

Opening extract from
A Fine Line

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CHAPTER 1

Balance to survive

I considered carefully how I was going to continue with my therapy without causing harm to myself or anyone else. My main aim was to get out of this cage, and home to my loving husband and children. My Mum and best friends, had been against me coming in, and I now wondered if they were correct.

Yet, Joseph my husband, and I had followed Dr Lynn's advice and we both believed that for me to get better, we both had to go through this. Joseph had to endure the uncertainty of not knowing how the therapy would affect me. He had the sole responsibility of looking after our young children, his business, and our animals. I felt a huge responsibility of trying to get better as soon as possible and to get home again. I had never been in a psychiatric unit before, and it terrified me. Some of the inpatients were very sick, and it was a shock to be amidst the unpredictable environment.

Now I was seriously thinking, that to get out, I had to work intensively and throw everything on the same plate together and deal with it. I had come into hospital as an inpatient, to deal with posttraumatic stress after years of extreme abuse. I had expected the therapy to last two weeks, as Dr Lynn had promised my family I would be home soon. I never expected the therapy and work to be so intensive

and difficult. Now I was so desperate to get out I threw all my energy to demonstrate and try to off load my past.

Dr Lynn told me to be as descriptive as possible and to use anything. Suddenly, as I looked up to the far corner of my room, I could picture a scene of drawing a leg opening from the corner, as if some one was sitting up, with legs stretched wide open. I grabbed a pencil, climbed onto the cupboard top and began to draw. I drew a leg stretching out on to the left wall, as if the centre of the vagina was in the corner, and a leg stretching out onto the right wall. In the centre, where the walls met, I drew explicit detail, thinking I want to go home I can do this. Whilst scribbling, thinking how to illustrate blood around the opening and all the bruising. I glanced across to where my plate of toast lay, there was an unopened jam. I rushed out, shutting the door and went into the ward kitchen. Grabbing a plate, I placed bread, and a handful of assorted little plastic tubs of jam, strawberry, raspberry, and blackcurrant on to it.

In my mind, the lighter blood could be the raspberry, where it had darkened was the strawberry, and where it had congealed, and gone thick was the blackcurrant. The creativity completely took over. I used the blackcurrant where I knew the blood would be thick and dark, and enhanced it with the others. This inspired me, as it looked realistic, the jam making it three-dimensional. It also brought home the horrors I had endured, and I quickly drew the man's car cigarette lighter, whirling the pencil, creating the inner coils. Then I coloured it with the strawberry jam to make it red hot, drawing z's from it indicating the heat.

Over the sink was a wide space, and I used it to demonstrate the knife the man used, not big but effective, using raspberry jam on the sharp end. I was well pleased, as my drawings to me, could not have been more realistic of the past. I could see the knife just edging out his pocket, it was ironic it was a Swiss one.

I was now married to a Swiss man who was lovely. I continued to draw from my memories. A corded patterned rope, a cross representing

the many times I did not think I would live, pausing, I then drew a cloud of blackness and some child's feet coming out with two big adult ones above and in between them. The contrast of the small feet to the big was making my heart lurch at the vulnerability.

Behind the door, I quickly drew my safety get away, my tranquil quarry, and trees, having no turquoise; I relied on the pencil to make it real. I wrote RIP on the cross, reminding me of my little baby cousin who had died so tragically and I drew a small child's coffin for him.

Lying back on the hospital bed looking up at the legs in the corner, I thought I could not be more descriptive. Then I caught sight of my dressing gown belt, and had another idea. I formed a noose with it, and hung it from the ceiling. He had used it around my neck.

I now had used as much creativity as I could to express the horrors, without passing out or shaking. I put it down to concentrating on completing a work of art, rather than the reality of it all. As I looked at it, I did not see the horror it truly represented. I saw a piece of work that I had managed to do, to fulfil Dr Lynn's wishes.

The door opened and Abdul, a Muslim male nurse came in. He was always lovely, and had come to say hello. He took one look at my room, and ran out, then nurse after nurse were popping their heads through the door. I lay on my bed, thinking I had done a good job for Dr Lynn, but was now getting worried about the reaction it was causing. Ruth the staff nurse came in.

"Oh my God, Bridget," she pulled down the noose I had made with my dressing gown belt. "Dr Lynn told me to be as expressive as possible and to use anything," I muttered.

Ruth sounded cross, "Well I'm sure he didn't mean putting jam on the wall or making a mess. How will we get it off?"

