

Enna Rose

Springs of Suicide

By Dagny McKinley

Spring. To leap. To come into being. Spring. A season.
Spring. Suicide.

Enna Rose felt the heaviness of the muds around her, of the swollen earth, the hands of winter releasing, the will of life to grow. Bare toes marked the mud as Enna moved up Emerald Mountain. Glacier lilies were poking up; canary yellow petals fallen from the sun. Tendrils uncurling, unfolding all around, except one. One bud had pulled itself out of the snows to begin its ascent to reach the sky but for some reason had given up. The bud lay its unopened form on the earth, petals sealed, holding inside the life it had to give.

Resting her head on the ground, Enna let a tear slide down to nourish the soil, hoping maybe the lily would revive. She thought about Spring, that huge S snaking through the alphabet: sorrow, scandal, suffering, separate, scary, silent, scream, secret, sabotage, shame, shroud, sob, stress, stumble, submerge, suffocate. Suicide.

Then she thought about balance. Safe, smile, save, sacred, serene, serendipity, sunrise, simplicity, sincerity, solace, splendiferous, start, subside. Survive.

A man walked by. Sam.

“Excuse me,” said Enna “do you think this flower died from external causes or do you think it was an internal decision to rest peacefully on this soil?”

“I don’t... what kind of a question is that, anyway? I just want to be alone.”

“There is no alone. You’ve got the flowers, the trees and the river breathing alongside you. I think this flower may have committed suicide and I need to talk to someone about this after I’ve had time to think. Do you ever feel like you need to talk to somebody?”

“Who are you?”

“Would you like to come to my Suicide Supper tonight?”

“What’s wrong with you?”

“No, it’s not that, it’s not a supper to kill ourselves, it’s a night for understanding and discovery.”

“That would be too weird.”

“Please. I could use a friend tonight.”

Sam’s body visibly relaxed when he heard that. His shoulders dropped and he seemed to breathe for the first time since they started talking. Enna gave him directions, then the man turned back the way he came, forgetting his walk.

Thoughts swirled through the soft mass of Enna’s mind. Did nature have a choice? If a flower knew unsuitable conditions were coming, could it choose to stop, or did it grow until it could no longer grow? Why did so many suicides happen in spring?

That night, in her rundown cabin on the outskirts of town, Enna set the table for five people. One of the seats would be left empty as both a remembrance and an invitation



for those not in body to join. The other places were set for Body, Mind, and Sam.

She prepared chicken noodle soup and cherries for their healing powers. Hot chocolate with peppermint would soothe for dessert. A knock on the door. Sam was the last to arrive. Enna embraced him with a warm hug, offering him a seat at the table. Music played in the background, a combination of instrumental and tribal in order to satisfy the needs of both Body and Mind.

“As you all know,” Enna started, “there are questions to answer tonight, a reckoning of sorts about suicide. Anyone want to start?”

“Freud said ‘life is not easy;’” offered Sam. There were nods and agreements around the table, except from Body. “Life is not easy or hard, life is instinct, life is survival. It is Mind’s fault that suicide happens,” responded Body who was swaying to a tribal beat.

“Don’t blame me,” said Mind.

“Think about it, Mind,” said Body. “You create guilt and shame, sorrow. You set the parameters through which the world is viewed, according to your personal filter and I’m forced to feel all of those emotions, half of which aren’t truth. If you would only shift your perspective and see things in a different light we might not be having this conversation.”

“But Mind cannot stop thinking any more than you can stop trying to survive,” said Enna Rose.

“Mind closes doors,” said Body.

“A closed door opens a window,” said Sam.

“Sometimes a closed door is simply a closed door. We can learn from it, we can sit with our pain and understand pain and grief and use those emotions to re-evaluate our lives, but loss is loss. It hurts. As simple as that. Jung said ‘The goal of life is the realization of the self.’ You ought to realize that suicide is murder, since after suicide there remains a corpse exactly as with any ordinary murder.

Only it is yourself that has been killed.”

“Hear, hear,” said Body. There are two of us involved in life, shouldn’t both of us be involved in death?”

“Body, I appreciate the simplicity with which you view life, however there are things you cannot understand: deadlines, failures, disappointments, depression, which you contribute to by adjusting levels of serotonin and endorphins or lack thereof,” said Mind.

