

551c never loved him and that I had only gone out with him to please my parents. I told him that I had always said that to Norman and his family and that Norman had raped me because he was jealous that I wanted to be a nun instead of marrying him. I said that I had done the right thing and had my baby instead of having an abortion and that I loved her and would bring her up because I was her own mother but that when she was grown up I would still go to be a nun then. Mr. Auckland laughed at me and said that my ideas were impractical as I was no longer fit to be a nun. I said that if I married Norman marriage would last for a lifetime and when my child was grown up I would be stuck with a man who I could not love, where as when my child grew up I would only be thirty six years old with half my life still ahead of me and that there were convents which would still take me. I told him that I knew it was going to be a long hard road but I knew that I could still make it to be a nun. I told Mr. Auckland that what Norman wanted was a wife and family and that was why he had got me pregnant. I said that he would be better off to go and find himself a wife who wanted him and the family he wanted. I did not want him and I had decided that a clean break was best because it was time that he learnt that he could not just have what he wanted.

Any sentimental ideas that I had found myself having after my baby's birth were giving way to more sensible and safer ideas for my child but somehow to Mr. Auckland they must have seemed quite the reverse. Mr. Auckland told me that

552c. I had not considered the fact that it was unfair that Norman should have to pay to keep a baby that he never saw and I told him that there was no question of that because I was already receiving some D.H.S.S. money and that I had got money of my own that had been left in trust to me which my parents should already have signed over to me in the previous February when I was eighteen years old. Mr. Auckland looked shocked and said that Norman had been paying money to my father for my keep throughout my pregnancy. I told him that he had not because my parents had taken all my D.H.S.S. money and some of my savings for my keep. Mr. Auckland looked alarmed as if he was wondering if there was more to what he knew than he had been told. He asked me anxiously if it was true that I had any money of my own left in trust to me and when I said yes and told him about my stocks and shares that my parents were holding he got very uneasy about it. He told me that I must accept that the Clarks would have to be involved and when I said that I would not, he told me that perhaps my money was best left in my parents hands.

Mr. Auckland had brought a black leather prayer book or bible with him and he suddenly opened it and asked me if I minded if he prayed with me. I said that I would like that because I expected him to say some nice prayers with me but when he bent his head over his

553c open book and closed his eyes. I was horrified at the prayer he started to pray because it was really spiteful. He kept repeating that the Lord would help me to see sense and be a decent married woman because anything else was sordid and that the sins of the parents were vested on the children which was why God had allowed my baby to be born sick. He went on and on repeating it and asking for blessings to be given to my parents for their care and devotion, which made me feel as if he was continually throwing it at me that nobody really knew how badly I had suffered or what had really happened. He paused at one point and asked me if I had thought of any names for the baby yet because he would be pleased to go to Great Ormond Street and christen her. I told him that she had already been christened by the Roman Catholic Priest "Elizabeth Christiana". Mr. Auckland said "according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church?" and I said "yes". Then his fury let rip as if that was the last straw and he said "You mean to tell me that you have had Norman's baby christened without even asking him about the names?" My voice was trembling as I replied to him and I said "It's not Norman's baby, she's mine and it's nobody else's business about what I call my baby." He looked at me with utter disgust and bent his head with a look of contempt to continue his prayers but this time he kept asking the father to "Turn this woman away from her sordid life and back to the man who loves her". He went on and on in a droning voice that really

554c frightened me because it sounded so evil. I nearly went mad listening to it as he just went on and on saying that all the very hairs on my head were numbered and that God knew the weakness of my flesh. He kept asking God to "help this woman give up her sordid life" and then went on and on about the baby saying that the sins of the parents were vested on their children and that it was my sin and Normans that had caused the sickness my child was suffering from. My head felt quite numb and sharp pains were jumping in my chest as he said that and then I seemed to come to my senses and realize that he was wrong if he thought that God, the loving creator and father of all, who cared for each tiny sparrow that fell could look at one tiny scrap of human life in an incubator and say that the child should be sick as a punishment for her parents sins. I knew God better than that, God was so loving that I knew he would take one look at the situation and heal the baby, the parents and everything. God was so good and only made things better so a sick child's illness did not come from God as a punishment. Elizabeth was so beautiful and God had made her alright but he had not made her ill because that had been caused by a mistake in the Special Care Baby Unit but I could not argue with Mr. Auckland any more. He just did not give me a chance to speak and I could not stand

555c. much more of it. A nurse tiptoed past my bed literally walking more softly as she passed the end of it in respect at a vicar who was so obviously praying with a mother whose child was very sick. The nurse even lowered her head respectfully and to everyone who could see it looked so holy as if we were having a little bedside service but if that nurse had come closer she would have had the shock of her life if she had heard what his lowered voice was sadistically accusing me of. I felt that I wanted to cry out to her to get him away from me but she was gone before I could attract her attention and I was so afraid that if I upset Mr. Auckland he might go straight round to the Clarke's and get them involved because he thought it was the best thing for the baby when I knew that it really was not. I had to be calm and keep control but I just felt totally afraid of me being in one hospital and the baby being in another and of so much going on so quickly while I was too ill to do anything about it. I had no choice but to lie there as he went on and on repeating what he had just said and emphasizing words like "my shame" and saying that nothing was covered that would not be uncovered or hid that would not be revealed and so Norman would see his child. I knew that Mr. Auckland was not praying properly and in trying to drive home his own point of view when I was at my weakest ebb he was driving me mad. He said that he was a married man and that he had brought up two children who had done very well in life and so he could talk to me about bringing

556c. up children because he knew from his own experience that an unmarried woman had no chance to cope with a child and see that the child was as well provided for as his own children had been. He asked me why I wanted my child to be deprived and I said that I did not. He said that a child with no father was a deprived child as it was deprived of a father and I just knew that trying to say anything to Mr. Auckland was just a losing battle and I knew that I would never go near the Church of England again. Half his trouble as a vicar was that he was married. He had set his own standards for family life by his own example and anyone who did not reach that standard was condemned in his eyes. I wanted to talk to Father Nolan as being a Catholic he was unmarried and as he could not speak from his own experiences of bringing up a family so he could not judge either and anything he said was unbiased because he was from outside the situation. He was not involved in the local gossip either or took sides in his neighbours quarrels which Mr. Auckland was know to. I knew that I was going to be a Catholic for certain then and that I would never go to the Church of England again. He kept on talking but I was too exhausted to argue back and Mr. Auckland seemed pleased as if he was glad that I was quieter and as he ended his prayers he thanked God that my spirit was now quiet

