



Touching the silence

Young men & Suicide – a poetic journey

Jovo Ćirković



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Author's message

Since being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2011,
I have retired from my property investment business.
My first book of poems was called "*Shaken but not Stirred*"
... Living life with Parkinson's disease.

This second book deals with a taboo subject which is not
often talked about ... suicide amongst teenage boys and young men.
I have written it from a spiritual space.

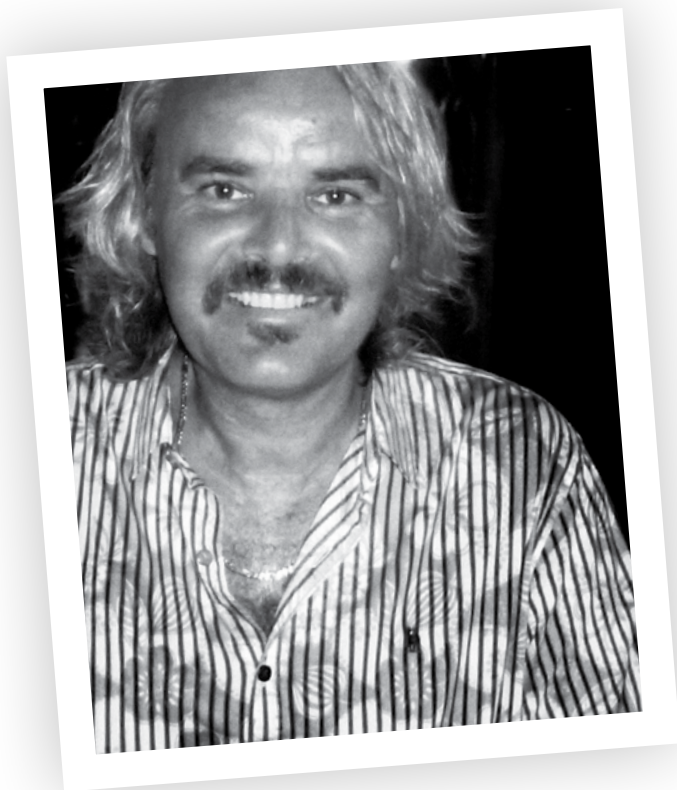
My desire is that any person who is contemplating suicide
may gain some insight from my words and seek professional help.
I have tried offering a perspective of not just one side but
how those who are left behind are affected.
I have read that in over 90% of suicide cases, the person
was suffering some form of mental illness. There are many
organisations Worldwide ... who can offer help.

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Touching the silence





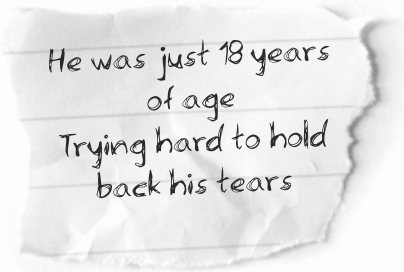
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Chapter 1

Mathew 21 years

“Intolerance ... be it to
sexual persuasion,
religion, race or beliefs
can lead young vulnerable
minds astray”

A piece of white, lined paper with a torn, irregular edge. The paper is slightly wrinkled and has horizontal lines. Handwritten in black ink on the paper are the words: "He was just 18 years of age" on the first two lines, and "Trying hard to hold back his tears" on the next two lines.

He was just 18 years
of age
Trying hard to hold
back his tears

Walk on your hands but not stand on your feet

It was 7am Sunday morning
When a knock upon my door
Would change my world ... turn it inside out
Like nothing had before

My friend Nick stood and stared at me
He was just 18 years of age
Trying hard to hold back his tears
Keep in control ... of his rage

My brother's dead he said to me
His body found in his car
Parked inside the family garage
Engine running ... window left ajar

At just 21 Mathew was young
Was a handsome man with dreams
But deep inside darkness grew
To live life too hard it seems

At his funeral and his wake
In low voice I watched adults talk
At 14 years I was thought too young
My tongue just turned to chalk

No mention of his suicide
Or what drove him to despair
Embarrassed look his mother showed
Her sorrow hard to bear

