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# Veronika Decides To Die

By Roberta Hanley

Well, let's see.  
After you decide that I'm depressed or  
whatever, you'll throw me a med, right?  
And I know, hundreds of people  
who swallow them,  
they're all doing  
just fine, really.  
I go back to work and take  
my new antidepressants.  
Have dinner with my parents, persuade  
them that I'm back to being normal...  
and it never gives  
me in any trouble.  
Then one day,  
some man ask me to marry him.  
He'd be nice enough and that'll  
make my parents very happy.  
The first year we make  
love all the time.  
Then the second and third  
less and less.  
But, just as we're getting sick  
of each other, I'll be pregnant.  
Taking care of kids,  
working on the jobs, paying mortgages...  
that'll keep us on even keel  
for a while.  
And then, ten years into it,  
he'll have an affair...  
because I'm... too busy  
and I'm too tired.  
And when I find out...  
I'd like to kill him...  
his mistress... myself.  
We'll get passed it.  
In a few years,  
he gonna have another one.  
And this time, I just pretend  
that I don't know, because...  
somehow giving in to fast just doesn't  
seem worth the trouble this time.  
And you know, I'm happy  
at least a few days.  
Sometimes, wishing my kids

could have the life that I never had.  
Other times... secretly pleased  
their trying to be duplicates of me.  
I'm fine... really.  
Green is not the new black.  
Hasn't anyone else noticed that  
everyone has gone completely insane?  
Why is everyone so afraid  
to look at things as they really are?  
Slogans like these have succeeded  
in distracting...  
all the things that really matter.  
There's no other escape.  
I want people to know I believe  
in killing myself rather than to join...  
this collective madness  
in the world we all live in.  
This is not the real world.  
Goodbye,  
Veronika Deklave.  
Call 911!  
Audrey, call 911!  
The syringe is going in.  
- Pressure is 100 over 60.  
- I need for you to back up.  
Pressure is down  
to 80 over 40.  
Bring her inside.  
Move her  
into intensive care.  
Could you please

**send in my 9:**

Edward!  
Come on now, Edward.  
I wanted to let you know that your fathers  
annual visit is scheduled for next week.  
He will ask then  
if you've made any progress.  
Have you made any progress, Edward?  
You know Villette, works for the great  
majority of people who come here.  
The last few times your father visited,  
I suggested to bring you home...

but...

well... I'm certain he believes  
you being here, is for the best.  
What'd you think of that, Edward?

Nurse!

Relax. We're gonna take  
good care of you.

Take it easy.

Here we are.

Veronika?

You were in coma  
and in intensive care, for 2 weeks...  
before being well enough  
to be with us here.

Where am I?

Villette.

Villette?

A privately funded psychiatric  
facility on the Hudson River.  
Our director, Dr. Blake has taken  
special interest in your case.

You're psychiatrists!

Why am I here?

Who brought me here?

Your parents approved it.

Veronika, can I ask you  
a few questions?

Your date of birth?

December 24, 2000...

Um...

Your address?

Your place of employment?

Freeman and Stanley.

Your position?

Assistant Account Executive.

Seventy-five thousand a year...

plus additional

health benefits included.

The color of your mothers' hair?

I don't remember.

The color of my hair?

Blond.

Are you sure?

"Deklava" is Slovenian?

Your parents are from...  
My parents left  
before I was born.  
We get along just fine,  
if that's what you're wondering.  
Look, how long  
do I have to stay here?  
Unfortunately...  
we have some difficult news...  
in that regard.  
Somebody wanna tell me  
what's going on?  
That's yours.  
Oh...  
We're ready to begin, when you took  
the overdose, your heart stopped.  
And the infarct of a heart attack,  
which caused a ventricular aneurysm.  
In layman's terms,  
you've damaged the mechanism...  
that pumps blood into the heart, which  
has caused irreversible damage to it.  
Your heart attack produced a scar,  
which in time became an aneurysm.  
I'm afraid the aneurysm is so large,  
it's... inoperable.  
It will get bigger and bigger  
every day, until it finally ruptures.  
So, I'm gonna die after all?  
I'm afraid so.  
Well, how long do I have?  
A year... years?  
Exact estimates are impossible.  
Not years.  
Okay. So, six months?  
Five months, four months?  
It could be any time, um...  
It may only be  
a matter of weeks... at most.  
I have to wait that long?  
Well...  
If I succeeded,  
why don't you just kill me now?  
It might be

too much for you to take in.

