

CHAPTER I

Some years ago a 13 year old boy was surprised to find himself on the front page of a Detroit newspaper. He had boarded the Woodward Avenue streetcar with a large package and passengers watched as he juggled the box with one hand and emptied the pockets of his jacket searching for carfare. Finally, he placed the package very carefully on a seat and fished out some coins which he gave to the conductor. "Whatcha got there, Sonny?" said the conductor, who liked kids. "A bomb," said the boy politely. "I made it myself." Something told the conductor that this was an honest boy. He stopped the car and ordered all passengers out. A passing scoutcar was signalled. The boy was taken down to headquarters with sirens screaming. The package was opened and it contained a homemade bomb.

The boy was honestly bewildered by the excitement he had stirred up. He answered all questions candidly. Yes, he had made the bomb himself, in his basement laboratory. No, he did not plan to blow up anybody or anything. He planned to take the bomb to his friends' house. It was too far to walk and so he took the streetcar.

A stern interrogation by police revealed no political motives, no irrational hatred toward society. He was a boy of good family, an excellent student, and he was educating himself for a career in science. Finally, the police were as baffled as the boy. It was perfectly clear that this boy had taken his homemade bomb on the street-

Superior Manifest

car in the same spirit that his mother might have carried a freshly baked cake to a friend.

His friend was a fellow scientist, aged 13. Both had engaged in independent research on explosives in their basement laboratories. They were both experienced in the handling of chemicals and were confident that the small amount of explosive material in the bomb would yield a small and controllable blast, without danger to themselves or anyone else. The boy was reluctant to confide the formula to the police and was grieved when the bomb was taken away from him.

Since I knew the family of this boy, I was able to follow his later career. He was obliged to discontinue his research with explosives but was permitted to go back to work in his basement laboratory on other, less challenging projects. He is a man in his thirties now, a very capable research scientist in a field that I think is not connected with bombs.

I do not tell you this story in the spirit of "All's well that ends well," however. I like the story because it tells us so well and so concisely about the nature of puberty and the dense fog that closes out communication between a child and the adult world during this period.

This is a boy whose intelligence and spirit of inquiry permits a fairly advanced research in a basement laboratory. But the motive in the research has as much to do with the small child's excitement in playing with fire, as the intelligent 13 year old's desire to work out a difficult chemical experiment. The superior intelligence is given

over entirely to intellectual problem solving and is not in evidence at all in such vital areas as "assessment of danger". His conscience does not prevent him from taking his bomb on the streetcar and endangering the lives of fifty citizens. But the same conscience will not permit him to tell a lie when the conductor asks him what he has in the package.

He is bewildered by the attitude of the adults toward his homemade bomb. The adult world looks upon him as a danger to society; he sees himself as a serious scientist who carried a piece of work to its conclusion. The incendiary squad of the Detroit Police Department finds itself without precedents in dealing with this extraordinary case. If this boy were ten years older, he would be treated as a dangerous and pathological criminal. But he is 13 and everybody knows that at 13 a child has moments when he looks like a lunatic, but he is really only acting his age.

There are times when every parent of the young adolescent has the feeling that his child's personality is disintegrating before his eyes. And it may be small consolation to the harried and exhausted parent if we remind him that what we see in puberty and early adolescence is not really "disintegration", but the beginning of the process of "reintegration", a reorganization of personality for the goals of adult life.

Between the years of puberty and the final achievement of physical and emotional maturation, the adolescent goes through a complex

reorganization of personality. The changes begin within the body, of course, and the new organization of personality centers around a body that is achieving sexual maturation. The changes in the external characteristics of the body bring about a new image of the self, a self that is becoming decisively masculine or feminine. At the same time, the physical changes within the body produce sexual and aggressive feelings of greater intensity than any that the child has ever known. The child's system of inner controls which may have been entirely adequate for the requirements of the ten year old personality is at times incapable of coping with the impulses of greater strength that emerge with puberty. The older control system must be rebuilt and strengthened in order to do its work and bring about a new harmony within the personality. And, finally, the attachment of the child for his parents, the deepest love, and the only love he has known, must slowly and painfully change its course, so that in maturity love can be given wholly and without reservation to a person of the opposite sex.

The entire process of maturation and reintegration in adolescence may cover eight to ten years. But there is a great deal of difference between the adolescent in puberty and the adolescent at eighteen or twenty and if we look closely, we can see at least two major phases in this developmental process. The first phase we might call "early adolescence", that period of adolescent development that centers in puberty and is still influenced by the biological processes of puberty.

The child's love is still centered in his parents and the turbulence of this period arises in large measure from the conflicts of emotional separation from the parents. The second phase, which corresponds roughly to the age period fifteen to 20 is characterized by a shift in the center of love interest; there is emotional readiness for love of a person of opposite sex. At this time, the center of conflict has also shifted to a large degree from the parents to the new objects of love in later adolescence.

Most parents will agree that the most painful period of adolescent development is the first phase. This is the period of turbulence, and violent shifts of mood, the time of bitter recriminations against parents, the time of door-slaming and solitary weeping in the bedroom. The child who had been so reasonable and civilized only a year ago has become uncivilized again. The conscience that had grown in stability during the school years seems to be in danger of falling apart. The half-grown child is often overwhelmed by impulses that he cannot cope with. And yet, because he is no longer a child, the old measures of parental control cannot always be employed with the same degree of effectiveness. It is a time of anxiety for the child and a time of anxiety for the parents.

Puberty - An Interior View

When a clinician writes about puberty, he brings in phrases like "inner conflicts" and "torments" and the parent who owns a live specimen is justly suspicious. Books about the torments of puberty are almost

the first to be donated to the symphony bazaar or left behind in the summer cottage. "What torments?" the parents want to know, "And what conflicts?" If anyone is tormented it's us. And as for inner conflicts, maybe you see them, but the ones we see are "outer" and they're mostly with us!"

And this may be perfectly true. The child in puberty does not reveal his inner life to his parents. He is very slow to reveal it to guidance workers and clinicians, too. It may take the best skill and tact of a clinical worker to get entry into the inner world of this age. What we see, then, is largely an interior view of puberty, and the parents, the teachers and others in his life may be limited very largely to the exterior and behavioral picture. But a portrait of puberty from the interior is not more valid than the exterior portrait. It's only through giving equal attention to the inner and outer phenomena of puberty, that we can make sense out of this chaos.

