SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

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by

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University of Cape Town

SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

I have don nothing, wilfully, perversly
toward it, yet must suffer in it, die by it;
There are too many Examples of men, that have
bin their own executioners, and that have made
hard shift to bee so; some have alwayes had
poyson about them, in a hollow ring upon
their finger, and some in their Pen that
they used to write with: some have beat
out their braines at the wal of their
prison, and some have eate the fire
out of their chimneys: and one is
said to have come neerer our case than
so, to have strangled himself, though
his hands were bound, by crushing his
throat between his knees.

DONNE, Devotions, XII.

"Ah, Davidson, woe to the man whose heart
has not learned while young to hope, to
love - and to put its trust in life!"

JOSEPH CONRAD, Nostromo.

NOTE

Man is not always plainly discernible in scientific writings about him. His individuality denied, in many psychological studies man becomes a cipher. Science demands useful generalizations, and psychiatry is in part so unsatisfactory a discipline precisely because human life is complex. To affect an impression of simplicity when encountering bewildering diversity, although usual, remains foolish, particularly when important matters are being dealt with.

Suicidal behaviour is important, because it is common and touches the lives of many people. When hundreds of people presented themselves after behaving self-destructively, it seemed gradually to emerge that suicidal persons do resemble each other, and that there are aspects of similarity in their personalities and their suicidal acts.

Psychological study of people is a worthy occupation now that we have lately learnt how all men pass the major portion of their emotional lives in secret, their continuing passions hidden not only from their close associates but, indeed, from themselves. The vague intimations of this buried aspect of life perceived by those forced to introspection are not accumulated easily; Mathew Arnold understood with what difficulty valuable knowledge about life is gained.

> But often in the world's most crowded streets,
> But often, in the din of strife,
> There rises an unspeakable desire
> After the knowledge of our buried life,
> A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
> In tracking out our true, original course;
> A longing to enquire
> Into the mystery of this heart that beats
> So wild, so deep in us, to know
> Whence our thoughts come, and where they go.

No amount of exploration on an obvious, social plane will reveal the crucial motives of a man undertaking so fateful a step as suicide: the deeper emotional life of memory, fantasy, desire and humiliation must be explored. Months may pass before it is perceived upon what patterns of feeling rests a man's need of dying, and an even longer time often before he can be assisted to a benign understanding of his own motives.

CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1.	INTRODUCTION	4
2.	SIGNIFICANT THEMES	13
3.	THE SUICIDAL ATTEMPT	33
4.	THE SURROUNDING PRESSURES	55
5.	THE PERSONALITY STRAINS	79
6.	THE MENTAL STATE	124
7.	THE FANTASY LIFE	149
8.	THE PARENTS	
	1. PARENTAL STRESS	177
	2. THE REPROVING PARENTS	198
	3. PROLONGED FILIAL ATTACHMENT	210
9.	PARENTAL DEPRIVATION	219
10.	WITHDRAWAL	245
11.	SUPPRESSION OF ASSERTIVENESS	262
12.	SUBMISSIVENESS	289
13.	THE MEANING OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR	308

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTORY

1. Understanding a Phenomenon

Politically, and in the many aspects of social administration, categories are more comfortably dealt with than individuals; science too, in its task of discovering order in nature, deals awkwardly with the single specimen and its life cycle. It appears that in our society the individual is slowly losing his significance.

Man's essence is in his individuality. That he has emerged as something less than human in scientific studies of him is inevitable, for science is concerned with broad and inclusive formulations. Conceding this, the psychologist can only be dismayed when, to fit them into a book, he attenuates the biographies of his subjects until they are drained of all individuality. It is an impossibility, and almost a betrayal, to describe a life history in the space of a paragraph.

This investigation deals with the development as individuals of a group of persons, all having the common factor in their lives that they wished to kill themselves. They have been studied in order to understand the phenomenon of suicide in particular, and the nature of human existence in general. For a suicidal act is but one event in the life of a person, and in studying the limited aspect the manifestations of the entire life must be studied as well. The foremost psychological discovery yet made is that any aspect of behaviour is the outcome of forces which have operated during the entire course of the individual's life; each event relates back to the life history and cannot be understood in isolation.

When a man behaves suicidally it is useful as well as humane to recognize what manner of person he is and to trace what factors made him so. People regularly try to kill themselves and frequently succeed; Dublin[1] has estimated that 310,000 persons die by suicide each year, more than the total number of American dead and missing during World War II. However, in spite of the importance of the problem, there has been a surprizing dearth of attention paid to suicidal behaviour: Stengel[2] remarked that psychiatrists tend to leave the problem to sociologists. Studies have already been made to define what suicide is, why some people attempt and achieve it, and what basic personality trends impel them towards suicidal conduct. These questions will again be

considered in the present investigation, as well as an aspect seldom adequately explored - the growth of a personality with suicidal inclination. We require to understand suicide as it occurs in the community, in people living and working together, and not merely as it manifests itself in an army division or a mental hospital. Facts need to be accumulated with which to augment the sketchy newspaper report, and to illuminate the occasional lurid suicide pact or an acquaintance's self-destructiveness. The question which this investigation aims to answer is the following: when a man puts his hand to his own life, what constellation of factors is in operation?

To increase understanding of a common event an investigation has been made of a group of persons each of whom, following a suicidal attempt, was brought to a general hospital. Scientific study is no more than the systematic search for general laws: generalizations about suicide are needed, for at present the phenomenon remains viewed with prejudice, and that by those who have authority in the community. In many countries suicide is considered criminal, and those who die by their own hand are often refused the rites of conventional burial. Scientific study may show how foolish it is to dismiss suicidal behaviour as immoral only, or merely as a contravention of the law. Suicide needs also to be studied from a psychological point of view, and to be related to the total life of the individual who reacts suicidally to the demands of existence. If laws of human behaviour can be discerned operating during suicidal behaviour, it may be foreseen that a particular person will behave suicidally. Moreover, if it is found that certain factors operating during personality development predispose to suicide, the manipulation of such social evils and inadequacies may make suicidal behaviour much less common than it is to-day.

2. That Some Persons Kill Themselves

For centuries men have been disquieted by the occurrence of an occasional suicide in their midst. Most men have found it both contemptible and incomprehensible that some few of their fellows should show a wilful preference for death, disdaining the existence to which they themselves cling with tenacity. The members of the suicidal minority, not waiting for accident or disease or degeneration to carry them off ("a lion, a precipice or a fever" is Hume's phrase[3]), have unnaturally shortened their

lives with poison or weapon, by leaping from heights or throwing themselves before vehicles.

Until recently it could be believed that human beings are imbued with an eagerness for life, and that longings for death play no part in the existence of a healthy man. Yet many persons have seemed to court death, finding a curious exuberance as they hung dangerously against mountain slopes or rushed along at speeds sometimes called neckbreaking. Indeed, these intrepid men seem most exhilarated when their lives are most in jeopardy. Moreover, they receive a special respect from the community, at times idolized when they permit their fellows vicariously to join in their furious exaltation as they fight violent beasts in an arena, or battle with men equally ferocious. Men killed in the course of a dangerous sport are publicly mourned.

On the other hand, when people hear that a man achieved death more directly, ending his life by suicide, they feel an act at once shameful and awe-inspiring has been performed. Some may be moved to state they lack the courage to make a similar attack upon themselves: "I would never be able to do it myself", they say, a sigh escaping which implies their own suspicion that death may be a state more desirable than life. Even the malice and indignation expressed by persons who condemn suicide suggests that they scorn one who adopts an escape from life which they themselves eschew only by stern self-discipline.

Thus people who on the surface appear glad to be alive allow to escape from them wistful admissions of their longings for death. As may be expected, it is from the articulate men of each age, accustomed to introspection, that we hear the most expressive longings for death. The playwright is at his most moving when he describes the prince who wished that his too, too solid flesh would melt, or a queen who called agonizingly, when deprived of love, "Give me to drink mandragoras!" The poets have often described their longings to cease upon the midnight with no pain, their death desires as

> "But only a mad clutching for relief
> From physical pain, importunate Nature's need;
> The search as for a womb where we may creep
> Back from the world, to hide, - perhaps to sleep."[4]

In spite of the impatience most men feel when they hear of an acquaintance's suicide, therefore, and their moral attitude that the action is unfortunate and fit to be spoken of only in shocked whispers, the wish to be obliterated commonly expresses itself in everyday life. Freud's assertion cannot lightly be dismissed that there is in all men an urge to death, an urge varying in intensity and which is in ceaseless conflict with the will to live.

While many people transiently become aware of a longing for death, there are others who are severely hampered by persistent wishes for self-destruction. Others go further, making determined efforts to die; a number actually kill themselves. Then there are those persons who don't die, but who render their existence so apathetic and passive that they may be said to live suicide.

In the past little valid information about suicide could be derived from those who succeeded in killing themselves. There are cases of persons who ended their lives while being treated psychiatrically but, for the greater part, understanding must continue to come from study of persons who made determined attempts at suicide. By study of cases of attempted suicide we can begin to perceive what suicide means, what sort of people appear especially prone to suicidal attacks upon themselves, what factors in their personalities, and conditions in their environment, bring about suicidal behaviour. It can be traced how the idea of suicide takes root in their conscious thinking and how, finally, it is translated into action. To gain such understanding the life-careers must be followed of persons who at length are going to make a suicidal attempt, and the influences must be defined which appear to be of significance in the evolution of the personality imbued with a conscious wish to die. The focus is on the individual preoccupied, at some time in his life, with thoughts of suicide.

Concern with the problem of suicide is valid and practical, for not uncommonly a person dies by his own hand before one's eyes. When one encounters hundreds of people who attempt suicide[5], the need cannot be denied of knowing more about human self-destructiveness. The literature dealing with the subject of suicide is of uneven quality and usefulness. The many philosophical works, profound as they are, seem to have only slight relation to reality; in philosophical works on suicide will not be found reflected the agitation and dread

of the man who attempts suicide, for the philosopher is interested to argue as if all men act with cool reason. In real life men differ greatly in their mood and intellectual capacity; men are affected by emotional disturbances and often the most reflective cannot explain why they behaved in a particular manner. Nor has the large volume of ethical reflection on suicide much psychological validity: the theologians have been firm in their insistence, since St. Augustine denied the solace of suicideeven to outraged virgins, that self-murder is sinful and indeed unpardonable. In practice, however, the Church uses the kindly subterfuge invariably adopted by the Law, assuming the person who died by suicide to be abnormal and therefore not accountable for his actions. So it happens in these enlightened times that many suicides rest in hallowed ground and not any more at the crossroads with a stake through the heart.

In the psychiatric literature are many reports with a statistical orientation, so that one can learn how many men and how many women attempted suicide during ten years in Cincinnati[6], and how many suicides occurred in Vienna during 1949[7]; one can discover what methods are most frequently used, what time of day most suicidal attempts are made and during which season.+ There are studies with soulful or exhortative intentions, a recent one[8] resting on the unwarranted intellectualization that only those who feel their lives are meaningless attempt suicide. Some investigators seem unconcerned about the questions which most require an answer. Others suffer the harsh fate of being misquoted: "Stekel and others have given us a precise psychological analysis of suicide, the longing for the abyss, the mother, the return[9]."

Freud has dealt with the problem of suicide with his usual distinction and perspicacity[10, 11]. Durkheim's book[12] remains a classical sociological study, in spite of his indefensible contention that suicide as a social phenomenon could not be understood by seeking to establish types of individual behaviour in suicide. Cavan's book[13] is valuable for its early emphasis on the crucial importance of psychological motives in suicide.

+ "... the statistical data available cover the smallest and probably least representative number of suicides; one is justified, therefore, in discarding them as nearly useless in scientific evaluation of the problem." Zilboorg, G. (1935) : Amer. J. Psychiat., 92, 1347

Menninger has written an illuminating if repetitive work[14], and Zilboorg [15, 16] has made outstanding studies.

But much remains to be learnt of the curious phenomenon that certain persons have a desire for death, sometimes so powerful that they kill themselves. The term "suicide" came into being during the middle of the seventeenth century to describe the act of self-murder. † Attempted suicide implies that a person has tried to end his life but has not been successful immediately; however, the suicidal attempt may bring about death days or even months later. Some confusion has been introduced into psychiatric literature by writers who attach aetiological notions to the use of the word "suicide"; sometimes needless expenditure of energy occurs in debating whether a self-murder is actually "suicide", when the wish to die had not been prominently evident in the behaviour of the person who committed the act. In the present study no such hidden distinctions are implied. Suicide is used to mean self-murder, and attempted suicide implies a harmful act executed by an individual upon his own person with the intention of bringing about his death. Both the word and the phrase thus signify clearly observable phenomena which may be described and analyzed. The terms lose precision not for semantic reasons but because the problem itself is complex: often the wish to die may appear absent from a suicidal attempt, as when a person insists he placed his life in balance only to reawaken love in one who had grown neglectful of him; in such instances the self-injury may be trivial. Another person may wish to die so strongly that he declines into total apathy, while refraining from inflicting any sudden harm upon himself, as in the case of a drug addict who is usually stuporose. (A Hindu woman on her husband's funeral pyre can hardly be called suicidal if secretly she wishes to continue living, for she dies by social decree and not from personal desire. However, it will be traced later how some people die by suicide through a distorted conception of how society wishes them to behave: there are thus informative similarities between the Hindu women and the lonely European suicide.)

The fundamental question waits to be answered, the very one which Durkheim dismissed as of no importance: the riddle of the personality factors in suicide. It will be seen how

† "one barbarous word I shall produce, which is *suicide*, a word which I should rather be derived from *sus*, a sow, than from the pronoun *sui*, unless there be some mystery in it; as if it were a swinish part for a man to kill himself." Philipps, Edward (1662): *New World of Words*. London.

the individuals who rendered themselves eligible for this investigation by attempting suicide had earlier been crippled by restraints of their own making. They had not permitted themselves rewarding fellowship with others. Their peculiar reluctance will emerge to use their talents to gratify themselves or to permit more close association with those among whom they live. Trapped in apprehension, stifled by anxiety, many were isolated in loneliness and devoid of achievement. Why, one wishes to know, have they known so little joy and derived such meagre comfort from the processes of their living?

In their inadequate lives the act of suicide was but the final failure, although until it occurred they may have contrived to hide their inadequacy from their associates. One requires to know in what ways suicidal persons differ from those who never seek suddenly to harm themselves; if the suggestion[17] is acceptable that all who attempt suicide are abnormal, the causes and varieties of possible abnormality have to be described.

Nor can it be forgotten that in making a study of persons brought to the point of suicide, the major theme of what life is really like is simultaneously being investigated. It may be that in persons who never behave suicidally there may yet exist attitudes similar to those which result in self-destruction, serving to rob many of achievement and stultifying their lives. Suicide is but one way, the most drastic, in which to become removed from living.

3. Popular Attitudes

The philosopher tends to assume that men are entirely rational beings; the psychiatrist sometimes insists that all men who attempt suicide are abnormal mentally[18]; the layman, however, not professing either discipline, will seldom pause to consider whether his suicidal acquaintence had the right to end his life or whether his mind was deranged. The chances are he will conclude his acquaintance has behaved shamefully. Almost invariably the suicidal person himself will arrive at the same assessment of his action and, abashed and crest-fallen, will say he feels disgraced, has no wish to face his friends and is timid about returning to his work. He feels that his suicidal behaviour has proclaimed his failure as a person, and made notorious his dismay. He will say how contrite he is to have disgraced his relations. And they, indeed, will look dazed and beg in whispers that secrecy be exercised. They complain that already many seem to know of the unhappy

victim's ordeal, in spite of the subterfuge they have used to conceal his transgression against the mores of the community.

The Law in some countries and the Church in most work to retain the stigmata attaching to suicide. But from the problem of suicide itself people turn away in embarrassement and awe. Magistrates hastily accept superficial explanations and employers express sorrowing displeasure. Medical practitioners, in many instances, after treating the immediate emergency of coma or haemorrhage, dismiss the individual as inferior. The contented and successful members of the community fail to recognize that suicide is a criticism of society: there can no longer be doubt that social influences contribute to make a man what he becomes, whatever the effects of heredity and constitution. Even to those who regard the suicides of our society as the failures, the emotional weaklings, the flawed introspectives, it must be obvious how in a better society they would not have been the people they became, nor would they be driven to the desperate measure of suicide.

A pessimistic writer recently wrote, "perhaps...after all, the soul of man is definitely crystallized in a suicidal form"[19]. We do not yet know what we require urgently to define: how prevalent in human beings is the urge towards death?

4. Present Evidence

The life histories which figure in this investigation represent a somewhat arbitrary fraction of the suicidal persons I have seen during recent years. The main evidence derives from the study of fifty persons admitted in succession to hospital following a suicidal attempt (numbered 1 to 50 in the text.) Five persons who were seen before the commencement of the investigation are described in the next chapter for the special light they throw on the problem (numbered A to E); additional illustrative histories were selected from cases of attempted suicide encountered after investigation of the fifty consecutive cases had been completed.

A serious difficulty has been to decide in what manner to present the evidence thus accumulated. To report the life histories in detail, although desirable and informative, is not possible in the scope of even numerous volumes and would strain the patience of the most courteous reader. Nevertheless, the fact-finding aspect of the work, the accumulation of biographies, has to be presented, however briefly, if the common and unaccept-

able compromise of much conjecture and meagre data is to be avoided. In reporting a life history the objective and revealing vehicle is the subject's own words, and these have been used.

In the following pages the reader will encounter a group of people with the common factor in their lives that they attempted suicide. They comprise a type of suicidal person which should be defined. They were received into a general hospital, in most cases sent there by the family doctor. The hospital does not receive persons floridly psychotic, and as a result the present study may not reflect sufficiently the occurrence of suicide in the insane. Finally, the persons studied were unsuccessful suicides, in almost all instances. The contention is dismissed that one who failed to achieve suicide did not have a convincing urge to die.* Unsuccessful suicides sometimes repeat their suicidal behaviour and succeed at the second attempt; moreover, unless the contrary is stated, the persons with whom this investigation deals seriously desired death and usually took impressive steps to achieve it. A distorted view of the phenomenon must be obtained if the intensity of the wish to be extinguished is assumed to depend on the violence a suicidal person inflicts upon himself.

The persons about to be described lived freely in the community, made a suicidal attempt which was not immediately successful, and were then admitted to a general hospital.

* Stengel[2] disagrees with this view; he postulates that those who attempt suicide differ epidemiologically from those who achieve suicide.

1.

NUMBER	FICTITIOUS NAME	AGE	DIAGNOSIS	PAGE
A	LETTIE DODDS	20	Chronic Anxiety State	14
B	JOHN CAMERON	21	Schizophrenia	21
C	MR. COSENS	29	Infantile Personality	24
D	MR. FORBES	32	Chronic Anxiety State	26
E	MR. BRAND	23	Schizoid Personality	29
1	MRS. FERN	25	Psychopathy	34
2	RICHARD HICKMAN	27	Chronic Anxiety State	41
3	MRS. GRAVES	31	Chronic Anxiety State	45
4	JIMMY PAINTER	17	Anxiety State	47
5	SUSANNA VAN BLERK	31	Psychopathy	52
6	MISS TEMPLE	44	Paranoid State	59
7	MR. LINDE	18	Anxiety State	61
8	AGNES ADAMS	22	Schizoid psychopathy	63
9	ACHMAT SULAYMAN	24	Chronic Anxiety State	70
10	MILDRED WHITEHORN	22	Chronic Anxiety State	74
11	MRS. CASPAR	39	Chronic Anxiety State	82
12	JOYCE LINDNER	29	Psychopathy; alcohol	84
13	JULIA HORSTMANN	24	Chronic Anxiety State	90
14	GARTH BARKER	23	Aggressive psychopathy	95
15	YVONNE MARAIS	34	Chronic Anxiety State	101
16	YOLANDA BRIGHT	39	Criminal psychopathy	110
17	ELSIE CRAWFORD	34	Chronic Anxiety State	111
18	ANNE COLLVILLE	24	Anxiety State, Hysteria	117
19	WILLEM DE WET	23	Schizophrenia	128
20	ELIZABETH PAWLEY	20	Schizophrenia	132
21	AMY HARRINGTON	25	Schizophrenia	133
22	MISS PIENAAR	25	Psychopathy	138
23	MRS. FAURE	34	"Normal"	145
24	HUGH WILLARD	25	Schizoid;Anxiety State	152
25	FRED JANUARY	27	Schizoid psychopathy	160
26	HERMANN LAUFFER	22	Chronic Anxiety State	166

2. NUMBER	FICTITIOUS NAME	AGE	DIAGNOSIS	PAGE
27	MRS. REED	32	Chronic Anxiety State	170
28	ROSE DELAPONT	19	Chronic Anxiety State	178
29	CYRIL FOXCROFT	27	Psychopath, anxious	183
30	ALBERT BALL	31	Chronic Anxiety State	191
31	MORRIE PILLANSKI	18	Chronic Anxiety State	194
32	ANDREW LATIMER	23	Chronic Anxiety State	201
33	MR. ANSTEY	32	Chronic Anxiety State	212
34	MARIA BARNARD	22	Chronic Anxiety State	215
35	EASU WITBOOI	38	Chronic Anxiety State	220
36	PETER DAWLEY	33	Chronic anxiety; drug addict	226
37	JACK DAWLEY	31	Chronic anxiety; alcoh -olism	227
38	MISS CALITZ	25	Chronic Anxiety State	232
39	SUSAN STRACHEY	34	Chronic Anxiety State	240
40	JOHNNY WILKEN	14	Psychopath, anxious	243
41	ALGERNON TRIBLEHORN	48	Anxiety state, alcoholism	246
42	NEIL CAMPBELL	46	Psychopath, anxious	252
43	MRS. FREW	24	Chronic Anxiety State	263
44	MR. LARSEN	41	Chronic Anxiety State	266
45	MR. BULLEN	45	Chronic Anxiety State	274
46	MR. PRIDGEON	38	Psychopath, inadequate	283
47	EDWARD BZOLO	24	Schizoid personality	286
48	ROSEMARY HEIDEN	32	Chronic Anxiety State	291
49	MRS. MEADOWS	32	Chronic Anxiety State	302
50	MRS. PAULSEN	34	Chronic Anxiety State	308
a	MRS. YUDLE	38	Chronic Anxiety State	106
b	MR. DANIELS	21	Chronic Anxiety State	108
c	TEDDY YATES	29	Psychopath, alcoholism	163
d	JANE WICKHAM	27	Chronic Anxiety State	222
e	SALLY BASSON	22	Chronic Anxiety State	238
f	MRS. STRUICK	46	Chronic Anxiety State	257
g	MR. EKSTEEN	38	Chronic Anxiety State	269

Chapter 2

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

When suicidal behaviour is studied as it manifests in a number of persons, certain themes will be seen to recur with a prominence and frequency which makes them appear crucial. These themes will feature in the majority of life histories studied later in this work, and clarity will obtain if they are emphasized plainly at the outset.

1. The Power of the Parent

It is no longer necessary to labour how strong is the influence parents have upon their children: the conviction will grow as the investigation proceeds that the most powerful factor in any individual's life is the nature of his relationship with his parents. The parents serve to convey to the growing child the cultural climate of the environment in which he will one day occupy an active place; furthermore, because the child agonizes to be loved by his parents, their behaviour will influence him profoundly, both in his concept of himself and in his expectations of other persons. These facts are commonplace. What is more remarkable is how extensive and sharp a hold a parent may continue to exert when the child has reached adulthood. The child's awareness of the world has been modified by parental admonitions, those million denials and urgings happening every day of the child's life. they are essential while the child is growing. But parents seldom perceive how ignorant they are of the inner lives of their children and, certainly, what a gulf must lie between them and their adult children. They may continue to force impossible attitudes upon their adult children, and to demand false responses. If the child is dependent he will permit his life to be pushed into illogical, unrewarding patterns which are at variance with his true nature and from which he is too weak to escape. His submission will be greater if he has still infantile hopes of being adored by his parents. The picture of filial docility, he will allow himself to be pushed into painful moulds designed by his parents for their own gratification. How hopeless are the demands he is accepting will be revealed only when his personality disintegrates from the strain.

These trends are shown, almost diagrammatically, in the following letters written by her mother to Miss Lettie Dodds. It is unfortunate that the correspondence cannot be given in full: the letters have crystallized in them a parent's anxieties which are then transmitted into the life of a daughter. Hopeless in an uncaring, industrialized society, the mother is married to a shiftless, weak man. She frets away her energies on the edge of destitution, frightened that sickness will strike the breadwinner, unable to go out because she hasn't shoes. Yet she knows her own insecurity is not the worst that can befall an individual. She is uneasy for her daughter in the distant city; also, her own personal failure motivates the anxiety she rains upon her daughter. Almost illiterate, she can yet exert over hundreds of miles which separate them an agitated demand of her daughter: that she should marry a certain young man whom the mother has never seen. She makes Lettie believe that ruination waits if she fails to marry Georgie: furthermore, the mother's demands are made more urgent by the precarious satisfaction she hopes to derive from the romance of her daughter. (The subtle, articulate and proximate mother can exert a much greater power, and the harassed and educated father a more persuasive influence: nevertheless, these letters give a concrete, objective demonstration of the power conferred by the child upon the loved parent). Even when she had achieved adulthood, the daughter still felt herself abandoned and evil at a word of reprimand from her mother.

The time interval covered by the letters is one of a few months only; in the first letter mention is made that the family's pet bitch is pregnant , and as the correspondence ceases we learn that the bitch is once again on heat. But in this space of time Lettie has found that the man she hoped would marry her was feckless and vicious, and has tried to end her life. Her cultural milieu had given her mind queer stuff to feed on, and she did not feel it inappropriate to place beside her, as she returned to face life again, a picture of a tawny film woman captioned, "Maria Montez has the grace of a panther."

Lettie Dodds was twenty years old when she took fifteen sedative capsules. "I'm tired of living. There's nothing to live for now that my father has lost his job and my sister has lost hers too. Other people have money and motor cars and they get the people they are in love with. I have just

had to slave all my life, from morning to night, and I've got nothing. My trouble is I can't have the person I want. His name is Georgie and he's a steward on an express train. I was going to be married in two months, and yesterday he told me he never wants to see me again. His mother told him I went out with other men when he was on the express. I'll take his mother to Court! I dragged Georgie up: he used to be drunk all the time and he was quick with the knife. I stopped him from going round with a black women and from smoking drugs. I knew he would be in the cinema last night with his folks; when I came in with my friend Helen, the sleeping pills were inside me already. Helen had to help me out of the cinema, but George didn't get up - even if he did see me being carried out." Lettie then explained that her mother would be very unhappy that George left her, and produced the letters she had received from her mother.

2 February: Lettie, mammie saw a wedding dress. If mammie goes to town she will ask how much it costs. Lettie you must not go out by yourself at night If George is with you then it is O K. Lettie that is all mammie is worying about becos the people are very rude. If a man tell you that he will give you lift then you say know.
My dear girl you now yourself what is the people today. Mammie sent you this little papper what happens to that girl in Cape Town. Lettie you now yourself what men say that cunt is a nice thing it tastes o so nice.
Best love from all at home and hope to hear the same from you. Lettie listen what mum write you if you walk in the street and motor car stop for you.

9 February: Lettie Listen to mammie Come home. Linten Lettie mammie know myself that work what you do is to hard for you. Lettie if you get sick in that work no body will help you with money. Listen Lettie when you is at home with your mother and you get sick by your Mother house then you can stay in bed and mammie will not ask you for money.
Lettie I am longing very must to see your dear face again I hoop I will see you soon. best Love from all at home and hope to here the same from you.

I remain your
xxxxxxx Dear Mother and Daddy

18 February: Lettie listen dont worry to come home so long that you look after yourself. You must be Carefull for your Boy Friends. To you must by you lot of nice dress.
So I ent with my letter But not with my longing hart

I remain your Mother
xxxxxxxx

24 February: Lettie you write me I must not worry over you, you can look after yourself. But be carefull for your Boys Friends. Lettie I can see what you write me in your letters abouth your Boys Friends.
Lettie you now uncle Sammy Fraser, he is 20 years, you now the welfair sent him away again. You now why, he smoke dagga.

16 March: Lettie you write me that you are Cross with Georgie. Lettie you must sent me foto from yourself

So I ent with my letter but not
with my long hart to you. I remain
Your dear Mother and Father
and Broteher and Sister

24 March: Hello Lettie,
Lettie I am glad to here that you and Georgie have made it up again. Lettie I will write you three letters week and you must also write me three letters week.
Lettie you now Monas stomach is pushing very high.
Lettie you must not pik and shuse. You must keep Georgie and send me a foto to see how he looks.
Lettie and do you remember you are nearly 21 years and all your friends are muried already and it looks to me you will ent up on the shelf.

So I remain your longing Mother and Daddy and
Sister and Brother. All the kisses are
for you.
xxxxxxxxxx So I remain your mother.

10 Avril: We are still in the best of health and hope to hear the same from you and Georgie.
Lettie I am very glad to hear that you and Georgie make up again.
Lettie you write me that mamnie will have a new son in low one of these days, I will be very glad of my new son in low.
Lettie you must look very nice after Georgie, and muryed him.
Lettie he will be very good husband to you.
Lettie Brother say you must write him when you and Georgie get muryed. Brother like to have a new brother.
Lettie so soon you and Georgie get mary then must you and Georgie come and visit your mother.
Lettie I ent with my letter but not with my longing hart to you.

best love from all at home and
hope to hear the same from you and Georgie give my best love to Georgie and dont forget yourself. Kisses for you and Georgie.

xxxxxxxxxxxxx



GEORGIE AND LETTIE

(With the letters was one from Lettie herself, which she had not posted to her mother, dated 19th April, and containing the following lines: "Mom there is something I want to tell you. Gee I dont know how to begin. But its like this I never got sick this month and I cant tell you why. Its better if I dont. I dont think Georgie loves me any more. Well its the way he behaves to wards me. So I wont be comming home.")

23 April: My Dear Lettie,

I ecived your dear welcome letter yesterday and was very glad to hear from you and Georgie again.

Lettie I am very glad to hear that Georgie love you more what he loves his own mother and father.

Lettie so you can see with your own eyes that Georgie love you in his hart and look very nice after Georgie.

Lettie I shall be very glad if Georgie had his own Car.

Lettie you must write me when you and Georgie getting marryed.

Lettie I am longing very must to see you and Georgie one of this days coming in by the door with your smiling faces. Lettie I shall be very glad when you and Georgie get maryed. then I had a new Son in law. then I am reach. Lettie dont look at my Handwriting take it all for love.

25 April: Lettie you now what Georgie is your losen. Thank you ever so must for the foto that you sent me from you and Georgie. Lettie I like Georgie face he look a very nice bloke. Lettie when you and Georgie get maryed you will see that Georgie will be a very good Husband to you.

1 May: Lettie you know Dennis and Graham was here last Sunday afternoon I show your foto to them where you and Georgie is. Graham say that he is very glad to here you get married Dennis say he like Georgie he can see in the foto that Georgie is a very nice bloke Graham say he like Georgie face.

3 May: Lettie I am very glad to hear that Georgie have very nice people. Lettie you must not let Georgie drink so must, you must try and get him away from drink Lettie tell Georgie mennie say he must not drink. that will do him no good to drink so must. Lettie best love from all at home and hope to hear the same from you and Georgie. Lettie tell Georgie I say drink make him old. Lettie when will you send us more foto again. Lettie ask Georgie to help you with money so you can pay your accounts soon.

15 May: Your sister Girlie say she will keep here job. So she will by here lot of cloths so that she can go with you and Georgie to Cape Town when you come for holidays.

20 May: Lettie you write me that Georgie will get married on his 21st birthday.
Lettie I can see in your letters that Georgie love you more what he love his own Mother and father.
Lettie you will have very nice days under Georgie. Lettie all your school mates is married already.
Lettie so I hope that you and Georgie will make start to.
Lettie its very nice to be married if you married man hes can give you every things what you want
Lettie you now that firm what your Dad working for they pay your Dad of Wednesday night but I hope god shall help him that he get job soon.
Lettie you now that people Girlie was working they pay here of to Friday night.

24 May: Lettie you and Georgie must try your best and married on his Birthday.
Lettie and then you must write to me when is Georgie Birthday.
Lettie Georgie will be a very good Husband for you he will give you anything in the world that you ask him. So I ent with my letter but not with my hart to you and Georgie So I hope you will get married soon. So I remain your Dear Mom and Dad. Sisters and Brothers. Kisses for you and Georgie

xxxxxxxxxx

4 June: Lettie you must not let Georgie go to the Mines.
Lettie I am very glad to here that you go to the Church with Georgie Mother. Lettie you are a very good girl.
Lettie you can belive me I haven got pair of shoes on my feet Ivy lend me here shoes when I go to town. but dont worry god shall help me.
Lettie I still vate for my wedding foto.
Lettie all the people say you must murried Georgie he is a Very Nice Boy.

11. June: Lettie you say I must send you the size of our shoes. Your Dad wear size 8 and Brother size 4 and Girlie size 5 and myself size 4½.
Lettie you must look very nice after Georgie he is a Darling Boy to you.

14 June: Lettie you must write me when you and Georgie get murried. Lettie you now Dollie will get in this month little dogs again. I hope that you was murried alred so that I can have new son inlaw.

Lettie Dodds could not explain neatly why she wished to die; in her sulky, aggressive and energetic way she could only say that she wanted Georgie while he rejected her, and that by losing him she had added to the unhappiness of her mother. She was reluctant to be sent back home; she expressed a desire instead to become a nun. However, with a realistic shrug she accepted the priest's decision that she "couldn't be a nun" and, without hiding her disgust, went to live in a girls' hostel. She begged that her disappointment should be kept hidden from her mother.

2. The Child's Mixed Attitudes

It is usual for individuals passionately to adore their parents during childhood, and often exaggerated devotion and loyalty is protracted into adulthood. Parents merit devotion; their exertions on behalf of their children frequently are stupendous. But it cannot be doubted that a child's failing to loosen himself from emotional dependence on his parents is a hallmark of the immature personality. With regularity persons who behave suicidally will be found still clinging to their parents, even though the allegiance may have become irksome to both parent and child. Each individual, on the one hand, retains the childlike memory of the parent as an awesome figure; on

the other hand, adult independence urges the need to shake off parental restraints. The normal adult balances his own desires realistically against the inhibitions he learnt at the parental knee, dispensing with restraints which he considers obsolete. But in those persons who behave suicidally it will be found that the conflict rages between aspiration to freedom and the infantile wish to remain dominated by the parent. The adult fastens himself emotionally with a furious passion to his parent.

In such intense attachments can often be found, existing together with love, resentment and even hatred. Chained to his parent, the child makes the bond more harmful by nursing antipathy; the child may be unaware of the hatred co-existing with his love, but he can no longer ignore it when his antipathy emerges so strongly that even onlookers can recognize it.

These facts are illustrated in the tragic history of a young man, gifted and gentle, who in childhood had been the helpless pawn of disordered parents. His father was a psychopath who imagined himself a playwright; the father's own mother, fifty-one years old when he was born had taken no notice of him, and he shocked her by marrying her paid companion when he was nineteen. When his first wife was in a mental hospital he bigamously married again, the sole offspring of this second marriage being John, with whom this history deals. The father drank heavily, borrowed large sums of money, associated sexually with many women and finally deserted his wife and John. His wife became a waitress. When John was ten years old his father had already married a fourth wife; he tried to entice John to come to live with him, and told him malicious tales about his mother. The mother became so angry and hurt that "for a moment I felt a violent hatred of John for seeming to side with his father after the wretched time I had gone through. So I told him the true and raw details of my marriage and separation."

Four years later she resumed her maiden name of Cameron. She reminded John of the suffering she had experienced on his behalf, and asked him to choose definitely between her and his father. She remembered each word of his tearful reply: "I will go with you, mother, and take what name you take." He and his mother then came from England to live in South Africa.

He grew into an idealistic young man, vulnerable and uncertain of his world. He went into the Army where his cultured accent and eccentric beliefs caused him to be the butt of his fellows; when he scorned the spit-and-polish

discipline, saying he didn't care if his platoon wasn't the best on the call-up, his comrades suspended him from the rafters of the hutment. He suffered this humiliation as if it had been a crucifixion. Later he was pushed fully clothed into a swimming pool. Because he did not turn upon his aggressors he felt his manhood lost. In Cairo he vainly visited an addled whore and left her with disgust. On discharge from the Army he became a university student. Although intelligent he could not apply himself to his work, and his poor examination results surprized his teachers. He turned to Catholicism. Imitating Eric Gill he thought of becoming a carpenter and even asked a shoemaker how to set about apprenticeship. At the time he tried to hang himself from a doorknob with his tie, an open letter from his mother lay on his desk , in which she reproached him for being slothful and neglectful of her. In the course of numerous interviews he explored his suspicion that his relationship with his mother was the main source of his anxiety. The mother herself was pained by the antipathy to her which suddenly manifested itself following John's suicidal attempt. She was obsessed with her son; as she wrote, "He has been my only motive for living during twenty years. It seems so very dreadful that this mental sickness from which he is suffering should have taken this particular form, involving our relationship. Oh! Please try and make John realize I have no criticism of the smallest kind where he is concerned. I know he has slacked, played snooker, gone to parties, stayed in bed too late in the mornings, missed lectures, but I understand. Surely love is no love which does not understand? He is literally all I have and his well-being is all I care about." John himself had more complicated feelings about his mother. He loved her and longed to win her respect; but, in addition, it was inescapable that he hated her. He was terrified of being visited by her. Furthermore, in hospital on two occasions he experienced astonishing episodes: he suddenly lost control of himself and shouted wildly, railing aggressively at his mother as if she had been present. One minute he had been his mild and timid self, and the next he was yelling: "Like him, am I? What is he is all the things you say? I'll go to bed when I like and I'll cut my hair as short as I please! Why should you judge me, mother? You made me into a caricature of a man!" Then he sank back in bed, exhausted and apologizing.

"When I was in the Army some of the men used to rag me. Once two men dragged me up into the rafters of the hut and tied my hands to the beams, leaving me suspended. While I was hanging there I lost my temper and said, "You should be fighting for the Nazis, not against them." One of them slapped me across the face. I felt humiliated - I didn't see why they should do it to me. By not fighting back I felt I had completely and forever lost my self-respect.

I dream very often, and almost invariably I dream that I am running away. I have been holding out in a house until I am the only one who has been left alive. I rush out and try to escape through a wood: I know there is a get-away of perfect peace, which I had found only once before. In the dream where I found the place of incredible beauty and peace, there was a wonderful feeling of escape and release about the dream. In an awful lot of these dreams in which I am running away I have the feeling that I am looking for this same place. Usually the pursuers, Zulus or Germans, catch me and are going to execute me. The Zulus plunge their assegais into me, the Germans shoot me. Sometimes I dream I am going to be guillotined: slowly I avert my face, so that I won't be able to see my head in the basket, or the headless trunk.

Now I don't feel pathological. I haven't lost my sense of humour. I don't feel a complete involution on myself. But since I came out of the Army I sometimes find myself giving way to an inner hate session. I imagine what I am going to say to my tormentors in the Army if I ever meet up with them again. Or I imagine I am standing up to my mother, in a sort of daydream, telling her why she frightens me. Just before I tried to hang myself, I wrote to my mother, "All my life I wanted your approval and I never received it." That is the crux of the matter. I have got to release myself from the restraint which my mother has over me. When my mother takes a dim view I feel frightened. She has



high standards. When I was a small boy, until I was sixteen, in all my dreams I dreamt I was running away from my mother. My humiliation in the Army weighed on me terribly, and I couldn't bring myself to discuss it with my mother - I felt she would despise me.

During my last long vacation my mother bought me a pair of trousers. While I was writing to a friend a drop of ink fell onto the trouser-leg. I went into an awful panic. I spent about half an hour trying to rub out the ink mark. I knew I was being silly and immature, but I felt I had to get it out before morning. A few days later, by chance, I overheard my mother say to a friend of hers, "Don't ask John, he's sure to make a mess of things." She kept referring to my long hair; when I went to the barber I had my hair cut very short. The moment I came back my mother said, "John, you do have a knack of not making the best of yourself." As she said that, I felt the same emotion of hopelessness and futility I had on the night I tried to kill myself. Whenever I heard her footsteps on that holiday I used to run and hide behind the cattle-kraal. In my mother's presence I felt myself constrained. I thought the feeling of tension wrong and unnatural, so I tried to discuss it with my mother. I told her of my fear at the stain on the trousers, but she couldn't understand. She said, "What has caused this fear you have of me? Do I lack understanding?" I told her I thought it was because she was too critical of me.

Mother has an incredible number of virtues: she takes a dim view of selfishness in others. She does all the right things for the wrong reasons. I am grown up; why does she contrive to make me feel like a small, guilty child? She would never be able to comprehend that I was cowardly; she would not be able to regard with tolerance that I had failed as a man. Whenever I was about to tell her, my moral courage failed me; I would switch the talk into other channels. I needed her as a confidant, yet I was unable to talk to her. Recently she said to me, "The truth is, if I was in rather a jam, I wouldn't be able to turn to you."

I did write to her in glowing terms of her coming to set up home for us both, but I think all along I dreaded her coming. Consciously I remind myself that I owe her a great deal, but if I had to kiss her I would feel hypocritical. I am restrained in her company and embarrassed by her. I think of the joy and peace our relationship could bring to both of us. But being honest with myself I know I also feel a great antagonism towards her.

Cameron felt his disordered relationship with his mother was the pivot of his emotional dilemma.- He longed for her respect,

and yet he resented her with a fury which devastated him: only in agitated trance-states did he permit himself the relief of reproaching her. She dominated him and he felt that only by opposing her could he, the son of a weak father, regain his manhood.

In a confused groping at a more mature adjustment, Cameron chose to become engaged to a young nurse, a placid, small, meek girl, a contradiction of his forceful, articulate mother. He went for a holiday on the farm of this girl's family where, again suspending himself behind a door, he killed himself. This dreadful outcome, it appears, followed an episode of frequent day-dreams, soliteriness and a strong return of death desires.

3. The Parent-Bound Child

The ties which bind an adult to his parent may be constituted only by affection, as far as can be seen. He will be unaware of any antipathy in the bond, and if any were suggested will recoil indignantly. Nevertheless, to the onlooker it will be obvious that even such unsullied attachments, in many cases, are harmful, serving to limit the acceptance of adult responsibilities and to spoil the individual for other relationships.

An infantile man, Mr. Cosens, began to choke his wife by gripping her neck. When he let her fall to the ground she said in weary anger, "Oh, why don't you drop dead!" He rushed to the dresser and grabbed up a bottle of ant poison. "If that's what you want me to do, I'll do it!" He drank a mouthful and shouted: "There! Are you satisfied now?" When he came into hospital his mother visited him. He did not tell her he had been admitted on account of his suicidal attempt.

> I wouldn't consider telling her about it, then all my family's respect for me would be gone. In any case, they'd never believe I'd do such a thing. My mother thinks my wife has poisoned me. Directly she left the hospital after visiting me, she phoned my wife at her work and gave her hell for poisoning me. I am the youngest of my mother's children, and she thinks the sun shines wherever I walk. I love my mother very much. I am sorry to have to say it, but my wife hasn't got the smallest feeling or affection for my mother. My mother dislikes to see my wife and I kissing or being playful; when she sees my wife making up to me, my mother looks quite annoyed and says, "Oh, don't be so silly!" My wife makes me very angry by being affectionate to me when my parents are looking.

Before our marriage my wife and I lived in the same boarding-house. I was anxious to get married, but my wife repeatedly postponed the wedding date. She argued, "You see me all day - the only thing we don't do is to sleep together. Do you only want to marry me so that you can get me in bed?" Last year when I got my annual leave I told her, "Either we get married now, at once, or never." When she said again she wasn't ready to be married yet, I packed my things and went to my mother's house; I thought to myself that if I couldn't get married I would go on a fishing trip. After I had been away a few days my wife had to phone me. She said she found it impossible to live without me. We were married later in the same week. My mother got a lot of satisfaction out of my wife calling me back, and having to admit that she needed me and could not go on without me. We were married the same week. I was twenty-four then. My mother never approved of my marriage. She hates my wife.

My wedding night was my first time with a woman. I never had much interest in women. I was only sixteen when I joined the Army and I was always dead scared I would catch a venereal disease. My wife is colder than I: I was terribly disappointed with our first night together. Before anything could happen it was all over. My wife asked me, "Do you still think sex is so marvellous?" I said, No.

The marriage has not been a success. When I enter the house everything changes. Gloom descends. It is absolutely grim. After we have had an argument and my wife falls asleep, leaving me lying unhappily in the dark, I get terribly mad. I think: She can sleep soundly while I have to stay awake worrying. When she tries to speak to me next morning I refuse to speak to her, and so it goes on. I have considered asking her for a divorce, and my mother agrees with me it might be for the best. I never find that gloom in my parents' house.

When we are with friends my wife pointedly seems to exclude me from the company. You'd get the impression that I'm part of the furniture, that everybody else is more important in her life than I am. But when we are alone she behaves as if I am the only person in the world. Sometimes, when we are alone at home, I become quite embarrassed by my wife's attentions. We love each other to death, and yet we have the most awful fights. I accuse her of outrageous misdeeds falsely. I get terrifically mad at her and then I pass horrible remarks, and before I know what I am saying I am accusing my wife of being unfaithful to me. I know I am accusing her falsely. All through our courting days I put lots of temptation in my wife's way and she never slipped up. In our disagreements, even when I realise I am in the wrong, I feel it is just too late to make amends and that makes me mad all over again.

You don't think very highly of me, do you? You don't think I'm much good?

His suicidal gesture was an impulsive act without great significance in his emotional life. He was prejudiced and without insight into the aggressive, defensive nature of his infantile behaviour. Nor does logical argument persuade him to look at his violent reactions with objectivity. He cannot accept his role as a husband and he remains socially irresponsible. It is clear his allegiance remains to his mother, to astonish whom remains his true and childlike purpose.

He cannot control his destructive impulses. When he was discharged from hospital after his suicidal attempt his wife filled the house with flowers and tried to welcome him. She determined not to be subdued by his coldness, but she was finally disheartened by his remark: "Don't you think you're overacting a bit?"

His impulsiveness is as disruptive as his cold suspicion. One evening they had dinner with friends, and a joke was told which Mrs. Cosens found very funny: An Egyptian urchin saw a man drink a Martini with a cherry in it and, thinking he would like a similar but more substantial drink, asked the waiter for a pint of beer with a paw-paw in it. When they returned home Cosens put a Teuber song on the gramophone. He turned down the light and taking his wife in his arms, kissed her. Unfortunately at that moment, she remembered the joke and could not prevent herself from smiling. Her husband must have felt her lips moving. He said, "What's so funny? What are you laughing at?" She tried to explain but he would not listen. Sobbing like a child, he smashed the revolving record with his fist, one by one broke every record in the room, and then collapsed on the wreckage weeping bitterly.

4. <u>The Hidden Inner Life</u>

Within his mind each person carries a vast fantasy life which is unknown by his closest intimate. To the individual himself this inner life may be the essence of his existence: private desires, humiliations and restraints which he would not confess to anybody but with which he is much preoccupied in solitary moments. Moreover, his dreams and fears may indicate to him how vast a private world remains completely hidden from him; foreign ideas and symbols will spring into his awareness, disquieting him but leaving him ignorant of their origin or meaning.

The man Forbes, about to be described, was a technician aged thirty-two years. His sister had a short time previously been killed by a train before which she threw herself; while he had himself not made a suicidal attempt, he was terrified

that he would not hold out much longer against a compulsion to end his life. By his social pliability he had been betrayed into an approaching marriage; he became sleepless, anxious and suicidal. Also, fantasies which had troubled him since childhood entered more frequently and frighteningly into his awareness. These private notions and imaginings centred about an illogical fear that he would be deprived of his genitals. Of these fears he had frequently become conscious at odd times, but they became insistent with the growth of his suicidal desires. He had never before mentioned their occurrence: had he killed himself without speaking of them, they would have remained buried in the private recesses of his personality. Indeed, whatever imaginings agitated his sister will now never be known.

His history is a valuable one, on account of his capacity for introspection and the detail of his recall. His drive to suicide, of which he was terrified, is meaningless unless seen against the background of his personal development. Intelligent, of pleasant appearance, docile, Forbes was so crippled by passivity that few of his potentialities were realized.

An emotional illness caused the father to live apart from the family. To his mother Forbes was closely bound; she was "the sweetest mother in the world who never nagged." His attachment to her heightened his social timidity and his furtive, guilty failures in personal relationships.

Both the children of this family felt unable to cope with the demands of living. The girl died with no evidence left of how she felt herself threatened or how her desire to live faded. It was after seeing her mangled body in the mortuary, where an attendant explained she was the worst sight he had ever seen, that Forbes himself felt impelled to suicide. At the same time, a threat of which he had been aware since puberty assumed new force.

> There is something I must tell you about. Since the age of fourteen I have had the sensation that some agent is trying to remove my sex organs. As I grew up, this sensation occurred more frequently, often as I was dropping off to sleep. I had the superstition that rubbing my shoulder or moving my fingers against each other relieved this feeling. Often I find myself holding my hands between my thighs, which seems to give me a protected feeling. The sensation I have used to be a vague one, as if someone brings a hot poker near the skin, although you know he's not really going to burn you. I feel pins-and-needles in my legs and in my penis. There is never any idea of blood or pain, but I feel that some agent, some means, is going to come down and take off my penis.

Recently the feeling that I am going to lose my genitals has become stronger, particularly as I am falling asleep, so that I suddenly wake up and find myself very tense.

Since I was fourteen I sometimes dreamed that I had an erection and that the penis had become detached, and when I woke up I was very thrilled to find it had only been a dream. I still have this dream. There is no goriness: in my dream I hold the penis in my hand, like a banana, altogether detached, and sometimes in the dream I join it on again myself. It is a great relief to wake up and find it was only a dream. The word "cut" has always made me feel funny. Sometimes when I passed some boys and the chaps threatened, "I'll cut your water off," I experienced an unpleasant feeling. When I saw an advert in the paper, for example, which had a picture of a knife, I found that I got all jittery. Even now, when I go to a barber and he approaches me with a cutthroat razor, I get a tingling feeling. I often find myself sitting in a protective position with my hands between my thighs. Since Pam's death I go into a sort of daze when the sensation comes on: I feel the agent approaching and try to push it away with my hand. I have the feeling that I want to crush the edge of this sharp agent, as if with pliers, but the edge won't break. I know this sounds vague, but that is how it seems. I open my eyes and look hard at some object of reality, and it helps me to get rid of the threatening object.

The dreams I have recently are so queer! In one, a doctor told me I had a disease with a funny medical name which I didn't catch, and I told him he was talking bull; somehow I connect this dream with my worry over fibbing to my mother about not having had a woman, when I had actually slept with one. I feel very anxious that I will do harm to myself while I am recovering consciousness after a dream. One morning I dreamt I was listening to a person who told me of the woman who wished that when she opened the door, it would be opened so narrow a crack that a man's penis would not be able to enter it; the association I have with this dream is that if a man's sex organ is as big as my father's was, how can it enter such a narrow crack as a woman's organ.

I feel much of my anxiety would clear up if I could understand about the sensation troubling me. Just lately the sharp instrument seems to have lost some of its frightening influence, and when I am dozing off I imagine it resting on my wrist while my hand is across my lower body. The edge, which I spoke of before as trying to break with pliers or a hammer, lost its sharpness and seemed to be soft, and I was able to roll it against my wrist. With my wrist I rolled its edge until it became a round, softish roll, which I consciously connect with the soft edges of a woman's genitals (as I know them to be now), or the penis in erection. The agent softens and rolls over my arm,

> like something plastic and rounded. When the feeling comes each time, I find I can't think properly. All my thoughts seem to blur and I surrender myself to the sensation. Now it has come to seem most like a penis. What I am trying to get at and can't is: Whose penis? *

Each human action is complex. So powerful an impulse as suicide cannot be thought of in isolation: only when related to the fantasy life does it acquire relevance. No individual can be understood psychologically until his hidden imaginative life has been revealed. During exploration of an individual's private thoughts, ideas and symbols will be met with which he himself does not understand; these, in turn, have escaped from an active personal world within him, beyond his awareness, from which come powerful impulses to motivate him.

Of his fantasy life his closest intimate is likely to be ignorant.

5. Social Emergence of Buried Ideas

In rare instances the private world of the individual sometimes finds public expression. The surprised onlooker will find presented to him secret fears and unrealistic ambitions which, until the occasion of their emergence, he had never expected of the person manifesting them. In fact, when told about his behaviour subsequently, the person may himself be astounded, and with justice deny all knowledge of the weird notions he had recently expressed. Dismayed, perhaps unbelieving, he may insist how foreign the very idea of such eccentricity is to him. His innocence will not be assumed, for his outburst of peculiar behaviour may have resulted from the emergence of fantasies of which he had been entirely unconscious. That all persons carry powerful fantasies out of childhood, often forgotten to their conscious selves, is undoubted. In this study there will present many examples of the emergence into ordinary life of antisocial ambitions and unrealistic fears.

An angry man or a drunk man may in his uncontrolled state reveal much of his private fantasy world; so also may one speaking in his sleep or emerging from anaesthesia; neurotic symptoms are symbolic expressions of unconscious desires or dreads; psychotic persons lose their ability to fit smoothly into their community and freely act out their private motivations.

A man aged twenty-three years drank ant poison because his girl told him she no longer loved him.

* See also pages 106, 208 and 230

She's been around quite a bit, but she's not such a bad girl. Sometimes her ways are the most horrible ways: she gets all sulky or don't want to talk, and she just sits still until we have a whole argument because she don't want to go anywhere. Me, I'm always the same. I had other women before but I was not in love with them. Love is what I got for this woman now. She is that certain one woman.

She kept on at me to take her to see my mother, so I took her. The background is rather black. My father drinks. My parents' home is very shabby, in a shanty-town. It was very unhappy. I have seven brothers and sisters, and I am the oldest. I want to be neatly dressed and live decent, but my brothers don't care. I have had a good job as a printer for nine years; I never stay out of work, even if I am sick. There is no special contact with my family; when I see my brothers and sisters, I see them. They go their way and I go mine. I don't worry much with friends either.

My girl behaved quite O K when she was at my folks, so I was surprised when she said to me the next night, "From now on I treat you coal." That was all she said. I reckoned to her, "If I come here Tuesday and you're not here, I'll take a dose of poison.



I dunno how I came to do it. I don't want to die, I never wanted to live as much as now. She was always out when I came to her place. I felt cut up and I had a few drinks. I couldn't find her about town. Then I bought the poison at the chemist shop. It was a stupid thing to do, but I thought I'd keep it in my pocket, and if she didn't want anything to do with me I'd drink it. I thought I would put the bottle in my pocket and my girl would have felt it: but she wasn't at home when I got there. I still dunno how I put the bottle to my mouth. It's not actually that I wanted to die because life is sweet sometimes. But I just got the feeling, Oh, to hell! What's the use of life?

To this point the clinical picture was not an unusual one: suicidal behaviour occurring in a friendless, subdued person, doggedly devoted to his job, emotionally undecided about his parents, when a shaky love relationship broke down. But, as the interview was ending, the patient asked seriously, "Doctor, why have you made me impotent?"

His question ushered in an agitated delusional state which continued for seven days. He believed that his masculinity was being tempered with and his digestive powers spoiled.

> I ran out onto the roof of the hospital because I was frightened. I am only an innocent patient. I could not understand what was being done to me. A nurse passed a remark to me, "After drinking that poison, I suppose you're going to remain a bachelor all your life." By that I realized she also knew when the poison was pumped out of me all the life was taken out of my sex organs. There was a lot of life, but it's dead now. Everybody wanted me to sleep; nurses kept coming up to me and asking me if I was awake. They wanted to inject needles into me; why? They wanted to tie me to the bed. I got frightened and they started chasing me.
>
> My backside is all knotted up and no bowels will come through. The pipe they put in me to wash out the poison knotted up my gut. I said to the nurse if anything is wrong they must please fix me up, but everybody just says I must sleep. I want you to attend to my testicles, doctor. You can't have a girl if you're in a state like this. Where I sit there is a lump, so all I can make out is that I must be knotted somewhere. Naturally I was normal before.
>
> No, of course I don't think all that is wrong with me is imagination. Who likes to walk around with a dead bottom part? You feel funny, in between a man and a woman. You feel silly. My body is changing. And my mind has changed a lot: it's such big open spaces in my mind. It's sad, for me to end up in this way. I am now sitting here in such a state, all silly and lifeless! I'm not going to run myself crazy any more, trying to get every woman on the street. The way I am now, I can do nothing. If I get a woman I'll use her, that's all. If I get better I'm not going to worry about that girl I had any more. But nobody at work must know the silly thing that has happened to me!

The hallucinations intensified so that Mr. Brand insisted his body consisted of pieces put together indiscriminately; mournfully he declared that he had no lungs or brain left. He thought he heard his acquaintances from his work come up to his ward door, call out to him tauntingly, and then steal away. Thus, after his attempt to end his life, in fantasy he proceeded to unsex himself, to suffer his orifices to be shut off and to disintegrate bodily. Swiftly he became rational again and returned to his work a few days later. The fantasies extruded during his post-suicidal breakdown were in abeyance once more, so that nothing peculiar was noticed in his overt behaviour.

Nevertheless, his suicidal attempt was but part of a

disturbed mental state. Both the suicidal behaviour and the subsequent delusional episode derived from the fantasy world within him; they were but the external manifestations of a disordered emotional life.

The hidden impulses of which they were the products continue to exert a dominating effect upon the course of his life. Months later he married, and it happened by chance that his wife was seen medically. She related that she had married him with misgiving, for he drank excessively: she decided to marry him only because he threatened to kill himself if she did not. She was perturbed to find that he had no friends. He disregarded her questions about his upbringing, and she could discover from him nothing about his parents. He would not see her own friends, saying that he disliked all people. She found him childlike, requiring explanations about matters most people take for granted. She noticed that he drinks particularly after they have had some difference of opinion. When he returns home drunk he is distraught and shouts taunts at his wife: what most startles her at such times are the obscene words he uses and his erotic gestures. When sober he denies them vehemently and, indeed, it then seems to her almost inconceivable that so meek a person can conduct himself with such vulgarity.

Chapter 3

THE SUICIDAL ATTEMPT

The common means people choose with which to end their lives are: the swallowing of sedative drugs, or arsenic - in the form of ant poison, or corrosives, or the cutting of their blood vessels. (Gas is not much used domestically in Cape Town). Of those who choose sedative drugs, death if it occurs will most often result from asphixia due to blocking of the respiratory passages with mucus; even in deep coma if the air-way is kept clear recovery is likely.

Male persons use more active means in seeking death. In this group of fifty persons about to be studied, all who shot at themselves or made incised wounds upon themselves were male. However, in rare instances female persons do use violent means in attempting suicide.

> A lady, aged fifty, irrationally feared she might have a breast growth. Rather than disturb her husband by informing him of her fear, she shot herself through the head. She survived, melancholic and blind but not otherwise disabled. (She was obsessional about dirt, as her father had been. Since childhood she had been afraid she would kill somebody).

It is equally uncommon to find a female person using a knife when behaving suicidally.

> Abandoning her illegitimate daughter to the grandmother, a pretty mother made a good marriage with an Army officer. When the girl was in her late teens the couple took her from her grandmother and let her live with them. Following one of frequent arguments, the girl first tried to strangle her own illegitimate baby and then cut her own wrists, not fatally.

Many statistical studies in the literature on suicide lend support to the hypothesis that men tend to use aggressive means, while women use more passive methods for suicide.

The corrosives, agents which kill often enough and that slowly, more usually mutilate the gullet, and are used by the uneducated and by persons to whom less painful methods are not available. In this city those who use corrosives are almost invariably Coloured. It is stressed later that the Native seldom behaves suicidally, but when he does tends to use curious means like chewing razor blades. However, an educated European

youth, crippled by tuberculosis and orphaned early, who decided to die and slowly ate glass fragments throughout an evening.

Availability is not the only ground on which the agent for suicide is selected. A man usually esteems himself sufficiently to sense that the means designed for his death has about it both ceremonial and sacrificial qualities.* Mr. Brand, it has been seen, carried his poison in his pocket, like a talisman, hoping his girl would feel it and be shamed by it to love him again. Campbell (Case 42), a nomad permitting himself few possessions, carried a length of rope for years in his suitcase, so that unerringly he could fetch it out when the moment of despair arrived. Mrs. Read (Case 27) in her domestic rage swallowed tablets she had kept through eleven years. Mrs. Fern, appreciative of the drama of her action, was discovered exquisitely dressed in white satin pyjamas, with a bracelet on each arm, immaculate, her hair tidy, and comatose.

Case 1 MRS. FERN

She had written to her employer, saying she would be dead when he received her letter. Apologising for any annoyance she had caused him, she explained she would not be able to repay the money he had missed from the till. She left a second letter: "Police or Doctor, Please keep this out of the papers. I don't want the young fellow's name mentioned. Tell him I loved him until my eyes closed on this life which has been so cruel to me since I was about fifteen."

The mother considered Lilian had always been a dull child. At school she had invariably been bottom of the class and was put up on trial each year. "She is inclined to be on her own; she never could make friends, even up to the present. She has never shown that she feels any affection for any person. She tells the most fantastic lies. Oh, Lilian has had so many jobs I can't remember them."

"Since I was a tiny tot," said Lilian, "I did the housework. My mother was always out nursing and depended on me a lot." She often played truant from school, electing to visit the Public Gardens and to meet an old friend of her parents, Mr. Fern. "He used to bath and dress me when I was a baby." By this man, twenty years her senior, she was impregnated when she was fourteen years old. "He didn't frighten me because I didn't know what was happening." Lilian's mother, a nurse, first realized Lilian was pregnant two weeks before the baby was born. Nevertheless,

*Juliet expresses this awe in her sad astonishment at Romeo's suicide. "Poison I see hath been his timeless end." (Act 5, Sc. 3).

with determination she delivered the baby herself in secrecy, letting Lilian see the baby each day until he was a fortnight old, without permitting her to feed him. Immediately the parents of Mr. Fern were made to adopt the baby, and the family moved to live in Rhodesia.

"My father was sad but never reproached me. He had lost a leg in the 1914 war, and he was grumpy and lonely. My mother nursed him and married him in hospital when she thought he wasn't going to pull through. My father is not a man you can be friendly with. He lives within himself and never opens his mouth."

After two years the family came back to Cape Town. At once Lilian sought out Fern. She went off with him, sending word after two weeks to her parents, persuading them to consent to her marrying him. They took the little boy from his paternal grandparents; the second child Lilian had by Fern was a girl. Lilian's parents now regarded their old friend Fern with antipathy and reproach. But Lilian herself has little resentment over her husband's shabby treatment of her. "He was good to me. His only fault was that when I said goodbye to him of a morning I didn't know whether I'd see him again that evening or six months later. He was so absentminded he did not know his own daughter. One day I was on the beach with two children and he arrived back after disappearing for a few months. He said, 'Good heavens, that's a lovely kid!' I said to him, 'That's your kid,' and he was really surprised. But I had to divorce him when I found him and a friend of his in a hotel room with two women. Afterwards I had nothing to do with him that way. Before I used to overlook his carryings-on because he was so old.



"Now they are saying I've stolen £275 from the firm. I admitted to £60 and I signed a paper; I did that without even looking what I was signing because I knew I was going to be dead. I thought of taking pills a long time before the money was missing. I often used to say, 'I'd like to take some pills and go to sleep and never wake up.' I had no real reason for wishing that. I said it in a sort of a joke. Money has nothing to do with it. The manager used to make eyes at me and fiddle with me and push me up against the counter. I had

bruises the way he handled me. He said, 'If you don't play ball you'll suffer badly.' I never really worried about him. I took £8 out of the till he should have given me as a rise, and didn't. I took the money to buy presents for Cyril.

"Cyril is my boy friend. He is very kindhearted: if he finds a flea on him he'll catch it and put it in the bath but he'd never be able to kill it. Only he has a violent temper; he hurts me sometimes and slaps my face. He has bitten me at various times. On Christmas Eve he nearly throttled me. One reservation I have about him is his violent temper. He is a man who possesses three revolvers and whenever there is any trouble between us he goes into his room and can be heard frittering away with the triggers of the gun. This makes everybody in the house nervous. That's why I left the house and went to live in a hotel.

"When we are left alone we love each other. Then Cyril never displays violence to me. It is the interference of his mother that ruins everything. I resent her and often I tell her, 'Cyril is your blue-eyed baby.' He was a meonpausal baby, born when his mother was fifty-two, and you know what menopausal babies are like: their mothers dote on them. Cyril has a high opinion of his mother. She will never give him to another woman. She says all we can do about our engagement is break it off. She wants Cyril for herself and I want him. I'm a cold person, and all he does is hold my hand in bioscopes and kiss me goodnight: there is never any great show. I don't know what will happen. I want him, but his mother talks to him against me all the time."

In Man Against Himself, Menninger claims that the means chosen for suicide often signifies both a form of punishment and an erotic gratification. Menninger is a Freudian psychoanalyst and the act of drowning, for example, is thought by him to have associations with the intrauterine life and to be symbolic of the wish to return to pre-natal bliss (memory being attributed to the foetus.) I do not feel that I have support to add to the suggestion that the particular form of the suicide has a symbolic meaning for the person adopting it. Rather does it appear that death is equated with peace, in the sense of no exhausting demands; suicide will induce a state of quiet when there will be no more humiliations or frustrations.

Speaking angrily a few days before she was to make a suicidal attempt, a young woman said, "When you have been frustrated often enough, you find you have ended up having nothing. You're tired. Ultimately you actually come to desire nothing. It's only a matter of time before the thought of complete nothingness, of death, in other words, comes into your mind. That's when a person becomes suicidal. Nothing

> matters any more, because nothing has been the outcome of every activity. There is only one action remaining which you are free to make, which will produce nothingness everlasting, with no more calls to action which can only end in dispair."

In the case of Mrs. Struick (Case f), a lady who walked into the sea rather than complain to her husband of a severe pain in her side, her desire for death and her going into the sea to achieve it, seems to be associated with her fanatical desire for peace. "I'm just a person who wants peace and no trouble or worry in the world - that's all." In her stupor Mrs. Heiden (Case 48) muttered repeatedly, "I want to rather sleep and never wake up again."

Not daring to express his great anger openly, the suicidal person, on the conscious level, wishes to free himself of the struggles and sorrows of life when he drinks poison or cuts his wrist. In part, he uses the means to which education and custom expose him. However, this cannot be the total explanation, for it does not make clear why a man chooses to eat glass or, in Menninger's example, to hug a hot stove. It may well be that he is preoccupied with erotic oral fantasies in the one case, or in the other feels a coldness within him, which, in his pathologically intense wish to be loved, he hopes to change to warmth by violent self-destruction. Such suggestions remain theoretical, and may in time be confirmed or elaborated. In the meantime it can but be remarked how strange many methods of suicide are, as in the case of the girl who elected laboriously to lick arsenic off fly-paper when it is both usual and easy to drink ant poison. (Case 8).

The State of Mind

Almost invariably it will be with sadness that a person decides to end his life. There is one person among this series who made his suicidal attempt while feeling frankly flippant (Case 47), laughing as he put capsules one by one into his mouth, but he was a man so estranged and artificial it is doubtful he truthfully described his suicidal emotions.

Associated with self-sorrow is rage. Often it is directed at a close associate, but sometimes at the world itself. Cosens, we have seen, drank poison in an outburst of anger shortly after he had tried to throttle his wife; when Mrs. Reed (Case 27) took sleeping pills she was raging inwardly against her husband.

The violence the suicidal person turns upon himself overflows frequently, so that a loved one also suffers in it.

Agnes Adams (Case 8) tried to starve her baby while on a mountain. Mr. Foxcroft (Case 29) stabbed his mistress before cutting his own throat. Mrs. Collville (Case 18) throttled her young step-son until she was removed from him, and Mrs. Whitehorn (Case 10) pondered with deep seriousness her intention to shoot her lover. Those near the suicidal person are affected by his rage.

Those most closely associated with the suicidal person, in point of fact, themselves make an absorbing study. Speak to a suicidal person and he will protest in many cases: "It isn't only me you should be examining" (Mrs. Reed, Case 27). Sometimes the individual behaving suicidally is seen to have insinuated himself into an extraordinary relationship. Mr. Campbell (Case 42) cuckolded the man who supported him, (with this man's tacit consent), pretending to acquaintances that his landlady-mistress was his sister. Mr. Foxcroft (Case 29) lived a passionate, Hollywood idyl with a prostitute old enough to be his mother. Mrs. Casper (Case 11) existed for decades in the confusion set up by a violent husband who terrorized her one moment and coddled her the next.

The way suicidal persons accuse those with whom they are in closest contact of being harmful and hateful, is often surprising, so emotional is their condemnation. Yet they resist with excitement and alarm any suggestion that they should be less intimate with the loved-hated person. Mrs. Collville (Case 18) insisted all her misery was engineered by the elderly, perverse husband she adored. Mr. Cosens (Case C) said, "I just can't do without my wife and yet we fight over nothing." Mrs. Yudle and her husband literally never stopped fighting, yet whenever he threatened to leave her she attempted suicide and when he did leave her she gave herself up to a suicidal orgy (Case a). Throughout her married life Mrs. Casper (Case 11) lived in sexual terror of her husband.

Insufficient emphasis is given to the blatant phenomenon that an intimate associate may be an object both of love and of hatred at the same time. This ambivalence can be observed in some cases during ordinary social activities, and quite regularly in careful psychological studies. At times the aversion felt from a loved person seems to exercise an additional spell: Sally Basson refused her parents' plea to leave an older husband who frightened her with bloodthirsty threats (Case e); Miss Elsie Crawford was bound in prolonged and hopeless courtship

with an elderly, stingy hypochondriac (Case 17); Mr. Eksteen (Case g) spent his life with a rustic woman of low intelligence who hated him and whom he hated, lacking even children who might have added significance to their union.

More instances of troubled association need not be given here: they will rise as the biographies are told. It need only be remarked how those associated with suicidal persons will often be found to have emotional disturbances sometimes more flamboyant than those their self-destructive partners can show.

The third emotional manifestation to be found in those behaving suicidally is agitated despair: the individual feels that there is no longer any point in struggling to continue life, so hopeless does his situation seem.

Sadness, anger and despair characterize all suicidal acts. The suicidal person sacrificially offers himself to fate; moreover, with an aggressive outburst he revenges himself for a whole lifetime of acquiescence; and finally, with resignation he admits to himself an incapacity to win love.

Many persons tell of the moment of terror before they behave suicidally, the time they think despairingly: "Whatever can I do now? Everything is finished, and only ruin waits." The uneasy balance they held for years can be maintained no longer; the tightrope breaks. Then it is that many stupid or unaccountable things happen. A schizophrenic man killed a cat before he turned upon himself. Another man messily murdered a cock before he cut his own throat. + Mrs. Collville turned upon her stepson, Agnes Adams starved her child and Foxcroft stabbed his mistress. Like hatred can be detected in the love impelling suicide pacts. The person who had behaved acceptably suddenly throws off his restraints, and the child he had once secretly been rises in all resentment to destroy the veneer of adulthood. An end is made to the desperate pretence of being able to function in a world of mature men. Responsibility for self is relinquished.

However good the impression he contrived, the suicidal person failed to achieve comfortable adulthood. Closer examination of his earlier life may show an inability existed to have mature sexual relationships; the adult may be seen to remain still under

+ It was the custom among the Jews for the master of each house to kill a cock on the eve of the Fast of Atonement; before doing so he strikes his head with the cock three times, saying at each stroke: "Let this cock be a commutation for me, let him be substituted for me," and when he strangles the victim by compressing the neck with his hand, he at the same time reflects that he himself deserves to be strangled. (See Westermarck, E. (1926): The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas. London: MacMillan and Co., Ltd.)

the thrilling power of a parent; or he may have been deprived in early life of a parent, thus growing in such insecurity that he failed to learn what he could expect from other people and what freely give them.

When he consciously recognizes his panic, the individual may use the most trivial and unlikely event as a last straw, a final if illogical push towards death.

> A young man of twenty drank a bottle of lysol because, he said, his sister teased him with not being able to support a wife. Her taunt apparently referred to his marriage which began when he was seventeen after he had made a girl pregnant and ended in divorce a few months before his suicidal gesture.
>
> Another man, aged thirty-two, drank sleeping tablets because, he explained angrily, his wife was acting in an amateur dramatic season; when their little daughter, who was to have had a part also, was removed from the cast he felt his wife should have withdrawn from the play out of family loyalty.

With such superficial rationalizations the suicidal person tries consciously to justify his suicidal leaning, and he cannot see what is obvious to the onlooker: these social confusions are but flimsy screens which he throws up to keep hidden from himself his more secret motives.

For it is inevitable that his social setting will be disordered. The emotional disturbance which culminates in suicidal behaviour will have produced irksome failures in social relationships earlier in life. When the time for suicide then is felt to have come, his self-destructive ruminations further complicate his social activities. Although the thoughts of dying may already have become conscious, he is still in dismaying proximity to his wife who expects adequate responses of him, he still sees his reproving mother or feels himself watched by an expectant boss. It is in such current relationships that the individual himself seeks the reasons for suicide, nor will he accept the assurance of an onlooker that they are to be found in conflicts existing within his own psyche and not in the real world, although the conflicts serve to disorganize the real world for him.

If the onlooker is hasty, he may be tempted to disparage much suicidal behaviour, for he will often be disconnected by activities which seem designed by the suicidal person to make his attempt less dangerous. An extreme example is provided by an elderly gentlemen who, when there was the entire ocean at his disposal, tried to drown himself by immersing his head in shallow water when most of his body remained in the air. This desire to foil his own suicidal behaviour, even when his

wish to die is clearly powerful, makes many a suicidal person appear ludicrous to the onlooker, provoking not pity but derision. Such responses are often unwarranted: after all, before he sought death the would-be suicide had to subdue his will to live, and he may not have done so entirely although his death wish may be strong enough to achieve effect. A man may actually die by his own hand with still a small hankering for life. It is the remnants of vitality in a suicidal person which lead him to phone the doctor before cutting a vessel, or to warn a friend of destructive intentions. At times, indeed, the wish to live may far outweigh the coexistent determination to die.

Case 2 RICHARD HICKMAN

I am a schoolteacher, twenty-seven years old. My unhappiness dates back some time. My wife and I have not been able to agree with each other. You know how little money Coloured teachers get: my wife works too, and sometimes she says it seems to her she has got to work for me.

The immediate trouble was over a girl of seventeen years, a mere child, who had recently been involved in an Immorality Act case. She is a nice girl whom I met at a friend's house. I had heard that she was still carrying on with a white man who had caused her to be brought into Court. I advised her to pull up her socks. I have told this girl many times that she ought to try to improve her life. She obviously liked me and we developed a platonic friendship. I admit I sometimes took her for drives in my car. However, I never had intercourse with her. She was a nice girl and I thought it a pity to see her going to ruin. There was nothing more between us; she perhaps ran after me.

At times I took her out and we used to have a spoon. I do admit one evening I tried to have intercourse with her. She respected me too much to allow it to happen, she said. She insistently refused me. I did not want to force her - I felt like a fool. There I had been speaking to her about the mess she was making of her life, and I was leading her to do the same thing again. Before I left her I apologized.

But the next evening there was a knock at our door. It was this girl's father. The first thing he shot at me was: "Where is Sylvia?" My wife looked at me dumbstruck. I was afraid of what would happen to me and I would not admit that I had taken Sylvia out. Her father insisted that I had her hidden somewhere and he made a grab at me. I was in my pyjamas and I was excited and worried. My wife was extremely suspicious. She agreed with Sylvia's father,

insisting that I knew where Sylvia was. He shot out to my wife, "And do you know that Sylvia is pregnant?" My wife said to him, "How far is she gone?" He told my wife, three months, and they both insisted I was responsible for the pregnancy. Sylvia's father said, "Look here, I want my daughter! Otherwise I will go to the police. She is a minor."

I felt as if I was in a concentration camp. They called a friend of mine, who said he had already warned me about going out with Sylvia. Whenever I stood up they trailed me, their behaviour showing that they were frightened I would dodge them to meet Sylvia. They insisted that I had put up the girl somewhere. Another friend of mine came to visit us with his wife, and his wife shouted at me: "I warned you to leave Sylvia!" To tell the truth, all those people were very dense. They kept on insisting I knew where the girl was. Her father threatened he would go to my school and deprive me of my job.

I was sitting in the backyard, when my wife came up to me. I felt as if I wanted to do something, to run away. All eyes were focussed on me. I felt I was not guilty and yet nobody believed me. My wife came over to me and said, "You are odious, and I never want to see you again."

I went to lie on the bed for a bit. I got up and went to my mother's house. I have a lot of confidence in my Ma. On the way I thought, "I can't upset Ma" But I went on thinking, "Perhaps Ma will understand me." She was out. I sat in the car and worried about myself. I felt hungry. When I came back home I didn't find my wife there.

So I went on a spree with a fellow who is courting my sister. On my way back home I was fed up. I was mad. I had a lot of drink in me. I had an urge in me to get drunk. I knew I would find my wife at home when I got back, and I felt I just wanted to flop in at the door and they would have to carry me to bed. I bought another bottle of wine; by then I could not speak properly. I remember thinking, "Yes, that's how I want to be, very drunk."

I came home. I was shouting and crying, "Please understand me!"

I love my wife very much. I just went off my head - I don't know what I said. My wife was looking hard at me, and I couldn't even stand on my legs. I went to the toilet and I don't know how long I sat there. When I woke up I felt worse. I thought, "Oh hell, wait!" I went into the kitchen and grabbed a bottle of D.D.T. I drank it all quickly. I wanted to die; I didn't want to live. When the bottle fell out of my hand, my wife jumped up.

She didn't do anything to me, but she shouted, "Why did you do it?" She had a job to get me to bed.

I had not known the poison content of the fly spray I had drank, but I thought it would finish me off. I drank all I could and the taste hadn't been pleasant. All it did was to make me bilious. My wife didn't sleep on my bed. When morning came not a word was exchanged between my wife and I. Quiet reigned in the house. I felt small. I knew, "Well, the end has come now." My wife had left me twice before, and I couldn't bear the thought of her leaving me again, with her mind poisoned against me. That Sunday morning there was no breakfast, so I thought she really meant to leave me.

Now is the time, I thought. I went to the chemist and bought ant poison. The chemist said, "Keep it out of the reach of children and animals", and I signed for it. I went to my mother's house but found she was in church: my sole wish was to say goodbye to her. I couldn't wait. The stuff was burning in my pocket.