Your ability to walk on your hands
Friends and family you'd entertain
But to face life ... stand on your feet
Somehow to you it seemed insane

What happened Matt ... why choose this path
Why could you not speak with me?
I may have wisdom beyond my years
Could have set your demons free

Was it the death of your dad?
Who passed a few years before?
Was it mental illness? Were you gay?
Answers locked behind your door

33 years have passed and finally
I pen verse about your death
I wonder now as I did back then
Why you chose to take your last breath

To someone else's tune we dance
And when it's time to go
There was no time to say good-bye
Still burns that I won't know

Maybe your time here on Earth
Was a lesson for your mother?
Still doesn't take the pain away
I miss you like my own brother

Why did I not
listen to my
child?

The guilt my soul must keep

Seven years have passed
When woken from a dream
I found you in the garage ... Lifeless
All I could do was scream

In my arms I held your body
Shook it with all my might
All my prayers that I recited
Couldn't wake you up that night

I heard your car pull in our drive
I dozed back off to sleep
Why didn't I get up to see you in?
With guilt my soul must weep

I felt responsible for your death
Since the passing of your dad
I put too much pressure onto you
To fill his shoes ... you had

I never really spoke to you
Or your brother Nick
About how losing dad affected you
I tried to move on too quick

Why did I not listen to my child?
When you needed me the most
I still scream in my nightmares
Feel the presence of your ghost

If only I had noticed the clues
That there was something wrong
But all my focus was on me
I just never was that strong

Mathew you took not just your life
I wonder if you could see
When you died you also carved
A big black hole in me

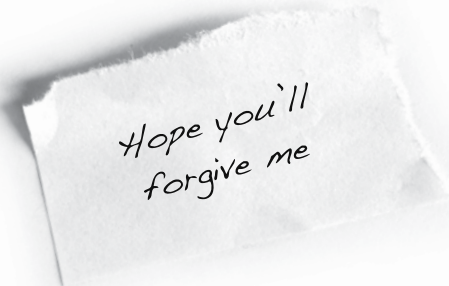
Poor Nicky took it very hard
Anger and depression filled his life
He found solace in drugs and booze
Recently saved by his new wife

If only I could turn back time
In my arms I would embrace
Squeeze you till you squeak I would
And stroke your lovely face

I try and understand ... to accept
There must be reason ... some grand plan
A lesson maybe I'm meant to learn
Why I lost my precious man

A mother is not supposed to live
Outlast her sons ... her boys
My memories are now all I have
To numb my mind of noise

Touching the silence

A small, rectangular piece of white paper with torn edges, resting on a larger white surface. The paper is slightly tilted and has the words "Hope you'll forgive me" written on it in a cursive, handwritten style.

Hope you'll
forgive me

You can't feel pain when
you're dead

I'm sitting alone inside my car
My thoughts run through my head
I just can't see any other way
You can't feel pain when you're dead

For months now I am filled with noise
Which chokes my embattled brain
I am tired I want it to stop
It's driving me insane

Should I leave a note for mum and Nick?
But then what would I say?
I'm sorry that I took my life
Oh by the way ... I'm gay

Mum just wouldn't understand
Doesn't know the real me inside
She just wants a man around
With her I can't confide

I know she's disappointed
That I'm not physical like Nick
What's with her Alpha male boyfriend?
That guy is such a prick

I so wanted to talk to Nick
But he is such sporty guy
Always making jokes about gays
If I told him the truth he'd die

I met a boy the other day
James was just like me
We arranged to go out tonight
Some movie both to see

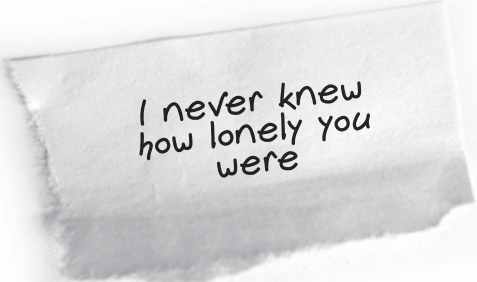
But his dad was suspicious
Stormed in the theatre for all to see
Dragging James out by his hair
That was the last straw for me

We don't choose our sexuality
It simply chooses us
I would get more sympathy
If I was run down by a bus

Since dad died I have struggled
As he was the only one I'd told
He made me promise to keep it secret
This leaves me out in the cold

I wish I had not been born
Or in a more tolerant time and place
Where I could freely announce who I am
Without threat of a punch in the face

I am sorry mum, sorry Nick
I know the pain you'll feel today
But if you walked a day in my shoes
Hope you'll forgive me ... both someday

A rectangular piece of white paper with irregular, torn edges, resting on a light-colored surface. The paper has handwritten text in black ink.

