warm the day we met.

An essay series about sex, love and abandonment

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Based on a true story.

DRAFT

For all who need to heal

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PART I – THE MONSTER

I find talking about Garrett Sweeterman difficult now, as though I'm sharing the stories of a character in a book- an antagonist, a despot, a stranger who I knew so intimately for so long, but never really knew at all. A villain whose deeper ambitions remain unknown to me, even though our lives are completely intertwined. I wish I could break the tether that anchors me to him, but our daughter makes that impossible. I sometimes let my mind wander – Why is he doing this? How does he sleep at night? How does he live with himself? I come up blank. I have no answers. I used to yearn to know those answers. I hurt myself and my family in the pursuit of finding those answers. Now I am resigned to knowing that there are no answers to those questions. He doesn't have purpose in his actions, he just does. No reason, no shame – a complete vacancy where any normal parent or person's moral compass should be.

The memories I have of him do not match the person he was or is, and my own uncertainty of our past and who I was in his life, and he in mine, forces me to cast doubt about what really happened between us. I don't trust my own memory. He still has a hold on me in that way. He gaslighted me for so long, abused my trust in him, and took advantage of my vulnerability. I can't reconcile our most intimate, passionate memories with the many narratives he's given about us. I was infatuated with him, and he with me. We shared an intensely sexual and intimate six months together while we were both students at Florida State. We at least agree on that much. Everything else is grey, clouded by the obscurity of competing stories and identities, inspected and examined by so many outsiders that retelling the story almost feels mechanical, like I'm assembling pieces from a pile of parts, trying to figure out which ones fit.

I see him in our daughter. She resembles him already, with her blonde curls and piercing eyes. She has such a sweet face and kind nature. She is funny and silly, and loves to test the boundaries of what she can and cannot do. I hope she inherited only the best parts of him, if she must share any part of him at all. When I try to think of what those best parts were, I come up short. He is handsome, resourceful, and well-liked. He was never particularly smart, not in the academic sense, but he is a master emotional manipulator, which requires a particularly keen emotional-IQ. He could read – and play – people in a way that should have caught up with by now but hasn't. It comes naturally to him. He makes deception and cruelty an artform. I suppose that could be

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useful in the ugly and unfair world our daughter will grow up in, but I am praying that this was an acquired skill, something he learned over time, and not built into his DNA.

Perhaps his parents are awful people, too – that would explain their complete lack of interest or concern in their first grandchild. Perhaps it was his parents who pressured him into pushing me toward an abortion I didn't want, or to abandon his child in the year after she was born. I've seen how parents can work a weak, fragile man into doing what they want. But of the things I feel I know about him, I sense that the wishes of those around him played a small role in what he did and who he is. Perhaps they feel the shame and embarrassment of his actions for him. Perhaps they, too, are unsure about what to trust. Perhaps it's just Garret's way, to mold and bend people and hold their minds hostage. I beg, let it be anything but genetic.

A year has passed since I met our daughter. Until very recently, Garrett's absence has been a blessing. I worried what he would do to her or me if we ever ended up in the same place together. You hear the stories about the Scott Petersons and Chris Watts of the world, and fear what cunning, charismatic men are capable of when backed into a corner. After all, he's never even met his daughter. He saw her – once – during a hearing hosted over Skype. His face turned white when he heard and then saw her on camera. For a moment, the guilt was visibly consuming him –the reality of what he did to me and what he's still doing to her. He tried to escape his fleeting vulnerability – he started looking away from his screen as we spoke in turns, as if he

couldn't stand seeing us on the other end. He turned off his camera and asked that we continue the conference via phone. When he was told no, he became angry, and yelled at the hearing organizers several times about having to see us. He was forced to confront me, and he lashed out at everyone because of it, yelling and cursing and eventually leaving early because he didn't get his way. That is the totality of his interaction with her since her birth last summer.

You hear of men who take off when their children are born, and always wonder how someone could be involved with such a reckless tool in the first place. You say, "what an asshole" in a consoling manner to the mother, or "you're better off without him, then." When a friend tells you the story of how his or her father was never around, you feel awful for them, knowing how hard his absence must have made your friend's life. You create an idea of the type of person who could have a child in the world and not care an ounce for their well-being. Even though you don't know this man, you hope this stranger gets what he deserves. You believe that he will, or else the world is without karma, which is too sad of a thought to bare. You may even wish him pain and suffering. We tell ourselves if this man was our friend, our brother, our son, we'd tell them exactly what we think of him – we'd yell at him, tell him he's wrong and even stop talking to him if he didn't make it right. As women, we think we are too smart to get involved with someone like that, or that we would be able to feel it with our mysterious, maternal sixth sense. I certainly thought I would be able to tell. And maybe

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I always knew what he was capable of but ignored it because I wanted to believe he would see the error of his ways and come around – if not to me, then to our daughter. I was wrong.

It took me a good deal of time to realize the full extent of the emotional, and on three occasions physical abuse I endured while dating Garrett. Time and therapy helped me come to deal with what happened to me. The constant manipulation. The using me for sex as often as he wanted without a real commitment to our relationship. He came and went as he pleased, having sex frequently and passionately, then disappearing for days at a time – ignoring my calls and texts until he wanted to have sex again. People call this type of man a "fuckboy." I suppose that's an accurate description, and if I were my younger, stronger self I like to believe I would have walked (and stayed) away from him. But I was bad with men. My marriage had failed. Over the years, I had become accustomed to being hurt by men – conditioned to believe it was normal. So I waited, I stayed, I endured it, because when we were together, he made me feel wanted, even loved. He was something that made me feel good again. To him, I was a toy.

He would spend hours yelling at me, berating me, calling me crazy, a bitch, a cunt. I waited. He would quickly turn around and apologize, show up unannounced, and we would have sex. Then he'd be gone just as quickly, probably sleeping with whomever he wanted as if we meant nothing to him. I stayed. He broke every promise

he ever made, lied to me just as casually as he slept with me, and truly brought out the worst, weakest parts of me. I endured it.

Despite my many protests against having unprotected sex, Garrett removed the condom he was wearing while we were having sex so that he could ejaculate inside of me the first time we slept together. I felt violated the first time it happened, and even ended things with him later that night. I wasn't sure how to sort that feeling out, until someone told me many months later that I was allowed to be angry and hurt that he did that to me. That's a type of sexual assault that has been colloquially named "stealthing." In Florida, Garrett could have been charged with rape if prosecutors could prove a pattern of this behavior, and his intent. I even discussed this possibility once with the Title IX office at Florida State, and with prosecutors who would later be investigating him. His intent was clear – he even once told me he was going to "fuck" me "without a rubber," that he wanted me to "feel every bit of it," and that I would not be able to stop him. I told him it was sex with a condom or no sex at all.

He tried to penetrate me without one, and I stopped him. So he followed along, putting it on at first then taking it off later without me knowing. I was terrified about STI's – I had a feeling, which was later confirmed, that this guy got around. A lot. Pregnancy didn't even cross my mind. He told me I am the only person he's had sex with since high school without a condom, but how would I know if that's true? Interview all his previous sexual partners? I spoke to one – she hated him so much she

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would have said anything to see him pay for what he did to her. Maybe if he's done this to someone else, they'll read these words and know that they have support if they choose to come forward. He was so adamant about not using condoms that I know better than to believe him that I was the only one, that the only times were with me. In an odd way, I want to be the only one he's done that to. It would make me special to him somehow.

After he found out I was pregnant, he spent a month trying to work me into having an abortion. At first he tried anger – demanding that I "could not have his kid," demanding I meet with him, and yelling at me constantly through texts and his many voicemails. When he quickly figured out that arguing with me was only pushing me away, he switched to affection. He kissed me the first time we saw each other after the first few days of fighting, and we resumed a relationship and started having sex again. He wrote me love letters telling me how much he needed me. That worked somewhat – I began to feel obligated to not ruin his life because we were in love. He said it was "me and you versus the world." But it wasn't enough to push me into doing it.

When anger and love failed him, he switched to pity. He began faking illnesses – everything from panic attacks and late-night hospitalizations, to weight loss and failing grades. He even pressured me into speaking to another professor on his behalf. He was trying to guilt me into it. His mistake was that, while I believed he was scared about how a child would change his life, he wasn't a good enough liar to make me believe

everything else, and that hint of doubt aided my better judgement in coming through. I believed he loved me because I wanted to believe he loved me, and he worked so hard to convince me so. But when I would ask what hospital he was at, when once he woke me up at 1 a.m. to say he was throwing up blood everywhere and had to be rushed to the ER, he wouldn't give an answer. Then when I said I was going to the hospital to be with him, he suddenly was discharged and on his way home. He knew I was vulnerable, but he under-estimated my skepticism. Little lies piled up, and I started to pull back from him.

When it became clear to him that I was no longer under his spell and would not have the abortion he spent a month pressuring me to commit to, he discarded me as easily as he impregnated me. It was never my choice in his eyes. It was his, and I disobeyed. He resented me for all the time and effort he put into manipulating me, just to fail at accomplishing his goal. He never loved me, and he was never confused about that fact the way I was. He was clear about what he wanted from when our affair started in May until it ended in October. He lashed out at me – going after me, my job, and my family. I was hurt and shocked at first. I thought, if Garrett doesn't want to be involved then fine, but why is trying to destroy my life? I told him he didn't need to be involved in her life. So why couldn't he just walk away?

I told him my reasoning for why I was going to keep the baby –that I had a good job, my husband and I were going to work things out, and it seemed like a good time in

my life, with me so close to finishing the courses I needed for my degree. He made a mental checklist of each item. Then he went after every single thing I told him: he tried to get me fired from my job the day after I told him I was keeping the baby. Then he went to the school and tried to get me suspended. Then he went after my husband. He sent messages to himself using VOIP numbers to try to have me arrested, and even once committed to a mental institution. He filed false police reports. Hurting me became his pastime.

At first I believed he was trying to hurt me so that I'd feel so awful that I'd have an abortion. If all the things on that list no longer existed, maybe he thought I'd cave. Maybe that would have been an added bonus for him if I had, but that wasn't why he went after me. There was no why. He just did. He was angry and I was the object and target of that anger. I don't think I'm the first girlfriend of his who he's been so vicious toward post-affair. I know of at least one, and from the conversations I've had with those who know him, he seems to leave a trail of destruction behind him, even with the girls he no longer wants. He enjoys hurting people. It's just part of what makes him tick. He's been described by others who know him as a narcissist. A self-serving, emotional vampire. A chameleon who uses his good looks to trap and destroy his pray.

When my mind wanders to him, I remind myself of all the pain he's caused. I don't think what he did to me bothers him. I don't think he loses sleep at night over it. I

don't think he lets his mind wander to me and our daughter, to what her day is like, to what her voice and her laugh might sound like. I truly believe he does not care.

The pain I was experiencing privately was amplified by how Garrett used the University as another tool to hurt me. I was caught completely by surprise when I was suddenly suspended for harassment and stalking- less than five days after things ended between us in October. I thought it was absurd – I hadn't called him or spoken to him in days. I quickly turned over all of our texts, facebook messages and calls. My department wrote a letter of support, vouching for my character and dedication to teaching and research. My husband and I both filed a statement with campus police, an official complaint of harassment against Garrett that would never be followed up on. I wouldn't know until much later, but he was weaving a web of lies so brazen that he was successful in getting me fired and suspended.

The University could have looked into his claims and quickly found the lies. They could have sifted through everything I gave them and seen him for what he is. But why would the university bother with trying to sort out this mess? I was no one to them. FSU has a history of mistreating its students when they make waves. A very public and dark history. It was easier just to get rid of me than to acknowledge how absurdly wrong they had it. And the risk of a scandal, a salacious headline about a student- instructor affair gone wrong, was not worth my education, my career to them.

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Even though he lied and it took months for them to see it, even though I turned over everything I had and answered every question, they drug me through the coals in the process of unraveling Garrett's lies. Garrett alleged I made advances on him while I was teaching his class. The University investigated and reported that I had done no such thing. In fact, he made several advances that I ignored. He told campus police I threatened his roommate's grade because of my relationship with him. The student went to the department the next day and told my advisor I was one of the best teachers he ever had. Again, the University investigated and reported I had done no such thing. He sent messages to himself from a VOIP number, reporting to the University that I was suicidal. I was taken against my will to a psych ward and held for hours while they traced the messages and found out he sent them to himself. Lie after lie. Provably false, but always taken as truth at first. Pending all these investigations, while he continued to stalk me online, threaten my friends, and harass my husband, he was allowed to remain a student, and I was not. He played the victim well. He is a gifted liar.

My therapist says it could be therapeutic to put all of this down in writing. To share my story with others so that they can see my every misstep, every gut feeling I ignored, every hint I overlooked, and learn from it. And at a certain age, our daughter will undoubtedly ask about him. Does she need to know the depth of his depravity, and the potential for any man she meets to be so robbed of morality? A hard lesson to learn, but an important one, regardless. I don't savor in being a victim – it's a label I'm

uncomfortable with and don't feel fits. I see myself and my daughter simply as two more casualties in what is a growing list of Garrett's escapades in recklessness. He's done it before and he'll do it again, like many men in the world with unchecked, unchallenged power, enabled by those closest to him who say nothing, despite their own quiet doubts about his character. Victim implies we're somehow special. We're not special in that respect. Which makes this all the more important of a story to tell.

There needs to a record of this – an accounting of what happened, so that I can move on and so that one day our daughter can understand why I gave up on her biological father. I don't often give up on others, even when they've hurt me badly. I forgave my husband, after all, for a year of emotional pain and neglect, and he forgave me for Garrett and the damage my relationship with him did to our family. I've always believed that people are inherently good – that the natural direction we all gravitate toward is just and rational. But with Garrett, my deepest held beliefs about the nature of people were challenged.

I know I'm taking a risk by telling this story. He'll undoubtedly retaliate. People who know something happened between us might be shocked, even angry, after reading my story. Those who he's lied to may not believe it. But our ordeal is already a public affair – the restraining orders I filed are public, the child support case we're going to go court over later this month is public, and every statement either of us has ever made is accessible by public records request or FOIA. Journalism is about truth;

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telling the stories that make us uncomfortable and force us to reevaluate our thinking. Journalism is about accountability, creating a record.

This essay series is that accounting, taken from our most private, intimate interactions over the last two and a half years, and quilted together using the many statements I've already made. I've sourced every statement here, and have done my best to include the correct dates and times of all that occurred – the only certainty within this reconstructed timeline are the actions and the days they were taken, because the words were meaningless. The intent was irrelevant. The why does not exist.

This is how it started.

This is how I met the monster I fell in love with.

PART II: THE AFFAIR

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They say to truly know someone's story, you have to go back to the beginning. For me, that's a long way back over rugged and steep terrain. I could write a three-part novel series of my life up to the point I met Garrett, so cramming it all in here would do my story a disservice. Forced to put it all in less than two pages, these are the most important stories.

Some of the stories in my past aren't even mine to tell - they belong to my mother and father, who were parents too young and did the best they could with an unruly, ambitious and intelligent child; they belong to my brother and sisters, whose experiences in childhood were quite different than mine, even though we lived through it together; they belong to my first love, who died too young to ever tell his story, and

my second love, whom I still feel guilt over how I treated today; they belong to the friends who supported me when I had been burned, and when I burned myself. Truly, an imperfect, arguably dark past full of good people trying to do their best by me, even when I wasn't doing what was best for myself.

My life was fragmented into pieces largely defined by the cross-country moves my family and I made during my childhood. I was born in Pennsylvania, bounced around between there and Maryland a bit before moving to rural, coastal Mississippi the week of my ninth birthday. I moved away from my small town on my own, a few hours from home, to attend art school when I was 16. I moved further away - back to Pennsylvania - by myself at the start of my senior year. Then I moved to New York for college, Louisiana for grad school, and finally Florida for my Ph.D. I spent brief periods between living in California, and sleeping on whoever's couch I could find, wherever that couch resided. Through it all I had one goal: my education.

When you tell people you were poor as a child, a lot of Americans picture a child with cheap or maybe overly worn clothes, or a sad teen with a prepaid cell phone plan. They don't imagine that you were housing insecure - your family moving in with relatives because you didn't have a home. They don't imagine going hungry, your parents unable to afford food even though they work two full-time jobs. They can't imagine never seeing a dentist because it wasn't covered by Medicaid, or giving

yourself ear infections to avoid school during field trips you couldn't afford to go on. They don't think of the constant fighting at home because every penny mattered, and someone was always spending pennies where they shouldn't have.

My mother taught me one crucial lesson during our troubled childhood: a bank can take away your car, a landlord can evict you from your home, you can get fired from your job and you can be hurt by those you love - but your education is the only thing that no one can ever take away from you. Education meant a life more than counting pennies and untreated ear infections. Education meant escape. Education meant freedom. I lived by that advice my entire life.

My father came and went a lot. My parents always seemed to be on the verge of divorce. As I got older, I wished they would have divorced. I wanted to go with my brother and live with my dad - mostly because he thought my antics were entertaining and would let me get away with causing trouble. And I saw my mom - the hard disciplinarian - as my enemy, even though no one has ever fought as hard as she to protect me. Youth blinds us all to the pain others inflict upon themselves trying to protect us. They never divorced - and now, six months after their 30th anniversary- the two couldn't be more in love and in sync with one another. He showed me that reckless, unreliable men can change.

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Perhaps that's why I didn't give up on my husband (then-boyfriend) when, at 20 years old and sophomores in college, I found out I was pregnant with my son. My husband and I were in love, but we didn't know each other yet, and his family formed an image of me early on that made him doubt how I fit into his life. So he left me. I spent the entire pregnancy alone, except for the friends who saved my life, who held me at night while I cried, who told me it would be ok. I considered abortion, but didn't make a decision in time to have the procedure done. I was scared. I felt like if I kept this child, I would lose my education and my life would be over. So I considered adoption. I even lived with a family who were going to adopt him for a time - my short stint living in California that I mentioned before. My head couldn't persuade my heart, and I decided to keep him. I was convinced my husband would come around. I thought I knew his heart enough to know that he was a good person, and despite all the pressure from his family, he would be back.

I never knew what real love was until the moment I held my son for the first time. In that moment, the Earth's axis shifted and my worldview moved with it. Nothing else mattered.

My husband wasn't there when our son was born, and he wouldn't meet him until a month after that. But as soon as he saw him, everything changed. *His* axis tilted. His worldview moved. He came back. He became an amazing, dedicated father. Our

relationship was fragile at first, but we made it through the hardest years. I now had two men in my life - my father and my would-be husband, convince me that no matter how lost a man was, he would always find a way back to what was right. We finished our undergraduate and graduate degrees together. We got married. But we also had problems.

We always had problems. I resented him for leaving me while I was pregnant and felt like he never accepted responsibility for it, and he hated that I hated his family (they hated me, too, to be fair). Our marriage was stricken was a disease, and he never committed himself to finding the cure. We separated a few times over the next six years, and by the time I met Garrett I had already told my husband I was leaving and I wanted a divorce. I had been hurt by my husband in the past, and every single day felt like a prison in our house. I wanted out. I wanted freedom. I wanted to experience happiness and love. When my husband couldn't or wouldn't be there for me, I threw myself into research and teaching. I let it take up every second of every day that I wasn't with my son. I suffered quietly, waiting to be rescued.

Then I met Garrett.

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Temptation

We met January 10, 2017. He was one of 56 students in my second class as an instructor at Florida State University. I still remember that morning. The temperature was unusually high for January, even in Florida, and I made a note to myself to bring that up in the first class. I walked across campus that morning feeling the sun on my skin as I ran over how I'd open my class in mind. I was excited to teach my new class. I spent all of winter break getting ready for this class - preparing my lectures and creating assignments. My syllabus was a masterpiece - a detailed, but graphically evolved schedule of everything I planned to teach. Things were bad at home, but everything else felt like it was the way it should be.

I had reviewed my roster a dozen times earlier that day, and remembered Garrett from his unique last name and handsome smile. He stood out. He was the first student I recognized.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't immediately attracted to him. He was tall, handsome and made it a point to draw my attention to him throughout the semester. I had never really been attracted to blondes, or men with brown eyes, but for some reason I felt pulled to him. I tried to internally reject that attraction, whilst he played on it every chance he could. He'd leave notes on his exams, trying to be cute or coy or both, and would finish his emails to me with a wink or smile emoji. Even though we were

about the same age and I thought about him in ways I shouldn't have, I never acted on this attraction while I was his teacher. To me, he was bait. He was a temptation to do something I shouldn't. He was trouble waiting to happen.

He was hardly the first attractive student I taught, and he wouldn't be the last. But seeing that there were other students in my class who were attractive didn't *mean* anything to me. I didn't *feel* anything toward them. They were just students. It was different with Garrett. From the moment we met, it was different.

I was only teaching while working on my doctoral degree, and wasn't technically a professor. A student teaching other students was the way I earned my stipend. I worried it would be hard for students to take me seriously – being practically the same age as them – but it only rarely seemed to cause any issues. I saw the knowledge gap as a surrogate for an age gap, and didn't play into being the "young, cool" grad student/instructor who reaches kids "on their level," as the cliché goes. I was a steadfast professional, and I took my job seriously. I loved it, in fact. I had found my true calling in the classroom. The only way I could see that I could ruin it for myself would be to lose my gradebook, not help a student who needed it, or to be an instructor who seemed unreachable or uncaring. As the semester progressed, though, I realized there was another threat I had not yet encountered nor anticipated. And as he made a point

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to come around more, to get too close, to look at me *that way*, I thought it best to keep my distance from him more than others.

There was one day in particular I struggled keeping my physical distance. I had called Garrett into my office to scorn him for the paper he turned in for my class – a paper that was easily, unquestionably the worst paper I had ever read. There are not words to describe how bad this paper was, and I debated on how to approach him about it beforehand. I gave students second and third chances on assignments quite often, knowing that every student can have a bad day or bad week, and that it shouldn't ruin their semester. I had seen in previous semesters how students would just give up or not bother working hard in a class if they get one bad grade on an exam or a project.

I decided to print out his submission, and have him read it out loud in front of me so that *he* could see how bad it was, rather than me showing him line-by-line all the grammatical (and factual) errors. He showed up early, sweating, having just come from the gym, he said. He sat too close to me, looked at me like I was something to devour, and brushed his legs against me several times. I could feel the heat coming off his body. And I noticed him getting hard. It was difficult for me to focus, and for him, too. I finished the lesson, and he lingered there until I said I had other things to do. I knew that day that it was best if I wasn't alone with him, and made it a point to call him to my office only when other students would be around. I kept the door open. I was flattered

by his forwardness and the attention, and I wanted him badly, but I knew it would be wrong and I would get in trouble. So nothing happened.

While he was not the only student to flirt with me during the four semesters I taught courses, he was the most aggressive in his pursuits. Garrett often flirted with me during and outside of class. On April 5, just a week after that day he was in my office, while I was out of town, he emailed me to submit makeup work and said, "Here is my long awaited question 5 revision. We all miss you so so much." I made my replies short, and said, "Ha. Thanks, Garrett."

Near the end of the semester, I provided my cell phone number to all of my students, during class, as I do every semester, in case any students had major problems bringing in their group final projects. I split my class into Houses of three students each, and every group was scheduled to present on a specific day and order. If for some reason that group was going to be late, I told the students to text me to let me know so we could move on to the next group and hopefully fit the group in crisis in at the end of the class period. This happened to two groups during presentations that semester – one had problems printing their final map, the others' ride was late. I explicitly stated that my number was only to be used in emergencies.

Garrett texted me the next day.

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I sent Garrett an email because one of his group members said he had not been working on the project like he should have been, and that she was concerned that she was doing all of the work. I didn't recognize the number he texted me at first, but quickly realized there was probably only one student of all 56 who would text me the very next day after getting my number. Garrett was a solidly mediocre student, largely apathetic about his grades and indifferent to any calling to greater learning. He would tell me later that the only reason he had such great attendance in my class was because he came to see me. I would say he was aloof, but the way he stared at me during class gave me the impression that he was paying attention. I just didn't realize he was paying attention to me, and not what I was teaching. That he suddenly responded, and did so via text instead of replying to my email, surprised me.

The class was aware of his flirtations, and I attempted to make a joke out of it to ease the tension. I told all my students to write their names on the back of their exams, so that I could return them without anyone nearby seeing any answers marked incorrect. Garrett deliberately wrote his name on the front, always, so I would know it was his. I told everyone to fold their exams long-ways ("hot-dog" style), so I could easily stack them up, put a rubber band around them, and again be discrete in giving them back. He always folded it the other way. He made silly comments, asked obtuse questions, and flattered me often. I played dumb, noting every thing he did for attention in class with an exasperated, "Damnit, Garret," which the other students

would laugh about. Several students asked me if his flirting made me uncomfortable. I would say, "nah, he's just being playful. I don't think he means it."

His flirtatious emails went overlooked. His in-class playfulness went unanswered. But as soon as he had my number, Garrett used my cell phone number instead of emailing me, something he later admitted he did because he wanted to "hook up." In April, I had an angiogram and notified the class the day before that I would likely not be able to have class afterward, even though I ended up not cancelling it in the end.

Garrett texted my cell phone that morning and said, "Good luck with your surgy [sic] today. Break a leg." I did not respond. Bait. Temptation. Trouble.

I made sure to keep all my communication with him via email. I asked him in early May if he wanted me to give his graded work to another student in class to pick up, since he had messaged me that he wouldn't be in class because of a "raunchy case of pink eye," or if he wanted to pick his work up from my office at another time. He texted me instead of emailing me back and told me he would pick up his work at my office. I told him I would be in my office around 1 p.m. on May 3. I deliberately told him to stop by when I knew I would be meeting with other students so that we wouldn't be alone. When he came to my office to get his work, Garrett knocked on the door, seemed surprised I was meeting with someone, took his work, and then lingered in my

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doorway for a few minutes, staring at me, making the student I was with uncomfortable. When he finally walked out, she looked at me and let out a long and dramatic, "oh my god."

"Is he always like that with you?" she asked.

"Yes," I laughed. "That boy is sex on a stick. Stay away," I joked.

He texted me from the hallway after, saying, "Better not be talkin smack."

Bait

After the semester ended and my grades had been submitted, I was done being his teacher. Now I was just another student at FSU again, and the rules about seeing students no longer applied. So I texted him, telling him his grades were in the night of May 7. I emailed most of my students who asked to know when grades were done, but I chose to text Garrett instead. Maybe I wanted to see if he was just flirting with me because I was his teacher, or if he actually wanted me. Since I was no longer his teacher, that temptation built up in my mind until I could no longer resist. We started flirting – the fun, exciting and awkward buddings of something new.

We went over all the little details about ourselves, where we were from, which I left Garrett guessing, our families, our interests, our hobbies. He said he wanted to take me out, show me the best bars in the area, get drunk together and hang out. I was treading lightly, flirting while simultaneously checking the university handbook to see if flirting after our class was over was against the rules. He kept trying to guess where I was from, but I didn't give in. I asked if he was searching for me on Google. He guessed I was from Ohio.

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DATE	TIME	SENDER	BODY
			5/7/2017
			I've had a little too much bourbon tonight decided to walk home to the
5/7/2017	21:05	Garrett:	beer
5/7/2017	21:06	Rebekah:	Yep. I got mead too but i was gonna save it.
5/7/2017	21:06	Rebekah:	Your map was really good!
5/7/2017	21:07	Rebekah:	The essay was... entertaining
			Haha I could help you grade. My mom was a teacher so it'll come
5/7/2017	21:09	Garrett:	naturally. And I can definitely help you put a dent in that mead
			Honestly I was having a tough morning which is no excuse, I just wrote
5/7/2017	21:10	Garrett:	what came into my head
			Lol not sure if me giving my underage students the strongest liquor in
5/7/2017	21:10	Rebekah:	Tallahassee is considered professional behavior
5/7/2017	21:11	Garrett:	Legal as of early April. Nice try
5/7/2017	21:11	Rebekah:	Whaa. I thought you were 18
5/7/2017	21:12	Garrett:	That's a joke
5/7/2017	21:12	Rebekah:	No seriously
5/7/2017	21:12	Rebekah:	Hmm. Interesting
5/7/2017	21:13	Garrett:	Remember we talked about this, I'm graduating next spring
5/7/2017	21:13	Garrett:	Attempting the dehumanization process known as law school
			Did we really talk about that? Jesus. Im going to be honest here.. i do
5/7/2017	21:15	Rebekah:	not remember that at all
			I mean not really. We all discussed our age in your office for maybe 30
5/7/2017	21:15	Garrett:	seconds
			Hm. I usually avoid that conversation so maybe i tuned out. Or i was
5/7/2017	21:16	Rebekah:	busy making your map
5/7/2017	21:22	Rebekah:	You're not really walking home alone drunk, are you?
5/7/2017	21:22	Garrett:	Probably both. Those hours were fun.
5/7/2017	22:03	Garrett:	No I didn't google you
5/7/2017	22:03	Garrett:	Wtf
5/7/2017	22:03	Rebekah:	Do i sound as though I'm from Ohio?
5/7/2017	22:03	Rebekah:	Idk. I have a website, but it doesn't say where I'm from.
5/7/2017	22:03	Garrett:	No one sounds like they're from Ohio
5/7/2017	22:03	Garrett:	Indiana
5/7/2017	22:03	Garrett:	Chicago
5/7/2017	22:04	Rebekah:	Chicago isn't in Indiana, Garrett
5/7/2017	22:05	Garrett:	I know that. You're not giving hints so I'm shooting in the dark here
5/7/2017	22:06	Rebekah:	I think the rum is kicking in, judging by my typos
5/7/2017	22:06	Rebekah:	Wait a second
			You use complete sentences... and proper grammar when you text...
5/7/2017	22:07	Rebekah:	Where was this in your essays???
			I was preoccupied mentally with another issue. You didn't fail as a
5/7/2017	22:08	Garrett:	teacher.
5/7/2017	22:10	Rebekah:	What issue
5/7/2017	22:10	Garrett:	You got me all emotional now I'm walking to another bar
5/7/2017	22:11	Rebekah:	Huh... how in the world did i get you emotional...
5/7/2017	22:11	Garrett:	I'm kidding lol
5/7/2017	22:12	Garrett:	I don't get very emotional

5/7/2017 22:15 Garrett:	My mom has dependency problems and had a set back a couple of days before but since my sister is a therapist she like controls all the news I hear about my mom because she's feels obligated to for some reason, and she decided to just send me a text about it like an hour before the exam
5/7/2017 22:15 Garrett:	It's not an excuse to do poorly, I was just trying to fly through it which was a mistake
5/7/2017 22:17 Rebekah:	Eh. We all do it
5/7/2017 22:18 Rebekah:	Dear God the faculty handbook is so unnecessarily convoluted
5/7/2017 22:18 Garrett:	You can't just try to veer off from me discovering where you're from
5/7/2017 22:19 Rebekah:	I doubt you could ever guess it
5/7/2017 22:19 Rebekah:	not a slight to you, but my ambiguity on the matter is intentional
5/7/2017 22:23 Garrett:	Fair enough. I don't give out my social, sexual preferences, or my blood type so I get you
5/7/2017 22:24 Rebekah:	...ok..
5/7/2017 22:24 Garrett:	Why are you looking at a faculty handbook?
5/7/2017 22:25 Rebekah:	What would be so odd about your social or sexual preferences that you would keep either a secret?
5/7/2017 22:25 Garrett:	Just another joke that's hard to convey via text. Trust me I'm good at jokes
5/7/2017 22:25 Garrett:	Social as in social security number lol
5/7/2017 22:25 Rebekah:	I was trying to see whether or not id be in trouble for making comments to you that could be interpreted as lewd
5/7/2017 22:34 Garrett:	I understand the importance of professionalism
5/7/2017 22:34 Garrett:	And also understand when it's time to not be
5/7/2017 22:35 Rebekah:	Ahhh
5/7/2017 22:35 Rebekah:	Garret you are going to get my in trouble
5/7/2017 22:36 Garrett:	No I'm not? Do you realize what some girls do at FSU for a B-
5/7/2017 22:36 Rebekah:	That's gross
5/7/2017 22:46 Garrett:	What is? I already passed your class I'm just trying to have fun and grab a drink

I have heard some wild excuses for poor performance in the past - ranging from I can't go to class without my dog, to my roommate was shot and I was held hostage at gunpoint. The last one was true, by the way. But I was always skeptical. My concern for the mental and physical safety of my students (and everyone else in my life) made me gullible. I didn't want to question someone's suffering and be wrong about it. So I didn't judge. I mostly took the wild and outlandish reasons for bad tests and papers with a grain of salt.

I have heard multiple stories from Garrett about his mother – ranging from "she's my hero," to "she's an addict," to "she's schizophrenic and I haven't spoken to her in years." His sister, Sarah, is in fact a social worker (outpatient dialysis, to be exact), and it's possible his mother, Karol, is a struggling addict. A background check on her shows no arrests or convictions for drugs, but many users suffer in silence. Public data shows that his parents have evicted a lot of people out of the properties they own, and have been at fault in a lot of car accidents, but nothing related to drugs. Though neither mean much in the grander scheme of things.

The dependency story wouldn't stick for long. Earlier in the night, he asked if he could come over to my place to help me grade papers, because his mom was a teacher and he helped grade papers "all the time." I doubted that was true - not because his mom wasn't a teacher (teachers can suffer from addiction, too), but because his writing was so awful that there's no way anyone with power over someone's grades would let him anywhere near a red pen. Besides, I had already told him I was done with grades. He was just looking for an excuse to come over, he said (though he wasn't even in town, he told me later, so why bother with the game?).

I chalked most of this up to him being an immature, 21-year-old guy, starving for attention and sympathy. I figured it was harmless – something I would later found out was anything but. He could tell I was a hopeless empath, and he wanted to create a less

superficial image of himself to me so I'd stay interested. He wanted me to see him on my level. We flirted some more, Garrett asking me several times to go out with him. At around midnight on May 8, I reciprocated interest in a sexual relationship with Garrett, which he explicitly said was mutual.

It seems odd now that I still have all these messages, and saving them was an accidental Godsend. I added a back-up feature for text messages on my phone a few months prior, wanting to save everything my husband sent to me in case our divorce turned hostile. I didn't intend to save all of Garrett's texts, but I'm glad that I did. I would end up needing them later when Garrett told his family, friends, other students, the police, prosecutors, the Title IX office and the University that I was "chasing" him, and he was never "that interested." (G#001)

Garrett teased me that night about acting "high school" because I was not flirting in the blunt way that he was flirting with me. This was the first time I had spoken to anyone this way since I met my husband nearly ten years before, so I was still insecure about how to flirt with him. He told me he wanted to take me out, show me a good time before I underwent surgery on my shoulder a few weeks in the future. He said we should take advantage of the time I have left before I would spend a month passed out on the couch, high on pain meds. He said he'd make it worth it.

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He mentioned that day when he came to my office, the day I couldn't focus as I felt his breath on my neck. He told me he spent the entire time in my office that day thinking about all of the ways he wanted to fuck me – on all the surfaces in my office, which he said was set up for a porno. I felt relieved that I wasn't the only one feeling this – I wasn't some creep completely off the mark on what I thought he was feeling. I was a student hitting on another student who so very clearly, and animatedly, talked about all the ways he had thought about fucking me over the last five months. We sent each other pictures, we teased about all the things we would do to each other. I don't think I've ever spoken to someone like that – so sexually graphic and confident about it. I hadn't been spoken to like that, either, in a very, very long time. It made me want him so much more.

	Ooh.. so if i told you I've had reoccurring fantasies about you that take
5/7/2017 23:13 Rebekah:	place in my office, is that still high school
5/7/2017 23:13 Rebekah:	Oh no
5/7/2017 23:13 Rebekah:	Can't share any of that stuff
	I like being a student and teacher. I want it to stay that way. Sharing
	one millionth with a sweet soul like yours would be begging karma to
5/7/2017 23:14 Rebekah:	destroy what I've worked for
5/7/2017 23:15 Garrett:	Hmmm reoccurring fantasies
5/7/2017 23:15 Garrett:	Would it be weird if I told you I've had similar ones in your office?
5/7/2017 23:16 Rebekah:	Depends on whether or not that's true
5/7/2017 23:16 Garrett:	It's very true. From the first time I sat on that couch.
5/7/2017 23:17 Rebekah:	Lol
5/7/2017 23:17 Rebekah:	Sure
	You were sitting on it right in front of me the day you made the map.
5/7/2017 23:18 Garrett:	You're going to tell me that wasn't running through my mind
5/7/2017 23:18 Garrett:	You can't
	Ok then. How'd it go then? Because mine were so vivid i could write
5/7/2017 23:19 Rebekah:	them into sonnets
5/7/2017 23:19 Rebekah:	John was there the entire time lol
5/7/2017 23:20 Garrett:	Wait with John in it too?
	No i meant That day in my office John was there with us so I'm did you
5/7/2017 23:20 Rebekah:	just like ignore him entirely ha
	Not that I'm opposed to that idea... thanks for putting that in my head
5/7/2017 23:21 Rebekah:	ha
	Well it really got going the time you called me into your office about not
	paying attention. I mean come on that was perfect. I imagined several
	scenarios in my head of you taking advantage of vice versa. Using every
5/7/2017 23:22 Garrett:	piece of furniture in the room to our advantage
5/7/2017 23:23 Garrett:	Desks couch. Pulling out a filing cabinet drawer
5/7/2017 23:23 Garrett:	I'd like to hear one of these sonets though
5/7/2017 23:23 Rebekah:	Not sure how the filling cabinet drawer would play in but ok
5/7/2017 23:24 Rebekah:	Oh the couch was definitely in play
5/7/2017 23:24 Garrett:	That meeting you were talking to me but that's all I was thinking about
5/7/2017 23:25 Rebekah:	Haha the irony
5/7/2017 23:25 Rebekah:	So why not make a move
5/7/2017 23:26 Rebekah:	I could get I trouble, but you wouldn't
5/7/2017 23:26 Rebekah:	Or do i intimidate you
5/7/2017 23:27 Garrett:	Idk you seemed legitimately mad at me. It was into it
5/7/2017 23:27 Garrett:	You throw me so many mixed signals get out of here

	Yeah there was once you looked straight at me and I just thought god
5/7/2017 23:30 Garrett:	damn she could dominate me
5/7/2017 23:30 Garrett:	Say it
5/7/2017 23:31 Rebekah:	Yeah.. i probably could
5/7/2017 23:31 Garrett:	Say it
	I don't remember why you were there. You were still in your gym clothes. Sweaty. It was like i could taste the salt on your neck just looking at you. I think i was upset with you, maybe it was the same day
5/7/2017 23:33 Rebekah:	i got on you about paying attention, idk..
	But i thought about how soft you probably kissed.. what your lips would feel like laced with mine.. whether it would hurt if i bit your lip before i
5/7/2017 23:34 Rebekah:	lifted your shirt off
	I wondered what you would do. If you'd bother taking my shirt off, or just let yourself find your way as you kissed across my neck, my shoulder, my chest. I thought you'd probably feel so good I'd let my head drop back.. just feel you on me before i pushed you back onto the
5/7/2017 23:37 Rebekah:	couch.. maybe you'd surprise me, throw me down on it first.
5/7/2017 23:38 Rebekah:	Like i said... sonnets
5/7/2017 23:40 Rebekah:	Too much?
	I remember that day because I was in gym clothes and 90% sure I was getting a hard on
I've thought about what it must be like to pull your hair and watch your back arch into position. I've continuously imagined and thought of you going down on me on that couch and looking up at me. With the blue lipstick you wore in the earlier weeks.
5/7/2017 23:42 Garrett:	After I watched the first episode of GOT I projected us into that scene
5/7/2017 23:42 Garrett:	Is that too much?
5/7/2017 23:43 Garrett:	Those are indeed sonnets
5/7/2017 23:43 Rebekah:	So all that time i was teaching..
5/7/2017 23:44 Rebekah:	Were you ever paying attention
5/7/2017 23:44 Rebekah:	Lol
5/7/2017 23:44 Garrett:	To you yes
5/7/2017 23:44 Rebekah:	Learn anything?
5/7/2017 23:45 Garrett:	Yes a lot, I usually know when I have to really pay attention in class
5/7/2017 23:46 Garrett:	You put your number on the board and turned around looked directly at me
5/7/2017 23:47 Rebekah:	Did i?

We flirted for hours the first night, gradually getting more detailed, more graphic. By midnight, Garrett wanted to sext and have phone sex, and I willingly played along. Keep in mind while reading this, Garrett initiated the sexual messages.

He initiated phone sex. He followed along as we both narrated what we would do to each other if we had been together that night.

			So you texted me not because it was a emergency, but just because
	5/7/2017 23:48	Rebekah:	you wanted to?
	5/7/2017 23:48	Garrett:	100%
	5/7/2017 23:48	Garrett:	50/50 you were demanding. Saw oppuetunity
	5/7/2017 23:48	Garrett:	Opportunity
	5/7/2017 23:49	Rebekah:	I think i looked at you because i had a feeling you would
	5/7/2017 23:49	Garrett:	Or maybe you wanted me to?
	5/7/2017 23:49	Rebekah:	Never could tell if you were being nice or flirting
	5/7/2017 23:50	Rebekah:	Will you did, didn't you? ;)
	5/7/2017 23:50	Garrett:	I did
	5/7/2017 23:50	Rebekah:	And then you did it again
	5/7/2017 23:50	Rebekah:	And again lol
	5/7/2017 23:50	Garrett:	Had to keep you guessing somehow
			I pushed off meeting you until i knew someone would be in my office
	5/7/2017 23:51	Rebekah:	last week
	5/7/2017 23:51	Garrett:	Whys that
	5/7/2017 23:52	Garrett:	You definitely said some stuff after I walked out
			Rough week. Hot guy in my office who i couldn't quite read.. just found
	5/7/2017 23:53	Rebekah:	out i might die in surgery at [myage] in a few weeks...
	5/7/2017 23:53	Rebekah:	Didn't want to do something stupid
	5/7/2017 23:53	Rebekah:	No i really didn't. I was distracted for a minute though
	5/7/2017 23:54	Rebekah:	Had to bite my lip, drink some water and get back on task
	5/7/2017 23:55	Rebekah:	I said you were adorable.
			And what i meant by that was... thank God we weren't alone because
	5/7/2017 23:56	Rebekah:	hot damn
	5/7/2017 23:56	Rebekah:	You better not share any of this
	5/7/2017 23:56	Garrett:	We should have been
	5/7/2017 23:56	Garrett:	No that would ruin it
	5/7/2017 23:57	Rebekah:	Too bad you're so very far away tonight
	5/7/2017 23:57	Rebekah:	When i am so, so drunk
	5/7/2017 23:58	Garrett:	I know god damn
	5/7/2017 23:59	Garrett:	Your office though is literally the perfect place theoretically
	5/7/2017 23:59	Garrett:	The room is set up for a porno
			5/8/2017
508001	5/8/2017 0:01	Garrett:	What would you do if I knocked on our door now
508002	5/8/2017 0:01	Rebekah:	Ha.
508003	5/8/2017 0:01	Rebekah:	Depends. Is it right now? Or is it theoretically daytime
508004	5/8/2017 0:01	Garrett:	Right now
508005			Because if it's right now I'd let you come in just past the doorway. I'd lean in close to you, my lips an inch from yours, just so i could lean in to turn the light off, letting the glow of my computer screen give just enough light to see your eyes before you kissed me. I'd put both hands around you, feeling the waves in your hair as i pulled you I closer to me, kissing you harder as you started moving toward me, letting you
	5/8/2017 0:05	Rebekah:	lead me
508006	5/8/2017 0:06	Rebekah:	Fuck the couch. The tension is too much and i back up onto the floor, your arm behind my back, holding me as we both get down.

	I left my shirt off, snap off my bra in one twist, you pull it off me, and my back arches as you start at my neck, move down, then across, my fingers playing with your hair again as I start to feel like I can't wait
5/8/2017 0:08 Rebekah:	anymore
	I slide my leg under yours, catch you as you take my place. And now it's my turn to feel every inch of you from the edge of your ear to the edge
5/8/2017 0:10 Rebekah:	of your belt
5/8/2017 0:11 Garrett:	This has me so turned on right now
	I tease you, kissing your neck as I slide my hand just behind the waistline of your pants, sliding my right hand farther down, my left
5/8/2017 0:12 Rebekah:	hand still in your hair, kissing you harder, feeling you get hard
	I move my left hand out, holding onto your right, fingers interlaced, as I start lowering your pants off you, waiting for you to tell me what to do,
5/8/2017 0:14 Rebekah:	or to move with me
5/8/2017 0:16 Rebekah:	Leaving it to you, letting you take a turn in this fantasy
	I'm not sure how far you want to take this, so I hesitate. I tell you we
5/8/2017 0:18 Rebekah:	don't have to. That you can go
5/8/2017 0:19 Rebekah:	You take it from here;)
5/8/2017 0:20 Rebekah:	Still with me?
5/8/2017 0:21 Garrett:	Yes typing
	When my pants come off you immediately start playing with me. But it dosent last long. In a quick motion I flip you on your back pinning you to the floor. As I'm holding your wrists to the floor I bite your lip until I can sense the pain in your body. I move slowly down your neck, kissing and biting. As I move down to your chest I pull my hands away from your wrists. I take my right hand, tighten it around your neck. I take my left
5/8/2017 0:25 Garrett:	hand I and put it inside of your pants, and you.
5/8/2017 0:26 Rebekah:	I gasp. I'm breathing harder now
	I can't help it, I start moving my hips, turning my face toward my arm,
5/8/2017 0:27 Rebekah:	wanting to bite my lip, wanting to fuck you, wanting to stop,
5/8/2017 0:28 Rebekah:	I say we shouldn't.
5/8/2017 0:28 Rebekah:	I say we should stop
	As I work your pants fully off I work my way kissing down your body until I'm between your legs. All the while you're pulling my hair so hard I
5/8/2017 0:28 Garrett:	think it might come right out.
5/8/2017 0:29 Rebekah:	Don't stop
5/8/2017 0:31 Rebekah:	I want you now. I want the foreplay but I want you more
5/8/2017 0:31 Rebekah:	I beg you to fuck me
	I keep doing this until your toes are curling inward so much your feet become U shaped. I then sit up and look at you as you're biting your lip, feeling my body. I start teasing you. Sliding it up and down your legs
5/8/2017 0:31 Garrett:	until you scream with agony
	I slide smoothly into you as you're soaking wet, I can feel your muscles tightening. You squeeze me even harder. Your hands find there way to my back as they begin shredding it apart. I start of slower teasing you
5/8/2017 0:35 Garrett:	even more

	But before you can get comfortable, I turn you forcefully on your knees
5/8/2017 0:38 Garrett:	pulling at your hair
5/8/2017 0:39 Rebekah:	I think you're typing with one hand right now
5/8/2017 0:39 Garrett:	I think you're using your hand too
	You absolutely love it from behind, begging me not to stop, telling me
5/8/2017 0:41 Garrett:	harder and harder until your moans are defining
	I feel like this is a drunken hallucination... And I'm going to go into my
	office tomorrow and be sorely disappointed that I've submitted your
5/8/2017 0:42 Rebekah:	grade and can't call you to meet with me
5/8/2017 0:46 Garrett:	You can wait a few days and try
5/8/2017 0:47 Garrett:	I don't think you wouldn't went for it if I made a move in your office
5/8/2017 0:47 Garrett:	Would have*
5/8/2017 0:47 Rebekah:	Ha. I've lost my power. I cannot summon you.
5/8/2017 0:47 Rebekah:	I would have kissed you
5/8/2017 0:48 Rebekah:	Because i wanted to so badly. Beyond that, i don't know
5/8/2017 0:49 Rebekah:	Do you still have a place on campus?
5/8/2017 0:51 Garrett:	No I live off campus now
5/8/2017 0:52 Rebekah:	You wouldn't have been the first student to kiss me this semester lol
5/8/2017 0:52 Garrett:	Some days I would think hell yeah she's into me, and others not so much
5/8/2017 0:52 Garrett:	No way really??? Dish
	So do you have a place in Tallahassee to yourself? Or at least to yourself
5/8/2017 0:52 Rebekah:	for a few hours?
5/8/2017 0:53 Rebekah:	I can't
5/8/2017 0:53 Rebekah:	Though you could probably guess
5/8/2017 0:53 Garrett:	:/
	Oh no. I was always into you. I was just more disciplined some days
5/8/2017 0:54 Rebekah:	more than others
5/8/2017 0:54 Garrett:	Yeah I live in a big room with a bathroom

During the next several days, Garrett and I spoke, via text and phone, almost constantly – starting in early AM and going late into the next night and early the next morning. Our relationship during this period took place entirely via text, messaging and phone calls. He even asked me at least three times to drive down to see him, which I couldn't do, so he told me he would drive back to see me.

5/8/2017 1:15 Garrett:	You seem like someone that would want to be put in their place, but also have their turn at helm as well
5/8/2017 1:16 Rebekah:	And yet, as you said, you know almost nothing about me
5/8/2017 1:17 Garrett:	We'll see I kind of figured that out
5/8/2017 1:17 Garrett:	There's times when I've wanted to just pull your hair to see how you would react
5/8/2017 1:17 Rebekah:	And all I know is you're an RA who talks like he hates it, but probably cares a lot more than you let off. You say you're going to law school, but you won't say where or why. You imply it's forced on you, but i don't see that
5/8/2017 1:18 Rebekah:	I think you want it
5/8/2017 1:19 Rebekah:	You're sweet and gentle
5/8/2017 1:19 Rebekah:	But no one who talks like that to someone who still has two days to flunk them can be that sheltered
5/8/2017 1:20 Rebekah:	You're too classically good looking to be single, yet you are
5/8/2017 1:21 Rebekah:	And you wander around bars in the keys thinking about fucking your professor
5/8/2017 1:21 Rebekah:	So.. I'm intrigued
5/8/2017 1:23 Rebekah:	On the other hand none of this will ever actually happen, so for you it's still safe, still a distant fantasy
5/8/2017 1:23 Rebekah:	Curious
5/8/2017 1:24 Rebekah:	Superficially, I'm probably easier to figure out ha
5/8/2017 1:25 Garrett:	I am no longer an RA as Dec.12.
5/8/2017 1:25 Rebekah:	Lol
5/8/2017 1:26 Garrett:	Yes it will
5/8/2017 1:26 Rebekah:	What will?
5/8/2017 1:29 Garrett:	I'm single because I'm poor
5/8/2017 1:29 Garrett:	This will happen
5/8/2017 1:29 Garrett:	Mark my words
5/8/2017 1:30 Rebekah:	Oh i will. I'm leaving Thursday for five days, so you don't have much time
5/8/2017 1:31 Rebekah:	And if you pull my hair... i will bite you
5/8/2017 1:31 Garrett:	Sweet
5/8/2017 1:31 Garrett:	That sounds like a double whammy
5/8/2017 1:32 Rebekah:	I'm spent for the night. Let's see if i apologize profusely in the morning
5/8/2017 1:32 Rebekah:	Omg
5/8/2017 1:32 Garrett:	Don't
5/8/2017 1:32 Rebekah:	I'm curious if you have the... power to back up all this hype
5/8/2017 1:33 Garrett:	I have barely hyped myself. Barely. You're the headliner
5/8/2017 17:50 Garrett:	I can definitely show you a good time
5/8/2017 17:51 Rebekah:	Yeah, but you're not here. :(
5/8/2017 18:00 Rebekah:	Unless you are back... that would definitely make things interesting
5/8/2017 18:04 Garrett:	Immm not. I wish I was. I love Tallahassee in the summer
5/8/2017 18:04 Garrett:	You should come here
5/8/2017 18:11 Rebekah:	Yea ill just drive over there no big deal
5/8/2017 18:11 Rebekah:	Not coming back anytime soon?
5/8/2017 18:22 Rebekah:	Where's a good place? I think I've found a co conspirator for tonight
5/8/2017 18:23 Garrett:	Im coming back soon

5/8/2017 19:28	Garrett:	I'm supposed to come home Wednesday
5/8/2017 19:31	Rebekah:	That's too bad
5/8/2017 19:31	Garrett:	Were you guys talking about me in that voicemail?
5/8/2017 19:32	Rebekah:	Ha no. Sorry. Accidental dial
5/8/2017 19:33	Garrett:	Are you going to be in town Wednesday?
5/8/2017 19:34	Rebekah:	I might be
5/8/2017 22:35	Rebekah:	Wow. Those ipas must be pretty strong
5/8/2017 22:38	Garrett:	Yeah they usually are. You know what my intentions are. You saw me checking you out multiple times. Deep down you knew you I wanted you. You're the one in the driver seat
5/8/2017 22:42	Garrett:	It's dark in here let me find some lighting around here
5/8/2017 22:43	Garrett:	Also can't take a selfie in front of these old sailors
		And you know I'm nothing like all the girls you've been with before..
5/8/2017 22:43	Rebekah:	grown ass women have curves, imperfections, abs ha
5/8/2017 22:43	Rebekah:	Lol find a bathroom
5/8/2017 22:47	Garrett:	Best drunk attempt
5/8/2017 22:48	Rebekah:	Ha
5/8/2017 22:48	Garrett:	Does it look like me
5/8/2017 22:49	Rebekah:	You're too freaking adorable
5/8/2017 22:49	Garrett:	That is so sexy god damn

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		I think after a month of mandatory rest ill probably lose what little i
5/8/2017 22:51	Rebekah:	have of abs
5/8/2017 22:54	Garrett:	I'm sorry kinda can't stop checking out that picture.
5/8/2017 22:54	Rebekah:	Ya. You look like you ha
5/8/2017 22:55	Garrett:	Mandatory rest can have its advantages
5/8/2017 22:55	Rebekah:	Quid pro quo?
5/8/2017 22:56	Garrett:	Yes we're wrapping up here and I cAn
5/8/2017 22:57	Rebekah:	Uh huh ;(
5/8/2017 22:57	Garrett:	Don't get sassy I'll be home in 10
		Oops. Wrong symbol.. see.. You're a much better texter when drunk
5/8/2017 22:57	Rebekah:	than i
5/8/2017 22:59	Rebekah:	I maybe took one earlier.... Kinda woke up still thinking about you
5/8/2017 22:59	Garrett:	Well you should show me
5/8/2017 23:01	Rebekah:	I think i might be a little too drunk to go out tonight ha
5/8/2017 23:02	Garrett:	That happens. I look at it as a good thing because you're saving money
5/8/2017 23:06	Rebekah:	Ha. Maybe. Losing all semblance of professionalism though
5/8/2017 23:08	Garrett:	Ok I made it
		A little nervous about sending anything too revealing without something
5/8/2017 23:09	Rebekah:	on you ,
		And you're clearly into intense makeup and i had zero on earlier and
5/8/2017 23:10	Rebekah:	zero now ha
5/8/2017 23:11	Garrett:	Am not
5/8/2017 23:11	Rebekah:	Uh huh and how do i know you didn't just Google hot selfie pic ha
5/8/2017 23:11	Garrett:	How many fingers should I hold up
5/8/2017 23:12	Rebekah:	Two lol
5/8/2017 23:12	Rebekah:	Or just show that ungodly adorable smile ha
5/8/2017 23:13	Rebekah:	Idk.. my hair was a bit wet and tossled
5/8/2017 23:13	Rebekah:	Haha
5/8/2017 23:14	Rebekah:	Fair enough
5/8/2017 23:14	Garrett:	I forgot the fingers
5/8/2017 23:14	Rebekah:	Hot damn. You're going to get me in so much trouble..
5/8/2017 23:14	Garrett:	Doubt it
5/8/2017 23:15	Rebekah:	True. So long as none of this actually happens i guess I'm o k
5/8/2017 23:15	Garrett:	Yeah let's go with that
5/8/2017 23:16	Rebekah:	Oh but that would be so very disappointing
5/8/2017 23:16	Garrett:	Yeah we both know that's bullshit and it's gonna happen
5/8/2017 23:17	Rebekah:	No make up, wet hair and half dressed.. at least you know it's me ha
5/8/2017 23:17	Rebekah:	From earlier
5/8/2017 23:18	Rebekah:	I'm 90% sure you are not coming Wednesday
		Which would pretty much be the only way this would happen.. either
5/8/2017 23:18	Rebekah:	tomorrow or Wednesday
5/8/2017 23:18	Rebekah:	None
5/8/2017 23:18	Garrett:	That's when my ride is leaving
5/8/2017 23:19	Rebekah:	If your ride gets held up then it'll never happen

	Just a one and done? What about when you get back from wherever
5/8/2017 23:19 Garrett:	you're going for 5 days
	Ha I doubt I'd have time. I'll be out in the field a lot. And I'm going to
	the beach for 5 days with my mum and sisters to enjoy it before I'm
5/8/2017 23:20 Rebekah:	sawed open
5/8/2017 23:21 Rebekah:	I doubt this makes one, much less done or anything else ;)
5/8/2017 23:23 Rebekah:	I changed
	I'm literally riding home with a John 2.0 on Wednesday. That sounds
5/8/2017 23:25 Garrett:	very relaxing.
	As much as I need the break, I think I'd like much more to be...
5/8/2017 23:27 Rebekah:	simulated first
5/8/2017 23:27 Garrett:	If you gave me that look in person I don't know what the fuck I'd do
5/8/2017 23:31 Rebekah:	Ha
5/8/2017 23:31 Rebekah:	Are you still sitting at home in your bed, shirtless and drunk?
5/8/2017 23:34 Rebekah:	That look any better?
5/8/2017 23:35 Rebekah:	You make the blood rush to every end of my body... makes me blush..
5/8/2017 23:35 Garrett:	I have a nasty tan line from today
5/8/2017 23:36 Garrett:	That's so hot you literally have no idea
5/8/2017 23:36 Rebekah:	I really want you to fuck me
5/8/2017 23:36 Garrett:	Trust me, you make my blood rush to all the right spots
5/8/2017 23:36 Rebekah:	Well hey #nofilter
5/8/2017 23:36 Garrett:	keep your shit together face
5/8/2017 23:37 Rebekah:	Lol
5/8/2017 23:38 Garrett:	But yeah I'm pretty much just chillin in my room
5/8/2017 23:39 Rebekah:	Some sort of beach theme filter on that one
5/8/2017 23:40 Rebekah:	Filters are lame
5/8/2017 23:40 Garrett:	Black and white has its moments but I agree
5/8/2017 23:41 Garrett:	Ohhhhh am I into that all black
5/8/2017 23:41 Rebekah:	Ya. I guess black and whites ok
5/8/2017 23:42 Rebekah:	Too bad you liked it. I already took the top off..
5/8/2017 23:43 Garrett:	Well I'm sure I'll like what's underneath even better
	You know the build up to this would probably make anything for real
	pale by comparison. Assuming John 2.0 gives you that ride.. John always
5/8/2017 23:45 Rebekah:	was late to everything
5/8/2017 23:47 Rebekah:	Would you like to see what I still have on?
5/8/2017 23:47 Garrett:	If you left now we could make it back to tally this time tomorrow ;)

Garrett told me he was going to drive back from his home in Englewood to come see me, which I was excited about. We made plans to get together and have sex when he arrived the night before I was supposed to leave for vacation. I thought about all the ways I'd fuck him, and let him fuck me. I thought about how easy it would be not to sleep that night – just stay up with him at his place, sweaty and wet. I told him the thought of it made me want to touch myself. So he called me and told me how to move

my hands while he masturbated to my moans. When he finished, he told me he wanted me to feel him ejaculate inside of me. I told him he could, but he needed to make sure he brought lots of condoms so he could do it over and over.

