

US FIRST: THE CHRONICLE OF A LOVE STORY, Part 2, by
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Now I'll mention for a bit the idiosyncrasies of our sex life. I remember an improvised sado-masochistic session on the way back from the Haymaker, the housing estate pub. I initiated it but she may have taken the initiative of formulating the desire for some sexual fun. In any case, the conversation must have veered into a sex discussion. By the way, back in the time of our relationship's honeymoon—or so it feels—she told me one day in the Doorbells pub, that she was "expressing (herself) sexually". I 'felt' pretty male then, after years of Women's studies and the deluded or truthful or partially real conviction that I was "a lesbian in a man's body". She kind of undressed and lay on the sofa. Jacky Boy must have been with either his paternal grandparents or one of her aunties. Or he may have been sleeping and when he sleeps, it's rather difficult to wake him up. Anyway she was lying on the sofa, her eyes covered, and I stroked with the blade and she thrilled with erotic pleasure. Other times, I dropped bits and pieces of hot wax or drops of icy water and she sighed of pain and pleasure. She enjoyed it and I too, but in a very male manner and that was one of the changes that living with her brought me. Another session went rather wrong. I motivated her to lie on the bed and starting reading Aleister Crowley's BOOK OF THE LAW while she was also tightened up. It took me a little while to realize that she wasn't enjoying it at all. That did bring a deflation to our mutual pleasure and I did not repeat the experiment. The result of those sex explorations was her writing a comedy sketch taking the piss of sado-masochism, enacted by me under her direction in a private art event in Newport scheduled for December 2003. But more of that

later. I was also massaging her while reading a book and she sometimes was doing the same for me, spreading the baby oil on my back.

Then came the time of the music hall performance. She was successful in her singing and performance. Then came the time of the after-show party, to which I was invited as I have done some helping like serving drinks to the customers. I was bored and went in my corner playing the piano. Jean came to see, wondering where I was. We went home in a mood of anti-climax for she was wondering what to do next. We had a few other drink-fuelled fights and Harry eventually returned to his mum's house. I was continuing my translation, using my computer set in the kitchen as it had a long table on which it was put. We had a good time at the Playhouse (pre) Christmas party dancing like mad followers of rock and roll.

One of the fights started, verbally, over the issue of whether the young daughter of friends of mine in the Welsh valley had been sexually exposed. Discussing the issue in the Haymaker, Borsalinec and I were adamant it was not the case. Then Jean yelled and left the pub for the house. Angry, I left Borsalinec, apologizing, and then had a fight with Jean in the house. The day after, I was sort of wrecked and had to destroy the pictures in which I was cross-dressed as Jean reckoned the photographs were dirty. They had been taken in the house of my Welsh valley friends. She forced me, under pain of our relationship splitting up, to denounce my friends as child molesters and I phoned the cops telling them about this Welsh family, and I felt really bad over it. She somewhat calmed down and I phoned again the police telling them not to bother with the case under the pretext I had made a mistake. The whole event left me shattered. Another fight, on the eve of doing the sketch taking the mickey of sado-masochism in Newport, left me partly bruised on my face—in a way, I was glad she could hit back for the

sake of fairness—and more determined to leave her and find a place to live. I went in the morning after the fight to work at Early Learning Center, and the manageress wondered what happened to me, and I had just told her Jean and I had a fight and that I was thinking to leave her behind. Jean eventually phoned me, asking me if she could come with me to Newport, really asking me not to break off from her. We went to Newport. I was anxious she would not get on with the other fellows. She also had brought her collage, which she did one Saturday evening while I relaxed watching her doing her artwork. I performed her comedy sketch and had instant success. The entire public was laughing and we even won the 'Gollum' prize. Here is the sketch:

"DOMINATRIX BY JEAN KELLY How was I supposed to know? I'm not a bloody mind reader. I did EVERYTHING she said to. Bossy cow. All I wanted was to be the dominatrix JUST for once. I didn't know she'd get so ANGRY with me. How the hell was I supposed to know? She LET ME be dominatrix, I did EVERYTHING she said and I still got it all wrong. It was even worse than that time before when she said it would be really exciting if we dressed up for each other. She stormed out of the room saying I was taking the piss. I didn't mean to it's just that the only thing they had left in the fancy-dress shop was that bloody giant Teletubby costume. What could I do? I never seem to get it right. She said I even make her vibrator go limp! And now this. Tonight. It's Wednesday, right. So that means it's our S&M night. She ALWAYS gets to be the dominatrix and the way she goes on with that whip I can't sit down for days. Sometimes I even have to check my Saturday Lottery numbers standing up! So, I asked her, sorry, BEGGED her if, for once, I could be the dominatrix. Well, I wish I'd never bloody bothered. SHE SAID, "Make sure you put on some suitable music." So I did. I LIKE 'Agadoo'. It's what I always listen to when I'm, you know, on my

own. SHE DEMANDED, and I quote, "Fill my every orifice." And then she got angry at me when I stuffed her nostrils with Blue-tack! SHE TOLD ME, "Food can act as a stimulating erotic aid." So, I tied her to the bed and went and made myself a Pot-noodle. It didn't do much for me and she CERTAINLY wasn't very appreciative! And that's another thing. She told me to tie her in such a way that she couldn't escape the knots. Then she starts absolutely FUMING when I go phone my mate Brian to ask him how to do a granny knot! I TOLD her "HE WAS A BOY SCOUT FOR CHRIST'S SAKE AND IN MY OPINION THAT MAKES HIM AN EXPERT!" Well, that's it. I'll just have to ask her that if she doesn't mind, if it's all the same to her I don't want to be a dominatrix any more."

An incident, a presage of what was to come in 2004, happened one evening around either late November or early December. I was confused this day and I thought I had the potential for something terrible within me. Jean thought I had that potential too and we weren't happy about it. That evening, we had to go for a reading of the play FLARE PATH. I actually enjoyed it as I was able to read a character who was Polish and not English, so there was the potential for me to have this role for, even though I possess a French accent, I was still the only one to have a foreign and continental accent as all the others had English accents. But Jean didn't feel well at all. She wasn't communicating with anyone and withdrawing in some kind of shell. She left without me right after the end of the play reading and I had to catch her up as she was like in a trance. I never saw her like this. She was obviously distressed, which I assumed to be due to us thinking I had that terrible potential, but I didn't expect it would have sent her in trance-like state, with her oblivious of the situation around her. She followed me after I suggested we took a taxi home. Her will was like annihilated and

the whole thing was forgotten as she fell asleep.

