

Cyberstalk victim gets even

CYBERSTALKING | NOVEMBER 13, 2012 | BY: MARK ALBERTSON |



Stalked by a cyber terrorist for six years, singer Leandra Ramm has a new book about her ordeal and a TV show as well.

Credits: stalkingadiva.com

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This is a story about fear, humiliation, anger, and jealousy, all brought together because cyberspace made it possible. But most of all, this is a tale of revenge.

The six year ordeal of singer and performer [Leandra Ramm](http://www.leandraramm.com/) (<http://www.leandraramm.com/>) is being documented this month is a wave of publicity that will shed new light on a disturbing question: what can be done when someone uses the power of technology to ruin your reputation and shatter your life?

This story is being told through a new book, [Stalking A Diva](http://stalkingadiva.com/) (<http://stalkingadiva.com/>), that is just arriving in

bookstores now, followed by a TV segment on the Lifetime Network's series "[My Life is a Lifetime Movie](http://www.mylifetime.com/shows/my-life-is-a-lifetime-movie) (<http://www.mylifetime.com/shows/my-life-is-a-lifetime-movie>)" to be broadcast on November 28. Ramm's story is guaranteed to send chills down your spine because the uncomfortable truth is that her experience could happen to any one of us, right now.

Back in 2005, Ramm was an aspiring young singer [whose appearance on Anderson Cooper's 360 program](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OX2OJjVMZ0s) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OX2OJjVMZ0s>) was broadcast around the world on CNN, including much of Asia. It was viewed in Singapore by a man who developed a romantic interest in the attractive young woman. His name was Colin Mak.

Posing as the director of a prestigious music festival, Mak made contact with Ramm, offering to help further her career by booking international singing engagements. But Mak was in fact a convicted arms dealer who, when he discovered that the singer had a boyfriend, became extremely jealous. That's when things began to go horribly bad for Leandra Ramm.

It began with unsolicited love letters to Ramm from Mak that evolved into thousands of email death threats, promising all kinds of bodily harm to her and members of her family. This progressed to bomb threats at locations where Ramm was scheduled to perform and blog posts accusing her of prostitution and other crimes. Theater companies were beginning to think twice about hiring her, especially since she was requiring police protection wherever she performed.

Ramm sought help from the New York Police Department, the FBI and even the United Nations. But because her stalker was not a U.S. citizen, there was no action to be taken. Mak had become an international [cyberstalking](http://www.examiner.com/topic/cyberstalking) (<http://www.examiner.com/topic/cyberstalking>) terrorist and there was nothing that Ramm could do about it.

In desperation, she turned to two men for help. One was an attorney, Monroe Mann, who was sympathetic to her plight and agreed to do what he could to help. The other was A.J. Fardella.

As a director at [Black Diamond Data](http://www.blackdiamonddata.com/) (<http://www.blackdiamonddata.com/>), Fardella specializes in computer forensics. He is also a planning commissioner for the city of Pittsburg, California and one of the key leaders in [Project Vigilant](http://www.projectvigilant.us/) (<http://www.projectvigilant.us/>), a group that has been [extensively covered by this column](http://www.examiner.com/article/secretive-group-expands-role-cybermonitoring) (<http://www.examiner.com/article/secretive-group-expands-role-cybermonitoring>) in the past. When Fardella first met Ramm, he was profoundly moved by the woman's plight. "It was a woman who had been through six years of hell," Fardella recalls.

By now, Ramm had collected a mountain of emails and other computer evidence of Mak's stalking. Drawing on his extensive contacts in law enforcement, specifically in the [Secret Service](http://www.examiner.com/topic/secret-service) (<http://www.examiner.com/topic/secret-service>) through the [San Francisco Electronic Crimes Task Force](http://www.secretservice.gov/ectf_sanfrancisco.shtml) (http://www.secretservice.gov/ectf_sanfrancisco.shtml), Fardella delivered the whole package to a colleague in the agency. The Secret Service began talking about Ramm's cyberstalking problem with the Singapore police. In July of 2011, Mak was arrested.

Fardella has not escaped Mak's cyber attacks either. Although Google has removed Mak's previous blog posts about Ramm, there is one particularly nasty blog post about the data forensics expert that remains. When asked about why he doesn't have it taken down, Fardella just shrugs. "I consider it a badge of honor," he says.

Mak was released from Singapore jail after just two months and has still not been charged with a crime. He is under a lifetime restraining order forbidding any form of communication with Ramm. Mak must report to the local authorities every Monday and cannot leave the country. According to Fardella, Singapore now has a female attorney general "who wants to throw the book at Mak," so there could still be more legal action to come.

What may have finally led to action by authorities in Singapore is the need to "save face," to salvage something positive from what has been hugely shameful behavior by one of its citizens. With a book, media coverage, and a nationally broadcast TV program this month, Leandra Ramm may indeed be getting the ultimate revenge. For Colin Mak, there will be no "saving face" for it is his reputation that is now ruined and deservedly so.

But the troubling specter of how one individual can so thoroughly disrupt a person's life by exploiting cyber technology remains the most important lesson in this whole affair. "Cybercrime isn't a ticking time bomb anymore," says Fardella. "The bomb has gone off."



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