

1-800-SAVE-ME

Or

Rational Self Loathing

"Pilot"

Written by Jessica Hinds

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EXT. APARTMENT - BALCONY - NIGHT

DEBBIE, 45 and feeling it, looks out into the night. Stinky, an adorable grey cat sits bored at her feet.

The wind blows her poorly-dyed thinning hair. She opens her arms, closes her eyes and leans forward -

WHOOSH! She slips over the railing!

Thud!

THE BUSHES BELOW

She sits up, twigs in her hair. She looks up...

Her balcony above her. Stinky casually licks his paw.

OLD WOMAN VOICE (O.S.)
You all right Debbie?

Debbie stands, brushes the dirt off her.

OLD WOMAN VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Debbie?

DEBBIE
Fine Gladys!

She turns to face the building. Her balcony is only five feet off the ground. Stinky meows a judgment.

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM

Debbie sinks into a water filled claw tooth tub. She looks to her right.

Stinky glares at her from the open door.

Debbie looks down at her pale wrists. She takes a deep breath pick up a pink plastic lady razor, closes her eyes and...

She looks down.

She drags the razor across, the hint of a red mark appears on her wrist.

She presses harder dragging harder and harder and harder and -
CRACK!

The handle breaks, head pops off and clatters onto the floor and through the heat vent.

DEBBIE

Fuck.

Stinky saunters away.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

An empty pill bottle sits on the coffee table.

Debbie chugs a bottle of vodka. Glug, glug, glu- her eyes go wide -

VOMIT!

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM

Debbie places a noose around her neck and steps off the ladder - RIP! The noose breaks - THUNK!

She lands on the ground face first. She groans. She turns her head to the left. She squints. She spots something under the bed.

UNDER THE BED

Debbie's hand reaches past several dust bunnies. Her hand grabs onto a small shoebox.

BEDROOM

Debbie pulls the shoebox out from under the bed. Opens it.

She pulls out a letter, she reads.

Her face softens. Tears well her eyes. She keeps reading. She pulls the noose off her neck, she smiles, true happiness.

EXT. APARTMENT - FRONT

Debbie runs outside clutching the letter. She smiles up at the sky and takes a huge breath in.

DEBBIE

Thank yo-

BAM!!

A red truck crashes into the building crushing Debbie instantly.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Red jelly spurts out of a powdery donut.

KATHERINE, 40, plump in her homemade shapeless dress, slowly stops chewing on the donut.

KATHERINE
(mouthful)
Sorry.

EMMA, 21, glares at Katherine. Emma's hair is black, eye liner is black, clothes are black. She stands next to -

HOWARD, 22, a spindly weakling. He tries to hide his watering eyes from the group.

HOWARD
Who's the manager now?

CARLOS, 28, Hispanic, makes the sign of the cross and mumbles a prayer.

KATHERINE
I guess we just...call the main
branch in Omaha?

On the wall, a huge poster reads:

"1-800-SAVE-ME: KROOCKS COUNTY SUICIDE HOTLINE"

Everyone nods.

EMMA
Is anyone gonna mention the irony.
Seriously, like...the irony of what
happened, like three layers...

Katherine and Carlos sneak out of the room. Emma turns to Howard.

HOWARD
What's irony?

Emma rolls her eyes and leaves.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CALL ROOM

Emma saunters over to her desk in the call room. The shitty space is covered in terrible inspirational posters.

Katherine and Carlos sit at their desks a few feet away.

Howard sits down at his desk. He leans over to Emma.

HOWARD
What's irony?

Emma stands.

EMMA
Let's have a moment of silence for
our dearly departed manager Debbie
Slanks.

Everyone bows their heads.

RING! Howard's phone rings. He hesitates.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

The OLD JUDGE bangs his gavel.

OLD JUDGE
Ms. Davis.

Ms. A. DAVIS, just DAVIS to those in the corporate world
stares coldly at the judge. He hairstyle is that of a
dangerous businesswoman who has read "The Art of War" one too
many times.

Next to her is her ATTORNEY, perfect brown hair, brown eyes,
pale skin, expensive suit.