"It will wash off easy. I'd never put anything on that was permanent," I felt offended. "Right, you're to stay in your room," she looked at me frowning. "Can you fetch Dr Lynn?" I asked, wanting him to see it, eager

to go home and do whatever he said to get home. “No, I can’t, he’s not in today, but his junior Dr can come and sort this out,” Ruth stormed out. I sat on the bed dismayed. Abdul came in, “What were you thinking of?” he asked, looking at me, avoiding looking up, “How can you let your kids into here?”

“Don’t be silly,” I said crossly. “I’ll have washed it off by then; I was only doing what was asked,” I felt annoyed, thinking I had done really well and was just getting grief for it.

The younger Dr was horrified. He completely brushed aside my explanation, and told me to get it off as quickly as possible. He did not take into account that I knew my kids would not be in for days, or that I was just trying to please Dr Lynn. He saw it as a sick pornographic scene, of destructible nature.

When he went out, I grabbed a cloth, soap, and washing bowl, and started to clean it up. An hour later, the walls looked better then they had done before.

The next day was ward round, and without warning, Dr Lynn came into my room, followed by Andrea, and Ruth. I reacted remarkably fast and bolted through the door. Andrea made a grab missing me; I flew out the double doors, and bolted up some stairs. I had no idea where I was going, but after running up the first flight, saw some slatted windowpanes, an easy way out. I jumped onto the ledge smashing through the slats with my feet and hands. Bending to jump, I realised the roof opposite was quite a few feet away, and there was a huge drop in between. Every feeling in my body screamed at me to escape. I jumped; simultaneously someone grabbed my ankle, pulling me heavily back in, on top of people.

They carried me struggling back to my room, telling me to sit down. Panting and out of breath, I looked up, there was a crowd of nurses outside my door, and then Ruth came in. She told them they could go back. “What are we going to do with you? You know Dr Lynn, Andrea, and me.” I shrugged my shoulders. All I knew was that without

warning, I was terrified and had tried to get away from the danger, “I’m really sorry, I’ll pay for the damage,” I was genuinely upset.

“Don’t be silly, that is what we have insurance for,” Ruth smiled, “but you know what this means don’t you?” I shook my head thinking of the damage to the window. “You’re back on level one; you’re too unpredictable at the moment.” Ruth said.

“But, it’s only because everyone crowded into my room,” I protested.

“Yes, but you could have ran outside through the door, the way most people go,” Ruth laughed.

“I didn’t have time to plan my route,” I was still arguing.

I lost out and had to resign to the fact that I was back on level one. This meant a nurse permanently at shoulders length to me. I thought back to my feelings and earlier conversation with Dr Lynn.

How could I tell my closest friends and family that although I loved them, I experienced great periods of distress where I had to fight to keep alive? Most people with an outside view would tell me to pull myself together and remind me that I had two children. This only added to the guilt. I loved my daughter Jo Jo and son Tee Jay. I would protect them with my life, yet I was unable stop the intensity of the intrusive suicidal thoughts and flashbacks. I could not in my own mind, justify what was going on. All I knew was that at these times although I was suicidal, I was not aiming to kill myself. I was actually fighting with all my resources to stay alive and safe. Dr Lynn and the medical team knew this and I tried my hardest to explain to Joseph my Swiss husband of five years.

I knew if the situation was reversed, I would take it as an insult and think he did not love me enough. I had to cling on to Dr Lynn’s words, that I was ill, and it was the illness causing this, it was not my wishes. He said it was way down beyond conscious levels, describing the way we would work together in hospital. Saying it would be like pulling the layers off an onion gently, to get to the heart of it. Joseph liked and

respected Dr Lynn, and placed his trust with his medical opinion. I recalled the day I entered the psychiatric unit.

I was apprehensive. I had agreed to go in for two weeks voluntarily, at the beginning of March 2001. I had been an outpatient of Dr Lynn's since 1994. Only after breaking the news to Mum, and knowing Joseph would be able to cope with his wine business, and our children Jo Jo who was four, and Tee Jay who was 2 years old, did I agree to go. The months prior to my planned hospital stay, flew by, and I became increasingly agitated, pacing the rooms of our house unable to settle. It had taken me all my time not to shout at the children. I had gone through intense periods of guilt, cuddling both of them, holding them closely, and telling myself it was only for two weeks.

Then my friend Sandra reminded me how they had forced her Mum to have electroconvulsive therapy. I had seen for myself, her damaged memory. She had to write everything down in note form. I had seen pictures in a medical book of the wires attached and it had scared me. I told myself I was not going in for that, trying to be rational. Sandra still insisted I should not go in to hospital. Mum would not talk about it, and my close friends Susanne and Tom told me not to go.

