

0 LIKES 1 WITNESS

This Is a Post You Shouldn't Read

*"Male or female, female or male—why does it have to be such a problem?
I'm sick of hearing about it. Can't I be something other than either of those?"*

— wild berry tea

Author's Preface

Whenever violence against women occurs, I often come across people asking the same questions over and over: Why didn't they leave? Why did they put up with it? Why didn't they fight back? Those words disturb me deeply, because not every woman can simply do those things without thinking about what may follow—especially in a society where patriarchy continues to exert a quiet influence over womanhood. These ugly, repellent ideas have embedded themselves in our society so subtly and for so long that they resemble old mildew clinging stubbornly to the fibers of cloth. No matter how hard you scrub with a brush or rub it by hand, a faint stain remains, irritating the eye all the same.

I wanted to tell a story about these issues, but all I had was a two-line idea sitting in my private notes. Then I had the chance to read *The Brothers Karamazov*, and a rather entertaining thought emerged—one that eventually became the force that helped me expand those two lines into an entire book. At the same time, after a long period of hesitation, I decided to tell the story through the eyes of "R", a boy from the countryside at an age when he is confused about his sexual identity. He must deal not only with harsh teasing from the boys around him, but also with domestic violence that leaves him asking: Why doesn't Mom run away? Why does Mom have to endure it? As for what role *The Brothers Karamazov* plays in all this, I'll have to let you, the reader, go in and figure out things for yourself.

I wrote this work in November 2025, then revised it into a format suitable for publication in May 2026. By my count, it lay sprawled quietly in my drive for more than half a year—indifferent from R's phone lying still inside a little box before finally lifting its head and waking when the right moment came for it to reveal itself. For many reasons, I never had enough courage to release this work to the public. I believed that, on my own, I could never push R. far enough for the light to reach him as brightly as he deserved. But Shine Publishing gave this work—a story that had never debuted on any platform and had no existing *buzz* behind it—a chance without hesitation. And so, at last, R. has found a space where he can tell his story and his mother's, *with the death of one man looming in the background*.

My thanks to Khun Tas for seeing the possibilities in this work and for constantly throwing interesting ideas my way so I could build on them. My thanks as well to everyone at Shine, in every part of the team,

for the physical and emotional effort you put into every stage of producing this book. I know there isn't much I can do besides write, which is why I'm so grateful that everyone has managed to put up with me so well.

One small piece of trivia I'd like to share here: this book was originally narrated in a different format before being changed into something more contemporary. It also went through several title changes, and the nickname I used for its folder was The Karamazov Complex. Clearly, naming novels is a disaster that has tripped me up time and time again, so the team eventually took over the job. That is how we arrived at the present title, which I like far more than the old one I had stubbornly kept using.

Finally, there is nothing more I want to add except to dedicate this last—and most important—paragraph to every reader who chooses to pick up this book. I don't think R's story would ever have managed to step outside that little box without the support of readers willing to open their hearts to my writing. Let me brew each of you a cup of wild berry tea, so you can sit down and sip something warm, fragrant, and sweet as you begin reading this book.

wild berry tea

December 27 · [lock icon] Only me

*I suppose I should tell you that if you happen to open one of my Facebook statuses (which I don't think anyone will ever read, and I certainly wouldn't let anyone read them while they're still set to Only me—but just in case) and come away thinking I killed my own stepfather, you're wrong. No matter how much I hated him or prayed for him to die, I'm only a kid, **someone who still has the word boy in front of his name**. There's no way I could commit some blood-curdling crime, or stand there telling lies to frightening grown-ups asking what I did on the day he died, where I was, or what I saw. I wouldn't dare. I'm just an ignorant kid with hatred and resentment buried deep inside me, but I would never dare do anything that openly defies the law. Let alone murder a fully grown man everyone knows takes pleasure in hitting women and children.*

Still, just in case. Just in case, okay? I decided to post this because a funny thought occurred to me: maybe one day you—or someone else—might happen to pick up this phone, or somehow get into my private account, and then accidentally read all these disgusting, ridiculously long posts I typed for myself under the Only me setting. If that ever happens, I don't want you to misunderstand me too badly.

I didn't kill him. There is no way I killed him. But all these posts of mine may help you understand, at least a little, why nobody was sorry when he died (and yes, that includes me). And if I really were the murderer—this boy typing these words right now—if he really were a murderer, then the tens of thousands of words in my posts would probably tell you why that man had to die. I'm only wondering what you would do if you were me. That's all. I'm really just wondering.

Comment Like

(End of post)

Notes Toward an Understanding That Isn't Quite Clear

The Karamazov Complex

(working title)

(First Draft)

Amarin Coporations PCL.