My wife was just ready to leave with the two children. I love them very dearly, but I wasn't prepared to go on living for their sakes. I kissed them both. I had in my pocket a letter I had written to my wife: "I am sorry to be a coward. I have thought earnestly about what I am about to do. As for the children, God will provide." I sat down on the edge of the bed, holding my children and I cried. I thought, I have already made up my mind now. I felt sorry. I knelt down and I prayed aloud, asking God to forgive me. I didn't finish my prayer. I opened the bottle quickly and put it in front of my mouth and swallowed!

To my great disappointment, I discovered that ant poison is thick. It wouldn't come out and I tried to suck it. I didn't know that it flowed so slowly out of the bottle. My wife grabbed it away from me: I had swallowed some and some I had in my mouth. I closed my eyes and went to lie down. I lay on the bed. It seemed that I lay there for ages. My wife gave me some milk. Then I realized what I had done: I felt my body was not the same as it had been; I began to feel pins and needles in my legs. The doctor caused me to be brought into hospital.

I have attempted suicide previously, a year ago when my wife had left me, also over another woman. I love my wife very dearly, and when she told me she was leaving me that time I must have gone crazy: I broke crockery and smashed two kitchen chairs, and pulled out electric fittings. I was not drunk, I just couldn't help it. I enjoyed the destruction then. I took one cup and smashed it, then I took the next one, and so on.

When things go badly with me I feel the world is unfair and I cannot tolerate any adversity. Things can hurt me very deeply and I cry easily. In company I feel bashful and I blush when the con-

versation refers to me. I have a bath seldom for the reason that we haven't got a bath, but I am fastidious about washing. My wife is none too clean, and she neglects to wash every night. Another thing: I am hot-natured, yet I can honestly say for the first year of marriage my wife knew nothing of the pleasures of love-making. When I get worked up and excited, my wife can quite easily blow her nose. When I am making love to her she can easily let a wind out. It has even happened while I was having intercourse with her she has fallen asleep. Now she is afraid of having more children, and we don't use contraceptives because I don't enjoy love-making with them.

I married my wife when I was twenty-two. My Daddy had a fight with me. He drank, but he never wanted me to touch alcohol. On Christmas Eve with a few friends I had some drinks, and when I got home he knocked me with his fist. He smashed my dentures. I was courting my wife already. She often urged me to forget her because she had another boyfriend. That night late I went round to her. She saw I had a swollen eye and a broken lip. She asked me where my teeth were. I told her the truth about my father. I shot a question at her: "Will you get married to me now?" She said she would. I wanted to have a hasty marriage; I didn't give my mother the real reason, that Daddy hit me and so I wanted to get out of his home.

He has been a labourer all his life, and ever since I first knew him he used to drink. He was very hostile to me. I was disappointed in my father. His hostility to me affected me, and he used to hit my mother and beat us children about. He was a good man other than all the drinking he used to do: he was very pugnacious when he had a drink in. I used to sleep out many nights because I was afraid my father would beat me. In the nights all the children were afrai for my father was likely to come home drunk. He used to pull us out of bed to hold a prayer meeting. Sometimes he used to bring us sweets though and then he was good to us. Although we were very poor, it was always my father's wish that I should become a teacher. He used to brag before the rich Europeans when he worked in their gardens: "Come, tell the boss what you are going to be one day!" He drummed it into me: a teacher. I don't remember how I felt, whether I ever wanted to become a teacher or not.

Halfheartedness does not negate suicidal behaviour. Feeble though the attempt may be, perhaps occurring in a woefully inadequate or hysterical person, close study will reveal that the attempt has been led up to by the same predisposing factors which operate in serious self-destruction: a despairing sense of failure, self-pitying fantasies and an intense emotional life, and pathological attachment to a parent (both loved and hated) upon whom blame is laid for failure.

Furthermore, even a person ruthlessly bent on suicide nurses a lurking belief that he will not actually die, that he cannot really kill himself. This sense of immortality in the suicidal person has been discussed by Freud[20]: "Hence the pychoanalytic school could venture on the assertion that at bottom no-one believes in his own death." Wassermann[21] could state even more firmly from his study of potentially suicidal persons that to them the concept of absolute death was inconceivable. There is no justification to deprecate a suicidal person, therefore, merely because he dropped a small anchor or ran up a hopeful signal as he rushed with sorrow and anger into the storm of dying.

The Form of the Suicidal Inclination

A person attempting suicide may act with appalling violence or be quite halfhearted, depending on the clarity of the suicidal idea in his own mind. Suicidal behaviour may take the form of a flamboyant gesture designed to impress a close associate, as in the case of Cosens already described. It may be equally theatrical, and yet be performed in isolation, as Mrs. Fern (Case 1) showed. On the other hand, no warning may have been given of the intention of suicide; to hold, as used to be done, that if a person threatens suicide he will not attempt it, is erroneous - conversely , suicidal behaviour of the most drastic sort is often unheralded. What gentle warnings there were had been overlooked. Indeed, relations sometimes seem to conspire with the suicidal person, so clumsily do they ignore plain distress. A pregnant woman aged thirty was brought unconscious into hospital and died a few days later, a Catholic medal pinned to her bosom and a coloured cord around her heavy abdomen.

Case 3 MRS. GRAVES

Her husband repeatedly asserted that his wife could not have wanted to die, in spite of her dismay when he left on his business trip, her sleeplessness and her dissatisfaction with her life. "I don't think she attempted suicide. I know she didn't. She was unhappy because I was in Johannesburg on a business visit. She's been a good wife to me. She has always told me she was happy .... there may be a little doubt about it. She didn't want me to go away for so long but the business depended on it. It's hard on her because I've got two interests: I've got my wife and my business. I won't say I think more of my business, but sometimes I let my business carry me away. It seems to absorb me possibly more than my wife. But all the same she means an awful lot to me and that's about all I can say.

I'm quite prepared to tell you everything, doctor. For a start, we got married when we were very young: I was twenty-one and she was

fifteen. Although I made her pregnant and had to marry her I don't regret the whole thing. She was the very first woman I ever made love to, and we were compelled to marry each other. I wanted it that way and she also wanted it that way.

She's been unhappy sometimes because she made herself unhappy. If she makes up her mind to something nothing in the world will cause her to change it. If she is unhappy ... if she is! sometimes she seems happier in other people's company because they can entertain her more, perhaps. You know yourself some people are very amusing and that type of thing; I am jealous of her as well, although she's been very good recently. I mean, there have been times when she's gone out with other fellows and stayed away from the house and we've had trouble about it. Not often. One time the Aircraft Carrier Remarkable was in she stayed away for about ten days. I was very worried about her. But we made it up. Sexually we get on well, but I'd like her to be happier. There's no trouble, but I feel we could be happier together, somehow. I'm not a very jovial kind of person - I don't entertain her perhaps as well as I should. She does feel cut up about me sometimes. Perhaps because I devote too much time to the business and not enough to her. I only wish I had devoted more time to her, but I am sure she is going to recover. They all say a woman likes to be entertained and made a fuss of. I'm not that way inclined. I wish I was. It's not in me. You know, some people are lazy. I'm one of the lazy ones.

We've got four children and she's expecting the fifth now. She wasn't feeling well. While I was away she was unhappy. She bought twenty sleeping tablets the day before this happened. She signed the poison book. She thinks she's got a strong constitution; that night she took an exaggerated quantity of tablets and they got the better of her. She spoke to her mother and when her mother left her I think she wasn't in control of her faculties and took the balance that was left in the box. I think that's what happened. When her mother saw my wife becoming unconscious she did her best. She rang the chemist twice. She told the chemist the second time my wife Sally had taken an overdose and that it must have been the full box. He said, oh, she'd sleep it off. So her ma didn't bother to call the doctor. My brother-in-law says she wanted to keep it away from the doctor. That was one of the reasons why she didn't call the doctor. On the other hand, she may have had faith in the chemist and thought Sally would sleep it off normally".

Such cases are common enough, of suicidal behaviour in persons who never proclaimed to anybody else their desire to die. Indeed, these silent suicides may have had no conscious plan of self-

destruction, but may have given way to a sudden impulse which they were powerless to resist. Many different kinds of stimuli can evoke thoughts of suicide in persons who never before thought of it as a way out of social difficulties; however, that the notion had firm unconscious roots in their personalities may become revealed to the observer, and the tenacity with which they seek to die may suggest suicide is not an entirely unwelcome notion. The instance which follows has the merit also of illustrating how contagious the idea of suicide can be. Immediately after his friend Norman had killed himself by jumping before a car, an exuberant boy of seventeen severed the tendons of both wrists. He explained that because his friend had died, he also had to die, even if with reluctance. He fought his medical attendants, struggling against having his wounds stitched. "Doctor, give me something that will kill me. Please! Leave me alone and let me die. I must get out of it!" After an hour he became calm and told his story fluently.

Case 4. JIMMY PALMER

My own home life isn't very happy. There are always arguments at home. At one time my father drank a great deal but he has given that up now. There was a lot of unhappiness while he was drinking. I would never have anything to do with my father while he was sort of drunk, and he used to resent that a bit. I used to get a lot of hidings, specially when he was under the influence. Even since he gave up drinking, I spend more time away from the house. I am always out of the house, whenever I can help it. I don't like thinking of the time my father drank. He and my mother still argue a lot at home, mostly over money matters. It gets on my nerves. My mother is very often sick with asthma and so on - my father's drinking had an effect on her, I suppose. I have two sisters and one brother; my small brother is very spoilt and gets everything he wants. They all work on my nerves.

My friend Norman always used to say I was more than a brother to him, and I think he was more than a brother to me, too. There was a lot of trouble in Norman's home life. His father and mother could not get on. They never slept together: they had separate rooms. Nothing was as it should be.

I had known Norman for a year. He sort of fell for my girlfriend Maureen, and so it worked out that we were both in love with the same woman, Norman and I. There was a sort of jealous feeling between us. We used to go round a lot together. After he fell for her he tried to get her for himself. She didn't want to know his troubles and he knew I was in love with her.

If he'd never met Maureen and me this may not have happened. He got the idea there was nothing in life for him. I ought to say how I sort of engineered that Norman should ask Maureen to be his girl. I thought to myself, "Well, I'm certain that if he asks her she'll say No, and that will sort of put a cap on everything." One night we went swimming and beside the sea he asked her, and she said, "Yes, I do love you." Then they were sort of boyfriend and girlfriend. Going back in the car I felt very sad, and I told them, "Yes, I hope you'll be happy," and I told Norman he must treat her well because I was very fond of her. Afterwards he came to sleep at my home. I put on an act that it was finished between the two of us, because he had Maureen now, and you can't have your girlfriend go off with your best pal. You either have to choose between your girlfriend or your pal, if that happens.

Afterwards, Norman told Maureen that he didn't really love her. The very words he used were: "It's like having a motor car and not being able to use it." So Norman said he didn't love her; he said he felt that he wanted her, but when he had her he didn't want her any more.

I believed him. Once he told her he didn't love her any more, we were very happy again. But I began pestering him again, saying he was stupid to break it off with Maureen. I made Norman swear that it wasn't through me that he'd broken off with her, and he said, "No, it was because I felt I couldn't love her." He felt very sad about it, but he had a good way of hiding his feelings. He told me himself that he was very sad.

The first time Norman spoke of suicide was when we were driving in his car. We had an argument. He stopped the car and wanted to get out and jump in front of an approaching car. There were just the two of us in the car that afternoon. I said to him, "You mustn't be stupid"; he said he didn't know. I knew the only way to stop him from taking his life was to suggest that if he ever tried it again I would also take my life, and I swore by God that I would. I thought that would definitely keep him back.



Weeks later he spoke to Maureen and told her he'd had enough. He wasn't going to see her any more because we were all getting on each others' nerves. He told me it was no good two chaps going

after one girl. Both of us were eating our hearts out when the other one was with her, he said.

What I want to explain is that I tried to get Norman and Maureen to make up. I egged him on. I sort of left the two of them alone. I promised him that if they did make up and were in love with each other, I was quite prepared to step out of the picture. I thought if they did I'd really be able to forget Maureen myself. I told him he and I would always be pals and it would be the three of us together.

So he asked her a second time. She said she hadn't made up her mind. He was very cut up when he told me about it, and he sort of said there was absolutely nothing in life for him. I said, "Don't be stupid. She didn't say No, she said she doesn't know. Hang on and give her more time to think it over."

Then one evening we were at Maureen's house. She sat on the couch next to me, but we were not close together; she was in one corner and I was in the other. Norman sat opposite us. I fell asleep but he woke me. He said, "Come on, let's go. I'm tired and I want to go home." So he got up and went out. There was mistletoe hanging, so I kissed Maureen under the mistletoe. I don't know if Norman saw me. There was nothing to it, just a sort of Christmas kiss. He might have felt a bit jealous. But I mean after all was said and done, if he wanted to kiss her under the mistletoe he could have come and done it. She wouldn't have minded, I'm sure. She wasn't in love with him and she wasn't in love with me either. She was very, very fond of both of us.

We pushed off, and as I got out of his car at my house, I saw him fiddling with his ring. I got out of one door and went round to his side to thank him for bringing me home. He said, "Here's my watch and ring. Give them to my mother." As he gave the watch and ring to me, he put his foot on the accelerator and he was gone. I thought, Oh, crumbs! I straight away got the thought Norman was going to commit suicide.

I stood on our verandah. Our house is about a mile away from the road so that if you look across you can see a long stretch of road. I saw Norman's car stop. Then all I did was to hear a bang and a skid. I shouted to my father: "Norman has gone and chucked himself under a car!" I began running, and shouting, "Oh God, is he dead? Please don't let him be dead!" Something like that. I was sort of hoping that Norman had just got hurt. But I stopped myself going nearer to look myself - I felt I would probably also jump under an oncoming car if I really did see he was dead.

So I went back towards home and I met my father. I said, "Daddy,

it's Norman, he's killed himself." My father gave me an arm and I felt calm. We both went up and I had a look. I saw Norman lying there. My father said to the driver of the other car, "Is he dead?" The chap said, "Y-e-e-s! Stone dead. All I saw was him running straight in front of my car." The car hit him full on and knocked half his chest away, all his stomach and everything.

On the way back home I said, "Daddy, you know, I've got to commit suicide. I've got to die because I promised Norman. Norman is dead, and what sort of life is left for me now? Everybody will blame me and say it was my fault. When he drove off in his car I knew what he was going to do and I didn't shout."

I was calm. I hadn't even cried when I saw Norman lying in the road - I was just sort of shaken. I didn't fully realize what had happened. When I said, "Can I go to bed?", and my father said, No, I had better not because he was getting into touch with Norman's people, I went to pieces. I found a blade in my room and I tried using it on me, but it was very blunt. I looked for a knife but couldn't find one, and then I said to myself repeatedly, "I've got to keep my promise. I have to try to kill myself." I went into the bathroom and got hold of a new razor blade and I started cutting. I thought I must have missed the vein because the blade wouldn't go deeper. I was on bone. Then I started another cut.

I mean... when I went into the bathroom I wanted to kill myself. I thought, If God wants me to die, then I'll die; but if He wants them to find me before I die... then I would... You see, I was really under the impression that if I cut a vein, the blood would squirt out and would squirt high into the sky for a couple of minutes and like that I'd bleed to death. So, after I made the cut I locked the door and made another cut. I shouted out. I thought, "Oh, well, now I've had it or I haven't had it!" All of a sudden my Dad broke the door in, and I really started to shout, half mad. Even when the doctor came I really felt that if I suffered, maybe... I'd make up a little for Norman's death. I made myself look when they cleaned up the wound. I laughed when the nurses gave me injections, and said, "That's nice, I like it, because it hurts me."

This youth's suicidal behaviour was exhibitionistic, performed to placate imagined criticisms from the world around him, and his desires to continue living weakened his suicidal resolve. Nevertheless, in his ambiguous self-destructive behaviour can be seen the identical motives present in cases of determined suicide. In the behaviour of the youth Painter can be seen the following trends: antipathy to his father whom he holds responsible for his mother's sorrow; a similar rivalry with his friend over the girl Maureen, but his resentment of his

friend remains hidden; the unconscious resentment causes him to feel guilty, so that he encourages Norman to closer relations with Maureen; when Norman dies his unconscious relief forces him to intensify his guilt feelings - so much did he want Norman to die, unconsciously, that he feels he can atone for his hidden hatred of Norman/Father only by dying himself.

In some unhappy lives the impulse to suicide may assert itself repeatedly. The person who makes numerous suicidal attempts may be chronically depressed so that death is compulsively sought; more often, in my experience, repeated suicidal attempts occur in histrionic, hysterical persons or in constitutional psychopaths, when the suicidal gesture expresses resentment at not obtaining some immediate social end. There are writers who feel that one suicidal attempt predisposes to subsequent ones[22]. It is as if the convention of self-preservation is weakened in an individual who has once tried to end his life. Christian doctrine stressed that man's life belonged to God and was not his own to do with as he pleased. But the looseness of contemporary community patterns, and the growth of ideas of individual freedom, both tend to encourage the belief that suicide is a valid means of escape from intolerable existence; however, there remains the powerful impulse to self-preservation to be flouted before expression can be given to suicidal behaviour. Many people who behave suicidally will relate that the thought of suicide had long been in their mind, or that earlier they had made a more feeble attempt.

> Mrs. Paulsen (Case 50): "I had thought of killing myself once before, when I was fifteen years old. I was just a child, but I really wanted to end my life then. I found that I was good for nothing. When I came out of school I sat at home and played solitary games. I sat in a corner and played my little games alone. My father often rowed me, saying it was very childish to daydream. I was ugly, I was stupid. I was not lovable. I thought, Far better for me to get sick and die. There certainly was a great desire to be dead. At times I imagined my own funeral, and thought how sorry my parents would be. Once we went sight-seeing and climbed to the top of a high tower, and at the top there was a compulsion in me, for God's sake! to jump to the ground."

> When Mrs. Yudle (Case a) was seen after she had ingested barbiturate capsules, she admitted that she had previously behaved suicidally, taking ant poison when her husband, to demonstrate his displeasure at her sexual coldness, had been unfaithful to her. Subsequently their relationship became more chaotic still. She took a gun to her hus-

band's work but was foiled in her plan to shoot him. Then she drank more sedative tablets and, later, tried to gas herself.

It is not uncommon to find that markedly inadequate persons reason in this manner: "If I can't cope, there's always suicide." In such cases, however, the suicidal attempts are often perfunctory.

Case 5 MISS SUSANNA VAN BLARK

I have a hate against life. I have often thought of killing myself. When I tried to kill myself on a previous occasion my doctor was very disappointed; the next day I had my lipstick on and he was pleased to see I pulled myself together so quickly and looked so fine. Honestly, I know my behaviour has been most impossible!

When I get depressed I don't know what I do and I don't care either. I'm not religious - huh! if there was a God he would have helped people with stupid minds like me long ago.



I loved nobody when I was small. Both my parents died when I was four. No, that isn't true! My mother is in an insane asylum; I always get sad when I think of her. Why shouldn't I tell you a lot of lies? I resent this prying into my personal affairs! I've never seen my father. He could have had any woman he wanted, but he chose my mother. My mother had black hair, brown eyes and a kind face. I knew my mother was in an asylum. The reason I hated my grandmother was that she wouldn't send for my mother to come to stay with us when she recovered. She left my mother in the asylum! When she had her last breakdown she wrote begging to see me, but my grandmother wouldn't allow me to go to my mother, who loved me so much.

I hated my grandmother. She was a dreadful tyke. She locked me up in the bathroom. I hated her too much even to say good-morning to her. I was scared to eat her food in case she'd poison us. She kicked me once because I went out with a man she didn't like.

I didn't like anybody. None of my uncles or aunts. I never spoke to anybody, but kept everything to myself. I never even told

my sisters anything. I don't want to talk about it! (Weeping). I didn't know my parents, and that's why I am the sort of person I am to-day. I had nobody to teach me, to tell me things.

I hated my grandmother, who brought me up. She is dead now, and I'm glad. She didn't like me. She never thought anything was pretty. I was always a small eater when I was a child, and my grandmother used to make me sit and eat until I vomited. It was from my childhood I learnt to hate everybody. I don't trust people. I'm crying like this now because I always get sad when I think my parents were missing from my life. Whenever I am alone, or I hear other people talking about their mothers and fathers, I feel like this, and I think of killing myself. I am never happy. I've always got to pretend I'm happy. I lie to people that my parents are living in Johannesburg.

I don't see why I should tell you about my life. It's disgusting enough that I've had an illegitimate child. If my mother knew of the things I get up to, I don't know what she would do! What happened to me is too stale to tell. It's slightly boring talking to you. My story is like you read in the magazines - you should read them, doctor, then you will find out all about young girls' troubles. When you get a young girl like me coming to see you, all you need do is to recall a couple of the stories. I won't give you the man's name. He had a mother with a bad heart, and because he was Jewish we had to wait till she died. When she did he married another girl - it was in all the papers. He refused to believe I was six months' pregnant. I took eight grains of morphia to die, but it didn't help. I wanted to die of the shame. I wouldn't go out of my room all those months I was pregnant. You'd never believe all the things I did when they said to me I couldn't keep my child after it was born. I jumped off five steps, six steps; I fell down in the dark, many times, just to get rid of it. I thought I would rather let the child be dead if I couldn't have it.

I am still in love with that same man. He phoned me the other day for a date but I refused to see him. He has come to where I live. But it was no go. At least now I have learnt to use my damned head with men. I have had enough of men. It makes me unhappy to think of all the affairs I've had. My mother would have been disappointed if she knew how I've turned out, but she would have helped me. I take drugs because of my mother. My life is empty and it takes a lot to fill it up. I don't go out of my way to get drugs, to tell you the truth: people just seem to have them. Once my doctor said he had to go to the chemist because he was running out of medicine. I said to him, "I've got enough morphia on me to kill half the people in Cape Town." He thought I was just making a joke.

I don't really love anybody. Anybody brought up without love ... they can't pump it into you at the age of twenty-four. And no doctor can do anything for me: it's ridiculous to think you can learn to love people when you've hated them all your life. You can't teach me to trust people. I don't like people - I never have. I just feel I've got a hatred against life. I don't care whether I'm dead or alive.

After my last suicidal attempt, my friend's chauffeur drove me from the hospital and dropped me off at my sister's home. On the way I thought I would bake a cake, but I found the kitchen was locked. I went to sit on the bed. Then I listened to the radio. It was so depressing with nobody in the house. Then I did my nails... ah!... and then I collected a whole lot of pills from all over the room. Sixty or so pills I collected. Half of them were Luminals, and I don't even know what the others were. I put them all in my mouth and drank a lot of water.

The Response to Resuscitation

Some persons are quite relieved when it becomes evident that their suicidal attempt is not going to succeed. Others rage sullenly that an intolerable life must continue. A few, reproaching the medical attendants, beg to be left alone, perhaps hinting at the more certain suicide they intend.

Nor can it be predicted from a man's behaviour immediately following his suicidal attempt how successfully he will adapt himself in the future. Some who make determined and even repeated attempts achieve happiness and efficiency later as they come to understand their motives and learn to accept responsibility for their lives. Others, who were mild in their attack upon themselves, and seemed able to deal with their anxiety, surprisingly will kill themselves.

Suicidal behaviour is but a symptom of ramifying personality disorder. Predictions for the future cannot rest on the fact of suicidal behaviour itself, but must depend on the nature of the associated psychological disturbance.

Chapter 4

THE SURROUNDING PRESSURES

The tendency is to believe that when a man throws away his life he does so because he is disturbed by difficult conditions in the world about him. Almost every person behaving suicidally will point to his desperate situation, drawing attention to illness, or disappointment in love, or the death of a loved one, or setbacks in his work. He will say how unsatisfactory the world is, how deplorable the conditions in which he is expected to live. That the attachment of blame to the social conditions is no more than a rationalization has already been discussed[23]. But the fact remains that man is a product of his environment. Although his environment does not drive him to suicide, it has contributed to make him that sort of individual in whom suicidal behaviour can happen. Organic hereditary determinants apart, a man's behaviour is the outcome of interpersonal influences during all the years of his growth to adulthood: from his parents he receives the cultural patterns of his milieu, and from his relationship with his parents he adopts the responses he will use in later life.

Those fears, hopes and strivings, which are characteristic of him, are activated by stimuli which come from the outside world. (It is true that he will seek out that aspect of the world in which the main preoccupations of his personality may be indulged). Environmental difficulties, while they may be provocative of suicide, are always less significant than the psychological functioning within the individual. Durkheim, deprecating the effect of psychological motives, had woefully exaggerated the importance of social conditions in the causation of suicide.

Nevertheless, environmental factors are of great importance in bringing about suicide, as they are in the occurrence of any psychological phenomenon. The personality of the individual cannot be considered apart from his cultural environment. In Myerson's phrase[24] the organism may be thought of as "a place where environmental forces of all kinds enter and are reacted to." An individual's social personality, the man as he appears to his friends, is the borderland between society and the private life of the individual. Only if his society gives him opportunity for various kinds of failure will a man be able to express his pyschological disturbance in poverty,

unemployment, marriage blunders or crimes. The major portion of this work explores the shifts by which unhappy people create external tensions for themselves; in the present chapter emphasis will be placed on the social conditions predisposing to suicide.

In South Africa a kind of natural experiment presents to show how important cultural factors are. In recent years there has been a formidable dislocation of population, an immense movement of Bantu persons from the rural reserves into the towns. In the cities the Bantu population increases each month, the newcomers assuming all the privation and insecurity of a primitive peasantry in strange surroundings. Yet, in my experience, a Bantu person hardly ever attempts suicide: there is not one in this series. Thus European culture adds an impulsion to suicide which seems lacking in the more primitive culture.

The sexual maturation of the European happens in guilty secrecy. With the African, on the other hand, parents do not inhibit sexual activities of their children; on the contrary, public sexual activity is prescribed for the child from an early age by tribal custom. At about seven years group masturbation commences, and with each new evidence of his sexual vigour the boy acquires greater prestige among his fellows. He develops publically, with parental encouragement, and not like the European child in private shame.

His inevitable sexual development is for the European child a matter of guilt. If he has already failed to achieve pleasing friendly relations, his erotic desires may serve only to heighten his isolation and increase his sense of sinfulness. His conscience grows more restrictive with the fresh grounds for disapproval of himself. Suicide is a product of the overgrown conscience in a socially-timid individual. The African Native lacks that portion of the conscience which derives from sexual guilt. His growing sexuality, far from needing to be faced in concerned privacy, forms a basis for his social participation. Thus does he escape from the anxious and sometimes stifling scrutiny of the parents to which many European children are subjected. Suicide does not occur in the African Native, because he does not have despairing and guilty attachments, tinged with distorted sexuality, to his parents.

The problem has another aspect. Zilboorg considers it a misconception "that the rate of suicide increases with the development of our civilization, that in some unknown way civilization fosters suicidal tendencies within us." His assertion is interesting, but it certainly runs contrary to the facts provided by other writers. Durkheim felt the rising suicide rate shows up the state of deep crisis in modern society. Sociologists writing later, observing how the suicide rate climbs

from year to year, blame the impersonality of city life for the frequency of suicide in large town populations[25]; in a town it is difficult for some individuals to identify themselves with the group. The definite fall in suicide rate which occurs during each war is due not alone to the sanctioned opportunities of killing, but as much to the group fervour and effort in which even lonely and isolated members of the community can participate.

In the city, groups become fragmented; society becomes asocial. Many contemporary imaginative writers are deeply concerned about "the agony of modern metropolitan souls", to use the phrase of one[26] of them. To the majority of artists and thinkers of our time urban man appears lonely and tortured and for him life seems futile. The world is drawn as corrupt, civilization as tired and effete, with disillusion paramount. The individual feels an exile from history: he is split off into helpless isolation in the face of the monster state. Customs have declined, authority becomes impersonalized and remote, and moral standards are often difficult to discern. Many gratifications available to their ancestors presentday city dwellers consider lost or inappropriate: jobs are often dull and cities drab.

But these social conditions serve to give play to the individual's basic personality patterns; it is his emotional development since childhood, his early position in the home of his parents that will determine whether he chooses to leave the world by suicide. Mature men do not use suicide as a means of dealing with social limitations. During the recent war it has again been revealed what pain, fear and humiliation men can tolerate and still went to live.

The World Situation

At the present time suicide occurs very much more commonly than it did a century ago, and is far more frequent in cities - where the child is more likely to be insecure and his parents anxious. The age is violent and disordered. People in cities have little contact with their neighbours and their lives are shorn of association with the earth and awareness of seasonal rhythms; work in factory and office contributes to the mechanization of life, depriving it of warmth and significance. Hanging like a pall over isolated, regimented, industrialized man are frightening world conditions which he feels powerless to affect, but which are thrust upon his attention by newsprint, cinema and radio. The individual may feel himself puny and helpless, his disaffection encouraging his despairing belief in the right to suicide.

The situation disturbed the uncle of the unfortunate woman

about to be described. "I am a very successful man," he said, "but to think my niece tries to do herself in! Honest, doctor, I'm going off my nut now. I'm a millionaire, and my niece is the number nine relation I am supporting. I've got a lot of relations. I am in a position, thanks goodness, to be a giver and not a taker. God has bestowed me with certain attributes of which, in life, I have taken advantage of, and then use it to help my fellow men. I comfort my relations. The family lived in Europe. Enough said! The smashing up of the European families is a history where I could write a book if I will have the patience. And not only Jewish families! Europe is a volcano and it will remain a volcano as long as there will remain humanity. We call it the cradle of civilization but... God damn it! The Middle East plus the Balkans plus the European continent. No wonder the United States of America, the New World as they call it, to where they were all rushing in boats and cattle boats, to get rid of the nationalism that what made Europe the volcano it is to-day. And you find it even in the United States. Land of Freedom! Even there you will hear people say, I don't buy from a bloody Jew. And between you and me and the lamppost, if you go to a Catholic university you don't stand a chance of getting the right bringing up, the right approach to your studies, and research. And here in this country it is terrible. It is worse than any other country in the world. Two million six thousand Whites, and eight and a half million Natives. Stretched over thirty-five square miles with a coast of one thousand three hundred and eighty miles, and we talk. We want to be independent and we don't give a damn! If the Indians want to-morrow to give us a shellacking, we have four hundred million enemies. Good God, what are we doing? Four hundred million! If they want to wee-wee twice a day, we will drown in wee-wee. It's like what we are starting up in Korea with the Chinese, the worst thing the United States could have done. They laugh at us, and Stalin sits stroking his moustache. And who's responsible? The powers that be. Ignoramuses! A man who sells haberdashery becomes the leader of four hundred and fifty four million. I'm sorry. We haven't got the great people, the Gladstones.

"Nowwe come back to my niece's case. Her mother died in the gas chambers, so did all my family except one brother. I know only by hearsay that the parents of Miss Temple couldn't get on. Her father fell in love with another woman. Her mother, my sister, wasn't mad or crazy, she was just melancholic. She was divorced when Miss Temple was four years old, and I used to send her money now and then. Miss Temple was a clever girl,

independent, with ambition. If she asked me I would have said nursing was not a profession for her. Nursing is a profession where you must have a temperament of smile! Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone. She weeps all the time, Miss Temple does, and she weeps alone - between me and you and the lamppost. After her mother died in the concentration camp, the whole family said Miss Temple had worked long enough, all her life, and now she should have it easy. They said I must bring her to South Africa and marry her off. They heard how I married another niece to a man in America, and how she is as happy as Punch with a nice home and a swimming pool. So the family thought I was the master brain. I didn't want the responsibility of Miss Temple, but they said she would never fall on anybody because she is a nurse: she can always earn. I got sentimental. She came out here. I gave her the satisfaction of a flat and I put a telephone in it. Also I gave her ten pounds a month. She kept popping into my office for the cheque. I said to her, 'Don't come to my business. I get cross with my business and then I lose my temper on you if you come. Why don't you come to my home if you want to see me? In my own home I'm a different Barney at home than I am in business.' Then afterwards she got in a state, because of a man who works on a cargo boat - how can a woman know what the ribbons on a man's arm mean? So she tried to kill herself. It broke my heart, because she is a damned nice person."

While he was speaking, Miss Temple emerged from coma to reveal that she was psychotic, troubled by delusions that the police were spying on her to have her deported.

Case 6 MISS TEMPLE

Thank you everybody, for all your kindness. I'm very sorry for the trouble. I was fed-up with life and all my friends let me down. That's why I took a lot of stuff to drink. I am afraid of being deported. I don't want to sleep any more. I'm sorry, oh, I am so sorry for all the trouble I'm giving. Water! Water! I want to save myself. I was fed-up with life, but I didn't know what it is like to try to die. Be kind to me. Be kind ... Why can't I save myself?

My heart is sore. Thank you, everybody, for your kindness. I know you will have to report it, but I was born like this, with my heart so sore. I was very honest. I worked hard for twenty-two years. I am a nursing sister. I know I am innocent; I will prove it in Court. I am not what you think. I am respectable - you can enquire about me in Australia. I feel ashamed about what you are thinking of me, and for this I must die. Thank you for trying to

save me, but my heart is broken. I'll be deported because I want to die. I am not what you think. I was born with an open hymen. I nursed a French lady who had to go to the doctor, and he pierced her because she was born with a closed hymen. I am not sleepy any more. I'll not kill myself - I have changed my mind. I won't disgrace my uncle and my family.



This world is bad, it is bad, it is bad! I was very unhappy. People laugh at you when they don't understand. I wish I was married. I want to live now. I was engaged twice in Australia but I was disappointed. In Cape Town I was going to marry a very respectable man who has a macaroni factory. He came to my uncle and wanted money for the marriage, but my uncle didn't want him to marry for money, but for the girl. I was very fond of him. I thought I would have a home and be happy. All he wanted was the money.

My nerves are very bad. I wanted to take my life because a man did me in. He was a sailor, and much younger than me. He hurt me and that's why I took my life. I am not his age but he should have married me as I was so kind to him. I loved him very much, and instead of marrying me he is going to marry my friend who is his age. What are the regulations in this country? Am I allowed to have boyfriends? Please try to arrange it so that I am not deported.

Sure, I want to live! I want to comb my hair. I want lipstick. I have heard music, even. After all, the world is nice. The sunshine is beautiful. Beautiful mountain and trees! I am going to live for the future only, and I hope it will be a bright time for me. All my suspicions are things of the past!

You have assured me a hundred times I'm not going to be deported, and I'm so glad. Only just now a Native man came into my room to polish my floor, and he made me a prostitute because he touched on my bed. Later on a man told me over the wireless that I must be punished and that I would get chicken-pox. Perhaps I am a bad girl. I am sorry for everything I have done. I suppose my good friend is not my friend: he said he was not my age when he first came to see me. When I reminded him he promised to take me to the States he laughed at me. I was very lonely and I wanted a friend; unfortunately I fell in love with him. I was told this is a free country and I could have a second chance. I know a doctor in this hospital is arranging for my deportation. They

want to deport me because people don't like me, I suppose.

It is not necessary for a person to be a refugee in a strange country in order to experience a sense of being alienated from others. Young people coming from rural districts are overwhelmed not infrequently by loneliness and can find no comfortable niche for themselves in the strange city. They find their confusion added to by the foreign manners and attitudes they encounter. To their dismay, the admonitions so weightily delivered by their parents have small validity in the city. They feel themselves unfairly cut off from other people and the suicidal attempts they may make aim, even at the risk of life, to beg for attention and warmth.

A youth aged eighteen, after leaving his father's farm, had already passed a year in the city; he lived with a married cousin and had failed to make friendships of his own.

Case 7 MR. LINES

I work in a big furniture store. When I started there the manager said he wanted to be my friend, because he liked to be friends with everybody. He and his wife were kind to me, and I visited them although I was very tired of always sitting with married people. I felt I had to try and get in touch with young people again. He introduced me to his sister, who invited me to visit her at her mother's flat. When I arrived the manager and his wife were also there. Another man also came, and the moment he talked I could see what kind of bloke he was. I could read his character on his face. I would call him a "flirt". Before he came they were all so friendly to me, and then they paid much more attention to him than they had to me.

I left early. I was disappointed in my friend, and in his sister as well. I didn't feel well. And I didn't like the other man's conversation. I could see he thought a lot of himself, and I don't approve of that. After I left their flat I had such a pain on my stomach I had to rest on the pavement. I must have fallen asleep, because when I came to my senses I was being carried into a car. It was my friend and his sister. I could hear they were talking about me. Their mother said I was a "character", and they said a lot of other things about me. I didn't quite know what the mother meant, calling me a "character". I wanted them to be my friends, and I loved the girl, but they only made me feel worse and more lonely. I didn't like the way that other man had spoken before the girl; he did not discriminate between the company of men and of women, but used vile language in front of girls. I told him not to use vulgar language. I didn't like it that he spoke so freely to the girl. I think she allowed men to make love to her. I only wanted to be loving to her: I

never thought of sleeping with her.

I wanted to die because my friends treated me so badly. I drank some iodine a few weeks ago but it was hushed up. Now I drank another bottle of iodine. My cousins with whom I stay think what I have done is just a lot of tripe, but I really wanted to end my own life. It seemed there was no place for me.

My cousin has telegraphed for my father and says my father must take me back to the farm with him. I don't want to go home! There is no future for me there. I don't like it there. All my brothers have gone away to towns because there are no prospects where my parents live. I was very unhappy there.

Oh, my father will never listen to anybody! When I was a child I was always very quiet. I had a friend or two, but my father was very strict. He never liked the idea that his children should go out, I can't say why. He would never give me a reason for refusing. My mother used to plead with my father to let us go out: she was very kind to her children. My mother and father had many arguments. My mother is a very quiet woman. I used to be very unhappy when I wanted to go out and my father made me stay at home. I could never make any friends; I never had the opportunity to meet girls. The rest of my life lies here, but I know my father will force me back home.

As it happened, the father allowed Linde to postpone his return home from the city; Linde became a nurse and worked successfully, but he went back to his parents after stealing small sums of money from a few patients in his care.

While it may be of significance in suicidal behaviour that the person concerned is an uneasy settler in a new country, or has come from a rural area to a strange city, one living in the same place all his life may have an existence of such isolation and triviality that death seems preferable. In every city, not considering how such obvious outcasts as the hoboes, crooks, prostitutes and pimps, are to be found persons who do responsible work and appear contented to their associates, but who on closer study will be found to live in astonishing loneliness and fear.

Here follow some remarks made by a girl of illegitimate birth, who was solitary. Her mother died when she was a few hours old. Her twin sister disappeared when twelve years old and was thought to have been murdered for no trace of her was found again. The girl, Agnes Adams, was shifted between numerous foster homes, in none of which was she welcome. She became so timid that she constructed a dream world which seemed more real to her than her actual environment. She recoiled from people to the extent of

feeling sick if she saw one eat. Agnes' mother was a Native; the lover with whom she ran away, and who fathered Agnes, was said to be Coloured, but nevertheless under a self-portrait Agnes described herself with the title: "Genuine South African Native." Colour prejudice increased her isolation. In sensitivity she outshone many of the Europeans to whom she was a lowly domestic servant. Her shyness forbade her to reveal to a young Coloured man how she loved him and, in self-pitying compensation, she allowed a furtive European to have an affair with her. By him she became pregnant. Her son, Leslie Alistair Rex Barnum Adams, was delivered in a maternity hospital; from it she absconded with him. After killing a dog - perhaps experimentally, she went up a mountain to attempt to starve her son. Failing in this, she herself ate arsenic from flypaper.

Case 8 AGNES ADAMS

A. Lines from a Poem

Yes, it is true, I was a miserable blighter,
I was an obstinate fighter.
I am a bastard, I have a bastard,
And I'll try not to mind when I'm mastered.
But Oh God, oh God! I'm not a liar, I'm not a thief,
I'm not a lunatic, I am not mad, and I'm only about
thirty per cent bad.

B. From "The Story of My Life"

Don't ask me where I was born, because I haven't the slightest idea. My sister was born two hours after I was. My mother was a sickly woman. She was an unmarried mother, and I think just as old as I am now. We were fostered by Mrs. Africa, and when my mother died the Child Life Society took us over. We stayed with Mrs. Africa until we reached the age of five years.

We were taken to other foster parents for six months - all I can remember about them is that we had a very tough time. I don't know why they took us away from there, but nevertheless we were placed in an orphanage. I don't know where it was, but we stayed in it for six months. I can very well remember the day we left that orphanage: a nurse came to dress us in our own clothes and then we were taken to the Sister's Duty Room where a man and a woman awaited us. The nurse and sister then kissed us and we were driven away in a big car. Just as simple and quiet as that. The car then drew up in front of a semi-detached house, and this couple took us in. The door was closed. The man seated himself and the woman remained standing. He then began to lecture us. All I could understand, and remember, was that he told us we were going to live with them. Just like that. Not even a smile of

+ Each life history has to be violated, compressed into a few lines; this need is especially difficult and even distasteful in cases like the present, where the subject has been seen over years and the history extends into thousands of pages.

welcome. We stayed there for seven years.

God, those seven years was the hardest time I ever went through. I can remember it all so plainly, but I don't want to go into details. I'll just say this. Every weekend they went out - from Friday night to Sunday night we saw nothin of them. They didn't eve leave us food, but the man at least gave us each a shilling and told us to bu something if we got hungry



During the week they got visitors every single night. Sometimes the visitors stayed overnight, then of course we had to sleep in the kitchen on the floor. It's no use whining now over all the things they did to us. Worst of all was that there wasn't a day we weren't reminded that we were being looked after because they got paid to do it, and not because they were fond of us. That they definitely were not. Matter of fact they hated us, they hardly ever wanted to touch us.

Somehow the Child Life Society came to hear of it and took us away. Back to Mrs. Africa we went, but because her house was crowded her daughter, Mrs. Kloppers, took us. Alas, Mr. Kloppers didn't like the idea of us coming to live with them. Aft r a year he got rid of us, and as there was no place for us to go, Mrs. Africa just had to make r oom for us. From the first day we set foot in her house we lived in terror. Mrs. Africa's son was a sort of maniac. He used to drink heavily and when he was drunk he usually became mad. He chased us with knives, or threw anything he got hold of at us. He simply couldn't bear the sight of my sister. The night we heard of my sister's disappearance you should have heard the things he called her. I lost my temper, and by god man, that night I saw stars . I threw my plate of food at him, and a chair. That was the last straw; Mrs. Africa being old couldn't stand those goings-on. . I could see in her manner, cold and distant, that she didn't want me in the house any more.

I was fifteen years old. I stopped my schooling and found domestic work that very day. I had no friends. I heard my sister must be murdered, because nobody heard of her again. I never bothered to go and see

all my foster people, and I just brooded. I kept to my room at work, and hoarded all my thoughts. The only way I could keep myself from self-pity was to make up another world, of a gang called the Blue Eagles which was strong and violent. I gave myself up to daydreams. With my employers I went on holiday as their children's nursemaid. On that holiday I met O'Hara. He asked me for walks at night and I fell head over heels in love with him. I just couldn't keep my eyes off him. Of his character, where he stays, etc., I know nothing. Simply nothing.

All good times come to an end. The holiday was over. I was pregnant. I worked for a while and then went into the Maternity Home. There the only one whom I liked, and I know our liking was mutual, was the babe in my womb. But I dreaded the time when he would be exposed to the world, and go through what I went through. I tried many things to prevent him coming into the world, that would have no place for him, but failed. I threw myself down stairs twice before Leslie was born. The nurses didn't like me anyway, so my badness didn't matter to me, of course.

The only thing that kept me going was The Blue Eagles. I had daydreams of them since I was fourteen, and the older I got the more vivid they became. They became real when I was nineteen. I could actually see them. I had become very bad. I didn't care what I did, and being the Chief of the Blue Eagles I wasn't scared of people any more. I would have got so bad as to become a murderer. I stopped myself just in time. I thought that if I killed myself I would live a better life with my gang, and get all the revenge I wanted without having to be imprisoned. I really wanted to die when I jumped from the balcony, but I only hurt my ankle.

I took Leslie and I walked off.

. . . . . .

I had no feeling for other people. I didn't want to live with them and among them. I didn't like them. I <u>hated</u> them. I always... you see, I couldn't look a person in the face. I was afraid a person would see what I really was, and despise me. For my badness. I was just about a hundred percent bad. I felt if I didn't attempt suicide, then I would become mad. I wanted to become mad, really mad. I wanted to do just anything. I felt like rushing round and even committing murder. I wanted to make people scared of me, you see.

But I decided to attempt suicide instead of being mad. You see, at that time I thought I would go to this other world; I even thought as Chief of the Blue Eagles I could come back to earth and punish those I didn't like. I decided I would not let Leslie live either. I didn't want him to be mixed up with people.

I took him up the mountain and I let him starve. For five days we had nothing to eat, but nothing came of it. I tried to let him die.

I wanted our family to fade out of the picture, the Adams family. Just two persons, to fade right out, because it's a disgraceful family. Then I remember finding us at the police station. They gave Leslie some milk and me some bread. I didn't want food, but I couldn't say so or they would lock me up. They took me to a house where I was given domestic work. The people were good but I hated it. They were dreadfully kind but ... All my life I'd been subservient. I didn't want to be under people any more. Coloured and Native people have got to say "Master" and "Ma'am" and I don't like it, you see. And then, I had shoes, but those people didn't like the idea of my wearing shoes in the house.

Then I stole cosmetics. I am so ashamed to speak of it! I was going to this other world. My mind was altogether made up, and I wanted to prepare myself. It just remained for me to go. I... I wanted to make myself look... respectable, I wanted to... look nice. I really can't speak about it, it's so dreadful. But when I got the stuff I was thrilled. For once in my life I was really happy. After I ate the poison I felt like like singing and dancing, I was so happy. After... I had made up my face.

C. Her Social Attitude

I'm always afraid of being hurt, you see. This cut on my forehead I made with a thread, to hurt myself as much as possible before I go back into the world. I'm testing myself for the world. I've passed the physical test, but that is not enough. The worst pain is not physical...

I avoid love, as much as possible. Even my son Leslie, I like him a good deal but I wouldn't use the word "loving". Well, you see, the thing is this. I want to be truthful. I love too quickly, and it hurts, and that's why I always try to avoid it before I can really love anyone. I don't even sort of want to like a person in case it turns to love. I try to hate a person before I can get anywhere to liking even.

There's something in me that makes people rather dislike me. They're sort of indifferent to me.

We're not on speaking terms, happiness and myself.

D. The Dream World

I have disciplined myself. That's why there's a half of me. If I didn't discipline myself I wouldn't have been here at all. I try to keep at least half of myself in reality. The other half... well, that's a luxury. The nice part of me, the half I turn to. That's the part I like. But I know I have got to have some responsibilities, so I keep one half for that. You make me think my dream world was hollow, that it was childish. That realization made me give up my dreams. Now I am picking up the fragments again. Reality is just the same old monotonous thing. Reality is without flavour. In my dreams I feel safe. No

horrid humans touch me. I can be as bad as I like and no-one can say a thing against me. They can't prove my dreams, can they? They can't see what's happening. I could be standing in front of you and having intercourse, and you wouldn't even know it!

E. Another Poem

Mother, father, baby, lover, are the things I've had,
But they have only helped to drive me mad.
My mother: I hate her, I pity her and I despise her.
My father: not worthy of my thoughts, he's but a low-born cur.
My lover: I loved him -unfortunately, he was a sir.
My baby: I loved him, I pity him, but for him I do fear.
So out of this world I have taken myself.
Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!

F. Message from the Mental Hospital

THROUGH THE INSANITY OF ALL PSYCHIATRISTS A VAST NUMBER OF PATIENTS IN ALL MENTAL HOSPITALS HAVE LOST THEIR PRIVATE WORLDS, AND THE FEW PATIENTS REMAINING ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING THEIR'S

G. From a Letter

Do you know, sir, I honestly do not know why I still trouble to do my most distasteful duty of trampling in the muddy paths of reality. I disregard my private world and, after all, what is my reward? I am made the laughing stock of the universe. Yes, I am ridiculed and looked on with distrust by every passerby. I scan my face before every mirror I happen to pass, but can see nothing funny in my appearance. It surely cannot be for the two front teeth that are missing. I do know, of course, my figure is all out of proportion but there are millions of people the world over who are worse than me, in appearance. Can it be that my hatred and contempt for these shallow fellow-creatures reveals itself in my countenance. This burning flame of hatred in me seems to have burned out all my inner matter and is now showing in my eyes?

H. From another Letter

One of the student nurses training with me actually called me to my face a prostitute. The very audacity of the scandalous word completely unnerved me. Needless to mention, the accusation is of course groundless. But the vulgarity and insolence of the girl cannot go unheeded. During the night I decided to consult a lawyer. Now I have decided to murder her instead. It would be far more effective.

I. Explanation of Attack Made on a Police Officer.

I had been to a factory to look for employment. I was refused, as I expected. God, how I hated them. Gradually my hatred turned to

humiliation: I was nothing but an ignorant, defenceless and lone little blackskin. A girl at that. Bad, a thief, a liar and slightly gone wrong. I had no power to plead with people. But it came over me like a great wave: of course I had one power. A power of detachment! Detached from people. Yea, even detached from myself. A power of having no feeling.

All feeling has left me. I just walk. I see people. I hear them. I am going to do something! What the intention in me is I don't yet know. I come to a flag - that damned flag I have always hated. That every police station has. Suddenly, very suddenly, a wave of exultation sweeps over me. This threat of violence, of not caring, not feeling. Yes! it has been defined: I am going to violate the Law. The Law itself! The very Chief of the Law, in his sacred office. This one great power of mine, the frightening thing: violence mixed with unfeeling. Surely this is one of the most valuable secrets of this damnable existence!

I walk up to the station, and right into it to where I think the Chief's office is. When he saw me, oh God! that moment of victory of complete triumph. That glorious feeling! Just a split second, when I saw fear on his face. Fear for me, Agnes Adams. So after all I had power to make people fear me. That Chief for a split second is horrified. His expression [1] could not describe in words; I would not do justice to it. All I'll say is that sheer horror and panic contorts his features. After the split second has passed, I am tied up, placed in a cell. I stay there for fourteen days and, with no misgiving or apprehension, I appear before the Court. I am detached from all these sorry-looking creatures in the courtroom. I am alone. I am triumphant. My name is called and I stand up. All the magistrate says is, "You can go - your case is dismissed."

J. <u>From a Third Letter</u>

Have you noticed that my hair is short and kinky? That my lips are thick? That there are dark, ugly circles under my colourless eyes? That my figure is a compromise between that of a wizened old woman's and a child of fourteen? That my two front teeth are missing and that altogether I am one of Nature's worst specimens? I am a cursed black simpleton, no name, no race, no nothing. Can you wonder that I am embittered, for you are well aware that when I have stated above are plain facts.

Why should I be treated thus? Why was I ever born? I wasn't even born decently, but under the most embarrassing circumstances. You know, had my mother still lived I'd have killed her.

H. From a Letter after Re-admission to the Mental Hospital

I had no idea you knew I had been arrested again, or that you had arranged for me to be given legal defence. I defied the white man's law, but I gave them no reason to think me insane. I can only conclude I was sent in here to crush me. If they merely sent me to jail the son in my womb would have been left to me. They are scared of the son in my womb. He already hates the Law as I do. If ever I get my hands on a filthy cop... But no, I'll make no threats. I shall leave that to my son. He will love and understand me and he will avenge my fate, my miserable fate.

Agnes Adams was able to strengthen her inner conviction of badness by having a second illegitimate child. Social censure continues to be directed at unmarried mothers, for scientific understanding[27] is slow to reach the community that unmarried mothers have fundamental problems in their personal relationships, their illegitimate child representing an aspect of their blind struggle out of an emotional dilemma. Such mothers are seldom able to care for their illegitimate children, and social censure merely adds to their hopeless burden, although it may restrict the number of emotionally-disturbed girls who adopt this unrealistic solution. When in South Africa a law was passed making it illegal for White and non-European to have sexual intercourse with each other, Agnes Adams was provided with a fresh opportunity to live out her role of victim: seeking out another male European, while he was sent to prison, she became pregnant a second time and was admitted to a mental hospital.

Its laws make society safer for its more contented, healthier members. Laws impose obligations. Often those who find themselves unable to keep the laws of the community are estranged, maladjusted members of it. In our time it is rare to find a country with laws which cynically discriminate against the socially weak, protecting a powerful minority more jealously than the safety of the nation demands. From discriminatory laws the weakest members of the class discriminated against suffer earliest. The workings of the South African laws which aim to prevent social mingling of non-Europeans with White persons have provided many unstable people with a way in which to gratify their inner needs for punishment and humiliation.

The Indian man now to be described lived a sad existence, troubled by self-recriminations that he had been disrespectful of his father; he then made suicide a possible event for himself by contracting an awkward marriage with a girl he imagined was White.

Case 9 ACHMAT SULAYMAN

The main trouble was because the police were interfering in my married life. My wife is a European. Although we married before the Immorality Laws were in force, the police say my marriage is illegal. They came to me last week, saying my wife and I are of different races. Then three nights ago two detectives came and woke us up at night, and ordered me to come to the police station and sign papers. Questions were asked me. Their intrusion has made everything unpleasant; I thought it was not nice to live in a world where other people can interfere in your marriage. I was a coward: killing myself would have got me nowhere and my wife would have been left abandoned. I took nineteen red capsules. I told the first doctor I couldn't sleep at night; he insisted on examining me and then gave me twelve capsules. I thought that wasn't enough. The second doctor also insisted on examining me, and he gave me five capsules. I felt nothing as I took the capsules. I said, "The Lord must forgive me. It is not right to take my own life but I am tired. I am fed-up with everything. I can't face the world any more." Two days later I wake up here in hospital.

The greatest fear is the police. If they took me to prison they are empowered to keep me there for two months. It is very upsetting to know that you live in a country and you may not even marry the woman of your choice. Because of my colour: because God has made me black. Because of the colour my my skin I have got to run away and hide. In the police station I who never lie had to be untruthful about where I was born. If I said Durban, I could be sent back there - torn from my business and from the people with whom I was living. What purpose is there in a life of that sort? My trouble is that I am an Indian. Perhaps you can understand, when I took the pills I didn't care what happened to me.

When I first met my wife I had a shop. She was always coming into my shop, or else walking past it, but then her mother put a stop to her visits. We did not go out together again. In fact, I did not see her again for four-and-a-half years. Then it happened one Sunday afternoon as I came from the mosque that I found her standing at the bus-stop. We began to meet each other every Sunday, for just ten minutes, at the same bus-stop. She told me



she would marry me. At that time I always felt lonely. The only person I had in Cape Town was my sister, and to her place I went very seldom because I didn't want to ask my people for anything. I used to live in my room all by myself. If I wanted to eat I used to take a piece of bread and make a cup of tea. You can say I never had a proper meal. Just imagine how I was living! I used to stay in a small room in the back yard of somebody's house. To bath, I used to go to the public baths. I thought if I was married it would make a big change in my life: it would be better if I had somebody to care for me, and to permit me to care for her. (wasn't realizing I was getting myself into trouble through getting married.) Before I married I would just come to my room and lay down; I used to eat a couple of shillings' worth of fruit and make a lot of cups of tea. I never had anybody to talk to. You always feel that you are alone. That's why I entertained the idea of getting married.

We were married by Malay rites, after meeting four times. I realized immediately that I had made a mistake and I became frightened; my wife was also frightened. We used not to speak much to each other the first few days of our marriage. The first evening I didn't have the heart to kiss my wife. It was as if I had done something terribly wrong. It began to work on me. My wife is a woman who does not think much, and when you tell her something she used to stare at you. I told her she must try and change herself, she must be ambitious and alive like other women and look forward to things in life. We were frightened. We began to repent. What made me nervous were letters from my friend telling me the police were looking for me. After that, my wife and I never used to sleep together.

Intercourse with my wife has never been fun to me. I used to use my wife only because I thought I was entitled to use her and she was entitled, as my wife, to expect something from myself. I thought sex might bring a change in her but she stayed as she has always been. I didn't find that my wife had anything to give me. She and I never slept in one bed; I let her sleep in the bed while I used the settee.

I went to Durban to ask financial help from my father. He refused to help me. Perhaps he reckoned that I married without his consent, and I did not marry a girl of his choice. He did not say a word of criticism about my marriage, but he did not help me.

He may have refused because years ago, when he went to Mecca to make a pilgrimage, he asked me to come and take over his business. But I was surprised to find he had given his power of attorney to my step-brother-in-law, so that if I went into my father's business it would only be like an ordinary boy working. Because the old man left everything to my brother-in-law I didn't go to Durban when he sent for me.

I left him when I was only a child of eleven, running away from home. I didn't have a mother. From the time I know myself I had no mother. I saw my mother die when I was nine years old. It makes me very sad. Whenever I see a man talking to his mother I think: it must be wonderful to have a mother. I always think if I had a mother I would try to make her happy and work for her. I never had anybody to teach me what was wrong and what right. I had to answer for all my actions myself. It made me feel bitter inside. You realise that you haven't got a mother who can take care of you. You are a child, and slowly you grow up with nobody to help you. You are left to look after yourself. Sometimes you haven't even got a packet of lunch with you for school, and yet your father has got a big shop. You've got to teach yourself to steal from your father's shop, money from the till, a couple of shillings...

I feel that the big mistake is: God has created me. Even up to this minute, all my life, I have felt that I am the one that has been wrong. Look at everybody else - they live decent and respectable. But me, I was chucked out of my father's house, that's all. Well... not actually chucked out, but I had to leave because of quarrelling between my father and his second wife, over me. I thought, Why should I be the one to cause unpleasantness between other people? My step-mother always thought I was naughty, and made my father listen to complaints about me. He made me big. He fed and clothed me. He used to wash me, and when he expected me to return his kindness, as a son, I could not return his kindness. I left him. When I was a child I left him because I thought it was not right of me to make his life unpleasant: when I was in the house he and my stepmother had arguments about me. But when I was a grown man it was not right of me to stay away from my father only because he did not give me the power in his business. If my father reckons my brother-in-law deserves to be over me, he is my father and he knows better than I.

When the police came to take me to the station, I felt very, very sorry. I felt in me that I had done a great wrong. I began to think: I have just done wrong. The only thing to do was to shoot myself or kill myself in another way.

Now I understand that I can convince the police my wife is a non-European. I did not know before she went to a Coloured school and that her parents have Coloured friends. I feel now she has deceived me. I want to leave my wife. But she must still be able to face the world and feel a good woman after I left her. I don't want to feel responsible if she does something unpleasant to herself one day.

Here, then, is a predicament which, on the surface, appears to result from legal disabilities imposed on a man because he has a dark skin. That the laws are indefensible is not in doubt, but

this man took pains to suffer under them. The community had withheld from him the right to marry a European woman: he neglected the plain evidence that the woman he did marry was in fact not European. He accepted unquestioningly and abjectly the probing by the police into his private life. Far from attempting to show to the police the legal validity of his marriage, he rather responded with emotionality to the persecution he went halfway to meet. The law's operation gave him justification to exteriorize psychological trends which had troubled him since childhood. Since his mother's death he had felt vulnerable, occupied by a sense of mournful isolation. Morbidly he felt that he failed his father and was deserving of punishment. Abnegation characterised him. The coming of the police provided a social excuse for suicidal behaviour; however, the deeper purpose of his suicidal behaviour was to atone for his guilt in relation to his father, and to stifle the hopelessness which troubled him since his mother's death.

Reality does not furnish the reasons for suicide. The surrounding environment can but give meagre point to the adult's self-destructiveness. Endowing social pressures with even the most weighty significance cannot make them appear sufficient cause for suicide; it is not poverty, discriminatory laws, disappointment in love, death of a loved one, etc., which suddenly makes a man the vulnerable target of his own aggression. The social factors which harm him at the time of his suicidal behaviour are but straws in the wind of a lifelong emotional disturbance. Where social pressures have been noxious, and they certainly can exert a disastrous effect, they will have operated most damagingly during the time of childhood. The growing individual is affected by adverse social factors through his parents: when they misuse him because of the pressures upon them, or if they abandon him to harmful conditions, the child's emotional growth will be impaired, and he will not cope satisfyingly with his environment when he arrives at adulthood. Environmental forces can warp the personality which, in later life, may then respond to inner emotional conflict by suicide.

The individual may try to deal with his social limitations not through striving to cope with them, but by disregarding them and timidly avoiding to recognize consciously that the limitations exist. Such a response is a common neurotic mechanism; a pride-figure is constructed which, however, can be maintained only if the individual adopts the further device of insulating himself from contact with his fellows.

This mechanism is the outstanding flaw in the adjustment of the girl described below. Illegitimate, a handsome woman of twenty-two years, she was suspicious of others and socially diffident. So remarkably observant was she that, coming into

a room months after she had been in it, she perceived immediately if the position of small objects had been changed. She sewed flawlessly and swiftly. Her face was always carefully made up, her hair neat and her clothes immaculate. In all her activities she was perfectionistic, and could not bear to be alone for even a short time. Yet she lived almost isolated.

Since childhood she had nourished the illusion that she was a European mysteriously living among Coloureds. Her mother, a Coloured woman, gave Mildred to Coloured foster-parents who permitted her to believe that she was European. Thus her foster-parents participated in her illusion. Mildred managed to strengthen her claims to being White, and to remedy the embarrassing absence of a birth certificate, by marrying a sickly European youth; his mother's antipathy after his death caused Mildred to withdrew deeper into isolation. Nevertheless, her vitality and intelligence enabled her to recover from her matrimonial disaster. Estranging herself from her Coloured foster-mother, she went to live with Europeans and met an uncouth Greek man, much older than herself, to whom she attached herself devotedly, with all the force of her obsessional nature. "Jim became like a cancer. My feeling for him has got a grip on me and it eats away, and eats and eats. I have stood on a pavement, illogically watching out for his car, my stomach turning all the time, all agitated inside because I wanted to see him." The man's mother raised objection to Mildred. The chances of marriage receding, Mildred stifled her desires to shoot her lover and instead attempted suicide. It is interesting that never at any time had she allowed herself consciously to accept plain evidence that she herself was a Coloured person. The objections of her lover's mother were so pointed that she could only barely avoid admission of her Coloured status. However, it was not the dilemma of colour which impelled her to suicide, but emotional disturbance which had existed since childhood. Indeed, she had tried before to kill herself, when she was ten years old.

Case 10 MRS. MILDRED WHITEHORN

Please leave me alone. I don't want anything to be done for me. I want to die. I am so sorry I did not die.

I do not want to discuss my affairs. Early in life I made the painful discovery that the more I hide away from people the better it is. Throughout my life that has been the chief lesson I learnt.

I am only wasting your time, so please let me go. There is nobody who can help me. I want my clothes to be fetched and I want to go out. What does it matter how I feel? Nobody cares. You are just one of the

people who don't care. Oh, I suppose you will eventually extract it from me, so I'll tell you my story.

I don't really know the whole truth about myself. My foster-mother worked for my father or my mother - I don't really know which of the two. And then I came along, illegitimate or something: it was all hush-hush. My birth is not even registered, do you know that? I don't even know what my real name is. But now I am Mrs. Whitehorn. But the fact is, I will never really know who I am, nor will I ever know what it is like to have a father and a mother. I am not ashamed of my foster-mother because she is Coloured, but she was never the kind of person I could speak my heart out with. She can't understand. But she was wonderfully good to me: she divorced her husband who was always intoxicated and fighting when I was eleven years old. Unfortunately she hasn't the mentality to tell me what I should do.



My real parents both died when I was little. I had a very secluded life as a child. I had cats and dogs and canaries and a bunny and lots of toys, but I never played with children. I was always alone. I had everything money could buy, but there was no happiness in the home. My foster-parents were always quarrelling, and the incessant argument going on kept me strung up all the time.

I always felt alone. I envied other children having parents. (Weeping). I suppose I was completely isolated. I did not concern myself with the Coloured people I lived amongst. I went to a European school. What worried me a lot was that the other children made me feel my difference from them. They made me realise my name wasn't real for me. My foster-mother wouldn't tell me anything. It was a fearful shock when one little girl who played with me told me that I didn't have any proper parents. Do you know, I took poison when I was a little girl. It was ant poison. I was about ten years old then. There had been friction between my foster-parents and my foster-mother was unhappy; I felt miserable that she was so sad. I just felt that they didn't want me and they didn't care about me. I vomited and was sick: nobody ever knew I took the poison - I kept it to myself until now.

I married when I was sixteen. I didn't know what I was doing; I didn't love my husband. I could not bear Ronald to touch me. I soon became pregnant, but after seven months I had an accident and had a miscarriage and lost... it was twins. Ronald's parents always interfered in our married life. My husband was tied to his mother's apron

strings - as a man he was weak. He developed tuberculosis and when he went to a sanatorium I moved to stay near him. He was still sick when he came out, but because his parents were unbearable I packed up and left. We were both Catholics. I would not listen to the priest when he urged me to return to Ronald. He was very sick when his parents started divorce proceedings against me on his behalf. They took all my things, my furniture, my linen and everything. Before he died the priest tried to marry us again. I would have agreed because Ronald wanted us to. I stayed with him three weeks before he died, but I could not marry him. Although the priest wanted to marry us, it would not have held because Ronald got meningitis and his mind went. His parents said to me I had failed him for not making him happier. They kept all my things. I have nothing to do with them now: when he died I thought I was well rid of them.

I know I never really cared for any one until I met my boyfriend, Jim. He is twice as old as I am. His mother is against me; she doesn't want him to marry somebody else's wife... or widow. Isn't that completely absurd? I prepared a trousseau, and six months ago she came from Greece. I saw her once, a typical peasant not able to think further than her nose; I don't think she even knew who I was. She won't let him marry me. He didn't come to see me, but just wrote he had discussed our marriage with his mother and it would now definitely not take place. I can't talk more... I am sorry. I have been weeping like this for days now. I don't see how I can continue living with this sadness inside me.

You must forgive me for crying like this. Jim knows how much I love him. He cares for me: I have told him a few times no good can come of our being together, but he has always come back to me. I have gone about with him for three years. He has a good character and I like being with him. But he has hurt me many times. Many times I got ready to go out with him and he never turned up for the date - that used to upset me. He is a gambler, preferring to play cards above anything else on earth.

The sexual aspect of our relationship does not worry me at all. I cared for Jim very much, and he is a man. It just happened and it kept happening. He's not emotional. I don't even know what he thinks of me as a person. I never know what he is thinking or feeling. I work myself into such a pitch about him that eventually I become a nervous wreck. And I just want to see him all the time. At times it did not make me happier to see him, and yet I could not keep myself from longing for him. I don't know why he got the better of me like that. He let me down so! I got into such a state of nerves before going anywhere. By the time he came I'd be all worked up from wondering whether he was going to come or not. Most times he didn't arrive, because he had got into a card game. With him a woman comes almost last in his life, long

after his business and his cards. There were times when he didn't come to see me for a week or a fortnight on end, and I used to go crazy thinking to myself: What did I do - I didn't do anything wrong! When next I met him I would hold in my anger until I couldn't any more. Then I would ask him what the matter was. Then we would have an awful quarrel. It has made my nerves into a terrible state. There have been times when it was obvious he delighted in hurting me. He has already told me that if his staff annoyed him, he would come along to see me and smack my head for no reason. If I said any endearment to him he seemed to become embarrassed, and he never returned the compliment. I always felt that he never felt anything for me: I never heard from him what I wanted to have him say.

He was like a cancer. I used to run into the street repeatedly during each day to see if his car was perhaps parked outside. I don't know why I kept doing it: it was as if I expected him. I'd run to the window every time a car came past; I'd think to myself, "I wonder if that's Jim?" I suppose I got into states through my own fault.

Just before I attempted suicide I wrote him a bitter letter. I wrote as if I was speaking to him. I said, "No, Jim, you can only expect me to loathe and despise you. I will always curse you for the unhappiness you have brought me." I did really consider going to shoot him. I could still shoot him, even now. I hate him, and yet I have loved him so deeply.

Sometimes I think I am going batty. I'm sure it would have given me a lot of satisfaction to go and shoot Jim, to kill him. I have often thought about him and planned to kill him. If I had a gun I am absolutely certain I would have shot him. I couldn't have cared less about the consequences.

You see, if I had a father and mother none of this would have happened. I suppose that is the difference between me and ordinary people. I would have had some security behind me; now I haven't any at all. I've never really been happy. Do you know that? Never in my life. There has always been something lacking. It all boils down to the fact of having no family, not a suggestion of family ties. I always see the wrong in other people, and when I dislike them I can't bear to have anything to do with them after they have hurt me.

The natural experiment occurring in this country permits valuable deductions to be made of the importance of social factors upon behaviour. My own experience of suicide does not support the contention that suicide is an outcome of poverty, or social suppression, or environmental frustration. Henderson[28] has summarized this contention in discussing the statistics of suicide: "... the natural deduction being that in those centres where competition is more serious, where adaptation

is more difficult, where failure and defeat are more likely, where unemployment, alcoholism and poverty are more prevalent, the problem of suicide becomes more alarming." These social factors cannot be of much relevance, in point of fact. In South Africa it is the non-European who is poor, very commonly alcoholic, often unemployed, whose life may be built on expectation of defeat, yet suicide is rare and half-hearted in the Coloured person and all but absent in the Native.

The drive to suicide comes from within the personality. (An analogy is found in recent investigations dealing with the other great form of solitary human aggression: murder. Alexander and Healy[29] decided that in cases of murder social factors played a provocative role only, in persons predisposed by their personality make-up. They feel that the character trends making the individual more susceptible to influences of the environment in the direction of criminality developed chiefly under the influence of the early family environment of the child. Their view is supported by the later investigation of McDermaid and Winkler[30]). While suicide may be activated by environmental difficulties it is not an outcome of them. Environmental influences bring suicide to manifest itself in the community in two powerful ways. Firstly, in a decaying, inharmonious society, which lacks firm institutions and group integration, individuals will come to feel that their lives are insignificant, theirs to dispose of by suicide if conditions become irksome. In the second place, malevolent and repressive social forces can damage the developing child. For centuries society has accepted that it has a responsibility to the growing child, an onus to take account of the child's vulnerability. Therefore, in recognizing that suicide is an expression of emotional disturbance, one certainly knows that emotional disturbance is in part engendered by environmental pressures noxious to the growing child.

Chapter 5

THE PERSONALITY STRAINS

Men are social beings. They live in association with other men and communicate with them. When they are emotionally disturbed their abnormal functioning will show most plainly and openly in their relationships with others; thus from one point of view, an attitude which has been emphasized by Sullivan[31], the emotionally-disturbed person may be regarded as one who has difficulty in his relationships with others. Because he is unstable and insecure, the inadequate person has particular need of protection and affection. But instead his personality is further weakened by his abnormal social functioning. His timidity serves to isolate him more. The resentment he nourishes estranges him. His aggressiveness has the actual disadvantage of incurring fresh wrath from his fellows. The more his maladjustment in society grows, the more anxiously he must distort himself to obtain safety. He may so fear punishment or rejection that he goes to the length of passivity, doing nothing rather than run the risk of any action which may be considered objectionable.

Social dilemma becomes added to personality inadequacy. No one who has dealt with emotionally-disturbed persons can avoid the realization that they often appear to seek out, consciously or unconsciously, relationships which are chaotic and mortifying. Thus, to describe mental abnormality as a failure in personal relationships is a useful concept, but a superficial one. The interpersonal failure is but an expression of the basic emotional abnormality of the individual. Social maladjustment, therefore, is a manifestation of personality disturbance, or which another manifestation is suicidal behaviour. In other words, the suicidal inclination, and the inability to have rewarding relationships with others are separate parallel expressions of personality disorder. Suicide is a result of an urge to self-destructiveness, or basic emotional disturbance, and not of unhappy contacts with other people. In point of fact, failure in social relationships can often be recognized as but another method of gratifying the basic self-destructive drive. Therefore, while attention will now be given to the patterns of social maladjustment, they can only be regarded as the outcome and not the cause of the adult abnormal behaviour. Myerson[32] made this point with his

assertion: "To the individual his own inner state is of more intimate and intricate importance than is the rest of the universe." We have already recognized how complex is the individual's inner state, and how inaccessible, in large measure, to his awareness. While men can unite with each other on a social level, exchanging views and enjoying fellowship and the cultivation of aesthetic and artistic expression, each man's fantasy world is secret and private. The buried emotional life which each person carries with him from childhood to adulthood consists of intimate symbols, personal humiliations, only some of which are agonizingly remembered, unrealizable but huge aspirations. To the person himself much of the hidden emotional component of his personality remains hidden, only sometimes emerging (as in states of intoxication) to startle even himself. That portion of his emotional life of which he is consciously aware he may regard as too private to communicate to others; the conscious outcroppings of the buried world he keeps hidden for fear society will disapprove of it. Reasons of shame and timidity prevent him from communicating his recognized fantasies to others: it is self-evident that the unconscious component of his fantasy life cannot be shared with anybody. He may recognize a portion of it through his dreams, or in wild, uncontrolled outbursts, or in a passage of drunken grief. Because every person's fantasy life is individual, people will forever be cut off from each other to the extent that they cannot share what they themselves do not recognize, and, in addition, they will by design suppress those memories and hankerings of which they are ashamed. In treating emotionally-disturbed persons, a serious difficulty is that people often show gross inability to accept the obvious implications of their behaviour; they reject any view of themselves which does not accord with the conscious concept of themselves they have needed to form during their growing-up.

The self image is formed during childhood, and it is then that his relationships with others is of fundamental importance to the individual, serving to shape his growing awareness of his own capabilities and of the surrounding milieu. Disturbed relations with his parents can lay the foundations of lifelong anxiety for an individual. In later life, if the growth of his personality has been arrested or distorted, the individual will not be able to tolerate comfortably social contacts with others. The original emotional injury sustained during his first years in his parents' home may predispose to difficulty in his school

friendships; later in life his sexual adjustments may be defective, and he may fail in his marriage association and in relations with people he meets during work or leisure. Because most people achieve the greatest intimacy of their lives in love relationship, their lovers are likely to learn most of their secret aspirations and fantasies. Moreover, from their lovers they may require the satisfaction of hidden yearnings carried over from childhood, often completely irrational and impossible to satisfy. Therefore, in love relationships with others, hidden yearnings often receive external expression. Irrational aspirations emerge in the close emotional contact of the love relationships, which already may have been uneasy or angry, because an inappropriate partner had been chosen. And then, in the grip of his chaotic emotional aspirations, the individual may try to kill himself.

It is to be expected that suicidal leanings will emerge commonly during adolescence, in the course of love affairs and in times of marital difficulty, for it is in sustaining intimate relationships that emotional maturity is most required. When his childhood relationships have damaged the individual so that all his social encounters are timid, he may withdraw entirely from close contact with others. For most people the sexual relationship achieved in marriage, on account of the intimacy it permits, the engagement of individuals in their full complexity, is the most intimate and important association they consciously seek in their lives. The timid person, if his personality distortion is gross, holds himself away from the emotional demands of a stable sexual relationship or, if he engages in one, he is unable to respond appropriately.

1. The Vulnerability of Children

In our culture it has come to be accepted that children are exposed and frail, requiring shelter and protection during their precarious growth to maturity. There are laws which prescribe stern penalties for neglectful parents, and public opinion is outraged by any cruelty inflicted upon a child. Most children, it would seem on the surface, do not suffer any grim hardships if they have educated parents and are not reared in poverty. Even if this were true, pathetically many children do have poor or harsh parents, or, infinitely worse, have no parents at all. A tragic aspect of human existence is that emotionally-disturbed parents tend to inflict their abnormal attitudes upon their children; the most widespread harm caused in the world by

emotional abnormality must be the distortion of character induced in the offspring of abnormal persons.

Case 11 MRS. CASPAR

My mother did not give me the love a daughter needs. I was aware of this throughout my life. I was a stranger to my mother which made me feel horrible. She had no notion of what I suffered. I had to work in the kitchen while the other girls did the more refined work, like tidying the bedrooms. My sisters did not wipe a teacup. They always came before me. With my father it was different. He pitied me. When I was eight years old I was certain that my mother did not care for me, and that my father pitied me. Once my father said to me, "I know what you feel in your heart, and I sympathize with you." I was named after my father; he insisted on that. My mother made me pay for this. My father said I was the nearest to him of all his children, and I struck a more tender chord in him.

I was twenty-one years old when I first realized my father and mother had a bodily existence with each other. Until I was twenty-one I kept it from my mind. Then I realized one night during a holiday when the three of us had to sleep in one room. That night I heard my mother talking in the darkness to my father. I remember she said, "I am tired. A man is always rested, it seems to me." I remember that I felt very hurt for my father's sake.

I always had a feeling in me that I would never marry. I know that marriage was not for me. I never allowed myself to have any such thought that one day I might marry.

My mother told us when we were still young of the difficulties in life. She warned us about boys and what they could do to us. She often told us to be very wary. When we were children, my mother always insisted that we should cover our bodies at all times. Even now, I can't bear my husband to touch me; I love him deeply and he cares just as much for me, but I don't like him to come near me.

Now, when my husband sleeps with me, I get no sensation. I hate his sexual dealing with me. I don't know how I can express the hatred I have of being touched by my husband. My wedding night was horrible! My husband just began to make love to me and then I begged him to stop. He tried again next night. For a long time I was terribly sick - he hurt me so; then I shouted at him and I was terrified. I would not let him come near me. It was horrible. I would have got unmarried, if I could have done so.

When my husband picks me out about my inability to let him love me, I feel very sad about it. He said I am hopeless. He shouts at me: "Why did you ever marry? You should have stayed without a husband!" I find him repulsive. I love my husband

but not at all in a carnal way. I hated ever to see his body.

That is the greatest difficulty and the one terror in my life. It is my sexual difficulty. Why am I so different from other women? At first I thought that it was the same with all women. I knew nothing of men. I asked my sister if all men were made as my husband was. I thought perhaps he was too large. She told me, "You have made your bed and you must lie in it. He will go to other women if you don't give him what he wants."



When I was married eight days, my mother said, "When a man has fastened up his clothes in front and walks away from you, you are besmirched and spoiled and you have nothing." I had a fear in me since I was small that a man would manage to overcome me. All my life I thought that sex was an ugly thing, and I had a great terror of it always.

I have given up my life for my own daughter. We are training our daughter to beware of all the dangers in the world. Every day one can read in the papers of murders and how young girls are molested. A person sees so many things and reads about so many tragedies in the papers, men raping young girls, even girls of thirteen. I keep my daughter safely under my arm and protect her from what goes on in the world. My husband is in agreement with the great care I am taking of her. My mother was the same with me. I know my mother was so right to be so worried about the future for her daughters. I tell my child regularly that I am praying for her and that she must be careful.