The weeks preceding Christmas saw Harry having to get on with me, whether we both liked it or not. We were both wary of each other and Jean was firm in telling him that he had to adapt to the home situation as it had been his choice to return to his mum's house. From what I believe I recall, him staying at his dad didn't work out too well, and Harry returned to live for a while at his mate's in Cheltenham. One afternoon, I had to accompany Jean buying the Christmas gifts for her kids. I was, for possibly the first time (as I before remained on the margins of Christmas building up commercialism) exposed to the extravagant expanses of this festive season in Britain, as I has never experienced such an orgy of spending during my Christmas in Brittany. I couldn't understand why Jean had to buy all those toys and staying in a long queue at Argos accentuated my impatience and irritability. Jean got irritated with me for being so impatient. By then, she was also supporting me financially more than ever as my wages were reduced due to working less hours at Early Learning Center than WHSmith, though the job in the new shop was far more enjoyable, freer from the mad chaos that engulfed WHSmith during the building up to Christmas. The day prior to the 24th, Jean had an evening out with her staff, and we were to meet up at the Weatherspoon later on. Borsalinec went with me and Jean was in her smart dress that she wore a year ago at the (pre) Christmas party organized by the Playhouse. She was already drunk and merry. I started drinking but I was wary. She was kind of friendly with unknown male drinkers and I was touchy about that, though she affirmed her love to me and she had her feelings towards her colleagues. Then Borsalinec, Jean and I went to the Taylors and then, at Borsalinec's flat, she decided to stay and not to go home with me. She said she didn't like some of my reactionary views as I was in one my right wing phases. I was

angry, drunk and I left I don't know how, vaguely recollecting taking a taxi home. Then I woke up the morning after with Jean appearing in the bedroom and looking in disbelief at the state of the bedroom that had been rendered trash due to me being drunk, therefore increasing my Frank Spencer tendencies. She sat down on the bed, distressed at seeing the mess in the bedroom, saying something like: "This cannot go on." And then, the distress went away and her eyes and love-based smile accompanied her declaration: "I love you so much." I didn't feel great that day. Jean told me that Harry asked me, during my antics in the house while drunk, what was wrong. It seemed he was concerned but not necessarily hostile as he had been the months before following the inappropriate cross-dressing. Jean herself didn't feel good to have slept at Borsalinec instead of returning to the house for the sake of her kids. That Christmas was rather miserable for me, and possibly for her too. I was tired of the many arguments we had and the difficulties experienced in the home. Jean said she wouldn't drink again and then changed her mind saying alcohol was necessary for her creativity and even quoted the book on creativity I gave her for Christmas. I was feeling uneasy about the drinking due to the trouble it brought us. Jean also started to work part time in the Haymaker serving the customers. She started on New Year's Eve and I was in Newport with my mates, a pill of ecstasy in my body was removing my worries and helping release the expression of my love for Jean, which I texted her. Concerning her working in the pub, I felt a bit uneasy as well as I feared men would try to seduce her. But it turned out she wanted me to pick her up from the Haymaker, as she told me later that she was afraid she could have been seduced by one male customer at least and that she would have done the business with that guy, if the whole thing had gone further. We had an argument in January. We had planned to take a

bath together after she'd finished work. I went to the pub to pick her up and we started to drink and stay in the Haymaker long after closing time. The pub manager, a Spanish guy, gave us drinks and it was on him. Also present was another young woman working in the pub. After a while I got annoyed because I wanted to go home with Jean and take our bath. But she preferred to continue talking and asked the other woman to come with us to the house so that she could phone for a taxi to get back to her place. I thought we were never going to have this bath and yelled about it. The other woman just walked to her home, feeling she was in the way. Jean was annoyed with me, threatening to end our relationship. She decided not to sleep with me in her bedroom but after five minutes of her being downstairs, she just went back upstairs into the bedroom saying: "I love you too much."

It has to be said that I was starting to struggle in terms of strict monogamous faithfulness. While doing the part time job at Early Learning Center, I was also doing some agency washing up and I landed one day in an old people's home called Grevill house. The kitchen staff was satisfied with my work and one of the senior care assistants, a girl named Michelle, was friendly, and I thought she was especially friendly towards me. It just happened she was just friendly to most people. But my male ego felt flattered and I learned through her that it was possible to apply for a permanent position in this nursing home, which I did and I started the job on the second of January 2004. It was going to start with a 30-hours-a-week position. Jean, in the meantime, tried to sort out my job position as the Early Learning Center position was finished and so, I worked in the morning the first week of January 2004 at her workplace, preparing sandwiches and selling them, and the afternoon I was working at Grevill House. I didn't really appreciate the efforts of Jean to get me a better working position. That first

morning I worked at Windows, I thought she was bossing me around even though she just helped me to get the handle of it. She texted me in the afternoon while I had my break in Grevill House and I was a bit annoyed by her texting me while she congratulated me for a good start at Windows. The evening of the same day, she went to eat something with a woman of the Playhouse to discuss things Jean wanted to do in terms of performance. She came back happy and well disposed towards me. I wasn't well disposed towards her. She told me her meeting went well and I pretended I wasn't interested, as I wanted to sleep. She said something like "It's OK, it's not too important." Then she asked what was wrong and I just answered in cold terms I wanted to sleep. She asked what she had done to deserve to be neglected and I just replied I wanted to sleep. She eventually starting crying for doing something bad to me, which of course wasn't the case. I tried to comfort her and we went to Windows the morning after and she was depressed. Her mood went further up as the day passed. I wasn't accepted for the job at Windows and I just continued with my position at Grevill House. I was starting fancying the senior care assistant Michelle and I was struggling to break the fancy. I was relieved when I learned in the accident of a conversation that she was married. In that same month of January 2004, Jean had wanted Borsalinec to photograph her and I in intimate positions. It was a Saturday evening and the kids were sleeping over in some house. Jean eventually asked Borsalinec, after he took a few shots of us, to join us in the bath and I didn't like the idea. I just went to bed while 'they' enjoyed themselves. I must have fallen asleep—a little drunk on red wine—when I woke up with Jean embracing me saying "I love you so much" while Borsalinec fucked her. It was my first experience of a threesome and I didn't know what to feel about it. Jean was afraid I would leave her. My mood eventually settled and I didn't think much of it,

