

CHAPTER FIVE

SAD MARIE AND THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Sad Marie was the false-front alter-personality who made sure the body got to my office on time for every appointment. Becky created her at age 21 when her husband had beaten her in the shower, causing her to miscarry her third pregnancy. She was programmed by Becky to be the complaint wife and dutiful, subservient female who deferred to male authority. She was the proverbial "sad sack," a morose, self-deprecating woman, unable to receive pleasure from any activity. Repeatedly suicidal, she often woke up in psychiatric wards prior to coming to the Yolo County Mental Health Clinic.

Sad Marie had lived her entire life in Sacramento where she was covered by MediCal, California's version of Medicaid, the government "health insurance plan" for indigent citizens. This paid for her private psychiatric office visits and many hospital stays.

Sad Marie had been seeing various psychiatrists for a long time. She could never understand why she always felt low one minute and was riding high the next minute. She could never understand why there were periods of time missing from her life. She could never understand why she felt so compelled to kill herself.

Sometimes she would wake up and find herself choking on pills and not know how they got into her mouth. She was always depressed but could never understand why. There were so many times that she could not get answers to her questions.

Why had she been admitted to so many psychiatric wards? Why had she finally been committed to a long term psychiatric hospital, Crestwood Manor, with her mother as conservator? Why was she sliding downhill so fast? WHY? WHY?

She had tried to be a good daughter, mother, and wife. But there were many holes in her

life. Sometimes she was called by different names by people she did not know and had never seen before. They knew her, but not by her true name.

Sad Marie felt she could never tell any psychiatrist this, since they seemed bored with her and tried to push her out of their offices. They always wanted to know why she was depressed, but she had only standard phases for explanations. She was lonely, had no money, no friends, no one to love her, and she hated herself. Her doctors became upset because sad Marie was not trying to change. They gave her suggestions, but she never followed though with their wise advice.

All sad Marie really knew about herself was that she was dead inside. No feelings at all. She wanted to feel again, but only happy emotions. Her doctors asked her what made her happy. Sad Marie could not come up with an answer. She could never tell any of them about the voices inside her head, the missing times, and being known by other names. She was afraid that, if she told them, they would lock her in a back ward of Napa State Hospital where she would have shock treatments for the rest of her life. Worst than that, they might remove part of her brain. At least that was what the voices kept telling her.

When Sad Marie had survived all the hospitalizations, she knew she must be crazy. Her mother and conservator did not like her eldest daughter at all. She hated to watch this daughter of hers going in and out of psychiatric hospitals, seeing psychiatrists and taking all those drugs they prescribed. Mother knew she could straighten out her daughter if she took her to Yolo County and made her work. Then Sad Marie would have to "pull herself up by her boot straps, straighten up and fly right."

Sad Marie never dared tell Mother that she thought the lady was not her mother. Mother never protected Sad Marie from the abuse by either her

father or stepfather. She was always working, and she didn't want to hear about any problems at home while she was at work. Sad Marie had to keep things running smoothly at home, free from problems. Sad Marie was a mother-figure to her brother and sister, and a sex object for her father and stepfather.

When could Sad Marie have ever been a normal child or teenager? Sad Marie was not normal; Sad Marie was different. She was made to be alone and depressed all the time; therefore no one could stand being around her. That was the way the "hostile psychic sisters" wanted it. But Sad Marie did not know that at the time.

When Mother became her conservator, the judge made it clear Sad Marie must continue seeing a psychiatrist. Mother did not like that, because there was nothing wrong with her daughter, nothing a little hard work wouldn't change. She managed an apartment house, and her daughter could look after it while she was away at work.

Sad Marie never felt she belonged to anybody or anything. She felt a part of something that was not whole. How do you explain that to a doctor who wants you to leave as soon as you come through the door? She couldn't, so she tried to put on a happy face to the outside world. She had done that for quite a long time. She was good at it, and she fooled everybody. Nobody looked into her eyes; they were sad and had a far away look in them. Nobody saw that, as nobody cared what happened to Sad Marie.

At the Yolo County Mental Health Services, patients were seen by salaried doctors, and MediCal paid for Sad Marie's visits. When Dr. Dailey first saw Sad Marie there, Sad Marie felt comfortable with her, as she was a woman. But Dr. Dailey didn't seem to really want to see her either. Sad Marie was boring, depressed, and made everyone around her feel the same way.

When Dr. Dailey left, Sad Marie was afraid to see anybody else. When she walked into a room, she felt others would run away as fast as

they could. However, she had to go, or she feared she would never receive her SSI grant.

Then I arrived on the scene. Sad Marie had seen Dr. Dailey weekly. After my first visit with her, I decided that I could only cope with her twice a month.

I had trained at the San Mateo County Mental Health Service, one of the best run county Mental Health Services in the country at the time. I worked next at the Mental Health Clinic for Santa Clara county, before moving to Santa Cruz. In that coastal retirement community, I spent three and a half years as the Program Chief of that county's Mental Health Service. At one of their professional meetings, I met Dr. McIver, who held the same position in Yolo County.

In Yolo County, Dr. McIver had put together all the elements of a complete system for delivering quality care to mentally ill citizens. He started with a central outpatient clinic in Woodland and four seclusion rooms in Yolo General Hospital across the street.

He next established branch clinics in Davis, the university town at the west end of the county, and in Broderick, a slum section on the east end of the county. The clinic building in Davis was an old house next to the fire department. I saw patients there one day a week on referral by the social worker. Sometimes the fire alarm would sound during a session, and we would have to wait patiently while the fire engines roared off. Once the clamor of the engines had faded, we could get back to our work of staving off another suicide.

