

worried about her mother's mental stability, having in mind Jane Duchene's past history of psychiatric disorders.

Mrs. Duchene was anxious about her physical health and with cause, that summer. She had become very thin, stooped in posture and felt weak, with unexplained weight loss. Some diagnostic procedure had ruled out cancer of the colon earlier in 1985. When there is progressive weight loss at any age a malignant tumor should be suspected. In retrospect it seems likely that the bronchogenic carcinoma involving the pleura, or lining of the rib cage on one side, was responsible for the weight loss. Dr. Corbett hospitalized his patient in January 1986 for diagnostic study, after a pleural effusion had developed. It proved to be exudate from the cancer.

On this summer visit Mary Jane found her mother to be more emotional than usual. For instance Jane wept copiously, which was quite unusual, at the airport as Mary Jane left for Europe. In December 1985, in a lengthy phone conversation with Mary Jane now in London, Jane told her of losing her sense of taste and smell. This loss often is very distressing to the patients who occasionally become depressed to the point of developing suicidal tendencies in reaction to the loss. With Jane it was frightening as well and seen as an omen, an intimation of approaching death. Her father had lost these senses not long before he died of a cerebro-vascular accident. This appears to be a phobic, irrational sort of fear but behind it may well have been a realization from bodily sources that serious disease existed somewhere

in her body.

In the fall of 1985 Jane Duchene creashed her car into a motorcycle, and the motorcyclist, who was in front of her car, a passenger, Mrs. Georgia Ek, an old friend, who had been driven for years by Jane Duchene had warned her, more than once there was real risk of a collision. Something was seriously wrong with Jane's driving as she did not stop before impact. After she hit this motorcycle she just sat immobilized, not making an effort to see if the rider of the bike, or her passenger were injured. Georgia Ek was shaken and went home by taxi. She and her daughter decided Jane's driving was a hazard and these regular meetings with Jane ended.

Mrs. Ek, like Mary Jane senses something might be wrong with Jane but did not know what it was.

Mrs. Ek is a rather timorous person and is easily frightened. She was a friend of Jane Duchene from 1942 on. Jane married Georgia's cousin and they became close friends. She had several interesting things to say in an affidavit sworn April 18, 1987. She describes Jane as a "very quiet and uncommunicative person. What I could describe as tight-lipped all the time I knew her." She found this upsetting when Jane was ill as she wouldn't speak about her condition. "Jane did not speak of her medical problems and she didn't like going to the doctor." She believed Jane confided in her more than most others in their long and close friendship.

She met Roger and Bessie Krause only once over the many

years. Occasionally after they were both widowed, Georgia would make a suggestion that Jane should visit her brother. This made Jane angry each time with comments to the effect she did not like them, especially Bessie. This outspokenness was unusual or atypical behavior for Jane.

Despite the fact they were strangers, early in 1985 Bessie Krause phoned Mrs. Ek to say that Jane Duchene, whose dying mother had come from Duluth to live with Jane, was neglecting the mother, leaving her alone, etc. There were several calls of this kind from Mrs. Krause before they stopped after Jane's mother died. Mrs. Krause went on in those conversations to tell Georgia that she had often asked Jane to bring Mrs. Ek on visits to the Krause home, (Mrs. Ek does not drive herself) apparently implying that Jane was at fault in not passing on the invitations. Mrs. Ek may have been ambivalent in her friendship with Jane Duchene, or excessively credulous with a confident speaker like Mrs. Krause, for she believed Bessie on both counts and "I was mildly upset with her", i.e. Jane. Georgia did not clarify these issues with Jane, nor oddly enough did it occur to her that she was being used by a malicious liar, fomenting bad feeling between friends. After Mary Jane was subjected to the same sort of ugly lying, i.e. Bessie's accusations of evil treatment of Jane this time by Mary Jane, Mrs. Ek realized finally that Bessie Krause had been using her as a recipient of her hostile ordure. Her last contact with Bessie came when Georgia called Bessie in March 1986 to report something nice. She and her daughter Carol, a



sensible woman and friend of Jane and Mary Jane had gone out of their way to drive by a place Mary Jane had as very suitable for her mother, a new complex with a nursing home as part of it, Woodbury Villas in the week of March 17, 1986. They were favorably impressed and Mrs. Ek called Bessie to convey the good news of the very nice place. It fell flat, Bessie being angered, complaining that the place was located too far away from the Krause home. After that Georgia was frightened of the Krauses and kept away from her old friends, Jane and Mary Jane except when "despite my fears and worries," she did visit Jane in June 1986 in the nursing home selected by the Krauses. Jane was "withdrawn," "not really herself at all". Conversations was only a yes or no in response to questions.

