

REAL SAD GYAL TINGS  
"THERASEE"  
DRAFT 7

Written by

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**ACT ONE**

Animated Topaz walks into view. She points to a picture of Topaz Gideonim.

ANIMATED TOPAZ

This is Topaz... Topaz is a fucking liar. She's not a bad person. This bitch is just:

TITLE CARD: IN DENIAL!

1 INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY 1

TOPAZ'S COMPUTER SCREEN

A video meeting platform specifically for therapy sessions "TheraSEE" appears on the computer screen of TOPAZ GIDEONIM. Topaz (30s), a queer Black Jewish woman appears to patiently wait for someone to login.

She sips from the water bottle next to her. On her wrist is a hospital band. She looks at the hospital band and gets up. She quickly searches the apartment for something. Scissors! Finally she finds a pair of scissors, just as the sound chimes to announce the arrival of DR. HATCHETT(30s), a queer, Black, female psychologist.

TOPAZ

You see my merch? It's insane but I like it...I'm keeping this...

Topaz laughs and shows scissors to her wrist. She holds up her hands.

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

I swear I'm only trying to cut this hospital band off, and not k-word myself.

Dr. Hatchett smiles warmly at Topaz.

DR. HATCHETT

I see you haven't lost your sense of humor.

Topaz nods, and cuts off the wrist band.

TOPAZ

Free at last!

DR. HATCHETT

Free? Is that how you're currently feeling?

Topaz nods to say yes...

An animation sequence, Topaz thinks of herself as caught by the ankle of an animal trap and in a jail cell that shuts with a gloomy cloud of rain over her head.

2

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

2

TOPAZ

Yeah...I'm good. I mean, I obviously know what you and the hospital think, but I'm good-

DR. HATCHETT

And what is it that I think?

TOPAZ

Well you saw the hospital papers...they said I attempted suicide. Even though that wasn't the case, and I told them that repeatedly. They still put me in the psych ward. I had to say what they wanted me to say. I have to admit I was a little pissed at you-

Dr. Hatchett raises her eyebrows but gives an encouraging nod.

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

I thought you'd advocate for me. But you sided with strangers...

DR. HATCHETT

Our last session before your hospitalization, you were having a hard time self-regulating. You disassociated more than once. You also reported being tired of everything. A hospitalization and this period after can be an opportunity to rest and regroup. Cliche question coming at you...so how is my perspective of the turn of events different or share similarity to what you experienced?

TOPAZ

I was all those things at our last session but I didn't try to hurt myself. The hospital- it was confusing... and scary...I was upset at first...but I understood that everyone was following protocol and that there are things I have to now do.

An animation sequence, Animated Topaz is followed by the depression cloud. She shivers and rubs her arms. The depression cloud rains on her.

3

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

3

DR. HATCHETT

Thank you for being honest about how you feel about your hospitalization. Let's keep talking about it. Are you in alignment with the service plan? Or are there areas that you'd like for us to re-structure...

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

Animated Topaz tries to walk onto the screen, but is prevented by a loud roaring. the roaring makes her hair stand up.

TITLE CARD: HEAR TOPAZ ROAR

4

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

4

TOPAZ

No, you misunderstood me. I did what I had to do to get out of the hospital. The hospital got it wrong. I didn't try to kill myself! I was just trying to get some sleep.

DR. HATCHETT

Ok, so let's back up. You did what you had to do to get out of the hospital?

Topaz nods yes.

DR. HATCHETT

Ok. Can you say a little more on that?

Topaz shrugs.

TOPAZ

I mean just what I said. I said yes to what they wanted me to say yes to, I said no to what they wanted me to say no to...cause they weren't trying to hear that all that happened was that I fucked up. And I accidentally took to much before bed-

DR. HATCHETT

What do you usually take before bed? Is that usually how you try to get some sleep?

TOPAZ

I mean nothing major. The sleeping pills I got from your wife, Dr. Brown. Sometimes...I take the pills with weed.