Sometimes, when a child in puberty has given permission to me to discuss certain of his problems with his parents, his parents can hardly believe that we are speaking of the same child. And when the parents describe the same child as they see him, or same events that the child has reported to me, I find I must strain my imagination to bring the two pictures into some kind of harmony. It may happen, for example, that a conflict that a child had brought to me as an inner crisis moved out into the home and was acted out within the theater of the family to become a drama in which each member of the family had been assigned a role.

Here is a good example - a fairly concise one because the events that I describe here occurred over a four hour period:

Peter is fourteen, an intelligent and normally ambitious boy whose grades have taken a terrible slump this year. He had been a good student with outstanding abilities in mathematics and music. His father was a teacher and father and son had always had a close relationship. But this year, which had brought disturbance into nearly every aspect of Peter's life had also brought some distance between Peter and his father.

On Friday at 4:00 Peter is in my office. He is in despair. There will be a history exam tomorrow and he knows he will flunk it. He has tried to read the material. He has read some pages over and over, and he can't tell me or anyone else what he has read. He's just a blank. He couldn't sleep last night. The sleeping problem is getting worse than ever, he says. "If I flunk this history exam I will flunk the course. I may flunk English, too. I can't get into a college prep course next year. I worry about what's going to happen to me. I keep going down and down and I can't stop myself!" He makes a heroic effort to control the tears that are coming, then snatches up a pillow and buries his face in it. "What else are you afraid of, Pete?" "What if you can't help me? What if nobody can help me? Maybe I'll never get to college. Maybe I'll never amount to anything..... I think how disappointed my father is. My mother doesn't say much, but she's hurt, too.....Then I get to hating myself. Last night when I couldn't sleep, I kept thinking I'd be better off dead."

I said those things to Peter that might ease his suffering and tide him over until I saw him next week. But he left the office in deep gloom. The rest of the story I reconstruct from Peter's report to me and from the parents' story to me later.

By the time Peter arrived home, gloom had been succeeded by surliness. As soon as he entered the house, he barked at his mother, went up to his room and read comic books for the hour and a half before dinner. His mother appeared at the door once. "Don't you have an exam in history tomorrow?" "Yup!" "Wouldn't it be a good idea to get that out of the way before dinner instead of reading comic books?" "Yup!" "If you fail this exam, isn't there a good chance you'll flunk the course?" "Yup!" "Don't you care?" "No!" His mother left and went downstairs. "I was afraid I would scream at him", his mother told me later. "Complete indifference! You feel as if you want to do something. Shake him out of his lethargy!" But this is not the end of the story.

After dinner, Peter turned on the television. His father came into the room. "Have you studied for the history exam?" "Nope". "When are you planning to do it?" No answer. "I asked you when you were planning to study?" No answer. Peter was staring raptly at the television screen. "At this point," the father told me, "I blew my top". He switched off the tv set, and delivered a scorching sermon to his son who sat slumped in a chair and listened with cold indifference on his face. At the end of this tirade, Peter said, "Are you through? I want to get back to my tv show". "And now", the father told me,

"comes the part I really hate to tell.....I kept warning myself not to say what I was thinking. I knew he was goading me. And the words just came right out of me." "I give up!" said the father in a quietly ominous voice. "You will never amount to anything!" "I knew you'd say that!" Peter yelled. "Oh, you're a great father. That's how much you care about me!!"

There is no need to record what follows. It is part of the repertory family theater and you have all been there before. "I do care!" said the father, "that's precisely why....." "Oh, no, you don't. You've never cared." "How can you say such a thing?" The drama comes to a close only through exhaustion.

I have told you that all this took place within the space of four hours. Between 4:00 that afternoon and 8:00 that evening, a ferment that originated within the personality of one fourteen year old boy was decanted by some wizardry and emerged as a family drama that was completely inexplicable to everyone involved.

In my office, we see a boy who is in torment over failure, a boy who put into words his own fear that he might never amount to anything. His own conscience was accusing him of laziness and failure to measure up to his parent's expectations. He said he hated himself. Within the space of the next three hours, Peter maneuvered a family drama in which the self-reproaches and accusations of conscience, "You are no good; you deserve to fail" are transferred from the inside to the outside. By goading his father through his passive indifference, Peter gets his father to make the accusations. And while it may be

mere chance that the father's words, "You will never amount to anything" were exactly the words that the son had used to himself, it is very likely that if you refuse to study for an exam and counter your parents' concern with studied indifference, that you will finally get them to say something that is at least roughly analogous to "you will never amount to anything".

Now, externalization of a moral conflict is a great trouble-saver to the young adolescent, and he makes use of it to a fair extent. If, at times, you hate yourself as much as Peter did that day, living with yourself is quite unbearable. And since the conscience that nags and reproaches you is part of yourself, you can't tell it to shut up or walk out on it. But once you move the inside conflict to the outside in such a performance as Peter brought off, you can turn the rage that was directed against the self into rage directed to a person outside. The feeling, "I can no longer love myself", which had led you last night into a wish to be dead, is experienced in the scene with father as "he doesn't love me", a transformation that discharges self-hatred toward the father. And when you get your father to reproach you and recite your failings, you can not only save yourself the painful duty of making self-accusations, but you may reach the point in this conflict where it appears to you that you are not responsible for your failures but your father is to blame. And then, in the fever of this battle, it may even strike you that if it weren't for your father and his nagging that you would have studied for that exam. At this moment

you embrace the thought of flunking the exam with ecstasy. The suicidal despair that seized you at four-o'clock that afternoon has been dispelled. You feel relieved of a terrible pressure. Despair may not return again until tomorrow.....maybe not for a few days.

You have just met Peter and his family on a black day. But let's not stay with the impression that Peter, or any other youngster in early adolescence is in daily crisis or spends his waking hours wrestling with his soul. There are many other things to be done in adolescence beside suffering. If you should encounter Peter on another day, you will find that the boy who raged at his father and the father who preached a terrible sermon are playing an amiable game of badminton in the back yard or building a boat in the basement. The boy who had no future on Friday afternoon, February 4th, was praised for a clarinet solo in the school orchestra on February 16th, and for nearly a week there was no sulking in the room, no door slamming or irrational accusations against his parents, as the boy lived with intoxicating day dreams of a career in music.

Which Day? Which Personality?