Joseph told me to ignore them all. He said that they did not know enough detail to judge. Consequently, I packed my bags for hospital. Scared, I had taken off the back of my mobile phone and hidden a couple of razor blades and others in the lining of my different bags. I was not planning to use them but felt comfort in the knowledge of having them there.

The day of my planned hospital stay arrived. Joseph and I walked into the hospital together through the double doors to the ward. A nurse had informed us that Andrea, who was my community psychiatric nurse, was on her way, and showed us to the communal lounge. It freaked me out looking at the surroundings, and I grabbed Josephs arm, running towards the seated area, where we had first walked in. Joseph turned to face me saying, "You know it's for the best." I looked at his face and searched his eyes. They were full of concern. "I miss the children already, I miss the animals, and I want to go back," I pleaded.

“Please wait until Andrea gets here, please,” he begged, gripping my arm tightly. Just at that moment Andrea came. She saw me with my bags, and looked at Joseph. He said, “She doesn’t want to stay.”

“Oh why not, Dr Lynn will be down in a minute, and I have your own room for you,” Andrea replied smiling.

“I think it panicked her when they told us to go into the lounge,” Joseph said. I nodded.

Andrea spoke. “I’ve your own room and once we explain to the nurses, you won’t have to go into the lounge, please, come and look,” she beckoned to both of us. I nervously followed her back along the ward, to a small room with a bed, sink, and wardrobe. Glancing through the sealed window, I felt like an animal trapped in a cage. Joseph followed, placing my bag down on the disinfected floor. A nurse came in to take it, and I was just going to object when Andrea intervened stopping her.

Inside my head, I thought, I have to do this for Joseph and the children. Yet every instinct screamed for me to run out. Joseph hovered anxiously, until Andrea turned to him, “Look, I won’t leave her, and Dr Lynn will be here shortly.”

I nodded, smiling falsely, “It’s ok you can go,” I could not look at him as I spoke. We had previously agreed he would not visit me later, as the children would need him, our animals would need looking after, and he would have his business to run. He hugged me tightly, and for a second I clung to him. “Don’t do anything silly,” he whispered.

“Go,” I said whilst I could still speak. He left the room.

“I don’t know if I can do this,” I said to Andrea, sinking onto the bed.

“You’ll be busy. The time will pass quickly, I know the surroundings aren’t brilliant, but you need to be here. We had come to a standstill.”

The tall sleek figure of Dr Lynn lumbered through the door. They both sat down. “Not quite home from home is it?” Dr Lynn said, apologizing.

“But you’re only here a short while, and I want you to work hard,” he smiled across at me. I felt a tiny bit of reassurance that it may be ok.

He leaned across showing me his paper. He had drawn a long line. One end he had written A, the other end B. “A is where you were born; B is where we are

now. Between these I want you to write down any significant event that's important to you,"he instructed.

I nodded. It gave me something to concentrate on and work at. He continued to tell me some of the procedures and told me that one of the nurses would be my key worker, and I was to go and ask if I was not sure about anything. "Right, I'll see you tomorrow,"he left the room. Andrea said, "Don't worry, I'll try and see you every day."

"Thanks,"I smiled, as she left.

I now felt alone and looked round. The walls marked and scuffed. The floor looked reasonably clean. I started to sort through my bag, and then I did not want to, I wanted everything together, in case I needed to go. The smell from the elderly dormitory opposite was strong, reminding me of when I sat near my elderly Grandpa as a child.

A voice suddenly started to shout, "Nurse, nurse,"and I heard the footsteps of a nurse going through to the dormitory. Two nurses were trying to calm an elderly woman down. I crept back to my bed and someone looked through the glass panel and went. I felt scared, lost and my privacy invaded.

I suddenly needed to hide, desperate for space alone, I climbed into the wardrobe, squatting down, pulling the door shut. It was dark. I felt safe. My mind was racing. Do I run? Do I stay? What was I going to do? I heard the voices of some of the patients. I felt stifled in the wardrobe. I tried to think rationally and thought of meditation and yoga. I desperately tried to do some deep breathing to relax.

In the background, I heard the door open to my room and the nurses asking where I was. Then the door shut and they went out. A few minutes later, they were back, and I heard someone say I had not left the ward. The door opened and a blinding light hit me in the face, I blinked not able to see. "What are you doing in there?"Stepping back, she continued gently, "It's ok we're not going to hurt you." I was shaking from head to foot, unable to move, reminding me of when he approached me in the safe. I jumped as the nurse in front of me, tried to touch my arm. She then turned to the two other nurses. "It's ok you go, I'll manage."

