The Intruders: Cyber Bullying

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He wanted something I wasn’t willing to give.  
It’s MY body. My ‘no’ should be enough.  
It wasn’t.

First, it was a pleading email, followed by an email full of insults and death wishes when I declined. That fast. Minutes after rejection, it became “I hope you die” and a string of expletives. Then he sent an email with apologies an hour later. He just didn’t understand why I treated him this way when he was nice!

All I said was no. I even explained my answer, and I wished him luck in finding what he desired.

He acted as though I were gatekeeping something he had every right to take at will.

Many more emails came, under different names, always using the same pattern and verbiage. Then the social media stalking began. He sent multiple direct messages daily and commented on dozens of photos on every social platform I used for weeks, under his name at first. Each comment was some sort of guilt attempt, insult, or request.

He created new email addresses, new Instagram accounts, and new Twitter accounts. Always the same pattern. Each time I blocked him, he popped up as a different account name, but still related to his original name. When I blocked a media account, an email would show up in my inbox asking why I was being this way, followed by more insults. Each time I shoved him away, he crawled in another opening!

Throughout all this, I worried that other followers would see his comments and believe the things he accused me of or called me. I developed this fear that everything I built as a social media presence would be destroyed. Years of energy, effort, sharing, and love, all soiled & toppled by one entitled penis who didn’t take no for an answer. He forced his way in, ignoring my anger, ignoring my denial, ignoring my right to choose.

One night, I had this dream. Chatting away with my sister in my beautiful home, I heard a noise. Someone was at my front door. I walked through the decorated hall with framed pictures and art thoughtfully placed in the living room. The door had been forced open, and 2 dark figures slithered in there as if they had every right to be! I yelled and pushed and shoved and threatened! I finally forced them out of my home, but not before they swore I would regret it. I turned and leaned against the triple locked door, my back feeling the vibrations of their pounding protest, only to notice my home was ruined. The walls were cardboard. The pictures were flimsy paper blowing away through the torn roof.

The years-long harassment was entitled and downright invasive. I hadn’t realized just how much it shook me until I had that dream. The worst part of it is I have no recourse. It’s a game to him, and as of today it continues, though intermittently.

It no longer has power over me.81

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81 This piece first appeared at the Empty Hourglass Project, dedicated to documenting, and discussing issues related to abuse, trauma, and healing through art. For more information, see Empty Hourglass Project, https://www.emptyhourglassproject.com/