All of which leads me to reflect that if you really want to know what it is like to live with a young adolescent, you should conduct a series of interviews with the parents over a period of at least one month and choose your interviewing days at random. Here, for example, are some sample days from one household that owns a thirteen year old boy. The boy in each sample is the same boy.

October 4. Delightful evening at home. Young Jon in superb form. Witty at the dinner table, complimentary toward his mother's cooking. Praised his father's golf game that afternoon. In discussion with father and dinner guest, presented well reasoned arguments against amendments to a bill recently introduced in Congress. After dinner, helped younger sister with math problems.

October 16. Has gone off for the day "with the boys". No permission asked, no destination given. Has simply vanished after mumbling something about going out to see Tim. At 9:00 in the evening police alerted. Mother on the couch with a migraine headache. Young Jon appears cheerful and unconcerned. No remorse. As parents begin their reproaches, young Jon counters with a speech of his own that begins with "I am sick and tired of being treated like a baby". (Since the text of this speech is known to all parents of adolescents we will not reproduce it here.)

October 17. Raked the leaves and cleaned out his closet without being asked.

October 20. Has been reading a biography of Fermi "for young people". Makes formal announcement at the dinner table that he has now made his decision. He will be a physicist. After dinner, writes letters to M.I.T. and Cal. Tech. requesting catalogues "and any information you can give a thirteen year old boy on subjects I should take in high school. I am thirteen years old".

October 22. Sent out of class for excessive clowning and rudeness to a substitute teacher. Lectured by principal. Lectured

later by parents. No remorse. Seems to be exhilarated by the whole experience.

October 24. School report card shows poor performance in three major subjects. Is given conventional warning by parents that if he wants to get into college, he will need to settle down and take his work seriously. "Oh, that's okay", he says cheerfully, "I've decided not to go to college anyway".

How can it happen that a perfectly civilized boy of thirteen can drop his familiar personality as casually as he drops his pajamas on the bathroom floor? Conscience, reason, manners, can all get lost at times. He is always losing things anyway these days and he's just as likely to misplace his conscience as his history textbook or his wrist watch. And since he is not inclined to search for missing articles, it may take a few days before the mislaid conscience turns up again. Maybe his mother will find it when she cleans his room.

Where did the conscience go? There are days when a household search will not turn up a trace of it, and then, surprisingly, you find that it has been fully engaged in an extramural program that had not come to your attention. The same boy who is callous to his parents' feelings and openly contemptuous of their old-fashioned virtues may be seen passionately involved in problems of justice and moral responsibility. An injustice to a schoolmate or political injustice in the United Nations will disturb him profoundly. He will debate the moral problem of nuclear warfare in his classroom and at the family dinner table. He is sometimes moved to write letters to the newspapers offering solutions to juvenile

crime or one of the global humanitarian problems that have been overlooked by the United Nations.

If only his humanitarian ideas were exercised at home! If you should point out this irony to Jon, he would argue strenuously, Moral idealism has nothing to do with family life. Nevertheless, the parent may take heart. The conscience that is periodically mislaid at home, and still works overtime on abstract moral problems or the great humanitarian issues, is a conscience that is not lost. This tells us that Jon has deep inner concerns with problems of good and evil, but there are times when he feels so embattled by the forces within him that he finds it easier to settle the international problems of justice and moral conduct than those of his own.

The trouble with conscience in puberty is that it was made by the parents; it's like having your parents right inside of you. And since the important business of puberty is to begin the separation from parents, the child finds himself at odds with his conscience in much the same way that he is at odds with his parents. But if conscience is built into personality, is really part of the self, you can't really bang the door on its nagging voice, or threaten to leave it and join the Navy. It's you, and even if you silence it long enough to play hockey from school for a day or snatch a trinket from the dime store, it will soon, by sounding out its reproaches and its accusations in all of its tricky ways, and the holiday from conscience is brief, as usual.

"All very interesting", says Jon's father, "but how do we know that Jon won't get himself into trouble? What do we know about his conscience anyway, except that sometimes it turns up in the most surprising places?"

Well, we know this: A child who has owned a reasonably good conscience for most of his school years and who has had affection for his parents is not more likely to completely abandon his conscience than to abandon his parents themselves. The conscience may not function very well at times. Sometimes a strong impulse may break through and lead to rebellion in the classroom or a terrible scene at the family dinner table; and sometimes conscience works overtime and produces a multitude of fears and hypochondriacal worries in puberty. But the conscience is there....and what we see is not disintegration of conscience, but a reorganization of conscience that corresponds to the reorganization of personality. As the personality grows independent of the parents who formed it, so the conscience achieves a kind of independence from the parents whom it represents. It is to become finally, one's own conscience and not only the representative of parents.

Conflicts of Love

Books on puberty may make much of the child's conflicts over love of his parents and the parent who reads this is quite baffled. The parent who must put up with the negativism, the obstinacy and the moods of puberty will strain his eyes at times for signs of love. And even when we can demonstrate a close connection between the opposition

in puberty and the conflicts of love, it is somehow not convincing to the parent who is living with this child.

Jon's mother says, "I don't expect the kind of affection from an adolescent that I would from a younger child. But Jon won't even kiss me goodnight. If I put my hand on his shoulder, he brushes it off....Most of the time he seems bored by our company. He spends most of his evenings in his own room".

And this is one of the most painful aspects of puberty for parents. It would be easier to put up with the storms and the infantile antics of puberty if a child could show his love and accept his parents' love. And why can't he show his love? If we ask the boy in puberty, he will say, "She still wants me to be her baby. I hate it, that's all! Goodnight kisses!" But behind the protest is a more powerful feeling that the child in puberty cannot even put into words and is not even aware of.

He only feels that he must oppose his own love for his mother. He doesn't know why. What we understand as the beginning of a new progress toward adult love and the beginning of transfer from the first loves to the later loves, is not seen by the child in these terms. He only experiences, as an imperative, the need to remove himself from the child love of parents and he does it by fighting his own love as well as the love of his parents.

Conflicts of Love

While nearly every parent understands the necessity for this new progress in emotional development, no parent is really prepared

for the experience. Typically, the parents feel this warding off of parental love as a rebuff, as a repudiation of them. And the feeling of rejection may lead the parent to increase the demands upon the child for proof of love which brings increased resistance on the part of a child. The parent who has lived through the adolescence of at least one older child will know that this apparent rejection in puberty is not the end of a child's love for his parents. In later adolescence and in maturity, a son or daughter can accept his affection for his parents without shame or violent negation. The reason is simple: If the love conflicts of puberty are successfully resolved and emotional independence has been achieved, there is no longer danger in loving one's parents. This love has been freed of the conflicts of childhood and is no longer an impediment to the achievement of adult love.