By transferring onto his child his own anxiety, a parent can inflict serious harm. Often the anxiety is a manifestation of an emotional disorder the parent himself does not recognize. In almost all maladjusted children, their emotional disturbance will be found associated with inner anxiety in either of the parents. Latimer may be mentioned here (Case 32) whose mother feared he was perverted already when he was an infant; Garth Barker will be encountered later in this chapter and the effect of an excessively tidy and domineering father upon him will be traced.

Regrettably common are instances of concrete cruelty inflicted upon children for apparently trivial reasons by chaotic parents. Many instances will present in the course of this study.

Case 12 MRS. JOYCE LINDNER

I knew there was something wrong with my mind; I knew it from the way other people were treating me and the way I was drinking. Even I knew I was drinking too much, getting drunk every day. But I couldn't stop it. Even if I made up my mind now to leave the hospital and find a job and never drink again, I know as sure as God made little apples the first thing I would do would be to go and get stone drunk. Why, I don't know. When people say I'm young and should give up drink, all I can say to them is that I can't find a substitute. Drink is my way of getting happy: I don't worry about anything, and I don't care what other people think. When I'm under the influence of liquor and going into a room with a lot of people inside I know that for a little while I am the main attraction. But if I don't keep on drinking and keep on drinking I can't keep that up. Without drink I'm useless. I can't talk to people. I get into a little corner and I stay there.

I always did have an inferiority complex, and I got rid of that through drinking. At first I couldn't walk into a place where there were people. I'd rather have walked three miles than get into a bus. I couldn't go into a shop to buy things without feeling that people were watching me. I always feel people are watching me. I feel as if I'm guilty. If something got missing I'm immediately think everybody thought I'd taken it. Then if I could get hold of a bottle I'd drink the whole job lot and I wouldn't care whether they thought badly of me or not.



That's why I won't work, because I'm always terrified of doing something wrong so that people will pick me out. Not that I haven't had a lot of picking-out in my life and stood it damn well. But I can't take any more. Well, you can't go to work drunk, believe you me. You'd never keep your job that way.

I first started work when I was thirteen. Then I knew an older man aged thirty-two, (I knew he was no chicken) who took me out a couple of times. One evening he wanted to take me to a dance, but my mother that week-end forced me to go instead on a camping party to the seaside with some friends of hers. I was miserable as hell because I wanted to go to the dance and she had prevented me from going. So for the first time in my life, I got tight. I got tight on brandy

that night. I don't remember very much about that night, except waking up in a tent with some man. I don't know what happened in the tent. I don't know! I was so tight... He took me into a tent, this man, and I remember there was another man as well, so I thought I'd be all right. I think there must have been a mattress and I passed out. I wake up next morning when somebody came in to fetch me. When I did find out that something had happened to me, I couldn't tell my mother. She would never have let me live it down. She'd probably have put it in the newspaper.

I felt terrible, because that was the one thing I'd never wanted to happen to me. I'd always made a vow as a child (and I grew up fast - I had to), that I never wanted such a thing to happen. You see, my father always sort of impressed on my mind that a woman was bad if that happened, so of course when a man did make love to me I felt classed as a prostitute. Even at work after what had happened to me in the tent, I was useless. I was fifteen years old and I was drinking like a fish. I don't like to talk about it. I know I am bloody bad, as bad as they come.

I have made three attempts at suicide really. I don't like to talk about them. This last attempt I made after I had been potting for three days. I had to get to see a doctor; I rolled up to him tight. I didn't have to get tight for he was very sweet to me really. Before I got to him at ten in the morning I drank a three-quarter bottle of brandy. When I got back I couldn't get any more drink. There wasn't any more in the flat. I decided to get into bed, but I couldn't stick the longing. I couldn't. So I sent the maid to ask a friend of mine, Billy, to buy me a half-jack. The maid came back and said he wouldn't. It's a terrible feeling when you want it and you can't have it. I think that's quite enough to make you want to kill yourself. I suppose in a way, more than anything else, I wanted to spite Billy because he wouldn't buy the half-jack. There's nothing else between the two of us at all: he's married and I know he's not interested in women in any case.

The second time I tried to kill myself was after my marriage. My husband is much older than I am. I always was landed with old men, and I still am. I don't know why it is. All my men friends have been older. I always seem to end up with old men. That's worried me a great deal too, because I was wrong when I thought older men wouldn't be out for the same kind of enjoyment as younger men are. I hoped older men wouldn't want sex. When I'm sober, I hate it. It reminds me of mad animals. When I'm sober, it always makes me think I'm an animal - plain animal. When I'm drunk I don't give a damn. When I'm starting to get drunk I don't have any feeling for anybody or anything. I could love fifty men without it making any difference. I most probably could kill a person without thinking. Then, when

I'm sober again, I'm nothing. Just a useless bundle of femininity. That's all. Oh!... horrible! I can't think for myself. I've got no confidence in myself. I worry about my self-respect and about what other people are thinking of me. I worry about what I've done when I'm drunk. I just want to run away and hide. That's why I've travelled so much, just to go on running away... At least, I think that's what it is.

I was telling about my second suicidal attempt. It was after a quarrel with my husband. I can't stand people being cross with me. I'd rather run a mile than be picked out. From the time I met my husband to the time I left him, we never did anything but quarrel and fight. I married him to get away from my mother's house. The day I married him I went to court with the one thought in my mind that if it didn't work out, I could always divorce him. Even then I'd be free of my mother. Marrying was just a way of getting away from home. Why I picked him I don't know: there were dozens I could have done it with, I suppose. I didn't have very much option, because I was going to have a baby.

I told you my husband was much older than me. I can't stick him, because he's nasty. He did to me what he had done to his first wife. He promised me he'd be different than he was during his first marriage. He used to knock me around and accuse me of things I'd never done. He'd go into a bar and talk to men about me, telling them all sorts of things about me that I'd never done. He used to bring them into our room: he'd no respect for me and none for himself. He let his drunk friends sleep in our room, not caring if they were on the bed right next to me. He'd bring his girl friends into the room and make me get out. So I started doing the same thing, not quite the way he did it. I started drinking again, and leaving the baby with Native maids. I was trying to prove to him that I could do it as well as he could. I drank so much because when I was sober I could not do the things I wanted to do to hurt him. In company he'd call me a bitch. Oh, it was terrible! He was always getting into fights and being mixed up with the police. I was never sober at that time. My husband reminded me of my father. My father was a cruel, cold-blooded, lying so-and-so. When my mother said I could not leave my husband and child I used to say to her: "Look, I know what Daddy did to you. If you'd walked out, you'd have been better off."

I left him to be cruel to him. My father knocked me around, my mother knocked me around, and I didn't see why I should take the same thing from my husband. I did care about my child, but now I don't ever wish to see her again. She screams for everything: if she can't get her own way she screams. She's spiteful. After I had her, my husband used to tell me I looked like a hag. After I had my

baby I changed in every way - my body, my face; and my husband didn't want me any more. That's why I hate my child.

I don't want to talk about the first time I tried to kill myself. Oh... it was after my brother-in-law Basil got killed. He was a pilot in the Air Force and I depended upon him a lot because he used to stand by me a lot against my mother and against my sister. While he was away I was miserable, but I always thought that when he came back things would be different. I was sixteen then. When he was killed it was the same as when my father died: I felt the only thing I sort of had was taken away. My father was never very good or kind to me, but he didn't allow my mother to do all the things she would have liked to have done, but he was also a horrible person, though.

I don't think two people ever hated each other more than my mother hated my father. They never spoke to each other unless they were cursing or fighting. It is all my parents' fault! They should have given me the things I wanted. I never wanted anything much. They never had any time for me. They were always quarrelling between themselves and they were both too sick or morbid or sorry for themselves, and they were always going to church. Of my father I thought absolutely nothing. A devil! I wasn't sorry when he died, but I was the only one who cried at his funeral. It was a terrible feeling. I felt as if everything I had had been taken away, and I never loved him. I was eight years old when he died. I was his favourite child.

But my father kissed me only once that I can remember about. It was when I went into hospital to have my appendix removed. He gave me a couple of damned good hidings. Once he gave me such a one I couldn't go to school for two weeks, and once he broke my arm. He was always in a temper, when he wasn't so sick that he was praying. He was a terrible person. He killed my cat: it dug in the garden and he flattened it with a tyre lever. He had a filthy temper. He nearly killed my mother over the cat too. It wasn't very pleasant having him alive.

(But I still have dreams about him, awful dreams! In them I see my father sitting in his big chair. My mother says: "Daddy's back again." I go up to the chair and say, "That's not Daddy!" for he is horribly burnt, all his face and his neck, and his hair is all gone, and you can't see his eyes. The face is too terrible, and then I realize the body definitely isn't him; it is Basil who was burnt in the plane crash.)

I hoped with him gone, mother would be easier to handle. But she wasn't. I have always been shy of my mother. As far back as I can remember I wouldn't even allow my mother in the bathroom when I bathed. I'd rather die than get undressed in front of her. When I was going to have my baby I wouldn't have her near me. No matter what I did, my mother only thought the worst of me. I will never forget how

> once I bought my mother a bunch of flowers. I gave them to her. She said, "What have you done wrong now?" So I took the flowers back and gave them to a woman across the road. I never could confide in my mother. If I did, she'd flare into a filthy temper and sulk for days and cry. Then she'd calm down and she'd start telling the neighbours about me. We had poverty from the word go after my father's death. I had to go out to get all the bloody charity. I had to stand in queues for it.
>
> My mother never drank or smoked or did any of the things I do. She's good! She's too damned good, in fact. She never went about things the right way. When we were alone she'd never pick me out. She'd just walk around sulking all day and refuse to speak to me, and she'd lie in bed and bawl like a baby. But if anybody'd come, oh, an audience! She adored an audience; she let them have it, all about me. I couldn't hit back, so I'd go and get tight again. She and my husband got on well together. My husband should have married her instead.
>
> I drink because it's easier than suffering. There is just a terrible gap in my life. My father... shouldn't have died. He should have stayed alive for another five years. He was a horrible person: I didn't like him particularly, but he was security. I would prefer my mother went first. I know one of them had to die, for they were both so bloody self-centred and morbid and full of themselves.

To spite others came to be the basic trend in Mrs. Lindner's behaviour. Suicide, as someone has remarked, is the ultimate example of cutting off one's nose to spite one's face). Later in her life, Mrs. Lindner married a mild, young airman who took her to the distant farm he was running successfully; she would not allow him to sleep with her. Leaving him, she had no place to go to until she was given harbour by her sister (her childhood rival, the mother's ally). She persuaded the husband of her sister to leave his family and run away with her; after a few days she tired of him and journeyed on alone, finding other men to buy her drinks and, when she was drunk, to sleep with her. Elderly men, a succession of fantasy-fathers whom she could embrace (as she never could her father in infancy), when drink had silenced her stern conscience. In her childhood, the father forgave, opposing the restricting mother with her nagging voice of respectability; this voice, taken over by Mrs. Lindner to be her own conscience, can be silenced with drink. Then the father can be enjoyed. And this voice, the inner image of the mother, she imagined could be destroyed by suicide.

If he is to become a mature adult, a child needs to be imbued with a kindly, expectant, forgiving outlook. If he learned to

dislike the world and to look down on people and (to protect himself) to be harsh with them, if he is suspicious always of the motives of others, it will be found inevitably that the individual suffers under his own intolerant outlook. His conscience is as cruel to him as it is to the world.

During the child's precarious development, we have learnt[33] that the worst parents are more valuable to the child than none at all. Society, represented during the crucial years of infancy by his parents, profoundly affects the growing individual. The older generation, through failure in understanding, can cause the child to experience insults to his developing awareness of the world so gross that his emotional balance is for ever disturbed by them. Parents, in turn, are the products of their own growing-up, which has contributed to what unhappiness they may experience.

The entire human situation is faulty, violent and confused; while cruelty and terror appear requisites of experience, it is not surprising that some children evolve into adulthood with trends in their personality actually seeking for pain and death. In the same individual may co-exist kindliness on the one hand and on the other brutality. Even socially efficient persons occasionally experience feelings of malice and a desire to inflict pain: thus do they enable the weak and defenceless to experience suffering. As long as there exists in a community violence and exploitation, children who are not loved and protected will sooner or later be given actual reason to feel afraid. A parental home is the one stable institution every child should inevitably enjoy. Society has disguised from itself too long that an orphan is an exposed and pathetic creature in other than material ways.

It has also been established firmly enough by now that if husband and wife exist in antipathy, their children suffer grave psychic injuries. Personal unhappiness is transmitted from generation to generation. If we do intend kindliness, the least we can do for the young is to protect them from damaging forces in their environment, especially those to which they are exposed when the greatest blow falls, the death of a parent. Too long has it been overlooked how ruined the existence of a bereaved child suddenly becomes.

2. Deformity and Disease

The concept a person has of himself may be outraged by a flaw in his body. Bodily abnormalities serve to isolate the inflicted individual, holding him off from close relationships with others. Naturally there are brave exceptions: Adler has crystallized in his useful theory of "organ inferiority" how a

flaw may actually spur on an individual to compensatory effort. When the deformed person is in addition emotionally disturbed, the effort to surmount the bodily imperfection may take place more in the imaginative life than in reality. We have seen how Agnes Adams became the chief of The Blue Eagles in fantasy to compensate herself for being " a little blackskin" and how she had imaginary intercourse with a handsome European man rather than risk association with her acquaintances. Such compensations in fantasy are very common, although in less flamboyant form, and are often accompanied by great resentments and angers against the world.

In my experience, physical abnormalities are not commonly advanced as the reason for suicidal behaviour. Mr. Forbes (Case D) mentioned his genital abnormality as a reason for social restriction, but did not feel that his suicidal wish was an outcome of his hypospadias. I have known a girl with female intersex attempt suicide, but her superficial reason was menstrual pain; on a deeper plane she had a withdrawn, sullen personality which her abnormality may have contributed to form. Nevertheless, it is too often forgotten how much hidden outrage shy people nourish behind a mask of apparent gentleness. Deformed persons rage angrily in secret against their fate.

In the series of cases here reported nobody attributed his desire for death to physical deformity. The nearest approach was a nurse with a hare-lip. It may be of interest to trace how the part played by her deformity in her suicidal inclination is at least balanced by her unhappiness in her relationships with her parents. Her deformity, after numerous cosmetic operations, was not gross although her speech was badly distorted.

Case 13 JULIA HORSTMANN

I am not good in describing my feelings. I am so restless. It is as if there is something in me. I just feel like shouting at people, giving a nasty answer to any person who speaks to me. I don't know why I've got like this.

If I had to go on duty this morning, I would have committed a murder. I would have killed anybody who spoke to me. I am all worked up. I want to do something violent to get rid of my feelings. I am unhappy as a nurse, especially since I have been sent to work in the Theatre. I hate the Theatre with its strain and everybody so immensely different from the way people behave in the wards. The Theatre Sister dislikes me intensely. She takes no notice of what I do, and that frightens me, because I have never before worked with anybody who disliked me. I felt so terrible this morning, so worked up, that I considered taking my life.

When I was a girl, I never had boyfriends like the other girls.

Although I went to dances, the boys never tried to tell me they would like to be closely connected with me. All the men I have known have not been of the type which I like. They are not up to my standard. Mentally they are below me. I don't meet the right kind of person. One was a detective, but I went out with him only because I like to go out. There was nobody else; only he seemed to show an interest in me. Yet, as soon as he became serious, I never wanted to see him again.

I have always had many friends, and I get on very well with them. If I set my mind to it, I suppose I could be quite popular, but I prefer having one or two friends rather than a bunch. I have nice girlfriends, but the boys I have met in my life don't come up to my standards. Oh, I wish I could get opportunities to meet the sort of men I respect! I have high ideals and like to talk of intellectual interests with people who are well-bred and used to my way of life. The men that take notice of me think only of love-making. That does not necessarily repel me: I am quite normal in that respect. I have always had a terrific inferiority complex because of my lip. When the time came for me to decide on a job, I thought I could do nothing but nurse. Now I have decided that I can really do anything I would like to do. I have decided now that I want to be an air-hostess.

I have only got a single interest. I have had a great passion all my life: I think I would have given anything on earth to take up dramatic art. Honestly, I live drama! I just feel as if I want to create something, but I can't even arrange flowers. I like painting and yet I can't draw; I love music but I can't play the piano. I love to listen to music, I live in it, I have got a terrific imagination.

My biggest problem has been that it has never been possible for me to speak to anybody in my life. I could never make any contact with my mother or with my father. I haven't ever got on well with my parents, but it has been worse recently. They quarrel a lot about petty little things. I want my father and mother to be happy. It's not nice having to listen to your parents quarrelling all day. I feel sorry for my mother: she is soft and can't stand up to my father. He hurts her: he is very hard: he has always been. He was never gentle to us as kids: I love him, and I respect him, but I can't get into contact with him. As a matter of fact, I am an absolute stranger as far as my parents are concerned. I can't tell them a thing. I have been separated from them most of the time since I was six years old, when I had to go and live in town so that I could attend school.

I was sent to a convent for a year and a half. Then my parents thought I was not making enough progress, so they brought me back to town and sent me to school with an extremely nasty woman. I don't know why my parents sent me away to the convent in the first place: at the time I just thought that my parents wanted to send me away from them. Maybe

they thought I was an impossible child. The explanation that my mother gave me afterwards was that she was not able to curb me. Perhaps all children are impossible at a certain age. I think I fight people so because I want to protect my emotions. I am always trying to protect myself. I fly into tempers over little things. It causes me a great deal of sorrow, but I am unable to speak with my parents. I would like to tell my mother about my boyfriends and so on, but there is a barrier between us. I am always afraid of being hurt, and I am afraid that she won't understand.

My father has given me every material thing in the world, but that is not enough. I quarrelled with my father every day. When I wanted to go nursing he would not allow me to. My father never allows one to do anything; he will never admit when he has been wrong either.

I was rowdy and nasty and I did not keep quiet when he spoke to me. My mother became very distressed at our arguments. She said to me frequently: "Can't you keep quiet when your father speaks, because you know you will never win him over to your point of view?" But I could not see why I should always keep quiet; why I should accept every little thing my father had to say to me.

I suppose my father suffered when he was a child. He is a replica of his own father: my grandfather did not believe in helping his children and my father had to struggle for himself. My father doesn't believe in giving praise where praise is due. When you do something that deserves praise, my father keeps quiet: but once you do something wrong, he never stops talking about it. My father was terribly poor and he had to fight for everything he had. Now he is quite wealthy; he gives me everything I want, but he lets me know that he is doing it. He sent me to boarding school and reminded me how few children had the privilege of going to a good school. He has given me a car, but I never cease to hear how kind he is to me. Do you understand? He is as hard as nails! He thinks he is always right. Even now, when I am an adult he will never accept any opinion that I express. Even my brother, the most marvellous person you could ever wish to meet, he is quiet and kind and gentle and sweet-tempered, and still my father finds fault with him every day. He runs him down, and the smallest little thing my brother does wrong, my father harps on for days and days and days. (Weeping.)

I have always been glad whenever I could leave my parents' home. I hate the bickering all day long! At some time my mother must have had a will of her own. But what is she now, an automaton! She shuts up just to keep peace in the house, and in the last few years my father has changed a lot, for the worse, I am afraid. My mother used to be quite plump and happy and healthy, but during this last year she has got so thin... she is thinner now than I am, and she discusses her unhappiness with me. My father is the type of man who will run down a member of his family in company. For instance, when he takes my

mother to a dance, he hardly dances with her; he would much rather dance with other women than with her. When we were on holiday a year ago, my father told me in front of our hostess that I was selfish and had no decent upbringing. In his pardon, I must say that he drinks a lot. My mother has crept into a shell of her own. That incident during the holiday seemed to put the cap on my dislike of my father.

Even my mother's letters to me are frightened and insincere: she won't risk writing anything definite in her letters.

I don't want to cope with these difficulties any more. I don't feel like ever going home again. The problem is that when I am away from home, my father takes everything out on my mother. When I come back he ignores her and focusses all his anger on me. My mother becomes thankful that there is someone else to bear the brunt for a change!

I still want to die. I would much rather be dead than go on struggling as I am at the moment.

Physical defects, therefore, can seldom be accepted as an adequate explanation for suicidal behaviour. Indeed, individuals with bodily deformities often show great striving to achieve social admiration for themselves. Every physician will have had patients with serious physical disease who behaved suicidally; these patients feel their physical diseases make life insupportable. It is almost invariable to find that the physical illness is no more than a superficial rationalization of deeper wishes latent since childhood. The suicidal behaviour will be found based on those personality trends with which this study deals. For persons who behave suicidally during physical illness, the present will be found to remain shadowed with unresolved relationships out of their past. Current hyperemotional actions are no more than fresh attempts to deal with old conflicts. The oldest person I have seen behave suicidally was an intelligent man of eighty-nine. With wonderful clarity and firmness he claimed his increasing senility limited him so greatly that he now wished to die. It was found that his father had deserted the family when he was an infant; that he ran away from his mother to live a wandering, rootless life in which his great intellectual gifts found little expression; that his personality was marked by a reticence and a fear of self-gratification so great that he chose poverty, and this rather than accept the old age pension to which he was by law fully entitled.

3. Adolescence

Adolescence is a time of considerable strain for many young people. Their childhood over, they must now make convincing steps to assume a responsible place in the community. Parental restraints and

guidance relax and they must decide for themselves how they wish to use their energy and leisure. They take up an occupation, devoting themselves to duties which may strain their resources and which require them to accommodate themselves to colleagues and superiors. School, with the friendships made by mere proximity, is behind them; they now form associations with other young people on the basis of similar interests. The greater their resourcefulness the more active socially they will be. Above all, after many years of taboo and actual misinformation, they have to undertake sexual associations, calling for self-control, tact and flexibility.

It is of great significance to remember that adolescence is a time when the developing individual has the final opportunity, so to speak, of reorganizing his attitudes, values and beliefs. Behaviour disorder at this time is common, and not of as sinister import as may be imagined. The adolescent gives up those ideas learnt from parents which seem to him unadventurous, hampering or false, often passing through a restless and miserable phase before he adopts a set of beliefs upon which he can conveniently base his adult attitudes. Thus the adolescent frees himself from the world of childhood, where he was protected and controlled; if his emotional development has proceeded without grave distortion or arrest, he soon achieves that maturity which enables him to work without anxiety or inefficiency. He participates with gratification in the social relationships of his group, and achieves a sexual relationship culminating in a marriage enabling him to love and be loved.

When the child's emotional development has not proceeded satisfactorily, he fails to surrender his attachment to his protecting parents. He has dismaying failures in his social relationships which is he now compelled to undertake by his mature body and by his liberation into the community. He will experience trouble in his work either because his emotional preoccupations prevent him from applying himself to it, or because he fails to achieve harmonious relationships with his fellows. Also, his sexual maturation will not have occurred, so that either he cannot form a heterosexual relation, or else constructs one which is detrimental to himself in permitting him to continue infantile behaviour trends into adulthood.

Garth Barker was brought to hospital after drinking sleeping tablets: he had before this tried to shoot himself and had threatened to shoot a friend. The other prominent disturbances he exhibited were in relationship to his girlfriend and at his work.

He had quarrelled with a number of associates, although his efficiency had not declined. His parents carefully hid from him his superior's belief that Garth caused more trouble than he was worth at his work; he was bossy and over-important, taking far too much responsibility upon himself and imagining himself a great force in the office.

Case 14. GARTH BARKER

The Mother's Evidence

My husband, I am afraid, repressed Garth, meaning well. He was too extreme. He never let Garth be dirty and Garth always had to go to bed very early. Even now he has to tell my husband wherever he goes. When he was growing up he said to my husband one night that he was so frightened of him that he was glad to get into bed before his father came home. My husband was very hurt. But if a gate had been left open, Garth would get a hiding. He only defied his father twice in his life before he grew up.

Our lavatory was in the yard outside. Garth used to have a lot of threadworms and my husband made him go out every night before going to bed. Garth used the chamber once in his room. He was only five at the time. My husband insisted Garth should go and empty the chamber, but Garth stood up to his father. He said he wasn't going out in the dark to empty the chamber. His father persisted and won in the end. Garth just refused to do what his father demanded: he thought it was worth a hiding not to clean the chamber. But my husband did win in the end.

My husband is terribly fastidious. He had expected Garth to be perfect and not to make any mistakes, even those we made in our own youth. For instance, he goes for Garth for smoking. Garth says to him: "You smoke yourself." My husband answers, "Well, no need for you to make the same mistake."

We have been very careful with Garth. He was clean when he was a year old. He is untidy now with all his papers: now and again my husband has got to tick him off about that. Of course, my husband shouldn't go and look in Garth's desk, but he is tidy himself... he never leaves a bit of ash about.

We had a fox terrier, Lucky, and my husband's boss told him that Garth said he would like to shoot the dog. Originally the dog was given to me by my husband. My husband is very fond of the dog, but his attitude to it is the same as it is to Garth, I might say. The dog has been brought up on the same lines as Garth was. No spoiling, but good care. My husband is firm with the dog, and insists on good manners. The dog sleeps in the house. Garth chases the dog out of his way very violently, or if the dog is being a nuisance he will get unnecessarily angry, shouting at the dog: "Get in your box, damn you!"

When he was eleven Garth came to ask me in a panic why he had no brothers and sisters, and begged me please to do something about it.

He was always very keen on excitement, on adventure. He would catch live snakes, when a child. Then he was fascinated by chemicals, and then it was guns. He became captain of his shooting team at school, and he was a champion shot in the Army.

My husband worries about things in connection with Garth that may never happen. Before Garth had the motor accident and hurt his head, my husband would be terribly worried if he ever came home after midnight.

All this trouble started really a few months ago. After his accident, Garth had to leave the part-time Army. He took his kit to return it, but when he came across his revolver, he loaded it. I saw him doing this and tried to get his gun away. I fought with him for it. I tried to be calm. Then I said, "Garth, I can't get the gun away from you. You are stronger than I am. I can't do any more for you. But please don't do anything silly." I walked away, my heart in my throat. When I got to the kitchen, I heard a shot. I came back slowly. Garth had fired a shot into the sideboard drawer. He threw down his gun, and I picked it up and hid it. Then he brought his wireless set, the first thing he ever bought with his own money, and smashed it up before me. He threw it repeatedly on the floor until it was splintered. He said, "You've got the lot. I've got nothing left now." I really felt I didn't know how it was going to end.

Shortly afterwards, he went into the main office at his work and told everybody what he thought of them, including the director. Garth loved his work so much that he is interested in keeping the costs down. But he knows that he spoils his chances by misbehaving so. After an hour had passed, he was sorry and went to apologize. I was in town that afternoon, and he drove me back after my shopping. He drove the car home furiously, seething. When we got home he just threw all the parcels into the house, onto the little dog who had come to the door to meet us. He came in a terrible state to my room. He picked up the dog from my bed and started to throttle the dog, saying he was going to kill him. I pulled the dog away from him. He said he felt he must kill something: "You and Daddy have got me where you want me now."

Since his suicidal attempt Garth is inclined to blame my husband far too much. I am sorry for my husband. I don't want him to feel responsible for Garth's behaviour. I don't want him to be ashamed. Now he regrets terribly all the wrong things he has done. He regrets bitterly the time he was in love with his brother's wife. The woman herself assured me that there was never anything physical in his relationship. What happened is that my husband went down there one

night, and she was upset; he felt sorry for her. My husband confessed to me. He said he was bitterly sorry it ever happened. For a couple of years I had jealous spells. I had trusted in him before that, and my suspicion of him hurt his pride. When I told my husband I was going to divorce,him, I didn't realize then that I had no grounds. My bitterness against him went on for months. I should have controlled my feelings more. It takes a long time for that sort of thing to get out of one's system, but now I would do anything rather than hurt my husband.

The Son

I wish to blazes I knew why I was doing all these things. Only last year my mother said, "I must tell you I think you a model son." I want to get to the bottom of why I tried to kill myself. First I shot myself, and why I did that I don't know. I missed. After that, I took all those drugs, because at the time I felt miserable. It came over me suddenly. I felt peculiar and I had to take those tablets, I don't know why. I had to take them. A friend came in who stays opposite us. He had heard the shot ring out. First I told him about the accident when I hurt my head, and then I said I would attempt suicide again. Why should I live, I asked him. I threatened to shoot him. I recall another shot: I think I did shoot at him. I had been in a very good mood earlier that evening. I seemed to have a black-out, and when things came clear I found that I had shot at myself. I wasn't asleep, but I was in a daze. I recalled taking the rifle out of the wardrobe; I had borrowed it from a friend to go shooting in the country. The bullet went through the window; I saw the bullet hole in the glass, and then I was spurred on to greater efforts, as it were, so I took the tablets.

I was in the peacetime Army. I was due for promotion to captain when I had my motor accident. The Army was my life. I was meaning to train as a pilot. The biggest blow I ever had was having to leave the Army after my motor accident. I had put everything I had into it. But nobody knew how sad I was: I didn't give expression to my disappointment.

I met my fiancée three years ago. We have been out lots together. We see each other every night. We fight each time we see each other. We often part in anger. Of late, my engagement has not been satisfactory. I expect I get mental satisfaction out of it. I was perfectly happy until a few months ago. She is not interested in the things that interest me. She is more interested in ordinary things than in intellectual things which I like - good books and so on. I don't know what keeps us together. When I am with her I am shouting at her. I usually call her a bird brain. Our sexual relationship is only the normal sort of necking. It doesn't leave anything to be desired, but I must say sexual matters embarrass me. There isn't anything I can say

about my feeling to sex. I found out about it from the fellows at school: I can't recall how I found out. I masturbate, but that does not worry me.

I don't know if my parents are happy together. I think they are. There was a time when they weren't; my dad had another woman. I was fifteen when it happened. I think it was a damned, despicable thing for him to do, having another woman. It nearly ended in divorce. The woman was my dad's brother's wife: she was a bit too good for him and she didn't want to break up our home. (This is most confidential, please!) I threatened to kill my father on several occasions. I used to get cheesed with him sometimes. He used to come home and say some trivial thing like: "Why don't you help in the garden?" Then discussion gets heated. He says, "You're not much of a son." I say, "You're not much of a father". And so on. Sometimes I nearly hit him... I never have, actually. I fly into rages with my father. I have never got on with him right since I was a child. I always used to be scared of him when I was a kid. He was very short-tempered. He knocked me around, although he was not brutal. He was never a friend; he always used to keep himself aloof until fairly recently. Now I find I can't bring myself to have any contact with him.

My father said when I was a child if I brought friends home they would only untidy the house, so of course I used to go out. Actually I was in trouble on one or two occasions, when I was a kid, pinching fruit; I was ticked off by the police once or twice.

My father has a perverted sense of humour, and he wants to own a person. I had two aunts staying in our house once and there was row after row because I was fond of them. My father was jealous. I have never regarded him as a friend. I suppose he has a perverted love for me and is jealous of every friend I bring home.

I can't stand hearing my people arguing. If there is an argument I pack up in defence of my mother. Then my father and I are in opposition. He is a crotchety old bloke, miserable. The only reason I haven't left home is that I don't want to leave my mom. I don't like upsetting my mom more than is absolutely necessary. My mother is very nice and she has played a satisfactory role in my life. She has told me about her troubles, though. Like about the woman who was my father's mistress. It worried me to have to listen to her discussing her troubles.

Actually, not much of a problem exists over my dad. I would say he hasn't caused me any actual sorrow, except that he has lost me my friends and that he fights with me. My grudge against him is in my mind. I can stay in the house and just ignore my father. He has always driven all my friends from the house.

I always wanted to be at the top. I don't want to be a

subordinate. I am going to be at the top always, in everything I do. I don't want to be somebody else's stooge. I want to be a chartered secretary and one day when I've got the money, I'll branch out on my own! I am going to be my own boss, to be somebody! My own boss, that's my only ambition. I'm going to make a name for myself. If it takes my whole life, I'm going to be a somebody.

But I'm not doing so well, am I? I tried to commit suicide... nobody understands me, I know it. I don't like mixing with people my own age. I like people who are intellectually my equal. Most of my friends are older than me: in fact, all of them are. They understand me. I could never go to Varsity, my dad wouldn't let me. I still will. That is the second worst blow in my life. I would have been a major in the middle of next year, I am positive, if my accident didn't cause me to leave the Army. One day I hoped to be in command of the regiment. I must be on top! I admire Hitler in many ways. I have risen from a gunner to lieutenant: the Army was my everything.

I am sorry I threatened to kill my father: he gave me quite a good education. I also threatened to kill our little dog because he got on my nerves: he was always full of nonsense. I was mixed up when my mother found me throttling the dog. Actually, I've got some courage in me, not to let people sit on me. I ought to be always as I was in the Army, in a position of command. A captain! The biggest blow in my life was being boarded from the Army. I was the youngest second-lieutenant in the peacetime Army. I forced my way up. I wanted to be somebody. I didn't want to be rank and file.

At home I'm like a gunner. A gunner! I want to be a captain. (A gunner is the lowest rank.) I have always been interested in guns since I was six years old. They always fascinated me. I can't think why. I used to go in for all the dangerous things. I used to bring snakes home alive. I had a chemical laboratory; until I blew up a bucket one day. The old man knocked hell into me. When I was fourteen I pinched his new car. I had never been driving on my own before. In fact, that was the first time I ever drove a car. When I came back with his car, he was waiting for me. He knocked hell into me. I did it to show him I'm one better than he thinks I am.

(It amazes me how you find all these things out from me. I've never told anybody about them, and I wanted to hide them.)

I am worried about the sudden changes in my mood. I can't stop thinking how my father used to knock me around. Always I could never bring friends to the house. He used to put the telephone so that he could see if it had been used. He used to knock me about. I wasn't so nasty, but he could never see the funny side of me. He used to hit me hard. He used to hammer me occasionally.

Last week I flew into the most terrible rage and couldn't control myself. I can't remember quite what happened, but I do know I went

completely wild. I was on holiday in a hotel, and I asked the Indian waiter to bring coffee to my room. He was slow and I sort of fell asleep. When he came I was in a terrible rage because he took so long. I was horribly annoyed and I shouted at him. He sort of salaamed his way out of it. Somehow I couldn't control myself: the more I tried, the worse I got.

I will tell you frankly, I do feel like getting violent sometimes. Nothing will please me better than being in a fight with somebody. In fact, I have been looking for a fight.

I can't stand Coloureds or Niggers or people in uniform. I've always had a hatred for them. An old delivery boy from Woolworth's walked into the kitchen the other day. I was sitting in the dining room. I shouted to him, "You can wait." I then went into the kitchen and threw him out of the house. He started to take his jacket off. He said to the driver waiting in the lorry at the gate, "How long will I have to go to gaol if I beat up this white boy?" I pushed him out of the kitchen and he didn't lift his hand to me. He just went off.

When I see coons hanging about the streets of the suburbs where I live, I sort of chase them off. I use bad language. They invariably listen. I sometimes wish they wouldn't so that I can throw them out forcibly. Since a child, I have always had a yearning for violence. I have always been terribly interested in dangerous things.

I threw a Coloured man off a bus, more than a year ago. He was drunk. There was a European woman to whom he seemed to make indecent suggestions. I threw him downstairs. I felt good. But the amazing thing is that I seemed to be stronger than I am normally when I am in a temper. That coon was a powerful chap! Once when I was walking home in the evening three Coloured men passed and one accosted me to ask for a match. They were after money, I think. I knocked one down. They would have beaten me up. I had a pistol and chased them off with it.

I will be quite honest with you, that's how I am. I am always looking for a fight. I relish one.

Suicidal behaviour is common in adolescent persons, who are dismayed by demands made upon them which their personalities are insufficiently stable to meet; if emotional maturation has not occurred to them, they are further crushed by their initial adult encounters in a frightening world.

4. Occupational Maladjustment

In the majority of studies on suicide will be found a neat list of the occupations which seem to predispose to suicide. At times, a blatant statement is made that certain occupations carry peculiar hazards. It seems too obvious to labour that

if a person undertakes a work which makes excessive demands of him, his emotional state will become disturbed. On the other hand, persons with defects of personality often compensate for these defects by spending themselves in ambitious drives designed to win social recognition. Freud has studied the artist as a misfit; [34] both from life (e. g. Adolph Hitler) and literature (e. g. Dodsworth, by Sinclair Lewis) we have had impressed upon our awareness the man who by work achieves social prominence but who remains infantile emotionally. Many men, great and insignificant, have killed themselves and their occupations have often been considered relevant to their end: one doubts strongly that such assertions are ever valid.

Of much more relevance is inefficiency at work resulting from emotional disturbance. One of the manifestations of psychological disturbance is failure in concentration on a reality task, inability to rouse sufficiently from preoccupation with personal unhappiness to sustain attention in work. It is usual, and to be expected, that when a person behaves suicidally it will be found that lately he has not managed to do his work. It not infrequently happens that the individual keeps himself away from his work for some time before making the suicidal attempt. Occupations are also interesting (as has been described too often to make more comment necessary) for the sublimations they permit. It is always revealing to trace how a person has come to occupy his position and find what attitude he predominantly exercizes in the course of his work.

An unmarried school-teacher, aged thirty-four years, was carried into hospital after she had attempted suicide by taking some sedative preparation, the nature of which was not established. She was stout and red-faced. A small but noticeable scar had been left following a few plastic operations to a hare-lip. She was extremely tearful and loath to answer questions. When she did speak, her remarks were excited and vehement.

Case 15 MISS YVONNE MARAIS

I am a teacher. I hate it - it is poison to me! I don't want to go on living. I hate everything! I just hate every damned thing! I hate my bloody work most of all!

And then at the beginning of this year, that class I got! They gave me a class of tiny children who drive me absolutely nuts. I am used to teaching big children, not small ones. I hate this class of small children! Actually, you have to have special training to be able to deal with such small children.

The principal has very peculiar ways. You never know what he is going to do. If I decide to do one thing, then he decides to do

exactly the opposite. He fusses over little things. He is always a strain on me, you know. He hasn't annoyed me yet, although I have been most cheeky. He is awful. I don't like my job one bit. I come back to my room in the afternoon, and I may go to a show or something, but that is very rare. Occasionally I go to my sister's place. Usually I just go to bed. That is all. I haven't got any interests really. I love reading, but I haven't got any guts. I never had. Not ever.

One teacher at the school is miserable-looking. He travels every day into town in the same train as I do. Every morning he comes to school in the same train and he annoys me. He shows me pictures and he talks to me the whole time... and... well, I don't know. In the early morning everyone sits and stares at us, and he will insist on talking to me, showing the whole compartment that I am a teacher, which I don't care to expose to all the world. I may be a teacher, but I am not going to talk in the train the whole day, school, school, school! School-marm! When I leave school I am not a teacher any more. I don't like talking school when I am out of school. It just drives me crazy to sit and talk school the whole day. Although this man irritates me so much, I haven't got the heart to tell him that I would rather not sit with him. He would be most injured and hurt. He is not sensitive enough to notice how I dislike him. I am most unlucky. When I get on to the platform, there he is. When I get into a compartment, he is sure to be in the same one. And he starts talking, talking: school, from morning till night! And in the afternoons I meet him again. The other morning he actually stopped before our flat and offered me a lift! Really! I could nearly scream. I have decided now that I am going to try to be most rude to him.

I was a very naughty child. I got a hiding from my father nearly every week. Besides being naughty I was cheeky too. I had a lovely time at home, I suppose, and that is why I hated being sent to boarding school. I was rather an impossible child. My father had an argument with my teacher at school about the absence of Latin Courses in that school. Tempers flared up, and my Dad said he was going to take me out of the school and send me to a decent school.



It was so strange leaving home. I was heartbroken. I was annoyed with my parents for sending me away. I really blamed Mommy for it. I thought it wasn't necessary. I thought my mother was sending me away because I was so naughty and cheeky. I thought it was a kind of punishment. I was a bit of a cry-baby when I first went to boarding-school.

Now I live with my mother in a flat. I am not married, but I have no men friends. I don't want to get married. I read and walk in my spare time. On my last holiday I stayed for a fortnight with my sister and her husband, and I didn't like it at all. My poor mother hates my brother-in-law as well.

I have a pain in my left breast, and I am worried about it. I have not told a doctor about it because I was afraid. (My father was a doctor.) I am afraid that the pain may be due to cancer. I have not told my mother about it.

Sometimes my mother and I get on each other's nerves. She does not curtail my liberty. What upsets me is the way my mother is so careless about herself. She is very reckless crossing streets and that makes me nervous for her. And then there is her awkward habit of talking to everybody she meets, all the people she encounters in the buses and trains. I don't really get cross with her, but I walk off, away from her. I say to her: "Mommy, now why do you talk to all the people? You don't even know the person's surname, but you get into conversation with them!" She goes to cooking demonstrations, and so on, and that is where she meets those women she sees in the streets and has long conversations with.

I haven't got the guts to do anything you know, like my mother or my sister have. I wouldn't have the guts to ask the name of a street in Cape Town or anything like that. My mother gets cross when she goes out with me. I just want to stay inside.

I was teaching when my father died: I was twenty-nine years old. My dad's death was a bad upset for me. I nearly died, and they actually blamed me... look, now you're making me cry! Yes, I did intend to kill myself after my father's death, just because I was so unhappy! I tried to take my life when we came back from my father's funeral. I was very attached to my father, and I became depressed because of the way they treated me after the funeral. My mother said: "You have to go back to school to-morrow." It all upset me completely.

My father's death was a great blow to me. Everything was broken up. They tried to force me back to teach at school, and I wouldn't go; I felt absolutely hopeless. I have never been my real self since my father died. I have always been nervy... I don't know how to explain to you. I don't know how to explain to you about my nerves. I was never nervous until my Dad's death, and then I got like I am now. That was seven years ago.

I have been upset and worried since then, and I have been taking all these drugs.

My father had little interest in me when I was a child, but it didn't matter to me. He and my mother often had rough words, but that didn't worry me at all. Sometimes I was annoyed with my mother for not standing up to my father, but he soon became friendly again. Young men could come to our house, but if they showed any interest in us... as soon as a young man showed any interest in us, my father turned nasty. If he behaved badly to one of my friends, I was nasty to my father in return. I didn't take much notice of his bad manners. If I wanted to get married to any man, I would have without my father's consent. What my father did when we got men visitors was that he just kind of ignored them. He just didn't talk to them. He was very nasty sometimes.

Although he was so quick-tempered, my father had a sense of humour actually. I don't think of him any more. I was horribly sad when he died, but he doesn't worry me any more.

I never bring any friends home. Most of my friends are the teachers at my school. I don't really know what the trouble is with me. I don't think there is anything really wrong with my life; it is just that I'm a nervous type, that's all. Everything gets on my nerves very easily. Where other people wouldn't be upset at all, I find myself weeping. Why do you ask me all these questions? You sit and stare at me as if I were a darned maniac! And the way you doctors come in in a pack in the morning, it's most amusing actually . The way you come in the first thing in the morning, all of you, with your little note books. I have got enough friends and I can visit them if I want to! Only, lately I have been too darned tired when I get home from school in the afternoons. Most of my friends get on my nerves, too.

Yes, my hare-lip does worry me to a great extent. It worried me when I was a child and it does still to-day. I suppose that's why I have an inferiority complex, which I certainly have. I have thought I look horrible all my life.

Sex doesn't worry me at all. I wouldn't be the least worried if I never had a love affair. At the University, I went to a few dances and I had several boyfriends, but there has never been anything physical. I have never been scared of sex, but I won't allow liberties. I have never considered being married. I have never even thought of it. I have seen my sister's marriage: it is the most hopeless affair I have seen in my life. I suppose if I got hold of the right man or something, marriage might happen to me, but it has never worried me. It's not as if I want to meet a man; I am certainly not looking for one. If he falls into my lap.... But I am not going to look for him. I am not that type. In any case, I don't speak to strangers.

I have done quite enough talking now. It has been most nerve-racking, all this talking. Now I want to get out of this hospital.

> I wanted to take my life because I had no further use for it. There is no reason why, I don't want to live - that's all. I have not wanted to live since my father died. He died five years ago. I am bloody crazy. I feel I am damn well crazy. I just feel like that. All day yesterday my mother and my sister nagged at me, and I decided life wasn't worth the trouble.

Any suicidal person who laments that he encounters intolerable difficulties at his work will soon proceed to reveal fundamental immaturity in his emotional life.

5. Psychosexual Disturbances

Many parents in these times attend with enlightened care to the sexual development of their children, realizing that if he is to become a mature adult an adolescent needs to orientate himself to hope for joy in marriage. If only for that reason Freud has done inestimable service to mankind, in removing the salacious hypocrisy and apprehensive lust with which alone sexual matters were discussed. Unfortunately, as the histories in this study show, the growth of many individuals, even to-day, is twisted by unwholesome parental attitudes. Lasciviousness, fear, prudery and lack of vitality work together to cause people to turn away in shame from instructing their children in what is no more than the exercise of a bodily function, both essential and wholesome. Instead, many cannot bring themselves to regard the genital organs without compulsive awe or distaste, and large numbers of people remain for ever incapable of sexual relationships. "Love disappointments" are far and away the commonest reasons advanced for suicidal behaviour. It will be evident from this investigation how very rarely suicidal persons enjoy mature relationships with their love-partners. They may well have made an unfortunate choice, but, in addition, they distort the relation with those pathological attitudes which, operating within the psyche, lead also to suicidal behaviour. If their amorous relationships are examined, it will be seen how little gratification they experience from them, what unusual patterns the affairs take, and what unrealistic yearnings are expected to find gratification. A person so lacking in vitality as to be chronically suicidal is not sexually adequate; even in those who are suddenly overwhelmed by a suicidal urge, it is the rule to find that over many years, in sexual respects, they lacked vigour. Neurotic illness in the adult damages the assertion of sexual drive; it is infantile anxiety which causes the earliest disturbance in the development of libido[35].

Many persons in this study will demonstrate the association of suicidal inclination with the impairment of sexuality.

Hugh Willard (Case 23) said: "As a matter of fact, I was afraid of sex. I am not sexually inclined. As I told you before, as far as sex is concerned, I am very poor. I just couldn't worry about it."

Mr. Forbes (Case D) described his aversion from the female genitalia. He had nightmares in which the shape of the female organ was a terrain for fearful events; he was frightened by tales which he heard with bated attention of how the female organ during intercourse could injure a man.

Frigidity is extremely common in the women featuring these pages. Males, on the other hand, are to some extent exonerated from giving a sexual account of themselves. The superstition is still in existence that it is not important or at all unusual for women to be frigid; in some spheres it is still regarded as rather ladylike to be so.

Case a — Mrs. YUDLE

Of Mrs. Yudle her husband said: "In our marriage she has been the haughty lady, the great lady. Sometimes I had to go for three weeks before she would let me touch her. I always bragged that any man who could get it from her was a better man than I am. On our marriage night we got home and I was busy making love to her - can I be crude, doctor? I was on the job and she fell asleep. Our marriage night. First night. Honeymoon night. I felt offended, as was only natural. I thought, Hell, what bloody business is this? Our first night of marriage and she falls asleep. I never heard of that before, and I've been years with an Army crowd. Then it became a regular thing for me to bring two bottles of wine home on a Saturday morning: one she consumed and one I consumed. For the matter of love-making. I didn't need any wine - I'm very hot-natured, but she needed her wine. With the bottles of wine I was getting it on Saturday afternoons.



I tried to make her understand it was good for our marriage. I told her, 'Don't you see when we've been good together I feel light and at peace with the world? Don't you notice my attitude afterwards: I'm whistling, I'm gay, I can't do enough for you? But when you make me go for a long time I've got a drip on. I'm moody.' She said she doesn't notice it. I wanted a baby, but a funny thing: she said it was only right for a husband to beg for a baby. Have you ever heard such baloney? I wanted a child, you see, and I had to ask her and beg her nicely for a baby. She said it

was the husband's duty to beg the wife for a baby. After the baby she got still colder to me. Sometimes I used to have to go three weeks, and when I did get it, it was getting on the bus and getting straight off. She says after I nagged her, 'Come on, get on.' Afterwards I'm pushed off: it's just a matter of relieving myself. She lay perfectly still, like that couch over there. She didn't allow me to kiss her - she just wanted me to get on with the job. Afterwards I realized it wasn't getting me anywhere. I'm very passionate and I like to romance. But she says, 'What's this drawn-out affair?' She calls it a drawn-out affair! It has to be short and sweet and there's no dropping off to sleep in her arms afterwards. I must stop my nonsense this minute! I can't wake up during the night and find myself making love to her. I'll never live it down. She is very arrogant . She says she loves me, but I said to her once: 'Your love is all mental.' As soon as I touch her she freezes up." +

With a man, however, sexual failure is a disgrace, a defect which is usually disguised. Further, confusion exists about the sort of sexual performance which is to be considered normal. A wife may complain that her husband is insatiable sexually, and the man may admit that he is sensually vigorous above the average, but on closer examination his sexuality will be found to be but a timid and neurotic self-indulgence which to his wife would only have a nuisance value.

Mrs. Reed (Case 27) said: "I hate exposing the family ghosts like this. My husband has lost all the charming, boyish qualities he had when he was courting me. The physical side of our marriage is very poor. When we were first married, my husband used condoms, but just lately he finds that he can't get any satisfaction with those at all, so he has left them off. I panicked. You see, the women gets the worst end of the stick again; if I get pregnant then I will have to bear the brunt of everything. I get no satisfaction at all when my husband sleeps with me, although I use a pessary now. Oh, Lord, yes! I derived a lot of enjoyment soon after we were married. If you ask me, I am prepared to say perhaps that sexual happiness is the be-all and end-all of marriage. My husband cannot endure for long enough to give me satisfaction. Before I have my pleasure he just sort of goes soft again, you know. But then I must not let you think he has not tried. When I have told him that I was not getting any satisfaction, he has tried. I don't want you to think he's an old ogre, being as nasty as he can be. He has tried, but I haven't been speaking to him recently about it, you see."

+See also page 51

> Only when he was intoxicated did Mr. Brand (Case E) demand intercourse with his wife, many times each night, accompanying his demands with obscene words and erotic gestures.
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> An alcoholic patient said, "I am hot-blooded; I like women: when I look at them I just can't resist them. Does it do a man harm to have intercourse every night? But it only takes two seconds and I am finished. If my wife feels like it, I have to think of totally different things. I think of horses and motorcars, I think of my work, to take my mind totally from what I am doing. That's the only way I can satisfy her. If I just happen to remember what I am doing, then I come, you know. I may just make two movements.

Numerous women, thus, do not recognize that what they have to suffer is no more than male timidity and the clumsiness of compulsion.

His sexual activity is man's potent drive towards achieving that personal relationship which will probably be his most significant association while he lives. Sexual adequacy is important in marriage. Sexuality cannot be considered to consist of genital activity alone; a person's sexual activity is an intrinsic part of his social striving, and sexual drive is in part turned aside from the primary genital act and invested in many activities such as careers and forms of artistic expression. Moreover, since Freud made his revolutionary statement[36], that "phobias do not occur at all when the vita sexualis is normal", we have come to see that abnormalities of sexual outlook affect not only a person's genital activity, but also produce, in most cases, glaring disturbances in social capacity and inhibitions to work. It is thus not surprising to find that a person with sexual perversion will encounter great social obstacles: so homosexuals sometimes behave suicidally.

> Case b SAUL DANIELS
>
> I fell so madly in love with an older man. I would do anything for him, far more than I'd ever do for my parents. With the other men I have known it has just been play: he is the first man I have ever loved. We used to wrestle and play, and all of a sudden I looked into his eyes, and then I just wished to kiss him. I accepted his love-making willingly: I loved him and nothing could be repellant. It's his soul I love. Nothing else means anything to me. When he speaks to me, even harshly, I am happy.
>
> I do not want to live any more. It is because my friend wanted nothing more to do with me. (Anguished sobs). I took those pills because I wanted to keep his friendship. He wasn't

going to be friends with me any more because he had found somebody else. I went and spoke to him. I told him I couldn't go on like this. He must be my friend! When I saw it wasn't going to make him my friend again, I took those tablets. I have got nobody beside him. (Weeping.)

I am very fond of him. I told him a lie, that my father had died. I wanted him to feel sorry for me and that is why I told him the lie. I thought it was the only reason I could use to make him friendly with me again. My own father still lives in town. He and my mother were divorced when I was very young... oh, seven years old I was when they were divorced. My parents had never been happy together. My father and mother weren't happy, nor were my mother and stepfather, so my mother left my stepfather and lived on her own. I lived with my mother until she died. I see my own father every day: I go and see him every day, at his work. I am still so fond of him. He is my father..... I am fond of my father. I am attached to my people.... (Sobbing.) I want to see my father! I have no mother now. I didn't want to live any more, that's all. There wasn't anything left for me. There was nothing for me to do, so why should I live? I have lost interest in everything. I play the piano; I have taken part in sports, ; I participate in social things; still, they all make no difference.

I got fond of this person, and the more I saw him the fonder I grew. Oh, my sisters don't know anything about this! I don't even think they have any suspicion of the sort of person I am. My nephew is studying for a doctor, but I don't think my sister has discussed me with him. They would never suspect a thing like that about me. You are not angry with me, are you? I don't want you to be angry with me. I am going to be a good boy from now on. I'll be different. I'll change. I will just have to make the best of it. I will just have to change myself, I suppose. I can't live this life... It's wrong. I have just got a feeling at the back of my head that it is not right to love another man.

Suicide and sexual perversion are each manifestations of emotional disturbance. In my experience it is not common for homosexuals to behave suicidally, but from other studies it is known that self-destructive attempts do occasionally occur in the life course of homosexuals[37], particularly when their social adjustment is notably defective: for homosexuals are usually emotionally infantile, their capacity for stable social relationships arrested as sharply as their sexual development. (The reproof of the community of course contributes to their discomfort.) Thus it is to be expected in many of them that their inadequacy will be re-

flected throughout their activity as individuals, but it is not an adequate explanation for suicidal behaviour that a person was a homosexual; additional aetiological factors will be found to operate.

A celebrated female crook, aged thirty-nine, drank sedative capsules while in gaol, after she had been captured on a railway station, dressed in male clothing. She and a woman friend had eluded the police for many months.

Case 16 MISS YOLANDA BRIGHT

When my father died, at the age of ten I was already supporting my mother. She was a semi-cripple, and I'd go and borrow money; at least I hoped I'd be able to pay it back. I didn't have a normal childhood as most children do. I had a brother years older than me who used to knock me about. He always refused to help my mother financially, saying he needs what he's got for his own family: I suppose each person has got to pay for his rottenness some time in some way.

I used to feel so sorry for my mother. When my father died he said, "Look after your mother." He was a really decent person. I used to feel so sorry for my mother: she was a brilliant person but she used to say things to people in anger which caused them to ignore her. My brother would never have anything to do with her, although I begged him to help me start a little fund for her. I just can't leave my mother to fend for herself.



My first crime was bribery, committed when I was eighteen. Everybody who was in on the job let me down; they just vanished and I got three years. When I came out of prison I went to stay with my mother who was running a little shop. Because of my reputation all the tradespeople turned down their credit and my mother went bankrupt. I couldn't get a job anywhere. Everybody clamped down on us. Once you've been in prison the only person who'll have anything to do with you is a crook. I've got to eat sometimes, and I had my mother to care for. So I got into a lot more trouble. The past has given me nothing. I was twice in love with men, but my mother made such a fuss I thought I'd rather let marriage go. Oh, the humiliation! There's nothing in life for me. I'm going to kill

kill myself! Next time I'll be successful. They watch like hawks, but I'll find a chance to do it.

My father! (Weeping copiously.) If he had not died all this would never have happened to me. He loved me, and he would have looked after me. Oh, it's stupid, but I have never loved anybody quite like him! It has been different with everybody else. I feel sad whenever I think of him.

6. Marriage

Studies of the phenomenon of suicide resting on a statistical basis often show that married people less seldom behave suicidally. The conclusion is then drawn that marriage protects against suicide - and more or less plainly a preventative proposal is implied: that a person who marries reduces his chances of self-destruction. The confused logic of such an assertion is obvious. It is not marriage which confers immunity. Rather is the failure to marry associated with personality disturbance; suicide is another manifestation of personality disturbance. A person refrains from marriage because he is not mature enough to undertake responsibility for the well - being of a beloved person. Conversely, a person having the vitality and the capacity to love another being than himself is also less likely to give overt expression to suicidal inclinations.

On the positive side, and this is the truth contained in the assertion that marriage protects against suicide, is the fellowship and life-purpose marriage confers on persons who were lonely and afraid and considered existence futile until they met their spouse. Furthermore, the sharing of responsibilities and the higher status which matrimony confers (especially upon women) may enable even a disturbed person to mobilize more adequately latent personality resources.

In our fragmented society an isolated person can be very lonely indeed. Women are further hampered by convention which restricts the freedom with which they may go about unescorted, and the social advances they may make to others. For while it is true that a person who fails to marry in a society in which suitable partners are available suffers from an arrest in emotional development, it is also unpleasantly true that in a busy city the weak and insecure receive few incentives to draw them into the stream of communal life.

Case 17 MISS ELSIE CRAWFORD

I am the same age now as my mother was when she became insane. You see, I am the illegitimate daughter of a mad woman! You don't like the sound of that, do you? Now you know why I have never got married. My mother is in a mental hospital. She became insane for the same reason that caused me to be ill now. It was also over a man. (My father died when I was a few months old.)

I have changed my name. I took my father's name. I am sorry I did. My father's legal wife is still alive: you see, she was my mother's sister. I am supposed to enjoy life with all that behind me. My father misbehaved with his wife's sister and I am the result. I used to see my father's true wife, and I liked her. Their son hates me because he knows who I am, so I don't have anything to do with my family any more.

I always felt different. I took my father's name so that nobody need know that the woman in the mental asylum is my mother. I was trying to hide that from everybody! I moved around a lot: I suppose I was trying to hide it even from myself that that woman in the asylum was my mother. I am not ashamed of my mother, not now. I suppose I was in the past.

When I was born my mother gave me away, and when I was three months old she took me back again. When my mother went.... insane, when I was fifteen she told me all about myself, and there were many other people who did not hesitate to tell me... facts. I will tell you the story, as I know it. My mother's married sister went to a farm for a holiday, leaving my mother with her husband. My mother was left alone with him for six months, and three months after his wife got back, I was born. My father told my mother that nobody had to know about me. He helped her to get away to Johannesburg, and then told her that she had to give me away. There is nothing wrong with my mother; she worked hard. And yet I was frightened of her, too. I used to tell her lies... Well, I never knew how she would react; sometimes she got very cross with me for no reason at all.

Huh! When I was a child, I went to thirteen schools. My mother just moved me around from place to place. I loved her when I was a child. I hate her now! No, I don't really... I did not mean to say that. I thought about it sometimes. It should not be difficult to understand how I have become the sort of person I am to-day. When I was a kid, I was sent from pillar to post, and everybody looked down on me.

Even then, I was always on the outside. I was the one they made fun of, you know, always. I was the one who was referred to as "Fatty" ... and .. well, I never paired off. The other girls... oh, I don't know why I am remembering all this rubbish!

When I was seven years old I lived with some aunt or other: I think it was my mother's aunt. That's where I had my introduction to sex. My aunt's husband... I used to have a headache every Saturday afternoon. He used to take me and put me over the side of the bed and he used to do things between my legs. You see why I have got such queer ideas about things! You asked me to tell you things, and you are getting it, boy! They did not give me the money my mother used to send me for

food and clothing. My aunt used to take the money and spend it on the races. That was the same aunt who, years later when I was going to have a baby myself, rushed up to tell my mother about it! Can you imagine going to tell a sick woman in an asylum that her daughter is going to have an illegitimate baby? I have not spoken to her since. I never told her about her husband until I heard that she was going to tell my mother I was going to have a baby. I told her I had never mentioned her husband's treatment of me, because I had no wish to hurt her, but after she had been to see my mother I told her all the facts. I reminded her: he had two sons and he used to bring them into my room and whip them, and he would threaten me with a beating like that if I didn't bend over. I used to write to my mother at that time when I was a small child of seven, but I never thought of telling her about my uncle. I was too frightened, even to think of mentioning it.

I am telling you these things because I know I have an abnormal outlook. I had a very happy year when I was a child, when I was sent to a convent for a year. The headmistress was very kind to me and took care of me. It was at that school I was told by my friends: "My mother says that your mother was never married." (Sobbing.)

Then my mother said I could not go longer to the convent because she couldn't afford it. I went to live alone. I was twelve years old then. I lived alone in Pretoria in a room. I did my own cooking on a primus. My mother was with me occasionally, but usually she was away in the country working as a nurse with maternity cases. She used to go for months to distant towns. She was a little, short fatty, with stumpy hands and a cheerful smile...

Then she got ill, and I had to leave school when I was thirteen. She got ill in that same room where I had been living alone. It was religious mania. She was also mixed up with an old man, like I am to-day. His death was a shock to my mother, and it happened at a time when she was having her change of life. I nursed her and I had to wash her: I can remember that. The night when she first got ill, she told me my whole life story. She said she should have killed me the day I was born. That's what she said! I said, "It doesn't matter, Mummy."

Then she tore up her nursing certificate and said she was going to preach the gospel. I got up and locked the door, and put the key under my pillow. Then she took up a carving knife... I don't remember very much about it. I said to her: "Put that knife down and come back to bed." Then she started talking in tongues. Have you ever heard of that? She spoke in tongues, all night. When morning came I went to get the doctor. When I came back with him I found the police had already taken my mother away. A policeman said to me, "Your

mother has been taken to an asylum. You will have to go to an orphanage", but I went to foster parents instead, people called Anderson. He was quite nice, but his wife used to tell my friends when they came to play with me that I was illegitimate. These were nice people who were supposed to have breeding!

When I was thirteen, my mother was transferred from the mental hospital. She was discharged, and I came to live with her for a year. She used to pick up a bicycle and throw it at me. I once wanted to commit suicide with a blade in the garden... The same uncle who used to mutilate... who used to touch me when I was a child once had a fight with my mother; my mother had been ironing and each of them had a hot iron in their hand and I had to separate them. It was nothing but fight and fight, and worries and misery.

I have been unhappy all my life. I have never been married: still, I am not promiscuous, even though I am not a virgin.

I first got mixed up with a man when I was working at a Mission. It was an Easter week-end, and I was polishing the Mission furniture, trying to get the office nice for the week-end. He came across the road and asked me if I would like to go out with him. I fell madly in love with him! He took me up to his hotel room; I fought like mad... but my initiation into sex was not what it should have been. (I am not referring to what happened when I was seven years old, because that was not really sex: that is an entirely different thing). For a long time after this man seduced me, I felt very ashamed. For many years I thought that I could not marry because I was no longer a virgin. It took me a long time to discover... if there are any virgins.. boy! If there are any virgins, they don't know how lucky they are to still be virgins. What's the good of having a prize, if you can't use it? You could be a virgin all your life and still not have any happiness. I am not sexy: please don't think that. I am talking sex all the time... all I want is to have a husband!

Then I went to work at a dentist's. That man initiated me into the realms of... love. I was very happy. He was married: he used to meet me clandestinely. He used to meet me and take me out. He was an old man of sixty. It's always an old man!

I suppose I had better make the story complete. I was in love with a man before this present one. He was a Jew, and he wouldn't marry me. I was five months' pregnant. Women can imagine a lot. I can imagine a love that doesn't exist. That's what I did that time. How badly one wants to be made to feel important! You love to feel that you are receiving a little attention. You know the way other women are taken out, invited out and loved. I was going to have a baby, whom I named already. I wrote to the man that Michael John was on the way. I wrote him a letter talking about our getting married. He wired back to me: "Suggest you leave Michael John in Salisbury."

I had made baby dresses and I was thrilled as anything: but I couldn't have Michael John after that. I had lived through it myself. I didn't see anything wrong then in having the pregnancy ended. Sometimes I still have lunch with this man, but it doesn't mean anything.

One good thing I have done for myself was destroying my original birth certificate. The one I have now, when I changed my name, shows me as having had a father. That's one of the reasons I've had so many jobs. When you have been there for a few months, you are expected to join the insurance fund, and then everybody stares at your birth certificate. I always used to leave my job when that stage arrived. I have overcome the difficulty now by having a copy of a fictitious birth certificate made.

Then there was a stupid old man who wanted to marry me. He had a lot of money. I thought to myself: If I wanted to go to bed with a performing ape, then I would have married him. I didn't love him because he had no... breeding. He hasn't got the foundation, the background that Freddie has. He was also a widower and he was older even than Freddie is. He was twenty-eight years older than I am.

I have no sex life at all. I don't even masturbate. I did at one time. The man I love so much now, Freddie, did have sexual relations with me at one time, but now he is not sexed. He won't even hold my hand. He just sits and talks. He is divorced now; I met him for the first time when his divorce was going through. That was seven years ago. He is one of the sweetest creatures. He is all I've got! (Sobbing, twisting her hands.) I have been fond of other men in the past, but this is the only love that has remained constant. To think I have gone so long without a little kindness! I asked Freddie to hold my hand, and he said, "Oh, stupid woman!" I think he is going through the change of life. Can a man's change of life last six years?

I asked him on Sunday if he would lend me some money to pay my debts. He said, no. I begged him, but he still refused, and when he left me I just took the sleeping tablets. He is twenty years older than I am; he is fifty-three.

Freddie can't even kiss me, he has got asthma too badly. He doesn't even love me. My darling! I want my darling! I would do anything for him.

Freddie says he can't have a baby. No man is too old to have a baby. He can't have an erection or anything like that, but surely he can have a baby? I am happy when I am with Freddie. He really has got bad asthma. He is chronic. The man is wasted away. His collars don't even fit him any more. The man hasn't got long to live, I don't think ...

I have tried to part from Freddie. I tried to interest myself in other men. My doctor told me that I should forget about Freddie, and

> if I did meet other men... but it would be old men, always these old men! It's not that I don't like young men myself, but I'm neither one thing nor the other, am I? The man I was most mixed up with before I met Freddie was also an old man.
>
> But my trouble is, and has been for a long time, that I am not able to live on the salary I earn. Still, I have got a lot to be thankful for. (Sobbing bitterly). I have not got meningitis, and I am not blind, and I can walk, but I want a baby and I want a home! I don't want to be all alone like this. I want to be married!

Many immature persons find it extremely difficult to bring themselves to the point of marriage, for by marrying a woman a man proclaims publicly his intention to undertake a sexual relationship; by assuming responsibility for a family he proclaims his own arrival at manhood and independence. When still attached to parents and recoiling from adequate participation in the life around him, the dependent person will find it difficult to undertake marriage. Thus emotional immaturity may keep an individual from marriage.

Yet, marriage does rescue many timid and insecure persons from their solitary gloom. However, it does not confer emotional maturity as regularly as is supposed by those enterprizing doctors who, regarding intimate personal relationships as a form of occupational therapy, recommend marriage to their neurotic patients. The creation of a good marriage demands emotional maturity in both partners.

It is significant how regularly the suicidal person has in his marriage assumed a subservient, placatory role in relation to his partner. In his marriage the person later to behave suicidally perpetuates infantile attitudes of subjection, giving expression to his desperate eagerness to win love. It will be shown later in this study how often such attitudes of devotion and service co-exist with raging antipathy to the marriage partner. Resentment and jealousy, although sternly repressed, reveal themselves unmistakeably in quarrels or in self-pitying demands. Passionate recrimination is suddenly hurled at the beloved partner. Sometimes rather than behave so aggressively, the person turns this hidden hatred (which he dare not direct outward because of lifelong discipline in silence) back upon himself and makes a suicidal attempt. But it leaves the observer in no doubt that, while it is himself he injures, the person who really deserved his attack was the beloved partner. Nearly all the married subjects in this study reveal these attitudes, so that particular examples need not be indicated here. The situation is made more complex when, following his suicidal behaviour, the person becomes

even more guilty and humble, full of polite agitation and self-accusation, speaking of his longing to "go home and make it up to my wife for this awful thing that I have done to her."

In some instances a person continues with devotion and intensity to live with a partner, association with whom is productive mainly of enervating strife and bitter anxiety. Any suggestion that he should be parted from his loved-hated spouse, will be resisted furiously. He insists that his marriage is the cause of his misery, and has brought about his suicidal behaviour; yet he declares that he will certainly kill himself if separated from his marriage partner.

A young woman, in the course of her second marriage , was alleged to have attempted to strangle her husband's son. She was certified insane, but before she could be admitted to a mental institution she drank sedative tablets, and was admitted unconscious to hospital for emergency treatment. (She had attempted suicide a year previously).

Case 18 MRS. ANNE COLLVILLE

They are sending me to a mental institution! Doctor, I am not mad, you must believe that! Please don't let them send me to a mental institution!

What's the use of going on living? I am married to a man older than I am. I am twenty-four years old and he is fifty. I am still in love with him, but he puts his children in front of me. We have been arguing without stopping for the past six days, and last night we had another argument. We argue about all sorts of things. I wanted my husband to make it possible for me to leave him. I know he is going to drive me mad eventually.

My father died when I was a baby. My brothers and sisters are all older than I am. I had to leave school early and go to work. My life has been a struggle all along.

I was only two months old when my father died. When I was twelve, my second eldest brother died. Then my mother had a nervous breakdown, and was sent into a mental hospital. She is still there. She is a hopeless cripple now through nerves. Although we took her to specialists all over the country, we didn't have much money and she had to be kept in a mental hospital. She was extremely depressed. All the money we had went to take care of my mother: I wanted to go on with my education, but I was forced to go to work when I was very young. I did not have a very easy time. I had to scratch for myself from the age of thirteen.

I loved my mother very dearly. It was terrible when she had to go away, and I had to go out alone. Even now, I feel that if I had my mother, I wouldn't have gone through such trouble. It was terrible

for me. My sorrows came gradually. I missed my mother terribly! More than I think anybody could ever miss any person. (Weeping).



There was very little to my first marriage. The whole unfortunate thing is that instead of waiting to get to know each other again, after a year's separation, we got married directly he returned from overseas, two days after he had got off the boat. It was all right for a couple of months, but then I changed, I suppose, and he changed... we just didn't get on. We were very young: when I left him I was only twenty. We just didn't agree. We were always squabbling, arguing. He used to irritate me and I used to irritate him. He was quite helpful, and gave me my divorce without any trouble. I thought I loved him. I suppose in such cases, everybody does. I know I was fond of him, he was a very nice fellow. Most of our arguments occurred because I was cold, and he used to get cross about it and the quarrel would come. I will say he was very passionate, and I didn't always want to respond when he wanted to make love to me. I don't know why I couldn't respond to him. I suppose it was because my feelings towards him had changed. It's no good living with a man if you don't love him. You make a misery of both your lives. Since leaving my husband I haven't heard from him until this day.

The same thing has happened in my second marriage, only the positions of husband and wife are reversed. Now it is my husband who doesn't love me... But I cannot understand! If my husband doesn't care for me why does he use my body? Why does he take me in the way he does? If he hated me, to put it in so many words, why does he sleep with me so easily?

I don't want our marriage to go on the rocks, and yet I was on my way to a mental hospital! Why should my husband do this to me? He said when he last visited me, "The best thing for us is to separate." I never answered.

On the night I met my husband, I did not even know he was going to be at the party. When I came to the dance floor I saw my husband

sitting alone. He looked so lonely and forlorn. I refused the next dance simply because this man looked so lonely. I thought I'd rather talk to him. Since that day, I never looked at another man. I am not interested in another man. Just before we got married I received an offer of marriage from another man who is very wealthy to-day. He is more or less my own age, but I am just not interested in younger men. I am interested in no man, for that matter, other than my husband. My husband is very much older than me, he is twice my age. I don't know what the attraction is that he holds for me. In those days, before he had angina, we used to go to the local dances and we played tennis. I lost all interest in the young men of the town. I think that if I could cure myself of my distaste for younger men I am sure I would be able to rid myself of this love I have for my husband.

I know that I am putting myself in a position where I am hurt all the time. My husband and I are not good for each other. My husband should have been a woman, doctor. He has got womanish ways. As far as I can hear from his people, he never got on very well with his first wife either. I think it was because my husband had a long period without a wife, after his first wife left him, that he has fallen into these womanish ways. He runs the home! You know, when I make up a grocery order I cannot send it to the shop until my husband has checked every item on it. If there is something on the list that he doesn't eat, or perhaps does not like, he scratches it off. He is always fiddling around with my household duties, instead of working in the garden, as another man would do. Bring us together, and my husband will not be able to deny the truth of what I am saying, but you may be sure that he will tell you I am mad, and that I talk nonsense. He always tries to show outsiders how insane I am.

I haven't the freedom that other wives have, and that's the truth. Never since I married him have I had it. In the beginning, I had too much pride to ask for it, I suppose. Even now, if I get gifts of money from a brother of mine, I buy something for the house. It is so embarrassing always having to ask my husband for what I want! I am so conscious of money because I have to beg for every sixpence that I spend. My husband gives me no allowance of my own and no house allowance. I have to go and ask him for every sixpence I want. I have got to answer for every penny that he gives me, even my small amount of pocket money. I have got to explain to him exactly how I spend it. Anyone would object to have to go to your husband every day and say: "I need some money because I want to take a friend to tea, or I want to go to a matinee." Most wives have got a little bit of money and they can use it when they want to take a friend out. They don't want to go to their husbands every day and ask for small sums of money.

If I had been faithless.... All I can imagine is that his dislike

of me is because of the money he has spent on me. I am sure if I had all that money to give back to him, he would be different. If I had my own independent income and did not have to touch his money, I am quite sure my husband would be able to love me. If I could give him back all the money he has spent on me, he would feel different! He says he is sick and tired of all the money he has spent on me, with my illnesses. He has said that to the children! I have done every little thing for my husband and children. Every day I love him as much as I can, and I stand while he lavishes his affection on those children. He has got no affection over for me. Sometimes I can't explain how I feel... what goes on inside me ... I keep it in, but eventually it bursts out of me, because my husband hurts me so; then I try to hurt him back, but I suppose I only make him hate me more. If only I could love him less, or not love him at all! My feelings about him are simply terrible! If only you could live in that house, and be with those children!

It is obvious that we are no good for each other. My husband would have treated me differently, if he cared about me. If he loved me, he would put me before the children. All men put their wives before their children. I know that we can't go on like this.

All my husband wants is for me to be a nursemaid to his children. He has four sons by a former wife, and I have one child of my own who is two years old now. My husband treats his son, Clive, a boy of twelve, like he treats my little boy of two. He cuddles Clive and he is for ever kissing him. I don't want to bear Clive's blame when he grows up, after being spoilt like that. The other three children are normal, but not that child. It is so awful it has now come to a pitch! I don't know what to do! I feel there is nowhere I can go to. Clive knows all my husband's business, whatever he does. The children are always there, watching. Whatever my husband and I do, the children are there.

I know, I realize, I have said terrible things to my husband, things I never meant to say; matters came to a head yesterday, when I must have shaken Clive. Clive has never had a hiding in his life, and he has done things for which other children would get a damned good thrashing, and his father says, "Never mind, my baba-boy." It was just as if something got into me, and I felt if I didn't shake Clive....

I remember shaking him, and then I think my husband slapped me and got me down to the ground, but everything is so hazy. Another man came from next door ... and held me to the ground, and then there were police all round us, and all I wanted to do was shake Clive, of that I am quite sure!

You can't imagine what kind of child Clive is. He knows all our affairs. It's a wonder that child isn't in the room when we are having sexual intercourse. It's the only thing he doesn't know. I'll buy a little article: "How much did you pay for it? Where did you get the

money?" I am worse than a prisoner in that house. Because my husband is a school principal he's got a complex about himself that he's got no faults; he has already told me to my face: "I've got no faults, and my children are all right." I try not to feel insulted when my husband tells the children they will be going to their own mother after he is dead. He is capable of love, but he lavishes all his love on his children.

My husband is always quarrelling with me, and instead of seeing that the children are out of the room, there Clive is, taking it all in. This last time it was just as if I couldn't control myself. I took hold of Clive and I shook him, and that's all I did. You can ask my neighbours how ridiculously my husband behaves with his children. They know what he is doing to Clive, and that child is not going to thank him for it, and my husband won't be there for ever!

The previous night, after my husband and I had one of our usual bust-ups, I had taken four yellow capsules. I thought that I might as well sleep, rather than argue, argue... All that I can remember about the quarrel is that my husband asked me how you cooked chops. I told him I put them in the pan, and then I put the pan on the stove. I don't know what he said to me then, or what happened, but the next thing... there Clive was. It was all hazy. I shook Clive and that is why they want to send me to a mental hospital. All the people knew, and I knew I was beaten, and there was no way out. I don't know why they don't leave me, so that I can kill myself, because there is no other possible solution. I have got nowhere to go. It's obvious that my husband and I can't live together.

I know my husband. I know he cannot do without a woman. He is over fifty and yet he has to have sexual intercourse once a week at least. About five months ago I asked him to destroy some love letters another woman wrote him. He destroyed some of them, but the majority of them he kept. When I made a lot of objections, he took them and kept them in his office. He doesn't care for me any more: he torments me with other women. If I was old, if my body was old, I would be able to understand .... When I am out walking with my husband he not infrequently says, "That's an attractive woman! What a lovely girl! See her breasts and her thighs! I wish I could sleep with her." He says that kind of thing when we walk together, and, knowing the man and what he is, I know that he means it. He is the sort of person who, as he passes a woman in the street, can say aloud, "Nice breasts! I wish you had breasts like that."

Oh, how my husband has hurt me! He has never hit me or anything like that. He has never used violence, and he can be so cruel without violence. I don't know how to describe it. I don't know if you have ever been through suffering like that, living with somebody who has a way of hurting you. He suffers from angina, and he plays on my sympathy

with it. But I don't know what is wrong with my husband's mind. He will do everything he knows to irritate me, instead of trying to avoid those little things which are unpleasant. It seems to me he harms me deliberately. I have come to the conclusion that either he wants me dead or in a mental hospital. And I am not mad! There is nothing wrong with me! I know I am not mad! Other people don't live with my husband, and they don't know what is going on in a house. If only there was someone who had the courage to tell my husband what sort of man he is. My husband has had his life; he is fifty-three years old already, and you can say that he has been through three wives. He knows that he has ruined my life completely.

The night before I slapped Clive, I said to my husband: "It's either going to be your life or my life!"

I mixed some caustic soda, and my husband told me, "Let me take that caustic soda away from you, and put it on the kitchen table, and you can go and drink it. But don't let people know I saw you take it." I did not take any of the caustic soda, but I took four of those yellow sleeping tablets. I slept, and when I came to my senses again, I was shaking Clive.

I admit freely that I am fond of my husband, that I tried very hard to get his love. It's a battle that I fought. Now I want to die and have it over with. I'm tired of fighting.

