

REAL SAD GYAL TINGS

Written by

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ACT ONE

AN ANIMATED BLACK FEMALE AVATAR WALKS INTO VIEW. SHE POINTS TO A PICTURE OF TOPAZ GIDEONIM. THIS IS TOPAZ... TOPAZ IS A FUCKING LIAR. SHE'S NOT A BAD PERSON. THIS BITCH IS JUST:

TITLE CARD: IN DENIAL!

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

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 whose exterior: smiley, friendly, open betrays her interior: sad, anxious, seething. She 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(40s), a Black female psychologist who appears to be cool, calm, and collected.

TOPAZ

Well this is awkward...

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 off 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.

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
Cliche question coming at you...so
how did that make you feel?

TOPAZ
I was upset at first...but I
understood that everyone was
following protocol.

AN ANIMATION SEQUENCE, AN ANIMATED TOPAZ IS FOLLOWED BY THE
DEPRESSION CLOUD. SHE SHIVERS AND RUBS HER ARMS. THE
DEPRESSION CLOUD RAINS ON HER.

DR. HATCHETT
Thank you for being honest about
how you feel about your
hospitalization.

(MORE)

DR. HATCHETT (CONT'D)
Since you're in alignment with the
service plan, let's discuss that...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

THE SAME ANIMATED BLACK FEMALE AVATAR 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

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

Is that usually how you try to get some sleep?

TOPAZ

Sometimes...I haven't been sleeping. 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.

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, CUREFEW 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

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

TOPAZ
It's like we learned nothing though.

DR. HATCHETT
What do you mean?

TOPAZ
In the beginning of the pandemic I tried to be good. I davened everyday. I kept kashrut, I said brachot before every bite. I learned torah. I volunteered with the community to bring the elderly and sick food. When I wasn't doing that I would do community organizing. I went to protests, I did teach ins to raise awareness. I camped out with people to push politicians to vote on acts/policies that are for the good of the people. I worked with folks to make sure people's basic needs like food, shelter, rent money. I did safety walks to make sure people got home safe. And I would do all that again and more if I could get 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. To feel like you're doing everything in your capacity to help, but feeling like it's not working...

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 G-D 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 (CONT'D)

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, also caused deep, reflective questions on faith for you.

TOPAZ

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.

(MORE)

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

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, 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'm just tired...I'm just really fucking tired.

DR. HATCHETT

Tired...I don't want to put words into your mouth. But it also sounded very upsetting to you?

TOPAZ

When the anxiety burns me out...it's not over, that's exactly when the depression hits.

ANIMATED SEQUENCE, 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.

DR. HATCHETT

High, painful anxiety and paralyzing depression...I can understand why you'd be exhausted.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

THE SAME ANIMATED BLACK GIRL, IS NOW IN THE FETAL POSITION SOBBING.

TITLE CARD: DEPRESSION

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 want to encourage you to lean into that pain 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.

ANIMATION OF TOPAZ DROWNING.

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

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.

ANIMATION OF TOPAZ MIND, MILLION TABS JUST KEEP POPPING UP.
UNPLUGGING ALLOWS TOPAZ TO BE IN THE DARK BUT DOESN'T WORK AS
THE TABS KEEP POPPING UP.

TOPAZ (CONT'D)

I did my usual cocktail of sleeping pills, alcohol and weed...I tried to sleep, I really did try...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 named it and told me how I was feeling. Like they fucking know me. I didn't even have a chance to explain to myself...and I've tried so many times to get back in that headspace but...I don't know. I don't fucking know. And that terrifies me...I did something 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.