

## © 2021 SAY: The Stuttering Association for the Young

### Erikson Rutkis On Repeat

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#### DEDICATIONS

This Book is dedicated to my Mother and Father who have supported my growth all throughout the years. Also to my family members like Arni, Ziggy, Bob, Nana, Grampa. To my cousins and aunts for paying attention to what I have to say and being there for me. To my Grampa on my fathers side, My friends that have chosen to hang around or who have seen me and remembered who I was thank you. "The Only Journey is the one within." -Rainer Maria Rilke

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#### AUTHOR'S NOTE

This book is going to make you question a lot of things. Its coming from a time when my mind went loose. I think making your own conclusions is part of the experience. If you figured out something the first or second time though, tell me what you think.



ERIKSON RUTKIS



## We're starting

I was staring at the ceiling. He was right next to me just sitting there scribbling, it seemed like he would glance up at me once every sentence, looking at me, guging me. Why does this fill you with glee don't you know hurting people is wrong. He said this in more of a disappointing tone, finally something other than just scribbling in his notes. I don't know, maybe it's the rush of it, the thrill of seeing something unwind at a distance.

He looked at me with the most disappointed and grumpy look he has ever done in these sessions.

Suddenly an alarm went off on his phone, it was a relief. That ment freedom for me, the man in the chair said ok meet me here next week on tuesday at 5:30 and we will go more into this. He let out a sigh like I was a bullet he dogged. I don't blame him in the slightest. I left the office.

As I was leaving the room I took a glance at his notepad and it was a really detailed picture of me. I was impressed to be honest. was just about to head out

Ι

door to the stairway when the therapist put his hand on my shoulder I looked behind. He looked sorry, not sure why but he did. The next thing he said was

<u>be careful in here.</u>	I nodded
and	

walked down the dirty concrete steps and opened the door to the blaring sun that hit me straight in the face. It was so annoying, like space and time harassed me already. I got to my car, unlocked it, sat down and then the guilt and stress set in. As I start the car I feel like I'm going to throw up from all the buildup of stress at the bottom of my stomach. I pull my car out and begin to take the road home. The shine from the sun and sensation of noshusnes does not mix well together at all. I suddenly get a phone call and I hear my stupid regular ring tone. I really have to change it, I pick it up and answer. Hello ? Hay.

Its my girlfriend

#### Sera

She's probably worried like always. I immediately say, everythings ok Stop...please. She hangs up, cool James really smooth I say to myself out loud. As I'm going down my home street the vomit is getting closer and closer to coming out of my mouth and onto my lap. I feel like death right now. If you have ever experienced this while alive, this is what it is. You would wish you were dead almost. I see my apartment complex from my car. I speed towards my house and rofly park my car in front of the huge building that towers over me. I feel like it's laughing at me as I try to put in the code to get in. As I opened the door I ran up the stars. My loude feet stomping on the steps. I get my keys and open the door bhaaaaaa. I was so close to making it... damn!

The floor took an hour to clean all the way. Made me want to throw up again. I was so tired of everything at this point. I get my phone and try to call back Sera but she doesn't pick up so I leave her a message. It goes through the robot voice before I get my chance to speak.

Hey its me, look I had a hard day im sorry...I...I was going to sa....I hang up the phone.

I am not sure what to say at this point.

I've done this so many times that I'm surprised that she hasn't hasn't broken up with me yet.

I shed a tear at the thought. I head to my room and look

at the clock. It's now 7:15 pm. I decided to take a nap because I just need to rest and think about my life. I'm just too disgusted with myself to do anything else right now. I get into my bed thinking about the guy I fooled at work today.

What have I done...it all starts to turn

black as I close my eyes and drift away to sleep.

I wake up with a rush of adrenalin like my body had to spasm from all the energy I saved up from not working out too much.

I look around at my dark room... all seems ok I guess.