It was only her and me. I scrutinized her long brown hair scruffily falling over her face, covering her oval rimmed glasses. She smiled, genuinely looking

concerned. I let her half help me out of the wardrobe, falling with cramp. She helped me on to my bed. "My name's Anna, I don't want to scare you, have you had a drink since you've been here?"

I shook my head and she went to the door and called another nurse. "How do you like your tea, or would you prefer coffee?"

I went to answer her but could not speak. I was still shaking and the whole bed rocked.

"Do you like tea strong with sugar?" she asked gently.

I nodded, curling into a ball for protection, staring at the wall wishing none of this were happening. I felt her sit down on the bed. Another nurse approached, and I jumped so hard, Anna jumped, and the other nurse gave a small yelp. Anna said to her, "She was in the bottom of the wardrobe." I could not see their glances and Anna stood up, "I'll see you later, this is Ruth your key worker, she also happens to be one of the top nurses here. She'll look after you." I was still shaking, feeling the bed go again, as Ruth sat down. She put her hand on to my shoulder and I flinched. "I can see Brenda coming in with your tea, wait a minute. I'll fetch it." I heard her shut the door, hearing the clunk of the mug as she put the tea down. She approached me slowly, half propping me up as she shook the pillows, and turned the top one vertically to give me more support. I looked at her, feeling embarrassed. She gave me a lovely beam, her eyes were so dark, and soft, I liked her immediately. She was small and had blonde hair. Ruth told me about the procedure for meals. The fear in my face must have been apparent.

"I'll make a note that you can eat in your room," she said.

Later, she showed me the kitchen. I followed her up the corridor, terrified, yet the toilets were along this narrow bit, so I needed to find them. Ruth was kind. She and Anna made a curtain in my room over the glass panel with a towel, so I had a bit of privacy. I had to leave a tiny gap, as they had to monitor me. They promised it was just a quick glance to know I was ok now and again. They also agreed with Dr Lynn, that I could sit at the desk in the reception, which was normally strictly for nurses.

That evening I decided to take up the offer of sitting at the reception desk. I had talked to Joseph on the phone and the children, assuring him I was ok. It

was nine thirty and an older nurse sat at the desk, the younger nurse had disappeared to the nurses' station with a message. I pulled my chair up and sat at the end of the desk with a drink. There were a couple of people sitting on a sofa and a few mooching back and forth to their respective side wards. The ward was mostly for elderly people, but there were a few young ones there, that saw Dr Lynn. I still felt nervous and eyed the nurses in the nurses' station. The young one came back, smiling at me as she sat down. Suddenly the older nurse shouted. "What the hell do you think you're doing?" She was so loud and rough that I did not dare lift my head up, feeling sorry for the two young lads mucking about under the duty board. Again, she shouted. "I'm talking to you, move."

This time I did look up, and was horrified that she was glaring at me and standing up. Her eyes were bulging with rage, and everyone was staring at me. I bolted back to my room panicking, desperate for a razor blade.

I grabbed one throwing myself on the floor next to the storage heater. I held the blade against my skin drawing blood on my arm. I did not feel it. I just wanted to feel safe and ok again, I missed Joseph and the kids. I repeatedly slashed my arm, the floor turned red. The nice young nurse came in. "Please don't do that," she appealed. I looked up at her. She came nearer. I cut again. She moved to take the blade and then pulled back, as I cut a deeper cut. It shocked me as I could see the white edge of my skin peeling back from the blade. The next thing I knew was the horrible older nurse had come into the room. "You think you're clever, do you know what seclusions like? I bet you do, you'll end up in there."

I had no clue what she meant. She scared me, "I've met your sort before, you won't win this way," her tone was frightening and her eyes still bulged. I cut; I wanted this nightmare to stop. She left the room and I leant against the heater. I stopped cutting, but held my razor tightly. It was my protection if anyone came near me. A young man walked up to me introducing himself as the Dr on duty. "Do you think that's a good idea?" He sounded sarcastic. I stayed silent, and he held out his hand asking for the blade. His eyes met mine and reluctantly I gave it to him, and he disappeared. The nice young nurse came in with some saline solutions and a bandage, and gently cleaned my arm. The panic had diffused and I let her finish, muttering, "Thanks."