But for the period of puberty, we must admit, there is often the feeling on the part of parents, that the child's love is irretrievably lost, and parental bitterness and even cold remove can be added to all the other burdens of this period.

I recall a father who told me that he had finally reached the point where he found himself avoiding his twelve year old daughter. He confessed that he could no longer feel any affection or even sympathy for this obstinate and defiant child of his, and yet she had been the child whom he had secretly favored above all of his children. Julie kept the entire household in ferment, ready to make a scene out of the most trivial occurrences. She accused her father of preference for

the youngest sister. (Yet, she must have known that she had always been her father's favorite.) She goaded her father and was openly defiant until she finally roused his anger and got him to shout at her. And then when her father's anger broke loose, Julie would burst into tears and like a tv tragedian, cover her face, and sweep out of the room crying, "You don't love me; you've never loved me. I'd be better off dead".

And while Julie accused her father of not loving her, she managed in every way to make herself unlovable. Father liked girls who were ladylike. Julie was noisy, shrill, tom-boyish and incredibly sloppy. She could be a pretty child but she wore her hair in a long, untidy mop to her waist and this, in her own fantasy, made her specially glamorous in some way. (Alice in Wonderland? Lady Godiva? Rapunzel? Neither comb nor brush disturbed this ravishing fantasy.) Her blouses and skirts neither matched nor stayed together at the waist. She was always without a button and her hems were continually unwinding..... Father had always been proud of Julie's good achievement in school and her talent in music had given special pleasure to him. But during the past year, Julie had abandoned her music and her grades in school had declined. It was almost as if some uncontrollable urge was at work within Julie to make her lose value in the eyes of her parents.

But worse of all, the father said, was the feeling that his child no longer loved him. He did not know, he said, how he had failed as a father, but it was very clear that Julie, at times, behaved as if she could not bear the sight of him.

One day during a week when Julie had exhausted the whole family with her histrionics, and her dark moods, father needed to drive her to a birthday party on the other side of town. Julie suddenly was in one of her rare good moods this afternoon, and chatted with her father in a way that he remembered from the old days. She was a good story teller, and had a gift for mimicry and as she imitated an elderly biology teacher who became the victim of a class hoax, her father found himself laughing appreciatively. Julie, who had always known how to hold an audience, brought forth another piece from her repertory, and soon the two of them were in a mood of high hilarity. Then, as the car approached the house of Julie's friend, Julie became silent and her father glancing sideways saw that she was crying. And he thought to himself, "Well, here we go again". And his bitterness began to return. He said, "What's the matter. Did I say something or do something?" "No," said Julie, "It's just that I do love you, Daddy, and I don't know what makes me so awful sometimes".

"And that's just one of the things I can't figure out", said Julie's father. "If she loves us, why does she fight us? And if she wants us to love her, why has she turned herself into the kind of a girl that is exactly opposite from everything we want in a girl. That doesn't look like love in anybody's book."

And who can blame any parent, caught up in this turmoil, if he cannot find meaning in his child's behavior. Julie is fighting her attachment to her parents by fighting the parents themselves. And she

is fighting her own longing to stay a child and keep the love of childhood forever; it is a safe and protecting love, and the future, at 12, looks perilous and uncertain. To avoid the temptation to stay here and never leave, she must fight the love of her parents. In making herself "unlovable" to her parents, perhaps, she is saying (unconsciously), "Don't love me so much because then I will be tempted never to leave you".

The accusations "You don't love me!" tell us how much she still wants her father's love and her fighting of her father tells us how she is opposing her own love as well as his. It may be small comfort to Julie's father to know this, but the strength of the opposition is about equal to the strength of love.

CHAPTER II

Rapunzel - Rapunzel

Rapunzel, languishing on her unmade bed, is an experience in motherhood that no woman is really prepared for. The inertia and the boredom of this age tax the nerves. The untidy room, the disordered clothing bring daily conflicts which end in tears and mutual accusations. The corrosive comparisons between "my mother" and "other girls' mothers" is the hysterical climax of many of these quarrels. At the end of such a day, the mother of Rapunzel, prostrate on her own bed, has a stunning insight. She knows at last the identity of the witch in Rapunzel.

Between Rapunzel and the Prince, there stands a Mother (very effective at this age when pronounced between the teeth). Now it doesn't matter at all at twelve years that the Prince is nowhere on the horizon; the belief in puberty is that if the Mother were not around, guarding the tower or whatever it is she is guarding, the Prince might make his appearance. It is in this way that devoted and self-sacrificing mothers undergo a morbid transformation of character during a daughter's puberty. From the testimony of girls in adolescence, I understand that mother is not always a witch. She is sometimes quite tolerable, even likable. But at certain times, she is reported to be cold, inhuman, jealous and cruel, and her meals are poisonous. These transformations in the mother take place at certain predictable times,

that is, whenever the mother stands between her daughter and something she wants. Now, since the Prince is still miles off, thrashing about in a distant thicket, anything else that is longed for and unattainable will serve as a symbol. The first lipstick, the first pair of high-heels, the first movie with a boy are all equally capable of igniting a passion as consuming as first love. At these moments, the mother who stands between her daughter and the object of longing undergoes a radical alteration of her person.

We have no difficulty in seeing that the Rapunzel Complex (which I have just invented) is a variation on the themes of the Oedipus Complex. The witch is not newly invented in puberty; she has only revived after years of dormancy. She had poisoned apples, pricked innocent fingers and snatched babies from their cradles in the earlier versions of this drama and, even in the kindergarten edition, she practiced her malevolent arts to prevent the girl from finding the Prince.

In the kindergarten version the cipher read "a little girl, her unattainable love for the father, a mother who stands between the girl and her father". The witch appeared in troubled dreams, dreams of punishment and banishment. The small girl would not have recognized the witch as the other face of mother; the witch was invented to solve an earlier conflict of love. If you are a small girl and you love your mother very much, it is intolerable to have strong feelings of jealousy and evil wishes toward this mother. The solution is found unconsciously and put to work in a fantasy. The negative feelings are split off and attach themselves to a more suitable image, that of the

witch who can be hated. And, although jealousy of mother and occasional irrational anger will make their appearance in the actual family life of the little girl, it is a great convenience to have a witch handy for daydreams and nocturnal dreams in which the more powerful, and disturbing feelings can be deployed in a harmless way.