557c. and that I was at rest and said to me that he would continue to pray for me and he said that because of his prayers I would find myself changing my mind about Norman. He said again that the Clarks would have to be involved and he said that I would find that I would come to accept it in time as he would pray for me. He pressed a little booklet into my hands and became alarmed that I did not take it from him properly as I could not move my hands properly. He asked me if I wanted to sit up and he looked around at the other patients and asked me in a rather alarmed voice why wasn't I up and about like the other Mothers. He said that I was making more work for the nurses by being in bed and that with no baby to look after I should be offering to help the nurses around the ward. He said that I should make my own bed for them as he had done so when he had been in hospital. He had spoken a bit louder just then because he had stood up to go and the patient in the bed on my left gave him a filthy look and said to him "she's supposed to be in bed, she's too ill to get up." and I suddenly realized that she had heard everything Mr. Auckland had said to me and that she did not think very much of him at all but Mr. Auckland gave her a kind of laugh that seemed to say that she did not know anything about it. Mr. Auckland told me to read the booklet quietly when he had gone and to think about it. Then he stopped and asked me if I could read at all saying that he knew what difficulty I had had with my reading at school and he said with a laugh that it was no good giving me something to

558c. read if I could not read it. I assured him that I could read very well indeed and he just smiled very understandingly and said goodby and walked off down the ward. The sister thanked him for coming to see me as he went out of the door and all the nurses watched him go very respectfully. I was worn out but after I had watched him go I looked at the booklet. It was a small single sheet of paper with printing on both sides of it and on the front it said "Think of the Lord speaking to you" and so I hopefully opened the folded single sheet. The first words at the top were "And saying..." as it went on to say what Jesus was supposed to say. So I thought of Jesus and felt his presence standing beside me on my left but as I tried to think of him saying the words on the page it just would not happen. There was just a kind of sadness and quietness as if Jesus would never ever say any of those things to me and as I began to read and the words came accusingly at me from the page I understood why. It was a typical religious leaflet of the better kind but what was written on it was still nowhere near the gentle loving kindness of Jesus words. He might perhaps have said what was written there to some repentant sinners after a hard life of sin but never to most people and not to me. He looked for goodness in someone and he knew all the times when you had gone without something and every hurt you had that no one else knew about.

559c. What was written there did not come from him. It would have been better to read straight from the Gospel if I had wanted to hear Jesus speaking at such a time, as the words of the Gospel were actually Jesus own words and what was written on the pamphlet was not. Pamphlets like these were the work of the Devil and they were so misleading.

I knew it was unwise to read on but I had been told to read it quietly and I found that a total feeling of obedience came over me and I felt unable to do anything other than exactly what I had been told to. My brain just seemed to fix my eyes to the paper and read on and on and although what I read upset me I could not seem to fight the feeling of obedience to read it, and put the paper away. It seemed wicked as well not to do what a vicar had told me to do and so out of fear I read it and as I read it I just got more and more afraid. At that moment I felt that I had been through so much in my life and that long drawn out agony had been a very long time indeed. Suddenly over the last few days the pain and heartache had grown much sharper and I was feeling my way through depths of despair that I had never dreamed possible. My soul had become correspondingly closer to God and my love and belief in God was going through depths of unshakable faith as all the things that really mattered to me God, my child, her health and a sense of prayerful trust in Gods love, all blossomed into living faith. I needed someone who could talk to me about God on the same level that I was on which was quite simply a

228

560c. life given over to God in the humblest possible manner. The booklet which was intended for times of trouble was totally inappropriate but I just seemed to read on and on through it. The first thing it said was "You do not have to be clever to please me" and agony rose in my heart at the awful failure of my life because I had been clever and I had very much wanted to please God as a nun but it had just somehow all been taken away from me. It went on "All you have to do is to want to love me" and pain shot through my heart because I had loved God from as far back as I could remember which for me had been back to the very beginning of time. It had just been so unlucky that no one had ever understood that, especially my parents, Mr. Auckland and the teachers at school, even though I had tried so hard. It went on to say "Just speak to me as you would to anyone of whom you are very fond" and it hurt me to read because it seemed to me to be explaining to me very simply how I should speak to God as if I had never tried to do it before and the truth was that I had never ever spoken to God in any other way except as you would to someone who you loved as a Father. I could not bear to think that other people could think that I would need to be told to talk to God as someone who I was fond of and I wondered how on earth people could write things like that. The pamphlet was intended for someone sick in hospital and when people are ill they are so close to

561c. God that it seemed so awful that someone could write things like that for them. Whoever had done it had no understanding because Jesus would never speak like that. No one who was sick in hospital or faced with the agony of their own child dying would talk to God badly because it was a time when your heart ached and you silently pleaded with him to give you some hope and because I felt so sad tears began to roll down my cheeks.

The paragraph ended there and another one began which said "Are there people you want to pray for? say their names to me and ask me as much as you like." I said "Elizabeth Christiana" silently in my prayers and I asked everything for her, every gift of health happiness and hope that I could think of and there was nothing that was good that I did not hope and pray could be hers. Then it went on to say "I am generous, and know all their needs but I want you to show your love for them and me by trusting me to do what I know is best." I knew that God was generous and I knew too that he knew everything before it even happened so that he had known what was wrong with my baby before the Doctors had even thought about it but when I read that God wanted me to show my love for her and him by trusting him to do what was best, agony and fear filled my heart because I dreaded the thought that God might think it would be best if he took her to heaven and for the very first time in my life I prayed without simply saying "Thy will be done" and prayed that it could only be God's will that my baby would live, as if

562c. I was not even pleading with him about it but I was humbly standing up against the possibility that it might not be his will and saying that it must be his will that she should live and that if it was not, then he must, with all due respect, change his will so that it would be. I just could not think in terms of anything except holding on to the hope that she would live and I don't think I even said 'please' in my prayers because I could not accept anything else at all.

The pamphlet went on to say "Tell me about the Poor, the Sick, and sinners", and so I mentioned all the poor in India who I had wanted to help so much by becoming one of Mother Theresa's nuns in Calcutta. I prayed for all the poor homeless men and women in the streets of London and for the Sick whose misery I knew inside out. Then I prayed for poor sinners and there were so many of them. I prayed for all the people who had held my head underwater and kicked me when I was down all through my life. There were so many enemies to pray for and no friends at all, and then the writing said "If you have lost the friendship or affection of anyone, tell me about that too." So I told Jesus about the whole terrible mistake of Norman's friendship that had turned so sour and of how I was now afraid of him and that I wanted him to be kept away from my baby and I but that no one else could see the sense of that.

563c. The next paragraph went on to say that if there was anything I wanted for my soul then I could write out a long list of all my needs and come back and read it to him which was so stupid because I was too ill to write or to go anywhere and then come back again. Because I was so ill I seemed to read into every word that was written there and the words seemed to be bigger than I was. Even so, I considered the graces I needed which were too many to be so selfish as to ask for. I had been brought up to know that I was a sinner through and through and now in the face of all the graces that Jesus could give me I did not want any of them. My baby's life was far more precious than anything I could obtain for myself and I asked only that she could live so that I could give her so many good things. I had never had anything of my own before because I had been made to learn again and again that even the clothes that I stood up in were not my own because they had been provided by my mother's good will and 'belonged' to her. My baby was the first thing that I had ever had of my very own and so she was even a million times more precious than she would normally have been. You have to live for years and years with nothing of your own to know what having something of your own really means. Now she had been taken away at a time when we should have been getting to know each other and the threat that she might not even come back hung over us like an awful thundercloud. The agony of that was unbearable and so was the unfairness that all the wonderful things that I wanted to show her would

564c not be possible if her short life was snatched away from her, so all I prayed for was that she might live.