Yes.

I think we've said

enough for now.

We think this is

the best place for you.

We'll be giving you

regular shots in your heart,

which may make you feel

that you're tired.

But we'll do everything we can

to make your last days here as...

pleasant as possible.

Do my parents know?

No. Not yet.

Will you tell 'em?

I think we said

enough for now.

Natasha, would you... please?

Yes, doctor.

Eight hundred sixty.

Eight hundred and sixty.

Eight hundred sixty-two.

Eight hundred sixty-three.

Eight hundred sixty-four.

Eight hundred sixty-five.

There you are!

Better?

I'm your new roommate, Claire.

This place isn't so bad, you know.

They have really good drugs.

I'm leaving any day now.

But not before I have more round

of my coma treatment.

You're really pretty.

I'm gonna tell you a trick

of this place.

It's a story.

Once, upon a time...

there was a powerful wizard

who wanted to destroy a whole kingdom.

And to do this...

he poured a magic potion into the well

from which all the citizens drank.

Everyone who tasted it  
would go mad.  
And the King... when he saw  
his people so changed...  
he was terrified.  
He was preparing  
to leave the city...  
but the Queen stopped him,

**saying:**

"Let us drink from the well,  
we'll be the same as they are".  
And so, they drank from  
the communal well of madness...  
and they were immediately  
as insane as their subjects.  
And so, the King was allowed  
to continue ruling in peace...  
the rest of his days.  
So...  
learn to think like those  
around you think...  
and you can pass  
yourself off with anything.  
You think outsiders  
are any less crazy than we are?  
I'm not crazy.  
Are you really gonna die?  
Who told you that?  
Oh, you know,  
you talk... talk... talk...  
Blah... blah... talk... talk.  
I don't wanna wait.  
Do you know how  
to get my hands on something?  
Really?  
Come have a smoke with me.  
No thanks.  
Oh, come on... get dressed. You don't  
want them to think you're crazy.  
Do you wanna go  
outside with me, Ed?  
Ask Mari, she'll tell you  
how you can get pills.

She's been here longest  
out of all the patients.  
Her clique  
has the best in here.  
They don't take their medications,  
unless they feel like it.  
She was a lawyer on the outside,  
and she was married to one too.  
But when she lost her job, she had  
a break-down and she ended up here.  
Her marriage is over too.  
And she's really close  
to Dr. Blake.  
You think she'll help me?  
I don't know.  
If she doesn't wanna talk to you,  
she wont.  
What about him?  
Ed. I know...  
He's gorgeous... but you can't  
actually talk to him.  
Mari has a way with him,  
no one else does.  
He was dumped here  
a few years ago.  
Years?  
That's what happened.  
He was in an accident, and against the  
time he was ever since...  
he stopped talking.  
His girlfriend was in the car  
with him, she died instantly.  
He thinks he killed her.  
What do they say  
is wrong with him?  
Oh God, it changes all the time.  
Catatony, Schizo,  
all these names.  
It's no use getting interested in him,  
he doesn't care about anybody.  
I'm not interested  
in anyone right now.  
Not even me?  
I'm freezing.



Hey! Hey, do you know  
what astral travel is?  
I use it in my coma treatment. I have the  
Moon was still not achieved, but I do.  
!I have my last treatments  
the next few days.  
You can take all you want.  
How are you?  
Your parents  
are waiting outside.  
No!  
I can't see them!  
I won't see them!  
But they want to see you.  
They've come all this way.  
Did you tell 'em?  
No.  
No, you told me not to.  
I thought,  
I leave it up to you.  
How can I tell 'em?  
I think you should see them.  
Someone please send in,  
Mr. and Mrs. Deklava.  
Veronika always had good grades  
and... made friends with nice people.  
Always had good paying jobs.  
Never had a speck  
of trouble with her. Never.  
She...  
You always made us...  
very proud.  
Doctor, help to make her  
get better, I mean...  
back to normal.  
He's a good doctor.  
Well...  
you see, first of all...  
your daughter tried  
to kill herself,  
now that's nothing for you  
to be ashamed of.  
In our society, we feel we must  
be happy, if we're not happy...