I tried to assert early that any sex between us would be protected. He just moaned in a "you tease" sort of way, and said he was taking a nap before hitting the road. He said he couldn't wait to touch me, to go down on me, to be inside of me. And I was throbbing with desire in my impatience.

I was leaving for vacation the day after, so if we were going to spend the night together, he'd have to leave the next morning, at this point just hours later. I was staying in a four-bedroom condo with my entire family – mom, sisters, etc – for four days, and this would likely be my last beach trip for some time, since I was scheduled for surgery on May 19.

I was looking forward to seeing my family, for the time at the beach with my son, for four days in the sun before my body was cut open and my top rib bone sawed off. I was scared about what the scars would look like. I thought all the work I had put into getting in shape after having my son would be pointless if I was covered in grotesque scars.

But the pain of my condition was constant. It hurt every second of every day. And the surgeon said if I didn't remove the top rib bone, I could lose my entire left arm. I think the fear of being changed by the surgery, or of something going wrong while I was under, made me act out more than I would have if I was just getting a divorce, just moving out on my own, just looking for some fun.

DRAFT

	I really just want to rip your fucking shorts off right now and kiss and lick every part of that amazing body... feel your hands in my hair as i go
5/9/2017 0:00 Rebekah:	down on you.. You moaning as i keep going..
5/9/2017 0:01 Garrett:	I've always had the notion that you give absolutely incredible head
	I bet you're an amazing kisser... I wish i could feel your tongue in my
5/9/2017 0:02 Rebekah:	mouth right now.. on my neck. .. everywhere else
5/9/2017 0:08 Garrett:	I want to be there so bad
5/9/2017 0:08 Garrett:	Kissing your chest with my hand in your pants
5/9/2017 0:17 Garrett:	You live in the coolest house
5/9/2017 0:18 Rebekah:	Fuck the house
5/9/2017 0:18 Rebekah:	You are killing me
5/9/2017 0:18 Garrett:	Have you ever touched yourself to the thought of me
5/9/2017 0:19 Rebekah:	Other than last night and right now.
Maybe
5/9/2017 0:19 Garrett:	What goes through your mind
5/9/2017 0:20 Rebekah:	Do you want me to
5/9/2017 0:20 Garrett:	Yes
	I think about how you'd taste.. how warm you'd feel pressed you
	against. How strong your arms would push on my leg when i wrap it
5/9/2017 0:22 Rebekah:	around your waist
5/9/2017 0:22 Garrett:	Tell me what you think about
	How you'd keep kissing me as you fuck me harder, slamming me into
5/9/2017 0:23 Rebekah:	the ground.. wanting to go harder..
5/9/2017 0:23 Rebekah:	Trying not to scream.
	I think about going as deep as I can in you. Squeezing me with
5/9/2017 0:24 Garrett:	everything you have
	Looking into your eyes.. You smiling because you fucking love it so
	much.. me smiling back as i start to tighten on you.. lifting my hips off
5/9/2017 0:25 Rebekah:	the ground each time you go in
	Making you want to cum. But you won't give in that easily. So you pin
	me back down, slow down... still hard, but making me feel you longer..
5/9/2017 0:26 Rebekah:	Making me get so close
5/9/2017 0:27 Rebekah:	Fuck.
5/9/2017 0:29 Garrett:	That's exactly the face I'd see when I'm absolutely giving it to you
5/9/2017 0:29 Garrett:	Are you laying on the floor imaging me fucking the lights out of you?
	I don't want to let you win. I want to keep going.. but I'm so wet.. you're
5/9/2017 0:29 Rebekah:	so fucking good.. i can feel every part of my body..
5/9/2017 0:29 Rebekah:	Maybe
	You can feel me getting close.. You think you've won. So just as I'm
	there, i wrap both of my legs around you so tightly you almost lose your
	breath.. i can feel you there with me.. my back arches, i start to get
	loud, and it gets you even closer.. i bite your ear one more time before i
5/9/2017 0:32 Rebekah:	scream.. I'm gripping onto you, you want it so bad,

	You moan, you can't help it. You want to be deeper in me as you cum,
5/9/2017 0:34 Rebekah:	both of us throbbing in pleasure, hot and wet
	Even after i still moan because i can still feel you echoing across my
5/9/2017 0:35 Rebekah:	body. You kiss my neck and let me enjoy it
5/9/2017 0:35 Rebekah:	Until finally I'm out of breath
5/9/2017 0:36 Rebekah:	Fuck. I'm so wet right now
5/9/2017 0:36 Garrett:	God I want you so bad
5/9/2017 0:37 Garrett:	You have no idea what that does to me
5/9/2017 0:37 Garrett:	Omfg
5/9/2017 0:37 Rebekah:	Yeah i think i do
5/9/2017 0:38 Rebekah:	I really fucking hope this just a tease
5/9/2017 0:38 Rebekah:	Isn't
5/9/2017 0:38 Rebekah:	Fuck i can't type like this
5/9/2017 0:38 Garrett:	Oh
5/9/2017 0:38 Garrett:	I was like whhh
5/9/2017 0:38 Rebekah:	Show me
5/9/2017 0:39 Garrett:	Show what
5/9/2017 0:39 Rebekah:	What it does to you
5/9/2017 0:40 Rebekah:	I really want to fuck you
5/9/2017 0:40 Rebekah:	I can't remember the last time i wanted to fuck someone so badly
5/9/2017 0:41 Garrett:	I need to show you in person
5/9/2017 0:41 Garrett:	Like you said
5/9/2017 0:41 Rebekah:	Add in how long it's been for me and i can hardly handle it
5/9/2017 0:42 Garrett:	You can't eat the desert first, itll spoil the real dinner
5/9/2017 0:42 Rebekah:	I got to see you two or three times a week for five months
5/9/2017 0:43 Rebekah:	And right now seeing you again seems impossible
5/9/2017 0:43 Garrett:	You knew my name on like the first day, I remember thinking how different that was
5/9/2017 0:44 Garrett:	It's not impossible
	Yeah. Despite all my damn rules the minute you walked in my class, i
5/9/2017 0:45 Rebekah:	thought damn. This kid is trouble
5/9/2017 0:46 Rebekah:	It took every bit of restraint i had that one day
5/9/2017 0:47 Rebekah:	I kind of awkwardly cut the meeting short...
5/9/2017 0:47 Garrett:	I was so pissed there was someone in your office this past time
5/9/2017 0:47 Garrett:	I remember thinking that omg
5/9/2017 0:48 Garrett:	Though that girl that was in there is incredibly nice
	i was trying to get you to realise how terrible your assignment 3 was... i ended up letting you redo it because i wanted to kiss you so badly i felt
5/9/2017 0:48 Rebekah:	guilty
5/9/2017 0:49 Rebekah:	I told you not to come until i knew someone else would be there
5/9/2017 0:50 Garrett:	that's fuckin it really
	And I'm glad because when you came in i was sure i couldn't have made it through anther 5 minutes alone with you without this agonizing
5/9/2017 0:50 Rebekah:	temptation
5/9/2017 0:51 Garrett:	I handed my exam in tried not to make eye contact
5/9/2017 0:51 Rebekah:	I know. I did too

	I had no idea how'd you'd react.. i didn't want to cross the line.. i can't be your professor and just fucking grab you and pull you close to me like
5/9/2017 0:52 Rebekah:	i wanted
	The first time as a group we met with you we ended up talking about
5/9/2017 0:53 Garrett:	sex somehow and from then on I couldn't get it out of my head
5/9/2017 0:53 Garrett:	I was hard in there thinking about it.
	100% understandable. I didn't want to get slapped into another
5/9/2017 0:54 Garrett:	dimension
	I wanted john to leave that day we worked on your project. You were
5/9/2017 0:54 Rebekah:	sitting on the chair across from me, i was in the couch
5/9/2017 0:54 Rebekah:	I Would never slap a student
5/9/2017 0:55 Rebekah:	I thought you were waiting him out
	I know I was looking at you the whole time. I was wondering if you were
5/9/2017 0:55 Garrett:	doing it on purpose
5/9/2017 0:55 Garrett:	Honestly was
	I thought ok maybe he's into this, because you stopped doing work a
5/9/2017 0:55 Rebekah:	while earlier
5/9/2017 0:56 Rebekah:	When you left i thought, ok, this is in my head and i need to stop
5/9/2017 0:57 Garrett:	Other people from other groups had begun making their way in
5/9/2017 0:57 Garrett:	My window had closed
5/9/2017 0:57 Rebekah:	Maybe forever :(
5/9/2017 0:57 Garrett:	No that wasn't even a real window
	It's so much better that this happened after, i feel as if it would have put
5/9/2017 0:59 Garrett:	you in a very difficult situation
	When you turned in your final i kind of just said thanks or something
5/9/2017 0:59 Rebekah:	senseless, too afraid to look up at you. But i couldn't help but smile
5/9/2017 0:59 Rebekah:	Ha nothing's happened really
5/9/2017 0:59 Garrett:	You said have a good summer. I don't think I replied
5/9/2017 1:00 Rebekah:	Did you keep texting me to feel me out.. see if i was into it
5/9/2017 1:00 Rebekah:	I had to ignore you. I knew I'd get myself in trouble otherwise
	Yeah I tried, but that was the mixed signals I was talking about. I thought
	all this was in my head and you were just toying with me without even
5/9/2017 1:01 Garrett:	knowing it
5/9/2017 1:01 Rebekah:	God that last picture you sent.. ahahha.. I'm dying
5/9/2017 1:02 Rebekah:	You do this with all your professors?
5/9/2017 1:02 Rebekah:	I don't really seem like your type ha
	No, 99% of professors dislike me it seems. Especially the girls. I was
5/9/2017 1:04 Garrett:	expecting the same with you honestly until you knew my name
5/9/2017 1:04 Garrett:	it's Garrett right?
5/9/2017 1:04 Rebekah:	That was the signal? Lol
	Not a signal just thought that finally here's a professor who's not
5/9/2017 1:06 Garrett:	judgmental or subjective
5/9/2017 1:06 Rebekah:	Haha sorry. Guess i failed you on that one

	If it helps, yeah, i thought you were really attractive right away, but i didn't treat you any differently because of it.. Maybe i asked you to come to my office more often than others.. But it really wasn't until the end of the semester when i stated being around you more until i really
5/9/2017 1:10 Rebekah:	thought about you differently
	Sometimes you would put my name in power points jokingly. I would think that you probably made the PP at home sometime or maybe in her office, all the while I was on your mind enough to put my name on a
5/9/2017 1:10 Garrett:	slide
5/9/2017 1:10 Rebekah:	Plus, i was never sure if you were even into it
5/9/2017 1:11 Rebekah:	Well you were asking for it ha
	Did you intentionally write your name on the wrong side so I'd
5/9/2017 1:11 Rebekah:	remember it?
5/9/2017 1:12 Rebekah:	Cause you did that like five times
	No that was all habit. Once you brought it to my attention, I continued
5/9/2017 1:12 Garrett:	to do it
	Thought crossed my mind once or twice... i never let it go beyond that
5/9/2017 1:12 Rebekah:	until that day in my office
	Sometimes I'd stare at your eyes to see how long it'd take you to notice
5/9/2017 1:13 Garrett:	and look at me
5/9/2017 1:14 Garrett:	It's was never very long at all
	I had like this whole lecture to come down on you hard for how bad it was... and honestly it was terrible.. You got there and i just kinda forgot
5/9/2017 1:14 Rebekah:	what i was doing
5/9/2017 1:14 Rebekah:	Well.. you have very endearing eyes ha
	Yeah you had me read my own paper aloud. As I was doing that I
5/9/2017 1:16 Garrett:	remember I could feel you starring
	Yeah.. i was like, ok that's enough, you know it's bad, go do it again
5/9/2017 1:17 Rebekah:	cause hot damn i need a cold shower
5/9/2017 1:18 Rebekah:	Your smile is fucking infectious
	So every week when you came to class.. were you ever interested in
5/9/2017 1:19 Rebekah:	what i was teaching? Cause you only missed one all semester
	Yes, my favorite class was probably the day you explained all of your
5/9/2017 1:22 Garrett:	field research with burial mounds locations in Louisiana and the conflict
5/9/2017 1:22 Rebekah:	Oh wow. You listened ha
5/9/2017 1:22 Garrett:	I found that incredibly interesting
5/9/2017 1:23 Rebekah:	So do i, ha
5/9/2017 1:24 Rebekah:	I gotta say.... This has been the hottest, er, interlude I've had in a while
	So even though this is highly unlikely to go anywhere, i gotta say damn
5/9/2017 1:24 Rebekah:	and thanks
5/9/2017 1:25 Rebekah:	Cause god knows i needed it.. and you are just too fucking sexy ha
5/9/2017 1:26 Rebekah:	You asked earlier if i ever thought of you..
5/9/2017 1:26 Rebekah:	What about you?

5/9/2017 1:28 Garrett:	Like I said earlier. When you described you fucking for 6 hours in one of the first weeks it was all I could think about when I saw you
5/9/2017 1:28 Garrett:	Not in a weird way. I guess I projected myself into a similar situation with you
5/9/2017 1:29 Rebekah:	That was like mid semester ha
5/9/2017 1:29 Garrett:	No it was before the first project
5/9/2017 1:29 Rebekah:	Really? Hm
5/9/2017 1:30 Garrett:	I had always thought about it from day 1, but after you said that it painted the picture
5/9/2017 1:31 Rebekah:	How long has it been for you. Or are you bringing home a be piece of ass every weekend over there?
5/9/2017 1:32 Garrett:	What you sound like, how you move, what's her favorite position, what would she do I kissed her
5/9/2017 1:33 Rebekah:	Maybe you'll find out;)
5/9/2017 1:34 Garrett:	I had a girlfriend last year for a while but it didn't end well like most things like that so I haven't been up to anything besides interning once I moved off campus
5/9/2017 1:34 Rebekah:	We've been sexting for like three hours and I've been drinking this entire time ha
5/9/2017 1:35 Rebekah:	So you've been celibate for an entire semester?
5/9/2017 1:35 Garrett:	I stopped like like 45 ago to eat and I cut my foot on a piece of glass on the floor so I sobered up a tiny bit
5/9/2017 1:36 Garrett:	No
5/9/2017 1:36 Garrett:	Tara and I had a thing
5/9/2017 1:36 Garrett:	Jk
5/9/2017 1:36 Garrett:	Tara hated me
5/9/2017 1:36 Rebekah:	Well yeah, there have been breaks but for some reason I'm always turned on when i talk to you
5/9/2017 1:37 Rebekah:	I was actually kinda hoping
5/9/2017 1:37 Rebekah:	Do you fuck a lot of people, Garrett?
5/9/2017 1:38 Rebekah:	I don't judge
5/9/2017 1:40 Garrett:	Nah I don't talk to girls that much. When I was a freshman I went a little girl crazy but I mean nothing compared to the stories you would hear about the frat parties. I havent been on an actual date in months.
5/9/2017 1:40 Rebekah:	Aww
5/9/2017 1:40 Garrett:	Idk to be completely honest I don't get along with most girls. I know that sounds weird or fucked up but it's true
5/9/2017 1:40 Rebekah:	Ha so why am i different
5/9/2017 1:41 Rebekah:	Grown ass women don't play games, maybe that's it
5/9/2017 1:41 Garrett:	You don't piss me off
5/9/2017 1:41 Rebekah:	Ha
5/9/2017 1:41 Garrett:	Yes
5/9/2017 1:42 Rebekah:	So i take it every girl you've ever been with was your age +/- a year or two?
5/9/2017 1:42 Garrett:	I was always taught to just say it how it is but this generation really does not like that

5/9/2017 1:44	Garrett:	Yeah I guess
		Aw. I bet for all your hard talk you're actually really attentive and sweet
5/9/2017 1:46	Rebekah:	in bed
5/9/2017 1:46	Rebekah:	I wish you'd get here tomorrow.
		Oh so know you think I'm softy who'll just roll over and accept
5/9/2017 1:47	Garrett:	submission?
		Assuming you get back Wednesday and wanna meet up, what do you
		want to do? Go out, have some fun, feel it out.. or just hit it up at your
5/9/2017 1:48	Rebekah:	place and hang out?
5/9/2017 1:48	Rebekah:	I didn't say submission... and i certainly hope not soft ha
5/9/2017 1:49	Garrett:	We definitely gotta go out a little right
5/9/2017 1:49	Garrett:	My room isn't that cool
5/9/2017 1:49	Rebekah:	I honesty dont care
5/9/2017 1:49	Rebekah:	Yeah i wouldn't be going to your place to check out the interior design
5/9/2017 1:50	Rebekah:	You actually seem cool.. like, gasp, someone I'd like to hang out with
		I have a very expensive bottle of mead imported from Norway that i was
5/9/2017 1:51	Rebekah:	planning I drinking after i finished grading
5/9/2017 1:52	Rebekah:	But i decided to save it
5/9/2017 1:52	Rebekah:	20% alc
5/9/2017 1:53	Rebekah:	Great for.. talking?
5/9/2017 1:53	Garrett:	What are you savoy for
5/9/2017 1:53	Garrett:	Saving it for*
5/9/2017 1:54	Garrett:	And yeah you're pretty slick yourself
5/9/2017 1:54	Garrett:	Interior design is great though. I can hang some mean drapes

I woke up the next morning to see some of Garrett's photos he had sent before I woke up. He was naked, hard, and touching himself.

5/9/2017 9:22	Rebekah:	Wow
5/9/2017 9:24	Garrett:	Showern w/o u
5/9/2017 9:24	Rebekah:	I can see that
		I guess i ought to return the favor... found a few from last night i never
5/9/2017 9:25	Rebekah:	sent..
5/9/2017 9:27	Rebekah:	One i took accidentally while reading what you wrote
5/9/2017 9:27	Garrett:	God I wish I was there in that couch
5/9/2017 9:28	Garrett:	Hot fucking damn
5/9/2017 9:32	Garrett:	The top one is one of my new favorites
5/9/2017 9:32	Garrett:	Raw emotion
5/9/2017 9:34	Rebekah:	I'm not sure which you got first but ok ha
5/9/2017 9:35	Rebekah:	I'm still in bed pretending like i could get sleep ha
5/9/2017 9:36	Rebekah:	My eyes are like black in the accidental one ha
		I'm pretty sure it's unhealthy to be aroused this much going on one hour
5/9/2017 9:40	Rebekah:	of sleep... aren't there medical warnings about that ha
		Gonna be honest.. this freaking trailer for this house is about exactly
5/9/2017 9:48	Rebekah:	how i was feeling last night
5/9/2017 9:48	Rebekah:	https://vimeo.com/215759124
5/9/2017 9:52	Garrett:	That movie looks extremely intense
5/9/2017 9:52	Garrett:	One of those girls looked just like ya
5/9/2017 9:52	Rebekah:	It's an actual movie trailer for a $100 million house ha
5/9/2017 9:52	Rebekah:	But, yeah...
5/9/2017 9:53	Garrett:	That house was pretty neat. Not my style though
		Why haven't you slept!?! I'll be honest after we finished on the phone I
5/9/2017 9:53	Garrett:	didn't last much longer
5/9/2017 9:53	Rebekah:	The house? No way. Everything else though..
5/9/2017 9:59	Rebekah:	Idk
5/9/2017 9:59	Garrett:	Of course everything else.
5/9/2017 10:00	Garrett:	That was hot

5/9/2017 10:00	Rebekah:	My extra as fuck shower
5/9/2017 10:01	Garrett:	Holy smokes you weren't kidding
5/9/2017 10:01	Garrett:	That's like the size of my room here omg that would be awesome
5/9/2017 10:02	Garrett:	Also whatever you're wearing there is incredibly sexy
5/9/2017 10:03	Rebekah:	I don't have to be anywhere for a few hours so.. I thought I'd play dress up ;)
5/9/2017 10:05	Rebekah:	I know you like blue.. ;)
5/9/2017 10:10	Rebekah:	Blue is good?
5/9/2017 10:11	Garrett:	that's how you look in the morning idk how I would get out of bed
5/9/2017 10:12	Garrett:	I reallly reallly like that outfit you just sent me
5/9/2017 10:12	Garrett:	I just want to slowly slip it off you
5/9/2017 10:13	Rebekah:	How about red...
5/9/2017 10:13	Rebekah:	Would you like to see red?
5/9/2017 10:13	Garrett:	How could I not like you in red
5/9/2017 10:13	Garrett:	Oh yeah
5/9/2017 10:15	Garrett:	Game over
5/9/2017 10:15	Garrett:	*passes out*
5/9/2017 10:15	Garrett:	Down for the count
5/9/2017 10:17	Rebekah:	Already? I was gonna try white next...
5/9/2017 10:18	Rebekah:	Too bad..
5/9/2017 10:18	Garrett:	No I'm back
5/9/2017 10:18	Garrett:	Came to my senses
5/9/2017 10:21	Rebekah:	You sure? I wouldn't want to harass you...
5/9/2017 10:21	Garrett:	Can't harass the willing
5/9/2017 10:28	Rebekah:	Should i lift it higher?
5/9/2017 10:28	Garrett:	Omg yes
5/9/2017 10:29	Garrett:	I just want to bury my face in your chest
5/9/2017 10:30	Garrett:	Soooooooooo cloooooose but soooooo far
5/9/2017 10:30	Rebekah:	Haha
5/9/2017 10:30	Garrett:	The sex appeal is incredible
5/9/2017 10:30	Garrett:	You're pullin of the Greek goddess look there

	It's a damn shame you're out of town... could be hanging out with me
5/9/2017 10:48 Rebekah:	on my back deck
5/9/2017 10:50 Rebekah:	I do look really tired though
5/9/2017 10:51 Garrett:	I love that outfit
5/9/2017 10:51 Garrett:	Perfectly simple
5/9/2017 10:52 Garrett:	I wanna fish in that lake so bad.....
5/9/2017 10:53 Garrett:	You keep giving me the fuck me eyes and it's driving me insane
5/9/2017 10:53 Garrett:	In a good way
5/9/2017 10:54 Rebekah:	Your fuck me eyes drive me a little crazy too
5/9/2017 10:57 Rebekah:	I don't get to see them as much though
5/9/2017 11:40 Garrett:	What are you doing today
5/9/2017 11:40 Rebekah:	Mostly busy work. Nothing exciting. You?
5/9/2017 11:44 Rebekah:	Well i should be doing busy work. I'm sketching instead ha
5/9/2017 12:03 Garrett:	Just cleaning some boats for some extra beer $
5/9/2017 12:20 Rebekah:	Ha. That can be fun if you get to spend the day outside
5/9/2017 12:22 Rebekah:	So when are you leaving tomorrow?
5/9/2017 12:22 Rebekah:	I'm going to need a break from texting for a while.. damn fingers are sore
5/9/2017 12:42 Rebekah:	Or are those plans not yet made, Garrett? ;)
5/9/2017 13:55 Garrett:	Tomorrow at 11!
5/9/2017 13:55 Garrett:	Claims the greaseball lee
5/9/2017 13:57 Rebekah:	You're leaving at 11? That'll put you back in Tallahassee exhausted at what, midnight?
5/9/2017 14:16 Rebekah:	I think you'll be too tired to stay up with me
5/9/2017 14:21 Rebekah:	So what do you wanna do?
5/9/2017 14:29 Garrett:	Hey sorry I've lost so many phones to the water that I don't bring them close anymore
5/9/2017 14:29 Garrett:	Well I can definitely sleep a lot during the drive
5/9/2017 14:30 Rebekah:	I could sleep right now.. so freaking exhausted..
5/9/2017 14:30 Garrett:	Have you not slept at all yet?
5/9/2017 14:36 Rebekah:	Nope
5/9/2017 14:36 Rebekah:	I think I'm going to try to get an hour now before i pick up my son from school
5/9/2017 14:37 Rebekah:	But i just can't get that damn image of you out of my head
5/9/2017 14:37 Garrett:	Do it
5/9/2017 14:37 Garrett:	Which one?
5/9/2017 14:38 Rebekah:	All of them.. especially from this morning.. and when you were biting your lip, looking straight at the camera
5/9/2017 15:56 Rebekah:	I think I'll go to bed at like 8 tonight ha. Soo tired, and i think i need to chill off this for a night
5/9/2017 15:56 Garrett:	Haha okay
5/9/2017 15:56 Garrett:	Did you sleep at all
5/9/2017 15:59 Rebekah:	Nope. Stirring, my body in this kind of shaking state.. starting between my legs and going everywhere else
5/9/2017 16:13 Garrett:	God you're driving me crazy
5/9/2017 16:13 Garrett:	I get so turned on thinking about it

5/9/2017 16:33 Rebekah: Plus.. I've been dehydrated for nearly three days now
5/9/2017 16:34 Rebekah: I've tried to just tell my body to stop it...
I feel like i did one of those days you were in my office.. my heart is
5/9/2017 16:42 Rebekah: racing.. i know I'm nearly gasping for breath
5/9/2017 16:51 Garrett: What kind of music we're on those playlists
5/9/2017 16:51 Garrett: Did you ever do anything to yourself those long nights in your office
5/9/2017 16:52 Garrett: I would have came at night if you called me in
That one day.. after i kind of kicked you out... i leaned back in my chair
all the way, almost tipping it over.. i remember saying oh my god, my
5/9/2017 16:54 Rebekah: hand on my breast, then my neck..
5/9/2017 17:43 Garrett: You shouldn't have kicked me out
5/9/2017 17:43 Garrett: I shouldn't have been so naive
5/9/2017 17:44 Garrett: oh maybe she's actually mad at me
5/9/2017 17:46 Rebekah: I was frustrated with you.. in more ways than one
I remember thinking.. even thinking about you like that was wrong.. and
how awful would that be if i hit on you and thought i was way out of line
5/9/2017 17:50 Rebekah: or had like.. sexually harassed you
I actually really beat myself up about one time when i was actually
5/9/2017 17:57 Rebekah: hitting on you and got like nothing back
I felt like an idiot.. here's the gorgeous and sweet kid, one of my
students no less, who's at least five years younger than me.. I'm
covered in scars and stretch marks and he probably fucks twigs without
5/9/2017 18:00 Rebekah: a blemish and I'm really stupid
5/9/2017 18:01 Rebekah: I think i avoided you out of shame for a few weeks
5/9/2017 18:02 Rebekah: That was actually mid terms week
5/9/2017 18:03 Rebekah: The week you missed class. Thought that was my fault
5/9/2017 18:10 Garrett: No I left to snowboard in NC with my roommates.
5/9/2017 18:10 Garrett: I do not recall that what the hell
5/9/2017 18:10 Garrett: When did you more than obviously hit on me
5/9/2017 18:13 Garrett: And that is so not true
5/9/2017 18:13 Garrett: You knew I was into you
It was the hazard map assignment.. i asked you after class how you were
doing with it and you said fine and i told you I'd be staying late that
5/9/2017 18:15 Rebekah: week if you needed any extra help
5/9/2017 18:15 Rebekah: Totally was eye fucking you
You said ok thanks and left, and then you were absent the next class
5/9/2017 18:16 Rebekah: and i was like faacckk
5/9/2017 18:17 Rebekah: I honestly couldn't tell until the last two weeks
5/9/2017 18:17 Rebekah: Even then i wasn't sure
I mean... you never actually said anything to me that would indicate you
5/9/2017 18:23 Rebekah: were..

	I think until i can be there with you and touch you ill always wonder if
5/9/2017 18:26 Rebekah:	this was an anxiety triggered fantasy ha
5/9/2017 18:26 Garrett:	I remember that now
	But I went snowboarding way early in the semester. So idk why I missed
5/9/2017 18:27 Garrett:	class but it wasn't for that reason
	Cmon I was texting you.... I've never texted a teacher or a professor in
5/9/2017 18:28 Garrett:	my life
5/9/2017 18:28 Garrett:	And you say that to literally everyone
	I mean.. i could see it being a mental invention.. from your voice to how
	unfairly sexy every picture of you is.. even how kinda awesome you are.
5/9/2017 18:29 Rebekah:	seems a little too prefect
	Did you immediately put my number in your phone knowing you'd use
5/9/2017 18:29 Rebekah:	it?
	Maybe I'm getting my weeks mixed up, but i definitely offered help
5/9/2017 18:30 Rebekah:	after hours once ha
5/9/2017 18:30 Garrett:	Yes after you looked directly into my eyes after you wrote it out
5/9/2017 18:31 Rebekah:	Yeah that was a little obvious...
	I tell everyone to email me to schedule a meeting. I told you I'd be there
5/9/2017 18:32 Rebekah:	late.. to help you.. didn't say that to anyone else
5/9/2017 18:32 Garrett:	You acted like it was the absolute worst thing ever that I texted you
5/9/2017 18:33 Rebekah:	I thought you were just fucking with me
5/9/2017 18:33 Garrett:	Well I mean it was just a way of me giving you my number
5/9/2017 18:34 Rebekah:	Uh huh. Even though i really couldn't do anything about it until Monday
	Is it weird that i just scrolled through all this pictures for the second time
5/9/2017 18:37 Rebekah:	today
5/9/2017 18:46 Rebekah:	I might be eating strawberries in an unexplained sexual manner ha
	In case i stop responding, I've probably fallen asleep or passed out from
5/9/2017 19:02 Rebekah:	exhaustion, or some mix of the two
5/9/2017 19:03 Rebekah:	Let me know if you actually make your back here ;)
5/9/2017 20:03 Garrett:	I just took a killer nap
5/9/2017 20:03 Garrett:	I've scrolled through the pictures at least 10 times...

On May 10, Garrett texted me in the morning to say he was leaving soon for Tallahassee. He would be there by the early afternoon, and we'd have most of the day and night to be together. I was worried my timeline was too small – I was supposed to leave the next day for the beach.

My husband was coming with us, which I wasn't thrilled about, but it meant I couldn't just disappear and show up late with no excuse. I was still living with my

husband – though in separate rooms with the only contact between us the yelling and screaming that I hated – so I wasn't about to tell him about Garrett.

Since we moved to Florida a year before, my husband and I became increasingly distant. We didn't have sex. We fought constantly – sometimes so viciously that I would just leave for hours. I worked late at night to avoid going home while I looked for an apartment. The place that was supposed to be safest to me – my home – was a battlefield, and I took great care to avoid stepping on the mines. Garrett would have been an atom bomb if my husband found out. So I kept it secret.

5/10/2017 10:46 Garrett:	Sorry I've been bitching at this kid all morning
5/10/2017 10:46 Rebekah:	Lol
5/10/2017 10:47 Rebekah:	I normally sleep ok... you've been on my mind a lot
5/10/2017 11:59 Garrett:	We're supposed to leave in like an hour
5/10/2017 12:00 Garrett:	Kids driving me nuts
5/10/2017 12:18 Rebekah:	See... knew it
5/10/2017 12:40 Garrett:	I know it's terrible
5/10/2017 12:43 Garrett:	What are you doing today
5/10/2017 12:43 Garrett:	Leaving soon
5/10/2017 12:49 Garrett:	Oh I just saw your earlier message. I'm asking for it
5/10/2017 12:51 Rebekah:	Idk... I think you might not actually make it... and as much as i enjoy being right... that would really suck
5/10/2017 12:52 Rebekah:	I really want to see you
5/10/2017 13:10 Rebekah:	I guess it doesn't matter... so here. From earlier. And i accidentally took one when i woke up at 12 and saw you weren't leaving for another hour...
5/10/2017 14:36 Garrett:	Hey I'm drivin me
5/10/2017 14:36 Garrett:	Driving first half* part of deal
5/10/2017 14:36 Garrett:	Omg.....
5/10/2017 14:36 Rebekah:	Ha so you're actually coming? Omg what?
5/10/2017 14:37 Garrett:	Yeah gonna be late sha
5/10/2017 14:37 Garrett:	Shattered phone
5/10/2017 14:38 Rebekah:	?
5/10/2017 14:38 Garrett:	Not good at texting n driving. Also towing his boat
5/10/2017 14:40 Rebekah:	Ok well don't wreck ha.
5/10/2017 17:12 Rebekah:	His turn to drive yet?
5/10/2017 17:23 Rebekah:	I have no concept of Florida geography or how far away you are
5/10/2017 18:58 Garrett:	Stuck in traffic around Miami
5/10/2017 18:58 Garrett:	We have to drop his boat off here
5/10/2017 18:58 Garrett:	Gah
5/10/2017 18:59 Rebekah:	Holy shit. I'm like.. already out.. there's no way..
5/10/2017 19:02 Rebekah:	That's 7 hours right?
5/10/2017 19:05 Rebekah:	I'm sorry, Garrett. This is such a mess and way too much trouble for you. I should have said something earlier or not at all..
5/10/2017 19:06 Garrett:	I was going to come home today or Friday
5/10/2017 19:07 Rebekah:	If you can go back, you probably should. I had sorta planned on crashing at your place, and i can't exactly go home, then leave at 3 am..

I waited, but Garrett didn't come. Later that night, after I had given up on him, he called and told me that he drove six hours back to Tallahassee in the middle of the night to see me. He said his phone broke on the drive over, and that's why he wasn't answering. He said he was exhausted from the drive – it was now about 4 a.m. – so he was going to sleep a while then I could come over. But he knew I had plans to leave that

day. I was so enthralled by our conversations that I even considered sending my husband and son to the condo without me, so that I could spend one night with Garrett then drive over and spend the rest of the time at the beach. He didn't answer his phone, and my husband seemed irritated by the suggestion we take two cars across the state. So I left. I wanted him, but I left.

I did not see him when he came back to Tallahassee, and a few hours onto the road to Pensacola, Garrett told me he had become sick, was throwing up blood and his roommate needed to take him to the hospital. I felt guilty, and said I would turn around and stay if he needed help, but he told me to go be with my family, so I did. I thought he was blowing me off that morning when he wasn't answering his phone, though he said he was sick and sleeping.

After I had left, he told me he was being hospitalized, and I thought about coming back to be with him because I felt like his being sick from driving through he night to see me was my fault. I didn't come back, though, and I think he resented me somewhat for it. Throwing up blood sounded like a ridiculous, over-the-top story for someone who was perfectly fine hours before, or anyone who doesn't have tuberculosis. I knew it was a lie, but I guess it was easier to believe he was sick than he simply changed his mind about hooking up once he got back.

A day into vacationing with my family, my husband went through my phone and found out about the affair. I use the word affair liberally to mean any sexual or intimate relationship lasting for any significant period of time, because my marriage was already over in my eyes. I was moving out, and my husband knew it. I wasn't cheating because I was getting divorced. I felt no guilt about wanting to be with Garrett because I started to believe I deserved to have fun after the year of hell between my husband and I.

Still, as angry as I was that he went through my phone, as violated as my privacy was by his snooping, as guiltless as I could be about the things I had said to Garrett – the phone sex, the plans, all of it – I still felt bad seeing my husband angry and hurt at finding out. I still loved my husband. I had always loved him. Loving him was never the issue.

My husband and I got into a fight about the relationship. He told me Garrett was just using me for sex and didn't care about me. *"Why would anyone want to be with you? Look at the way you threw yourself at him. You're a slut."* I told my husband he was an asshole. He looked at me and said, "maybe you'll just die in your surgery." He said this in front of our son, in front of my mother and sisters and their husbands.

That night was the first night in my entire life that I got so drunk that I blacked out.

DRAFT

Garrett claimed my husband called him and told him to stop calling me, or something of that nature. My husband said he has never contacted Garrett, then or any other time. I've poured over all of his texts and call logs, and there isn't one message or call to Garrett's number. I had called him a few times that night, apparently. Or maybe I didn't. I don't remember.

Garrett was, at this point, a brief fling that left me disappointed. It was easy to break off, and the risks were starting to outweigh whatever pleasure I could gain from the possible sex we might have one day. I asked Garrett to delete the texts and pictures we had sent each other. He said he kept looking at the ones I sent, touching himself every time. I got upset with him, and asked him if the last several days were a joke and if he was planning on sharing those messages. I was embarrassed, told him that he had his fun and that he should leave me alone. I told him he was a jerk for using me, letting my husband get in my head, and he responded:

> *"I didn't want to trick you or do any of that. I drove home yesterday to see you! I tried as hard as I could to get home yesterday to see you but it just didn't work out. I didn't do this on purpose, it wasn't intentional. I thought maybe I could see you when you get back from your vacation. I wouldn't ever do anything to get you into trouble. I keep to myself like I said. You don't ever have to worry about something like that. I'm your friend. I like you. A lot."*

I told him the short fling with him was a mistake, that it was inappropriate of me, and that I was sorry for engaging in a relationship with him.

He responded, "You know what really would have been a fuck up? If something happened in your office during the semester. If I made a move. If I came when you were staying late. Imagine those implications you did nothing wrong."

Even his assurances felt like come-ons, as if he wanted to tell me all the ways he could have made life hard for me, all the ways he would have had me. I told him I knew he blew me off that morning. We could have been together before I left, but he missed his chance. I couldn't just take off whenever I wanted to be with him – it had to be planned, like it was before. It couldn't happen again – there just wasn't time.

Once I stopped texting him as frequently, Garrett informed me he had gone to an urgent facility, saying, "I was looking in the mirror when I woke up and blood just started poring from my nose. I drove up here to see you, I wouldn't blow you off for no reason or intentionally ignore you."

Blood.

I've tried to come up with a literary analogy for what blood symbolized between us, but I haven't quite found the right one.

DRAFT

I don't think this story is true, given all the other times he has lied to me, told me he was bleeding, someone else was bleeding, he was throwing up blood, etc. This was the first time, but it would happen at least six more times over the next five months. I think he made this up to get sympathy from me since I was saying I wanted to end our brief infatuation.

5/11/2017 16:19 Garrett:	I went to the urgent care center today
	I was looking in the mirror when I woke up and blood just started poring from my nose. I drove up here to see you. I wouldn't blow you off for no
5/11/2017 16:20 Garrett:	reason or intentionally ignore you
5/11/2017 16:22 Rebekah:	Are you ok
5/11/2017 16:23 Garrett:	I'm prescribed lidocaine
	I would have helped you.. it's not like you'd say you i don't feel good and
5/11/2017 16:23 Rebekah:	id just day i don't care let's fuck
	Yeah they said it was due to high stress and staying up for conitued
5/11/2017 16:24 Garrett:	hours which is dosent make any sense.
5/11/2017 16:24 Garrett:	I know, my instinct was to just grab my roommate
	Maybe staying up until 5 am and being turned on So many hours in the
5/11/2017 16:26 Rebekah:	day..
I really haven't slept since Monday and today was the first time i
5/11/2017 16:29 Rebekah:	actually cried in.. a long time
	Maybe a continued elevated heart rate just pushed everything I've been
5/11/2017 16:31 Rebekah:	not dealing with to the edge.. or made you sick
5/11/2017 16:32 Garrett:	Idk but I don't hate you for anything
	I feel like you're either lying to me about being sick and blowing me off, or I'm awful for just leaving you if you are really that sick from driving in
5/11/2017 17:07 Rebekah:	the middle of the night to see me.
5/11/2017 17:08 Garrett:	I'm not a monster
5/11/2017 17:09 Rebekah:	Oh i know you're not
	I am really sorry that you're sick. That really sucks and i hope you don't
5/11/2017 20:08 Rebekah:	feel like that for much longer
5/11/2017 20:09 Garrett:	I'm back at the urgent care
5/11/2017 20:10 Garrett:	Coughed up blood about 30 minutes ago
5/11/2017 20:10 Rebekah:	Jesus. What's going on?
5/11/2017 20:10 Rebekah:	Is the friend you drove over with sick?

Our conversations continued throughout the next few days. We talked about politics, religion, growing up. At one point, Garrett began talking about his mother,

who he had told me several days before he had been estranged from for some time. I later found out, through Garrett's own admission, that the entire story was a fabrication.

On May 12, Garrett told me his mother and grandmother were both schizophrenic. He made up a very elaborate story, and I still don't know why. I never really believed this story – Garrett had told me just three days prior that his mother was an addict, and before that he told me that she was a teacher. I again thought this was just an attempt for attention. I thought it was harmless, but it shows a pattern of making up elaborate lies and stories for attention that would continue throughout our relationship.

DRAFT

5/12/2017 13:59 Rebekah: Really? We grew up in two very different Americas then ha
5/12/2017 14:00 Rebekah: Shitttttt... just limited my place of origin to the usa
I just never grew up around it. My mother had me baptized or whatever but when I lived with my dad in the keys it's just not a thing down there.
5/12/2017 14:00 Garrett: Never thought about it ever really
5/12/2017 14:00 Garrett: Yes
5/12/2017 14:00 Rebekah: You might end up figuring out where I'm from after all ha
5/12/2017 14:01 Rebekah: Why haven't you seen your mom in so long?
5/12/2017 14:01 Garrett: You're faired skin you can't be from the south
5/12/2017 14:01 Garrett: Actually that's false. I know alotta red heads down there
Well I'm almost pure Viking blood so ill always be pale ha. My mom's
5/12/2017 14:02 Rebekah: not the same complexion as me though
5/12/2017 14:02 Rebekah: She's darker.
5/12/2017 14:05 Rebekah: It's ok if you don't want to talk about it
My mom was environmental scientist focusing primarily on coral reef restoration with Mote Marine for a very long time. But her mom, my grandma had severe schizophrenia. My mom started to develop a very mild case when I was born. So mild that it's almost just like extreme anxiety. She became dependent on the medication it changed who she is. They try to take her off it but at the same time she cannot function properly without and when she's on it it affects her short term and day memory. I haven't seen her after the day she thought I wasn't really me.
5/12/2017 14:11 Garrett:
I don't mean to drop that on you. But you told me personal stuff as well.
5/12/2017 14:11 Garrett: I really haven't told really anyone the complete story
5/12/2017 14:12 Garrett: I could go on and on but it's too long for a text
5/12/2017 14:12 Rebekah: I'm so sorry Garrett
Yeah and I know that shit is hereditary as fuck so my sister and I walking around
5/12/2017 14:15 Garrett:
5/12/2017 14:15 Garrett: I don't want to have kids because of it
5/12/2017 14:16 Rebekah: Just because it's hereditary doesn't mean you'll have it
I am in absolutely no place to say anything about this, I know. I can't
5/12/2017 14:18 Rebekah: even imagine how painful that was/ is for you
I mean we've done the prenet squares and all the research. One of us has it and we're ready for it.
5/12/2017 14:18 Garrett:
5/12/2017 14:18 Garrett: It's okay It's nothing new
5/12/2017 14:19 Rebekah: One of you? As in odds, or you already know who?
5/12/2017 14:20 Garrett: As in odds...I'm sure it's already embedded in one of our brains
5/12/2017 14:20 Rebekah: It may not be new, but that doesn't mean it's ok
5/12/2017 14:20 Rebekah: Maybe not

Garrett seemed somewhat unstable, telling me stories I knew in my gut were not true. I was starting to convince myself that my husband was right and that Garrett didn't care about me. It had only been a week since this all started with him, after all, even if it was intense. I had been stupid and sent him pictures that he could have easily

put online. His stories became more insane, but more detailed and nuanced as he went on.

I didn't trust him, but I didn't want to accuse him of lying. He might have been telling the truth for all I knew. I started questioning whether or not I could trust him. I was concerned he was going to tell my supervisors about our relationship, because at the time I was not sure whether I had broken any rules.

Things started to die down by May 13. And by die-down I mean that we weren't sending each other hundreds of messages a day - more like a few dozen. I apologized via Facebook on May 14 for what I said was "acting crazy," and told him we shouldn't text anymore in case my husband went through my messages, so Garrett added me as a friend on Facebook on May 16.

Most of our communication from May 15 until August happened via Facebook messenger, except a few calls here and there. We continued talking occasionally for the next few weeks on messenger, not as serious as before. It seemed to have fizzled out on its own.

I had my surgery May 19. My mother was staying with me to help with my son and around the house, since the recover from having a rib bone sawed off takes a hard toll on the body. I was on fentanyl, in and out of consciousness for most of the time

after. The day after I came home from the hospital, my husband told me he was moving to New York. He blamed me for everything he was unhappy with in his life. He was so vile that even my mother yelled back at him, before leaving for a few hours to get away from my house. I was pretty out of it so I just took it and didn't fight back.

On June 6, I decided I was ready to go out and do something. I needed to get out of the house. I had been on bed rest for weeks, with my husband yelling at me non stop. It hurt to get up, but I could move around without an arm sling now and thought the pain wouldn't be too bad if I spent the afternoon out.

I still wasn't able to drive, so my husband, son and I went to the park. It was hot. I didn't want to be there because, in private, my husband was nasty with me. I suggested we go to the mall and walk around - it's air conditioned, I said. Really I just wanted to be around other people.

We had just walked into the mall when I saw Garrett sitting on one of the couches in front of a store. I was surprised to see him there – on the first day I was out, no less. It felt like fate. I came up behind him and covered his eyes, and whispered "guess who" to him, before quickly taking my hands off. His eyes widened, he was as surprised to see me as I was to see him.

DRAFT

We sat there and talked for a few minutes – mostly about how our summers were going and Garrett's job at a summer camp. He told me he had given someone a ride there and was just waiting around. He kept looking behind him. I had told my husband to go ahead without me and was worried he'd come looking for me and find me with Garrett, so I said I had to go. I told him it was good to see him.

I saw him a few minutes later, and he was with another woman. We weren't talking as often as before, but we still spoke to each other like we were a thing, so I was surprised and hurt to see him out with someone else. I guess we never really made anything "official," so I had no right to feel jealous. I texted him and said, "damn, you move on fast." He told me she was just a friend.

We spoke infrequently over the next several weeks, flirting a bit but not as intensely as before. On June 21, Garrett and I were supposed to go out and celebrate the solstice - something I did every year, with lots of mead. I waited for him at Cascades Park, but he never showed.

Garrett messaged me via Facebook saying, "Honestly, after seeing you with your family at the mall it really did it for me. I'm not a home wrecker."

I called Garrett several times that night and the next night, until he told me to leave him alone. So I did. It had been a month and a half of head games. He was done

with me for now, either because I had become obnoxious, he had other playthings, or both. But he was done.

I was confused and hurt, and even spent several nights over the next six weeks with friends, staying over at their places, getting very drunk, crying about how I ruined things with him, calling myself a fuck-up for having him and squandering it. I said he was out of my league. I said he was the first person I felt like that with in a long time, and maybe screwing it up was a sign that my husband was right about Garrett, and that he was just using me. Or maybe that he was right about me, and that no one could want me.

DRAFT

Trouble

I thought things were over with Garrett after our conversation on June 21, and having just left my husband, I felt OK with the calmness of not being involved with someone. I had my own place, and was picking up the pieces of my soon-to-be post-marriage life with my son. I thought about messaging Garrett a few times, but I never did. I didn't want the distraction just as I was getting my life together.

After no contact since June, Garrett messaged me at 1:41 a.m. on August 2 via Facebook messenger. I didn't see the message until later, but figured he was drunk and it didn't mean anything.

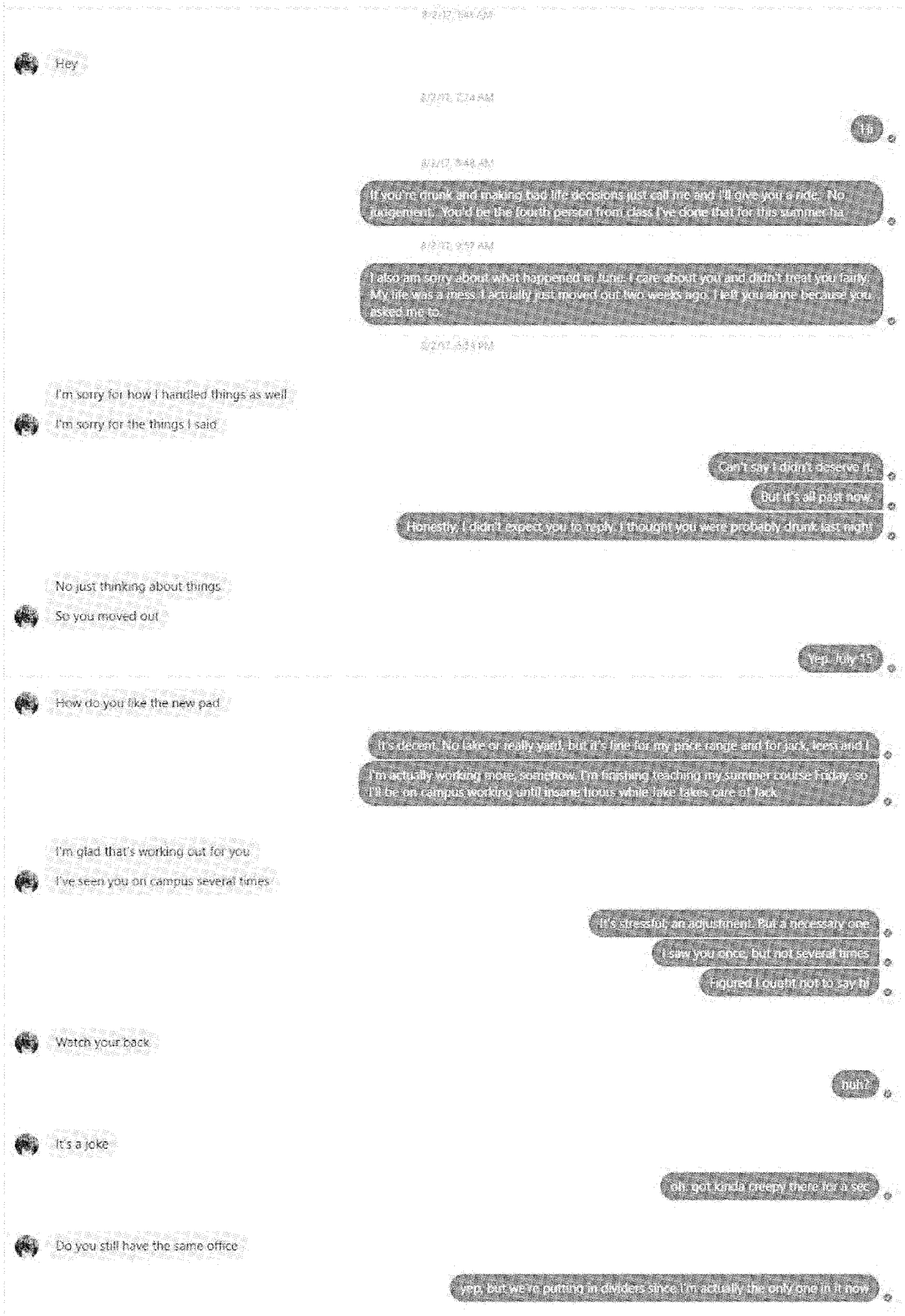
He started apologizing for things he had said earlier in the summer. He asked me if I had moved out yet, and I told him yes. He told me he had seen me several times on campus, and said "Watch your back." He said this was a joke, even though it was a bit creepy, then. asked if I still had the same office. He asked me if I still had sex dreams about him.

I hadn't heard from him in six weeks. Nothing. Not a word. Now, not 15 messages into our first conversation in over a month, he was starting it back up again. Why? How could he just turn it on and off like that?

I didn't play along this time. I still had feelings for him, but I didn't want to get led on again so I tried to brush it off. I tried to not be sexual with him, but he kept making moves. When he asked me if I still touched myself when I thought of him, completely out of nowhere, I actually told him I wasn't doing that with him again. He would just lead me on and I'd be disappointed and I didn't want to be played.

He tried to feel me out, see if I had been with anyone in the time we weren't speaking. "Surely you have some strapping young man in your class," he said. He was jealous. He was trying to see if he still had me, if I had waited for him. He said he might come to see me, I told him OK, I'd believe it when it happened. I didn't actually think he would, because he had stood me up so many times before, but I got dressed up anyways.

ROMER: IT WAS WARM THE DAY WE MET



That's a cool office

Lotta memories

Ha, yep. I remember your fondness for the office.

Honestly I'm just looking forward to getting rid of some of the desks and moving things around a bit.

Right now I just need to survive grading and the last two days of class. Gonna be another 18 hours I've been in the office several times in the last six weeks.

Do you still have crazy dreams about your office

Nah. Not anymore.

Was only really a thing I had thought about with you.

I'm sure you have to have some strapping young man in your class

Ha, yes, but I learned my lesson.

My office is kind of sad now. The thought of what never was...

I told you it wouldn't happen. 😉

Could still

Uh, I'm pretty sure not.

You hate me, remember?

Hmmm idk

Oh, don't tease.

I still think about it

A lot

Somehow I doubt that.

Alright

Otherwise you just would have walked in my office like "hey, how's it going?"

I haven't been on campus that much

Just a couple of times

And you just so happen to see me on those days?

When I said several I meant like twice

ROMER: IT WAS WARM THE DAY WE MET

Do you ever touch yourself in your office

Wow you went from 0-60 rapidly ha

I'm not doing the sexting thing again

Too much of a paper trail ha

Yeah

Me either

Just asking a question

You would have denied it if it weren't true

Oh really...

May b

Honest to god, the only person I've ever thought about like that in this office is you

And after what happened I made a conscience effort not to think about

even when... I maybe wanted to

Darn guess not

Did you sleep there last Night?

Nah, I went home around 1 am

Drove around for a bit

What are you up to?

About to go to the gym hbu

Making the final exam for my class tomorrow

campus gym?

No, because I'm not taking summer classes this semester I'd have to pay $$. Stupid

Ha ok

guess I won't get to see you lol

I'd be all sweaty

Besides, bad things would happen and another professor would come by

On August 3, he asked me, "What would you even do if I just randomly showed up," to which I said "I'd be pretty surprised." He responded, "And then probably tell me to leave." So he knew I was angry and hurt from the way things ended that night in June. I did not know it, but while texting me that, Garrett was on his way to my office. He showed up, without an invitation or notice. I had secretly hoped he would, but was still surprised he came. When I heard the knock on the door, I knew it was him, but all I could muster up when I opened it was "you came."

He never seemed to care about how he looked. He arrived in a pair of gym clothes and a dirty t-shirt. Honestly, he was usually pretty nasty. Yet he always looked so good to me. He came in, then locked the door behind him. I sat back down at my desk so he pulled up a chair next to me. I said I couldn't believe he was there. I was blushing. All of that build up, and here I finally was – alone with him.

I was mid-sentence when he tried to kiss me. I turned away and told him I couldn't do that. I was nervous. He had his hands on my waist, pulled my chair in to his so that I was sitting between his legs. He put his head next to mine, pushing against me. I wanted to kiss him. I felt all of that intensity rushing back. Something stopped me, though – an internal warning flag. I thought to myself, *why the games? Why is he here? Are we just picking this back up where we left off back in May? What does it mean if I kiss him?*

We talked for a while, mostly joking around and flirting on the couch in my office. The building was quiet during the summer – only a few people coming and going during the day. I wasn't too worried about being walked-in on, so I got comfortable with him, got closer to him, started to regret turning my head when he tried to kiss me earlier.

