

Life



“my face was

SLASHED

over a guy!”

When you're in a new relationship, the last thing on your mind is your boyfriend's ex. But when Nicole, 19, was attacked by her guy's former girlfriend, it literally left her scarred. as told to ashley mateo

Facebook haters slash Kentucky model's face

My friends and I have fought over guys before—mostly bitchy texts or cold shoulders. Eventually we'd get over the guy and go back to being friends. But I've never understood girls who hate on an ex's new girlfriend. How is their failed relationship *her* fault?

A year and a half ago, Andrew* and I started dating. He'd recently broken up with his girlfriend of four years, Nicole (we have the same name)—she was older, so we had never been in school together. I'd never even met her.

Everything was perfect at first, but after about a year, I randomly started getting Facebook messages from Nicole. From my profile, she knew I wanted to be a model, so she'd write "Your looks are a joke" or "U have the body of a lil boy"—which really stung, because I had just started doing local photo shoots, and I was saving up to move to New York or Los Angeles. It was as if she knew exactly how to hurt me the most. She'd even tell me she was still hooking up with Andrew! He swore it wasn't true, and I blocked her. Eventually she got my phone number—I have no idea how—and texted, too. Andrew said she was just jealous, so I didn't take her seriously.

But by early January, after months of harassment, I'd had enough. I knew Nicole was a liar, but I also knew that as long as Andrew and I were together, she wouldn't stop harassing me. Breaking up sucked—I cared a lot about Andrew—but the drama was already ruining our relationship. It just wasn't worth it.

sneak attack

After Andrew and I split, I figured Nicole would leave me alone—she'd gotten what she wanted, right? A week later, I barely thought of her as I drove to work the closing shift at my job at the mall. I always get there 10 minutes early, so out of habit, I called Andrew to kill time. We were still in that awkward arguing phase. (He wanted us to stay together.)

Inside, as I walked down the main corridor past a few small crowds, I felt a stare—and when I turned, there was a girl *right* next to me. I saw her face and I realized, That's Andrew's ex! My heart

skipped a beat—it was a shock to see a person I only knew from her photos online standing in front of me.

Nicole didn't say anything—she just smiled—but then I felt a crushing blow to my face. She had punched me! As I stumbled, another girl held back my arms while Nicole pushed me to the ground. The other girl let go, but I still couldn't fight back—they were kicking me and stomping on my face, so I put my arms up to protect my head and screamed, thinking, Why isn't someone stopping them?!? I knew people had been near us. Nicole leaned down and I felt something hot on my face. Before I could even process that, the beating suddenly stopped and the girls ran away.

survival mode

I sat in disbelief for a minute, then got up and pushed my hair out of my face. That's when I saw it: My hands were

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covered in blood! People were looking around, waiting for someone else to step in. A man finally asked, "Do you need help?" and I thought, Where were you a minute ago?!? With my adrenaline pumping, I sprinted to my store, only 30 feet away, where I saw my manager. Covering my face, I cried, "Call 911!" My white jacket now had red blood smears *everywhere*.

We went in the back to wait for the ambulance, and I finally took my hands



slice of revenge Andrew's ex (shown here in her mug shot) could go to jail for allegedly using a razor or knife to slice an X into Nicole's face.

away from my face—my manager's eyes nearly popped out of his head and he said, "They cut you!" I was still so shocked that I didn't feel it, but then it all came together—that hot sensation had been blood! My mind raced: Why did she hate me so much? Was my modeling career over? By the time the ambulance arrived to take me to the ER, I was light-headed from the loss of blood, but I was also afraid. Your face is the first thing people notice about you—was mine going to be covered in scars? I feared Nicole's messages were coming true—she'd ruined my looks.

a brave face

The doctor said if the knife had gone less than an inch higher, I could be blind—an inch lower, I'd be dead. I'm happy my injury wasn't more serious, but my scars are still the first thing people see.

Nicole was arrested and charged with second-degree assault. She pleaded not guilty and is out of jail awaiting trial. In the meantime, I got a restraining order, but I'm constantly looking over my shoulder. Even Andrew said he's scared of her now.

I'm back at my job at the mall, and I just did a shoot with a local photographer. There's no way I'm letting my modeling dreams go! It's different for Nicole, though. My lawyer said if she's convicted, she could go to jail for up to 10 years. My scars will heal, but Nicole will have to live with what she did for the rest of her life. **17**

*Name has been changed.