

Mark is 2 years old. His mother decided to leave his father. The grandparents look after the grandson while his mother is at work. Mark's mother is in therapy to "get over some things of my past relationship". Although rules were set to regulate when and where Mark's father could see his son, the father believed the rules made no sense and felt that the boy needed to see him more often. Recently, while Mark was on a walk with his grandmother, Mark's father, despite the strong crying of the child, snatched him from the hands of his grandmother. Mark's grandmother asked his father to let her reassure her terrified grandson and tell her where and for how long he was taking him. Mark's father insulted the grandmother and pushed her. He had not previously informed Mark's mother, who was at work, that he wanted to meet his son that day. The father's aggressive behavior and the child's crying drew the attention of bystanders, who called the police. The police established that the father returned to work after the incident, placed the child in the care of his girlfriend, whom Mark did not know. After returning, Mark clung to his mother tightly, refused to eat, and at night got a very high fever.

Sarah is 10 years old. Her parents are divorced. She has been living with her dad and his new family for two years. Her father picked her up from school and, without her mother's consent, took her to the home where Sarah grew up. He reported to the police that the mother was neglecting their daughter and that she had an alcohol problem. Sarah missed her father and was initially glad to be living with him. The father was nice to her and gave her various gifts, he spent a lot of time with her. Currently, Sarah's stepmother, often yells at Sarah, challenges her, makes her look after her step-siblings. She tells her that she is lazy and that she got bad genes from her mother. When she tries to talk to her father about the stepmother's behavior, Sarah's father tells her that she should be grateful to his partner for raising her. The stepmother complains to her father about Sarah, saying that she is a bad child, that she doesn't keep the house tidy and doesn't care about her personal hygiene. Sarah's father starts thinking that Sarah might be lying because she's having a hard time adapting to her new family. Sarah's father has a negative opinion about Sarah's mother. He tells her that her mother wanted an abortion, that she is mentally ill and is dangerous. He tells Sarah that for her sake she shouldn't see her mother, because nothing good will come of it. Sarah's mother is raising her younger brother, she fights in court to be able to resume contacts with Sarah. She has tried to see her daughter many times, but the father claims that the daughter is afraid of her mother and does not want to see her.

Jan is 12 years old. He is musically gifted. He composes his first musical pieces and plays the guitar perfectly. Music is his great passion. The family is well off. His father runs his own construction company. Mom is an accountant and supports her son in pursuing his passion. The father, on the other hand, is disappointed with his son, he does not understand how a boy his age can dream of a music career. A father wants his son to be tough and strong. He forces him to play soccer. He criticizes when he tries to explain that he prefers to play the piano. He accuses his wife of raising her son as "a parasite". Several times his father threatened to throw him out of the house to "show him what real life is like". The father often refused to pay for music classes. One time he even sold Jan's guitar, which he had received from his grandmother for his birthday. Recently, the boy had a severe panic attack. When the teacher at Jan's school invited the parents to discuss about Jan's behavior and panic attack, Jan's father explained in tears: "I'm just afraid he won't make it, I just don't want him to be a failure."

Kate is 15 years old. She was referred to a psychologist by a teacher who found her unconscious in the school bathroom. After being brought to a hospital, urine tests showed high levels of benzodiazepines and among Kate's personal belongings an empty bottle of Xanax was found. After waking up the girl explained that she felt like her life was not worth living since she couldn't get anything right. As Kate opened up she told the doctors of the rules that her mother had set in their house, including a curfew, the prohibition of going out with friends, especially when they're boys. Kate keeps repeating of how she hates herself for being fat and ugly (although she is thin and has a normal BMI) and she asks the doctors to not tell her mother about what happened because of her feelings of shame. While crying she adds: "My poor mother, she works like a dog to put food on my table, and this is how I repay her."

Jessica is 11 years old. She's a bright student, although her teachers frequently scold her for chatting during lessons, and has a very good sense of humour which makes her quite popular in her class thanks to her wit and jokes. She's an only child and lives with her parents with whom she has a wonderful relationship. In the summer between fifth and sixth grade they decide to spend their summer vacation at the seaside and invite some old friends with them who have children more or less Jessica's age. The vacation goes well, but after returning home, one night, while sleeping, Jessica wetted the bed. Jessica's parents are confused, this hadn't happened since Jessica was a toddler. Their family doctor gives Jessica a few behavioral suggestions: writing down a sleep

diary, being very careful to empty her bladder completely before going to bed, trying to drink less during the evening, etc. Although she makes all these behavioral changes, night after night she continues to wet the bed until finally the doctor, not knowing what else to do, prescribes her some drugs that reduce the bedwetting incidents. About a month later, a teacher calls Jessica's parents telling them he's a bit surprised of the worsening of Jessica's grades and of how little she talks and jokes in classes compared to the previous year. Although these changes may be just temporary and are sometimes common in adolescent girls, the teacher asks them if anything happened in the family during the summer. Jessica's parents start to grow anxious, they talk to the teacher about the bedwetting incidents and the teacher tells them they could be linked to distress. When Jessica comes back home, the parents ask her to sit down and discuss what's been going on, she's very evasive, and tells them everything's fine. When Jessica's father asks her if anything strange had happened during the vacation, Jessica looks upset, and after her parents insist that she must tell them if anything happened, she tells them that Mark, one of their friends on vacation with them, one night had walked into her room and showed her his penis and made her touch it. She felt very guilty and frightened afterwards and felt relief confessing this. Jessica's parents hugged her, and told her they would immediately call Mark. Jessica asked them not to, but they did anyway. Mark denied these claims, and so did his wife. Since there wasn't any proof, and Jessica's parents were afraid of causing more harm, they decided to not alert the police and only send Jessica to a psychologist so that she could talk about this horrible experience.

John, a 7-month old boy with a history of multiple fractures, is referred by a general practitioner to a private hospital and is admitted to the orthopaedic ward where he appears to have a swollen left arm and leg, and a high fever. A week prior to admission he was brought to the emergency unit, accompanied by his aunt and house-maid, after falling from a swing. John did not pass out and didn't significantly change his daily activities. When the incident occurred, he was under the care of his baby-sitter while his mother was out of town. On physical examination brownish spots on the chest, abdomen and neck were found. He seemed in pain when the doctors touched his arm and showed impaired movements of his limbs. Laboratory exams showed also anemia and multiple fractures were recognized. Investigation by a multidisciplinary team including police officers was performed but nobody was arrested or accused.

After 2 years, he was living under the care of his mother and grandparents and had no more significant falls or fractures.