OLD JUDGE (CONT'D)
Due to the fact that this is your
first offense, as megalomaniacal as
it may be, I am sentencing you to
200 hours of community service.

Her Attorney smiles, victory. Davis releases her breath, her
face remains stern.

OLD JUDGE (CONT'D)
So long as you attend AA meeting no
less than five days week.

Davis pulls a Brooks Brothers flask out of her suit jacket
and defiantly sips.

OLD JUDGE (CONT'D)
Starting today.

Gavel bang!

EXT. BISTRO - OUTDOOR SEATING

Davis's Attorney chomps on a piece of red meat.

ATTORNEY

You got off easy. Considering how much you stole-

DAVIS

Embezzled-

ATTORNEY

Just go to the damn meetings. You don't have to pay attention -
(sips his martini)
Just go. And finish your comm service with straight As.

Davis finishes her manhattan.

DAVIS

As long as I'm not picking up trash or working with the retards.
(signals for another drink)
What am I doing?

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY

A poster hangs on the door: A kitten dressed in a snowflake costume. In block letters the poster reads-

"WE ALL ARE UNIQUE AND NEEDED IN THIS WORLD

1-800-SAVE-ME. ANSWER THE PHONE. SAVE A LIFE."

Davis sips from her flask.

DAVIS

Jesus Christ.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CALL CENTER

Davis glares down at the pathetic team sitting before her.

Howard shrinks into himself, eyes to the ground. Katherine smiles and eagerly waves, revealing half her lunch clinging between her teeth. Emma glares through her thick black eye liner, she crosses her black fishnet legs. Carlos picks his nose.

CARLOS

Hola. Welcome.

He holds out his hand. Davis does not accept it.
Katherine stands.

KATHERINE
It's such a pleasure to meet you.

DAVIS
I know.

She looks at the office in the back of the room.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
That my office?

EMMA
That's Debbie's offi-

DAVIS
Great.

Davis struts over to the office and slams the door.

HOWARD
She has very nice shoes.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CALL ROOM

Carlos leans his ear against the door to Davis' office.
Above him Katherine leans her ear against the door.
Emma sits at her desk.

EMMA
You guys are cowards.

Howard stands back, ringing his hands.

HOWARD
I don't think we should eavesdrop.

EMMA
Don't be a pussy Howard.

CARLOS
I think she's growling...

Everyone listens closer.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
Do you think this is a test. New
managers always test employees. Let
them know whose boss.

EMMA

We're volunteers, not employees.

REPLACEMENT MANAGER, 35, sunglasses, big hair, enters from the front door. She looks at the ease dropping group.

REPLACEMENT MANAGER

Hello?

Everyone turns.

EMMA

Who are you?

REPLACEMENT MANAGER

I'm your new manager. Straight from Omaha.

CARLOS

We already have a new manager.

The sound of Davis mumbling something through the door.

Replacement Manager rips her sun glasses off her face.

REPLACEMENT MANAGER

Are you kidding me? Did Eddie do this? God DAMN it! That's it - no. Fuck this, fuck all of this, not again, not AGAIN! I am going over to 1-800-Help-You. They have been after me for months-

She turns and heads out.

REPLACEMENT MANAGER (CONT'D)

Why I stay dedicated to-

The group turns back towards Davis' office.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE

Davis snores loudly asleep in the desk chair.

Her snoring turns to grunting. She startles awake. She groggily looks up.

Howard, Emma, Katherine and Carlos stare down at her.

DAVIS

What is this, an intervention?

HOWARD

Meeting time.

Davis waves them off.

DAVIS
Go ahead without me.

KATHERINE
Everyone meets at meeting time.

HOWARD
(proud)
It takes five fingers to lend a
hand.

EMMA
Four fingers.

HOWARD
What?

CARLOS
She's right.

Howard holds up his left hand.

EMMA
Thumbs not a finger.

HOWARD
What?

CARLOS
Lo siento. Not a finger.

HOWARD
But, but then, what is it?

Davis growls.

DAVIS
If I move into the other room will
you all shut up?

Katherine nods. Davis pushes herself up. Everyone shuffles
out of the office.

Howard, paranoid, stares at his left hand. He slowly pokes
his left thumb with his right pointer finger.