I never knew
how lonely you
were

I hated you for what you did

Not a day would pass when my anger
Could stay bottled up inside
Like a volcano it rumbled in my gut
Leaving nowhere for me to hide

I hated you for what you did
So selfish was your deed
To take your life leave me and mum
In my greatest time of need

I too missed our dad you know
But at least in you I had
A big brother who I can lean on
Made up for the loss of dad

Why did you go ... not say a word?
I thought I was your best friend
You just went quiet all withdrawn
Before I knew it ... it's the end

My whole World just fell apart
I was choking with the pain
Drugs and drink ... bad company
I needed to numb my brain

Such weakness I saw in your final act
I sought out and with knuckles bare
All challengers who came my way
Win ... lose I did not care

I too felt I wanted to die
Leave all the pain behind
Something happened which saved me
Made me change my mind

I met a girl so full of life
I'd forgotten how to feel joy
Till recently she presented me
Our smiling baby boy

We had names planned ... so we thought
Our hearts were set and true
But when I held him in my arms
We named him after you

Watching him melted all my anger
For what I finally knew
He is tiny ... needs care and love
In that way he's just like you

I never knew how lonely you were
How you couldn't find your stride
You needed hugs and love
A mentor in whom you could confide

I deal with anger better now
When I hug my boy I'll know
Every time I call his name
It reminds me of you bro

Chapter 2

Kevin 14 years

“*Mental illness is sometimes
miss diagnosed
particularly when signs are
missed by parents and teachers*”



Something about Kevin

Since the day that you were born
I knew there was something wrong
You cried all day ... my nerves were shattered
As a mother I was not that strong

We called you Kevin after your dad
Who idolized having a boy
After work he'd wake you up to play
You brought him so much joy

You had trouble just fitting in
Slow to potty train or talk
You were almost two years old
Before you began to walk

The doctors said that you'll be fine
But by age 8 you had
Given me a nervous breakdown
I thought I was truly mad

We changed Schools three times
To try and fit you in again
You always would revert back to
Your misery ... your pain

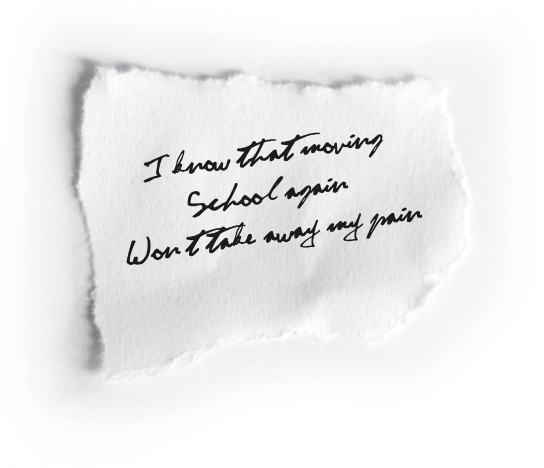
I know your dad kept pushing you
Raise your chin ... be strong
He still does not understand
How he's gotten you so wrong

When first you tried to take your life
It gave me such a fright
I started to take more notice
Be with you every night

In the end it was all for naught
For within a month I found
You lying in a pool of your blood
We hadn't heard a sound

Since that dreadful winters day
Our lives have turned real bad
The endless fights ... the anger, guilt
Ended my marriage to your dad

He just cannot see the boy
That struggled oh so much
He continues to live in denial
With reality he's out of touch

A piece of white paper with deckled edges, appearing to be torn from a larger sheet. It is centered on a light gray background. The paper has three lines of handwritten text in a cursive script.