we feel hopeless,  
we feel like... failures.  
The plan... is to talk  
with Veronika, mainly.  
Talk?  
We have to go back...  
Why would you listen?  
Dad, how much you think they are  
charging you for this place?  
Oh, it's nothing. Forget it.  
The most important thing  
is your health now.  
Of course it would be better  
if you stayed home with us...  
- and rest with us, but...  
- Sometimes,  
being away from everyone,  
even loved ones,  
will help people  
to get calm.  
This... this place...  
is worth it.  
I even noticed on the way here,  
they have a nice piano.  
You play piano?  
No.  
- Oh yes, Doctor, she...  
- She used to play lovely...  
- Mozart... Bach...  
- Oh, yeah.  
Debussy.  
Every teacher said  
she has a gift.  
It doesn't matter, I don't play  
any more. It's nothing.  
Well, she even had a scholarship...  
- from the Juilliard.  
- Oh, yeah...  
But we really expected her to go  
to a bigger school, so that she...  
So, she would never have to... uh,  
be lacking for a good-paying job.  
Could... could we not have  
this conversation, please?

We just want you to be happy.  
Could we just not.  
I'm sorry.  
It's okay, sweetheart.  
It's okay.  
Sorry.  
Veronika.  
There's nothing else you want to say,  
while your parents are still here?  
Are you sure?  
Well, it's a long drive  
back to Brooklyn...  
if you want to beat  
the rush-hour traffic.  
Yeah, I guess.  
Getting back to Brooklyn  
at this hour, could be... horrible.  
Listen.  
When Dr. Blake says  
it's okay...  
you come home.  
Then you'll spend  
some time with us, okay?  
- Thank you.  
- Good bye.  
See you soon.  
Take care.  
Is this it?  
There she is.  
You gave us a startle, young lady.  
We're going to try adjusting  
the dosage on your medication.  
We wouldn't even be involved,  
if she'd succeeded.  
But fortunately she didn't, okay?  
We're talking about a womans life.  
And jobs like this have always been taken  
over by these Ad-Agencys when you look...  
None of you all  
sell fruit-cake.  
Honey, I'm a fruit-cake.  
They're dissing on all the publicity  
around this and they're trying to...  
Well?... Aren't you gonna

react at all?  
No. You won't be with us...  
much longer...  
anyhow.  
Good thing about being  
in a crazy hospital...  
so you can get away  
with slapping Fred...  
when he yells something.  
- I was looking for you.  
- Hm?  
Claire said that you might...  
Be somebody who can help you?  
I need pills.  
I wanna die on my own terms.  
When those two geniuses changing  
shifts at the end of the day...  
at dinner time, around 7...  
that's when you come over  
when the door's unlatched.  
I don't understand.  
The medicine closet.  
How can you stand it here?  
Edward!  
Edward!  
Edward, come on.  
It's time for your treatment.  
Come on.  
Come on.  
Edward, come on.  
Dinnertime.  
Dinnertime.  
Come on, let's go.  
George, this way.  
Veronika! Get outta there!  
You better not. No!  
Spit it out, spit it out, spit it out.  
All of it, all of it!  
Come on! Spit it out!  
All of it, all of it.  
Come on. All of it!  
All of it! All of it!  
Is that all? Let me see.  
Come on, look at me.

Look at me, great. Come on.  
Let's get her to Dr. Blake.  
So you really thought, it would be  
that easy to steal some pills?  
You're shit.  
Because I won't cooperate  
in you killing yourself?  
Because you love playing  
with peoples mind.  
I hate you.  
Really?  
Tell me about it.  
Fine. I hate your stupid desk...  
and I hate your ugly tie.  
And I hate your  
ridicules socks.  
And I hate everyone locked up in  
this place, and I hate my parents...  
for spending their very last penny  
to keep me in this zoo.  
God forbid, they should ever  
for one moment, live their own life.  
Is that what they come here for?  
To be the fucking same as everybody else?  
And I hate the jerks  
in my office, who think...  
the money they earn  
makes them be "shit".  
And more than anything,  
I hate the zombies on the subway...  
who have forgotten  
all of their dreams...  
or the fact that  
they ever had any to begin with!  
I have some  
terrifying news for you.  
Don't really much care  
for news.  
You sound like you might be  
feeling better.  
Answer me honestly, please.  
Does't it feel better,  
to feel better?  
Have you ever heard the story