(MORE)

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

But I asked her about that. She said edibles won't hurt. But I still haven't been sleeping even with the pills and weed. So I had a few shots... I just needed to sleep. But if I did try to kill myself, I think I'd be well within my rights to do so.

DR. HATCHETT

Can you elaborate on that?

TOPAZ

2020 seriously broke something in me...between the beginning of covid and the George Floyd protests...I was so hurt...deeply hurt...

DR. HATCHETT

You're not alone in those feelings. 2020 was and still continues to be traumatizing. And when you already have a baseline of mental illness it just makes it that much harder.

TOPAZ

Yeah, I know we're all going through it. I think something's wrong with me though...like why the fuck do I internalize everything so deeply?

DR. HATCHETT

Say more...

TOPAZ

2020 hit us all...

SILENT MOVING IMAGES THAT CAPTURE 2020: STATISTIC RATES OF COVID CASES, NEWS FLASHES OF QUARANTINE, HOSPITALS OVERWHELMED WITH PEOPLE, CROWDS CLAPPING FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS, SIRENS OF AMBULANCES, CURFEW IN NYC, NYC TRUCKS FILLED WITH COVID VICTIMS, GRAVESITES TOO CROWDED TO BURY MORE, MASS PANIC, EMPTY GROCERY STORES, GEORGE FLOYD PROTESTS, NON-STOP FIREWORKS.

5

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

5

DR. HATCHETT

With such a collective trauma, we really need one another to begin to heal.

(MORE)

DR. HATCHETT (CONT'D)

We don't chose our feelings and emotions. But we can chose how we respond to them. But that takes work. Lots of work. You have to be patient with yourself through this process.

TOPAZ

But it's like none of this matters though.

DR. HATCHETT

What do you mean?

TOPAZ

All I want is a little assurance from G-D that HE is listening and that HE sees our pain and will make it stop...but I got... we got nothing but more evilness.

DR. HATCHETT

That sounds very painful. How do you sit with those thoughts and feelings?

TOPAZ

People are people but G-D is... is...you know what one of the things Jewish people call G-D? We call HIM, Adon Olam, master of the universe!...Infinite...I kept thinking, ok Hashem how about some intervention here?! Cause clearly this project called humankind on earth just keeps fucking shit up. But nothing...no radical divine intervention. Just more blood. More destruction of the earth. More violence, mass deaths, governments choosing profit over people...it's sick. I'm sick of it all.

STOCK IMAGES AND NEWS REELS OF PANDEMIC, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, WAR, SLAVERY, TRAFFICKING, MURDER, RACISM, POVERTY, NATURAL DISASTERS, MASS DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE, EXTINCTION OF ANIMALS, POLLUTION, CORPORATE GREED.

TOPAZ

What kind of G-D sees all this and doesn't do shit?!

DR. HATCHETT

It sounds like in addition to everything we experienced collectively, it also caused deep, reflective questions on faith for you. Have you ever grappled with your faith that way before?

TOPAZ

Hmm...My family thinks I don't believe in G-D anymore. But that's not true. It's because I believe in G-D that makes me so angry. I know G-D is real. My life is a testament that HE'S real. That's the part that really hurts. If I just stopped believing in G-D, that might feel easier. Things might make sense. I think I could deal with that. But I believe in G-D, and I know HE can stop all this bullshit...so HE's making a choice...HE's not choosing us...we're on our fucking own.

DR. HATCHETT

Cliche question coming back at you again...Those are really strong feelings. How are you moving through those deep, intense questions that don't have easy answers?

Animation sequence, Animated Topaz crawls back to bed, and pulls the covers over her head. the depression cloud remains over her head even though she's undercover.

TOPAZ

I don't know. I mean. I can't answer that. Cause I'm not? I mean...I'm just tired...I'm just really fucking tired.



DR. HATCHETT

During our last session, tired came up a lot for you...In addition to being exhausted, it also sounds very upsetting to you?