In Broderick, the clinic was in an abandoned school building, which also housed the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Clinic and the Salud Clinic, a general medical clinic.

The Sacramento River made a bend around Broderick, creating a peninsula that jutted deep into the metropolitan area of the capitol city, Sacramento. This region, West Sacramento, was home for the alcoholics and prostitutes who had been forced to move across the river when the county authorities cleaned up Old Sacramento,

turning that slum into a tourist attraction. Along the western banks of the Sacramento River were leftover motels from the 1920's, single rooms with bathtub and toilet, plus garage space. These were the best accommodations that the burned out alcoholics and chronic schizophrenics could afford on their SSI and Welfare checks. Some shacks by the river's edge even had plots of ground for gardening, and I was amazed at how much color the alcoholics could create in front of their cabins with their flower beds. The bright and vibrant blossoms gave these washed out men the little beauty they had in their lives.

I was the only psychiatrist in Broderick. There were psychiatrists practicing at the Woodland Clinic, but most of the private practitioners clustered in Davis, a university town. The only physician in West Sacramento and Broderick was a manic-depressive general practitioner who was under investigation for prescribing narcotics too freely.

On the grounds of this old school building in Broderick was a mobile home housing the Stepping Stones Day Treatment Center. A covered walkway connected it to the mental health clinic. A psychiatric nurse, mental health worker and occupational therapist conducted programs designed to rehabilitate chronically ill patients. They held classes and discussion groups, took outings, cooked lunches, and otherwise helped their clients develop social skills. The mental health worker brought the clients who lived in Woodland and Davis in a van, so they could be there six hours a day. Each afternoon he would drive them home, park the van at his home, and pick them up on his run in the next morning.

The Yolo County Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Service had its own building in Woodland, next to the mental health clinic building, and most of those social workers had worked for the Mental Health Service. They frequently called me to consult on cases, and I once found an alcoholic man with MPD because he reported non-alcoholic blackouts during which alter-personalities bought

cars and boats, but never paid for them.

When Woodland Memorial Hospital built its new building, staffed with doctors employed by the Woodland Clinic, they included a model version of a psychiatric ward for a general hospital. That ward was similar to the one I had helped establish at Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz years before. The Woodland Clinic's Department of Psychiatry initially consisted of two psychiatrists, Dr. Luther Lucien and Dr. Barry Romero, who were later joined by Dr. Fred Newbury.

Dr. McIver contracted with Doctors Lucien and Romero to manage his inpatient hospital services. Rather than upgrade Yolo General Hospital's primitive seclusion rooms into something appropriate for the modern age, he negotiated a contract with the Woodland Clinic psychiatrists to handle all inpatient services at both hospitals. They often transferred the rambunctious patients from pleasant, homelike Woodland Memorial to Yolo General Hospital, with its concrete cells, leather restraints, and yellow plastic barrels for toilets. The private psychiatrists also handled admissions from the jail, whose inmates were sent to the Yolo General seclusion rooms for evaluation and emergency tranquilization, before being sent back to the jail. I covered the jail psychiatric sick call each Tuesday afternoon, when I saw all those inmates sent back from the seclusion rooms at Yolo General Hospital.

The two private psychiatrists also took all night and weekend calls from the Mental Health Service patients. This kept the county's salaried psychiatrists' schedules at 40 hours a week. There was no money in the county budget to pay them overtime to work nights and weekends.

Dr. McIver contracted with other agencies to fill the gaps so as to provide a full-service program. Transitional housing for the chronically mentally ill patients was supplied by Sihaya House, a large, two story house in Davis. The managing psychologist, Dr. Gregory, employed UC Davis college students as live-in staff. They received free room and board for acting as counselors to the six

mentally ill residents who lived there.

Shortly after I arrived, two quarter-way houses were opened. Two half-duplexes had been purchased in Davis by a philanthropic couple whose son was mentally ill. They rented to three men in one half-duplex and to three women in the other one. These were called Satellite Houses, and were intended for those patients who no longer needed the supervision at Sihaya House. Patients were expected to move from the hospital to Sihaya House to a Satellite House and then to apartments of their own.

Yolo County's Mental Health Service also contracted with Napa State Hospital where Dr. McIver was allotted a few beds for which he paid a stiff daily fee for each patient in one of them. To insure patients did not stay too long, his Psychiatric Nurse, Jane Parker, visited monthly. She had to find local placements for these chronically psychotic patients when they left the state hospital. Often, the only suitable housing was in Board and Care homes in Sacramento, but there were no such places in Yolo County. With all of these contracts, Dr. McIver had all the elements in place that planners recommended for a modern treatment system.

When I needed a full-time job, I called Dr. McIver to see what he had available. The psychiatrist in the Broderick clinic had just died, so Dr. McIver invited me to apply for the job, which put me in position to meet Sad Marie.

Mental Health Service staff members expected patients to conform to a set of rules, thus insuring a volume of patients can be served. Only those individuals who fit within prescribed patterns of conduct could expect to get in the door to receive service. Once there, those individuals had to conform to the pattern expected of them. They had to call for an appointment, show up on time, be sober on arrival, treat the receptionist politely, wait until called by the therapist, stay the allotted time, and leave without objection. These behaviors are difficult for some mentally ill patients, and they

were the ones who could not be easily accommodated.