As the conflicts of early childhood begin to diminish, even the witch becomes superfluous to a certain degree. Jealousy of the mother wanes; the fantasies of having father all to one's self lose vitality and importance and in the school years, there is relative harmony and a strengthened love for the mother. The witch, who no longer serves a purpose, can be banished to the attic. She will remain there for several years until, on a day, a maiden of twelve years unlocks the door to a secret room and finds an old woman seated at a spinning wheel.

In the second version of the childhood drama which takes place in puberty, there are modifications in the theme and in the members of the cast. The girl of twelve no longer has daydreams of marrying her father one day and no longer remembers that when she was five she had such fantastic ideas. The man who played the part of the Prince in the five year old version of the drama can not be cast in the same role seven years later. Apart from the fact that his hair is thinning and he is approaching the senile decline of the late thirties, he no longer belongs in this drama. At best, he will be cast in those plays that require an aging kind who sends off the suitors of his beautiful daughter, or invents ordeals in which the wooers are required

to slay dragons or charge up glass hills. The new Prince in the twelve year old version is the unknown Prince, the not-yet Prince, and the problem in the play is to get the dragon off the stage. (Some authorities have suggested that the King and the dragon have a symbolic kinship. The reader is free to read this play according to his taste. I would only suggest that the aging King does present a problem; that he stands between the beautiful daughter and the unknown Prince and that the classic versions of this fairy tale have probably deleted some of the sharp exchanges between the King and his fair daughter.)

We began this parable with a moody Rapunzel guarded by a jealous witch and now, it appears, we have a beautiful princess whose aging father stands between her and her suitors. There is really no contradiction here. The two myths exist side by side in puberty. If we consult the oracles they will tell us: "This means that the maiden must fulfill two tasks before the True Prince can appear. She must free herself of the spell of the witch and she must free herself from the power of the king."

The parent who is presented with this obscure message will rightly object. In the first place, the mother points out she not only does not exercise magic upon her sluggish daughter, she can barely exercise ordinary influence. As for the father, he will admit that his daughter's unripe suitors, redolent of pizza, and short of cash, would be unworthy of his daughter if they came charging up on the front lawn bearing golden apples. Still, he would not go so far as to suggest an engagement with

a dragon or an ordeal with one-eyed monsters. He would be satisfied if the suitors removed their bicycles from the front lawn and went off to trample the carpets and pillage the larder of a more affluent house with a less beautiful daughter. The daughter's name could be Medusa.

A contemporary reading of the oracles' message would be more to the point. As I see it, the "spell" of the witch and the "power" of the king are allusions to the love bonds of early childhood, from which the girl must free herself before the Prince can come. For the girl, as well as the boy, the mother is the first love in infancy and early childhood. And this love of earliest childhood is a mixture of tenderness, dependency and physical closeness, all of which makes sense if you consider how much of the relationship between a mother and child in the early years involves the satisfaction of body needs and physical care of the body. To some measure, all small children experience love as "being in the power of" the loved one and if this is lost to the memory of all adults, we can recapture the experience, in part, through the adult experience of falling in love or at high points, in the experience of love. There is the feeling that the loved one exercises a power or a magic over one's whole personality. The metaphors employed in lovers' songs and letters are "magic", enchantment, sorcery, enslavement.

The love magic which is alluded to in these lovers' songs has no sinister overtones. Yet, suppose there were a crisis in love in later life in which two partners must become free of each other,

yet the love bonds are still strong. The magic of the old love is now experienced as a sinister bond and the partner who can still exercise this magic is experienced as one who commands an evil power. The enchantress of the early love letters becomes a witch whose spell cannot be broken; the old lover is a demon who can still exercise mysterious powers against the conscious will of the partner. Neither the woman nor the man has actually undergone a transformation of personality. The altered image of the lover is a consequence of the struggle of each of the partners to give up the other.

Perhaps it offends taste to draw analogies between child love and the love of maturity, but if we can put aside our feelings, there is much that can be learned from these analogies. For a while there are in no sense equivalent experiences and adult sexuality transforms the experience of love; there are archaic patterns in love that may be traced to the earliest experiences of child love, patterns that evolve and form new combinations during the life history, yet preserve their origins through the repetition of design elements. The very mystery and magic of love, as we know it, in adult life and the experiences of being re-born through love are repetitions of older forms of magic and the mystery may be attributed to the stirring and kindling of archaic experience sensations from an unremembered time.

The analogies are useful in explaining the love-hate conflicts of the child in puberty. The girl in puberty who behaves at times as if her mother were a witch who will not set her free is struggling to free herself from the love bonds of early childhood. She does not

experience this conflict as a consequence of her own attachment (this remains unconscious) but feels the pull and the tension as coming from the outside; "mother won't let me be free." And, as we saw in other examples earlier, the child acts out the internal conflict fighting or opposing the mother herself, which serves to negate and oppose her own longings to keep the love bonds of early childhood.

The child-love for father produces its own conflicts in puberty. The girl in puberty no longer remembers that her father was once the Prince, but the new Prince has not arrived yet and the old Prince is still in the picture, no longer the hero of fairy tales and childhood longings.....but still there. The affectional ties still remain to father - and why shouldn't they? The relinquishment of childhood fantasies of replacing the mother in father's love does not, (and should not), abolish love for the father. But in puberty, even these bonds to father are experienced by the girl as a deterrent, or even a danger to development. Since the ties are old ties, the oedipal wishes survive in the unconscious as a historical truth and, as such, become a disturbance to a relationship that has been relatively free of conflict for some years. The girl in puberty is rarely conscious of these wishes; she only experiences consciously a strong opposition to the ties with father. And here, too, she does not experience the conflict as originating within herself, but she externalizes it and feels as if her father stands in the way and even behaves toward him, at times, as if he were preventing her from realizing her daydreams of love, as if he were the aging king who

sends away the suitors. At the center of this fantasy is an element of truth, that is, the love ties to father "stand in the way", metaphorically, of the progress toward mature sexual love. The girl must unbind herself from the child love for father before she is ready to love another man.. This is the work of puberty and early adolescence and much of the conflict produced by the girl in relation to her father can be seen as a negating of and a fighting against her own bonds as a preparation for the new love of later adolescence and maturity.