HOWARD
(to his thumb)
What are you?

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM

Everyone sits around the conference room table. Howard stares at his thumbs. Emma draws on her arm with a black sharpie. Katherine knits. Carlos chews gum. Davis waits.

Davis looks around.

DAVIS
Who starts this thing?

KATHERINE
Well Debbie...

DAVIS
Where's Debbie?

Silence. Davis looks around.

EMMA
Debbie is no longer with us, that's why you're here.

DAVIS
Fine.

Davis stands.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Let's start with the numbers.

KATHERINE
What numbers?

DAVIS
You guys don't have your numbers pulled?

Katherine shakes her head.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Doesn't matter. Let's talk strategy. How are we going to double those numbers this quarter.

CARLOS
I don't think we want to double our numbers.

DAVIS
Sure. But your investors do, and remember if you're not growing, you're shrinking. We don't want to lose customers.

EMMA
We do lose customers-

DAVIS
Not anymore.

She points to Howard.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
You!

Howard startles up from his hand.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
I want a brilliant idea right now:
One way we can double the number of
calls this month?

Howard stares, stupefied.

HOWARD
I don't think-

DAVIS
Don't think - speak!

Terrified Howard blurts out-

HOWARD
Tell people they're fat and no one
will ever love them?

Davis stops. Everyone in the room looks at Howard. Davis leans down and gets right in Howard's face.

DAVIS
Fear based advertising. I like it.

She stands up.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Who's next!

Emma stops drawing on her arm.

EMMA
You do recognize that our goal is
to *stop* people from killing
themselves, right?

Davis pauses, unsure.

Howard looks down at his feet, he's wearing flip flops.

Emma throws THE HANDBOOK on the table in front of Davis.

Davis looks down at the happy colorful cover with a smiling cartoon duck:

"100 WAYS TO SAVE A LIFE: SUICIDE HOTLINE HANDBOOK"

Howard focuses on his big toe.

HOWARD
Are you even a toe?

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - CALL ROOM - COFFEE STATION

Davis stares down at the world's most pathetic coffee maker. Drip.

She picks up a ceramic mug, turns it over. It reads,

"WORLD'S GREATEST BOSS"

She looks inside the mug, a spider web.

EMMA (O.S.)
It's disgusting.

Emma grabs the pot of coffee and pours it into her all black mug. She sips.

DAVIS
What with the whole vampire thing?

EMMA
I'm in mourning for my life.

DAVIS
Depression is a sign of weakness.

EMMA
I was quoting Chechov.

DAVIS
As I recall from Liberal Bullshit
101 the Russians were always the
cheeriest of the poets.

About fifteen feet behind them, JIM, 40, no nonsense, enters the office.

Emma directly faces Davis.

EMMA
Listen, you may not respect what we
do here and that's fine.
(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

It's America, everyone has the right to be an asshole in whatever way they choose. But know that I take this very seriously.

Behind them Jim speaks with Carlos.

Davis sets down the mug.

DAVIS

Sure, death is a terrible thing.

EMMA

Death is not a terrible thing. He is a higher entity that deserves respect. And I have dedicated my life to making sure the irreverents don't fuck with his plan.

She steps closer to Davis.

EMMA (CONT'D)

You don't choose death. Death chooses you.

She glares up into Davis's eyes. Davis leans back.

JIM (O.S.)

Annabel Davis?

Davis turns to Jim. He's handsome in an uptight way.

DAVIS

(relieved)

Yes. That's me. Just Davis though.

Emma smirks.

EMMA

Annabel.

DAVIS

So lovely speaking with you darling but I have non-satanic citizen to converse with now.

Emma walks away. Davis smiles at Jim.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

This way to my office.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE

Jim looks around the office, examining the books, posters etc.

Davis sits in the desk chair.

DAVIS

So what, you're going to come check up on me every week or something. Make sure I wash my hands after wiping my ass.

Jim stares into a painting, all blue, on the far wall.

DAVIS (CONT'D)

You don't look like a cop.

JIM

(eyes on the painting)
Probation officer.

DAVIS

Ugh, I'd kill myself if I had to be a babysitter.