I know that moving
School again
Won't take away my pain

A waste of air I breathe

Dungeons, dragons fill my sleep
I must fight just to be free
Morning comes I dread the day
No one cares for me

My School just sucks the kids are cruel
Lessons written on the board
To me they make no sense at all
Classroom's like a crazy hoard

The teacher says I'm special
Wants to send me to another class
If he could see the stuff he's teaching
It really does suck ass

I just don't get the point of it
Why I'm here at all today
It's like some cruel joke been told
The central character in which I play

Teasing in the playground
Is easier for me to be
At least I can kick and punch
It always ends bad for me

Dad just says that I need to try
Pull myself together and be tough
He just don't get me at all
I say I've had enough

I've got no friends I am useless
A waste of air I breathe
This World would be a better place
If I just up and leave

I know that moving School again
Won't take away my pain
For it is with me 24/7
Locked up in my brain

I'll leave a note then they'll all know
Why I chose this to be my fate
By the time they read it though
It will be too late


I just don't see another way
That makes more sense to me
Noise which bangs away in my head
It just won't set me free

The last time I tried to top myself
They said was for help a cry
But nothing has changed since that day
To make me not want to die

I force myself to shut out noise
My final act I don't dread
It is to me the only way
To stop the noises in my head

Anger

Touching the silence



find a way to
forgive myself
To stop living in
denial

Big River in Egypt - Denial

When you arrived on the earth
I was blessed ... and overjoyed
All my prayers had been answered
I had myself a son ... my boy

To raise a child to be healthy, strong
Was no walk in the park
No instruction book on parenting
Twas mostly fumbling in the dark

Your mum complained constantly
Saying you weren't right in the head
I was having no bar of that
Holding on to every sane thread

My own dad was a soldier
Tough love was how I grew
It was all I had to pass on
My way of raising you

Oh junior why was life so hard
What was I to do?
I did the best with tools I had
Yet still I have lost you

I blame your mum for being so weak
Which softened you inside
Together we should have fought the bullies
But you chose instead to hide

Since your mother left me
I've had time to analyse and think
Though blurry sometimes are my thoughts
From excessive drink

Your mental illness I should have
Acknowledged and sought a helping hand
But due to my tough ego and pride
I just buried my head in the sand

Stupidly I saw your illness
As a weakness within me
I turned back to my tough love
Hoped to set your demons free

I wish I could turn back hands of time
Seek out help rather than run
Maybe then I could grow old
Still have you around my son


Instead I just feel lonely
Miss you more today
Inside my bitterness just grows
Becoming stronger every day

If only I was not so proud
If again I could learn to smile
To find a way to forgive myself
To stop living in denial

Chapter 3

Rob 28 years

“*A man is programmed to
hunt & gather
when roles reverse and
mental illness
is present ... look out for
signs of cries for help*”

A photograph of a small, rectangular piece of white paper with torn, irregular edges. The paper is set against a dark, textured background. Handwritten in black ink on the paper are the words "There's no hiding" on the first line and "from the truth" on the second line.

There's no hiding
from the truth

Work out how to be a man

At 28 you'd think that I would
Work out how to be a man
My father, brothers and my mates
Through example showed me that I can

To be a husband and a father
Provider, friend and lover
Balance finances ... do the shopping
Makes me want to run for cover

My wife is more successful
In her sales career of late
We decided when baby Elle was born
I'd stay home ... my career can wait

At first I found the time a breeze
But lately I feel as a man I've failed
It's like I've got post natal depression
From my wife to me it's sailed

Bec comes home every night
Tells me of her working day
Whilst I talk about our bub Elle
And how I passed my time away

I sense that Bec has little time
For me and my silly fears
She has always been the strong one
For us both through-out the years

Today I haven't spoken to
Anyone for 6 hours at least
Whilst inside my gut is knotted
Like I'm being eaten by a beast