Sad Marie understood the rules and was one alter-personality who could abide by them. She had the proper presenting symptom, chronic suicidal depression, so she was always eligible for psychiatric services. Someone who had somatic complaints might be shuttled off to the medical clinic, and those who acted violently might be sent to jail. Sad Marie had the proper presenting complaints so that psychotherapy could be justified.

She never got happier or more self-confident, so she kept the body coming for more therapy. That was not her fault, nor any doctor's fault, but a necessary condition Becky gave her to keep her coming to the clinic. This allowed me to work with the persecutors who needed to be converted into helpers so they could be integrated into the Original Marie. If Sad Marie had become happy, she would have had no reason to return, and therapy of all the others would have come to a halt. Becky could not allow that to happen.

Sad Marie was "old reliable." She was the prompt one, the one who got up on time, and drove to wherever she had promised to be in time for her prescribed activities. If she couldn't get there, she called by phone to explain and never left anyone wondering what had happened. She was a courteous patient, in a patient population with many rude members. She was not someone the staff could discharge from care because of obnoxious behavior. She was ashamed if any of her "psychic sisters" insulted, harmed, or irritated any member of the staff, and she acknowledged and apologized for anyone's hurt feelings.

Sad Marie was always early. The secretarial staff talked to her while she waited for her appointments. They often said they hoped that she would get well soon. They would try to calm her down if she was agitated. If she seemed scared, they might tell her a joke.

Sad Marie knew her psychiatrist was always busy with chronically ill patients. She knew he was expected to treat patients in several differ-

ent parts of the system. She saw patients lined up in the waiting room to see him for their quarter hour blocks of time. She wondered how he managed to see her a whole two hours a week. How did he accomplish what was not provided for other patients in the system?

I took advantage of the fact I was expected to be in the Broderick clinic three days a week, in the Woodland clinic one day a week, and in the Davis clinic one day a week. Each clinic's schedule was managed by a different clerk. In Woodland, I insisted I have a regular hour assigned to Sad Marie, and the clerk had the other hours available to fill at her discretion. In that way, she never felt I was shortchanging the other patients she was expected to squeeze into my schedule.

Likewise, in Broderick, I insisted I be allowed one hour a week for Sad Marie. That clerk also had all the other hours to jam full of patients the other therapists insisted had to see a psychiatrist. The clerk didn't feel pressured about giving this one woman an hour, when she was always on time and polite when she came to the waiting room. She had the rest of the day available for other patients.

I never did give Sad Marie time to talk about problems she was having. I focused on problems she brought with her, in the form of Lisa Kay, Lynn, or Marcia, among others. With them acting up most of the time, I didn't have the luxury of discussing Sad Marie's social difficulties or lack of friends with her. Those matters were not as important to me as was my need to keep the angry persecutors out of the hospital. I hoped the staff at each residence where she lived would act in a friendly way toward her, but her social problems just didn't seem issues I could do much about. As a man, I was used to trying to solve problems, not listening over and over again to problems she refused to try to solve. I had heard enough of those complaints when I was in practice in Santa Cruz. There I had to listen to collect my fee, and my tolerance for chronic complaining, when there was no attempt to solve the problem, was mighty slim

by this time.

Sad Marie was the carrier of the problem makers and solvers. She was there to provide continuity and stability so the therapy staff could have their patient would show up promptly, stay the allotted time, and leave without a fight. She did her job well. Her positive traits have remained in the Marie of today, as they are essential characteristics for a person to have if she is to participate in our complex society.

When Sad Marie first met me, she felt she could tell me anything, but she was afraid. She knew that she had to tell someone. She could not hide what was happening to her any longer. She knew she was going to die -- if not by her hands, then by the hands of someone else.

Sad Marie was afraid of her own shadow. How was she going to let this big, bad, mean looking doctor in on her secrets? His eyes helped her overcome her initial reluctance of being unable to trust him. Then, when she went home and found those strange items in her closet, she was compelled to come back and begin therapy with him. She had no choice. She had to go or be no more.

When Sad Marie started psychotherapy and I discovered her "psychic sisters," her duty was to bring the body for therapy and take it out to her car when they were done. Sad Marie never complained. She wanted to talk to me occasionally. She wanted me to know she was there, not just in charge of the body.

Sad Marie was always depressed, and the other "hostile psychic sisters" would feed on her negative emotions. Sad Marie had her fantasies, but they were never to come true. Sad Marie wanted to know happiness, but that emotion was never to be hers.

Sad Marie loved and admired me and wanted to do whatever would please me. She cooperated with all of my requests in therapy. Sad Marie wanted to be known as her own person, but she was not a person. She was created by Becky to do just what she was doing.

Sad Marie tried to do everything anyone

asked her to do, without argument or upset. Still, she was always sad, as she knew her time was limited, and she was never going to realize any of her dreams. She wanted a father to love and accept her. She was tired of being forced to earn her father's love, an impossibility. She wanted to teach sign language, but that was never to happen.

Sad Marie was not going to live to see her hopes, dreams, and wishes come true. She died never knowing a father's acceptance. She died living a fantasy without ever seeing it become reality. She was never able to tell me what a good therapist and friend I was to her. She died never having told me that she loved me, never having hugged me or kissed me good-bye on the cheek. She died as she lived, alone, but with a knowledge that she had done something important to bring about change. She helped someone grow, someone who was meant to inhabit her body for all time. Sad Marie was a helper and a fighter, but she was alone in her fight for her life, and she knew that she was not going to live. She was only the caretaker.