JIM

(eyes on the painting)
You are pretty confident aren't you?

DAVIS

What can I say...I'm good at what I do.

JIM

You got caught.

DAVIS

I got in trouble, a slight infraction.

Jim finally turns towards her.

JIM

The courts may not have caught you, but I will.

Davis smiles.

DAVIS

Bully to you.

JIM
So keep in line.

DAVIS
(sarcastic)
Yes sir.

JIM
Confidence isn't something you
prove.

Davis looks up at him.

JIM (CONT'D)
It's just there. Like the color
blue.

DAVIS
What?

He points at the painting. He opens the door.

JIM
Me thinks the lady doth protest too
much.

DAVIS
Am I the only one who understands
the devastating effect the arts are
having on capitalism?

He steps out the door.

JIM
I know who Alexander really is.

Davis freezes.

JIM (CONT'D)
Blue.

Jim shuts the door. Davis, shaken, stares at the blue painting on the wall. Staring at the painting she pulls out her flask and chugs.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE - LATER

Davis stares at the painting in a daze. A knock. Davis slowly lifts the flask. Sips. Knock knock.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
(through the door)
Davis? Davis we are leaving now.

The blue painting stares back at Davis.

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Just remember to forward the calls
to the night branch okay?

Davis sips.

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I left the handbook on your desk.

The painting stares back...blue.

KATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It was nice meeting you.

The sound of footsteps. A door closing. Davis sips from her flask.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE - ONE HOUR LATER

Davis trips over her heels and clutches the chair. She is drunk as hell. The chair begins to roll. THUNK!

She hits the floor. She bursts out laughing.

Her two hands plunk onto the edge of the desk. She pulls herself up. She rests her head on the desk.

On her laptop, Pandora.com on the screen.

DAVIS
Let's open the box shall we.

She clicks on "PLAY".

Something similar to "You've Got A Friend" by Carole King plays.

The phone rings. Davis picks it up.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Al's house of human taxidermy.

EXT. BUILDING - WINDOW LEDGE

JUMPER, 22, female, stands on the window ledge of a building in a hospital gown. Her long brown hair flutters in the breeze. She clutches a cell phone on her left hand.

JUMPER
 (into phone)
 What?

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE

Davis sneers.

DAVIS
 What? Who is this? Frank? Am I back
 in?

EXT. BUILDING - WINDOW LEDGE

Jumper talks with a lisp on her "s"s.

JUMPER
 What are you doing, ith thith 1-800-
 thave-me?

Jumper looks down.

Fifty blocks below her is the bustling city street.

DAVIS (VO)
 You talk funny. What do you want?

JUMPER
 I'm gunna do it.

DAVIS
 Do what?

JUMPER
 What ith thith your fitht day.
 Thuithide.

A pigeon flies by nearly hitting Jumper.

DAVIS (V.O.)
 What?

JUMPER
 Thuicide.

DAVIS (V.O.)
 What?

JUMPER
 THU-A-THIDE.

DAVIS (V.O.)
 What?

JUMPER
I'm gunna kill mythelf you dumb
bitch!

Jumper looks down at her cell phone.

JUMPER (CONT'D)
Jethuth Chritht.

INT. HOTLINE OFFICE - DAVIS' OFFICE

Davis sneers at the phone.

DAVIS
Jesus Christ.

She puts the phone back to her ear. She pulls the guide book onto her lap.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Hold on a sec.

Davis flips through the book.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
What is your method...

JUMPER (V.O.)
What?

DAVIS
How do you intend on thuithiding
yourself.

Davis pauses on a a photo of a happy housewife sticking her head in the oven.

JUMPER (V.O.)
Ith there thomeone elth I can talk
to?

Davis tosses the book in the trash.

DAVIS
Sorry lispy I your only hope.

JUMPER (V.O.)
I'm fucked.

DAVIS
No, you're not fucked. Jesus. Have
you no confidence.

JUMPER (V.O.)
I'm trying to kill mythelf, what
the fuck do you think?

DAVIS
The lisp isn't that bad-

JUMPER (V.O.)
I'm not killing mythelf becauth of
my lithp.

Davis groan, rolls her eyes.