I outline the above rather trivial set of excerpts from Mrs. Ek's statement because it is an instance of how decent people are frightened of, inhibited by, gullible with aggressive, hostile, malevolent, ruthless characters whom they experience as really dangerous. The reactions of fear override their decent feelings and wishes, their sympathy and sense of responsibility as in this situation in which Georgia virtually abandoned her friends at a terrible time in their lives. Mrs. Ek could not see the obvious malice in the accusing phone calls, the palpable lying in the "invitation to visit" remarks. She knew perfectly well Jane did not visit the Krauses, didn't like the Krauses, wasn't invited to the Krauses. Yet Georgia believed Bessie. She could have thought too that an invitation so off-handedly extended, rather

than a direct call to her, was a rather impolite sort of invitation, lukewarm. The result was an alienation to a large extent from her old friend who was dying. Georgia became too afraid to be a friend to Jane or Mary Jane in sadness and catastrophe, the latter engineered in fair measure by Bessie and Roger. This is an example of the non-material loss and hurt inflicted on Jane Duchene by the last ditch invasion of Jane Duchene's life by people who had not cared for or about her, (one of whom actively disliked her) and who connived and colluded before Mary Jane had even returned to Minnesota from Europe to obstruct, and disrupt, not only the responsible arrangements and day-to-day care provided by Mary Jane, but to wipe Mary Jane out of the situation altogether, once they had access to Jane's and Mary Jane's money after defaming and lying about Mary Jane.

This couple colluded with others in destroying the sick mother's real relationship with her only child, without any seeming recognition of the loss to Jane their fostering of delusions was. The fear and avoidance shown by Mrs. Ek probably was only one instance of Jane Duchene's being isolated from and deprived of friends and others who would if not afraid, have given her some care and love or solace. These imponderables can't be measured but their loss is a dreadful thing to inflict on helpless people.

In a rather detailed statement of her observations of the onset and progress of her mother's psychiatric disorder I asked her to write, Mary Jane states "I believe I noticed that my

mother's personality had changed very subtly, (she seemed to care less about things be less astute and less independent than she normally was.") Mary Jane thought she may have imagined things. She was probably accurate in that these are common manifestations in an early phase of dementia. (See Freedman and Saddock.)

The loss of taste and smell troubled Jane Duchene greatly and she talked of it repeatedly in a peculiar and specific way. She repeated the same complaints over and over without interruption, with seemingly no recognition of the social inappropriateness involved. It appears she was incapable of doing otherwise. This repetitive sort of speech, like a broken record, is called perseveration and it is a significant symptom. It is an indicator of brain damage and impaired brain function. There are several reports apart from Mary Jane's statements, from people who noticed this behavior. A friend of Jane's, Mrs. Lester Roloff, who saw Jane as often as once a week from 1980 on noticed perservation o New Year's Eve, December 31, 1986. "I recall clearly and distinctly that Jane Duchene complained to me throughout this dinner that she could not taste her food..." After arriving from Europe February 2, 1986, Mary Jane heard her mother speak of tast loss "very often," although in general she was quieter than she had been, speaking less about other matters. Allan Johannesen, Mary Jane's fiance, describes this scene at a lunch on February 22, 1986. Present were Jane, Mary Jane, Allan, Mr. and Mrs. Krause. "Throughout the lunch, Mrs. Duchene re-



peated constantly that she could not taste her food in the presence of the Krauses and none of us could think of a reply or comment to Mrs. Duchene; except my fiancée who suggested her mother try different things and try her best to eat. Roger Krause just smiled throughout the lunch and his wife just stared at Mrs. Duchene." (This was part of a notarized statement given before the U.S. Consul in Copenhagen by Allan who is a Dane and lives there.) There are other reports of the patient exhibiting this organic symptom and it showed in Dr. Boller's psychological testing very clearly.

There was a concurrent reduction in social awareness and sensitivity apparently present. Mrs. Duchene did not appear to consider or care about the reactions to her perservation.