sharing some kind of matter of fact intimacy with Borsalinec sitting beside the bed in which both Jean and I were lying naked. In fact, the following Saturday, we went to Borsalinec's flat. Jean and Borsalinec undressed and I commanded him: "Fuck her!" Jean told me afterwards she had one of her most pleasurable erotic experiences. We were getting naughtier, but in a different way, after the end of sado-masochism for us. Jean was feeling on high and she was on high. We were very sexual towards one another in January 2004. But the fall from the high was going to be severe. The last week of January 2004 was the week of the crash, Jean's crash to be precise, her falling right to rock-bottom after her high. Early that week, either Monday or Tuesday before going to sleep, she said something like: "I hope my universe isn't going to collapse." And the Wednesday evening came. We had a bath together, after some wine and before doing the Kali devotional practice. Even though she didn't feel attracted to the Goddess—and still doesn't—she decided a while ago to help me in my devotional practice with the pronunciation of Sanskrit. And so we started to carry out those PUJAS together. To be honest, I enjoyed quite a few of those ceremonies worshipping Kali with my beloved. But that evening after the practice, she asked me: "Will you stay faithful to me?" And I didn't know exactly what to answer to her in all honesty. My hesitancy was on account of her telling me before she couldn't promise whether she would ever remain sexually faithful to me. She may have said that being drunk and had forgotten all about it by then. Except that I didn't, but it would have been a better option if I did for, noting my hesitancy in promising my faithfulness to her, she went in a state and thought someone else was in my heart. And I'm not sure what I answered her as the row went so fast, but I remembered my surprise at her guessing correctly the name of the 'competitor', i.e. Michelle from Grevill House. I

confirmed she was right, although I can't remember exactly if it was the day after or that same evening. Anyway, the tension between us was mounting and she told me she would not have sex with me until I sorted myself out. I got angry, hit her and then, as a pure Taurus-born, she exploded and the bull devastated the bedroom, shattering the glass framed pictures. She was going for me with a bit of glass in her hand she intended to hit me with. I yelled something like: "OK! OK! I stop the fight!" She stopped at once and went downstairs. I put together the shattered glass in a plastic bag that I took downstairs in the kitchen, where she was crying and visibly distressed. Her face was in her hands and then she left the house. She returned later and I don't know what happened then, probably the two of us going to sleep. I took the day off the morning after—it was Thursday—and we stayed in bed trying to resolve our situation. I remember her telling me some: "I'm not going to return to a psychiatric institution." Towards late afternoon, she was going to prepare the tea and she started 'switching off', not sure how to make a meal. The morning after that, we both had to go to work and she was there seemingly unable to find dresses or trousers and put them on. I had to direct her for her to get dressed. She was like drugged up. At work, I learned that I was off that day. Indeed the reason I came up with for not going to work the previous day was that I had vomited or some shit like that. In the catering business, when your bowels are in trouble, you got to be off work for 24 or 48 hours. So that Friday morning, I texted Jean saying I was off work and she texted me back telling me to meet her at her surgery. And I went there, finding her crying her eyes out, visibly very distressed and that was the start of her nervous breakdown. She had been unable to work and could not stop crying. So the staff dismissed her that day telling her to get an appointment with her GP, and that's how she ended up in the surgery. In retrospect, it seems that I

had been attracted to this Michelle sensing a person with more stability around. As said before, I was getting really tired with all the arguments and fights between Jean and I, not to mention the upsets with the kids, like Harry moving away for a while. I don't think they were happy to hear us fighting on quite a few occasions. But now, the urgency of the home situation, with Jean breaking down, removed once and for all any idea of an affair with Michelle, an idea which may have not had not a shred a chance of success in the first place. But our home world was turned upside down. The Jean that had accommodated me, supported me financially and otherwise, got up Monday to Friday at 7 AM and prepared the breakfast for Jacky Boy before taking him part of the way to school in the bus before she went to work, who had a certificate in science and a NVQ3, teaching social skills to learning disability folks, who directed AN EVENING WITH PINTER back in March 2003 at the Playhouse, wrote funny comedy sketches and was so enjoying herself performing well in the musical hall of autumn 2003... So the Jean who created photo-montage based on decoupage was now rendered incapacitated by a nervous breakdown triggered by my struggle with my fancy for a girl at work, taking into account that nothing had happened and was ever likely to happen. And she guessed the name of her 'competitor' all right, another evidence of Jean's psychic abilities. And in the early afternoon of that Friday—it was the last one in January 2004—we were Jean and I in the Frog and Fiddle, before or after her getting her medicine, and she said she could read people's thoughts and the content of those was mostly 'unclean'. I was anyway too taken aback to say much and I don't know what went through the kids' mind but I don't think it was funny. She started saying she was in other planes, which may have been true as specific human psychological states may have an affinity or link directly to specific states of being or spheres of

existence. The Saturday right after her 'discharge' from work, Chantal, her drug-addicted sister came to see her and I had to take Jacky Boy in town for some reasons. Before leaving the house, I remember Jean crying uncontrollably and her sister waving at me to leave them. The following Tuesday, Jean went voluntarily to a psychiatric ward in Charlton Lane, Cheltenham. I was panicky when she texted me about her decision. Apparently, she was still going on with the different planes of existence and frightening her kids as a result. When I went back home from work in the evening, Jean's mum was there and told me I had to look after the kids and bluntly blamed me for her daughter's state, my religious beliefs having messed up her daughter's mental state. So here I had a virtual 'mum-in-law' that couldn't stand my guts and estimated I was partly or entirely to blame for her daughter's psychological distress, and still she entrusted me to look after the kids. The ill logic of that still bemuses me, as we knew by then that Jean's parents didn't think I was making the kids happy, but still they thought I had to look after them. If they thought I was that 'bad', then why did they leave me in charge of looking after the kids? It's as if they didn't really care for Harry and Jacky Boy.

As a matter of fact, in the last few months of the preceding year, I had read Jean a book, while massaging her before her falling asleep, a book entitled THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES by John Keel describing the allegedly true weird occurrences involving UFOs and men-in-black in West Virginia in the sixties, and I was wondering if this sort of reading would be good for her. True, the book reads like a novel and she likes Stephen King. I remember one incident during October or November or December 2003 which may, or may not, shed some light on Jean's psychology. We had a good evening—for once—and I was trying to fall asleep and she was mumbling something to me. I told her I was trying to go to sleep

till the point when I shouted something like: "Jean! I want to go to sleep!" And, to my surprise and all of a sudden, she blotted herself in my arms crying. I tried to comfort her. I didn't expect her to weep. And then I had the thought, linked with a previous occurrence in which she, when she was drunk and I had hit the bottle too, was expecting me to be like a dad fatherly welcoming her back from her sexual adventures; and this led me to think that she had some kind of father need, as I thought she was now like a child crying in her father's arms. It also was linked to a dream she had, seemingly full of Jungian archetypes and family stuff. She had quite a rich dream life. One of those night adventures was her walking naked and feeling great on a rainbow and descending it along St Mary Church, Cheltenham, and then being embarrassed of her nakedness among the Lower High Street crowd. I thought her walking naked on the rainbow was her in touch with her higher self, her naked soul, and that her embarrassment at her nudity among the walking people was her forgetting to put on the clothes symbolizing the ego, the lower self of our everyday life. In any case, I had started wondering about her psychology, and now I was forced even more to do so as she was interned in the psychiatric ward. I started reading some books on and by Carl Gustav Jung as well as the books by Barbara Hand Clow, inspiring me to get into some creative writing in the evening as I had finished my translation.

