

Family Fracture or The Forbidden Subject: Lyn Jones

Such a struggle to write this, being for so long in our family a subject forbidden to be discussed. They why do so? Because we now know better.

Understanding, progress & treatments have come a long way since the dark days of the past in the field of Clinical Depression, now MDD Major Depressive Disorder - too often with suicidal ideation.

Thankfully gone now the stigma, discrimination & the illness being thought of as some delicate matter, not to be spoken of as it was for us - forbidden.

Debilitating & traumatic for the sufferer, a ripple effect occurs through families or those close. Below my scattered recollections of such a time...

"Come & say hello to your Mother" my Father said. Slowly & silently my older Brother around 6 & I about 4, followed him into the dimly lit lounge. A list of names was in a frame on the wall, under words that read - The Great War. The pressed metal wall had a flower motive on it but I can't be sure. Some memories do fade over time. Others that have a more profound impact remain.

A strong smell of furniture polish & cleanliness filled the room. Beautiful flowers were in a glass vase on top of the radiogram. My Mother was sitting on the long lounge, the window behind her, putting her face in shadow.

I remember looking at her hands, lying loosely in her lap. It was my Mother, but her fingernails were different. Usually lovely, oval-shaped & buffed to a shine, now they were bitten down, ragged, bleeding. I held back, afraid this was only temporary. My Brother seemed to be doing the same.

Everything was silent. Then a bird chirped twice outside on the trellis. Softly & very shakily my Mother whispered, "Don't you know me?" Although we did know her, what & I & perhaps my Brother too weren't sure of, was what would happen next.

Would she disappear again from our home? Be put back in that hospital we had been told she had been in, for months or was it years? Nothing felt certain now. Time had stood still, become warped & unreliable since she was whisked away in a heartbeat. My Brother & I had been taken away too, would we be taken away again?

Taken back to that vile place, that place of nightmares that haunt me still...The Children's Home.