The next paragraph said "Just tell me about your touchiness, self centredness, meanness and laziness" and at those words agony and wretchedness ran through my useless body and tore at my mind. because I had never been like that at all. Even with all the awful and ridiculous things that my parents had made me do I had never given way to being 'touchy', and on the few times when I had answered my parents back, it had been out of despair, like a cry for help, and never out of touchiness. I had never been self centered either because I had lost every opportunity that had ever lain in front of me by putting other people first and I had deprived myself in order to make things better for my family. I had never been mean and perhaps working too hard had been the cause of the state that my baby and I were in. Somehow what was written there seemed to be shouting accusations at me of things that I had never done and it was more than I could bear. I was too ill and too tired for that and what I needed would have been to hear what Jesus would actually have said to someone like me which was very little more than to gently reach out and touch them.

It was being accused of being lazy that hurt most of all because that was something that I had never been. The heavy burden of all the hard housework that I had done in the past months loomed over me and was weighed down by the accusations of the labour ward

565c staff that I had not looked after myself properly and that it was my fault that my baby was premature. Everything seemed to spring from the fact that I had done too much housework and to read that I should have done even more was more than I could bear because I desperately needed to rest. My mind felt as if I was being made to carry on and on beyond what I could bear to the point of total mental and physical exhaustion. It was like I was being led down a maze of corridors in my mind and as if there were doors in the corridors that were closing behind me one by one as I struggled away from remembering each painful thing that had happened to me; leaving me unable to think and in a state of despair and frustration. I had also broken out in a cold sweat and as my mind became so unbearably heavy with mental strain, I felt less and less able to move my body. I felt that what was written on that paper was making me think about painful things that reached so deeply into my past while I was under such heavy sedation that I had no resistance to push it away from me. My mind was so clear and my body was so weak that it was like stretching a piece of elastic so many times that it finally lost its elasticity. My nerves seemed to have become really shaky as if rivers of shock were running through me and I found myself feeling cold and shaky as if my mind was going through a further series of assaults and shock waves were running down my body and taking every ounce of my ability to move away from it.

The pamphlet went on to say that "I should not be ashamed" and I wondered why the vicar had spent so

566c. Long going on and on about "my shame" and then handed me a paper saying that I should not be ashamed. They were two complete opposites and being so ill I felt as if they were statements that were much bigger than I was and that I was defencelessly in the middle of them while they were fighting viciously over me. I knew that I should be ashamed of myself as all my life my parents and other people had made me be ashamed of how my face looked and ashamed of being so lowly and especially as my parents had shouted at me again and again that someone like me should never even have been born. The way it was written on the pamphlet that Jesus could forgive what I was ashamed of made me wonder how it could have been my fault that I had the things I was ashamed of needed to be forgiven as it had never been my fault for the way I was born and God loved every child that was born. I knew Jesus would not say that but it still seemed to keep shaking me as I read it. I should have put the paper down but I had been told to read it and somehow it was beyond me to disobey and stop reading it. I just could not turn away from it and it seemed as if insults kept hurling themselves at me from every sentence. It went on to say that there were saints in heaven who had once had the same faults as me and little by little they had prayed to him and little by little their faults had been corrected. I was willing to be corrected of any fault at all

567c. and would suffer anything at all but the fear of being a saint filled me with dread because I knew the awful family prophecy about a girl who would suffer and die and if death was anything like the ordeal on the delivery table then it was awful. I was so absolutely terrified of that taking hold of me and this time not getting out of it at all that I started to feel waves of terror going through my body. I was in an awfully upset state but although huge tears were silently rolling down my cheeks I could not cry properly and it was all bottled up inside my head. I carried on reading the pamphlet quietly as I had been told to and I felt as if I was staggering through it in total humility and sorrow. It went on to say that I should not hesitate to ask Jesus for blessings for the body and mind, for health, memory and success with Jesus saying "I can give everything and always do give everything needed to make souls holier!" I did not waste the offer by asking for anything for myself and I asked only for blessings for poor Elizabeth's body, her memory, her mind and especially her health. It was her who needed them and finding reassurance in the words that he always gave them I prayed that he would give them all to her.

It went on asking what it was that I wanted today and I asked only that my baby live. It said "tell me, for I long to do you good" and so I told him about my baby asking that it would be very very good if she could be alright and not die. It went on to say "what are your plans?" and I told him of every good thing that still lay ahead that I had planned for my

568c. baby pushing aside the fact that so many things I had planned had already been snatched away from me, like holding her and not having her taken away from me even for a night in the nursery, and I told Jesus of the times I would take her to the park and push her on swings and of the ducks we would feed and of all the games we could play together and of all the beautiful things of his creation that I could show her like his rainbow, his sea, his fields of poppies and corn and his flowers, his sunshine and his rain and every living thing that he had created so perfectly. I begged him that such wonderful gifts as seeing the beauty of this world should not be snatched away from her.

The pamphlet went on to say "Is there anyone you want to please and what do you want to do for them," but I asked only for my baby back and to be able to be a good mother to her and then I read on where it said "And don't you want to do anything for me" and I cried silently when I remembered how I had run away from home and given up everything to follow Jesus, only to find that the Children of God were just a 'con' and of how I had had to go home after having nothing to eat and nowhere to go, only to be faced with the strict discipline that my parents had forced on me and of how I had had to go out with Norman. I had already done everything possible for Jesus as I had given him everything in total renunciation and yet

569c. somehow I had still failed him. The words read on saying "And don't you want to do a little good to the souls of your friends who perhaps have forgotten me" and I felt totally lost as I had no friends at all except my neighbour Janet. All my school friends now walked past me in the street as if I was not there. They all came from decent homes and had done well at school but I had failed and had taken on common shopwork so not only had their parents forbidden them to speak to me as I was considered a bad influence and beyond reform, but when I had become pregnant it was my friends themselves who no longer wanted anything to do with me and that hurt more than it would have done if they had walked past me and just not spoken to me out of obedience to their parents. My friends at school had always been rather concerned with who was in the circle of friends they mixed with and who was not and they seemed to hold the same snobbish attitude that their parents had but even in school where I had been called a dirty gypsy they had never shunned me to the point that they would walk right past me in the street and ignore me as they did now. I had no friends at all but I remembered that they had once been my friends and I did want to do them good and I asked God to bless them and help them along in their more upright way of life than mine. What did not fit in was that they might have forgotten Jesus. I knew they all went to church every Sunday and were well thought of and given to me as good examples by the vicar. It was them who were supposed to pray for me but somehow in my lowly way I knew God as a

570 c. person and a friend and I knew that they only thought they knew God and that I had really found him, so I prayed that they would too.