I wake up again, my throat dry and begging for water. So I slowly try to wake up with my right arm numb and asleep. I turn on the lamp in my room to see the door. I suddenly realize something really strange, I go to feel

my lamp switch, if it feels like plastic? I could have sworn it was made of metal but ok then. I go for the door handle, I get a full grasp of it and eminently take my hand away in disgust and shock. I could have sworn I got a metal door handle as well.. Why does it feel like cheap plastic? I suddenly feel really bothered by this fact. I go for the door again and this time turning it and pushing it open. I enter the room and I say ``what?". I go into the middle of the room. It's my room!? Didn't I just leave my room though, I look back in confusion and yes I confirm in shock and panic that I did just leave my room and enter another room that looks exactly like my room just copy and pasted onto my apartment. I eminently start for another door and open it. I walk into another room that looks like my bedroom again! I panic and sit down on the bed to breathe. What is going on here ? Have I been drugged? Has someone put me in a weird place that has my room.. But that couldn't be the answer either because how would they know that my room looked like this. Have people been spying on me?...No wait I know.. It's a dream! I suddenly feel relief at this new idea. Oh good, I'm not kidnaped or crazy. I walk back to the room I started in, shaking a little every step I take because of all the panic and anxiety I just went through. I get in bed and turn off the light, and go back to sleep. It's only a dream right.. It can't be real right? This just has to be a dream! I'm just having a strange dream. I'm not crazy. This happens all the time.



## Why Me

I look around it looks the same but it seems to be different

in some way.

Wait, did I already say that? Am I going crazy and if I am why now?

I thought it would take a little more to break me at least. As I try to make light of the matter I open the next door. It's the same thing...the same room.

As I see this I start to laugh at how strange it is. Yeah this is a dream, I know it is, I would know right? I close my eyes and tell myself that I'm dreaming. I feel the warmth of the blanket over me. I feel the pillow on my head softly crataling it.

I am dreaming, yes! I open my eyes in excitement... I'm still in the room, standing up, with a strange feeling. I start pacing back and forth in panic. Ok so what if im crazy what does that mean for me? No that can't be there's got to be some logical explanation and way out. Before I know it I start going through room after room. Opening doors, everything looks exactly the same in every single room. What if I just keep going this way, will I eventually end up somewhere different? Something new maybe, It's already bad that I'm starting to get tired of looking at the same room over and over. I knew this was bad because at the time I thought maybe if I kept going maybe I would get out. Would I ever make it out or was I missing something. I know I had to be missing something but what. Did I have to go the other way? I looked back, It was an endless hallway of empty rooms already. I was like I could see all the way back but I knew I couldn't. No, it's already too far back. I would waste all the progress I just made. Am i making progress, I don't even know If I even made a difference. I sit down in a glum state bordering on the edge of tears. The tears were in my eyes but I was just strong enough to hold them back. I had to hold them back, I

told myself that I wasn't supposed to cry in the story yet, not yet. I started to go through the rooms again again and again. CHAPTER THREE

## Realization

Hours or what felt like hours later hunger started to rise from the bottom of my stomach.

I was losing energy and fast,

door after door, room after

room.

Everything in its regular place started to bug me to the core, the same lamp in each room on the same table in the same place.

The lamp I liked months ago was really just stabbing me with anger every time I saw it. The light from the lamp was casting a shadow that looked like a face, my face.

What am I saying?

I was fed up and tired, I knew this but I kept going and going. Turning every door handle in the same way every time. My hand was even sore from doing the same motion on repeat. I don't know what time it was..what time was it? How long have I been here? It felt like forever but i might be wrong and sense the clocks don't even work it was making my gut feel worse. My throat was feeling dry and there was nothing to stop that from happening. Was this how I was going to die? Was this really where my resting place was going to be? I can see it now, my rotting corpse on the floor face down. One hand above my head and one hand below.

It was a scary thought but I couldn't help it. It was also fascinating in some way...what the hell am I saying, I didn't say that I did I. I needed to get up and keep going. Suddenly I remembered what the doctor said. Be careful there, I wasn't hungry anymore. So I got up and kept going.

Тар Тар Тар I suddenly heard a faint pitter patter in the distance behind me. It was faint but I could tell something was there.