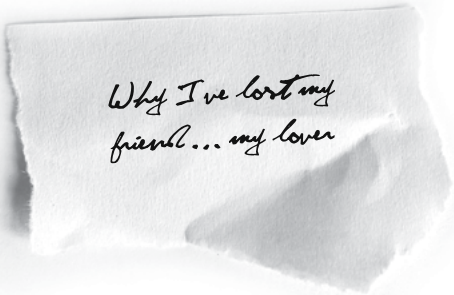
I'm a failure that's all I know
There's no hiding from the truth
Some provider I turned out to be
I feel like a bumbling teenage youth

This is not how my life should be
Not at all what I had planned
The pressures of just being a man
Out of grasp ... of my command

Every day I'm suffocating
But to admit to Bec I'd feel
An even bigger failure than I am
Hide my feelings ... fail to heal

I just can't do this any more
Cannot live this farce ... this lie
Bec will be better on her own
If I was to go away and die

The pain grows in me every day
I'm just not thinking straight
I should talk to Bec tonight
Tomorrow might be too late

A small, rectangular piece of white paper with irregular, torn edges. It is centered on a plain white background. The paper has a subtle shadow beneath it, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. Handwritten in black ink on the paper is the text "Why I've lost my friend... my lover".

*Why I've lost my
friend... my lover*

Tears well up in my eye

As I push Elle on playground swing
Tears well up in my eye
What happened to my sweetheart Rob?
Why did you leave us and die?

Three years have passed since
Police came to my work to say
We found your husband, he hanged himself
I was numb and sick for days

You left no note we never spoke
Of the troubles that your soul possessed
I wish to god I could have seen
That you were dark ... depressed

I really thought you enjoyed your time
Spent at home with Elle
Da-da was the first word which she spoke
And now she can even spell

I'm sorry babe for my anger at you
It's hard for me to understand
Why I've lost my friend ... my lover
Can no longer hold his hand

Why was it so hard for you?
To confide to me your fears?
We'd always discussed every issue
Over many ... many years

I would have quit my job you know
You and Elle were my lucky charms
Now I'm widowed off at 30
Never hold you in my arms

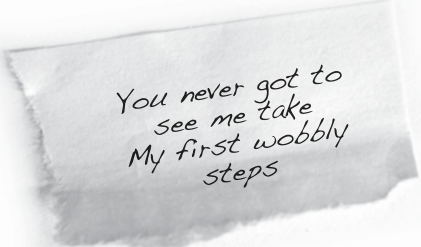
Poor little Elle has lost her dad
How do I explain it to her young mind?
That her daddy took his own life
I can't do it ... too unkind

I've decided when Elle is 10
The whole truth she must hear
I will try my best to explain
Why you left in her first year

It makes me sad to think that you
Will miss her first day at School
Her first kiss, her graduation
Her wedding ... oh how cruel

You'll miss the moments good and bad
Of what our future was to bring
You've stolen from me ... from us both
60 summers, falls and springs

You've just left me on my own
Winter every day of my year
I have to find strength to forgive you
I will always love you Rob my dear

A rectangular piece of light-colored paper with irregular, torn edges. It is placed on a white background. The paper contains handwritten text in black ink.

You never got to
see me take
My first wobbly
steps

You never made my first birthday

Hi daddy it's me again
For every year I write
Mum told me the truth about your death
My letters a different one tonight

The past 9 years I was told
How of weak heart you had died
Mum told me the truth this afternoon
I am angry that she lied

How could you do such a deed?
As a baby was I so bad?
Did I cry and scream so much?
That it simply drove you mad?

I just can't believe that you
Would leave me in such a way
So little time we had together
You never made my first birthday

You never got to see me take
My first wobbly steps
Never heard me speaking words
Missed my first day at preps

I played Alice in our School play
But again you could not see
You decided that somehow without you
Life would be better off for me???