Sad Marie left the integrated Marie with an important trait, reliability. She is her sense of responsibility that makes her call if she is unable to make a meeting. She is her need to be considerate of other people's feelings. When the present day Marie gives her word to someone, it is her bond, and she never breaks her word.

During the time I was treating Sad Marie at the clinic, many staff members were involved in her care. Some monitored her at the Satellite House, some saw her in the day treatment center, and some made her acquaintance when they were on emergency duty at one of the clinics. Since I had to be at each of the three clinics some of the time, she saw me at each of the clinics, thus involving the secretaries in all three towns. No staff member was uninvolved in Sad Marie's case.

Due to my conflict over MPD with other psychiatrists when in private practice, I expected to have conflict with staff members in Yolo County.

To my surprise, it never happened. The staff members were secure enough in their own competence that they didn't need to build up their own professional prestige by knocking someone else down. All had special interests, which Dr. McIver let them pursue. Treatment of MPD was "Dr. Allison's thing," so they left me alone to do what I did best. Never once did a staff member criticize me for bothering them with such a difficult patient. They looked to me for help in dealing with their troublesome patients. If anyone had objected to my keeping Sad Marie in treatment, I might have offered to trade her for one of their problem patients!

No one dared do that, of course, so they stood beside me all the way, did their professional best to assist me, gave me feedback when they needed to, and watched the drama of rebirth unfold.

While thinking about Sad Marie, the present day integrated Marie was filled with mixed emotions. Her predecessor was ignored for so long, including at the time of her "death" by integration in 1981. She cried and was obsessed about Sad Marie, who had so reliably carried the body in for therapy, then passively walked home, having had no time for herself with the man she loved more than anyone else on earth.

She talked this over with Becky, her Essence, who agreed she needed to have a chance to thank Sad Marie for all she had done for her. That would provide a chance for Sad Marie to say goodbye to me, her dad, friend and therapist. Becky and I discussed how to arrange such a farewell, and I suggested an age-regression session. I thought I could accomplish the procedure with the integrated Marie without unraveling her integration, if all went as planned.

When Marie and I visited Rebecca Worth for the first time in 14 years, we had our chance. At this visit, the "family" met together once again. When Worth opened her front door to greet them, she could not believe her eyes. Here was her one-time rehabilitation client and "adopted daughter"

standing in front of her, so different than she remembered her. The woman she had last seen was Sad Marie -- overweight, disheveled, suicidal, guilt ridden, and begging for attention. The woman she now saw on her doorstep was svelte, well groomed, neatly coiffured, confident and congenial.

"I can't believe it!" Worth shrieked. "It's really you! You look so great! I never expected to ever see you again, and you're just beautiful!"

"You've never really met me before," Marie said anxiously. "I'm not the one that you knew at the facility. I'm the original one, grown up. It sure is good to see you, though, Rebecca. How are you doing?"

"I'm just doing fine, Marie," she answered warmly. "Come on in. We've got a lot to catch up on."

The reception was much more cordial than Marie had dared expect. She didn't know why Worth had left the Sacramento Rehabilitation Facility while Sad Marie was still a client there. All she knew was that Worth had left shortly after agreeing to be Mary Lou's mother. The integrated Marie had not come out before Worth left town.

While they chatted in Worth's living room, time dissolved into nothing. There were no barriers in their communication. Worth had remarried and now had a stepdaughter. She had gone to graduate school and earned her Marriage, Family, Child Counseling (MFCC) license. She had worked in a private psychiatric hospital and then opened an office near her home. She was happy and had plans for a productive future.

I watched quietly as these two ladies became reacquainted. When I had first seen Worth dealing with Marie and Lisa Kay, I sensed she had a natural talent for being a fine therapist. All she needed was the schooling and state license. I had told her that at the time, and she took my advice. She had done exactly what I knew she was capable of doing, something she doubted was possible at the time.

Worth said she had been sure Marie would kill herself before the year was over. She was

amazed how this lady had survived all these years and looked so healthy as well.

"We've got a question for you, Rebecca," I interjected. "Marie and I have been talking about doing an age-regression session so we can talk with the old Marie you knew. Maybe we could do it together, and you could say hello to her, too."

"Can you really do that?" she asked.

"We can try," I replied. "But we need to set the stage just right. We need privacy, near darkness, and no chance of an interruption with some stranger wandering in. We both think you should be there, since you are her mom, and she would naturally want to talk to you as well as to me, her dad."

"Why don't we use my office after dinner?" offered Worth. "It's only a couple of blocks from here. You are going out to dinner with us, aren't you?"

"We wouldn't miss it," I said. "Thanks for the invitation. I think we will have an interesting session, even more so if you are there."

In Worth's private office that evening, Becky and I set the stage for a successful outcome. The room was quiet and safe, with no chance for interruptions. We dimmed the light, so Sad Marie would not be disoriented by finding herself in an unfamiliar place. The only other person there was Worth, her emotional mother.

I explained the procedure, conditions, methods and potential dangers involved to the integrated Marie. "In age regression, you will go into a trance as soon as you close your eyes. I will then use a visualization to have you go back in time, while you get younger. When I arrive at the proper date for our interview, the date of your final integration with Marie, Becky will call on the Marie who existed at that time. She will act and talk exactly as if she is in the time I state, but she will be comfortable talking to me. She will think she is where she last was that day, but she will trust me and be willing to talk to me.