of the King and the poisoned well?  
You mean...  
Claire's absurd story?  
Do you think she invented it?  
Oh, I should've  
guessed this one.  
That's your brilliant take  
on reality?  
Well...  
reality is what the majority  
deem it to be.  
Not necessarily the best,  
or the most logical...  
but the one that has become adopted  
to the desirers of society as a whole.  
Some things are governed by  
common sense, and others become fixed...  
until more and more people believe  
that's the way it should be.  
Like the QWERTY keyboard. Do you know...  
do you know why... it's like that?  
Haven't really had time  
to give it much thought.  
Well...  
when the typewriter  
was first invented...  
the letters were arranged  
in alphabetical order.  
Now, when a person typed  
to quickly... keys became jammed.  
So this man... uh, Scholes,  
he invented the QWERTY keyboard...  
whereby people were obliged  
to type... more... slowly.  
And?  
Well, it's...  
it's a true story.  
You're a bat-shit crazy,  
you know that?  
You sell those patients  
on the optimistic belief...  
that they're no differend  
than the people on the outside...  
because they're

no differend than you.  
Well, I consider that a simple matter  
of fact, only a truly crazy person...  
would call it reassuring,  
or optimistic.  
Besides... aren't you the one  
who accused fashion industry...  
of posting pathological and  
dehumanising values on our society?  
Well, I was high  
when I wrote that.  
Then I take it,  
an ad campaign...  
was not the real reason  
you tried to kill yourself.  
I had a point.  
You almost laughed.  
Another sign of improvement.  
Go to hell!  
She's beginning to expierince  
the reality of death...  
is something  
beyond her control.  
Edward's noticed her.  
Whatever that means  
to Edward.  
Have you grown so attached to your guild  
about the fix you're in with Edward...  
you can't see yourself  
living without him?  
Since you are so close to leaving,  
you'd want to construct...  
a happy ending for Edward  
to match your own?  
I don't think Edward being  
interested in a suicidal girl...  
with a few days to live,  
is much of a happy ending.  
Perhabs they are  
if you're jealous.  
You mean countertransference?  
Just because it's a cliché,  
doesn't mean it isn't true.  
Anyway...

who says I'm ready to go?  
In order to lose someone,  
you must first experience...  
authentic attachment.  
Now if Edward could recover normal  
affect to the point of being capable...  
of general loss, I think I use that  
as my finest hour as a doctor.  
You're free to go.  
Yeah, a mystery.  
Yeah, I know, really.  
Okay Claire,  
I'm gonna swap you down.  
Here we go.  
- It's 100 over 80.  
- Good.  
- The numbers are all good.  
- Very good.  
Okay, stay still.  
Goodbye.  
One of your patients,  
Veronika Deklava...  
is getting considering  
media play...  
from some rather unfair things she said  
about one of our advertising campaigns.  
Of course our first and...  
formost concern is...  
for the wellbeing  
of the young lady.  
Well, now, she is a patient  
undergoing active treatment here...  
and the details of her condition  
are confidential.  
But she is recoverd enough for a...  
well wishing statment to pay our respect?  
Look...  
you want to put Veronika in  
some sort of dog and pony show.  
that's not going to happen.  
We're under a great deal  
of pressure over this matter...  
as I'm sure you understand.  
I'm sorry, she's not available



to be put on display.  
We did some inquiries.  
The State Board Health,  
which gives you a license to operate.  
Apparently three years ago  
a patient died here...  
of a drug overdose?  
And the families of other patients  
have complained about...  
irregular methods of treatment.  
What the families of patients  
complain about by enlarge...  
is that not every mentally ill  
person can be cured.  
Now, what is it exactly  
you want from me?  
You have very...  
unorthodox methods, Dr. Blake.  
I can shine a spot-light...  
on the unusual activity  
that's taken place in here.  
I have absolutely  
nothing to hide.  
Two hundred and seventy-four,  
Two hundred and seventy-five...  
Two hundred and seventy-six,  
Two hundred and seventy-seven...  
Two hundred and seventy-eight,  
Two hundred and seventy-nine...  
Two hundred and eighty,  
Two hundred and eighty-one...  
Two hundred and eighty-two,  
Two hundred and eighty-three...  
Hey, Claire, honey, come on.  
You haven't been released.  
Okay, get your bags,  
and go let's sit at the table.  
Okay, I'll go get Dr. Thompson.  
He'll come and talk to you, okay?  
No, not now, Edward.  
I... I don't feel  
like playing.  
You okay?  
I'll get to the moon next time,