I play netball and sing in choir
My teacher says I have flair
But at my parent teacher nights
There's always an empty chair

Mums sadness seems to have passed
She re-married now to Pete
He taught me how to catch a fish
Then let it go ... real neat

Mum and Pete have two more kids
Two twin brothers ... terrors too
Pete has been the only dad I know
That must be painful for you

I'm sorry daddy ... I wish that I
Had got to know you better
But you took that chance away from me
Now I write to you my last letter

I have to let go of you now
For the truth was to set me free
Knowing you didn't care enough
To stay for either mum or me

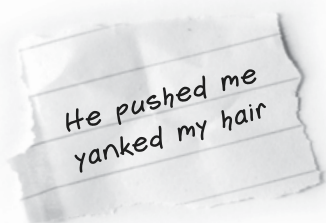
Good-bye dad I wish you well
Your blood runs through my veins
I will always feel your presence
I hope you've healed your pain

Chapter 4

Cabe 12 years

“*Bullying in Schools and now Cyber-bullying
are destroying young lives.
As a society we need to take responsibility.
Every bully is someone’s son or daughter
many actions are witnessed by fellow
students ... stand up for the victim!*”

Touching the silence

A small, rectangular piece of white paper with horizontal lines, torn at the edges, is centered on a larger white background. The paper is slightly tilted. It contains two lines of handwritten text in black ink.

He pushed me
yanked my hair

My daily sticks and stones

My heart is beating faster now
Towards the bus I must walk
Someone's waiting there for me
He's not there for a friendly talk

It's been the same for 8 months now
My daily sticks and stones
It's the words which I dread the most
I fear they'll break my bones

Why does Bruce single me out?
For his daily dose of pain
His barrage of personal taunts
Are slowly driving me insane

We used to be the best of friends
Until he grew in size
Deciding that might was right
He chose me to terrorize

Cowardly Cabe he announced
Should be my new nick-name
Other kids thought that they too
Should join in his cruel game

The daily bus trip was bad enough
Then he notched it up a hook
Realised he can get at me 24/7
By attacking me on Facebook

Last week on top of verbal abuse
He pushed me yanked my hair
Spilt water in my lap and laughed
Said "Cowardly Cabe pissed his chair"

Out of bus I walked in shame
The water stained my crotch
Whilst half the School had a laugh
My embarrassment was too much

I tried talking to Student services
They gave to Bruce a warning
Now he's angry ... more physical
Gave me a nipple cripple this morning


I tried to talk with my mum and dad
They gave me this advice
Toughen up Cabe ... turn other cheek
You can't help it if you're nice

I see classmates who stand by
Not want to be involved
Bet they are glad it's me ... not them
Oh how our society's evolved

I've had enough ... I just can not
Take this in my stride
I feel worthless ... I have no one
In whom I can confide

I will post a note to my tormentor
He'll get it when I'm gone
Maybe then he will understand
He should have left me alone

I'm sorry mum ... so sorry dad
That I took my life tonight
Unfortunately I just didn't have
The strength or will to fight



I did feel
bad when
I saw you cry
but I was too
dumb to see

Buried my head in shame

When I heard of what you did
In knots my gut went tight
I tried but with not much success
To pretend it's not my plight

I got your letter addressed to me
By registered mail it came
Once I read it ... I just cried
Buried my head in shame

Why did I cause you so much pain?
Pretending I'm so tough
Stupid taunts at your expense
Not knowing when enough is enough

We were mates in Primary School
We lost touch ... went our own ways
You were smart a straight A student
In the gym I spent my days

Insecure I have always been
But when my body grew
I used the only tool I had
To prove I was better than you

I did feel bad when I saw you cry
But I was too dumb to see
No matter how tough I became
You were still smarter than me

My dad's a jock and used to teach
Me how to box and fight
He said the weak are to be stepped upon
All leaders rule with might

I told my dad of what I'd done
How I pushed you to your death
He said only a weak person
Would choose to draw his final breath

I've stopped taking dad's advice
For I know that it was wrong
To bully you ... make life a misery
Just to prove that I am strong

I spoke to the School principle
In tears explained just what I'd done
She suggested that it was big of me
Bullying I could help overcome

She called in an expert psychologist
With his help I share with others
Just what I did to you through bullying
We call it "Protecting our Brothers"

If through my words I can save
An innocent boy from being torn apart
Then maybe it will help to ease
The guilt inside my heart



To help you I was lame

I sat near you on the bus
Used to watch you shy away
From the cruelty that was being directed
By Bruce bully at you each day

At first I used to play along
But then I felt the shame
I chose not to pick on you
But to help you I was lame