It went on to tell me to tell Jesus about my failures and I could not name them all, I had failed at school, I had failed at home, I had failed at work, I had failed at getting to be a nun and on the very day that I had become a mother I had failed even to get to hold my own baby. Total hopelessness swept over me as what was written on the paper dragged me deeper and deeper into soul searching agonies that I should have been trying to lift my spirit out of and not accuse myself of. When I read that Jesus would show me the cause of my failures, my soul almost moaned in agony as I had been told the cause of my failures over and over again by my parents to teach me that the cause of everything that ever went wrong in the family was my fault forever having been born and they cursed that day that I had been born.

It went on to say "what are your worries, who has caused you pain?" and it asked me to tell Jesus all about it and add that I would forgive and forget and then he would bless me. So I told him that my worry was for my baby and that if I had not let them give me that one painkiller then I would have stayed awake and have been in control of what was going on. If only I had not been such a coward and accepted it my baby would have stood a better chance and then the staff would not have had an accident

571c. with her in the special care baby unit. I totally blamed myself and asked Jesus to forgive me and to bless my baby with health and a recovery from what was wrong with her. I wanted a chance for us to be together and the chance to make up the two days that we had so far spent apart and that felt more like two years.

It went on to ask "if I was afraid of anything, if I had any tormenting, unreasonable fears" and I silently cried at the awful suffering of not being able to explain the awful agony of experiencing all my fears being realized together. All I had been afraid of before I had come into hospital was happening and I was actually living through a nightmare. I was tormented by the awful fear that my baby would die, that she was too small and too weak to survive an operation as I had been told that she was. I struggled in my mind to find the words to explain how I had felt when I had woken up from my ordeal on the delivery table when I had found myself in a completely new world, a second world that other people were unable to see all around them, where no secret was hidden from me and I could see and hear everything that everyone was trying to keep away from me. Although loneliness had never been any stranger to me, the utter loneliness that I had felt for years at never really being a part of my own family or never being able to find my own mental age group in school was absolutely nothing compared to actually being able to 'see' the way that people were deceiving me. I also felt that I had become a completely different and much sadder person as if my whole character had changed. Apart from the drugs that I had been

572c. given which were not wearing off but were having a permanent effect on me, I seemed to be a totally quieter person and I just knew that my life would never ever be the same for me again. I had met death face to face and I had spent three and a half hours locked in a living tomb, and it seemed that while everyone else was walking around as if they had all eternity to live on earth, I was now aware that death could just come crushing down on you at any time and quite unexpectedly. I felt as if my eyes had been opened in a way that other peoples eyes seldom were and I knew that I would never ever forget what I had been through. Inside myself I was full of horrific memories but on the outside I seemed to have become silent and 'vacant' and I felt that my real self, a girl with determination and polite outspokenness, had been locked away in a prison deep inside me and something quite different, a totally different character had taken over and I was trapped like it. The worst thing was that I had no one to tell about how I felt who would have understood properly. Facing all that worry while under sedation was like having my eyelids held open in front of a very bright light so that I could not protect myself; being under sedation was like having taken away my ability to move but having opened my mind to my deepest thoughts and then having left me alone in fear to face them and that combination was mentally lethal.

The pamphlet went on to say 'Have you no joys to tell me about? Why do you not share your happiness'

573c. with me, tell me what has happened since yesterday to cheer and comfort you?, whatever it was, however big or small, I prepared it. Show me your gratitude and thank me." And so I told Jesus about my babys christening and of how we had been allowed that time together before my family had got in on everything. I told him how lovely it had been when the sun had shone as the oil of crism was put on Elizabeths head and of how I had held her afterwards. I said that I had shared it with him and that I had put my baby in his hands before he had put her in mine. Those moments were my joys and they were so precious that I held them in my heart so that no one could take them away from me. I thanked God from the very depths of my heart for them and I thanked God for my babys rosey cheeks and I prayed that such beauty could not die. Agony and grief ran through me as I read on and it said "Are you determined to run into no more temptations, Have you made up your mind about bad books, and bad friendships? They disturb the peace of your soul. Are you going to be kind to that one that has hurt you?". To read what was there was the same situation as the vicar had been so convinced of; that I needed to give up my bad ways and of how much trouble I was to my parents but I had never given into temptation nor had I ever read bad books and it was me who tidied away my fathers dirty books out of sight while the church books that the vicar had lent him that Mr. Auckland thought he read so diligently lay collecting dust in the bookshelves. I had no bad friendships in the sense that what was written there meant and the one person who had hurt me was Norman and the only way to do the right thing about him was to have nothing more to do with him which was the opposite of

574c. what the church seemed to think.

As I read what was written in the booklet it seemed as if all my worries were dragged in front of my eyes in stark reality and it was all too much for me. Huge tears kept rolling down my cheeks but it was as if I was not actually crying. I was more cold than anything and I could not move my hands which seemed numb, in order to pull up the bedcovers to keep myself warm. I read on to the last paragraph and it said, "Well, go along now" to me who could not get up or move without difficulty; "Get on with your work" to me who had worked beyond such tiredness that I had virtually dropped dead; "Try to be quieter" to me who had been rendered virtually speechless; "Be more submissive" to me who was at my lowest ebb and be kinder to me who had always stooped to pick up the tiniest worm from a rainy path lest it be trodden on. Then it said "Go now" which was the opposite of what Jesus had always said to "Come to me". He never sent anyone away and I just could not bear or understand such a misinterpretation. The pamphlet went on to say "Come back later" so that I did not know if I was coming or going or why, nor could I work out how much longer was later because I was in such a state that waiting for anything was an agony that I could not bear. I was so ill that what was written on the pamphlet came across just as if it was telling me exactly what to do and I was too ill to be able to discern between ideas. I was also much more ill at that point than I had

575c. been when I had first begun reading the pamphlet. I had always known that the vicar had disliked me and he had done since I was a child but sometimes it frightened me the way I saw him looking at me when no one was watching. He seemed to stare at me as if it was not actually me he saw there but something else and my Father had always told my Mother that Mr. Auckland had confided in him during one of their long talks that because I looked like a mongol it was my eyes he could not bear as they reminded him of the Japanese who had tortured him brutally for being a vicar in the war when he had worked on the Burma railway line. I knew it was not his fault that he disliked me and he could only believe what my parents told him about me on top of what he already thought but giving me a leaflet that was an open self examination of things I had never done, when I was so ill was just too much for me and I knew then that I would never ever set foot inside the Church of England again. As I read the last line "Tomorrow I shall have more blessings for you" my mind tore through with mockery as my brain right on cue with the words "tomorrow" promptly switched on a preview film in my mind of exactly what agonies were going to be in store for me "tomorrow" and I 'saw' that the next day was actually going to be worse than what I had gone through already. Today was already filled to overflowing with such agony and torment that I did not want to know what tomorrow had and then my mind seemed to have a kind of electric storm and I could see white zig zaggy lines in front of me like a television that had gone wrong for

576c. a moment and when I went to move my hands and arms and say something I could not move at all or speak.