Later I crossed the corridor to the toilet; quickly washing making sure the glass panel was covered and got into bed. I could hear an elderly woman shouting. "Nurse," seeming ages before I heard footsteps, and the nurse responding to her call. Another one came and I could hear them trying to lift her out of bed onto a bedpan.

I learnt to listen to the footsteps, eventually identifying each nurse, by the shoes they wore. I tried to put my head under the covers hiding from the torch light, which shone into the room regularly. The blood on the floor reminded me of a hostile environment.

I stood up, enough recalling of my first day and night in hospital. It was a mixed reaction, experiencing empathy from some staff and extreme abuse from others. My level one nurse stood also and she followed me to the toilet, an unfortunate witness, to my necessary toilet requirements.

I walked back to my room. The walls still looked a lot cleaner and I sat down to work and concentrate on my lifeline. I started to fill in my earliest significant memories.

I was born in January 1961 and my earliest memories were of my first day at infant school at the age of five years old. I was in the same class as Susanne, still my best friend now. I made a mark near my date of birth and wrote adopted. My parents thought they could not have children. They adopted Jane in 1958, whose birthday was on the same day as Mums, and then they adopted me in the spring of 1961. Little did they know that Mum would actually bear a child two years later, and in June 1963, my younger sister Denny was born. I scribbled hard, making the mark into a big star so as to belittle the adoption bit.

Most people did not know my sister and I were adopted. Jane looked like Mum as she was part fair, and Denny looked like both my parents having very blonde hair. I was dark haired with dark olive skin. Mum used to joke and say I was the milkman's.

Dad was a true gentleman, believing heavily in his role to provide

food on the table, and Mum's role to keep the house in order and to have his meals ready. He was a conservative and freemason, and the household diary ran around his Masonic duties. These were kept confidential, and we were ignorant about the freemasons, except that they raised money for different charities and later at school, we learnt there was a joke about the handshake.

I looked at my lifeline, it looked so bare. I lay back on my propped up pillow and sucked at my pencil, trying hard to think of my childhood.

I was always satisfied to stay at home and play in our large garden, making a den under the huge willow tree, or climbing the old apple tree at the bottom and spying on Dad. I often took the dogs for a walk, or spent hours bird watching. I loved animals, reading all I could about them. My two sisters in contrast spent time watching Top of the Pops and having many friends. Jane loved to read, spending more time in her bedroom with stacks of magazines. Denny was a bit of a tomboy like me. We would play football together in the garden, or see who could climb the highest tree. We had homemade bows using fine green garden sticks as arrows, learning to bend a cane, and with the right twine, sending arrows sharpened with Dad's penknife, to penetrate the old apple tree, and draw the sap. The arrows were lethal, and I actually shot Denny in the leg once. We were so scared at the time that we pulled it out, stuck some ointment on it with a plaster, and told no one. Luckily, for us it did heal ok. I laughed, as I remembered the day clearly.

We also played Jacks, where we stood apart from each other and threw a knife into the ground, and the opponent would have to stretch their foot to where the knife landed, whilst not moving the anchor foot. I sighed; I had loved our garden and dogs and had never really wanted to move out.

I glanced at my lifeline. The two significant marks were adoption and starting school. I did a mark from the age of 5 to 12 with a little smiley face and question mark. I placed my paper down and stood up.

Immediately the nurse stood as well. "Let's go and get a drink," I said.

He followed me closely to the ward kitchen. I made a drink for both of us and headed back to my small room to try to continue with my lifeline.

As I picked it up, I threw it down again frustrated. I felt like a prisoner. What was I doing stuck in a psychiatric unit? Why had I agreed? I still questioned whether I should have agreed to let them section me. At the time, I did not really know what choices I had. It was only after I had been in for a few days.

It was not even nine thirty, bored; I looked round the room to see what I could do. Noticing the steel plates screwed to the doors under the handles. I picked up the knife that came with the toast and used it like a screwdriver. I undid the metal plate carefully keeping everything. Then I turned to the cupboard door and started to take that off. I thought of the light switch but did not want to endanger anyone so I left it alone. Sighing I put the knife down and tried to read a book, but could not concentrate.

In the end, I sat on my bed and left the door open. I could see the nurses changing the beds opposite. The smell of the soiled sheets hung heavily. I remembered Dr Lynn telling me off, which was a shock, over the razor blades. "Do you want me to help you?" he had asked pulling up the chair.

I nodded. "Well where are they?" I had looked at him blankly. "Don't be clever, I'm not letting you stay here, and put others including yourself at risk if you don't hand them over."

