

# **Groping in the Dark for the Broken Lightswitch**

Tom Senkus

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# A Tour of My Suicides

Commiting suicide: There really isn't much commitment to the act One just does it Often it comes inspired by a lack of appreciation "I've done so much, and what comes of it but heartache and fooling-myself happiness" My friends then were no help My friends now are no help But time builds endurance And endurance is strength And strength is vivacity La vida, la vida!!! The first time was easy: Codeine. A massive dose and then off to Mr. Trupia's class 10th grade, Advanced Placement Social Studies and here I was, a druggy, falling asleep on my desk, muttering I checked myself into the guidance counselor's office They made a note, and I was sent off to Stony Brook Hospital to drink charcoal and listen to an old woman groan about a pain that even the doctor felt was undeserving of the groaning.

I remember laughing and the taste of the charcoal solution. The funny part was that I understand the drug's effect on me; it was originally used to cure my hairline-fractured wrist and to cure a hole left by a girl Ahhh young love. Sincere, sincere love. I loved codeine, too, because I felt that the girl might feel a sympathy towards a guy willing to hurt himself for her. I used to call her religiously Monks have nothing on my piety. Everyday a call. Without fail One time in a movie theatre, on our one and only date she kissed my cheek after holding hands through an Austin Powers movie (the second one) and I responded with a "thank you." She responded by talking in such beautiful tones about a guy named Joe Senior What crap! The next morning, I played Black Sabbath's "Sabbra Caddabra" brought the boombox in the shower with me and felt in love... what a lie.

Hence, the suicide.

And that was only #1. Number two was a bit more involved, but it involved going to Newton, Massachussets chasing after a girl from Manhattan with pink hair and who left me with enough

tender memories to fill reams of paper The town square seemed like a likely spot, and after I met her up at her crappy job painting crappy sculptures of hardened, glazed clay for children and bored housewives she invented a reason to leave: she needed to find computer parts it was 9pm. In Newton, Massachussets. I was hurt spent lots of money coming to see her I doubt she knew how much my shitty job as an overnight gasoline station attendant I doubt she cares. Oh well.

First, I found a drug store on the main street adjacent to the clay store when she was gone. Bought Sudafed and complained to the clerk about my pounding headache and sinus problem (I had recently had sinuitis—I knew what was needed) and, for my sleeping problem, Nyquil I downed both on a concrete loading dock felt terrible and worse from the combination of drugs to my current mood decided to die and what hadn't I done before I died? Lots. Smoked 3 packs of Newports, that I, which the gasoline station attendant gave me shit for. But I paid with a \$20 and that gave me legitimacy I sat in the town square. Called her a few times, only to be left with a voicemail Other things happened beforehand, such as when she was leaving, I grabbed her arm in desperation wide-eyed pleading “don’t leave, I need someone to talk to.” She left. Now I was ready to die, my head spinning gradually towards nothingness I composed a suicide note after pleading to a shopwindow’s reflection: Mom, Dad, I’m sorry. I’m a fuck-up. I love you, but I have to die I imagined a funeral, I imagined the local suburban write-up in the pennysaver and the “I barely knew him’s... a life cut short” and other platitudes on a mediocre life soon to be written. There was pleasure in melancholy. I laid on the bench, freezing from 50-ish weather. The urge to vomit was resisted, which may have sobered me up In other words, I was drunk.

Not dying, drunk on Nyquil It was late, the suicide note was laughable most of it about apologizing to everyone, and not much about her besides desperation I realized the comedy of life that moment and I made my way back on the train. A guy purposefully stepped on my heels, scared me with his drunken, sexual, pushy

advance Stumbled my way to a friend's apartment My friends nursed me back to health In the morning, my friend showed me his automatic apartment cleaner something that looked like a fast-paced horseshoe crab and I ate cold french fries that either he or I bought. Then came nearly dying in a Connecticut rest stop from the drug combination a watery mixture of shit and godknowswhat ejected from my ass, stomach cramps compounded by caffeine drinks, finally ending a 4-hour Fung Wah bus ride and landing on Canal Street in Manhattan's filthy subway. So, I say to you when someone says they have tried it

just let 'em know I'm qualified and I have a résumé available upon request