I love my husband so intensely! I don't know if you can understand that? And he thinks I am selfish and jealous. And he tells everybody that I am extravagant and wasteful. They don't really know what happens in our home. He doesn't love me! He doesn't want me... he doesn't care for me, and unfortunately I care terribly. I would hate to leave my husband. It would be very hard for me to go away from him. If I leave him there would be nothing to look forward to, nothing in my life to go on with.

Mr. Collville, with a bad grace, came to take his wife home from the hospital. Oh, well," he said, sighing despondently, "come, my dear, your baba is waiting for you."

"Oh, Percy," she exclaimed, and swiftly crossing the room, she threw herself against her husband's chest. She wept noisily and happily, with joyful looks going to get her clothes.

In many such uneasy marriages, the impression cannot be resisted that the subservient, anxious partner stands as a child to the dominant one. This impression is strengthened when the suicidal person himself stresses the resemblance to the once-dominating parent. This has already been revealed in the history of Mrs. Joyce Lindner (Case 12), and the evidence will accumulate as the study proceeds. Another subject, Mrs. Struik (Case f.)

grew to adulthood cut off totally from all other people but her husband. Him she called "Daddy". He was more than twenty years older than she was. She could not tolerate his sexual advances. She sent all her children to institutions and lived alone with him in stern and obsessional isolation. She attributed all her own unhappiness as a child to the death of her beloved father.

But it is obvious that greater age is not the only attribute for which a spouse may be chosen to impersonate a parent, in relation to an emotionally immature person. By repetition of childhood attitudes the tensions experienced in relation to a powerful parent are again created in the marriage relationship. The suicidal person often stands in relation to his spouse just as a child anxious for affection (all resentment hidden out of sight) stands to his dominating parent. Thus old and powerful emotional forces compel the person to tolerate great indignity rather than remove himself from the partner who causes him so much pain. Moreover, when a crisis occurs in a marital relationship, requiring new adjustment, rather than become assertive towards the partner or insist on a modification in behaviour, the person will seek his own death.

So it comes about that when suicidal behaviour manifests itself in the course of marriage, the individual has only too often found himself somebody who can occupy in relation to him the place formerly held by a parent.

Some marriages serve mutual psychopathology in both the spouses, and thus can continue. On the other hand, divorce terminates a great many unhappy marriages; the divorce comes about when one spouse insistently makes impossible emotional demands, or too frequently gives expression to fury when frustrated.

Chapter 6

THE MENTAL STATE

There is no one personality disturbance of which suicidal behaviour is characteristic. This is certainly true. Yet it is notable that various authorities have been much at variance, the one emphasizing this nosological entity in diagnosing the background psychiatric state to suicide, and the other that. For hundreds of years suicide has been considered a manifestation in depressive psychosis. Some authorities, on the other hand, have emphasized the association of suicide and constitutional psychopathy. Others stress the importance of neurosis, even while contradicted by those writers who state pontifically that suicide does not occur in the neurotic individual. There have been a few writers who have perceived how much more common is the association of suicide and schizophrenia than has been suggested in the past. And some have felt that suicide can occur in psychiatrically normal persons, although, again, there have been others firmly to contradict this view. The very confusion betokens imperfect understanding. Generalizing about my own experience, I would say that the suicidal person does volunteer he is depressed; his shallowness and the meagre satisfactions he has evoked from his life may in some instances suggest constitutional psychopathy. Occasionally schizophrenia is the mental illness unmistakably underlying the suicidal attempt; however, I would put forward and illustrate during this investigation that neurotic mechanisms most frequently underlie suicidal behaviour. Yet I wish to stress that the common neurotic state found in those attempting suicide cannot always be placed comfortably in a conventional psychiatric nosological entity. Neurotic or psychopathic or schizoid mechanisms will appear especially prominent to different observers, varying with the concepts most prominent in the observer's theoretical system.

Hereditary Factors

To argue that mental illness is an outcome solely of life experiences is manifestly untenable. Hereditary factors have received much attention during recent years, and evidence exists for speaking of the mental abnormality in some individuals as genetically determined: such implications are conveyed in the phrase Henderson uses: "of poor stock". However, on closer scrutiny, findings in genetic studies of personality disorders appear ambiguous. The relative contributions of nature and nurture in any

personality can seldom be defined accurately. The emotional abnormality of parents weighs heavily on growing children, and theories of genetic transmission of mental illness often deprecate the effects of the failure of emotionally-disturbed parents to fulfil their proper social role in relation to their children. Bleuler[38], after weighing much evidence, has decided that psychiatric genetics has made only modest contributions to our understanding.

There is little evidence that heredity plays a part in the production of suicide. Families are found in which suicide seems almost a tradition (the Dawley family in this investigation is an example), but more important than any genetic factor is the emotional harm done to their growing children by disturbed parents. Moreover, the tendency of children to identify themselves with their parents cannot be overlooked, nor the importance of suggestion as a precipitating factor in bringing about multiple suicides. (In a Spanish family, a male descendant in five consecutive generations committed suicide at the age of forty-five[39]). The psychiatric literature does not contain a single instance of both members of a twin pair dying by suicide. Kallmann[40] concludes that suicide is so complexly determined, with genetic factors playing such a minor role, that suicide in each of a pair of twins is largely coincidental. Nor has Slater[41] encountered an instance of both members of a twin pair committing suicide. He remarks that "our material would seem to show some resemblance within twins in tendencies towards self-injury in a more general sense," which, of course, can be due as much to environmental conditions as to inherited constitution.

The individual personality is a complex product of heredity, youthful experience within the family, and environmental influences. To stress one factor alone is unrealistic. Durkheim is right in holding to the social determinants in his discussion of suicide, but he is ridiculous in repudiating psychological factors. Nevertheless, in any scientific study, special attention may be paid to one chosen aspect, provided the conclusion is again related to the total field of study; thus Freud and his followers may, with validity, emphasize the individual life experiences once they have recognized the equal significance of constitutional patterns[42]. In the present investigation emphasis falls upon the developing and participating individual and the social forces which play upon him.

Suicide and Psychopathology

Kraepelinian psychology has led for many decades to the classification of psychiatric states into separate entities, assumed to run a common course and to have a predictable outcome. The chief

entities may conveniently be classified as follows:

1. Psychoneuroses:

   Anxiety states
   Hysteria
   Obsessional (compulsion) neuroses

2. Psychoses:

   Schizophrenia
   Paranoia
   Manic-depressive psychosis

3. Psychopathy.

It is of great value to have the clinical patterns so defined; however, they are not rigid, but are modified by social forces acting on the affected individual. In diagnosing an abnormal mental state a nosological label is no longer adequate; the early beginnings of the individual have to be traced and the development of his personality in time, if useful understanding about him is to be gained.

Static conceptions of mental illness have now become only partially useful, both from a therapeutic and from a prognostic viewpoint. The distinction between neurosis and psychosis is not a firm one: thus a neurotic person does not necessarily remain so all his life, nor does schizophrenia pursue an invariable and predictable course. Mania characteristically is replaced by returning normality. Dogmatic compartmentalization of mental disease is contradicted by continued follow-up studies. Naive complacency must exist in those who can hold to the belief that a neurotic person remains at the same level of maladjustment, which for ever precludes his resorting to suicidal behaviour.

Suicide and Depressive Psychosis

The occurrence of suicidal behaviour is not confined to the course of any particular type of psychiatric condition, as has already been stated. Suicide was especially linked, in the past, with depressive states; however, this association has been overworked decidedly. There are other states with which suicide is related as much or more: it will be stressed later how common suicide is in the course of schizophrenia. As far as depression is concerned, one may immediately make the following points: depression, we now realize, is not merely an abnormal mood change characteristic of a particular disease entity, but is rather to be seen as the external affective manifestation of complex emotional conflicts going on in the interior life of the individual, in which guilt and a cruel conscience are crucial; moreover, in depressive

psychosis, retardation is so great that active suicidal behaviour is usually inhibited. In fact, it has been noted[45] that suicide is not to be expected with deep depression, but rather when sudden improvement occurs in a depressed, hopeless and perhaps deluded patient.

Undoubtedly, suicide occurs in depressive psychosis. But it occurs very commonly in other conditions, and to suppose that all persons who attempt suicide have depressive psychosis is to be very wide of the mark indeed.

It is curious how even scientific observers can overlook or disparage evidence which contradicts their theories. A favourite device in pigeonholing suicidal behaviour is to pronounce as "not genuine" any particular suicidal attempt which does not conform to the theory being aired. Too many writers have not perceived that a glancing assessment of the apparent mood of a suicidal person, and of the means chosen by him, cannot disclose the hidden trends of feeling of which the suicidal behaviour is but an outcropping.

Suicide and Schizophrenia

Only recently has the recognition been described by a few that florid schizophrenia is commonly heralded by suicidal behaviour, and that suicidal attempts also occur during the course of schizophrenia. I would choose to emphasize this association. I find it so common that I would suggest the likelihood of schizophrenic psychosis be held in mind whenever an individual is encountered who behaves suicidally. John Cameron (Case B) became hallucinated only after his first suicidal attempt had failed. Another student I saw after he had ingested sedative tablets on a mountain; he had not used the revolver he took with him as well; at that time his possessive mother devoted herself to shielding him from the pressures of a successful, overbearing father. A year later, after the mother had died, the young man developed systematized delusions that he was being watched and that all his conversations were being preserved on wire recorders. In this series twelve per cent of the individuals may be considered schizophrenic.

That suicide should be linked with schizophrenia is not remarkable; what is remarkable is that the association has been ignored for so long. It will be shown later that withdrawal from the demands of the environment and flamboyant fantasy lives quite at variance with the reality that surrounds them, are usual in suicidal persons; completely veiled aggression ramifies below their placatory social aspects, which can be maintained only by avoidance of contacts with others. The judging and inhibiting conscience has an authority almost separate from the personality

upon which, indeed, the conscience exerts a devastating restraint.

Zilboorg is one of the few writers who have commented on this association of suicide and schizophrenia. He states that the older view by which persons with depressive psychoses have more or less monopolized the clinical right to commit suicide, requires substantial revision. In a recent paper Reichard and Tillman[44] have described their feeling that an occasion suicide (and murder) occurs as an attempt to ward off a schizophrenic psychosis.

In my own experience, it is by no means rare to find that suicidal persons are suffering from schizophrenic illness.

Case 19 WILLEM DE WET

I am born in spirit. I am begotten. When it came to this, the spirit took life and the body took life. Then it came to my mind: I live. So there were two lives in me, and when the spirit lives it keeps on forming beliefs. I just went on with my work and one day I was mixing dough when it came to me that my spirit was going out.

Everything comes from God, but I don't understand. I might have been somebody special. I didn't feel nice any more. Inside me were two parts: the spirit of the world and the spirit of nature. Wanting to die was a belief that was formed in me, but it was formed in the spirit of nature. It happened like this. I was riding in a donkey cart with a stick in my hand and the dust was blowing. The spirit kept forming beliefs in me: car-stick-so-dust, and the word was formed "caustic soda". I never thought of going to kill myself. It's not me that forms the idea, it's the spirit of nature. I did say, Should I do it or should I not do it? But the spirit of nature forced me.

I got two spirits inside me, a good spirit and a bad one. The bad one made me drink the caustic soda. You can't fight against spirits. Now my own spirit is supposed to be dead. It's not my spirit in my body now, it's the spirit of the first woman who was born. Lucifer. But it's not Lucifer, it's Lucy-were. She's the passage of death. She can be a woman, she can be a man ....

It's hard to say that I would like to die, but I want my spirit to be free. I still want to die, but my heart is not in it. The time I wanted to die the spirit of nature was inside me already. Then I could not die. The spirit of nature is also a spirit. For instance, like where Jesus said, "When ye eat, then God eat." If I eat, you would say, "He eat." Isn't it? But when God eat, he says: "I eat." You form the belief, but you form it in nature. You see, you form it in the natural thing, that's the spirit of nature; but the spirit of the world is, for instance, your soul lives, but it does not live on



bread. It has no nature, but it just lives. It just lives on the world. That's the two different kinds of spirit.

I was in gaol last year. Lots of people forced me to do things; men in gaol are savages! They had intercourse with me, many times, and crowds watched while it was happening. They always pick on small people. And once I went with a man myself, but I was drunk; that was four years ago and I was very much ashamed afterwards. The man never knew because he was also drunk. I wanted to forget about these things, and all the girls I was naughty with. Only my soul is worrying me now, and so I got the idea of dying.

I went to church and began to pray. I began to be honest and obedient and to work in the house. When my mother died I was still obedient, and I took over her place as mother in the house. I did the cooking, the washing and the ironing and the scrubbing. I loved my mother very, very much. I did not know that I loved her so very much, but she was very good to me. And all the time I didn't see her goodness, because I was a naughty boy. When I wanted to be good to her, the time came for her to leave me. I couldn't be good to her any more; so I thought, I'll be good to my brothers and sisters. I thought about her very often, and I dreamt about her many times, but now I don't dream about her any more.

I was eleven years of age. One day my father came back from work, and he was hitting the tins on the road with a stick, coming down the street to our house. At that time he was already ... mad. One day when he was out he took a pair of socks from a line, and the people put him in gaol. From there he was sent to the asylum. I can't remember in what way he was mad , but he wasn't as he used to be. I loved him and I missed him when he was gone. My mother had to bring up five children. We used to visit my father in the asylum, and he always wanted to come home; every time we went to visit him, they had a lot of trouble with him. They had to beat him to stop him from fighting to come home. One day I just heard that my father was dead. I was

> and, but I can't remember well. I was just a child who cried because his father was dead. I missed him for a time and then I forget all about him.
>
> I was sitting outside and the clouds seemed to be just above my head, and the sun was very near to me. And in the nighttime, but not now, my brothers came from the football, and I asked them, what's the score? So they told me the score. Then I was in the veld chopping wood. The trees were green and the grass was green, and that very afternoon I picked up a pin at my bedside. That very same night, when I was sleeping, I felt as if my whole body was covered by scorpions. They seemed to be trying to kill me. I felt them on my body, but I was asleep. It was a dream, but the spirit of nature forms things like that. It takes the natural word and forms the spiritual action. The scorpion and the pin and the green grass. And I saw in my dream (if it was a dream) the green scorpions all over my body, so I just crushed them on me.
>
> That's what gave me a fright, so I just wanted to die. I am in the middle of two things. In the nighttime I am disturbed, as if it is by my soul; and in the daytime by the sun which is as if it is very near to me, and I thought: the best way, the only thing, is to die. If I am dead the spirit of nature can't have life, because he gets his life through me: if I am dead, he shall also be dead. I wanted to kill the spirit of nature in me. The spirit believes in the natural things, the things of this world, but my soul believes in the things that cannot be seen. I thought of dying for three days before I tried to kill myself.

Not only does suicidal behaviour occur in the course of a schizophrenic illness, but in rather more instances the psychosis is ushered in by suicidal manifestations, the clinical appearance of schizophrenia manifesting itself, in all its sinister floridness, soon after the suicidal attempt.

A lapsed Catholic priest, a small man with rheumy eyes, grossly paranoic, devoted his energies to sanctimonious hatred of a wife who had left him to marry another man. The father never ceased impressing on his five children how damnable their mother was, nor would he allow them to visit her. The only boy of the family at length ran away to spend a holiday with his mother; he returned, and after a few days shot himself dead. The youngest girl, Elizabeth, took rat poison and when she was brought into hospital it was evident that she was psychotic. She was agitated and spoke with great hesitation, usually remaining mute while struggling visibly to repress her excitement. Her obsessive belief that the rat poison was still at work in her, destroying

her intestines, could not be persuaded away. She took increasingly little interest in her surroundings, preoccupied with the delusion that her death was approaching. No argument or reassurance dispelled her agitation. She returned again and again to her sad delusion.

Case 20 ELIZABETH PAWLEY

I am not going to live any longer, because I have got phosphorus inside me. I didn't know when I took it that I would have to die slowly... Is there no more doctors can do for me? I still have pain in my intestines, and I know my intestines will be slowly worn away. I don't want to die slowly. I want to live, but it's too late now... I wanted to kill myself because I thought I had stink-nose. Is there not anything you can do for me?

I was very happy at home with my father. He was good to me. I stayed at home with my father and my sisters, and my brother Joseph. I suppose you know why I took that poison? I took it because I was always unhappy. It was very silly, but now it's too late, hey? I suppose I was selfish to try and take my life.... do you think there is something wrong with my mind? My father has been very good to me. I don't want to say anything against my father! I have always told the truth. I don't want my father to get into trouble with me. I went into the room to take away a bottle of whisky and my father saw me, and he spat in my face. I didn't want him to drink ... I put the bottle away because I didn't like him to drink it all. I just didn't want him to drink any more and disgrace us in front of people. The trouble lies with nobody; I am to blame for everything. I never used to go out: I used to see to the house. I used to do the tidying and the washing up when they weren't there.

Since I was small I wasn't very happy. I never had a mother like the other children have. I had no mother, and people thought I wasn't clean enough. When I went along to my sister's wedding, I saw my mother there. She never wanted any of us children, but I liked her. I thought she was my mother, and I thought I had to be nice to her.

Oh, I have been worrying all along! Because of my nose. Everybody seemed to behave to me as if I were unwanted. I have felt unwanted for quite a long while. I used to go to parties, but people used to ignore me and talk about my nose. My nose used to smell ... Oh, it was true, and I was not imagining it! People used to say things to me like: "Look who's here! It's the girl with the smell again!"

My brother Joseph killed himself a week ago. I was very upset when I heard of his death. I thought he was unhappy. I was also

unhappy. My brother visited with my mother. She was a gay person. I am not always so glum as I am now... Well, I suppose you doctors have all done your best. My stomach burns and my skin is all dead.



I loved my brother Joseph very much. We used to be together when we were young .....

My father has done his best for all of us. I don't live with him any more because I had to leave home when he ordered me out. My boyfriend used to come and see me and my father refused to let me go out with him. I was about eighteen. I saw every other girl had a boyfriend, so my father wrote a letter to my boyfriend saying that he wasn't to see me any more. I suppose he wanted to keep me at home, looking after the house and all that. My boyfriend took me away to his people. He did not want to tell them I was his girl friend, but he persuaded them to let me live in the servants' quarters. At meal times he used to pretend I was only there as one of his parents' boarders. He was afraid that his parents would be against us if they knew we were in love with each other. His parents didn't like me. They told him so. They used to speak in Italian and say things about me, and afterwards my boyfriend would tell me what they had said. They asked me to leave. My boyfriend and I did nothing wrong together; all I did wrong was to try and kill myself. I am a Catholic, and now I will have to suffer for the evil I have done. But is there nothing that can be done to help me? How long will it take before I die?

Suicidal behaviour, therefore, may manifest itself in the schizophrenic, serving to foster the withdrawal from real life to which all his symptoms have tended. In a catatonic stupor

the individual actually imitates death. The fact can no longer be overlooked that suicidal intentions and acts can occur as a symptoms of schizophrenic illness.

A young woman of twenty-five had attempted suicide a year earlier, and was given a few electro-shock treatments. (Both she and her parents neglected to divulge that she then went into a mental hospital). She came herself for psychiatric assistance, dressed in deep mourning for a sister who had been run over by a bus a week previously. She was extremely infantile, with her manner shifting from suspicion to coyness. She was vain, hostile and argumentative. She was plainly psychotic implacably bent on a denial of the events in the world about her. She showed a marked blocking of thought. Her account of herself remained vague. She was manneristic, notably in the way she had of placing one palm against the other, and moving her fingers affectedly. Her fifth fingers were bent backward in a curious way at the proximal joint, deformed from being twisted too often.

Case 21 AMY HARRINGTON

I am going to take my life, I think. I don't want to, but ... I have suffered terribly, and it has all been for other people. A terrible thing happened about a year ago, and it is because of this that I must suffer. I have a great desire to kill myself, but I don't want to die. I don't want to tell you about it; I would rather kill myself, and then all my troubles will be finished.

I have had a very hard life. And I wanted everything to be so nice! It would have been nice if this terrible thing had not happened. It is because of these people that I must die. Why should I die because of them? It's not fair! I liked people until I hated them because of this thing. It is nothing to do with me, but it is a terrible thing, and I would rather die than tell anybody about it.

I think I have thought about it too much, and I have had too much of a hard life. I have always tried to smile and bear up with it. I wouldn't have minded a hard life, but when that happened as well ... you know, doctor, if something terrible happened in your house, to you and your dad and your mom and your brothers and sisters, something terrible, how would you feel about it? And if I had to tell you I'd be so ashamed, I would never be able to speak to you again. We have always been a family that's been respected.

I think I'll tell you, but no, I think I'd rather keep it for ever and for ever in my mind, even if I had to walk about in a state like this. Much as I desire to be free of it, I think I'd rather not tell anybody.

I don't know how to start telling you. We were all a highly respected family. I'll tell you! I'm going to tell you now! It's terrible, it almost made me mad, and yet I did not lose control.. I did not go mad. And every person that I bumped into, many of them knew it. There was written in the papers about it.



Well, we had a nice house, and when we came home one afternoon from the sea, we found that every single thing... do you really want me to tell you? I can be very obstinate if I want to. But if I want to tell you, I will be able to tell you. Do you want to know? Well, all right, I'll tell you, and you can think what you like about it! Think whatever you like because it's not the fault of my mum, or me, or the rest of the family. I'm certainly not going to suffer for my dad any more - I've just made up my mind that I won't this very minute. I am going to make myself well. I'll tell you! We had a nice house and everything in our house from the bedroom to the kitchen, everything was gone, taken out suddenly one afternoon by my father. We went to the sea, and when we came back, he'd emptied out the house, for this woman. We had to do everything over again to get the house again. To refurnish the house again. Everywhere I go, people look at me. They know all about it because it was in the paper, all written, written clearly in the paper, if you have read about it. Everything about what my dad did; that a man had taken all his furniture out of his house and gone with a woman; she was going to have a baby, and there my dad was going about in public with her.



I pleaded with my mum to let him come back and stay with us in

in the house again because he got ill. I felt sorry for my father because he was ill, and I told him he must come home, and all the time he was with that woman he didn't give us a penny of his salary. I spoke to somebody one day who told me, "Well, your dad has been going out with a woman ever since you were a tiny child," that's what the person said to me! What a terrible thing! I didn't know about it. I came to the next person: "Don't you know? Your father's been doing those things for years and years and years!" Candidly, doctor, if you know, not only had he done that but ... he's not worthy to be my father any more! Not at all. He's just a low-down loafer, and he's from such a good family! To think that something like that can happen in our house! He is back in our home because I asked him to come back when he was so ill. But I'd rather not see him ever again.

No, I don't think I will want to commit suicide. When you come to think of it, it's most ridiculous that I should want to die on account of what my father has done. If he wanted to hide his badness he can, but I have done nothing wrong, so why should I be ashamed? I'm not going to kill myself. There's something else that happened to me, but it's too terrible to tell you about. Everybody has pride .....

Something disgusting had happened in our family. My sister had a baby. That's how I took it: as a disgrace. I mean it. You hear of it every day that girls have babies and they are not married, but I took it as something very disgusting. I never expected it to happen in our family. Because (now I'll tell you everything) on account of me having a father like that, I thought it would be beautiful if we children could make up for it, and show that we were a decent family, no matter what my father was like all the time we were small children. I heard so suddenly that my sister Gloria was going to have a baby. I told my mother never to let her come into the house again! I said : 'Don't let her come near us, because she disgraced our house." But parents are always sorry for their children, and when I saw that my parents were sorry for Gloria, I wasn't jealous, but I was annoyed. I thought they shouldn't help her. "Don't do anything to help her," I said. Of course, when I saw they were helping her in every way, it annoyed me terribly.

I was so ashamed. Everybody said to me: "Oh, I hear your sister's going to have a baby." I answered: "Yes, and what about it? She married." And there was a certain boy who also heard that Gloria was pregnant. I tried to tell him she was married, but he said, "No, it's not true." And he didn't want to speak to me after that.

Other people seem to behave different to me. It may have been my imagination, but still I was worried. They said to me, "Is it true your sister is having a baby?" And after my sister had the baby, my dad behaved much worse than he had before. He was always drinking and going on with other women. But I always walked about with that feeling that people didn't want to reckon with us, as they always used to reckon with us. And I thought that I would hide the truth. Everywhere I went, I'd lie. I'd say that my family were not my people, and things like that, and, really, doctor, I'm being truthful with you now, and I never told anybody when they sent me into the mental hospital. In the first place, I can tell you that I should never have gone into a mental hospital. I wasn't mentally ill. It was only because I was worried because of all those lies I had to tell to save myself shame. People would ask me, "Is that your father?" Then I'd say, "No." "Is that your sister there?" I would answer, "No, that's not my sister", and it was going on in my mind terribly, even at night, when I was trying to sleep. "Look, they are my people, and it's no good my trying to say they are not my people. I was telling lies and hiding lies, and trying to hide them, but I can't get away."

I thought, "I've lied so now, for the sake of myself to hide their dirty doings that I can't go on living any longer, telling more lies." It was enough and I was tired.

When I heard my sister was going to have a baby, the anger that came up in me! Honestly, doctor, I was never so angry in all my life. I never bear a grudge or a hate to someone. If I can do good to people, I'll do good. But the feeling of hate towards my sister was terrible! I just couldn't speak to her! I couldn't look at her. I was so ashamed and annoyed. Yet when her baby was born, I was the one to buy it clothes, and to knit for the baby and do everything for it, and I look at the child. I think what a lovely child it is. I love that child.

My dad wouldn't have gone so bad if it wasn't for my sister and her having the baby so disgusting. My father always said, "Although I drink and go and drink like that, I want my children to be decent." He wanted his children to be good, you see. I tried to hide what was happening from other people, telling lies, instead of saying: "Yes, it is my dad, and he is rubbish! It is my sister and she has had a baby!" But I never did say so. Instead I allowed myself to be taken to a mental hospital. I made up many lies, but in bed at night, I would worry and worry about the lies I told. I'd think: "Oh, God, I told a lie, and I didn't want to tell a lie. Oh, hang! Well, will I go to heaven when I die?"

Until it got so bad with me that I thought I'd better put an end to my life and go to hell. Now that I have told you the truth I don't think I'll ever have a feeling for suicide in me again. You know the truth now, and I think I'll just tell everybody else the truth too. Everybody I bump into, I'll tell: "Yes, my sister had a baby. Quite right; not me, she! You're right! My father is a rubbish!" That's all I'm going to behave like in the future.

All those lies I told weren't deliberate. I mean, people used to come up to me and say, "My goodness, I saw your father last night, and he was so drunk."

And I'd say: "My father? That's not my father; you must be silly. There are many Harringtons. You must be ridiculous. My people don't even stay here in Cape Town." I'd say it coolly, like that, but to myself I'd think, "God, another lie!" I used to have a book in which I marked off all the lies I told. Another one! If I had to count them up! And everybody began to find out that I was telling lies. What a shame! ....

I don't damn well want to die at all. How would you feel if you had such a thought in your mind? It's just in my mind and I can't get out. You understand. (Screaming). Well, don't understand then. The thought goes away for a long time, and then it comes back into my mind. It just comes so quickly in my mind I can't help it. I can't get it out. (Screaming). The wicked thought. I know it's there. I can't help it. If only you'd leave me alone and go away so that I could kill myself now. I may be silly, but I can't help myself. If only that horrible thought will go away from me, then I would never want to kill myself. I tried everything in the world already. I would give anything at this moment, if only I could die. Because it is so in my mind, to do it.

When the current psychiatric preoccupation is modified, that suicide is an event in the course of melancholia, it will no doubt become plainer how often suicidal behaviour occurs as a schizophrenic manifestation. Already there has been a report[45] showing that in a mental hospital population suicide was far the most common among schizophrenic patients.

Suicide and Psychopathy

But psychosis, depressive and schizophrenic, accounts for only a proportion of the suicidal attempts encountered. Suicidal persons in some cases are clearly psychopathic. Apart from their suicidal behaviour, it is evident that they cannot fit in with the rules, arrangements and aspirations of their fellows.

They are isolated from the stream of life around them. It becomes clear how unable they are to love anybody but themselves; a vast coldness characterizes their conversation about others, and their social behaviour. Their stores of aggression are kept in check most of the time, only now and again an impulse to destructiveness breaking loose. The psychopath knows that open violence will be disapproved of by the community, so aggressive action is reserved for times when great tension has accumulated. The anti-social action is performed with vigor, almost frenzied relish at times, and from his outburst the psychopath obtains a kind of relief. The psychopath who attempts suicide will usually fall into Henderson's group: predominantly passive; aggressive or creative psychopaths will not behave suicidally, but usually will vent their impulsive anger upon the world about them.

The girl about to be described was undisciplined, and lacking in any capacity for insight. It seemed, indeed, impossible for one so impulsive, confused and trivial to find a place for herself in the competitive and demanding ways of city life. She had little consideration for others, no personal humility, a markedly restricted range of interests and a tragic inability to learn from experience. Before she behaved suicidally, she smashed the frame of her boyfriend's photograph and burnt the photograph itself. She then proceeded to destroy her own picture, a symbolical self-destruction which was followed by an actual suicidal attempt. But her suicidal behaviour was theatrical and half-hearted, as is customary in psychopathic persons. After it she felt little remorse or any real emotion. In her naive, egotistical manner, she insisted in the hospital that she still wished to die. Her action was a feeble, impulsive manoeuvre, designed to draw attention to herself, and to express with violence her dissatisfaction at the termination of a romance which had always been confused and paltry.

Case 22 MISS PIENAAR

Ever since I was a kid I was always terribly restless. If I am here, I want to be there, and if I am there I want to be here.

I'll tell you straight: Mommy couldn't understand me at all. Of course, my father is everything to me. My daddy loves me dearly, but he doesn't want to interfere when I fight with my mother. But I know I am everything to him. A couple of times, my mommy and I had quarrelled when I just walked out of the house.

In these last few years, my mother has changed to me. You see, my sister was everything to her. But when I came home ill two years ago, my mommy suddenly realized what she had been doing to me, and

she became fond of me. But always I used to feel that there was something in the way, keeping me away from her.

I met a man on the train when I was coming back to do nursing in Cape Town. Everything was arranged for our wedding, and one week before our wedding I found out this man was married. I was so upset I couldn't sleep and I started taking drugs, drugs, drugs. Amytal, Nembutal, Tuinal, all the things I could have thought of I took. I was on night duty, and I couldn't stay awake... that was the terrible thing, so I used to take Benzedrine at night to try and stay awake. I was doing private nursing, and sometimes after I had been awake all night, they called me to take another case during the day. It went on like that.

When I found out that the man I was going to marry was married already, I started getting these terrific headaches.

I live in a flat with my sister. My sister couldn't understand me, you know. I really can't describe it for you, you know. I sort of feel as if I was in a room that was too small for me, and I can't get out. And when I get excited or anything like that, I get these terrific headaches, and if people talk to me, it's just like hammers on my brain, you know. Lately, I used to go into a hell of a mood if anybody just says anything, my sister or any other person. You know, if I stay in the room with my sister for some time, I got to feel as if I would like to smack her, or something like that, so I just used to walk out of the room. That's how I have been lately, you know. My boss is a personal friend of mine, and the other day the phone began to ring when I was busy doing accounts, and my boss said to me: "Miss Pienaar, why don't you answer the phone?" He spoke quite normally, but immediately I was so mad with him that I said, "Listen! Were you shouting at me, by any chance? If you were, I'll just take my things and walk out." I don't know what was wrong with me, but lately the smallest thing has irritated me. Even my friends who have known me quite a time say it is funny the way I have changed lately.

I have got another boyfriend. His name is Mick. When the married man, Percy, came back to me, I broke it off with Mick, but now Mick and I are together again. It was after Mick didn't come to see me for two nights that I decided to kill myself.

Mick didn't come for two whole nights. Instead, he went out with his pals, and he started drinking. When he came to see me last night, he was so drunk he could scarcely stand on his feet. I got one of those terrible headaches again. Then I felt I must just <u>do</u> something, otherwise I was going crazy. Of course, I took the box of tablets from my dressing table. First I broke up the photograph of Mick that I had, and burnt it. And then ... I couldn't keep it in any longer. For the first time in all these months I

started crying. I said to myself, "It can't go on like this!" So I just took the tablets. I wanted to die. I still want to. I just don't want to go on living, that's all. I still feel that way, but I don't want to talk any more now.

The first man, Percy, was the one I told you I met when I was travelling in the train. He saw me and tried to get introduced to me, but he couldn't. The girl who was with me in the compartment knew him quite well. When he came to talk to her, we met. I liked him from the beginning. When we were in Cape Town, he phoned me and we went out together, and so it just went on. He told me he was divorced, so I asked him (I hadn't been worrying because I trusted him) ... then one night it suddenly struck me, "I wonder how long he has been divorced." Well, I asked him and he told me he was not divorced yet. He told me he still wanted to be divorced. I just looked at him, and I said: "I'm sorry, but we can't go on."



I felt it terribly, and I started working night duty as well as day. When they couldn't give me night duty I used to take drugs to make me sleep. Then, of course, I started losing weight terribly, so I fainted on duty one day.

Then I got to know my present boyfriend, Mick. He was the boy of a girlfriend of mine. They came to visit me one night when I was sick in bed, and then I didn't take much notice of him. The next night he came to see me alone, and I was better then, so I sat talking to him all evening. With him I had just got this funny feeling that I want to be alone, you know. I was just satisfied with Mick coming to see me; he always tried to get me to go out with him, but I didn't want to go out.

Then one day I met Percy in town again, and he said I mustn't worry about him, because he was going to get a divorce from his wife now. So he came back to me. I was in love with him ... I sort of realized that I cared for him all the time. He came to see me often, but in the end we couldn't understand each other. There were a lot of things about him I couldn't understand. You know, he'd sort of changed in

certain ways. He said I'd changed, and all that sort of rubbish. Then I realized that his wife was away from Cape Town, and he was just trying to get round me while she was not with him, so I decided the best thing to do was to cut him out. I phoned him up and I said to him, "Look, I don't want you to ring me again, and I don't want to see you again." And that is how Mick came to see me again. Mick was one of these people who could get me out of my moods.

We are near the end of the story now. Must you know? I think it's best for you to forget all about it and let me go my own sweet way. All right .... I was pregnant, and I didn't want to take it away Mick was the father, and I didn't want to take it away. Mick was frightened because he was soon to write an examination to become a sergeant, and he thought that if I had the child it would all come down on his record and he would not be allowed to write the examination. So I told him on what conditions I would do away with it: I told him he must give up his pals and stop drinking and then I would have it taken away. So I did it. It came away about a week ago, but Mick didn't give up his pals, and he didn't give up his drinking.

I did really mean to kill myself. That was my intention. It's funny. I tried to describe to my sister the feeling that I had when I decided to take the pills. But I couldn't. For a long time, you know, I just felt I was too tired to go on with things. The moment I took the tablets, just after I had broken the picture frame and burnt his photo, and after I had burnt a photo of me, I felt that I had to kill myself. I don't know what made me do it, because my sister asked me: "Do you know what you are doing?" I said to her: "Yes." She was in the room with me at the time. I said, "Of course I know what I'm doing; and don't talk to me!" You know, doctor, actually I was all worked up the whole night, and just before the particular moment when I broke the photos, I went outside and I sat outside for quite a while before I walked back into the room. When I saw the photo, you know, it was just as if something made me so cross all of a sudden that I took the photo and broke it all in pieces with the frame. I grabbed up his photo and I struck a match and held it to the side of his photo. While it was burning, I just looked at it for a while. When I was breaking my own photo up, it was as if something broke inside me, you know, and I just walked and took the tablets. My sister was talking over the phone, and she was watching me in the mirror all the time. She was watching me all the time, and when she saw me open my nursing bag, she knew that I wanted something. When she saw me taking out the tablets, she had been watching me in the mirror all the time. When I drank the tablets, she rushed up to me and tried to stop me, but she was too late. There were twelve tablets in the box and I drank them all.

I don't know what to do now, doctor, I don't know at all. I think Mick has not been to see me in the hospital, because he's scared.

He's scared I'd go to his parents and tell them the whole story. That's all I can think, because he told me the other night, I must please forget all about what has happened to us, so that we can start from the beginning again. That's all I can think. He don't want his people to hear about it.

My own parents have not heard that I had an abortion and I don't want them to hear about it at all.

I was only in love with those two men, Percy and Mick. I don't think it was right to let them make love to me, and so on, but with Percy it was just a case of ... it just come natural, but with Mick I didn't like it. As a matter of fact, I hated it. I just couldn't feel for it, or anything like that. You know, I quite understand that sex is natural and all that sort of thing, but I don't care for it very much. I am not so interested in it. I was never taught anything about sex; my mother never spoke to me about it; she just gave me books to read, and, of course, I was terribly young when I started nursing; I was only sixteen, and there I learnt plenty.

I didn't bother to go out with Mick much because I was very tired at that time, you know. He always wanted me to go out, but I could never bother to leave the room. I liked him just coming and going. We had intercourse just occasionally, when he could work me up. I am very cold, as far as that is concerned. Just occasionally, you know, especially when I'm tired ... then I can't fight against it. Because he is quite attractive. I had intercourse with Percy too, but I wasn't as cold with him. I don't know, doctor... I think I still care for the first man, Percy.

I don't know what I am going to do when I leave the hospital. I've got no idea what I want to do. I've got no plans at all. I don't want to think about the future. I am not worried about work: I don't need to think about money, because my father is quite well off, and he has got all the money I need. I am not going to worry about anything any more. I am just going to take life easy, as it comes. When shall I leave? I have just suddenly got a feeling that I want to be out in the world again. I am not going to think about the future any more at all.

Even in those cases of suicidal behaviour in which psychopathy seems a likely nosological diagnosis, it will usually be found that the aggression and the destructiveness of the psychopath's personality had not been allowed overt social expression, but raged silently within the psychopath's psyche; aggressivity had not been poured forth in crises into the surrounding environment (as is usual in psychopaths.) As is consistently often demonstrated, the suicidal person tries hard to hold himself from being socially

disruptive; in fact, his life is impoverished because so much of his striving is devoted to creating a facade of acquiescence and placability. His lifelong fury has remained internalized, and is not permitted to achieve social expression. Rather than attack a powerful and perhaps harming associate, the suicidal person chooses to keep his aggression asocial, turning his anger upon himself. Even in extremity, at the final moment, he desires not to be socially offensive. (The typical suicidal person is thus the opposite of the aggressive psychopath.) In some cases an attack may be made upon another person, at the same time as suicide is attempted, e.g., Mrs. Yudel (Case 8), Mr. Foxcroft (Case 29). It is as if, aghast at his daring, the suicidal person, in contrition, turns on himself after behaving aggressively to an associate.

Suicide represents a withdrawal from participation in the real world. Writers who glance cursorily at the problem of suicide, dogmatizing from a few impulsive suicidal gestures they may have witnessed, may well deceive themselves[46] that suicide is most commonly a symptom of constitutional psychopathy.

A classical difference between psychopathy and neurosis lies in the nature of the conscience. A psychopathic person characteristically lacks the inhibiting or stoning qualities conferred by the conscience; a psychopathic person does not often feel so convinced of his sinfulness that he wishes to kill himself. It is in neurosis that the conscience acts punitively upon the individual, causing him to attack himself rather than seek redress for his wrongs in the outside world.

Suicide and Neurosis

Some writers[47(a)] cherish the belief that neurotic persons do not commit suicide, and others[47(b)] state that if a suicidal attempt occurs in a neurotic person, intention of self-destruction should be doubted, or the diagnosis of psychoneurosis questioned. But few psychiatrists who regularly deal with suicidal persons continue now to believe that a person with psychoneurosis never kills himself, however determined his suicidal threats.

In fact, the majority of those who attempt suicide are found to be psychoneurotic. Yet the neurosis which most of these individuals show cannot usually be fitted into one of the classical nosological entities. The common psychological condition encountered I have named "chronic anxiety state", yet the psychiatric disturbance most often found in those who attempt suicide does not correspond with the usual form of anxiety neurosis. Nor does the personality disturbance resemble classical forms of hysteria or obsessional(compulsion) neurosis,

although evidence of all these may be present. (Hysterical features are pronounced in Mrs. Fern (Case 1), and obsessional traits are marked in Mrs. Whitehorn (Case 10), for example.)

Psychiatrists will not recognize as very familiar the type of psychological disturbance common in those behaving suicidally. Neither could Hopkins[48] label comfortably the psychopathological condition most commonly encountered in his cases of attempted suicide. He states vaguely that in most cases those attempting suicides are "persons neither insane, nor mentally normal, and can be described as chronically unstable persons of poor stamina."

The reason for the unfamiliarity of the personality disturbance is not hard to find: because the individual who is later to attempt suicide is so anxious to be socially mild, to pass unnoticed with his anger hidden, he will avoid those overt emotional manifestations which customarily cause relatives to call in a psychiatrist. Also relevant to this aspect is the frequent protestation by the person who has recovered from the suicidal attempt that he is perfectly fine. In his eagerness to sink back to emotional anonymity after his outburst of aggression, he is prepared to forego the psychiatric help offered to him.

Neurotic symptoms are the products of the individual's defective attempt to cope with his inner anxiety. But the symptoms themselves cause additional social dislocation, thus increasing the state they were intended to relieve. His symptoms have another short-term advantage for the neurotic person; the symptoms themselves provide fresh excuses for withdrawal from the real world. Behind the screen of agitation set up by his symptoms, the neurotic person can continue to indulge fantasies and resentments. The future suicide will have seemed lacking in vitality long beforehand. His existence seemed ungratifying, his talents remained undeveloped. With meekness he accepted unrewarding situations. His associates considered him withdrawn and inarticulate. But the impression of emotional vacuity given by the person later to be suicidal is misleading. Great forces of affrontedness accumulate; in the unconscious life of the individual are gathering forces of anger and desire to be revenged. As one suicidal youth said, "My body is a case, but my soul inside is a torpedo." Revengeful forces may continue secretly to accumulate until suicide is undertaken, the outburst of rebellion in an acquiescent, placating person, when his sense of outrage becomes intolerable.

The "Normal" Personality

It is doubtful if emotional maturity occurs commonly enough in our time to be considered the normal or average state. Be that as it may, by emotional maturity is implied the attainment by the individual of independence and a sense of responsibility, together with confidence in himself, and the ability to co-operate rewardingly with others. Maturity is achieved when the child, already marked with characteristics endowed by heredity and the intrauterine existence, has passed through the formative association with his parents, the socializing contacts with his fellows, the knowledge he can acquire by imitation or study and, at length, accepts the real world in a spirit of inventiveness, adaptability and calm. His anger and resentment are kept at a low level, his feelings of inferiority are slight, love is turned from himself and directed upon others, and childish longings do not force him into repetitious patterns creating passivity and loneliness. The mature individual is at peace with his conscience and does not behave with aggression towards himself. He is not anxious and obsessional, but adapts himself to the real world in a way which gives satisfying expression to his sociability and his sexuality.

It will be evident that such maturity will seldom countenance the occurrence of suicidal behaviour, even when the individual is hampered by great external pressures.

A woman, aged thirty-four years, was brought in comatose after taking two dozen sleeping capsules. She could give no concrete account of her suicidal attempt. It was interesting, during interviews, to see that she appeared on the whole to be living normally. She seemed direct, unsentimental and articulate, efficient in the conduct of her life and realistic in her attitudes. She had formed close emotional attachments, her relations with others were not warped by resentments, and her strivings had brought rewards both in her work and her marriage. The aspects of her personality less favourable were a tendency to be over-conscientious, and an awe of her long-dead father. "Whenever I discuss my father who is dead, I become unhappy. I would prefer not to speak about him."

Case 23 Mrs. FAIRE

The doctors here seem to think that I have a terrific problem. There isn't a problem actually. I cannot say why it is that my husband has refused to co-operate with the medical attendants here while I was unconscious. It is silly of him to refuse to speak to the doctors, but I can't answer for my husband.

You see, I can't remember taking those capsules. I believe fully that in my unconscious mind I may have the wish to die. Being fully

conscious now, I must say that I have no wish to die. I would not say that my life is barren. I have my interests, I have my job, I have my children, I have plans for the future. My husband is not a paternal, protective man at all. Infact, I behave more like a parent to him. I have often wondered why I married him. Why does one marry people? I married my husband because I loved him, I suppose. I was only nineteen. I have been married for eleven years. I think my biggest problem now is my husband's excessive interest in horse-racing. It is and always has been something that has worried me, something that has got on my nerves. I used to say that I did not believe there are such things as nerves, but I have been grated. I have often said to my husband that unless he gives up this interest in racing, I would leave him. But you can't just walk out on a man, after eleven years. You know, my husband loves horses more than he loves anything else in this world. I think he puts a horse before his wife and children. If he had to choose between a racehorse and his family, I really think he would choose his racehorse. Now he is talking of buying his own horses; I have assured him that such an undertaking cannot include me. I have been very happy. I still love my husband very deeply, and I have loved no other man. Sexually we are perfectly adjusted. I respect my husband as a person, and he does me, to a certain extent. You see, my husband is the type of man who is the ruler in the family. His word is law. What he says has to be done. One grows used to these things eventually - you just carry on as you have always carried on, regardless of objections.

My mother doesn't come into the picture really. She doesn't know much of what has been happening to me. She thinks I have had a nervous breakdown and that is why I am in hospital. She does not know of my taking pills. I lead her to believe what I like her to believe, because my mother is a nervous person; she has had electrical treatment for her nerves. She is a very worrying type of person. I haven't lived with my mother or near her since I was married. She is always worrying about some trivial matter; minor things which do not need to be taken into consideration. She has never attempted to interfere in my life in any major way and I would not permit her to do so.



My father is dead. He died

when I was a little girl, very little. It has affected me deeply. That is the sore point in my life. I have always missed my father. I don't want to talk about it ... there is nothing, in fact, that I can actually talk about. You see, my father was ... my father was my friend until his death. I was only seven when he died, but I think at that age a child can be very much impressed, and you can carry your impressions with you right through your life. Perhaps I have carried my own too far. It is a great love for my father that I have, always the longing when I need somebody: "Why isn't my father here? Why don't I have a father? Why did God have to take my father away? "

I can see that such questions are ridiculous, but that is what I have in my mind. Ever since I was a small child, the loss of my father has been in my mind. It is almost as if I have built my life around him. I don't think my husband knows how deeply I feel about it, and my mother certainly doesn't know. My father died when I was seven; he was on board ship on his way to England when he died, and he was buried at sea. Whenever I am ill or worried, it is as if my father appears before me, just as I remembered him when I was a child. When I was giving birth to my last child, the nursing sister became frightened and threw chloroform over my face: my baby was born normally and without difficulty, but when I came round from the anaesthetic, I seemed to see my father standing at the side of my bed and smiling at me. I kept it to myself all my life, and I have never spoken to anybody about my father and the influence he has on me, even though he is dead. I think of him mainly when I am ill, or when I am in trouble of any description, or when I am worried. I have a gentleman friend in town. He is much older than myself; he was my boss before I married. He has remained a very close friend to me, and to my husband for that matter. Whenever I see him I think of my father; perhaps he reminds me of my father, I don't know ... This man has not been as important in my life as my father would have been had he lived, but this man certainly does take up an amount of my affection. He has often said to me, "You mean more to me than my own daughter ever can." Further than my fondness for him, there is no intimacy in our friendship. It is just a clean and straightforward attachment. But it is very important to me. If I was in trouble, I would go to him and tell him exactly how I feel, and I could be sure that he would try to help me. My husband knows exactly what I think of this man. He knows everything about our relationship.

My husband is not a jealous man. We never have rows because of jealousy; that doesn't enter our lives at all, not in any way. But you get to a certain stage when you have taken so much from a man you can't take any more. When my husband sits with a newspaper, I don't have to say to him, "What are you reading?" After a while it has got

so that I don't dare to ask him that question, because I know without asking he is reading the racing news.

Whether I got the idea in my head when I saw the capsules before me, or whether the full plan had been lying hidden in my mind the whole time, or whether I wanted to give my husband a shock, or whether I wanted to sleep... I can't remember. I can't remember taking the pills at all. With all the responsible office work, and the worry my husband has been causing me, I suppose everything just piled on me till I gave way, and this is the result. My husband and I had been angry with each other, following a quarrel for a few days. We had not spoken to each other for a few days. I thought it so ridiculous that grown-up people should walk about sulking. Perhaps it was because I was angry with my husband that I took the tablets.

I myself would like to know why I did such a thing. It could have been disastrous.

Chapter 7

THE FANTASY LIFE

Men are social creatures, most gratified when capable of living in harmony with others. Nevertheless, not all men can permit themselves sociability. Some are driven by manifestations of emotional disturbance to seek solitude, and then to dwell in their loneliness on grandiose fantasies of being greatly loved, or respected, or desired. Such isolation, and the consoling fantasies accompanying it, result in those adults who have felt themselves threatened during childhood, so that their developing sensibilities were outraged.

While it is in these lonely individuals that the fantasy component of the personality is most florid (and is resorted to with most protracted intensity), every person brings out of his childhood a buried emotional life which, being unique for him and in great part obscured, can rarely be perceived by his associates. Each man's fantasy world is made up of intimate experiences, unrealizable aspirations, half-forgotten frustrations and painful humiliations. From his private fantasies each man derives motives to which he gives expression in his daily existence. Some longings, however, may be so irrational that they are permitted a conscious outlet only in daydreams.

By introspection the individual can gain access to many youthful memories which he had thought forever forgotten, and he may be able to trace aspects of his adult life designed to compensate for damaging experience early in life. The individual will regard many of the fantasies which he can expose to his awareness as too shameful for utterance: he will strive to keep some secret longings hidden from his associates. Even more significant is the universal tendency of each individual, the more gross when neurosis is severe, to repudiate certain humiliating aspects of himself; he may lack insight of traits of his personality which are plain to his associates. Indeed, when confronted with clear evidence of such private aspects of his personality, the individual will often reject recognition of them.

However, suddenly catching himself in significant error, or during a state of heightened emotionality, the individual may himself recognize, and also present to others, inescapable evidence of personality trends of which, until that moment, he had been ignorant. Whole tracts of feeling, about which he had kept himself unaware, may be spilled to his consciousness in the course of an aggressive outburst. Latent personality trends are often given expression with drunkenness. From

observation of his dreams an individual can often recall momentous events in his distant past which he had thought lost to memory. (These means of exploration of the fantasy life, of course, are used in the treatment of psychoneurotic persons.)

In consideration of suicidal behaviour it is the fantasy component of the personality which must be explored if understanding is to be obtained. The suicidal person's reason for his self-destructive behaviour will not be found on the everyday social plane. In the special atmosphere of the therapeutic interview he will discuss his secret aspirations. Even then he will refrain from accepting the implications of many of his fantasies, although from discussion of them the investigator can soon perceive motivating trends of behaviour of which the patient remains unaware. Only at the therapeutic encounter, for example, did Agnes Adams reveal that she considered herself a hundred per cent bad and the worst specimen of nature. His closest friend could not have guessed that polite, eager Forbes since childhood episodically imagined that a cutting instrument was about to remove his genitals. Nobody could know how Cameron dreaded his adoring mother, or that he had fantasied encounters with brutal soldiers who had tormented him years previously.

1. Withdrawal from the Real World

All people undergo episodes of withdrawal, when they remove themselves from what is actually going on in the world about them. Self-forgetfulness can be induced under everyday conditions. It may be sought wilfully, as by the drinker who uses alcohol to make his awareness of reality recede until he is oblivious of his surroundings. On the brink of sleep, blurring of awareness precedes the nocturnal void. In sexual passion the individual's attention is abstracted from the world about him, his mind occupied with ecstatic and intense musing. Various art forms have the special attribute of precipitating the individual who enjoys them into an evocative brooding. A person reading poetry or listening to music may forget his surroundings and become lost in a sense of introspective wonder, perhaps agitated by excitement in addition.

In many suicidal persons, a similar state of withdrawal from immediate contact with the environment will be found to have taken place at the time of self-destructive behaviour. In a condition of blunted awareness, the sense of reality blurred, the suicidal person withdraws from responsiveness to his environment: his attention is turned inwards upon his inner imaginative

world of fantasies and secret aspirations. In this twilight arrest of participation, the suicidal ideas often manifest themselves for the first time, perhaps not yet clearly defined, and receive effect. That a suicidal person sometimes cannot give a precise account of his behaviour while he tried to kill himself, or say clearly what ideas led him to put his hand to his life, is not surprising. Davidson[49] has commented on the "extreme contraction of the field of consciousness, a state of inattention to life." The individual, he states, ceases to will, and gives way to imagination; the result is a cessation in the suicidal individual of "the normal automatic rejection of what is unhealthy".

I do not feel the withdrawal into fantasy is an acute event taking place only a short time before the individual becomes suicidal. The suicidal attempt is but the climax of the individual's timidity concerning his chances in life. Nor is it only in seeking his own death that the suicidal person stands back from life's struggles. During preceding years already he will have revealed his inability to cope with the life-demands confronting him. From childhood can be traced his subterfuges, evasions, daydreams, abandonment of interpersonal relationships, his social tension and fears that he is not accepted by others, and his lack of confidence that he will be able to function satisfactorily in the human community.

Only after his second suicidal attempt was a psychiatric study made of the man who will now be described. He had been admitted to the hospital following his first attempt, but with a vague, polite smile and aimless chatter, he denied any intention to take his life. No doubt could exist on the occasion of his second attempt. He was deeply comatose when carried into hospital, and beside him had been discovered an empty bottle which had contained sleeping tablets. His suicidal attempt was not so much a gesture that he had failed in life as an affirmation that he lacked the incentive ever to begin independent living. He was twenty-five years old, a bus conductor and the father of three children. His life history suggests that a steady change in the direction of isolation and ineptitude had come over him in the course of a few years, and the photographs in his wife's possession would seem to reflect such deterioration. But throughout his life he had been lonely, unable to communicate with people, and his appreciation of the world was shadowy and tenuous. Since his childhood he had clung to a huge, single fantasy which wildly denied reality.

Case 24. HUGH WILLARD

You see... well, I mean.... well, I mean this is a long story. This is a long story, and somehow I have always wanted to get it off my chest. When I was nine years old my mother died, and I was always devoted to my mother. She and I were just about one, to tell you the truth. Well, after she died... you may think this sounds stupid, but I would like to speak about it...

I thought to myself like this: My mother, she's not dead, and ever since that day, ever since my mother died, even after I married and up till to-day I still wouldn't believe that my mother is dead. In my memory she was still a living soul. It was as if she was there, telling me what to do and comforting me. I felt, you know, as if I had to go out and find her somewhere. I felt since the day my mother died (this may sound like a lunatic's story) I felt that since the day my mother died I fell into a deep sleep, and all this life I have been leading since my mother's death I felt was just a dream. All this business... I felt I was just going to wake up again, I was going to wake up and find, you know, that I am a child of nine years again, and that my mother... my mother is still alive. That's how I have been feeling. All the time I felt as if my living now was just a sort of horrible nightmare. I mean, even after I was married, all the time after my first child was born, I still had that continual feeling as if one of these days... well, I mean... as if everything was going to blast! And I am going to wake up again, and I'd find that it was all just a nasty dream.

When she died I didn't feel any sorrow. It was when my mother was lowered into that grave, it was then that I began to get emotionally upset. Before the funeral I can remember quite distinctly my sister was in tears, but I was like a... like a piece of wood. When the nurse came out and told me my mother was dead, I felt nothing; but as soon as I saw my mother being lowered into that ground, then the trouble started. My aunt didn't tell me my mother was dead; she told me my mother has gone away. She said: "The Lord has taken her away", and to that belief I hung, I hung, until now! I remember I still said to my aunt, "Well, why doesn't the Lord bring her back again?" I started looking for her myself, to tell you the truth. I just couldn't grow up. Even after I had come out of the Navy, it was just as if I was still a child, a blind child, wandering about, searching, looking for... for someone I couldn't find. I didn't actually contact any people while I was searching for her. I'd go on walks, by myself. I would walk in the open fields, and I would go round and I would sit and I would think. And I'd get up and I'd wander again, and I'd walk around all those places and talk to myself... as if I am talking to my... well, to tell you the truth, as if I am talking to my mother. Just talking freely and easy, and

I didn't care who heard me.

Yes, I've been in a sort of dream since I was nine. I don't know whether it was actually the love of my mother that brought it on to me, but... I mean, ever since her death it was just seeming as if I was in a dream. I never took part in sport and even when I was in the Navy, this dream business was still going on in my mind. I was thinking all the time: One day everything will have to pop! I didn't know how long it would take. All through the life I was leading I still felt, well, as if I wanted to wake up.

That is as far back as I can remember, when I was the age of nine, and my mother died. I couldn't believe it. I was very devoted to my mother. On the death of my mother a great grievance came into my mind, which I couldn't get rid of. It came at the time when they were burying her in the ground, when they were putting her under the earth. I realized that they were taking my mother away from me, but I didn't believe <u>that</u>! I knew my mother was way out... waiting for me. All my life it has been as if I would wake up out of a nasty dream and find myself nine years old again. I am still in the same predicament. Often I felt as if I wanted to speak to somebody, but I couldn't. When I tried, I mean, it was just as if I went dumb. I wanted to tell my wife about it as well, but I couldn't.

After my mother's death, I went to live with my aunt. Although my uncle wasn't a harsh man, he was liable to get into a bit of a temper. It was only later that I found out that he wouldn't hurt a fly. If I was in his presence when he had one of his moods, I felt that he would make for me if I did or said something wrong.

When I was ten years old and staying with my uncle, I saw him having intercourse with my aunt. I didn't think anything. I just turned round and went to sleep. It was then that I began to masturbate. I didn't see it from anybody. It was just a feeling... a feeling that came up in me, and while I was doing it I thought of anything that came up in my mind. (When I was a kid of about seven I knew my father and mother slept together. It didn't take any course through my mind then. I was about seven when I saw them having intercourse; I went into the room by mistake and I saw my dad on my mother. When they saw me he just lay still until I was out of the room. He wasn't naked, he was just... his pyjama pants was on. My mother was naked. I mean, well, I was... I didn't think anything at the time... at the time I just didn't...)

Then my father married again, and he wanted me to come and stay with him, so I came into contact with my sister again. She was three years older than me. As a sister she was close to me, but that was that. I haven't heard from her in years, to tell you the

truth, but I have the feeling... well, she is <u>there</u> She's worrying about me too, that's the feeling I have for her. I don't know whether she's happily married. I don't know where she is, and she don't know where I am. When people ask me about her, I wonder what has happened to her. That is all the thoughts I have about Sally.

My father did love me, and I loved him too. It was on account of my stepmother that I couldn't stay with him. It was not actually that I was afraid of him, for Dad was as gentle as could be. I mean if I did anything to hurt him, I felt it the deepest of anyone, to tell you the truth.

But after my mother's death, my stepmother was in the picture. I don't actually know what went on with her and my father before he married her. I didn't even bother to ask anyone. When my stepmother married my father, she was already pregnant with a child... my father's. They had been sleeping together before they were married, and the thought came into my mind: "He had to marry her!" Later on in years, I thought about it; sleeping with a woman he's not legally married to, putting her in the family way, marrying her because he had to. I was cross with my father, but I didn't actually show it.

So I just went on my own. I wanted to be by myself. I felt inferior. I mean, I felt that I wasn't wanted in the home. I felt that I couldn't cope with them, especially my stepmother. So I decided to make a getaway. I asked my father if it was not possible for me to go and stay with an aunt in Benoni. I told him: "I'd rather stay with you than with anybody, but not if she's here too." Hugh this, Hugh that, and then Hugh said good-bye.

When I went to my aunt in Benoni, I was shy and I just couldn't cope with other boys. I never played any sport at school. I gave my time to reading. After school, when the boys used to go to the gym or play rugby, I just used to go for a stroll, or visit the museum or go home to do my homework. Sport just didn't worry me, and I like listening to music on the radio.

I used to leave the girls strictly alone. What worried me was that I often caught myself telling lies. Not that I planned them, but it was just as if I was afraid of something. I am still like that. It is just as if I am afraid of telling the truth. For instance, if I have done something wrong and the truth has to come out, it will make me ashamed, and then I tell the truth upside down. This happens if I feel I can't face things.

I got a job in the post office in Benoni, but my dad asked me to come and stay with them again. I wrote to him: "Look, I am getting a month's leave soon. Let me come and stay with you, and if we agree, good." But it didn't work. I was about seventeen. Actually, I couldn't cope with my stepmother. If anything went

wrong, Hugh this, and Hugh that, and Hugh is always wrong, so I said, "This is where Hugh says good-bye again", and I was gone. I bolted from the house.

I went into the Navy. There I was very touchy, of course. I don't know why, but I used to flare up at anything. I used to go off with a pop at a thing anybody else would just laugh off. Like a cracker, I was. And, of course, the men used to tease me about that. I have got quite rid of flaring up now. To tell you the truth, it was teased out of me. I went off pop , and they used to chaff me, and so I tried to control myself, and after a while it just wore off. I was the one they teased. Well, I never used to swear very much. When one of them swore, used the word "Christ" or "God" or something like that - I used to pounce on them. They used to call me Holy Boy, or Bible Beater, or something like that, and it used to go on for days.

Sex is not very strong with me, and has never been very strong. Before I got married, I never actually took a girl seriously. I just wasn't interested, that's all. It just didn't worry me. I could have had intercourse many a time, and when I got back to the ship, the men used to ask me, "So why didn't you doodle her?" or something like that. Then I'd say, "Ah, man, bugger off." Then I'd go and sit in the galley with the chief steward and help him a bit. Of course, I'd stay away for a bit before our mess subsided again, or else, if I'd walk back there they'd just start teasing me again.

Actually the ideas I had about sex was very poor. I mean, sex wasn't important to me. I'd never go out of my way for it, to tell you the truth. I didn't worry about women. Instead of having intercourse with girls, I used to think about them and masturbate on that particular thought. I was always on my own when I masturbated. It's common for men to do it together in the Navy, but I didn't take any notice. I mean, being around at sea with chaps all the time, they never worried me and I never worried them because I never used to sleep in the mess. I always used to go apart and sleep in our little pantry; I rolled out my blankets and dossed there. There's many a night I got an erection and masturbated and turned round and went to sleep. That was all.

I had nothing to do with women because I was worried, to tell you the truth. If I took a woman out, I knew I just wouldn't be able to face the music if she got into trouble. You know what these whores are; they blame you for everything that happens. I didn't want anything to do with them at all. As a matter of fact, I was afraid of sex. I'm not sexually inclined. As I told you before, as far as sex is concerned, I'm very poor. I just couldn't worry about it.

I'm very fond of classical music. I can sit for hours... there were nights that I used to... well, for instance, I had my own little gram, and I had record on record of classics, like the Warsaw Concerto, Schumann, Schubert, Tchaikowsky and Beethoven. I used to put them on and listen deep into the night. I never used to worry about girls or cinemas or things like that. So long as I'd got my cigarettes on the table next to me, and I'd got a record on that gram, well, nothing could get me out of that seat. That was the life, more or less, that I led until I got married. If I am listening, the music goes right through me, and I can, more or less, judge the setting of that music. Tchaikowsky music, for instance, where it comes to his Pastureland Symphony I can more or less see against the setting of the grass the cattle grazing, the sheep here and there, and through the music itself you can hear the children calling one another. It's got to such a stage that I've got such an ear for music that in a piece of music I can actually hear far off children calling to one another and I can actually sit back and see them. That's the thrill I get out of classical music.

When I met my wife, it was the first time I ever fell in love. I was lonely. I felt I needed a mate. Just somebody, I thought at the time, who I could speak to. Somebody who I could depend on if I got into trouble. I felt I couldn't cope with going through life on my own.

After a while, I began to have intercourse with my wife. I couldn't help myself. Also I felt that if I did have intercourse with my wife it would be much easier than just lying at home masturbating. She was the first woman I had ever had intimacy with. I haven't slept with her for a long time now. She doesn't want me to; she is afraid that I'll make her pregnant again.

I spent one night in gaol after stealing cigarettes at my work, and that started me off. That started the fire in the building. Since then the building has been burning fiercely, to tell you the truth. I have been on the loose, drinking and gambling and just going my own way. I squandered the money I had to pay debts with, and I can't tell you what I did with it. My wife thinks I squandered it on other women, but that is not true. I did drink and smoke and gamble.

I have been just like a rolling stone. I mean, I have stopped caring what I was doing. Before I had realized what I was doing, I was deep into debt, and I got myself into trouble with my wife. I have been in one job after another. I have attempted suicide three times. Each time, I thought: What's the use? I have gone straight before, and I get over my troubles knowing that a week later, as I said before, I'll just set the building alight again. Go on the pot, or something. I don't know what gets into me. I just have no control over myself. Sometimes I go into a bar for a beer, and when



Out of the Navy



After Stealing Cigarettes



One Job After Another



Burning Fiercely

I look again I've had a few brandies as well. Yes, it's true that I go and sit in bioscopes all afternoon, but I never take a woman with me. I go alone. I know my sister told you that she found me talking under the trees in the garden; to be quite frank, I was talking to myself when I stood under the trees in the dark in my sister-in-law's garden, telling myself how I was feeling... My wife has often asked me why I don't speak to her, or try to start a conversation with her. I've tried so many times but I couldn't manage it. I'd come home in the evenings and read and sit. In company I can speak quite freely, but the minute my wife and I are

> alone, well... I can't even say, "Bah!" I don't know why it is, but I've got to find out. The way I'm going on! The last couple of weeks... well, just as if I'm going crazy or something. The thought of suicide came up in me many times, as fear and doubt for myself came up in me. I thought... well, I felt ... how shall I say..wanted by nobody, and all alone.
>
> It's like I told you: being in a dream and thinking that some day I've got to snap out of it. I told myself often that I was upsetting my life by thinking about meeting up with my mother again.

Suicide cannot be understood without remembering that a private fantasy world exists in the mind of each person. Not only is it kept secret from his fellows, but he himself remains unaware of the major portion of it, not controlling or understanding many of the motivations and feelings which emerge from the fantasy world.

In the individual, responses of withdrawal can become ingrained, so that the person, almost without conscious planning, creates for himself repetitiously the kind of emotional atmosphere in which he had lived during the years of his growing up. He gives recurrent expression to patterns of behaviour which enable him to retain his social isolation. In situations of stress he makes rigid responses, not appropriately varying his behaviour with different demands. In addition, because the individual is compulsively occupied with his fantasy life, and with the imaginery fears and angers he nurses in private rumination, challenges of reality are not met.

At times, suicidal behaviour occurs in the individual soon after hopeful efforts have been made by him to improve the social situation; there presents then the anomalous event of suicide occurring in one exhibiting a fresh access of vitality. The explanation is not hard to find. The individual will be found to have aimed his renewed vigour at an impossible desire, destined to suffer frustration. nThe individual's aims are tainted by unrealistic expectations which, although they can be indulged in in the fantasy world,can never be achieved in the real world. Disappointed, the pained person then withdraws more firmly from the reality about him, and surrenders himself more widely to his fantasy forces.

2. The Inner Fantasy Life

In normal individuals it is probable that the inner fantasies and the real world are not widely discordant; enough gratification is found in reality, so that the fantasy need not so often be yielded to. In normal persons, fantasies are in any case

not so impossible of realization, and can therefore find partial expression in the individual's social behaviour.

But this does not apply in suicidal persons. It is striking in them how the fantasy world is out of accord with surrounding reality. For example, a youth may choose by suicide to atone for his guilt over masturbation, not having perceived how universal is his "sin". The private world is embraced with such ecstasy that the realities of the surrounding world are left unexplored. Irrational fears and desires, resting on obsolete childhood experience, profoundly modify the individual's manner of engaging in the world outside him. For reasons existing in his fantasy system he has severely restricted himself. His feelings of inferiority may come to dominate existence and cause him to withdraw until alone, isolated, unsatisfied, he finds his behaviour compulsively following a few defined patterns, which had existed powerfully already in his childhood.

Moreover, the individual himself can only know a minor portion of his fantasy life: those private ambitions, desires, humiliations and fears, dwelt upon with fascinated concern, but which he would not dream of confessing to his closest intimate. He can never know the significant part of the fantasy world which remains hidden from the individual himself, a vast repository of childhood experiences and attitudes which cannot be recalled to memory by mere introspection. Freud's great insight was of this buried world within the adult person, made up of the vestiges of the child's painful attempt to find a place for himself in the family.

Both the conscious and unconscious fantasy life centre upon the individual's relationships during childhood and growing-up to the parents. Later it will be traced how, probably, a child will seek his gratification in the real world, if he has learnt in his dealings with his parents kindly expectations of his environment.

In every person who attempts suicide, if the interviews are allowed to follow his private preoccupations, intense reflection will be focused upon the parents, in relation to whom conflicts and pathological degrees of emotional dependence will be revealed. If the individual has been rebuffed and harshly repressed, or apprehensively protected, or reared without a notion of identity and parentage, then his expectation of reality will be meagre and his desire for participation in the world feeble. He will turn instead to a fantasy world within him, constructing systems of desires which are hidden from his fellows, and unlikely to find gratification in reality.

Dwelling with vigour and apprehension in the fantasy world, not only does he participate half-heartedly in real existence, but in addition he has fantastic expectations of what limited reality he can bring himself to accept. He does not perceive that the secret longings, the intense inner wishes cannot possibly receive gratification precisely because they are out of accordance with reality.

> The Nurse with the hare-lip (Case 13), we have seen, cherished fantasies of being a famous actress.

A coloured youth swallowed caustic soda. He died after a year's discomfort from an oesophageal stricture. A psychopath of schizoid temperament, he lived in isolation and surrendered himself to daydreaming. He did not have friends, considering that they might land him in trouble. He regarded it as safer to be completely apathetic. He was vacant and listless and had no life aims. Yet he daydreamed of possessing fleshy clothes. Also, great aggression escaped from him, and caused him in a predatory manner to prowl the suburbs on the look-out for drunk men. These unfortunates would then become objects for the rage which he vented.

Case 25 FRED JANUARY

The two times in my life when I did feel unhappy were when my mother died, and now. I was eighteen when my mother died. I felt very heartbroken. I missed my mother very much. I made up my mind that I would follow my own head, and do exactly what I wanted to do. I said that I knew best, and I refused to listen to nobody. I met friends; one glass of wine, and then another, and then I began to drink a bottle each day till I got like I am now. My mother had been dead for a year when I began to drink. I felt very sad, and although I went on with my work I could not feel any happier.

My mother was fond of us all, but I was the only one that she loved. I can't say why she spoilt me so much. When she died I was very heartbroken, and I thought that I would never again get a mother as she was. I knew if she died that my life was going to be hard, because now there was nobody who was going to take my part. I could not do now as I wanted to do. I knew that I was going to be thrown on my own if I did anything that was not right. When my mother was alive, I knew that she would always take my part and love me, no matter what I did.

My mother was divorced when I was just a weak baby. My father divorced my mother because he went round with another woman. My mother looked after us and then she married my stepfather. My stepfather is all right; he lives with us now

in the house.

I am going to behave well, as I did before I made such a mess of my life. I am going to be a good person again. I admit I drank a lot and I slept out of the house. I carried on terribly. I drank too much, and I went round with rough friends. I fought and molested other people and did such things. It is because of the type of friends that I met.



I have no friends at the moment. I don't hate people really. There was just one boy that I hated, and he is now dead. He had a fight with me, and he chopped me against the forehead with a knife; he could not manage to hit me with his fists. Since he chopped me with a knife I have hated him. Soon afterwards he was killed in a motor accident, and I was glad about it.

But I don't like people. I had a fight with my girl, and I tried to throw her out of the window two storeys up. Now she is cross with me. I slapped her in the face, not once but many times, because she drank a glass of wine with a girl friend when I told her not to drink. I see my brothers, but I am not very fond of them. I don't worry much with them. If I come up against them, then I am good to them. But I don't worry myself if I don't see them. When they go away, then I am by myself again. I am alone most of the time, all on my own. I like to be by myself. In the evening and during the day, if I have got nothing to do, I like to sit - alone - thinking, and when I get hungry then I go to my sister and ask her for food to eat, and then I go out of the house again, and sit on a bench near the back door. That is the only place I go to. In the

evening I don't worry about what is going on in the house. I let everybody do their own things. I am much better off when I sit by myself.

If I go with friends, then perhaps I land up one day in prison.

I will tell doctor straight out what I desire. You can think what you like! I want to have lots of beautiful clothes... I'll tell doctor straight out what it is that I think about. I won't hide it any more. What I think is to be rich! I like to have what other people have got. What I want to have is money, clothes, and those are the things that I have in my mind when I am sitting alone. I am always full of desire for things. I am envious: if I see a beautiful thing, then I want it too; that is all that I get on my mind.

Those are strange thoughts that come into my head when I am sitting alone. I know that I will never get the money to get the things I want, but what I can do is to dream when I will be rich. I am not well-educated, and I have not got a trade of any sort; I am only a labourer, and what is a labourer to-day? He gets very little money.

I was unmannerly. I interfered with people. Then they came to my sister and complained to her that I was interfering with people in the street. They said I hit people with pieces of wood.

It is true. I molested people, because it was a kind of pleasure for me. Not sober people but drunk people who were walking in the street. I walked up to them and just hit them. Other people saw me doing that and they came to tell my sister. They said that I was hitting innocent people for no reason at all, with big pieces of wood, or else, I walk up to the drunk men and just slap him. When other people talk to me about doing that, I say to them: "You look after yourself. You just see to it that your children don't do the kind of things that I am doing." That is why the people hate me. I've got no reason for hitting the drunk people. I do it out of spitefulness, because I don't know what else to do. I will never slap a sober man. He would hit me back and he would hurt me, because he is not drunk. I just slap drunk people, and then I run away. That is why so many people come and talk to my sister about me.

She tells me I must not do it, but I do the same thing over and over again. My sister worried me not to do it again. I feel shy, but then I just do it again, and it seems to me that I hardly know what I am doing.

The inner world, the idioscosmos, exerts a crucial motivational influence upon the individual. Any person who attempts suicide does so because of attitudes that cannot be understood without reference to memories derived from the humiliations, frustrations

and the illicit desires of childhood; these the child has learnt to control by developing a conscience, and as he grows to awareness of the world and its ways, his conscience can grow so powerful that it forbids him spontaneity and assertion.

Of these hidden aspects of his personality the individual's closest associates remain unaware.

3. Unexpressed Aggression

The suicidal person has conscious wishes to die; these suicidal wishes derive from the individual's fantasy life. It will now be described why the suicidal person, who has a secret fantasy life with more immediacy than the surrounding environment, turns to death.

If a typical suicidal personality can be described, it is the withdrawn, placating, anxious individual, desiring with exaggerated concern to live peaceably: society's meek victim. But the glaring paradox is that in practically every person behaving suicidally will be discovered great reserves of hidden aggression. The person himself may not be aware of this aggressivity, or of the major portion of it. In fact, many of his conscious strivings aim at keeping this conscious aggressivity out of his own sight, and out of view of others. Now and then, startling even himself, a gust of aggressivity will escape from him. He is appalled because with infinite pain he has constructed a social personality designed to inform everybody how gentle and amiable he was, to camouflage his aggression. So urgent is his need to do this that in adulthood he may succeed in being unaware himself of the core of aggression round which his personality had been built.

Case c Mr. TEDDY YATES

There doesn't seem to be anything for me in life. What's the use of living? I mean, all I live for is to die. I'm really living-dead. I'm alone; I have no home. I have sufficient money to spend for five years, then I've got to be dead. I'm scared of going insane. It's difficult to know where to start, if I've got to talk about myself.

Since I can remember my Dad used to drink. When I began to go to school people always pointed at me and said, "That's old drunk Yates' child". I can remember since I was six years old, and even then all the kids bullied me around. They knew my Dad was drinking and wouldn't be able to stand up for me. My old man even wanted to keep me out of school so that I could work on the land for him, but the Law made him send me. I

grew up from childhood feeling a black sheep. The drunkard's child! My father treated my mother badly, often hitting her. I hated him! I told him often how I hated him, but he just ignored me. He could do so because I was just small then. Eventually when I was fifteen he died.

I had been looking after my Mum so long when he died that I thought at last the two of us would be able to start a happy life together. But my mother remarried, to a Dutch chap by the name of Bezuidenhout. There I was: Out again! I felt she done me down. Although I didn't hate her, I was definitely sadly disappointed. She had paid every attention to me before she remarried, but this Bezuidenhout had three small children. I felt an outcast. I was only fifteen, remember, when she got remarried. I felt I had stood by her through thick and thin. I used to cycle through the night from school to see her, a fifty mile journey. Instead of the two of us being happy together, she chose to marry again. Her wedding night was actually the first time I got drunk. That night...



At her wedding reception I thought, "Well, I've had her." I got drunk. As I was getting tight I got so bladdy mad with a girl I had with me as my dancing partner that I gave her a clout. I was cross because I thought of my mother getting married. As a matter of fact, I cracked my mother too, not that same night, but long afterwards. Just after my wife left me. I drove up to my mother's place at five o'clock in the morning. I woke her up. I asked my mother, "What are your intentions?" - she had the ruling hand about the farms. Then I just cracked her, and got in my car and drove off. I banished her from my farm; for a whole year nobody put their foot on my farm. I just sat there thinking about what I was going to do. I started having a few drinks, so everybody started to say eventually, "Just like his father, the image of his father!" It worked on me so...

When I married my wife everything went well. But then she started going out in the morning and not coming back until evening, when she would open a bladdy tin of sardines. That was supposed to be my

supper for the night! So to punish her I stopped sleeping with her. I went to sleep in another room. On her birthday she buzzed off - she had only stayed with me ten months. Then I really started to drink. I don't go on all the time; I have bouts. When my wife left me I left the farm. I went to Kenya.

There something mysterious happened. I got malaria and because there was no hospital they kept me in the hotel and the doctor attended me there. When I got out of the hotel I got a cable from Bezuidenhout to say that my mother died of a stroke. So I came back to the Union. I noticed people were nasty and would hardly talk to me. Only later did I find out a telegram had been sent, telling my mother before she died that I was drinking very heavily. Everybody blamed my mother's death on to me, and from that time everything seemed to change. People said I was the death of my mother. Everybody was just nasty, plain, bloody nasty. My stepfather doesn't even speak to me. I'm afraid nobody understands me, now now.

I met a girl who wanted to get married to me. I couldn't. I know I was drinking too much and wouldn't be able to support her. So she committed suicide. They wanted to arrest me for murder! The night before the girl died I slept with her. I suppose she thought she might be in the family way and wanted to get herself out of the way of any scandal.

Then I had an accident in which my uncle was killed. I was driving, and I had something to drink. A year later I had another car accident in which three people were killed; that time I was very much under the influence. After the first accident everybody thought I had deliberately killed my uncle. After the second accident there was a legal case. I had the best advocate in Africa; if it wasn't for him I would have been in much, much more serious trouble. I got a £75 fine and a three years' suspended sentence - the magistrate said he didn't want to take away my driving licence because being a farmer I would need it for my work.