And so I started to see her in the ward, either before or after work, now and again with Harry and Jacky. Another time Jean's daughter was there. The latter spoke to me briefly the previous year, while Harry was away, that she understood then her mum's difficulties while she was with Jonas the abuser. We were at Jean's workplace during noon break. Now my beloved's position was a reversal of situations in which, from being quite a strong woman, Jean became power-less, disempowered. It was a time when she drank vodka on

the side, away from the ward's cognition. One Saturday afternoon, in which she was allowed to be home, we went drinking at the Doobells with Borsalinec and her boss and friend Cecilia came in with her boyfriend. We had a good chat. I was telling Jean's friend that her opening her heart to me also allowed the repressed emotions to surface, emotions and wounds that were kept under the carpet during her time with Jonas. We were supposed to play a board game called JUNTA later on in the same evening and we had quite a few beers. At home, Jean decided she couldn't do the game and I exploded, impatient and angry with this change of plan. Jean cried and wanted to go back to the ward while Borsalinec told me never to remonstrate someone in this psychological condition. She went to the ward and I woke up the day after, Sunday, face to face with Jean's dad who threatened me and commanded me to pass him Jean's debit card which she lent me to buy food for the kids. Apparently, words were passed, in a distorted manner, to him that I had assaulted her, physically speaking, which was not true, although my telling off the night before was way out of order and I was drunk. Jacky Boy actually corrected his granddad by telling him I only shouted at his mum. I gave her dad the required item and he left. I went outside saying: "What have I done?" On my way out, inside the living room, I heard Harry telling me: "It's about time you go away you dickhead" as before that I said in a panic: "I'm going to leave". I went to see her in the ward later the same day and I remember her in distress saying to me: "I feel like you're going away." And she was imploring me not to leave her. And I carved in my mind this image of her in distress and tears at the sight of me leaving her behind in her psychological hell and that image may or may not have helped me not to abandon her. As to her dad, the first time he visited her was with anger and his disapproval of her continuing a relationship with a "druid and cross-dressing" fellow.

Jean and I decided to synchronize our devotional practices. She thought a lot about religion and it may or may not have contributed to her well being or downfall. Her parents and grandparents were blaming Kali and me for the state in which she was. The causes were, in their view external and not internal. One of the first evenings she was interned, I was sitting miserably in the living room when Harry and Jacky Boy came downstairs to play some music with me. It was real nice of them to do so when Jean phoned me up, telling me as she was with her working class woman friend, Catherine and her boyfriend, Nelson on top of one of the hills dominating Cheltenham, that she could see clearly my attempts at controlling her, as if I was some kind of Jonas. I only wanted to keep the synchronization of our devotional practices, and my Moon and Venus in Taurus would impart me with the need for an established, and sometime rigid routine, especially when things go topsy-turvy. Jean's friend was freaking out as she never saw my beloved like that. Vodka had been drunk too. The day after, Jean apologized. Another evening, Jean was with her parents; she started mentioning me when her mum stopped her saying: "Don't even go there!" We were hearing lies about me, that I engineered the whole thing so that I could have the house for myself, never mind if by that time, part of me wanted to be somewhere else. I sent a letter to her parents trying to bridge the gap and they never answered that letter. There is one thing I didn't do which didn't help improve their view of me. I was supposed, while she was allowed a day trip to London to the Hare Krishna Temple, to sort out the kitchen and living room, which were messy. I didn't do that job and instead, drunk some wine and played my electric guitar. She came back and I remember her walking up the stairs and she started to say that she didn't want to stay in the house as it was all messy. I got angry and threw a few items around. She was sobbing saying she might have

to press charges against me for criminal damages. She left the house for Charlton Lane in a taxi. The day after, I went to see her in the ward and her mum was there stating she would show no sympathy towards me and I remember replying to her: "I know." The warmth between Jean and I resumed and I sorted the mess out once I was back to the house. We went to Newport the following weekend and had a nice trip in the Black Mountains with my mate Bailiff. I was anxious over whether Jean's mental health would improve or not. I took her to neo-pagan meetings and my neo-druid acquaintance Veronique. In my mind, I thought those guys could present Jean with a different understanding of mental illness. Whether that worked or not, I'm not sure. I do not see incompatible the idea of mental illness with the notion that one might be too open to psychic influences. Heaven and hell are also psychological states, located within so to speak. On the positive side, she was doing some craft and painting in Charlton Lane. Jean was diagnosed with being afflicted by some schizoaffective disorder. I remember another evening in which her suspicion over me went way out of order. She was going to take the bus from Whitman's Brook back to the hospital after a visit home, and I went with her to the bus stop when I told her I wanted to spend now and again some time in pubs over a pint of real ale and reading a book, which I had done many times before meeting her although the drink would have been a cup of coffee. Hearing that, she protested that I was having an affair or something like that. My reassurances were ineffective and she took the bus in a distressed state. I phoned her on her mobile some minutes later to make sure she was on her way back to the hospital when speaking to her I learned she was in the Doobells. She said she wouldn't move to the hospital or that she was unable to do anything apart from drinking vodka in this pub. I was starting getting panicky when I decided to pick her up at the Doobells. I

took a taxi, met her in the pub and calmed her down by talking to her. She eventually decided to sleep at home instead of the hospital and that was it. I was concerned, for instance, that things could have happened to her with her then vulnerable alone in public places. She was eventually discharged from the hospital in the spring and we were preparing for my 12th of April birthday and a coming handfasting in which there would be people around us this time, and also a 'vicar' to preside over the ceremony. The birthday came and Johnny and Gregory from Newport were present. Drinks were consumed and Jean prepared the entire food and it was a nice birthday gift. I was anxious for the day center she had to attend didn't motivate her and she was alone doing at home doing nothing at all except, possibly, drinking vodka while Jacky Boy was at school and I was at work. Or she may have had the now and again company of Harry. But he was usually on his own learning to play the guitar. The handfasting came and Kenneth of Newport accepted to be the 'vicar' as Jacky Boy was going to nickname him. Friends from Newport and Cheltenham turned up. I played a few songs, the handfasting was performed and it was a nice moment for most people. Johnny was attending to the needs of the guests. Pictures were taken. I was seemingly happy and she was seemingly happy too. But under the surface was a different story. We woke up the day after, Jean in a twilight zone and ashamed she had allowed her sons to drink the night before. I was probably aching with a hangover but what was more frightening was the unknown of the future to come, with Jean in her mental twilight zone, or gray area, cut off from all, in hell and I was anxious due to the feeling of powerlessness over the whole situation. And the most tragic, and yet miraculous in a way, moment came. The Monday of the week of the event in question, in the afternoon, I cried for her while Bjork was played in the kitchen. I was mourning for the suffering and