I look behind me, I

could

see

a faint shadow long ways behind me getting bigger and bigger.

I could slowly start to make out the shape and at first I was so happy my mouth was already shaping into a smile as it was getting bigger. At that point I note two things though. One he looked just like me which made a chill up my spine, two I had no time to prose though because he was holding an ax. It was held up high as he was running.



# Insanity

I immediately ran the other way through the rooms. I try to go faster and faster but my feet seem to be giving out. I look behind me, I see him getting closer and closer even though I'm putting all my strength in each step projecting myself in the other direction. Who are you! I scream, He screams back Who are you !. He sounds just like me, have I finally lost it? I quickly try to get out of that train of thought to get back to running for my life but I can't help it. I keep thinking about myself going insane, I start to think about how that would look in someone else's perspective. Stop... what am I saying! There's a man chasing me right now! I look behind me to see how far he is from me. He's only 2 feet away now, his ax is raised high above his head. I scream on the top of my lungs. He goes for a swing as we are running. I somehow ran a little to the left to doge the swing.

His ax making thonk! Sound as it hits the wooden floor.

The mistake on his part is as he's running and doing this the ax gets stuck in the floor. As the ax handle is facing up it nails him in the leg and he crashes into the table with that disgusting lamp. On his impact he nails the lamp and gets a table to the stomach.

He falls back the other way and nails into the dewars

thwack!.....Pum!.

He falls face first into the wooden floor. Suddenly I get two ideas in my head. Number one grab the ax and finnish him off or two grab the ax and run. I hear him starting to get up. I swing at him. Well at least I thought I did,not too sure but I think I got him in a spot where it would be impossible to recover from but I can't remember. I suddenly hear footsteps from behind. I turn around and see a police officer telling me to put my hands up. They get me on the floor and put handcuffs on me. I feel like I'm losing control of everything at this point so at least to get my mind straight I ask the offer what I'm being arrested for. He says "look behind you are you stupid". I look behind, there is a stranger dead on the ground with an ax in there back. As I realise what has happened I also start to hear things like people talking outside. Is everyone ok! I think they caught him ! Really?. My feelings start to die within seconds. I'm taken outside and thrown into a police car. All I could think at the time was how the therapist drew a picture of me. It's a really good picture. I love the detail in the eyes, they sure look real right?

### CHAPTER FIVE

# The Turn

It was late at night, pitch black from my point of view.

I was stuck in the back of a police car looking outside and in front of me.

The driver of the vehicle was eyeing me down evrey 5 seconds like I was a monster ready to break out and attack someone.

The driver suddenly said "strange right" What I said in response. I was really confused by this guy already.

He says again "strange right"....Strange right....Strange right.

He keeps repeating the same two words in the same tone over and over again.

I start becoming anxious, the repeating words, the fast driving, him not looking at the road anymore but straight at me now...not taking his eyes off me. Light blue eyes staring into me. I shout

What do you want!

He in response says "strange right."

I start to shout at him more from the back of the car. Are you crazy or something, what are you gaining from this! Strange right. I start to hit the wall separating me from the driver.

Ok look what do you want tell me please! I will do anything! Just please stop saying that. The driver looks back at me.

My heart sinks into the bottom of my stomach... he looks like me. What he says we're just taking a ride! He screams this in my face and spit gets in my eyes. I jump back and wipe my eyes. Suddenly the car stops dead. He stops so fast I get boosted forward into the wall, slamming my nose into it. I yell. The pain was so unbearable.

I want to cover it but it is impossible to cover it all when the blood is all over your clothes and hands.

The copy of me gets out of the car.

Takes him at least a minute to get to the back for some reason.

I finally understands why when he opens the door and points a Gun Directly to My face.