He had gotten his hair cut since the last time I saw him – his long, blonde curls were trimmed to mere waves – shorter on the sides than the top. It felt soft, like feathers, and I could see how touching him made him aroused. I ran my fingers through his hair, telling him he had that naturally messy hair that was perfect for sex. I could pull on it and it wouldn't look out of sorts. I tightened my grip on his hair, and he lunged forward to kiss me. This time, I let him.

My entire body lit up. He moved on top of me as I slid under him on the couch. I could feel how hard he was as he pressed against me. I kept my hands on his face as he kissed me hard, passionately. His tongue knew exactly how to move with mine. His lips were soft, just as I had imagined. His body was heavy on top of me as he moved. He was too tall for the couch, so I lifted my legs and locked my ankles on his back so he could bend his knees, slightly propped up while on top of me. My mind freed itself from thinking so that I could feel every touch as fully and deeply as humanly possible. I

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don't think I've ever been brought so close to orgasm just from kissing someone. It was goddamn euphoric.

We spent three hours that way – kissing each other, pressing against each other, our bodies urging us to take it farther, begging us to satisfy each other, to forego the suppositions and posturing, and relinquish control to one another.

I could feel how badly he wanted me. His thin gym shorts didn't do much to hide his desire – they were soaked through around his cock from the mere idea of being inside of me. I was on top of him now, both of us sitting on the couch, grinding into each other as he kissed me, bit my ears, licked my breasts. He pulled me close, his hands firm on my hips, and said, "let me inside of you."

I whimpered from how badly I wanted him. I asked him if he brought condoms. He said no. I asked if he was sure, because I wanted him then and there as badly as a person could desire another person. He told me he wanted me to feel it, that he wouldn't finish inside of me. Every cell in my body was pulled toward him like a magnet. My body ached for him, throbbed for him. I had not felt this feeling in years. I had not been wanted this badly for even longer than that.

Still, I knew better than to have unprotected sex. He had played games with me all summer, and now that he was here, now that I could see how badly he wanted me, I didn't worry about saying no at this moment. So I said no – no condom, no sex.

He begged me to just let him inside of me, "just a second" he said. He said he needed to feel inside of me, again promising not to finish before pulling out. I said I was on birth control so pulling out wasn't the problem – I was more concerned about how many people he'd slept with.

He said he was clean, still kissing me, still using his body to convince me – and his body was very, very convincing. He told me he had been waiting to be inside of me since we met that day in January. That he had imagined how I felt so many times over the last eight months when he touched himself. Just a minute, he said, just let me inside of you once.

I told him I couldn't. I wanted him, but I couldn't. I asked what he was doing that night, and he said nothing. We had already been together like this for nearly five hours by this point and I had a few hours left of work to do. I stood up, trying to assert my resoluteness.

I told him we should go to his place. We could go right now, get condoms on the way, and do whatever we wanted to each other in his bed.

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He said he was meeting a friend soon and couldn't do it now. He taunted me, saying on the walk to the car I'd probably change my mind.

I told him I'd come see him that night after I finished my work and he had time to get condoms after seeing his friend.

He followed me as I walked toward my desk and then pinned me against the door, touching me and kissing my neck.

I asked him what time, he said about nine. I asked him where, he said White Drive. I said ok – I'll see you at nine.

He tried once more to change my mind – pulling his pants down. Maybe he thought if I saw his hard cock, I'd fuck him then and there. I told him I would not look at it. He told me to close my eyes. I lowered myself to my knees and found him with my mouth. I heard his hand hit the wood of my door above me as he groaned with pleasure. His other hand found my hair and played with it as I played with him. I stopped, wanting him to leave with his desires peaked. I wanted him to count the seconds until we would be together. The look he gave me when I stood back up was equal parts craved and madness. It took another 15 minutes to get him out the door.

When I came over after work that night, I was early. I hurried to finish my work before 8 – an extra hour with him to savor tonight.

But when I got there, he seemed caught off-guard, and only let me into the area near the front of the door, like he was hiding me, or keeping me from seeing something or someone. I didn't think anything of it at the time, except that it was weird that he suddenly didn't want to fuck like animals the way he said he did just hours earlier. I protested, asking if he seriously wanted to wait after all that. I asked if he got the condoms. He rolled his eyes.

I moved towards him and stood on the tips of my toes to reach him. Kissing was harder when we weren't sitting or laying down because he was so tall.

He kissed me back, then pulled away and led me out the front door, where we kissed for a minute. He told me he couldn't do it tonight. He told me his roommate's girlfriend had slipped and cut herself on glass and there was "blood everywhere," and that we "couldn't do it here" tonight.

More blood.

He told me rain check, and we agreed that I would come over the same time the next night. But when I came over on August 4, Garrett was with friends, drunk and high. I knocked on the door, but I could hear it was loud inside so I tried to call him instead. I heard his phone ring, but he didn't answer. Then it got quiet inside.

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What the hell is this, I thought. Is he seriously pretending he's not here? He asked me to come over. What the fuck.

I yelled at him through his door, told him I knew he was there and he was being a dick. He came outside, he was angry. He told me I couldn't be there, so I left. I texted him later and told him that was a fucked up thing to do. If he didn't want me to come over, why did he ask me to? Why pretend he wasn't home and not answer his phone? Who does that?

I wasn't sure why the sudden change – from wanting to have sex without condoms in my office on a whim, to turning me away when I showed up later. Now I see that rejecting him in my office probably made him angry. He didn't get his way. He wanted me the way he wanted me – in my office, no condoms, when he came over – and was punishing me for not doing it the way he wanted. I was in no position to schedule sex with him, or for it to happen on my own terms. He wanted me to beg for it, and he'd only give it to me when he set the conditions. After the second time I showed up at his house, he ignored my calls and messages for about a week.

I was confused. We were hot and heavy at first, then we fizzled out over the summer. Then he decided to pick things back up after more than a month of nothing, begged me for sex, and now he was disappearing again. I hated the games. I didn't hear

much from him over the next two weeks, just a few sexting sessions and some photos, until August 15, when he picked up right where we left off again.

We began making plans to see each other, and began sending sexual messages – images and texts - to each other. That night, Garrett video called me while he was masturbating. I was not expecting the video call and was with my family when I received it. He wanted me to go upstairs, find privacy, and show him my body while I touched myself. I couldn't, I told him. He tried to video call me, but I rejected the call. I said it would be weird. But he only pushed harder – he wanted to see me, he wanted to masturbate while thinking of being inside of me. So I went upstairs. He made it seem like it was now or never.

Most of our relationship was at Garrett's will and whim – meaning, he would ignore me between periods of when he wanted to hook up, then after weeks of not talking, we always ended up getting back together. He would literally show up to my office uninvited and pull down his pants to try to seduce me. I told him this was not OK, but neither of us ever ended the relationship entirely.

I am only including these extremely graphic messages and photos because Garrett would later tell the University that our affair was mostly one-sided, that I initiated all of sexual contact and that he never really "got into it." He tried to say, throughout this entire time, that I was harassing him, that I was making unwanted and

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unanswered sexual solicitations. When I read his statement many months later, then re-read the messages below, I felt like either I was crazy, he was crazy, or he was just making things up to hurt me.

Didn't he know I had the messages? He must have deleted his. I did not delete mine. He would also claim we never talked about condoms, which we did, many times. I was pretty sure he never bought them after the first time, so I brought it up to see. If he wasn't going to get them, then I would, and I needed to make it clear to him that we wouldn't be having sex without one.

ROMER: IT WAS WARM THE DAY WE MET

I don't have any pictures of you with your sexy short haircut

I also have a question... sorry if this sounds weird but I've forgotten and I tested the elasticity of condoms before

Can you wear regular condoms or do you need like, plus size ones

Never tested*

When I fuck you im not wearing a rubber

You're going to feel every bit of it

You've got to. I like you, but I don't know your sexual history

I really wish I could see/ go down on your pussy

I get tested every year... stds are not something I want to deal with

And I dont want you to pull out when you cum... I want you to cum inside of me

Sorry but I won't do it

You can pretend like you'll be able to stop me

Why not?

that's not a safe lifestyle

I stopped you in my prime 😎

there needs to be an expression that's the equivalent of "I love you" but for how bad you want to fuck someone

Cause you're like fucking ecstasy to me

Show me your body

Lol I can't right now.. I'm with Jack

Show me yours 😏

I want your lips around my cock again

I wanna make you scream

If you had asked me to, and weren't in such a rush that day, I would have done things with my tongue while deep throating you that you didn't know could be done

Bullshit you were scared

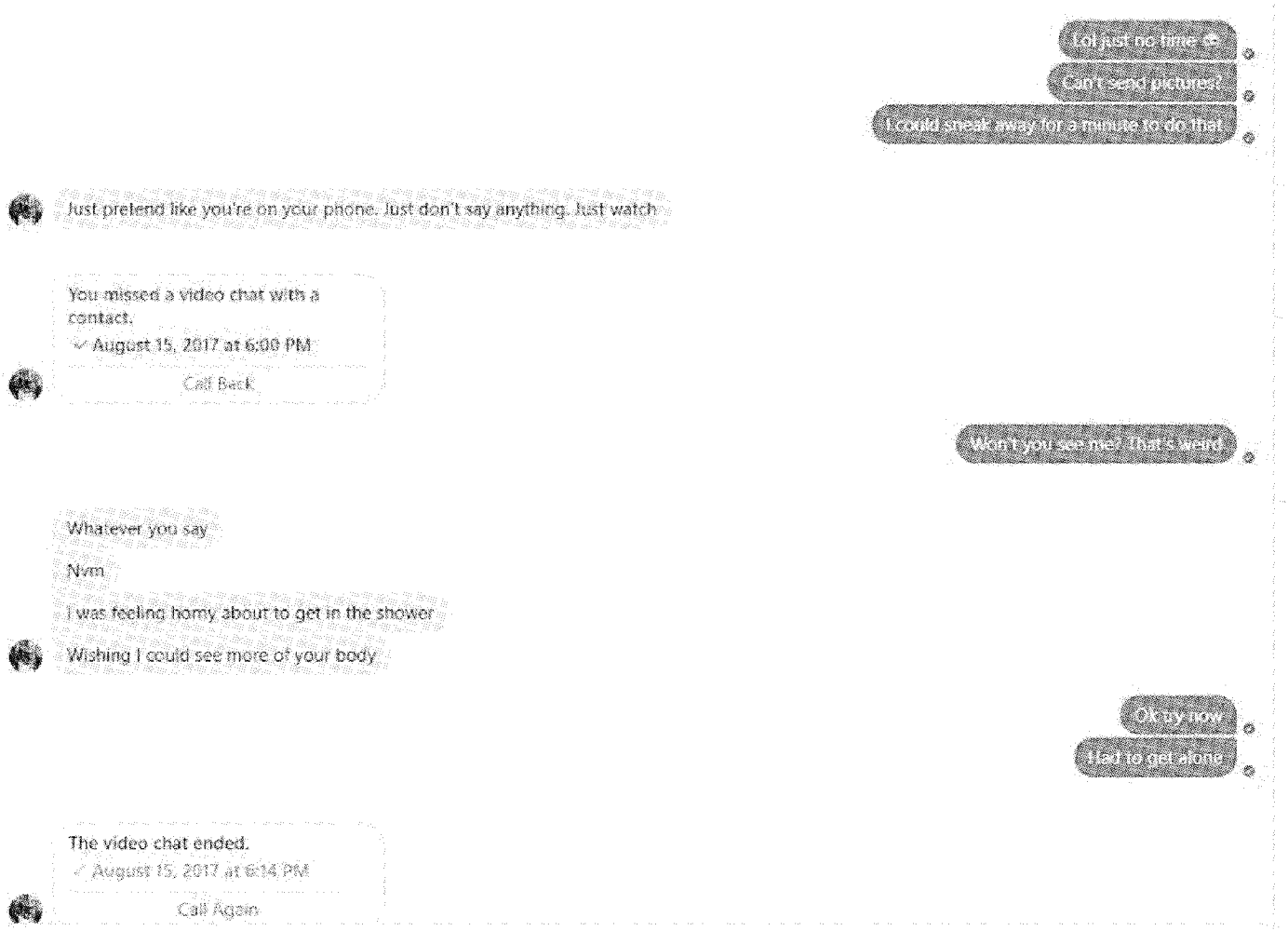
No way. I loved the way you tasted.. everywhere

I know for a fact I wasn't the one who stopped you from sucking me off

You said you wanted to go!

And I thought we had plans for later

I can show you my body..... on video call..... but you can't talk at all because there's people in other rooms



We continued this way, sharing sexual messages, videos, calls and images with each other over the next several weeks. We were on one day, and off the next. He told me I was an amazing kisser, and would go out of his to see me, then when I'd call him the next day, he'd answer and say, "for fuck's sake, leave me alone."

More head games.

The first text message I received from Garrett outside of Facebook messenger was on August 28, after Garrett and I had both shown up to the same cross-listed

geography course – one where grad students and senior undergrads were taught together.

I thought I had walked into the wrong class at first, and was surprised, but happy to see him. He looked pissed, put his things in his bag, and left. I was confused and followed after him, but he left the building so I just went back to my office.

Fuck this, I thought to myself.

I decided to drop the course and just take something else, even though it would have been an easy elective toward my degree instead of a harder course that would take up too much of my time.

I told him I would drop the course and he should stay enrolled because it was awkward. I was the older, more mature one and I felt obligated to step back. I was acutely aware that I was one step away from getting in trouble for seeing him. I had asked my advisor earlier in the summer if I was allowed to date a former student, and he told me that while it is not against the rules, it isn't advised, and to keep it quiet, if possible. Garrett didn't seem like the quiet type. He seemed like the explosive type, which I wouldn't know for sure until later that night.

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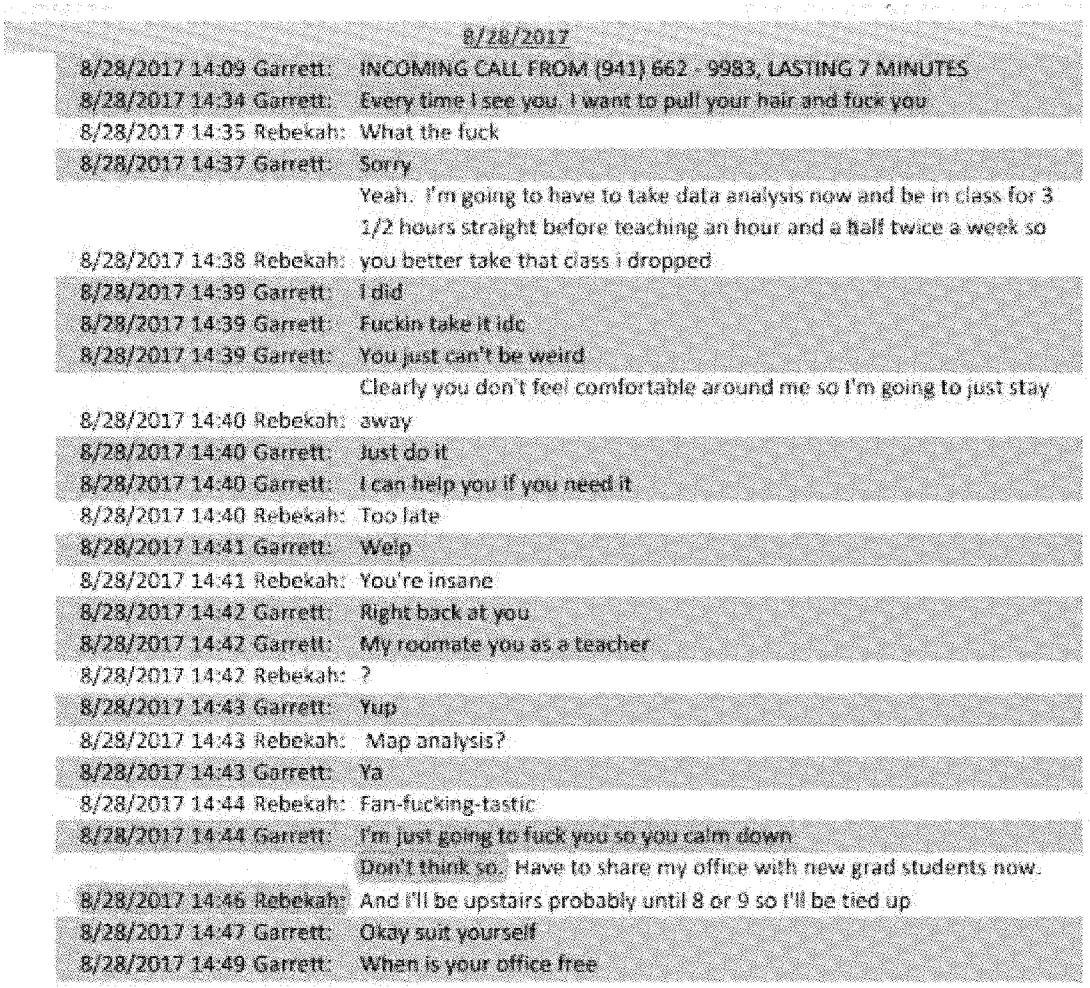
He called my cell phone over and over, yelling at me as if I had no business being in that class. I told him he was freaking out over nothing, then I hung up on him and sent him a screenshot showing I had dropped the class. He went from screaming at me, over and over and over again, non-stop, in a total fit of rage, to hanging up on me, then texting me how badly he wanted to fuck me every time he saw me 20 minutes later.



8/28/2017

8/28/2017 14:09 Garrett:	INCOMING CALL FROM (941) 662 - 9983, LASTING 7 MINUTES
8/28/2017 14:34 Garrett:	Every time I see you. I want to pull your hair and fuck you
8/28/2017 14:35 Rebekah:	What the fuck
8/28/2017 14:37 Garrett:	Sorry
	Yeah. I'm going to have to take data analysis now and be in class for 3 1/2 hours straight before teaching an hour and a half twice a week so
8/28/2017 14:38 Rebekah:	you better take that class i dropped
8/28/2017 14:39 Garrett:	I did
8/28/2017 14:39 Garrett:	Fuckin take it idc
8/28/2017 14:39 Garrett:	You just can't be weird
	Clearly you don't feel comfortable around me so I'm going to just stay
8/28/2017 14:40 Rebekah:	away
8/28/2017 14:40 Garrett:	Just do it
8/28/2017 14:40 Garrett:	I can help you if you need it
8/28/2017 14:40 Rebekah:	Too late
8/28/2017 14:41 Garrett:	Welp
8/28/2017 14:41 Rebekah:	You're insane
8/28/2017 14:42 Garrett:	Right back at you
8/28/2017 14:42 Garrett:	My roomate you as a teacher
8/28/2017 14:42 Rebekah:	?
8/28/2017 14:43 Garrett:	Yup
8/28/2017 14:43 Rebekah:	Map analysis?
8/28/2017 14:43 Garrett:	Ya
8/28/2017 14:44 Rebekah:	Fan-fucking-tastic
8/28/2017 14:44 Garrett:	I'm just going to fuck you so you calm down
	Don't think so. Have to share my office with new grad students now.
8/28/2017 14:46 Rebekah:	And I'll be upstairs probably until 8 or 9 so I'll be tied up
8/28/2017 14:47 Garrett:	Okay suit yourself
8/28/2017 14:49 Garrett:	When is your office free

He told me his roommate and best friend was going to take my class that semester. How did he find out about my class, I asked him. Was he a geography major?

No, Garrett said. He was looking for a good class to take so he told him to take mine. I had a feeling it was more than that. He kept asking me to take the class I dropped with him, that he'd help me study and catch up from what I missed the first day. I told him no, it wasn't a good idea.

Later that afternoon, Garrett came to my office angry with me for not re-enrolling in the class. I told him I felt stupid for behaving like a teenage girl with him, thinking only about sex and not caring about how he was treating me between bouts of intimacy. He came at me, kissed me, and started taking off my clothes. He nearly tore my leggings as he ripped them off of me. He pushed me onto the couch, asking if that was how I wanted it. He was rough, but I didn't stop him. He undid his pants, pushed me up higher on the couch so he could be on his knees. He wasn't kissing me this time. He wasn't being tender, slow, close to me like before.

He was already hard, and he spit onto his hand then wet himself before he grabbed my shoulder firmly to hold me in place. I wanted to stop, but he was ready. I could feel him on my skin, and knew I needed to wait. As he tried to push inside me, I asked him if he brought condoms. He looked angry, said he was going to fuck me deep and hard, and wanted me to feel it. I said we couldn't. I said I wanted him inside of me, that he could finish inside of me if he wore a condom, but I couldn't have sex without one. He was mad, but went to his wallet to get one.

DRAFT

I waited while he put it on, listening to my heavy breathing, my eyes closed as I asked myself – why now? Why like this? We had been fighting for hours. My body was aching, anticipating, nervous. I didn't look at him while he was putting it on. I had waited so long to be with him, and I thought if I rejected him now, I'd never get another chance. I don't know if he would have stopped even if I told him to.

When I felt him enter me, it had been so long since I had sex that it hurt. He pushed into me, too deep, too hard, the first few times. He remarked about how tight I was. This didn't feel like passion. It didn't feel like intimacy. It felt angry.

We started on the couch, then moved to the floor. The sex didn't last long – only about five minutes. Each time he went deeper, harder. I was biting my lip in pain, and he seemed unconcerned about whether I was enjoying it. He kept his eyes locked on mine the entire time. He usually looked at me in this warm, disarming way – like he knew me, wanted me, wanted me to feel something amazing with him. Now he looked at me like I was his – his to command, his to use, his to do whatever he wanted. He was enjoying my pain.

I tried to kiss him, but his mouth was tight and he only gave up a shallow kiss. Nothing like all the times before. He kept thrusting. Harder. Harder still. It hurt, but I didn't stop him. I figured it had just been too long since I had sex last, and Garrett was

bigger than I was used to. I was so sore and wasn't feeling much. I thought to myself, this isn't how I wanted our first time to go.

He said he wanted me to feel him finish, and asked me if I was ready. I wasn't as talkative, but my lack of response didn't seem to make a difference to him. I knew I wouldn't feel it, but why say that? It all happened so fast, so unexpectedly, that I was completely swept up in it, feeling so much yet so little of what was going on.

But when he ejaculated inside of me, I could feel it. I felt the way he hardened just before, I felt the pulsing of his body as he came, and I felt the wetness of his semen coat my sore tissue inside.

He was still inside me for a moment, his head bent down from what seemed to be an amazing, almost paralyzing orgasm. I was envious of how much he seemed to enjoy that – at how overwhelming the pleasure he felt was while he was inside of me.

As he caught his breath, I looked over and saw the condom on the floor. The stretched out, empty condom he had put on at the start. He had taken it off at some point – probably when we moved from the couch to the floor, and I hadn't noticed. Or maybe he never put it on at all? No, I thought. He had to put it on, right? Why didn't I look? Did we have sex the entire time without protection? Why would he do that?

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I was trying to process what was happening; He was inside me, having just finished inside of me, while the condom was on the floor. My head was spinning. I was shaking – partly the exhilaration of having sex with someone other than my husband for the first time in eight years, partly all the buildup between Garrett and I up to that point, partly the way he talked to me while he was inside of me, and partly the shock and confusion of seeing that empty condom on the floor while he was still inside of me, knowing he ejaculated inside of me when I had so many times said no.

I didn't agree to this. This wasn't what I wanted. I can understand sex being disappointing, or that he didn't care that I didn't enjoy it or that I didn't orgasm. But he had turned into someone completely different that night. And he did something to me I had so very clearly and on so many occasions told him I was not okay with.

Any STI's he had, I now had, and with the forceful way he just took me, I was worried I had just had unprotected sex with a very promiscuous and reckless man. We had discussed it at length– I had even rejected him once because he didn't have any. I made it clear I wasn't having unprotected sex with him – I didn't know his sexual history and it was too risky with STI's and pregnancy to be so irresponsible. Yet, here I was, laying on the floor of my office, with him on top and inside of me, with no condom.

Was this his plan? Was he angry that I told him I wouldn't have sex with him unless he wore a condom the first time? Is that why he blew me off the next two nights? Did he get angrier while he was inside of me wearing it, and take it off, knowing I wouldn't know he did so, to spite me? To punish me for rejecting him? Was this to prove some point to me that he could do what he wanted with me, when and however he wanted to do it? Why did I put myself in this situation? More importantly, why wasn't I angrier? Why wasn't I screaming and yelling at him for it?

He pulled out of me, sliding the fluid off himself and onto my floor with his hand, before pulling up his pants, asking if I was ok, and walking out the door. I waited until he left to get up, then went to the bathroom down the hall to clean up. I saw some spotting, which worried me. Not much of his semen came out, which worried me more. I could feel I was torn, but knew that could happen after not having sex for so long.

How did I let this happen? I couldn't put words to it. Everything had been so intense with him, but I felt like I had broken a rule by having sex unprotected. I blamed myself – I knew it was a risk I was taking when having sex with anyone, that a condom might break or something. But this wasn't that. He *took it off*. He knew I thought he was wearing one. Why was I so stupid every time he came around? I remember that he told me he was going to fuck me without a rubber, and that I wouldn't be able to stop him. But I thought he was just trying to turn me on or something. I didn't think he meant it.

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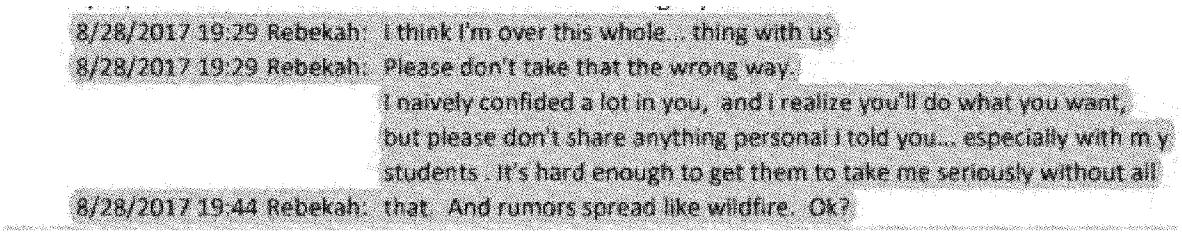
I didn't think much about pregnancy at the time, because even though my birth control was set to expire soon, I didn't think it would fail. I was far more concerned about HPV, gonorrhea, or some more serious STI.

After we had sex that night, I texted Garrett to tell him I was done. I asked him to keep the things we shared private, and told him there were no hard feelings.



I don't know whether or not he ever got that message. According to a statement he later made to the University, he blocked my phone number as soon as he walked out that door. I tried to call him the next day, to sort out how I felt, but his phone went straight to voicemail. I thought he was blowing me off, but I did not think he had blocked me. I couldn't imagine a reason why he would do that. To me it just seemed like another few days of him disappearing that he'd eventually come back from.

I decided to take the class with him. I couldn't add another intense course with my current workload, and needed the easy credits. We hadn't talked about what happened by the time the next class session came around two days later.

I remember that I did my hair and makeup that day. I remember I wanted him to notice me. I didn't sit next to him in class, rather a few rows to his left. I saw him looking at me. I thought maybe the other night was just a crazy fluke, and that we could get back what we had before. When class was over I waited for him outside, but he charged right past me without saying a word.

I texted him and asked him what his problem was. I asked if that was how he was – having sex with people then ignoring them. He told me we couldn't have sex again. He called me a crazy bitch and a cunt.

I didn't know where any of this was coming from. I didn't know what I did to make him so angry, to deserve this from him. I sat in my office crying, him blocking each of my calls, only answering intermittently to yell something hateful. He said, "I've dated a lot of crazy bitches, but you're by the far the craziest bitch of them all."

Why? Because I called him after sex? Because I called him at all? What the hell was going on? He was the first person I had been with in nine years other than my husband, and I had so many mixed feelings, I was so confused. Giving myself to someone else was a hard thing to do, and this was not helping.

Hours passed like this. I felt used and rejected. I was still crying when my office door opened and he walked through. He came in and locked the door behind him. I

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stood up and said it was my fault for thinking there was something more going on between us. I said all he did was use me and fuck me and set me aside. I said I wore something I knew he'd like that day to see him – the strap of the thing showing on my shoulder. I was by my desk, standing as I haphazardly shoved my things in my bag to leave.

He walked toward me, not saying anything as I cried and yelled at him. Then he was right in front of me. He slid his finger under the strap of my bra, then up and down its length across my shoulder. He gently pulled down the sleeves of my shirt to my arms, exposing my shoulders and most of my breasts. He ran his hand across my shoulder, my neck, then to my face. He wiped a tear from my cheek as he stepped forward to kiss me.

My back was against the floor-to-wall bookshelf behind me, and I felt the shelves push into me as he wrapped his arms around me and lifted me up. My legs were around his waist as he held me. We kissed like before – like two people who wanted each other, who cared.

He backed up to the couch, and sat so that he brought me down on top of him. He took off my shirt and bra and kissed my entire chest and stomach, down to my underwear, which he gently took off, before bringing me back on top of him. I must

have still looked sad because after I brought his pants to his ankles and sat back down on top of him, he looked at me and paused.

"We can't do this," he said. "We can't keep doing this to each other."

I looked at him, kissed him, and said back, "then stop doing it. Just let us happen and stop fighting it. If we want to be together, then let's just be together." I kissed his neck, feeling the warmth of his skin. I kissed his chest, and followed his abs down just far enough. I looked back at him, and how he seemed sad. I asked him if he wanted me to stop. He put his hand behind my neck and pulled me closer, our foreheads pressed against each other as were breathing heavily. I asked him again, my lips next to his, "do you want me to stop?" He looked at me and said no. I reached down to put him inside of me – it didn't hurt as much this time. He laid his head back and moaned as he moved with me. He knew just how to move, how to pace himself with me, the right angles, the right way to touch me while we made love.

This was what I had imagined. This was what I wanted. I started to orgasm, and he wrapped one arm around me and put one over my mouth so that no one would hear me scream. He started to orgasm with me, and I put my hand over his mouth so no one would hear him. We finished together, him inside of me again, but the experience was entirely different. I stayed on top of him while we kissed afterward. I was totally and utterly at the mercy of the moment, and in that moment, I was in love with him.

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I didn't bother with a condom because I thought it didn't matter anymore – we had already had unprotected sex. I thought the damage had been done, and there wasn't a point of wearing a condom again because whatever he had, I had from the first time we had sex. So we had sex again on August 30, and again the next week. The intensity never died down. Every moment I was with him, my senses were heightened. He was being nice again that night and after the next time, but the rest of the time was an entirely different story.

We were either fighting or having sex, usually in that order. He'd bring me to tears, then we'd make love and pretend the fighting never happened. When I was with him, I felt wanted, needed and loved. But he was still Garrett. And for a few days after each amazing night together, he'd disappear again. He'd screen my calls. I once came over to see him, the day after we were together, and he wouldn't let me past the front door. He said he had people over, and made a strange look to one of his roommates who walked by as we were talking. A look that suggested I shouldn't be there.

I had a feeling I wasn't the only person he was sleeping with, from the way he went hot and heavy to disappearing in a flash. I had a feeling he was lying to his roommates about our relationship, from the strange way he acted when I came over. I buried those feelings because they hurt, and I was falling for him despite everything I felt was off or wrong. Whatever we had, it was incredible. But it was toxic.

I noticed that I was bleeding after the second time, too. I felt cramping, but that wasn't unusual with an IUD. I told Garrett I had one. He had even asked me about birth control after the second time we had unprotected sex. He joked, "you're not going to have my kid if you get pregnant, right?" I laughed, still strewn out naked on the couch, "oh, hell no, you'd make a terrible father," I joked. "Besides, I have an IUD and they're pretty much the best thing you can get." I thought the cramping and bleeding was caused by nearly a year of abstinence immediately ended with frequent and intense sex.

I was home one day taking a bath, thinking about him and the last time we had been together. I put my fingers inside of myself and felt something wrong. When I pulled them out, I was holding the small, plastic device in my hand. It had become dislodged and came out more easily than a tampon would.

I didn't think I could get pregnant from having sex before the birth control came out, though I started to worry if it had been out before that, maybe torn during the first time we had sex, because of how hard and deep he was. I worried if it had been out even longer - maybe weeks longer - and I hadn't noticed because I hadn't checked. Either way, I didn't think I would get pregnant if it had recently been in place. Surely, I thought, it would take time for the hormones to leave my body.

I planned on making my annual appointment in a few weeks to run the usual exams and blood-work, and would ask about it then. I was planning on having a new

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one inserted soon, anyways, since the one I had was now expired. A hurricane hit the next week and classes were cancelled, so I didn't even see Garrett.

I wanted to get to my appointment and have a new one put in before I saw him again. I knew he wouldn't want to wear condoms after having done it several times without them. But before I could get to that appointment I started to feel sick. Nauseous, hyper-sensitive to smell, craving salty foods. I have had that very specific feeling only once in my life before, and with my birth control insert out, I started to get scared. It took three brands of pregnancy tests, all with positive results, to convince me it was true.

I was pregnant.

Part III: The Pregnancy

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When Garrett and I were in an "off" period in September, meaning he had decided not to answer my calls or respond to my texts after the last time we had sex, things at home were getting worse. I moved into my own place during the summer, leaving my husband at the home we had shared together to figure his own way out. But he let the lease run out on our previous home, and said he would be leaving to New York if he didn't have a place to stay. I fought him on it. I said no. I said if I let him stay with me, he would never leave. I told him we were getting a divorce and I didn't have to deal with him anymore. I had started to move on – I had real feelings for Garrett, and even if it didn't become anything, I had seen that I was capable of moving on.

Worried that he'd take off to New York and how that would impact our son, he wore me down and I let him move into the spare room of my new apartment while he looked for his own place. I made it clear it was temporary. I made it clear we were not getting back together. Having him back made everything harder. I hated fighting in front of our son, so I again started staying late at work more to avoid being home. I threw myself into school and work to distract myself. I had whatever I shared with Garrett, and I didn't want to go back to being so unhappy and stuck with my husband. He tried to initiate sex with me a few times, but I knew having sex with him would only end up putting us back to where we were when I moved out, and I was desperate never to be in that place again. And sex with Garrett, with the exception of the first time, was amazing, so I didn't feel I needed it.

Before we separated, I felt like I was living in a cage. I wasn't allowed to go anywhere or do anything, and any time I asked if I could, I was drilled about who would be there. Even when I told him I was just going over a friend's house, he'd insist I was lying. He'd call me 50 times a night to see where I was and who I was "really" with. Garrett was the only person I wanted to be with, and we didn't go "out" often, but I wasn't going to tell my husband that, certainly not while he was living in my spare bedroom. The worst part was that our son overheard all of it. My husband didn't care how his constant accusations and belittling affected our son. After he read those texts between Garrett and I in May, it got worse. Before I moved out, a friend and former

colleague of mine died. I told my husband while we were getting ready to go eat together as a family -something we still tried to force ourselves to do. I said it was sad, that my friend was not much older than me and he was a bright scientist. My son overheard me and asked, as plainly as he would ask why apples are round or why water runs downhill, "did you have sex with him?"

I couldn't believe he'd ask that. He was seven years old. That was what he associated with me now – any man I ever had any interaction with, I *must* be having sex with. That's what his father had taught him through all the yelling and fighting. I felt sick. I was angry beyond words at my husband, but mostly I felt sick. I didn't even know how to explain why that question was not ok. I couldn't go out and pretend that didn't just happen, so I stayed home alone, thinking about how awful it was that I had let my son hear those things. It didn't seem to bother my husband, which made me angrier. I become even more determined to get away from him.

We had been living separately most of the summer, and had not had sex. We couldn't talk to each other without fighting, and there wasn't a drop of intimacy between us while I was seeing Garrett. I truly believed my marriage was over. I started the divorce papers months before Garrett and I had sex the first time. I moved out, even though it set me back financially. I even had to get a short term loan from the University to put a down payment on my place. I was gone.

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My husband started suggesting that he move in with me in August, if for no other reason than to save money, but I always said no. I had embarked on an exciting new adventure – freedom and independence.. But my husband never found a new place, and I knew moving out had been hard on our son. Even though I thought I knew better, I let my husband move into my apartment in September, demanding he only stay long enough to find an apartment of his own.

One night, I went out to pick up a package that was mistakenly delivered to our old address, only to come back to find my husband sitting in front of my open computer, my Facebook messenger opened, and Garrett's pictures and my messages to him splashed across the screen. He was crying. He was aware that Garrett and I were flirting back in May, but that was four months ago and he had assumed it was over. I was livid, and I yelled at my husband for again violating my privacy, for again going through my private messages. He didn't fight back.

I believe seeing that I had been with someone else made my husband realize that I was not bluffing about a divorce, and it changed him. All the times we had separated before, I had never slept with anyone else. A few weeks later, my husband wrote me a letter begging me to give him another chance, promising to do all of the things I had been asking him for years to do – like seeing a therapist, starting medication, being better with our son. I still loved my husband. I had always loved him. I didn't leave him

because I didn't care – I left because he treated me badly, and showed no commitment to changing any of the things that were driving us apart. I was weary of his promises this time – I had heard them before. Twice before this summer I had moved out, and each time let him move back in on promises that he'd change. I didn't want to forgive him, take him back, and have him not follow through with any of it. So I told him no, not until he's made real change. He still needed to find his own place. He still needed to plan for us to be divorced. If he committed to change, real change, I would consider it, but I wasn't going to fall right back into bad habits upon more promises he'd never keep.

I promised to stop talking to Garrett. My husband asked, "how do I know if I do all this that you'll even take me back? Are you still seeing him?" I told him I'd stop seeing Garrett. I deleted Garrett's number from my phone. My husband followed through with his promises; he started taking medication for his anxiety, apologized to me for everything we had been through, and we decided to try to make it work. Things were still touch-and-go, and very delicate. I wasn't ready to have sex with him yet, and I still had feelings for Garrett. I thought it would be unfair to have sex with my husband while I was still thinking about Garrett. I thought time would help me get over that, and eventually my husband and I could be intimate again.

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Not long after, I took a pregnancy test at home that was positive. Then I took two more. My hands were shaking. I broke my promise and tried to call Garrett. Twice he screened my calls, then he answered and hung up on me without saying a word the third time. I told my husband. His face went blank. He looked very serious. He didn't react right away, which was new for him, but instead took time to process the news. I was pregnant. I hadn't been with my husband in more than five months. I had been with Garrett just weeks before.

I had always said I was done having kids. I was a young mother in college, from an unplanned pregnancy with my husband, and it made life very difficult. My son was and is the light of my life, my motivation to work hard. But the physical toll of having a child wasn't something I wanted to experience again. That is, after all, the reason I made sure to get an IUD as soon as possible after my son was born. I assumed if an accident happened, I'd have an abortion. While I had it, I never had worries about getting pregnant. That was in the abstract, though – now it was reality. And I felt extremely uncertain.

Baby, Maybe

It was obviously difficult for my husband to find out about the pregnancy, knowing we had not been intimate since before the summer started and the baby couldn't be his. I had ended things with Garrett, but the damage was done. I was trying to keep the peace at home without involving Garrett. He blew me off when I tried to call him and tell him, so I figured he didn't need to know. His opinion on the matter was irrelevant to me – I was going to make a decision without his input. I didn't want him involved because I didn't think he was a good person, regardless of my feelings for him, and I had an idea about how a 21-year-old guy might react from how my husband reacted when we were younger and scared.

Garrett found out, he claims, through a message sent by my husband to Garrett's cell phone. I have checked my husband's phone records during this period and found no communication to Garrett then or at any time since. I believe it is more likely Garrett heard a rumor from his roommate, who Garrett had told to take my class while we were dating. I think he wanted to have eyes on me. The roommate overheard a joke I made in the class. Another student swore she saw me at a bar the night before one of our sessions, and I laughed and said no – not only did I not have time to go to bars with all the grading I had to do, I said as I pointed to a large stack of papers I had brought with me to give back, but I couldn't drink anymore, anyways. The student asked if I was

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pregnant and I just laughed. She gasped, "oh my god, are you?" I said, "that's the kind of personal stuff professors don't talk to students about." Garrett's roommate overheard this. There's no reason to lie about it. Garrett could have just texted me and asked me how I was doing and tried to find out for himself. I wouldn't have been angry that he found out through his roommate. It would have been my own fault.

Garrett immediately began harassing me and pressuring me into having an abortion as soon as he found out. He called me and texted me hundreds of times during that weekend, and demanded I meet him to talk, even after I repeatedly told him to leave me alone. I expected to feel some sort of natural obligation to include Garrett, but any instinct like that was snuffed out by how he reacted once he found out. Garrett sent me 158 text messages on September 15 and 16. He told me I couldn't have his kid, that I had to promise not to have it, that I had to "abort it," that he'd pay for the abortion pill, he would literally do anything to help me terminate my pregnancy. He told me that if I wanted a baby, I should abort the embryo inside of me and then just get pregnant with my husband afterward.

I'm pro-choice. I had an abortion when I was young, dumb and in love. At 16, it was a no-brainer for me. It wasn't some traumatic, life-defining moment, it was just a thing I went through. I wasn't opposed to it as early in my pregnancy as I was at that point. But the decision to be made was mine and mine alone. I had the control. And I didn't

care what Garrett thought or felt – and he knew that. The ugly, controlling side of Garrett that had only peaked out from behind the curtains before was now out in full display.

9/15/2017		
9/15/2017 18:16	Garrett:	INCOMING CALL, REJECTED
9/15/2017 18:20	Garrett:	So apparently I knocked you up?
9/15/2017 18:20	Rebekah:	No. Wtf. **Please just leave me alone**
9/15/2017 18:21	Garrett:	Well your husband is saying I knocked you up and threatening me?
9/15/2017 18:22	Rebekah:	**Just stop.** Please. He's pissed. He'll calm down
9/15/2017 18:24	Garrett:	Okay, I'm just wondering if I should sleep with the shotgun loaded next to me tonight or not. But you're not pregnant?
9/15/2017 18:25	Garrett:	Heyy texting and threatening cole, your student
9/15/2017 18:27	Rebekah:	It's not going to be your problem
9/15/2017 18:28	Garrett:	Can you call me?
9/15/2017 18:28	Rebekah:	**Please just let me deal with this in my own**
9/15/2017 18:29	Garrett:	Wtf give me an answer
9/15/2017 18:30	Garrett:	Why would he say you're knocked up
9/15/2017 18:32	Rebekah:	**I can't talk to you right now**. I'm sorry
9/15/2017 18:34	Garrett:	Well what the fuck
9/15/2017 18:42	Rebekah:	I wasn't going to tell you. I need to calm things here now. Sorry
9/15/2017 18:43	Garrett:	How do you know your pregnant? You said you had internal birth control. What are you going to do
9/15/2017 18:45	Garrett:	You need to call me
9/15/2017 18:50	Garrett:	???
9/15/2017 19:06	Rebekah:	I can't talk to you now, or here. I'm trying to calm things down and I can't do that if you're blowing up my phone
9/15/2017 19:07	Garrett:	You can't call me for 2 minutes
9/15/2017 19:12	Rebekah:	You're not my priority right now

9/15/2017 20:14	Rebekah:	Whatever i decided i wasn't going to tell you
9/15/2017 20:15	Rebekah:	And this is exactly why
9/15/2017 20:16	Garrett:	Stop. We just need things to go back to normal and get through this semester. I need to feel safe at night
9/15/2017 20:19	Rebekah:	Yeah well I'm pretty sure Jake's on his way to new York now so you're fine
9/15/2017 20:20	Rebekah:	And this isn't your decision. I don't expect anything from you. You're just some jerk who i slept with a few times.
9/15/2017 20:20	Garrett:	We both know this can't happen. We talked about it right after it happened you assured me that you wouldn't get pregnant and that you wouldn't have a kid with me
9/15/2017 20:20	Garrett:	You're my teacher. My roommates teacher
9/15/2017 20:21	Rebekah:	Don't even pull that shit
9/15/2017 20:21	Garrett:	And I don't believe that shit
9/15/2017 20:21	Garrett:	Don't pull this shit
9/15/2017 20:22	Garrett:	You just said you weren't having a kid with me
9/15/2017 20:22	Rebekah:	It's not your problem!
9/15/2017 20:22	Garrett:	It is if you have a kid wtf
9/15/2017 20:22	Rebekah:	**I'm not doing anything with you! You're not going to have a say or part in anything.**
9/15/2017 20:31	Rebekah:	You are so immature
9/15/2017 20:32	Garrett:	What the fuck this is schooling
9/15/2017 20:32	Garrett:	Shocking
9/15/2017 20:33	Garrett:	Why did you say you're not having a kid with me
9/15/2017 20:33	Rebekah:	Because whatever i do, it won't be WITH you
9/15/2017 20:34	Rebekah:	You use the pull out method but don't pull out, ask about birth control after the fact, and yet you're shocked
9/15/2017 20:36	Rebekah:	I haven't made any plan. I need to think without everyone telling me what to do
9/15/2017 20:36	Garrett:	I asked to buy you a pill
9/15/2017 20:36	Garrett:	Okay I'm sorry for freaking out
9/15/2017 20:37	Rebekah:	What pill?
9/15/2017 20:39	Rebekah:	I'm sorry. I know you're upset. I realize that. I do. But there are so many things going on right now and I'm still in stock myself
9/15/2017 20:39	Rebekah:	Shock*
9/15/2017 20:46	Garrett:	There a pills you can take to end pregnancy
9/15/2017 20:50	Rebekah:	Sorry.. i was fighting with Jake and missed that message.
9/15/2017 20:56	Rebekah:	And yes, i know what the abortion pill is. I asked.
9/15/2017 22:10	Garrett:	Maybe we can meet in person tomorrow morning. Let me know
9/15/2017 22:10	Rebekah:	I don't know. I'm not really doing well right now
9/15/2017 22:16	Rebekah:	**I wasn't planning on seeing you again to be honest**
9/15/2017 22:18	Rebekah:	I cared about you. And you hurt me. Now this. It's just... too much
9/15/2017 22:22	Rebekah:	Jackson has soccer tomorrow morning.
9/15/2017 22:55	Garrett:	Okay maybe afternoon. Think we should at least talk in person. Have a few things I'd like to say. idk I'm sorry for freaking out earlier. It's shocking
9/15/2017 22:56	Rebekah:	I understand why you're freaking out. But this really needs to be my decision
9/15/2017 22:58	Garrett:	Okay. Once again just like to talk
9/15/2017 23:00	Rebekah:	I think i know what you're going to say

Garrett called me, interrogating me about how this could have happened, blaming me. He asked me to meet with him. I was afraid. In the back of my mind, I knew Garrett was capable of hurting me. As I listened to him rant on the phone, I wished he'd never found out. I don't know if I got pregnant from the first time, or one of the many times after. Was it his fault if it was the first time he had sex, or my fault if it was one of the times after? Were we not equally responsible? When he called me on September 15, he went through all of the reasons it wasn't his fault. He wanted to pull out the second time, he insisted, but I was orgasming so he didn't. But he wanted to, so it was my fault.

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9/16/2017 8:36	Garrett:	Can you tell me what's going through your mind
9/16/2017 8:39	Rebekah:	I'm spending the morning with my son. I don't want him to know what's going on.
9/16/2017 8:39	Garrett:	Okay. Is there a time I can call you
9/16/2017 8:40	Rebekah:	I don't know
9/16/2017 8:40	Garrett:	Did anything I said last night make any sense to you
9/16/2017 8:41	Rebekah:	Not really
9/16/2017 8:41	Rebekah:	You were hysterical
9/16/2017 8:46	Rebekah:	I honestly cannot deal with you blaming me on top of everything else going on. I knew you'd be a dick about it. That's why I wasn't going to tell you. I don't need this from you right now
9/16/2017 8:46	Garrett:	No I'm not blaming you
9/16/2017 8:47	Garrett:	That's why I wanna talk on the phone I'm bad at conveying message
9/16/2017 8:54	Rebekah:	I never wanted to have sex without a condom in the first place!! That's why we didn't that one day when you just showed up. You said you wanted me to feel all of you. And i know it was fucking stupid to do without one, but God damn i can't help myself around you and it's really confusing and I'm already scared and worried and i don't want how i feel or felt with you to complicate things anymore than they already are
9/16/2017 8:54	Garrett:	you sure you don't like this
9/16/2017 8:56	Garrett:	I just want things to go back to normal. I was looking forward to a normal rest of the semester with you
9/16/2017 9:07	Rebekah:	Well you're not the one actually going through this, or the one who's going to have to go through a lot of pain to end it, or change your entire life if you don't, so you'll have to forgive me for not feeling sorry for you that you regret not pulling out
9/16/2017 9:08	Garrett:	I mean don't you wish that I pulled out as well now?
9/16/2017 9:09	Garrett:	I'm pretty sure we even talked about the possibility of you getting pregnant
9/16/2017 9:10	Rebekah:	Omg yes!
9/16/2017 9:10	Rebekah:	Please stop making this about you
9/16/2017 9:11	Garrett:	I'm not trying to. That's why I keep talking to you
9/16/2017 9:11	Rebekah:	I highly doubt I'm the first person you've came inside of, considering how little i meant to you and that you came inside me after like five minutes of me fucking you
9/16/2017 9:13	Garrett:	You fucking hot and I find you sexy of course I came quickly. And no the only times I've ever came inside when I was in high school and was wearing a condom and didn't know any better
9/16/2017 9:14	Garrett:	You, rode the fuck out of me. It felt great. But this can't come of it not like this
9/16/2017 9:16	Rebekah:	Whatever. It doesn't matter. You didn't give a damn about me 24 hours ago, and you still don't know. You just dont want to be responsible for any of this and I've already told you that you won't be so what do you want from me
9/16/2017 9:18	Garrett:	What do you mean I don't give a damn about you I'm not a monster? I was looking forward to having a normal class and having a conversation with you after classes and stuff. We both talked and agreed it couldn't happen again. It does matter. This is serious. If you have a kid it becomes my responsibility.
9/16/2017 9:19	Garrett:	I just want things to go back to normal

9/16/2017 9:21	Rebekah:	I have my education and career to think about. I have my son. I'm 9 months away from finishing school. I'm also 27 and could handle this on my own. I'm thinking about so many other things than you. But honestly talking to you just makes everything hazy and uncertain and I'm questioning myself and I'm not doing something i regret because a scared 21 year old boy is worried his mom will find out
9/16/2017 9:22	Rebekah:	I'll have a job and be out of here by May
9/16/2017 9:23	Garrett:	It doesnt have to be hazy, I wanted to tell you it all immediately!! You assured me this wouldn't happen and you wouldn't have my kid
9/16/2017 9:23	Garrett:	Rebekah please stop
9/16/2017 9:24	Rebekah:	Well you're really good at just disappearing and ignoring people who care about you so why don't you just go back to doing that and I'll handle my body and my life myself
9/16/2017 9:24	Garrett:	What do you mean you don't want me feeling the pain you're feeling
9/16/2017 9:24	Garrett:	I'm not good at disappearing? Things like this don't work that way you know this
9/16/2017 9:25	Rebekah:	Oh yes they can
9/16/2017 9:25	Rebekah:	I'll move 2000 miles away and just like that it's not your problem
9/16/2017 9:27	Garrett:	No it doesnt. Rebekah we need things to get back to normal. You have your 9 year old son
9/16/2017 9:28	Garrett:	It can't happen like this when i literally made you confirm to me that you wouldn't get pregnant or have my kid
9/16/2017 9:28	Garrett:	You said something like oh fuck no are you crazy
9/16/2017 9:29	Rebekah:	Jackson is 7, not 9.
9/16/2017 9:30	Garrett:	Oh I read the message wrong earlier
9/16/2017 9:30	Garrett:	It dosent feel right
9/16/2017 9:30	Rebekah:	Fine, Garrett. This is all my fault. I'm the adult and i should have known better. You don't give a shit what happens to me so **stop trying to manipulate me**
9/16/2017 9:31	Garrett:	What do you mean I don't give a shit? I'm not a monster? I thought things were going good with us? I was actually looking forward to seeing you n class
9/16/2017 9:31	Garrett:	And what'd you wear
9/16/2017 9:31	Rebekah:	You don't want to deal with this, and I'm saying it's fine if you want to just walk away and forget about it
9/16/2017 9:32	Garrett:	I can't forget about it. It dosent work like that
9/16/2017 9:32	Rebekah:	Things weren't fine. I was falling for you back in May and i haven't been over it since. I'm a nuisance to you and what the fuck ever, i don't care
9/16/2017 9:33	Rebekah:	But this is not up to you
9/16/2017 9:33	Rebekah:	And feel free to disappear again, because i wasn't this upset before Jake and you found out
9/16/2017 9:33	Garrett:	You're not a nuisance. I know it's not you've said that
9/16/2017 9:34	Garrett:	That's what your telling me to do, forget about it
9/16/2017 9:34	Garrett:	I mean when do you make a decision?
9/16/2017 9:37	Garrett:	Rebekah that isn't fair to me
9/16/2017 9:38	Garrett:	This isn't fair to do it like that to me
9/16/2017 9:39	Garrett:	To have someone's kid that way

9/16/2017 9:41	Garrett:	The circumstances are wrong
9/16/2017 9:42	Rebekah:	I should have known something was wrong when i started bleeding after. But i just figured between how long it had been and your big, perfect cock it was no big deal
9/16/2017 9:42	Rebekah:	Again, this is all my fault
9/16/2017 9:43	Rebekah:	So just blame me, call me a cunt again, whatever.
9/16/2017 9:43	Garrett:	I just want this to go back to normal Rebekah
9/16/2017 9:44	Garrett:	Do you really think that you'll have it after that
9/16/2017 9:44	Rebekah:	You're a guy. That's pretty easy for you to do.
9/16/2017 9:44	Rebekah:	I have my own medical issues to think about.
9/16/2017 9:44	Garrett:	Not if you're pregnant for the next 9 months
9/16/2017 9:45	Garrett:	My sister has taken the abortion pill
9/16/2017 9:45	Rebekah:	I'm not planning on seeing you around
9/16/2017 9:45	Garrett:	She said she barely noticed anything
9/16/2017 9:45	Rebekah:	Good for her
9/16/2017 9:45	Garrett:	That dosent matter. You're the teacher to my roomate who thinks I knocked you up
9/16/2017 9:46	Rebekah:	So you told him. After i begged you not to
9/16/2017 9:47	Rebekah:	Is that what you're going to do, then? Threaten and blackmail me into having an abortion i don't want to have?
9/16/2017 9:47	Garrett:	No, but he's not stupid! You've been to our house!
9/16/2017 9:47	Garrett:	I don't have many affairs with married women
9/16/2017 9:48	Rebekah:	I never saw him there the two times i came over so how does he know
916115	9/16/2017 9:49	Garrett: I mean how do you expect me to keep this such a secret especially if you decided to have a kid
916116	9/16/2017 9:51	Rebekah: No one else needs to know it's yours
916117	9/16/2017 9:52	Garrett: I can't keep a secret like that it's not fair to me
916118	9/16/2017 9:52	Garrett: All of this is not right
916119	9/16/2017 9:52	Rebekah: Not fair to YOU???
9/16/2017 9:57	Rebekah:	Please stop
9/16/2017 9:57	Garrett:	Have another baby with Jack. But not my baby
9/16/2017 9:57	Garrett:	What do you mean
9/16/2017 9:58	Rebekah:	Just... stop. I get it. You'd like me to get an abortion like, tomorrow, because we're not dating, you don't feel like that about me, you're 21, etc etc
9/16/2017 9:59	Rebekah:	I understand all of that.
9/16/2017 10:00	Garrett:	No it's not even because we're not dating, it's the circumstances that I've constantly been saying I didn't want to do it
9/16/2017 10:00	Garrett:	But what are you thinking.
9/16/2017 10:00	Rebekah:	Got it.
9/16/2017 10:03	Garrett:	Are you going to tell me when you decide

9/16/2017 10:03	Rebekah:	I'm thinking that nothing has been the same for me since this thing with you started. I wasn't lying when i said i couldn't focus, that seeing you hurt, that i cared about you. And you don't feel like that and i get why it seems wrong to you that I'm pregnant or would keep it. Maybe it is. I don't know. I can't think right now.
9/16/2017 10:07	Garrett:	Okay I'll talk to you again later
9/16/2017 10:07	Garrett:	INCOMING CALL, REJECTED.
9/16/2017 10:43	Rebekah:	Sorry... kids soccer games are crazy
9/16/2017 10:43	Rebekah:	I know you don't understand, but Jackson is my whole world. He's the only thing I've ever done right
9/16/2017 10:45	Rebekah:	And my circumstances when i got pregnant with him were really, really bad. Now they're actually pretty good. I'll be a doctor in a year. I already have a research offer starting next summer so ill be financially secure. And though I'm busy and know i could do it better, i love being a mom
9/16/2017 10:55	Garrett:	Yes but I'm not ready for a kid of mine to be in this world that way
9/16/2017 10:55	Garrett:	Please. I think this would be good to have a kid with jack
9/16/2017 10:56	Rebekah:	Jake
9/16/2017 10:56	Rebekah:	Jackson is my son
9/16/2017 11:07	Garrett:	Have another kid with Jake. Wouldn't it be great for the family and marriage
9/16/2017 11:08	Garrett:	It's the circumstances how it happened. I was prepared to do anything to prevent this all you had to do was say so
9/16/2017 11:11	Rebekah:	I have a doctors appointment Wednesday. Just give me some time to think ok?
9/16/2017 11:12	Garrett:	Especially when you do the pill form early
9/16/2017 11:12	Garrett:	Okay. Can I call you?
9/16/2017 11:16	Rebekah:	I'm at my sons soccer game
9/16/2017 11:17	Garrett:	That's a long game
9/16/2017 11:17	Garrett:	Are you gonna be in class Tuesday
9/16/2017 11:19	Rebekah:	Tuesday? I have class all morning then teach
9/16/2017 11:20	Garrett:	I mean Monday
9/16/2017 11:20	Rebekah:	Yah I'm not going to that class anymore
9/16/2017 11:21	Garrett:	Why
9/16/2017 11:21	Garrett:	Dropping it?
9/16/2017 11:22	Rebekah:	No. I'm just not going. I can't be around you like that
9/16/2017 11:26	Garrett:	So you have your first doctors appointment Wednesday?
9/16/2017 11:26	Garrett:	Isn't that a little late?
9/16/2017 11:33	Rebekah:	No?
9/16/2017 11:33	Rebekah:	It's the soonest i could get an appointment
9/16/2017 11:35	Garrett:	Can I like actually talk to you in person like I asked last night? Or on the phone again?
9/16/2017 11:38	Garrett:	Can I go with you
9/16/2017 11:41	Rebekah:	What? No. It's at 2 30. You have class and I'd like to discuss my options without you there
9/16/2017 11:42	Garrett:	Okay. But can I call you
9/16/2017 11:45	Rebekah:	I'm still at the soccer game
9/16/2017 12:15	Rebekah:	I'm spending the day with my family
9/16/2017 12:16	Garrett:	Okay. Do they know
9/16/2017 12:17	Rebekah:	Well Jake knows. Jack doesn't. I haven't told anyone else because i know how they feel about these things and I'm not sure what I'm doing yet
9/16/2017 12:18	Garrett:	Okay
9/16/2017 12:24	Garrett:	So can't talk to you on the phone?
9/16/2017 12:24	Rebekah:	Not now
9/16/2017 12:49	Rebekah:	I need to run some errands later. If i meet you, what are you going to do?
9/16/2017 15:19	Garrett:	INCOMING CALL, REJECTED

I agreed to meet Garrett at a park downtown - somewhere public where he couldn't hurt me. He got there first, and I left my car to meet him in his Ford Escape to talk. It was the first time I had seen him in a week. As soon as I saw him again, I knew I wasn't over him. Yet, things were different to me somehow. After two days of him making demands and being unable to control me, I sat down in his car feeling like the power he held over me during the summer had been weakened.