DAVIS
Then why are you?

Davis listens...silence. Davis looks down at the phone, puts
it back to her ear.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Hello?

JUMPER (V.O.)
(softly)
I'm a horrible perthon.

Davis looks down at the ring on her finger.

DAVIS
No. You're not.

She twits teh ring back and forth on her finger.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
A horrible person would never think
about killing themselves...A
horrible person would never reach
out for help no matter happens to
her, or because of her. A truly
horrible person always finds a way
to cheat the system...even when
that system is a charity that helps
give food to starving children. A
real horrible person lies about it.
Lets her fiance take the hard fall,
and then refuses to visit him in
prison...and feels nothing but
relief. Felt like she won.

She pulls the ring off.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
And would do it all again.

She sets the ring on the desk.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
So you can't be horrible...I've
taken it all for you.

She stares at the ring, in and out of focus. Silence.

The line goes dead.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Hello?...Hello?

She looks down at the phone.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
Oh shit.

INT. COURT HOUSE - JUDGES CHAMBER - DAY

Old Judge glares forward, chewing on a egg salad sandwich. A white napkin tucked into his collar as a bib.

DAVIS (O.S.)
I just don't think it's a good fit.
My skills will be much more useful
in a more... corporate environment.

Old Judge sets his sandwich down. He looks up at Davis.

OLD JUDGE
This is not a 'choose-your-own-
adventure' sentence.

DAVIS
It should be.

The Old Judge's face grows furious. He rips the napkin off -
The door opens Attorney bares in and grabs Davis.

ATTORNEY
Sorry your honor, so sorry.

He drags her out.

OLD JUDGE
This is your last chance Davis!

EXT. COURT HOUSE

Attorney drags Davis out of the courthouse.

ATTORNEY
You look like shit.

DAVIS
Lovely to see you to.

ATTORNEY
What the hell are you doing?

DAVIS
I don't like it. The people
are...weepy. Crying is a sign of
weakness. What if it's contagious.

He snaps his fingers in front of her face. She rolls her eyes
and pulls out a flask. He grabs it from her.

ATTORNEY
I can save you from jail but I
can't save you from yourself.

He storms off.

DAVIS
That flask costs more than your
suit.

ATTORNEY
(calling over his
shoulder)
Go to your meetings!

She turns. Two cops glare at her, guarding the Court House
doors. She walks away.

EXT. CHURCH - SUNSET

The sun set behind the cross atop an old church.

Davis looks up at the church. She takes a deep breath. She
walks up to the door. She looks around, she sneaks in.

INT. CHURCH

A group of twenty sit in folding chairs, smoking, drinking
coffee, legs and hands shaking.

A FIDGETY MAN stands behind a podium.

FIDGETY MAN
...but I said no. And I came here.
I hate it here. But I came. I hate
all of you. But I came. I hate the
smell in this place. Like ass. I
don't know if it's all of you...or
the stench of that rotting homo
over there-

He points to a statue of Christ of the cross.

FIDGETY MAN (CONT'D)
 But I hate it here. I still came. I
 didn't drink. So I guess I'm doing
 better.

The GROUP LEADER, 45, female, calm. Gently rests her hand on
 his shoulder.

GROUP LEADER
 Thank you for sharing.

Davis slips into an empty seat in the back.

GROUP LEADER (CONT'D)
 Who else?

A hand raises. Group Leader nods and step to the side.

Someone approaches the podium.

Davis checks her cell phone.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
 Hello, I'm Kara. And I'm an
 alcoholic.

Davis texts.

EVERYONE (O.S.)
 Hi Kara.

Davis texts.

KARA (O.S.)
 Latht night I tried to kill
 mythelf.

Davis looks up.

KARA (formally JUMPER) stands behind the podium.

KARA (CONT'D)
 But then I realithed...I'm not a
 horrible perthon. I have done thome
 terrible thingth...but it doethen't
 mean I'm bad. Or evil.

Davis holds her breath, watching, listening.

KARA (CONT'D)

It's never too late to start
being the person I wish I could
be.

She looks out.

Davis stares back. Water begins to gather in Davis' eyes.

END OF EPISODE.