The Labyrinth and the Minotaur

Among boys as well as girls, the process of "unbinding" involves the ties to both parents. There are spells to be broken, monsters to be subdued, malevolent witches to be undone, sirens to be lulled, sinister caverns to be conquered, wily kings to be outwitted, and all this before the beard is grown and the princess beckons from the tower. The American boys I know would scoff at this stuff about monsters and sirens. If they are condemned to read Odysseus in the ninth grade, there will be wild hilarity in the classroom. It would be tactless of me to suggest that the taste in monsters changes with the times, that Medusa wears another face when she visits the dreams of a fourteen year old boy in Cleveland, that the Labyrinth is ageless and only the form of the Minotaur is new. However, as a proof of the indestructibility of myth, let me offer a sample from the ordeals of an American boy circa 1964.

"I dreamed that I bought out the owner of the Rex Novelty Shop on Milwaukee Street. There was a little room like a bedroom behind the

the store and I was living there. Then it seemed like it was the next night and the owner came back to take his revenge. He had a long stick in his hand like a magic wand and he waved it and snakes came out of the wall. The snakes began to chase me and I was running through the hall ways trying to escape. I was scared. I thought they were going to kill me. I woke up before I could find out what happened. Boy, was that a scary dream. I'm still sweating when I think of it....."

If we look closely we may find many of the elements of the ancient myths in this night terror of early adolescence. We have a beardless youth and his ancient opponent. In the modern version, the king appears in reduced circumstances; he is the owner of the Rex Novelty Shop. The heroic lad who deposes the king or is granted the kingdom for meritorious services is also reduced by the conventions of a modern business economy. The penniless youth buys out the owner of the Rex Novelty Shop. There is a hint of craft or illegal acquisition of this property for in the next sequence the owner of this shabby kingdom comes back to take his revenge. He returns as an evil magician who summons snakes from the wall and the terrified youth is pursued by snakes as he flees through lonely corridors. Here, the powerful magician, the snakes, and the labyrinth survive intact from the archaic versions of the myth. You will notice that the dream does not contain a golden haired princess or anything that makes this business venture and the ordeal in the labyrinth worth the trouble.

And you will notice that the youth takes flight from the vengeful magician.

There are two great dangers that stand between the boy and the heroic conquests that will lead him to manhood. There is the ancient opponent, the king-magician, who may avenge himself upon the youth who seeks to depose him. And there is the dread of the labyrinth and the snakes. Even a non-psychoanalytic oracle will confirm that the labyrinth and the snakes represent the sexual dangers that confront the untried youth. We may learn from the ancient myths that until Ariadne appears to guide the youth safely through the treacherous labyrinth, that the terrors of this unknown place will not abate. I take it that this means that the sexual dangers will not be conquered until love of a woman casts out fear. This is just about what happens, in fact. This should not, however, lead us into reckless thinking. This does not mean, for example, that the whole process of becoming a man can be hastened by bringing Ariadne on to the stage sooner. Before Ariadne can be of any use in this story, the youth must unbind himself from his own childhood. A youth who is still bound to his child love for his mother will not lose his terror of the labyrinth even if Ariadne is dragged on to the stage. And a youth who still fears his father or is too strongly dependent upon him, is not advised to challenge dragons.

But the pedestrian life of a 13 or 14 year old boy will produce no encounters with monsters, no ordeals to test his manhood

and the ancient struggle with the father is carried on by means of minor contests. The issues are lamentably commonplace; lawn-cutting, putting out the rubbish, a raise in the allowance, television, school grades. Yet, each of these issues may be raised to Olympian proportions when properly invested by two antagonists. I have sometimes listened to both sides of a conflict between father and son and have marvelled at the passions excited over lawn cutting and putting out the rubbish. And while I am entirely in favor of requiring useful services from the young, it is clear that the issues here are neither lawn nor rubbish. The issues are the enduring ones; the challenge of the father by the boy growing to manhood, the father defending his ancient prerogatives.

But, finally, the mythical analogies fail us in understanding the complexities of the boy's relationship to his father. For a while, opposition and challenge are part of the process of unbinding; there is also love and idealization of the father, both of which play a vital role in the successful outcome of the adolescent process. Both child love and idealization must undergo certain alterations in the course of adolescence. The exalted picture image of the father, which belongs to childhood, must undergo certain modifications. Love and admiration for the father can survive and enrich the later personality, but an overestimation of the father, an uncritical worship of the father, or the magical attribution of unassailable power to the father, can impede or block the later personality. It may happen that

such overestimation of the power and achievement of the father will produce a fear of competition with the father, a fear of achievement and of success for oneself. One thinks of Kafka who remained in his own eyes a puny and insignificant dwarf beside the father whom he saw as a giant. And while we cannot think of analogies between the culture that produced this distortion of a father-son relationship and the American family of our own time, it is not extraordinary to find an adolescent boy in our society and our time who feels defeated by a father whose exalted image was created in childhood, a boy who is beset by doubts regarding his own worth, his own competence, his ability to become a man in his own rights.

If we look closely at early adolescent development, we will see normally an affection for the father and admiration for him, but a fair amount of carping, criticism, and opposition in the everyday exchanges between the boy and his father. And while it can be wearing to be on the receiving end of this kind of thing, it is an indispensable part of the early adolescent process. It means that the boy is coming to grips with his own magical idealization of the father and is bringing his father down to human proportions. This does not mean that the father as "ideal", as model, is destroyed. On the contrary, it only means that magical overestimation of the father moves out of the picture. And when this process is brought to completion in later adolescence, we will see that the father as model - an honest and human scaled model - takes his place within the personality as an "ego ideal".

"Who Am I?"

"James Arthur Anderson
824 Willow Street
New Brunswick, Kansas
United State of America
The Universe"

In case the boy or girl in puberty should get lost he can always be returned to his rightful owners by consulting the blank pages of his composition books or his school textbooks. This vital information will appear in graceful script, or ornamented block letters wherever space permits. At thirteen you need to remind yourself frequently who you are because it happens so often that you can't be sure. Very often these day you have the impression that a stranger has moved into your house, and has taken to wearing your clothes, eating your food and lodging in your bed. The new boarder complains about the food, at the dinner table, talks back to your parents, sulks in your room, and neglects your homework.