He says get out of the car, But I... trying to think of what to say. Get out of the car!. I get out slowly and calmly as I possibly can after getting thrown into the separation wall of the car head first. I step out and I absolutely wear I am. It looks like an abandoned desert highway but that would be impossible because it only felt like I was in the car for only a few seconds. This can't be real, I'm crazy right? This was an illusion of an insane man. I copy suddenly and say walk. So I do...I start walking one foot after the other. I start to give up at this point. I limp with every step, my energy leaving me after every minute. My head starts to droop down until I suddenly hit my face on something. I look up and there's a door. Just a door standing straight up in the desert. Nothing behind it and yet its a door standing straight up like a house is holding it up. I start to cry, I say to him in a crying voice what do you want me to do now. Open it he says. What...why. Open it...open it...open it. Ok ok i will just stop. I open the door, it leads into my room. I go through the door.

CHAPTER SIX

## Jack the Lumberjack

I walked inside sweating after my day's work. I went to sit down in my chair to watch TV..

Ring Ring.

My phone was going off so I took it out of my pocket.

Hello, I answered.

Hey it's Hans, did you finnish that pile I told you to finish?

Yes I'm sure I did.

Then why do I see logs still here?

Look, I thought I finished it all. I'm sorry.

Jeez! What do I pay you for! I told you to finish the whole pile before you left.

Ok I will tomorrow. I'm sorry.

It's fine, just have the pile gone before the landowner shows up tomorrow.

Ok got it, you know I always get it done right?

He hangs up.

I think about how many times he has yelled at me even though I always get the job done. Oh well you will be fine, I say to myself trying to cheer up a little. I look at the clock. It's nine at night. I make a plan to get something to eat while I watch tv.

I turn on the TV first just to hear something while I cook.

As I do that I go to the kitchen and put the remote on the table near the kitchen as I'm walking there. I grab something off the shelf to heat up quickly. That when I hear the local news come on, I walk to the living room to get the remote to turn the volume up for the weather. Instead I'm greeted with a breaking news report. This just in, a mad man in our area just took over a police car and is speeding down the road. When the police arrived at the scene of the crime, the prisoner took over. They say the policeman was beaten to death.

We advise you to stay inside and lock your doors.

As they were showing me where it happened it looks like the place I drive through to get to work!

I quickly run to the front door to lock it and close the blinds on every window of the house as fast as I can, tripping on the way to the last one I have to pull down.

I sit down on the couch and see if there's any other things they have to say.

I look out one of the sky windows in the living room and see that the sky is now pitch black which means now it's impossible now to see in the forest where I live. I start to think this is a good thing because that means I'm even safer than before. He can't even see in the forest to get here. I get up to even turn the lights just to make it harder for the guy. I'm starting to feel really good about this plan. Out loud I remember telling myself, you're alright Jack you're alright just breathe. As I start to calm down I feel a rush of endorphins to the brain.

I am in control of this. A smile quickly grew on my face like I had just won the lottery.

I close my eyes and camly drift to sle ep.....

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The sun

shines from the sky light in my face waking me up.

I realized that I had been sleeping on the floor the whole night right behind the front window. Getting up from the floor I get a shot of pain though my back. I struggle to get to my chair. I look around the house, everything seems ok...seems perfectly fine actually. I turned on the tv to see if they caught the guy yet, to see if I could stop worrying about it. As I turn off the TV it evidently turns to the channel 7 movie station. This throws me off a little because I thought I was on the news last night. I called my local police station to get more insight on the problem to see if it was fixed. I get my phone, put in the number, put it to my ear and say the question of the day.

Hello this is the office calling. What's the problem?

Did you get the guy that got away in a cop car last night?

The woman responded in the answer that I was not expecting in the slightest. What are you talking about, what guy.

I responded with the guy that killed a police officer and drove away.

Is this a joke? This better not be a prank caller, she says in a frustrated tone.

No i'm serious on the news last night there was a guy in a cop car seeming to start havoc near me.

If there was a convict on the loose I'm pretty sure I would know about it.

I look at the phone in a confused manner. I say ok well then thanks? I hung up.