I spoke to other kids on the bus
And although we all agreed
The pain you suffered was so wrong
Yet none of us helped your need

As a girl I too have been
On the receiving end of rumour
Girls too bully with their words
None of which are filled with humour

I should have said something
In your defence to put Bruce in his place
I just chose to turn blind eye
Stare off into space

I noticed when you became withdrawn
Your talk of sensing your own end
I thought you were blowing off steam
I should have been a better friend

You should be able to rely on friends
When the going gets real tough
Together we could have prevented this
If only we said "ENOUGH"

Cabe I promise this to you
That never again will I stand
Doing nothing watch someone suffer
Whilst I bury my head in the sand

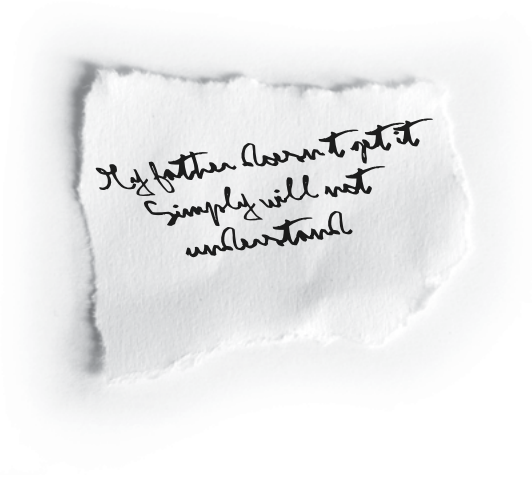
I have heard that Bruce has started
Making amends for his old ways
I guess there was some silver lining
These are truly crazy days

I too have stepped up ... volunteered
To speak-out against this scourge
Eradicate Bullying from our Schools
All students ... parents I do urge

Chapter 5

Dave 23 years

“*With farm life there can be isolation
the internet stimulates what the
isolated farmer may be feeling.
Unfortunately there are not enough
mental health professionals in rural areas*”

A rectangular piece of white paper with irregular, torn edges, centered on a light gray background. The paper has a subtle shadow beneath it, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. Handwritten in black ink on the paper is the text: "My father doesn't get it / Simply will not / understand".

My father doesn't get it
Simply will not
understand

Farmer wants a wife

I drove the ute through the back paddock
As my mind just ate away at me
I realised I'd die here on this farm
No hope of ever being free

For the last five generations
Our family has worked this land
Should feel privileged I was chosen
To make the family final stand

Both my younger brothers
Have moved into the city to work
Whilst me being the eldest has to stay
On the farm like some hick jerk

My father doesn't get it
Simply will not understand
I feel my future was to be much more
Than being just a farm hand

Don't get me wrong
It's not that I am lazy
It's thinkin this is all I'll ever be
Which is driving me stir crazy

How am I ever going to
Find myself a wife my bride
When I know every single local girl
From me they want to hide

At 23 years old I'm not
Exactly their first pick
To think I will be forever alone
Makes me ill and sick

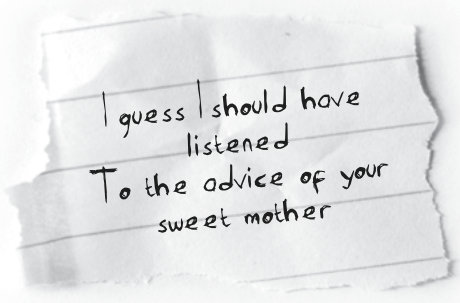
I watched the reality TV show
Farmer wants a wife last night
My dad said I should apply
It caused another fight

His expectations he has dumped
Upon me his first born son
Have guaranteed I will live in sorrow
Never to enjoy any fun

Sorry dad but I can see
That there is no other way
I hope you realize when you find my body
Lifeless on the hay

You pushed too far and chose not to
Listen to the dreams of your son
Now you'll have to live your own life
With your guilt ... just you and mum

I tried to tell you that on this farm
I was not prepared to die
But I guess that in the end
That too was a lie

A small, rectangular piece of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The edges of the paper are torn and irregular. It is placed on a light gray background. The text is handwritten in black ink.