incapacitation she was in. I had known her as an actress, a single mum, a worker, a lover, a financial supporter and now I knew her as totally incapacitated by a mental illness I had been the trigger of. I was also aware of the unfairness dealt to her in her life with the marriage with Jonas. I have never cried for someone like that before or after. On the eve of the event's day, I was going to Newport in the second half of May for the birthday of a female friend of mine and my Welsh mates. It was a Saturday and I wanted just a bit of quiet on my own. I had just left Jean downstairs when she came upstairs. She couldn't leave me alone for a minute and I expressed my annoyance. She went back downstairs and I came down too, a little after. She was in the sofa and she appeared so defeated so to speak. I was feeling guilty to let her know my annoyance knowing her psychological distress and yet, I was frustrated of not having any space at all. I tried to comfort her and she said: "It's all right". She was to receive her mum later on that evening to have, among other things, some company. I left with a feeling of vague doom ahead of us. In Newport, I cross-dressed for the party and a lot of people turned up. I drank far too much, falling on and breaking some glass as I was told the day after. The party went wrong with too many people and too many drinks, unlike the birthday party of the same friend in 2001 where the magic mushrooms helped me enjoy one of my best parties in an inglorious year. During the morning recovery, I also received a curious text from Jean saying "goodbye" to me, asking me to forgive her and re-stating her undying love to me. I was feeling like shit due to my having made a fool of myself the night before, and also feeling the burden of having to go back home in a house struck by powerlessness, isolation and mental hell. Towards 6 PM, I was back in Cheltenham, that late afternoon of that fateful Sunday and, back home, Jacky Boy told me his mum was upstairs sleeping as she was

now doing most days. I had this feeling of impending doom, so to speak, walking from the train station to the housing estate. So I went in the bedroom to unpack my bag and she was on the bed, deeply asleep. Something was amiss. I noticed this note on the floor and the scattered boxes of pills. I read the note and said: "It's not possible." She was leaving me in charge of the kids and telling me that it was for the best she had to leave this world behind. It was a suicide note. I yelled to the kids telling them the news and ran downstairs to phone '9.9.9.' Panic was over me as I was anxiously waiting for the ambulance to arrive. Jacky Boy was with me, seemingly calm. At the hospital, we had to stay in some waiting room and Jacky texted her addicted auntie, Chantal. I texted or he texted Jean's workplace boss and I texted Clara and her boyfriend. They all came to the emergency waiting room and comforted us. They were also anxious like us. Jacky Boy, his auntie and myself were admitted in the intensive care room where Jean was unconscious, with all those tubes coming out of her mouth and possibly elsewhere. Jean's sister started to cry. I was probably too shocked by the novelty of the situation, and yet it was not a surprise as I knew of Jean's past suicide attempt in the late eighties. Back home, I fell asleep wondering what was going to happen. The doctor told Jean's sister that had my beloved arrived an hour later in the hospital, she might have died. I also felt some guilt thinking I was partly responsible for her suicide attempt having left her for Newport the day before, after letting her know of my annoyance with her unablness to leave me alone for a minute. I took some days off that week right after her attempt to end her life and the workplace gave me no trouble considering the gravity of the situation. Jean was slowly regaining consciousness. I was hoping this failed suicide attempt was going to trigger her recovery, as happened to a mate of mine in Newport who, following his failed

suicide attempt, did an access course, went to Swansea to do his degree, got his degree and went to live in India with Tibetan Buddhist monks. The latest news I got about him would suggest he would have become a monk himself. The family came, parents, grandparents, kids, sisters and myself though I wasn't considered part of the family in spite of Jean choosing me. Her sister on methadone was the family spokesperson and she expressed to me her family thanked to me for phoning 999 on time. I was hoping that the gravity of the incident would put a stop to Jean's family's hostility towards me and that the whole lot would start co-operating instead of bickering. Nothing of that happened as the following weekend, Jean's mum gave my beloved a letter; she entrusted her with the firm recommendation that I shouldn't read it. By the, Jean was back in Charlton Lane, her recovery from a near overdose of tablets being pretty much miraculous. I remember that, before the family left the psychiatric ward apart from Chantal, Jacky Boy and myself, Jean's paternal grandmum telling my beloved: "There must be no more of Kali now." Jean was devastated upon reading the letter and gave it to me to read. She protested to her sister against her mum's judgmental interference in her life. Here is the letter written by Margaret Kelly:

"Dear Jean, I'm writing this letter as a way of saying some of the things that I find difficult to say to you, either because I don't have the opportunity to talk to you or because you don't want to hear what is being said. Your overdose at the weekend was a wake up call for all of us, including you and about the need for the family to do something more to help you. Over the years, dad and I have always been there for you when you've been in trouble or difficulty and we've done whatever it took to help you sort things out. We supported you when you had Gertrude, looked after Gertrude when you couldn't, welcomed you back home when you left David

Pashlyng, found you somewhere to live and supported you. We helped you to move to Cheltenham and supported you through your break up with Jonas. In return you supported your youngest sister, and me, through her troubled times. That's what families do, care about each other and help each other through difficult times. All parents want for their children is for them to be happy. Dad and I have done our best to support you in whatever you've chosen to do. What has changed over the past 18 months has been your destructive relationship with Yann-Vari. The problem is not that we don't like him, for parents to like their children's choice of partner is a bonus. Parents just need to feel that their child's partner loves them, treats them well and is a positive influence in their child's life—and most important of all, just makes them happy. Yann-Vari, does none of these. Since he's been around you have been in misery. You have separated yourself from the family making us feel unwelcome and unwanted. That includes Gertrude, Harry and Jacky Boy. You have become a stranger to all of us—he has taken away, or you have given him, your personality. Your relationship with him is not healthy love, but destructive obsession. As for the religion, Hindu and eastern religions are about love, purity of mind, spirit and body. I recognize none of this in your lifestyle of booze, fags, junk food, neglecting your children and weird sex parties. How can we support this lifestyle and relationship? You may say none of this is any of my business, after all you are an adult. The fact that we have to pick up the pieces and watch you neglect the boys and exclude Gertrude makes it our business. Have you given any real thought and taken any responsibility for how the boys feel? Whilst I was cooking tea last night, Jackie Boy said: "Before Y.V. moved in, there was mum, Gertrude, Harry and me and our home was nice. Mum used to cook my tea and make me cocoa before I went to bed! It was nice before he moved in!" Are you