Thoughts roll though my mind. One of them stuck though, what did I see last night? I look at the TV, I go to the channel 7 news and sit there for an hour or two. No warning about a crazy guy on the loose, no confirmation that anyone was captured at all. Nothing...just nothing, I went outside to get some fresh air, to think that this was a mind trick was crazy but what if it was. What if I was just tired and was making all of this up. As I get on my front porch I realise that it doesn't matter.

There was no guy anyway I guess. Relief swept over me and I started to humor myself to calm down even more. I look at the sky and laugh, how stupid can I be?

I decide to get my car from the back yard and drive into town to tell the people of my ridiculous story. As I walk to the back of my house I laugh some more thinking about how crazy I was for doing this whole survival thing. I get to the back and see my car in the grass. I get in my car and turn the key. The engen takes a minute to start but it starts. I look around as I put my foot to the petal drive to the dirt road to get out of the forest. Then I see it, the thing that scares me. I stop the car dead, My mouth slowly opens to say something but I can't say anything. The words get stuck like trying to break down a door. I stutter for a good few minutes.

W w w w wh wh what... deep in the forest

I see a cop car parked in the forest behind trees.

It's really hard to see but it's obvious.

I get out and stand there in front of my car, Looking deep into the forest at the car. One word is shouting in my mind and that is why! Anxiety goes through me like I'm getting drugged directly in the side of my head.

### CHAPTER SEVEN

### Stuck

Get to the car and there's a police officer in it.

Hello, are you ok? I called out.

Nothing, all I see is him staring at what's in front of him.

When I take a closer look at him he seems fake. Like a manikin...just sitting there.

I open the door on his side, I take a closer look at him, He is just a plastic manikin.It just sits there staring at what's in front of it. I see in its hand that it's holding a note. I take the note from his hand...no reaction. It felt super cold, like freezing cold.I put my hand on the manikin's shoulder. Through the fabric on his uniform I feel cold air.

I take my hand back.....I said I take my hand back.

### My hand is stuck to its shoulder like

### flys to fly paper.

I try to get my hand back but it's literally glued to the mannequin's shoulder. I get more forceful with every pull I make but as I do things I start to see its nose bleeding. Then I start to feel something running down my nose. I taste blood. I start to try to run back to my house with blood everywhere on my dragging a mannequin body through the woods back to my house. I also start to realise that my hand is numb. I see my house in the distance but I'm struggling with caring for the body with one hand and nose blood everywhere. I look back at the plastic body I'm dragging. I see that his nose is now literally shooting with blood. Then now mine is. I start to yell Help! Help! Someone, anyone. Help! While still dragging an officer's body. I somehow made it inside my house, I have to get this body off my hand but how?



## What James Found

As I go through the door I look behind me. I don't see the officer anymore. I look ahead, I'm in a nice log cabin type house. Finally a change in scenery I say, I start to think that I've gone crazy. Looping rooms, an officer looking just like me and repeating himself over and over again. Yep, I've gone crazy.

Why though......I don't know. I walk around the house a little. Searching for something to eat. I go to what looks like a big kitchen in the next room.

I walk in, there's a man with a knife really close to his hand like he's ready to chop it off. He looks at me, the expression on his face turns from scared to terrified. What are you doing here he says in an angry voice. You know why ! James says. I'm here because of you! James screams right after. Jake starts to cry but tries to hide it. It's ok James you don't have to do this James!

Yells

It's ok we all make mistakes!

Jake looks at the knife, then back at James, then at the knife again. This happens for a good two minutes. The knife starts to shake in Jake's hand, tears fall on the cutting board that was set up all proper for this action.

James takes a step closer, Stop! No closer or else it comes off f f f.

Jake couldn't finnish the sentence without wincing at himself even saying it.

Fine do it James says see what happens! Jack suddenly has an expression of shock, mixed with sadness and soro all falling out of his face at the same time. Jake drops the knife like it was too heavy. Jake falls to his knees crying.

Jakes is all alone in his house with a knife on the floor and him praying to the sky saying For give me. He screams this over and over again and over again.

He gets no response.

He doesn't need one.

