

A Re-birth

I lay in my bed. I held up the container of pills in front of me and tipped its contents onto my palm. Perhaps I'll be on the newspapers: 'Teenage Girl Committed Suicide after Failing the HKDSE'. Then the writer would go on to writing a full account of the incident and letting the whole of Hong Kong know all about my poor grades and how I couldn't fulfil my parent's wishes to become a doctor. Then people would read the article and some might feel sorry for me and some might even agree with the choice I took. But no matter what they would feel or think after reading it, they'll simply toss it in the bin and shove my story (if I could even call it that) to the back of their minds. Most probably there won't even be an article written about me. I'm definitely not the first one to take her life after failing a big exam in this academically focused and stress driven city. I'll most likely just end up as a statistic instead.

It sounds like an ultimatum, doesn't it, life or death? But the way I see it is that life is merely existing on this Earth, struggling every day in order to get into the best college, the best job and the fattest wallet, toiling every single day to feed our greed which seems to have an ever growing appetite. And death? Death is a free one way ticket out of this miserable world. I think that anyone in their right minds would choose the latter.

One of the many things I've never learnt to do, and will never learn to, is to swallow pills without having to drink water. So I held tight the glass of water in my left hand and pills in my right. No suicide note by my side because I've got nothing to explain or apologise for, and no one to say anything significant to. One by one, I popped the pills into my mouth and I shut my eyes.

Now the room was cold and I was lying on what felt like, dare I say it, a cloud. I opened my eyes to find myself staring straight into a bright white light. So this is where dead people go? I felt tired and calm and my eyes shut automatically.

"She's sleeping just like an angel.' An oddly familiar voice was cooing over me. "That's because I am an angel!" I thought to myself as I felt a hand brushing through my hair.

"My little angel, why did you do this to yourself?" I recognised the voice of my mum. She just started bawling like a maniac as she rested her head on my stomach. I wanted to hug and comfort her but I couldn't move. Then after a while she left and I was alone again.

Suddenly I sat up and found a young girl, about 8 years old, sitting next to me on what was not a cloud but a hospital bed. I didn't know whether I should be glad or horrified over the fact that I still had a pulse.

"Hi!" she chirped. "I think you're really lucky." She was wearing pyjamas and a bright pink head scarf. I raised a brow at her "Because I failed my suicide attempt?" I sighed "Just as I've failed everything else." I was yelling, but she didn't seem bothered.

She shook her head "You're lucky and you better believe it because you're given so many chances - to study, to learn, to have a family, to have fun, to love, to live." She pulled the scarf off her head and revealed her fully bald head. "Some of us don't have that. Change your attitude, look at the bright side and smile for a change. And when you do, believe me, your life will change. It's all about attitude. Remember that forever." She gave me a colossal hug and the warmest smile and I felt my own lips starting to curl up.

I felt myself smiling for the first time in a very long time. It made me feel good. No, "good" is an understatement, I felt absolutely awesome.

I opened my eyes, still lying on the soft hospital bed and realised it was just a dream. But a dream or not, it still felt real and it was. It was a big lesson for me.