able to hear what your children are trying to say to you? Before he moved in, I had a daughter with whom I could laugh, watch an old movie, put the worlds to rights and be a friend. Now you are a stranger who only wants to talk about him, strange religion and get drunk. All of us, including your children, want you back, we miss you because we love you. We came very close to losing you physically last week and it scared us, but we feel we lost the Jean we all love and know 18 months ago—we all miss you. I know you are ill, but I know that you can never get better whilst you stay in this destructive relationship. You have to want to get better and to get the priorities right in your life which has to be [unreadable] a loving and caring mother to your children. I've no idea if you will take on board anything I've said, but its given me the chance to say what needed to be said. We all want you back, you deserve to have a happy life, but none of this is possible while he is around. Your children deserve a happy life but they can't have it whilst he is in their home and taking their mother love away from them. Do you know that he's sending Gertrude weird texts? Why? Gertrude doesn't need the stress from him. She has done really well but thinks you don't care and aren't interested in her. Just what the boys feel. All I ask is that you give some thought to what I've said and remember that we love you and want you to be happy and want you to be part of the family again. We miss you. Love. Mum"

Jean was diagnosed a little more than a year later with OCD, tainting her love to me with indeed an obsessive streak. But Gertrude was excluded from Jean's home before I moved in. It is me who's pushed Jean to renew her relation with her daughter, and they came round for either Christmas 2003, and after as well when Jean was ill. The "weird texts" to Gertrude was simply me texting her my believed understanding of an aspect of her mum's psychology. Jean also has made a few repeated attempts for her family to come

round during Harry living away, but they never came. They never sought to know me and never replied to my attempt to bridge the gap by writing this letter to Jean's parents. I was deploring myself the excess of booze. I tried my best not to interfere with the boys' space. The cross-dressing was an unintentional mistake and I didn't feel good about it. The weird sex party was only the threesomes with Borsalinec. The rest was just Jean and I exploring our fantasies. Jean neglecting her children was the result of her illness incapacitating her. It's not that she didn't want to get better, it's just she was powerless to do anything about it, so serious was her breakdown. What still leaves me pondering is why the 'family' left me in charge of the kids while their mum was away in the ward, if I was making them so unhappy. Jacky Boy and Harry were welcomed for the last handfasting, Jacky Boy strongly involved in the proceedings. Harry's dad was frowned upon by Jean's mother while this relationship was going on. Now Harry's dad was a superb person to be proud of. They apparently even said that Jonas was better than me for the kids because he could get them up and ready to eat their breakfast. Never mind that he abused Gertrude and Harry, psychologically scarring them for, possibly, life. Never mind as well Harry's dad's drinking and his connection with the reggae scene. I could have also explained the 'weird religion' but they hated Kali 'the god of death and destruction', never mind that she occupies a considerable part in Hindu metaphysics and mythology, and that she inspired the Hindu of the nineteenth century, Sri Ramakrishna, who was indeed pure—I prefer the word 'whole'—on all levels. The big one was also me taking her personality away. Jean affirmed on the contrary I was restoring her personality by giving her a CD of Siouxsie and the Banshees and doing the demonstration against the invasion of Iraq. I always encouraged her creativity that was just repressed and silenced by

Jonas. Jean's youngest sister also wrote her a letter and here it is: "Dear Jean, I want to try just one last time to get through to you. I don't know why I think you will listen to me because you haven't to anybody else. You wanted to die last weekend and you so nearly did, now it seems that you want us to forget about it and let you go on exactly as you did before. I can't do that. If you tried to kill yourself again and succeeded do you think I could go on knowing I could have stopped you? You are being so unfair Jean. Mum and dad are devastated over everything. We all are. Last Sunday we were told you could die or at least be brain damaged. I had to explain that to your children. The doctors let me in to see you in intensive care on a ventilator. I thought it was going to be the last time I ever saw you. So did Jacky Boy. It was then a waiting game for the next 36 hours; eventually they turned off the ventilator and luckily you breathed by yourself. So after you took those tablets, you just had to lie there. It was us that picked up the pieces and your children. Now you say it's none of our business and we've got to respect your feelings again, as fucking usual. Well what about our feelings Jean, and you know its not just Mum and dad, it's the entire family—your family. For the past year and half, we've had to watch you turn into a different person, one which I don't like at all. One that is not my sister. The only person that can't see this is you. OK you're right about one thing. Everybody, absolutely everybody hates Yann-Vari. Nan, Grandad, Mum, dad, Caroline Anne, Mary Andrea, your brother, me, your workplace manager, but above all of us GERTRUDE, HARRY AND JACKY BOY. But what you don't understand is, we wouldn't care if we liked him or not, as long as you were happy. BUT YOU'RE NOT. Your relationship is completely fucked up. You know it, Yann-Vari knows it and I know it. We can all see it, but you don't want to. The fact is you want Yann-Vari more than your parents,

your brother and sisters but mostly, more than your own children. You love Yann-Vari to the exclusion of everything and everybody else. That is not normal. Its not Yann-Vari I'm attacking it's the relationship. I'm not disputing the fact that you're ill. I know you have always suffered. But this is not the same thing. You are completely obsessed with Yann-Vari and religion. That is destructive [and so is the letter's writer's addiction to heroine and prostitution]. If he makes you so happy, how come all this is happening? Surely, your children's happiness matters the most. For the past year or so it has been so hard to see you. Every time I do see you all you talk about is Yann-Vari and religion. Even when Mum and me meet you in the Jazz Café, you spent the whole time talking about Yann-Vari. You didn't even look at us, you were looking at your phone: texting him and then he turned up 10 minutes later. You used to be so kind and loving. Jean you looked after me. You looked after your kids. You kept your house nice. You were the perfect sister and mother. In over a year not once have you asked how I am. Mum had a nervous breakdown last year and was put on tranquilizers. You never called or asked how she was doing [Jean told me once in a pub of her concern for her mum's health in the previous Autumn]. You only ring when you want something. 2 years ago you would never have been like this. None have us have seen you without Yann-Vari being there [Jean was probably trying her best to make me part of the 'greater' family]. He made Jacky Boy, Harry and Gertrude read your suicide note after I told him not to [this I don't remember]. They were all devastated, mostly because nearly all of it was [due] to Yann-Vari, if you'd died. That would have been all they'd have to remember—a few fucking lines. They are desperately unhappy, and desperate to have their mother back. I'm not asking you to never see Yann-Vari again, but why do you have to live together [I was by that time contemplating now and