Some while later some nurses came along to my bed and I thought they were going to ask me if I was alright and help me but when one of them asked me a simple question and saw that my mouth could not form the words properly and that I lay so motionless she looked pleased and said to the other nurses that the drugs seemed to be taking effect at last and that they would tell Sister. I struggled to keep in control and searing pains shot through my head as I tried to break through the barrier of what was happening to me and be able to speak and move. It was getting darker on the ward and it was very quiet indeed. I lay there for a long time thinking about my baby and feeling worried to death about her. I was cold and yet sweat was pouring out of all the pores in my skin. It was a white oily kind of sweat and was pouring out of every pore in my skin especially on my forearms and was running down me in little rivers. Inside myself I felt as if my body was shaking uncontrollably but because I was so helpless and my body lay so motionlessly still, the tremors could find no way out and so they returned to my brain in waves of shock that made my brain more numb with each and every tremor that hit it but even then I seemed to be recovering all the time especially as it was sort of dusk in the room and so

577c. very quiet and my main worry, the vicar, had gone home hopefully to have his tea and keep out of my affairs. At about quarter to five a Sister came up to my bed. She was the young one who had been concerned earlier about me not smoking and about what had gone on in the Labour Ward. She stood by my bed and bent down to talk to me saying that Great Ormond Street had been on the telephone and said that the baby had been operated on. She said it very gently as if she expected it to be a very great shock to me and as if she was waiting for an outburst of anger that I had not been told about it before it happened. Realizing that what I had 'seen' earlier must have been totally accurate, I felt my spirits drop as I knew for certain that the nurses had openly lied to me and I just said "Yes, I know" very quietly. The Sister looked directly at me as if the surprise or shock she had expected from me did not show. She guessed that I knew already and she quickly defended herself saying "we didn't know you knew about it" or we would have told your ourselves" but it sounded so inconvincing that even she looked embarrassed about it. I said nothing and just looked straight at her because I was wondering how she could have sent that nurse to tell me the opposite of what was actually happening to my baby who was the only person who I really cared for with all my heart. She said that she was sorry that I already knew and she looked annoyed and asked me if it was the vicar who had told me. I said no but she did not believe me and she said that the vicar had stopped to talk to her on his way into

578c. the ward and she said that she was shocked and disappointed that a vicar could have taken it upon himself to tell me about my baby when they had particularly told him not to. I said that it was not the vicar but she did not believe me and she said that he was the only person who had been near me all afternoon except her nurses. I did not know how to explain it all to her and I struggled to find enough words in my brain to pick out enough words to form a sentence to ask her if they could get Father Nolan to come to see me if he was not too busy and I got enough words mumbled out to make sense that I wanted Father Nolan to come. The Sister talked to me very sweetly as if I was confused and she said to me that the vicar had come in and sat with me all afternoon but that I must have been too sleepy to know. I was just going to cry with utter frustration because I had no way of explaining the whole complicated situation, that it was the wrong clergyman who had come, because it needed too many words to explain it all, when one of the other patients who was in the bed on my left butted in. It was obvious that she had been listening in to all my business but I did not mind at all as she was so kind and seemed to have the voice that I lacked and she stuck up for me. She told the Sister that I wanted my own priest not the one who had come in and the Sister said to the other patient really nicely that it was my own vicar who

579c. had come in but the patient told her that it was not my vicar, it was my Fathers. She said that the vicar who had come in was from the Church of England and I was a Catholic. The Sister checked my name band which gave my religion on it and she seemed a bit doubtful because what the other patient said was right and my nameband did have R/C on it. The other patient seemed determined to have her say and she told the Sister that the vicar had done nothing except upset me. She said that she had heard every word and had nearly lost her temper and told him to clear off and leave me alone. I silently wished that she had told him to go and tears filled up in my eyes as she told the Sister what I could not find the words to say about what he had said to me. She told the Sister that he had gone on and on about the very hairs on my head being numbered and had kept referring to my baby as 'my shame'. She told her that he had kept on and on to me about me having to see the baby's Father and that I had had to keep on telling him that I did not want to see him, what it had really upset me. She told the Sister not to think that he had sat praying with me because he had come in and upset me. She said to the Sister "They've had a row" but that it was a one sided row because every time I had gone to say anything to him, he had ignored me or laughed it off so that I could not get a word in. She said that the paper he had given me had upset me, too, and what I wanted was my own vicar, the one that had come in to baptize my baby. The Sister seemed as if she did not know what to do and she said that

580c. She wondered if the wrong vicar had got in to see me. She said that I certainly seemed very upset about it, but there was nothing she could do to get Father Nolan in. She said that the Hospital had asked my parents if someone could come and sit with me while my baby was operated on so that I would not be alone and that my parents and the Hospital had arranged with the vicar for him to come in as my parents had 'had to go out' and as she said 'had to go out' she looked really ashamed as if she could not talk about that in front of me. She said that she could not do anything against my parents wishes and ask for a clergyman of a different religion to come in. The Hospital just could not involve themselves in that sort of thing and she said that the vicar had said that he was the Dean of Lewisham and so he must be above Father Nolan anyway and they could not go upsetting people. One of the other mothers who by now had joined in as they were so sweet and really tried to help me when they could, said that Father Nolan was a different religion. He was Catholic because he came from St. Saviour's Church in Lewisham High Street and he had christened my baby. She knew because her baby was up in the Special Care Baby Unit as well. She said that he was ever so nice and he would come in to see me, but the sister said that they could not ask him now because it was too late. She seemed really concerned as

581c.

230-1
227

if nothing was going very right for me and she said that she wondered if the wrong vicar had got in to see me and upset me and that if it was not the press trying to get in and upset me it was my Father's vicar. She did not know what to do and she seemed to sense that she was dealing with something more serious than she wanted to be involved in and she backed out of it. She asked me if she could tell me about my baby anyway and I said yes and made it obvious that I really wanted to know. She told me that they had found two things wrong with my baby and that they were both serious. That was different from what I had 'seen' because I had seen the surgeons unable to find anything much wrong but I wanted to know what the two things were that she was going to tell me. Then she explained that she could only tell me that there were two things wrong but that she could not tell me what the two things were as only a Doctor could do that. She said that the Doctors would be coming along to see me when they could, but for now they were busy in the Labour Ward. She said that the baby was in a serious condition, although she had come out of the operation alright, but it was chancy as to whether or not she would recover at all as she was far too tiny. The Sister said that an operation was risky enough on any baby let alone a premature one and she that the baby obviously would not be coming back to Hewisham Hospital at least for the time being as Great Ormond Street would obviously want to keep her there. I could hardly believe that the Sister could actually be standing beside me saying

582c. that she knew what was wrong with my baby but that she was not allowed to tell me. It was too cruel and if it was a hospital rule that only a doctor could tell me then they could surely have got a doctor from another department to tell me. It was waiting to know that I could not stand and I just wanted someone to speak to me openly and tell me. I seemed to become totally quiet and my heart physically ached with all the worry I had. The Sister carried on quite obliviously and told me that the nurses could regularly telephone Great Ormond Street and find out how my baby was for me, for as long as there was any news to give me and from the way she said 'for as long' so carefully it was as if she was trying to tell me that it was only a question of time and that she was sure that my baby really had no chance at all. She told me that the doctors would not be long and she asked me if I wanted to go home. I said no and she smiled as if she had expected me to say that. She told me that she was going off duty and that she would see me the next day and could telephone the hospital to see how the baby was for me herself.