Enna passed around the chicken noodle soup. Body filled its bowl full, but Mind had no need of food, it was too caught up in the discussion. Sam filled his bowl, but only sipped slightly.

“I will never admit this anywhere but here,” said Body, “but I am a follower until the end and then I am a fighter. I am a survivalist. I have only one goal - to continue to breathe, to continue to be.”

“For some people, love and acceptance are as necessary to survival as water and air,” said Sam. “To feel hated and ostracized can be more deadly than cancer.”

“That’s Mind,” said Body.

“That’s human,” said Enna.

“Why do you think more men than women kill themselves but more women than men try to kill themselves?” asked Sam.

“Pressure on what a man is supposed to be is my bet. Men are judged on their ability to be the breadwinner, the strong one, not to fail. Women are often judged on their ability to reproduce,” said Mind.

“In this day and age?” asked Enna, passing cherries.

“Women have just as much pressure to work, be a parent, be a lover, as men do. I bet the statistics change soon.”

“Maybe women are more intimate and able to talk openly about their problems with other women. A lot of men don’t have that. On my walk today, I was going to... nevermind,” said Sam.

“We all have shadows,” said Enna.

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Springs of Suicide cont.

There was silence in the room. The music stopped and everyone was lost in thought.

“How do you stop a suicide? Can you?” asked Enna as she sucked on a cherry. She then left the table to warm milk for hot chocolate. Everyone wanted the hot chocolate. She passed steaming cups all around.

“Smile,” said Body. “Go out on the street and even if you don’t feel like it, smile. People will smile back. It’s contagious. Those feelings you give when you smile or hug change the physical make-up of your body and can override your thoughts and send your body into healing.”

“We can listen and ask questions,” said Mind. “But if we listen we have to listen without letting ourselves get in the way. ‘Death is a mystery for which we must prepare ourselves in the same spirit of submission & humility as we once learned to prepare ourselves for life,’ Jung said. Those thinking about suicide usually want to talk but they might be afraid or feel they have no one to talk to,” said Mind.

“Death could be anything,” said Sam. “It could be the end literally; it could mean rebirth; it could mean heaven or hell or purgatory. We don’t know.”

“We don’t know.” They agreed.

Outside the first pink petals start to peel apart on the crabapple tree. Body and Mind had assimilated together again for a while and the candle in front of the empty seat sputtered, flickered then extinguished.

“You know what I’d like?” asked Sam.

“What’s that?” asked Enna.

“I’d like it if someone asked me how I was doing. If I was okay?”

“Are you okay?” asked Enna.

Go Figure!?

Insights Into The How and Why of Everyday Things

By the Local Data Geek with a Personality

Why are there 60 minutes in every hour? It all starts around 4000 BC with the Babylonians. They noticed that the sun’s path took 360 days to return to its extreme points, the summer or winter solstice. Consequently, they divided the time the sun took into 360 days. Although we know today this journey takes 365 days, 5 hours, 49 minutes and 15.9 seconds, the Babylonians saw the journey as 360 days. This is because the sun seemed to pause a few days at either extreme of its journey.

As humans we have always been obsessed with knowing what time it is. To get a more accurate way to measure time the Egyptians divided the day into two separate periods of 12 units each. This idea caught on as a way to measure time; however, the length of the 24 units varied depending upon the season. The Greek astronomers, a very orderly group of individuals, eventually said, “Screw this!” and divided each of the 24 units into periods of equal length.

Although this was a big improvement over how the Egyptians kept time, the Greeks wanted even more precision. The Babylonians had long before made the conceptual leap to view the passage of time as a circle consisting of 360 days. For even more accuracy they divided this circle by the number of months it took for the sun’s journey from one solstice to the next. Dividing the time circle by six months results in 60 units of Babylonian time. Alexander the Great was likely passing through Babylon and said, “Hey, they use the sun to measure time as we Greeks do, but do it more accurately.” Therefore, the 24 equal daily units (now called hours) were divided further into 60 equal units (now called minutes).

Go figure, not only are we dependent upon the Middle East for oil, but also for the system we use to tell what time it is.

If you are “old school” and need to adjust your sun dial to Steamboat Springs, the settings are 40° 29’ 6” North, 106° 49’ 52” West. This is the location of the flagpole in front of the Courthouse on Lincoln Ave between Fifth and 6th street.





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