again that Jean and I should continue our relationship but not under the same roof, but she would had none of it]? Wouldn't it be worth to see your children happy? He could rent somewhere close by. You could see him a few times a week. If you don't do something about this Jean, you will lose everything. Your children are on the risk register for gods' sake. They don't want him in the house. Every time I see them, they tell me how unhappy they are [that explains Jacky Boy weeping when he learned of my working in the evening at WHSmith from then on for he couldn't see me in the evening—surely he should have been smiling with me working in the evening]. Every time I see them, they tell me who unhappy they are. They just want him out of the house. They know you've chosen him over them, especially Gertrude. She's got on eating disorder, she needs her mum. You'll go partying in Newport with Yann-Vari but you won't go and see Gertrude. She is heartbroken and blames herself [as a matter of fact, Gertrude could always have asked us to come to Newport, but she was and would never had been interested. Jacky Boy has been with us to Newport on a few occasions]. Jean, all we want is you to get better. I want my big sister back. Mum and Dad want their daughter back, and your children want their mum and house back. We all want to help you, but you have to help yourself too. I'm not blaming Yann-Vari, I'm saying that the relationship is destructive and you both need peace. We worked from 10 AM till 5 PM, me, mum, Jacky Boy, Harry and dad. Scrubbing yesterday, mum spent her time, effort and money on stuff for you [learning about the 'family' intended cleaning of Jean's house, I've panicked and put my stuff safely and condensed, getting of many a clutter so to speak, which gave me the thought that I was to move soon enough]. We've looked after your kids through all this. We don't mind helping you, but you have to make some effort and acknowledge that things need to change. I love you so much

Jean, I can't stand to see you like this and watch your kids get more and more unhappy. If you don't want anything to do after this, that's fine, because unless things change, I can't go on seeing you kill yourself. And I won't let Mum and Dad either. Please think about things. Love you Jean. Your sister."

During the 'restoration' of the kitchen, a photocopy of the award of my degree simply disappeared. Thanks God, I did not frame the original paper. Before this cleaning up mission, I took off the images of Kali and the devotional practice was by then in complete collapse. Whatever the original motivations of Jean's family, the re-organizing of the kitchen felt like, to me, a violation of privacy as Jean had no say in the matter. I would not be surprised if the vanishing of my framed photocopied degree had instigated by Jean's mum. When my beloved returned home from the psychiatric ward, she wasn't at ease in this kitchen imposed by an outer order. We now had the interference of the social services, which I welcomed to start with thinking it might attenuate our relative isolation from our mates and other people. With a social worker, we had a first sort of home family meeting and Jean was curiously happy and smiling until Jacky Boy and Harry started telling the social worker of their dissatisfaction with me living in the house. I was not surprised of their reaction but it was a devastating blow to Jean as I observed her going from smiling to deeply despondent. I said to the social worker that I regretted the inappropriateness of last August cross-dressing and this may have changed Harry's perception of me for he was less hostile towards me afterwards, possibly with the help of the social worker telling Jean's second child there were no more reasons for him to resent me as I offered an apology for the cross-dressing episode of last year. I shaved my head during this period, deciding for a psychological change by removing my long hairs. Harry was apparently amused to see me in this psychotic-looking

appearance. Then a family conference happened organized by and in the presence of the social services. Jean's mum made her point with Kali as being a 'god of death and destruction'. I made my point with Kali as being a goddess of the destruction of psychological crap and clutter. Jean made her point by telling her mother with anger and protest what was the reason why my beloved tried to drink bleach when she was four. Jean, by questioning the education her mum gave her, broke the family taboo: the questioning of the 'wonderfulness' of Margaret Kelly. Her mum then disowned Jean not long after and one of her sisters was with the matriarch, telling Jean: "How could you dare to insult mum like that?" Jean's mother said she felt concerned for the kids and, yet she would do nothing more for them. I went to see the third Harry Potter with Jacky Boy who didn't like it, while I enjoyed it, getting me to think to consider again to get involved in the Western Mystery Tradition. I decided to go to see the spiritualist church. Jean and Jacky Boy decided to come with me and we had some remarkable, although probably average, evidences of psychic perceptions when one medium guessed or was told by spirits of the departed that we had changed the bedroom bed position. It was the Football European Championship and we went to see a few of the matches at our local pub. On one of those football-watching times, at the Haymaker, Jacky Boy and I discovered that Jean lied to us when she claimed she wasn't drinking vodka whereas she actually was. Later on in the same evening, Jean decided to stay in the pub talking with another woman. I fumed when I saw the both of them having a snog. It was infuriating because I was reminded by Jean of that virtual fancy for that care worker back in January and here she was snogging another woman. The inconsistency inflamed me. Jacky Boy pulled his mum and she fell on the floor. In the meantime I had a fight with the Spanish landlord. I told her off when we were back in the house and she

didn't protest save a few moaning for she had nothing to protest against. By then, I was just angry at the silliness of the situation and the lying over the drinking. The morning after, Jean was aching badly with one of her arms, and I was anxious over the cause of it. Did I bring that about during yesterday's remonstrance? It turned out that she fell when her youngest pulled her off the stool, desperate for her to go back home, and that was the likely cause of the ache in her arm. We went to the hospital later in the afternoon and she had a partially broken forearm all right, or one of the bones was dislocated as a result of the fall from the pub stool. Later on that same day, we went to Jacky Boy's school event and I was afraid Harry would have a go at me for her mother's broken arm, but the opposite occurred and I was partly relieved, although I wasn't so optimistic over Jean's mental recovery which I had hoped would occur after the failed suicide attempt. Harry was often out with his mates, often sleeping in other houses. Jean and I took Jacky Boy to Newport for the second art event my mates were organizing. We had a good time and so did Jacky Boy. It probably was good for him to experience something novel and different, taking his mind off the recent family events. On the way back, I was anxious though over Jean's possibility of recovery. The following week, I experienced an acknowledgement of the fundamental Christian nature of my psyche, and that did bring a psycho-spiritual boost, encouraging me to channel my life into the Christian tradition as I had no motivation left to carry on the Kali practice, as before her it was the Tara practice. Now it was going to be the Virgin Mary. But in the house, things weren't getting better with Jean. One day coming back home from work, I met with Jean's grand mum on the father's side who suggested that perhaps I should move out. The thing is, I was already contemplating the option as, obviously, I was wondering if my presence in Jean's house was a good thing or rather