I thanked her and after she had gone I lay crying about it. I ate only a small amount of supper as I could not find any appetite at all and then I lay there crying again. A nurse came up to my bed and told me very nicely to go and have a nice wash ready for visiting time to give me something to do when she saw me crying as the other mothers fed and cuddled their babies. I got out of bed with some help and went off

583c. to the bathroom very unsteadily. I was completely unable to feel my body at all but it was amazing how I could just carry on when I was told to and walk on legs that could feel nothing at all. When I went to use my hands to pick things up I had to stop and think about what I wanted to do before I could do it because I could not feel my fingers and it was like trying to pick something up with two long artificial hands on long sticks and operating them by remote control from my head and not being very used to it. I changed my nightdress and put my last one on and I was glad that my mother would bring my other nightdress back that she had taken to wash because I really did not have enough to wear. It was really embarrassing not having all the things I needed and I felt very uncomfortable. I had just not expected to come into hospital and so I had lost out on the opportunity to sort myself out the right things that I needed. I looked and felt a sight in what I had even though it would have been quite adequate at home. I ran some water and washed myself but I felt very clumsy and as I moved my back made the most peculiar creaking noises. I washed thoroughly enough to wash off the cold oily sweat that my body was covered with but as soon as I had done it the cold clammy sweat seemed to come pouring out of my skin again. After I had got back into bed it was nearly time for visiting. The sister and nurses who had seen me get back into bed told me to stay in it and then they told all the mothers to get into bed and stay there. There were some complaints as some of the

584c. other mothers did not want their visitors seeing them in bed but the Sister told them that it was because they did not want my parents to see me walking about and that if everyone stayed in bed then it would be alright. Then the Sister looked at me and laughed nervously and said that it was a new rule, before she went down the ward to let the visitors in.

When the visitors were let in, the husband of the woman across the ward in one of the beds opposite asked her what on earth she was doing in bed. She told him that the nurses wanted everyone to stay in bed so that I would not get up because I was a bit 'funny', but she added that she had spoken to me and she thought I was alright. She said that the nurses seemed to know all about me and that I could be a bit 'funny' sometimes but that I had not been so far. I knew that I was no different from usual except that I had become so ill and I knew it was my mother who they were talking about. The woman's husband looked across at me and asked his wife what I was doing on the ward if I was like that and then he told her to keep her eye on his son as he looked proudly into the cot at his newborn baby son. It was lovely to see a father's protective pride towards his tiny son and what they said about me did not really matter. I knew that I was never a bit 'funny' and that the best thing to do was to lay there as good as gold and let the nurses see for

585c. themselves that I was not going to get up and that I was very responsible. The ward filled up with visitors and I lay there sleepily for over half an hour before my mother and father came. They looked absolutely delighted with themselves and without even saying hello to me, my mother said that she was sorry that they had not been in to see me that afternoon but they had been 'OUT' somewhere. She did not sound very sorry at all and she emphasized the 'OUT' as if it was none of my business where they had been and she gave me a sickly smile as if she was being secretive about something. She asked me if I knew how the baby was, as if she already knew and she just wanted to know how much I knew. I told her as best I could that my baby had been operated on and that the doctors were coming later to tell me what was wrong. I said that I was waiting for them but that they were busy and would come later when they could. My mother said that they were not busy because there were loads of them sitting around in the Sisters office doing nothing at all. She said that she knew because she and my father had been in there for ages with them all. Then she said half to herself that it was all they had seemed to have done all day to talk to doctors and I wondered what she meant. She showed me a plaster on her arm and said rather proudly that she had given some of her blood for the baby and I felt furious that they had taken her blood for my child because I would have given them all the blood they wanted for my baby and I did not want my mother's blood in my baby. I stayed calm as it had already been done and so there was nothing that I could do about it.

586c. My mother said that she would go and get one of the doctors to come and tell me what was the matter with my baby so that it could be done while she was present so that she could be there to comfort me if I went hysterical. I gave her a cold hard stare and said that I would hardly do that. I said to her very firmly that the doctors would come to see me in private when all the visitors had gone so that I could talk to them on my own, which was what I expected them to do. My mother looked annoyed and asked me what I thought I meant by seeing them when she had gone. She told me that she was my mother and that she had a right to be present if anything was told to me because I was underage. I told her that I was eighteen and that I was of age now legally, because I knew that she had never accepted the age of majority having been lowered from twenty one to eighteen but my father butted in and told my mother to keep her big mouth shut. He told her that I was over age but it was obvious that there had been some mistake and the doctors thought that I wasn't. He said "Old Galvan, (meaning our G. P.) must have mixed her age up with Stella's and told them that she's fourteen." He told my mother that if she kept her mouth shut no one would be any the wiser and he warned her that she had only got custody of the baby because they thought at the hospital that I was underage. He said that if they thought I was of age then

587c. I would be allowed to keep the baby with no question. He told her that all she had got to do was to keep her mouth shut and go along with it all because I was in no position to speak up for myself. Then my father looked at my mother as if he was being really sadistic and he indicated towards me and said "she deserves this!" as if he was trying to hurt me as much as possible and my mother was suddenly quiet as if they had come to some agreement earlier about it and it was what she wanted and she kept staring at the baby in its cot who belonged to the mother in the bed on my right as if she was full of bitter sadness. I knew that the doctors knew how old I was from my medical notes which had my age on them and from my nameband that also said I was eighteen years old, so I did not let what my parents were saying upset me. My father told my mother to let the doctors see me on my own as they would probably get more out of me on my own and that the doctors would question me and use telling me about the baby to get me to talk and then not tell me anything about how the baby was once I had talked. I would have told the doctors anything they wanted to know and the way my parents were talking was upsetting me but I would not let it show and let them see how much they were hurting me because they would have done it all the more. I was tired and I wanted to go to sleep but my parents had got so much of the upper hand already over my baby that I knew I had to fight the tiredness that I felt and stay awake in order to stay in control. My mother carried on to tell me how

588c. the Doctors in the office had kept asking them the same questions over and over again about me and asking them if I was usually like this and when she and my Father had said yes the Houseman, who had insisted that he was my Doctor while I was in Hospital, had kept asking my parents if they were sure I was normally like this because he had seen me in the outpatient clinic and I had seemed alright then but he had added that 'it was hard to tell in the short time you had with each patient'. He had told my parents that I had walked into the consulting room and got onto the couch alright each time and he would have said that that I was perfectly normal then. My Mother paused just for a moment as if she was puzzled and said 'You can walk can't you?' I said 'yes' so that she would not know how weak I was or I would have no chance against her bullying, and she carried on saying that they had told the Doctors how I had always been a problem to them, and 'had always been handicapped'. I had not been too handicapped to do her housework I thought to myself and my mother went on to say that the Sisters had made it clear that it was not only me that was being considered but the baby as well. They had told my Mother and Father that if I was handicapped and had always been like it then it was a question of who the baby was going to go