In puberty, even your body has become a stranger to you. And while it's very exciting to discover the changes in your body, it's also disturbing to find the familiar landscape acquiring unfamiliar features. This body which is the very center of "I" from earliest childhood has now changed its characteristics. It's as if the house and the tenant have become strangers to each other.

"In my dream, " Jenny tells me, "I went back to find our old house on Wilshire Street, the one we lived in until I was seven. And when I found it, I couldn't recognize it at first. There were verandas

and dormer windows like Aunt Sarah's house in Atlanta but not like our old house at all. I went in and the house was empty as if the people had just moved out. All the rooms were changed about, not at all the way I remember. I walked and I walked through all the empty rooms and I couldn't find what I was looking for. I was lost and I began to cry for Mama to tell me where I could find her. And there was no answer. And then I began to scream and I woke up crying for Mama!"

"It was a horrible, spooky dream. I don't know what it reminds me of.....Yes, I do.....It's about me. How everything has changed this year. And how alone I feel. And how lost."

Jenny is twelve. The house that had changed beyond recognition is Jenny's body and while the dream speaks eloquently of a child's sense of estrangement and of anxiety at the body changes, the daytime Jenny speaks another truth which deserves at least as much attention. Jenny-by-day is perfectly pleased with her New Look - she will tell you. There is no prudery, no evident embarrassment about breasts, or menstruation. It would be unprofitable to argue whether the dreamer speaks more truthfully than the child awake. It is precisely because both feelings exist within this child - and all young adolescents - that Jenny, at times, feels estranged, and "not whole".

"I" is centered in the body. Long before Jenny knew she was Jenny, the sense of self and separateness began to take shape in infancy through body sensations that were organized into "me" feelings and "Not me" feelings. Gradually an image of her own body emerged so that "me" feelings were united with a mental picture of

the body with the name of "Jenny". Later, the mental picture and sense of separateness and uniqueness were organized under the concept "I". From the beginning, then, the sense of identity is indissolubly linked with the body and its sensations and "I" becomes the unifier and organizer and governor and interpreter of inner and outer stimuli. The image of the body, the permanence of its characteristics, affirm identity and give substantiality and constancy to the self image.

This means that changes in the appearance of the body and changes in the quality or quantity of body sensations will be initially experienced as disturbances of identity. The child in puberty sometimes has the awesome feeling that his body is a stranger to him. And before the new image of the body is fully integrated into the concept of "I", the child has fleeting moments in which he experiences feelings of unreality and of estrangement from the outer world. These moments are brief but terrible. "Maybe", the child thinks, "I am going crazy!" And of all the secrets that have been confided to me by boys and girls of this age, this is one that I have come to expect with predictable regularity.

"I" and the sense of personal identity are also united from earliest childhood on, with the love for parents. It is through identification and a series of identifications with loved persons, primarily the parents, that "I" emerges and is given its unique stamp. Through love of the parents, the child "borrows" and assimilates the characteristics of his parents, and the story of his personality growth is, in large measure, the history of such identifications. By

the time a child has reached pre-adolescence these identifications have been intricately worked into the design of personality so that one can recognize certain attributes of the original models, yet, the borrowed attributes in this unformed personality have undergone certain transformations and have formed new combinations, so that no child is a copy of his models.

While this personality is unmistakably "Peter" or "Nancy" and is like no one else's, it is still an unfinished work and can give nothing more than a glimpse of the personal style that will only emerge at the close of adolescence. One is reminded of the emergence of style in the history of the artist. The early works bear the stamp of the teacher or an exalted master and the elements that are identifiable later as personal style are obscured during this period. Only later when a process of disengagement from the master begins, do we see a breakthrough of personal style and ultimately a reordering of original and borrowed components into an entirely new and autonomous statement of personality.

Adolescence, too, is a process of disengagement from the original models, and the completion of personality at the close of adolescence can be read through the emergence of a personal style and an "I" sense that confidently embraces one's own uniqueness. If the reader is struck by the fact that this is not always the outcome of adolescence, we shall come back to this point later.

The word "disengagement" is too neutral and clinically bland to describe an experience that shakes the very foundations of personality. Much of what is called "adolescent torment" is the suffering that accompanies this prolonged leave-taking of the first loves, the parents. The passionate turns of love and hate are part of the leave-taking. The solitary weeping "over nothing" is often a kind of mourning for the lost love of childhood. The feeling of emptiness and emotional impoverishment is exactly like that of bereavement. In obedience to an inner necessity that the child cannot describe even to himself, he withdraws the investment of love from his parents and finds himself in possession of a vast and uncommitted store of emotion. Between the old loves and the future loves, there is a long interval of no-loves and in this void, the adolescent may experience unutterable loneliness and desolation.

This crisis in early adolescent development strikes deep into the center of personality. Where "I" has been formed and elaborated out of the love for and identification with parents, the process of emotional separation from the parents is experienced by the child as a crisis in identity. The brooding question of early adolescence, "Who am I?" is the attempt of the child in puberty to give meaning to the disturbance of self feelings and identity that assail him. If it seems to us, as adults, nearly impossible to recapture such memories from early adolescence, we may find parallels in later experiences of love, the dissolution

of a love affair or the death of a loved person. At such times, the feelings of longing and grief are closely united with a feeling of emptiness, nothingness. "I am nothing without you". "I don't know myself any longer". "I feel as if a stranger is inhabiting my body". Now, admittedly, these lovers' laments are not exact parallels for the experience of an adolescent, but they are useful in reminding us that the relinquishment of deep love under any circumstances will be experienced as a disturbance of one's own identity.

But isn't "relinquishment" of love an inept term for the leave-taking of parents in adolescence? Where there has been love for the parents, is it ever really surrendered? This is one of the great troubles in elucidating the adolescent process. For it is perfectly true that even in later life when permanent ties to a husband or wife are formed, the deep rooted love for parents can persist side by side with the love of a marriage partner. But there are these differences acknowledged by all of us: The love for the marriage partner takes precedence over all earlier loves. The love for the husband or wife unites sexuality and tenderness; the love for parents, which in childhood had erotic components is a love which has been largely divested of its erotic characteristics. Erotic feelings that once centered in the parents were long ago withdrawn and both the childhood sexuality and the genital sexuality of maturity are given over exclusively to the sexual partner of adult life. And this divestment and transfer from the original love

objects, the parents, is the work of adolescence - a work that takes place with little conscious knowledge on the part of the adolescent, and can be known to us only through its manifestations in adolescent conflict.