Author's Note

The first thing I saw after opening the Facebook account of this phone's former owner was a status whose privacy setting had been set to "Only me."

It was an old white mobile phone with gray edging, yellowed with age—the kind of coloring that practically cried out how much time it had traveled through. More surprising still, the account was still logged in even though the year on the final status was roughly thirty years in the past. Old phones really were built to last.

The screen had faded badly, but I could still read it without difficulty. That was how I first encountered the existence of R. He was a boy from another time whom I came to know through long streams of letters packed tightly into Facebook posts, which he typed for himself instead of keeping a diary.

Of course, nobody uses Facebook anymore. These days it is nothing more than a social-networking service run by an outdated American technology conglomerate. At one point, the company tried to redesign and modernize the platform to make it more appealing, only to suffer a crushing defeat at the hands of newer Chinese social networks with strange profoundly unseen features. If I remember correctly, after that attempt Facebook gradually slipped out of public awareness. It became an unprofitable application, and no new version was ever released, though the company never formally announced its closure.

That may be why the Facebook installed on this phone is a version so old I can't even remember it. Judging from the dates and years I saw, the owner must have lived around the period when the application had only recently launched in Thailand.

I discovered this digital memory on the day my mother and I were sorting through piles of old belongings in the warehouse, after the sale had been agreed upon and I had paid the landowner's son. I had bought the land together with the warehouse, which had once been a secondhand-goods depot, intending to renovate it into a greenhouse for growing salad greens—a new profession I had begun

studying after my career as a reporter went downhill, now that people in this era had turned to AI for practically everything.

I remember that most of the warehouse had already been cleared out. Then I found a few old crates tucked into a recess. They were filled with notebooks and loose papers, famous Japanese manga mixed in with old romance novels, and a small metal box containing electronic devices from another era: wireless earbuds, a digital watch, headphones, a three-fold keyboard, and several mobile phones. I assumed they had come in through trades for a tray of eggs, perhaps, or several flowerpots and plastic basins. I'd heard that in the old days there used to be trucks driving from house to house buying or bartering for mobile phones and laptops, so these electronics probably arrived that way. Still, I wasn't entirely sure. Several things about them bothered me. I'll come back to that later.

Everything was over twenty years old. Some books had been eaten by termites or gnawed by rats, but the box of electronic devices was still intact. I tried switching on every item because, although they came from a bygone era, there were still shops that bought such things. If anything still worked, I planned to sell it for a little money. If not, it would have to go into the electronic-waste pile and wait to be disposed of.

Most of it no longer worked. Only the digital watch still functioned. The headphones produced sound on one side only. There were six mobile phones, but after charging them, just one would turn on. This phone had no lock code, sparing me the trouble of taking it to a repair shop. Its wallpaper showed bookshelves in a library. There were fewer apps installed than usual, and the owner clearly hadn't been interested in playing with very much. Even the gallery contained barely enough pictures to count. (I found no photographs of the owner himself. I assumed he simply didn't like taking pictures of himself.) But when curiosity led me to open Facebook, I discovered I had been wrong. The app its owner liked most was apparently this one.

I should make one thing clear before we go any further: Under normal circumstances, I would never pick up something this questionable from a hygiene standpoint. I only wanted to check whether I could

sell. But after opening Facebook, tapping into the owner's profile—which used the same image as the phone's wallpaper—and reading a post marked “Only me” all the way to the end, I simply froze.

That day I decided to take the old phone home with me. It had been lying silently in the crumbling cardboard box like a sleeping beast. Once home, I began scrolling through its posts one by one as though under a spell. I read from the account's very first post, from the first letter on the first day R. placed his fingertip on the keyboard of his first mobile phone. I got to know him. And through his small story, I began to sense a certain force that made me question the moral limits of more than a few people.

And I began to wonder what, exactly, I was reading: a record of events meant to shed light on the truth, or the confession of a young murderer who had plotted a killing for the mother he loved.

[Layout note: Format as a Facebook post. A reference for the post design was provided by email.]

June 24, [redacted] · [lock icon] Only me

Hello. Hello. Hi. Hello. Hello. Hi. Hi. Hello.

Oh no. I really don't know how to start. How do people usually begin their first post on Facebook? HELLO FACEBOOK!? Is that it? I thought about it for ages and still couldn't come up with an answer, so in the end I just typed hello over and over.

This is ridiculous. My hands feel a little stiff. I'm not very good with phones, and I still have homework to do, but I really couldn't resist. In the middle of doing my homework, I picked up my phone and tried signing up for a Facebook account like my friends do. At first, I thought about Hi5¹, but apparently people stopped using Hi5 years ago. Everyone is on Facebook now, so I thought I'd do the same. But when I was about to press Post, I suddenly got embarrassed and didn't want to make it public. I don't have many friends anyway, and I don't really want to add anyone. Typing things here just for myself feels a little lonely, but it's more comfortable. So I set the posts so only I can see them.