I know we talked for more than three hours that day in his car, though the specifics of what either of us said are lost to me now. I remember him being panicky – he had a million thoughts in all directions, none of which were being expressed clearly. I kept my sunglasses on, even though he tried to take them off several times. I kept my voice calm and low, trying to keep him calm. Scott Peterson, I reminded myself. Garrett could have lost his temper and hurt me, maybe killed me. Men are capable of that, and all too often women are injured or murdered when their boyfriend finds out about an unwanted, unplanned pregnancy. He asked me there to "hear him out," but he wasn't saying anything that mattered to me.

I remember feeling that I didn't care about what he thought. I remember my concerns personified in his rantings. I saw the small but increasingly-stark age gap between us in full color. He would speak, and I would listen stoically. He rarely asked me what I thought, and I only ever really said that I didn't know, that I just found out

myself a week before, and that I needed time to think. I could feel him scanning the surface of my face to sense what I was thinking – every line he crafted one more tentacle reaching out from his mouth, searching for a reaction, some direction on where I stood and how he could use that feeling against me. The dynamic might have changed between us, but it wouldn't stay that way for long.

He realized about an hour and a half into arguing with me, while I measured his behavior, that his strategy was working against him. I was not someone who liked to be told what to do. I had moved out and started a divorce because of that behavior – and I wasn't going to take it from someone I spent a few months hot and heavy with over the summer. More critically, I was an unapologetic feminist, and wasn't going to let any man dictate what I did about being pregnant. Once it dawned on him, he stopped sitting as far away from me in the car as he could get, stopped raising his voice, and reached out for my hand.

Suddenly, he was interested in what I was thinking and feeling. I repeated the same lines. I just found out, I didn't know what I wanted, and I needed time to think. That wasn't good enough for him. So he moved in, his face pressed against me, and kissed me. Or maybe I kissed him. Or maybe we both moved in at the same time. I don't remember. He told me he'd be there for me and support me, adding that he didn't think it was a good idea to have a kid "this way." I said my son was unplanned and I

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not only survived after having him, I thrived. But this is different, he insisted. We weren't even dating, he said. The sting of that must have shown on my face. He tried to clarify, "you're married. How could we be dating if you're married?"

"We were separated and getting a divorce," I snapped back. "Besides, it didn't seem to matter to you that I was married while you were fucking me."

"That's not what I meant," he said. "The circumstances are wrong, that's all."

He started having a panic attack - his hands and legs shaking, rocking back and forth in his seat, talking quickly and not making any sense. I hadn't seen him like this before, and I instinctively went to him, holding him, rubbing his back, telling him it was ok. I promised him I hadn't made a decision yet. I told him I cared about him and didn't want to hurt him. After a little while, he calmed down. *Was that real,* I thought to myself. *What am I doing? I'm hurting him. Why am I hurting him? Why am I here?*

I said I had been away too long and needed to get home. I promised my husband I wouldn't talk to Garrett, and here I was, in his car, missing from home for more than three hours, letting Garrett kiss me and try to influence a decision that would impact his life far less than it would affect mine, my husband's and our son's. I suddenly felt guilt. I got out of his car and went back to mine. I waited until I saw him backing out of the parking lot and turning onto the road to collapse. The guilt of what I had done – having

repeated, unprotected sex with Garrett, lying about it to my husband, the pain it was causing my husband to think about Garrett and I together – came rushing to my eyes, and I sobbed into my hands. Garrett had come back. I didn't see him turn around, but he must have noticed I was still there, and before I realized he was back, he opened my car door and kissed me. He told me it would be ok.

In person, he became a saint – he was no longer disappearing into thin air, but answered my every text and call. But in the moments he let his true nature come out, he was bitter and resentful. Garrett made me take a pregnancy test to prove I was pregnant, and continued to pressure me over the next several days. Every time he could see that he pushed too hard, he reached out to hold me or kiss me, then assure me that he only wanted what was best.

Yet, he insisted that I make an appointment at an abortion clinic while on the phone, right in front of him – just to keep the option open, he said. He said it needed to be done soon, early in the pregnancy – to make recovery easier, he said. He insisted at first that he go with me to the clinic – just for support, he said. He insisted I text him before I went and after I got done to tell him what happened – just to know what I'm thinking, he said. I made the appointment while he stood over me, and I said my husband would probably go with me, if I decided to go at all. That was as good as it was going to get, for now.

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9/17/2017 13:54 Garrett:	Everything still okay?
9/17/2017 13:55 Rebekah:	Yep.
9/17/2017 13:57 Garrett:	See you tomorrow I guess?
9/17/2017 13:59 Rebekah:	Idk.
9/17/2017 14:00 Garrett:	Why all of the sudden cold shoulder?
9/17/2017 14:07 Garrett:	Rebekah you're scaring me
9/17/2017 14:17 Rebekah:	I don't know where I'm at with you on this
9/17/2017 14:18 Garrett:	Can I call you?
9/17/2017 14:19 Rebekah:	Not now
9/17/2017 14:21 Garrett:	We're at the same place we were yesterday and this morning. I'm sorry I'm terrible at texting. I'm glad that I was there for you when you let your guard down as you were for me as I was having a panic attack. You don't have to try hard to not be emotional around me. I do take responsibility towards this
9/17/2017 14:22 Rebekah:	You wouldn't be talking to me if you didn't think you could convince me to have an abortion.
9/17/2017 14:24 Rebekah:	And you know how I feel about you, even though you don't feel the same way. You let me kiss you because you want me to trust you and care about you so I'll listen to you and do what you want.
9/17/2017 14:27 Garrett:	Rebecca when we kissed yesterday I was thinking about doing everything. I kissed you. I know I made terrible terrible decisions. I didn't know what to do. I'm just scared Rebekah.
9/17/2017 14:28 Garrett:	Kissing you felt right but I don't know what to think
9/17/2017 14:33 Garrett:	I wish you were here to stop me from shaking. I gotta run or something idk
9/17/2017 14:35 Rebekah:	I can't be there. Roommates.
9/17/2017 16:18 Garrett:	How's today been for you
9/17/2017 16:18 Rebekah:	Fine i guess

I had it right from the beginning. He didn't care. I knew it. I fucking knew it. But I let him convince me otherwise. It's a strange thing when you let your heart beat your brain into submission. All the walls I had built up over the years, all the logical ways I approached every single other thing in my life, all meant nothing when I was around him. He was a drug to me. I tried to be distant. I tried to remind myself of everything that happened between us. I tried. Just not hard enough.

Three days passed with a message from Garret every few minutes, with unplanned visits to my office and long walks together. I learned rather quickly that Garrett was fully capable of being present and committed, if he wanted to be, if he saw use in it. I guess he didn't find it useful in those weeks over the summer, between periods of when we were together, to answer my calls, or to ask me what I was thinking or feeling. This 180 in behavior was all I wanted from him in our relationship before, but that was then. Things had changed. He had hurt me, been cruel to me, said horrible, awful things to me, had sex with me more times than either of us could count, but still didn't see me as his girlfriend, apparently.

Before class one day, I noticed spotting in my underwear. I had read that pregnancies conceived while on an IUD can occur outside the uterus, and lead to miscarriages or major health complications. How long had my IUD been dislodged? Was it the first time we had sex, that awful first time that I felt like I was watching from outside my body? Was it before? Was this going to be a short, doomed pregnancy that ends early? Did what I wanted even matter if it wasn't viable? The timeline matched - if it was out before or because of that first time, I should have been getting my period by now. Maybe that was the spotting I was seeing. Maybe I was getting my first real period since the IUD came out. Maybe I was getting false pregnancy tests because birth controls creates hormones that could do that, and I was never really pregnant at all. Then I remembered I had unusual bleeding in August, weeks before Garrett and I had

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sex. What if the antibiotics and everything else from my surgery made it not work? What if the catheter from my surgery moved it out of place? Was that even possible. Fuck, I thought. That would mean we were sleeping together exactly when it was most likely that I could get pregnant.

I went to teach my class as planned, but scheduled an appointment for immediately after. I usually held my office hours when I met with students right after class, so I told everyone they were cancelled for that day because I had a doctor's appointment, but that I would reschedule for another time. Ten minutes after class was over, just as I was heading out of my building to go to my appointment, Garrett called me. He told me his roommate had told him I cancelled office hours for an appointment. I told Garrett I was at the doctor's. He called me frantically, asking me if I was really there. I told him I was going to the clinic because I had concerns about spotting and I told him what I read about IUD-pregnancies. Fifteen minutes later, he called back.

He told me he didn't see my car in the parking lot. I asked him where he was and what he was doing. He said we was "just freaking out" and went to the clinic that he heard me make the appointment with for the abortion. I told him I wasn't going to an abortion clinic for a checkup. I told him that he cannot show up to my doctor's appointments like that, and I was extremely uncomfortable with the way he was acting. I told him that he needed to calm down and he couldn't just show up whenever he

wanted. I was beyond uncomfortable that he drove there to make sure he was present during an appointment, that he assumed that was his place and role in overseeing and "guiding" my healthcare and my choices. A red flag went up so high, that I was again reminded of all those men who hurt their pregnant girlfriends – and, according to Garrett, I wasn't even good enough to be that. So what did that make me to him?

I told the doctor what had happened - the surgery, the bleeding in August before we had sex, the unprotected sex, the spotting that day. She said I could take a blood test - those were usually more accurate. I said OK. I was definitely pregnant. I really had to deal with this. I went to see my counselor immediately afterward - they were in the same building on campus. I talked about how Garrett made me feel - like I wasn't in control of myself, like I was at his mercy, that he was pressuring me into this and I didn't know what to do. I felt more uncertain than ever about Garrett's involvement.

I walked back to my office after my appointment, and Garrett arrived shortly after, apologizing for "freaking out." I didn't ask him to come see me that night, and I was still unsure about how to respond to him driving to the clinic without telling me. But he wouldn't leave. He had to convince he was merely worried about me first. I was emotionally exhausted, physically drained, and completely withdrawn from the game Garrett was trying to play. Garrett's method of trying to strong-arm me into an abortion by arguing with me and making demands wasn't working. He could see that. Almost

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instinctively, he changed his approach. And I was stupid and vulnerable enough to fall for it.

Things weren't going well at home, again, and I was beginning to believe that the short period of time I shared with the changed man that my husband had become was soon coming to an end because of the pregnancy. He was angry again, controlling again, demanding of where I was and what I was doing, forcing me to be with him every moment of every day outside of work and school. Garrett had always been the complete opposite – he would come around when he wanted, and could have cared less what I did while he was away. He could step in and out of my life with no guilt. Garret represented freedom, and my husband oppression. But now Garrett was trying to control me, too, and unlike my husband, he did not know me well enough to do it successfully.

Garret's greatest weapon was always his good looks, and my uncontrollable thirst for intimacy with him. So he used that. If things were falling apart with my husband again, then I faced being alone through this. And that was the only thing at that point in time that really scared me. So when Garrett kissed me, I let him. When he touched me, I let him. That night in my office he laid on top of me, looking into my eyes, pushing himself inside of me, neither of us bothering with condoms or pretenses. Sex was slower now, intimate. We kissed throughout and laid together afterward. His

fingers would outline my every curve as we just let ourselves forget about time and our responsibilities. He told me he needed me, that he couldn't get through this without me. He told me he was just scared, and overreacting. He'd kiss me on the forehead and hold me tightly in his arms. Nothing else he did before mattered when we were together like that. He held me tight and said to me, "and it's you and me versus the world."

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Me, You, World

I didn't tell my husband that I was sleeping with Garrett again. I wasn't sure what he was going to do – I had only given him a second chance right before this happened, and now I was pregnant with another man's child. I thought he might leave. I thought he would turn back into his old self. So I started seeing Garrett again behind my husband's back. When Garrett and I first started seeing each other months before, I didn't feel like I was cheating or breaking any rules. Now I felt guilty. But I didn't stop. Garrett and I were spending all of our time together - going out to eat, lying together in the field on campus in front of the library, hell, we even ran into FSU President Thrasher together. My worries that Garrett didn't want people seeing us together were relieved. He even said hi to people he knew while we were walking together, holding hands.

I wanted to just dissolve into his arms. He was everything to me during this time. Still, something felt off. He would come to my office and just sit on my couch while I did my work. We'd make out between grading papers and studying, but I was starting to feel like he was trying to keep me away from home. I told him my husband wanted another baby. He said he didn't care if he was wasn't the father - we were a family and that was all that mattered. He knew my husband was an opposing force, and Garrett's neediness was a wall he built between us. When I wanted to go home, he'd ask me to stay longer. I didn't object. One night he was so overwhelmed while we were laying on the floor together, having just had sex, that he started crying, tell me how much he needed me, how much he cared about me. I cried, too.

I had suspicions about Garrett's sincerity early on, and the relationship became too intense and overwhelming for me after we spent a few days practically tied to each other in bed. I tried to end things with Garrett on September 22, after I asked if he could stay over at his place instead of mine or at my office. He said he couldn't because of his roommates. I didn't believe him. Over the summer he would tell me how he couldn't wait to get me in his bed, he described all the surfaces in his room that we'd have sex on. He had invited me over. But he also acted strangely every time I was there, so we always met somewhere else. He was supposed to meet me that day, though we hadn't discussed where. I drove over to his house after hours passed with no word. His car was in the driveway, but he didn't answer. I was brought back to that night when he

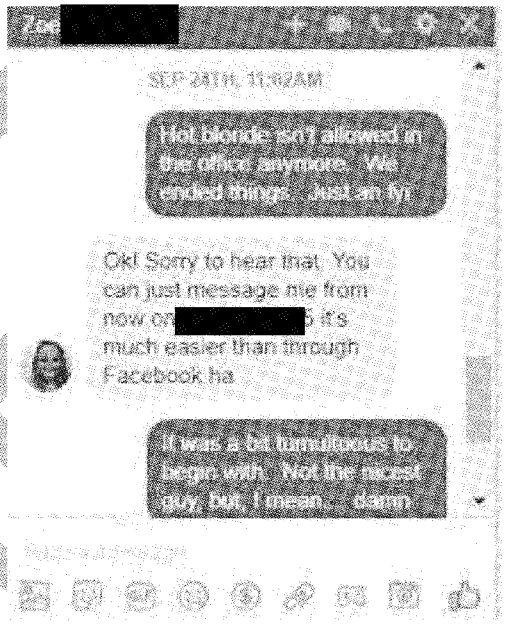
asked me over, just to pretend he wasn't home. I called him and left an angry voicemail. I told him I knew what he was doing, that I knew he didn't care about me, that I should have never let him back into my life, and that I was done being a pawn in his game.

9/22/2017 17:42 Rebekah:	OUTGOING CALL, NO ANSWER
9/22/2017 20:36 Rebekah:	OUTGOING CALL, NO ANSWER
9/22/2017 22:03 Garrett:	Holy fuck I just woke up
9/22/2017 22:04 Garrett:	What is going on
9/22/2017 22:04 Garrett:	What's happening
9/22/2017 22:04 Garrett:	What did I do
9/22/2017 22:04 Garrett:	Wait you know I have feelings for you
9/22/2017 22:05 Garrett:	We sobbed together on the floor
9/22/2017 22:05 Garrett:	I'm so confused
9/22/2017 22:05 Garrett:	And sweaty
9/22/2017 22:05 Garrett:	Did you come by the house?
9/22/2017 22:06 Garrett:	I don't know what's going on but I hope you're ok
9/22/2017 22:07 Garrett:	I'm not lying to you on anything
9/22/2017 22:07 Garrett:	I took NyQuil and passssssssssed out
9/22/2017 22:07 Garrett:	Still hazy
9/22/2017 22:08 Garrett:	Why would I lie about any of this. You know how worried I am and you know I have feelings for you
9/22/2017 22:08 Garrett:	We cleared that up in your office the other night I believe
9/22/2017 22:08 Garrett:	So confused
9/22/2017 22:09 Garrett:	I'm so confused
9/22/2017 22:10 Garrett:	God I'm sick as fuck
9/22/2017 22:10 Garrett:	You're scaring me I just fell asleep I didn't do anything
9/22/2017 22:13 Garrett:	I'm so sorry for angering you that way I really didn't mean to. I just slept for 5 hours
9/22/2017 22:14 Rebekah:	**Stop lying to me.**
9/22/2017 22:14 Rebekah:	**Stop texting me**
9/22/2017 22:15 Garrett:	I'm not lying to you at all I can prove it
9/22/2017 22:16 Rebekah:	**Don't text me. Don't call me**
9/22/2017 22:16 Garrett:	Rebekah... I didn't do anything
9/22/2017 22:19 Garrett:	You know how I feel about you. I'm not lying to you Rebekah. I've literally been sleeping on this couch after chugging the NyQuil. I didn't do this intentionally. This whole situation is everything to me. I literally wouldn't risk do anything remotely bad to mess this up
9/22/2017 22:20 Rebekah:	**I said don't text me**
9/22/2017 22:20 Garrett:	Please try to understand
9/22/2017 22:21 Garrett:	You mean so much to me
9/22/2017 22:22 Garrett:	You know that. I've done everything you've asked me to do. I'm sorry for upsetting you this way
9/22/2017 23:07 Garrett:	Please understand

I blocked him on my cell phone that night but he called me from a blocked number and begged me to give him another chance. I felt bad and I second guessed myself and unblocked him. Garrett often went to great lengths to convince me that he cared about me, that his feelings were genuine, and even that he "needed" me. I let myself believe him, despite my doubts, because I was hormonal, pregnant with his child, and unsure of what I was going to do.

I told him that if he was being genuine, he would be there for me when I needed it, not just show up whenever he wanted to talk or have sex. I told him if he meant what he was saying, then the next day I was coming to see him and if was serious about being with me then he would cancel his plans to go out that night and spend time with me at is place. He said he couldn't, but I told him it was his final chance. When I showed up, his car was in the driveway, but he stopped answering his phone. I think he may have been inside the entire time, but was just pretending to not be home. While I waited in his driveway, his roommates came out and said Garrett "didn't want me there" and I should leave. I was pissed, and confused. All this talk about how genuine his feelings were, but his roommates were talking to me like I was some crazed ex. He had clearly lied about what was going on between us – either that night or maybe even some night before. I was hurt and upset.

9/23/2017 21:48 Rebekah:	Real fucking mature thing to put a pregnant woman through... especially considering how sick and stressed you supposedly were
9/23/2017 21:59 Rebekah:	Tell me why you told your roommates that you don't want me here
9/23/2017 23:46 Rebekah:	I should have never met you last weekend. You're a fucking liar and I'm going to do what I want, which is keep it. **I'm blocking you. Don't contact me again. Ever.**



I blocked him for the weekend and would not talk to him, despite several missed calls from blocked numbers. I told my officemate the next day that Garrett was not allowed in the office anymore. She had walked in on us a few times, so we established a courtesy-text system to avoid any more awkward situations. She was used to seeing him around. I told her we ended things and that it was a tumultuous relationship to begin with that I was glad to be out of. I was decidedly done with whatever was going on with Garrett.

On Monday, September 25, Garrett stormed into my office. I was busy, and I looked up at him, incredulous, and said I didn't have time for this. He didn't say a word - he pulled a letter out of his backpack, handed it to me and left. I remember how angry I was at him for the weekend before. I also remember how I felt when he walked in - how was he able to do that to me? With one look, I couldn't fight it. I read the letter.

"Dear Rebekah,

This past week has probably been the most stressful week of my life. I know you feel the same way.

I just wanted to start out by saying how sorry I am for how I acted this past week. It was so incredibly unfair to you. I am so sorry for that. I never want anyone ever feel like that [sic], especially you of all people. It was wrong for me to impose my mentality on you in that way. I am so sorry for that. I am ashamed of myself that I cause such an intelligent, amazing person to feel that way.

You most likely now think that I don't care, or have been acting this whole time. But that's not true, Rebekah. We talked about this weekend and you knew it was going to be hard. I told you that on Saturday I would not be able to do anything, that I was going to be just like I am every Saturday. We planned for this. I'm sorry, Rebekah. I'm sorry that I couldn't be there for you that night. I'm sorry that I couldn't hold you. But that wasn't because I didn't want to. I said I wanted a night with you in a hotel. I meant it.

We had talked about planning it, and I was all for it and still am. I don't think you should throw out all of our emotions from the past week based off one night. I'm still the same person who we both broke down together with. I'm still the same person lying awake all night shaking, thinking about you and everything. I still care so, so much for you and want to be with you. I'm sorry. But my house just cannot be the place. Just as your house isn't for its own reasons. I don't know how this weekend went so bad when I finally thought we were beginning to understand each other. We were making jokes with each other. Shit we could basically go to lunch everyday. I'm not sure if what I'm saying is making any sense or if you can even read this. I'm really scared, Rebekah. The last time I saw you I thought we were on good terms, and even though I had the shakes your letter would help me relax. I haven't slept or ate hardly anything at all this week. Please don't shut me out like this Rebekah. You help me calm down in these situations when no one else can. I didn't tell my roommates anything mean or dumb about you. I played dumb.

I really want/need us to keep talking. Rebekah I need you just like you need me. Rebekah please don't shut me out. I never wanted to do this. Please, Rebekah. Please. You know how much you mean to me. I am not an emotional person. You have seen sides of me no one has. Please, Rebekah. I'm here for you. I'm sorry I wasn't this weekend but we talked about the long hall. I [sic] here for it. Planned for it. You mentioned other reasons why. I thought you wanted me to try to live normal. I'm so confused. Please. Let me talk to you. Talk to me."

Dear Rebekah,

This past week has probably been the most stressfull week of my life I know you feel the same way.

I just wanted to start out by saying how sorry I am for how I acted this past week. It was so incredibly unfair to you I am so sorry for that I never want anyone ever, especially you of all people It was wrong for me to impose my mentality on you in that way. I am so sorry for that I am ashamed of myself that I caused such an intelligent person to feel that way.

You most likely now think ~~now think probably~~ that I dont care, or have been acting this whole time. But thats not true, Rebekah. We talked about this weekend and you knew it was going to be hard. I told you that on Saturday I would not be able to do anything that I was going to be just like I am every saturday. We planned for this. I am Sorry Rebekah. Im sorry that I couldnt be there for you that night. Im sorry that I couldnt hold you. But that wasnt because I didnt want to. I said that I wanted a night with you in a hotel. I meant it.

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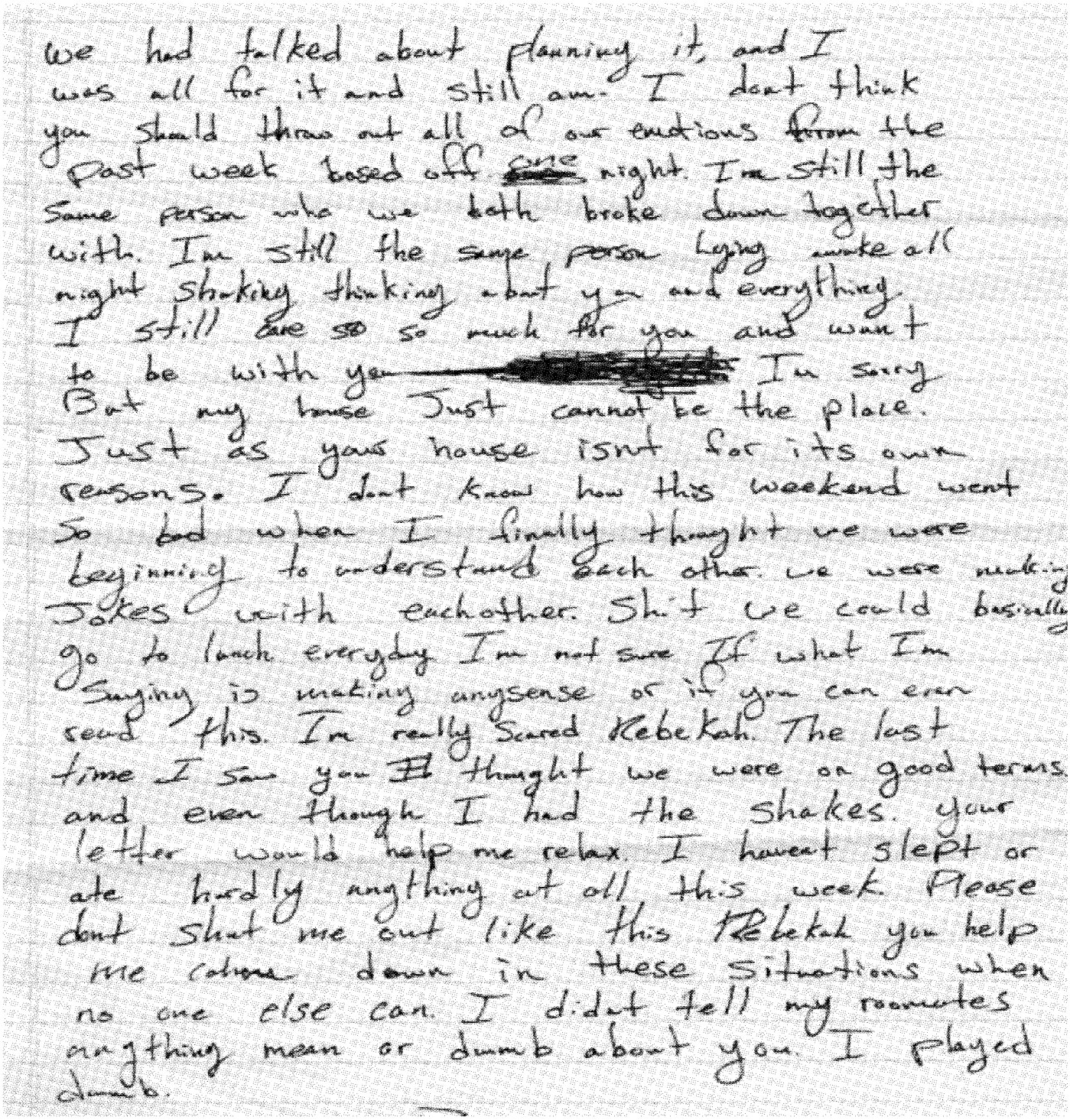
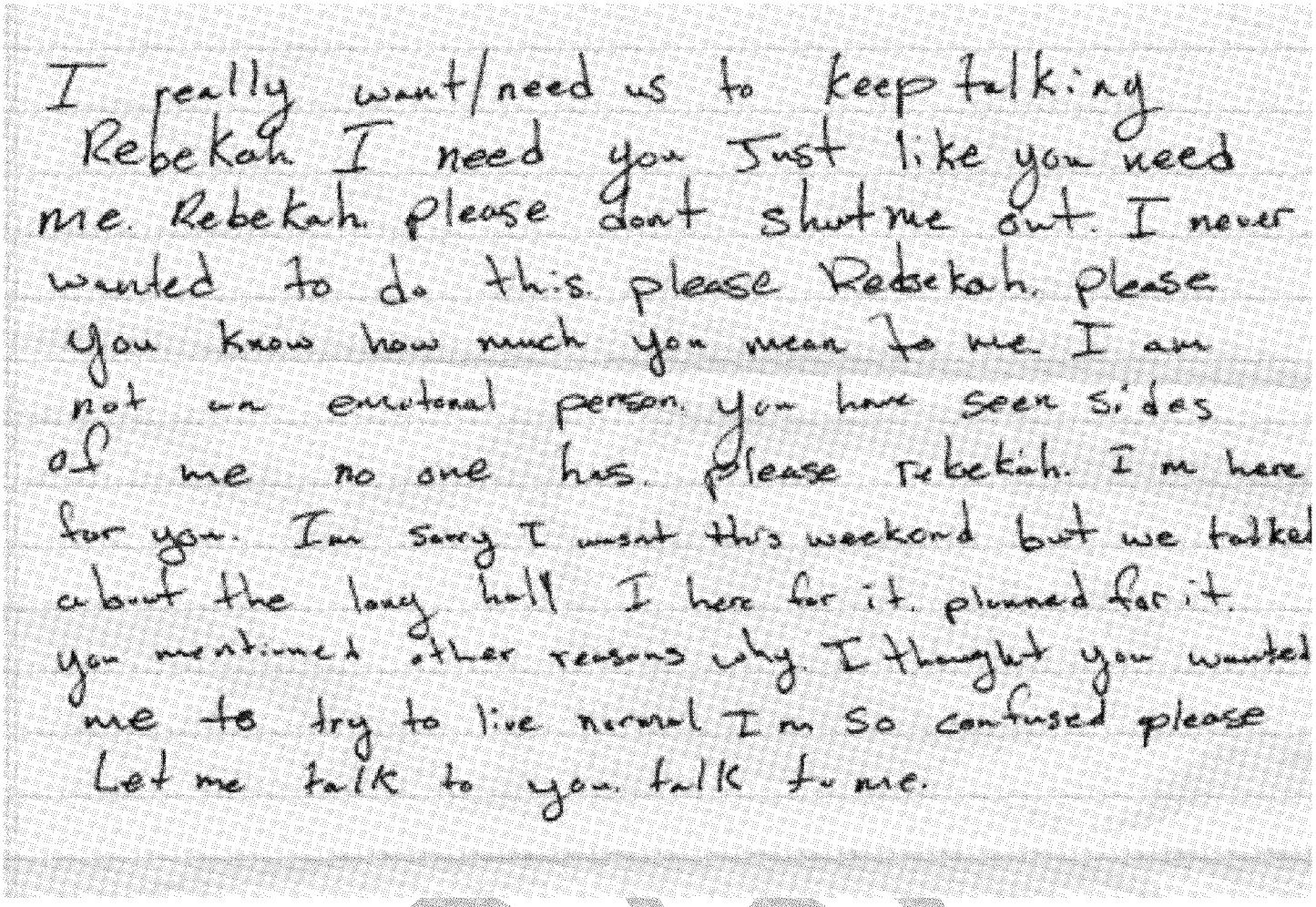


we had talked about planning it, and I was all for it and still am. I dont think you should throw out all of our emotions from the past week based off one night. Im still the same person who we both broke down together with. Im still the same person lying awake all night shaking thinking about you and everything. I still care so so much for you and want to be with you [redacted] Im sorry But my house just cannot be the place. Just as yours house isnt for its own reasons. I dont know how this weekend went so bad when I finally thought we were beginning to understand each other. we were making jokes with eachother. Shit we could basically go to lunch everyday Im not sure if what Im saying is making anysense or if you can even read this. Im really scared Rebekah. The last time I saw you I thought we were on good terms. and even though I had the shakes. your letter would help me relax. I hawent slept or ate hardly anything at all this week. Please dont shut me out like this Rebekah you help me calm down in these situations when no one else can. I didnt tell my roomates anything mean or dumb about you. I played dumb.


I really want/need us to keep talking Rebekah I need you Just like you need me. Rebekah please dont shut me out. I never wanted to do this. please Rebekah. please you know how much you mean to me I am not an emotional person. you have seen sides of me no one has. please rebekah. I m here for you. Im sorry I wasnt this weekend but we talked about the long hall I here for it. planned for it. you mentioned other reasons why. I thought you wanted me to try to live normal I m so confused please Let me talk to you. talk to me.

As easy as it is to look back on that letter now and see all the ways he was lying to me and trying to manipulate me, I couldn't see it then. The letter worked. He had convinced me I was wrong, that he did want to be together. We planned on getting a hotel room together that week and again in the future, so we could spend the night together. He again said we couldn't stay at his place because of his roommates, which I knew was a lie, but no matter how many times I told him I didn't believe him, he just dug in further.

On September 26, we had sex again. Afterward, I tried to talk to Garrett about maybe keeping the baby. Garrett pretended to have a panic attack and started dry-heaving in the trash can. He pulled out his hair and talked about how much of a "fuck-

up" he was. He said his father would be ashamed of him if he could see how Garrett had been treating me. He did this every time I talked about keeping the baby, I told him I wanted to end our relationship, or I told him I wasn't sure about the situation. I told him I cared about him and didn't want to hurt him, but I was torn. He kicked the trash can next to my desk and it flew across the room, spreading papers and coffee grounds everywhere. He said if I cared about him, I wouldn't do this to him. I wouldn't ruin his life. He said he was falling apart. He begged me to promise him not to have the baby. I told him I didn't make promises that I wasn't sure if I could keep. He yelled at me, threw a book across the room. I thought he was going to hurt me, so I ran out of the office, down the stairs and away from him. I heard him calling for me outside, but I didn't stop. I was scared.

Garrett told me the next day, September 27, that his cousin had died, who had been bulimic. I am not sure if this story was also made up or was true. Garrett was nothing but drama, claiming repeated ER visits, panic attacks, changes in the history with his mother, lies about his roommates, lies about his feelings about me, and more. I did not know what was true or untrue until I read the statement he gave during his interview with the Title IX office, and even then he changed his stories between them, the police, and what he said to me. Maybe he did have a cousin who died. Maybe he really was having an awful, terrible week. Maybe. Maybe not. I don't know.

He said the visitation was Friday - I could sense he was already setting up the pretense for why he would, yet again, not be able to be together on the weekend. He seemed to have all the time in the world every day of the week except for Friday and Saturday nights. I knew he hadn't told his parents about us, and actually asked him not to for a while in fear that they'd call the school and try to get me in trouble, even though I hadn't broken any rules. Garrett said he wanted to keep them out of it. He said he had been sick lately, that he felt like he had the flu. He said he couldn't wait to cuddle in bed with me the next night, but with his family in town this weekend he might not be able to see me afterward.

9/27/2017 20:19 Garrett:	I've been talking to my parents for the first time since all of this so that's helped in a way but been stressful in others
9/27/2017 20:19 Garrett:	I'm just trying to take it one moment at a time
9/27/2017 20:19 Rebekah:	I know.
9/27/2017 20:20 Rebekah:	I miss you. I wish I could hold you
9/27/2017 20:22 Garrett:	Friday's going to be hard. Afternoon and evening there's a visitation or whatever it's called at my aunts for the relatives near by in Florida
9/27/2017 20:23 Rebekah:	If you don't want to go alone, I'll go with you. As a friend
9/27/2017 20:28 Garrett:	Thank you, that means a lot. I'll be with so much family though. I won't feel alone
9/27/2017 20:29 Rebekah:	Ok. If you need me, I'll be there. Just ask.

We spent the night together at a cheap motel near campus on September 28. I dressed up to go out, but Garrett wanted to stay in bed together. We watched Tosh.0 and ate junk food while we cuddled. I made a Tylenol run because he said he had a headache. When I got back, I took off my clothes down to my lingerie. He was already down to his boxers. We cuddled under the blanket while we watched TV together,

taking it easy and just enjoying being together. Things felt fine until I made a joke about him being too sick to get it up. It was a joke. It didn't mean anything. It was in direct reference to something we had just seen on Tosh.

He screamed at me, shoved me to the other side of the bed, grabbed the blanket off of me and threw it on the ground. I told him I was sorry. I tried to explain it was a joke and I didn't mean anything by it. I asked why he was yelling at me, why he was so angry. He sat back down on the bed as I tried not to fall off the edge from the other side. I rolled over to face away from him. I started crying. I didn't understand. I felt him put the covers back on the bed. I felt him get in and move close behind me. He said he was sorry. He started rubbing my back and trying to turn me over to face him. I resisted at first, but then let him pull me toward him. He kissed me. I don't know why, but no matter how awful he was to me, every time we kissed it was like I couldn't remember why I was scared or angry with him. He put his hand on my breasts and started kissing my neck. He told me he was sorry over and over again as he slid his hand between my legs. I kissed him back.

He got on top of me, quickly pulling his boxers down to his knees. He didn't wait this time - he was inside of me before I got my underwear past my thighs. We kissed like it was the last night of our lives. We held hands the first two hours of sex, kissing the entire time, looking into each others eyes. I told him I loved him. He told me

he loved me, too. He'd tell me how beautiful I was while he switched from his hands to his mouth and back again. He told me he loved my body. We didn't take a break for water. We didn't stop for anything. We spent hours making love like this, taking turns on top, both sweaty and sticky from all the physical labor.

We both had already orgasmed once, but we kept going. At one point he stopped, he pulled out and looked at me while I was laying in the bed. He took a deep breath in and out, then said, "You're the most amazing person I've ever met. I don't want to fight. Promise me you'll end it. We can be together like this, just promise me you'll end it." He told me he had never told anyone he loved them before. He said he never felt about anyone the way he felt about me - like I was family. Like I was the only person in the world who truly knew him. I was the only person who mattered to him.

He looked at me like he needed me to promise him. He looked at me like he loved me and I held his life, his future in my hands. I loved him, and I needed him to feel ok. I told him ok. "Promise me," he said, still staring into my eyes, on his knees in front of me, naked and exposed. He was beautiful. I thought I didn't belong in the same playing field as him. He was that attractive. Yet, he chose me. He wanted me. "Rebekah, tell me you promise," his tone more serious. "Ok," I said, "I promise."

He came back down and kissed me again, before getting on his back, waiting for me to get on top of him and put him back inside of me. When I got back on top of him, I

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thought I could orgasm again. I started to move faster, and he grabbed my hips, moving with me, tilting his head back as he shouted, "Fuck yes, Oh my god, Yes." I was starting to scream. Our emotions were so high I thought we'd both explode. Then he yelled, "Fuck me! Cum on my dick! Fucking cum on me!" It caught me off guard. He hadn't spoken to me like that during sex since the first time. When he could tell I was close, he stopped, put his hand firmly around my neck, and said, "You don't get to cum yet."

He flipped me over suddenly, and grabbed me by the hips, pulling me up so that I was on my knees. It was rough. I felt him grab the back of my hair. That was rough, too. We had gone from something incredible - probably one of the most intimate nights of my life - to something else entirely and I had no idea why. I wasn't close to an orgasm anymore. The way he was pulling me back by my hair, while he thrust as hard he could inside of me hurt. I wanted him to finish so we could stop and we could back to just laying together. I thought he was trying to penetrate me so hard that he'd force a miscarriage. That's how rough he was. I started the night with the romantic, gentle, loving Garrett, and in a second he turned back into the animal he became that first night we had sex. It lasted a lot longer than I thought it would, and when he came, he let go of my hair and pushed me down from my knees.

After he was done he got up to go to the bathroom. I just laid in the bed. He tossed me a hand-towel, told me to clean myself up, commented about preventing

UTI's and took a shower. I waited until he was done to go into the bathroom and clean up. I was bleeding again. When I came out of the bathroom, he was already in bed. I crawled in and climbed up next to him. He put his arm around me and we slept for the next four hours.

Garrett became more distant in the days following; busy with his family and classes, he said. He also claimed his health was deteriorating and he had lost weight from not eating. He constantly reminded me of my promise to him. Was I as bad as him, saying things while we were in bed together that I didn't mean? We weren't going to be together, regardless of what happened. He knew that when he said it. And I knew I didn't want to and probably wasn't going to have an abortion when I promised him I would. Were we the same - two irredeemable liars, using each other to get what we wanted? I wanted him, and my insincere promise gave him to me. He wanted me to agree, and his insincere promise persuaded me. He disappeared that weekend. Again. He thought he was back in control, and didn't worry about what influence the time alone with my family would have on me.

My husband, and I started talking more about what was happening. My husband said regardless of who was the father, he wanted to be with me and start over together. I wanted to be with my husband, but I still had feelings for Garrett, which I told my husband about. I had promised to stop talking to Garrett so long ago, but yet I

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lied to my husband and told him I was staying over at a friend's place the night I was Garrett. I wish I could say cheating on my husband was a mistake - and it is in the sense that I wish I could take it back - but I wanted to be with Garrett. I wanted to be with both of them. How can you love two people at once? Was it even love?

Factitious

I didn't know how to tell Garrett that I didn't want the abortion after I had promised him. I was afraid he would hurt me, that he would snap, that he wouldn't forgive me, that I'd lose him. I wasn't ready for that, but our infatuation needed to end. I couldn't ever truly fix things with my husband while I was still in love with Garrett. And I seemed to be with a different version of Garrett every other day. I needed to get serious about making a decision, and Garrett kept asking me to promise him that I'd have an abortion. I loved him. I hated to see him suffer. In momemts of weakness, I considered having the abortion just to protect him from any more pain. He was tearing me in two. Seeing Garrett so upset, so sick, so destroyed by what the pregnancy was doing to him made me feel awful. He knew what I wanted, but he didn't care. Every time I even hinted that I didn't want to do it, he would start yelling, asking me why, reminding me of my promise. He'd throw things, kick things and rip out his hair. I

didn't know what to do. I tried to walk away. I told him I needed to let him go and forget about what happened between us. He convinced me not to.

The appointment I had scheduled at the clinic weeks ago, with Garrett standing over my shoulder, was set for October 4. He knew the date because he was listening. Two days before, he was doing all he could to make sure I went. He was pushing too hard. I started questioning what I felt was an imbalance in our relationship, to which Garrett fervently denied. I told him that I didn't believe he loved me. He promised to come see me that night.

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	I haven't been feeling well this weekend, and I'm in a weird place with you. Jake wants me to keep it now, and I have exams this will, and a class to teach... the only time i feel better is when I'm with you, and
10/1/2017 15:07 Rebekah:	that scares me because our.... relationship is pretty much over
10/1/2017 15:22 Garrett:	I know what you mean Rebekah. Please just try to remeber the feeling of holding me at night. I haven't slept and have hardly ate at all this weekend and keep finding out more and more news about my cousin. We're both stressed to the max. I can't sleep at night thinking about you and all these tests. I just want things to be okay
10/1/2017 17:29 Garrett:	I'm worried and savaged Rebekah
10/1/2017 17:29 Garrett:	Scared
10/1/2017 17:29 Garrett:	Starved
10/1/2017 17:50 Rebekah:	If i help so much, why are you pushing me away
10/1/2017 18:05 Garrett:	I'm not trying to push you away at all
10/1/2017 18:26 Rebekah:	I'm not going to be able to see you again before Wednesday
10/1/2017 18:27 Rebekah:	Tomorrow i have to leave campus early to get jack, and i have class/ have to teach Thursday
10/1/2017 18:30 Garrett:	How early?
10/1/2017 18:31 Garrett:	I think we'll be able to
10/1/2017 18:31 Rebekah:	Around 2 or 2 30
10/1/2017 18:31 Garrett:	We always figure something out lol
10/1/2017 18:31 Rebekah:	We didn't this weekend
10/1/2017 18:38 Garrett:	I can see you in between classes tomorrow easily
10/1/2017 20:12 Garrett:	I can see ou before or after my classes. My first one is at 11. I'm going to see you Rebekah I swear on it. I'm not going to let you down. Please just try to remember Thursday and how it felt to just hold me in your arms. When we made love. To even just sitting there and laughing at tosh for an hour.
10/1/2017 20:12 Garrett:	You don't have to let me go
10/1/2017 20:12 Garrett:	I won't let you let go
10/1/2017 20:13 Garrett:	Please don't forget
10/1/2017 20:14 Garrett:	Don't let me go

10/2/2017 12:32	Garrett:	Yes.. I'm just worried
10/2/2017 12:32	Rebekah:	About what
10/2/2017 12:33	Garrett:	Just everything about it
10/2/2017 12:34	Rebekah:	Me walking out?
10/2/2017 12:35	Garrett:	You after. Everything after. Everything
10/2/2017 12:40	Garrett:	What are you thinking
10/2/2017 12:41	Garrett:	I have an exam right during your appointment
10/2/2017 12:41	Rebekah:	I'm thinking I wish we could be together to talk before
10/2/2017 16:43	Garrett:	I'm probably already going to be late because of the exam
10/2/2017 16:45	Garrett:	I'm sorry Rebekah please don't be upset with. E
10/2/2017 16:45	Garrett:	Me
10/2/2017 16:53	Rebekah:	No chance?
10/2/2017 16:54	Garrett:	I can come by your office again after the exam for a second but I really need to go to this review tonight I really need to do good on these exams
10/2/2017 16:54	Rebekah:	what about after the review
10/2/2017 16:55	Garrett:	I mean I don't know how long it's going to go. But I don't really want to come back to campus that late to go back there again at 8am
10/2/2017 16:56	Rebekah:	Ok. Nevermind. It's ok
10/2/2017 16:56	Garrett:	I was just gonna keep studying at home
10/2/2017 16:56	Garrett:	Are you mad at me??
10/2/2017 17:24	Rebekah:	No.
10/2/2017 17:29	Rebekah:	Mad isn't the right word
10/2/2017 18:47	Garrett:	Please don't fall apart on me I need you
10/2/2017 18:51	Rebekah:	You need me to keep it together so that I'll do it Wednesday. I need you so I'm not broken forever
10/2/2017 18:51	Garrett:	No I need you to keep it together for more reasons than that. If you lose it. I fuckin lose it
10/2/2017 18:54	Rebekah:	I can't do all of this. I can't be strong for everyone. The only thing that takes my mind out of this is being with you. I wish we could just order food and study together here, or watch a movie.. just something
10/2/2017 18:54	Rebekah:	I know it seems stupid but that's what i need
10/2/2017 18:57	Garrett:	I'm at this study group and we're just now starting I don't know if I can do that tonight Rebekah on a moments notice
10/2/2017 18:57	Garrett:	Please try to remember Thursday
10/2/2017 18:58	Garrett:	Please don't be upset with me that dosent sound stupid at all
10/2/2017 18:58	Rebekah:	Sorry i can't schedule my mental breakdowns around your study schedule
10/2/2017 18:59	Garrett:	I know that Rebekah
10/2/2017 18:59	Garrett:	I'm sorry
10/2/2017 19:00	Rebekah:	You've said that
10/2/2017 19:01	Garrett:	I can text you when I get out of this
10/2/2017 19:02	Garrett:	See what's up

I told him I thought he was playing me. He got angry, offended even, at the accusation.

10/2/2017 19:30 Garrett:	Rebekah how am I playing you. I'm not playing with you at all this is all genuine. I'm just trying to understand this law shit. It's gonna be like midnight by the time I get out of here at least that's the way everyone's talking. I don't understand going back to school that late it's dark and scary and I don't think you should stay there at all
10/2/2017 19:31 Garrett:	I'm not playing you for the slightest
10/2/2017 19:31 Rebekah:	I stay here all the time
10/2/2017 19:32 Rebekah:	And it's fine. I think I'm starting to get it now
10/2/2017 19:32 Garrett:	Starting to get what
10/2/2017 19:32 Rebekah:	You.
10/2/2017 19:35 Garrett:	I'll fucking come by if it really is making you feel that way about me. I don't want you to feel that way at all. When I hug you and hold you those feelings are real. I'm not playing you for anything. Thursday would have never happened if that were the case. Please please Rebekah I'm trying I really am please don't shut me out like this. Please I'm not trying to do anything to upset you
10/2/2017 19:36 Rebekah:	Garrett. It's fine.
10/2/2017 19:37 Garrett:	Like I don't want you to be even the slightest upset with me. Whatever you think you're understanding or think I'm lying or whatever it's not true it's not
10/2/2017 20:37 Garrett:	You know how much you matter to me. I've done so much to try to prove that to you Rebekah. You know how much you mean to me. I told you that I would write you the greatest letter to help you just get through another day. I thought you understood how much these exams were stressful for both of and the time they require. What about tomorrow night even I don't know Rebekah I'm scared and confused and worried about everything and failing bout of college I just don't know what to do I'm tearing at the edges here and I'm tryin g to focus and I can't I'm lost

Garrett came to my office just after 11 that night and we had sex again. This time felt different again. It felt real – like we were there together emotionally. I don't know how he faked that so well, but it was a convincing performance.

I didn't want to end things with him, but I knew I couldn't stay with him, and if I couldn't leave yet then I didn't want the abortion he wanted me to have to be the only reason we were still having a relationship. I was starting to trust myself more that he

was trying to manipulate me and I was tired of pretending that I was going to do it when I had made my mind up days earlier that I was not. I wanted to know what Garrett's intentions really were. If the pregnancy was over, would he disappear? Garrett had no plans on being a parent, so I thought maybe it was best he not know if I decided to keep the baby. I thought about lying to him - telling him I had the abortion on Wednesday so I wouldn't need to be afraid of what he'd do to me if I didn't.

I lied to Garrett on the morning of October 4 and told him I would go to the clinic and take the abortion pill. I told him I felt awful about it, but that I was doing it for him, so that he could find some peace. I asked him if there was ever a moment that he felt like he could fall in love with me. He said yes, but everything had changed so fast. He told me to text him if I needed him. He asked me if I was ok. I asked if we could see each other before, but he said he wasn't home. I didn't believe him, so I drove by his house. He was home.

I told him I did it. I told him it was over.

He told me to prove it.

I asked him how.

He told me to take a picture of the pill bottle. I lied and said they give it to you there at the clinic. I guess he looked it up and there are two pills you take - one at a

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clinic and one at home. He told me again to show him the pill bottle. I said I couldn't, that I wasn't feeling well and I was in bed.

He told me to show him the blood, then.

He was acting crazy, and I was starting to feel seriously afraid of him. I downloaded a fake pill bottle label, slapped it onto one of my empty bottles of sleeping pills (which I had stopped taking as soon as I found out I was pregnant), and sent him the picture.

Earlier in the day, he said he wanted to see me between classes, after it was over. I told him I'd probably be there a few hours, but that I'd drive to campus to meet him. I said I'd be there from about 12 - 2. He promised me he'd come by. He didn't. He didn't even respond to my texts until after I had to leave.

10/4/2017 12:02	Rebekah:	It's done. I need to go to the pharmacy then campus.
10/4/2017 12:02	Rebekah:	It's your right to block me or disappear or whatever. But it's done.
10/4/2017 12:04	Garrett:	Is it really done?
10/4/2017 12:04	Rebekah:	Yes
10/4/2017 12:08	Rebekah:	I hope this helps you. That's all I wanted
10/4/2017 12:12	Garrett:	When are you going to campus. My phone is dying
10/4/2017 12:13	Garrett:	I'm with another law study group on campus
10/4/2017 12:15	Rebekah:	I'll be in my office in like 20 minutes until about 2
10/4/2017 13:23	Rebekah:	I'm free now and have a few minutes. Not sure if you're busy or not
10/4/2017 13:33	Rebekah:	Is that a no?
10/4/2017 14:19	Rebekah:	This is it for me. I'm out. I've already given you everything I had. There isn't anymore left
10/4/2017 14:20	Garrett:	I don't know what to say to that
10/4/2017 14:21	Rebekah:	Nothing.
10/4/2017 14:22	Garrett:	How do I know it actually happened. I can't see you again?
10/4/2017 14:22	Rebekah:	I really fucking regret what i did today.
10/4/2017 14:24	Garrett:	Why? What did I do
10/4/2017 14:25	Rebekah:	Nothing. It was my decision.
10/4/2017 14:26	Rebekah:	We need space. Like you said, Tallahassee isn't very big. I'm sure we'll see each other around.
10/4/2017 14:26	Garrett:	I don't think you will what do you want me to do.
10/4/2017 14:27	Rebekah:	Nothing. Just ace the semester, get into law school and be happy.
10/4/2017 14:37	Rebekah:	That was the point, wasn't it?
10/4/2017 14:38	Garrett:	I don't know

I told him I felt like I was doing something wrong. His reaction to thinking I had done it started to make me question whether or not I actually should maybe have an abortion. I asked if he would come see me that night since he didn't earlier in the day. I asked if we could just hold each other so that I could sleep in his arms. He said he was going to be busy studying. He said, "I thought you were cutting things off with me?" I told him I would, if that's what he wanted, but I still cared about him. He started to question if I was telling the truth.

10/4/2017 16:47 Garrett:	I thought you were cutting things off with me
10/4/2017 16:49 Rebekah:	I don't know. I should. I will if that's what you want
10/4/2017 16:52 Garrett:	You have your whole family Rebekah. I can't sleep on a office floor. I don't like it there that much. You said you should and that you want to cut things off with me. I don't know what to think.
10/4/2017 16:53 Garrett:	You said it was going to be 4 hours and you were done in less than 2
10/4/2017 16:53 Rebekah:	I went in at 9.
10/4/2017 16:53 Rebekah:	What do you want
10/4/2017 16:55 Garrett:	I want things to go back to normal I'm not through this week. I don't even know if it really happened. I was planning on seeing you and actually having a conversation with
You after my exam tomorrow
10/4/2017 16:57 Rebekah:	We can talk later. I'm going to go out for a bit
10/4/2017 16:57 Rebekah:	Does normal include me
10/4/2017 18:43 Garrett:	It's not a no

I felt terrible about it, unnaturally dishonest, but I knew deep down, ever since I found out, that I wanted to keep the pregnancy. I had seen Garrett get angry when I suggested that I wasn't going to do it, and I was afraid of telling him. I told Garrett that day that the abortion was done, that I was "out," and that the romantic relationship had to end. If his life was really falling apart because of this, as he so often told me it was, then he would be ok. I thought I could hide it for a while, wear baggy clothes and avoid seeing him. I didn't think it through fully, but it felt like my only way out.

The next morning, Garrett asked again if it was really over. I told him I felt terrible about all the lies, but I didn't specify which ones. I told him I wanted him to come by so we could talk about it. He asked again if I was sure I did it. I asked him to come by later that night, so that we could be alone and talk.I guess I'm just not as good of a liar as he is, because as soon as he showed up to my office that day, during a break I

had between classes with other people in my office, he instantly knew I didn't do it. He yelled at me, stormed out and told me to tell him the truth.

Garrett showed up to my office again later that day while I was meeting with a student. I had a student that was taking a make-up quiz when I saw Garrett walk by my office door, look inside, and keep walking.

10/5/2017 14:57 Rebekah: Was that you?
10/5/2017 15:12 Garrett: Can I come now? Just give him the final answer
10/5/2017 15:13 Rebekah: One sec
10/5/2017 15:19 Rebekah: Ok he's heading out
10/5/2017 15:20 Garrett: No he's not
10/5/2017 15:21 Rebekah: He's in the door one sec

He told me to "just give him the final answer and kick him out," so that I could meet with him. He got irritated when I didn't kick out the student, circling my office in the hall outside. He waited there for about 30 minutes while my student took the test, even though I told him it wasn't a good time. After I told him the truth, he again faked a panic attack.When he used to have them, I would rub his back and hold him and tell him to breathe and calm down. When I tried to do that on this night, he pushed me so hard I fell backward to the ground. He pushed me, and when I hit the ground, I froze. I just stared at him. He just stared back at me. Then he stormed out of my office.

Maybe he thought he had crossed a line with me by pushing me to the ground, because he'd spend the next week apologizing for it. Or maybe he realized that I would

take as much abuse from him as he wanted to inflict upon me, because he'd do it again a week later. I've wanted to ask him since that night if he ever thought about hurting me. Like really hurting me. I could see it in his eyes as I sat up. I could see he wanted to hurt me. There was no love there. He was all rage. I asked him not to leave like that. I begged him to come back. I spent our entire relationship taking orders from him, doing what he wanted. I had so often told him that I didn't want him to do anything that he didn't really, truly want to do. Not that night. I needed him to come back. He had just found out I wasn't going to have an abortion, and he threw me to the ground for it. I wanted to believe it was an uncontrollable reaction, that it was a mistake, that we would be ok.