"The goal is to have her go through those procedures we did not do in 1981. Now I will have

time to talk to her alone and thank her for all she did to help you get well. You will be able to talk to her, thank her, and say goodbye.

"The hazard is that I could make a mistake and do something to would cause your integration to unravel. I will do everything I can to prevent that. You must realize that one risk is that an unexpected interruption could cause you to regress to before the integration and become disintegrated again. If that were to happen, we would have to repeat the integration process. I will do everything in my power to prevent such a catastrophe."

Marie considered the options, the method, the quality of the hypnotist, and the risks. She agreed to proceeding as planned.

With the light well shielded, I proceeded to age-regress the integrated Marie to the moment just before the Sad Marie integrated, in 1981, in my clinic office in Broderick. Before the induction of hypnosis, I asked Marie to use her left index finger as a YES finger and her left long finger as a NO finger. If I asked a question under hypnosis, she could then answer YES or NO by raising one finger. That would enable me to quiz her about what was going on inside regardless of who might be in charge of the body.

She entered into an hypnotic trance and visualized a calendar in front of her. In a low, calm, and tranquil voice, I told her to fold down one page of the calendar at a time, while she grew younger and younger. I finally arrived at the appointed time, May 28, 1981, and said, "You have just been through a very complicated session with me at the Broderick Clinic, and you have been watching and participating as all of these psychic sisters of yours have been coming forth and saying, 'We have done our duties, we've had an exciting time, and we think it's time to let that young whippersnapper, Marie, take over our work. We give her all of our good characteristics, all of our talents, all of our love of fun, and all of our steadfastness, interest in working and doing a good job, being reliable and all those things that she will need. Now there is just one more person left; that's

Marie, the Marie who brought the body into my office every day since 1978 when you first came to the Yolo county clinic. She is old reliable; she showed up every time; she did whatever I asked her to, went into whatever type of trance I needed that day. At the end I would say, 'Thank you,' explain what I did that day, and she would walk out to her car and go home.

"We couldn't have done it without her. That's first and foremost, because I can't go chasing somebody all over town. Every one of those others have now been integrated into the integrated Marie except for this Marie, who carried the body in even though she was unhappy, miserable, and wanted to end it all. She was old reliable. She always showed up on time, and I could always count on her bringing everybody into me so I could do what I needed to do. And she's the only one left.

"Now I want to make sure that all of these others have been integrated, that there are no strangers around. Check around in there that all you've got are you, who brings the body in, the Marie who is going to be the final person who was born into the body and went under at six months, and Becky, Faith and whichever helpers Faith has in the cheering section right now.

"I want this to be a private affair. We don't want to start this session with any strangers or outside interrupters. This is a very private, confidential session. Look around and, if you are absolutely sure only the people we described are there, let your YES finger raise. Make sure you have an absolutely clean room, with nobody but you and your best friends there. Look around. I don't want any strangers hiding under the chairs. OK?"

Marie's YES finger raised.

I continued. "Now that you're there, I want the Marie who brought the body into the office every day for therapy and arrived so nobly to open her eyes and come out and see her doctor, so he can say, 'Hi,' to her."

Sad Marie opened her eyes, blinked and slyly smiled, looking at her doctor.

"You recognize me?" I asked. "Hi, Marie."

Sad Marie smiled, looking only at me. "How are you doing?"

"Well, I'm really doing fine," I answered.

"Whom do you want to speak to?" she asked, thinking she was there for another therapy session. She looked as sad and forlorn as ever.

"I want to speak to you," I said. "I haven't anybody else to speak to. You did so well they're all gone. Didn't you know that? If you'll look, you'll see you haven't got a crowd in there anymore."

With that, I took Sad Marie's hands and never let go of them while I talked to her. It was my chance to make contact with her. I had to say goodbye, and I had to show her I cared as much as she had cared about me.

"Nobody?" she asked.

"Because you did it. There had to be an end to all this, didn't there?" I stated.

"I didn't do anything. You're the doctor."

"You did do something. You know what that something was? You carried them all into the office every day. You know what that's like? Like a fancy dessert I had at a fancy hotel last week. This is what they brought to me at the end of a meal; it appeared like this."

I cupped my hands together. "It was a shell made of some kind of sugar stuff coated with chocolate, and inside there were strawberries, peaches, pineapple, and berries."

"Was it good?" Sad Marie asked.

"You bet. But it had to hold together so I could eat all the fruit. Obviously, if it breaks, the fruit ends up on the table, and that would make a mess. So I was careful not to break it. It was very delicate. If I broke it, I couldn't eat the fruit. So I carefully ate each of the pieces of fruit, and what did that leave? That left this chocolate covered shell that really looked kind of funny when I saw it by itself. But that tasted good, too. Had they only served the shell, it would have been a very weird dessert. How could they have sold it to anybody? If they had only brought the fruit, how could you eat it? You might only eat one little grape. Now if they had put it in a metal or plastic saucer, that wouldn't

have been enough. This was perfect for what it did. It held the fancy fruit. Then when it was empty, it tasted even better. It was the dessert after the dessert.

"So, you were the dessert after the dessert. Now, if that isn't special, I don't know what is. I wouldn't have enjoyed the meal if I hadn't had the dessert, and I wouldn't have enjoyed the fruit if I didn't have the shell around it. Got that?"

"Now, it may look flimsy all by itself, but, in combination with the others and in combination with the whole meal, it was the perfect end to a lovely meal. OK?"

