

Hope
By Michelle Weisblat-Dane

Andrea lay down on her bed. Next to her, on her nightstand, sat a full bottle of aspirin, several razor blades and a glass of water. Fourteen year old Andrea wrote in her journal "Why is it no one loves me?" Tears ran down her cheeks. Drops fell on the ink and blurred her writing. She threw her journal to the floor, collapsed with her head face down in her pillow, and wailed hysterically.

The call had come late last night. Her boyfriend of 2 years had told her he no longer wanted to have anything to do with her. It had only been last Sunday that they had gone to the movies where he told her he loved her. Her father had abandoned her as a baby. Her mother spent more time in the bar than at home. Donald was all she had.

The loss, despair and loneliness grew inside her until she couldn't take it any more. She grabbed the bottle of pills from the nightstand, popped the top and yelled, "I hate my life." She proceeded to swallow the aspirins, alternating water and pills until the bottle was empty. She threw herself back onto her pillow and cried.

A short time later she sat up and grabbed one of the razor blades and looked down at her wrist. She stared for a couple of minutes. "This was the end," she thought. Her stomach began to heave. She ran to the bathroom, put her head over the toilet, and retched.

Andrea lay curled in a fetal position on the floor. Thoughts flitted through her head. Was her body trying to tell her something? Did she really want to die? There had to be more to life! She wanted to live. She hoped life could be better beyond her childhood, beyond her teenage years. She fell asleep dreaming of living in a large house. A man came through the front door, gently kissing her on the cheek as children run past him screaming, "Mommy! Mommy!"

Twenty years later Andrea drove up the driveway of her house, coming home from work. She got out of her car and walked up the front staircase. Taking a seat on the front porch, she watched her children playing in the park across the street. Her husband drove up and parked his car behind hers. He got out and walked towards her. The wind blew gently on her face, and for a few moments it seemed that time stood still. Andrea thought back to the day she tried to kill herself. Had she succeeded, she would have missed all this. If she could have known what the future had in store for her, then she wouldn't have had to try that. Or, kissing her husband, maybe she had known.

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY IS:

Hope is the ability to look beyond the here and now - no matter how bad it is - and see a better future.