After finding out I didn't have the abortion, Garrett pulled away, started talking about his depression and his thoughts about going to sleep and never waking up. I think he tried to guilt me into changing my mind, which made me feel terrible. We met the night of October 6, and I gave him a letter, trying to reason with him and explain how I felt. I was confused and everything going on with Garrett and my husband was making me feel like my heart was torn in two. I was worried about Garrett. I tried to tell him that he wasn't alone, that he shouldn't hate himself over anything that happened, and that I was there for him if he needed me.

10/5/2017 17:04	Garrett:	I can't do this anymore it's all my fault
		I have never told you what you do but i am telling you right now to
10/5/2017 17:04	Rebekah:	come back
10/5/2017 17:05	Garrett:	Please just do it and be happy I'll grow up
10/5/2017 17:05	Garrett:	I can't
10/5/2017 17:05	Rebekah:	Please come back
10/5/2017 17:05	Rebekah:	I'll never forgive you if you leave like this
10/5/2017 17:05	Rebekah:	Please
10/5/2017 17:05	Rebekah:	I need you
10/5/2017 17:06	Garrett:	You can't put that on me like this I can't do this it's my fault
10/5/2017 17:06	Garrett:	It's all my fault
		We were supposed to be here for each other. Us against the world. And
10/5/2017 17:22	Rebekah:	you just left me ..
10/5/2017 17:22	Rebekah:	When i really needed you the most, you left me
		ITS ALL MY FAULT THAT YOU EVEN FEEL THAT WAY I LITERALLY CANT DO
10/5/2017 17:24	Garrett:	THIS
10/5/2017 17:25	Rebekah:	It is not all your fault. And I need you. I still need you.
10/5/2017 17:26	Rebekah:	You said it was you and me.
10/5/2017 17:27	Rebekah:	You promised me
10/5/2017 17:27	Garrett:	I'm 100% sure this is my fault and am making you feel this way
10/5/2017 17:28	Garrett:	You can't convince me otherwise
10/5/2017 17:28	Rebekah:	You're wrong, Garrett
10/5/2017 17:28	Rebekah:	And now i can't think about anything else
10/5/2017 17:28	Garrett:	I can't live with myself
10/6/2017 14:31	Rebekah:	Please take care of yourself. Please
10/6/2017 14:53	Rebekah:	Don't disappear on me this weekend, ok? Let me know you're ok.
		I didn't have time to and didn't know how you finish it... I don't expect
10/6/2017 16:31	Rebekah:	you to have answers right now.
		Whatever you want or need to say, I'm here. I won't be frustrated with
		you because texting is shitty, or because you think you're not saying
10/6/2017 16:50	Rebekah:	what i want to hear. I just want to listen and be there for you.
10/6/2017 17:39	Rebekah:	You can say anything
10/6/2017 17:41	Garrett:	I'm not going anywhere
		I'm not going home. I read the letter at home. I'm staying in Tallahassee.
		I don't want to drive home. I don't want to be in a car. I just want to be
10/6/2017 17:42	Garrett:	alone
		I just want to sleep and never wake up I just need to keep reading your
10/6/2017 17:43	Garrett:	letter
10/6/2017 17:43	Rebekah:	What? I thought you had left hours ago
10/6/2017 17:44	Rebekah:	Please don't talk like that. You know if you needed me I'd be there
10/6/2017 17:44	Garrett:	No I can't do it. I can't be around my parents like this
		I'm so sorry. I wanted to help. I thought maybe you would be ok this
10/6/2017 17:45	Rebekah:	weekend.

Over the course of the next several days, his entire demeanor changed. I became frustrated and hurt by the way he spoke to me and treated me, and he became

increasingly distant. He apologized for throwing me to the ground. He said he wasn't *trying* to hurt me. He didn't *want* to hurt me. He began making statements like, "I just want to go to sleep and never wake up," "I don't like myself," "this is all my fault," "I know this is all going to come back to me in like two years, if I even make it to then."

From about October 6-13, I began to seriously worry for his personal safety. On October 7, after Garrett had stated at least four times that he wanted to "sleep and never wake up," I asked one of his roommates to check in on him throughout the night. When Garrett found out I did this, he texted me, "Rebekah I just saw this. I will probably be alright what did you text cole? I don't want him telling my parents that I'm thinking bashing my head through a wall. I just don't know wtf to do."

When I told Garrett I was going to call his parents to get him help, he asked me not to, saying "Because that will complicate things and make everything x5 more stressful." I also told Garrett on October 7 that the relationship was stressing me out, and that I couldn't do it anymore.

10/7/2017 8:31	Rebekah:	Are you ok?
10/7/2017 9:00	Rebekah:	I'm sorry if I said/ did something wrong
10/7/2017 9:16	Rebekah:	I'm starting to get really worried about you. Please answer me
10/7/2017 9:26	Garrett:	I'm sorry I woke up really sick early this morning. You did nothing wrong at all. It's just me. I talked to my mom a while again this morning and have cole giving me medicine
10/7/2017 9:26	Garrett:	Might go to doctors today
10/7/2017 9:27	Rebekah:	Ok. I'm sorry. I was really, really sick last night. I hope it's nothing i gave you =/
10/7/2017 9:27	Rebekah:	I really miss you
10/7/2017 9:35	Rebekah:	I feel like there's a mountain of space between us and I hate it.
10/7/2017 11:13	Rebekah:	And I never thought you were trying to or wanted to hurt me.
10/7/2017 11:17	Garrett:	I'm not trying to hurt you. I don't know Rebekah. I'm not going to the game I'm so sick I'm just staying here with everyone else but in a dark room sleeping. I got really sick last night. I'm just trying to get through all of this one minute at a time. I just want to sleep forever
10/7/2017 11:56	Garrett:	I've got a fever from all of this I just get like this when I feel awful about everything and physically
10/7/2017 11:58	Rebekah:	I don't want you to feel awful. I thought my letter would show you why this isn't your fault, how it's not you influencing me.
10/7/2017 12:08	Rebekah:	I thought you would understand. I'm sorry
10/7/2017 12:19	Rebekah:	You don't have to hide from me or lie to me. I never want us to be dishonest with each other ever again.
10/7/2017 12:26	Garrett:	I'm not hiding or lying to you. It's just me and this fever. I'm not pushing you away. I understand. Your letter makes me happy and helps me. I just need more rest and a break from everything. Before another sleepless week
10/7/2017 12:43	Rebekah:	You mean a break from me? That's ok if it helps you.
10/7/2017 12:54	Garrett:	No school, life, everything. I'm taking some actual sleeping pills
10/7/2017 13:12	Rebekah:	Be careful. Don't take too many.

I asked him to let me know he was ok, because I was worried about the way he was talking. This was a new Garrett - depressed, blaming himself, hating himself. I still don't know if he meant any of this or if any of this was real. While he was telling me he was sick and near death, he was going to games and parties, out all night drinking with his friends. He was screening my calls.

7/2017 19:13 Rebekah: This isn't fair.

7/2017 20:40 Garrett: Hello

Rebekah I told you I was taking sleeping pills. I've been passing in and out all day I feel awful I'm not trying to push you away. I don't want you the feel that way. I jut want to sleep and never wake up. I'm not going anywhere I'm just so sick. Maybe I can see you tomorrow if I stop feeling this way physically and mentally about myself

7/2017 20:42 Garrett:

7/2017 20:42 Garrett: I've been out

7/2017 20:49 Rebekah: I can't do this anymore

You're telling me I've gotten physically ill. And just want to sleep my life away and quit school

7/2017 20:51 Garrett:

7/2017 20:52 Rebekah: I meant I can't do this with you

7/2017 20:53 Garrett: I don't know what to do

I think that's what you want.... for it to be over... so I'm not going to try

7/2017 20:57 Rebekah: anymore. I won't pressure you. I can't chase you like this.

7/2017 20:57 Rebekah: I can't.

I haven't checked out. I'm sick from all of this. I can't eat all I can do now is sleep barely. Thank god. I told you I would be under for awhile from drugs. I wish you wouldn't have gotten mad at me like that. I read your letter as much as I can because it helps me here in my sick bed. I told you o just don't feel good about anything in my life now and I just don't want to be around anyone. Just sleeping for years. A coma.

7/2017 21:16 Garrett:

7/2017 21:16 Garrett: Coma

7/2017 21:20 Rebekah: I don't know what's going on anymore

I wish I could take that letter back.. or go back and stop myself from

7/2017 21:20 Rebekah: writing it

7/2017 21:21 Garrett: Why why why it means so so much to me

7/2017 21:21 Garrett: So much

Please don't say that. It's helping me get through this please don't be

7/2017 21:22 Garrett: upset with me I'm not pushing you away

Please don't say that. I can't get through this without any of it. I'm sorry I'm getting like this from being sick and just hating myself for all of it. I know it's confusing I'm confused. I thought you didn't expect answers right away. We're just trying to get through this and I'm trying to be alive. I thought we understood each others feelings. We've made love we've felt the passion through eachother. I don't know what's going to happen between us after whatever happens I can't see the future I don't want to cut you out. I just don't like myself. I'm just taking everything by a minute. I want to at least keep being your friend after all of this. Your letter means so much to me please don't get upset by my incompetence

10/7/2017 21:38 Garrett: with myself and life

It's just a letter. I didn't expect answers but I wanted to see something, anything to get us back to being close again like before... I hated myself Thursday for everything that happened. I don't care how gross or smelly or sweaty or sick you are... it hurts so much that you don't need

10/7/2017 21:41 Rebekah: to be with me through this

It's not that I don't need you. I just can't with life. I'm checking out of it. I wanted to go home this weekend to make it easier. But I couldn't. I couldn't be in a car that long. That's why I'm here by myself just trying to prepare for everything. Reading your letter to help me. I love it. Everything. I know it hard for you to understand about not being in person it's just that I don't know. I just want to cry and sleep and never wake up like how I was in your office. Just disgusted. I just don't like

10/7/2017 21:46 Garrett: myself. I wish I was someone else. I just don't like it

Break ups, especially in intense relationships like ours, can be ugly. There's confusion, and dishonesty, and anger, and passion, and it's all pouring out at once. I'm not proud of everything I said during those few days. I was mean to him at times. I wanted answers for why he was suddenly so different. I wanted to understand what was happening to us. I should have just walked away. I loved Garrett, but I was angry. We seemed to always be pulling each other under the water, gasping for breath as we slowly drowned.

That's what it felt like. Drowning. Suffocation.

But if I'm going to tell this story honestly, then I need to be honest about the role I played in that volatile, violent last week we were together. I should have let it go. I made it worse. Garrett told me he had gotten sicker, that he was becoming severely depressed and that he needed a break from the stress. I tried to be supportive; I asked if he needed anything, if I could check up on him, and I tried to clarify where our relationship stood.

Garrett claims during this period he was lying to me to avoid me, which wasn't necessary because I told him several times it was fine if he didn't want to see each other, that I was worried about him but I knew things had changed between us. I didn't want to show up to his house and cause problems, but I was worried about him because of the things he was saying and didn't know what else to do.

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I should have stopped right here. I should have called someone - the counseling center, a crisis help line, his family - and told them I was worried about Garrett. I should have told them he was talking about going to sleep and never waking up. I should have told them everything, rather than putting it on myself to carry the weight of his mental health. I didn't, and I would end up paying a very heavy price for that.

	I hate myself I don't know what to do. I DIDNT EVEN know we were technically dating enough to call it breaking up. I know that sounds mean over text but I don't want it to. I'm not cutting you out I just can't do it here or now I jucst can't do anything. It all makes my head spin and I can't do anything please don't be mean to me like this. Nothin really helps me like this except just being isolated sometimes I just don't like
10/7/2017 22:09 Garrett:	myself I'm sorry
10/7/2017 22:09 Garrett:	Didn't mean for caps
	God sometimes you are really immature. You're more considered about the term to describe whatever our relationship is than the fact that it's
10/7/2017 22:10 Rebekah:	ending
	I can't do this when you talk to me like this. I can't do any of this. I'm not okay with myself or anything. My head won't stop fucking pounding and I can't eat a damn cracker. I'm sweating through all my shirt and I'm
10/7/2017 22:14 Garrett:	getting yelled at I just want to go away. And sleep forever
	No matter how kind or patient I am with you, it makes no difference. So just hide away and leave me to deal with ALL of this by myself, like
10/7/2017 22:16 Rebekah:	you swore you would never do.
10/7/2017 22:17 Garrett:	I'm not I just can't do this tonight I'm physcocally incable
	I'm sorry you're stuck in your own self pity. I don't know if I can be here for you after you finally snap out of it, because you again have
10/7/2017 22:17 Rebekah:	abandoned me
	I can't feel sorry for you anymore. I've done and am doing all you've
10/7/2017 22:19 Rebekah:	asked for. I told you my reasons.
	I'm not abandoning you. I'm not doing it again. We've both been there for eachother so much. You can't say that. I'm sorry it's just so impossible to understand. It's not self pity. I thought you witnessing me
10/7/2017 22:22 Garrett:	dry heaving several times shows you this isn't a joke and that was over a week ago. None of my ducking clothes fit.
10/7/2017 22:23 Garrett:	I said that I could see you tomorrow when I wasn't so sick and out of it
10/7/2017 22:23 Rebekah:	You said that Friday
10/7/2017 22:23 Rebekah:	Just stop
	You won't let me help you, you won't let me be with you to help me, but I can't just watch you destroy yourself and do nothing. So just tell
10/7/2017 22:24 Rebekah:	me you're fine and leave me alone then.
10/7/2017 22:24 Garrett:	I know I said I could see you Sunday

10/7/2017 22:29 Rebekah:	I asked Cole to keep an eye on you. I can't just sit back and let this happen, and you won't let me help you.
10/7/2017 22:29 Rebekah:	I'm sorry, Garrett. I can't stomach you being like this and not do anything about it
10/7/2017 22:30 Rebekah:	It's best we just stop talking for a while. Because I can't stand this
10/7/2017 22:35 Garrett:	Rebekah I just saw this. I will probably be alright what did you text cole? I don't want him telling my parents that I'm thinking bashing my head through a wall. I just don't know wtf to do.
10/7/2017 22:39 Rebekah:	I told him I was worried about you and asked him to check in on you often this weekend
10/7/2017 22:43 Rebekah:	Maybe someone should tell your parents. Maybe I should. You're talking in a way that is unhealthy and you won't let anyone help you
10/7/2017 22:44 Garrett:	I'm going to be fine.
10/7/2017 22:44 Garrett:	I'm just sick.
10/7/2017 22:49 Rebekah:	You just spent three days telling me i can't see you because you don't feel like yourself, you hate yourself, and you want to go to sleep and never wake up
10/7/2017 22:53 Rebekah:	Tell me why I shouldn't call
10/7/2017 22:59 Garrett:	Because that will complicate things and make everything x5 more stressful
10/7/2017 22:59 Garrett:	That's not fair
10/7/2017 22:59 Rebekah:	Not fair?
10/7/2017 23:00 Rebekah:	what the hell am I supposed to do???
10/7/2017 23:01 Garrett:	I just need to sleep

I told him I wouldn't call his parents if he promised to get help. If he had done something to hurt himself, I would have never forgiven myself. I realize now, of course, this was all an act, that he was never sick, never went to the hospital, never threw up blood, never suffered the way he made me think he did. I know that because he admitted to it during his disciplinary hearing. This was all an act.

But to what end? Did he think if anger, affection, and love didn't work, guilt would? I started asking more questions when I felt that he was lying to me. I stopped

blaming myself, though I still felt somewhat responsible. And what made him angry the most - I started telling him I thought he was lying.

10/8/2017 6:43	Rebekah:	I haven't slept at all
10/8/2017 9:04	Rebekah:	Random question.. how tall are you?
10/8/2017 9:24	Garrett:	I slept alright
10/8/2017 9:24	Garrett:	Still sick.
10/8/2017 9:25	Garrett:	I don't know I'm not sure why
10/8/2017 9:25	Garrett:	Who did you calll stressing me out
10/8/2017 9:26	Rebekah:	I didn't call anyone. You asked me not to and promised you'd be ok.
10/8/2017 9:27	Garrett:	Yeah I'm about that tall
10/8/2017 9:28	Garrett:	Thank you that would make things worse
10/8/2017 9:28	Garrett:	I'm planning on seeing a doctor today. If you can on a Sunday
10/8/2017 9:30	Rebekah:	Yeah you can
10/8/2017 9:30	Garrett:	A throwing up bits of blood that bad. Online says I'm either dying or have TB
10/8/2017 9:31	Rebekah:	You said you've done that before... in May
10/8/2017 9:32	Garrett:	Yeah so can't be that bad I guess
10/8/2017 9:32	Rebekah:	unless you made that whole thing up
10/8/2017 9:33	Garrett:	God I hate the way I feel about everything

On October 8, Garrett told me he was "throwing up blood."

Why blood? I'm sure I'll think of the symbolism here eventually, but I still can't figure out why it was always blood with him.

I accused him of lying. He brushed it off.

10/8/2017 9:37	Garrett:	You emailed cole
10/8/2017 9:39	Rebekah:	I told you last night i did that
10/8/2017 9:39	Rebekah:	What did he say
10/8/2017 9:40	Garrett:	Just confused. I haven't hurt myself
10/8/2017 9:41	Garrett:	I can't live like this anymore
10/8/2017 9:42	Rebekah:	You can't just say stuff like that
10/8/2017 9:44	Garrett:	I'm going to call my mom at the doctors. I'm so close to just spilling everything
10/8/2017 9:45	Rebekah:	For fuck sakes just let me come over

Garrett texted me saying, "I can't live like this anymore." I told him I needed to see him, to check on him to make sure he was OK, but he said I could not come over because his roommate was still sleeping. I continued talking to him, though both of us likely only stressed each other out even more than before. He said he wanted to meet that afternoon, about 3:30, at the same place we always met in Cascades Park. I was swamped at work and running late. He got very angry when I was late. He always set the time. He always set the place. My job was to show up.

10/8/2017 12:28 Rebekah: How are you
10/8/2017 13:31 Rebekah: Garrett?
10/8/2017 13:44 Rebekah: I'm still grading so can meet at four or five?
10/8/2017 14:29 Garrett: I was hoping to start hw by then
10/8/2017 14:29 Garrett: I'm sick I feel awful
10/8/2017 14:29 Rebekah: Could you do it now and we meet later?
10/8/2017 14:30 Garrett: I don't know. Now I just want to throw up or sleep
10/8/2017 14:31 Garrett: I've gotten so dehydrated from all of this
10/8/2017 14:31 Rebekah: Ok so meet me at 5 or 6, sleep now
10/8/2017 14:32 Garrett: Once I sleep I won't wake up for awhile
10/8/2017 14:32 Rebekah: .. ok
10/8/2017 15:46 Garrett: Can't I just see you sooner. I have medications that are going to make me pass out. I'm physically exhausted from heaving
10/8/2017 15:47 Rebekah: I don't want seeing me to be some terrible burden on you.
10/8/2017 15:49 Garrett: It's not a terrible burden. I'm just fucking passing in and out of consciousness and keep jumping awake scared of passing out because I know I'll fall so deep I won't wake up and then you'll get upset but okay
10/8/2017 15:51 Garrett: I'm trying Rebekah
10/8/2017 16:04 Rebekah: If I got there by 5 would that be ok
10/8/2017 16:05 Garrett: Yes I can meet you somewhere at 5
10/8/2017 16:06 Rebekah: Ok where
10/8/2017 16:07 Garrett: Same place?
10/8/2017 16:10 Rebekah: The panera bread? Really?? Can we go to cascades or something instead?
10/8/2017 16:11 Garrett: I guess but I can't get out of the car and walk around. I'll throw up
10/8/2017 16:15 Garrett: I can't do this long. I'm gonna throw up now
10/8/2017 16:30 Garrett: Planning on meeting there at 5?
10/8/2017 16:30 Rebekah: Ok. Im running behind. Just got out of the shower, going to put some clothes on, braid my hair back and try to leave soon
10/8/2017 16:30 Garrett: It's fine
10/8/2017 16:45 Rebekah: Sorry... erything takes 10 times longer with a kid.. leaving in 5 minutes
10/8/2017 16:58 Rebekah: Be there in about 15 mins. Same spot as before? You under the trees if it's not roped off?
10/8/2017 16:59 Garrett: Yes please hurry I'm not doing good
10/8/2017 17:00 Rebekah: I'm hurrying
10/8/2017 17:07 Garrett: I'm so sick
10/8/2017 17:10 Rebekah: Almost there

We sat in his car talking for a while. He was doing his best to sell to me that he was sick. He had the heat turned all the way up in his car - I could tell as soon as I got in. It made him sweat as though he had a fever. I got a towel out from the back of my car and brought it over to him. I held him. He held me. We kissed. We talked.

He asked me to go the clinic again the next day. I felt defeated. *What was I doing with him again? Why did I keep coming back? Why did he?* Maybe I could just go and make sure everything was normal with the pregnancy. Maybe I would just lie and tell him I went. Maybe I made a mistake when I told him the truth the previous week. I should have stuck to my story that I went through with the abortion. This time, I would have to be more convincing.

The next morning, he turned right back into super-attentive and supportive Garrett again. He thought playing sick had worked. He thought he was getting me to do what he wanted. I told him I was nervous about going, nervous about everything. He said he wanted to be with me. *I guess we're not broken up, I thought.*

Garrett told me that we couldn't be at his place because he didn't want to go through a million questions with his roommates. He said it was the same way that we couldn't be at my place. I wasn't letting it go. Every other time he told me this lie, I just let it go. Not this time. He could tell I wasn't going to drop it. I saw the lie. I saw it clearly and his self-wallowing wasn't going to convince me otherwise. So what did Garrett do when I wouldn't let it go? He made up a story that he was being rushed to an Urgent Care Clinic. Again.

10/9/2017 0:12 Garrett:	Don't be nervous don't be scared. You are strong. Think of me and when we look into each others eyes. You can feel it. I'm always there with you
10/9/2017 0:13 Garrett:	Have you've heard of The Velvet Underground? Try Pale Blue Eyes. Beginning starts off weird, but I've listened to it a lot recently thinking
10/9/2017 5:11 Garrett:	You've got this.weve got thois please don't forget about me
10/9/2017 7:04 Garrett:	Please be okay and awake
10/9/2017 7:21 Rebekah:	I'm awake, I'm ok. Sorry. Busy getting jack ready earlier
10/9/2017 7:50 Rebekah:	Here's a playlist for you... Monday by Bek Jones
https://open.spotify.com/user/12185389870/playlist/7qCQR lQLxh4euh7YbW8pzd
10/9/2017 8:30 Garrett:	I am going to listen
10/9/2017 8:30 Garrett:	Everything going okay
10/9/2017 8:50 Rebekah:	I'm home now. Everything is ok.
10/9/2017 8:53 Garrett:	Can you tell me what happened?
10/9/2017 8:58 Garrett:	Did something go wrong or
Not happen
10/9/2017 9:19 Rebekah:	Sorry. I really don't feel good and just want to lay in my bed and listen to music
10/9/2017 9:20 Garrett:	Okay
10/9/2017 9:20 Garrett:	Do you promise?
10/9/2017 9:21 Rebekah:	I promise. I'm not out doing anything else with someone else. I'm home.
10/9/2017 11:24 Rebekah:	I miss that part of you that loves me, not the part that doesn't trust me
10/9/2017 11:25 Garrett:	It's the part that fell asleep in your arms. The part that you fell asleep in my arms
10/9/2017 11:32 Garrett:	Did you listen to my song
10/9/2017 11:33 Rebekah:	Yeah, I did. And I answered you. I don't know what you want me to do
10/9/2017 11:59 Rebekah:	So much for being with me through this
10/9/2017 12:01 Garrett:	I am with you. I just don't like the lying
10/9/2017 12:01 Rebekah:	I'm sorry for lying to you last week, but I thought I was helping you.
10/9/2017 12:06 Garrett:	I love the way that you have been so understanding of me from the beginning. After everything I've done to make this horrible. I love how when you hold me I calm down and rest easier 99% of the time. I love how you knew my name the first day I saw you. I love how you opened up to me the way no one else before and it means so much to me. I love how you would risk anything for me. I love how even though I am disgusting you still don't mind. I love how you're always there for me. I love that you're an incredibly strong individual. I wish everything how this happened was different.
10/9/2017 12:06 Garrett:	Maybe I need to write a letter
10/9/2017 14:37 Rebekah:	I just got here... so not up for this today
10/9/2017 14:50 Rebekah:	This is really lazy of me you all, but do you think you could grab me a bottle of water from one of the nearby vending machines after your class?
10/9/2017 14:51 Garrett:	I didn't go to class
10/9/2017 14:51 Rebekah:	Oh. Nevermind :(
10/9/2017 14:52 Garrett:	Still sick as fuck remember
10/9/2017 14:54 Rebekah:	I was hoping you'd feel better. Not coming tonight, either?
10/9/2017 14:55 Garrett:	That class is cancelled luckily. I've been drinking water. You're right it makes the puking better
10/9/2017 15:06 Rebekah:	Glad to hear about the water.

	You do not have a child at home. You have a college roommate. Something isn't right about this... there's something you're not telling
10/9/2017 16:27 Rebekah:	me...
	THERES NOTHING IM NOT TELLING YOU ITS MY HOUSE WITH MY ROOMATES YOU HAVE BEEN ALL THE WAY INSIDE IT WHAT CAN I POSSIBLY BE HIDING. YOU CAUGHT ME MY HOUSE IS A METH LAB. I JUST CANT HANDLE ALL OF THIS AT MY HOUSE I KUST DONT WANT TO GO THROUGH THAT WITH THEM. I SAID I WOULD MEET YOU IM GOING TO FUCKING GO CRAZY I CANT HANDLE THIS. YOURE MAKING ME FREAK OUT AND IM SICK IM GOING TO FUCKING DIE FROM THIS. I CANT DO
10/9/2017 16:29 Garrett:	THIS
	I can't fight like this. I shouldn't have to fight to see you today. I'm so
10/9/2017 16:29 Rebekah:	emotionally exhausted from you
	I TOLD YOU I WOULD SEE YOU WITH A LETTER TONIGHT I CANT DO THIS
10/9/2017 16:30 Garrett:	I CANT DO THIS. I CANT
	I'm getting driven to urgent care because my roomate is fucking scared
10/9/2017 16:40 Garrett:	for my safety
10/9/2017 16:40 Rebekah:	You've told me that before. In May
	I mean it's mostly because I can't stop shivering and sweating. And also
10/9/2017 16:41 Garrett:	that I'm hysterical

On October 9, 2017, Garett told me that his roommate was driving him to urgent care because he was "afraid for my safety." He told me he was diagnosed with the flu and strep throat, and that he was going to take an anxiety test. We were together on October 8, the day before, and kissed and I was fine, not that that disproves he had either condition, but I was skeptical. He told me he threw up all over the doctor's office and fainted, and that he "can't do this." I asked him what I could do to help him, and he said, "I don't know how to help myself that's why I'm here at the doctors being tested for mental problems and stuff I'm going to break down. I just want to go home."

Three minutes later, he told me was in the hospital and going back for a test. I told him, "Garrett you need help. Let them help you." Shortly afterward, he told me he

left. I again asked him to let me check in on him, and he told me that his mother was driving up from Englewood that night to take care of him.

In the moment it's all happening, you get sucked into the whirlwind and can't see straight. Now, the timeline seems ridiculous. We had been texting all day, and then suddenly, at 4:40 p.m., he was on his way to an urgent care facility. By 5:40, he said he had received both a positive flu and strep test. At 6:10 he said he threw up all over the doctor's office then fainted. By 6:33, he said he was in the hospital. But by 6:51, he said he left with his roommate to go to the pharmacy.

It was all a lie.

Every. Single. World.

He would admit as much later, but on that night he wanted me to believe he was near death. Even though he was completely fine. Maybe this was payback for how I lied to him about going to the clinic. Maybe he was just trying to break me. A lot of questions were piling up. And I would never get answers to any of them.

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10/9/2017 17:40 Garrett:	I tested positive for flu and and a form of strep throat sore throat just now. Going to be prescribed amoxicillin and tamiflu. Also getting prescribed something to help me sleep and am going through an anxiety test
10/9/2017 17:40 Garrett:	I don't know what to do. I didn't want to upset you I'm upset
10/9/2017 17:41 Rebekah:	I hope I don't get sick from kissing you =/
10/9/2017 18:00 Rebekah:	Are you ok?
10/9/2017 18:10 Garrett:	Threw up all over Doctor and room and fainted. I can't do this
	I don't know what to do when you say you can't do this... what can I do?
10/9/2017 18:11 Rebekah:	What do you want me to do? How do I help you????
10/9/2017 18:13 Garrett:	I can't go to school tonight. I can't even make it out of this office. Heard doctor say IV I'm scared for everything
	I wasn't expecting you to come tonight. Maybe you need an IV, get fluids
10/9/2017 18:13 Rebekah:	in you
	I don't know what to do when you say you can't do this... what can I do?
10/9/2017 18:23 Rebekah:	What do you want me to do? How do I help you????
10/9/2017 18:29 Rebekah:	Please tell me how to help you
10/9/2017 18:30 Garrett:	I don't know how to help myself that's why I'm here at the doctors being tested for mental problems and stuff I'm going to break down. I just want to go home
10/9/2017 18:31 Garrett:	I don't know why I agreed to these should have just gone home with the flu
10/9/2017 18:31 Garrett:	And fucking strep
	Garrett please let me help you. Let me be there for you or something...
10/9/2017 18:32 Rebekah:	anything please
10/9/2017 18:33 Garrett:	I'm in a hospital
10/9/2017 18:33 Garrett:	I'm going in to test now
10/9/2017 18:33 Rebekah:	You're at the God damn hospital?????? Which one???
10/9/2017 18:35 Garrett:	It's not a hospital. I don't even know I don't even remeber the drive. It's a clinic
10/9/2017 18:36 Garrett:	I'm baking out of this they can't make me do this
10/9/2017 18:37 Rebekah:	What?? Garrett you need help. Let them help you
10/9/2017 18:48 Rebekah:	Garrett where are you
10/9/2017 18:51 Garrett:	I just left with Austin to the pharmacy
10/9/2017 18:52 Garrett:	I can't keep my eyes open
10/9/2017 18:54 Rebekah:	Is there anything I can do

On October 10, Garrett told me that his mom was driving up to see him and, "my mom thinks I'm mentally insane and I can't even say why." I told Garrett that I was going to talk to his mother because he was worrying me. He told me not to because, "if you told my mom I think it would just make everything worse."

When I told him that I had to tell *someone* that he wasn't just sick with the flu, he said, "If you tell my mom I can't ever speak to you again. That was never my intention." I told him again that I had to tell her, and he said, "This is going to end me as an individual. I don't know where I'm going after this or what will happen." He began using never talking to me again as an ultimatum to keep me from telling anyone what was happening. I felt extremely uncomfortable. He told me he was going to tell his mom himself. I again wondered what I was supposed to do.

Who do you call when someone is like this, talking about dying, hurting themselves? He begged me not to tell anyone. What if he did something to himself and I didn't try to get him help? Didn't I have a responsibility to tell someone who was in a position to help? He was asking me not to tell anyone - but shouldn't I have, anyways? He needed help. What should I have done?

On October 11, Garrett said his condition was worsening, and that he couldn't come to campus. Of all the communication I've shared in the attached documentation, none concerned as much as the texts I received on October 11. Garret asked me if he could drop off a letter to my house, which I told him was fine. Then he said his mom wouldn't let him drive. I told him I would meet him, or stop by his place. He asked me how he should explain that to his mom. I told him to just tell the truth - that his girlfriend was coming over to see him. He didn't like me giving him commands, or

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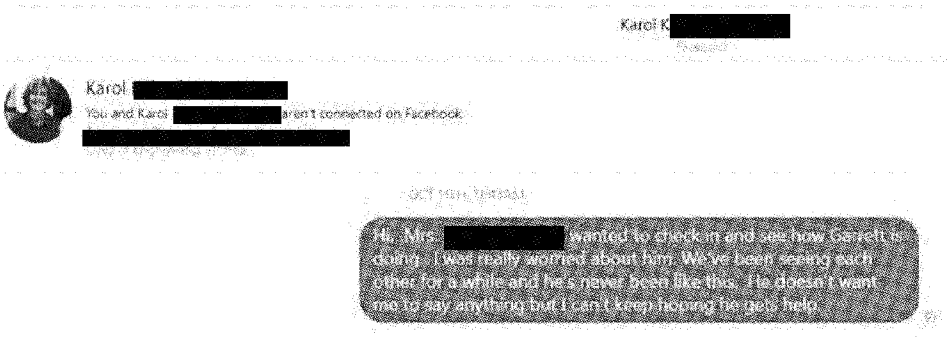
even suggesting that I be a part of his life in any other way than the very isolated place he kept me in. Hell, for all I know his mom wasn't even there.

10/11/2017 11:15	Garrett:	She doesn't know I have a girlfriend
		Ok well tell her you do. Or you're seeing someone. Whatever the hell term you want to use for the person you've been talking with and seeing almost daily before this weekend, sleeping over at hotels with, fucking
10/11/2017 11:17	Rebekah:	and getting pregnant..
10/11/2017 11:17	Garrett:	I fucking can't okay. I can't see you.
10/11/2017 11:17	Rebekah:	I think girlfriend is a little cheap for us, but seems to fit
10/11/2017 11:18	Rebekah:	Why
		I don't like the way it makes me feel. I can't do this anymore. I'm failing
10/11/2017 11:19	Garrett:	my classes. I'm dying. I can't hold you. I can't be held
10/11/2017 11:19	Rebekah:	What the hell
10/11/2017 11:20	Rebekah:	Everything was fine
		You won't even talk to me in person?? You're really breaking up over
10/11/2017 11:23	Rebekah:	TEXT? After everything we've been through???
		I can't. I can't hold you. None of this can go on it's not right. I don't feel right about any of it. It was all my fault from the beginning. I should
10/11/2017 11:23	Garrett:	have never pressured you into doing anything. You
10/11/2017 11:23	Garrett:	I am going to talk to you in person but I can't today
10/11/2017 11:24	Rebekah:	You just broke up with me over text
10/11/2017 11:24	Rebekah:	You asshole
10/11/2017 11:25	Garrett:	Stop saying that YOURE MARRIED
10/11/2017 11:25	Rebekah:	I can't even believe you right now
10/11/2017 11:25	Garrett:	you have a family and I've ruined everything

I decided to message Garrett's mother on Facebook and tell her that Garrett had been behaving unusually and that I was concerned for him. He broke up with me and I felt pressured to tell someone about his mental state – someone who he could trust, someone who could help him.



Less than a half hour after he broke up with me, he started calling me and texting me again., saying he didn't mean it, saying he was just scared and confused. I thought I

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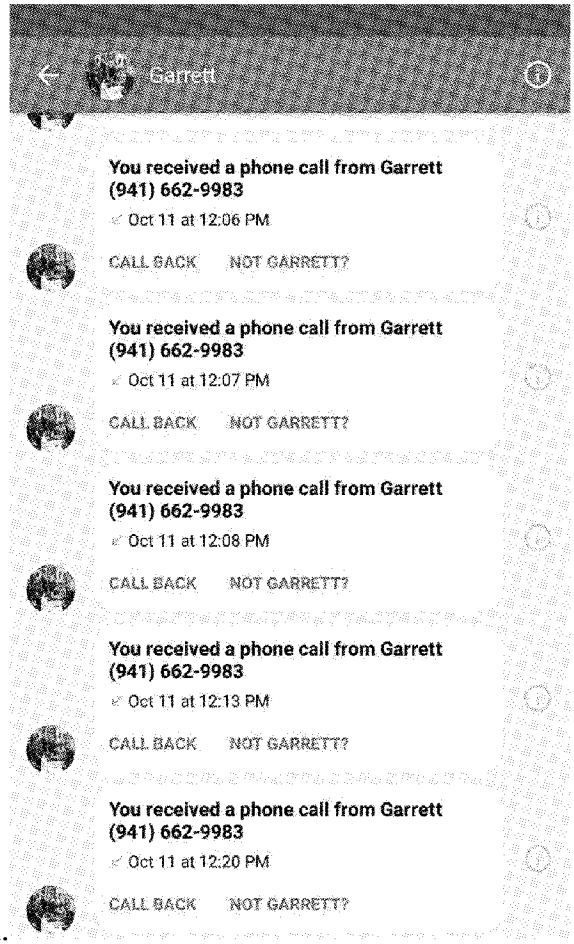
had heard the last from him – he did have a habit of disappearing, after all, and when he apologized I didn't want to take him back.

10/11/2017 11:54 Rebekah: But hey, you've shown me EXACTLY who you are
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah: I'm done.
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah: I wanted to talk to you
10/11/2017 11:55 Garrett: I wanted to talk to you too
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah: You decided to break up with me
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah: I'm done
10/11/2017 11:56 Garrett: You lied to me about still being pregnant.
10/11/2017 11:56 Rebekah: I really hope you get better. But please leave me alone
10/11/2017 11:57 Garrett: You're not making any sense
10/11/2017 11:57 Garrett: I told you I could see you
10/11/2017 11:58 Rebekah: I don't care Garrett
10/11/2017 11:58 Rebekah: You wanted out of my life. So get the fuck out
10/11/2017 11:58 Garrett: No that's not what I said.
10/11/2017 11:59 Rebekah: And you're right. I told my husband I'd stop talking to you weeks ago.
10/11/2017 11:59 Rebekah: So I'm done



In the morning, Garrett said he wanted to end our relationship, which upset me, and he continued to talk about how sick and upset he was. He told me that his mom thought he was "insane." Later in the day, he said he wanted to see each other and still be together, but I told him to stop talking to me. I told him I didn't want to have the abortion so there was no point in him continuing the charade. I told him I was done. He played me, and I was done. Suddenly he didn't want to break up anymore. I had no idea what the hell was going on. It was dizzying.

Stress, fatigue, being shoved to the ground, being thrown across the bed, the rough sex, the not eating - maybe it all contributed to why I started bleeding. Not just spotting this time, actual blood. I was both terrified but also relieved that it was possible I might lose the pregnancy. I thought that I should go to a doctor, have myself checked out. But I also thought I deserved punishment for it all - for the cheating, the lies, the madness I had let engulf my life - so I didn't.

Garrett wanted to know what was going on, which in fairness was his right. We were still together, kind of, and he was the father, so I told him. If I didn't lost it, he said, he still wanted me to have an abortion. I told him I wasn't going through the fiasco of an abortion pill again, and I didn't even know if I could at that point in my pregnancy. He told me to get the surgical procedure done instead. I was still at the doctors office when he called me. I didn't answer. I didn't feel like talking to him. I was

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with my kid. I just wanted to be left alone. He then told me that he talked to his mom and that he was going to drop his courses and go home. He even told me in a letter that night he was thinking about quitting school and becoming a carpenter. Seriously.

He said, "My blood pressure is at abnormal levels. My immune system has been greatly weakened. I've been deemed emotionally disturbed. My mom is looking to get a leave of sickness from the school."

I told Garrett that I couldn't tell him what to do, but that I thought he had worked too hard to quit school and what happens with me shouldn't determine whether he finishes his degree. I reminded him that he broke up with me and that he should just walk away. He then said he didn't mean it, that he was upset, that he messed up, etc. He then said he was OK if my husband and I raised the child as our own, but then said, "I don't know what I'm going to do when it all comes back. If I make it till then."

We continued this conversation throughout the day. At one point, Garrett said, "I didn't want to alienate you I didn't want today to go the way it did. I just panicked and freaked out and messed up. I have nothing to lie to you about... you've seen me break down. I didn't mean to say it so harshly like that. I panicked I freaked out. I've never cared for anyone that wasn't family like the way I did. I promise my letter will explain

stuff like this better than these texts. I know you don't believe that but it's true. I felt intimate that night in the hotel. It's the future that scared me from the beginning."

10/11/2017 14:30 Garrett:	My mom wants to talk to you
10/11/2017 14:33 Rebekah:	No. I'm at the doctors with my son.
10/11/2017 14:33 Rebekah:	You can tell whoever you want but that doesn't mean I have to be involved in the fallout
10/11/2017 14:35 Garrett:	Okay, what happens if you decide to have the baby. You said before that you could never put me [illegible]. That you couldn't do that. That we couldn't do any of this.
10/11/2017 14:37 Rebekah:	Well given how you've acted the last few days ill manage
10/11/2017 14:38 Garrett:	I didn't want any of this. I wrote you a letter. You probably don't want it.
10/11/2017 14:39 Garrett:	My mom and I talked and I'm dropping my classes this semester before they go onto my transcript. Spending the semester at home.
10/11/2017 14:42 Rebekah:	Ha ok. Literally abandoning new
10/11/2017 14:42 Rebekah:	Me
10/11/2017 14:42 Rebekah:	I want the letter
10/11/2017 14:43 Garrett:	My blood pressure is at abnormal levels. My immune system has been greatly weakened. I've been deemed emotionally disturbed. My mom is looking to get a leave of sickness from the school
10/11/2017 14:44 Garrett:	This is all out of my hands
10/11/2017 14:49 Garrett:	I can't even read your letter it just hurts. When it made me feel so much better.
10/11/2017 14:50 Garrett:	I'm not abondoning you. You said your husband would raise it and have his name
10/11/2017 14:51 Rebekah:	It will have MY name, just like Jackson. And I'm sorry you're so stressed but all I ever wanted was to be there for you
10/11/2017 14:51 Rebekah:	Burn my letter if you hate me this much.
10/11/2017 14:52 Rebekah:	I never even got yours
10/11/2017 14:53 Garrett:	Are you and Jake going to raise it
10/11/2017 14:53 Rebekah:	I don't know what to tell you to do. Maybe taking the semester off is what's best for you. But you have to come back. You have to finish school. You know that right?
10/11/2017 14:53 Rebekah:	It might be just me. I'm ok with that.
10/11/2017 14:53 Garrett:	I'll probably finish school somewhere else.
10/11/2017 14:54 Rebekah:	You can't do that.
10/11/2017 14:54 Garrett:	Why?
10/11/2017 14:54 Rebekah:	You have one semester left. You could probably do online classes to make up for this semester

10/11/2017 16:54 Garrett:	I just never handled any of this well from the beginning. You hate me for it I hate myself for it. I panicked today and said all that stuff out of fear and humility in the face of my own mother as if she wouldn't be my biggest crutch. I should have never said those things like that today. Or ever. It just stresses me out so much I panic and my weapon is my phone. I never wanted you to ever feel like this. I know you don't believe that but it's true. I just messed up big time and am going to talk to my father soon
10/11/2017 16:54 Rebekah:	You didn't say anything that wasn't true
10/11/2017 16:55 Garrett:	What
10/11/2017 16:56 Rebekah:	Everything you said to me was true
10/11/2017 16:57 Rebekah:	It all hurt. But at least you were being honest with me
10/11/2017 16:58 Garrett:	It wasn't expressed in detail or the right way and I'm sorry for that. Maybe the letter will be better
10/11/2017 17:24 Rebekah:	What should I do here Garrett... I dont know what you expect me to do
10/11/2017 17:30 Garrett:	I don't know Rebekah. I would like if it raised by your family
10/11/2017 17:31 Garrett:	I don't know what I'm going to do when it all comes back
10/11/2017 17:31 Garrett:	If I make it till then
10/11/2017 17:31 Rebekah:	What do you mean all comes back
10/11/2017 17:37 Garrett:	Like In a couple years when you send me a picture or something
10/11/2017 17:38 Rebekah:	It doesn't have to be like that
10/11/2017 17:42 Garrett:	How would it be. I can't do it either way
10/11/2017 17:43 Rebekah:	What does that mean? You can't be involved and you can't not be involved?
10/11/2017 17:43 Garrett:	How could I be involved. You said so yourself it couldn't work like that
10/11/2017 17:46 Rebekah:	I was trying to justify what you wanted. It can be however we want it to be
10/11/2017 17:55 Garrett:	I can't be involved I don't How I could be.
10/11/2017 17:55 Garrett:	You have a family
10/11/2017 17:55 Rebekah:	I have myself and Jackson
10/11/2017 17:56 Rebekah:	And it would make you a part of my family, too, btw
10/11/2017 17:56 Garrett:	You have a husband that wants it and to raise it.
10/11/2017 17:56 Garrett:	I can't do that
10/11/2017 17:56 Garrett:	I can't do any of this
10/11/2017 18:30 Garrett:	I'm. It trying to guilt you. I never have never wanted to. They don't know. I would do a lot of things differently. I know you wanted to help me. You did help me. The days in your office. Your letters. The nights. Holding eachother. It all helped me it all did. I just it scared Rebekah. Since the beginning I've just been terrified.
10/11/2017 18:31 Garrett:	I didn't want to alienate you I didn't want today to go the way it did. I just panicked and freaked out and messed up.

	I told Danielle and Cole. You said you told your mom. So how do they
10/11/2017 18:34 Rebekah:	not know
10/11/2017 18:35 Garrett:	I'm talking about the pregnancy
10/11/2017 18:35 Rebekah:	Oh
10/11/2017 18:35 Garrett:	I really wish you wouldn't have done that
10/11/2017 18:35 Rebekah:	Why
10/11/2017 18:36 Garrett:	I spent so much time lying to them and now they look at me differently
10/11/2017 18:39 Rebekah:	You said you didn't lie
10/11/2017 18:42 Rebekah:	Lol of course you did
10/11/2017 18:42 Rebekah:	I have no idea what parts of this were even real
10/11/2017 18:43 Garrett:	All of it was real. They're just putting pieces together that's what I meant. All the things I deferred or swept under the rug
10/11/2017 18:45 Rebekah:	I'm supposed to trust you that you've lied to everyone in your life but me?
10/11/2017 18:46 Rebekah:	The same day you ended things between us? Telling me that you never loved me.. That you never wanted to hold me or kiss me again
10/11/2017 18:50 Garrett:	I have nothing to lie to you about... you've seen me break down. I didn't mean to say it so harshly like that. I panicked I freaked out. I've never cared for anyone that wasn't family like the way I did. I promise my letter will explain stuff like this better than these texts. I know you don't believe that but it's true. I felt intimate that night in the hotel. It's the future that scared me from the beginning.
10/11/2017 18:54 Rebekah:	I don't know what to do. Earlier you wanted to never see me again, then you hated me and were going to quit school and never see me again, now you're talking to me like we're still in this together... I don't know... I don't understand what I am to you...

I noticed a few hours after I messaged Garrett's mom that I was blocked by his mother's account, and I asked Garrett what he said that would make her block me. He said, "I'm not telling people anything. I blocked you on my moms phone myself. She doesnt know how to use technology. I blocked the message so she wouldn't be more terrified of my safety."

He told me he had saved us both from a "major problem," but when I asked him what problem he saved us from, he said, "She freaks out just like me. She would just freak out. I don't want her freaking out on you or anything that's not fair to you. I told you I talked to her. It's the concern for my safety. I just convinced her that I don't need

to be in a fucking straight jacket. Moms do not need to keep hearing that their son is going to hurt themselves."

Reading Garrett's statements to FSU, this appears to be a lie, and his mother likely blocked me herself as she was not visiting in the first place. He likely told her some elaborate lie about why I had sent the message.

10/11/2017 19:32 Rebekah: What the hell did you tell your mother that led her to block me
10/11/2017 19:32 Rebekah: What the hell are you telling people
10/11/2017 19:34 Rebekah: Garrett what have you said
10/11/2017 19:35 Garrett: I'm not telling people anything. I blocked you on my moms phone myself. She dosent know how to use technology. I blocked the message so she wouldn't be more terrified of my safety
10/11/2017 19:35 Rebekah: .....
10/11/2017 19:35 Rebekah: Doing shit like that, maybe she should be
10/11/2017 19:36 Rebekah: Did you delete Coles email, too?
10/11/2017 19:36 Garrett: No cole saw that. I understand you sending me that message. I saved us both a bigger problem if she read that message too.
10/11/2017 19:37 Rebekah: How
10/11/2017 19:37 Rebekah: What bigger problem did you save us both from
10/11/2017 19:38 Garrett: She freaks out just like me. She would just freak out. I don't want her freaking out on you or anything that's not fair to you
10/11/2017 19:38 Rebekah: You did not do that for me
10/11/2017 19:39 Rebekah: You did that so your mom won't find out you've been lying, or that you've been dating someone for months and didn't tell her... You did not do that for me
10/11/2017 19:40 Rebekah: So all that about your mom wanting to talk to me was made up
10/11/2017 19:41 Garrett: No.. my mom knows that... I told you I talked to her. It's the concern for my safety. I just convinced her that I don't need to be in a fucking straight jacket
10/11/2017 19:41 Garrett: No that wasn't.
10/11/2017 19:41 Rebekah: Why on earth would she want to talk to me
10/11/2017 19:42 Garrett: Moms do not need to keep hearing that their son is going to hurt themselves
10/11/2017 19:43 Rebekah: if she doesn't know I'm pregnant, why would she want to talk to Mr
10/11/2017 19:43 Rebekah: Me*
10/11/2017 19:43 Rebekah: And what exactly did you tell het
10/11/2017 19:44 Rebekah: Her*
10/11/2017 19:45 Garrett: I can't talk or explain all of this right now I'm about to sit down. She wanted to talk to you because of how upset I was. She initially thought it was all your fault as moms do but I explained everything. She dosent hate you. She just said that with the millIon things I said and I just typed it. It was all happening very fast

Garrett told me he had a rough night. He said he threw up and made a scene at dinner. I believe it is also worth noting that on October 11, 2017, around 5:08 PM, Garrett was pulled over and cited for careless driving, according to Leon County Clerk of Court, case number: 37 2017 TR 024773 - STATE OF FLORIDA vs SWEETERMAN,

GARRETT MICHAEL. Garrett seemed to be unraveling at the seams, and maybe some of that was authentic.

Later that night, early October 12, I received a text from Garrett stating he was going to the hospital, that he had thrown up blood "everywhere." He said his phone was dying, and I did not hear back from him until the next morning, when he told me he had just had an allergic reaction to his medication and was not going to school.

We met that night and talked for a while and Garrett gave me a letter. He said he was going home that night and staying home for the weekend, which I learned later was also a lie. In his letter, Garrett told me he had been living the "hardest weeks of my life," that he now had a "D" average in his classes, that he had not been eating and that not eating had been making him sick, he again talked about dropping out of school. He said:

"I just wish I could start over. Be someone else. People tell me I'm different… This is all of my fault. Everything I've done or said to you the past month has been real. I'm sorry that I couldn't always be there Rebekah. I always wanted to. I'm sorry for constantly pressuring you into things. I don't know what I'm going to do these next weeks in semester. I have nothing. I can't even get a political science degree. I don't know what to do then to just let you do as you please. That I won't bother you. I just can't do it. Any of it. **I just want to dissolve. I need to find myself. I want everything to be okay**

for you. I just need time to feel like myself. I'm so sick I thought my time had come last night. That was it. I'm so sorry Rebekah."

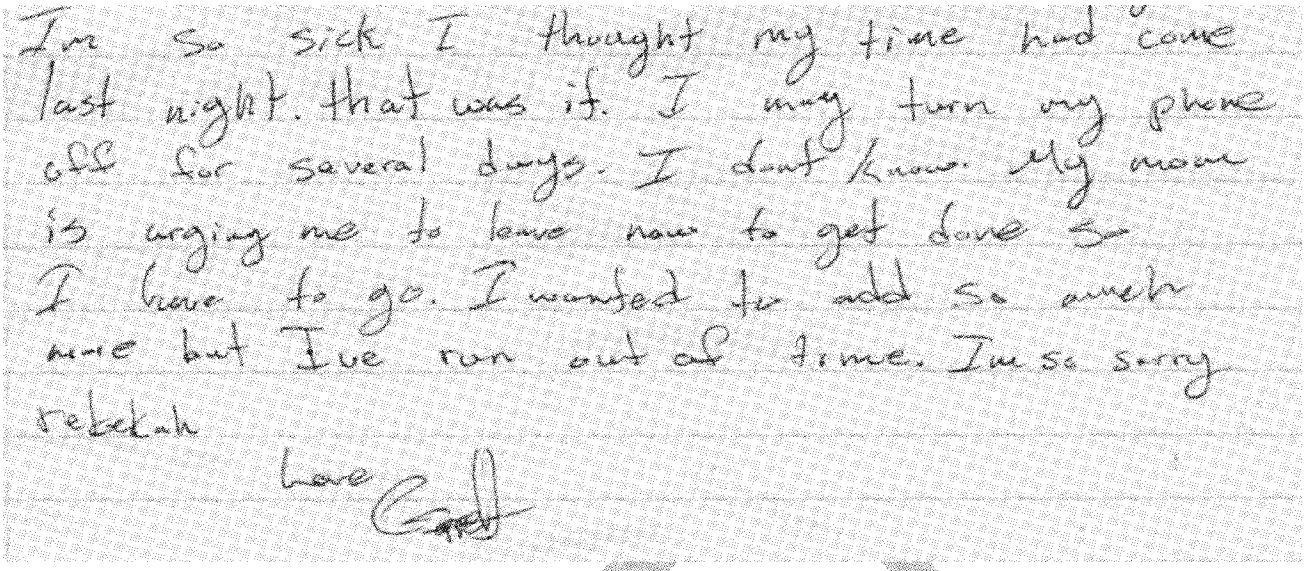
DRAFT

I just wish I could start over. be someone else. people tell me Im different. I havent texted people back in a month. Im not blaming you for any of that. this is all of my fault. I handled the poorly.

Everything Ive done ~~to~~ or said to you the past month has been real. all of those moments when we calmed eachother down. laid together, all of it. I hated how much we argued I hate arguing. I wish it were all different. I wish we werent in such different places. Im sorry that I couldnt always be there rebekah. I always wanted to. Im sorry for not understanding your views earlier. Im sorry for constantly pressuring you into things.

~~Eng~~ There is a very nice community college where Im from. I could continue school there. or maybe commute to FGCU. I also might take the year off from school. I have friends who I could work carpentry with. hard ass work. But eventually could make $100 an hr. I dont know what Im going to do. I dont really know who I am anymore or what my goals in life are anymore.

→


Im so sick I thought my time had come last night. that was it. I may turn my phone off for several days. I dont know. My mom is urging me to leave now to get done so I have to go. I wanted to add so much more but Ive run out of time. Im so sorry Rebekah

love Garrett

Garrett told me the next morning that he wanted to die. He stopped answering. I was worried. Concerned for his safety, I texted his sister and asked if he was doing ok and told her I was worried about him. I did not tell her that I was his girlfriend, or that I was pregnant. Garrett called me within minutes of texting her, yelling at me for texting his sister. He responded, "I'm fine. Please stop freaking everyone out in my family on me. I told you I'm at home resting. Trying to regathering myself. I need space. Time. Actual rest. Stop freaking out my family like this. It's not fair." I then received a threatening voicemail from his sister, and asked Garrett what was going on. His sister called me while I was on the phone with Garrett, and left the following message:

"I don't know who the fuck you are or what the fuck you want but you better fucking stay the fuck away from my family. Delete my number and delete my families number you fucking bitch."

DRAFT

	Jesus Christ you said you thought you were going to DIE then you
10/13/2017 20:32 Rebekah:	freaking disappear
	Now I'm getting so many questions nobody does this I told you I was
10/13/2017 20:32 Garrett:	fine at home
10/13/2017 20:32 Garrett:	Why
10/13/2017 20:32 Garrett:	Why
10/13/2017 20:32 Garrett:	Why
10/13/2017 20:33 Rebekah:	You cannot talk the way you do and just disappear
10/13/2017 20:33 Garrett:	I told you I was at home with MY MOTHER
10/13/2017 20:33 Garrett:	THIS JUST CAUSED SO MANY PROBLEMS
10/13/2017 20:34 Rebekah:	Jesus I don't believe you half the time
10/13/2017 20:34 Rebekah:	I was literally shaking worried something had happened
	I'm fine. I'm at home. Trying to rest. Trying to find myself again. I understand your concern. Please just let me be. I'm not going to die. Let me have some space. I thought I could just relax and I ge woken up to this. Please. I'm begging you. Stop messaging my family like that. Let me
10/13/2017 20:35 Garrett:	have space
10/13/2017 20:35 Rebekah:	Say you were out of it when you have it to me idk
	Why the hell did your sister just leave a threatening voicemail? What
10/13/2017 20:36 Rebekah:	the hell are you telling people I did?????
10/13/2017 20:38 Rebekah:	What the fuck is going on???????
	I didn't tell her I did anything I just told her to ignore it. Please just stop.
10/13/2017 20:38 Garrett:	I don't NEED MY SISTER INVOLVED
	WHAT DO YOU MEAN WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON THIS IS RUINING
10/13/2017 20:38 Garrett:	MY LIFE
10/13/2017 20:38 Garrett:	I CANT EVEN RELAX IN MY OWN HOME
10/13/2017 20:44 Rebekah:	And you wonder why I'm worried Jesus Christ
	I don't know who the fuck you are or what the fuck you want but you better fucking stay the fuck away from my family. Delete my number
10/13/2017 20:46 Rebekah:	and delete my families number you fucking bitch
10/13/2017 20:46 Rebekah:	That's the voicemail
10/13/2017 20:47 Garrett:	She's drunk
10/13/2017 20:47 Rebekah:	This is bullshit
10/13/2017 21:01 Rebekah:	I don't know. I don't fucking know what to do anymore..
	Who freaks out like this over their parents finding out they're sleeping with someone who's concerned you've been in this hospital????? I don't
10/13/2017 21:05 Rebekah:	fucking get it

Garrett responded, "She's drunk. I didn't tell her I did anything I just told her to ignore it. Please just stop. I don't NEED MY SISTER INVOLVED. I just wanted to have

two days at home to regather myself Rebekah. I just wanted to feel comfortable in my house. Get better. In my own original bed. I understand you feeling concerned for my safety. I don't blame you. I just wish you wouldn't contact people of my family because I have to explain and lie and I'm bad at that. Especially to family. All the yelling on the phone has caused my throat to ache. I'm not blaming you for that. I just need rest and space Rebekah. Please understand." Later that night, Garrett texted me: "I can better talk it all over in person maybe tomorrow. I don't think anything bad is going to happen. I don't know if I can go back to that office. All I want is to make it through this car ride without throwing up. I'm going to try to rest."