I regard myself as responsible for all those people who died. I know there are seven children left orphans through me. I was responsible, certainly. I have a lot of nightmares: there is screaming, yelling, bang! I wake up shouting. That girl who killed herself....

But I have no time for women. Any woman, I wouldn't trust her as far as I can piss. I think they are all the same. In a way, I'm afraid of having a woman. I think the nearest I can come is to say that I'm afraid if I marry any woman I won't be able to give her a child. I couldn't give my wife a child, and she has had two since she left me.

> I don't make friends. I feel no affection for people. As a matter of fact, I could see somebody die and I'd give him a kick. I'd stand and laugh at him. I've hurt people, but people have hurt me so badly I don't care. I just don't care for them. I see no hope for myself. There is nothing. I really don't mind being dead. I don't see the point of living. I suppose other people have got something to live for...

In this man inner aggressivity assumed such monstrous force that he felt himself a harmful outcast; and, not content with fantasies of outrage and revenge, he allowed his aggressive trends outlet enough to make a veritable career of murder. In his childhood lay his hatred of his father, from whom he obtained early in life an example of alcoholism. His life held no more promise by the time he came to make a suicidal attack upon himself. One of the most pressing scientific tasks is to discover why aggressivity forms in the personality of an individual. It will be argued here that frustration in infancy, resulting from repeated humiliations and denials, brings about strong aggressivity. Feeling himself abandoned and unloved, the child would wish to scream, to break things and to bite, but he still hopes for love from frustrating parents, and on this account he pretends to meekness. He does not rage and storm, the child who in adulthood may behave suicidally, because he still has wishes for kindness, in spite of the indignities he has felt inflicted upon him. So with guile and infinite anxiety he constructs the false personality of acquiescence, passivity and eagerness to serve.

A youth aged twenty-two years was admitted with a filed-off bullet in his shoulder. A dependent personality of goody-goody type, he was disinclined to talk. Long pauses occurred. He wept silently, shielding his face in his hands, and permitting the tears to roll down his cheeks. At times he sobbed loudly and could not speak.

Case 26 HERMANN LAUFFER

> I felt so unhappy. It is as if the world had pushed me out, so I shot myself.
>
> A few weeks ago I went away from the house, away from my mother's house. On the Wednesday evening I felt so sad and on Thursday morning I got up to go to work. Instead of going to my work I just went straight to Pretoria Station and took a train to Cape Town. When I got here I went and stayed with my aunt. Then I began to think back about everything at home in Pretoria. I thought about how my brothers fight with me,

and of how I have left my mother without even telling her where I was going. That Thursday morning I just turned round at the gate of my work and said to myself, "I am going to take the train to Cape Town." When I got here to my aunt's house, I was still unhappy, although she has offered to adopt me. Oh!

I love my mother very deeply. I will admit that! Now I can never go back to her because I left her. How stupid won't I look if I go back? I will look a complete fool, but I want to go back to her very badly.

To think that I went away from home without even telling my mother where I was going to! (Sobbing.) I came to Cape Town to see if I could not find some happiness, but now I sit here and think that I went away from home without even telling my mother. I have been so unhappy since my father died. Since he died I have always longed for him. It has been very terrible not to have a father: nobody who has a father can know how awful it is not to have a father. Since my sixteenth year I have had to work, and I would have liked to learn at school. I never had any privileges. Other people have fathers, and I can't have a father! That is not fair... I have just got to stand and listen to other people saying, "Father, father, father?" I have been miserable because I don't have a father.



I have got to be like a father in the house, but nobody takes any notice of me. My brothers won't listen to me. I am not one who likes fighting. I thought that perhaps if I went away from home they would be good to me, and listen to me when I say what they should do.

My father died when I was sixteen years old. I haven't got a father with me in the house now. My younger brothers are always quarrelling, and I don't like fighting at all.

I have been unhappy since I was a child. I don't really know what to say... I felt that I was bad. I have been unhappy since I was young because my brothers always quarrelled with me. I just kept quiet and spoke seldom. It is my brothers who cause the trouble at home now, and I know that I left the house so suddenly because of my brothers. I rowed with my small sister and one of my small brothers said to me, "Get out of the house!" He just wanted to hit me, and I can say straight

out, doctor, I can't fight. I don't like fighting. Fighting is nonsense, it's just kafirs that fight.

My brothers have often taken my clothes and gone to sell them. Anything of mine they take a fancy to they put on. When I try to speak to them about it and tell them that they are taking my clothes, then they get cross. They swear at me and chase me out of the house. Often they have taken my money without even telling me. That kind of thing is not fair. Before my father died the family life was good.

I helped my mommy in the house when I was there. I washed dishes and swept out the house and at times I even did the washing of the clothes. But my brothers and sisters do exactly what they please. My brother and sisters are happy; it is only I who am so miserable. That has been so since I was young and it is worse since my father died. My father's death was a terrible blow to me. I loved my father very deeply, and I suffered when he died.

I don't think I wanted to kill myself when I shot myself, although I would far rather be dead than alive. I just wanted to hurt myself thoroughly so that I could feel pain. I thought if I suffered I would feel better afterwards. I wanted to hurt myself thoroughly.

When my father was alive, I got many hidings! I washed the dishes, and doctor will think it is a girl's work, my washing dishes, but I did it often. I swept out the house; and when Mommy washed, many times I helped her with the wash. If I didn't do the housework, I got a hiding. But my brothers and sisters can't do anything to-day, they are useless.

The brother younger than I am is twenty-one years old now. He is married already. My brothers are always causing trouble and there is never any friendship between them and me. I can't open my mouth without having them swear at me. Then my mother becomes angry at the noise, and it is me she tells to shut up! It makes me very sad when she rows with me, when it is not my fault. I helped to support the house. I work as a postman, earning £21 a month, and more than half I give to my mother every month. The other money that is over I use to pay off the rent of the house, and so on. There is hardly any money over for me. I don't really know what I am working for!

I have no friends at all. I don't know why that is so. I don't like going around with a lot of people: before I know where I am I will end up in a lot of trouble. I don't want any friends. The people you meet can bring you into trouble. They can get you into mischief, and I don't like that. I would far rather stay at home and sit alone, and then I would know that I am out of danger: outside there are always fights, and people

being hit with sticks. I am very quiet; I am not a chap who talks a lot. You get people who like to talk, to talk a lot of nonsense. I speak when I have got something to say, but I keep my mouth shut if there is nothing I want to say. I don't believe in talking nonsense.

All I desire in life is peace. I am interested in girls, but I have never had the privilege of taking them out. I had to care for the house. My brother of twenty-one who is married lives with his wife in our house, and yet he bears none of the responsibility of looking after the household, and he is always making trouble.

I am the eldest son, and yet I never thought of love-making when I was young. Even when I was sixteen I knew nothing about love. Only since I went to work I heard people talking about girls. I just listened. I have only been to bioscope with a girl once in my life, only once! And then I felt that everyone was looking at me. I don't know why it is; I just feel shy all the time. I have never had anything to do with a woman. I am shy to talk about such matters, but the way I look at it is like this: Look at all the trouble there is these days. I mean the girls who get into trouble and don't even know who their child's father is. You often see in the papers about such troubles. I wouldn't like to bring anybody into trouble about such things. It's not nice at all. Later on people know about it, and when you pass they say: "Yes, look, that one did such a mean thing!" I mean, nobody will like me. Everybody will think, "He had better stay away from my house; he will molest my daughter."

I have sexual feelings, but I don't do anything about it. Sometimes I play with my own body. You don't know who you are going out with if you are interested in girls. You can pick up all kinds of sicknesses, and then you have got to go to a doctor with it, and that isn't nice at all.

I wanted to hurt myself very badly. I wanted the people at home to feel sorry for me. Now I can only think of what pain I have caused my mother. I always cared for her, and I was sorry for her. I don't know what is going to happen to me the day when she passes over.

When a person behaves suicidally, it is significantly himself that he attacks. He cannot shed the inhibition imposed by his swollen conscience, even when his aggressivity finally breaks out. Angry and murderous though he is, he still does not risk an action harmful to anybody else.

To keep hidden his core of inner aggression, the individual uses much ingenuity; a considerable proportion of his energy

and talent is spent in constructing the placatory demeanour he presents to the world, so his adult life is likely to be devoid of achievement.

In later life, an event may occur to activate his slumbering aggression, disturbing his carefully-prepared personality defences. He will be moved to vast anger: but he will be restrained from making an attack on the person by whom he feels oppressed, because his firm conscience demands from him, at any personal price, that he act in a socially-accepted manner. He still desires to be loved. Moreover, he himself recoils in fright from the spectacle of the anger he carries within himself. So it happens that when at last his lifelong rage is exteriorized, he does not seek a victim from the environment, but again compromises and uses himself for victim.

A young married woman became depressed and, after much angry nagging, drank sedative tablets she had saved for eleven years. She could not tolerate her feminine role: in childhood she had felt herself worthless because her father had wanted a boy.

Case 27 MRS. REED

In the first place... I shouldn't be here. I should be away. I mean, I should be dead. There has been a horrible mistake. I suppose I should have done it at night, so that nobody could find me. I want to die very much. You see, I would have done it a long time ago.

My husband was the first man with whom I had ever gone out seriously. I am glad now that I never married the boy my husband took me away from. It's funny, isn't it, how things turn out... When I met my husband, of course, he was twenty-eight already. He was a man then, and the charming-looking boy who took me out, he doesn't look as handsome any more. He has lost all the charming, boyish qualities he had when he took me out.

My husband is quite a bit older than me. He is forty-two, and I'm thirty-two. But I didn't think our difference in ages was so great when I married him. There is the same difference between my Mom and my Dad, and they've been very happy.

My husband and I have been married for ten years. Ten years this has been going on. It is as if he had got me, and he said to himself, "You can just carry on, I've got you!" I know him so well. If you were to take us to a divorce court, there is no real point at which you can say: "This is where he has done wrong to her" - you know what I mean. It's just a bickering that

goes on between us all the time, what you would call mental cruelty, I think! That's what they call mental cruelty...

He was the first man who touched me in a sexual way. I was very shy of him, but I trusted him, and I was not afraid. For a long time we couldn't make contact, my husband was afraid to hurt me too much. I don't know whether it was right for me to lead him on, or whether I should just leave him to find his own way. I didn't know whether a girl must help in that way, you know. On our honeymoon we hardly had contact at all. We tried, but it was only when we got back to our flat that we could make love satisfactorily, and for two years everything was all right.

When we were first married my husband used condoms, but just lately he finds that he can't get any satisfaction with those at all, so he has left them off, and I panic! You see, the woman gets the worst end of the stick again. If I got pregnant, then I will have to bear the brunt of everything. My husband doesn't have to worry, so I have had to use pessaries.

But at least my husband used to come home, and we used to go to the pictures. But, you see, we didn't have the children then. I know the children have complicated things terribly, and we have had them one after the other, two years between each of four of them. I do admit they've complicated things, but it's not their fault, and he did want them. I wanted them too... but he was very keen on them.

He adores his children. And that's another thing! It rankles with me so. They are naughty little kids and he won't check them. If I've got to check them, he says, "All right, you come to Daddy." That's not right. They've got to leave the place tidy! If we've got to manage without a servant, the children have got to do their little bit. They leave their toys and he leaves his newspapers scattered all over the lounge, and I get cross about that. I don't hit them or anything, but I get cross about it. Then he says: "What's all this row about? There you go again. Now, you leave these kids alone. You come to Daddy, so-and-so." He picks them up and takes them to him. In the end I've got to clean up the papers that they should have folded together. That's what makes me mad!

He will not check the children, as I check them. If they have done something wrong, and I check them he doesn't stick up for me. He doesn't take my part, and it makes me mad! He always takes the kids' part, and when I speak to them he says I am... oh! what's the word, "extremist", or something like that

He always says I'm too hard on the children. I don't think I am. They've got to be brought up very carefully. They've got to be made to do their share. Honestly, I don't think he's given this a thought. I don't think he's ever given the children's future a thought.

If I could get my husband to be as he was before our marriage, even as he was before our first baby came, it would be all right. It would be wonderful. I've often suspected he doesn't love me any more. The things he's said to me! He says dreadful things to me. I've forgotten them, see. He says dreadful things to me in the heat of the fight, of course. We try not to let the children see us fighting, but sometimes they do get in. I hate letting them see us bicker. I've learnt lately that my temper is bad, I flare up. But, damn it all, why should I be the one to sit down and... take his harsh words, if they should come, and I hate him to arrive home smelling of drink, even if he has been to see a friend. Oh, I hate it! I can smell it at once. I've got a nose as sharp as I don't know what.

I think it's a crime, myself. On Saturday he goes off after lunch, at half past one, and I don't see him again until nine o'clock on a Saturday night. I don't think a man should be allowed such latitude. Women are not. I don't go to watch cricket on Saturday afternoon. What would men say if women came home at one at night and left the men to wash the babies? What would they say of us women if we went on the razzle once a week? Oh, yes, I know I should try to show a little more humour. Most people would regard what my husband does as nothing at all. "Fancy", they would say, "wanting to kill yourself because your husband expects you day after day to do the woman's work!" I must say "expects" because my husband never forces me to do anything at all, but my spirit revolts against sitting in a home and doing housework every day of my life.

It is when I tell my husband that I am dissatisfied with my share of our marriage that a row starts. Before I know where I am we are having a first-class quarrel. He says that it is my job to do the housework, and to hear him say that is what makes me so mad!



I wanted all my children to be boys. I wanted them all to be boys, so that they would not be humiliated and they would not have to do work about the house. I wanted my child-

ran to have the best of life, and to be able to get the best out of everything. People only do that if they are boys. Then they don't have to change their names, they don't have to have kids. At school, too, a boy is always taken more notice of than a girl, somehow.

I very definitely wanted to do away with myself because I was fed up with being a woman. How I hate being a woman! I have been fed up at being a woman for the whole of my life, I think. You can say what you like. I know very well that a man gets all the advantages in this world, and the woman gets the worst end of the stick, doesn't she, in every phase of life? From her childhood upwards, the woman gets the worse end of the stick. I have definitely felt that, definitely.

My life is so damned uninteresting. Oh, well, I was not cut out to do anything else but housework. I am not good enough for anything else, you know. However, I shall tell you that I have often been provoked, and I have passed over what has been done to me by keeping quiet. On many occasions I said nothing when I felt terrible. I suppose my desire to kill myself has been a sort of revolt. I certainly did want to die, because I was so damned fed up.

As a person, I am an awful worry-pot. I am always anxious and scared, especially since I have been a housewife. If my grocery bill has been added up wrongly, even if the error made is only a halfpenny, I nearly go off my head.

I have completely changed since I was a child. For instance, I had a cast-iron nerve when I was a young girl. I haven't any more, not since having the children, anyway. I've become frightened at the least little thing. I was full of fun, as a child.

I must say that when I was a child my mother was always getting cross with me. I was her only one, and she always picked me out for the least little thing. My father never lifted a finger to me. My sister wasn't born until I was ten years old, so you might as well say that I was an only child.

We have been very worried about my mother. She has recently had this big operation, and there was a time when I thought that she wouldn't pull through. In all my trouble, I never, never ran to my mother to tell her what was going on in my married life.

My parents weren't very happy when I was a small child, before my sister was born. My dad was mad on horseracing and there were many arguments about that, but he soon saw the error of his ways... long before my sister was born he changed. Since

that time there has been no fighting between my mother and father.

My mother was fond of laying down the law, but I knew what she was saying was for my own good, so I always listened to her. My dad is just the gentlest old thing. He was never unkind to me. Dad is ten years older than my mother. (There is the same difference between them as there is between my husband and I). I was always sure of my dad's love. He was a dear old dad... I mustn't say "was" because he is still alive. He is a wonderful old dad, but I felt that he wanted a son because he was the eldest son in his own family. He was my grandfather's eldest son, and I felt that I should have been a boy. It wouldn't have been so bad if my sister had turned out to be a boy, but of course it was tragic for my poor old dad when he ended up with two girls...

My mother sent me to boarding school because she thought it would do me good. I was fourteen years old, then. For the years that I was fourteen and fifteen she sent me to boarding school. I have asked her, even to this day, what was the reason she sent me there. I was a naughty child, of course, and I thought that was why I was sent from home. My mother said to me: "Your father and I talked it over, and we thought it would do you good." I was taken away from my day school, and I was sent to boarding school. The first month I was miserable there. Being away from home made me so miserable, because I was a home bird.

I passed Matric in school, that's all. I think that is quite enough for a girl to pass. My father used to mention sometimes that when I left school, I should go to the University. I said to him, "Oh, Dad, I have no inclination to go to the University. There is nothing I want to take up there." I said, "Even if I <u>was</u> a boy , I haven't got the ability to take up anything at the University. There is nothing I am good enough at. I haven't specialized in anything at school." He was a very gentle old chap who would never force anyone to do anything. Then, as I say, my sister came afterwards. She came ten years after me. I had been an only child for all those years.

The suicidal person makes a victim out of himself because he has always been too timid for relationships, especially angry ones, with others. He had always been timid because he was convinced of being unloved. His anger may be hidden from him, but the guilt it induces restrains him in his social dealings.

His suicidal fury spent, he will often be abashed by the spectacle of his own inner anger. He knows society disapproves of his outburst, but, further, he feels guilty because he has been an aggressor. At times, he dimly senses, and at other

times declares outright, that his fury was really intended for another and not meant for himself.

> Garth Barker (Case 14) threatened to kill his father who had severely repressed him in youth, even to the point of trying to order the child when to have his bowel motions. This anger directed at the father spilled over in later life when the youth attacked inoffensive native men. But the little family dog had also been repressed ludicrously by Garth's father; the dog representing him, Garth tried to strangle the little animal before actually making a suicidal attack upon himself.

Buried aggression in the fantasy life gives rise to a whole constellation of behaviour trends. The individual feels that he is unloved. He is the one who did menial tasks while his brothers and sisters played carelessly, and yet he is unappreciated. He had hopes of life, but they were frustrated. He yearned for affection, but it was withheld from him, so, as compensation, he allowed resentment to smoulder in his inner, imaginative life. Although he kept his resentment carefully hidden, even at the cost of his life's ambitions and rewards its presence within his own secret being caused him to feel guilty. He knew his resentment was directed at powerful adults who could crush him more utterly by loving him still less, so that he used his life striving to hide his resentment deeper, perhaps succeeding even in hiding it from himself. Surely, he argues, nobody so timid, so acquiescent and unadventurous could be thought to house anger. But his guilt remains. Even assumption of greater humility cannot disguise from him that, inside, his soul is a torpedo.

The person later to be suicidal fears that his inner anger can wreck his whole world, so he wants peace at any price. His personality he purposely impoverished; his very placatoriness was a kind of mutilation. He must avoid even the slightest expression of displeasure, if his huge, inner resentment is to be kept quiescent. He must avoid situations in which his aggressivity might be provoked. Almost shuddering sometimes, he retreats from any hint of rivalry in what meagre social relationships he permits himself.

So that his anger will not be provoked, with painful intensity he wants everybody to love him. He is "sensitive", unable to bear an unfriendly look or word. Over a small, perhaps altogether imaginary slight, he broods for days. When he witnesses other people being angry, he becomes strangely

agitated. His whole desire is to live in an impossible calm which he may try to achieve in a variety of ways: by religious discipline, by pretending a continuance of childhood, by careful withdrawal from adult activities or, ultimately, by seeking death.

He may feel that secretly he is "bad". He tries to hide his anger with social meekness, but cannot still the guilt the anger causes him to feel. He needs punishment for being so bad, so envious and nasty. He accepts insults meekly. He almost welcomes humiliation. He may go to the length of inducing injury upon his own person. He may choose to live in situations of gloom. Finally, he may punish himself with death for the anger within him. And, paradoxically, the moment of suicide comes about when he can no longer retain the aggressivity of which he is ashamed. The aggression, carefully housed until the moment of suicide, bursts forth to find social expression at last, but the individual is still timid of others, his conscience still sits in harsh judgement to restrain him, so his aggression is visited not upon another but on himself. In his outrage, he must be his own victim.

Chapter 8

THE PARENTS

1. Parental Stress

Egocentrism in children is so marked that until the age of about seven the child consistently fails to distinguish clearly between himself and external reality. This the studies of Piaget[50] have confirmed. The egocentricism decreases as the child's abilities mature with increasing age, when he learns to distinguish between the various aspects of reality, and discovers that these are separate from his own internal psychic processes. Throughout his early years there is this impression of the "connectedness" of all reality, both external and internal.

Therefore, children who pass their early years in an atmosphere of domestic strife and recrimination have the stress of their environment communicated to them most inescapably: from their parental anger they derive a legacy of anxiety which mars their personality development. The child senses the external strife as a profound anxiety within himself, a sense of tension upon which later apprehension will heap.

A child who, during the years of his growth, is forced to be in proximity to parents who live together in anger suffers a great harm. Failing to learn by early example that adults may be associated creatively and joyfully, in later life he may form identical tensions and rages in his own adult relations, for the tendency is considerable in children to identify themselves with one or other parent and to imitate that parent.

Children sometimes interpret even peaceable activities of the parents as acts of violence: the psychiatric literature contains many references to the dire apprehension of children who misinterpreted parental coitus as an attack being made upon the mother, for example. When he is faced by concrete wrangling and even actual fighting between his parents, the protracted cruelties some marriages generate, the child can be greatly agitated.

Unfortunately the concepts are themselves vague, and statistical basis is still lacking, but it does seem that persons who have neurotic or psychotic illnesses in later life very often tell a history of parental stress. Conversely, the children of happily-married adults are more likely to achieve warm and satisfying relationships with others.

I have no doubt at all that parental stress is an outstanding contributant to later suicidal behaviour in the child. In this series of cases is only one suicidal person (Case 47) who insisted for any time that his parents were happily married, and in his personality inarticulateness was desperately assumed as a protective response.

The cruelty one spouse is able to inflict upon the other is astonishing. The fury with which some adults can devote themselves to hatred is surely one of man's most dismaying capacities. It is a fact that the Church and the Law aim to prolong marital associations. It is also true that the most acrimonious home is kinder to the growing child than the most efficient institution. Yet I have no doubt that suicide will become a rare occurrence when children are provided with adequate parents, happily married.

To me it seems that the chief responsibility parents have to their children is to afford them the calm atmosphere which is an outcome of marital peace. The following history deals with a girl who became a domestic drudge early in her life, hoping by her sustained presence in their home to deter her parents from fighting. Later, when she came to marry, she chose a man more than twice her age who had already been divorced twice, and to him she clung in spite of being misused.

Case 28 MRS. ROSE DELAPORT

I am nineteen years old. I left my husband after we were married for only seven months. (Weeping). My husband is much older than I am, doctor, but I didn't care about it. I feel it is not right for me to leave him when he is so old. I always felt that I would look after him, and I want to do it. I promised and I want to do it. I can't leave him alone after I promised... I promised him that I would never leave him, I told him that I would look after him one day when he is old, and I am still a youngster. He is forty-five and I will be twenty to-morrow.

He used to suffer a lot. He got a headache every day and I used to feel sorry for him, so if I wanted to go anywhere and he didn't want to go, I was quite satisfied to stay with him.

He had been married before. I am his third wife. I did not know that he had been married before, when we two got married. He told me that he didn't treat his first wife right: he said he used to take no notice of her and he went out with other women. He said he used to leave her alone at home in the night, and go out to spend the evening with his friends, and he used to drink.

His second wife ill-treated him. She used to treat him badly, sort of pay him back for what he did to the first wife,

so he changed. But she was the one who used to go out now; she went out with other men, so he divorced her and he got married to me. He divorced the first wife, but the second wife divorced him. He did tell me he was divorced, but only recently have I found out that he was divorced twice.

When I first got married it upset me whenever my husband tried to make love to me, but I soon got used to it. At first I just didn't like the idea at all: I used to get sick after it. I retched and vomited whenever he slept with me. I don't know why that was. I can't think why that was so. I thought the whole thing was very ugly. I knew about sex before I married him: my mother used to tell me. She told me what married life was like; how your husband makes love to you. She reckoned that I had to know; she told me when I was about fifteen years old how babies come and all that, so I know. My mother suffered a lot herself. When my father was drunk and misbehaved himself, my mother could not eat or drink or sleep.



One of the things that decided me to leave my husband was that I wanted a baby, and he would not give it to me. He would never make love to me in such a way that I could get a baby. He never used a preventative; he used to pull it out before he came. He always did that. It was only sometimes that I got any enjoyment out of the love-making. He has never used a preventative, not once, since we were married. I have spoken to him and told him that I don't get my satisfaction, but he doesn't give me an answer when I speak about that.

After I had left my husband I heard from other people that he wanted me to come back to him. One night I went to his house actually to tell him that I was going to have a divorce. People had warned me that he was living with another girl, and I wanted to find out for myself. I thought I had to find out if it was true that he had another woman. When I got down to the house, another lady who lives in the same place told me that he was

sleeping with this girl at that very moment. She said they had been living together as man and wife. I knocked at the door and when it was opened, I found the woman sleeping in one bed with my husband. When I asked him to explain himself, he told me that the girl was sleeping with him only for that night.

When I came into the room, she began to sob, and she told my husband that she would take his life or her own, but she would never see him in the arms of another woman. I explained that I wanted to come back to my husband, but she would not let me. Even days after, when I went to see her so that I could explain that I wanted to save my marriage, she said she would not let my husband come back to me. She said she was going to take my life and my husband's life, and I thought I would rather kill myself before she could do so.

Then she came to see me, and she told me that my husband doesn't want to see me again: she said that my husband was now in love with her, and that they both wanted me to go on with my divorce case. She said that the two of them wanted to get married as soon as I had got my divorce. She began to cry and moan, and say that I must not see my husband any more because he no longer loved me.

That same night my husband came to see me. He said I must take no notice of the woman, he wanted me to come back to him. He said that the woman had been good to him for a long time, keeping his house for him and washing his clothes. He said to me that he wanted to have nothing more to do with her, that I was his wife and should come back to him.

So I stopped my divorce case from going through. The other woman got all upset and began to cry, and said that my husband and I would never be happy again. She said that she would not permit my husband to live with any other woman but her. I got all upset too, because I couldn't stand the quarrelling. The other woman began to cry, and she went on crying in my room all night. I didn't want to hurt her: I would rather hurt myself. She has been making me terribly unhappy during these past days. Wherever my husband goes, she goes.

I have not told my parents yet that I made up my mind to go back to my husband. They were pleased when I left him, and I know that they would be very sorry if they heard that we were living together again. My mother told me that I must try to forget him. I told her that I can't, that I can't live without him. She said that I must do my best to get over him, because I was much too young to suffer for the rest of my life. It is against my parents' wishes, but I am going back to him.

Even if my life turns into the same sort of life that my mother has, it wouldn't worry me. I am not frightened of it. Say, for instance, if my husband started drinking or ill-treating me, it wouldn't worry me, because I am not frightened of it. Even if it has to happen - and I know that my mother used to suffer a lot - it won't frighten me. Even if I could choose another sort of life, I would not take it. All I want is to have my husband back. I spoke to my husband about it when I saw him last night, and he said he would try not to make my life difficult. He promised that he would make up to me for my suffering. He did make my life hell when we were together, because he would not let me go out and he would not allow me to speak to any other person. I wasn't allowed to have any friends at all. He interfered with my housework; if I wanted to change the furniture in my bedroom and he didn't approve, he would not allow me to do it. He wanted everything the way he wanted it. He would never let me have my own way. Sometimes, when I cooked anything, he said that I was not cooking it in the right way, and he would grab the things out of my hands and show me how the dish should be cooked. I don't mind that much. He never really ill-treats me.

I have always had a hard life. When I was a child I used to have to work a lot at home. When I was ten years old my mother had a baby and I had to do all the housework for my mother. I did the washing, the ironing and everything else. I used to do the work early in the morning before I went off to school. My father was very strict... my father used to <u>drink</u>. It worked on my nerves. I couldn't stand it! I was very much against it!

I was the child who did all the work, and when anything went wrong I always used to be blamed for it, even if I wasn't to blame. My father gave me many a hiding. His drinking brought a lot of unhappiness into the home. He used to hit the children, and he used to bother with my mother. He used to pick her out over nothing, and he would never leave her alone. Many a night he used to go out and stay out all night. I didn't like it. I was very upset about it.

My father was so awful to us, and yet I did not dislike him. I can't say I disliked him; I felt sorry for him, and I tried to help him.

All the work at home fell on to me because I was the child who was willing to do the work. I knew my mother could not afford a servant and that is why I helped her. All the other children thought far more of their schoolwork than of housework, and that is why I was the one who helped my mother. Someone had got to help her, so I helped her. Then I went to the High School

> when my mother got better and could do her work, but I did not like it and soon I became sick. I had trouble with my knees, and I thought we had to work too hard at school. The work was too much for me. They were very strict at school and I couldn't stand it, and, most of all, I was homesick. I did not want to stay at school. I just wanted to go home. What really happened is that I used to worry all the time I was at school, because my mother used to write to me and tell me how my father was behaving at home and that upset me. She wrote to me that he had started to drink again, and that he stayed out all night. One day she wrote to me that he left home at ten o'clock at night and had not come back after three days. When she wrote me the letter, you see, he had not come back home yet. The baby was sick... I thought I had better leave school and go back home to help my mother.
>
> I could never bring myself to go away from home because I was always worrying about what would happen when I was not there. It was always on my mind. I was scared that my father was going to worry my mother, hit her, or something like that. I was frightened of that. That was why I couldn't leave them alone. I left school when I was fourteen years old, in standard seven, because I was sick again with my heart. I stayed at home for three months, and then I started to work. I found a job at Woolworth's bazaar. I was very scared to leave the house, but my father changed slightly and didn't drink quite as much.

The dominating spouse has been identified with a parent, and has been submitted to abjectly: this is not an unusual phenomenon in the suicide-situation, as we have already seen. The onlooker can perceive at once that the spouse is no more than a replacement for a parent. This investigation tells of many women who call their husbands "Daddy", of men married to older women whom they have pet them. If an adult sees his spouse in the role of protecting parent, then the marriage relationship is not a new, grown-up one. Instead, the whole weight of that adult's childhood feelings are carried into the marriage relationship: the spouse would be startled if he knew what, imaginatively, was being expected of him. The despairing intensity of these callow relations stamp them as substitute-seeking; the adult remains too tied-up emotionally with memories of the parent ever to behave rationally and calmly to the substitute-parent he or she has, with guilt, married.

A young man's suicidal attempt contained two interesting aspects: first, it occurred with a frustration of his peculiar arrangement for marriage, and, second, it was accompanied by a

murderous attack upon his middle-aged beloved. Foxcroft had an extremely difficult childhood. His father and mother separated when he was fifteen. He showed the trend, familiar in the childhood of one later to behave suicidally, of washing the dishes while his siblings played. He believed he loved his absent father; the mother, with whom Foxcroft continued to live after his father left, proved dissolute, and his attitude to her became one of reproach and hatred. Carefully hiding his resentment of her, he became socially delinquent. He beat up a child half his age so severely the child had to spend a week in bed. He denied all culpability when a few years later a Coloured woman brought a charge of rape against him. (In adulthood he was to deny that he had attempted to murder his mistress, claiming an amnesia for his assault). He was twice sent into a reformatory. He interrupted his Army service by deserting, and then joined the Navy. At this time, he associated compulsively with prostitutes. In adulthood, still resentful that his pleasure-loving mother had denied him tenderness, he found himself a middle-aged prostitute; he wished to marry her, following an association which was both devoted and compulsive. His mistress was alcoholic while he was abstemious. Her own children were of an age with him, and he had hopes of adopting legally the youngest of her children. In his attitude to the woman are to be found both the joy of a child in his protecting mother, and also the bravado of the adventurous and amorous male. He was able to adore with exaggerated and cloying passion his elderly mistress, but when he thought she would give her love to another man, he was overwhelmed by impulses to murder her. In a frenzy of destructive aggression he himself participated both as destroyer and victim: so it happened that he tried first to kill his mistress (who was denying him tenderness) and then himself. This violence occurred during a state of confused agitation; after it had passed, the young man claimed forgetfulness of his actions.

Case 29 CYRIL FOXCROFT

The way my mother has treated me! The way she's always treated me! (Weeping). I know that before my birth my mother went to several people to try and bring me down. One of the women she went to told me about it. I know for sure how little she thought of me! She didn't love me at all! She hated me!

I knew I wasn't wanted by my own mother when I was a child. As soon as I got my senses, as long as I can remember, I knew that! While the other children played games, I had to work. My brothers and sisters got money to go to bioscope, but there was none for me.

It was after I was sixteen years old, when I joined the Army, that I saw my first bioscope picture.

The way some people treat you, you can't love them. Unfortunately, I tried to love my mother. When I was a child I saw my father only once or twice a year, because he worked in a diamond field far away from us. It was while I was still a small schoolchild that I saw what sort of a person my mother was, and what she was doing... I actually saw her... sleeping with other men! In bed with men! I saw her. I didn't know what I could do about it. I was too shy to tell anybody about what my mother was doing. She definitely wasn't a good mother to me. She didn't buy me clothes. She told me I was a wash-out. My mother did not know that I had seen her sleeping with other men, and I will never tell her. It's not a son's job to show up his mother. She had a kid too with one of the blokes I told you I saw her sleeping with. The kid was born less than six months after they were married.

I tried to treat her as if she was my mother, but she just wasn't the same after my father left us. She was worse than ever. Every night there was men in the house. She started buying a lot of drink from the hotel, sometimes three times a week I had to go to the off-sales to buy her bottles of drink. She was drinking a lot and she was smoking all day. She never used to smoke before. And she gave dances: they lasted until three or four o'clock in the morning, and next day I had to clean up the mess. One year she bought a new lino for the sitting-room. It was a Friday, and we put it in. That Saturday night she gave a dance again. Sunday morning I had to take out the pieces of the lino. They buggered the whole thing up.

I was always the one that's got to clean up. My mother didn't care about her children. She didn't worry how we looked. My father had to pay support for us, but all the money she put into fancy clothes for her. After the divorce she didn't make or buy any other clothes for us, and we had to go on wearing our old ones. We never got new clothes, but she got quite a lot. New coat, new handbag, new shoes, new gloves, new hat, frocks, the lot she bought for herself. She never gave us any money either. She had no interest in us.

When I got older I had quite a lot of women. Some were prostitutes, but not all. The Army is a lot of men together, and I learnt a lot about sex. Then I got many medical books and read all about childbirth and all that. I think from a medical point of view I know more about a woman's organs inside than I know about my own. I sort of made a study about woman's organs. I read articles in magazines specially to find out more about a

woman's parts. I don't know why. I still don't know why. I'd like to know what made me have intercourse for the first time, what was the urge behind it.... the first time I got myself a woman. There were two of us together, me and my cousin, and we got two women. We asked them for intercourse, and after that it was easy. The experience was just a sensation for me. I liked the sensation, and the more I done it, the more I liked it. Later on when the Army life was going on, I had as much intercourse as I could. Sometimes I stayed away two or three days out of the camp and slept with women. It was just that I liked the sensation. Every time I have intercourse, I make sure that the woman I do it with didn't have disease. I have never had a venereal disease. I was very lucky.

But I wasn't happy, not until I met Audrey. Then everything was different. We were happy, always happy. Sometimes Audrey and I had fights or arguments, but we forgot them very quickly. We hardly finished the fight when it's forgotten already. We always fought about Audrey's drinking. I never wanted her to drink.



She was like a mother and a wife to me, Audrey was, and a sweetheart also. I told her so. I told her, "You mean to me more than my mother ever did. My mother never could have meant as much, even if she did treat me as a mother would treat her child, because my mother couldn't be a sweetheart to me. Audrey treats me better than if I was her own son. I love her. She is a real companion to me. In a way she treats me like a mother treats a child. You know, looking after me and all the rest of it. When I comb my hair, she come and put the waves right. When I put on a collar and a tie, she come and fix on the collar, put the tie straight and dust off the shoulders, you know, after I had combed my hair, just like a mother would do. I liked it because I never had it before. My own mother never used to care about me, like.

On the day I stabbed her, we were happy together, until we had an argument about intercourse. I wanted intercourse with Audrey, and it was nearly time for me to go to work. She didn't feel like it, and she told me so. Then I said, "All right!" I spoke as if I was cross. I just put on my coat and I walked out of the house: but I came right back again, and I kissed her good-bye. Then we had another slight quarrel. She said, "Why don't you go and scrub a woman in town?" So I was cross, and I said, "All right, I will."

And I done it that night. I am a conductor and I met the woman on my bus. She wanted to get off in Woodstock, but I asked her to come along for the ride. I know she liked me because I saw her a couple of times before, and every time she saw me I talked to her, and so on. I suppose I just decided on the spur of the moment to ask her to come along, and then while the bus was standing at the hospital - we stop there for over half an hour - I asked her was she willing, and she said she was willing to do it, so we did do it, in the bus, on the top floor.

That night when I got home I kissed Audrey. She asked me did I want coffee, it's warm, and I can just pour it out. So I poured her a cup, and I poured myself a cup. Then she asked me, "Did you do it then?"

So I told her, "Yes. Don't you know yet that what I say I do, I do?" So she looked a bit cross, but we talked with each other about it. We argued about it and she kept on, kept on, kept on! It was past three o'clock in the night, but she still kept on. I tried to sleep, but she kept on nagging. I got cross, and gave her a smack and told her to shut up. There was surprise on her face, and she said, "You done it. You hit me! Just like the rest of them all, you hit me!" She turned round, turned her back on me and we didn't spoke another word that night. I never wanted to hurt her, it was only my temper got out of control. But I kissed her, and we fell asleep as usual, with me in her arms.

Then the next morning it was as if she was... changed. She got up and she didn't kiss me. But she still brought me a cup of coffee to bed. I couldn't understand her behaviour; she didn't kiss me, the way she always waked me with a kiss. She shook me awake that morning, and then walked away. I laid in bed a bit, then I got up too and lit a cigarette and took it to her. I saw she wanted to iron, so I fixed up the table, and I ironed her slip and skirt for her while she was fixing up the blouse she was going to wear. Then she wanted to dish up breakfast for me, but I said, "No, thanks, I don't feel like eating."

She said, "Well, I'm eating, because I know what I'm going to do."

I said to her, "Audrey, wherever you go, I'll be with you, and if you go with another man, I'll kill you." She told me she felt like doing the same to me after what happened the night before. She said if she caught me and the woman doing it she would have killed me, but then she said, "I wouldn't hang for you."

What happened then I don't know... I tried to think about what happened then, but it mixes me up more about the details when I try to think. I know when she said that, something snapped in me. What happened I don't know. I only realized again what was going on with me when I was there on the floor beside her. I knew instinctively that I had done it, stabbed her, but I can't say why I went and hurt myself also. I don't know about that. Maybe it was because if she died life don't mean anything to me without her, and if she died I don't want to go on living. I felt instinctively that I had injured her, and that I couldn't fix her up again, and she might die. I didn't want her to die! I wanted her to live and be happy, as she always was. Laying on the floor there, I was talking with her. I told her I wanted her to live. I told her I was sorry. She was just laying there. She couldn't do anything. She was paralysed. She was trying to get some breath.

The Mistress

I started dressing. He said to me, "Where are you going? I am going where you are going."

I said, "Well, why don't you take that girl out?"

He even ironed my slip for me! That's the kind of man he was. Sometimes he was like a spoilt child. He irons your slip, he fastens your shoes, he takes the curlers out of your hair, and he acts like he's madly in love, or God knows what! And then he came in and pressed my frock out, and I got dressed. So when I was fully dressed, I says to him, "Cyril, give me my shoes out of there." Those were the green shoes I bought for Friday, for our wedding. He wanted me to be dressed in green for the wedding. So he says to me, "But you are not wearing these shoes? It was bought for just one occasion."

So I said, "No, there won't be no wedding. There won't be no occasion."

Then I could see how he lost memory, going off... I just continued with dressing, and I took the box and put the shoes on. Then my curls was ready, and I packed my things in my bag. During that time I heard him sharpening a knife. I thought to myself, "Oh, he is only playing, trying to make me scared." I never took no notice. He came in and grabbed me by my throat. He still

stood in front of me, and I said, "Don't come and stand next to me, after you have been out with another woman; go and wash yourself." I pushed him away and went to the bed to pick up my bag. I was just going to get my coat out of the wardrobe when he grabbed me by my throat and threw me over the side of the bed, and I was going: "Ugh" already. I am sure my tongue was hanging out. I gave him one push, kicking him off me, and I jumped up and I must have been looking down, because I never looked up to see what he was up to; I just felt the hit between my shoulders. I thought he had hit me with a fist. I went over backwards, and I said, "Oh, Gee!" I had seen the knife in his hand.

He said, "That's your blood on this knife, Audrey."

Then, my God, I got a fright! I pushed past him but he grabbed me and pulled me back into the room. I was stronger than him, and as I pushed him I could just feel him cut me this way, and that way, and then I couldn't talk. The blood was oozing out, and I was going "Wha-a-a", like that. I was struggling to run out, because he would have finished me off then. He was like a raving lion. As I opened the door, he grabbed hold of me, and I pushed past him and I was out at the door. I just felt another bang here in my back. I called the landlady, but I couldn't get any words out of me, and then I saw Cyril cut himself. I think he did my throat with a bread-knife, or he may have done me all with one knife. I didn't see. I think he stabbed my back with a small knife, because it was so quick. He must have cut himself with the bread-knife. They said there was three knives there.

What a horrible feeling, with the blood pouring from my back! As I was laying on the floor, I opened my eyes and said, "Oh, Cyril!" He was also lying on the ground, and he stretched out his hand and took the hair out of my face. Yesterday he asked me if I remembered that. He said I kissed his hand, but I don't remember doing that. The blood was all thick like jelly already. Somehow I can't hate him. People will laugh at me, or hate me for feeling this way about him. All the time I had a feeling for him. I really do love him, you know. He asked me yesterday if I'll still marry him. I said, "Yes, to murder me completely this time, I suppose!"

He didn't know what he was doing when he stabbed me. He thought he lost me, you see. He said, "I know you're finished with me now, " and I couldn't talk to him. I dunno why I love him so much. To me he seemed like a grown-up because he acted like one, you know. But he was very good. I told him, "Where my son lacked, you are a son to me."

"It is like mother and sweetheart", he said to me. He said he never had a mother to give him real love or to look after him properly or to bring him up well. I can cook and everything. Everybody said to me they'd never seen me scared of a man yet, and I used to go out with smart chaps in my time. It's funny that Cyril had to come into my life.

I have forgiven him. I wonder why I love him so much. It must be something in his ways, you know. He is good and very kind-hearted. He helps me. He is very obliging and he gives you his last. When he asked me to marry him I just laughed at him. I have been offered marriage before, but in the end I find that the men are the same as my first husband was, drunkards that beat me. I have been through the mill, in other words, I know a lot. At times I feel to Cyril like a woman to a man. At other times, I treat him like a child. He grew up rough and untidy among men. I have got to get him into my ways. I like cleanliness. He didn't like to be taught right, and his ways are different to mine. The way he ate! I always told him, "Don't eat that way!" He combed his hair funny, and I wanted him to clean his shoes. I spoke to him like a mother sometimes. Otherwise, he is like.... like a real little man.

I did say to him, "All right, I will marry you." He even bought me a lovely ring, but it was smashed up one day. He was so cross with me because I was tight he crushed the whole ring together and the sapphire fell out.

I will marry Cyril, but maybe they'll keep him in gaol too long. I may be dead by the time he comes out. When he slept with me, there's no-one like him. He was so nice, so different, a real lover. The men I used to know they were just out for a good time, but he was really a nice little boy. He behaved, you know. He treated me like a lady, so I think the world of him. It's wonderful letters he wrote me, you know. When I read them, I think, "Shucks, something must have gone loose in his head!"

A Letter

My dearest Darling. I take my pencil this morning to put some of my thoughts on paper. What happened I don't know. It troubles me a lot, what happened, but I am worried most of all about you.

When they lock me up, what is going to happen to you, who is going to support, to supply your needs and to love you and give you happiness?

You might say that you can go back to your old way of life, but what can you get out of it that is lasting? You won't be able to go on with that life long, because, although you might not want to admit it, you are getting old. You will have to give it up some time or other, and then what will happen then?

I made you some promises about the future. I still love you and want you, and if you will wait for me, I will fulfil them.

My darling, if you only know how I long to have those loving arms of yours around me. How my lips are burning to kiss those lovely lips. My heart is yearning for you with an incessant ache. I am hungry for you and your love. Everything around me reminds me of you, my angel, the cleanliness, so typical of you, the smell of Dettol, like you use it; being used to your marvelous cooking I can hardly eat this hospital food, and how I miss your kiss before the meal, and you sitting on my lap while we drink the coffee at the end of it, the good-night kiss, and all those other little things of our home. You know that snap taken of us two in town? It stands on my locker all the time. Sometimes when I'm all alone, I make love to you on the picture and every night I kiss you good-night on it.

My darling, if I got to write down every one of the small things that makes me want you, I never would have enough paper or time to write it. There is so many. Every time I comb my hair, I miss those work-hardened but still lovely hands of yours, that always push the curls to the right place. And the lovely blue eyes of my darling, how do I miss them! And the glow of love that shines in them, coming from your heart. Oh, my darling! My angel! How much do I love you and how much do I miss you! I miss that sunny smile, and the tender, loving care of your hands! Oh, how I miss you! I am so used to you now. Night after night in dreams, I see your face, but when I awake there is only empty space. I try to hide my sorrow while my heart keeps crying inside. Night after night I kneel beside my bed, and then I pray that you will come back again. My darling, I am closing this letter with love and longing burning in my heart, and hoping that this note will find you greatly improved. Get well soon and PLEASE ANSWER SOON. Yours till the end of time, yours till the stars no longer shine; I'll be true to you, my darling love, yours till the end of time; forever yours, with all my love, Cyril. Please answer soon.

The examiner does not have to wait, in many cases, until deeper feelings have been uncovered before the suicidal person reveals his pathological emotional adherence to a parent. Sometimes, as he is emerging from coma, the suicidal person will drowsily mutter about his excessive attachment. The suicidal person will call on a parent, with despairing devotion, or else with hatred, perhaps appealing to a parent who has already been dead for a long time. Then, as he gains control of his behaviour, some time will have to elapse before the individual will again set himself at pains to associate his adult dilemma with memories of

the unhappiness and strife he saw his parents endure.

A man aged thirty-four felt he had been tricked into marrying a diseased and promiscuous woman: he described how he felt he was receiving another man's presents, and eating another man's wedding-cake; the girl he married had been jilted, and, not to look foolish, she asked Ball to marry her.

At the hands of his wife he was humiliated into washing dishes and cleaning floors. Not only did he accept this domestic drudgery, but he agreed to give up his male friends. He handed over all his salary to his wife, receiving in return five shillings each day as he went to work. He hated rows. To avoid a row, he tolerated meekly any scorn, accepted any subjection.

Case 30 ALBERT BALL

My father drank heavily. I never felt that I knew my father. I couldn't go to my father like other boys, and ask him questions about my homework. I couldn't ask him for tuppence to go to the bioscope, or anything like that. He just regarded me as a piece of furniture. We never spoke to each other as father and son, never. Many times, he'd give the other two boys money, but never me. I could never call him "Father". The word stuck in my throat. My father often beat me up, and the youngest boy too. Once he hit my baby brother off my mother's breast, and kicked him as he lay on the floor. My father was much kinder to my elder brother Kenneth. At school I went to speak to the headmaster about my father. The headmaster asked me why I came to school all marked, and after I spoke to him he said he'd send someone to see my father. I said, "No, it's no good doing that; I'll only get a good hiding." My own class teacher also spoke to me about the way my father hit me around. The teacher said I should send for the police if my father knocked me around again, but I said that was no good. Even when I mentioned to my mother that the teacher had advised me to call the police, she said, "No, it only means a scandal, and our name in the paper, so it's no good." Then when I got older, I told my mother the house wasn't big enough for both of us, for my father and me. One of us would have to go, so I chose to go.

I left the house after a fight with him. I waited until I was seventeen to have that fight. He came in one night and of course there was some liquor in him. For supper there was food he didn't like. I always remember his words. He said to my mother, "I'm not going to sit down to that", and she said sarcastically, "Then you can stand up to it." She said, "There's some celery in the garden; if you like, you can go out and dig it." I'd never seen him use a spade, I always had to do the gardening. He got a spade and he went out and he got the celery and washed it and

brought it in and put it on the table. Then he went out to wash his hands. My elder brother Ken, the one I don't like, got off the settee and took the heart out of the celery. My father never hit Ken before. He told Ken to put down the celery. Before that Ken could do anything to my father, and he told my father to go and drown himself. My father just grabbed Ken by the back of the neck, and hit him with his fist, knocking him clean under the settee, knocking him out. I began to call my father names. I told him what I thought of him for doing that to his own child. He said if I didn't shut up he'd do the same to me. Before I could answer, he dragged me across the table, plates and dishes and everything flying. I just saw red and let fly at him. When I calmed down he was lying on the floor, covered in blood. He threatened to kill me. Then he just got up and walked past me and went and washed himself and put on his coat and away he went. He went out. Then I left home.

Mother was sickly always. She was soft-hearted and she always gave in to my father. She used to say things to him at the precise moment, but soon afterwards she would forget about the quarrel. I know my mother told me that when I was two my father ran away and left her for about twelve months, but she took him back again. He left her several times, and I didn't know till I was eighteen that he'd been married before and had a grown-up daughter. Once when my mother was crying she told me that my father had been married before, and also that he had lied to her about his age when they got married. My mother found out his true age when he was pensioned: she found out he was sixty-five then, which was twenty years older than he told her. She used to look after his things. She used to keep him clean, always clean shirts; she used to trim his moustache before he went out and see that everything was clean for him. But then when mother was ill for a long time (she had rheumatic fever) he wouldn't lift a finger to help or wash her. I had to nurse her. I just had to do it. I didn't think it was right then I should see my mother undressed and all that sort of thing, because I had to bath her. I thought my father should have done it. I was only fifteen.



Since I have been away from home , I heard that my

father died. It was some time ago, of cancer, I believe. I did not feel anything at all when I heard of his death. I was not a bit sorry. He had never been a father to me. I know it was wrong, but I often used to lie that he wasn't my father. It is only lately that I have come to feel that my mother was a good mother to me, and always had been. I used to feel disappointed in her before. My brother Kenneth is still with my mother at home. I dislike him. He has grown to be just like my father, with my father's build, and with ways just like my father had.

It makes me very unhappy to think I left my mother, just when she needed me most. To think that I left her with that husband, and with Kenneth, who is so selfish and bull-headed - just like my father was; and now he is stuck with her. It makes me sad when I think I haven't seen my mother for years, and she may need me. She's old now, and I'd like to see her again before she passes on.

I'll try to cut out drinking. I can't get on at all with the foreman at my work. He bullies me. I can't stand up to him, and he takes advantage of me.

I hate rows. At home, too, my wife and I are always quarrelling. I always give in to her. I suppose I am so afraid of rows to-day because of all the fights that happened in my parents' home.

The unions of which these placatory children are a product are often too troubled to continue: thus the parents of persons later to be suicidal are in a great many cases divorced or separated from each other.

Susanna van Blerk (Case 5): "I've never seen my father".

Miss Temple (Case 6): "My father left my mother for another woman when I was four."

Elizabeth Pawley (Case 20): "My mother left us for another man. She never wanted any of us children, but I liked her."

Fred January (Case 25): "My father divorced my mother when I was just a weak baby, because he went round with another woman."

Cyril Foxcroft (Case 29): "After my father left us, my mother was worse than ever, sleeping with other men."

Albert Ball (Case 30): "When I was two my father ran away, but my mother took him back again. He left her several times."

Mr. Triblehorn (Case 41): "My parents separated when I was a youngster. When my father married a Scotch nurse, I parted from him: I couldn't have her taking the place of my own mother."

Mrs. Frew (Case 43): "My mother had to put me in a Home when I was four years old, when she was divorced from my father."

Mrs. Meadows (Case 49): "My father was a drunkard, and he left us when I was twelve."

The dissolution of the marriage is but the outward, social manifestation of serious discord; long before separation has occurred the child's growing personality will have been damaged by parental strife.

It is remarkable that many of the investigators of the phenomenon of suicide have not perceived how invariable and crucial parental stress is. Of course, superficial explorations will often not detect marital strife, where it exists. Mention has already been made that people wish onlookers to think well of their parentage, and thus tend to present a favourable initial picture during interviewing. Moreover, a great many unhappy marriages continue in spite of grave antipathies; few social evidences of the spouses' incompatibility may be allowed to leak out of the home.

There is the further significant factor that, apart from the contribution to personality defect which derives from parental strife, the growing child may still be involved firmly in the continuing social difficulties of his unhappy parents. He has grown old enough to assume an active role in the social drama of a failing marriage. Then the parental incompatibility becomes an actual and not only a recollected incentive to despair. Furthermore, unhappy parents in some cases use their children selfishly to fill their own emotional void.

Case 31 MORRIE PILANSKI

I just want to die now. (Weeping softly and pathetically). I don't want to see anybody. I don't want to see my parents! I don't want to see my sisters either. I don't want to say goodbye... I don't know whether I love my mother any more - I think so. I don't know if I love anybody of my family any more.

I was a child in an unhappy home. I had a bicycle which I could never ride, in case I rode into something and got hurt. I could never go further than the corner shop. Somebody always had to hold my hand. I couldn't play rugby. I wanted to be like the other boys and play rugby. "No, " they screamed, "you'll get hurt!" That's why I played no games. They saved me up to be a nancy-boy, a sugar-boy. (Sobbing).

All my life my parents have quarrelled with each other. My mother is the type of woman who nags and nags, you know: she can keep nothing to herself. Whatever happens, whatever my father does wrong, she tells us, and she cries.

I stay at home because of my mother. She is always quarrelling with my father, and then she moans to me. I don't want to see her



crying about him, and telling me how awful he is! I don't want to see him! I feel very sorry for my mother. I have felt sorry for her all my life. Sometimes I don't know whether to believe her or not. The stories she tells! The things that she says! She always says that he is inferior, and that we became particularly inferior when we had to move out of our old home into a neighbour hood that wasn't as decent.

My mother always says that we're inferior to everybody else. She always says that we are lower than anybody else, particularly after we moved: she says our old house was too good for us, and the small house we are now in is the place where we should always have been. All the while she says that. She keeps on saying she can't face all the old people that we knew when we were staying in our previous home. My mother keeps on saying that we are inferior to other people all the while, that I am lower than anybody else. I resent having that told to me night and day.

My parents don't love each other, but they still live with each other. They certainly don't love each other. They talked of separating for years and years, but they have never done anything about it. They still talk to each other, but the moment anything happens, though, they quarrel. Then they don't talk to each other, and my father walks out of the house in a huff. But he's back the next day, back borrowing money again...

Mother keeps on groaning. She has always got something to say about my father. He is a gambler, she says, or he is a nothing. I won't support him! I won't try to get on in commerce only for him! He is getting into debt now. I don't exactly hate him, but I don't like him. I haven't told him so only because I have never had the courage. My dislike of him comes from my mother. She is always telling me what a nothing he is. I can see what he does, how low he is. I can see what a nothing he is! Always borrowing money... always bringing us to shame! (Sobbing.) I can't face any of my customers, and all because of him, because they all know about my father. How can I have a respected position in commerce, and have friends when they know about my father? When they know how low he is... How can I face anybody, if they know who I am? (Groaning and twisting in the bed, dashing tears from his face with noise and anger, sniffing up the mucus hanging from his nose.) Perhaps I am going the same way as my father. I don't know what to do!

I don't want to be like him! Everybody judges me by him. Why should I be judged by him? Oh! My mother is always complaining about him, always without a stop! How can I have a future with a father like him? Who can respect me with a father like him?

I have been feeling mixed up and lonely and inferior for a long time, since I was in school, and I left school four years ago. It was always the same old story every day from my mother about my father. She kept telling me how bad he is and how he is no good. She told me I should pretend I hadn't got a father. She told me I must ignore him and pretend that he doesn't exist, that he is just somebody who lives in the house and no more. It has always been like that. She has always said to me, and even my sisters said to me when they were in the house: "Just pretend he exists in the house, and that's all. Further than that, he doesn't count."

They always say I mustn't be like him. They keep on harping on that one subject, that I must never become like my father. I must watch my step, they say! My mother keeps saying that if I ever do find myself going in the direction my father has taken, she will do something terrible to herself. She always says that everything depends on me. As far as I can remember, my father was a gambler, throwing all his money away on cards and at the races. I remember once he gambled his whole salary cheque away after he'd got paid, every penny of it! My mother came to cry to me. She used to cry to me every night, almost.

I don't hate him. There is always some affection still for a father. I don't exactly hate him... He kept on picking on me that night, picking on me, and I told him to leave me alone. He said I mustn't be cheeky to him. I said I wasn't being cheeky; he must just leave me alone and not interfere with me. So he got annoyed and threw his hot tea over me. Then my mother started to shout and my sisters started to interfere, and he kept on persisting that I had been cheeky. All the time he kept repeating, "I've got a cheeky son!" He said I could go to hell for all he cared, and he called me a dog. He did! He called me a dog. And he sat on the verandah, saying, "He's just a cheeky dog, that's all." My father called me a... he called me a dog! Dog! He told me to go to hell! (Shouting in agitation.) Oh... only the maid likes me. Only Liza likes me! (Sobbing). Only the maid sits with me when I cry. Oh! (Protracted and violent sobbing.)

The Mother

You know how it is. Nobody knows how things will turn out when you marry. Naturally I didn't marry... I don't say it's the wrong man, but a difficult man. He is hopeless and he will never be a success.

> I will tell you what mistake I made: I thought Morrie is a kind of big man already, and I can't turn to my husband so I thought my son will share with me, you know? His father wasn't a success. He was actually more a failure in his life than many men, I should say. And I thought Morrie maybe he will say: "All right, Mummy, we will suffer together, and I will go out with you, and when we come to our friends maybe everything will appear differently." I thought Morrie is a growing-up man and will take it this way, and that's how I went on in my house. I thought Morrie is a person which has got more brains for a steady man! But I didn't realize that Morrie is still a youngster as a child. As a child! Because now I can see. Because Morrie becomes lately very moody. If I had knew I would never have spoken to him because Morrie is the will of my life. If I think of something that brightens up my life, I think of Morrie. Nothing was too much for me to do for Morrie. You know, I myself am a sort of little doctor to myself, because I have stood so much. I have had a hard life. Only now I see it was wrong to expect Morrie to be a help to me. You know, in Russian there is a little verse: "Where a cat is so much in love with her little kittens, and she loves them so much and she lies on them, and so they die because she doesn't realize that she loves them too much."

Parental dissension produces its deleterious effect on the child in a number of ways. An inner sense of anxiety, instilled during early years by the surrounding strife, mars the personality with lifelong fears and tensions; in adulthood, therefore, anxiety exists which does not derive from the concrete exigencies of experience. Then too, as a protective response, the individual adopts deformations of his personality, assuming spurious placatory attitudes. He will do anything for the sake of peace. With timi dread of parental anger, he stifles all assertive trends of behaviour, showing an eager-to-please, acquiescent front instead. Moreover, from the atmosphere of dissension in his parents' home, the child may be led to expect confusion in his later life, having gained the impression that quarrelsomeness is the order of things, and that calm and trust in human relations are not to be expected. Finally, the prolonged view of marital brawling presented to him will make it difficult for him to achieve a mature sexual relationship in his own adulthood.

The prediction seems to me warranted that suicide will continu to be a common phenomenon as long as unhappy marriages exist. The emotional security of growing children is more threatened by parental acrimony than by any of the real burdens the child will encounter in later life.

2. The Reproving Parents

It is almost invariable to find that a person who attempts suicide had a severely neurotic parent. (Attention has already been focused upon the singular spouses suicidal persons manage to associate themselves with; marriage is at least to some extent a voluntary step, although mention has been made of the aim the immature individual has of obtaining a spouse with parental attributes). The emotionally disturbed parent features invariably in circumstances of suicide.

Very frequently in the background of an invididual who attempts suicide is to be seen the shadow of a reproving parent; at times the father, at others the mother, this powerful parent had placed on the child restraints powerful enough permanently to mar the developing character. Often enough it is evident that the parent himself suffers mental illness of gross degree; his anxiety is foisted upon his child, leading to suppression of the child's early tentative gropings towards social expression. Therefore, while parents may sometimes harm their children out of ignorance, more often they do so because their own personalities are disturbed. In the history of each suicidal person instances of gross parental unkindness may be expected. In the foregoing pages, many illustrations have already been given.

Mrs. Joyce Lindner's father broke her arm in a temper and flattened her cat with a spade. (Case 12).

Mrs. Meadows (Case 49) was deprived of her vicious drunken father only to be exposed to a brother who was a replica of the father; this brother copulated by force with her when she was a child, and later kicked her while he dragged her away from her first dance.

Mrs. Heiden (Case 48) had a mother who got remarried to a drunkard; when her daughter objected, the mother would allow her to leave the home only on condition that she herself married a half-witted sadist.

Miss Harrington's father emptied all the furniture from the home one day the family was out (Case 21), carting the furniture to his mistress.

Mr. Triblehorn (Case 41), like Mr. Cameron (Case B), had parents who wrangled viciously over him as for a trophy.

Mr. Bullen (Case 45) remembered his childhood as "heartbreaking; I was always the lackey of the house."

Miss Marais (Case 15) had a father with the idiosyncrasy that he refused to return the greetings of male friends who came to visit her.

Miss Calitz (Case 38) after being instructed by her father to call him "Father" no longer, was driven from the house. The father's youngest son, an adolescent became ill with encephalitis; the father made his other sons urinate on the boy regularly, believing that would cure his symptoms.

Miss Barnard's mother put a curse on her daughter (Case 34): "Tears will be your daily bread."

Foxcroft's mother slept openly with strange men (Case 29), and told him repeatedly he was a wash-out.

The suicidal person himself at times relates his maladjustment directly to the harshness of his parents. Usually, however, only after prolonged interviewing will he reveal how his parents failed him. There are those unfortunate persons who know that they were unwanted by their parents, learning that their births followed unsuccessful attempts at abortion (e.g., Foxcroft, Case 29). A few parents tell their children bluntly they were not wanted.

An efficient, shrill and tense woman said, after a suicidal attempt: "My mother used to tell me whenever I misbehaved that I was an error and should not have been born. She said she wanted my eldest sister, but not me. I always got the reach-me-downs, and was told I should be seen and not heard. Now that I am in another country, far from my mother she still does not answer my letters. Although she was so beastly, I still want her to take notice of me. I am so unhappy! My husband... dear old George, I'm very fond of him really, in a way, but we don't live as man and wife. It is my dog that I love more than anything else in the world. I think people are awful, actually. I don't like anybody at all. I smile at people, but I would like to snarl."

Another woman, in late middle-age, competent and wealthy, took sedative tablets. When she recovered, she said: "I am a mistake. I never was wanted."

The daily pressure upon the child may not have been blatantly acrimonious; in fact, the parent may hinder the child's development formidably while believing the child is being benefited. A repressive parent may evoke from the child no overt hostility until many years later. If the child's protective submission is great, he may never recognize overtly his anger at his restrictive parent. Stern, autocratic fathers often induce in their wives an answering timidity, and the children of the house may be thoroughly intimidated. One suicidal man said he felt in childhood he could never get a word in edgeways: he explained

he believed his suicidal attempt was designed to force himself upon his father's notice. The meek mother, in such a household, characteristically insists on implicit obedience to the father, but in his absence bewails to her children during weaker moments how unhappy she is. The children tend to identify themselves with other inferiors, the domestic servant (e.g. Pilansky, Case 31) or with the household pets who are similarly ordered about (e.g. Garth Barker, Case 14, and Andrew Latimer, Case 32). These autocratic fathers seldom perceive, when the suicidal attempt is made, how their harshness has contributed to it. Indeed, many persons, after they have been aggressively suicidal, elect to return to meek dependence on the restricting parent. The child becomes entangled in a warm, confused emotionality with his parents and, because he has grown to feel that his chances in the world are bleak, he himself desires to prolong the parent-child relationship.

The person later to be suicidal withdraws his ambitions from the real environment which exists outside the home. He seeks his satisfactions and his revenge in the family circle, continuing to behave in adulthood as he did in childhood. Suicidal adults not infrequently describe that their desire for death manifested itself already when they were children.

The child concludes from the repression he experiences in his parental home that he is not adequate to life's demands. Moreover, he regards the restraint placed upon him, with its daily exacerbations of warnings and reproaches, as intimation that he is not loved.

The following is the story of a youth of twenty-three who, in childhood, thought himself loved only by a few cats and dogs in the town. This young man's childhood was rendered grotesque by thrashings, chidings, reproaches and ceaseless parental anxiety. His parents had a vast obsession of the evils of sex, but they could cloak their destructive influence with religiosity.

In his childhood already, from the remarks he made, his mother realized that he considered himself unloved. At the age of four years, when he was playing with a dirty cat and was told to come away "because cats are nasty", the child told her he did not agree. "The only ones who love me are a few cats and dogs." His mother desired her child to be the perfect child. She saw to it that his hair was cut once a week, and she kept him scrupulously tidy. "He never had a dirty ear. When he put his elbow on the table, I thrashed him. When he ate too quickly I also gave him a hiding. I know now that I was wrong." She had been very disturbed when, at a wedding, she first saw her

son accept champagne. "I am grieved to think that Andrew has no spiritual side, and no religion. My husband and I are Seventh Day Adventists, and we are very religious. We can't get over the fact that Andrew reads Westerns and plays jazz music. He goes to the cinema, and I frequently weep over that because I know what poison the cinema is to the youth. When I first realized that Andrew smoked, I had a nervous breakdown. I feel that heaven is closed to those who smoke, and it makes me so unhappy when I think my child will miss heaven."

Throughout his life the recriminations of his parents were directed at the boy. On his masturbatory activity their hysterical objections had the effect only of making it compulsive, and he became precociously impelled to excessive sensuality. He developed a close attachment to a young girl who seemed to him also to suffer at the hands of her parents. (Later she too was to be treated following suicidal behaviour).

Neurotic symptoms had appeared early in his childhood. He wet his bed, he had night terrors, he had a severe stammer, he required to be fed by his mother until a relatively late age and he walked in his sleep. Recently he formed the habit of grinding his teeth while asleep("although queerly enough, I can't reproduce the grinding when I am awake.")

Case 32 ANDREW LATIMER

I always talk much worse in front of my mother. I am not nervous in front of my parents, but I stammer so much when they are listening because, throughout my life, I have had the idea that they are looking down on me. In any case, I don't very much wish to talk to them because they get me down. I just don't want to see my parents at all.

When my folks expect visitors, they always tell me to go out of the house because I am smelling of smoke. This aggravated me badly, of course, as can be understood.

They they begin their nonsense of talking to me about my relationship with the girlfriend. They don't know what goes on between my girl and I at all, but they always warn me. They say I am only a human being, and I must watch myself. This is the sort of thing they keep hammering on, hammering on, and it kind of gets me down. They tell me I am only a human being, and I would have to try very hard to keep myself from having intercourse with the girlfriend. They tell me that sex is a dangerous thing, and they keep harping on the business. I don't like it, that's all. They used always to warn me when I was a child, and now they nag at me all the time. Whenever the girlfriend comes to visit me for an afternoon, they always say to me: "You must watch yourself." One weekend one of the boys I know came out with a couple of little verses.

They weren't such marvellous verses. I wouldn't really call them immoral, but they were borderline. I asked my girlfriend to write some of them down for me. I don't know why I asked her, but she wrote them down. I was carrying them in my jacket pocket when I came home. My mother must have been looking through my pockets because she found the verses and recognized that they were in my girlfriend's handwriting, and of course my mother told my old man about it. What a rumpus there was! I can't really remember any of the jingles, but one of the little ones was: "The girl on the judge's lap usually gets an honourable discharge." My little girlfriend was innocent; I know she didn't even catch on what that meant. My mother caught the meaning, of course, and my old man came into the room where my girl and I were and talked to us the whole of one blooming evening. A whole evening! He went on, "Young people should never permit themselves to think of that type of thing." He spoke so much blooming nonsense, man! I can't remember the exact words he said. "Young people always think and talk about nothing but sex. A young boy nowadays is bound to have intercourse with his girlfriend. Things work on your mind because judging from the newspapers, young people are always having intercourse nowadays."

I tried to tell my mother, "Why do you people keep nagging that I and my girl have sexual relations? It seems to me that you people have guilty consciences. Normally a young person doesn't only want intercourse with his girlfriend! I have been telling them that every weekend. I am sick and tired of it! They reckon to me: Yes, that I am hostile towards them. I have told them, who wouldn't be? They can't blame me at all for my attitude to them, and yet I do feel guilty about it. They always told me I had a duty towards them. What I tell them is, "Why can't we compromise? If we tried to understand each other, we could be so much happier."

My parents worry me a lot. I have always felt unhappy about them. I don't think they are happy together. Ever since I can remember, the smallest difficulty has caused the hell of an argument. When the argument was going on I didn't know what to do. The old man always wants to ride the high horse in our house. I got so sick of it during my childhood, and now I feel that when one is seventeen years old one's parents should not think they can tell you everything. After I had left school they used to ask me every evening, "Where are you going?" I didn't mind that, because I was only a child and they had ghe right to ask me. But then they would ask: "When are you coming back?" I told them I couldn't say. My father would then mention a certain time at which I had to be home. If I said that I might be a little later, he would start: "I am your father," etc. I got so bad that I just used to have my supper as quickly as I could, and then rush out, even if I was just

going for a walk, merely in order to spite them, because they always wanted to know where I was and what I was doing.

I feel that my mother has been the cause of a great deal of trouble in the home, although she hasn't meant it in that way. She's a perfectionist, in a way, and that makes life a drudgery for everyone around her. Everything has to be just so, or she moans her heart out. She is the kind of person who would rather walk two miles than pay 1/6d for a taxi. She has made life very unpleasant for me with her exacting habits. If I am shaving in the bathroom, for example, and don't really need to have the light burning (although it would be better if the light was on) she'd moan and nag at me until I put the light off out of pure exasperation. When I am getting hot water, the first water is usually cold; as I am allowing it to flow out, my mother will rush in from the kitchen with a saucepan, push me aside with a great flurry to catch up, say, a pint or two of water, in order to save on the water account. She has the habit which I find extremely irritating of trying to provide me with the word I am going to say when I stutter. This habit of hers makes it impossible for me to convey my meaning to her, and I have urged her not to supply my words if she wants to find out what I am wanting to say. She is terribly fussy as far as the motor-car is concerned, and unless she absolutely needs the car, she rather walks. If we are driving together and waiting for a robot to change, she always insists on having the car switched off in order to save petrol; when I try to explain to her that restarting the car will use even more petrol, she still won't give in. That's the type of person she is.

My mother is most terribly shy of little things, such as toilet paper! Isn't that just too ridiculous for words? If there is a piece lying round the house for some unknown reason, she will hurry to pick it up, attracting as little attention as possible. If I happen to talk about an underpants in front of my girlfriend, she'll go through spasms of violent coughing and throat-clearing in order to show me that she strongly resents the mention of such garments. When I ask her later on why she behaves in that way, she told me that an underpants is always associated with one's sexual organs! Isn't that ridiculous? We have been trained to be ashamed in our family. My father sometimes comes into the bathroom when I am bathing, and I don't like it. I would never go in when he is in the bath, if I could help it. All through my childhood the rows between my parents were going on at home. I loved and hated my mother by turns. Up to the age of fourteen I was an extreme introvert; I would never go out of the house. My great joys have been music and poetry. That reminds me: there is one point I have been

puzzled about for quite a few years. Why is it that when I sing, I never stutter? I can sing anything, and my stutter never troubles me at all. I have often wished to take up singing and work with a dance orchestra. It is rather strange that jazz has always held such a fascination for me. When I hear a really brilliant jazz pianist playing in the old jazz style of "Dixieland" or a hot, boogey solo, I get a strange, sleepy, creeping sensation all over me. Or when I hear a good trumpeter like Harry James going to town on one or other number, I get the same feeling. It soothes me, while it stimulates most other people. As far as Harry James is concerned, he can play any type of tune, sweet or harsh, and I get the same sleepy sensation.

During my last years at school my interest in girls increased. I was always trying to imagine what the girls I saw would look like in the nude. When a girl wearing a low-necked blouse happened to bend down and I could just see the faintest glimpse of the beginning of her breasts, I could scarcely control my sexual emotions. I used to go often to the beach just to look down the girls' bathing-costume fronts. I know this sounds terrible, but it is the truth. I used to collect pictures of nudes and then indulge while looking at them. I got hold of books on sex, but not for the sake of education, of course, but with an evil, dirty mind. I was altogether beset with ideas of sex, nude women and such things, and naturally I continued to masturbate more than ever before. I heard people saying that masturbation is a great sin. Cautiously I asked why, and I was told that it was lusting after a woman.

When I was twelve our teacher at school gave us a talk on masturbation. I remember feeling very guilty because I imagined he was talking just to me. He told us it was no disgrace to masturbate, if it was indulged in occasionally, but it could be very detrimental if done too often. He spoke about wearing oneself out, and other things. I have always been of slight build, and never was at all muscular. Naturally I put two and two together and formed the conclusion that I was so thin because I masturbated. I was under the impression that the signs that I masturbated were written all over me, so I would never go to the sea or to a swimming pool for a swim. I always managed to find some excuse or other. But, in truth, I was ashamed of my build. I would never talk about any sexual matters, as I felt guilty whenever I did so. I was very interested, but I didn't dare join in the conversation. When I first discovered what the process of reproduction involved, I vowed that I would never marry.

And now comes the point I fail to understand. During my first

years at high school I was homosexually inclined. The sight of a boy's erect penis used to send thrills of ecstasy through me. This may not sound good at all, but still it is the truth. I used to get far more pleasure out of handling a boy my age than a girl. I carried on this while I was in standard seven. Then it left me, my homosexual feelings, but the habit of masturbation remained with me.

You must understand I was the only child for seven years, and I can assure you that although I received many hidings, I was a spoilt child. Many times I refused to do what my parents wanted me to. When I cried my father used to lay into me with a razor-strop. I distinctly remember asking, "Daddy, why are you beating me?" He would then answer, "Why are you crying?" He used to tell me that he would give me reason to cry if I wanted to cry. When my brother came along, I was seven years old. Up to that time I was used to getting all the attention. Naturally he disturbed my hold on my family, and I regarded my brother as an intruder, and although I tried hard to change my attitude towards him, I still cannot force myself to like him. He is a spoilt brat! He has not received <u>one</u> decent hiding in his twelve years.

Life was terrifying when I was a child. All the hidings and nightmares I used to get! It was hell for me, man. At times I needed the hidings, definitely. I was naughty.

I was very young when I started the habit of masturbation. When my mother caught me at it, I used to receive severe thrashings and warnings about madness and so on. But I never took any notice of these warnings. I know when I was a baby, I had very many nightmares. These used to terrify me so that I was afraid whenever it got dark, too afraid to go to sleep at nights. I also had the habit of somnambulating. Many evenings I used to get up and walk round the house and wake up in a different room.

One afternoon, while I was lying down in my cot I started to masturbate. My parents caught me at it, and I distinctly remember being pricked with a pin on the point of my penis. That I shall never forget. My mother always used to threaten me with madness if I continued with the habit, saying that all mad people had enlarged sexual organs because they had been playing with them. I took no notice of this. But I do remember receiving the most terrible hidings whenever I was caught at the habit.

Now I have just decided I don't like my parents any more.

I remember when I was just five years old, one day a little boy and I were handling one another, and my mother caught us at it. I was only a hell of a kid. Not more than five years old. My mom caught us at it, and she had a knife with her. She caught hold of my penis and stretched it out and held the knife right on it. I was howling like hell, I can remember that! I sure was anxious then. It was horrible, man. That's all I can remember of it. It was soon after

that time that I started to stutter.

Also I had the habit of wetting the bed. I did this regularly, and it continued until I was quite old, say, twelve or thirteen. My parents used to make fun of me when I used to wet the bed, but I couldn't help myself. Sometimes I used to get up and look for the bed chamber, but I could not control myself, and before I found it I used to wet myself.

Lately I go to bed many nights haunted by the fear that I won't wake up the following morning. I can tell you this is torture to go through.

The Mother

Often in the night I wake up and reproach myself for the evil I have done Andrew. I don't know what I can do to atone for the harm of which I have been guilty. I was so young when he was born, and so stupid! I was sixteen when I married, and my husband twenty-four. Everything my husband did seemed to irritate me, so I was always nagging him. Andrew was born when I was seventeen. When he was a baby and I saw him masturbating I was so shocked and ashamed to think that my own child was a degenerate that I did not dare to speak of what I thought was his foulness to any of my relations. I was frightened for them to discover that I had given birth to a perverted child! In my misery I did not know where to turn. Then I went to speak to an old lady in the town who was considered to be wise. She told me I had to beat the evil out of my child, or he would grow up to be insane. I was so ignorant and very unhappy. I know now that I was wrong, and I am awfully sorry for what I have done. What can I do to make up for it to Andrew?

When the assertive attitudes of a child are repeatedly rebuffed during the formative years, he ultimately takes on protective attitudes of submissiveness. Having been found so objectionable by his parents, he reasons, if he becomes so good that butter won't melt in his mouth the stern parent will relent. He continues to pine for love; and when he can no longer contain his buried aggression, it is himself he chooses to attack.

That an emotionally-disturbed individual hates a parent with whom he is in close association is usually disclosed after long exploratory interviewing. In cases where suicide has been resorted to, however, the anger directed towards the parent is more conscious and immediately experienced. The suicidal person very often has exteriorized his hatred at the time of his suicidal behaviour, not unexpectedly so, for in giving vent to his aggressivity his careful self-vigilance has been relaxed. Not only is he aggressive, but he is passionate, prepared to

give expression even to those feelings he had considered most reprehensible. So it happens that the investigator is occasionally permitted to see the smouldering inner hatred which the suicidal person houses.

> John Cameron stalked down the corridors in a violent trance vowing death to his former aggressors and expressing implacable hatred of his mother. (Case B.)
>
> Mrs. Wickham (Case d) said she disliked her mother too much to visit her, and had set dogs upon her mother's sister. Once she wore replicas of skulls as earrings, thus expressing both how dangerous she was and her preoccupation with death.
>
> Foxcroft (Case 29) hated his mother; he found as a mistress a drunken prostitute old enough to be his mother, and, goading her by infidelity, stabbed her at the same time as he cut his own throat.
>
> Yates (Case c) lived a whole career of murder, his own suicidal attempt merely a facet of his destructive urge, of which his resentment of his mother was motivational.
>
> Miss Calitz (Case 38) from hopeless love of her father at the time of her suicide, turned to spiteful hatred of him so that she would go to lengths to irritate him.
>
> Garth Barker (Case 14) attempted suicide without being able to understand why he did so at a time when he allowed himself to recognize his hatred of his father, actually threatening to kill his father.

