

I'LL NEVER COMMIT SUICIDЕ AGAIN

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PART I

BEFORE



It was the first time I attempted to commit suicide—but not the last!

Looking down into the emptiness of an endless darkness, with my eyes half-closed I stood on the edge of the abyss of despair. I could hear the small pebbles tumbling down toward the crashing waves below as I slowly shuffled my feet forward in the direction of my impending death. The headlights of my car parked behind me faded in the distance like faint spotlights on the shadow of a hopeless future I could no longer endure. Whether I looked ahead toward the ominous horizon that my life had become, or below where truculent waves roared like famished beasts eager to devour my flesh, my indifference remained unperturbed. Not even the insidious whirring of the VW bug’s engine running could muffle the chilling silence of my last moment on Earth. The time to put an end to my misery had come.

“Wait!” A commanding baritone voice that seemed to have echoed from the depth of a canyon resonated in my ears. It felt as

though a storm was building up and a thunderous warning heralded its approaching.

“Don’t make such an irreversible mistake,” a soothing raspy voice now whispered in my left ear as I felt a strong and yet gentle touch on my right shoulder.

Startled by the unexpected visitor, I turned toward the towering male silhouette standing next to me, but before I could say anything, he continued.

“Once you do this, there is no coming back; no time for regrets and no chance for redemption,” he said as I watched his breath wafting in the light that illuminated us from behind. Then, he tilted his head downward the cliff as though he could see something that my eyes were incapable of perceiving. “It looks very dark, cold, and painful down there.”

“Yes,” I said dismissively looking down at the dark abyss below where the sounds of crashing waves made the ill-omened unseen sight visible to the imagination. “But it feels very dark, cold, and painful up here, too. The difference is that down there it all ends.”

“Does it?” He questioned my reasoning insouciantly and I resented the subtlety of sarcasm in the intonation of his voice at such a pressing moment. I turned my head toward him trying very hard to identify his facial traits, but all I could see was his shimmering bright eyes. They looked like a pair of miniature Suns in the twilight at the end of a long stressful day. All the other details of his countenance were obscured by the shadow of the night and the mystery of the moment.

“Who are you? And where the hell did you come from?” I barked at him beginning to feel irritated by the unexpected interference in such a momentous decision-making time in my life; a life that I was determined to end.

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“What does it matter to you?” He replied as brashly as I addressed him. “Considering what you are about to do, who I am or where I came from is as irrelevant as wanting to know which of those waves will smash your wrecked dead body against the rocks. The only thing worth knowing right now is that there’s no coming back from where you’re heading to.”

“Maybe, but on the other hand, I’m getting away from a situation that I already know is worthless,” I said looking down the pitch-black chasm below wondering, fretfully, what I’d find there.

“It might not be any better than where you are at now,” he said. “In fact, it may turn out to be much worse. And once you take the plunge and embark on this mysterious journey, it’ll be too late to regret. There is no coming back.”

All of a sudden, I felt extremely annoyed with his presence.

“Listen, mister, I’ve had with you. I didn’t ask for your advice and I don’t need your meddling in my personal affairs. I’m experiencing excruciating emotional pain and I’ve made up my mind to put an end to it. I’m not turning back now because a ghost-like figure shows up out of nowhere to intrude in the last minute of my life. Please go back to wherever you came from and let me carry on my business.”

A long unnerving silence permeated the moist nightly air. As an onshore breeze wheezed by my ears, I felt his presence moving toward the razor-thin edge of the precipice as though he was trading places with me. Suddenly, he pivoted and I gasped startled by his abrupt move thinking he’d plunged to his death. With his back to the steep drop behind him, he spoke to me and the somber tone of his voice was infused with an ominous enigmatic message I could not comprehend.

“I am invested in you, and so are many others,” he said standing immovably as though he spoke to himself. “If you jump to your death, we’ll all suffer the consequences of your desperation-

based impulse to put a premature end to your life at a moment of emotional vulnerability. If you fail to triumph over this challenge, we'll all pay the price and lose an extraordinary opportunity to succeed. It's not worth it."

Although his hodgepodge made absolutely no sense to me at the time, I felt terrified with the prospect of bearing such an immeasurable weight of responsibility; a responsibility that it was completely oblivious to my consciousness. And yet, I felt as though iron anvils of accountability weighed heavily on my shoulders. I intuited that something of foremost importance would be wrought by my decision. But I was determined to put an end to my life and there was no turning back. I could not go on living any longer. The weight of my pain was significantly heavier than the symbolic iron anvil of accountability on my shoulder.

I could feel he sensed my determination when he took a step toward me. Then, he placed his gentle strong hand on my shoulder before speaking again.

"Well, there is only so much I'm able to do to avert this unnecessary tragedy. My duty is to make recommendations, but you're the only one who can make decisions," he said while letting his hand slowly slip off my shoulder. "I must get going now. I don't want to witness what I failed to prevent from happening."

I did not utter a single word. I just paid attention to the sounds of his footsteps on the gravel road fading away behind me, until I felt an irresistible urge to turn around to see his vanishing in the same mysterious way he'd appeared. Suddenly, his footsteps were halted and only the deadly eerie sounds of the waves crashing on the rocks below filled my ears with dread. I knew he was standing there and I couldn't resist turning around to take another look at him. However, the bright headlights of the car obstructed his silhouette in the distance. Then, to my astonishment,

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he spoke again and his last words would haunt me for many years to come.

“We shall visit again in the future, but I’m afraid it’ll be at a time of even more dire circumstances,” he said and the somber tone of his voice was almost visible in the haze. “We shall see how it’ll all pan out. Having nothing else to say to you, I bid you farewell, for now.”

After he disappeared as mysteriously as he had showed up, I stood at the edge of the cliff for what it felt like an eternity. I looked up staring at the stars spangled sky as a shooting star crisscrossed the firmament as though to tell me that I didn’t have to die, at least not at that moment. Almost involuntarily, I began shuffling my feet backwards away from the razor-thin edge of death. Next thing I remember, I was driving the winding road down the canyon heading back home.

This event happened 18 years to the day until I attempted to commit suicide again; but the second time around I would not fail.