An astute, experienced, and reliable observer who visited Jane Duchene in hospital in January 1986, and later, Dennis Ruhnke, Minister, Faith United Methodist Church, Oakdale Avenue in West St. Paul, made a number of visits to Mrs. Duchene in the hospital and later in the nursing home. He visited her on January 17, 22 and February 4, 1986. He believes he saw her more times than that probably but did not record all visits in his diary. Rev. Ruhnke writes, "While in the hospital (i.e., in January 1986) she would often stare blankly out the window and not respond to my attempts at conversation. She would occasionally contradict herself in describing her condition, saying at one time it was cancer and terminal, and then, during the same visit saying she did not really know what her condition was." This is

a picture of fluctuating confusion and amnesia in January, 1986. Mr. Ruhnke's interest in his parishioner was real. His perceptions are very acute and he was willing to support Mrs. Duchene's daughter over a potentially offensive visit made by Roger Krause who demanded some papers in the Ottawa Street house when Jane was visiting the Krauses after March 20. Krause had adopted a bullying offensive manner towards Mary Jane in announcing his impending visit. Mary Jane, badly shaken and horrified by the events of March 20 felt afraid and in need of responsible support. She found a decent and responsible person in Mr. Ruhnke. His affidavits recording his contacts with the patient and her relatives are very informative.

Jane Duchene who accompanied Roger made a curious reply to some encouraging sort of remark her pastor had made. She said she would be fine when she had her house and car again. What she says seems inappropriate, as if she were temporarily deprived of house and car, neither of which realistically she could manage again.

It is perhaps relevant to her insidiously developing mental and physical illness that she felt a need to join this church in the autumn of 1985.

At this point it might be useful to consider Mr. Ruhnke's observations further. Mr. Ruhnke was one of very few people who tried to really communicate with Jane Duchene. In doing so, he found from early on, rather serious signs of mental impairment. From January on, in repeated contacts, he saw her mental state



deteriorate steadily and he recorded his observations. My impression is that the pastor was perceptive, of sound judgement and that he had a shrewd grasp of the situation. He differed from the casual or indifferent observers who accepted the quiet limited facade of this quiet, reticent woman as "normal," without a valid history of the changes occurring and without real curiosity as to how Jane Duchene's mind was working. Mr. Ruhnke not only saw that his parishioner's mind was disordered, he grasped Mary Jane's plight and recognized Roger Krause, I think, for what he was.

Very few people with knowledge of Jane Duchene's terminal psychiatric and physical illnesses observed clearly and responded appropriately in this situation. The pastor did. The fears, evasiveness, defensiveness, denials, indifference, callousness, irresponsibility, deceitfulness and lying that appeared to be integral parts of the strange psychosocial events, stressors and observations surrounding Mrs. Duchene's last illness are not apparent in the affidavits of Mr. Ruhnke. Without an intention of attacking anyone personally, I have to note that I am aware of few lucid, honest, explicit reports concerning Mrs. Duchene's psychiatric illness and of the behavior of people who chose to involve themselves in her and her daughter's affairs, or who were required through professional responsibilities to become involved. The Reverend Ruhnke's clarity, honesty, and his benign involvement, continued over months, are in contrast to what appears to me to be a remarkably high incidence of avoidance of

explicit, detailed, open comment or consideration or determination of (a) the patient's psychiatric disorder; (b) the timely and scientifically sound determination of the issue of her capacity to handle her affairs on March 20, 1986; and (c) the extraordinary inappropriate legal and fiscal activities complicating the lives of these two women and the death of one. One group involves friends or friendly acquaintances who were literally too frightened to visit the dying woman or to "get involved." With responsible "Establishment" authorities, there has appeared to me to be a curious attitude of non-involvement, a sort of Pontius Pilate-like response to information concerning this situation in its problematic aspects.

One form of noninvolvement that remains anomalous as I see it is the remarkable failure to, in fact, aversion to investigate and establish a sound diagnosis and a functional assessment of Mrs. Duchene's psychiatric disorder as it became more obvious particularly by March 20, 1986. Quite apart from the need for accurate diagnosis for treatment and family concerns, the legal issue of competency called for expeditious diagnostic measures. That there was an issue of questionable competence can hardly be seriously disputed. Anyone who hears the March 20 tape or reads the transcript can't, with a sense of reality, logic or reason, doubt the issue. The fact that the patient was quite delusional and obviously vocally so far instance is usually more than enough to prompt attorneys or a physician to request examinations to assist the Court in a determination of competency. Psychiatric