Other instances of the emergence of the hatred for a parent will have been noted in the case histories, and need not be detailed again.

What does deserve strong emphasis is the manner in which aggressive, antisocial ideas find emergence at the time of suicidal behaviour. Exteriorization of previously-buried feelings when persons become self-destructive is not merely a finding of theoretical interest, although it is the counter-argument to those who claim that if a suicidal person utters hatred of a parent he must be of psychopathic constitution. (Those who argue in this manner must have a woeful ignorance of the later careers of many suicidal individuals.) More important is the great therapeutic value of the personality disintegration which attends suicidal behaviour: at such a time the individual is particularly responsive to psychotherapy.

Because this hypothesis seems to me of such fundamental significance, I will stress further how buried ideas emerge by reminding the reader of Mr. Forbes (Case D, chapter 2.) The

findings of psychoanalysis concerning infantile sexual development, and the fantasies the child constructs around sexual functioning are uncovered in the individual only after months of searching analysis. Yet Mr. Forbes presented himself for treatment at a time when he was overwhelmed by suicidal desires, and at the same time proceeded to dwell spontaneously on his sexual development, in terms which psychoanalysis alone has made familiar to us. In psychoanalytic writings, notably in the studies of Melanie Klein[54], we learn that some children develop notions that the mother's vagina is "bad", capable of bringing about castration; the male child dreads that inside her vagina his mother has the father's penis which already she has removed. Against this maternal penis, Klein postulates, the boy directs his sadistic ideas but, dreading his mother's retaliative powers, anxiously suppresses such ideas. These infantile trends are certainly not revealed easily or often in adult persons. However, when Forbes was agitated with suicidal ideas, he brought identical fantasies into the open during early interviews.

> I am troubled a lot by an urge to kill myself, and I have a strange vague sensation that my sex organs are going to be removed. I have strong feelings to kill myself, the same way my sister Pam has just done. Recently the feeling that I am going to lose my penis has become stronger, particularly as I am falling asleep, and I wake up to find myself very tense.
>
> When I was very young I saw a dog with his penis outside its sheath; the dog had been injured in some way, and I got a horrible fright when I saw it. That happened long before I was ten, and soon afterwards my sister, my father and I saw a boy fall out of a tree when a branch broke. He fell onto a spiked fence, and one of the spikes stuck into his bottom. I can remember that the accident gave me a terrible feeling and Dad had to take us away. I don't know why I have got those accidents in my mind now after so many years. They happened after I saw a contraceptive in Dad's room and asked mother what it was; I was told it was for keeping the dressing on a sore finger. (Some boys may have told me already what a condom was actually for).
>
> When I was about twelve and just beginning to get erections I noticed little raised lumps at the root of the penis. I was too shy to ask mother to take me to a doctor to find out if it was serious. I realize now that it was the follicles of the hair roots, but I was so nervous at the time that I never used to look at my sex organs when I bathed. At that time, in a dream, I got the first sensation of the penis being detached: I was so thrilled when I awoke and found I had only dreamed it. I must say that long before

the sexual feelings began in me, I had been shy to look at the sex organs. When I bathed I used to put a cloth over me. I remember once I lifted the grate to clean out the fireplace and got a terrible pain in my right side. I think it was a hernia. After a week mother spotted I was ill and in pain, but I couldn't tell her what it was. I was too scared to say a word to anyone in case it would mean going to the hospital for an operation.

When I was seventeen one of my friends, who was quite experienced sexually, spoke to me about intercourse. He discussed what would happen when a woman contracted on a man's penis during intercourse. He told me that she could hurt a man severely, and that it had been known for the man to die. This conversation was before I had indulged in any sort of sex play with women. I thought it was awful: it was strange that a woman should want to do such a thing. I thought it horrible and frightening. My friend said that a woman had once done it to him, but he had made her let go by squeezing her breasts; he said that she had merely hurt him somewhat. Years later when I had my first girlfriend I was still too shy to kiss her, although I longed to flirt with her. After two years she gave me the boot because I couldn't pluck up courage to make love to her, mildly even.

I feel heavy and sad when I think about my relations with girls. My first engagement I had to break off. I couldn't go on with the engagement. I felt utterly miserable, and after breaking it off the idea that I had hurt my fiancée worried me. I remember crying bitterly at having hurt the poor girl - I felt a real rat over my behaviour. None of my sex experiences with the girl I'm shortly going to marry have brought any real satisfaction to me. I don't see how I could have satisfied her. Directly after having intercourse with her the first time I had the feeling I would probably have to marry her because of having used her body, but I was never thrilled with the idea.

Mother has always been so sure that I am a perfect gentleman. She believes that I will never misbehave myself. Quite recently mother said in the presence of an old lady: she was sure Joe (she calls me Joe) had never taken a girl. Then she turned to me and asked me if I had, and I told her a deliberate lie. I couldn't confess about my fiancée and I. The deception made me feel bad. With my girl I always feel that what we are doing is wrong.

There is a certain dream I have had a few times. A farmer is trying to run up an inclined wall. At the top of the wall stands a woman with two black sticks, like swords, which she holds close together. Then the sticks open apart, like a stage curtain, and between the sticks it is as if a weird play is in process, with an awful black group of characters moving about. When I saw them I

> got a frightened feeling, and in the dream a sharp knife was cutting or just going to cut something soft and roundish, about the thickness of a broomstick.

At the time of suicidal behaviour the personality disintegration is grose enough often to permit exposure of underlying fears and hatreds customarily uncovered only after long psychological exploration.

In all these filial hatreds, the despairing attachment of child to parent is obvious. Passions intense as these, although called hatred and having a corrosive effect on the child are, in fact, a sort of love, turned inside out by thwarting, so that the hater is exhausted and yet obscurely satisfied. Hatred so intense serves to bind him firmly to the parent. Thus the suicidal person, often enough, suggests that by his suicide is implied a substitute murder, and that had he the social bravado, his victim would have been the parent to whom he was attached.

3. Prolonged Filial Attachment

Prolonged attachment to parents is the hallmark of the immature personality. Not only does the individual proclaim his infantilism by remaining in his parents' home, but, in addition, his confused passion for his parents and his childish adherence to his filial role enable him to renounce many of the attributes of adulthood. In the intellectual sphere too the individual may exaggeratedly adhere to the beliefs and admonitions of his parents, even when these are clearly outmoded and unrealistic for his own existence. Furthermore, he finds sufficient emotional stimulation in the parental home to convince himself that he need not form friendships, seek fulfilment in a job, or marry. The parent-attached adult will speak with awe of his parents, as if their most banal utterances possess a holy power; the attached adult will remain preoccupied with the tensions and emotional struggles of childhood, now grown morbid because protracted into the stage of life where independence and acceptance of responsibility alone can enable the personality to develop.

Although perhaps to some it may seem paradoxical, the good parent is one from whom the child is capable of separating himself. Emotionally-disturbed parents have difficulty in accepting this fact: they cling to their children, to assuage their own loneliness: they would keep their children infantile. The wife of an artist, a narcissistic and agitated woman, said: "What <u>will</u> I have if I don't have my children? I always went

to keep them close to me, throughout my life." She could not believe that the child, calmed and encouraged by tenderness and confidence, should, without anxiety, grow to rely on his own powers, associating rewardingly with others, and inclining to accept responsibility for himself.

The devotion with which a dependent child attaches himself in adulthood to a parent is usually suspect. With investigation it transpires that the exaggerated filial "love" disguises fear, dislike and guilt. By "loving" a powerful parent the immature adult hopes to protect himself from adult responsibility. Moreover, the superficial but furious devotion acts as a veil for his resentment, and it lulls his fear of retribution. Suicidal persons often present one with the opportunity of observing frantic filial attachments, and before long the residue of resentment becomes plain.

Mr. Anstey was admitted to hospital in deep coma. When he recovered consciousness, he revealed that he was incapacitated by a protracted and passionate allegiance to his mother, using a dying admonition of his father's as an excuse to remain attached to her. His wife explained: "I know he has had an unpleasant childhood, but I have got to think of myself as well. His parents were always fighting. His father was weak and his mother was ambitious. The daughters have been failures; they think they are wonderful, whereas they are in fact unhappy and frustrated women. On several occasions when I threatened to leave him, he said I could go and he could continue to live with his mother, explaining that he promised his father when he was dying that he would look after his mother. He said he had vowed to his father that he never would desert his mother, and that the promise was on his mind."

Mr. Anstey's mother relished that her son continued to love her (to the detriment of his adult affairs), but she sensed the more sinister undertones: "He is very fond of me, as you know. After he took the pills, he said, 'Mummy, I have tried to be a good son to you.' He put his head on my chest and wept. My son is very, very brilliant, but he is very anxious about me. If I sigh at the table, he nearly dies. If I say my eye is sore, he wants to weep. He is terrified that I will die. He says that he does not care to live if I am dead. He has told me that there are aspects of his wife which infuriate him: he is always calling her a stupid girl. I tried my best to help him make his marriage succeed. I have even asked him to leave my house. Because it is difficult to live with him. I dare not mention any of my troubles. I may not even mention the price of meat, or he becomes excited and disappointed.

"As a child, he was the sweetest boy in the world, the most loving son any mother could want. He still has one of the sweetest natures I have ever known. He often takes me to cinemas. I can't understand the change that comes over him when he has been drinking: it is like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. As a boy he was always docile and nice and sweet. He was always the boy who didn't get things. When other boys got a bicycle, he would not get one at all, or else he would get an old one which was always breaking. I felt it bitterly that he was being deprived of so much, but as a child he never complained. Yet it is strange now, when he is under the influence of alcohol that all the resentments come out. He often shouts, 'I was the one that never got anything!'"

Case 33 MR. ANSTEY

What really happened is that I had a terrible row with my wife. You see, she has been objecting for a long time to our staying in the house with my mother. I have had to stay in my mother's house, and that got on my nerves, I suppose. I get so irritable, so cross. I go into rages, a thing I have never done before.

I explained all my difficulties to my wife before I married her. I told her the responsibility I had to my mother, that I wasn't like a normal chap who had a father. I told her that we'd have to go slow for a couple of years because I had to help out with my mother. I also told her that my sisters weren't settled, and that I had to support them.

Before our marriage I can remember an incident when my wife and I were just sitting on the couch, and my sister went into hysterics. We were not married yet, but I merely held my wife's hand. My sister screamed that we were making love in front of her, and had no respect for her. There was a fearful fuss. That is one incident I can remember vividly. But ever since then there has been a definite animosity between my wife and sister.



Our wedding wasn't a great success. We only had a few friends there. It was in a registry office, on a cold, winter's day. The sexual aspect of our marriage hasn't been very bright. I wouldn't say sex is very important to me. I would never worry if my wife didn't feel like it, nor would I go out and look for it elsewhere. I think when we first got married, like everybody else... we were very much in love at the time, and then gradually it just wore off. I don't know... I always felt my wife

had a resentment against sex. Perhaps I should not say resentment really... it seems to me that she doesn't fully co-operate. Unless she is very willing I won't press my desires. Sex is not even worth while, I should say. My wife is a very fine girl, the sort of girl who would think it half her duty to allow a man his pleasures. She has been brought up in a strict family: if your husband wants to sleep with you, let him do it. I mean, we do both of us occasionally find satisfaction. Then afterwards I am left with a feeling that I have done most of my duty, and that's that. I learned long ago that there is more to marrying than just sleeping with your wife in bed. My mother always used to say that men only wanted women to get them in bed.

My wife has left me twice already, for what she has to stand in the house with my mother. On those two occasions when she left me I couldn't do very much about it, and I had to stay at the time because there was no-one to support my mother. I asked my wife to come back to me, and she did. But now I tried to end my life she threatened to leave me for the third time. She gets very angry, and I can't blame her.

I don't resent in the least having to support my mother. What I do resent is that I am treated like... a little boy. I can't come or go unless I tell my mother where we are going. My wife and I don't dare do anything unless we tell my mother what we are going to do. My wife feels that we can't continue to live with my mother unless she allows us to live our own life. I don't know what I shall do. I get all mixed up in my own self.

My sisters are in the house too, and they don't speak to each other sometimes, and there is always misunderstanding and jealousy between the lot of women in the house which creates a terrible atmosphere of ill-feeling.

Oh! I love my mother deeply! I love her very much indeed. She has done a lot for me. I owe her a great deal. I couldn't let her down in any way... and yet I do! Sometimes I get drunk... I am the only son. My mother would go out of her way to help me. She'd lay down her life for me, if necessary! That's what my mother is built like.

I am afraid I have been very unhappy. I don't know what to do. I am pulled both ways. I have to see that my wife is contented, but on the other hand my mother expects me to help her. I don't want to hurt anybody... My mother has been very good to me, and she has done all she can for me.

Sometimes I just want to sit down and scream: "Get out of this bloody place, all of you; just get out!" My nerves have gone to bits, and I can't stand it any longer. I don't actually scream: it is just in my thoughts. I would like to scream to all of them

about their selfishness; not one of them has done a thing to help me. Oh, what's the good of talking!

And yet, even though they are ungrateful, I can't neglect my mother and my sisters because I promised my father on his deathbed that I would look after them. When he was dying, he said to me: "Take care of the old lady." I told him: "Dad, you know I will do everything in my power."

I think my father did love my mother, although they were not at all happy together. My parents were always fighting about money. I can remember one night when I was a little boy... walking down to the sea because they had a terrible argument. I don't think I was going to do anything to myself. All I can remember is walking away, to get far from all the row. That I do remember.

My dad was never really interested in me. I don't know why... I was his only son! He never gave the impression that he sort of cared about me, and if anything went wrong, I always used to get it in the neck. If there was any irritation in the family, if the old man got annoyed or something he took it out on me. He had a code of honour, an Englishman's honour, and all that business, and all that, and he never hit his girls. They could do what they liked, but if anything went wrong I always used to get a hiding. I resented that, but my father would never listen. Then he didn't... he didn't give me... well, I wanted him to take notice of me, but I always came in the second place.

In the end my mother realized that she hadn't given very much to him. When he died, she knew that she had not given him enough. She had given all her love to her children, and her children had not turned out very successfully. I have always been under the impression that my mother could have given my father more... she did not give my father enough, and that was why he was so unhappy.

Selfish parents, to compensate for their own social failure, at times actually abet their children in remaining immature. They encourage their children to emotional dependence and make the attainment of healthy adulthood all the more unlikely.

However, it is in the personality of the child himself that reasons must be sought for the inability to relinquish dependence on his parents. Such clinging "love" is very common indeed in persons who behave suicidally, and it needs to be taken into account in any study of suicidal phenomena. As has been shown in the case of Cosens (Case C), attachment to a parent not only mars the individual's own strivings, but interferes with his relationships with others. Indeed, while a child is unhealthily dependent on his parents there can be little sincerity in his attempts at adult adjustment. When he marries, a man declares

publicly his intention to assume a sexual role, and to found a home of his own. Attachment to a parent exonerates the retarded adult from such endeavours: he can use his filial loyalty to escape from the material and emotional responsibilities of adulthood.

To understand the basis of a filial attachment protracted into adult life, one requires to realize first of all that society condones such infantilism; the girl who renounces her own fulfilment in order to look after aged parents, the son who cares for a mother who may foist on him insatiable emotional demands, such persons are respected, if pitied. The psychiatrist is perhaps alone in seeing regularly the residue of resentment and angry frustration underlying the child's sacrifice. For the sacrificing child, as many histories have already shown, sacrifices himself precisely because he is apprehensive of being unloved: his excessive devotion is an angry, confused bid to ensure the love of the powerful parent. It is in filial love protracted into adulthood that one can most regularly recognize how manifest love can hide unconscious hatred.

Indeed, some suicidal persons will be seen to have hated openly the parent to whom they continued to cling. This is illustrated by a young woman who was much preoccupied by conflicting desires, on the one hand to become reconciled to her mother and, on the other hand, to go on hating her mother as she had been urged to do by her late father.

For ten years this girl mournfully longed for her dead father; lately she had conceived an intense passion for a young man who was faithless and alcoholic.

In the manner that parents sometimes use to their children, the father had thought it necessary to tell her when she was a child of twelve that her mother had been unfaithful to him. He asked the child to revenge him on her mother and to strive to be utterly different from her mother. Her attitude to her mother remained one of reproach; while recognizing how necessary it was to lose her fierce resentment to her mother, she could not bring herself to forget that her mother had cursed her.

Case 24. MISS MARIA BARNARD

I was born in a small country town. There are four children in our family. I can't say we were an unhappy family but I was certainly very unhappy at home. I may as well tell you that I ran away several times from home. I was brought back.

Must you know all this? So far my life has been all chaos.

My father died when I was fourteen years old. It was just a wind that pushed under his heart and he died. I was very sad. (Weeping.) I didn't openly show it to my mother or anyone else, but my father's death still worries me sometimes. Others can sit and talk about their fathers, and I can't. (Sobbing.) He is dead .. For a long while I felt lost and alone. At times I still do, for when anything unpleasant happens to me, I have got nobody to confide in. My father was about the only person I could go to. He would understand if I went to him and spoke to him. Oh! My mother was so unworthy of him. I don't know if they ever were happy together, because she was quicktempered and he was not.

I was unhappy at home. I ran away when I was fourteen years old. My mother was terribly hard to me after my father's death. I suppose it was all the hidings that I got, but it was only after my father died that I became really unhappy. When I left the house and was working by myself my mother used to write threatening letters to me, saying how badly I had behaved when I was in her house, and she was going to check up on me to see that I was respectable when I was away from her. She wrote to my employers and asked them to keep me from going out at night. I don't know why my mother did those things to me. I suppose she was trying to be mean to me. I am sorry to have to say this (she was my own mother) but ... she had a dislike for me. I knew why, and my mother knew! It was because she had not been loyal to my father when my father was away from the home. I don't feel it's fair to speak of these matters; I have never discussed them with anybody ...

My father went to some mining camp, many years back. It was then that my mother was disloyal to him. She had a child by a Jew she used to go out with. There were terrible scenes when my father came back and I never quite knew why. My father used to confide a lot in me. When he was resting he often used to sit and talk to me. So I learnt the truth: my father told me I would have to know it some time or other; I can't remember his exact words any more, but I do know we had a long talk, when my father told me that the one thing that he expected of me above all others was that I should never take after my mother. He said I should never follow in my mother's footsteps nor do the same as she had done. I was about thirteen years old when my father had that talk with me, and three months later he died.

Soon after he died... oh, I hate speaking like this! Actually, my mother threatened to kill me. Once she beat me, and I went down to the police station, asking the police to come and speak to her. I told her I knew what she had done, how she had not been loyal to my father. I told her she had allowed the Jew to sleep with her when my father was away. I told my mother

how my father had told me that she had been unfaithful. The child was there in the house, as my sister. I made my mother admit the child was not my father's. She threatened me: I suppose I was cheeky and answered her back. I can't remember exactly how it came about. I remember I used to get terrible thrashings from her whenever I ever did or said anything wrong. I had no alternative; I had to go to the police. My mother threatened me so much that I dare not enter the house, because she came rushing after me the moment I put my foot in it. I suppose it was because I was scared that I went to the police for some protection. They came and gave her a warning, but the moment they left I was given another thrashing, and after that my mother never spoke to me for days.

I have never had any love for her. I suppose I might have loved her as a mother, and perhaps when I was a small child I did love her. I am sorry to have to say that eventually I hated her. She told me when I left home: "Tears will be your daily bread." Many a day that has been true. I know my mother meant those words as a curse. My mother put a curse on me. I am absolutely convinced that it is a curse; how many times haven't I got into bed, tired and heartsore and cried myself off to sleep? Next morning I have a headache and my eyes are all swollen up. I am sure my mother has cursed me.

Why did she have to be like that? I had such a happy childhood. I would like to be happy now. I have gone home to visit my mother, and I have avoided mentioning a word about the past. I tried to be happy with my mother, but there is something in the back of my mind which makes me draw into my shell. I have never been cruel to her, never. At times, though, I must admit what I said caused her to feel guilty.

I last saw her over six months ago. I found I did not hate her as much; I can't go on hating her for always. After all, she brought me into the world, and I should be grateful to her for that, I suppose. Sometimes I am happy, but for me periods of happiness are few and far between. I suppose I am to blame for my badness. I make myself unhappy, remembering about the past.

I loved my father. I worshipped him, and at the back of my mind I know I still love my mother very much. But in spite of all the harm she has done to me, I go home and pretend that nothing has happened, trying to be happy, but always something lacks.

The conclusion can often not be escaped that the suicidal person harms himself in order to punish a parent to whom emotionally he remains attached. It follows that suicidal

behaviour will become less common when parents recognize that the later adequacy of their children depends upon their attainment of emotional independence. Children need to emerge, without mortification, through the fierce dependency of childhood to a state of responsibility, adventurousness and active social participation.

PERSONS REVEALING ANTIPATHY TO A PARENT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SUICIDAL ATTEMPT, IN THE FIRST INTERVIEW

No.	NAME	OBJECTION
14	GARTH BARKER	This is most confidential, please! I threatened to kill my father on a number of occasions. I always used to be scared of him when I was a kid. Now I find I can't bring myself to have any contact with him.
29	CYRIL FOXCROFT	Before my birth my mother went to several people to try to bring me down. I know for sure how little she thought of me! She didn't love me at all. She hated me!
30	ALBERT BALL	I never felt that I knew my father. He just regarded me as a piece of furniture. I could never call him, "Father". The word stuck in my throat.
32	ANDREW LATIMER	Throughout my life I have had the idea that my parents are looking down on me. I just don't want to see my parents at all. Life was terrifying when I was a child.
34	MARIA BARNARD	I am sorry to have to say this (she was my own mother), but my mother had a dislike for me. It was because she had not been loyal to my father when my father was away from the home.
38	MISS CALITZ	When my mother died it did not comfort me very much to know my father was still alive. During all the years of my childhood whenever my father spoke to me there was a tone of command in his voice.
40	JOHNNY WILKEN	I was sent to a boarding school when I was six. My parents didn't love me. My parents cast me off and now I don't love them or anybody else either.

PERSONS REVEALING THEIR ANTIPATHY TO A PARENT AFTER NUMEROUS INTERVIEWS

No.	NAME	OBJECTION
2	RICHARD HICKMAN	Ever since I first knew my Dad he was very hostile to me. I was disappointed in my father.
3	MRS. GRAVES	My mother used to be in a drunken stupor for days at a time, and I could see that she never cared for me.
4	JIMMY PAINTER	I would never have anything to do with my father when he was sort of drunk, and he resented that. I am always out of the house.
7	MR. LINDE	Oh, my father will never listen to anybody! He never gave us a reason for refusing to let us go out. He was very strict.
8	AGNES ADAMS	Why was I ever born? I wasn't even born decently, but under the most embarrassing circumstances. I'd kill my mother if she was still alive.
9	ACHMAT SULAYMAN	I left my father when I was a child of eleven, running away from home. Sometimes I didn't even have lunch to take to school, and my father had a big shop.
11	MRS. CASPAR	My mother did not give me the love a daughter needs. I was aware of that all my life. I was a stranger to my mother, which made me feel horrible.
12	JOYCE LINDNER	I have always been shy of my mother. No matter what I did my mother thought the worst of me. If I ever confided in my mother she'd flare into a filthy temper.
13	JULIA HORSTMAN	I feel sorry for my mother. She is soft and can't stand up to my father. He is very hard. He was never gentle. I can't get into contact with him.
17	ELSIE CRAWFORD	I am the illegitimate daughter of a mad woman. I hate her now. No, I did not mean to say that...
21	AMY HARRINGTON	I'm certainly not going to suffer for my Dad any more! Now I don't think I will want to commit suicide. Its ridiculous for me to want to die on account of the wrong my Dad has done.
22	MISS PIENAAR	I'll tell you straight: Mommy couldn't understand me at all.
23	MRS. FAURE	I have never had confidence in my mother. My mother doesn't come into the picture really. I lead her to believe what I want her to believe.
24	HUGH WILLARD	When my stepmother married my father she was already pregnant with a child - my father's! I was cross with my father, but I didn't actually show it.
27	MRS. REED	I must say when I was a child my mother was always getting cross with me. I was her only one, yet she always picked me out for the least little thing.
33	MR. AMSTEY	My Dad was never really interested in me. And I was his only son! He never gave me the impression that he sort of cared about me, and if anything went wrong I used to get it in the neck.
44	MR. LARSEN	My father never really gave me what I wanted, and he never bothered too much about me. My father only thought of himself.
45	PINKIE BULLEN	When I was a child myself it was heartbreaking. I was always the lackey of the home. After she made me do all the work, my mother said I could go to play; but as soon as I was out I got called back in again.
50	MRS. PAULSEN	My father was very disappointed when I was born, that I was a girl and not a boy. He took little notice of me since the time of my birth.

BASIC ANTIPATHY TO A PARENT MASKED BY DESPAIRING DEVOTION

No.	NAME	OBJECTION
5	SUSANNA VAN BLERK	I always get sad when I think of my mother. She is in a lunatic asylum. If my mother knew the things I get up to, I don't know what she would do. I take drugs because of my mother.
15	YVONNE MARAIS	Sometimes my mother and I get on each others' nerves. What upsets me is the way my mother is so careless about herself. She is very reckless crossing streets and that makes me nervous for her. All day yesterday my mother nagged at me and I decided life wasn't worth the trouble.
16	YOLANDA BRIGHT	I used to feel so sorry for my mother. I just can't leave my mother to fend for herself. My first crime was bribery, committed when I was 18...I had my mother to care for. I was twice in love but my mother made such a fuss I thought I'd rather let marriage go.
19	WILLIAM DE WET	When my mother died I took over her place as mother in the house. All the time I had not recognized her goodness, because I was a naughty boy. When I wanted to be good to her, the time came for her to leave me.
20	ELIZABETH PAWLEY	I was very happy at home with my father. I don't want to say anything against my father. My father spat in my face. I don't live with him any more because I had to leave home when he ordered me out.
26	HERMANN LAUFFER	I shot myself because I wanted to hurt myself very badly. I wanted the people at home to feel sorry for me. Now I can only think of what pain I have caused my mother. I don't know what is going to happen to me the day when she passes over.
28	ROSE DELAPONT	I was the one who helped my mother. I used to worry all the time I was at school because my mother used to write to me and tell me how my father was behaving at home. I could never bring myself to go out of the house. I was scared my father was going to worry my mother, hit her or something like that.
31	MORRIE PILANSKI	I stay at home because of my mother. She is always quarrelling with my father, and then she comes to moan to me. I have felt very sorry for my mother all my life. My mother keeps on saying that we are inferior because of all the wrong my father did, and that I am lower than anybody else.
33	MR. ANSTEY	Oh, I love my mother deeply! I couldn't let her down in any way... and yet I do! Sometimes I get drunk... I go into rages. The two times my wife left me I had to stay with my mother because there was no-one to support her.
41	MR. TRIBLEHORN	When my parents separated I went with my father. But I left him when he married again, a Scotch nurse. I was still attached to my mother. I felt very badly when my mother died. Her death caused me to start drinking to excess. I drank for consolation, and it also comforted me to tend my mother's grave.
46	MR. PRIDGEON	I could never really speak to Father since I was quite a child. There was a barrier between us. Suddenly your mind goes completely numb, and you sit there struggling to talk about something. It was awkward.
48	ROSEMARY HEIDEN	The first time I tried to kill myself happened because of my mother. I never knew what a mother's love was. I could never, if I wanted to, go and talk to my mother. I felt nobody loved me. Yet I did everything I could for my mother.
49	MRS. MEADOWS	On three occasions when I was young I left home, but my mother threatened me that if I didn't come home she would have me put into an institution. She didn't actually mean to be unkind. If I could help my mother more then I'd be anxious to do all I possibly could for her. I have no real desires of my own, and no ambitions. All I feel is that I want to help my mother.

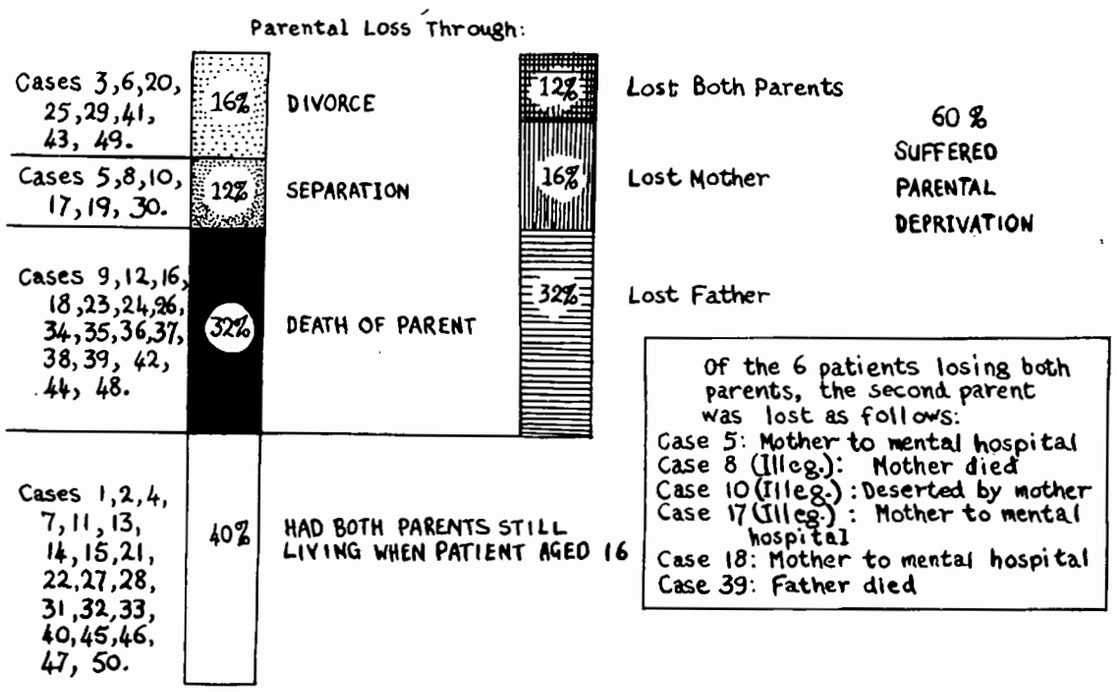
Chapter 9

PARENTAL DEPRIVATION

We have come to learn, belatedly in our civilization, of what crucial importance parents always are in the development of an individual's personality. It can be said, without qualification, that the paramount influence in the life of a suicidal person will be found to be his association with his parents. Those who resort to suicidal behaviour almost invariably will have had unsuitable parents, or, even worse, will have lacked one or both parents during the early phases of development.

In my experience, the significance of parental deprivation as a factor in the causation of suicide cannot be over-estimated. Until the finding became commonplace and, therefore, of inescapable significance to me, I was astonished to find how often a person presenting for study after a suicidal attempt had lost a parent during the first two decades of life. This finding has been so frequent that it stresses itself. The chances are considerable in any case of suicidal behaviour that parental deprivation has been a prominent factor in the development of the individual concerned.

Out of the fifty consecutive cases studied in this investigation, thirty were deprived of a parent before the age of sixteen years, six lost both parents at an early age. Of the sixty-three total cases mentioned in this work, thirty-eight suffered parental deprivation.



The literature of suicide had not prepared me for this finding. However, on further study of the writings about suicide, I found that Rietman (who studied twenty-five cases) reports[51] the finding that sixty per cent of his cases had lost a parent before the age of fifteen years. Palmer[52] had previously reported that sixty-eight per cent of his cases had lost a parent in early life. Teicher[53] has also remarked how commonly suicidal persons had a parent dead or otherwise unavailable during the formative years. The most obvious way in which loss of a parent serves to harm the growing child is in economic and social spheres. Had the parent not been lost to him, the child would have been spared the early exposure to crippling demands. In addition, he would have had the help of a supporting adult, who might have protected him from avoidable disappointments, and encouraged him with material assistance.

A Coloured man aged thirty-eight years drank weed-killer after an argument with his wife.

Case 35 ESAU WITBOOI

I warned my wife, "You will see what I am going to do to myself because you don't want to understand me. I'll go and cut my head off or I'll drink poison, and rather be dead." But she did not listen to me; she left me and took the children with her. The whole week I slept alone at home. At night, lying alone when I came back from work, I lay with this thought: Why must a woman try to be boss of the man? It's not right. We were legally married in the church, my wife ought to listen to me. I only gave her a few slaps, and she should not have left me for that. Each night I lay with the thought: "If I want to, I am all alone in the house: I can just kill myself, and when they come home then I am dead; then they don't know why I am dead."

With this thought I lay every night.

Then my wife came to the farm, and when I saw her I asked her: "When are you coming home to me again?"

She swore at me, "Fuck you! You can die and I won't care!"

Then I said to her, "All right, I'll do as I want to do." When she walked away from me, I poured a lot of that weed-killer into a tin and drank it. (The stuff was standing on the farm in round cans. I wanted to die. I was not drunk. I saw that it was going to be hard for me to die. Now I don't want to die any more.

I had a hard life. My father died when I was seven years old. When my father died, I had been going to school. Then I was still

in small Sub A. After my father's death, my mother hired me out to a mistress when I was seven years old. I was very unhappy for the first two months; I wanted to go back to my mother. I worked there for a year and six months; then my mother married another man, Koos Olivier. This man was just as good as my own father.



Then I was happy again. This man treated me just as my own father had treated me. He said I could go back to school. I became Sub B, and I stayed in school all the time until I passed to standard two. Then my father got sick; a horse tramped on his foot and he got blood-poisoning. He did not go to a doctor and the poison spread upwards. He died, and I had to go to work again. Then I was about twelve years old. I was unhappy again. My heart was sore. When my second father died, I was very sad again. I had to go and work, after I was able to come back to school and my friends.

I went out to work for my mother again. I was only twelve years old when I went out to work for her again. I kept working for my mother until I was fifteen years old. Then my mother took another man for herself so that I could go back to school again. But this man did not live well with my mother. Some days he fought with her. So when I was in standard four I went out of school. I was seventeen, so I went back to work, and I went on working for my mother until I was twenty-one years old. I loved my mother.

When I was twenty-one I went on my own. I was working for myself. The man my mother was living with swore and often hit my mother when he was drinking. I could not stand to see the man hit my mother. I told my mother that if I stayed longer in the house I would have an accident with the man: I would hit him dead, or something, I said.

You see, I am very dark. My sister and I are the only ones in the family who are like this, and we take after our mother. The other children had different hair to ours. Ours had pepper-corns, and the others had straight hair and lighter skins. I worked for my mother until I was twenty-one years old, and only then did I first take a girl. Until then my mother cared for me. She washed and ironed for me and cooked my food for me. My mother is a very good

woman. Since I got my senses I have known that she was good. She is very old to-day, but her ways are still as kind. I loved her so much, and I worked for her for a very long time. My other brothers were not so good to her. The boys married soon and the girls took men. I was the one who went to work for my mother when I was only a very tiny child. My brothers just gave her a few shillings and enjoyed themselves.

A child who lacks the care of parents is exposed to strains which disturb his personality development. If one parent dies the other, no matter how benign, may be so harassed in the struggle to maintain the family that the offspring are deprived of necessary affection. Furthermore, the remaining parent will be subjected to increased demands from the child, sometimes excessive and perhaps even malevolent. Out of loyalty to the departed parent the child at times forbids the remaining parent to enjoy quite ordinary human rights.

The young woman described below could not in adulthood free herself of an angry and yet hopeful concern with her mother. After her father had died, it was impossible for her to permit her mother a new sexual relationship. She became a narcissistic person, employed as a fashion model, and was busy divorcing her youthful husband when she attempted suicide. At the same time she consented to have her baby adopted. She despised her mother, all women and her own feminine role. She was very carefully dressed, usually with intricate straps around her waist; and she once wore a model of a human skull in silver hanging from each ear, thus expressing how dangerous she was and how preoccupied with death.

Case d MRS. JANE WICKHAM

So I thought if I killed myself it would be the best solution. I have not succeeded. Even my suicidal attempt has been another nauseating failure. I am just a mediocre person, and I love nobody but myself, as you have probably guessed. When my father died, I cried because everybody else cried. Then they all jeered at me, so I cried some more, because I was ashamed of crying. I had always been rather frightened of my father: he brought me lots of presents and tried to persuade me to eat my food. (I never used to eat my food.)

I realized how unfortunate my father's death was; I mean, my mother was very young. She was only thirty-four when my father died, and she was attractive, a very attractive woman. I suppose life must have been a bit empty for her.

When I was a little girl I drove my mother's lover out of the

house. I did not want my mother to love anybody else. And yet, I disliked my mother very much; I used to wish her dead.

I was the youngest of four children. I was frightfully spoilt. I suppose most youngest children are. I didn't know my father very well, because he was always in sanatoria. But I remember him vaguely. I did not see him often because I was not allowed to be in close contact with him on account of the infection. When he came to see us he always brought us presents.

As soon as my father died, my mother's lover moved into the house. I was the one who eventually forced him to move out again. I was so abominable to him that he could not tolerate our house. I was always dreadful to him, and I never missed an opportuhity to show him how much I hated him. I could not bear the thought that my mother was giving him love which she could have been giving to me. I was so horrible, so unbearable, that eventually he had to leave, and it was through me that he left! I don't think my mother has ever forgiven me. I realize how that I shouldn't have quarrelled with her: it was not for me to judge. There were always quarrels in the family, violent quarrels, between my mother and this man. I resented this man trying to take my father's place when he was not my father at all. He was not a very nice character, and he was a drunkard.

The only person who really means anything at all to me is my brother. All through the years of my childhood I did not mind anybody else being cross with me, but I used to mind very much if my brother was angry with me. His opinions always mattered enormously to me. Now I am incredibly sorry for my brother.

I must say that my brother used to be frightful to me. Whenever my mother wasn't at home, he used to inflict the most awful tortures on us. He made me and my sisters sit for hours in a cold bath, and he beat us when we tried to get out. He made us eat mustard. He made us crawl underneath a chair and wrapped newspapers around us. If we tore the paper he would beat us. He really behaved murderously. I am sure that is why we are all nervous wrecks to-day. And yet, when my mother was at home, he took no notice of us at all. My brother would never let me join in his games, so I used to tear up his comics when he was out of the house.

He and I are... similar. I love him so deeply. He does not know of my love. (Weeping.) I don't know if he loves me. Forgive me, it is just weakness which causes me to be so distressed. I suppose I just feel very sorry for myself. (Sobbing.)

It is thinking about my brother which makes me so unhappy. I feel very sorry for him, very sorry for him... I was thinking about a row we had. I was about fourteen years old and everyone wanted to go out of the house. I was terribly nervous and upset, and wept when they wanted to leave me alone at home. At that time we

had an aunt staying with us who had just come out from England. I always was terribly nervous and upset then because I hated my aunt so much. She was a horrible creature! She used to have epileptic fits, and those fits broke my nerves. It was only my mother and I who could ever help my aunt when she had an epileptic fit. My two sisters are quite useless, just having to see blood when they swooned. It didn't upset me to help my aunt, but one night she had a fit while I was actually sleeping in the room with her. I can still see her face sometimes ... the eyes are so horrible. She used to foam at the mouth, and her eyes.. her eyes were very white, and they used to roll back and she used to moan. I always used to imagine that I could see this face just behind me. It was a queer feeling; I knew that if I looked, it wouldn't be there, but yet I had the sensation that it was actually there. I felt if I looked it wouldn't be there, and yet I knew it was just behind me all the time! (Sobbing).

My aunt also left our house through me. I couldn't stand her. I used to behave abominably. I used to pour ink over her clothes, and I gave her clothes to the dog to chew. She hit my dog; she hit him with a stick! She beat him! I hated her for that, so I took all her stockings and all her clothes and I gave them to the puppy to chew up. I used to lock her wardrobe and throw the key away so that she could never unlock her wardrobe. People used to have to come and take the locks off the furniture. I hated her!

This aunt was horrible, horrible! She had lots of money. She was quite wealthy. Her husband and one son had been killed in the war, and she hadn't been here for two weeks when she had two lovers. She was a horrible, evil creature, and yet what is so awful is that I feel I am going to be exactly the same as she was, and that is so awful. I am having a vague affair with someone; it isn't physical,but most probably it will develop into that. I loathed my mother for doing it, and my aunt, and yet it feels as if I am going to do it myself: it all seems so ridiculous!

I had suicidal thoughts before, when I was sixteen. I had a row with the man who is now my husband. I did not want to go out with him any more, so quite impulsively I tried to kill myself. I said to him very dramatically, "This is the end!" And I took a lot of pills after leaving him.

I became a Catholic convert when I was seventeen years old. I strongly have the idea of eventual punishment. I feel that I fall into the "bad" group and not into the "saint" group. During my first confession I just about sweated blood. I was intending to get rid of the accumulation of seventeen years of sin. I nearly fainted from disbelief when all the priest said to me was, "Take seventeen 'Hail Mary's.'" Then I felt that Catholicism was all quite insincere.

Others have made it impossible for me to ignore that I am beautiful. Yet I never think of myself in a physical sense at all. People have always noticed me and said nice things about how attractive I look. Now I am tired of my beauty; sometimes I have thought of slashing my face. I haven't done so because then there would be nothing else there - but at least if I was ugly people would not look at me as if I was a decorative object. They keep flattering one, and one doesn't know if you can believe them.

The point is now that I just want to revert to being a person without any ties or responsibilities. I can't be a housewife. I want to divorce my husband. I don't hate him at all, but I don't want to be with him any more. I think that sex is horribly overrated and I could do without it. Sometimes my husband repels me: I so seldom feel in the mood for sexual intercourse, and often it is so nauseating... I think that sex is such an awful sign of weakness: I really think that, that it is evidence of terrible weakness. If I were a man I would take a vow of celibacy, because no matter how intelligent a man is, he is always finally caught out by a woman. Because a woman is beautiful and has a lovely body, she captures him. I think it is a sign of weakness for a man to surrender.

My marriage to my husband was a necessity. I had to marry him, because I was pregnant. Now I find just being a mother and a housewife isn't enough to me. I couldn't bear to have tea-parties with a lot of women and talk about how to bake cakes. At present I am working in a chemist's shop, besides doing my modelling; I dislike doing this work, selling patent medicines consisting almost ninety per cent of water, and rejuvenating creams to a lot of old, fat, wrinkled females. I often burst into laughter, which is not very good for business.

Loss of a parent is detrimental to a child both in the material consequences to his security in the community, and in the hampering effect upon his emotional growth. This conclusion is strengthened by the frequency with which siblings of suicidal persons also exhibit emotional disturbances. We need recall only a few instances here. Forbes (Case D) became obsessed with ideas of suicide only after his sister threw herself before a train; Elizabeth Pawley (Case 20) became suicidal and insane shortly after her brother killed himself; Miss Temple (Case 6) had a sister in a mental hospital; Mr. Triblehorn (Case 41), an alcoholic who attempted suicide, had an alcoholic brother, etc.

The only siblings who both presented within the time when these fifty consecutive cases were being studied were the Dawley brothers. Their father had died by suicide when they were child-

ren. Peter was first admitted to hospital after ingesting an overdose of sedative; shortly afterwards he was found dead in a hotel room. Jack, a younger brother, was admitted a few months later with incised wounds on his wrists.

Case 36 PETER DAWLEY

I have three brothers and a sister. My father committed suicide when I was two years old, and I have known that he killed himself ever since I can remember. My mother died shortly afterwards, and I felt bitter at school whenever I was told I was an orphan and was told I couldn't have what I wanted.

My aunt always promised me that she would tell me one day why my father had killed himself. She gave me affection to a certain extent, but her family always rubbed it in that I was living on her charity. Even when I was younger, I used to get violently depressed. I was apprehensive all the time of what I don't know, because of my loneliness, perhaps. I never went out much. I seemed to realize that I was different from other people. I don't know what it was. I didn't feel I belonged. I tried to turn to my sister in place of my mother whom I missed so much. Now my sister has fallen out with me and shows no more concern for me. Many years ago I found I had great difficulty in sleeping because of a terrible fear I had - the fear of the future. I felt I was not sufficiently equipped for the future. I had a terrible fear of being alone, and I was always alone - even when I was in company, and that fear is getting worse. My wife was the first woman I got to know, and I made a serious mistake marrying her. Before I met her, I had taken women to dances, but I had never been intimate with them. I had never been attracted to women. I do think if I let myself go my inclinations would swing to the other way, to men. I had many opportunities, but I was scared. I thought it would become a habit, and I always had wanted to have a home, a wife and children. But that doesn't seem what Mother Nature has planned out for me. It certainly seems terrible to me, being unnatural. Normally I would be pretty well-sexed, but I have got to battle against it. My dreams are so muddled that I am lost, wondering what is going to happen to me, and not knowing where to go.

I have always felt that I am wandering in the dark with nowhere to do. On my wedding night I realized what it was that I had been frightened of all my life. Oh, Christ, it upset my wife terribly too! I had warned her before our marriage, but maybe she didn't realize what I was trying to tell her. She had relations with other men before she married me, but she could not understand my inadequacy. Before I married her she was gay and she laughed, but now she looks strained.

My wife won't give me a divorce. She says she is going to have our marriage annulled, claiming that it was never consummated. The few times I had anything to do with her physically, I was just plain revolted. She was five years older than me. I am not really blaming her for our failure. I think myself that our marriage was consummated, but how can one argue with her? I have been very restless and depressed while my marriage with her was breaking up. I know myself pretty well, and what I know I don't like. I was hoping that my life was drawing to an end. I was not really suicidal, but I don't want my life to stretch on aimlessly, endlessly. Everything has fallen to bits. I have been growing more and more bitter, thinking that my lot was unjust and wondering why I should suffer so. I have a great dread that anybody(and especially my sister) would find out that I was different from other men. The realization that I am different has been with me all my life. When my aunt was on her death-bed, she said to me, "Peter, don't get married; it won't work out." I thought I knew even then what she meant.

Case 37 JACK DAWLEY

I was not very upset about Peter's death. As a matter of fact, only when I saw his body in the morgue did sorrow come to me. Then I felt a bit grim, and for two or three days afterwards, it sort of kept coming back to me; I realized: "Now my brother's gone, and I'll never see him again." I was very depressed for a few days, but then I forgot all about it. My eldest brother Ivor died a week after Peter, of double pneumonia and pleurisy. I saw him two days before he died. I found him drinking and laughing in a hotel room. I thought he had D. T.'s, because he did drink quite a lot. He had been married, but he got divorced from his wife. When I found him drunk in the hotel room, I begged him to see a doctor, but he refused. Against his will I brought a doctor around, but he kept on drinking, and he died. I don't think he was a homosexual. Only Peter in our family was that way inclined. I think when Peter died it came back to Ivor how alone he was. He kept on drinking all the time, although I begged him to stow it for a while.

I have often thought of my father's suicide. I have even discussed it with my brothers. My eldest brother, Ivor, the one who died last, did not want to discuss it with me. He used to sit staring into space: he was always a very quiet man. He said to me: "You being the youngest of the lot, even if I did know, I don't think I'd tell you about it." I worried about my father's suicide, especially when I heard for the first time that Peter was dead. That was a false alarm that first time. Ivor told me that Peter was lying in the morgue, and that he had been pulled out of the sea after jumping off some rocks. I rushed up to the police morgue

but they told me there: "We can do nothing now, come in the morning." Next morning I waited for an hour-and-a-quarter before the attendants arrived. We searched through the whole morgue, but we couldn't find Peter; we looked at all the bodies, and I kept saying: "Definitely my eldest brother told me that Peter did die and is in this morgue." Then the police phoned up the hospital, and we heard that Peter wasn't dead but had just taken an overdose of sleeping draught. They had pulled him out of the sea. Peter explained he went to sleep in the water when it was low tide. It was then that I became very worried and went to my eldest brother and asked him what all this business was about a suicide in our family.

Ivor said to me, "I've told you many times before. I've got no idea at all. And if I did know, what would be the use of telling you?".

When we were children we already suspected that Peter was different. When we were kids we used to call him the nickname of "Sissy". We never knew anything of homosexuality, of course, but to us he was like a little sissy-boy. The way he used to walk...

When he got married, I sort of changed my mind about him because I knew the girl he married quite well. I thought, "Oh, well, he can't be a homosexual. I suppose it was just appearances against him." But the girl told us later that the first night after Peter married her he refused to sleep with her. She told my sister he took his bed and slept in the dining-room, saying she was so filthy-dirty he could not possibly sleep with her. So then I suspected Peter again, realizing that he had just made up an excuse to this girl he married, because he probably couldn't have anything to do with a woman. He just got married for companionship, that's all. His wife had told a friend of mine that she is going to divorce him. She said he never once slept with her. The day he got married, he got blind drunk; he didn't even see to the licence. He was trying to back out of the marriage. A homosexual told me later that at the time Peter and his brother used to get around together.

I often asked Peter how he came to start taking drugs. He always used to maintain to me that he wasn't a homosexual. Even when my sister came down recently on holiday, and we saw Peter sitting in the lounge of my hotel one morning, she said, "I still don't believe he's a homosexualist." I knew that at one time Peter was living with a homosexual in a flat, but I did not speak to him about it. It did disgust me in a way, because quite a few fellows told me in company that my brother was a homosexual. I just laughed and said, "Well, what do you expect me to do about it? I can't do anything about it. Doctors can't even do anything about that."

Peter never seemed happy to me. He used to stay in the house, instead of going out. He used to lay and read in bed, and I used to try and take him to bioscopes. He spoke to me about the trouble he

was having with his wife, and one day when he was under the influence of drugs, he was calling out that he was a homosexual. Later on, he denied it. I told him, "But you said it yourself, one day when you were under the influence of drugs." He said to me, "No, I'm not."

About my own suicide, I can't say that I attempted to kill myself because my father did it, and because my brother killed himself. When I think now I realise all the pleasures I have in life. If you're dead, you don't have any pleasure at all. I think I cut myself because I was drunk and feeling sorry for myself.



My father committed suicide when I was seven months old. I'm the youngest child in the family. My mother died a few years after that. Not one of the children know why my father killed himself. I often try to find from my mother's sister, but all I have been able to find out is that my father killed himself by drinking Lysol. None of us children ever got a clue. When my mother died, I was just five years old, so I have never really known my parents. I have had such an awkward childhood, stowed away in an orphanage, and I can tell you it was an orphanage! You couldn't look skew without getting seventeen of the best with a cane. I was in the orphanage until I was sixteen. All of us children were with the exception of my sister. You must understand that I really did have a tough time in the orphanage. The superintendent was one of these religious maniacs. We were cooped up and we were not allowed to put our foot out of the gates. That is why to-day I can't stand being at one place for a long time, I suppose. That's why I've always got to keep moving about the country. The only thing that happened to us in my childhood days was that once a month my aunt came and took us out, and at six o'clock that evening she had to bring us back. You get the feeling that you're cooped up all

the time. That's why, even now, I can't stand being cooped up for a moment. If I had to be locked up, say in a police cell for a couple of days, I think I would go stone mad.

Well, I did have a tough life. We all did. When I was sixteen I was out battling for myself. I don't like staying in one place for very long. After a while it sort of gets dreary, and I feel like getting somewhere else again, somewhere new. You can call it my roving spirit. I will never attach to anybody. I have had girl friends for a short while; I have had lots in my time, but now is the first time that I've had a true girl.

I used to love people when I was a kid. I remember that if anyone hit one of my brothers, I used to cry for their part. When I was about sixteen we were all separated. I did not see a member of my family for three or four years at a time, especially during the war. I had a severe accident, and had a plastic operation to my face after the crash. People told me that I was hideous-looking, and I took them seriously. I never used to go out with people after the crash happened to me. My face was very bad, but it is better now that I have had plastic surgery. It would all have been different if I had had a mother and a father, but what did I have in my mother? Nothing. What did I have in my father? Nothing? I suppose that is why I have never really been attached to anybody.

Peter made a complete mess of his life, and it ended in tragedy. Ivor died drunk and alone. I know that I am also a rolling stone, and that I am not going to amount to anything. But if I can fix up things with my girl, I may be quite happy.

From the histories presented thus far, it is already clear that the child confers enough of his feeling on the departed parent to be left emotionally impoverished after the parent is lost. The child then suffers an arrested development: unless his mourning is softened by understanding from others, the child interprets his deprivation as an actual loss of his own substance. Forbes (Case D) may be recalled again:

I can remember one day when I came back from school to find that father was ill. He had come back from a country trip and was suffering from a nervous attack. When we kids were told about it, we were sent off to bed, but that night Dad came and stood at the door of the room, and had a wild look in his eyes. He was obviously in a very nervous state. Mother came running into the room and stood beside us children, as if to protect us. I got a horrible scare. To this day the picture of that episode still remains clearly with me. After a while, when she saw he was not going to do anything, mother led him back to bed. He left the family and lived by himself. He was mentally ill.

He was the dearest,kindest man to us all. I never questioned or wondered why we were separated from my father. I knew we had been advised to leave him by a doctor, for his own sake. But all the time I was very unhappy about him. I felt terribly sad when he died just before my twenty-first birthday: my uncle told us my father had pneumonia, but he made no fight against it because he had no desire to live. The thought still worries me. Although we separated from him so early he stayed vividly in my mind always. I must have been very tiny when I got one memory of him I often thought about, because I was sleeping in the same room with my parents at the time. I can remember we were all in the same room, and I was in bed. Mother and father were at the window. He was showing her something on his penis, I think it may have been a flea-bite. I didn't say anything, but I was sort of surprized. He wasn't shy to let a woman look at his genitals. I can remember my mother bending down and looking and they whispered together. When I got older myself I was always very shy to have any flirtation with girls. My first girl gave me the boot after two years, because I couldn't pluck up the courage to make love to her, mildly even - although I wanted to.

Susanna van Blerk (Case 5): My mother became insane when I was little. She would have been disappointed if she knew how I had turned out. I take drugs because of my mother. My life is empty and it takes a lot to fill it up.

Achmat Sulayman (Case 9): I saw my mother die when I was nine years old. From the time I knew myself, I had no mother. It makes me very sad.

Hugh Willard (Case 24): On the death of my mother a great grievance came into my mind which I couldn't get rid of. All my life it has been as if I would wake up out of a nasty dream and find myself nine years old again.

Mrs. Faure (Case 23): I was only seven when my father died. That is the sore point in my life. It is a great love for my father that I have, always the longing when I need somebody.. Why isn't Father here? Why don't I have a father? Why did God have to take Father away?

In the growing child many of his resources suffer arrest of development at the stage when parental deprivation occurred. Subsequently, at times when increased demands are made on him, he will feel himself inadequate, bereft of power for effort. He will in many cases feel himself unequipped to accept adult responsibilities. Disappointments and frustration are not met realistically and with adaptability, but instead the individual subsides

hopelessly with the conviction that his life would have been easier had he not been deserted by a parent. For the absent parent there is thus a protracted, devitalizing love, but also felt is an obvious underlying reproach. The suicidal person seems to argue that because he had been bereaved, the world became a cold and difficult place. He considers his loss absolves him from showing his assertive attributes, and from developing his talents. He argues that he is different from others, less contented than they are, because they had not been bereft; he is more miserable because he had been less loved.

Furthermore, he makes impossible demands of the remaining parent in his need of solace for loss of the departed one.

Case 38 MISS CALITZ

My unhappiness began three years ago. It was because I could not keep a boyfriend. I had one boyfriend, and unluckily it went so far I became ... pregnant.

Sidney was definitely not the man I had imagined for myself, but I liked him quite well enough. He asked me out to a dance after I had known him for three weeks, and then he came to visit me nearly every night. One night he took me to a park, a lonely place. I did not know what was right, or what association one was supposed to have with a man. Sidney told me if you had a boyfriend you allowed him to come into you. He assured me that was definitely so. I accepted it as true, but now I realize it is the greatest sin there is.

He wanted to marry me, but after he made me pregnant, I hated him. I suppose it was not all his fault: he begged, and I gave in to him. Even though I disliked him I agreed to marry him, but then the pregnancy came down, and I refused to get married to him. Since that time I have been very unhappy. I never had any direction... Mother! Mother! Why did you die and leave me? (Sobbing). I was only thirteen when my mother died. I went from one household to another. I never learnt what was wrong and what was right. My older sister realized later what was happening to me. I pretended I was happy, and people thought I was, but I was utterly miserable. Lately I have come to feel that I cannot go on any more. I have come to a standstill now, to an end. I would be glad if I could stop remembering.

After my mother died, nobody understood me. There was nobody I could approach if I wanted to know something. Since the time of her death I have had nobody. I have now no trust in myself. I think it has been so since I lost my virtue. I get very depressed when I remember I am not a virgin any more, and I think often, terribly often, of my mother's death. It always comes up in me. I think that she has deserted me. If she was here with me, these things would

never have happened to me. I feel tender towards her. My mother died of her heart, after bitter suffering.

Oh! If my mother was alive it would never have happened to me. There have been a number of men to whom I have given myself since Sidney left me. Only too late do I realize what is happening to me with them, and then I get terribly sad. (Sobbing.) I am not a young girl any more, and it is impossible for me to find somebody who will love me. It is so difficult to fight against my desires. I know what girls like me are called. I thought things would come right in the future. After Sidney there was one man who came to see me often and who seemed to want to marry me. I thought I would tell him of all that had happened to me, but when I told him how Sidney and I had behaved, he said that he saw no chance to marry me because I had a relationship with a man before marriage. I told him all about us myself, explaining that I did not know if I could marry him because I had already gone so far with a man. I thought it was my duty to tell him all about myself. He stood silent for a while after I had told him, and then he said: "I don't believe I'll see you again." I felt rejected. (Sobbing). What will I live for now? There will be nobody else who will understand me. I have fallen, and all is finished. Now I know it is finished. If you have fallen, what is there?



I was religious. I was a young girl, and it should not have been so. It should never have happened. I should not have listened to Sidney. I had some drink. I went about, in my fright, telling all my friends that I was pregnant, so everybody knew about it. The ideas I had about life were romantic and beautiful. It was a great shock to find that nothing was as I imagined. I still think the idea of sex between men and women is revolting, and it is wrong, and I despise myself more because I can sometimes think with pleasure of a man's body. Sidney was the first person who really let me understand that such a thing could happen between a man and a woman.

I was thirteen years old when my mother died. I felt lonely, without anybody who could stand beside me. It did not comfort me very much to know that my father was still alive at that time. He was a quiet man, and he had bad moods. He was not always very kind to my mother. He said unkind and filthy words to her, and I remember dimly something about a pumpkin . . I don't know ...

if they were playing, but my father smeared my mother with pumpkin. It was frightful! I think that a man and a woman ought to live together in all friendliness and to respect each other. I thought it very wrong that my father should do such a thing to my mother. I was ten years old when that happened, I think. My mother was a very tender woman, and the slightest thing hurt her. There is another incident I can remember dimly: my mother had been sitting on a chair and the chair was moist when she got up. My father made a dreadful fuss and teased my mother horribly. I felt terribly shy for her sake. I can remember that my mother wept very often, but she tried to behave courageously, and she never let my father see her weeping. But I often saw her. My father treated her very badly, without any tenderness. It seemed to me that he had no feeling for her. It is difficult for me to remember these things. I can remember my mother only really when she was sick, and when I was a child. During all the years of my childhood whenever my father spoke to me there was always a tone of command in his voice.

I would not like to tell you of the memory that just came into my mind.. I find it very difficult to speak of such things. I thought of my brother... When we were still small we played with each other's sex organs. He was eleven years old and I was eight. My mind told me it was very wrong what we did together. It is so strange that since my childhood I never thought about playing together until to-day. It was as if I forgot all about it, and yet to-day I can remember everything. Someone discovered us playing together, my sister, I think. She told me what we were doing was evil, and we could get a hiding if she caught us again, and I can remember sometimes coming to the door of my parents' bedroom and finding the door locked. I thought it very strange, and I did not know then what was going on behind the locked door. It was only later that the idea came to me that they were sleeping together. Even now I cannot bear to think that such a thing happened between my parents. For a long time I could not bear to think how we children came into the world. I can't even tolerate people to discuss sex and childbirth before me. I think it's very ugly and evil to have a sexual relationship with anybody, because I can't imagine that sex between two people can be good. I had such high ideals of my mother and father that I could never believe that they would demean themselves in that way.

The only important things in life for me were my mother and father. My mother died and my father thrust me from him. I had so many hopes of my father.

Throughout my life when my father took no notice of me, I felt terrible. I felt sore inside when he did not notice me, and now I haven't got the courage to try to make him my friend again.

All my life when I have tried to speak to him I have felt timid and afraid. I was frightened of approaching him.

I have told you that after Sidney there were a number of other men who made love to me. If I had to know they were going to make love to me I would be frightened and shocked. But when I see a man of a certain type, my head seems to become drunk so that I cannot think. I can't grasp what is happening, and it is as if I will consent to anything. I will have difficulty in describing how the man would have to look. He would be a gentle type, a good person. I would have to think that he was a person of ideals. I would certainly not have anything to do with a man whom I thought was promiscuous. The certain man would have to be well-built, dark, with dark eyes. He would have to look rather stern. It appears to me suddenly that the man likes me and the thought comes into my mind that it would be wrong to have intercourse with him. Then suddenly it occurs to me, "It's all right" and I would not be able to stop myself from giving in to him. I would become frightened and I would think to myself that I would never permit the man to go away from me. I fear that if I don't give him what he wants he will never come back to me. That is the way I think, and I have been right in the past. I feel I have to stay in the good graces of the men I like.

It is the same with my father. I feel I have got to please him. He is as hard as rock. He walks away and goes to sit quietly in a corner and he won't answer you, even when you speak to him. I become very frightened when I think that I will lose my father. I think with panic that perhaps I will mean nothing more to him. Once he hit me. He asked me a few times to do something for him, and then he walked up to me and said, "You! You do nothing in the house. You must work because I am taking you in only as a servant", and he hit me in the face. I said to him, "Father..." He answered, "I am not your father!" "You will always be my father", I said. "I want to be with you and go wherever you go." Then he gave me another hit in my face and said I must get away from him. I tried automatically to do things after that to please him, but it was as if I could not understand what was happening to me. My father did not even see how I was working to please him. He would never even approach me to say a word to me. I was heartbroken when my father slapped me. That night I left the house and went to the railway station to jump before a train. I felt there was nothing left for me in the world. I had been pushed away from him, and I felt useless.

My father isn't the same to me as he was. He said, "You need not call me father any more. I am not your father. You can go and find another father for yourself." Often my father says what he does not mean, but when he said that I realized that there was no more feeling in him for me. He said that to me four years ago. It made a terrible wound. He has married another woman since then, and taken her into our house, but I still love my father very deeply.

I left home, but later I went to ask him if I can come back. I waited many months, hoping that he would come to see me himself, but I

had to go back to him. He said, "Yes, you can come back, but just as a boarder." He did not care for me any more. I could feel that I was not welcome. He did not speak to me, and he scarcely answered me when I talked to him. With others he made jokes, but the moment I came into the room, he was quiet as death. My own sister in the home got all his love, although she had never done anything for my father. But he loved her. He gave her everything and did all he could for her. He gave her advice and accepted the advice she gave him. The night she moved out of the house he said, "Now my one true daughter is going to marry; I suppose I had better become engaged myself." Then he became engaged to that woman after he had known her for a very short time. He clearly meant that I could not care for him. I had always expected he would ask me to stay with him and care for him, but he did not.

This woman tried to take my mother's place, but she could not; never! When she came I thought I could stay to help my father. As he walked into the church on his wedding day it seemed to me that he had not wanted to marry. My mother's place should have been left open. And he married! To me, his actions meant clearly that he found me unworthy, and he married a woman who was so far beneath him. He said that his only reason for marrying was so that he could have a woman to care for him.

This marriage is frightful! She doesn't love him. He lived with my mother, and he slept with my mother. How can he now go and marry that woman and have intercourse with her? I am sure they slept with each other before they were married. And now she is expecting a child before the proper time. I hate her! I hate her terribly! (Weeping.) What can I do? Father! My father is not happy, and I know it. It makes me so unhappy because he is sad. My father, oh, my father! I love him deeply, deeply! When my mother died I always imagined I would be able to look after him and help him, and he went and married that woman.

Oh, my father ... such a sly woman! I do not want to live any more. Life is too difficult for me. Memories come up in me and there is too much for me to suffer. I am so depressed. My biggest worry is that I am not virtuous. I would rather have lost both my arms. I feel so guilty. Why must I feel so guilty? Why do others not feel guilty after they have sinned? And now there is this additional shame: I tried to kill myself. I became pregnant and then I attempted suicide. I despise myself utterly. I am so frightened that I will never see my mother again. (Weeping.) For years the fear was in me that I was not going to find my mother, although I could not accept that she was dead. I felt that she was alive, and now I am frightened to think that I will never encounter my mother again. And I am so sorry for my father. He seems alone to me. Alone among all

those strange people... he has married the wrong woman for him. When I see my father looking so sad, then all the details of my mother's dying come up in me... It's terrible! My father thinks he may have been the cause of my mother's death. She did have a hard time, she worked hard, and she had to suffer.. that is what broke her in. My father has often said to me that my mother had a very hard time, and perhaps he could have made her life easier. He said perhaps he could have saved her if he had brought the doctor to her earlier. She was only forty-five years when she died. (Weeping bitterly).

She loved me so deeply, and I hurt her sometimes. One day I took poison in my hand and said to her that I was going to drink it. I did not really mean to drink it, I just wanted to let her believe that I was going to drink it. I often said to her, when somebody teased me, that it seemed to me that I was not really her child. I often said to my father that I thought my father got me somewhere else because I did not look like the other children.

After her death, throughout my childhood, I played a sort of game with myself. I thought, as a matter of fact, that my mother was still alive... somewhere in the world. When my father got married again, I came to the conclusion that my mother wasn't there any more. My father had got himself a different wife. All the evidence was there that my mother had died, but my mind kept telling me that she was still alive. I thought she must be somewhere. I didn't see her when she died. I was at home, and they came to tell me that my mother was dead. I couldn't believe it, and I thought to myself that my mother must be somewhere on the earth. I thought she was still alive somewhere. I could not understand. Only on the day my father brought this woman into my home did I realise that my mother was really dead.

My father clearly has no nice feelings. Any father should love his child, and reprimand her when she does wrong, and be pleased when she does right. My whole life is hopeless. My mother loved me very much. She often praised me above the other children, and they did not like it. Once my sister smeared my face black with soot, saying that I was a little monk.

I often feel that it is my mother's responsibility for dying and leaving me alone. I think it was wrong of her to die, but I have never had bitter thoughts about her for leaving me.

If he lacks two parents, the child arrives at adulthood with a defective sense of self. To him his identity seems confused. He does not know what he may expect of the world, and how he is required to behave. He believes himself out of step with other people. Ahmet Sulayman (Case 9) expressed this idea in saying:



> I never had anyone to teach me what was wrong and what was right. Even up to this minute I feel that I am the one who has been wrong all my life, never other people.

When such a deprived individual becomes suicidal, his dead parent will be found to figure prominently in his thoughts.

After a parent is removed by death or divorce, the child, shocked by the careless departure of one he had considered omnipotent, feels himself cheated of a benign and love-giving presence that would have made his existence easy and pleasant. He does not give up his expectations of the absent parent. It is by no means uncommon to find that a child continues to cherish illogical requirements of a parent from whom he has been parted for some time; following a divorce, a child will continue to imagine during the years of his growing-up that his estranged parent will not marry again, but will live with as much suspense as himself, anxiously planning for a re-union.

Case 8 MRS. SALLY BASSON

> I tried to kill myself because of my husband. He has a terrible temper. He is thirteen years older than me. Last week he again swore and screamed at me. He had been drinking. I told him I was young when he took me from my mother's house, and he was not allowed just to throw me away when he got tired of me. The next night he came home drunk again, and he threw a knife at me. I ran out and sat in the dark on the steps on the verandah. He shouted at me to come to bed, but I was afraid he would murder me. When I said so to him, he said, "I can just as easily shoot you where you are sitting over there as in bed." So I went back into the house, but I did not sleep in his bed.
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> When I tried to speak nicely to him next morning, he said he would call the police to take me away. I locked myself in a room, and he kicked open the door and said he would have me sent to work on the breakwater. I perhaps don't love him, but it would hurt me terribly if I had to leave him. My mother's married life was also unhappy, but she stayed with my father for twenty years for the sake of her children. My father was very cruel to her.
>
> My mother divorced my father when I was only ten. I am a married woman of twenty-two now, but I still think of my father and I long very much for him. I know I will still be in his thoughts. I have written letters to find out where he is. I have not been able to find a trace of him. I worry a lot about my father.

Removal of a parent early in life is a severe handicap to the child, and even when the deprivation occurs as late as his

adolescent years, the child is still severely incapacitated. He is cheated of developing a detached attitude in relation to the removed parent. In the child's imaginative life, the removed parent remains embalmed in infantile awesomeness and power, still the focus of great charges of filial affect. The child's social striving is impoverished because all this emotional energy remains tied up with a person who no longer figures in his life. Had the parent not died or been removed by divorce, his actual presence would have been there for the child to react with during the formative years. Lacking the presence of his parents, the child comes to adulthood emotionally arrested, allowing unjustifiable longings and unreal adoration of the absent parent to mar his own participation with his fellows. The orphan child in our society is a wretched figure. There are children who, after loss of their parents, retain the capacity for affection and the drive which enables them to achieve mature adjustment in later life; but there is no doubt more understanding and consideration must be held out to those children who are grieved by the loss of a parent. In the past the distress of bereaved children has been disregarded. The child's inarticulateness, and his natural reserve before strangers, should not deceive us of his great bereavement.

It is appalling how divorce proceedings are poured over the child who is regarded by the parents as a trophy or else as an encumbrance. Marriage partners have not been made enough aware that revengeful rivalry causes the child to be battered emotionally, exactly by those whom the child inevitably considers heroic and powerful. How ludicrous to think the child can choose between his bitter parents in the upheaval of seperation! He will continue to love the parent who deserts him with all the arrested force of his imaginative life; no matter how he protests his regard for the triumphant parent, reproach at being deprived will also exist. These confused, sad allegiances, flourishing protractedly in the fantasy life, warp the child's relation to the world outside his home.

The child orphaned of both parents is an even more confused and exposed individual. A parentless child in many cases will remain lost in an alien world, misunderstood and unable to understand.

A woman aged thirty-four years was brought to hospital in a deep coma. As she recovered, she wept and insisted seriously that she wanted to die. She explained she loved her deaf husband, because she had nobody else. When he fell in love

with another woman, she gave expression to unexpected reserves of hatred; however, it was herself she attacked.

Case 39 MRS. SUSAN STRACHEY

He admitted his affair with that woman and said he was not even ashamed of it. I had to have my baby and, in the meantime, they were corresponding with each other every day, and she was phoning him up at the office. He sat up half the night writing to her. I tried not to let it upset me very much, but you can imagine that it did. I begged my husband to please see me through my confinement with consideration, and not correspond with the woman for the two weeks it would take me to have my baby. I asked him to give me a chance to love him too. Those two horrible weeks I will never be able to forget, the way he looked at me with loathing in his eyes. I had my baby, and, dutifully, he visited me every day, with his mind miles away. I came home, and all alone, by myself, I have loved and cared for my little girl, through the lonely nights. The little girl I tried two years to have, only to find that at the end neither of us was wanted. I prayed in the nursing home for God to let us both die. When I didn't die I somehow got enough courage together to take my baby home, and I allowed nobody to see how unhappy I had been during these past six months.

I simply couldn't forgive Sally, the woman my husband loved. I have never seen the woman. She has never been to see me, but I hate her, and I could rend her to pieces. Therefore I couldn't ask God to help me in my trouble. When I did go to Him with hatred in my heart, I knew He would turn from me. I had to forgive first. Yet the more I thought of Sally, the more I hated her. It became a vicious circle. In my mind I hated Sally, but I could not get to hate my husband who turned indifferently from me, but I lost God when I started hating. That was the most terrible thing, to have lost all my faith in God. I don't like talking about it. I had been very close to God, always, and now God was lost to me. I started hating, and I have never hated before. I thought of my happy home which was being broken up. I kept saying to myself, "You mustn't hate, you must love." I used to sit for hours and loathe the very thought that there could be a person like that woman in this world. The more I hated, the further everything receded from me. I could not reach God.

Then my husband decided that he would give the woman up. I said to my husband that I was definitely going to take my life. My existence was miserable. What is a home when there is no love? At that time there was nothing for me in the home except the children, and my husband loves the little boy. I said to my husband,

"I will give you a divorce", but he asked that we should make a new start.

My heart seems to break when my husband comes into the house and takes my son Alec in his arms and kisses him, but at me he just looks and says, "Hullo!"

I think of myself as very unemotional. Can you understand that? I never try to make an issue of anything. I try to take calmly everything adverse that happens to me. I try not to show how deeply I am hurt. I am good in any emergency: I never cry out if I get hurt... but although I don't show it, I nevertheless do get hurt very deeply. My difficulty is probably that I have led a very narrow, self-centred life.

You may find it difficult to believe, but I have lost sixty pounds in weight in the last few months. Do you know what was going on in my mind? I kept asking myself, "Why could that woman not leave my husband alone? Why could we not be together again? Why, why, why? Why did God have to let this happen? Why do I have to be pregnant at a time like this?" Round and round everything went in a vicious circle. I hate that woman, I hate her! She couldn't even wait for two months after her husband died before she grabbed another man. But why did it have to be my man? And why did my husband have to succumb to temptation when he is not that type of man?

I said to him, "I don't want to live any more. I am going to die." He just laughed. So I took an overdose of sleeping pill.

I don't think I will be able to tolerate being alone again. I had lost both of my parents by the time I was ten years old. I had a fearful shock when my mother died. She was lying there, and they made me look at her. I don't think children should look at their parents when they were dead. She was awfully pale... and her eyes were closed.. and I can remember looking down into the grave, and then feeling that terrible sense of loss... I cried bitterly when my mother died, but my father's death a year later did not move me so much. I don't know why, because when he died the home was broken up, the last link was gone, and I was on my own, so one would have thought I would be distressed. My mother had tuberculosis, and my father died because he loved her so much that he would not stay away from her for a moment. He slept with her in his arms, with the result that he got the disease himself.

You know there has always been a lack of security behind me, a lack of love. I don't like talking about all this. (Sobbing.) When I was a child I was shunted from one place to another. Nobody really wanted me. My brother was very much older than I, so I don't remember him at all as a child. When I was a child I was always a lonely sort of person. It is the main thing I

remember, how lonely I always was. Imagine a youngster losing her parents, and then being put suddenly in a boarding-school! I was desperately unhappy. All the other kids used to get letters from their parents, but I never got any. I got no presents when other children did. When weekends came I had to stay at the school, and during holidays I had to go to people who didn't really want me.

My chief thought was that I wanted to find somebody to love me. (I had forgotten all about this for years, but how it comes back to me now!) All I wanted was some kindness. After a while, I became quite popular at school, and I was a prefect by the end of my school days, and I was games captain. But I was lonely all the time. There was never anybody with whom I could dream of discussing my problems. I am still like that. If I am worried about anything, I would rather keep it to myself than bother anybody else. I just wanted to be loved! That's all! I required only to be loved. I had been all alone for so long. I would have been quite satisfied if my husband only said occasionally, "Hullo, darling!"

These separations of the child from his parent by divorce or death are blatant matters, however. They are concrete deprivations: indeed, that they have been overlooked for so long in human affairs is astonishing.

Much more frequently does a child feel separated from a parent with whom he is in daily proximity. Numerous histories already written (e.g. Miss Julie Horstmann, Case 13) have illustrated how a child can feel divided from a parent by harshness, coldness or mere carelessness. Often enough parents do not perceive when their demeanour deprives the child of necessary affection. Neglect of an older infant by his parents when a baby is born is a well-known deprivation inflicted by unwitting parents.

Neglect of a child's emotional needs can have a permanent and devastating effect upon his personality. As he grows older, nursing his conviction of being rejected, the child can be confirmed in his sense of isolation, sometimes by steps his parents take innocently. The sending of children to boarding-school has sometimes a more deleterious effect than ever parents perceive. They may anxiously hope that the disturbed child may prove more amiable in sterner surroundings, overlooking the child's tendency to interpret his banishment as punitive.

A child deprived of his parents' care during formative years may suffer an emotional dislocation from which he never recovers, as is shown by the youngest individual to feature in this study: a boy, aged fourteen years, who shot himself through the shoulder in a suicidal attempt, using his father's rifle.

In a cold, aloof voice he insisted that he had meant to kill himself. It became apparent that he saw the world as a menacing, ugly place, and people as unlovable and unfriendly. His appetite for life was so small that he would as soon be dead as alive. In fact, he threatened if his parents displeased him ever afterwards he would certainly kill himself. He denied that there could be any joy in life for him, and he said that he had no hope of the future.

His timidity had long been apparent in his behaviour at home. He had bad dreams, he slept poorly and cried out in his sleep. Each night his mother had to go with him to his room and stand by him while he undressed. Before she left him she had to tuck him under the blankets. His door always remained open, and his parents left open the door of their room. His mother said, "I worry because Johnny is so frightened. He always speaks of ghosts."

Case 40 JOHNNY WILKEN

I was frightened. I had a frightened feeling because of all the learning work I had to do and because I was afraid of my teachers. I do not like my school. I wanted to go to a trade school, but my father said the school I was going to was good enough. I just wanted to shoot myself dead. No, that is not at all stupid. If I am dead, then there is nothing: then I will just be dead. I don't want to live. I don't want to go back to that school. Everybody is so unfriendly. I am sure that if people treated me fairly I would be happy. I am prepared to take responsibility for the unhappiness I cause to myself, but I think people are awful to me. I was sent to a boarding-school when I was six. My parents' farm was sixteen miles away from the town, and they said that was too far for me to travel back and forward every day.



My parents didn't love me, and sent me out of the house when I was small. They cast me off, and now I don't love them or anybody else either.

When I got to the school, the first night I ran away. In the darkness I ran back to my parents, through all those miles. I was only small then. My father gave me a hiding and took me right back

to the school. I went home every weekend since then. Each weekend I cried when I had to go back to school, and begged my parents to let me stay at home. They could not have loved me because they refused to understand how miserable I was at school. I had nothing there. So my parents won't really be sorry if I die. And why should I care if they are sad? It's my own life, and I can do what I like with it. I don't believe there is a God: how can there be one if I have never seen Him?

I won't go back to school. That's why I shot myself. I warned my parents that if they tried to force me back I'll shoot myself again, and this time I won't live.