TOPAZ

It's not like I want to be angry...But by the time the anxiety burns me out...it's not over, that's exactly when the depression hits. And I just feel trapped, like in a hamster wheel. And all those thoughts come at me, over and over again.

Animated sequence, Animated Topaz runs at full speed. Suddenly, a wall appears. Topaz crashes like in the cartoons and falls to the ground. As she shakes the dizzying stars, the depression cloud floats over her head.

8

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

8

DR. HATCHETT

High, painful anxiety and debilitating depression...I can definitely understand why you're exhausted.

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

Animated Topaz, is now in the fetal position sobbing.

TITLE CARD: DEPRESSION

9

INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY

9

Topaz begins to tear up.

TOPAZ

I'm sorry-

DR. HATCHETT

Don't be sorry. Tears are a body's release. What's coming up for you?

TOPAZ

I'm starting to scare myself...I'm scared of how much I feel like shit...

DR. HATCHETT

I know that seems scary to say out loud. So a few things. Thank you for entrusting me and sharing that. I just want to give us some time to honor this. Do you mind if we hold silence for a minute?

Topaz wipes her tears and nods. Dr. Hatchett leans back and mutes herself.

DR. HATCHETT

Again, I'm really grateful for you sharing so transparently with me. I want to encourage you to lean into that instead of feeding the urge to repress it. In order to start a journey into healing.

TOPAZ

What do you mean?

DR. HATCHETT

Let's start with how did we get here?

TOPAZ

I don't know what I was thinking...I honestly don't know if I was really trying to kill myself. I just, I just...I was just so tired of feeling like shit.

Animated Topaz feels like she is drowning.

10 INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY 10

TOPAZ

I just wanted my mind to shut the fuck up...I couldn't stop all the thoughts. It's like my brain never stops going.

Animated Topaz's mind, feels like a million tabs that just keep popping up. Unplugging allows Topaz to be in the dark but it doesn't work as the tabs keep popping up.

11 INT. TOPAZ'S APARTMENT- CROWN HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN- DAY 11

TOPAZ

I did my usual cocktail of sleeping pills, alcohol and weed...I should probably be honest with Dr. Brown that I've been drinking and having edibles with the sleeping pills. But anyways, I was just trying to sleep, I really did try...but I couldn't fucking do it. So I just kept taking more pills and drinking...and then I woke up in the hospital...before I could even process what was happening to me, the hospital said this is what happened and they tried to tell me how I was feeling, like they fucking know me! I didn't even have a chance to explain shit to myself...before they were all like oh you disagree with what we said?! You're being resistant! So then I was like fuck it. Just say what they want and get out of here. But even so I've tried so many times to get back in that headspace but...I don't know why or what I was thinking. I don't fucking know.

(MORE)

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

And that terrifies me...I did something so major that hurt me and I don't know how it happened or what I was thinking...all I remember is I just wanted my mind to shut up and my heart to stop racing.

DR. HATCHETT

Topaz, I know this isn't easy. I hope you can appreciate yourself for being honest and vulnerable...I know that's been a challenge in the past and something you're still working towards. What are you thinking now?

Topaz puts her head in her hands. Without looking up she answers Dr. Hatchett.

TOPAZ

I don't know...But I'm not gonna kill myself if that's what you're concerned about-

DR. HATCHETT

Are you worried about that?

Topaz looks up.

TOPAZ

I want to say the answer is no?...But I really don't even know how I got to such a place...

Dr. Hatchett nods.

DR. HATCHETT

So you know this practice, the groups, is made by and for queer and trans people of color. We have a group that's just getting started that I'd like to recommend you to join. What do you think?

Topaz shrugs before answering.

TOPAZ

I think, I have to get ok with not being ok...

DR. HATCHETT

As we come up with a safety plan  
that has your input and insight,  
why don't you tell me more about  
being ok with not being ok.

Topaz leans back in her chair...unsure of how she's feeling  
but she is open to engaging with Dr. Hatchett.

**END OF SHORT**