a bad thing. I had to move just to get back some space. I didn't want to break up with Jean, but I needed a bit of rest too. Anyway, back home I told Jean about it and at first she seemed to consider the option as a possibility, But later, I was in the bedroom and she went upstairs to join me, pacing round in circles saying she couldn't bear the idea of me being away from the house. So, I had to retreat so to speak and comfort her. Another time, I saw her drinking openly a bottle of vodka that must have been hidden behind the bed. That just took my breath away. Now and again, Jean would freeze and sob at the bottoms of the stairs so to speak, seemingly regressed to the state of a frightened little girl. I was suspecting part of her psychological problem resulted from unresolved childhood trauma, possibly her being child-molested one way or the other. Sometimes in July, Jean was facing the wall of the bedroom, frozen again. Then she said she had to go out drinking away from the house. I told her my disagreement over this issue, for on no account was I gonna let her out in such a vulnerable state. Now I was like a patriarchal husband, running the show so to speak, but the truth is I didn't like it. It may be I felt I had to be like a dad to her. Her kids were more adult, behavior-wise, than she was now. Certainly Harry was. We compromised by going out together in a miserable pub and then went back home. By then my job was doing my head-in and so was home. One afternoon, Jean took an excess of tablets for possibly going to sleep. It didn't seem to be a suicide attempt. The novel thing was Harry not blaming me, but including me among the ones affected by his mum's behavior. For some reasons, Harry seemed to have stopped with the idea that I was the only one to blame. It's like the new formula was now Jean against Harry, Jacky Boy and me for the three of us just wanted Jean back and her to stop her destructive behavior.

We have been also starting to rehearse for FLARE PATH, a play

about some people living in an UK airbase during World War Two. The performance was scheduled for the first half of October 2004. I was going to play the Polish colonel and Jean the English wife of the foreign officer. The cast and the director were concerned with Jean's unavoidable erratic attendance due to the unpredictables of her illness. Sometimes in the second half of July 2004, it was at the end of one of the rehearsals in the Playhouse and I was there with Borsalinec; he already knew of my wish to move in another place. Jean would have none of it. She may have replied to me with an: "If you move away, then it's over between us." So I told her: "Ok then! I'm going home!" deciding to leave her behind in the bar as there was no way to reason with her. I went to the bathroom before coming out, and on doing so, I saw Jean walking up Bath Road. She was calling for me: "Yann-Vari! Yann-Vari!" I caught up with her and she said she didn't want to lose me, even if I had to live in another house. The tables were turned; a year ago, I would have felt devastated with her threatening to break off, and now I was ready to accept that option due to the powerlessness of the home situation. But now she was panicking. At least, she did seem to make a step towards accepting that we might have to regain our own private spaces.

One evening after the end of a rehearsal, on the way to a taxi, I told her she was invited to a party or gathering organized by Kym and Emma. Now Kym and Emma were a couple a lesbians I became friends with during my time in university. Earlier on that year in a pub, I was talking about Kym to Jean and she said: "You fancy her". I didn't reply anything and I didn't know what to reply. Maybe I had a slight fancy towards her, but it must not have amounted to much and I was only seeing the both them intermittently. But after I announced her that she was welcome to come to that party, Jean entered into an 'OCD' scene. She was

convinced that I only wanted to sleep with Kym, never mind me mentioning that she could also come. Back home, my compassion for Jean was temporarily gone and my annoyance was increased. I called her: "Stupid woman!" And maybe I was guilty of over reacting or just reacting angrily to her stubbornness, but it definitely motivated me to move away. Our relationship was at such a low ebb that I didn't really care whether it was going to continue or not. Then the day after, it was a Tuesday, I had to go to Gloucester for training to get a food hygiene certificate. I noticed my bank the Co-operative Bank was offering a loan and, as I was penny-less, I went to the cathedral to pray to our Lady to intervene in my situation promising my faithfulness to the Mother of God, went back to the bank and got the loan. And then Jean was back in Charlton Lane, then phoning me at work she wanted to be back home and needed me. The social services told me I had to move away otherwise the kids would be put into care. What I didn't appreciate is that they didn't offer me any help to find a flat and I had only ten days. Then, I was at Borsalinec's and Kym was there. Upon hearing my situation, she let me know of a Chinese acquaintance of hers that wished to rent his flat. The deal was arranged and I had the loan to pay the deposit. Returning home, I saw Jean distressed, drinking vodka. The social services told her too I had to move away and she had trouble digesting the news so to speak. I tried my best to comfort her. We were now in the second half of July 2004 and I was going to be in the new flat by early August. I took cardboard boxes to pack my stuff and Jean moved upstairs not standing seeing the signs of me moving away. Then in the middle of the week, Thursday or Wednesday, she was in a funny state, drunk and hardly able to stand up. Jean was smiling saying: "It's all right!" And I replied annoyed: "No! It's not all right." The day after, a social worker or a community psychiatric nurse heard Jean's latest news:

she confessed to the outsider the swallowing of I don't know how many tablets to commit suicide a second time. That explained her funny state the night before. Now Jacky Boy was taken into care and Harry had already a new home at Stacey's, the mum of one of his mates. Jean's youngest sister had to look after Jacky Boy while I was at work and herself phoned me in the workplace telling me she couldn't cope with her sister's antics. The irony of the situation is that, even though I was blamed by Chantal for her sister's state and the unhappiness of her nephews, yet she was begging to do what I could to stop the family breaking down—and there wasn't much I could do. I went to see Jean later on in the evening in the General Hospital and she apologized to me. I did tell her I was nonplussed. And now we have to introduce the plump woman, Katherina and her blind husband Jeffrey, both of them were encountered earlier on back in the spring of 2003, when I overtook them on occasions on my morning walk to WHSmith. Katherina appeared earlier on this year of 2004 in the kitchen of Grevill House as an agency kitchen assistant. She had been in school with the stammering cook Timothy and we seemed to become well acquainted fast enough. When Jean committed her first suicide attempt, I told the nursing home staff of my home circumstances and Katherina seemingly shared in the grief, having herself been depressed and suicidal, or so she told me. I introduced Jean to her and her husband Jeffrey who worked in the local government surveillance center and spoke a few languages. I thought that Jean could benefit from knowing someone who had been through similar mental torments and knew where she was coming from, hoping that Jean could realize she was not the only person to be afflicted with mental problems. Jean was at first reluctant but a few drinks eased her confidence and her and Katherina started talking like women do. After Jean's second suicide attempt, Katherina came to see her in hospital and Jean told

her she wanted to sell the house now that the kids and I didn't live there anymore. Katherina did some researches and must have come up with a few estate agents addresses. I came to see Jean most evenings while she was in hospital. The director of FLARE PATH was starting to get panicky as Jean's erratic visits to the rehearsals, due to her psychological distress, were potentially damaging and he had to find another actress in case Jean couldn't make it. Both he and she had a talk and both actresses were going to perform part-time during the showing of the play. Actually, Jean was starting to get much better.