589c. to as I would definitely not be able to cope but he said that on the other hand if something had just gone wrong then I needed special attention. Apparently my parents had been unable to resist the temptation of a new born baby being dangled in front of their eyes and they had absolutely sworn to the Doctors that I had always been severely handicapped and that they were expecting to take on the baby themselves as they had always taken care of all the little 'bundles of trouble' that I had brought home to them and that Rabbits, guinea pigs and stray dogs had all been taken care of by my parents. I thought miserably that it was my mother who collected stray animals and my Father smiled sadistically at me and said half laughing, half sneering at me, "You're just our little wayward girl, aren't you?" emphasizing the word 'little'. I took hold of my pride and remained in total control as I completely ignored him and said sadly to my mother that the baby might not even live as she was very ill. My Father looked annoyed and said to my mother "They have told her" as if he had wanted to hold it over me that I did not know and my mother went on talking about the baby saying that 'custody' was going to be arranged and that they would be made supervisors over the baby and that I was lucky that the baby was not going to be completely taken away from me. My mother lingered over words like 'custody' and 'taken away' as if she was trying to drive me slowly mental.

My Father asked me if I had felt ill that morning and I said no. He said to my mother that he had smashed the watch with a hammer at the right

590c. time and had expected me to die when it happened. He seemed to be annoyed that I had not even felt ill. Other people in the ward visiting other patients were beginning to listen in and my Father shut up and smiled at me nervously as if he was trying to pretend to be nice to me and make out to people watching that he was glad to see me. A nurse came up and asked if my parents could get me some flowers as they had asked if there was anything they could do for me and mine was the only bed with no flowers at all. When she had gone my Mother asked me if I had any money for them to go and get me some but my Father said that he would pay for the flowers as he had his usual pocket full of money. I said no and felt quite alarmed about the flowers because I could not bear to see them die in the heat of the ward. I panicked at the idea of lying there so uselessly and helplessly watching the flowers slowly wilt and I did not even want a plant in case that died however much I watered it and cared for it. I could not bear to think of the nurses taking away a vase of dead flowers to throw away in the sluice and so I said no. My Mother said that I usually liked flowers and asked why I did not want any and asked me what money I had in my locker. I just said that I did not want to see the flowers die and that I was alright for money, because I did not want her to know that I had not got any more.

My Father said that he had seen a notice downstairs for requests

591 c for the hospital radio and asked me what I wanted for them to request for me. He pointed out the earphones behind my bed and said that I should sit and listen to the radio all day. I felt that they were rushing me too much and I said to them that I had listened to it for a few moments but I could not bear it and I tried to explain that the words kept saying 'baby'. My mother understood and said to my father that I was having a nervous breakdown and she asked him what on earth 'they' meaning the Doctors and Sisters had been on about in the office, as if she was saying that it was a nervous breakdown that was my trouble and not what ever they had been going on about in the office. My mother looked at me closely and when she saw the sweat pouring off me she said that I looked as if I had got flu and she asked me if the doctors had taken one of my teeth out because my mouth looked funny. She just did not know that they did not have dental equipment there in a maternity ward and she seemed to think that anything was possible in a hospital. My father kept saying to my mother that he knew what had happened to me as if he thought my mother was too thick to know. Then my father took no notice of me and he turned to the girl in the bed on my left and asked her if I had come over ill that morning. She was so nice and she seemed determined to tell my parents that I was ill and needed looking after. She told my parents that I had come over so ill that one of the nurses had thought that my breathing had stopped when she found me because my face was so grey. Both my parents were listening intently to

592c. her but when she went on to say that the Press and the vicar had upset me on top of that my parents just turned away as if they were not interested in that. My Father was jubilant and said to my Mother that it had worked when he smashed the watch. He seemed to know a lot about it and he said that it proved that Uri Geller was 'just a puppet'. He said that was why he had been sent to France to try it again because they knew that his power could not cross the water of the Channel. He said to my mother that "It wasn't Uri Geller who bent all that metal and broken the clock on Friday night, it was HER, and us, and she doesn't even know it" as he indicated towards me. He said to my mother "We've bent her mind, that's what we've done, and she's bent everything else, that's what happens and she's broken herself doing it. She won't walk again she's 'broken' and that baby is ours!" He seemed jubilant and just for a moment my mother looked sorry for me. She seemed to ignore my Father and she asked me if I wanted to sit up better but I said no. My mother also asked me if I wanted to take my dressing gown off and I said no. I had put my dressing gown on when I had got changed before visiting time because after the vicar having come in without giving me a chance to get it on, I was not going to give another man the chance to see me like that, especially not my Father. My Mother tried to get it off me saying that I was too hot in it but I was too heavy

240
152

593c. for her to lift and not wanting it off I just remained unhelpful. My mother was determined and tried to undo the buttons and just get me to open it and I could see my mother's filthy eyes all over my swollen breasts as if she had just noticed that my milk for the baby was there. As she pretended to undo the buttons she was prodding at my breasts the same way that the nurses had done to feel if my milk had come and when I just moved my arm as best I could to stop her touching me she sneered at me and clenched her teeth as if she would have liked to have hit me but could hardly do it in front of a ward full of people. If the nurses had come along then they would have seen me 'being difficult' for my mother to handle in that I would not let her take my dressing gown off when I was sweating hot but I would have let the nurses do it if my family had not been there and if it had been more private on the ward. I was not being difficult, I could just not bear my mother near me. I asked my mother if I could have the nighty that she had taken to wash for me as I had just changed into my last one and she got really nasty to me saying "What time had she to do work and what was I getting all stuck up for, changing my night dress so often just because I was in hospital" she said that she had to wear hers for a whole week and that she had all Clive and Stella's washing to do. She said how was she going to get a nighty dry in this weather as it was freezing cold out. I said to her that it would only have taken her five minutes to wash it out and twenty minutes to dry it in the brand new dryer that I had just bought for drying

594c. clothes in that was standing ready to use. She only had to hang the nightdress over it and put the plug in the wall. She said "don't you be cheeky with me girl" but I was not being cheeky I was in despair as I was desperate for something to wear. My mother looked put out and said that she did not know where the dryer was and I said that it was standing in the hall where we had agreed it should go and that she passed it everytime she went in and out of the house. We had agreed that it would give a little heating to the hall in cold weather and dry all the babies nappies but she looked at me as if she had not expected or thought of that and then she said defiantly that all her babies clothes had gone out on the washing line in the garden. She looked sheepish about something and she said that she supposed I was right in case the health visitor came and my mother gave me a look as if she would have to go and get it back from somewhere and I began to suspect that she had already given it to one of her animal charities. My mother remained firm over the nightdress and said that she would just take the one I had just taken off but no more. She said that I was to stay in the one I had on and make it last the rest of the week and she said that she had enough to do without me causing her more work which really hurt me.

