

Committed

PERSONAL ESSAY & MEMOIR

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After all of the ass fuckery that was...is...the coronavirus, I finally committed my first act of suicide.

I've toyed with the idea of suicide for a while. When I was younger, there were times when I was almost there. I took my uncle's gun and held it to my head, I hid behind a tree and waited for courage to send me bounding into a stream of cars, I submerged my head under my bath water and scarily inhaled little bouts of death. There was a time when I gathered pills from various bottles with the intent to swallow them, but I stopped myself because I couldn't stuff them all down my throat-I wasn't a fan of making myself throw up. I held a knife to my throat, pressed threateningly, and said my goodbyes to God. I was a coward, though, and couldn't follow through. I even starved myself, thinking that I would pass out and hit my head so hard that my body wouldn't be able to wake up. It didn't work because I suffer from migraines, and starvation made them worse. I refused to die so painfully.

I was fully committed to killing myself, as I genuinely did not want to live in this world. People were so evil. I was made fun of for being black, fat, female, queer, and smart. I was made fun of for accepting opportunities and developing a love for art. I was an asshole for not caring about things that other people cared about, and I was an idiot for talking about things that I personally cared about. I was living within the poverty line, I was being molested, I was struggling with school, and I was stressed at home. My only silver lining was the possibility of ending my struggles with death.

When the coronavirus came about, I was a freshman in highschool. The previous school year and summer had been one of the most depressive, draining, and

mentally incapacitating periods of my life. And although I was still struggling with depression and problems at home, my school life was becoming my saving grace. I enjoyed skipping the first period of classes to go buy snacks at the store with my older sister; I was getting to know her better and I was enjoying being rebellious. I made new friends in school, became closer to the ones I liked, and my grades were great. That had also been the year in which I was determined to start the process of making the most out of my highschool years. I was in the band, I was in the sign language club, I was on the speech and debate team, and I was even beginning to figure out what I wanted to pursue in the future. I determined that I would put suicide on hold because "Life might be great in my 20s. Who knows?"

On my fifteenth birthday, I was dangerously close to fulfilling my commitment, though. After an argument with my grandmother, I went upstairs, where I thought no one would find me, and cried. I hadn't been able to cry in a while. No matter how upset I was, the tears just would not come out. But I cried that day; a cry I never knew that I could cry. It was like a sad, dramatic scene you'd see on television. I pulled my hair, I choked on snot, I scratched my arms, and I pleaded with God to just kill me already, as I could no longer take it.

The argument was because my grandmother yelled at my younger sister for being depressed. Y'all always walking around here like something wrong with y'all. Frowning and shit, with nasty attitudes. I just think that it's so inconsiderate. We have done everything we can for y'all, and y'all are just being ungrateful. How do you think I feel? Y'all are making me feel like what I'm doing is not enough.

Like we're doing stuff to y'all. We ain't doing nothing. I'm tired of y'all acting like this. Y'all want for nothing. Then she begins to cry. Y'all really ruin my mood. I just be wanting to laugh and talk, but y'all always acting like y'all mad with the world. My younger sister had recently gotten out of a hospital because she attempted suicide. Throughout the years, the adults in my family always made it a habit to guilt trip, manipulate, and shame us for things out of our control. My grandmother was turning my sister's depression into a personal attack on herself, and I decided that I was not entertaining that type of behavior that day. So, we argued. I told her to stop making everything about her, and that my sister had every right to feel the way that she feels. I told her that she was completely in the wrong for shaming my sister, and that I was tired of her attitude, her overbearingness, and her projecting. Then I stormed off when she refused to lose the argument.

After I had calmed down a little from the theatrics, my tears just fell softly, one by one, and I began to reflect on the events that had just occurred. I immediately felt guilt for talking to my grandmother the way that I had. I didn't call her out of her name, say she was a bad person, or even raise my voice too loud, but my grandmother is a sensitive lady. The tiniest thing can hurt her feelings, and I knew that she was going to hold a grudge for what I said. And then my foster sister walked into the room and caught me crying. She tried to ask me what was wrong, but I said that I was fine and asked to be left alone. I felt horrible shame for having been caught in a vulnerable state. I could hear her tell my grandmother that I was crying, but my grandmother just went on a tangent: I know she not crying because of what I said. Y'all are not about to make me feel like I've done something wrong. She can go ahead and cry all she wants. She is not about to treat me like shit. I'm tired of my children and grandchildren disrespecting me. When my little sister came to check up on me as well, I told her to leave. We'd never been very close, and it made me uncomfortable to have her seeing me showing emotions other than humour and the occasional anger.