"That is who you are. If that isn't important, I don't know what is. I enjoyed the meal with you. You were the final dessert. You're good enough to eat."

"Thank you, but I couldn't be a dessert, because I did what you told me to do," replied Sad Marie. "If the dessert was so special, why did you eat it?"

"That's what a dessert is for," I answered. "Food is meant to be eaten, right? What are helpers meant for? To help until the other person is strong enough and has knowledge enough to do it by herself."

"Is the six-month-old one ready to do it herself?"

"The six-month-old one has grown up. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your coming in every day. I couldn't have done it without you. No way. I couldn't have gotten Lisa Kay or Lynn to leave on time, the way they were flashing knives at me. I've got other things to do in a clinic then run after them. I would have been fired if I'd spent any time doing that. I'm glad Dr. McIver didn't do that. All the staff there liked you, you know that, because they could count on you knowing the rules and following them. They never gave you a hard time about coming in. Now, if Lisa Kay was the only one who came in, I would have been fired."

"We wouldn't want that."

"The point is, we both had to be there. We had to come to the same place, with the equipment

and the desk, so people would leave us alone. I couldn't have the secretaries rushing in saying, 'Get out of here! She's making so much noise. Nobody can hear anything.' That's what you did. Now, it may sound simple or unimportant to you. They never gave me a hard time about you coming in. Can you imagine what could have happened if they had?"

"She wouldn't get well."

"You would have never gotten well, that's right."

"That's right, I wouldn't have, but what I did wasn't very special, and I wasn't very strong."

"Tell me what it was that you have been strongest about. None of the others were strong enough."

"Showing up."

"Showing up all the time. Now where is that important? Give me some examples."

"School," Marie said.

"Right," I answered. "Number one is school. If you're going to learn anything, you've got to show up for class. Now, if you stay in school, what do most people do?"

"What?"

"After a number of years in school, you graduate. You get a job. Do you know what the biggest problem the people living in the welfare slums have about jobs? They can't get out of bed on time."

"What?" she replied, unbelieving.

"Believe it or not, that is it," I said. "According to companies who have hired these people, they had to send their own workers out to get them out of bed. They couldn't get their rear ends out of bed to come to the plant. Thank goodness, we didn't need to do that here. That trait is essential to living in society. That will be in her all the time. I'm sure there are others, but I can't think of a more important one. She's got to have that trait because nobody's going to drag her out of bed for work. Nobody's going to do that. Otherwise, she'd end up being broke and starving to death."

"We don't want her to do that."

"Well, she won't. She knows that she's supposed to do that. I bet she'll be able to buy a house and a car and wardrobe, maybe even a mink coat."

"You think so?"

"You have done that. That trait will be passed on to her, among the other reliable traits you have. Everything useful is passed through. She'll have the same parts as you, though in a different style."

Sad Marie leaned over and hugged me warmly.

"I love you," she said through her tears. "I'm going to miss you."

"We love you, too," I answered. "Love is an energy that can never be destroyed, and that love you will deliver to her. Love is essential. Without love we have wars, and you don't need those. That you do love and can love is a wonderful trait. That will enable her to get along with a lot of people. It's amazing what happens when someone loves. They can't stay obnoxious."

I turned to look at Worth, who had been sitting in the shadows all this time. "Now look over there. See who's there?"

Sad Marie turned to where he was looking. "Rebecca?"

"Yes," answered her "adopted mother." "You remember me?"

"Of course I do," sad Marie replied, almost letting a smile sneak through.

"Remember when you first came into the center and saw her?" I asked. "You were the one who signed up there, weren't you?"

"I went every day," said Sad Marie.

"How often did you come in the first few weeks you were there?" I asked.

"Every day," she said.

"Were you still going to college then or not?" I asked. "What was the month that you started there -- remember? I was trying to check it with the school schedule. You were still going to some classes."

"After I left the center, I audited some

classes in the late afternoon and early evening," Sad Marie answered.

"You had to show up the first semester to get those grades -- A's and B's. That's as good as I ever got. But then I pushed the therapy so hard, and it's hard to go to school when you're in the hospital so much."

"I know. It was so hard to keep studying and then doing everything else I had to do. But at least I kept going to school. I just wish I had finished and gotten a degree. But I stayed in school for those two years."

"Right, you went all four semesters."

Then Sad Marie saw my tape recorder on the couch. "Why is that there?" she asked.

Worth answered, "So you can put together your thoughts and memories."

I continued, "Becky-- she and Michael are dictating to me. You know him?"

"Yes," Sad Marie answered.

"Nice guy. Smarter than me?" I asked.

"No, he couldn't be," Sad Marie replied.

"He'd better be," I responded. "Why would I bother listening to him otherwise? Becky's smarter than you, or she's no good to you, right? If you could tell her what to do, what's the point of her being here?"

"We're writing a book about all this, and we were talking about her part in your life, so we could get it straight. We want to explain to other people how it is. Nothing's been written about this before. We need to explain how it can work. It worked, right?"

"Yes."

"What did you get out of all the therapy we have done together?"

"That I wasn't the only one inside, and that you found the true me. And that I hurt you so many times, but you found the true person. And that I am going away, and the six-month-old is going to take over this body. And it will be hers forever because she is was designed to run this body forever."

"Now we'll get somewhere."

"Yes, and Rebecca, did you know someone

at the center where you worked told me I would get better if I could scream a lot?"

"Who told you that?" asked Worth. "Was he tall and skinny and had a beard?"