On two separate occasions, I told him I was going to call his parents and tell them what was going on so that they could help him. He begged me not to, assured me he was going to be ok "eventually," so I did not. This was a mistake on my part. I should have notified the University the first day he started making suicidal statements. I did not want to cause further stress to him and felt responsible for his mental state given our very intense, emotional relationship.

Months later, the University would use the message I sent to his mom and the text I sent to his sister as justification for suspending me for a semester.

They said it was harassment.

DRAFT

So if someone knows another student, a friend or lover, is suicidal or talking about hurting themselves, and they call someone for help even though the friend or lover said not to, is it always harassment? So if a friend is suicidal, the only person you're allowed to call is the police, otherwise you'll be suspended? That seems like a dangerous policy.

Garett "went home" for the weekend. He didn't actually, but as far as I knew he did. Really he just wanted to party with his friends all weekend. I called him once and texted him twice that entire weekend - just to make sure he was ok. He was fine. He had even grown a dirtstache in the time we spent apart.

October 16

On Monday, October 16, Garrett and I spoke a little during the day. He came to my office and asked how I was doing. He told me he was failing his classes and didn't know what he was going to do, and asked if me talking to his professor would help at all. I said he should talk to her himself, but I could tell him he's having a hard time, if he thought it would help. He said he didn't know. I explicitly asked him after he suggested this if he had changed his mind and no longer wanted me to talk to her, and he said no. I told his professor, who was also my professor, that Garrett had been having a really

hard time, but was not the type to come forward. I said I knew he was sick and missing class, and just wanted to let her know in case he needed extra help or to catch up. She told me he hadn't been missing class– which is not what Garrett had been telling me. I think I finally understood that he had been lying to me.

Garrett asked me to meet him during one of his classes, saying he would leave class to go to the bathroom and meet me. I told him I was busy and we could talk after his class. I told him I talked to his professor and that she said he hadn't been missing class. I called him a liar. He started cursing at me. He wanted me to wait near the bathroom. I don't know why.

10/16/2017 17:48 Rebekah: Jesus Christ stop freaking out all the time
10/16/2017 17:49 Garrett: I can't wtf
10/16/2017 17:57 Rebekah: I'm still outside talking to people
10/16/2017 17:58 Garrett: Can I talk to you if I go to the bathroom?
10/16/2017 18:02 Rebekah: Can't you just wait until your class is over

We met after his class and spoke for several minutes, though it was tense and uncomfortable. I told him about my conversation with his professor and how she said he had not been missing class. He said he had a friend sign in for him, but I didn't believe him. I called him a liar and said he had played me and I wanted nothing to do with him. He said he wasn't playing me. I told him to fuck off. He said he wanted to talk later. I said, "why? so you can lie to me more? Fuck you, Garret." He yelled back at

me. He told me I had no right to yell at him after I lied to him weeks ago. We fought for 45 minutes, out in the open, right in front of our building. That wasn't normal. Usually we were alone, hiding. He didn't care anymore, and neither did I. I stormed off and texted him a few minutes later.

10/16/2017 18:44 Rebekah: You really are an asshole

10/16/2017 18:53 Rebekah: You lied about the hospital. You lied about going home. You lied about being on campus. Everything has been a fucking lie from the start and you have the nerve to shame me for lying to you to help you?? I am fucking pissed. I have always tried my best to patient, understanding and even comforting for you. I have a right to be angry

10/16/2017 18:55 Rebekah: and yell at you

He told me there was nothing he could do to convince me he was telling the truth. I went to his house to talk to him. I parked across the street and texted him to let him know I was there. We spoke outside in the yard. Roommates, remember? I told him I did not want to talk about having an abortion again, that I wasn't going to have such a procedure done if I was still even pregnant, and that I didn't think it was fair for him to just take off as soon as he thought I had ended the pregnancy. He was frustrated with me. He said all he wanted was for things to go back to the way they were. I said to him, "you seem like you're doing just fine, Garrett."

He charged at me, "What? Because I grew a mustache?" He was aggressive. He was moving around a lot, raising his arms, yelling at me. He pulled his forward to show

me how much weight he had loss. "I've lost 15 fucking pounds. I can't eat anything. Fuck this. Fuck you."

He started to walk back toward his house.

"So that's it then? You're just gonna take off?"

He ran at me, his fist clinched, raised. He was less than a foot away from me when he stopped himself.

"You want to hit me? That's what you want, then? To beat me up?"

"I'd never hit a girl," he said, lowering his fist back down.

"It wouldn't be the first time you've pushed me," I said. I was different. I was normally so calm around him. Now I was angry. I was standing my ground. I was challenging him. He looked at me, then turned around and went inside his house. I started crying. He was really going to hit me. What the fuck.

His roommates realized we were outside fighting. I could hear one of them ask what was going on, and a few seconds later Garrett came back out. He headed toward his car.

"Where are you going," I asked.

DRAFT

"I'm leaving."

He unlocked the doors and I got in the car with him. He started hitting the visor above him on the driver's side. I told him to calm down, that we could go somewhere and talk.

His roommates came outside and asked if everything was ok. Garrett got out and slammed his car door, yelled "no, it's not ok," and went back inside. I was still sitting in the passenger seat of his car, trying not to cry, trying to figure out what the hell was going on. I heard the locks click - he must have the button on the key. But I was still inside the car. I opened the door and yelled to him, "could you just please come outside so we can talk without you freaking out?"

One of his roommates stepped toward me and told me I needed to leave. I told him it was none of his business.

"Garrett, please" I said. The roommates turned around and went back outside. I didn't know what to do. Was I supposed to leave? Was that the end of our conversation? Was that the end of us? I was leaning against the side of his car when he came back outside. He got in the car, and I got in, too. I asked if we could just go somewhere and talk. I guess his roommates had thought I left and then saw me in his car with him and came back out.

He stepped back out.

I got out, too. I was still holding the door with one hand when I heard the locks click, and one of Garrett's roommates came up to me and tried to slam it shut. My hand was still in the door. What the hell had he told him to make a complete stranger come up to me and slam my hand into a car door? Then he started grabbing my arm, pulling on it to get my hand out, but it was stuck. The door was locked and wouldn't open. I told the roommate to back the fuck up.

Garrett's other roommate, the student in my class, came outside and ran up to us. He pulled the guy off of me and told Garrett to unlock the doors. He yelled at him to stop it. Garrett unlocked the door and got back in the car. He didn't expect me to get back in with him. All the roommates were outside and screaming now, and there I was, sitting with Garrett, listening to it all behind us while I looked at him.

I spoke quietly. I had tears running from my eyes.

"Garrett, just tell your roommates to leave us alone so we can talk."

He didn't say anything. He looked at me. He looked hurt, like he knew he was hurting me and didn't want to.

"Please Garrett, "I said. "We can go somewhere. Just you and me. Please."

DRAFT

One of the roommates yelled at Garrett to get out of the car.

Garrett looked at me. I could see in his eyes that he didn't want this. I could see in his eyes that he wanted to go with me. He didn't want to hurt me. I put both my hands around his.

"Don't do this," I said. "Don't be this person. You're not this person. Just tell them to leave us alone."

He looked at them again. He looked at me. He was weighing the consequences of what he was about to do. If he went with me, he knew whatever lies he told his friends would fall apart. He'd be caught, seen for what he is. If he went back inside, he'd lose me. He knew it from the look in my face. He created this spectacle and now he had to make a choice.

"Garrett, get out of the car," the asshole who grabbed me shouted.

He made a calculation. I was holding his hands. I was crying. I was begging him with my eyes not to do it.

He made a choice.

He jerked his hands away from me and went back inside.

I couldn't hold it in. I started sobbing. I covered my face, but I could stop crying. He was inside, watching me as I sat there and cried, knowing he had just broken my heart. Knowing that I now knew everything. That I now truly knew him and what he was. He just watched me cry. He kept clicking the unlock and lock button on his key, as if to remind me where I was at.

I calmed down a bit and wiped off my face. I went to get out of the car to leave, and remembered the towel I had left in his car when we met at Cascades. I went back in the car, and looked into the back seat. It wasn't there. So I crawled into the back seat to check the trunk area. There was a keg on top of it. I started to pull out from under the keg when he came back out, roommates in tow, asking me what I was going.

"I'm getting my shit out of your car," I said, giving the towel one more hard jerk before it was loose.

"You've never even been in my car!" he shouted, looking at his roommates like I was crazy.

Never been in his car? Never been in his fucking car? Was he serious? What the fuck was happening?

I got the towel and moved back toward the front seat. I heard the asshole roommate say he was calling the police. Garrett was now by the passenger door.

DRAFT

"Why did you do this?" he shouted, almost as if he was blaming me. "He's calling the cops. They're going to put you in handcuffs," he said. It was almost like he was saying he didn't want it to happen like this, but now it was going to happen and it was my fault and felt bad about it but wasn't going to put a stop to it.

"I've never been in your car, Garrett?" The roommates were now back inside and it was just the two of us. He was standing in front of the car door, which was now wide open.

"I never meant anything to you, did I?" I said.

He gave me that look again. Maybe I'm just imagining it, or want to think I saw it in his eyes, but he seemed truly torn, like he wanted to stop it. He didn't want to hurt me, not like this. But he wasn't going to stop it. He had made his choice.

"You have a family," he said.

"And you wrecked my body," I snapped back through tears.

"If you didn't have the abortion then how did I wreck your body?" He obviously didn't know what I meant. He was shouting at me and acting hysterical, so I pushed the car door open with my foot and ran away from him as he shouted at me from across the street.

My husband had been so patient and understanding. He had forgiven me and wanted to have a baby together. But I messed it up. I wasn't home. I was fighting with Garrett. Again. I wasn't where I should have been. I was driving away from Garrett's house when I told my husband I was sorry for everything and I needed to talk to him when I got home that night. I wanted to come clean about all of it. He texted me and told me it would be ok.

I had just turned off Garrett's road when I was pulled over several minutes. I pulled into a gas station and waited, thinking I might have been pulled over for texting while driving, or maybe I was so upset that I was swerving and didn't realize. My plates had been dead for a while, too.

An officer came up to my window, looked inside my car, and asked me where I was headed. I said I was going to get groceries then head home. I had been crying, and my makeup made that obvious. The officer asked if I had broken glass or broken into something that night. I asked him to repeat the question. "Did you break the window of a car?" No, I said. "How do you know Garrett Sweeterman," he asked.

Why are the police involved? Did his asshole roommates actually call the police? For what? Nothing happened except some shouting.

DRAFT

I told him he was a former student. What business was it of his that Garrett and I were dating or lovers or whatever we were. He asked me to step out of my car. I tried to text my husband to tell him what was happening, but the cop reached inside my car and tried to grab the phone out of my hand.

He asked me more questions about Garrett, about what had happened that night.

"What were you doing over this way if you live on the other side of town," he asked.

"I'm a student at FSU. I just left campus," I said. *Mostly true.*

The officer told me Garrett was accusing me of causing minor damage to a door handle, and wanted to press charges. I was shocked and embarrassed. Was it broken glass or a door handle? Later someone said the mechanism for opening and closing the door was jammed and there was a dent in the door. What the hell happened when I left? And why were they asking ME?

I waited while they spoke to Garrett.

Another officer asked me, "Are you pregnant?"

"What?" I asked.

"Are you pregnant and is Garrett Sweeterman the father of your child."

I said we were dating, but we broke up and had a fight but nothing happened. They put me in handcuffs. I felt like I couldn't breathe. I told him I didn't do anything. He said, "well you lied about how you know him, you lied about what you were doing here."

I could see how I had screwed up. I was just going to make things worse for myself, so I decided to stop answering questions. I waited there while they picked up Garrett to make an identification. I told the officer, "he knows me, so why are we doing this?" They made me stand in the middle of the parking lot while a squad car drove by, presumably with Garrett in the back.

"Positive identification," I heard through the walkie.

They waited for word on whether or not Garrett wanted to press charges.

Press charges!? No way he would do that to me, no way, I thought.

The cop asked on his walkie again to the police at Garrett's house for a final word on pressing charges.

"Yes," I heard the other officer say. "Pressing charges."

My heart sank. I didn't think it could be any more broken than it already was. But there I was, in handcuffs, having just left this explosive fight with him, on my way

DRAFT

home, when he made up a story about damaging his car door as I was trying to run away from him. I knew it was a lie so I knew nothing would happen. But that didn't ease my pain. What, did he get mad when I took off and kick the door? Did he slam it shut, or push it too far open? Wasn't this a bit much for that, either way? Why would he blame me? I never saw the photos of the damage I allegedly caused. The arrest was for criminal mischief. The State's Attorney office would eventually drop the charge entirely, because of the many lies Garrett had told to police then and afterward, but I didn't know that would happen while I was sitting on the cement floor of the jail that night.

I spent the entire night crying in a cold jail cell. One of the guards yelled at me to cut it out. So I tried to cry quieter. My husband had to wake up our son and bring him to the jail at 3 AM to pick me up. I had planned on telling him everything just seconds before I was pulled over. Now he already knew, and found out in the worst way possible. He was mad. He had every right to be mad. But more than anything, he was hurt.

"Is it over?" he asked.

"It's over," I said.

Part IV: Retaliation

DRAFT

Five days.

That's how long it took Garrett to destroy my life.

My job. My degree. My own sanity.

Everything I had worked for. All of the adversity I had overcome. I was a hungry, determined girl, with no pennies to spare, but no shortage of dreams. I grew into a hungrier, more determined woman, with a family, a life, living a dream I was never truly sure was possible. With a few more pennies.

He took so much from me. I knew growing up that a bank could take your car, your landlord can evict you from home, and yes, people you love can hurt you. But the one thing no one was supposed to be able to take away from me was my education.

But he did.

In just five days.

Monday

Monday I told Garrett no to an abortion, no to his lies, no to all of it. For that, he nearly hit me (again). He made a choice to break up with me and abandon me. He had me arrested.

My husband had to not only find out that I was still seeing Garrett - which I had told him a month prior I stopped doing - but he had to drag our seven-year-old son out of bed at three in the morning to deal with it.

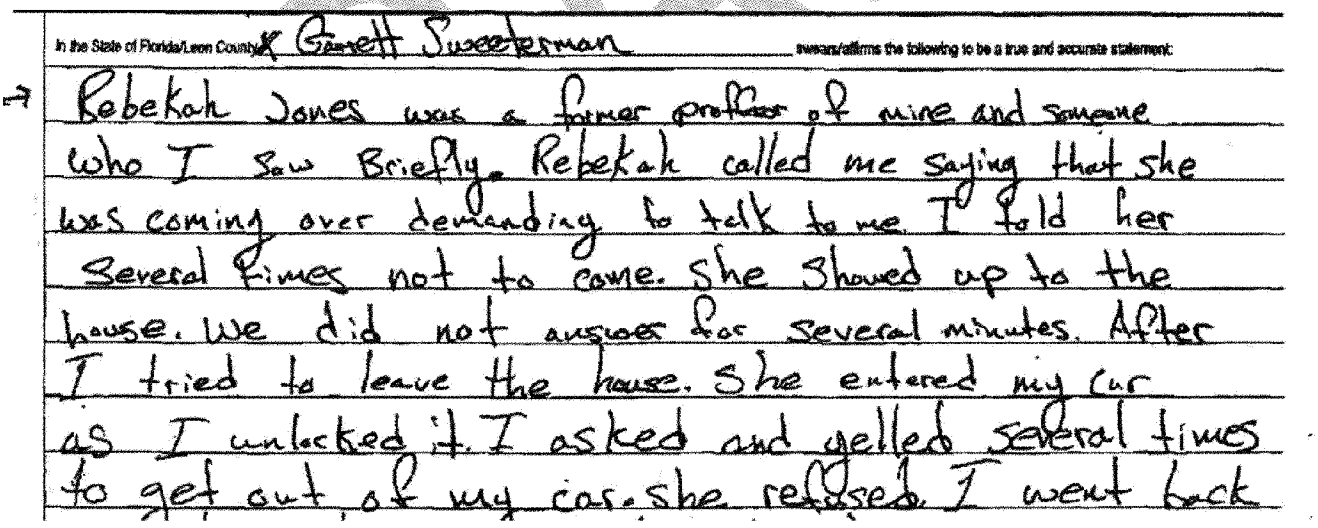
$100 bond to go home to my family. $50 fee for the lawyer (to start).

Before I left the jail, I got a packet of information - a court date, personal items log, and the police report from the night of. I started reading the statement. Within the first two lines, my perception of my relationship with Garrett - the entire experience from May until that night in October - shattered.

"On October 16, 2017 at approximately 8:01 pm I was dispatched to 232 White Drive in reference to a disturbance. The call notes stated a female stalker was outside yelling…"

A female stalker? … *A stalker???* That's what he had told people? That's why we couldn't go to his place - because he told his roommates I was a…. stalker? When did he do that? When I first came to his house in August? Sometime later? Sometime before? And why? Why in the world would he say that? Was he trying to hide our relationship from someone else? Who? What was this double life he was leading?

I started reading his written statement.



In the State of Florida/Leon County, I Garrett Swasterman swears/affirms the following to be a true and accurate statement:

Rebekah Jones was a former professor of mine and someone who I saw briefly. Rebekah called me saying that she was coming over demanding to talk to me. I told her several times not to come. She showed up to the house. We did not answer for several minutes. After I tried to leave the house. She entered my car as I unlocked it. I asked and yelled several times to get out of my car. She refused. I went back

Someone I saw briefly? He never told me not to come. He came outside as soon as I got there. *"We" did not answer?* Who was we? His roommates? We had been talking for a while outside before they got involved. He was telling the story from the moment his

roommates noticed us outside. He had told his roommates I was stalking him, for who knows how long, and the police that I was someone he "saw briefly" and that it had "long since ended."

What the hell was going on.

Did I imagine everything between us? Am I some sort of crazy person who invented this entire thing up in my head? Could it be possible that I was having a completely different relationship from the one Garrett was having? Was I stalking him? How can you stalk someone who begs you to talk to them, who never stays away for more than a few hours at a time, who tells you they need you when you break it off? I started to really question what I had done, and if I had been doing something wrong - very wrong - this entire time and was too crazy to see it.

I didn't know what to think. I didn't trust my own mind. My heart was broken and I felt like I was going crazy. Why would he do this to me?

Everything was a lie.

Tuesday

I decided not to tell anyone about what happened with Garrett. I kept it to myself. It was painful and embarrassing, but it was over and I needed to move on. How

do you explain that to a friend, a family member? Tell them you were seeing someone, that you got pregnant, everything else? No one even knew I was pregnant at this point except for Garrett and my husband. I wasn't even sure if I still was after the heavy bleeding the week before. I started hoping I wasn't.

I taught my class like nothing happened that day. I tried to be positive. I was exhausted from the night before, but I was back where I belonged - the classroom. I tried not to think about Garrett. After what he did to me, I knew there was no going back.

A close friend of mine told me I should talk to someone about it, that I should get some protection. So I called the Victim Advocate's office earlier in the day and scheduled a time to come in after I finished teaching. While I was waiting in the office area to meet with her, I was given a letter issuing a no contact order *on behalf of* Garrett. I asked the victim advocate what was going on. She asked around and found out that he had just come in and reported what happened not two hours before my appointment with her, and was now accusing me of stalking and harassment.

Did he know I was going there, and did this to beat me to the punch? How would he have known that? Was it possible he was hanging around my office, listening to me on the phone, or talking to my friend? Was it just a coincidence? Was this another head game? Can he just make an allegation like that without any proof?

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I was stunned.

I told her I wasn't planning on having a romantic relationship with him anymore, but I was pregnant. The baby was his. There were logistical things we would have to discuss. I didn't think it was the University's place to assume the role of manager of my communications with the biological father of my child. I'd need a detailed family medical history for my doctor. Blood tests. Garrett hadn't even made a decision about what his role would be if I kept the baby. He'd tell me different things every day. He knew what he would do, but he hadn't told me. I had a right to talk to him about these things, I protested. No, I didn't, they said.

If I gave her the forms, she'd see that they got to Garrett, she said. For now, I needed to follow the no contact order or I could get in trouble. I didn't tell them about all of the horrible parts of what he'd done to me at first. I went there because I was tired of him pressuring me into the abortion and I wanted it to stop. I needed distance, space from him to get myself together. I didn't want him coming around my house or my office, but I figured we'd still message each other. I needed to get healthy - I couldn't keep waking up in the middle of the night because he said he was in the hospital throwing up blood.

They offered me support. They asked if I wanted to file a complaint. I said no. I just wanted to feel safe again. I didn't want to get him in trouble.

You probably rolled your eyes at that. If I was reading this story, I would too.

But I still loved him, and I didn't want to hurt him.

I didn't know about all the lies. I thought the no contact order was a warning to me - a way for him to say, look, I can mess things up for you at school so just back off. So I agreed to back off.

The things he was saying kept me up that night. So I messed up. Again. I messaged him - once - after that meeting. I told him I was sorry for everything that happened between us. I asked him to stop trying to hurt me. I said he had hurt me enough. We had hurt each other enough. I said this was my life. He needed to stop screwing with it. I asked him why he was doing this.

Sending that text was one more mistake on top of a mountain of poor calculations I had been making since I agreed to meet him that day in park.

I thought the no contact order was a mild first strike. His attempt to shape a narrative of our relationship that wouldn't have any real, permanent consequences.

But he also went to Human Resources that day, too, though I wouldn't know it until a few days later. He was now gunning for both my degree and my job. And why? Why do this? Why take it this far? Because I told him I wouldn't have the abortion? Was

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that really all he ever wanted? I didn't do anything wrong. How could he accuse me of stalking and harassment?

Garrett drug his roommate into it, too. He was listed on the no contact order, which I found very strange. I still don't know why that happened. I was his teacher. How would that work? All I had ever said to his roommate that night was to stay out of it, and that was to avoid having this experience effect his class and my job.

But when that asshole slammed my hand into the car door, and was trying to grab me, my student intervened. He told Garrett and the asshole to stop it. He actually defended me. Maybe he knew I was pregnant. Maybe he was one person Garrett told (some of) the truth to.

I knew this was bad. I tried to make sure everything was ok. I emailed him with a group of other students who were absent in class that day about assignments. I worried he wasn't in class because of what happened the night before.

I was in the wrong. I had let my relationship with Garrett interfere with teaching, and that was unfairly impacting my student.

This was something I could seriously get in trouble for, I thought. This could get me fired.

Garrett's roommate went to my advisor that day, who had known about Garrett and I for a while. He told my advisor he felt uncomfortable being caught in the middle of the storm between Garrett and I.

My advisor asked if he wanted to change classes. His roommate said no, and even told my advisor that I was one of the best professors he ever had. He just didn't want to be caught up in the drama.

My advisor met with me after, and I told him about what happened, that it was over between Garrett and I, and that I was pregnant and it was Garrett's. I would make sure it didn't effect how I treated my student. He said it was fine and not to worry about it.

The one thing I was sure would get me in trouble, the one thing I was sure I did wrong, and still know today I did wrong, was the only thing that didn't matter. It was the only part of the entire fiasco I'd never be in trouble for.

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Wednesday

All quiet on the western front.

Thursday

My victim advocate asked me to come back by her office that afternoon after my class. She was with an administrator from Student Rights and Responsibilities. They asked me if I had contacted Garrett since Monday. I said yes, just to try to reason with him. To tell him I was sorry.

The administrator seemed agitated with my disregard of their no contact letter. I asked if I was in trouble. He said he wasn't interested in getting anyone in trouble for anything that had happened right up to that point, but from then onward, I had to stay away from Garrett. I told them ok.

My mom came over that night to visit. It was grandparent's day at my son's school the next day. His birthday was the next week, so we were having his party that weekend. I was looking forward to being with my family. I needed the stillness, the support. I needed to get back to what really mattered to me.

Spending time away from Garrett, I realized how unfairly I had treated my husband. When he found out I was pregnant, he was supportive. He was excited about having a baby together. He knew I wasn't over Garrett, but he understood that it would take me time to move on. He was patient. He was worried about me.

I was reminded of how much I loved my husband, seeing the way he was there for me when I screwed up so badly. He had every right to leave me for what I did. Things with Garrett started while we were separated, but I had gone back and even slept with Garrett after my husband and I decided to reconcile. Why did I do that?

Garrett was sex. He was passion, fear, anger, raw intensity. My husband was love. He was real. He was, and always will be, the love of my life. We agreed to make changes and he had followed through with them. For that, I got back with Garrett and cheated. He deserved better. I could deal with losing Garrett. But I couldn't lose my husband.

We were together for the first time in a long time that night. I felt safe with him. I was reminded of how sex was supposed to be - with someone you love, who you would never be afraid would hurt you, violate your trust or your body, or grab you by the throat, or throw you to the ground, or across the bed, or not care if you're not enjoying it, or need to stop. Someone who didn't use sex a way to show their power over you. To hurt you. To control you.

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Friday

I spent the morning at my son's school with my mom and nephew. I liked being around my family. I was happy. Overwhelmed with all that had happened, but at peace. We had fun meeting his teachers and seeing all his work.When we came back from his school, there was a note wedged in the frame of my front door at my house. It was from Garrett. It said he was sorry.

I texted him. One text. All it said was, "GARRETT YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS."

I figured if he was coming to my house, leaving notes for me at home, then the no contact order the school gave him didn't really mean anything. I didn't think I'd get in trouble for telling someone to leave me alone. For telling someone not to go to my house.

I didn't know it, but Garrett was waiting for me at my office on campus that morning. Several witnesses saw him pacing in the hallway by my office. Maybe he thought since I wasn't at home, I would be there. I usually was on Fridays. He didn't know I was out with family. I don't know how long he waited for me to show up, but at some point he got frustrated. He got angry.

He sent himself a text, saying I was suicidal and that I would abort "with a coat hanger" if it would make him happy. He then called campus police and reported these texts. He

was still at my office when he called them. No one else seemed to think that was odd. No one asked him why he was hanging around my office if I was some fling who had been supposedly stalking him.

An officer called me and asked me if I had sent Garrett any texts that morning. I said I sent him one, telling him to stop, after I came home and found a note from him lodged in my door frame. He asked if I said anything about a coat hanger. I said no. He asked if he could meet me on campus to talk. I said no, I was with family and getting ready for my son's birthday party. I was doing laundry and cleaning up, and didn't want to drive all the way to campus for this. I was avoiding campus, avoiding Garrett.

He said he needed to "get eyes" on me to make sure I was ok. I insisted that I was fine, that Garrett was an ex with whom I had a complicated situation with, and he was only doing this to harass me. He said he still needed to do a wellness check.

Two officers showed up to my home, where my mother, nephew and son were playing, and told me I had to go with them to receive a psychological evaluation because Garrett had shared a screenshot of messages I supposedly sent to him that suggested I may want to hurt myself. I told the officer I did not send any messages to Garrett like that. I asked to see them. He said he didn't have them. I asked who they came from. They said it was an 850 number.

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"You have my phone number - you called it earlier," I said. "It's not an 850 number."

I did not send those texts, I told him again. I showed him the text I had actually sent. I was fine, I told him. This was just another way Garrett was keeping tabs on me. The entire reason this blew up was because I refused to have an abortion. Why the hell would I tell him I'd do it now? After what he did? And if I wanted the baby, why would I talk about killing myself? That would kill the baby, too, so that made no sense. The only one of us who ever sent texts suggesting self harm was him. And I even showed those texts to the officer.

Despite my protests, I was still taken against my will to a psychiatric clinic, where I was forced to wait several hours for an evaluation that would eventually clear me. They took my shoes, purse and phone. I had to use one of those prison-style phone booths while the nurses listened in to call my husband and tell him what was going on. My mom had no idea what happened - she was just left at my house with the kids while I was handcuffed and put into the back of a police car. Apparently that's protocol, even for "wellness checks."

I was involuntarily held in a room with other patients for about six hours, one of whom touched me twice. He stood by me and started rubbing my shoulder, and the second time he came over to me and put his half-eaten sandwich on my thigh, before

taking off his pants, kicking open doors, and trying to charge at me when I was released.

I asked the nursing staff if I could wait in a private area, but was told there was no other waiting room available. This was where they put people who had been taken using the Baker Act, which allowed police to take custody of anyone who might be an immediate threat to themselves or others. No criminal activity necessary. No due process. No rights.

I was unlawfully detained, humiliated, and groped because of a fake screenshot of messages I never sent to Garrett that were never properly vetted.

Six hours of my husband searching for me, terrified of what was happening to his pregnant wife, frantically driving around trying to find me. Six hours of me waiting in that cold room, with my legs pulled up to my chest, my eyes glued to the floor. Six hours to trace the texts back to Garrett and issue my release.

My husband was furious that I was kidnapped by the police based off of an unsubstantiated text message, shown to police from a man who had a history of harassing me. He wanted to go to the police. He looked up lawyers we could call. No one bothered to verify those messages before coming to get me. But the law seemed to allow it.

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"How many people lose hours, days of their lives for this sort of thing?" I asked the psychologist who was ordering my release.

"You'd be shocked how much the Baker Act is abused," he said. "Especially by vengeful ex lovers."

"Can we press charges against him for this kind of thing?" we asked.

"Unfortunately it's up to the discretion of the officers whether or not to take custody, so not really."

There was nothing we could do.

While I was there - locked away from my husband, locked away from my phone, with no rights to demand release, no lawyer to call - Garrett sent two more texts to himself from that same fake number. More suicidal nonsense. But I didn't send them. I *couldn't* have sent them. I didn't have a phone. I had nothing. While I was unable to defend myself or even free myself in those six hours I was locked away - Garrett was working hard to destroy me on all fronts. It would end up working in my favor that I was detained, because I would later be able to prove that he faked those facts. But as it was unfolding, there was nothing I could do.

He sent all the fake messages to the school. Maybe he got his parents involved to pressure the school into doing something. I don't know. Maybe he wanted to buy himself time - file all the complaints without me being able to immediately respond. But whatever he did, by the time I got out, it was too late.

As soon as I was released, I checked my emails. I had received a message from my advisor notifying me that I was on mandatory leave until I received a psychological evaluation. I emailed him back that I just had such an evaluation, the clinic issued a statement that I was fine, and I wanted to come back as soon as I could. I told him the entire situation was ridiculous. I told him this was my ex trying to get back at me. He told me to take some time to get better, and to send him the letter from the clinic so he could send it to HR. I sent him a screenshot and told him I was fine. He said good, but he would teach my class until everything was sorted out. I wouldn't be able to come back until I met with HR.

My husband and I were supposed to go see Geostorm that night. We had already bought the tickets. We didn't get to go out alone often because we couldn't afford a babysitter, so we were taking advantage of having my mom around. I got out just in time to make the movie.

I told Jake I just wanted to go out with him and forget about it all. So we saw the movie. It was really, really bad, by the way. But I love cheesy sci-fi movies so it was a

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fun kind of bad. We laughed through it and we took bets on whether or not the guy playing Gerrard Butler's brother was wearing a wig. I said he definitely was. Jake said it was just a bad haircut. It's a debate that rages on to this day.

I was angry, but spending time with my husband helped take my mind off everything. I was trying to keep calm, to keep it together. I knew I had to be strong. I couldn't fall apart. Not now.

While we were in the movie, I got a voicemail from an officer at FSU asking that I come to the station to pick up some documents. We drove to campus after seeing the movie only to find out that I had been suspended pending disciplinary action for "destruction of property, stalking and harassment."

This has to be a joke, right? Stalking? Harassment?

If Garrett was claiming I damaged his car while we were fighting, that's something we would have to fight out in court, I thought. But stalking and harassment? No one at the school had even asked me what happened. Not one call from anyone to get my statement.

"Can someone just do this," my husband asked the officer, raising his voice now, "claim someone is harassing you with no proof and just like that you're suspended?"

The officer said he didn't know the circumstances, he was just delivering the letter.

I decided to file a complaint against Garrett. If he wasn't going to stop, I had to submit something official regarding what happened. My husband and I waited at the police station for a Victim Advocate to arrive, while I wrote down my statement regarding the harassment.

My husband and I were at the police station when Garrett alleges one of us sent him another message via computer that was threatening in nature.

He was literally filing a false police report at the exact same time I was at the police station filing a complaint against him for filing false police reports.

Both of us were with an officer for a period of time before, during and after the time when this message was supposedly sent, in the police station. The officer's statement confirms this information as well as the timeline. There's no way I sent those messages or the ones earlier in the day, but that didn't stop him.

We told the officer what was going on when Garrett's call came in, and he got his supervisor. His supervisor was almost as outraged as we were that Garrett had made false police reports, trying to hurt me and harass me because of the pregnancy.

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He said I should do whatever I could to protect myself. He said men like this were dangerous. He told me I should file the report with them, and then get a restraining order. I told him the officer had just given the injunction hearing notice. Didn't that protect me? The school's no contact order went both ways, I was told. Didn't that mean he couldn't contact me?

No, he said. The injunction meant I couldn't contact Garrett. But he could still contact me. He could still show up to my house. He could do whatever he wanted. The school's action didn't mean anything legally, so if he came to my house again he wouldn't be breaking any laws. I couldn't have him arrested.

I asked if I could fill out an application for a restraining order, then. He said he could take my statement, but the application had to be submitted to the court. By now it was nearly midnight on Friday. He said they'd be open again Monday, and that I should go as soon as I could.

The officer told me Garrett said he received a threatening text while out with friends, and that he had to rush home to safety.

If he thought he was really in danger, why would he go to the one place where he knew I could find him? Wouldn't you call the police first, to make sure no one was hiding where they knew you'd be? Why not go straight to campus police?

Maybe he did. Maybe he went to the police station to see if anything happened with his previous false reports, and saw my husband and I inside. The entire front of the building was glass and we met with the officer at the desk nearest to the window. We had already been at the police station for about an hour when he supposedly got these threatening texts, again from another number that was not mine.

Later, he would suggest it was my husband who sent the texts, not me. Maybe seeing me with my husband set him off. Whatever it was, Garrett added my husband to his list that night.

Since we were at the police station during the entire ordeal and the officer saw that neither of us had been on our phones or stepped away at any point, they obviously did not bother with his complaint.

Maybe he was trying to get me arrested, or otherwise held captive that weekend. Maybe he needed to make sure I was gone before some certain point, someone visiting or something. Another girlfriend, maybe. A parent. Maybe he thought I would show up to his house and scream the truth at the top of my lungs for everyone to hear.

Maybe it was more sinister than that.

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He knew my son's birthday party was that weekend. We had talked about it earlier in the week. I told him my mom was coming over, and that we had a party planned for Saturday. Maybe he was trying to hurt my son.

I realize that's a chilling accusation. I thought it was too dark, even for him.

Until I read the texts from that morning.

"... It's Jackson's birthday and you're calling the police on me...." one of them read.

"Please, Jackson is the only thing I have left."

My job. My education. My husband. My son.

I had told him so many times while we were together that those were the most important things in my life. He was trying to take each of them away from me, one by one.

Garrett made a mistake that wouldn't come out until later, but my son's birthday wasn't that day, it was next week. I mentioned we were having a party that weekend, but never told him when his birthday was. Garrett didn't know that. I guess he didn't remember that the party was Saturday, not Friday, when he sent it, either.

None of it made sense. My son wasn't the only thing I had left. As far as I knew, I still had my job. I had my degree. He supposedly got this text early in the morning,

while I was out with my family. I thought everything was fine. I got a warning about the roommate mess, but that was it. Nothing had been taken from me yet.

He must have already made his plan to get me fired and suspended, if he thought the only thing I had left was my son. He screwed up when he sent this, because I had no idea yet what he had done, and he got his days mixed up. Maybe if he had cared more, paid attention to me more, he wouldn't have made that mistake. Garrett filed an application for an injunction earlier that day, right after he sent those texts to himself.

This was planned.

He had no proof that I was ever a danger to him, so he had to create it. He made up some stuff about stalking, but with no proof he'd need more than just that. As soon as he called the police about the suicidal and crazy texts he received, he had a police report stating I was mentally unstable.

That was enough.

Anyone submitting an application for an injunction has to supply a sworn statement describing at least three incidents of stalking in order to have an injunction approved, and if not approved, scheduled for a hearing at a future time. Garrett's

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petition was scheduled for a hearing that wouldn't end up happening until May of the next year.

He didn't have three incidents of stalking, so he simply made them up. He didn't provide any proof. Nothing he said could be substantiated whatsoever. He perjured himself. He could go to jail for that. That's how bad he wanted to punish me.

His three alleged incidents, the three events that allowed him to get me suspended from school and work, and to have an injunction hearing scheduled:

1. *"Early July was the first time Jones showed up to my house. I never gave her my address. I have no idea how she got a hold of this information."*

We didn't speak to each other the entire month of July. We stopped talking on June 21, and didn't start talking again until he messaged me in August. That was when he showed up to my office - uninvited, without telling me - and begged me to have unprotected sex with him. When I said no, he told me to come to his house. I texted him after, even, asking him to confirm the address to make sure I didn't show up to the wrong place. Why would I do that if I already knew where he lived, if I had been there before? How could he lie like that?

I turned over my call logs - not a single call, text or message to or from him from June 21 until he messaged me in August. I had the address message I sent. I had the one of him telling me to come over.

2. *"The weekend of Sept. 23 Jones came to my house and just sat in my driveway and wouldn't leave. I was not there, my roommates had to go talk to her and see if she would leave. She was constantly calling me that weekend as I was away for the weekend."*

This one was at least partially true. I did go to his house that night after he asked me not to and I waited for him in his driveway. His roommates did come out and tell me that Garrett didn't want me there, and then I did leave. After that, though, I told him it was over and blocked him for the rest of the weekend. He was calling me over and over, not the other way around.

I even told my officemate we broke up and he wasn't allowed around anymore, afraid he'd try to hurt me. I told her it was volatile and that it was over and I didn't want to see him. Two days later he gave me a letter begging me not to stop talking to him. He forgot to mention all of that. I could *prove* all of that - I had the letter, the message to my office-mate (who was there when he stormed in and gave me the letter), the texts, the calls, everything.

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3. The night we broke up. He claimed I came over and was "banging on my windows." That wasn't his statement to the police, and none of his roommates said that happened. They all said they learned I was there because we were outside together fighting. He said I was "hysterical."

I suppose he used this word to try to encourage the idea that I was crazy. He was trying to create a very specific image of who I was. He was painting a picture of an emotionally disturbed stalker with whom he once had a brief fling. He was trying to make me look crazy. I'd give him credit for the invention if it wasn't so unoriginal. That seems to be the default reaction of every bad man when a woman is angry with them - she's just crazy. With his new report about me being suicidal, though, they believed him.

I was crying and we fought that night, yes, but I'm not the one who lost his temper and nearly punched the other one. I'm not the one who put on a whole show about how I had never been in his car before in front of his friends to protect his lie that I was a stalker. I'm not the one who shouted "oh my God, you're not pregnant" in front of his roommates as if the idea was crazy, as if that was the first time he had heard about it. He didn't mention the pregnancy, either. I assume he was trying to keep anyone from finding out. But it didn't matter. I was suspended during the period of the investigation.

FSU doesn't even act on rape accusations this quickly and harshly. And Garrett wasn't even accusing me of trying to actually hurt him in any way. He was claiming I came by his house three times uninvited. I was not even allowed on campus except for meetings until the hearing - which Garrett would be successful in repeatedly postponing until the next semester. I wanted a hearing immediately, but since he was "the victim" they catered to what he wanted.

My husband and I had tickets to go to the FSU Circus Halloween show the next week as a family- a birthday present to our son. I couldn't go. I had to sign in and out at the campus police station every time I went, like some sort of criminal. People heard wild rumors and stopped talking to me. My students were sending me best wishes as their entire semester in my class was disrupted.

All because of a lie.

All of these people he hurt, all the lives he disrupted, all the rumors and confusion... all because he was too embarrassed to tell the truth.I lost an entire semester just waiting for someone to look at everything I'd given them.

In five days, he took my job and my degree. He had me arrested and locked up for psychological evaluation. He was able to do it that quickly, and no one stopped to see if any of it was true. No one asked for proof. No one questioned the inconsistencies

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in his story. No one even asked me what happened - not the school or the police. All of this happened based on his word and his word alone.

The word of a liar. The word of a monster.

I would spend the next six months of my life - almost my entire pregnancy - fighting tirelessly to clear my name. To get to the truth. To get back my sanity.

Part V: The Investigation

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Garrett was a man of many faces. Lover. Abuser. Saint. Liar. Hero. Villain. Victim. Victim was his favorite. He really loved playing the victim.

He changed who he was so frequently that it's amazing it took so long for him to screw up. To get caught. He couldn't tell his story the same way twice, and once he was being interviewed and investigated by five different entities - HR, Student Rights, Title IX, police, lawyers - eventually his stories started to fall apart.

Depending on who asked, Garrett would describe us as either two people who couldn't keep their hands off each other, or a one-night stand he barely remembered.

He told one investigator that he meant every word he said to me and wanted to support me, and told another he faked everything to get me to have an abortion. To some I was a brief fling, to another I was his "serious girlfriend." He said we were hot and heavy in June, and then ended things. He said the first time I was ever at his house was October 16. He said we never talked about condoms, and I never insisted he wear one. He said he didn't really even know for sure if I was pregnant. He said a lot of things.

So many lies. But it would be months before the interviews were finished and Garrett's many versions of events could be put side-by-side. Months before he made mistakes that would show him to be a liar. Months before anyone questioned all the lies.

But it was more than just the lies that would ruin me. I butchered the first interview. Mostly because I had no idea which parts were true, so I didn't know how to defend myself. Or what I was defending myself against. Even if I knew, the system in place would have never let me win. He won the second he filed his complaint, long before I answered a single question.

The Flaw

My husband wanted to sue the university for screwing up their response to Garrett's claims, for allowing Garrett to use the school as a way to hurt me for not

having an abortion. He even spoke to lawyers. I hesitated. I didn't want to challenge a system that I thought was (mostly) working.

Imagine it had been true. Imagine I had actually been stalking him, actually harassing him. Imagine he was a student seduced once by his teacher who became obsessed with him afterward and would not leave him alone for a year afterward. Imagine his first version of events was the way it actually happened - without the five-month affair, the pregnancy, the love letters, all of the other stuff.

Shouldn't the university immediately suspend this individual, to protect their student from any potential danger? Shouldn't they believe the victim first? Shouldn't they have reacted swiftly and harshly, even if the proof wasn't immediately available?

I believe the answer is yes. Because if a student is assaulted and she comes forward, she shouldn't have to live in fear of running into her rapist on campus while police collect evidence, or wait months until a hearing is scheduled. False rape reports are extremely rare- and I believe the system was designed this way to help victims. To protect women.

If that logic were applied fairly, maybe college campuses wouldn't be the rape meccas that they've become. If FSU had this policy in, say, 2013 when Jameis Winston

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raped a girl at a party, they wouldn't have had to settle a $1 billion dollar lawsuit with the victim for mucking up the investigation.

Title IX was put in place to protect us. To protect me. Now it's being used to harm the women (and men) it sought to protect from these predators - those who are already victims of male aggression, being further victimized by their abusers. One guy at the University of Cincinnati actually filed a Title IX date-rape complaint against a girl because she came forward when she was raped by his friend. Seriously. That happened. In another case, two people met at a party, both drunk, and went back to his place to have sex. The next day, the guy panicked, thinking she was going to file a rape charge because she was "sort of" passed out when he penetrated her. In reality, he had raped her. So he went to the University the next day and said he was raped because he was too drunk to consent to sexual contact. He got there first, so the university suspended her, and would eventually expel her, though she'd win a large settlement after she sued the university.

So really if you ever want to get back at someone, or hurt someone because you're an awful human being, make damn sure you file a complaint as soon as you realize you've done something wrong. As long as you're the first one there, you'll win.

Garrett hadn't gone quite that far, but that's what he did, in principal. He anticipated that I would go, and he beat me to it. I wonder if maybe he could have done

this to me, if we were ever drunk during one of our many sexual encounters. Luckily, neither of us was ever drunk when we had sex. We were always stone-cold sober. Not a single drop of alcohol involved - ever. I wish I had been, though. I'd feel less responsible, less guilty for taking him back and having sex all those times if I had been cognitively compromised.

Drunk or not, Garrett crafted a character who unwittingly got in over his head. He created a victim: poor, sad, pathetic Garrett, the helpless fuckboy who just wanted some ass, but got more than he asked for, and now he couldn't feel safe in his own home...

They bought it. They were almost obligated to buy it, because he got there first and I wasn't coming forward yet with the full story. It was personal to me, private. My relationship and my pregnancy were none of the school's business. I still believe it was none of their damn business. If you read Part II and Part III of this essay, would you feel comfortable telling all these strangers about all of that? While you still had no idea what was going on?

With him as the victim, giving the school screenshots of a text here, a text there, a few missed calls, a couple lies and and some crocodile tears, he tried to build up a case against me. He was putting everything I had ever said or done out there, without turning over a single one of his messages to me. It all looked bad. Really bad.

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I had no choice. I turned over all of it. Every message. I wanted to be completely transparent. I knew some of it was ugly, and I would probably be judged in a negative way for how I handled those last few days, but I could not stomach how much he was lying. I wanted to tell the truth. The problem was... I had no idea what the truth was.

The Interview

The first interview was with HR, a few weeks after everything happened. I was emotionally torn - I wanted to get my job back without ruining Garrett's life. I thought about what I'd tell my child if he or she ever asked about him, their biological father." *Well, kids, after mommy and daddy broke up, mommy told the school and police everything bad daddy had ever done to her. Mommy got daddy expelled from school and ruined his life. He became a grifter addicted to fentanyl and started selling his body on the streets...*" Maybe it wouldn't have gone that far, but you get the idea.

Didn't I have an obligation to protect him? Wasn't I now invested in his happiness, his success, as the father of my child? Wasn't he family, in a way? I couldn't hurt him like that. So I tried to save my job without harming him in the process.

Allegations of sexual abuse

They asked me how many times Garrett and I had sex. I said I wasn't sure, but it was a lot. It's not like I counted. Two or three times a week, maybe? Some nights more than once, or for hours at a time. They asked me if Garrett and I ever had sex *with* condoms. I was honest. I said no. They said if I cared that much about having safe sex, then why did we never use condoms? Did we *actually* ever talk about condoms?

I hadn't dealt with or even really acknowledged what happened the first time we had sex at this point. I didn't tell them all of the details. I didn't even know it was a type of sexual assault yet. All I had said was that we had sex the first time without condoms, even though I told him I didn't want to do that.

They warned me that making an accusation like that was very serious, and that I should really think about what the consequences might be after making such a complaint.

I said I had proof. I said there were messages we sent to each other where I told him he had to wear condoms if he wanted to have sex with me. I showed them the messages.

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"So he told you he was not willing to wear condoms," they asked me.

"I guess," I said, "but..."

"He said, 'Sorry but I won't do it.' He implied that you would not be able to force him to wear them," they said.

"Yes, but..."

"So you knew his position was that he would not be wearing them during sex, and he told you this weeks before the first time you had intercourse?"

"Yes, but I didn't think he meant it like that. I stopped him in my office the first day he showed up because we didn't have them. I told him he had to. He said he wouldn't, but I just thought he was trying to be flirtatious. I didn't think he would actually do it."

"But he told you, it's right here," she said, pointing to messages I brought as evidence to *help* me. "He clearly states, 'Sorry I won't do it'."

It didn't matter that I had told him no to sex without condoms before we had sex the first time, because we *never* used condoms. My behavior didn't show a pattern of concern about using condoms, they said, because Garrett said he wouldn't use one and I had sex with him anyways. I took the risk. And then after that, every time we had sex, I had sex with him willingly without protection.

This was not going how I imagined.

On-off-on-off-on-off....

Garrett told everyone we were never really dating. He said I'd demand he come to my office and he would just sit there and do nothing. He said he never wanted to be with me, but he felt forced. I told them that wasn't true. He showed up when I told him

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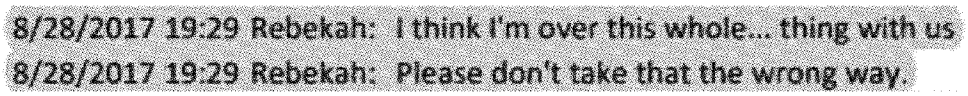
not to. He went above and beyond to convince me he cared, that his feelings were real. I said I had tried to end it several times throughout this period, and if he wanted to walk away, he could have.

They asked me when I tried to end the relationship. I said there were several times. I pointed to the texts I had sent telling him it was over. I told him on August 28 that I didn't want to be involved with him anymore.


8/28/2017 19:29 Rebekah: I think I'm over this whole... thing with us
8/28/2017 19:29 Rebekah: Please don't take that the wrong way.

"But you had sex with him again two days later," she said, not really asking a question.

"Yes." Honesty is the best policy, right?

"Who initiated intercourse the second time?" she asked.

"He did," I said.

She flipped through some notes.

"Garrett said that you were on top of him the entire time you had sex the second time, and that he wanted to withdraw before ejaculation."

This was so ridiculous. And embarrassing. So what if I was on top? That's not a fair picture of what happened. I remembered that night as vividly as if it happened five minutes before that meeting started. I still do. I remember I was upset, and I was packing up my things to leave when he showed up. I remember how he came to me and kissed me, picked me up and took me to the couch. I remember all of it.

"Garrett told me several weeks after that he wished he had pulled out," I said. "He could have stopped. He could have thrown me off of him. He didn't say or do anything that indicated he didn't want to do it that way. "

"Did he tell you that he didn't want to do it before you initiated sex?"

"What?" I asked, stunned.

She cleared her throat, reading from the page. "I said 'We can't do this', but she got on top of me and started sex anyways." She looked up from her notes.

What the hell was happening.

"Is Garrett suggesting that I raped him?" I asked, laughing at how insane the idea of it was.

"No," she said. "We're just trying to get an understanding of the history of the relationship. "

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Ok. Let's talk about the relationship, I thought.

Let's start with the day he found out I was pregnant.

The Pregnancy

Garrett didn't talk much about the pregnancy when he first tried to get me fired and suspended. He probably figured that would make him look bad, or maybe he just didn't want to draw attention to it because he was still lying about it. They asked me when I found out I was pregnant, how Garrett found out, how I knew it was his, whether or not I had bleeding like I told him, whether or not I was really ever pregnant. That last question really pissed me off.

"I never wanted Garrett involved," I insisted. "He wasn't nice to me while we had our fling over the summer and at the start of the fall semester, and I knew he wouldn't be supportive."

"But you tried to call him and tell him when you found out," she corrected.

"On impulse," I said. "He blew me off. He didn't even answer."

"Can you provide evidence that you were and still are pregnant?"

I wanted to shout at them, "sure, why don't I just piss in your cup right there and you can take it down to the health center and have it tested." I wanted to say, "Fuck you. Who the hell are you to invade my privacy like this? This is none of your fucking business." I wanted to just get up and walk out right then and there. But I was fighting for my job. I had to stay. Instead, I just told her, sure, I could. She'd have to let me go to the health center so that it was "official," but I'd be happy to. They let me. Voila, I was still pregnant.

This now seems like an especially ridiculous and offensive intrusion into my privacy, my body, considering eight months later I'd give birth to my daughter. But what else could I do at the time? I told her in addition to not wanting him involved, I told him many, many times to leave me alone, to let me handle it, to stop pressuring me. I told him at least a dozen times from September 15-16 to leave me alone, to stop texting and calling me. I read all of the texts from those two days. All the times I said it wasn't his decision, that I wanted him to leave me alone.

9/15/2017 18:20	Rebekah: No. Wtf. **Please just leave me alone**
9/15/2017 18:28	Rebekah: **Please just let me deal with this in my own**
9/15/2017 19:25	Rebekah: **I don't want to talk about this with you.** I'm sorry.

"But then you met him at the park the next day. You said you kissed him. He said you kept him there for hours."

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"I felt bad. And I didn't '*keep*' him there. I didn't even want to go. He begged me. I was afraid he'd hurt me at first and I said it wasn't a good idea," I said. "And we kissed each other," I emphasized.

Another scowl.

I told him it was over on September 22, to stop texting me. He begged me not to break up with him.

9/22/2017 22:14 Rebekah:	**Stop lying to me.**
9/22/2017 22:14 Rebekah:	**Stop texting me**
9/22/2017 22:15 Garrett:	I'm not lying to you at all I can prove it
9/22/2017 22:16 Rebekah:	**Don't text me. Don't call me**
9/22/2017 22:16 Garrett:	Did you come by my house?
9/22/2017 22:16 Garrett:	Rebekah... I didn't do anything
9/22/2017 22:19 Garrett:	You know how I feel about you. I'm not lying to you Rebekah. I've literally been sleeping on this couch after chugging the NyQuil. I didn't do this intentionally. This whole situation is everything to me. I literally wouldn't risk do anything remotely bad to mess this up
9/22/2017 22:20 Rebekah:	**I said don't text me**
9/22/2017 22:20 Garrett:	Please try to understand
9/22/2017 22:21 Garrett:	You mean so much to me
9/22/2017 22:22 Garrett:	You know that. I've done everything you've asked me to do. I'm sorry for upsetting you this way
9/22/2017 23:07 Garrett:	Please understand

I told him this again on September 23, then I blocked his number for two days.

9/23/2017 23:46 Rebekah:	I should have never met you last weekend. You're a fucking liar and I'm going to do what I want, which is keep it. **I'm blocking you. Don't contact me again. Ever.**

"This was the night you came to his house and made a scene," she stated. "When he asked you not to."

"He begged me not to leave him. I told him if he wanted me to believe him, he could at least make time to see me."

"Did you do that a lot?" she asked. "Give him ultimatums? Threaten him if he didn't do what you wanted, when you wanted?"

"I wasn't threatening him..." I said.

"You told him if he didn't go see you, he'd regret it."

"I meant he'd regret it because I would leave him and I wouldn't forgive him. And that's all I did. I told him it was over, and I blocked him."

"But you unblocked him again? Why?"

"Because he came into my office and gave me a letter apologizing. Because I loved him."

She just stared at me.

September 28 we got a hotel room so we could be together, so clearly he still wanted to be with me at this point.

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She asked me why we rented a room. I told her because we wanted to be alone.

"Since your husband was moving back in with you," she sneered.

"Because Garrett had lied and told his roommates that I was a stalker so we obviously couldn't go to his place and have loud, crazy sex all night," I said.

"But also because your husband, " she spit back. "Because you didn't know at this point what Garrett had said to his roommates. "

"That's right," I said. "So we got a hotel room, and he spent hours that night having sex, over and over, with his 'stalker'," I said, making air quotes

I moved on.

On October 1, I tried to gently tell him that I thought that our relationship was over. He insisted it wasn't. I told him I had to let him go. He begged me not to.

10/1/2017 15:07 Rebekah:	I haven't been feeling well this weekend, and I'm in a weird place with you. Jake wants me to keep it now, and i have exams this will, and a class to teach... the only time i feel better is when I'm with you, and that scares me because our.... relationship is pretty much over
10/1/2017 15:22 Garrett:	I know what you mean Rebekah. Please just try to remeber the feeling of holding me at night. I haven't slept and have hardly ate at all this weekend and keep finding out more and more news about my cousin. We're both stressed to the max. I can't sleep at night thinking about you and all these tests. I just want things to be okay

10/1/2017 20:12 Garrett:	You don't have to let me go
10/1/2017 20:12 Garrett:	I won't let you let go
10/1/2017 20:13 Garrett:	Please don't forget
10/1/2017 20:14 Garrett:	Don't let me go

On October 2, I told him I thought he was being disingenuous about his feelings. I told him I needed space.

10/2/2017 19:36 Rebekah:	Garrett. It's fine.
10/2/2017 19:37 Garrett:	Like I don't want you to be even the slightest upset with me. Whatever you think you're understanding or think I'm lying or whatever it's not true it's not
10/2/2017 20:37 Garrett:	You know how much you matter to me. I've done so much to try to prove that to you Rebekah. You know how much you mean to me. I told you that I would write you the greatest letter to help you just get through another day. I thought you understood how much these exams were stressful for both of and the time they require. What about tomorrow night even I don't know Rebekah I'm scared and confused and worried about everything and failing bout of college I just don't know what to do I'm tearing at the edges here and I'm tryin g to focus and I can't I'm lost

I ended things on October 4. I made it very clear the relationship was over.