they didn't let me leave.  
Are you OK?  
You should be careful.  
It doesn't really matter,  
does it?  
Hey, there is an expert in Sufi spiritual  
teaching talking with us tonight.  
Some people say Sufi spirituality  
is beautiful... and helpful.  
I'm one.  
~Maybe you should take the time to  
gather yourself if a hurry, you know.  
Ooohmm...  
Insanity... is the inability  
to communicate our ideas.  
So, all of us...  
are to one degree or another insane.  
But don't confuse insanity  
with the loss of control.  
You have two choices:  
To control your mind  
or let your mind control you.  
And allow the real "I"...  
to revealed... itself.  
The real "I" is... what you are...  
not what others...  
think of you.  
I...  
I could fall in love with you,  
right now.  
And you can see me  
won't see me again.  
But that's okay.  
It's very early.  
I need to talk you.  
I need your help.  
You didn't have your injection  
last night.  
I know.  
I'm feeling much better.  
Well, you don't look it.  
If you want to make the most of the time  
you have left, you do as I say.  
I don't want to.

And that's why I need to know exactly  
how much time I have left.  
I told you  
I can't be sure.  
Everything is happening  
as I anticipated.  
Dr. Blake, I need you  
to do two things for me.  
I need a shot or something  
so I can stay awake.  
I want to be conscious  
of every moment.  
What's the other thing?  
I wanna leave here.  
No... I don't know...  
You can't just go. You're not well enough.  
Besides you're under my care.  
You're looking very pale.  
I'm tired, that's all.  
Look, if I have even a little time left,  
there's so much I can do.  
I wanna go to the beach. I wanna see  
the ocean and I wanna feel the sand.  
I wanna have a huge taco  
at my favorite taco stand.  
I wanna walk into an Irish pub  
and I wanna order a Guinness.  
I've never done that.  
I wanna see my mom, I wanna  
talk to her, really talk to her.  
Look, get some rest and conserve  
what little energy you have left.  
Dr. Blake there's...  
Last night...  
I knew I had to live.  
There's so much about myself  
I don't know.  
When desire comes, that's fear.  
These days, most people replaced  
almost all their emotions with fear.  
And everyone has dreams, but only  
a few realises them,  
makes cowards of the rest of us.  
Even if they feel their right?

Particularly then.

Veronika, go get some rest.

I have other patients to attend to.

If everyone would relise their dreams,  
this place would be empty.

Ha...

The Martians just send me a message

it's not a war anymore...

we must go forward and bring peace  
to the Nations. That's what I'm doing!

You think I'm making this up?

This was reported on CNN!

You can hear their words as plain,  
as the nose on your face!

I recall you're telling me  
that Panic attacks aren't fatal...

even if they feel anything.

"Positive Compation".

All that textbook stuff is  
beginning to sound rather old.

Maybe it's time for you  
to leave this place.

Oh, don't be silly.

I do actually help people here,  
in case you haven't notice.

Helping people?

Like Veronika?

Edward's benefiting, isn't he?

Yes, but to get that benefit  
you're torturing a dying woman...  
making her recover her will to live  
just means too late to do any good?

All in the name of research?

Well, it's not a perfect science.

Perhabs with everyone seams to me  
to lie then say what it is.

And when will you finally drop those  
tedious notions of right and wrong...

you never really believed in  
to beinn with?

Or are you still a lawyer at heart  
with fantasies about truth and justice?