After study of hundreds of suicidal persons, I have no doubt that when a child loses a parent by death or separation his chances of behaving suicidally in later life are increased.

When children grow to adulthood without the advantage of two parents, they do not learn a proper perception of the world, what they can expect, and what accomplish. To grow to any sort of maturity, the child must have appropriate understanding of the pressures of society upon him, and know how he may respond. During his most important years his parents constitute society. It is the child who mislearns about the nature of his environment who will later be driven to behave suicidally. For it is the sum of his response to society that is an individual's personality.

Chapter 10

WITHDRAWAL

Suicide, being an event in the life of a person, is a phenomenon which can be understood only after study of the individual history in which it has taken place. However, when large numbers of suicidal persons have been studied, it will be found that they regularly exhibit certain behaviour trends which, on account of their constancy, are of fundamental significance.

Almost invariably the suicidal person will be found to have been notably submissive in his social dealings. In his associations with his fellows, and in his creative efforts, he will have been held back by his excessively stern conscience. A chronically self-destructive trait will have been his suppression of the assertive tendencies, without which a successful life in the community is impossible. Finally may be mentioned the private imaginative activities of the suicidal person: a conscious fantasy life which is hidden from his fellows and which has small relevance to his actual, social existence. Suicidal persons have exuberant, unrealistic fantasies, and it is often the indulgence of these fantasies that has contributed to an attitude of withdrawal already manifest in the individual many years before suicidal behaviour occurs.

Of the personality trends in suicidal individuals, withdrawal is the one which may be recognized most easily. The person who is withdrawn does not participate satisfyingly in the community of which he is a member. He holds himself apart and he feels isolated. He has few friends, and his contacts even with these are superficial and unrewarding. The degree to which suicidal persons have abstained from personal relationships is often astonishing. If their life histories are scrutinized they are seen to have refrained from satisfaction of quite common urges, notably of their sexual needs. In their occupations, too, they often seem somewhat adrift, either "passing the time" in their jobs, or else accepting chance opportunities of occupation which come their way. This does not imply, of course, that such people may not be excellent at their work. But it can be seen clearly how they have recoiled from involvement in the activities going on in the community, and how isolated they are from their fellows. Nor do they strive with energy and interest to achieve and maintain acquaintanceships, but lethargically

accept the company of those persons they haphazardly encounter. It cannot be sufficiently stressed that an apparent apathy, a failure in personal relationships, may conceal profound longings for love. The shy, stand-offish and timid person is frequently pining inwardly for the warmth of others, and is chagrined by his loneliness.

A debonair forty-eight, Mr. Triblehorn was in poor condition when he was brought to hospital, his wrists sloshed and he himself in an alcoholic confusion.

Case 41 MR. ALGERNON TRIBLEHORN

My parents separated when I was a youngster. I went with my father. Most unfortunately my father got ill and entered a nursing home where he met and married a Scotch nurse. That went against my grain. I was still attached to my mother and couldn't remain with my father after he married that woman. I wouldn't have her taking the place of my own mother, so I parted from him. He warned me that if I went into the world on my own I would have very great trouble. When I was grown I got a fine job, earning a few thousands each year, and I married. My wife was a divorcee. When war broke out I had a trace of albumin in my urine, so I didn't join the Army; I felt in my heart of hearts that I had missed what I most wanted to do. Then I gave up golf. I sort of lost interest in everything. I gave away my tails because I didn't have the heart to enjoy myself dancing any more, when there was a war on. I felt a bit of an outcast, as if I hadn't done my duty by everybody I knew. I should by rights have joined the Army in some capacity. I had been reluctant... the selfish side of my nature had entered into the picture.

My wife divorced me, and afterwards I took up for a while with another divorcee. I had no intention of marrying her. I was drinking heavily all the time, just killing my spare time. From time to time I still saw my wife and took her to a cinema show, but there was no intimacy between us. My moral outlook thought it would not be right. Sex had never meant a tremendous thing in my life. I had fifty, sixty affairs; usually they just sort of automatically faded out. The women did want marriage, but with me it was once bitten, twice shy, and I didn't feel like settling down again. I was more interested in the human side than in sex.

Most of the women I knew were married. One of them I became infatuated with. It was a thing I often cursed myself for, that I was a cad - interfering in the married life of another woman. That's a cad's action! There was a child in this family, and the woman and I after talking it over decided we had better drop the whole thing.



The woman never actually left her husband, and I rather think he never knew about our affair. Since then I have led a very quiet life, as far as women are concerned. I seldom go out. I usually spend my nights in my room, reading various papers... and an old travel book... and I drink a lot.

I seem to have made rather a mess of my life. I have tried to sink my feelings, and in doing so I have done myself no mental or physical good. I become depressed. I seem to like my own company too well. I work myself into a state of nerves - I have always been nervy since a child. Things become magnified into a gloomy outlook; I look back and I think I might have made more of my life. Most of my downfall has been due to my weakness, my love of drink. It seems to induce sleep and help me to forget those little worries which assume great proportion during the day.

I have not done a stroke of work for five years. I have been living on my savings and they are practically exhausted now. That is why I did this stupid thing, trying suicide. It led from a state of depression about my future. That is as much as I can say: I have got a feeling of hopelessness because all doors seem closed to me. It sort of occurred to me that I would be worth more dead than alive. I have written myself off as an utter failure. I owe my sister a great deal; I feel that instead of throwing away my last bean I should let her enjoy some of the money I have left. I have got insurance policies... I don't know... if I really tried hard to reinstate myself...

The Elder Sister

You see, I am five years older than Algy is, and I remember him literally from the day he opened his eyes. I have seen his faults, and I have been noticing the way he has deliberately reverted to the tricks he used in childhood.

My parents were the two most unbalanced people. There was

actually insanity in Daddy's part of the family. Other relations who weren't in an asylum should have been there, including my father, an unbalanced, violent-tempered, lazy man, a man I honestly... words fail me when I try to describe him. There was a man who could have saved himself a harvest of troubles.

Mother had been a spoilt baby. She had been born after Granny had just lost a small child. So Granny lived in perpetual terror that she would lose Mother. Apparently the first thing Mother could say, when she was very small, was about herself: that "poor baba nearly died." She told us this herself. That was her greatest fear, the fear that she would die, and she kept it up until she was sixty-five years old. She was a neurotic, a hypochondriac, if ever there was one. She nearly drove me dotty, working on that hypochondria of hers.

Algy was the younger of the two boys, and he was a devoted son to Mother. He was also devoted to Father. My parents quarrelled violently and incessantly, and we were pulled into these rows whether we liked it or not. Before Algy was born Mother and Father had a disgraceful row one night. They didn't drink (neither of them needed to drink - their tempers were violent enough). Mother tried to get through a window, and I think Daddy was trying to stop her. He was well advanced in pulling her out from the window, when he fell over a rail, and she bit his finger. There were quite loud shouts, as usual, and then sudden apologies and tears and, until all was right again, we kids would have our hair on end and would have the fright of our lives. Then before we knew what was happening, the whole fight was over.

It was on the force of this prenatal fight, so to speak, that Algy came into the world. Since the time of his birth my mother was more frightened of losing him than of anything else. Of course, he was exceptionally beautiful, and my mother preferred him to the other three children. My older brother had three years of being the eldest son, and when Algy was born he had his nose out of joint. For the rest of his life my older brother has always been doing something foolish to draw attention to himself and all he got as a result was to be slapped and beaten. Both male members of our line have been psychological failures, since they were small boys. I need hardly tell you that my other brother also drinks very heavily. Both brothers have been married; both started married life with the best intentions, both finding wives who were not very suitable; both wives couldn't stick their husbands and divorced them. We hardly ever hear from the older brother; he insisted so heavily that we must stop worrying him that we don't even write

to enquire about him any more.

It comes to me now that one can almost sum up Algy's life that he teetered along the edge of things, just on the edge. When he was small he'd go down to the river sometimes, and I remember one day when he was only a small child that he was walking along the green slime of the edge. Mother and Daddy were shouting at him. They were afraid to go near him because the slime on the edge of the river was too slippery; they were afraid he would fall in if they came near. So they shouted, "Come back at once!" And he kept saying, in his childish voice, "No, I won't fall in. No, I won't fall in." His little feet were all creeping along the edge. Then he got safely back to us.

One day Mother gave him a hiding because he picked a nasturtium. He called the flower " a pretty thing". You see what unbalanced people my parents were. They ignored monstrosities and they got excited over trivialities. One was never sure where one stood with them.

My parents were both abnormally fond of Algy and they clung to him. Algy was the baby one. He had one peculiar habit when he was a small child, talking to himself. He used to sit out in the land, perhaps on the plough, beside a haystack and talk to himself. I never knew what it was that he was talking about. He seemed to be quite cheerful and pleasant. Daddy used to go creeping up behind him to hear what he was talking about. I don't think Daddy was any the wiser for all his snooping.

The trouble is that during all those years when Daddy was such a fiend, such a particular fiend, Algy does not remember Daddy. Later, when the trouble started properly, between Daddy and Mother, and they were likely to separate, they both started making advances to Algy. It went on until it was almost pathological. Both of them were flattering him and buttering him up, trying to keep his sole attention for themselves. And they were so proud of Algy's good looks. Algy could not stand up against any of the little trials of life. He had literally no ambition. He had learnt to be a very great person in a very small space, and it was good enough for him that he could bask. I have never heard him express any real ambition in my life.

When he was eleven years old, a catastrophe happened. My mother and Daddy were separated. They actually separated when Algy just got to eleven. Daddy had made a curse of himself too then, and we told him that neither of us, my sister or I, wanted anything more to do with him, but my parents bandied Algy between the two of them. That poor little boy! Each were after him for themselves. Daddy's nickname for him was "Goody". I mean, I leave you to make what you can of that. There isn't much more I need to tell you.

My Daddy remarried, but I am afraid he never did anything at all with his life. He was a horrible person. When he died, Algy was very upset and fixed up the funeral and transported the body many hundreds of miles for a special burial in Port Elizabeth. There is a nice tombstone standing in a clean cemetery for Daddy, the duplicate of one that Algy was later to put up for Mother. We could never stand Daddy, and both my sister and I feel that he has literally poisoned our lives.

It was his temper. He had the most fiendish and undisciplined temper that I have ever encountered. He was brutal. He used to beat me. He used to beat Algy. He was a skunk of a man! He used to put my elder brother on to Algy, when Algy was just about two or three years old. Daddy encouraged him to push the baby about as if he were a football, but Algy doesn't remember that. I remember my sister and I screaming until we were nearly out of our minds with horror and anger.

I have got no time for my mother's memory. She hung on to us until the end of her life. Later she was an invalid and lived only in misery. I must say that in the brief lulls between their quarrelling it was as if my parents used to unite with each other in ill-treating their children. If Mother happened to be beating one of the two boys when Daddy came in, he would take the strap from her and finish off the job. I am sorry to say for the rest of my life my mother acted as a trouble-maker between her children. She used to make a lot of mischief between the different members of her family, even when she was an adult. I think she was not all there.

Algy is one of the kindest people I have ever known in my life, in many ways. He is most thoughtful and considerate. But I can see so much that has developed in his life has been like green plants growing up between the weeds that were sown by my parents. When he was a child, he used to yell blue murder whenever he imagined that anything was threatening him. He used to get a terrible fright when he saw a little blood on his foot; he used to lie and bawl helplessly with his lips all blue. I consider him a great coward. He is very nervous of everything. For a long time he has found a retreat, perhaps a feeling of bolstering up, in drinking.

After my mother's death, every Sunday morning and every public holiday, Algy would accumulate a mass of flowers and we'd go to the cemetery. Once there, we would deck Mother's grave with fresh flowers. Algy had spent pounds and pounds on flowers. My mother had been keen about flowers, and so, after her death, we made these periodic trips to the cemetery, taking armsful of flowers to Mother. My mother would have traded any of her children for flowers at any time! She was positively insane on the subject of

flowers. Horrible! Now I have a horror of excessive affection for flowers. In all kinds of weather, Algy would go trekking down to the well at the other end of the cemetery; rain, heat or snow, he would trek down to the well and come back with buckets of water to fill the vases and water the grass. Then he'd arrange the flowers. Every visit he worked on the little garden that had been made on her grave, and we made Mother's tomb really nice. It got on my nerves, all this hanging about a graveyard with sentiment and bushels of flowers. What I didn't like was the sort of general sorriness that Mother was no longer with us, that she was dead, but that if we spent our whole day hanging about her grave it would still somehow make her happy.

Since his divorce he has had plenty of girls, but I don't think Algy has ever had much real interest in women from a sexual point of view. But he always had to have women around him. He still has them. Women are very sweet on him, and ready to forget everything he does and wait on him hand and foot while he lies in bed. I have been expecting Algy to make an attempt on his life for the past four or five years. Whenever he drinks at all, he gets so dreadfully depressed. "You'll be a rich woman, when I die, Maggie." I am Maggie. "I am leaving you all I've got." He gets so sorry for himself. I told him not to talk nonsense. Incidentally I won't be a rich woman at all. It has been coming out lately, since he has been becoming so helpless, how little money he has left.

When Algy is under the influence of liquor he becomes frightened. He whispers fearfully that the police are coming to fetch him, and that he is going to be punished. He has no grounds at all for these fears that he is going to be punished. Yet when he is drunk he yells blue murder.

This history shows how vacuous, lacking in vitality and unreactive a person can be. Even more significantly it demonstrates what excitement and sense of approaching danger can be nourished under an appearance of withdrawal. "Goody" walked the tightrope suspended between parental love and parental anger during his childhood. Not having any ambitions for himself, his own life became increasingly sterile. In childhood there had at least been the likelihood of a snake in the lucerne patch, but in his adult environment no realistic reasons for fear or withdrawal existed. When the angry parents died, he paid a morbidly prolonged and excessively floral tribute to them. The white tombstones, the stupor in his bedroom, already presaged death, but, in addition there was the formidable excitement about dying: whenever blood flowed from him, he could scream again with childhood terror. He hid from the world, sitting in his room drinking. When he was

drunk, his timidity and fear could again motivate his adult behaviour: it was then that his irrational dread was allowed to emerge, in the form of illusions that the police were coming, that he, so placatory and kind, would be thrown into prison where dire punishment would be inflicted upon him.

Withdrawal is a personality trend of great interest in those who behave suicidally, and the effect it has on the course of an individual's life can hardly be exaggerated. The withdrawn person, rather than join in the activities of others, passes his time in isolation, indulging solitary inclinations. Indeed, scrutiny of the histories studied in this work will show the close relationship of suicidal behaviour to trends towards isolation in the individual. With attitudes of withdrawal are associated sulks, imaginary injuries, groundless grudges, inferiority feelings, irrational fears - all the psychological mechanisms with which people who are withdrawn can consolidate themselves in their isolation.

At times this dominating tendency to withdrew is not immediately evident; only after a careful examination of the individual's life can his failure in active participation be perceived. Yet the withdrawn person can sometimes land himself in astonishingly convenient situations in which he can maintain his apathetic trends. The man now to be described had withdrawn from all active participation: he made no effort to find a job, or to conduct adult relations with others. Nevertheless, passive and lethargic as he was, he found a man prepared to give him shelter and a mistress for himself in the man's wife. (Many interviews were to elapse before he confessed that his u n-paid landlady was also his mistress). He came to hospital after he had tried to kill himself by hanging. He was a timid, evasive, long-winded man who was very anxious to please. His bulbous eyes shifted apologetically behind his spectacles. He told his life story so tediously that significant events were buried in a welter of trivial details.

Case 42 MR. NEIL CAMPBELL

My mother died when I was four, and it broke my father up completely. I was badly neglected when I was a kid. I don't like to mention this: do you assure me that everything will be completely confidential? I had things to be guilty of when I was a child. Once another boy broke a window with his football, a very small accident really. The football was new and belonged to my brother, but it was never found again. This chap said I had kicked the football through the window, and my brother gave me a hell of a hiding, the only one he ever gave

me. I don't know why I didn't tell him it was the other boy who lost the ball. But next day I said to the boy, "I never want to speak to you again!" There was this feeling of guilt that my brother didn't like me, and that he thought I had lost his ball. And yet I couldn't bring myself to tell him it wasn't my fault. My brother was eleven years older than me. He was my father's favourite. He was in a car that hit a tram, and he was killed. That broke my father up completely, and after that he took very little interest in any of his children. My brother never had anything to do with me that we need be ashamed of, and yet... I feel so guilty about him, even now he's been dead so many years.



There was one thing that happened when I was a child of twelve that I am very ashamed of. At that time, as far as sex was concerned, I didn't know a thing. I was passionately fond of music. After a concert once the organist at our church said to me, "We'd better have a pee before we go back." In the lavatory he grabbed hold of my penis and that was the first sensation I ever had of anything happening, and I know for days my father and my old aunt... they are both dead now... they could not make out what was wrong with me. I was very unhappy and I moped about the place. I had a feeling of tremendous guilt. I felt it was wrong, but at the same time, more or less, I was almost enthralled, particularly when I started getting the feeling, but I have never felt so guilty in my life. In the Army, I went to brothels, but it took me years before I could recover from what that man did to me. Only my eldest sister had a suspicion that something had happened between this man and I. She knew there was something wrong. Ever since I have had this feeling of guiltiness, as if I'd done wrong.

Now I am also worried about my drinking. I hate confessing this, but my drinking really started during the war. To speak quite candidly, I was a coward. In a way, the drink helped to nerve me.

I was married, but my wife left me and took our daughter with her, after I found her with another man. I thought it wasn't worth the

trouble to make a fuss. I don't miss her at all. In some ways, I take things lying down. I hate any feeling of argumentativeness or anything like that among my friends. If they argue, it is generally me that will try to make peace. I can't say that I have had many friends. I have had a few, and the friends I have had have been loyal to me, but I have had many acquaintances, the type of people I would stand by, whatever the odds, but who would leave me in the lurch every time.

When my wife left me, I came down to Cape Town to work. One night I went into town. There were a lot of us men in the party, and we all got boozed up. On my way home from the party I got lost, and who should I come across but Mr. Pearson. He was a stranger to me, but he kindly said, "You'll never get to the place you're trying to find now. It is very late, so come home with me." After that, I used to visit his house regularly. When I lost my job, I went to live there. He is very good and kind in his way, but he is a very heavy drunkard. He has been a drunkard since he was a child, and so far as his wife is concerned, although he would do anything for her - help her in any way, sexually he has nothing to do with her whatsoever.

He more or less knows what goes on between his wife and I. Mrs. Pearson and I get the opportunity to sleep together during the day, because I am unemployed. Mr. Pearson is the type of man who does not cause a disturbance when he comes home very, very drunk, but just goes straight to his bed and falls asleep. He knows what has been happening in his house. I suppose it was instinct, but he once spoke to Dinky, picking her out for her relationship with me. So I went and spoke to him, and told him that if anybody was to be picked out, it was not Dinky. I admitted to him all I had done. From then on I can say we have remained very good friends. Peter knows if I can, I will do anything to help him, and I think the same applies to him.

It so happened one day that I fell in the fowl hok where I was working and injured myself in the groin. I couldn't help limping. Peter asked me what happened, and I said, "I fell in the fowl hok and hurt my knacks."

He said, "Let's have a look at it." He said, "God, man, you'd better let Dinky have a look at that! She knows something about such accidents, because she was a nurse. Maybe she can do something about it." And that unfortunately started our relationship. Immediately after speaking to me, Peter went off to sleep. I had a little room at the back of the house and Dinky came in. She said, "What is it? Peter tells me you have hurt yourself." I said, "Yes". She said, "Let me have a look",

and I showed her. I don't know how it happened... but I remember pulling her down onto the bed with me. Afterwards I kept away from her.

Until one morning she told me, "You know, Neil, no other man has ever touched me in that way." I apologized to her and told her it would never happen again. She said that was just the reason she had come to speak to me for; the simple fact was that she wanted it. She told me straight, "As far as Peter is concerned, I will always stick to him, no matter what happens, but as far as actual love is concerned, I love you." I told her that I loved her, and in our way we lived very happily in that house. There has been no real discontent.

Peter never refers to my relationship with Dinky, and he does not mind that we are intimate. At first, I did feel very, very awkward with him, but since then we have had a heart to heart talk about things. He told me I must understand that he will never leave Dinky. I said I didn't expect him to, and he said, "I know Dinky will never leave me. Whenever you are able to earn anything, give it to Dinky, and the whole family will benefit."

I think his drinking puts Dinky against him. He is not a man who is able to go on a wild bust and then stop - he himself admits that he started drinking heavily at the age of ten. He says that he used to be able to drink a bottle of wine before going to school in the morning. I mean, there is never a single day when he is sober. When he comes into the house he is drunk, and you have to tip him off about what is going on.

I have wondered whether it was right, me living on in the house like that. Really, at the time, I would have asked Peter and Dinky to be divorced, but I know that Peter would never hear of it. Often when he is a bit drunk, he threatens to pack up and leave. Even his kids, they don't actually mock at him, but they play the fool with him. I don't know how he can continue with his job; it's amazing. He can't go to bed without a bottle of wine beside him, no matter how drunk he is already when he comes home.

I have really opened my heart to you now, doctor. I have a guilty feeling. I have had it for a long time, a long time. Since I was a kid... Now I am in this predicament: Dinky won't leave Peter... She says he is too dependent on her, and I don't know myself what would happen to him if she leaves him alone.

I was very worried about all these things when a lot of fellows persuaded me to drink, so I had some wine. Then I remember walking back to the Pearson's house, and after that everything is a bit vague. There is a swing for the children to play on behind the lavatory in the yard; I don't remember seeing any children. I walked into my bedroom up to a suitcase. In it there were two coils of rope: I have had them for years, using them when I go out camping, or for

rolling blankets up. I have always kept these two pieces of rope, and I don't know... all of a sudden I remember getting this feeling, oh! to hell with everything! I remember taking one piece of rope in my hand and walking to the lavatory, but I can't honestly say... I remember in the lavatory there is a beam, and I remember pushing the rope through the beam, and that is the last thing I do actually remember. At that stage I felt something inside me going to crack. That's how I felt! Every time I went out to look for a job, since my ulcer operations, and couldn't find a job, people round me were saying: "Oh, that bloke hasn't got a job!" A lot of them were very nice to me about it, and all the rest of it, but again there was the feeling in me that they thought I should be doing better, sort of style.

The withdrawal adopted by a person may be so complete that his few contacts with people are artificial and unrealistic. Almost the totality of his life may be passed on a fantasy plane. There is removal from ordinary life and aversion from outside reality. Adult interpersonal relationships on a reality level are almost non-existent. Immersed in dreamlike soliteriness, the individual may insulate himself as much as possible from all social encounters. Those he cannot avoid, as at his work, are confused and endowed with heightened significance, to be dwelt on obsessively when he is alone. Sinister implications may be seen in ordinary encounters. No satisfaction can be derived from associations in which the individual sees himself as exposed and isolated. The frenzied irritation of Miss Pioneer (Case 22) by an innocuous male colleague is a case in point. But to illustrate the extent of withdrawal, the suspicion with which the world can be viewed, the denial of vitality and the repudiation of joy, perhaps Mrs. Struick is an ideal example.

The only person with whom she was in contact was her husband. Even her children she caused to be sent to an orphanage. She had no friends, permitted nobody intimacy with her. She was addicted to the radio; she sewed industriously; she couldn't sleep; frigidity caused some awkwardness in her marriage. Her husband she called "Daddy". She loved him harshly, like a stern parent. Woe betide him if he spilt a grain of sugar! She came to hospital after her third attempt to drown herself in the sea. As she recovered in hospital, she apologized abjectly to the nurses for the trouble she was giving them. She explained she felt ill, and had decided to end her life rather than complain and

so cause inconvenience to her husband. Her guilty beheviour was an obvious demonstration of an underlying sense of sinfulness.

Case f. .. MRS. STRUICK

The Husband

No, she has no interest in her own family. She is not in touch with anybody of her family. They were separated from youth, you know, on account of their father dying. I don't mind telling you my wife's mother didn't play the game with her children.

My wife has never forgotten her father. She never loses an opportunity to praise him, and she can never praise him loud enough. She has no deep attachment or friendship for any of her brothers or sisters.

But her relations with me have been absolutely beautiful. She has been almost foolish. She calls me "Daddy". She has called me "Daddy" ever since the day I first met her. I have always been "Daddy" to her. Why I couldn't tell you. (Laugh). I couldn't tell you why she calls me that. From the moment we met I have been "Daddy" to her. She never calls me by my Christian name. It is always "Daddy this" and "Daddy that". She is undoubtedly fond of me. I tell you, I can't lose her; she's too wonderful... Mind you, she's straight! Everything has got to have its place. She places an article in one spot and there it must remain. She is very precise. In fact, she is too precise. If I spill any sugar on the table then there is a lot of trouble about it; if I perhaps spill some water on the floor, I have got to wipe it up that very instant, but otherwise I can assure you she is a hundred per cent. She never goes out. She has no friends and nobody ever comes to see her. She's perfectly content, if only she's got her radio.

She put our sons in an orphanage while I was in the Army. She doesn't write to the boys at all. They have been shifted from one home to the other, and in the end we have lost touch with them. It was her idea, her intention that we shouldn't get in touch with them. They have just about finished their apprenticeships now, and it is our intention to get them to come and live with us again.

I have a prospect of getting a little cash soon, and so we are hoping to have the boys home.

I can give you the assurance that my wife is perfect. She is such a little working cat, I can tell you! She wants to do everything herself and it must be done her way. But I have to confess to you that she is as cold as ice, as cold as ice! Mind you, if I want to have intercourse, I have never been refused. But as far as she is concerned, it doesn't worry her in the least. It wouldn't worry her in months. She is very cool; very, very cool. It

wasn't like that when we were married, but after the birth of our last child, she turned very, very cold. That is one thing that absolutely worries me. There are times when there is a bit of an upheaval on account of this.

The Suicidal Wife

I don't want to complain. I am so afraid I am taking up another person's bed. I don't want to cause any trouble. I am so afraid I am taking up the nurse's time. I wanted to die because of something that has worried me for a long time. I have never spoken of it. I don't want to worry other people with my troubles. The fact is, I get a pain in my side, and it's worse when I have my periods. I can't stand it any more.

I just got a sudden craze to do it, to cut a long story short. I have been depressed often before, and then the thought of suicide always came into my mind. I don't think it's at all fair that they fished me out of the sea and brought me here. Now I am only being a lot of trouble to everybody else.

You needn't try to find if there is anything wrong with me, because there isn't. I am just a person that wants peace and no trouble or worry in the world - that's all.

I am the eldest of ten children. I don't think any more questions are necessary. I don't see why I should be getting this treatment. I wasn't sent here by a doctor to be operated on or examined or anything else; I was just brought here, and now I want to go home. I will be able to get over this by myself.

My father died when I was thirteen, and I was sent into an orphanage then. Actually, my father died a year after I went into that Home, but I don't like to talk about that. I just want to forget all about that! All this is taking questions just a little too far.

I wasn't there when my father died. I was in the Home when he had the accident that killed him. I went into the Home a year before my father died because we were so poor.

I never want to give other people trouble. I have always been independent. I am not the sort of person who ever has illnesses or bothers other people. Only three years ago I had a very severe nervous breakdown, and I was taken into a hospital. Please don't think I am ungrateful. I am very grateful for the help I am getting. I don't want people to concern themselves with me. I can be very independent, you know. I could be dying, and if I knew that a person would make fun of me, I would refuse his help and rather die. If anybody was rude to me, I would never talk to him again.

It hurts me to have to think back to when I was a child. I was very upset when I was sent out of my parents' home. I just felt like

someone that wasn't wanted any more, when I was sent out of the house, Why should I be the one to be sent away, when I wanted to be so much in the housewith them? They could see I was unhappy to have to go away.

They knew that it made me sad. My father was the only one who was really fond of me and when he was killed.. that was the end of it. It came to me as a shock. He was driving a lorry that overturned, and he was killed. I didn't cry and I didn't talk to anybody about it. I kept it all to myself. I had lost the only one that ever thought anything of me.



My mother was very quarrelsome. There were always quarrels in the house, and it was through her that I was sent away. I suppose she is still alive, but I never want to hear from her again. I never try to get in touch with any of my relations. (I don't mean to say that in a nasty way).

After my father was killed, I used to see him for a long time: he used always to appear before windows and doors. It never frightened me when I saw him; I tried to make him come before me. But after a few years he never came any more. The people in the Home were good to me, but I didn't appreciate their kindness. I didn't want to be there. I am not interested in talking any more. I don't want to say anything else, if you don't mind. I don't want to be a nuisance to anybody at all. I would far rather go home now. It was very silly of them to bring me to the hospital - they should have taken me home when they took me out of the water.

I like to be alone. I don't like people. My husband is the only one I love, and my children. If I have a duty to anybody it will be done fairly, but I am not one for making friends. I don't like a lot of people standing round laughing, and wasting time. For me, the quieter the better.

I sent my children into a Home. When their father went into the Army, and I was just living in a boarding house where I couldn't keep

them comfortably, I arranged for them to go into a Home, and I never disturbed them. I have longed to see them, but what is the use of going to see them if you haven't a home to bring them to? I loved them so much, but I don't care anything at all for other people's children. I am not fond of other people's children at all, whereas I would do anything for my own. I don't know where they are at present. . .

After the birth of my third child my husband told me I had gone cold. My husband is the best man in the world. He is much older than I am. He is fifty-three and I am thirty-one. I reckoned something happened to me with the birth of the child; I don't get any pleasure out of sex any more, and I hate it! I don't mind admitting that my husband does get very disappointed with me. It does sometimes cause a little unpleasantness, but nothing much to worry about. Since then I have had no pleasure out of intercourse. I try to explain to my husband, but he just says, "Nonsense!" My husband has never forced me to do anything, and we do have intercourse occasionally, but it means nothing to me. I can't be bothered with it. My husband thinks that is why I am so unhappy sometimes. But that is not all I've got to live for in life. There is no feeling. I have never spoken to anyone about it as I am speaking now. My husband says there is no correspondence between us, and that is what he doesn't like.

Many months had to pass, of superficial reassurance, before Mrs. Struick could bring herself to recognise consciously and report on the feeling hidden in her despairing love of her elderly husband. Slowly she allowed to emerge, over weeks, resentment against her husband. Yet she did not articulate her greatest reproach until, one afternoon just as she was leaving, she whispered tensely, "Of course, mine was a bigamous marriage." Then she allowed to pour forth what she had been so reluctant to face herself, and what she concealed with such ferocious shyness from her neighbours: the pattern of childhood was indeed repeated, for after all her love of him, her husband too had deceived her. Only when he had been in the Army for some time, and she agitated for her allowance, did she learn that he had another family to whom his marriage allowance was going. Mrs. Struick comments, "That's all fixed up now.". But she had served to demonstrate how the appearance of devotion can contain intense hatred and feelings of recrimination which, in many cases, the individual refrains for some time from admitting.

This important inclination to withdraw, so prominent a manifestation in many suicidal persons, is a personality trend apparent on the everyday social plane. An onlooker can observe

how the withdrawn person is peculiarly impoverished in his daily existence, in that he holds himself off from others and has an inability to participate with them. It is as if only limited vitality is available for the business of social intercourse. The withdrawn person prefers to see few acquaintances, making superficial excuses that he is unsuitably dressed, or does not like so-and-so; equally often headache or tiredness is pleaded, and it can often be observed how withdrawn persons precipitate themselves into a temper before a social encounter. For an emotional upset gives the individual further excuses to refrain from social effort during the following days. Only the introspective person, anxious for insight, will come to perceive that habits of withdrawal are based on a solid reluctance to encounter people, to whom the necessity arises of reacting emotionally. Withdrawal rests upon the individual's sense of insufficiency, upon his basic fear of rejection by others. This, in turn, can be traced to the child's insecurity in his relation to his parents and the failure, during growth, to form a sense of confidence in himself.

The important point is this: the withdrawn person, as his parents did, judges himself so harshly and has such timidity of the world that he dare not venture into relationships with others, for fear of the dislike he will evoke from them. The withdrawn person, however passive he appears, has a passionate fantasy life, very different from his subdued outward appearance. When alone, the withdrawn person is not vacuous, but knows agitation which can sometimes amount to frenzy. Often he himself refrains from recognizing this. Triblehorn (Case 41) felt the police were coming for him only when he was drunk, and Campbell (Case 42) fantasied gunfire and destruction in episodes which his associates shrugged away as "bomb-happy". In the next chapter will be discussed the unrest which apparent placidity serves to mask.

Chapter 11

SUPPRESSION OF ASSERTIVENESS

The personality arbitrarily but conveniently may be considered to have three components:

1. The everyday social manifestations, the behaviour in the group by which an individual's friends may recognize him: the ego.
2. The portion of his personality of which his friends are not aware (and part of which he himself fails to recognize), the fantasy life.
3. The conscience (part of which operates outside the individual's awareness), formed as the child gradually discovers - from his dealings with his parents principally - what behaviour the world will tolerate and what inclinations he must suppress.

It will always be found that persons who behave suicidally had earlier during their lives imposed grave restrictions upon themselves. In part, that they behave self-destructively occurs because they cannot permit themselves to behave unpleasantly to anybody else. No matter how profound their sense of outrage, it has to be kept hidden and, if anybody must be punished, it is themselves.

This cruel conscience of suicidal persons, the smouldering and sad conviction that they are defective and that the world does not contain them kindly is, of course, an outcome of experiences during formative years. All individuals at adolescence, when they have grown to physical and intellectual strength, can strive to put their lives in order by repudiating unrealistic restrictions imposed by the community and their parents. Through endeavour they can come out of poverty, they can part from bitter or reproving parents, they can move into situations where they are free to give expression to their talents. Thus, an unhappy childhood, though an explanation, is not an excuse for adult maladjustment. It is when the individual has grown to deceive himself that his parents remain powerful enough to veto his endeavours, when his need of love from them is excessive and despairing enough to hold him to them, that his conscience keeps him from liberation into adulthood. He chooses rather the security of parental censure than the challenging freedom of adulthood.

He fears too much for his enfeebled self to enter into open, energetic participation with others. As his ego develops, nevertheless, his sense that he is repressed may grow so great that he has to perform some violent act to outrage the powerful parents. However, so timid is he that he attacks not them but himself. His suicidal behaviour, paradoxically, sometimes marks the ending of his prolonged childhood. He feels that by his injury to himself he has atoned for future disobedience, and his self-punishment has won him the right to break away from the demanding parents. He declares, by his suicidal behaviour, dissatisfaction with existing conditions. But, as a weapon, suicide is two-edged. After he attempts suicide, his conscience may cause him to be more aghast than ever, so that contritely he permits himself to be borne back into smouldering child-likeness. His suicidal action may remain the one rebellious outbreak in an existence remarkable for passivity.

His passivity may be confined entirely to the emotional sphere. The individual may be active and respected in his work, and competent intellectually; it is in his home, in his relationships with those closest to him that his emotions manifest themselves. It is onto those he loves that yearnings from his fantasy life are attached.

A balanced, intelligent woman, aged twenty-four years showed no suggestion of inadequacy when first interviewed. She was a competent stenographer, earning a high salary. She nursed no resentment or illogical regrets, although her father had been divorced by her mother when she was a child, so that her childhood was spent in an orphanage. Her existence was seriously marred by a psychopathic husband. It was when talking of her relationship to this violent and destructive man that the abnormal trend in her personality manifested itself. She showed prominent patterns of servility and a passive desire for pain. She took no steps to rid her life of her husband, although he had never ceased to be cruel to her. She showed little determination to solve the conflict which dissipated her energy. She dreaded continually that he would appear unexpectedly with an avenging weapon. Although bound to her torturer, she had no suspicion what psychic adjustments were served by her bondage to him.

Case 43 MRS. [illegible]

Life is so short, and look how miserable it can be. What has one done to deserve it? I spent much of my youth in an orphanage. My mother had to put me into a Home when I was four years old, when she was divorced from my father.

My husband is the sort of man you have got to feel sorry for, and I think I may be the sort of woman who feels sorry for people. I was fond of him and I just didn't have the heart to say I would not marry him, because I was engaged to him, and I couldn't make up my mind. I was only seventeen when we became engaged. He was so fond of me, and I just didn't have the heart to let him down. I was never really in love with him.

He is one of those restless, irritable people who can't spend a single evening at home. I have left him permanently now. His own mother said to me, "I don't know how you can live with him; he nearly drove me mad." I have never had any security. My husband is fond of our little boy, but he knocks me around in front of the child, and it had a terrible effect upon him, because he is only four years old. The child himself said to me, "Mummy, I think we had better go. Daddy will kill you." It would be quite impossible for me to describe what my husband can be like when he gets into one of these states.

He is the only cause of trouble in my life. I have left him on several occasions, and now I am always expecting him to arrive suddenly in Cape Town. I am afraid that he is suddenly going to come upon me. Every time the phone rings, whenever I walk in the street, I listen and I look around and expect to find him standing there. He has threatened to kill me so often, I think to myself: "Why should I not do it myself?" He nearly has killed me at times. He has choked me so that I had blood-blisters on my throat. He has stood over me with razor blades in a drunken state. He has knocked me unconscious on a concrete floor. He is a very vicious man when he has had a few drinks. Right away after our marriage, he started gambling and drinking. Before I was pregnant already I had left him, and I always feel sorry for him and keep returning. When I was pregnant I got more hidings than ever before, and he never brought me food or money. I think he has got a kink. That's all. In company, if any man seems to be nice to me, my husband will say to the man, "Do you want to sleep with her?" When I was ill a doctor came to see me and advised that with my nerves I should take a holiday. While I was being examined, my husband walked around the room muttering, "It's nothing but bloody laziness!" I always come back to him, of course. Even then, he goes on ill-treating me. He will say, "You're always complaining you've got nothing to wear." Whether or not I had been complaining, he would go to my wardrobe, take everything out, pour methylated spirits on all my clothes and just burn them. He does things like that, destructive and senseless. If I try to cook onthe Primus stove and it doesn't work well, he'll

just lift it up and smash it against the wall. I have bought him a tie for a birthday present, and if it isn't the very best quality and it doesn't knot absolutely correctly, he tears it into shreads. If he happens to cut himself while shaving and a drop of blood falls on to his shirt, he will rip off his shirt so that the buttons go flying, and he just puts on another shirt. The more I try to tell him that another drop of blood will only fall on a clean shirt, the less he listens.

When I was pregnant with my little boy, at one stage I went practically without food for three weeks. It so happened that my husband had gone out to speak to his mother and had left his pay book lying on the table. You know what a wife is; I opened his pay book, and I saw that just the previous day he had drawn £12 after telling me that he did not have a penny. I was pregnant at the time, but when he came in late he used to get me out of bed and sometimes lock me outside thd room. I had to go and knock his mother up and ask her if she would allow me to sleep in her room on the floor. He lived in a little room in the back yard of his mother's house. When I was hungry I would never have dared to tell his mother that I didn't have food. I was too proud. But sometimes it was necessary for her to come to my room and try to quieten my husband down, or take me away to her own room.

I have been thinking of suicide for a long time. Although the idea was not clearly in my mind now, it has often been in my thoughts before:that I would be better dead. Sometimes the thought came up in me, "Oh, it would be better if I were out of it!" I suppose this time I was feeling depressed and I had nobody to speak to. I have coped well with the difficulties of my life. My only problem is my husband. I cannot live with him. My problem really is to get rid of him. I was never nervous in my life. I think of myself as a very happy person. I am easily pleased, and I like being alive. I would never have thought of suicide, were it not for my husband.

And yet my husband is not the cause of my suicide. I tried it because of my difficulty in getting rid of my husband. It is getting rid of him that is my whole problem. I would be quite happy if I thought I would never see him again, but I know I am soft: if I see him again, I will return to him and try to save our marriage.

I am terrified my husband may appear at any moment. I live in dread. I will never go back to him - I have never felt as frightened as this in my life! These days I get excited about everything. The least thing upsets me. If anybody omits to say, "Good-morning", to me I feel that I can cry. The least little set-back disheartens me completely.

My husband could come on me and shoot me, couldn't he? It has happened to other people... I suppose I am afraid of dying in

that way. I am not afraid of my husband. Before now he has frequently put something round my neck and choked me: I have always controlled myself and looked at him, showing nothing. You know how it is with a person like my husband; if you object, their behaviour only gets worse.

I get on wonderfully with everybody. I am not just saying it; I do. I am in the middle of my family, a sort of peacemaker. I have always been the one who keeps quiet. I don't say to people, "I feel sick," I keep it to myself. I listen to other people's troubles, but I never tell a soul about mine. I can laugh with anybody, and a few minutes afterwards walk quietly to my room to have a little weep.

In other instances, one finds that a person is constrained to accept indignities at the hands of a spouse who is not sinister, but actually warm and vivacious. In such cases it is not conscious fear which induces long-suffering spouses to tolerate repeated insult, but their own inner guilt, their own conviction that it is meet for them to suffer.

Case 44 MR. LARSEN

My home life when I was a child was very religious. I rather kicked against it because I missed quite a lot of pleasure. I had to go to church three times on Sundays, and a few more times during the week. It was hopelessly overdone. I didn't want to be tied down to church so much. The result is that I have never gone to church once since I left my parents' home.

I loved my mother. As far as my father is concerned, he never really gave me what I wanted, and he never bothered too much about me. My father only thought of himself, and didn't care sufficiently for his children. I can't say I ever had a lot of love from him. He never sort of worried... what I mean is, we never got intimate with each other. He was too wrapped up always in himself. I've never been a pal with my dad.

My mother wronged me also, in a way. In this respect: she deprived me of quite a lot of pleasures, innocent pleasures. I couldn't have them, because I always had to be in church.

I never wanted to hurt either of my parents. Although, I must say, as soon as m mother died, my father never bothered to go to church again; I mean, that sort of proved to me his religion wasn't very deep.

I went to school with the girl I later married, but then I didn't see her for a year or two. When I met her again I was intimate with her the first time we saw each other, and I thought it was really too easy. My son was born very prematurely: he was just under seven months. I mean that cast a doubt with my

parents and quite a few more people. I knew that my wife had been out with a boy previous to this, and well... I mean, to-day I say... well.. he's my son; I mean, I brought him up and I think the world of him. I have discussed whether or not he is my child with my wife. He could have been a premature baby. It has happened before... He was born a month after our marriage. He doesn't know this, and I have always given my age a year above what it really is.



Fifteen years ago, soon after our second child was born, my wife ran away. I sort of sensed she had gone to Liverpool. I sent for her to come back after she had been away for a week. She wrote: Would I forgive her if she came back? Well, I did do so. I felt very, very bad about it at the time, but I already had two children, so what could I do? She sort of... it never seemed to trouble her very much what she had done to me. I discussed it with her, and then I let it drop, and I never discussed it again. I mean, I never mentioned a word about it since. So far as I was concerned, it died a natural death. But she became pregnant while she was away; it was a miscarriage, and I moved away from the district. I felt that it was much better to go somewhere where we weren't known. I never reproached my wife.

But the trouble, you see, is that I never really trusted my wife after that. I mean, I would never allow any banking accounts in her name or anything like that.

Now, twelve years later, she is mixed up once again with another man. I had been on an overseas business trip, and on the boat coming back, I got a telegram: "Everything O. K. Awaiting your return." That's what I got on the boat, as I was coming home, and I had to discover that all the time she had been living with another man. I discovered he had been living free of charge in my own hotel, at my expense, sleeping in my bedroom with my wife. The night I came back, she threw a party. Suddenly without any argument or row, or anything like that, I found she was missing. There were ten people in the room when she went. We were having a musical evening. She said, "Wouldn't you like some tea?" She went into the kitchen herself, made the tea and poured it in. And that's the last I saw of her. I thought somebody had called her into another room, you see, and I didn't worry for a couple of hours.

Of course, it got to midnight, and I really became worried then. It was about three o'clock in the morning before I got the car out and went to the station.

My son is suffering from quite a state of nerves, because his mother's gone, although he tried to put a good face on things. I don't think it is going to do him any harm. My daughter is getting on quite nicely, even though her mother is gone; she's doing the sweets at the hotel.

I have written to my wife to ask her to come back to me again. I have given her an alternative. I can't expect her to come back here where people know her. I wrote: "If you admit that you've done something you're sorry for, and you come back, I have a friend in Muizenberg. You could go there and I wouldn't see you until you've made up your mind whether you want to be with me. If you come back to me, I'll sell the business, book a passage for us to Australia, and we can get right out of the country."

But my wife wrote back I'll never see her again because she wants happiness in her life. She says she wants to be able to sit back and put her feet up. She doesn't say whether she plans to get married or not, but it appears to me that I have been led up the garden path, very much indeed. I am rather surprised that my wife could pick up with a man with a background as bad as this one's.

Only too often the mildness of men who forgive their errant wives is but superficial; in secret they balefully dwell on the way they were cuckolded, thus intensifying their lifelong grudges of having been harshly treated - as is shown by their venom when ultimately they do turn upon their wives, or when they find themselves abandoned.

In this example, the unassertive individual was associated with a warm, vital spouse. Often enough, one finds a person unable to make an appropriate gesture of indignation, even when he is ridiculously belittled. Then the spectacle presents of an intelligent, resourceful person submitting himself to restrictions imposed by a spouse who perhaps is silly and limited. One wonders when self-control will snap, when the resigned victim will at last revolt. If he does muster some assertion and become angry, his rage unsuitably may be directed upon himself. I have been told of a doctor in a small town who had to remove his shoes on coming into the house; whenever he lit a cigarette his wife darted distractedly for an ashtray, and when he sat down she laid newspapers on the floor about his chair. One day, hearing an explosion, she ran into her immaculate sitting-room to find that her husband had blown out his brains. To consoling friends,

always afterwards, she expressed her hurt astonishment that her husband could have been so inconsiderate as to make such a mess.

Often, immature individuals are so preoccupied with their private resentments, and their irrational designs, that they fail to come out of themselves sufficiently to assess the world about them, and the people they live with. Assertion may be so low in them that even when forced to realize how they are imposed upon, how outrageous are the blows dealt their human dignity, some persons find themselves unable to take up any real arms against their oppressors. They may have perfectly realistic means of redress available to them, means sanctioned by their community, and yet rather than stand up to another person they will injure themselves.

A man aged thirty-eight years was removed unconscious from his motor-car, into which had been led the nozzle of a hose-pipe, the further end attached to the car's exhaust. When he recovered from carbon monoxide poisoning, he had a very gross dementia, so that he was not ever again to give an account of himself, or manage even simple tasks. All information had thus, of necessity, had to be obtained from persons who knew him. (Although he presented while this series was accumulating, he cannot feature in it because he was not in a position to offer subjective evidence of his attitude to his parents.)

His wife provided an eager and malevolent testimony. She was an extraordinarily plain woman, her face in profile rather like that of a horse. She scorned cosmetics, her hair was straight as string, and her voice was of the braying quality.

Case g Mr. ERSTKEN

The Wife:

It was a few months ago that I noticed a change in my husband. He had always been quiet and he became quieter. When I asked him what was the matter, he said that he did not feel well. He had eczema on his legs, and I think that depressed him. I thought, maybe, that was why he was so quiet at Christmastime. But during January I became suspicious. My husband came home at midnight. When he came in so late, I asked him why he had not been home, and he said he had met people. But I made enquiries and found out that he had not been with the people he mentioned. I did not know where he went, and I still did not ask. I noticed that he was not eating at all. He just drank his coffee and he was smoking terribly - more than a hundred cigarettes a day. Everyone

had a high opinion of Eksteen. His boss said he was one of his best lorry drivers. But to me he was more of a bother than a husband. He never spoke; he just slept. He made his own breakfast, and then got into his car and drove off without a word to me, until one day he said to me, straight out, "I don't want you any more as a wife."

After a while it was after two o'clock in the morning when he got home. His nerves were very bad, and he was smoking incessantly. One Sunday he told me a wonderful story. He said that he had another girl! He told me he had wanted to leave me for a long time, but he could not think how he would do it. I had been refusing for years to give him a divorce. I said to him, "You can walk out of the house and stay away as long as you like, because that is the fashion. You can go out; I don't mind!"

And so, every night, I sat by myself in the house, wondering when Eksteen would come home. I prayed to God that I would find out where he was going to. For a long time my husband did not speak a single word to me. Some nights he sat straight up in bed and held his head in his hands. I love my life, and many a night I kept my eye on him all night, until morning came. He was behaving as if there was a burning fire under him. On the day of the King's funeral he gave me a dirty look which frightened me. That evening I noticed his trousers hanging behind the door, and in his wallet I saw a Christmas card with writing on it. "To Eksteen from Brown Eyes." There were also bioscope tickets, and I confronted him with them. He said he did not know how they got there.

I told some friends of mine about my husband's behaviour. I told them that I found Port Jackson willow pollen and leaves in his trouser turn-ups, so they said to me that he must be visiting in Retreat. We went for a drive there, and we found a man in the road and stopped to ask him if he perhaps knew where my husband Eksteen was visiting. The man said no, but by coincidence Eksteen rode past us with a girl in his car. She looked a Coloured girl to me. I thought that a white man who dirtied himself with Coloured women is just rubbish.

I had seen what I had been waiting months to see. I felt sick. After all those months of anxiety, I had to lay my eyes on such a low woman. As I passed I saw that Eksteen saw I was sitting in the car watching him. When he came home he knew that I had found him out. He rushed to the wardrobe and packed all his clothes into his motor-car.

He had not had a drink for fifteen years - I cured him of that

trouble. I felt then that I was entirely finished with the man, and I did not care what happened to him. But I was worried when he rushed into the house and drank a few tots of the medicinal brandy I keep in one of the cupboards. I am poor, and I am ugly, but at least I have a character I can build on. When Eksteen rode away, I just remained seated in the room. I don't follow after any man; I am too proud for that.

But next morning Eksteen came walking back into the room. He looked like his ghost. He had slept in his clothes. He told me that he had been going out for three months with a nice girl, and he begged me to divorce him. I said to him, "Have you chosen between your two women, then?" He answered me that he did not know what to do. He said that he could leave neither. He wanted me to take him back and wash and iron for him, I suppose, so that he could carry on with the other woman. He admitted to me that he had lied and cheated. He said that such a person like himself should not live and that he would kill himself. I said to him, "Well, if you have decided to take your life, that's your business, but, for heaven's sake, don't tell me about it." That's all I said. I also said to him that I did not want him any more as a husband. "Go to her, and let her give you shelter. I cannot forgive you." For the rest of the day we did not talk a word to each other.

On the following evening he walked to the garage, and I thought he was working there. After an hour I looked out of the window and saw it was quiet in the garage, but I could see my husband sitting up in the car. I walked over and saw that there was foam on his mouth, and a tube in the exhaust which stuck into the car window. I did my duty as a wife, up to the last moment: I went and called people and we took him out of the car.

I have not set eyes on the girl who was my husband's, but I went to visit her father. I told her father what I thought of a woman whose character is so low that she can take another woman's husband from her.

The Brother-in-law

I feel that much of the trouble lies with his wife. She seems to me to be a completely sexless person. She has a curious way of talking: she never argued with Eksteen, but she belittled whatever he appeared to take an interest in. It would not be exaggerating to say that she had a complete mania that people are going to cheat her or fool her. She is extremely suspicious of her husband and of everybody else, and it is strange how she grabs anything that she can get hold of. She has a very strange outlook on life. As I sum her up, she has no interest in things outside of herself, and she is not able to feel any sympathy for other people.

I could have got a house for them, but she was not interested. They live in two rooms, and every single object that she can get hold of she crams into those rooms. She has an incessant fear that somebody else will have more possessions than she has or that somebody will remove what she had. She has accumulated everything into those two rooms. It is almost as if she has a kleptomanic idea. She never went to bioscope, and they have no garden in which Eksteen could work.

When I got there I saw that Eksteen tried to converse with her, but it was quite pointless, so little interest did she have in anything. She is entirely stupid. I myself have no nerves, but when she has spent an afternoon at my house, I feel as if somebody has been working over me with a grater. Through the years he has been weakened by her incessant chatter and by her deadness. She got the whole of his salary every week.

I asked him why they had no children, and he said to me that sexually his wife was as dead as a stone. He said she was very definitely orientated against any sexual approach.

This is a distasteful business, but I had better tell you. About two months ago his wife telephoned my wife to say that Eksteen had taken his clothes and was leaving her because he wanted to marry a young girl. He went away for a few days, then returned, and so on. One day I asked her, "Have you ever done what a wife would do to try and attract her husband back to his own home?"

She said, "I cook his food, and I give him a house, and that is all I am prepared to do." She hasn't got the slightest conception of the qualities a wife needs to have towards her husband. I spoke to him about divorcing his wife, and he laughed bitterly and said that she would never consent in a month of Sundays. She regards herself as a wonder of nature and would never admit any inadequacy.

The last time I saw him was the time he told me he he may as well be living with a stone, for his wife was just someone to whom he handed over his pay envelope. You have perhaps noticed her monotonous, mournful way of speaking, and he said to me that her voice was beginning to work on his nerves. His wife had only two topics of conversation: either she describes her physical complaints, or else she criticizes other people. She tells how she saw a woman wearing a dress which was badly cut, or another woman who painted herself excessively.

Everybody was astounded that Eksteen stayed with her so long. I think the soul-deadening effect of living so many years with that woman has weakened his will. I think he ended his life in part because he knew that he would never be able to get rid of her; also, living with such a person for many years must

disturb one's judgement. You have heard her yourself; she never changes the intonation of her voice, and she can go on for hours; she is not interested in anybody else's attitude and, worst of all, she talks such nonsense. Many years of that grating voice must have worn him into a state of weakness.

I am afraid if he ever comes out of the asylum his wife, with her collection mania, will try to get him back for herself. I hope the poor, demented man will be spared that. He must have had an absolutely colourless existence, and yet, in a way, I think he must have loved her if he stayed with her all those years. He must have had a tender feeling about her because he would never take any drastic steps against her.

In the case of Eksteen, his dementia prohibits him from giving any account of himself. It cannot be traced upon what basis his meekness rests. Yet it is clear that he failed to look upon his wife with any mature appraisal; in spite of all her failings she still had a profound power over him, so that when all was prepared for him to break away, he still had to come back to her, plead with her, and - rather than do her any harm - to threaten her with his own death. It was as if he had to have her approval: that is why he remained so firmly in her power, in spite of her intellectual and emotional limitations. She was not merely a cold and unintelligent wife to him, but a powerful figure, a totem.

Outraged husbands are common enough, and hurt wives as common. Not all commanding spouses remain in proximity with their victims; after their departure the unassertive member of the marriage is left to nurse passively his outrage, increased now after being deserted. With emotional exuberance the unassertive partner ruminates on the injury inflicted upon him; so obsessed is he with his absent but still-powerful spouse that his existence becomes devastated, not only by thoughts of revenge, but also with convictions of humiliation. It is as if with a certain perverse relish he adds his desertion to all the reasons that life has provided him for abasement. The interesting aspect of this abject gloom, interviewing will show, is that trends towards humiliation were present already early in childhood. In spite of his too vehement protestations, the individual himself will come to recognize that desertion is but added justification for the social expression of personality trends which had long been present in him. His inner anger existed before he found the wife to evoke it more strongly. The catastrophic marriage was contracted so that reality reasons could be provided for the indulgence of fantasies of being ill-used.

A child who is suppressed, and cannot find creative outlets for his energy, will in later life attempt to create an identical situation in which to suffer restraint.

There is no doubt that passive unassertive adults, who nourish within themselves a sense of outrage, often visit their anger upon themselves in the form of a suppressing conscience. In some instances, their self-anger asserts itself socially as a suicidal attempt. The identical, smothering self-pity will be found to have been present in childhood.

An extremely serious man, forty-five years old, with bulbous eyes and a deeply-lined face, was brought into hospital after he had slashed his left forearm, severing numerous tendons. His eldest daughter said: "I'd like to live my whole life with my father. I love him very much. I have planned never to live apart from him, and I never intend to get married. I have no friends. The only people I speak to outside my family are the other girls at my work. I want to become a nun. Even when I was a little girl, I felt I wanted to be locked out of this world. I don't want to be in this world. (She began to weep). "A life in a convent seems to be the only life that will suit me. My mother left us, and I try not to think about her at all."

Case 45 MR. PICKIE PULLEN

I just felt all in. I felt depressed. I went for a walk down the road, and the people I saw all seemed to be happy... I don't know, but I just got into a cold sweat. The thought of dying just got into my mind... I just couldn't worry any more. I am very fond of my children... I went into my room, and then I came out again and said good night to my children. I said to them: "I will do something to myself." They seen me look into their eyes. It was then they came into my room, and before them I did it. My mind was corrupted. I don't know...

I have always wanted to do good in my life. I have tried to do good only, but it seems to me that I do harm, and I would rather give ... than take. If I go down the road to buy myself a pair of socks, often I see in the shop window a little suit for the boys, or a pair of stockings or a scarf for one of the girls, and I just forget about my socks. All the time, in my mind, there is this feeling as if I am not doing enough. It is as if I had got to do more and more and more and more! And so it has come about that to-day I just want to give. I am only happy when I am giving something to people. In my mind, when I feel

that I am not giving enough, I feel that I am evil. I feel that I am not doing right.

I can remember when I was a child: we were five brothers, and I always got the worse end of the stick. I always got blamed for what they did. When my brothers grew up, they didn't think of my parents. When my dad died nine years ago, I was the one to support my mother. I wanted to have a house built for myself while my father was still living, but he said, "Don't build a house, because you'll get mine, when I am dead." After his death, in spite of all I did for my mother, she always wanted me to be the under-dog. One day she interfered with the children, and I said to her, "Leave the children alone -I'll do the chastising. This is my home." She said, "Oh, is it? What do you mean, your home?" I twigged it. I said, "Oh, I get what you mean. My father had always said that the house would come to me in the end, but now you want to take it from me!" My mother used to go talking to strangers about me often. She used to tell people, "He never puts his foot under his children's tails." She sold the house from under me. Then I also got this depressed feeling. I am soft, that's what I am, and everybody takes me for a fool. I wasn't a home when my father died, but I thought I would respect him as a son, and I would try to get a tombstone for him. It was not only that I was disappointed when my brothers did not help; in my mind I expected the other brothers to say, "Here is a shilling towards the gravestone." No, I had to do everything myself! I did not actually ask them to contribute, but I suggested that they should help. I didn't actually suggest it,but I got my wife to tell their wives that we should put up a gravestone. But whenever they came to me for anything, like the bloody old fool I am, I just used to give. I can't stop myself giving! As if, as if I have to go on giving. The feeling is inside my chest, I have got to do something for others. If I don't keep on giving then I feel.. guilty. I feel I should have done more. I should have! I begin to worry, and then I lose my appetite, and all day at work it is in my mind: I just think how can I possibly make up for what I did not do.

I want my children to be happy. I want to see them get on in the world. (Weeping.) But I don't think... I don't think I am giving enough!

When I was a child myself it was heartbreaking. I passed standard six when I was thirteen years of age, and then I had to go out and work. I had to go and work when I was only a kid. I was always the lackey of the home! All the other kids used to play in the big field behind the house, but when I came from school

I had to do the work, and I have to go on messages. When the work was over, my mother still made me turn the machine for her while she was sewing, and I had my homework to do. She used to say to me, "You can go outside now", but soon as I was out, I got called back in again; and yet I stuck it. It has always been in me to give! If I can't give enough it seems to worry me.

As far as I can recollect my mother and father were happy together. There were five other brothers, but I was always the one who had to bear the brunt of everything. It seemed to me that if anything wrong got done in the neighbourhood, a knock came on the door, and someone stood on the doorstep saying: "It's Pinkie Bullen". I took many a rap; many, many a rap I took.



Since that time the thought has always been in my mind: "Why must I always be accused when anything goes wrong?" No matter what happens or how little I have to do with it - Knock! There goes the knock on the door, and people accuse me that it is my fault, and me, poor kid, was never even out of the house.

I was the lackey, and they all cleared off when they got what they wanted. Nowadays I don't mix up with my brothers. I am not begrudging them anything, but it's "Good afternoon", when I meet them. I can enjoy myself just on my own. I can drink a beer on my own.

Like other boys, I took girls out when I was young. I took a girl out, and she disappointed me... she weren't true to me. I took another girl out - she weren't true! I took three different girls out in my time, and none of them were true. I remember the last one I had before I got married; she was a dressmaker. I thought it rather funny that she said I mustn't come on Tuesdays and Thursdays, because those were the nights when she had to work at her dressmaking. I took her to a lot of dances, and I bought her flowers and chocolates. One Thursday night I did a little job for the manager of the bioscope near our house, and he gave me two complimentary tickets. So I went down to this party's house and just opened the door, and went in. She were not expecting me, so..

what I saw! I seen it happen! I saw her having intercourse, to use the actual word. And there I was spending all my money on the girl, taking her to dances and to bioscopes and spending all my money on her. I just told her. I said she was a bitch. That's what I said. The bloke came up to me and said, what do I mean? I didn't jab at him, but I moved up to him, and he fainted. I took the flowers out of the bowl of water and put them on the table and emptied the water over him.

What hurt me so about the girl misbehaving herself with that man, when I was being so good to her, was that I respected her. I always had it in me. I always just wanted to give to people. I can't explain why, but I had to give, and I am still like that to-day. I give before I take.

I was mostly on my own, when I was young. I used to come home from work in the evenings and walk up the Main Road, down the Main Road, looking into the shop windows. I used to kill time.

Then I met the wife. She told me she was disappointed because somebody had actually let her down. I met her when I was visiting with a friend, and all of a sudden this party comes into the dining room. We weren't even introduced, and nothing was said for five minutes. Then we were introduced, and she spoke. She said, "Are you the Mr. Bullen that we always heard about?" In those days I took a pride in my clothes. She said again, "Are you the young man they are always speaking about?"

I had a nickname in those days. I earned lots of money and I was well-dressed. Each Sunday it seemed as if I had a different suit of clothes on. I took pride in my dressing. In those days I never used to visit the pubs, it was just my pride and I wanted to be well-dressed. They called me -I wish it was true, though, it would solve all my troubles - the Walking Millionaire.

She told me she had never been married, but she had a kid two years of age. When I found myself, I was courting her. I courted her for about three months, and then I turned to her and I said, "I would like to make up a home," so I got married to her. She was very poor, very. They actually had good looks in her family, but they were very poor. She always used to keep saying to me, "With my looks I can go anywhere." I don't want to see her ever again, but I will say that she had looks. She always used to throw that up in my face. I married her when she had an illegitimate child because I am such a very soft man. You know, somebody can give me the hiding of my life, and if he comes back a week later and tells me that he is down and out, I'll give him five bob.

My troubles really began when I came out of the Army. I spent five years and one hundred and fifty-four days in the Army.

I thought everything would be fine when I got back home. I had a family waiting for me in South Africa. The reasons I had to be suspicious I tried to push out of my mind. The trouble started the moment I saw my wife again. Who should be at the station to meet me but my wife and her sister. I no sooner got out of the train, than this is what my wife said: "Christ! Look what you look like! Look how dirty your clothes are!" I was on the point of introducing some of my Army friends to her, but I thought to myself that something must be wrong, and I decided to keep my eyes and ears open. I couldn't prove anything, but I was going to keep my eyes and ears open.

I realized very soon that my home was in a mess. Before I got home, I dreaded I would find out I had been played false. When people came to visit me I noticed that my wife tapped her fingers as if they were staying too long. She neglected me: at times I had to mend my own clothes.

I told you my wife had an illegitimate child living with her ever since I married her. Which I reared. When I got out of the Army I felt disappointed because they never sat down to meals with me. One day I asked my wife, "Who cooked this meal?" When she said that she had, I said, "You lie! The servant girl did." My wife had been out, but she made the mistake of not changing her best shoes and stockings when she came back home.

I had my suspicions of a certain fellow, a married fellow. I searched the streets, and who should I see... who should I see? Arm in arm, this man and my wife! I rushed up to them and got in between them and separated them. I said to my wife, "Get home! I'll attend to you later," But I said to the other bloke, "As for you, you're a married man! Why don't you take your own wife out? Are you ashamed to take your wife out?"

He began to argue with me, and up come the cops and the cops want to take me to gaol. I was in the wrong, and he was doing me an injustice, but yet I was made to seem wrong! Yes, I was wrong! I explained to the cops that he was the type of fellow that was very popular with everybody. I said to the cops, "If you want to take me, take me. I know what I have seen."

When I got home, I said to my wife, "So those are the goings on!"

The trouble came to a head when I smacked my stepdaughter in the face after she had been rude and insulting to me. She went out and came back with two men and said, "Why the hell don't you hit me now, when I've got friends with me?" Then one of the men, a weight-lifter, grabbed hold of me. He kicked me and hit me, and as a result I have these broken, deformed ribs. All this

happened in my own house, in my own kitchen.

I decided that this matter had to be brought to court. I sent my four children up to my mother on holiday when the case was due to come up. I had fractured ribs and multiple bruises, and I had to stay out of work for six weeks. Do you know what the magistrate found? He found them ... not guilty! Since then that very same night when I was left lying in my kitchen with nobody to help me and waiting for my neighbours to come and pick me up, I have just fended for myself. Ever since I knew that I was found guilty when my daughter and her friends should have been found guilty, because they <u>were</u> guilty, I have had this depressed feeling. (Weeping.)

To-day I don't know where my wife is. She is a Catholic, and I got married Catholic, so we have not got a divorce. From that night, when I was beaten up, I don't know where they are... I never tried to find out. She was unfaithful, and I wouldn't want her near me again. Now I have something to do with a woman once in a while. It's not very often... a prostitute.

In plain words, this is what I think of women, and I've got two daughters myself: they would suck you dry! And when you've got nothing more, they'll turn round and follow some fancy bloke with good looks. That idea has always been in my mind. I have friends, but they all turned out false. They only wanted to know me when I had something to give. That's the time they come and see you. And I've got no friends at all now. This is the way I pass the time: I am very fond of my children. I act the fool with them, and I play draughts with them. I come home in the evening. I cook the food; I wash up the dishes and cut the lunch to save us from doing it in the morning; then I listen to the radio for a bit and play a few games of draughts. If I have got a bob to spare, I go down for a beer. When I come back, we all tidy the place so that it is clean when we get up in the morning.

That's how I pass my time. If it's a nice day, I take all the children down to the seaside, or we all go together to the bioscope. I have never brought a woman into the house since my wife left. They all let me down! They have all let me down...

Even before my wife left me, I never looked at another woman. The chaps in the Army used to say to me,, "Come on, don't be a sissy!" I said to them, "Oh, so! Have you not seen the pictures?" They had those pictures up in all the streets, and I was very scared of syphilis. And, to tell you the truth (although I am ashamed to tell you) I satisfied myself in another way. There was no other way out, so I masturbated.

The children will look after me. They said so. Whenever they

go they said I must go with them. I will have to go with them, they said. They say they will never leave me. We must all stick together and be happy together. Whenever I have a lot of money, do you know what I do? I rig the lot of children out, all four of them, and do you know what I buy for myself? A pair of socks. That's all I buy, a pair of socks! Whenever Christmas comes I rig them out from head to foot.

The older boy back-chats to me. I give him hidings. He is very naughty. I as much as took him to the police station, and asked them to cane him. They wouldn't, so I took the cane and gave him a beating myself, there in the police station. If I tell my son anything, he just won't do it. If I send him to the shop, he does not even put out his hand to take the money, but he just mumbles and mutters, "Why should I?" It hurts me. I placed my children right in the front when their mother left me in the lurch. My son is stubborn. He will not answer me. You can hit him, but he will just stand and look at you; he is actually a mischief-maker as well. He does things and blames it on his little brother.

He is my greatest problem to-day. Every time I come home I hear a different story about him. I send him to school. I cut his luncheon parcel for him, but he does not want to learn. I am very worried about him. I took him to a priest and asked him if I could find an institute where we could send my son, but all the priest could do was to tell me to get down and pray. He made a fool of me, in front of the boy. I know that my wife's family would be very glad if I put the boy away. I don't say my son is in touch with them, but it is very queer the way he is going on. What must I do? I think: Will it be thrown in my face one day that I put him away? That seems to worry me all the time.

My eldest boy has inherited from his mother. I hit him with my hand, with a stick, with a strap, and once I hit his head against a wall. He never cries -- it is only when someone is near that he howls, because he wants to harm me. That's the kind of boy that he is.

It works on my mind and makes me miserable. I sit down and relax with a beer, but the thought crops up in me. My own son! If I am going to forget about him, I have got to be on the move and to keep my mind active. If I rest I wonder: Am I doing the wrong thing if I send him away to some place where he can be given discipline?

When I took him to the priest, all I heard was "What you must do, Mr. Bullen, is to pray for your wife." What must I pray for her for, when she leaves the little children with me? I went back to the priest again and asked him if he could not

suggest anywhere where I could put the two boys. The elder one is influencing the younger one. The priest asked me to go out and leave him alone with my son. Then he called me back and said I must kneel beside the boy. He said a prayer, and that's all. Next day, there are more complaints than ever. One day I hit the boy unmercifully, until my daughter begged me to stop. An hour later he was behaving as if nothing had happened. It was just as if I had never lifted my hand to him. I worried. He is holding it all up here in his head. If only I could see him a respectable man one day! Their own mother who has deserted them said to me, "You are too fond of the children- one day they will slap you in the face."

Look at everything I have done for my eldest son, and I have been bluffed by him all the time! He has got his wisdom teeth already, but he is so stupid. Hands in his pockets, too tired to pick up his blooming feet! When I sit down quietly, I think to myself, "Here it all comes out in my son again. He is not like me at all. If I give my mind time for thought, I feel uncomfortable.

I was a good boy, and I loved my parents. When I was working already I still kissed them both every night I went to bed, in front of everybody. I am quite content if I can only sit down at a distance and see my children enjoying themselves. I get complete enjoyment that way. But when I see that things are going wrong, my mind becomes corrupted. All the enjoyment I have in life comes from my children.

Although he failed to connect the two worlds, except by the thread of his need to give, Bullen's adult failure is grounded in the catastrophe of his childhood. Then, already, he was the lackey in the house. "When I was a child, it was heartbreaking." He was Pinkie Bullen that took many a rap and waited for a knock on the door. It infuriated and confused him that he was always the guilty one. To compensate for his inner sense of guilt he developed the attitude that if he served others, even to the point of despair, they would not perceive how unworthy he felt himself.

As he grew up his conscience remained vigorously restrictive. He had no friends or interests; he was on his own when he was young, and he just killed time. Those with whom he tried to be friendly dealt as harshly with him as did his conscience. Although he had been so humiliated in childhood, out of all the children it was he who took it upon himself to be devoted to his parents, as they grew old.

The disgrace he found in himself, his sense of unworthiness in his own eyes, he tried to cover up by developing his

muscles, by dressing in brilliant clothes and by joining up in a war to win medals, as his father had done before him. He achieved an uncomfortable adulthood. He knew a great need to abase himself, to go on ridiculously giving. "If I don't keep on giving... then I feel... guilty. If I can't give enough, it seems to worry me." His conscience made insatiable demands on him which he could never satisfy. His brothers are cold, friends exploit him, girls deceive him, his mother becomes slim and indecently gay after his father dies, and the son of whom he has high hopes flouts his instructions and seems to betray him. On this son is conferred the power his wife had of being terrifying, of ministering to his lifelong conviction of outrage.

He had chosen to marry a woman who had already been astray, but even her illegitimate daughter brought fresh disaster upon him. The only outlet he came to allow his sexual drive was guilty masturbation; in his disgust of women he set about confirming in his own daughter her terror of living. With pathetic feebleness he desires his children to mature happily merely in order to spite his estranged wife. He who in his home with his wife had been merely a "rubber stamp", had arrived at a dangerous, consuming pass. He was obsessively dedicated to his growing children, allowing himself no existence apart from them. They were warned by him of his approaching suicidal behaviour and required to witness it. He accepted gladly their shocked protestations that they would never leave him. His older daughter is sufficiently cowed by his influence, and the example her mother set her, to want to leave the world.

What could be more placatory than an insistence that one can never give enough, that one is aching to be generous? But the resentment underlying this subservience is apparent, and even beneath it the childhood humiliations are not stifled. The buried anger in one as socially placatory as Bullen can only be expressed in self-injury.

Stress has already been laid on the way in which an individual can be subdued and unparticipative, and yet on the social plane give an impression of being involved in the community. Only on closer scrutiny will it be seen how meagre is the emotional participation of such people with other adults. In fact, the impression is sometimes gained that their daily occupations are no more than a screen covering their ramifying fantasy lives. In their work is no satisfaction; they have little rewarding contact with their associates, and almost no interests. Ambition is stifled. Their friendlessness is sometimes surprising to the onlooker,

yet such persons continue to have in their prolonged association with parents a passionate substitute for adult relationships.

They have restrained themselves from any more mature participation with others, and censor ordinary gratifications out of their lives. Extremely noticeable is the way in which such individuals judge the world as harshly as they are judged by their own oppressive conscience. Nobody is worthy of love, even if loving were possible.

There are some who inhibit themselves still more grotesquely. Not only do they occupy themselves with jobs which waste their talents, and permit themselves no friendships or deeper emotional attachments, but in addition they are unable even to describe their own feelings. Socially inept, they can allow no feeling of theirs to be recognized by those they live amongst, and none of their imaginative trends to escape. The man now to be described is unique among all the individuals studied thus far, because he alone provides no story of parental unhappiness which spoilt his childhood. Pridgeon was given many interviews, yet he was so vague, embarrassed, wooden, that he conveyed no adequate picture of any stage of his life. His relations with his parents and the conditions of his growing-up remained obscure, except that he felt a barrier between himself and his father. Of all the persons studied, he is the least participative. He described his suicidal attempt in a chillingly jocose fashion.

Case 46 MR. PRIDGEON

I think I just felt sort of depressed. All sorts of things were counting up, and it's been a bit of a fag. It's a battle, I think. Actually, you know, it's rather funny now.. it seems... it seems to be clearing up, somehow. Everything about me is just boring.

The girl I am supposed to be engaged to has got a mother whom I have a name for. I think "lady" is a misnomer. This woman, as I have only found out now, has been telling tales about me. I mean, you can't keep everything inside you. You let go! When I got back to my work after being ill I found out from a man at the office that this woman had wasted no time in going about and telling everybody all the secrets I had told them. I told you I am supposed to be engaged to her daughter. It happened like this: Her mother and I were walking along the pavement when her mother said what a nice girl she was. I was leaving for another town the next day, see, to take up my assistant managership. The mother then went on to say she often thought... she said she thought

she was a bit selfish for asking me, you know, when she had sort of got Petty and I together because.. I quite enjoy the mother's company. She's an amusing sort of person.

Oh, yes, I will try to get my thoughts into order. I know I am talking nonsense. (Giggle.) It's so hard for me to say things simply. I am not a practical person.

Peggy is engaged to me, but really, really, it's nothing. It's the sort of thing that just happens, and I know, I know... it was just because her mother made the suggestion. I am sure Peggy likes me and I like her myself. She's a very kind sort of girl. She may still think I'm engaged. The girl is not so important really. I haven't seen her for over a year now. I haven't even got into touch with her. I let things slide rather. I tried to write a letter to her - and that's as far as I got, just thinking about writing a letter.



There is nothing I can say about my family. It's just the usual thing in my family; my Mom and Dad are very nice people.

I could never really speak to Father since I was quite a child. There was a barrier between us. I never thought about it, really, but it was awkward. Suddenly your mind goes completely numb. I think, "What can I talk about to him?" And you sit there and feel struggling to talk about something.. you know. With my mother it is different. I like her much more as a friend, but I suppose there is something missing between my father and me. (Giggle). My brother and I are strangers. He is nine years younger than I am. Two years ago he told me that he and my cousin had been having a discussion about me, and they were quite sure (laugh).. quite sure... I said: "Well, if you want to think so..."

I prefer to regard the whole thing as so silly. My brother and I are absolute strangers to each other.

I am homosexual... May I have a cigarette? (Laughing). I haven't got a match. I've always got one thing, but not the other. It's true and it's not true. I am a homosexual, but I am the other way too. It's very confusing. Still, I am much more attracted by males. My sexual history is not very interesting. It's just a case of.. most schoolboys are... I've accepted I am a

homosexual. There was no struggle. I knew at about the age of nineteen. Then I knew definitely. I was rather slow... but it's never been on my mind.. it's never been something to worry about. It has never upset me or caused me any disturbance.

It gave me a bit of a shock when my brother asked me straight out if I was a homosexual. Well, I just laughed it off.

You know, when you're alone, you sort of think too much? I remember picking up a suitcase and looking for something in it. Then I saw these pills but my mind was quite clear - it's strange - (Giggle). People say you are of sound mind, or something, and you're not. Then the thought came to me, "Well, it just seems like being put into your hands. Percy, take advantage of it!" So I sat down and I got a glass of water, and I thought of all the nice things that had happened in my life. (Giggle). And I looked at the water, and I thought to myself, "Heck, no! I'm going out now, and I must go with brandy." I drank some brandy and water, and then a little more and - it sounds rather silly, I know - but I even read a chapter out of the Bible. There is nothing really dramatic about what I did. I find it rather amusing when I look back. And then I took one capsule, and I thought of somebody I liked very much, and then I took another and thought of somebody I liked, and when I had counted up to fourteen I lost count after that. (Laughing). I got rather bored with counting. I was quite clear. I think it's all rather amusing when I look back on it.

I had a strong wish to die. I just.. I just... it's rather funny.. I had, I had a feeling if I did die I wouldn't be picked out again. Wherever it was that I was going to .. (laughter) I wouldn't be kicked out of heaven or hell. At last I was going to be saved. On earth I didn't know where I was.

Oh, yes, I did want to kill myself! I don't really know why. I know I was very clear in my mind. I think it has been a case of continual struggle. Unpleasant things were always happening to me, and I was finding myself... well, it seems rather silly, but I know... my life was in a mess. It was barren.

All the individuals in this study, apart from being distinguished by the occurrence of suicidal behaviour in their lives, show how their energy has been suppressed, so that they have little spontaneity. Their talents are not exploited, they censor all social assertiveness out of their activity. The restrictions they impose upon themselves are so rigorous that as the examples in this chapter indicate with particular emphasis, they may have little contact with their associates. Their energies are not used for social expres-

sion, but go to nourish and indulge their hidden resentments, the childish angers they carried out of their parents' home. Failing to assert themselves, they are noteworthy for their continued reliance on parental authority, their protracted need to win approval from their parents. The person now to be described is ill-equipped to live as an adult in a city. He is distinguished by a gross dependence, a marked lack of vitality. He was a most interesting individual to encounter. In this series of persons who attempted suicide, he was the one most nearly an African Native. It was surprising to see a man who was Coloured in appearance, but, in mannerism and in the inflexions of his voice, was an authentic Xosa.