To Borrow An Identity

While searching for a new identity, the young adolescent may find it convenient to borrow an identity and try it on for size. In the intimate friendships of early adolescence, you may see two youngsters borrow each other's personalities or striking characteristics or manner of dress. You can easily guess who among your adolescent's friends is in highest favor by the personality he brings to the dinner table. Speech mannerisms, a way of walking, an eccentric turn of dress may easily be traced to the best friend of the moment. An elaborately disordered hairdo may be your daughter's testimonial of love for a celebrated movie actress. The histrionics at the breakfast table may only be something left over from the film in which your daughter and Brigitte Bardot starred last night.

The teen-age "gang" will also issue cards of identity for members in good standing. "If you're not sure who you are, be like us" is the slogan. "We provide a standard model with good trade-in features for next year. Your clothes, your habits, your opinions, your school grades are built-in features of our model,

all parts interchangeable with anybody else's parts. Maintenance of our prefabricated model is trouble-free. No self-searching, no brooding about the right decisions, no Weltschmerz."

In the course of shopping for a new identity, the young adolescent may turn up with some surprising acquisitions. "Who is that creep?" says George Anderson to his wife, after an encounter with an extraordinary visitor in the living room. The visitor was a lad of twelve with unshorn hair, a dirty T-shirt and small, mean eyes. He was lying on the sofa, juggling small silk pillows with his unwashed feet. "A friend of Jim's," said Mrs. Anderson dully. "He lives with his grandmother. He's truant from school about half the time and he's spending his second year in the sixth grade. He's hitchhiked across the country twice. He never takes a bath. Jim says he's a great guy".

"What's wrong with Mickey?" says Jim when his parents make tactful inquiries. "Nobody makes him take a bath so he doesn't take a bath. I wouldn't take a bath either if nobody made me. He hates school and so do I. He knows more about real life than any of the guys. I know. Whenever he gets the fever he just takes off. He's hitchhiked to New York and New Mexico and he's worked in carnivals. He's picked beans in California and beets in Michigan. His grandmother doesn't care. She never wanted to take him anyway."

"Where are his parents?" says Mr. Anderson.

"He's an orphan," says Jim, "and in a way, he's lucky,"

Jim's connections with this lucky orphan should not be construed as a first step toward delinquency. At the same time, nobody can miss the point that Mickey is the embodiment of Jim's own suppressed yearnings, an unwashed, untrammelled and adventurous spirit that has been lying dormant and untried within the James Anderson ego. This other self is actually the negative self-image of a carefully nurtured, well laundered middle class boy, the sum of all things that would be Jim if they had not been opposed by the energetic civilizing of his parents.

Sometimes, it is true, that the "negative identity" that lies dreaming in every personality will emerge in adolescence for a try-out. Sometimes, as in Jim's case, it will do almost as well to acquire a friend who substantially represents this negative identity and through him, live out the forbidden dreams. In this case, the friend who represents the negative identity can take all the risks (he's had more practice anyway) and may ask for no payment for his services beyond unreserved admiration and an occasional free meal or a touch. Meanwhile, Jim Anderson is spared the trouble of altering his personality and modifying his school attendance in order to try out his negative identity. The whole experiment of trying out a negative identity by proxy may last only a few weeks; it may last longer. It rarely leads to either a permanent attachment to the proxy or to adoption of the negative identity, but no parent can ever believe this and, at times, like these, the parents of adolescents have their own bad dreams, the dream of the policeman at the door,

the dream of the juvenile court, and the dream of a boy careening down the street in a car without brakes.

"Let me tell you about yesterday," said Sylvia's mother when she came in to see me on a Monday morning. "I still have a headache and I got practically no sleep last night. We all had a lovely week. No crises, no storms. Sylvia has been rehearsing every day for the Christmas play. She is the Virgin Mary, you know, and she has been in an exalted state. All week she has been the serene Madonna, never raising her voice, soothing the other kids when they quarreled. She even made her bed and volunteered to set the table."

"Yesterday morning she came down to breakfast looking gloomy and she snapped at me several times over nothing. When she came home from Sunday School, she went up to her room and sulked for about an hour. Then she came downstairs and spent another half hour trying to pick a fight with me. She griped about the lamb for dinner, and said she couldn't stand my cooking. When Peter spilled his tomato juice, she barked at him and he began to cry. When I tried to comfort Peter, she said that was the whole trouble - I always took the side of the little kids. And then she began to cry. She said that nobody loved her and that she wished she had the kind of mother who cared, the kind of mother a girl could confide in. She said I was cold and selfish. And then she marched out and went up to her room.

We could hear her wandering about upstairs and making incoherent speeches about Motherhood. And when I went upstairs, finally, to try

to calm her , she had thrown all her clothes down from their hangers and was sitting in the middle of the floor sobbing. She wouldn't talk with me. So I went downstairs again. About an hour later I was sitting at the kitchen table trying to steady myself with a cup of tea. Sylvia came in. She was very cheerful and she kissed me and asked if she could have a cup of tea. She said she was sorry if she had upset me. "I must have been crazy," she said. Then she said, and so help me, she was perfectly serious, "Mother, speaking objectively, don't you think I'd make a good Ophelia if we do Hamlet in the Spring?"

"What did you say," I asked. "I told her that if Woodrow Wilson Junior High put on Hamlet in the Spring, I would personally lodge my protests with the board of education. Can you imagine living with Ophelia for the month of February?" "Why not put in a plea for Lear?" I proposed. "Cordelia could be restful".

"So was the Holy Mother," said Sylvia's mother, "for less than a week".

I know Sylvia, too. I knew perfectly well that Sylvia was not just putting on an act. When she played the role of the Virgin, she became the Virgin and an image of herself in exalted motherhood was projected in the role. When chaos descended on her once again that Sunday morning, she had to find a name and an image for the chaos and she found it in Ophelia. She could not say, even to herself, "At times like these I am afraid that I am going crazy!" She had to create a role for herself in which the unspeakable fear was given a voice behind the mask of Ophelia. Had you asked her during her Ophelia scene if she were acting, she could not have told you and would not have known.