"Yes."

"You had tall and skinny men with beards?" I inquired of Rebecca.

"Yes. Don," she answered, with disgust.

"That sounds like a prescription for primal screaming to me," I added. "I think this is a warning we can give."

"Yes," said Worth. "We don't want to tell people to do things like that. I didn't know anything about that."

"No one should do that unless he's the responsible therapist," I commented.

Sad Marie continued, "He said no one would be able to hear me if I went out to my car and screamed. And I wasn't supposed to tell anyone about it, so I didn't."

"Well, Dr. Allison came out and talked to the staff," continued Worth, "but I'm not sure if it made them feel better or worse."

"It made me feel better to see how well she did at the job," I said. "I had a lot of confidence after seeing how she handled them."

"She was a nice lady," Sad Marie said, looking over at Worth.

"Was?" asked Worth.

"In the center," I interjected. "You haven't seen her since you left the center, have you?"

"She hasn't left the center," said Sad Marie, thinking back. "Oh, yes, you have."

"Yes, she quit," I replied. "She got into too much trouble with the boss. Nothing to do with you. She needed a better job."

"I thought it was me," said Sad Marie, "because we messed up so bad."

I turned to Worth. "You explain that to her."

"No, I left because of personal problems," stated Worth.

"It wasn't me?" asked Sad Marie.

"No way," answered Worth, reassuringly.

"There was a boyfriend I had. I moved away. It was not you for one minute. It had nothing to do with you. No, no, no."

"Those were not happy days for her," I commented.

"No, no, no," Worth continued. "My personal life was not doing real well, either, so . . ."

"You know what boyfriends do to your lives," I said to Sad Marie. "Look at what they did to Wendy."

"Yeah. I can't believe she actually loved that sort of person."

"Maybe you can explain what it was," I inquired. "I don't know what went on."

"She loved him."

"She loved him?"

"I don't know why."

"If you don't know why, how can . . . ?"

"Bob was a weak individual."

"He was also sort of a criminally minded individual, a con man."

"You know how Wendy was," Sad Marie reminded me. "She liked helping people. She had to take care of them."

"The sicker they were, the more attractive they were, right?"

"Yes. You know she had sex with him?" Sad Marie confided to me.

"I heard about that from Becky," I replied. "It's a good thing she didn't get anything bad from that."

"I'm glad, too."

"How come you folks are so lucky? Somebody must have been looking out after her."

Safe sex had never been a priority with any of the acting out alter-personalities, I remembered.

"You know Becky," Sad Marie said. "She always watches after all of us."

"But that's taking too many risks with a guy like him," I said. "Probably catting around everywhere else, too. He wasn't faithful to anybody. Why should he be?"

"Those were things Rebecca had going in

her life, too. She's a human being. She had a boyfriend, family, and all that. She talked to me about the hard time she had with her boss and all."

"Did you know Mary Lou asked her to become her mother?" asked Sad Marie.

"Yes," I answered.

"Did you know she agreed to that?"

"Yes."

"Mary Lou was real happy about that."

"What did you think about that? Did you need a mother?"

"I always wanted a mom."

"What about a dad?"

"I always wanted a dad."

"Well, I'm your dad," I said, "so you've got a dad and you've got a mom."

"I'm your mom," said Worth.

Worth leaned over and hugged Sad Marie, tears streaming down both their faces.

"I'm going to miss you, Mom," Sad Marie whispered to her.

"Remember what Dr. Allison said about the traits," Rebecca commented. "That there's a part of you that's going to be here. But I understand what you feel, that you're going to miss the connection, right? You're going to miss that connection to him."

"I won't be here anymore. I won't have a dad or a mom anymore. I have dreamed what it would be like to have two parents who loved me. Now I won't have that."

"Let me put it this way," I explained. "I've been in a lot of places before. I came to Davis after a practice in Santa Cruz I had to quit. I'll never go back there. You know why I'll never go back there? Because I don't like to do something I've done before. What's the fun? I already know how to do it. Let's do something new we haven't done before."

"Now's your chance to go do something you haven't done before. I don't know what it is, but it isn't the same old stuff. You know how to do that. You are an old pro. Now's the time for a new career."

"Maybe you'll go bungee jumping!" Worth

said.

"What's that?" Sad Marie asked.

I explained. "That's when you jump off a high thing with a long rubber cord and pray you don't hit the rocks on the bottom."

"Who would want to do something stupid like that?" asked Sad Marie.

"I don't know who would want to do stupid things like that," I answered. "Maybe Lisa Kay would."

"She would," said Sad Marie. "She'd probably cut the cord."

"But you know what?" I continued. "To get there, you've got to show up on time."

"Maybe I don't want to go," said Sad Marie.

"Well, let's put it this way," I continued. "If you're Lisa Kay, you would enjoy it, right?"

"Yeah."

"If you were you," I continued, "you wouldn't jump. But, between the two of you, you would show up on time to jump, if you're stupid enough to do it. That's an example of what could be done. You'll have to admit that would be a new career."

Sad Marie changed the subject. "Can I tell you something?"

"Sure."

"I just wish sometimes you would have talked to me, but I know that it wouldn't happen that way."

"Well, it could have if you had said something."

"No, because I had to do what you wanted done."

"Well, we had a problem of only so much time in the week," I explained.

"I know that," she replied.

"That's the problem we always have, right?"

"I know about the time. I know that because your time is so precious."

"Well, there was so much to do with you, too. How many people did you have in there?"