10/4/2017 14:19 Rebekah:	This is it for me. I'm out. I've already given you everything I had. There isn't anymore left
10/4/2017 14:20 Garrett:	I don't know what to say to that
10/4/2017 14:26 Rebekah:	We need space. Like you said, Tallahassee isn't very big. I'm sure we'll see each other around.

"Wasn't this one of the nights you two had intercourse, in your office?" she asked.

"Not in my office," I lied.

"Garrett said that he came by your office that night and you two had sex. You received a text just after 11 pm that night from Garrett, asking you to look out the window. What window? If not at your office, then at your home? You were living with your husband again by this point, correct? Did you invite Garrett to your house late at night to have sex, with your husband in the house?"

I knew I was caught on this one. I thought if I admitted to having sex in my office I would be fired for sure. So I lied and said we met at my office, and went somewhere else to have sex. I moved on.

The next day, on October 5, he accused me of using him, showed up to my office demanding I end a meeting with a student to talk to him. He started blaming himself and talking about how much he hated himself. I didn't tell them he threw me to the ground that night. I was trying to make this all go away without hurting him.

10/5/2017 14:42 Garrett:	You literally just used me this past week knowing all along what you would do
10/5/2017 17:27 Garrett:	I'm 100% sure this is my fault and am making you feel this way
10/5/2017 17:28 Garrett:	You can't convince me otherwise
10/5/2017 17:28 Rebekah:	You're wrong, Garrett
10/5/2017 17:28 Garrett:	I can't live with myself
10/5/2017 18:08 Rebekah:	I am the one who's married, who fell in love with you anyway, who got pregnant and can't make up her mind. I did all of that
10/5/2017 18:16 Garrett:	And makes it worse. I don't think I'm a very good person after making you feel like this

On October 6, he started making statements like "I want to go to sleep and never wake up." He was faking this because I ended things. I told him I wrote him a letter. He asked me if I would bring it by his house. We ended up meeting that night somewhere else instead. I was trying to help him and be supportive.

10/6/2017 12:08 Garrett:	God I feel so awful and not myself anymore
10/6/2017 12:09 Garrett:	I want to sleep and never wake up
10/6/2017 12:09 Rebekah:	All I want is to give you a letter
10/6/2017 12:11 Garrett:	Can you put it in my mailbox?
10/6/2017 17:42 Garrett:	I'm not going home. I read the letter at home. I'm staying in Tallahassee. I don't want to drive home. I don't want to be in a car. I just want to be alone
10/6/2017 17:43 Garrett:	I just want to sleep and never wake up I just need to keep reading your letter
10/6/2017 17:43 Rebekah:	What? I thought you had left hours ago
10/6/2017 17:44 Rebekah:	Please don't talk like that. You know if you needed me I'd be there
10/6/2017 17:44 Garrett:	No I can't do it. I can't be around my parents like this
10/6/2017 17:45 Rebekah:	I'm so sorry. I wanted to help. I thought maybe you would be ok this weekend.

"Why didn't you notify someone?" she asked me.

"I don't know," I said. "Who should I have called?"

"Anyone," she was speaking in an angry tone now. "When a former student tells you he's thinking about going to sleep and never waking up, you call someone. An advisor, teacher, the counseling center, the police. "

Former student? They're being extremely judgmental about me being his teacher the semester before we hooked up. We were only a couple years apart in age. We were classmates, too, and lovers, but the way they kept referring to him as my "former student" told me everything I needed to know about what they thought of me.

"Well, seeing as he was lying about everything the entire time, if I had called someone I would get in trouble, because he would have just told them that I was a lying stalker."

"But you didn't know he was lying at the time," she retorted.

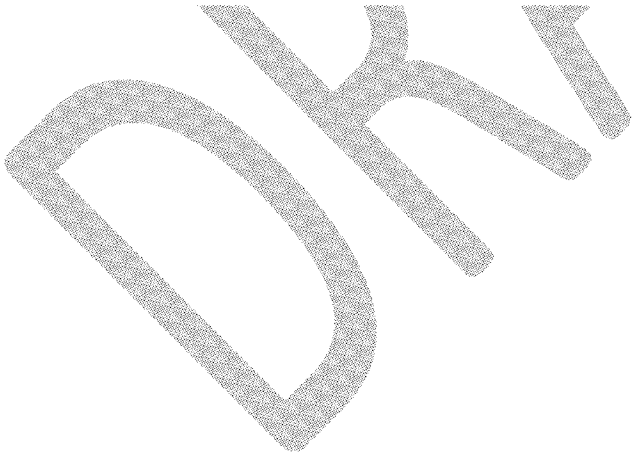
"No, not for sure," I said.

She made a face and scribbled something on her paper.

On October 7, he continued pretending he was depressed. I didn't know he was faking it. I thought it was serious. I was worried about him. I wanted to help him - he kept talking in a way that really worried me - but he wouldn't let me help. I got tired of

it and told him that having to sit by and watch him like that was too much. I needed a break from him.

10/7/2017 11:55 Garrett:	I can't I'm sorry. I just can't do any of this I'm sorry. I just need a break from everything
10/7/2017 11:56 Rebekah:	Ok. I'm sorry.
10/7/2017 11:56 Garrett:	I've got a fever from all of this I just get like this when I feel awful about everything and physically
10/7/2017 11:58 Rebekah:	I don't want you to feel awful. I thought my letter would show you why this isn't your fault, how it's not you influencing me.
10/7/2017 12:08 Rebekah:	I thought you would understand. I'm sorry
10/7/2017 12:19 Rebekah:	You don't have to hide from me or lie to me. I never want us to be dishonest with each other ever again.
10/7/2017 12:26 Garrett:	I'm not hiding or lying to you. It's just me and this fever. I'm not pushing you away. I understand. Your letter makes me happy and helps me. I just need more rest and a break from everything. Before another sleepless week
10/7/2017 12:43 Rebekah:	You mean a break from me? That's ok if it helps you.
10/7/2017 12:54 Garrett:	No school, life, everything. I'm taking some actual sleeping pills
10/7/2017 13:12 Rebekah:	Be careful. Don't take too many.



10/7/2017 20:49 Rebekah:	I can't do this anymore
10/7/2017 20:51 Garrett:	You're telling me I've gotten physically ill. And just want to sleep my life away and quit school
10/7/2017 20:52 Rebekah:	I meant I can't do this with you
10/7/2017 20:53 Garrett:	I don't know what to do
10/7/2017 20:57 Rebekah:	I think that's what you want.... for it to be over... so I'm not going to try anymore. I won't pressure you. I can't chase you like this.
10/7/2017 20:57 Rebekah:	I can't.
10/7/2017 21:16 Garrett:	I haven't checked out. I'm sick from all of this. I can't eat all I can do now is sleep barely. Thank god. I told you I would be under for awhile from drugs. I wish you wouldn't have gotten mad at me like that. I read your letter as much as I can because it helps me here in my sick bed. I told you o just don't feel good about anything in my life now and I just don't want to be around anyone. Just sleeping for years. A comie
10/7/2017 21:16 Garrett:	Coma
10/7/2017 21:20 Rebekah:	I don't know what's going on anymore
10/7/2017 21:20 Rebekah:	I wish I could take that letter back.. or go back and stop myself from writing it
10/7/2017 21:21 Garrett:	Why why why it means so so much to me
10/7/2017 21:21 Garrett:	So much
10/7/2017 21:22 Garrett:	Please don't say that. It's helping me get through this please don't be upset with me I'm not pushing you away
10/7/2017 21:38 Garrett:	Please don't say that. I can't get through this without any of it. I'm sorry I'm getting like this from being sick and just hating myself for all of it. I know it's confusing I'm confused. I thought you didn't expect answers right away. We're just trying to get through this and I'm trying to be alive. I thought we understood each others feelings. We've made love we've felt the passion through eachother. I don't know what's going to happen between us after whatever happens I can't see the future I don't want to cut you out. I just don't like myself. I'm just taking everything by a minute. I want to at least keep being your friend after all of this. Your letter means so much to me please don't get upset by my incompetence with myself and life

On October 8, he told me he was throwing up blood. I didn't believe him. He talked about death again, and I told him he needed help. He asked me to meet him. We talked that night. We kissed. It seemed like we got back together. I told him I was nervous and scared about everything.

10/8/2017 9:28 Garrett: I'm planning on seeing a doctor today. If you can on a Sunday
10/8/2017 9:30 Rebekah: Yeah you can
10/8/2017 9:30 Garrett: A throwing up bits of blood that bad. Online says I'm either dying or have TB
10/8/2017 9:31 Rebekah: You said you've done that before... in May
10/8/2017 9:32 Garrett: Yeah so can't be that bad I guess
10/8/2017 9:32 Rebekah: unless you made that whole thing up
10/8/2017 9:33 Garrett: God I hate the way I feel about everything
10/8/2017 9:41 Garrett: I can't live like this anymore
10/8/2017 9:42 Rebekah: You can't just say stuff like that

10/8/2017 16:30 Garrett: Planning on meeting there at 5?
10/8/2017 16:30 Rebekah: Ok. Im running behind. Just got out of the shower, going to put some clothes on, braid my hair back and try to leave soon
10/8/2017 16:30 Garrett: It's fine
10/8/2017 16:45 Rebekah: Sorry... erything takes 10 times longer with a kid.. leaving in 5 minutes
10/8/2017 16:58 Rebekah: Be there in about 15 mins. Same spot as before? You under the trees if it's not roped off?
10/8/2017 16:59 Garrett: Yes please hurry I'm not doing good
10/8/2017 17:00 Rebekah: I'm hurrying
10/8/2017 17:07 Garrett: I'm so sick
10/8/2017 17:10 Rebekah: Almost there

10/9/2017 0:12 Garrett: Don't be nervous don't be scared. You are strong. Think of me and when we look into each others eyes. You can feel it. I'm always there with you
10/9/2017 0:13 Garrett: Have you've heard of The Velvet Underground? Try Pale Blue Eyes. Beginning starts off weird, but I've listened to it a lot recently thinking
10/9/2017 5:11 Garrett: You've got this.weve got thois please don't forget about me
10/9/2017 7:04 Garrett: Please be okay and awake

On October 9, he started telling me he loved me again. He tried to reassure me of his affection. I was being distant, unsure of what we were to each other, but he tried to make sure I believed that he loved me.

10/9/2017 9:19	Rebekah:	Sorry. I really don't feel good and just want to lay in my bed and listen to music
10/9/2017 9:20	Garrett:	Okay
10/9/2017 9:20	Garrett:	Do you promise?
10/9/2017 9:21	Rebekah:	I promise. I'm not out doing anything else with someone else. I'm home.
10/9/2017 11:24	Rebekah:	I miss that part of you that loves me, not the part that doesn't trust me
10/9/2017 11:25	Garrett:	It's the part that fell asleep in your arms. The part that you fell asleep in my arms
10/9/2017 11:32	Garrett:	Did you listen to my song
10/9/2017 11:33	Rebekah:	Yeah, I did. And I answered you. I don't know what you want me to do
10/9/2017 11:59	Rebekah:	So much for being with me through this
10/9/2017 12:01	Garrett:	I am with you. I just don't like the lying
10/9/2017 12:01	Rebekah:	I'm sorry for lying to you last week, but I thought I was helping you.
10/9/2017 12:06	Garrett:	I love the way that you have been so understanding of me from the beginning. After everything I've done to make this horrible. I love how when you hold me I calm down and rest easier 99% of the time. I love how you knew my name the first day I saw you. I love how you opened up to me the way no one else before and it means so much to me. I love how you would risk anything for me. I love how even though I am disgusting you still don't mind. I love how you're always there for me. I love that you're an incredibly strong individual. I wish everything how this happened was different.
10/9/2017 12:06	Garrett:	Maybe I need to write a letter

Later that night, he told me he was being rushed to an urgent care clinic, then to a hospital. He made all of this up, too, but up until this interview, I didn't know that for sure.

10/9/2017 16:40 Garrett:	I'm getting driven to urgent care because my roommate is fucking scared for my safety
10/9/2017 16:40 Rebekah:	You've told me that before. In May
10/9/2017 16:41 Garrett:	I mean it's mostly because I can't stop shivering and sweating. And also that I'm hysterical
10/9/2017 17:40 Garrett:	I tested positive for flu and and a form of strep throat sore throat just now. Going to be prescribed amoxicillin and tamiflu. Also getting prescribed something to help me sleep and am going through an anxiety test
10/9/2017 17:40 Garrett:	I don't know what to do. I didn't want to upset you I'm upset
10/9/2017 17:41 Rebekah:	I hope I don't get sick from kissing you =/
10/9/2017 18:00 Rebekah:	Are you ok?
10/9/2017 18:13 Garrett:	I can't go to school tonight. I can't even make it out of this office. Heard doctor say IV I m scared for everything
10/9/2017 18:13 Rebekah:	I wasn't expecting you to come tonight. Maybe you need an IV, get fluids in you
10/9/2017 18:23 Rebekah:	I don't know what to do when you say you can't do this... what can I do? What do you want me to do? How do I help you????
10/9/2017 18:29 Rebekah:	Please tell me how to help you
10/9/2017 18:30 Garrett:	I don't know how to help myself that's why I'm here at the doctors being tested for mental problems and stuff I'm going to break down. I just want to go home
10/9/2017 18:31 Garrett:	I don't know why I agreed to these should have just gone home with the flu
10/9/2017 18:31 Garrett:	And fucking strep
10/9/2017 18:32 Rebekah:	Garrett please let me help you. Let me be there for you or something... anything please
10/9/2017 18:33 Garrett:	I'm in a hospital
10/9/2017 18:33 Garrett:	I'm going in to test now
10/9/2017 18:33 Rebekah:	You're at the God damn hospital?????? Which one???
10/9/2017 18:35 Garrett:	It's not a hospital. I don't even know I don't even remember the drive. It's a clinic
10/9/2017 18:36 Garrett:	I'm baking out of this they can't make me do this
10/9/2017 18:37 Rebekah:	What?? Garrett you need help. Let them help you
10/9/2017 18:48 Rebekah:	Garrett where are you
10/9/2017 18:51 Garrett:	I just left with Austin to the pharmacy
10/9/2017 18:52 Garrett:	I can't keep my eyes open

On the morning of October 11, Garrett told me he wanted to break up. Less than a half an hour later, he said he didn't mean it, but I told him I was done.

	I don't like the way it makes me feel. I can't do this anymore. I'm failing
10/11/2017 11:19 Garrett:	my classes. I'm dying. I can't hold you. I can't be held
10/11/2017 11:19 Rebekah:	What the hell
10/11/2017 11:20 Rebekah:	Everything was fine
	You won't even talk to me in person?? You're really breaking up over
10/11/2017 11:23 Rebekah:	TEXT? After everything we've been through???
	I can't. I can't hold you. None of this can go on it's not right. I don't feel
	right about any of it. It was all my fault from the beginning. I should
10/11/2017 11:23 Garrett:	have never pressured you into doing anything. You
10/11/2017 11:23 Garrett:	I am going to talk to you in person but I can't today
10/11/2017 11:24 Rebekah:	You just broke up with me over text
10/11/2017 11:24 Rebekah:	You asshole
10/11/2017 11:25 Garrett:	Stop saying that YOURE MARRIED
10/11/2017 11:25 Rebekah:	I can't even believe you right now
10/11/2017 11:25 Garrett:	you have a family and I've ruined everything
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah:	I'm done.
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah:	I wanted to talk to you
10/11/2017 11:55 Garrett:	I wanted to talk to you too
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah:	You decided to break up with me
10/11/2017 11:55 Rebekah:	I'm done
10/11/2017 11:56 Garrett:	You lied to me about still being pregnant.
10/11/2017 11:56 Rebekah:	I really hope you get better. But please leave me alone
10/11/2017 11:57 Garrett:	You're not making any sense
10/11/2017 11:57 Garrett:	I told you I could see you
10/11/2017 11:58 Rebekah:	I don't care Garrett
10/11/2017 11:58 Rebekah:	You wanted out of my life. So get the fuck out
10/11/2017 11:58 Garrett:	No that's not what I said.
10/11/2017 11:59 Rebekah:	And you're right. I told my husband I'd stop talking to you weeks ago.
10/11/2017 11:59 Rebekah:	So I'm done

When I told him no, that I couldn't do it anymore, he told me he was ill and dropping out of school. I told him he was acting ridiculous. I don't remember how it happened, but somehow when we met that night, we got back together. I messaged his mom on Facebook telling her I was worried about him.

10/11/2017 14:43 Garrett:	My blood pressure is at abnormal levels. My immune system has been greatly weakened. I've been deemed emotionally disturbed. My mom is looking to get a leave of sickness from the school
10/11/2017 14:44 Garrett:	This is all out of my hands
10/11/2017 14:49 Garrett:	I can't even read your letter it just hurts. When it made me feel so much better.
10/11/2017 14:50 Garrett:	I'm not abondoning you. You said your husband would raise it and have his name
10/11/2017 14:51 Rebekah:	It will have MY name, just like Jackson. And I'm sorry you're so stressed but all I ever wanted was to be there for you
10/11/2017 14:51 Rebekah:	Burn my letter if you hate me this much.
10/11/2017 14:52 Rebekah:	I never even got yours
10/11/2017 14:53 Garrett:	Are you and Jake going to raise it
10/11/2017 14:53 Rebekah:	I don't know what to tell you to do. Maybe taking the semester off is what's best for you. But you have to come back. You have to finish school. You know that right?
10/11/2017 14:53 Rebekah:	It might be just me. I'm ok with that.
10/11/2017 14:53 Garrett:	I'll probably finish school somewhere else.
10/11/2017 14:54 Rebekah:	You can't do that.
10/11/2017 14:54 Garrett:	Why?
10/11/2017 14:54 Rebekah:	You have one semester left. You could probably do online classes to make up for this semester
10/11/2017 14:55 Rebekah:	Because you've worked too hard to get a degree from a lesser school.
10/11/2017 14:55 Rebekah:	Because you want to go to law school
10/11/2017 14:55 Rebekah:	Because you wouldn't leave fsu just because I'm here
10/11/2017 14:55 Rebekah:	Shouldn't*
10/11/2017 14:57 Rebekah:	this is way over the top. Get a medical leave for the semester, come back in the spring and finish. You're too smart and capable not to.
10/11/2017 16:36 Rebekah:	I don't trust you anymore
10/11/2017 16:41 Garrett:	I know you don't trust me. Trust in ourselves is not the best. I can give you the letter tomorrow. If you still want it. I need to change some things and add some too. I broke down today in my room. My mom was pressuring me as to what was wrong and I was texting you and I just panicked and messed up
10/11/2017 16:42 Rebekah:	Messed up how?
10/11/2017 16:46 Rebekah:	Are you going to class tomorrow? How did you mess up? What happened
10/11/2017 16:54 Garrett:	I just never handled any of this well from the beginning. You hate me for it I hate myself for it. I panicked today and said all that stuff out of fear and humility in the face of my own mother as if she wouldn't be my biggest crutch. I should have never said those things like that today. Or ever. It just stresses me out so much I panic and my weapon is my phone. I never wanted you to ever feel like this. I know you don't believe that but it's true. I just messed up big time and am going to talk to my father soon
10/11/2017 16:54 Rebekah:	You didn't say anything that wasn't true
10/11/2017 16:55 Garrett:	What
10/11/2017 16:56 Rebekah:	Everything you said to me was true
10/11/2017 16:57 Rebekah:	It all hurt. But at least you were being honest with me
10/11/2017 16:58 Garrett:	It wasn't expressed in detail or the right way and I'm sorry for that. Maybe the letter will be better

"So you wouldn't call the police or a crisis line, but you'd invade his privacy and tell his mother?"

"I didn't think to call anyone else. I texted his mom because I thought she could help him. If I was acting like this, I'd want someone to reach out to my family before doing something that could make everything worse, like telling someone at the school or the police."

"But he told you not to," she said. "He was adamant that you not involve his family."

"He would have told me not to call the police, too," I said. "I thought I was helping."

"How did you find her? Did you use your position as a faculty member to get personal information about him and his family?"

"What? God no," I said. "We were friends on Facebook. His mom is on Facebook. He told me about his parents, so I knew her name. It was just one Facebook message."

Just after midnight on October 12, he told me he had been hospitalized. None of this was true, either. We met that night.

10/12/2017 1:00	Garrett:	Going to hospital
10/12/2017 1:00	Garrett:	Threw blood everywhereasfh
10/12/2017 1:00	Garrett:	Phones dead
10/12/2017 7:12	Rebekah:	Are you ok
10/12/2017 7:25	Rebekah:	What hospital?
10/12/2017 7:25	Rebekah:	Garrett please answer
10/12/2017 7:27	Rebekah:	please be ok. Please call me and let me know you're ok
10/12/2017 8:17	Garrett:	I had an allergic reaction to the strep medication and just from not eating my throat started to bleed. I'm not going to school
10/12/2017 8:29	Rebekah:	I'm allergic to everything in the penicillin family =/
		I'm a terrible girlfriend/ lover for not being there for you in this. I wish
10/12/2017 8:39	Rebekah:	you'd let me
10/12/2017 8:42	Rebekah:	This is my mess. This is all my fault
10/12/2017 8:46	Garrett:	No it's really all of my fault. I'm going to try to see you later tonight. My throat is still bleeding a little
10/12/2017 8:46	Garrett:	I don't like the taste of blood.

On October 13, he disappeared. I hadn't heard from him. He had told me he was having serious health problems, then just disappeared. I was worried. Really worried. So I texted his sister to see if he was ok. He said he was going home for the weekend to rest.

"So first you message his mother, after he repeatedly told you not to. She blocks you on Facebook. Then you looked up his sister's number online, and texted her, too. He told you not to contact his family, several times. You don't think you did anything wrong?"

"He told me that HE blocked me on his mom's account," I said, realizing as I said it that was probably a lie. "I thought he might have hurt himself."

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More scribbling.

"So he had become increasingly distant over the last week?" she asked.

"Not really, just the last two days," I said.

"But he was telling you he was sick all of the time and you couldn't come over," she said.

"It's not like he said he had a cold - he said he was throwing up blood. He did this for attention, not to create distance. He only started doing it after I broke up with him."

"But he did tell you on October 11 that he wanted to end the relationship?"

"Yes, but..."

"And you got angry at him. You called him an asshole. Were you always vulgar with him when he tried to end the relationship?

"What? Calling a guy an asshole for breaking up with you through text when you're pregnant with his kid, the night after he begged you to take him back, isn't being vulgar," I said. "Besides, he literally took it back not half an hour later. He said he didn't mean it. "

I wondered why it mattered. If I was supposed to know it was over and never speak to him again after he ended things the morning of October 11, shouldn't he have done the same thing all of the times I had ended it before? Was I supposed to read his mind? It was like they were punishing me for being stupid enough to believe him, as if I wasn't already punishing myself.

The Night Of

"Do you remember signing this?" she asked as she showed me a form with my digital signature. "It would have been part of your new-hire paperwork. "

I didn't recognize it, but who actually reads all those policies when they start a new job? There's about 50 pages of stuff you'll never need to know. And I definitely didn't spend much time on the "what to do if you're ever arrested" portion because I didn't think it would ever happen.

"I don't remember this specific page, but, yeah, I probably signed it. "

"Because there's a policy in this document that explains you must report any arrest within 24 hours of being charged to your department supervisor. It has your digital signature on it. "

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"Then I probably signed it," I admitted.

"Did you tell your immediate supervisor within 24 hours of being arrested?" she asked, already knowing the answer.

"No," I said. "It was later that week."

"Is there a reason you did not immediately report your arrest," she asked.

"I was exhausted, didn't remember that specific policy, and it was embarrassing."

She made a note.

"Why did you go to Garrett's house that night," she asked.

I explained we broke up and got back together a lot, sometimes several times within one day. I wasn't sure where we were at, figuratively speaking, on the night of October 16. Neither was he, apparently, because he told police the night of that it had been over for "a while, " he told police months later that it was a one night stand and we never had a relationship, and he told HR and the Title IX office that we broke up on Oct. 16.

Looking back, I think our romantic relationship really ended on October 4, and everything after was a rotating wheel of guilt, confusion and regret. He was only ever interested in being with me until I had an abortion, and when I didn't we both should

have realized we couldn't be together or be close anymore, instead of trying to force each other into the other's life because we both felt guilty. It should have ended then. All of this pain could have been avoided. All the heartache.

"So you thought you were broken up when you went to his house that night, uninvited," she asked.

"I didn't know what was going on, but it felt like we were breaking up," I said. "We broke up a lot, and I didn't know if this would be the last time, or if we'd work it out. "

"Is that why you went to his house, yelling at him? Because he broke up with you?" she asked.

"I don't know. I guess. I was hurt. I was upset."

"Did he tell you to get out of his car and to leave several times?"

"Yes," I admitted. "I made a mistake. I didn't think everything would spin out of control like that."

"So who damaged the vehicle?"

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"I don't know," I said. "I don't even know for sure what was damaged. The police said it was the door handle. I guess I could have done that when I tried to get out of the car. "

"So you kicked the door?"

"I don't know, maybe," I said. "It was more like just pushing it open because he was standing in the way. I was just trying to get away from him. Everything happened really fast. "

"That's not what the police report says. It says the door hinge was damaged, that it had been over-extended, repeatedly. "

"The only witness to that is Garrett..." I growled.

"You mean the victim?"

Yes. Garrett. "The victim."

Helping, Making it Worse

"Tell me about why you talked to his professor," she said.

Why did this matter? Why was this moment being singled out? This was so inconsequential to all that happened. It didn't make sense.

"That was October 16," I said.

"The same day he broke up with you, the same day you were arrested for damaging his car" she said.

"Yes, but before all of that."

"Why did you do that?" she asked me, her voice clearly indicating that I had done something wrong.

"Because he asked me to when he came by my office that day," I said.

"Garrett said he didn't see you that day before you came over to his house that night," she said.

"Well, he did, " I said. "Twice. Once before his class, and once after. "

"Do you have any texts or proof of that?"

I thought about it. No, I didn't. He just showed up. I tried to remember if anyone else was in the office that day who might have seen him. I couldn't remember. I didn't

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really notice other people when he was around. I told her she'd have to ask my office-mate if she saw him.

"What did you say," she asked.

"Just that he was a friend and he was going through a hard time, like he asked me to."

"Did you say anything else?"

"Yeah, I said I knew he had been missing a lot of class because he was sick. I said it was pretty serious - he had been hospitalized twice the previous week. I said he wasn't really the type to come forward and tell someone about it, so I was just letting her know."

"And you didn't think that was unprofessional? You don't think you crossed a line, going to a colleague like that on behalf of a student you were dating?"

"I didn't go to a colleague, I went to a professor, *my* professor, and not on behalf of a student, on behalf of a friend," I said. "I didn't say we were dating or anything else about him other than that he was having a hard time. The professor even said thank you for letting her know, because so often students never come forward when they need a little bit of help."

"You really don't see how that's unprofessional," she pressed.

"Aren't you the one that said I should have told someone at the school what was going on?" I shot back. "Well, I told a teacher."

That really pissed off my interviewer.

"You told her about his state of health, which was not your place. You told her he was hospitalized, which he wasn't."

Well. That was news to me. That's how I found out he had faked the illness and all the hospital trips he woke me up in the middle of the night for.

"He wanted to get away from you so badly that he told you he was being hospitalized," she said. That hurt.

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A Tale of Two Lovers

It truly was the best of times and the worst of times.

Garrett said I was flirting with him "constantly" during the semester I was his instructor. I told her that wasn't true. I told her he would flirt with me through emails and texts, but I never reciprocated. She asked if she could have permission to go

through my email account. I told her yes. She told me he had said I was texting him "constantly" in May and that he lied about coming to see me that week. I said ok. I didn't have anything to add to that. I had counted how many texts he had sent me that first week we were flirting in May – there were more than 600. I sent about 580, so I thought it seemed fairly mutual.

He said I showed up to his house several times in July, without permission, and that he had never given me his address. I told her I didn't even talk to him in July. How do you prove that something *didn't* happen, that you *didn't* talk to someone? And the first day I was at his house was in August. She asked if he sent me his address through messenger, so I could prove it. No, I thought, I'm pretty sure his cock was in my mouth when he told me. But I had the message I sent him after he left, asking if I had the correct address. Why would I send that if I already knew it, if I had already been there?

Why was he making up this entire chapter of our relationship in July that never happened? Was it crucial to his stalker story that we were fooling around that month? Why? Did someone see or say something that obligated him to create this fictional episode within the saga that was our relationship?

At the end of it, she asked me if I would change my behavior if I could go back and redo it all. God, if only.

There was so much I would change. So much I would do differently. I told her I didn't mean to hurt him. I told her that if I could tell him I was sorry for everything that happened, I would. I told her the idea of what he was saying he went through made me disgusted with myself. I loved him. All of this was happening because of me.

She told me how he described that last month together. I started crying as she relayed his version of events. He talked about all the ways he felt he couldn't leave me because I was pregnant. All the times he wanted to end it, but was worried about what I might do. All his pain, his suffering, that I guess I saw, but interpreted so differently than the way he was describing.

Who was this person I had shared so much with? Who was this person I cried for, bled for, and still missed? Who was this man I loved? And if all of this was true -- that he felt pressured to be with me, that he felt I had used the pregnancy to manipulate him into dating me, that he never felt that way about me -- then who was really the monster here? Maybe I was wrong about everything that had happened between us, from the moment we first kissed until the moment I ran away from him that night at his house. Maybe he wasn't a monster for lying to me. Maybe he was just scared, confused, caught up in the whirlwind of it all.

Maybe the monster the entire time... was me.

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Decisions

Not long after the interview, I was fired.

I turned over more than 150 double-sided pages of texts, dozens of emails, countless pages of Facebook messages and all my medical records. They didn't even read them. There simply wasn't enough time between when I went in for the interview and when they made their decision. Even though we spent hours going into detail about the relationship, none of it even mattered. None of that was factored into their decision.

In the end I wasn't fired for the lies, I was fired for the truth. They specified three reasons for why I was fired:

1. Having sex in my office
2. Taking to Garrett's professor
3. Not reporting my arrest to my department

I did all of those things. I couldn't argue with that. Sure, grad students probably fool around all the time in their offices, and if that were all that it was they may have overlooked it. They could have given me slack for waiting a few days to report my arrest, if they wanted. And I literally did the exact thing they had been scolding me for not doing for half an hour before I told them I went to his professor.

But they wanted to fire me. I simply gave them enough reasons to justify doing it. In being honest, I provided the ammunition. Now I had to deal with the university and try to salvage my education. I wasn't sure how'd I pay for it without my teaching assistantship. I'd take out loans if I had to, I thought. I couldn't have this taken away from me, too. Did Garrett know what the consequences would be when he told that first lie? When he went to the university? Was this what he wanted?

Did you care at all? Did you feel any guilt or remorse about ripping this away from me? Did you know I tried to save my job without getting you in trouble?

Did you know that I went to bed every night for weeks sick with myself, hating myself for everything that happened between us?

Did you know that I would have given anything, truly anything, to make things right between us?

Did it matter to you at all that I loved you?

Did it, Garrett?

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Part VI: Villain, Victim, Verdict

November... December... January... February…The months rolled by in a haze. My stomach got bigger. My list of potential names for the baby grew longer.

Johannes or Sebastian for a boy. Aurora or Evelyn for a girl.

I wonder if he'll have Garrett's eyes.

Maybe just Hans for short, or Desmond for a boy. How about Emma or Celeste for a girl.

Will she have his smile and his blonde curls?

I liked Raphael and Luna.

Does he want to know if it's a boy or a girl? He always said the baby was going to be a girl. He said he "just had a feeling."

Then came the first ultrasound in December.

Will he want to know her name?

The first flutters in January.

Will he want pictures? Will he want to hold her, even if it's just once? Just to say goodbye? Doesn't he owe her that?

It was hard to keep Garrett out of my mind.

Some days I missed him so much it hurt. I would suddenly feel like my chest was tightening, my lungs struggling to find air. I was drowning again. Other days I was so angry with him I'd go for a two-hour walk just to clear my head. I'd still dream of him every night. I wondered if he was dreaming of me. I wanted to know what he was thinking, feeling. I wanted to reach out. I believed that if we could just sit down in a room together and talk with no one else around, if I could tell him all the things I wanted to say, then he'd stop hurting me. I wanted to know the truth. Did I ever mean anything to him? Did he ever feel something for me in the time we were together? I

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wanted, no, needed to know that some part, any part of it was real. I missed him. I still loved him.

Was he even sorry?

"You and me versus the world," he said.

Now it felt like it was just me versus him, the world, and everything else.

Blood and Brine

My husband and I decided to share the baby news with everyone in early November, and both our families were excited for us. Since my family was at the beach with us when my husband found out about Garrett, they had an idea that I had been seeing someone else while we were separated. They didn't ask. I know they knew, or at least suspected there was a chance that the baby wasn't my husband's, but they did me the courtesy of not asking. They could see how much my husband already loved this baby. And if we were happy - and we were - then it didn't matter.

I had this child growing inside of me, and I already loved the baby so much. But the baby's father was gone. I still felt that pull - that need to have him around, so he

could see his baby grow, too. It was probably just hormones - I haven't felt that way since a few months after I had her - but hormones can be a powerful force to overcome.

Family gatherings made it even harder to forget about Garrett. He was my family, too, in a way. I called him the week of Thanksgiving. He answered. I told him I was sorry for everything. I didn't want it to be like this. He listened, then hung up. He never reported that call. I can't remember if I tried to call him on Christmas or New Years, but I probably did. I remember wanting to. Maybe I resisted the urge. I'm not sure. If I did, he never reported those, either.

I noticed from time to time that he would unblock me on Facebook, look me up on LinkedIn, or search for me on Google. I had a search notification feature set that notified me anytime someone searched for me, and it recorded what they found, what they clicked on, and the city where the search was done. Always my personal pages. Always from Englewood, Florida. I thought maybe this was a glimmer of hope. He was curious about me, my life, my pregnancy. He was trying to know what was going on. At least, that's what I told myself.

Our baby was especially elusive during ultrasounds. We could never get a clear profile picture, and we had to reschedule that critical, 20-week session because she wouldn't stop moving around. When it finally came time for my mid-pregnancy

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ultrasound (a bit past mid-pregnancy), I was given a packet of paperwork to fill out. I flew through it until I came to one section - father's family medical history.

I filled in as much as I could. I knew Garrett's height, hair color, eye color, age, etc. I guessed his weight and a few other details. But for the rest of it, I had no idea. I didn't know if there was a history of down-syndrome in his family, or heart disease, or blood disorders, or mental illness. This was supposed to be a guide for the doctor - information to help them hone-in on anything that might be considered high risk. And I had nothing. The school sent Garrett the family medical history paperwork back in November, but he never filled it out. I tried to plead with his mother and sent her the forms through email, but she never answered, either.

Any potential increase in risk would need to be investigated to make sure everything was fine. And if everything wasn't fine, I'd have a very short window to make a serious decision. My window was already nearly closed because the ultrasound was scheduled so late into my pregnancy. Florida bans abortion after 24 weeks - and that's based on your last menstrual cycle.

I didn't have a menstrual cycle that I knew of before getting pregnant. The IUD had only just come out, and I didn't have periods at all while I was on it. My periods after, if I had them at all, were irregular. I knew I had bleeding in mid-October, but it wasn't like a regular period and only lasted two days. Plus, I already had positive

pregnancy tests by then. The doctors said it was a "false period," which wasn't abnormal in pregnancy. So we went based off of the last time Garrett and I had sex before I found out I was pregnant, though it could have been before. They used that date, and the ultrasound, to come up with a date of conception, and based on that, I was dangerously close to not having a choice at all.

I had always hoped it was a mistake. I hoped I had a miscarriage that day Garrett tried to follow me to the clinic, and then somehow magically became pregnant again weeks later with my husband, after Garrett and I stopped having sex, in late October. There were only a few weeks between when Garrett and I last had sex and when I was with my husband. I hoped we could narrow down the possible dates as much as possible. I asked if they could give me a date range for possible conception based on my ultrasound.

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Result

Most probable conception dates: Sep 3, 2017 - Sep 7, 2017
Most probable dates of sexual intercourse that led to the pregnancy: Aug 31, 2017 - Sep 7, 2017

Possible conception dates: Sep 2, 2017 - Sep 12, 2017
Possible dates of sexual intercourse that led to the pregnancy: Aug 28, 2017 - Sep 12, 2017

They unintentionally addressed a question I didn't want a definitive answer to. It was possible I became pregnant that first night Garrett and I had sex, but it was most

probable that it happened after. So it was my fault, I guess. Maybe. There was a silver lining in that, though - my baby wasn't conceived when I was confused about how I felt, he/she was conceived on one of the nights when I felt totally and deeply in love with his/her father.

It also meant my options were limited. If I needed the procedure done because of a fatal fetal defect, I'd have to leave the state. I'd have to go to New Jersey, New Hampshire or Vermont. Alaska and Oregon were too far away, and I didn't have any family I could arrange to stay with if I went to New Mexico or Colorado. Those were the only states that would even allow me to do it.

And without a guide on what to look for, things could be missed or overlooked. I wouldn't have time to think about it, and things would need to move very quickly if the ultrasound didn't go well. I needed information.

So I called him.

He answered.

From my own statement: "*I spoke to Garrett on Sunday, Feb. 18, the night before my ultrasound, and asked him if there were any genetic/family medical issues I needed to tell my doctor what to look for during my exam the next day. Garrett and I had never*

discussed this, and he had not filled out the family medical history forms I had requested FSU send to him."

He didn't answer my questions about the ultrasound, but we talked a few minutes. Mostly about how he didn't mean for that all to happen, how I didn't either, how it didn't have to be like that, how we were both still confused, etc. The conversation went about as well as could have been expected, considering. Not friendly, but it wasn't angry; mostly sad and regretful on both our parts. He told me it made things more difficult that I had an injunction against him, and he asked me if I would drop it. I said ok.I asked Garrett if he wanted to know if the baby was a girl or boy when I found out the next day. He said he didn't know.

The ultrasound went well. We still couldn't get a good picture, but even without Garrett's medical history, everything seemed to be ok. Perfect, actually. And we finally got to stop saying "it" every time we talked about the baby - it was official, we were having a baby girl. My husband cried when they told us. So did I.

I emailed my lawyer the next day and asked him to drop the injunction against Garrett. I let Garrett know he was right - he was going to have a daughter.

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Girl, Interrupted

I started looking for jobs. I was thankful it was winter, because I could wear heavy coats to my interviews and try to hide the fact that I was pregnant. No one would hire me if they knew I was about to have a baby, I knew.

I lined up two interviews in January that would both provide a solid income for my family. Both of my interviews went well. I was sure I aced one of them. I went home after the interview excited that I had found a job. Money was getting tight after I was fired from FSU, so we needed the income. Badly. I was so sure I would get the offer, we decided to go out and celebrate that night. So my husband, son and I went out to eat - a small splurge that would be made-up for quickly by my impending offer.

It was just my luck that one of the people I met while touring the office earlier that day was at the restaurant. He wasn't one of the three people who interviewed me, but he was a supervisor I was introduced to after the interview. He noticed me there and waved, and I waved back.

I wasn't wearing my heavy coat. I was wearing a sweater-dress with leggings that not only showed my pregnant belly, but accentuated it.

I didn't get the job.

Half the time I was depressed, the other half excited and happy. I was living one life when I was my husband, son and family, and another in those long hours I was alone. The days melted away. Most mornings I would take my dog for a walk after dropping my son off at school. We'd go to the park then walk in the woods for about an hour. It was nice to have the time outside, but I felt so alone throughout it. The quiet was too loud.

A lot of people stopped talking to me after everything happened at FSU. The rumors had gotten out of control, especially after I was fired. I told former students I ran into - like the one who worked at my son's camp - that I had to leave because of pregnancy-related issues. That wasn't *not* true. Students still emailed me, though, asking me to write them letters of recommendations for grad school and job applications. I asked my advisor if that was a good idea - I didn't want to hurt my best students' chances by tying them to my bad reputation. My reputation with my department was good, he assured me. At least someone still had my back.

I still felt alone, though.

My contact with Garrett became more frequent that February. One morning, I was on campus to meet with my victim advocate. I decided to park in my old spot by the student union and walk over to the stadium. It was beautiful that morning - sunny, but cool. I put in headphones and started walking over.

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Before I was off the street where I parked, I saw Garrett walking ahead of me. He claims I said his name, and maybe I did. It was the first time I had seen him since October. I was frozen. We saw each other from a few meters away. We both stopped walking for a moment, before he crossed the street and I turned around and headed back in the other direction.

I told my advocate about it afterward. She asked me how it felt to see him again. I said it was hard. He apparently called campus police to tell them I was there. He didn't know the University removed the ban on me being on campus and let me enroll in classes for the spring, after I went through and found the discrepancies in his texts from the previous October. My advocate confirmed with the police why I was there - and that she set the time and date for that meeting.

He called me two days later, on February 23, for the first time in a while. He didn't even bother blocking his number. He seemed uneasy. I told him I was on campus for a meeting and I didn't appreciate having to waste my afternoon confirming that with campus police because he had another episode. He told me he didn't know that's why I was on campus. I told him it wasn't the first time I've been on campus since everything that happened – that I had been on campus many times and not everything was about him. He said he was sorry, that he understood.

I then confronted him about his parents not knowing. He told me they were "aware of everything." I told him I didn't believe him. I told him that after all of the lies he had told, all the trouble he had gotten me into, and everything unfair he had done to me, I couldn't trust him. I hung up.

I noticed on February 28 that Garrett had again unblocked me on Facebook and was going through my profile and posts again, so I messaged him. I said, "Why are you stalking me on Facebook if you have nothing to say to me or about our daughter, Garrett?"

He texted me from a different number that is not his cell and told me again he wasn't sure what he wanted, that he didn't want to make things worse for me, that he was scared. He told me he wanted space, that he wanted me to leave him alone. I replied via Facebook messenger so that I could prove the person I was talking to was actually Garrett, and not a third party. I told him that all of this happening over a car door handle (a reference to the Oct. 16 incident) was insane, but that it was OK, that I couldn't make him be someone he wasn't, and that I hoped he figured out whatever was going on with him. I told him he knew how to find me if he wanted to talk.

About an hour and a half later, Garrett called me via Facebook messenger to tell me *"It was never about the car or school or the police.. I just couldn't deal with it. I didn't know what to do.. I'm going to drop everything. I'm going to drop the charges.*

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You can finish school, move away with your family and raise it together... I didn't want it to be like this. I don't know what I want..." he went on for about two minutes, somewhat hysterical.

I thought maybe something was wrong with my phone because I couldn't make out half of what he was saying, so I hung up and tried to call him back. He was crying and very upset. He didn't answer when I called him back, so I messaged him and said, "Would you please answer," trying to be calm and get him to slow down. He answered the second time I called him back and we spoke for another few minutes, very briefly. He repeated the same things – that he was going to drop the charges and the school "stuff," he was asking his lawyer that day to drop the injunction, that he was scared.

He mentioned something about not knowing if his parents would want custody, which I asked him to slow down and explain, but he didn't. I still didn't believe him that his parents knew, so I was pretty sure that he was at least partly lying to me. He said he wanted me to move away with my family and for me and my husband to raise the baby and to move on. I asked if he wanted to have nothing to do with the baby, if that was his final decision. He said he didn't know, then said "I just can't" and hung up.

A few days later, on Friday, March 2, Garrett messaged me via Facebook messenger and said he wanted to meet at this place we used to go to often to be alone. It was a place we would go to meet up and talk and be physically intimate with each other- a small, private parking area near Cascades Park. I told him I couldn't do that because I didn't have time that morning - which was true, but mostly I didn't want to be alone in a secluded place with him because he gets scary and violent. The first time we met to talk about the pregnancy was at this same place, and I was hesitant to meet him

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even then out of fear that he'd hurt me, and we also spent more than three hours talking and I didn't have time for that kind of ordeal.

When I said I couldn't meet him at the park, Garrett asked what I was doing that day and I told him running errands and stuff, and he asked me to stop by to see him before his class, just to "hear me out." He told me to meet him at his class, in the Williams building, at about 1, and that his class started at 1:30. I eventually said fine and agreed to meet him. I don't know why I agreed. He was acting crazy, but I thought if I could record him saying that he lied on my phone, it would help me get back in school and get the charges dropped. The hearing was scheduled a few weeks from now, and if I could just get him to say he lied, it would be ok, I thought.

I couldn't get a job, I had been neglecting my online classes, and I wanted my life back. And maybe I hoped somewhat that he was realizing how wrong he was for acting this way. It was stupid to meet him. I knew it was as I was driving there, as I walked into the building. I thought at least we would be in a public place so that he couldn't hurt me and if anything did happen, someone would see.

I dropped off my rent check downtown and headed to campus, running about 10-15 minutes late. I tried to call to let him know I was late at the new number he gave me, but couldn't get through. He was angry when I got there. He was always angry when I was late.

He was waiting inside the classroom already- students were still coming in and I didn't see a professor so I just waved at him from outside. He packed up his stuff quickly and stormed out of the classroom. He grabbed my wrist and started pulling me outside (there were a few students in the hall). He was walking so quickly I could barely keep up.

I told him that if he was serious about telling the truth he should do it sooner rather than later, and that I was sorry for how bad things got between us. He told me he had to go back to class soon and he had told me to be there at 1:00, pointing out that I was late. I said somewhat angrily, "well last time I saw you on campus, you called the police so I'm sorry if I didn't rush here to see you." He yelled at me loudly, "I did not call the police" and started pulling toward the door.

We got outside the building at the top of the steps and he pulled my wrist really hard and I jerked my hand away from him and ran down the stairs to get away from him. I was worried he'd push me or something. He yelled at me, and I told him I wasn't doing this anymore, that it was too easy for him to act like this, to just come and go in my life, and I left. The entire encounter lasted maybe two minutes. I had several bruises on my wrist afterward. I left, upset, and went straight to my son's school to pick him up for the day. I checked him out early to spend time with him, and the school has a record of the time I arrived.

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We went home and spent some time together until my husband came home. I was emotionally exhausted, and we were laying in the bed together when the doorbell rang. I could hear low voices, so I went to the top of the stairs and saw police cars out front.

Garrett had called the police on me – again – and God only knows what he told them. I told my husband to shut the door and not let them in without a warrant, then the police stormed through the door – in front of my eight year old son. They started shouting at me, asking me where Garrett's phone was. I had no idea what they were talking about.

They came upstairs. I locked my bedroom door. They can't just come into your home and take you like this without a warrant, without a reason, I thought. I told them to slide the warrant under the door. They said no. They used a key to unlock the door, came inside my bedroom and arrested me. They didn't interview me, they didn't ask me any questions, they didn't investigate the lies Garrett had told them, they just sent me to the county jail. They kidnapped me and made me disappear.

I was going to be stuck there for at least one night, I knew, because I was told it was too late in the day to get a bond hearing. The next morning, I waited in a long line with other women as we each got our 10-seconds to plea for our release. Someone in

front of me stabbed her boyfriend. She got a $5,000 bond. Another woman was drunk and got into a fight. She got a $1,000 bond.

When it was my turn, the judge took a moment to read my charges. Apparently, FSU police hadn't even bothered to officially file the probable cause warrant, so we had to wait while the state attorneys looked for it. It was only a few paragraphs long. The judge read it.

Violation of an injunction, even though he said he'd drop it and he asked me to meet him. Trespassing since I was on campus without signing in first. And… robbery by sudden snatching. He was claiming I stole his cell phone while we were fighting.

"That is… weak," he said. "I guess it's technically robbery by sudden snatching, but that is a weak case," the judge said again. He pointed out there were no witnesses. There was no investigation, just Garrett's statement.

"What are we on bail?" he asked.

"We would ask your honor to deny bail," the prosecutor said. "There's a history of harassment with the victim."

I wasn't supposed to talk, but I couldn't help myself. I begged the judge to let me go home. I was pregnant. I had an autistic child who I needed to care for. I didn't steal

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anything, I told him. He said I needed to get a psychological evaluation before I could go home. I asked how long that would take. He said a counselor would be in Monday or Tuesday, and they would review the information and make a decision next week.

Next week? I was going to spend the weekend in jail? What about my family? My son? My husband? My baby? Me?

Because I was pregnant, I was put into solitary confinement. This was supposedly for my own protection, but it felt like punishment. I was put into a single cell with a steel-framed bed and a thin, plastic mattress on top. The light was always on – not a single second of darkness for three days. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat. For much of it, I felt like I couldn't breathe.

I never knew what the time was. There was a window that had been painted over with thick, black paint. It had been chipped in one corner, and from it I could just barely tell if it was night or day. I was dressed in a heavy robe that made it hard to move. I told the guards I couldn't eat meat, but they kept bringing it over so I just didn't eat. I had switched to a medication to help me sleep that was safe for pregnancy a few months ago. My husband tried to bring it to the jail so I could take it, but they wouldn't give it to me. I was told they "didn't treat sleep here."

No sleep. No darkness. No food. Hours and hours. I paced around the bed, counting my steps. I took walks every day while I was pregnant, and I thought it would help me stay calm. I had spent so much time just being calm, being strong, not breaking. I'd get dizzy walking in circles.

250, 500, 750.

I asked the time. Sometimes they answered me. I asked if I could eat. They'd yell at me for not eating the tray they brought earlier. I told them I didn't eat meat - I had been a vegetarian for nearly a decade. If I ate meat now, I'd get sick. Really sick. They ignored me.

250. 500. 750.

Time.

250. 500. 750.

Hungry.

250. 500. 750.

I couldn't stand the light anymore. I laid on the floor - the blood and urine-stained cement floor - so I could lay under the bed, in the dark.

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"Stop doing that," a guard yelled at me.

I just wanted to sleep. Was it day? Was it night? I didn't know. But I was so tired. "Get off the floor!" she yelled.

I couldn't move. Just let me sleep, I thought. Please, just let me sleep. The guard came into the room and tried to drag me off the floor. She told me I was never going to get out, now. I just laid there while she struggled with the awkward weight of my pregnant body. She gave up, dropped me to the ground, kicked me and said I was really in trouble now.

The guards came back and wheeled in a chair. I let them pick me up and put me in it. I didn't talk. I could have been comatose for how still and quiet I was. I think all of it finally got to me. Everything that had happened in the last six months caught up with me in a single moment.

I was finally breaking. No, I was already broken.

It was a restraint chair meant for people who were hurting themselves - doing the kinds of things my husband told me he saw on his job in the prison system, like biting fingers off and ripping out their own guts with their nails. I just wanted to sleep on the floor, without that light on me. It's illegal to put pregnant women in the

restraining chair. One guard said it was wrong, that they shouldn't do it. The nurse said they would all get in trouble. They did it anyway.

They strapped me into the restraint chair so that I couldn't move my arms or legs for eight hours. It works by tying you to yourself and then down to the frame. So if you moved one arm, it would pull and twist on the other side and cause you a lot of pain. But when your stomach is bulging and you don't fit right into the straps in the first place, it just hurts the entire time. I couldn't even lean my head to one side because it was too tight. I was still under that damn light. When someone finally came to let me out, she spoke to me in the same tone you'd speak to a petulant child, "if we let you out, are you going to cause any trouble?" I just wanted to sleep, I told her.

After that, I wasn't allowed to have clothes – just a thin paper smock too awkward to wear on my body and too small to use as a blanket. The paper was as thin as a cheap paper towel, with the same texture and roughness. Every time I moved, it tore. After only a few hours, it was a shredded mess. I tried to fit the thin pieces over my breasts and exposed genitals, but I was so uncomfortable that I needed to turn over every few minutes, and it would just fall off or tear more.

I was naked and exposed, my pregnant belly sticking to the plastic mat that was my temporary bed. Every time I moved, it hurt. My skin stuck to it, and I could hear it as I pulled myself off it to sit up or use the bathroom. A few of the guards were nicer.

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They didn't take my old paper smock when they gave me a new one, so I started balling them up to make a pillow. I gave up on modesty.

I wasn't allowed to shower all weekend, and by Monday I started to smell. By Tuesday I smelled so bad that I made myself sick. After being taken to the nurse to check on the baby, I threw up in someone's trash can on the way back to my cell. So they let me shower. It was the greatest two-minute shower of my life.

The judge ordered my release, but I'd have to wear an ankle monitor to make sure I didn't go to Garrett's house. I had not been to Garrett's house since that night in October. He didn't even lie and say I had. But I still had to wear it. I didn't protest. I just wanted to go home, eat and sleep.

I didn't answer Garrett's calls after that. I learned my lesson. I was never going to get answers from him. I was never going to get the truth. Every time I tried, I only hurt myself and my family more. I worried that the baby would be damaged. If not by the man-handling during the arrest, or the chair, then by the trauma of those four days. I immediately went and saw my doctor, and, miraculously, the baby was fine. Her heartbeat was strong and steady. She was tough. Tougher than me.

My husband blamed me for going to see Garrett, for not thinking about what Garrett could do to me, given all that he had already done. He was right. It was my

fault. I felt no more obligation to include Garrett in any of it. I felt no sympathy for what I perceived as his struggle to cope with an unplanned pregnancy. From then on, it became about protecting my daughter, myself and the rest of my family from Garrett at any cost.

I decided to file the Title IX complaint. But first, I had to go through the disciplinary hearing for everything that happened last October. Finally, five months later, I finally had a chance to defend myself.

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The Hearing

Take your worst moment - your ugliest breakup, your nastiest comment, your lowest low, your most private sins - and show that, and only that, to a group of 50 strangers.

How do you think they would judge you?

Sure, some of us have darker sins than others. But imagine a room full of people judging you for that moment and nothing else. They begin combing through your life, looking at every choice you've made through that lens. They dissect your actions before you can speak. They strip you down to your most basic, human parts, and measure

your worth. You fight for the truth, telling yourself it will put a stop to the madness, if you only had the chance to explain. But which is it - the truth hurts, or it will set us free?

Sometimes it's both. Sometimes it just hurts, and it only further traps us in its vanity. I wanted to be honest, believing honesty would resolve the matter and all would be well. But the truth so often gets pushed aside, the messiness of real life too troublesome to devote any effort toward. I didn't have faith in the truth. Garrett didn't seem to care about the truth, so why should I?

I found a lawyer. I reviewed the evidence. I prepared for the hearing that would, in essence, determine what I would be able to do with the rest of my life. I was advised not to blame Garrett for his role in any of what happened - blaming the "victim" never worked out for anyone, he said. When I finally received the charge letter, I saw I was charged with three things:

1. Disobeying a university order by contacting Garrett after the no contact order was issued.
2. Destruction of property for the night of Oct. 16
3. Harassment/Stalking for an unspecified period of time

Even though the administrator said I wouldn't get in trouble for the message I sent Garrett after I received the no contact order, it was part of the first violation. They also included the text I sent him that Friday, telling him to stop harassing me. Shockingly, they included the messages from when I was detained - even though it had already been pointed out to the university, and verified by the clinic and police, that it was not possible that I had sent them.

Because my court case was ongoing, and with possible new charges over what happened March 2, my lawyer advised against talking too much about what happened at Garrett's house that last night. I said I was fine with talking about it. We agreed he'd let me talk about it up to the point that I could get myself in trouble, and then he'd tell me to pull back.

My lawyer said there was no way they'd find me responsible for harassment and stalking. The accusation was absurd, if you looked at everything that happened between us.

And the witness list was short.

- The officer(s) from the night of October 16.
- The HR investigator(s) with whom I did my interview.
- Garrett.

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- Me.

It came down to his word against mine, except everything that I could prove. We wouldn't have to see each other, I was told. I thought that was unfair. If he was going to sit there and accuse me of these things, then he needed to do it to my face, like he would have to do in a court of law. I wanted him to have to look into my eyes as he lied. But this wasn't court. This was school. And they got to decide what they wanted to do, and how they wanted to conduct the interview. So we were in separate rooms.

The questions at the hearing were personal. They wanted to know everything that ever happened between us. My life was again being opened up to people who had no right to be involved in it. No authority to judge my actions. Garrett had invited them in with his lies, and the truth seemed irrelevant. We went over every detail. My lawyer grilled him with questions he couldn't or wouldn't answer.

"Did you create an elaborate story about your mother and your grandmother being schizophrenic in May, after Rebekah had ended things, to gain her sympathy?"

Garrett didn't want to answer that.

"Were you ever, during any point in your five-month long relationship, hospitalized due to illness?"

No, he said. He was trying to create distance between us. My lawyer and I looked at each other and both rolled our eyes.

"Did you tell Rebekah on October 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 that you still wanted to be with her?"

"I can't recall," Garrett said.

"We have the texts, Garrett," he reminded him.

"I could have," he conceded.

"Did you contact her after the no contact order was issued?"

"No," Garrett lied.

"We have a letter from you stating you were sorry about the incident at your house and you didn't mean for it to happen," my lawyer said, passing a copy of the letter to the hearing administrator.

"I wrote that before," Garrett lied.