I have to go finish my homework now. Hopefully I'll have more to say next time.

Comment Like

(End of post)

1 Hi5: a social-networking website that was once popular among teenagers. Users could add photos and background music, decorate their pages with glittery HTML code, send gifts, and leave greetings. — Me

June 24, [lock icon] Only me

I'm back. I haven't actually been gone very long—it's nine o'clock on the same night. I just wanted to try typing a little more. After spending the whole day wondering what I should write about, I decided I might as well tell the story of how I got this phone.

Today Mom took me into town to buy some things. Where we live is pretty rural, so if you want to buy anything big or anything decent, you have to go to the market in town. Mom wanted a bicycle to ride out and buy food in the mornings, but the village market that opens every Thursday at two in the afternoon doesn't sell bicycles. So we had to take a three-wheeler all the way into town, where there's a big bicycle shop. While Mom was choosing a bicycle, I waited outside the little general store next door. I love shops like that because they sell everything in one place—pots, jars, baskets, plastic basins, toilet brushes, pumice stones, pocket mirrors, combs, pencils, pens, coloring books, lottery notebooks, carbon-copy pads, notebooks, notebooks, notebooks. So many notebooks. I love walking around looking at them. I've always liked scribbling things down, but since starting secondary school I haven't written much of anything long. Everyone types nowadays.

There was also a phone shop with glass display cases on the corner of the street, with phones arranged in rows, backs facing up, at all sorts of prices. The new ones I see my classmates showing off must cost tens of thousands of baht. That's insane. Tens of thousands! I have no idea where they get that kind of money. More than half the people in my class have mobile phones, but I don't. I do want one, really, but we don't have much money. Mom says we can't buy unnecessary luxuries, and I think a mobile phone counts as one.

But today, for some reason, Mom pulled me over and said she was going to buy me a phone. She had to say it twice because I just stood there staring. I was so happy—completely excited by this good thing I hadn't expected at all. Deep down, I'd been jealous and wanted a phone like everyone

else. One of my friends even has an iPhone². But those iPhone things are way too expensive. Even if I wanted one, Mom definitely couldn't afford it, so I picked a cheaper brand instead.

There were white ones and pink ones. I chose white because, even though the pink one was cute, if I picked it people would probably call me a sissy again. So annoying. Anyway, I chose the white one. The shop owner suggested I buy a SIM card and then recommended an internet package too. There were so many little extra charges for this and that, but Mom agreed to all of them.

Mom bought a pink bicycle, then stopped to buy a new faucet head and a pack of short-handled spoons. I got the first mobile phone of my life. Even though it was a cheap phone, mine cost more than Mom's pink bicycle, faucet head, and pack of spoons combined. I felt guilty, but Mom kept smiling at me. The shopkeeper put the phone in a box and then into an opaque shopping bag, while the man at the bicycle shop helped lift the bicycle onto the three-wheeler. We rode home that way. The whole trip, Mom held the plastic bag with the faucet head and spoons in one hand and kept hold of the bicycle's handlebars with the other. I clutched my plastic bag tightly, then hugged it to my chest. Before long, I pulled the phone box out, crumpled the bag into a ball, and stuffed it into my trouser pocket. I hugged the box containing the first mobile phone of my life all the way home.

And that's how I got this phone. I signed up for Facebook like everyone else and started typing whatever I felt like typing. But I don't think anyone would want to read posts this long anyway.

That's enough for today.

Comment Like

(End of post)

² iPhone: a smartphone brand that was famous in the past. Powerful and expensive, it was developed and sold by Apple and ran on the iOS operating system. It once flourished, then gradually lost popularity when Chinese brands began producing phones with software better suited to users' needs. As we can see today, hardly anyone uses the brand anymore. — Me

About the Author

wild berry tea

wild berry tea is a pen name chosen while its owner happened to be drinking wild berry tea. It is deliberately written in lowercase as a small rejection of authority and grammatical strictness—a mildly rebellious gesture, despite the author once having been a student of Eastern languages. In the end, those languages were abandoned for the worlds of content and news. After spending time in education, the author veered into the cutthroat world of real estate. The capitalism and extreme inequality encountered in Thailand's real-estate industry led to complete burnout, and writing became one way out. The author writes in the hope of crossing between different worlds and forms of writing, wanting to taste every kind of craft—stumbling through genres that may not come naturally, but at least taking the step to try.

At present, wild berry tea's main occupation is serving as the devoted slave of a female orange cat. Reading books is the secondary job. Growing every kind of plant that looks worth growing is the hobby. Writing happens every once in a while, on days when the weather is not unbearably hot.