"Sixty-three, five . . ."

"Sixty-three, somewhere in that range? I figured somewhere around there. That's a lot of people I had to deal with."

"Including all the exorcisms you had to deal with."

"Were those real exorcisms?" I inquired. "Or was I kidding myself?"

"You put that guy in the can?"

"I know I did."

"We took it."

"I was just wondering if you were playing games with me or something," I asked.

"Why would I do that?" she replied.

"I didn't think you would, but nobody around here thinks exorcisms are real. They all tell me that I'm just fooling myself."

"They don't know what goes on inside with us."

"They don't know what goes on within you, that's right. They weren't inside your head watching, were they? Only you were. If you say it was, it was. Well, thank you for reassuring me I did the right thing. It's nice to know I did the right thing."

"You did."

"I sat there and prayed, 'Please, is this the right thing?' I need feedback, too."

"Everything you did was right," Sad Marie reassured me.

"Don't tell Becky that. She thinks I made some boobos."

"I won't."

"She's a tough task master, isn't she?"

"She's smart."

"She's a perfectionist," I noted.

"Yeah, but Michael is one, too," said Sad Marie.

"Maybe that's why they get along so well. They're quite a twosome, aren't they?"

"Rebecca's a perfectionist, too," commented Sad Marie.

"Who does she have who is like my Michael and your Becky?"

"Hers?"

"Yeah."
"Doesn't she know?"
"No."
"Hasn't anyone ever told her?"
"No. She's been working, you know, and she never got around to asking. She never was in therapy with me, so we never talked about those things."
"Oh, really."
I explained. "We were out tonight at dinner, and she asked about it. I thought that, as long as you're here, you could tell her. Otherwise she'll go away ignorant. We can't have that happen, can we?"
"No," replied Sad Marie.
"We can't have her leave her own office ignorant, can we?"
"No."
"So what would you like to tell her about hers?" I asked Sad Marie.
"Vicky."
"Vicky?"
"Yeah, right."
Worth leaned over as we were talking about her and her Essence. "I've got Vicky?"
Sad Marie said again, "Yeah."
"That's her Essence?" I asked.
"Yeah," repeated Sad Marie.
"My Michael?" asked Worth.
"Yes," repeated Sad Marie.
I asked, "What characteristics of Vicky can you tell us about?"
Sad Marie answered me, "She's exactly like Becky and Michael. They've been joined before."
"That's why we got along so well together?" I asked. "They're all good friends? Like the Three Musketeers?"
Sad Marie continued, "Yeah, she has Vicky, and she has more."
"I know, three others," I continued. "She has three others to protect her."
"Three others?" exclaimed Worth.
"Yes, one is here and one is here and here,"

I answered, pointing to beyond each shoulder and in front of my chest. "Michael discusses with me what to do. But those are my guards."
"Here, and here, and here?" Worth asked, pointing to spots in front and behind her shoulders.
"They're surrounding you," I said to her.
"Really?" Worth tried to absorb all this news.
"They're guards against the harm of the other world, and all those patients you've got," I said.
"Right here," said Sad Marie, pointing to one ear.
"Really, right here?" replied Worth, pointing to her ear.
"Talking in your ear," I said.
"I've got to open my ears," Worth said, the insight unfolding.
"That's right," I said, turning to Sad Marie.
"That's what you learn to do in this business. If she'd learn to listen to Vicky better, she can figure out these weird patients she has."
"She's a doctor?" asked Marie.
"What's your degree?" I asked.
"Marriage, family, child counselor," replied Worth.
"We just call it 'therapist,'" I said. "She does all the talk stuff, but she doesn't write prescriptions. She's darn good at it, too."
"Not like the Big Head Honcho Doctor!" joked Sad Marie, lightening up.
"I'm the one who gets all the complaints how medicines mess up their heads. But we don't have to worry about that anymore, now that I'm retired."
"But Vicky is her loudmouth she's going to listen to," said Sad Marie.
"As smart as Michael and Becky?" I asked.
"All part of the same passel?"
"Yes."
"All came from the same crew?"
"Yes."
"Off the boat at the same time?"
"Yes."

"Yeah, I figured as much."

Sad Marie continued to explain about Worth's Essence, Vicky. "She's been with her four times."

"She's been her helper four times, four lifetimes?" I asked.

"Yeah."

"Well, that's a fair amount of practice," I said. "She should know her well by this time. Did she work well with her last time?"

"Yeah."

"Then, it's just a matter of getting acquainted again. Now that she knows about Vicky, she has no excuses, does she?"

"No."

"We won't let her out of this one, will we?" I said.

"OK," said Worth. She had gotten the message loud and clear.

I decided to continue with the rest of what we had planned to do during this age-regression session. "The integrated Marie is in there waiting to say goodbye to you."

"I know," replied Sad Marie.

"She especially wants to give you her greetings. So close your eyes and go in there and talk to her. I'll wait until you're done. When you're done, let your YES finger raise. Now go to say goodbye to her. Go to find the integrated Marie . . ."

Inside her mind, she and the integrated Marie made their peace with each other, while Worth and I saw a radiant smiling face replace the sad visage they had always known. Finally, they saw a happy false-front Marie, an experience they never thought possible.

Inside, the integrated Marie silently communed with her last fragment and told her, "Thank you, thank you for giving me my life."

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Since that session, the integrated Marie has felt peace within herself, as the circle is now complete. She has done her duty by her last psychic sister, the one who looked after her basic needs for a decade.