Look, if Veronika can help Edward  
by giving him the illusion...

he's helping her, through love...  
then her life and dead would  
not have been completely meaningless.  
My god! Is that the only  
consolation you can manage?  
Anyway... I made  
a few phone-calls...  
I found a nice legal-aid office  
on West End Avenue in Manhattan.  
No Billionaire Corporate clients.  
just needy defentants...  
without a pot to piss in.  
Down the block is a decent takeout deli,  
I can bring my lunch to the park.  
Who knows? Maybe I'll... call up  
my ex-husband see how he's keeping.  
Well, it sounds all very normal.  
It's time I got away from you.  
I mean... from here.  
That's like I been saying,  
for how many years is it now?  
This is my office address.  
I stay with my sister  
until I can find a place.  
I get you the number  
when I have one.  
Thank you.  
You can come sit with me  
in the park one day.  
If my schedule let's up, maybe.  
You can't hide here  
forever, Alex.  
Yeah?  
Hey.  
Want some help?  
You can put  
those clothes in there.  
- Okay.  
- Thanks.  
You know,  
I heard you last night...  
playing the piano in a way  
I've rarely heard before.  
And I that you played

with so much soul...  
because you know  
you're gonna die.  
I thought... when I'm gonna die,  
where's my soul?  
I lost it...  
to my husband and a job  
and a house...  
and I never had the courage  
to leave.  
And now today,  
I feel like I can.  
I wasn't myself last night.  
Only maybe,  
I really was.  
Nothing makes  
any sense anymore.  
Some people go their whole lives,  
searching for one moment...  
like the one you had...  
never achieve it.  
You got a thousand in you.  
- Sorry, I...  
- No, it's okay,  
it's time  
for Edward his treatment.  
You two can see each other later in  
the playroom. So, what you working today?  
Come on.  
It's time for your treatment.  
Come on.  
I need to leave Villette.  
Were you talking?  
I wanna leave.  
Assistance, please. Northeast corridor.  
Immediate assistance.  
It's okay Ed,  
it's okay.  
Hey Eddie,  
everything okay?  
I need to talk to Dr. Blake.  
Wow! You're talking up  
a storm there, huh?  
I wanna go.

Why don't you take a few of these,  
calm down a little bit.

Go here something very  
of grand?

Don't touch me.

- Where's Blake?

- You got a hot appointment in the city?

Dr. Thompson, you need to get here  
right the way.

You're just having a little crisis.

- Whoa! What's going on?

- He talked!

Edward, that's wonderful!

Let's get him outta the hallway, okay?

Everybody, just calm down.

Edward, let's get you to the room.

Relax!

Everybody calm down.

- Veronika!

- Keep your hands off him, okay?

- Veronika!

- Keep your hands off of him.

Get back, leave him alone.

You just spoke.

I believe that you just started  
to become important to me.

- Ed, you need to come with me.

- Take him to emergency.

You need to go find Blake.

We do the treatment  
as planned?

Wait!

I'm coming with you.

- I'm going with him.

- Go.

Go back to your rooms now.

Hey.

Hey.

Are you back, huh?

You don't remember, do you?

Veronika.

How you feel?

Like I could live forever.

It's like you're a part of me now,

like you're inside of me.  
You better  
take good care of me.  
It's too cold for you  
to be out here.  
No, I like to see the sunrise.  
Okay?  
If you close the door...  
the night  
could last forever.  
And no sun shining in.  
and say hello to never.  
All the people are dancing  
and they're having so much fun.  
I wish it would happen to me.  
If you close the door...  
the night  
could last forever.  
I'll get the wine...  
we shall toast to never.  
But, some times, I know.  
Your eyes,  
say hello.  
You're a very special girl.  
But if you close the door...  
I'll never have to see  
the day again.  
Veronika?  
Veronika?  
No!  
Dr. Thompson.  
Greetings.  
This office and Villette  
are now in your care.  
I hope you will conduct yourself wisely,  
as I have tried to do.  
I want to bring you up to speed with  
a few things, clear up a few matters.  
In a few more days,  
I've anticipated telling Veronika...  
that our injections  
had cured her heart condition.  
But in light of her unscheduled  
departure from Villette...



my telling her a perticulare lie  
will not be required.  
The majority of people  
who attempt suicide...  
repeat that attempt  
until they succeed.  
I took a risk in lying to her  
about her condition.  
I decided to test the only remedy  
I've come to have any faith in.  
Awareness of life.  
Hey, look.  
We made it.  
We did.  
Until she finds out from some doctor  
that she's perfectly healthy...  
She'll consider each day  
a miracle.  
Which, in my view, it is.