

Psychiatric Report

"The Stone Boy"

I would like to bring to your attention one of my new patients, Arnold Curwing. Mr. Curwing, 21, lives a quiet life alone withdrawn from his family and friends. He has lived these past 12 years in frustration and isolation, unable to be confident, unable to express feelings. This was shown when he came in to my office that day with his hands in his pocket, shirt not tucked and tilting his head towards the floor; avoiding eye contact. He had very poor communicating skills and plus he had been very nervous. I understand that before the accident, Mr. Curwing was once a very charming and enthusiastic boy. One whom I should mention was very fond of his older brother and greatly admired him. I have clearly reviewed a detailed incident with Mr. Curwing, an incident which has been the most important factor in shaping Arnold's life choices and his state of mind.

The day of the accident, Eugie had promised Arnold that he would go pick peas with him. Arnold carried his 22-caliber rifle with him hoping that "...if there were any ducks... he'd take a shot at them."(p.1) On their way to picking peas, they had to climb "...through the wire fence that divided the wheat field from the marshy pasture around the lake."(p.2) Eugie had gone first. When it was Arnold's turn, his rifle caught on a wire and consequently fired. The next moment, his brother, Eugie fell forward, dead.

Some would suggest that Arnold, being the youngest, was jealous, but the evidence suggests that Arnold greatly admired Eugie, making his death even more traumatic. Eugie was the eldest in the family. He was tall and had a very good figure: "Arnold never tired of watching Eugie offer silent praise unto himself."(p.2) Arnold greatly admired his brother and wished to be just like Eugie when he grew up. He wondered that, "...if when he got to be Eugie's age he would still be undersized and his hair still straight."(p.2) Clearly, Arnold wanted to be like his brother. Therefore, when Arnold noticed the bright blood of his brother, "...like that of a parasite,"(p.3) he became scared. In fact, he was in total shock and did not know what to do. The death of his brother made him feel as if he had just lost a part of his own life.

Arnold's feelings about his brother's death can explain his behaviour following the death. First of all, Arnold, traumatic from the accident, did not know what to do. All he remembered was the reason why they had gone out that morning; to pick peas. Arnold seemed calm about the accident because he was in shock. In reality, he was also scared to go home right away, not knowing how the rest of the family would react. These feelings were noted while he was picking the peas: "...his hands were strange to him, and not until some time had passed did he realise that the pods were numbing his fingers."(p.3) He was left with no feelings. "When he got up his legs were so stiff that he had to go down on his knees again." Just as Arnold was in physical pain, and didn't realize it, he also did not immediately recognise his emotional pain.

The reaction of the family immediately after they found out about accident scared Arnold even more. He ended up hiding up in the loft, to be as far away from his family as possible. Arnold thought that, "...he would stay up in the loft forever, out of the way."(p.3) His fear of his family could possibly be attributed to their unusual reaction to him. As well perhaps, Arnold felt that he was not very useful and he was never sure if he would turn out just like his brother: he knew that he had taken something he could never replace. This is not Arnold's fault though, he was lack of all the other attentions his brother got that he never got. To make matters worst, Arnold had to face everyone else's reactions and comments about the whole accident, "...the others set their cold, turbulent silence against him."(p.4) He noticed that both the sheriff and his Uncle Andy had, "...thought he was cruel...and didn't care about his brother."(p.4) This gave a lot tension to Arnold for he didn't understand why he was blamed for something that he did not do on purpose. Eventually, as the other family friends arrived at the house, things get worst for Arnold. Everyone was talking about Eugie, ignoring the

present of Arnold. Arnold was a pretty bright boy, and had feelings too. What the others did not take in account was that he was traumatised from the whole accident, therefore did not know how to react. He did not need all the unnecessary comments that were made by everyone else. "Not a tear in his eye," said by his Uncle Andy and "He didn't give a hoot, is that how it goes?"(p.5) Added his Uncle Sullivan. These comments were not appropriate at all. They were making comments not knowing that the bright nine years old understood every word that was spoken. This was a very intense moment for Arnold. He had not received any comfort from his family at all. What they did not know was that Arnold was the one who suffered the most pain. There was no one there to comfort him. He needed someone to care for him and he had realised that the only person whom he really depended on was dead now. He was desperate and finally hoped he would get relief from his mother by showing her how sorry he was and hopefully in return she will give him her love and understanding. Instead, his mother refused to listen to him when he knocked on her door in the middle of the night. Arnold was left with sorrow and pain all to himself and no one to share it with. Just think, what do most people do when they are in frustration or grief, they turn to their family or friends for help. Arnold did not have either, so one can feel how Arnold must have felt. He had no one to talk to and this is what brought him to be so cold and calculated in his reaction to the world these past 12 years.

Arnold has suffered a great amount of pain due to the incident, which also has changed the way he thinks and the way he looks at the world around him. At this stage I would like to suggest some therapy programs for Mr. Curwing. He has suffered many years of grief. I would like him to reacquaint with his family and friends since he does not spend a lot of time with them. They should be aware of Arnold's feelings ensuring that they will slowly show him how much they care about him, giving him all the love and support that he should have received when he was a child. This is only a small part of his program. In the meantime we provide him with therapists with a view to helping him cultivate close relationships and being able to share his feelings and thoughts. He must also experience the social world around him. Maybe trying out different sport related activities or even some kind of social job may help. Doing sports can stimulate his blood circulation to keep him relaxed and doing team work and communication with others can also be very helpful because it can show him that he can get support and care from people on the outside also. These are just some suggestions I came up with and as progression applies, I will suggest more options.