"When?" my lawyer asked. "Because this letter specifically references the events of October 16."

"I'm not sure when I wrote it, but it was before that," Garrett lied again.

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"If Rebekah was at your house in July, why would she ask you if she had the correct address in August, the night you came to her office," my lawyer asked.

"I don't remember that message," Garrett said,

We again pointed to the messages.

"I don't have an answer for that," Garrett said.

"Can you provide any evidence whatsoever, a single text, message or call, to show you two had a romantic and sexual relationship between July 21 and August 2?"

He couldn't. Garrett didn't even bother bringing any evidence - no copies of texts or calls, or Facebook messages or photos, letters, nothing. I brought more than 200 pages worth. He didn't care that he had no proof. He didn't need it, he thought. They'd believe him, anyways - he was that confident in how good of a show he would put on. Honestly, it wasn't that good of a show. My lawyer couldn't help but remark out loud on several occasions how ridiculous he sounded. "Give me a break," he'd say. Flagrant, provable lies.

But Garrett wasn't on trial, I was. Garrett's honesty or character didn't matter, but mine did. I had made mistakes, I knew that, and I took responsibility for them. Even though I wanted so badly to take him to task - to rip every part of his story apart - I

listened to my advisors and didn't. I took responsibility for *all* of it. And I shouldn't have.

Near the end, when I was trying to give my final statement, the fire alarm went off. I still find that suspicious. At any rate, we were all forced to leave the building, and upon exiting, there he was. Right down the hall. He looked at me. I looked at him. Everything stopped for a second, before reality jerked me back to consciousness. We wrapped up the hearing and headed home.

Afterward, my lawyer told me what he thought would probably happen. Since Garrett was behind in school, they'd probably suspend me through the summer, until he graduated, then let me come back. That way, they look like they're taking it seriously to avoid any pushback from Garrett (or his family). And because they can't just go and admit they stole two semesters of my education away from me. I could sue them for that. That made them liable. And making me wait until fall to start classes again wasn't so egregious that I'd run straight to the court to file a lawsuit.

When the decision came through, that's exactly what they did. I was suspended until Garrett graduated and left, and then I could go back. Of course I'd be facing an entirely new hearing at some point because of what happened on March 2, but that hearing wasn't scheduled until months later. Even though I had been told that was the most likely outcome, I was outraged. Not at the suspension, per say - I was going to be

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giving birth that summer so it's not like I would have been in classes, anyways - but at the reasoning.

They found me responsible for the damage to his car, even though the charges were dropped entirely. Here's the kicker: because Garrett said I did it, and I didn't make a statement that night to police and told them I had no idea what they were talking about, they determined I was responsible. I gave them my statement regarding those events in the hearing, but they said because I didn't tell Tallahassee police the night it happened they could only consider Garrett's statement and the police report, which was, again, just Garrett's statement. So much for the right to remain silent.

> Based on the testimony provided, it is clear Rebekah and Garrett provided two very different accounts of the incident. When reviewing the police report, I noted that upon being stopped by TPD, Rebekah indicated that she was picking up food and asked why she was stopped. When informed by Officer Condor of TPD that the traffic stop was initiated based on a vehicle being damaged, Rebekah informed Officer Condor that she did not know what he was referring to. Officer Condor read Rebekah her Miranda Rights and offered to hear her side of the story. She again advised she did not know anything about a vehicle being damaged.
>
> At multiple times, TPD provided Rebekah the opportunity to explain her side of the story. At no point did she provide TPD any information that would refute Garrett's claims. At no point did Rebekah communicate to TPD her version of events that were ultimately communicated in the hearing. Garrett's testimony supports the information provided in the TPD report. Rebekah did not dispute that damage was done to the vehicle, and testimony provided by Officers Rowan and Condor support that damage was done to the vehicle. Based on this information, I am finding that the information provided supports a finding of "responsible" for this charge.

Next, not obeying the no-contact order by contacting Garrett. They included the text from when I told him not to come to my house. The included the fake supposedly-suicidal texts he reported the morning of October 20. They said the suicidal, coat-hanger texts were "consistent with the nature of the relationship" at that time. I never talked

about killing myself. I never talked about having some kind of back-alley abortion. We broke up October 16 because I refused to have an abortion, so no, that wasn't consistent.

They even acknowledged that it was impossible for me to have sent the texts later that day, which CAME FROM THE SAME NUMBER AS THAT MORNING, while I was in custody. They even went so far as to say, given the history of every text we had ever sent to each other, those texts didn't even sound like me. But instead of considering what it meant that Garrett was making all of this up, instead of judging him for his eagerness to get me in trouble by any means possible - they just blamed my husband. He was with me at the police station, the officer provided a statement saying so. But instead of questioning every other message or call Garrett supposedly received from a blocked number, instead of saying "hmm, if it was impossible for her to send the texts that afternoon, and for her and her husband to send them that night, and the texts from that morning came from the same number as later in the day, maybe Garrett sent these to himself, or had a friend send them."

And there was the fact that the texts that Garrett pretended were sent by my husband were wrong about my son's birthday. My son's birthday wasn't October 20 - his birthday wasn't until the next week. His party wasn't until the next day. My husband wouldn't suddenly forget that. Garrett didn't know when it was other than

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that it was coming up soon. Also, my husband never knew where Garrett lived. And he never texted in all caps.

They could have considered all of this and what it said about Garrett's character. If he was lying about this, and he clearly was, what else was he lying about? They could have asked themselves that question. But no. They just blamed my husband, and me by default. And I actually called Garrett on Thanksgiving, and we spoke on the phone several times in February. Why wasn't he reporting any of those calls? Why not report the things I actually did, instead of making them up?

They even accused me of "creating a hostile environment" for him by going to his house "uninvited." I showed them the message I sent asking if I had the right address - in August. I posed the question - if I had been to his house "many times" during July, which he was still saying I did even though he had no evidence of it, why would I be asking if I had the right address? Because I didn't have a text saying "Here is my address…." they decided I had somehow found it another way, though didn't make any suggestions on how the hell I would have gotten it. Not to mention the texts the next day asking me to come over.

Related to the charge of failure to comply with the lawful order of a University official:

The finding of fact for this charge will focus on incidents that occurred after the issuance of a No Contact Order that was received on October 17, 2017. Specifically, this finding will weigh the evidence to determine if Rebekah Jones attempted to contact Garrett Sweeterman after she retrieved her No Contact Order sent her FSU e-mail address. The timestamp receipt shows Rebekah retrieved this letter at 2:52pm on October 17, 2017.

According to Rebekah's appeal of her interim disciplinary action (appeal dated October 21, 2017), she indicated that on October 20, 2017, she contacted Garrett via text saying, "YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS." She further admitted to contacting Garrett when she had full knowledge of the No Contact Order. She identified her behavior as a "mistake."

During the hearing and in the information Rebekah provided, she disputed that she repeatedly contacted Garrett after receiving the No Contact Order. Garrett disputed this and claimed that after the issuance of the No Contact Order, he received numerous phones calls from blocked numbers. Rebekah indicated in her testimony she did not attempt to contact Garrett using blocked numbers. Furthermore, she indicated in her testimony and documentation there are two instances where it would not have been physically possible for her to have contacted Garrett. In one of the instances, Rebekah was detained under the Baker Act. In another, she was providing a statement to Officer Adams of the Florida State University Police Department (FSUPD).

At 8:49am on October 20, 2017, Garrett received a series of text messages from an unknown number. He reported these to Victim's Advocate at 9:20am on October 20th, 2017. While Garrett indicated this correspondence was from an unknown phone number, the content of the messages are consistent with the current nature of the relationship between Rebekah and Garrett. During the hearing, Garrett indicated no one else would have conversations with him such as the one documented in the text messages.

Based on FSUPD Report #1710-0298, Officer Bailey took Rebekah Jones into custody under the Baker Act no earlier than 12:36pm on October 20, 2017. According to FSUPD Report #1710-0313, Officer Adams documented Rebekah had been discharged from [redacted] at 6:38pm on October 21, 2017. The only correspondence I can find potentially occurring between this thirty-hour span were two text messages reading: "You fuck. I know where you live. see you in 5 minutes" and "IT IS OUR SON'S BIRTHDAY YOU SON OF A BITCH AND HIS MOM IS IN A PSYCH WARD YOU LIAR. SHE MADE A MISTAKE. LET IT GO. STAY AWAY FROM MY WIFE AND OUT OF OUR LIVES." The nature of these messages do not read like any correspondence previously sent between Rebekah Jones and Garrett Sweeterman; however, the language is consistent with language potentially sent by Rebekah's husband to Garrett. The content of the messages do not suggest Rebekah was the author of these messages sent at times in which she likely did not have phone access.

Based on the totality of the information provided in the hearing and the documentation provided, it is more likely than not Rebekah violated the No Contact Order by attempting to engage in persistent, unwanted contact with Garrett. Additionally, some correspondence Rebekah admitted to sending to Garrett occurred after she opened the No Contact Order at 2:52pm on October 17, 2017.

Related to the charges of stalking and conduct creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment:

The finding of fact for these charges will examine whether or not Rebekah Jones engaged in behavior that fits the University definition of stalking, and whether or not her behavior may have created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

During the hearing, there was dispute between Rebekah's and Garrett's testimony regarding whether or not she was invited to his house. According to Garrett, every time she showed up at his house it was unannounced and unwanted. Rebekah refuted this by saying she was invited each time. Furthermore, Garrett claimed he had never given Rebekah his home address, whereas Rebekah claimed Garrett's address was verbally communicated to her. There is a Facebook Message where Rebekah sent Garrett his address in the form of a question, asking him to verify his home address.

I was getting angry reading the decision letter. But the last part pissed me off more than anything.

> On October 10, 2017, Garrett began telling Rebekah he did not want her to contact his mother about their relationship or his personal difficulties. Contrary to his wishes, Rebekah ultimately did contact Garret's mother. Additionally, on October 13, 2017, Rebekah contacted Garrett's sister via phone. It is not known how Rebekah obtained Garrett's sisters' phone number as it had not been previously communicated to her. Garrett again expressed displeasure of Rebekah contacting his family after he had specifically asked her not to do this. Garrett would further communicate he did not want his family involved in his personal affairs and remarked that he "CANT [*sic*] EVEN RELAX IN MY OWN HOME." He also said he needed "rest and space." By this point, Rebekah had violated Garrett's communicated wishes multiple times, and it could be reasonably determined Garrett was not interested in further contact.

Again, I was being punished for reaching out to my boyfriend's family when he said he wanted to die. I was being punished because I didn't stop messaging him on the night of October 10, even though he told me on October 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 that he still cared about me and led me on. Garrett even told the investigator from HR, who gave a statement during the hearing, that we broke up on October 16. But I was supposed to know from his messages telling me he didn't want to break up, from him waking me up in the middle of the night because he was in the hospital (which he admitted lying about), and from his constant texting me, that I was supposed to just stop talking to him? What kind of person would I have been if he told me he wanted to die and had been hospitalized and I just… didn't respond? And I told them how I got his sister's number online - did they not listen to anything I said? Was everyone losing their damn minds?

I appealed, but it was denied. I knew I couldn't have enrolled in the summer, anyways, and I didn't want to run into Garrett again and deal with whatever the hell he'd tell people. But it was the principal of the matter that bothered me. I was a villain. He was a victim. And they had their verdict.

Uneven Ground

I created a "hostile" environment for Garrett because I continued talking to him after he told me he loved me and he wanted to die. I created a "hostile" environment because I went to his twice while we were dating.

But what about me? Was it not hostile to me that he would show up to my office whenever he wanted and would refuse to leave? Was it not hostile to me every time I said it was over and he begged me to take him back?

My complaints against Garrett went unanswered. The university didn't even bother to respond to my emails half the time, when I would forward them the texts I was still getting, the calls he made to me, the times he looked me up on LinkedIn, or unblocked me on Facebook so that he could look through my profile.

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The texts would come from a VOIP number, and couldn't be traced, so they couldn't be used against him, they said. *Really??* REALLY??? Because he got me suspended with the very same texts - the ones that were not verified, the ones from VOIP numbers. It was OK to suspend me for texts that couldn't be verified, but not him?

And how about the fact that it was physically impossible for me to send several of the messages he claimed I sent - does that not put into doubt his entire statement, his character? The texts weren't the only reason I was suspended, they said, just a part of it. But it showed that he was lying - that he was making things up to try to get me in trouble! Didn't that matter? Shouldn't you question everything someone tells you when you find that out? They just ignored me.

The Title IX office was investigating Garrett, but the University had done nothing to punish him or to protect me from him. If I was suspended for every mis-step I made while dating him, why wasn't he?

Was it not harassment when he spent three days texting me non-stop when he found out I was pregnant, demanding I talk to him, demanding I meet him, demanding I have an abortion? Even when I told him every few minutes to leave me alone, to stop calling me, to stop texting me?

Or when I blocked him and told him to stop contacting me, and instead he came barging into my office to leave a love letter begging me not to stop talking to him? Or that he would come see me without warning, whenever he wanted, and demanded I see him, demanding I just give students taking quizzes in my office the answers because he had something to say?

Was it not stalking when he asked his roommate to enroll in my class and keep tabs on me? Or when he tried to show up to my doctor's appointment? Or when he showed up to my house, after the no contact order had been issued?

Was it not abuse that he lied to me on four occasions, telling me he was hospitalized, every time I tried to break up with him? Was it not abuse that he made me make an appointment with a clinic while he stood over my shoulder, or that he threw me to the ground when he found out I didn't go?

What about all the times I told him he had to wear a condom or we wouldn't have sex? How I even kicked him out once because he didn't have any? And then he just took it off without telling me the first time, knowing I thought he was wearing it?

What of all that?

The university knew about all of that because I told them. I gave them the texts. I gave them the call logs, the messages, the letters. All of it. But they did nothing.

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Part VII: Redemption

I stayed as far away from Garrett as I could after he had me arrested on March 2. My husband had enough. "If you talk to him, if you go see him again, I will leave," he told me." I will love and take care of our children, and I will still love you, but I can't do this again. I can't watch you do this to yourself. To our baby. To our family." He was scared, angry and hurt. He was right.

I immediately re-filed my restraining order. I blocked Garrett on all of my social media accounts - no more perusing my profiles whenever he pleased. He called me, but I didn't answer. He threatened me, but I didn't respond. He showed up to my house, but I wouldn't open the door. He harassed my friends, tried to get my husband in

trouble, and even blamed me for getting advertisements for baby items. But I didn't take the bait. No one did. I became unreachable to Garrett.

Garrett may have been a mediocre student, but he managed top scores on all the lists out there of emotionally abusive behaviors.

1. Name calling (bitch, cunt, crazy)
2. Yelling (always)
3. Pubic embarrassment (everything he said and everything he put me through)
4. Threats (threatening to disappear, to tell other people about our affair, to hurt me and my family)
5. Digital spying (the countless examinations of my social profiles after we ended things - and possibly before)
6. Direct orders (telling me what I had to do, how to do it, when to do it)
7. Outbursts (the joke in the hotel, kicking and throwing things when I disagreed with him, hurting me)
8. Feigned helplessness (he "can't make it" without me)
9. Jealousy (keeping me away from my family)
10. Denying something you know is true (gaslighting)
11. Using guilt (the entire final two weeks of our relationship)
12. Denying their abuse (he still does)

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13. Accusing you of abuse (Part VI)
14. Blaming you for their problems (it was all my fault that I got pregnant, apparently)
15. Shutting down communication (this one started early in the relationship)
16. Trying to come between you and your family
17. Withholding affection as punishment
18. Turning you out/ignoring you
19. Actively working to turn others against you (I still want to know what he told his roommates that would enrage one enough to attack a (pregnant) stranger)
20. And of course, physical harm

I also learned about Factitious Disorder after we ended things, a serious mental illness in which someone fakes being sick in order to gain attention. "When you see that someone in your life is faking illness for attention, don't be so quick to dismiss their pleas for help. If they have factitious disorder, they need urgent mental health treatment. Don't make the mistake of dismissing their pain and isolating them further in their distress."

I found comfort in knowing I did, in fact, handle Garrett's many claims of illness - throwing up blood, hospitalizations, and the like - how I should have. Despite what the

university suggested I should do (just ignore him), my instincts to help him and to encourage him to get help were right.

Things moved quickly after the hearing, and with the Title IX office ramping up their investigation and my newfound thirst for justice, I pressed the police for an interview. I met with investigators, bringing my victim advocate with me, and all of the evidence. Finally, someone was willing to hear what really happened.

The Lie Heard 'Round the World

His first - and biggest - mistake was lying about our relationship. Not because it was a particularly difficult lie to sell- who knows what really goes on when two people are alone, after all. But because I had proof. I brought the receipts.

On October 16, he told the police I was someone he "saw briefly." He didn't mention the pregnancy in the police report. I imagine that's because other people were around, and he couldn't admit to anyone - ever - that he had made up everything he had ever said about us and that I was pregnant with his child.

Garrett met with Human Resources and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities on October 17.

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He told HR at first that he didn't want to file a formal complaint, but later changed his mind. He described our relationship to them as, "on/off over summer, on again when school started, then sexual activity leading to on/off situation." He told them the first time I was at his house was the night of October 16. He alleged we had sex weeks before school started and for a while after. He said we broke up the night of October 16. He said things were serious between us, and that I was his girlfriend. He said he had been trying to end things for weeks.

When he met with the Student Rights office the same day, he said he was never really "into it," and that I initiated all of the sexual contact and communication between us. He said I was "chasing" him. He said he had been trying to end things with me for a week, and we were never really dating. He said that I had shown up many times over the summer to his house, and that he didn't know how I got his address. He made it a point to mention that I was his teacher. He said I was stalking and harassing him. He again failed to mention I was pregnant with his child.

On October 20, he told other officers I was a a "fellow student, who he had sexual relations with in the past", and we were "having an intimate relationship."

During the hearing the next spring, Garrett said we were seeing each other during the summer. He said we "made out" a lot in July, and that I was at his house

three or four times that summer. But after he realized it was wrong because I had a family, we stopped seeing each other before the fall semester started.

We never physically did anything in the summer, and we didn't actually start having sex until the second day of classes that fall semester. And he saw me with my family in June, before we supposedly "made out all the time" in July (which we didn't). I have the message from him on June 21 saying it was over because he wasn't a homewrecker. And it didn't all end before the start of the fall semester - we had sex twice the first week of classes.

In March, he described our relationship to police as *"brief, such as a one-night stand. He explained last year he took a class at FSU that was taught by Jones. He explained they had a one-night stand in the classroom."*

A one-night stand? Sure, a dozen times, maybe. And I would never have sex in a classroom. Probably not. Maybe not. But that didn't happen. Regardless, he was now trying to portay this as me seducing my student while I was still his teacher, months before we actually had sex, in the classroom, no less.

There were a million other lies sprinkled across his statement. He told the police I was fired for threatening his roommate's grades. In reality, I was fired for having sex with him in my office, for telling our professor he was sick, and for not reporting an

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arrest that should have never happened to my supervisor within 24 hours. Nothing he said that day was true, and it made me look like a crazy person. That's why they took his word. That's why they stormed through my front door and took me in front of my family.

However, after they spoke to me, and I gave them records of all our communications, campus police called Garrett in for an interview. This time he brought a lawyer with him. He must have sensed that people were starting to question his story. Campus police told him this was his opportunity to come clean.

He told them I was his teacher last spring. He said we started texting over the summer, but it "died out." He told them we had a class together last fall, and that on August 28, we "hooked up" in my office. So far true.

> From the report: *"He explained things kind of "preceded" from there. He explained she was going to have an abortion and he needed to be around with her until she had that abortion. Sweeterman claimed he would come to her office often and text but it was not a romantic relationship. He advised they only had sex a total of three times."*

Three times? Is he only counting the first week, or maybe just the last week? We had sex more then three times before I even found out I was pregnant. Hell, we had sex three times that one night in the hotel. And wasn't romantic? I thought about

everything he had said to me. All the texts. All the letters. The nights together - the night in the hotel.

It was all fake? Every single moment? And he said he "needed to be around" with me until I had an abortion? Why did he "need to be around?" So he could manipulate me, coerce me? After he said this, the police asked about the letter. I had let them make copies. I imagine it went down like in a TV show: they let him lie, continue to spin his story, while they waited for the big reveal. I imagine they dramatically pulled the letter out of an envelope and opened it on the table in front of him. I imagine his eyes going wide, realizing he had just lied to the police, and the police knew it.

> From the report: *"I showed Sweeterman the letter and he advised he remembers writing this. Sweeterman advised he exaggerated his feelings in the letter. He advised this was his way of attempting to calm Jones down in order to talk to her about it."*

So he's admitting to the police that he lied to me and begged me to forgive him and talk to him right after he stood me up at his house and I blocked him? He "exaggerated" his feelings? He's actually admitting that he lied and manipulated me, led me to believe he loved me, so that he could coerce me into doing what he wanted? Surely, the police were starting to put together a clearer picture of just how terrible of a guy Garrett was, if nothing else.

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They asked about our communication after the breakup in October. He said that he had received missed calls from blocked numbers, but he had never called me. He never spoke to me. He never contacted me in any way. Campus police then warned him they were going to apply for a search warrant for his Facebook account and message logs. From the report: *"I asked him if I was going to find anything other than what he has already told me."*

First, Garrett admitted to stalking me and a phone call he made to me in February. He claimed he only called me to tell me to leave him alone. A few more truths here and there, and Garrett's story was falling apart. I can picture the police baiting him: Oh, so you did text her this time from a blocked number? How many times did you do that? Why did you call her 12 times after she filed a restraining order against you? Why did you go to her house? Why were you at her office? Why this, why that?

I can see the panic on his face. The investigation turned to him - now they wanted to know about those police reports he filed, knowing he made a habit of lying to police. They wanted to check into the calls I had been reporting for months that the school did nothing about. Someone finally didn't believe him. He was forced to tell the truth, and the truth made him look like a very, very ugly person.

A week after his second interview with police, Garrett told the Title IX investigator, who was investigating him for dating violence, stalking and harassment,

that our relationship was "intense," that we had sex "more often than he could count," and we were "very intimate." I guess with all the evidence sitting right in front of him, when he was under the microscope, he realized he couldn't lie about it. Or knew that lying about some parts would only make him look worse.

But here he wasn't being investigated just for lying to police or filing false reports. He was being investigated for the truly awful things he had done to me. He was being looked at as an abuser. He needed to create the image of a person who truly cared, deeply, madly even, for me, and thus would never, ever try to hurt me.

He told the Title IX office that he meant what he said to me in the letters and texts, that his feelings were real. He said he never tried to use or manipulate me, and that he never wanted to hurt me. He said he was scared and confused about everything going on, but he was supportive of me and whatever choice I made about the pregnancy. He said he never tried to pressure me into an abortion. He never pushed me. He never did any of it.

He added in at the end that they really shouldn't be looking at him at all. I, after all, was arrested that night at his house. I was the one who got in trouble with the school.

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He didn't know it, but the state dropped the charges for that because of the multiple lies to police, multiple false reports, and the lack of evidence. And the Title IX office already had the transcript from his interview with police, where he said he "exaggerated" his feelings to me so that I would talk to him and not break up with him. The same interview when he said that he used my feelings for him to manipulate me so that I would have an abortion, and that it "wasn't romantic" in nature.

The Title IX investigator used pretty strong language in describing what he thought of Garrett's character. "Son of a bitch" was used at least twice. He spoke with the officer who Garrett told he only slept with me once, then three times. The two were shocked at how easily Garrett lied. The officer asked the Title IX investigator if that was how Garrett described our sexual affair to him, as once, three times, or "brief."

"He didn't say exactly how many times, " he remarked. "But he said it was A LOT." He put the emphasis on "a lot." The officer shook his head. The Title IX investigator said he would be sending his report to the University, since they were technically different entities, and that I had a very strong case for relationship abuse and harassment.

When the officer walked me to the elevator after the meeting, he told me he was sorry for the way the investigation had been handled. He said that if they had known

about everything from the beginning, they never would have arrested me. I don't think I've ever heard a cop apologize to someone like that before.

By April 14, 2018, the university was asking police about updates on when Garrett would be charged.

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Villain, Absolved

Once the police were onto Garrett, things got better with the criminal charges I was facing. Well, I should say *could have* faced because the State never even filed charges against me for what happened in March. My husband and I both spoke to the investigator who worked for the state attorney's office. We turned over my phone and let them see Garrett's calls and texts. I let them have whatever they wanted.

What Garrett was accusing me of was a felony. I would have been a ***felon***. I wouldn't be able to ever go back to school or get a job. I would have lost my right to vote. I would have been a non-citizen. Nothing more serious had ever happened in my life, so I cooperated with whatever they wanted.

After a few weeks of investigating him, the attorneys filed a statement essentially saying they would not be pressing charges because Garrett had lied so often and about

the most basic things - including the lies about our relationship. The state's attorney office didn't believe a word Garrett said, the ankle monitor came off, and I was finally a free woman. No criminal record. No fines, fees or other punishments. It all went away. It should have never happened, but I was glad to be done with it.

I spent the last bit of time I had left before I had the baby getting right with myself and my husband. I was excited to meet my daughter, and the last few weeks seemed to drag on forever as I only become more anxious to see her. I was huge. Someone at the mall asked if I was having twins. All the babies in my family were late. I don't know about Garrett's family, but all of the women in my family went far beyond their due dates if they weren't induced. My brother was about 3-4 weeks late.

When I was pregnant with my son the doctors were eager to "get it over with." He was due on a Wednesday, so when I looked like I wasn't going to pop by then, they scheduled an induction for two days later. Now, pregnant with my daughter, they looked at me being three weeks late more holistically, "oh that's nothing, she'll come out when she's ready" she said. I had been dilated several centimeters for weeks. But she still wasn't coming out. I was getting to the point that I couldn't get in and out of the tub by myself, and I felt unsafe going up and down the stairs. The heartburn was terrible. I threw up all of the time - not from sickness, but from simply not having

enough room inside my body to eat any real amount of food. Finally, my doctor agreed to induce me.

My husband was with me. He held my hand, coached me through it. He nearly fainted, I think, but I was pretty out of it. I decided to go all-naturelle for the birth. With my back problems I didn't want to try with the epidural. Giant needle shoved inside my crooked spine? No thank you. I regretted that later, but it was a great motivator to hurry the labor along.

I had my daughter at about 4:40 in the afternoon on a Tuesday. She was just over 8 lbs 1 ounce. She was beautiful. Perfect.

I didn't even think about Garrett until the lady who processes the birth certificates came around a few days later. She asked me what we were going to name her.

Evelyn.

"Her middle name?"

Even though my husband wasn't present for our son's birth, I still gave him my husband's first name as my son's middle. I knew that if my husband didn't come back, it could very well be the only connection he'd ever have with his father. Now, this could

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be the only connection my daughter would ever have to her biological father. But what was the female equivalent of Garrett? Gertrude? Gross. I thought about it. Garrett's middle name was Michael.

Michele, I said. *Evelyn Michele.*

"Last name?"

I gave her both mine and my husband's last names. We had discussed it beforehand and we both agreed that was best. She took down my information - my birthdate, birth place, etc. - and turned to my husband.

"And your name, sir?" she asked him.

We paused. We both looked at each other. They wanted the baby's father's information. They assumed, since he was my husband, the baby was his. And she was, really. Garrett may be her father, but he'll never be her daddy. So my husband gave them his information. Garrett, it seemed, had been nearly erased.

I let my husband decide if he wanted to do a paternity test or not. If there was a slight chance the baby was his, how much of a relief would that be? But I think the fear of getting the results back and finding out, with absolute certainty, that she wasn't would have been too much. He decided we shouldn't do it.

Guile and Gall

The hearing for the March incident was scheduled right around my due date, so I had to formally request it be postponed until several weeks after. I was again charged with violating the no contact order by taking to Garrett that spring and by agreeing to meet him on campus. They also included the bit about Garrett saying I stole his cell phone when we met that day, even though the police pinged it right afterward and it pointed them toward an off-campus student housing complex on the opposite side of town that I was at in the exact same moment (a complex where Garrett had friends who lived). I was also charged with creating a hostile environment, even though I only saw him that one day for about two minutes, after he asked me to meet him there.

We ended up doing the hearing over Skype sometime in August. There were only three witnesses: the officer who wrote the report, Garrett, and myself. We were all given a time to join the Skype conference, since Garrett was away (somewhere) and I was still at home with my newborn baby. I tried to get her to sleep before we started, expecting the hearing to be relatively short. There wasn't any evidence that anything happened other than that we saw each other that day, and with the revelations about Garrett's lies that had since come out, I was pretty sure no one was buying his story anymore.

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When the videochat started, three windows popped up on the screen. First, there was the hearing administrator who would be reviewing the case and would be the primary decision maker in any potential charges/punishments. I was there, sitting at my kitchen table. The officer joined, and then we all waited. I think the hearing was supposed to start around 9:00 or 9:30 a.m. but Garrett didn't "show up." We waited. The school kept trying to reach him, saying he had told someone he would be participating a few days prior, but then told someone else he wouldn't. We waited. About 45 minutes passed. I asked if this was normal, for someone to just not show up to the hearing. I wanted to proceed without him. The officer was getting impatient. We waited.

Someone eventually got in touch with him. At first, they said we would be starting without him and that he wouldn't be participating. That was a relief to me. Then about 10 minutes into the hearing, we stopped because he changed his mind. Then we rescheduled the hearing for two hours later. I made clear my frustration. But there was nothing I could do but wait.

We picked it back up at about 11:00 a.m. (to the best of my memory). Garrett again was not joining us yet, but he told them we could go ahead and start the hearing without him. He didn't have any questions for anyone, so he would just join later and give his statement then. Since the officer needed to leave (the hearing was supposed to

be two hours or so earlier, after all), he went first. He said he wrote an 18-page report. The administrator asked if he had anything to add. The officer said no. The administrator asked a few questions, to which the officer just said, "it's in the report." I think I only asked him two or three questions.

"Was there any physical evidence whatsoever that I took Garrett's cell phone the day we met on March 2?"

"No," he said. "Just circumstantial."

That was the answer that mattered most to me. I couldn't argue that I didn't see him that day – a video camera on campus caught me walking away. Since he was the one who asked me to meet him there, I knew (or maybe didn't care?) they probably wouldn't buy into the whole "hostile environment" bit. I wasn't going to take the blame this time. I was ready to show everyone exactly who he was, and I knew just what questions to ask to force the monster to make an appearance.

Garrett finally decided to grace us with his presence sometime after a break we took following the officer's statement. He looked like he was hiding in a bathroom or closet. As soon as Garrett saw that the conference was visible to all of us, he turned off his camera. The administrator told him he had to turn it back on. Garrett said he wanted to do it so that he didn't have to see me, but they said no. No separate rooms

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this time, Garrett. No hiding from me as you made up stories. He had to look at me (kind of) the entire time. He was frustrated already.

The administrator asked Garrett what happened on March 2. Garrett gave his story, a slightly different version (again) from what he told police that day, but more or less the same. An administrator was asking him some questions when the baby woke up. She would have been asleep the entire time if Garrett had cared to show up on time like the rest of us. I asked for a minute to go get her. Garrett was furious.

"Why are we doing this?" he shouted.

"Just give her a minute here," the administrator said. "We waited for you."

"This is bullshit!" he said. "Bullshit."

I had the baby in my arms and told them we could keep going. The administrator said if I needed to take a break we could reconvene later. I knew if we did, Garrett probably wouldn't show up and I had questions for him. So I rocked the baby in my arms while he spoke to keep her calm. Garrett was frazzled. Seeing the baby and I really angered him. He was snapping at everyone. He was cursing. At one point he tried to be dramatic and say he just couldn't feel safe on campus because of me. He really tried to ham it up. It was so painfully obvious that he was acting. I was holding

our daughter, not realizing my microphone was still on, and said in a cutesy baby voice "that's just crazy, he's crazy."

"Is it?" he snapped at me. "Because I got an injunction. Remember that?" His face was red. He was all rage.

"You had to lie to get it," I said.

"Why are we doing it like this?" he shouted again. "Why aren't we doing it like before when we didn't have to see each other. This is such bullshit!"

"Aw, we made daddy mad," I said again in cutesy baby talk. Maybe I knew the mic was still on for that one. He lost his temper.

"You're going to sit here and lie about this shit?" he said.

"Oh, you mean like how you lied about me harassing you?" I shot back. His eyes widened. He didn't expect me to defend myself. "How *I stalked* you? How you lied to get me fired? Remember *that*, Garrett?"

The administrator intervened.

"If you two cannot stop arguing, we're going to have to stop and do this later," he said.

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I apologized. Garret scoffed.

"Do you have anything to add Garrett?" the administrator asked.

"No, I'm done with this," he said rudely. "Can I go now?"

The administrator seemed taken aback. "You don't have any questions for her? You don't want to make a closing statement or add anything?" Coming in during the middle of the hearing and taking off after you're "done with it" wasn't typical for these sorts of things. It wasn't exactly "victim" behavior to get pissed off and start cursing at the administrators. And they saw the way he looked at me, the way he was talking to me. The game was over.

He turned off his camera and left. I calmly continued, briefly covering all the lies he had told, all the ways he had manipulated me, all the evidence against him. I said it was a mistake to talk to him at all after what happened in October, but I felt like I had to try for our daughter. I said it would never, ever happen again and I learned my lesson.

The administrator was pretty much forced to find me responsible for talking to him while the no-contact order was still in effect, but the language in that part of the letter was different from the rest. It was almost as though someone had reviewed the letter, decided that giving me slack for that wasn't going to happen, and added in a few

paragraphs to find me "responsible" for answering Garrett's calls, for telling him to stop stalking me, for agreeing to see him that day.

The rest of it was dismissed. The administrator said that Garrett didn't seem threatened or in fear of me – he seemed like he was annoyed. I had never posed any physical threat to him, there was no evidence I was "aggressive" with him then or any time before, and his attitude before and during the hearing didn't appear to be of someone who was afraid for their own safety. Since there was evidence I ever "stole" his phone, and in fact there was quite a bit of evidence suggesting I didn't, they didn't find me responsible for that, either. Add in the police report, all the lies he had told, the lengths he went to get me in trouble, and the hearing administrator didn't seem interested in punishing me.

Still, I faced another two-semester suspension for violating the no-contact order again, and since it would have been more than four semesters total since I had been enrolled, I'd have to reapply for admission to my own department. They're not obligated to let me come back, and maybe they won't. I won't know until I apply this fall. Either way, everything that I done to myself in trying to get answers from Garrett – all the pain to myself and my family – was truly over now.

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Part VIII: Do you have a soul, Garrett?

When you have children, you surrender so many of the small pleasures you never realized you had. Sure, I had a son already, but he was older - almost nine years old now. It had been a very long time since we had middle-of-the-night feedings and diapers and baby food and so on. You give up sleep lasting more than a few hours at a time. You stop caring about getting dressed, or putting on makeup, or washing your hair every day. You accept that you'll be covered in spit-up and messes and will probably, at least for the first year or so, be unable to go to the movies, eat out or really do much of anything without family around to help.

You have to worry about taking off work for illness, doctor's appointments, or because you're just too exhausted to get out of bed. Or because you don't want to put her in daycare because you miss her. You have to worry about crazy people who refuse to vaccinate their kids, because your little one can't get all her shots right away, and the really scary stuff isn't vaccinated for until 12 months of age. You worry that even if you keep her away from other people, your son might make contact with one of these dangerous children at the park or school, and bring something home that could make your baby severely ill, or even kill her. Eventually I would have to worry about shootings at her daycare or school... her biological father coming back to hurt her... another man hurting her the way her father hurt me, or worse. The evil in the world taking her innocence.

So many things to worry about. The one thing I didn't think would happen -- the greatest fear in the back of every new parent's mind -- is that my child would be sick.

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The First Few Months

My son was bottle-fed from birth, since I was still in college and went back to work three days after I had him. That was back when formula was mostly made from cans of concentrate that you just added water to, before the powdered stuff took over. I

wanted to breastfeed Evi. I was privileged enough that the job I was hired for would wait about 10 weeks after she was born for me to start work, and I thought I owed it to Evi to try.

You assume since it's (rightfully) pushed as the best method of feeding an infant that it'd be easy. But no one tells you that not everyone can do it. We just assume all women push out babies and then PRESTO! Breast milk! Latch! Feed! If you aren't aware, right after you have a baby you produce something called colostrum (also called "first-milk). It's not milk, but rather something to feed your baby to hold them over until your milk "comes-in." This usually happens for women before they leave the hospital. It didn't happen for me until almost six days after she was born.

That's wasn't the first problem, though.

Right after babies are born, they usually get up to feed about every two hours or so. You're given a little tracking sheet in the hospital to make sure your baby is eating, sleeping and peeing/pooping in the right proportions. The nurses would come by often and see how you were doing, and check the log to make sure everything was going right.

They said it wasn't unusual for her to be so sleepy the first day. But when the second and third day came and went, with Evi sleeping eight hours at a time, not

pooping at all, and barely eating, they became concerned. The long segments of time between feedings didn't help me produce milk like I was supposed to. We started waking her up so that she would eat. She'd eat a little, then just go back to sleep. We'd try it again. And again. And again.

Jaundice set in. Our first trip to the emergency room.

Once we were discharged, we scheduled her first pediatric appointment for two days later, since she was having so much trouble. They took her vitals, asked about her schedule, and weighed her. "It's not unusual for babies to lose weight in the week right after birth" the nurse assured me.

For breastfed babies, it was normal to lose 7-10% of their birth weight in the first week. They usually gain it all back by week two. She lost 15% in the first three days. She was still down 7% by week two. Her jaundice hadn't gone away, so we went to the ER to run tests.

Doctors hate running tests on babies, especially blood tests. Parents hate it, too. It's traumatic for the baby (and the parents), exposes the baby to germs their little bodies aren't ready for, and can hurt them if too much is taken in too short a period of time.

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We added supplements for the jaundice and discussed how to deal with her weight loss. Because of her weight problems, we decided to supplement breast milk with formula a few bottles a day, and have me pump more so we could better track exactly how much she was eating. I spent four hours a day stuck on my couch or bed pumping breast milk, and still only made about 2-3 bottles worth.

Newborns usually eat 2-4 ounces at a time, at least eight times a day. She was barely eating 2 ounces four or five times a day.

Newborns usually get up three times a night to eat. She usually slept through the night. So we woke her up to try to get her to eat. Most of the time, she'd throw up everything she ate just minutes later. Not spit-up as babies are prone to do when they eat too much or too fast - actual vomit.

Newborns usually need changed about six times a day - wet as many times with three or four poops. She went three days without a bowel movement.

The doctors started looking at all of the possible causes, checking for each one through changes in formula, schedules, behavior, minimally invasive testing, everything they could without running tests that could harm her.

Could it be as simple as colic? My son never tolerated powdered formula well as they started to introduce it near the end of his bottle-feeding days, so we switched to

the premixed formula. That helped, a little. She was doing better with keeping it down, but still struggling with how much and how often she ate. More tests.

A lactose intolerance? Easy to test for. No.

Allergy of some kind? Did the full-panel test. No.

Acid reflex? The GERD test involves x-rays, subjecting her to harmful amounts of radiation. It's not recommended for infants. Still, we had to check it off the list. It came back negative. The tests became more invasive, more dangerous.

She developed a rash all over her body that no one could identify - three doctors and not one of them knew what it was. They had their own list for that, too: Not measles, pox, hives, pimples, heat rash, diaper rash, hand-foot-mouth, contact rash, diaper rash… all the possible viruses, bacteria and other stuff that could cause these small bumps all over her body… No. We never found out what it was. It took about a month to go away.

By four months old at the latest, babies should double their birth weight. She should have been 16 pounds and 2 ounces, or somewhere in that ballpark at her four month visit. She was 12 pounds and 3 ounces. She not only didn't double her birth weight, she barely increased it by 50%. She was in the bottom 10th percentile for weight and bottom 25th for head circumference.

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The doctors said the most important thing was that she did not seem to be cognitively impaired at all. Her motor skills were on target, and even though she was in the bottom 25th for head circumference, her skull was still soft and had room to grow. We changed her formula again to see if it would help. We were now spending more than $300 a month to get her special, pre-mixed formula. The cost didn't matter, even if it put us in debt, because she needed it. We found a way to pay for it.

More doctors visits. More exams. Never any answers, just more questions.

Most people look forward to the day when their baby starts to sleep through the night. I cried every time I woke her up and she wouldn't eat. I cried every time she'd finally eat, just to throw it up. We couldn't go anywhere - not because she was little, but because we couldn't make it more than an hour without a pool of vomit to clean up.

Every small bit of progress was offset by something else becoming worse. She was still in the bottom 10th percentile for weight by the time Christmas came around, which wouldn't have been so bad if she was not also in the top 60th for length. But there was hope - it looked like her weight might have been stabilizing since she wasn't falling in percentiles anymore. So we kept doing what we were doing.

By January we managed to get her up to the bottom 25th percentile of weight - up from the bottom 10th. I cannot express how happy and relieved we were, seeing her

weight measurement come in and the nurses putting it in the computer. I hugged her. I kissed her. I cried and I told her she did a good job, that I was so, so proud of her. She just smiled and giggled at my silly voice and dramatic gestures.

Next, they measured how long she was - she was now in the top 75th percentile for length. Her weight-height ratio was still in the bottom 10th, but she was growing. She still had not doubled her birth weight, which was very concerning, but that she was increasing her weight at an upward pace was good. Her head circumference was still in the bottom 10th, but her skull was still soft and she was hitting all of her milestones. As long as nothing fell again, she wouldn't need any intense kind of treatment or hospitalization.

She was ready to start eating solid foods and our doctor was optimistic that her weight would catch up.

"I think once she starts eating real food," he said, "she's just gonna take off."

We left that appointment feeling okay about her health for the first time since she was born. It felt like victory. We scheduled a follow up for a month later. We had been tracking her eating habits, and though it hadn't changed much, we were hoping to see more progress. We made it a goal to shoot for the 33rd percentile, to put her into the

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bottom third instead of the bottom fourth. Her weight fell back down to the bottom 15th, her height up to the 75th.

Have you ever had to watch someone you love struggle and suffer with illness, feeling like you couldn't help? Now imagine it was your child, and you were singularly responsible for that person's care, and you kept failing her. All I wanted was for my daughter to be healthy. To be okay.

We met with a specialist who went over all of my pregnancy records and all her records since she had been born. He was confused.

"So there's no history in either parent's family of any conditions like this?"

Not on my side, I told him. I asked everyone I could think of - my parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, all my living grandparents, and even family members I hadn't spoken to in over a decade. I investigated as thoroughly as possible. Nothing.

"And the father's side?"

"Not that I know of," I told him. He asked if I would get my husband to ask around, because he suspected it could be something genetic, maybe a metabolism or gastro-intestinal disorder. Something inherited. The kinds of tests needed to diagnose something like that were not advised for infants so young. You shouldn't take that

much blood from a baby, he said. Scans and xrays were too dangerous, he said. He said I shouldn't have had the GERD one done at all.

He asked about her father's birth weight and growth. My husband was like me - a big, nine-pound baby who topped the scales through the first year.

But that information didn't matter.

Garrett never filled out the medical history forms I sent him when I was pregnant. His mother never responded to my email. I had no idea if babies in his family were small - weight, length or otherwise - or if there were other conditions that could explain what was happening to my baby.

Without Garrett's help, all I could do was keep trying, listen to her doctors, do whatever tests they needed, and pray for the best.

I had a few tests done on myself to check for a list of conditions and disorders that I had never heard of that could be heredity.

Nothing.

I debated asking Garrett.

"He won't answer," I told my husband when we talked about it. Besides, I didn't even know where Garrett was anymore. I assumed after he graduated he moved somewhere.

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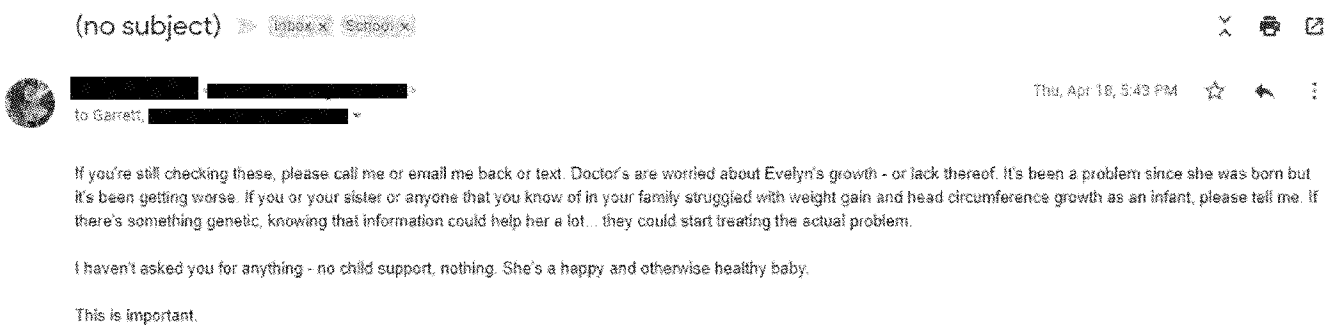
I had his number, but I figured he had long since blocked mine. And if I tried to reach out and he didn't respond, or if his response was negative, I knew I'd be opening up a past that I had tried to forget about, tried to move on from.

We worked out a plan to try some other things instead - more changes to help her gain weight, or at least to stop dropping.

We waited for the next appointment, and the next, and the next. Bit by bit the scale tipped in the wrong direction. Bit by bit, she fell lower on the charts.

At her April appointment, I wanted to scream and cry and just ask why, why this was happening to this baby. This amazing, beautiful, silly, smart, sweet girl who I loved so much. She was down to the 5th percentile for weight and height. She fell all the way down to the bottom 6th for head circumference/growth. She wasn't a newborn anymore and her skull wasn't as soft. Her weight was still concerning, but the attention quickly turned to how little her brain had grown. 95% of all the babies in America were bigger than her. 94% had larger head circumferences, which was indicative of brain growth. I couldn't take it. I decided that whatever Garrett did or did not say, I had to ask. I *had* to. So I sent him an email telling him what was going on, and I begged him to answer me.



(no subject) Inbox x School x

[redacted] Thu, Apr 18, 5:43 PM

to Garrett, [redacted]

If you're still checking these, please call me or email me back or text. Doctor's are worried about Evelyn's growth - or lack thereof. It's been a problem since she was born but it's been getting worse. If you or your sister or anyone that you know of in your family struggled with weight gain and head circumference growth as an infant, please tell me. If there's something genetic, knowing that information could help her a lot... they could start treating the actual problem.

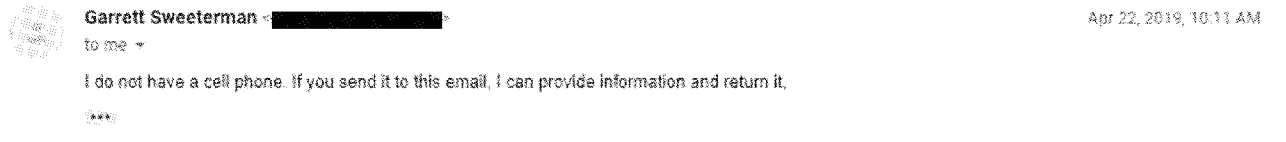
I haven't asked you for anything - no child support, nothing. She's a happy and otherwise healthy baby.

This is important.

When he sent an email back, I almost couldn't believe it.

Answers

Garrett emailed me back right after I sent him that email. He said there was not a history of that in his family. I knew he hadn't asked and probably wouldn't know if there was, so I asked him if could just ask around before telling me no. I said I could send him some forms to fill out that covered a wide range of family medical details and he could just send it back to me when he was done. I asked if I could call him to talk to him about the parts that were most important.



Garrett Sweeterman [redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 10:11 AM

to me

I do not have a cell phone. If you send it to this email, I can provide information and return it.

***

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"I don't have a phone?"

He couldn't just say he didn't want to talk? He had to make up a story about not having a phone? Whatever. It didn't matter. All I cared about was getting the information, so I sent him the forms and a few of the questions the doctors had asked me.

[redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 2:16 PM
to Garrett
When can you get this back to me?

Garrett Sweeterman [redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 3:26 PM
to me
Hopefully tonight

[redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 3:27 PM
to Garrett
Ok well I need it back as soon as possible so I can bring it to her next appointment.

[redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 3:30 PM
to Garrett
And thanks for responding and doing this.

Garrett Sweeterman [redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 6:04 PM
to me
I dont have access to a scanner. I copied a pasted the information on a word Doc. I hope this works. They are mostly no.

I was just under 7 pounds, 20 1/3 inches long, with a head circumference of 36.5 cm from what she has in her files.

Health Records.docx

[redacted] Apr 22, 2019, 6:31 PM
to Garrett
Thanks. She had a rough day today so we'll probably go to the doctor tomorrow. If they need bloodwork, is that something you can do? They can get you a referral for a lab closer to you, I think. I had to go through LabCorp because I have blue cross/ blue shield. If they need it I'll just give them your info and have them call you to set it up for a provider covered by your insurance. Is it ok if they call your work number?

You were under 7lbs? That's... pretty small. You sure there were no problems with weight/ growth as an infant?

It seemed like he was actually cooperating, that hearing his daughter was ill awoke some part inside of him that was still decent, still human. Until I opened the form. He sent the form back to me blank except for two questions. He said the only illness in his entire family was his aunt's breast cancer. I knew he didn't ask. I should have known better than to think he did. He gave me just enough to say he tried without having to do any real work to get the answers.

I asked him if he could do any lab work - the doctor could send a referral to where he was (Tampa) and he didn't even have to deal with me. I told him if he didn't want to talk to me, I could have her doctor's office contact him directly. He again lied and said he didn't have a phone. He said he didn't want to do blood work. I pleaded with him. Evi needed this. She was sick. If he had any idea how long this struggle had been going on, he would just help. She was his daughter. He said no blood work, no referrals.

I told him fine. I had not asked him for anything since she was born. He never even checked in to see how she was doing. Not one call. And I left him alone. But if he couldn't do this now, when his daughter truly needed him, then I would take him to court to compel him to do it. I would file a paternity and child support case.

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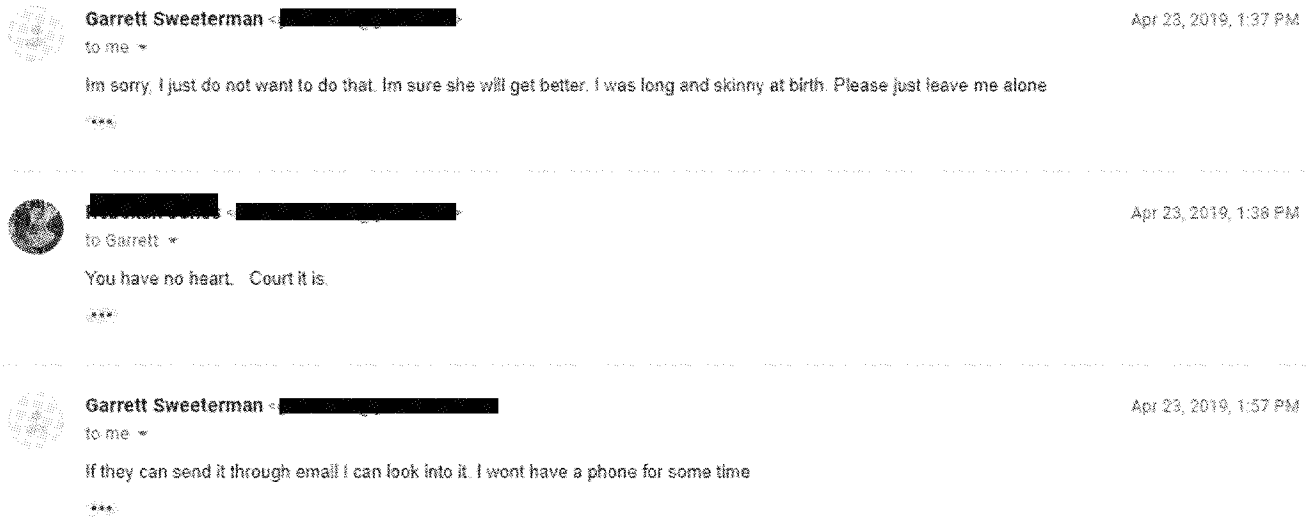


Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 1:37 PM
to me

Im sorry, I just do not want to do that. Im sure she will get better. I was long and skinny at birth. Please just leave me alone

***

[redacted] <[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 1:38 PM
to Garrett

You have no heart. Court it is.

***

Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 1:57 PM
to me

If they can send it through email I can look into it. I wont have a phone for some time

***

He was "*sure*" she would get better? Because he was long and skinny?

He didn't know what was going on because he *chose* not to be a part of her life. He had no idea how many nights I got up, setting alarms for every two hours, to try to get her to eat. He had no idea how many times I had to throw away her clothes because they were stained from vomit. He had no idea how much I cried, begging God or whatever mystical source might be out there to help my baby. His baby. I'm an atheist, but I prayed to the Earth, to faith, to whatever God or Gods I might or might not be wrong about for the first time in my entire life.

But he was "sure" she would be fine.

His sick daughter wasn't a compelling enough reason to help, but apparently the thought of being drug to court and creating a public record of his abandonment of his daughter was.

Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 2:12 PM
to me

Use my old phone number. I dont have to be involved. If it's just bloodwork you need from me ill do it

<[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 2:13 PM
to Garrett

Which old number?

Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 2:16 PM
to me

[redacted]

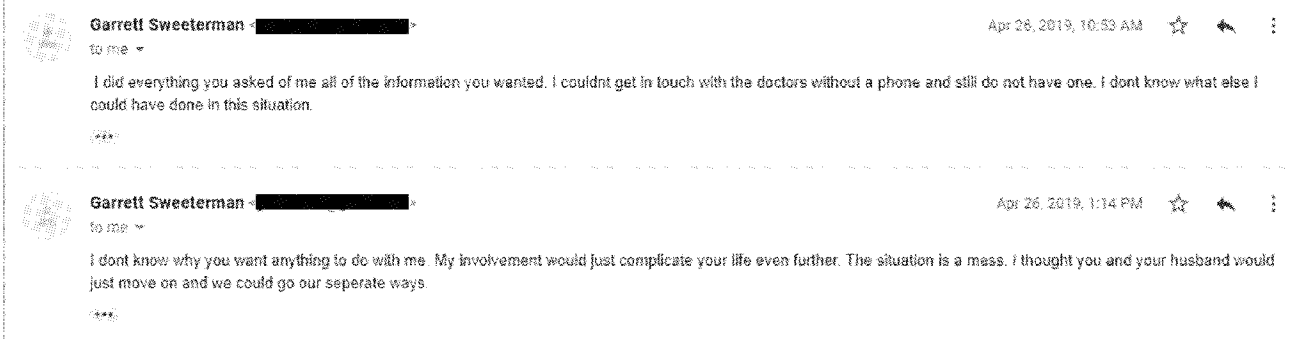
<[redacted]> Apr 23, 2019, 2:25 PM
to Garrett

... you just said you won't have a phone for a while. How soon will they be able to reach you at that number?

I gave the doctor's office his cell number. They tried to reach him, but he didn't answer. He disappeared again for three days.

He didn't know what else he could have done. He didn't know why I wanted anything to do with him. He thought we would just "move on."

Enough.



Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 26, 2019, 10:33 AM
to me

I did everything you asked of me all of the information you wanted. I couldnt get in touch with the doctors without a phone and still do not have one. I dont know what else I could have done in this situation.

Garrett Sweeterman <[redacted]> Apr 26, 2019, 1:14 PM
to me

I dont know why you want anything to do with me. My involvement would just complicate your life even further. The situation is a mess. I thought you and your husband would just move on and we could go our seperate ways.

There was no point in asking for his help. He doesn't have a conscience. He's not human. He's a monster. This wasn't about him, bringing him into Evi's life, or involving him in my life in any way. I wasn't asking him to be a father, I was asking him to give information. I needed data. That was it. But he couldn't see that. Everything was about Garrett all of the time. So I filed the suit. He got a lawyer. We're going to court in June.

He's not denying he's the father, but he's seeking to dismiss the case because I'm married so I shouldn't need his help. As if being married helps with getting his medical information. He doesn't want a public record stating that she is his daughter, probably because he has lied so many times about it. So he's trying to avoid taking a DNA test at all costs.

He told all his coworkers he doesn't have a daughter. When the doctor's office called to get his records at work, since they couldn't reach him on his cell number that he gave me but apparently didn't have a phone for, his coworkers harassed and threatened the nurse because, "Garrett doesn't have a daughter," they demanded in all their ignorant, pontifical, audacious insolence.

Once I came forward with this story, Garrett directed his lawyer to tell me that if I took the story down and never spoke about Garrett again, directly or indirectly, he'd send his medical records. He used my voice as leverage against his own daughter's

health. Because of how much I love my daughter, I'd agree to that - and only that - if he'd agree to the records and whatever lab work her doctors need. If this story is still up, then he wouldn't agree.

Court

The first hearing related to the paternity suit is scheduled for June 25 at 2:00 p.m. This story will be updated as events continue to unfold. Update: Garrett has requested to appear by telephone, as attending the hearing in person would be too "burdensome."

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