That's when I realized that I was not okay; I was deflecting. I should've known. When the school counselor called me out of class to tell me that my little sister attempted suicide, I didn't even cry. My older sister bawled her eyes out, and I just sat there avoiding everyone's stares. I had no tears in me until the day of my birthday. I deflected by busying myself with other things. I hadn't realized that I was avoiding my problems, avoiding my feelings, and avoiding myself. I would not allow my body to cry, I would not allow myself to open up, and I would not clear space for any self-rehabilitation. If a piece of myself was chipped away, I turned my head as if I didn't see it. It wasn't there. I didn't care.

I was always busy because time at home was not good for me. I was always discluded, berated, or quite literally made fun of. I skipped the first period of classes because I needed to act out. And because I couldn't act out on others, I acted out on myself. I had already begun building up to the moment when I would commit.

Covid gave me a lot of time to spend at home, and to be depressed, and to reevaluate everything I knew about myself. I lost more than half of my friends and lost self control. Unlike my eighth grade year and the summer before ninth grade, my depression manifested itself in a different way.

I began to eat, and eat, and eat, and eat. I ate until I was almost one hundred pounds heavier. I locked myself in my room and spent my time on Youtube. I didn't log into my online classes, causing me to fail the first class that I had ever failed. I didn't talk much to anybody, causing a rift in my relationships. I had quite literally become a shell of a person. I'd killed away all of my will, motivation, interests, and connections.

Funny enough, I thought that I was doing quite well. Having found solice in youtube and ignoring responsibilities, I thought that my coping methods were effective. I didn't realize that I was crying myself to sleep more than normal, and that that was not okay. I cut off all of my friends and seldom spoke to my family, which was bad because I had

no one to reach out to. I was attempting to ruin my education by rarely showing up to my classes. It was a really sad time for me. The best word to describe me at that time is numb. I was numb to all and simply floating through my life.

When I went to get a check up at the doctor's office, I ended up, for the first time in my life, being honest with the doctor about being suicidal. Of course, that ended with me being admitted into a behavior institute. I was quite annoyed with the whole ordeal, as I felt as if being in that place would do nothing for me.

While nothing really changed much for me in the hospital, it was interesting meeting the other kids there. I realized that I never wanted to go back, as not being able to write or watch Youtube was killing me. And I was also very concerned about missing school work. I knew that I would never make the work up, and I was right. I didn't.

I let slip in the hospital that I had been sexually and physically abused. Thus started the process of informing my mother, who encouraged me to make reports. I hated every second of it. Having my mother stare at me as doctors ask me how I'm feeling, casting angry glances at her as if she was the one who had gotten me into those situations. My voice was quiet, eyes were wandering, feet were dancing, and hands were shaking. I gave one word responses and grunted at everybody like I was a toddler who had been refused a treat. It was embarrassing, and a part of me knew that I was making things difficult, but I could not stop myself. I was someone else, because I had already begun killing off the old me.

Sitting in front of a stranger—anxious, annoyed, and embarrassed—while being forced to detail the many things that your rapists and molesters, cousins and friends, did to you..was not fun. I had seen a side of me that was completely different. I was too vulnerable, anxious, and the biggest mess that I had ever been.

When Hurricane Ida hit Louisiana, I was forced to go and live by my aunt who lived in Alabama.

It was a weird ordeal, as her son was one of my molesters. They didn't know that I had pressed charges yet, so having them try to interact with me made me uncomfortable. He especially made me uncomfortable. He was a family favorite, so everyone was hugging and kissing him while I hid in a corner. Whenever he was by me, he tried to talk to me, as if he had no recollection of what he used to do to me. And when it was revealed that he had a daughter on the way, I wondered what he would think when the police finally called him to tell him about the charges that I pressed. I let the pieces of him that were still inside of me develop into a nasty rash, itching and burning and clawing at my heart. Because I had let my old self chip away so much, the old me that ignored everything and felt nothing, I had become too vulnerable to my emotions.

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Upon returning to Louisiana, I fully killed myself. My old self. I surround myself with good friends; friends who care about me. I cut off toxic family members, and I'm gradually becoming closer to good family members. Although I'm failing French, I'm at least trying in school. I hate it, it drains me, but I'm putting forth what little effort I have. I'm continuing the process of pressing charges against my assaulters. It's a scary process, but it's a process that I'm glad I continued on with. I'm trying to find a way to develop a healthy relationship with food, because I want to take care of my health. And even though I never liked the idea of therapy, I signed myself up for it, just in case it helps.

I committed to killing myself, but only the me that continued to hurt in silence, with no outlet and no direction. I committed to ending unnecessary struggles, and plan to allow myself little instances of happiness that I could provide. I committed to myself in a way that I never did before. And I hate the coronavirus. It killed my grandfather, brought devastation upon billions of people, and gave me many hardships. However, it allowed me a chance to change the bad things in my life. It feels weird to say I'm thankful, but I am glad. ■