Case 47 EDWARD BZOLO

I was born in Kentana in the Transkei. My parents are Coloureds, but they lived in the Transkei among the Natives long before I was even born. I have been in the city to work for the past seven years.

I wanted to kill myself last night. It is my girl friend. I did brought her here to Cape Town. Her mother who lives in Kimberley left her in my hands. Her mother she let that girl into my hands to let her come with me to Cape Town. Now the girl is in Cape Town, she don't take notice of me. She don't worry, she do what she like to me. Last night, when I came to her room, I found she was out with another man. Now when I think about all those things, I just take a knife and cut me. It was only that thing, that thing what she does. She don't worry about me, see? She do what she likes, anything. She go out weekends, I don't see her. I start to fed up and take a knife and cut me.

I was sad. I love her. I loved her since August when I came to Cape Town last year. Her mother said I must look after her... but now my girl is changed.

I had to cut my throat:, there was no other thing. There is just that one thing what my girl done to me. It's better for me to die, and then I can't feel that thing what she dome to me. I loved her very much. I really want to die. I still want to die. It is no use to live on the world. No, I would rather die! It is only that thing which she done to me. We sleep together, we live as man and wife. The Jew where we live said there were too many peoples in that room, so me and another man, we go out, and I go to stay in Langa. My girl go to stay at a room where she work. She stays at her work in Brooklyn with her madam. I meet her every morning when I go to my work, and at lunch time and in the evening. But she doesn't worry. She does what she

likes. I don't see her. If I come on Fridays she is drink with another man. I see her Monday to Friday morning, but then I don't see her again in the weekend. Now when I think those things, my heart want to stand. She doesn't say she doesn't like me. She doesn't say anything.



The love is a thing that takes people's sense away. My love for this girl has made me mad. I don't know, sir, why I love her so. I can't say; but I love her too much. She loved me too, but now she is changed. So I get tired and I just take the knife and think I am going to kill myself. The knife was in my pocket when I was in the street. I thought before of cutting my throat, and that is why I have the knife. I did keep it only for that purpose, the knife in my pocket. I was thinking before, it is better for me to be dead. My heart was sore when she did that thing to me. I couldn't stand for it, so I just take a knife... My heart told me I must do it. So I cut my neck.

I think I had better go home to Kentana. I will be happier if I am with my mother. I better go home. If I am near to my mother, I won't think about that girl. I'll think only about my mother. I love my mother too much.

I told you my mother is a Coloured and my father also is of mixed blood. They are good people. They were kind to me. They loved me too much, and I loved them. My father did die two years ago. My mother had eight childrens. My father, he was sick; he was a policeman. I was very sad when he died. I have been going back to Kentana every few years, because I am working for my mother. I am twenty-four years old now. My mother knows I love her so much. When I was small she did so much for me, and now when I am big you cannot leave your mother. No, I will look after her till I die! I will never stop loving my mother. She do love me that time I was small. I can't stop loving her now.

The avoidance by a person of all assertion is an important personality trend, implying that the individual is being firmly

prohibited from social expression by his conscience. He fears that his actions will earn him disapproval. His insecurity may not have become evident to his associates until he reaches adulthood, then to be revealed perhaps only when the suicidal attempt takes place. His avoidance of assertion is grounded in his childhood dismay at the hands of his parents. He may have been suppressed or protected with excessive anxiety, or he may have been deprived of parents and thus exposed to demands he was too youthful to bear.

Assertion is a manifestation of healthy personality, the outcome of an individual's trust in others, and his confidence in his own powers. Assertion, so woefully absent in suicidal persons, is diametrically different from aggressiveness. Aggressiveness is to be found on intimate examination of a suicidal person. A manifestation of immaturity, it is always linked with hatred of others. The only outlet to his aggressiveness which the suicidal person permits is rigid suppression of his own pleasures. He will not attack others in spite of his buried resentment; instead, throughout his life, he will have offered himself as target for his aggression. In timid, withdrawn individuals aggression finds an incongruous expression in the form of suicidal behaviour. The immature individual is so caught up in private, childish resentment, that he cannot permit himself rewarding contacts with others; moreover, his conscience has forced him to suppress his tendency to ordinary social assertiveness. He is preoccupied with private ambitions and sad daydreams. His suicidal behaviour expresses both anger and isolation.

CHAPTER 12

SUBMISSIVENESS

The point is simply made, yet important enough for special emphasis, that suicidal persons are markedly submissive. Where others would object or protest by fighting back, the person later to behave suicidally will submit meekly to insult and inconvenience. He accepts without compleint conditions which restrict his existence and cause anxiety and even anguish to be his daily climate. The onlooker will always discern, more or less evident, at least a suggestion that the submissive person finds in his suffering a surreptitious excitement, a perverse thrill. A certain languor, at times almost a fascination adulterates his meekness. He is not only passive, but also agitated; one cannot avoid recognizing how the unprotesting person has anticipated successive blows, so that when they fall he experiences an inner satisfaction of a sort.

Deeper study shows that submissive persons do have private satisfactions to derive from their sufferings. They have a real need of punishment. One individual may express why she welcomes her humiliation by saying she is just about a hundred per cent bad (Case 8): insisting she has been guilty of a hideous sin, another may wail, "There is no hope for me" (Case 38); or she may feel she is a mere girl and so not nearly as worthy as a male is (Case 27); one may say she has stink-nose (Case 20): or another that all his life he is the one who was wrong (Case 9). However, the sense of sinfulness may remain entirely masked, the individual instead being troubled by a curious yearning to prostrate himself, a desperate need to serve others if he is to avoid feeling guilty. So, shuddering, the submissive individual remains in the path of successive blows.

These submissive trends of behaviour in suicidal persons are prominent in the life history of Mrs. Rosemary Heiden, whom I first saw after her fourth suicidal attempt. In adolescence she drank ant-poison when her mother accused her of misbehaviour with a young man. Later she took sleeping tablets following a false accusation levelled at her that she had gossiped about a friend. She tried to drive her car into the sea when her husband, a man of low intelligence, lost her hundreds of pounds by his inter-

ference in a legal deal. Three months after the death of this husband she made her fourth suicidal attempt. Her explanation was that her father-in-law had accused her of mourning insufficiently his son's death; with cynical over-statement he referred to her repeatedly as "The Merry Widow", a taunt she evoked from him by visiting a cinema.

Her birth had been illegitimate. Since early childhood she had felt there was something wrong with her. She believed a slavey was made out of her. So vulnerable had she been that even in adulthood she could not tolerate an unkind word said to her; harsh treatment precipitated her into panic, a tendency fully exploited by her relations. It has already been mentioned that she once tried to kill herself rather than refute the accusations of a girlfriend who was angry with her.

Her history is a catalogue of suffering meekly endured, of humiliations heaped upon her. Through ten years of marriage she went to bed at seven o'clock each evening. When her husband had a child by a Coloured woman, she welcomed this child into her home. Through a decade she tolerated her husband's blows and sexual onslaughts; although terrified by his uncontrolled eroticism, she complained to nobody. Once she brought herself to leave him, but took him back when his father felt it would disgrace the family if her husband perhaps married a Coloured woman; by her own misery, she chose to spare her parents-in-law from a hypothetical indiscretion. When her husband had gone out of the house, he carefully left an idiot brother to spy on her. Yet after the death of her husband, a sadist of low intelligence, she compelled herself to remember him as "the poor boy".

For her to have felt relief at the death of such a man could not be considered an inappropriate response by any standards, but she permitted herself to feel only remorse. In fact, she reproached herself that her mourning was inadequate. "Do you think I am callous?". Her dread of being thought "bad" compelled her to flout reason and utter only kindly memories of her husband. However, the question she had asked the family doctor while her husband was still alive suggests hidden desires she would not admit to her awareness: "If I hit him, and he falls dead...?" But murderous wishes were rigorously refused admission to her consciousness. All she desired was to serve others, and to ensure that nobody could say an unkind word about her. Guiltily she remained with her father-in-law, an old

men,for the hollow reason that his late wife had been kind to her own mother. In other words, it was on her mother's behalf that she endured suffering: here was the first indication of hidden animosity against her mother.

In spite of all her protestations of the love she bore her mother, it was obvious that Mrs. Heiden had many reasons for being resentful of her. Mrs. Heiden admits she never knew a mother's love. Although her mother had now become affectionate, with an agitation which she did not understand she could not yet permit herself to kiss her mother. She hesitated to mention her illegitimacy even to her physician, not because she was ashamed, she insisted, but because she dreaded her revelations might reach her mother's ears and evoke indignation. Earnestly she repeated how deeply she loved her mother, clinging to her protestation of love, even as she enumerated instances of her mother's cruelty to her. She recalled that her childhood had been made unbearable by her mother. She could not forget that it was her mother who drove her into a disastrous marriage with a sadistic man, and for all the misery of her marriage she held her mother firmly responsible. With meek long-suffering she accepted the cruelty of her husband, in this way punishing her mother with the spectacle of her unhappiness. She went to lengths to have her mother see how she suffered. Not only her mother but her other associates as well failed to love her, yet in relation to them also she abased herself in her need to serve others. Just as an alcoholic punishes a parent most effectively through his dissipations, so Mrs. Heiden could reproach her unkind mother by inviting torment. After death had removed one torturer, her husband, she passively accepted a fresh one, his father: in relation to this old man she also felt herself suffering on behalf of her mother.

Case 48. MRS. ROSEMARY HEIDEN

I am feeling very miserable. I would like to sleep and never wake up. I rather want to sleep and never wake up again. I feel like that because my father-in-law nags me so. He doesn't want me to go out. You see, I was never happy with my husband and my husband died three months ago. Although I was not happy with him, I consented to stay with him.

Am I going to live? I don't think I want to. But I did so want to go to bioscope on Saturday nights, and I so much liked going out with Algy. I love going out. And do you know, he took me to a hotel! That was the first time in eighteen years that I

wore a long frock. I was invited to a dance! Do you think I am callous? I do miss my husband, but I can't live with the dead. I felt terrible, and I did want to die. I am religious, but I thought of nothing else than death. Do you know what it is to have no sleep at night, to be nagged and woken up when you do fall asleep? My father-in-law nagged at me and was making me mad. Now I can't go on any more. My father-in-law won't let me alone.

I am just the worrying kind. If people say two words to me, I begin to shake, and if they get cross with me then I worry and worry. Even if they are in the wrong and I am in the right, I go and apologize. I have let people sit on me for years, and while they were sitting on me they said what they liked. One night (I don't know why I never killed myself that night) I had three men going for me: my father-in-law, my husband and his brother, all of them giving me hell at the same time. The other night the old man went for me unmercifully and that is when I decided to kill myself. To my father-in-law I am known as "The Merry Widow". The man who took me out, Algy, who is divorced, my father-in-law called "The Gay Divorcé." He nags at me all the time. He is afraid that I will marry Algy. That is the real reason why he never lets me alone. But I don't mean any harm, and the old man knows that. I only want a bit of fun and pleasure. My husband and I had no happiness together. We were not happy. My husband was quite a nice boy, but we didn't get on. Now that he is dead, if I go to my room and look the door, the old man comes and hammers on the door and shouts at me from the lounge. He says I shouldn't be going out with another man when his son has only been dead three months. He throws up the past at me, and I didn't love his son! For weeks I have been trying to hide from the old man. I creep in behind the wardrobe, after I have banged the front door so that he can think I have gone out; but he finds me and stands shouting at me.

I will never ask him to get out of my house. Rather than send him away I will get away myself or kill myself. I have been thinking of dying for a long time. I have said to him, "Dad, I can't live with you any more."

He's got a crippled son living with me in the house. This cripple boy has been watching me for years. He has got rigid paralysis and he sits in the kitchen by the sink. When you walk, he watches... When I am at the sewing machine in the dining room he creeps up to the door and watches me. I can't stand it any more!

The boy is simple. He had brain fever, and he is not as he should be. Do you think I could stand being watched any longer? When I drop my work and look up, there he is watching me. Even when I don't look up I can feel him watching me. While my husband was still alive I used to go out shoping three times a week, but I gave that up. If I went out my husband would say, "Oh, you've been out!" I asked him who told him that I was out, and he would say to me, his brother. Now my husband is dead the cripple still spies on me and tells the old man about me.

Oh, my Daddy! Why did you have to die? I felt very sore when my Daddy died. I still miss him because, if he were alive, he wouldn't let the old man carry on like this with me.

. . . . . .

Before I married my husband I was devil-may-care. I laughed a lot, but I will never forget how I wanted to run out of the church during the marriage ceremony. I heard my husband's sister say: "She's always laughing, but I wonder how long she'll laugh!" That was what she said, the day I got married in church. I can tell you I wanted to run out of the church. My mother had warned me, "Rosemary, if you ever get married you'll have to give in to the man." I was frightened, terrified.

All through our married life I have had to carry my husband, all those years... I have had a hard life, and his father, the old man, knows it.

It seems so long, long ago that I met my husband. It was at his house and he asked me if he could come for a walk with me. Ah! he is dead now! I feel funny! I feel terribly sorry for him. It was out of pity that I married him. He told me how many rows he had at home with his brothers; they kept fighting with him and they wouldn't leave him in peace, and he felt very hurt and lonely.

My husband terrified me. Now I am frightened that all men are like my husband was. I couldn't bear my husband to come near me, even in the daytime, and he used to worry me all night. I never enjoyed it. I have never had a sexual relation with any other man, so I don't know what sex is really like, although I have often wondered how it would be with another man. I am terrified of sex. I am dead scared of all men.

My mother told me nothing about sex. When I married my husband, it all came as a surprise to me. I never knew a man could be an animal. When I was five months' pregnant with my first child, he threw me out of bed at three o'clock in the morning, and told me he wanted me again. Five times in one night was usual for him. Do you think any woman can stand that, nearly every bally night? I had only to look at his face when he came

home in the evening to know what it was that he wanted, and he used to complain to my mother that I would not give him his rights. Just looking at his face, when I woke up in the morning! That drove me clean against love.

I found out too late that my husband was never responsible for what he did. He would never let me alone sexually when we were first married. Only then did I realise what living with a man meant. Every afternoon he was at me, and he went on all night long. Do you think, and I am asking you candidly, that any woman would have been able to stand for it?

I wanted to leave him, but I thought of what his mother had done for my family. During the depression she was very kind to my mother. We had a bad time then, because my mother had seven children. I call him the poor boy, when I think of him. Although I never loved him, I was sorry for him when I married him. It was more pity than love that made me marry him. He had violent tempers. He dragged me out of bed and beat me unmercifully when I wouldn't give in to him, when I said, after I had let him make love to me two or three times a night, that was sufficient. I was only skin and bone, and we often had to get the doctor in after he was finished with me. I was always sick. Who could help it? You felt sick every morning of your life and that went on for six years. I tolerated it because there was nobody to stand by me and give me help. I never looked for love in my life, but what I got from my husband was dreadful. There was never any joy between my husband and me, because I used to get irritable and next morning I got migraine. I always got migraine after intercourse. It was ugly to me.

Even after my husband had taken girls out, he couldn't be peaceful when he came home. I used to put the kids in the corner and try to calm him down. Often he'd hit me, and when he hit me I wouldn't hit him back. I was dead scared. I am frightened to think that if I ever get married in the future it will all happen to me again.

My mother knows how I suffered, because I never hid it. I never pretend. But what woman wants to be thrown out at three o'clock in the morning and sit under the bush in a thin nighty when you are five months' pregnant? My husband always had lots of women, some of them low and dirty, and I knew all about them. Yet he would never leave me alone. He was very nasty to me. Oh, five times a night was nothing, and I was pregnant! To be thrown out in the rain, and I sat under a bush. One night when I wouldn't let him go on any more, he dragged me across two beds. They were fairly big, and he

throttled me and had his knee in my tummy. That is what they said caused me to have this goitre... You know, I used to put the kids in the corner and my husband would come home. I would try to hide away from him, but he would wait for me, and when I came into the room he would give me absolute hell for keeping him waiting. I told you how I got a headache every time he slept with me, because I just used to let him have his own way, and there was nothing for me. I didn't love him. If he couldn't have it his way, he used to get miserable and nasty. He'd go for me and beat me, and shoo me out of the house.

I was away from my husband for two years and nine months, and then I took him back. His people wouldn't let me divorce him. He was living with a Coloured woman, and his people said if I divorced him he would marry her, and she wasn't quite white. They kept at me, knowing that I was not well. I was very down at that time, just as down as I am now.



My husband had a child with this Coloured girl he went off with. I like the child, and I never held the child against my husband. The child has always come to see us and he has stayed with me since last year. When I first heard of the child though, I wanted to divorce my husband. Then his people kicked up a whole big fuss. They said they didn't want their name to get into the papers, so I took my husband back, and then I had a nervous breakdown. In the nighttime it was bad enough, but he wouldn't let me alone in the daytime either... He drove me mad.

He used to work in his father's business as a bricklayer. The doctor told me later on that my husband was mentally deficient. The doctor said he could kill me and he wouldn't be held responsible! The doctor said to me, "Your husband is not responsible for what he does." I told the doctor how he ill-treated me and how nasty he was to me. I remember I still asked the doctor, "If I hit him, and he fell dead...?"

I was very, very sorry for him, and I stayed with him because

he had coronary thrombosis. But I didn't love him because he hurt me so years ago. He was very nasty to me. You see, my husband often hit me. The doctor told me I wasn't to hit him back because he had coronary thrombosis, so I let him hit me.

He often flew into such tempers that he wanted to kill me and I had to hide away. The old man often used to hit my husband, and there was a fight. The old man used to hit out at my husband when my husband was trying to hit me. Soon afterwards, my husband died, and when he died something died within me. When my father-in-law came to tell me my husband was dead, I told the old man to go to the devil. He said again, "He is lying on the floor, dead!" My husband, poor boy, didn't know. He was never responsible for what he said and what he did. My marriage was ten years of hell. I'll go back to my mother; she will let me go out to the bioscope. She will know that I am not doing anything wrong, but my father-in-law waits up for me and screams at me when I go out, and I only want to go to the bioscope. He calls me "The Merry Widow".

My husband has only been dead for three months and a week, but I miss him, I do! You see, he was nasty to me, but you became so attached to somebody, and my husband was in the house with me, even though we seldom talked to each other. After his death I was quite contented to go on living the way we are, with the old man in my house. But the old man won't let me live my own life. I want to go out with Algy, and I love taking out Algy's children, but the old man keeps on nagging at me.

. . . . . .

You know, I was quite prepared to sacrifice my life for my husband. I was never in love and I have never been in love with anybody else.

My mother admitted three weeks after my husband died that she knows it is her fault that I married my husband.

I will never forget the Thursday night my mother said to me that she was going to get married. So I said I was going away. But my mother refused to let me leave. I forgive my mother for all the other things she has done to me. I forgive my husband's father, no matter how nasty the old man has been to me. But I can't forgive my mother saying to me: "You cannot leave the house, even if I do get married. You can't go out; I'll send the police after you!" She got married on the fourth of the month and I got married on the twenty-second. I married just to get out of my mother's house, but I went out of the fryingpan into the fire. My mother scolded me while I was in her house, and I can't bear people to be nasty to me, because I am not nasty with anyone. I try to help everyone.

When my father died, and my mother told me she was going to marry my stepfather who is a drunkard, I said I would leave the house. But it is through her fault that I had to marry my husband.

A short time ago my mother, on doctor's orders because of her diabetes, got my stepfather to have a separate bedroom from her. Since then she is a changed woman. Now she can go to bed at night with no fear of the bed catching fire, and knowing that she can sleep. She knows now that her husband, even when he comes home drunk at night, will not wake her up and worry her. I know that my mother was very unhappy.

The first time I tried to kill myself happened because my mother said something to me, things that were not true. She said that I had been out with some men, and she accused me of being bad. I was only a girl then. I said to her I wasn't bad. She said I was. I got hurt, so I just went and drank some ant poison. That was after my father died. I was very upset. I always say if my father had not died, it would not have happened. It would not have been necessary for me to try to kill myself. I was very hurt over what my mother accused me of. I have always been like that. I can't stand people to be unkind to me.

Long before I know the truth about my birth, I really felt I wasn't a member of the family. It was my grandfather who let it out one day when he was drunk. I don't know why my grandfather hinted to me that I was illegitimate. I have never spoken to anyone about this, and if my mother knows I am talking about it to you, doctor, she'd get furious. Just shortly before I got married, I did ask my mother. She told me it was none of my business who my father was, and that I had better leave the matter alone. Three years after my marriage I went to her about it again, and she hit me... I said I wanted to know who my father was, and she hit me in the face. Then I just walked away. I didn't speak to her for a long time. That was three years after my own marriage when I asked my mother who my real father was, and she wouldn't tell me. I don't want to know any more. I think it's better not to know. I think I would rather let sleeping dogs lie, don't you?

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Oh, I suspected my father was not really my father, long, long ago. I wondered why it was that I had to do all the work, when my sisters never did anything. As my brothers grew up, I had to look after them, but my two sisters never lifted a hand. I always had to do all the work at home. I always had to do everything. You see, my mother had me before she was married, and the man I grew up to think of as my father was not my father,

although I looked upon him as my father all the time I was a child. I always knew there was something wrong, because my mother took everything out on me. All I did was wrong. I looked after her, and yet I got hidings all the time. When my mother was ill, I ran my feet off for her ...

I reared all my brothers, and that is why I swore then I got married myself I would never have a son, because I reared them, five boys, and I reared them all. I always wanted my mother to have a girl, but it was always boys! And I never did want boys. I had two sisters who were younger than myself, and then came the five boys, and I had to look after all of them. I did so want a girl. I said, "When I am married, I will have all girls."

I always knew there was something wrong with me, and then I found out. My grandfather told me. He told me my mother had me before she was married, and the man I thought was my father was not my father. When I spoke to my mother about it, she gave me a hiding. I don't know why my grandfather told me, but my mother was nasty to me so often; I could never understand why I had to do all the housework. The other two girls were never expected to work. They could play with other children. I could never even read a book. I had to nurse the kids, and do the washing all the time. I grew up that way. I had to watch other kids going round in nice frocks. I never knew what a mother's love was. I could never, if I wanted to, go and talk to my mother. I can't explain the feeling there was between us. Honestly, I mean... what can I say.. it was so long ago.

Even while I was growing up everybody said I had a face like an old woman. When I used to tell people my age, they would never believe me because they said I looked older. I did look very much older than I actually was, but I think that was because of all the hard work I had to do, and yet I always seemed to feel sorry for people. When I got my money, after I was working, I always gave my mother a big share of it. I did everything for my mother. The thing that hurt me most was that when I was ten and my father was out of work, I had to deliver washing to people. But honestly I don't regret anything of those days because it taught me what life is like. I never did want what other people had, and I never envied anybody. When I was twelve years old my mother sent me to beg from the Board of Aid. That was a terrible thing to do. I had to go and ask for help for my mother and father when I was only twelve years. Would you have done that to your daughter, doctor? And things worse than that have happened to me. When my father was out of work, we used to bake cakes, and I had to go out and sell them. Before I was eight years old, I was doing washing, washing double-bed sheets. I felt that nobody loved me.

I could see that my two sisters got everything from my mother. What could I do? I wouldn't cry or kick up a fuss. I knew I was lonely. My sisters didn't want me with them. I never had any kindness. When I came back from school, there were all those boy children to nurse.

I went to school when I was thirteen. I left school in standard six and I couldn't get a job. I tried for three months, then I did a terrible thing. I went to church until I got a certificate, and I got them to write on the certificate that I was sixteen years old. I had to get a job, because my father was out of work, and my mother couldn't keep me at school. So I got my first job by cheating about my age.

My father (of course he wasn't my real father) died when I was seventeen years old. I missed him terribly. He was a good man. I wish all men were like him. You know, he never abused my mother; he was very kind to me; he gave me a lot of hidings when I was a child, but I loved him very dearly. After he was dead, life was not so happy with me, because I don't get on well with my mother. A few years after my father's death, I came home one night, and my mother said: "I am going to get married." I had come home from work and suddenly she told me she was going to get married to a man I didn't like. He used to drink a lot. So I said to her, "I don't like the man. He's a drunkard, and I know he won't treat you right. If you marry him I am going to go away from home."

She said that if I left she would go to the police. I was eighteen at the time, and she said the only way I could leave home was to get married. She said so to my husband, and he told me that I must marry him. So I married him. It was only because my mother didn't want me to leave her.

After a few months, Mrs. Heiden gave up her exaggerated subjection to her mother, and freed herself of the domination of her father-in-law. She married a widower and declared she had never imagined such happiness possible as she found in her second marriage. Unfortunately she had occasion to come again to the hospital, this time to seek assistance for her elder daughter who had attempted suicide while at boarding school. That the girl should have behaved suicidally was not surprising, considering her parents had been quarrelsome and her father died when she was fourteen. What was interesting was that she revealed a passion for motor-cycles. In writing of this interest she provided a poignant last reason.

WHY I LIKE MOTOR-BIKES

1. The thrill of speed.
2. The fact that one is riding almost like the wind to some place.
3. The joy of being free, just like the air, forgetting all earthly worries of the past and the future. Forgetting everything except the fact that at present one is on a motor-bike.
4. Also knowing that some day I hope to possess something that is interesting and will not fail me, something one possesses and is your own and nobody will take away from you.

Submissiveness is always a compensatory response to an underlying sense of enormous guilt. What leads the submissive person to feel guilty is the store of hidden aggression retained in his fantasy life, deriving from his fearful determination during all the years of his growing up to conceal the resentment he feels towards a powerful parent. Endlessly afraid his angry reproach will manifest itself, the individual seeks to cloak it by lifelong assumption of submissiveness. He decides the joys of the world are not for him. He wants only to be well-thought of, and spends himself in a driven need to serve others. He is passive and docile in his social relationships. He does not permit himself mature ways of sexual expression. Harsh blows and humiliations he accepts uncomplainingly.

As has already been described, his aggression towards a parent may be vented during the first interview that follows a suicidal attempt, the personality disorganization brought about by his murderous stress premitting him to give utterance to resentments he would normally consider too sinful to mention. Or the resentment may emerge only after a time, when with psychotherapy he comes to perceive the latest trends of his personality, of which he formerly had no insight. In this latter group the aggressive wishes against the parent have remained unrecognized by the individual, an evasion he can achieve only through sacrifice of his social development. All the individual's adult efforts, profoundly anxious and unrewarded, may be directed at placation of the parent, whom he cannot regard with adult objectivity, the parent on behalf of whom he has foregone adult gratifications.

A women aged thirty-two was brought to hospital unconscious. Remnants of sedative capsules were found in the stomach washings. Yet she said she could not recall having made a suicidal attempt,

but she admitted freely that she was so unhappy she wished she were dead. In point of fact, she said, she had been aware of strong wishes for suicide when she was sixteen, and these desires for death she had always linked with her terror of her brother Ralph. Her appearance was attractive, but remarkably mournful; her mouth drooped sadly at the corners. Her manner was gentle and kindly, although an occasional whine appeared in her flat voice. She moved slowly and spoke with hesitancy, giving an impression of dispiritedness. She kept her eyes averted from the person she was addressing. Throughout the early interviews, with abstracted care she slowly scratched the varnish from each of her very long fingernails.

Her unbearable sorrow, she said, had been induced by the death of the man she considered her father. He was an elderly man, a lodger in her mother's house. Her own father had been a drunkard. He had abandoned the family when she was twelve years old. In spite of the poverty which descended on the family when he left (for the boys had to go into an orphanage and the older girls to work) nobody was sorry when he did not reappear. He was drunk more often than not and he used to beat his wife as well as his daughters. After he had deserted the family, the patient encountered her father on two occasions. The first meeting occurred in a street; she told him it was her birthday, but when he offered her a sixpence, she retorted she would not accept anything from him and walked away. The second meeting took place when she was on her honeymoon; finding her father drunk in the same hotel, she arranged for her husband to meet him, and then moved with her husband to another hotel.

When she was a child, both her brothers misused her sexually. She married after a weird courtship an American sailor who promised her that he could cure her skin disease. He said that he would come to her home with her, and for three days give her continuous treatment with injections and hot baths. She said that her "father" was asleep during each day because he worked at nights, and that the hot water system at her home was not very efficient. She allowed herself to be persuaded to come to stay with the sailor for a few days at a hotel. They were given adjoining rooms. Every three hours during the night he came with a pencil torch into her room to administer an injection. For reasons which she cannot explain, the sailor did not carry out his intention to administer hot baths; nor did he make any sexual advances to her

until he married her a few weeks later. Immediately after their wedding ceremony she began to doubt the wisdom of her marriage. As they left the church her husband said, "Those vows we took in that church mean nothing to me; I am an atheist." Then he treated her cruelly, deserted her and expressed satisfaction in a letter when her pregnancy ended in miscarriage. After not seeing him for many years, she still did not bestir herself enough to get a divorce from him. Had she done so, she might have been able to marry one of her subsequent suitors, in particular a man who for years was her dancing partner and lover. She had lately participated abjectly in a chaotic relationship with a married Swede.

For the most part, her ambition was concentrated in making her mother contented. The elderly man who lodged in their home and who had accepted all the responsibilities of the house had not married her mother, nor did Mrs. Meadows believe that he had become her mother's lover. She regarded this man, nevertheless, as a father. When he became ill, she began to experience headaches. These grew increasingly severe as his sickness became worse. After three months he died, and on the day of his death Mrs. Meadows herself attempted suicide. As was mentioned, she claimed inability to remember drinking any pills.

Case 49 MRS. MEADOWS

My brother Ralph is a replica of my father. He is violent and a drunkard and he is cruel. When I was a child, Ralph used to come home from work on the five-fifteen train. Because we lived near the train lines it was possible for me to hear every train that passed throughout the day, but I was not aware of any of them - it was only when the five-fifteen was due that a fear came up in me. My whole body seemed to go cold, even when I happened to be occupied with something else. Suddenly I would know that it was time for my brother to come home. I have never been afraid of anything else in my life; I was not even afraid of my father, but I was terrified of my brother Ralph.

He just seemed to have an evil streak in him. He was very cruel with animals, too. We had a few fowls that used to run round the place in other people's gardens sometimes, because we were in the country. Ralph never used to do anything to our fowls, but if the fowls of other people used to come into our garden, he would shoot their legs and they used to wobble around. He got great joy out of that.

It was the same with dogs too. We had a female dog and when other dogs came after her round our house, Ralph would lure

them into the bedroom. He took the mattress off the bed and made a sort of hok with it with the bed and two corners of the wall. He put our dog on a lead and pulled her into the room, getting all the dogs to follow her. Then he would block the dogs between the bed and the wall with the mattress at the opening. He would lash them and whip them, and he forced me to watch. When I tried to stop him from whipping the dogs, he used to whip me with the lash.

(My father was the same, though. He couldn't stand animals. When we were small we found a little crow that had hurt its wing and we put it in the bathroom. We had a puppy too, and my father kicked the puppy over the fence. He wouldn't allow us to have any animals.)

When I was a little girl, Ralph tried to do things to me, and after he had done it he would beat me. I never really understood what he was doing until I grew up. I could not really understand then that he was trying to have sexual intercourse with me. When I was very young I had a fear of this brother. As I grew up I ignored the fear as much as I could. To be frank, both my brothers tried to have sexual relations with me when I was a child. I never really realised until I grew up what they had been trying to do to me, but I have never forgotten their behaviour to me. It has been in my mind all the time. When I realised what they had done to me, I felt bitter towards them. But I never showed it. I never referred to what they did to me.

But I hate Ralph for it! I was discussing his behaviour to me with my sister the other day, when we were talking about our brothers. I told her what it was that he did to me. I said, "I was just thinking how terrible Ralph and John were when we were small; how they used to get hold of me and try to do things to me."

My sister said to me, "They've still got that streak in them", but she would not explain to me what she meant. She just said, "Well, Ralph's got little girls of his own now, you know." That remark of hers horrified me. It made me think... My sister does not like to make a remark or an accusation unless she has actually witnessed an incident. One can be sure she has definite evidence, if she speaks about anything. One night when I was seventeen this sister took me to a dance, a small dance in a tiny little hall in the country. It was the first dance I had ever been to. I went into the room and because it was hot we sat down near the doorway. I was sitting on a bench with my back to the doorway. My brother came in from

round behind me, and pulled me down over the bench and through the door, dragging me on to the grass. He started to kick me. He said I was going round with prostitutes - that implied my sister. When my sister was pregnant my brother used to run after her on the streets shouting names after her and saying that he hoped her child would be born a cripple. (I don't know why he wanted to put that curse on her.)



When he came back from Italy after the war, my mother seemed to think that the war had played havoc with Ralph's nerves. I don't think he was affected by it at all. However Mammy was always making excuses for him. When he got back he said, "Oh, yes, I've got it all down in my black book the way my sisters carried on when I was out of the country. I had all my spies out."

I mean, people don't just say things like that to other people. I got angry, and when I told him to get out of my room, he said: "I know about the illegitimate children my sisters have had." He said he knew how many children I'd got in a home, and goodness knows what else he said.

So I said, "Get out of my room! I'm not interested in talking to you." I put his behaviour down to the fact that he had been out and might have had a few drinks. But he wasn't drunk, and I hated him more than ever after what he said.

At that time, I had a very small room in my mother's house. It was like a pantry. My mother had bought a very small bedroom suite to fit into this tiny room. I gave my mother money to pay the instalments on the suite. When Ralph got back, he suddenly claimed this furniture. He said it was his. "I want that suite, because I am going to get married."

I said, "But it isn't yours, Ralph. Mammy bought it for me."

My mother said she had bought it for him. She knew very well I had given her the money to pay for it, but I didn't argue. I just took my clothes out of the drawers. I didn't want to start any argument with him because he had just come back from the war, and Mammy was so pleased that he had returned. I didn't want to upset her. Until to-day Mammy is still covering up for him. She still

protects him. She does that because she is worried she had to send the boys into orphanages.

On three occasions when I was young I left home and went to stay with my sister, but my mother threatened me that if I didn't come back home, she would have me put into an institution. So I went back home each time, because I did not want to be put into an institution.

In spite of all he has done to me, my mother never did think there was anything wrong with Ralph, except for his drinking. I suppose my mother thinks the two boys have to be forgiven all their wrong-doing, because when they were children she was forced to put them into a Home. That is why she thought so much of them afterwards. They were put into a Salvation Army Home, and they always ran away from all the orphanages they were in.

I wasn't any happier after my marriage. When my husband was giving me the injections for my psoriasis after he first met me, he did not try to make love to me before we were married. I find it impossible to explain why I married him. It may sound foolish to say so, but I thought, first and foremost, of a scheme I had to adopt two children. It was just an idea of mine to adopt two little war orphans. That was a great longing I had. Then somebody told me I couldn't adopt children unless I was married. So I had to get married, and the sailor seemed a very nice type of person. Even my mother and my "father" respected him very much, and he seemed very keen on the idea himself too. I explained to him that I didn't like sex at all, probably because of what my brother did when I was small.

After we got married, my husband liked reading to me. He was fond of Freud and Kinsey and he insisted on reading them aloud. When I asked him to explain a word I did not understand, he said, "Well, I'll show you." And then he used to demonstrate different, disgusting methods. He was always wanting to demonstrate when I asked him to explain anything. I think he had a highly-sexed mind. I told him I didn't like his behaviour. I often said to him I would go to sleep in my sister's room. Then he always told me that if I stepped out of our bedroom door, he would phone for a taxi and go back to his ship. I didn't want to let him do that because the phone was outside my "dad's" room, and if he picked up the receiver he would wake up my "dad". I felt sorry for the old man. He was like a father to me, and he had to be up at half past four every morning. So I always used to say to my husband, "All right, I'll stay in the room." Otherwise, he would have picked up the phone.

And I think my mother felt obliged to him in some way, because whenever there was a meat shortage during the war he always brought meat from his ship, and he used to bring my mother presents - flowers, and so on. Even "Dad" admired him very much. Just before he died he said, "Of all the people you brought home, Henry was the best. I am very sorry he turned out the way he was."

Henry brought Mother lots of flowers, and she became very fond of him. She could never stand drink at any time, even at Christmas, and so we never used to have any liquor in our house, particularly because of my father being a drunkard too. But Henry used to come in, staggering drunk from whisky, and my mother used to swear to me that he had not had anything to drink. I'd say to her, "Mummy, I'm asking you, is Henry drunk, or isn't he?" Then he'd blow right into my mother's face and she would say, "I can't smell it."

I can't understand why she insisted that he did not drink, because you could smell him, and you could see from his appearance that he had been drinking. He had very, very blue eyes, and they used to get very bloodshot when he had had drink. He used to drink a lot of whisky, and Mummy used to stand up for him every time and say, "No, he hasn't had much to drink." I suppose she did that because she was obliged to him.

When our lodger died, the man I used to think of as my father, I couldn't believe it. I kept feeling that I was going to find everything was a horrible dream. I loved him very deeply. I have told you that when I was sixteen I wished to die, but I haven't told you yet that later on in life I took an overdose of sleeping tablets, because I was feeling very weary. I slept for two days. A few weeks ago I thought of killing myself more definitely than I ever have before, but I didn't do anything about it. I know I was horribly sad when my "father" died, but I have no recollection of taking a lot of pills. I was very depressed and I wanted to die, but I have no recollection of putting the pills into my mouth.

There is nothing that I really want in life. I'd like to have a family in a way, but not with the world as it is to-day. That's why I wanted to adopt two children. Sometimes I don't think it's right to bring children into the world, but I would like to have a family, but I was disappointed when I had the miscarriage of my own baby, but now I am glad. I wouldn't be able to look after a baby now, because I am helping my mother.

I feel sorry for my mother. I do feel that she has had a hard life. I try to give her as much as I can, as far as money goes, and comfort, and so on. If I could help my mother more,

> then I'd be anxious to do everything I possibly could for her. I have no real desires of my own, and no ambitions in life. All I feel is that I want to help my mother. I don't think that I have any other purpose in life. I just let life go past as it is and that's all there is to it. I can't reach any higher than what I have done.

This woman claims she hates her father "for what he has done to my mother". She refrains from making any stand against her brother's cruelty "because it would hurt my mother." All her vitality is surrendered to a mother who refuses to recognize her own goodness and fails to reprimand her evil brother. Even after being abandoned by her psychopathic husband, she permits herself to express no condemnation of him . Although she does not reproach her mother(who refused to accept the evidence of her husband's depravity), without cynicism she believes her mother encouraged the marriage because she got gifts of meat. No resentment is expressed with this allegation of her mother's brutal materialism. If she permitted herself to respond to her mother at all, it would have to be with recrimination and dislike. Instead, to avoid this huge sin, she stifles all her energies and assuages her inner guilt by sacrificing herself totally to the mother. This uneasy compromise was shattered when the elderly lodger, the substitute father, died. With his death was reactivated the unadmitted desolation she must have felt when her own father abandoned her. Although recognizing how poorly her mother had used her, she had devastated her life by service to her mother. Rather than allowe her resentment to escape, all her ambitions have been dedicated to her mother, the one who constantly failed her. The lodger's death recalled the sad terror she had felt when her father had abandoned her, but still she clung to her facade of devotion to the mother. Instead of showing aggression to her reprehensible mother, she reaffirmed her intention to serve her mother. Rather than utter even a single word of reproach, she chose in her despair to attack herself.

Life is a dismal and tortured experience for persons who are abject and timid in their social relationships, and who consider themselves fit only for submissive roles. For them to resort to suicidal behaviour is commonplace.

Chapter 13

THE MEANING OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

Any person seen after he has behaved suicidally, if he is heard with patience, will trace in his own life the importance of the factors described in the foregoing pages. Schoolboy, physician, delinquent or artisan's wife, each if given the chance will show how the origins of self-destructiveness lie in the earliest years.

A Dutch woman aged thirty-four years was brought to hospital comatose after swallowing a large number of sedative tablets. On recovering she appeared severely depressed. In the course of prolonged interviewing she came to see her neurotic trends with objectivity and made a splendid readjustment. She had been bitterly resentful that her father had neglected her, favouring her beautiful and clever elder sister. However, in adulthood she did not admit that her resentment of her father persisted, instead inflicting herself with melancholic ideas. In addition, she transferred onto her husband the feelings she had for her father and, with her depressive symptoms, she punished her husband for her groundless notions that he neglected her. Her husband explained they had been married eleven years. "I went through the whole war: it was terrible. If another war should come the Russians will occupy all the countries from Norway to Spain. I know what happened to the young girls in Berlin. I would hate my daughters to be in Holland if the next war comes. But even so I am prepared to go back to Holland if my wife wishes it, although it will mean giving up my good job and our beautiful home. There has been a great change in my wife; her mental state has deteriorated very much. But, I must say, even before we left Holland my wife found it difficult to make friends with others - I noticed that. Our marriage seems to have failed hopelessly: we used to be happy, physically as well, but now my wife seems to have no more interest."

The woman looked sad and reproachful. She insisted she should be left alone. She said she did not wish to talk: it would have been far better if she had not been meddled with. She still intended ending her life, and she did not believe anything could be done to her that would cause her to change her mind.

I have a personality which is very reticent, so it is difficult for me to speak of my troubles. It is not possible for me to speak to a stranger, and in my affairs I know you have only a business interest, so to speak. It is not in my nature to speak much.

I don't want you to think that my trouble is merely a conflict between husband and wife - although that certainly does come into the picture. Your examination cannot be complete if you ignore my husband, if you take no notice of the part he has played in causing me to feel as I do now. Even if I improve, if my husband stays the same, the position won't be altered. Do you understand what I mean? I am not blaming my husband... Indeed, I have a very fine husband, but nothing in the world is perfect, is that not true?

During these past months my interest in my house and family has diminished. I am amazed at the change in me. If I wanted to do something in the past, if I had any sort of plan, I would press on, persist, until I had done what I intended. If I was making a dress, for example, I would go on with it even till three o'clock at night -I had to finish it before I went to sleep. But now nothing matters to me any more. When my husband returns in the evenings, he seems to me merely the man I married. He, like the Native boy who brings the milk, happens to be one of the only two adults I see during the whole of each day.

My husband leaves the house in the morning at the same time as the children. He comes home at half past five; we eat and the children go to bed. Then my husband takes up a newspaper! I don't quarrel about <u>that</u> any more... I let that pass! When he lays it aside he says he must go to sleep. I can see he is tired in the evening and not in the mood for conversation, but can I help that? Surely he has responsibilities to me as well as to his employers. I am a person and I also have my needs. We have always differed in the respect that my husband takes no interest in cultural matters. In Holland I had friends in company with whom I could indulge my cultural interests. Now I find I am far removed from everything. I have no friends with whom I can talk. When I read a book I can discuss it with nobody. I try to encourage my husband to read, but he cannot manage more than two pages at a time. I find it impossible to believe that he ever gets any reading done! So how can I possibly discuss books with him? At half past nine he says he's tired. Then I give him coffee. At ten o'clock he goes to sleep.



It seems there is just nothing for us to talk about. If I ask him something, "Have you heard this or that?" - then he just stares open-mouthed at me and says, "Hey?" When we receive a letter from Holland we read it together; but if I happen to speak of something mentioned in the letter three days after we received it, my husband looks at me as if he had never heard before of what I am discussing. It irritates me so! I become angry and make a short, provoking retort. There are other things about him that annoy me also... Soon after our marriage I asked him not to sit sleeping in his chair. He promised me, he promised me: He would not sit and sleep like that in the evenings. Now I say to him, "You can sleep in your bed from ten o'clock until morning. In the evenings I would like to converse with you."

He answers, "But I'm tired, can't you understand?"

Then I say, "Well, then I'd better go back to Holland."

In Amsterdam I could go and see paintings. There is such a richness of culture. I know I can't expect the same privileges in a young country like this, but if you have seen the Cape Town gallery you have to go a thousand miles to see another collection of pictures. And then I have no personal friends in this country. There are a few Afrikander women who live about me. When I visited them we invariably discussed a cake recipe and chickens. Then we talked for a while about our children, and all conversation was over. You can't talk of the music of Bach with these women. I hold them in high regard, believe me - I don't despise them in the least. In many respects they are wiser than I am. But the fact remains that when I have discussed egg-laying once I would like the topic to be set aside. Of course, my husband loves his

home country too. But books and music and paintings are not so important to him. His nature is different.

Our marriage was happy. But now our sexual relationship satisfies my husband but not me. I don't know if this is because I look down on my husband a little. I know it is wrong to do so. I do not have the right, and yet I must confess I do it. I feel our sexual failure is important. I am sorry I can't put into words what disturbs me. I can only say: There is that in me which does not permit me to let my husband touch me. Something prevents me, but I can't bring the reasons for my coldness into my understanding.

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The war brought much trouble to us, and I felt bitter about it. But I think we can leave the war out of this discussion. It has no connexion with this illness of mine. Only I do want to mention that it was at the worst time of the war that my second child was born, and then I felt that my husband was a great disappointment to me. Both my children I have had with great difficulty, spending almost all nine months of my pregnancy flat on my bed. My husband gave me everything that he could find to eat, and he had to chase about the country searching for food. We lived in dread because the Germans often came with search-parties to the house. Nevertheless, in those days I still had a great interest in life and a desire to keep my house clean.

My little girl was born in hospital. The night before my husband had gone from me at seven-thirty, because by law anybody found on the street after eight o'clock was liable to be shot. But the curfew was lifted at four-thirty in the morning, so if he wished my husband could have been back with me at five o'clock. When he did return, the little girl was already born. My husband had badly wanted a boy. For my part I found it good that I had another little girl. The nurse asked my husband, calling up the conventional picture of the harassed husband, "You were probably very nervous last night!"

"Oh, no," he said, "not at all - I slept very pleasantly all night."

I knew it! I knew, so it was not necessary for him to brag. I know perfectly well how very much he loved his sleep. But... I mean, the child born that morning was the result of love between the two of us... I could not understand how my husband slept so well during my labour. I do not want

to judge him harshly. I know his constitution has a great need of sleep. But if I were a man and my wife in labour, I imagine I would not be able to put my head down on my pillow in peace. I don't expect my husband to suffer in sympathy when I suffer, but it does surprise me that he was not even uneasy! When I heard him give that answer to the nurse I wondered, for the first time, if he really cared for me.

The nagging memory of this behaviour stayed with me. I knew it was dangerous to push such an enormous thought away from me, that it was far better to consider and discuss with myself what it was that was in my mind; to my husband, of course, I did not mention my grudge. But my husband was dragged under its influence. One day I surprised him with two tickets to the Matthew Passion. He came with me to hear it, and he admitted: "It is very beautiful, but it does not touch me as it does you." When I came back from such a concert the music still sang for days inside me, and I tried to keep it for as long as possible within me. I could not bear to have the radio playing, in case it should interrupt the music I was thinking about. Naturally such behaviour is ridiculous, even though it made me happy. It is of course ridiculous to expect your husband not to turn on the radio. I made no mention to him of these feelings, yet I had a sense of antipathy to him.

He comes of a very nervous family. His grandmother was insane. Some of his aunts were in mental institutions. Even some of his brothers and sisters are not absolutely well-adjusted. I did not know this when I married my husband. I do not think it would have stopped me if I had known, for I loved him. But perhaps I would have said: "Should we make children?" In any case, our children are sound. At least, I hope so. I really do not think there is anything abnormal about my children.

I know one has to be very careful when a younger child is born, not to cause jealousy in the older. I told my elder daughter that another child was coming. I explained to her that the baby would be not only mine and my husband's, but hers also. I read books and attended a course on child management. But my husband made no such study. I was the one who educated the children and helped them to grow. Although my husband loves both his children, he shows excessive love for the younger child. I do all I can to have the other child not notice this. I honestly try not to have any favouritism appear. But the younger child is quick and bright and she is very pretty. (It is so difficult for a mother to see these things objectively.) Still, while the younger child is very much more lovely, the elder is not

ugly - she has a nice child's face. And the nature of the younger child is so much more pleasing and open, like her father's nature. I feel when people come to our house it is always the younger child who attracts attention.

I understand my plain daughter very well. I myself suffered as she does when I was small. My elder sister was clever and beautiful. She looked like a film star. She learned easily and well, and she was polite and warm. She was not reserved. She was the elder, so if new dresses became necessary she was the one to get them. My parents were not rich, and I could always be handed down the dresses which had become too small for my sister. My sister was musical. (I love music but I can't play myself at all). So, the older daughter being musical, she must get the music lessons. I could merely hear and find the music beautiful. When she played I felt: There is a wrong note, or: That passage is faulty. I often said to myself when she was practising, "That is a faulty passage." Sometimes it was, but I suppose I would have said so even if there were no error. The trouble was my sister could play and I couldn't.

I was very average - not mediocre, but in no way brilliant. My parents had many guests in the house, and it was always the older daughter who was noticed, not me. My father often made the error of showing how greatly pleased he was with his elder daughter. He was very disappointed when I was born, that I was a girl and not a boy. He took little notice of me since the time of my birth.

My sister was in the foreground everywhere we went. She was lovely and friendly and caused happiness. I was shut up and withdrawn. I gave little of myself to other people. (The funny thing is that I never felt hatred for my sister. Life has treated her very harshly. She is most unhappily married, to a man we warned her against, and she has no children. And to think she had every possible gift...)

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It has come to me that the conflict between husband and wife is not an important matter. Such matters I think we can leave aside. They are too small. I think we'll leave my husband out of our discussion. What I have complained about him is the truth, and yet it is not the truth. I must look in another direction to find the reasons for my unhappiness. I don't know in what direction. I have been thinking: is all this illness of mine due to anxiety which I have experienced? But

I don't know what stage of my life is important...

The thought keeps coming up in my mind: it would have been better for me if I were in the cemetery at this moment. It would have been better if I had succeeded in killing myself. Though I have fought against this thought over and over, the idea troubles me.Even if I conquer my need for death now, what is to prevent it from bursting out again in the future?

There is one ray of light for me, one helpful idea. Can it be possible that I am trying to punish my husband for something? I'm very sad to think there is any likelihood of that. Forgive me for weeping, I let very few tears flow from my eyes. I can't live if I continue to be so sad. The world appears so dark to me that life seems not worth the trouble of going on. I cannot believe that this darkness will ever pass.

It worries me fearfully to remember when I was depressed all through these past months how touchy I was, and what an unpleasant person I was to live with. You will realize what a dreadful decision I had to make, to decide to kill myself and leave my children behind. It shocks me to see the harm I was ready to do to my children. Almost every night I used to have awful dreams: I see my children run over by motor-cars, even to the last detail! I have never really seen an accident in which anybody was injured, but I can picture every incident of the motor-accidents in which I dream my children die.

I had very few expectations of South Africa. When I arrived here my house shone. It was spotless. I spent every day dusting the same chair and washing the same cup. I watched myself doing the same little chores every day. During the first few years my little girl was still at home with me, and we played together while I was doing the housework. She lived in the fairy tales I told her.

Then the little girl went to school and that is where my whole illness began. For a few days I felt that I was freer without her. Then came the feeling of isolation, of loneliness. I realized that nobody ever came to visit me, or even to look at me. Do you know what I do? I flee from my work into daydreams. To get away from the chores, I go on imaginary trips. I enjoy to think that I am terribly poor, and that I start with ten fowls and ultimately build up a great chicken farm. Or that we haven't a house at all and start our married life with two pieces of corrugated iron, until the house takes shape and grows

bigger, and in the end we have all we could wish for. There are still other daydreams I could mention. I imagine that I work in a poor district, labouring for the good of the under-privileged; then I achieve prominence, of course. I build up my fancies, usually helping others - not for gain but for fulfilment of myself.

During the week I was alone throughout each day. Because I never took any trouble, naturally nobody particularly was eager to come and visit me. When at ten o'clock each morning my work was finished, when the coffee was ready on the stove (I am fond of coffee), although my commonsense told me I was behaving in a ridiculous fashion, how many times have I not earnestly watched from the window to see if nobody would alight from the bus to visit me! (A bus passes the door of our house each half hour). When the bus had passed I said to myself, "Oh, what nonsense! Who will ever come here to visit you?" I told myself other women have their work and their households. Yet every morning I had that great disappointment. Nobody came to visit me! At each half hour I watched the bus pass, and every time the bus passed and no friend alighted from it for me, the feeling returned to me: Nobody looks at me, nobody pays me attention. Now, in my adulthood, the feeling is within me that I experienced in my childhood! The situation is the same... It seems to me that time, years even, do not count, and that in my imagination I am behaving exactly as I did when I was a child. Time falls away... The present and the past are fitted together, I now realize. The fear and the longing of my childhood returned to me, and I wanted attention, even if I had to force it.

That feeling of not getting attention that is now in my marriage I also had when I was in school and also, doctor, from my father! I was small and weak. When I was nine I looked like a child of six. Even when I was sixteen I hid in a corner and still had no friends. I was scared I would be hurt and, like a tortoise, I hid myself away from other people. I felt I was not loved. It once again comes to the same old thing: I felt that no attention was ever paid me. I was just a child, and I found I was good for nothing. I had a great sense of inferiority. When I came out of school I sat alone and played some solitary game. I sat in a little corner and played my little games alone. My father often called me and gave me a rowing, saying it was very childish to daydream. But my mother said, "Oh, leave the child, if she finds pleasure in it!" I had no friends. I just kept myself sheltered. I was ugly; I was stupid. I was not lovable. Nobody thought of liking me. I thought : Far better for me to get sick and die.

In my young childhood there was certainly a great desire to be dead.

Perhaps I can give another clarification. It may be that this is very important. I thought of killing myself when I was fourteen years old. I really wanted to end my life then. I actually visualized my own funeral. Now that I have come to think of it, I can recall the importance my own death would confer on me.

Throughout my childhood I felt I was always in the second place. My mother did her best, but for my father I was only an ordinary, ugly child. A daughter wants her mother's love, but I never thought whether I wanted my father's ... I know that I hated my father for a very long time. We were bitter enemies. I don't know how early in my life my hatred began. After me there were no more children, and I was a girl. Later my mother told me my father had hoped I would be a boy. He was bitterly disappointed. I could not help it, and my mother could not help it. But the man never got over his disappointment.

I can remember vividly how my father and mother fought when I was young. They argued. Yes! Suddenly I can remember many things... Many a night I walked in the street with my mother, not daring to go back into the house. My sister stayed with my father. My mother was very proud - too proud to go to spend the night with her own parents and so admit her husband was unkind to her. Throughout the night sometimes we sat in the small summer-house in our garden. Always frequent fighting! I can remember one most awful incident. When we had walked out of the house my mother remembered that she had forgotten her money. So she asked us children if we would go into the house where my father was sleeping and get the money. My sister dared not. Then my mother asked: Would I go? I can remember myself going up the stairs in the dark. It was so terrible, because I was very frightened. With great anxiety in me (my father was lying asleep on the bed) I opened the wardrobe and took the money out. As I went back I could hardly walk for my shivering. I was ten years old then.

I never thought till to-day to wonder why my mother exposed me to such things.

We children, many a time, could hear my father quarrelling. I thought he would murder me. He would take a knife and murder me, I thought with my childish mind. But nothing like that ever happened.

I and my father fought. We stood as enemies against each other. We fought over many small things, but particularly because I often thought my father wasn't mannerly enough. That,

of course, was a ridiculous reason. The enmity existed until my marriage, when my husband kept saying my father was quite a decent man. Now I have a very big matter to raise. When the thought of it came to me last night, the discovery of what I am going to say to you, I jumped in bed! I was shocked. I was terrified to go off to sleep in case I should wake up in the morning and find my head empty.

When I decided to kill myself I told myself that life was so dull, so without prospect, that nothing was worth the trouble. But it was not anxiety that I had within me. It was something very much uglier. The whole thing is that I wanted attention, and I thought I wasn't getting enough. My reasons now are the same as they were when I thought of suicide in childhood. You will understand when I was young I did not think of those matters consciously - in fact, I really only perceived them last night. But the thoughts were lying active in my mind. Now I am going to say an ugly but an important thing. I decided after a terrible struggle to leave my children behind and end my life. But festering in my mind was the thought: By God! Even if it is with my death I will force people to pay attention to me. They will <u>have</u> to come to my funeral! I will die for it, but they will have to give me attention!

Is it not pathetic? I thought deep down in my mind, without ever admitting it to myself, that I would be able to gain the interest of people if I died.

When my parents fought, there was within me the uneasy fear that a child has, that something is going to happen and she does not know what. But I have already said it is not anxiety which has made me ill. Rather my mind has been turning to the way I hated my father. The hatred itself is not important; what matters is the feeling beneath that I wanted my father to love me, and he never gave me his attention. It was always my sister who he took notice of. I remember now (although I have worked so hard to persuade myself to forget these little things) small instances which gave me so much misery! At the end of the school term he would say to my sister, "Marie, go and fetch your report." My sister's report was always so brilliant it was read out by the teacher to the whole school. When we came home I was shivering. My father would call us and give my sister a guelder, but to me he gave only a quarter. And that quarter burnt my hand, so that I had a strong urge to throw it in his face. But my manners and my fear of him prevented me. In my degradation I tried to push back from people so that nobody would see me.

My father did not pay me attention! I know now that is why I hated him so. My father hurt me so... I loved him, and he ignored me. After all these years, is it possible that I have been reacting on the man who happens to be in my vicinity, my husband, to punish my father? Now that I am an adult with an individuality of my own, I find it is no longer necessary to hate my father - now I find him by no means a bad person.

Last night when I went to sleep I was almost glad that I attempted suicide. It seems to me now that my misery is over. I even laughed this morning, out loud, and I can assure you it has been many months since I laughed. I understand so much now that I had never even thought about before. I don't think I would ever have been able to give my attention to these matters: had they been discussed I would probably have regarded them as silly.

But I am puzzled. If my mind is good enough for me to come to the conclusions I have discussed with you (and I know with all my mind how true they are), why could I be so stupid as to think, seriously, of ending my life? Why did I sit at home, so lonely and sad, watching the buses pass, and find myself unable to conquer my feeling of unworthiness sufficiently to go and pay somebody a visit? I can hardly forgive myself when I think of the suffering I have caused my husband. How unfair to think my husband has had to bear the brunt of my attitude to my father! In a sense I know that I can't blame myself, but I must discuss with my husband my awareness of the pain I have caused him. What a shock it has been, like a lightning stroke, to realize how egocentric I have been, and how all my energy was turned onto myself.

1. THE SUICIDAL ACTION

From the psychological standpoint suicide is very complex. The occurrence of suicidal behaviour in a person carries implications which ramify through his entire personality. Furthermore, the meaning of suicide can only become clear if the total life history of the individual is taken into account. Suicide is merely one event happening in the life of a person, and has been predisposed to by factors operating long beforehand: the roots of suicide are to be found in childhood.

Suicide is a self-destructive action, but is still an act of aggression. The aggressor becomes his own victim because he has always been too timid for strong relationships with others, and because he has a conscience cruel enough to instil in him needs

of punishment. The deeper emotional life of the successful suicide can seldom be known; it is from study of those who fail to achieve suicide, either on account of medical intervention or of their own half-heartedness, that most information about self-destructive behaviour can be obtained. Even those who succeed in dying may have betrayed that they still had a furtive half-hope of living. The suicidal individual had damaging relationships with inadequate parents during childhood, and in later life will have failed to achieve satisfying associations with others.

2. THE URGE TO DEATH

The conscious existence of most people appears dominated by desires to go on living. In social relations emphasis is placed on participation with others and ambitious drives. The wish to live is affirmed by personal animation, affection for others, creative occupation and interest in the surrounding world. Death is served by opposite tendencies: isolation of self, timidity, resentment of others, aggressive behaviour and passivity. The drift to death is strongest, and life most denied, in those who feel hatred and contain aggression. The suicidal person turns away from murder to attack himself because he has not yet surrendered all hope of being loved. The parent forbids the child to express his anger; the suicidal attempt is an aborted attack upon the parent, and also a self-punishment for nursing aggression. When the suicidal action takes place, the death drive in the individual will become plain for all to see. But long beforehand he will have shown a low vitality, a shrinking from participation with others, a constriction of effort and a tense concern with self.

3. THE PRECIPITATING FACTORS

External factors in the environment of the self-destructive person are seldom adequate to explain why he behaved suicidally. Poverty, sickness, social disgrace, setbacks in courtship, death of a parent or spouse, etc., serve only to activate inner rage which has long been rampant in the fantasy life. Each person, in large measure, creates his own environment, so the individual can often be seen to have contributed actively to the predicament which called forth his suicidal behaviour. A suicidal reaction to catastrophe thus depends on the psychological constitution of the individual; the reasons for suicide derive not from recent disappointment, but from youthful for-

motive relationships in the parental home. Suicidal behaviour is a signal that although he has continued to struggle with his environment, the individual has brought out of his parents' home emotional dilemmas which he affords fresh expression during his adult life.

So, timid and spoiled for ordinary social relations, the person later to behave suicidally appears docile and submissive, but in private (often refraining from self-recognition of it) he nurses anger he has brought out of childhood. Excuse for social expression of this anger is provided him by the many factors the popular mind readily accepts as causes for suicide.

The individual has long believed there is no comfortable place for him in the community, and his feeling of self-abnegation grows intensified in his isolation. Civilization has increased loneliness by herding men in impersonal cities. Moreover, the dissipation of traditional ethical standards has encouraged some men to feel, as increasing restrictions hem them in, that they are free to dispose of their own lives.

4. THE PERSON

Personality factors are crucial in those attempting suicide. While a constant personality-type is not found, certain outstanding trends are nearly always present. Of these most noticeable is withdrawal, a trend plainly evident in ordinary interpersonal relationships. Suicide occurs in unassertive, inhibited individuals. In spite of their wish to be loved, and their need of self-expression, they have come to impose rigorous restraints upon themselves. The person later to be suicidal may permit himself few social gratifications; he may complain uncomprehendingly how much he desires to serve others, and yet how unappreciated and solitary he remains Before the suicidal action takes place his politeness and eagerness at work may have impressed onlookers how adequate to life's demands he seemed; only those close to him will have seen how he restricted his social participation.

5. HIS VIEW OF THE WORLD

Although the suicidal person is occupied more by inner conflicts than by realistic problems, he does land himself in social predicaments: these occur to him repeatedly because of his inappropriate view of the world. The individual has failed to assimilate the attributes and restrictions and liberties which are conferred on him as a member of the community. His social maladjustment is the outcome of defective learning, resulting

because the child missed being reared in a stable home with two responsible parents. Loss of a parent by death or divorce often causes the environment to press too unkindly upon the developing child, and violent, unhappy parents often deceive him of what he may expect from the community. His view of the world was formed during his early years, and his expectation of human behaviour derived in large measure from the example provided by his parents. Because his contact with his cultural climate had been impaired he fails to learn what patterns of behaviour will bring him fulfilment. He has not learnt sufficiently accurately the usages and customs of his fellows, or recognized what are his rights and privileges in the community. His ideas and beliefs are out of harmony with those prevalent in the community. He appears naive, and sometimes frankly withdrawn into fantasy.

The view of the world is continually added to from infancy; at adolescence the individual makes major adjustments in his relationship to his milieu and, just as many forms of disturbed behaviour occur at this time, his despair of the world may be exteriorized in a suicidal action. Or he may weather adolescence and find subterfuges to shield him from the community, so that for many years he may give a spurious impression of social participation, bolstering his uneasy position in the community with placating attitudes. A fresh blow may then make him actively suicidal.

6. PARENTAL STRIFE

Suicidal behaviour is related to unhappiness which existed in the parental home. Any person who behaves suicidally will recall his childhood with distress. In homes where the parents are at variance, tensions between parent and child become inevitable, exaggerating and consolidating the normal but transient developmental antipathies. The wrangling of his parents evokes in the child anxiety, timidity and mistrust of others. Only too often it can be traced in suicidal persons how their significant adult relationships have repeated the pattern of their uneasy relationships with their parents. It may be predicted that any person who attempts suicide will sooner or later, without being prompted in that direction, dwell on parents unhappily married to each other and on his own resentment of one of his parents.

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7. PROTRACTED DEPENDENCE ON PARENTS

Suicidal persons have not been able in adult life to loosen the bonds which hold them to their parents. The continuing allegiance indicates that rivalries have not been resolved. Their dependence may seem all the more weird when the implicated parent has been dead a long time. Such exaggereted filial devotion is always suspect, and represents an overt manoeuvre by the child to subdue his fantasies of unexpressed resentment. Because suicidal behaviour occurs at times of personality disorganization, the individual may then reveal what he may never have suspected himself: his outburst of aggression, though inflicted upon himself, in the imaginative life was directed against the parent to whom he was so grimly bound.

8. PARENTAL DEPRIVATION

Significantly often a person who behaves suicidally will have lost a parent before adolescence. Loss of a parent will expose the child during formative years to environmental strains which might have been avoided had the parent not died. (There is often some reserve in the affection of a foster-parent). Bowlby[55] holds that psychopathic character may follow in cases where children suffer maternal deprivation before five years of age; after intense emotions of rage and despair they organize their social relations on a new pattern in which no particular human being is sought after and loved. The parental deprivation which appears to me to predispose to later suicidal benaviour is that which occurs in later childhood: the child longs for social relations but, bound up in resentment of the depriving parent, does not have his affective tendencies free for adult relationships.

A personality is affected not so much by actual blows as by the individual's conscious and unconscious reactions to them. When he is deprived of a parent the child is cheated of the opportunity to grow through his filial role to maturity. Dwelling on his emotional ties to the lost parent, the child continues to deceive himself he had been crippled permanently through being deprived of love.

Death or divorce are the literal modes of parental deprivation , but a child can consider himself abjectly deprived through being sent away to boarding school, or being handed to the temporary care of relations. Moreover, a child may feel himself severely deprived by a parent with whom he is in daily contact, if that parent is brusque.

When one parent dies, the child is exposed more vulnerably to the surviving one. No matter how painful such a distorted relationship, he may not bring himself to surrender it later in his life. In a clinging marriage he may attempt to recreate the association with a lost parent.

9. THE CONCEPT OF SELF

Persons who attempt suicide will be found to have imposed fierce restraints upon themselves. They suffer under their own restricting, overgrown consciences. Their outgoing emotions and activities are severely censored and usually suppressed. The person later to be suicidal will fail to achieve satisfaction in the company of others. Unlike normal individuals, he will not permit himself feelings of lenience; he holds unalterably to his malign view of himself he has brought out of childhood. In part, his suicidal behaviour will assuage his everyday anxiety, through punishing suitably so iniquitous a person as himself. However, before he becomes suicidal he will devote himself to rage, which is kept secret by his harsh conscience. His social personality is weak and inhibited, and he despairs of being accepted in spite of the assiduity with which he abases himself and tries to serve others.

The potentially-suicidal person is the epitome of social meekness. Acquiescent and placatory, he retains always the dread, "What will the neighbours say?" He ruthlessly watches himself for any indiscretion. It is because he considers himself mortified in the eyes of society that he inflicts harm upon himself. His dilemma he has brought out of childhood, and is poignantly dependent on cultural conditions: the parents say he must obey them, and they they go on further to prohibit him threateningly from attending to his sexual desires. A great timidity grows in him, a hesitation in association with others, lest they find in him the evil his parents so dreaded.

10. THE FANTASY LIFE

The docile demeanour of the suicidal person masks an exuberant fantasy life. In secret underneath his timidity ramify aggressive desires. Suicidal behaviour can only be understood if the fantasies of anger or revenge are perceived which motivate the individual's adult strivings. He himself may not recognize his powerful inclination to revenge himself by doing injury; indeed, his conscience so strenuously represses his social participation, rendering him meek and acquiescent,

exactly to keep in check his inner aggression. He may strengthen his loneliness with fantasies ludicrously incapable of realization, clearly derived from childhood, when he had not yet formed an adequate grasp of reality and when his parents, with their admonitions, goaded him to construct his conscience.

Only in nightmares or neurotic symptoms or uncontrolled outbursts may he have manifested his anger. But when the time for suicide arrives, earlier, more childish behaviour will receive frank expression. Then the individual may permit himself to rage against a parent or associate; perhaps threats of murder may actually break from him. That he attacks himself and not the frustrating associate is again an outcome of his stern conscience forbidding social assertion.

11. MENTAL DISTURBANCE

Suicidal behaviour may occur as a manifestation of emotional disturbance of all types and severity; the person behaving suicidally may be relatively normal psychologically in rare instances, or neurotic or psychotic or psychopathic. Thus suicide does not belong with any particular nosological variety of mental disturbance.

Its classical association with depressive psychosis can no longer be accepted, and was the result of biased emphasis. It has been overlooked until recently how commonly suicidal behaviour occurs as an early manifestation of schizophrenia, or during the course of schizophrenic illness. This study has demonstrated how often it is that suicidal behaviour is an expression of psychoneurosis.

The view cannot be supported that suicidal behaviour is a characteristic reaction of the psychopathic personality. That some suicidal persons are psychopathic is certain, but those who have an extreme notion of the frequency of this association would appear to have expanded their concept of psychopathy to meaningless dimensions. An argument often advanced to link suicide with psychopathy is that violent outbursts of aggression (of which suicide is certainly one) characterize the psychopathic personality. The fallacy is obvious: the suicidal outburst is usually the one aggressive expression in a career distinguished by timidity. An even more important difference seems to me to lie in the nature of the conscience. The psychopath, incapable of affection, is irresponsible and careless of the effect his antisociability has on others.

The suicidal person is entirely different. He has an excessively restrictive conscience. Anxious to be pleasing to others (on the social plane), he chooses to hurt himself rather than disturb even slightly those associated with him.

It is sometimes argued further that suicidal persons express hatred of a parent (or other close associate) when they are behaving suicidally, and that to have conscious, murderous attitudes to a dear one an individual must, in most cases, be psychopathic if he is not psychotic. (In psychoneurotic persons such resentment against a parent usually is uncovered only with prolonged personality exploration). The error here lies in forgetting the emotional upheaval of which suicide is but a part. A profound personality disintegration occurs at the time suicide is attempted, so that feelings and ideas are made manifest which the individual had not before allowed to manifest in his social existence.

12. EFFECTS OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR

By his suicide the individual in part means to astonish those near to him; this is especially evident in impulsive, perfunctory suicidal attempts. However, such domestic gains are counteracted by the effect the suicidal attempt has to shock friends and make employers chary. Upon the suicidal individual himself his attempt has important repercussions. He has now declared openly his hurt dismay at life, and proclaimed his inadequacy to exist calmly among other men.

Following his suicidal attempt, the individual may be aware of new energy, experiencing a lightening after being near death. It is as if he considers he has earned the right at last to some self-indulgence, to some assertion of his desire By self-injury he has placated, perhaps forever, the insistent conscience; he has atoned for his childhood sinfulness and considers himself free to enjoy the solaces available to ordinary men. Although his suicidal behaviour was undeniably an antisocial aggression, and in his fantasy life carried implications of murder, the aggression cannot be regarded as wholly destructive. It was the emotional force with which, however clumsily, the individual broke out of the angry thrall of childhood. While he sought death, he was also taking a liberating, life-demanding step. It is for this reason that psychological therapy is especially fruitful at the time of suicidal behaviour, and should never be withheld.

On the other hand, the individual may recover from his suicidal attempt with fresh horror at his bravado. His action has only increased his guilt and remorse. By way of it he may become floridly insane. But even then he may recover to a useful and productive future[56].

Thus a suicidal attempt may have no great effect on the individual, or it may be followed by more realistic engagement in the community, or further deterioration of the personality may ensue through increased dependance and withdrawal. The occurrence of a suicidal attempt does not carry constant prognostic value; the implications of it can be assessed only after consideration of the life in which it is an event. Of greatest significance is the stage the suicidal person has reached in the direction of maturity, what strengths and assets of personality he has, how wide a range of interests he has permitted himself. The underlying psychiatric state is of crucial relevance, for to some degree its course can be predicted from experience. Finally, the situation of the individual in the community is significant; if he is supported by considerate, helpful associates his future will be easier than if he were isolated.

The suicidal attempt, if proper treatment is offered, enabling the individual to explore the formative years of his life and to adopt more realistic attitudes, may be regarded as an important formative event in some lives.

13. THE MEANING OF SUICIDE

Although self-destructive, suicidal behaviour aims at reparation, the person behaving suicidally violently seeks to disrupt his inhibiting conscience, the frustrating behavioural code learnt from an inhibiting, perhaps unloving parent. Symbolically, therefore, by his suicide the self-destructive person is murdering the inhibiting parent. His suicide is a passionate demonstration in which external utterance is given to secret aggression, to hide which the individual had to constrain his entire personality. Then too, because it is a protest against abnegation, suicidal behaviour is not without an element of exhilaration: by inflicting pain upon some hateful and inhibiting aspect of his personality, the individual revenges his past misery. He had not been found lovable, and he atones by sacrifice of himself. Though he cannot contain his fury any longer in timid privacy, when it at last breaks forth he has too long suppressed his social assertiveness to find another victim than himself.

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INDEX

Abortion, 183
Adolescence, 93, 321
Aggression, 142, 163, 166, 169, 175, 288, 300, 318, 326
Aggressive outburst, 143, 149, 183
Agitation, 24, 31
Ambivalence, 38, 211
Amnesia, 151, 183, 302
Anger at parents, 21, 206
Animal killing, 39, 63, 99
Anxiety - infantile, 105, 177, 197
Assertion, 160, 269, 285, 288
Associates of the suicide, 38
Awe, 34

Bantu, 56
Behaviour, 55
Bereavement, 239
Bigamy, 20, 260
Biography, 11
Boarding school, 92, 102, 174, 242, 243
Bowel training, 95
Bravery, 6

Case material, 11
Castration fantasies, 27, 31, 205
Catatonia, 129
Catholicism, 21, 45, 76, 224, 279
Childhood, 318
Christian doctrine, 51
Church, 11
Coloured, 33
Conscience, 56, 89, 143, 163, 169, 262, 274, 283, 318
Constitutional factors, 55, 124
City life, 57, 61
Corrosives, 33
Cuckold, 255, 268

Daydreams, 149, 162
Death by suicide, 12, 24, 26, 269, 319
Death instinct, 7
Death wish, 6, 24, 41
Definition of suicide, 9
Deformity, 89
Dependent children, 13, 19, 200, 210, 286, 322
Depressive psychosis, 124, 126
Despair, 39, 194
Detribalization, 56
Disease, 93
Disgrace, 10
Disintegration - personality, 207, 210
Divorce, 193, 238, 239, 321
Dreams, 22, 26, 28, 80, 150
Drug addiction, 9, 226

Economic conditions, 78, 220
Emergence of resentment, 207
Environment, 55
Ethics of suicide, 8
Evidence - compilation of, 11
Excitement, 251, 289
Exhibitionism, 50

Fantasy, 2, 26, 29, 80, 149, 245, 282, 323
Filial hatred, see hatred
Filial loyalty, 215

Generalization about suicide, 5
Guilt, 174, 253, 281, 289, 300, 326

Halfheartedness in suicide, 44, 319
Hatred of parent, 207, 210, 240
Healing aspect of suicide, 325
Heridity, 11, 55, 124
Homosexuality, 108, 129, 226, 285

Illegitimacy, 33, 69, 111, 291
Illness 93
Immortality beliefs, 45
Individuality, 4
Inferiors - identification with, 200
Inhibition, 20
Insanity, 12
Introspection, 2, 149
Isolation, 62, 149, 252,288

Joyful pain, 50, 66

Law, 5, 11, 69
Life history, 4, 11, 63
Loneliness, 61
Love relationship, 81

Manic depression, 126
Marital subservience, 273
Marriage, 111, 116, 194, 273
Masculine protest, 170
Masochism, 303
Masturbation, 115, 153, 201, 279, 282
Maturity, 145
Means used for suicide, 33
Menial tasks, 281, 298
Mixed attitudes to parents, 21
Mourning, 230, 322
Murder, 78
Murder - suicide as substitute, 210, 325, 326
Murderous thoughts, 63, 74, 99, 183
Mutilation, 50, 66

Native, 33, 56, 286
Neurosis, 124, 143, 324
Normal personality, 145

Occupation, 100
Orphan, 89, 239

Parents - child's attachment to, 44, 190, 210, 211, 214, 322
- importance of, 14, 89, 159
- influence of, 13, 55, 57, 73, 80, 83, 219
Parent substitute, 122, 182
Parental abnormality, 83, 198, 210
- admonitions, 13, 210, 215
- coitus, 153, 177
-death, 215, 238
- deprivation, 219, 231, 244, 322
- restraint, 20
- power, 19, 44, 262
- stress, 89, 177, 194, 197, 321
Passive suicide, 7
Personality, 55, 78, 244, 322
Personality factors in suicide, 9, 78
Philosophical attitudes to suicide, 7
Placatoriness, 170, 175
Poverty, 14, 319
Prenatal bliss, 36
Prognosis, 54, 326
Psychiatric state, 324
Psycho-analysis, 208
Psychoneurosis, 124, 324
Psychopathic personality, 51, 137, 207, 322, 324
Psychosis, 65, 324

Race discrimination, 63, 70, 74
Rage, 37
Rationalization, 40, 55
Reality, 66, 73, 160
Refugee, 61
Resentment, 215, 288
Respect for parents - exaggerated, 210
Responsibility, 211, 218
Revenge, 273
Ritual, 34

Sacrificial ideas, 34, 215, 251
Sadism, 178, 198, 264, 290
Sadness, 37
Schizophrenia, 127
Self-image, 80, 323
Self preservation, 51
Sexual coldness, 44, 104, 225
Sexual development, 56, 204
Sexual revulsion, 82, 85, 106
Sexual timidity, 245
Sexuality, 105, 108
Sin, 289, 307

Socialization, 321
Social conditions, 11, 78, 323
- decree, 9
- factors in suicide, 8, 55, 56, 73, 220, 224
- relationships, 40, 79, 245, 319
Solitude, 149, 320
Spite, 88
Spouse - dominating, 266
Statistics - on suicide, 8, 111
Submissiveness, 206, 289, 320
Suicidal ideas, 7, 45
- in families, 125, 225, 229, 299
Suicide infection, 47
- pact, 5
- precipitating factors, 55, 77, 319
- repeated, 51, 85, 289
- silent, 45, 46
- as social criticism, 11
- as social phenomenon, 8
- stigma of, 11
- successful, 12, 24, 26, 50
- sudden impulse to, 26, 47
- symbolic, 34, 36, 37, 138, 222, 263
- threats, 45
Stammering, 201

Timidity, 288, 307
Therapeutic interview, 150
Treatment, 207, 326

Unconscious, 2
Unconscious hatred, exteriorisation of, 163
Unmarried mothers, 69
Unsuccessful suicide, 12
Urban conditions, 57

Violence, 24, 38, 43, 100
Vulnerability of children, 78, 81

War, 57
Withdrawal, 143, 150, 245
World situation, 57