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# Leaving

CHAPTER NINE

Jack confronts the family that he hurt with his actions. They say their son's still alive so it's ok. Even their son forgives him. It was a big misunderstanding. Does Jack get it?

Hey Jack?

Yeah James?

James came into the room.

Do you think Mom's mental illness will get to us? Why would you say that James Jake said.

Well it's just that my girlfriend keeps reminding me of my mental disorder and it's really taking a toll on me and I'm worried I have what mom has. Sounds like you need a break from her man.

I can't love her though! I know Jake said. Let me tell you this at least. We all need things in moderation, even if you lower the amount just a bit then that would be great for you I think.

Jake, can the same be said about you? What do you call James?

I mean you need to take a break from work.

But I can't James, you know I have to pay the bills. Jame suddenly had a blank expression.

You have enough for the rest of your life Jake. I know I do, Jake said to the mirror.

You're laughing at me James, why? Jake said to the lighted mirror. Jake started to cry. Not because of the people that judge him, not because of the pressure of being told that you're crazy.

It's because of the crow looming over the mirror.

I squeak down on him. Jake looks up with tears streaming down his face. The crow speaks to him only once. You don't like it but you keep doing it

over and over again.

Suddenly Jake hears his girlfriend from the kitchen. Jake get in here! Jake looks into the mirror again. James looks at Jake in more of a happy promis. Tell her you're done, you already tried to cut your hand off this week. Take a break please. Jake smiled at the mirror in his room, tears still streaming down his face. He tells James ok...I will. Jake, who are you talking to in there? Nothing love, hey listen I need to talk to you about something. Jake gets off the chair directly pointed at the mirror in his room.

Jake gets up. Reaches the door handle, turns it, pushes it open.

He is met with a different room. He leaves his bedroom.

James is still on the other side of the mirror sitting in the chair.

# Be careful out there,

# please.



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I can't describe how thankful I am for all the counselors, supporters. And people at SAY for just giving me support in general. It really helped my confidence, and self-esteem, helped me grow up a little easier. Also to all my friends that I have met at SAY, I just want to thank you for paying attention to me. "Erikson Rutkis moves through the world with astounding precision. Wise beyond his years, he advocates for himself and he knows what he wants. He knows right from wrong and is a person who is deeply honest. We look on in gratitude as he gives himself permission to be his true self. He is honest and true with his emotions; he does not hide - he shares himself with the world, and the world is better for it. He chooses to be kind, to look smilingly at his community and the world at large - his legacy is potent and powerful."

### -KATE DETRICK, SAY Director of Confident Voices

"Erikson Rutkis is a visionary. This is a young man with a razor sharp view of how the world is, and how he wants it to be, and he's not afraid to tell you so! Big-hearted, mature and deeply intellectual, Erikson brings generosity, wit, and an incredibly honest perspective to any interaction. He is a tremendous human being and an absolute joy to be around.

"On Repeat" is less of a book than it is a full-body experience – read it and have your understanding of reality flipped upside down. At times funny, at times scary (and always thrilling), this piece is the work of an extraordinary artist unafraid to leap outside the box. Erikson's novel is reflective of a brilliant mind and an honest heart."

### -AIDAN SANK, SAY Artistic Director of Confident Voices

"Erikson is a young man with charm, wit, and endless depth. He is a constant light beaming eccentricity and wisdom onto anyone he meets. His writing always welcomes his readers into worlds that straddle reality and the uncanny in ways that leave us with unending curiosities."

### -RYAN PATER, SAY Writing Mentor and Teaching Artist

"To know Erikson Rutkis, is to love him. His ability to make people laugh is unmatched. His generosity of spirit is refreshing. His talent is energizing and his ability to share his moments of vulnerability are unmatched. Every moment I have spent creating and connecting with Erikson at SAY has left my heart full of joy. There is a wisdom that lives in him that is well beyond his years. He lights up the stage, the page and the world just by being exactly who he is. I feel so lucky to have seen him grow into the extraordinary young man he is today."

### -COLLEEN O'CONNOR, SAY Teaching Artist