Blushing, I knew he meant the razor blades. I got my handbag, taking one and others out my makeup bag. I hesitated, when he asked if there were any more. He had three, "Come on, I wasn't born yesterday where's the others?" I grabbed my mobile phone and pulled the battery cover off. He actually laughed and shook his head. "I can't believe it's your first time in and you're like an old pro," he said. He took them off me and left, leaving me frustrated.

Later on that day, staring at a blank piece of paper I felt very frustrated and trapped. I was too scared to sit out at the desk. I could not relax and read. The

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more I tried to concentrate and write, the harder it became. I became increasingly agitated. The ward was a gloomy place, some patients would suddenly act out, and the environment around me was as changeable as the seasons and extreme. I felt insecure without my razor blades, and I could not distract myself without my home and family around me. I withdrew and my frustration increased. I started to store any security I could think of, in the trend of cutlery and mugs. I would go for a drink and fetch a clean mug leaving the original one under my sink. I took two knives when I had my toast, and stored one. I became obsessed with storing anything I could use to self-harm. I could not release my feelings and the frustration grew, all contact with home became a front. I tried to support Joseph. I knew he could cope if he thought it was worth the struggle, as I would be better. The last thing I wanted to do was to let him down. I did not feel I could tell Andrea or any of the nurses how bad I was feeling, as I wanted to go home and not be kept in longer.

Eventually that evening I snapped. Using a hidden piece of mug, I sat on my bed discreetly slashing my arm; I still felt trapped and was desperate to get outside into the fresh air. Outwitting my level one nurse, I grabbed a jacket, shut my door, and walked quickly down the corridor. I walked straight past the nurse's desk as if everything was fine, and continued down the corridor. Once through the double doors, I hurried across the reception area and out through to the hospital car park. The cold hit me, yet the fresh air was welcoming. I aimed for the gates, and turned down the road. Looking back, to my horror, one of the male nurses in charge was following me. He quickened his pace and I quickened mine. He was catching up. I ran in front of a car, it missed me, braking hard. He followed me, scared I veered in and out of traffic, and realised I had lost him. My arm was dripping and I stood still feeling frozen, not sure what to do. I walked a while and then returned reluctantly to the ward.

I walked slowly back to my room, peeling my jacket off. Shocked at the state of my arm, I lay on the bed, staring at the ceiling, immediately I was aware of footsteps coming down the corridor, and John the male nurse entered. He sat slowly down on the chair opposite the bed, leaving the door ajar. "Can I clean that

arm up?" he asked. I shook my head slowly. He stood up to come and look at my arm and I jumped. He stopped, "Look, I'll call a nurse to make you a drink." I lay back on the bed feeling faint. He must have realised as he shouted after the nurse, "Can you bring the blood pressure machine too?"

Whilst cleaning my arm, he asked me, why I ran off. "I was scared," was all I could say. He did not ask me any more and I finished my sandwich and drank a second mug of tea.

The next day Dr Lynn turned up very early, "Bridget, we need to talk seriously," he pulled up his chair, and started to ask me about the night before. I explained that I never planned it. He asked why I did not go to John when I saw him on the roadside. I spoke, "I was scared."

He patted my arm gently, "It is ok, I am not blaming you, but I need to explain to you what we have to do. Have you heard of being sectioned?" I shook my head. "All it means is that like last night when you ran off, John can't stop you because you are in here voluntarily, do you understand that?" I nodded. He continued, "Well if we section you, then if you run off again, it means we have the right to bring you back." He continued to explain a bit more, and asked how I had cut my arm. I told him truthfully and he asked where the remainder of the mug was. I gave him the towel yet did not comment on the odd pieces elsewhere. He told me he wanted me to see another Dr just for ten minutes, to explain how I cut my arm, and then a social worker for a quick word. I nodded in agreement.

Joseph came in later; he seemed upset at what had happened the night before. I assured him I was ok, but had just panicked at being enclosed, and I was still trying to adjust to the hospital. "Look at it," I told him, gesturing at the whole place with my hands, "It would have an effect on anyone," he agreed. He told me the children were fine.

He promised on Saturday, he would bring the children in. He gave me a huge hug and we just clung to each other. I loved him, yet part of me was putting barriers up to protect him, as well as myself. Joseph was shocked I had been sectioned, yet Dr Lynn assured us it was a temporary measure, whilst we worked hard on my past to keep me safe. We had followed his professional advice all the way, and felt we needed to continue, as my care was in his hands.