My mother went into my locker

595 c. to take out the dirty nighty and saw my knitting there. She had a look at it and turned to me and asked me furiously if that was all I had done all day, "just a few rows". I was puzzled myself as to why I had not been able to knit at my usual speed and I felt quite ashamed that I had only done a few rows. My Mother was furious at my laziness and said that she had expected me to have finished it so that she could have gone and bought me some more. My Father said "don't forget the vicar came all afternoon" and both my Mother and Father laughed. My Father told me that the vicar had told them how I had got him out of bed at 7am that morning and my Father had told the vicar that now he (the vicar) knew how he (my Father) had felt when he had been got out of bed to collect me from the Police Station at Borough Green years before at 5.30 in the morning, and my Father told me how the vicar, my Mother and himself had all had a good laugh about it. My mind felt as if it was splitting with frustration of not being able to explain to the vicar that it was not like that at all and I felt so helpless that my parents could just talk to people round to laughing with them about what they had done to me by just telling them snatches of what had happened and leaving out the bit about what they had done to me that had caused it. My Father said that the vicar had come round to see them at lunchtime and they had all had a long discussion about the matter. The vicar had told me that he had seen my parents but not all

596 c. of what they had said and I felt that while I was so helpless everybody was seeing my parents about different things and everything was getting so out of hand because it was me they should have come and asked. I just seemed to have been told what I should do and just not asked. It should have been me who should have been considered being a newly delivered mother but everyone seemed more concerned about the Father and my parents and I was just completely trampled on particularly when I was so ill and could not get up and sort everything.

Then my Father said "You don't know where we've been do you?" He was sneering at me as if he was trying to torment me with not knowing and panic rose inside me that they might have been to Great Ormond Street so I pushed the thought out of my mind and ignored him. My Mother got a newsletter out of her bag. It was the weekly newsletter from St. Mary Magdalene's Church and she said that she had been to the 11 o'clock mass at St. Marys with Clive and Stella to pray for me. She said that she had told Geraldine's Mother and everybody that she had seen that she knew even vaguely about the baby being in Great Ormond Street to get them to pray for me and the baby. I was furious and I said that some people at that Church were neighbours of Mrs. Clark and they would tell her so I asked my Mother just to

597c. keep quiet about it. My mother looked at me as if she had done it on purpose and said that people had GOT to know and that I had just got to accept it. She said that a baby was not something to keep hidden and I said that it was not that at all, it was a case of avoiding brouble with the Clarks. She smiled a sickly smile at me and I just knew that she had done it on purpose. She had told so many people as if she was just daring one of them to go straight to Mrs Clark with the news as the people round our way were just like that. I just could not cope with so much worry and I felt so helpless. My mother asked me if I knew that today was the Feast of Christ the king and she wanted to know if I had read the book 'God so loved the World' that she had brought me in, and very quietly I said 'no'. My Father kept on repeating what he had said to me about where they had been all afternoon and he kept dropping hints as if he was trying to get me to give him the answer saying that they had been to see 'someone new' but he would not say who it was. I just ignored him and did not let him see that he was making me panic with fear. He gave up in the end and said nastily about me to my Mother "see, you can say anything you like to her, shes got no feelings at all" as if I was the lowest creature he had ever seen but he was just being spiteful because I would not let him hurt me. My Mother talked on for a time and then my brother and sister turned up. They had been down in the Hospital shop buying sweets for themselves and my

598c Father asked them what they had bought. My brother recited off a list of bars of this and that and my Father impatiently asked him where they were. My brother innocently replied that they had finished them and honestly reported to my Father that they had been so long because they had had to go looking for a bin to put the wrappers in. My Father laughed loudly and falsely and said "Isn't it just bloody marvellous! I give them money to buy Anne sweets and they go and buy them and eat them themselves". My brother looked genuinely amazed as my Father could not have told him what the sweets were for and I felt so glad that they had enjoyed them. I said quite honestly that I did not like sweets and I really did not want any. I felt so suffocated that my Father would buy me sweets as if he was visiting a child on a childrens ward. I thought that he could have got me something more suitable and when I very nicely suggested that I would rather have a womans magazine, he sneered as if it was a joke and said "What do you want with a womans magazine?" I said that the girl in the next bed had this weeks magazine with a good pattern for dolls clothes to fit a doll for a little girl and I would like to get it to knit them for my little girl. My Father laughed nervously and said loudly for everyone on the ward to hear that they

599c. could try to get hold of a copy and then my mother could knit me the dolls' clothes and they could get a doll for me as well. He spoke very simply as if he was trying to get me to remember that it was me that was the little girl. My mother told him to shut up and she said that she had seen the pattern and the magazine too and I was surprised as she did not usually look at womens magazines. She changed the subject and asked me if there was anything else I wanted. I asked for some tissues and said that I had finished the whole box of mine. My mother was shocked that I had used so many and asked me if I had got a cold. I said that I had been crying and my mother looked alarmed and asked me what the matter was. I said 'the baby' with tears pricking in my eyes. She looked so surprised that I had been crying about that and she said to my Father "Don't tell me she hasn't got any feelings." My Father said quickly "It's Auckland! That's what it is, He's given her a good talking to, he said he would, he's got her soul to think of, and if he doesn't get through to her at a time like this then he never will. Her soul will be lost and that's what he's worried about". My mother looked annoyed and said that it was for her priests to see to that sort of thing, not the Protestants. My mother asked me what Mr. Auckland had said to me and I found it difficult to talk about it. I seemed to be unable to speak when it came to the things that hurt and I just mumbled about him having said that the very hairs on mine and Normans head were numbered and that our

600 c. sins had deformed the baby. My mother was genuinely disgusted and said that Mr. Auckland interfered too much. She said that she and my Father had not minded him coming to the Hospital to save them coming but she said that he took things upon himself too much, and she did not want him interfering with the Clarks. I said no, I did not either. I told her that he had wanted me to make it up with Norman and my mother got agitated and said that Mrs. Clark would be after the baby, as if she was anxious that she might have a rival. I did not want my parents or the Clarks taking my baby and I was so afraid that the whole situation was just getting worse and worse as I was struggling to keep a hold on my own baby while everyone seemed to be trying to get custody of her and I had hardly even held her. I had already had too much of my visitors and I wanted to rest. It was not only my visitors that were too much for me because the whole ward was full of noisy visitors as more people came to visit the patients at the weekend and the lights on the ward seemed very bright where I was so tired. I tactfully suggested that my family should all pop off home before it got too late and my mother was pleased and got ready to go saying that they had been busy all afternoon and that she had her dogs to see to but as she got ready to go we saw my Aunt Marion and my cousin Katherine coming down the ward