I guess I should have
listened
To the advice of your
sweet mother

Oh my lord what have I done

Oh my lord what have I done
Lost my pride and joy
Pushed you beyond your breaking point
I've killed my son ... my boy

As a father I had no skill
Farming is all I know
Like my father and grandfather before
Five generations in a row

My preference always was to see
A son take from me the task
Keep within our family name
I guess was too much to ask

I did not realise how unhappy
Was for you to live this life
I know it caused you heavy heart
To have no prospects for a wife

I too once had wanted to leave
Though many years ago it be
My father told me about family duty
I guess it worked on me

Times have changed it's all beyond me
I just don't seem to understand
Why is it so difficult?
For a son to work his land

I guess I should have listened
To the advice of your sweet mother
Appoint a manager to run the farm
Send you to the city with your brothers

In the end it was for naught
This time it shall not pass
Our farm will leave our family
As my tears fall on the grass

Alas the hands of time they are
Beyond this old man's skill
I simply cannot turn them back
There is no magic pill

What I'd give to just replay
The last night that we had
Maybe you may have gone to bed
With less hatred for your dad

I miss you Dave my boy
I always will until the day I go
You took from me my will to live
Reap the fruits from what I sow

I will think of you whenever
I plough the back wheat field
Sorrow is my new companion
My grief will never yield

Chapter 6

Chiang 16 years

“Many parents push their children to succeed, that is ok as long as it is balanced with being a child. Loss of face is a common expression amongst Asian culture”

I told dad that I can't
continue
Not at this fast pace
He said you mother
would just die
From the loss of face

Never to lose face

In my family I've been taught
That our entire race
Has to respect the olden ways
Prevent a loss of face

As the only child I was born to
Chinese parents in Beijing
You'd think to my mother though
She'd given birth to a king

Before I started kindergarten
I had my own private tutor
I was taught to play violin
While my friends played on a scooter

By grade five I was enrolled
In a mathematics competition
In grade six Shakespeare's Hamlet
I recited my rendition

But in my final high School years
With puberty there came
The thrill of girls of growing up
My studies seemed quite lame

I tried to talk to both my parents
But mother would not yield
Reminding me of her sacrifice
I must excel in every field

Straight A's were now not enough
Distinctions were the go
It's like I'm some performing monkey
In a weird family circus show

I told dad that I can't continue
Not at this fast pace
He said you mother would just die
From the loss of face

Why can't she live her own life?
Not live it all through me
Can't I too have a choice?
To decide my own destiny

I wish at times for a brother
So that her focus was to fade
From me to him I'd get a break
But such dreams are never made

The pressure has been building now
I feel stifled cannot breathe
The only choice open to me
Is from this life to leave

I am sorry mother you will need
To now run your own race
Maybe losing your only son
Is worse than loss of face

A piece of torn, crumpled paper with handwritten text in black ink. The paper is rectangular with irregular, torn edges and is placed on a light-colored, slightly textured surface. The text is written in a casual, cursive script.

I'll spend
my days
just
missing
you

Your ghost wants to be free

I am feeling guilt ashamed of self
I blame no one else but me
How can a father lose his only son?
Your ghost wants to be free

I stood by and held my tongue
When you needed a strong voice
To defend you from your mothers need
Give back to you some choice

You came to me and asked for help
But all that I could say
It is your duty to respect your mother
I still regret that to this day

Why did I not take up your fight?
Give you strength from my resolve
Maybe then your mother would
Have allowed you to evolve

Our culture is hard to accept
When as a Chinese family
Forced to have but just one child
The same happened to me

My own mother told me how
She killed her first born as she could see
A daughter could not carry on
The family name ... job left for me

The pressure to always be the best
Challenged my resolve
Her strength caused my insecurity
My anxiety I still can't solve

I know that it is no excuse
I should have shown some strength
Stopped your mother from pushing you
I should have gone to any length

Now your mother hides away
Cannot face her friends or family
Her loss of face has cut her deep
She'll get no sympathy from me

I light candles at the shrine
I've made for you Chiang my boy
Watching as the smoke entwines
Briefly brings me joy

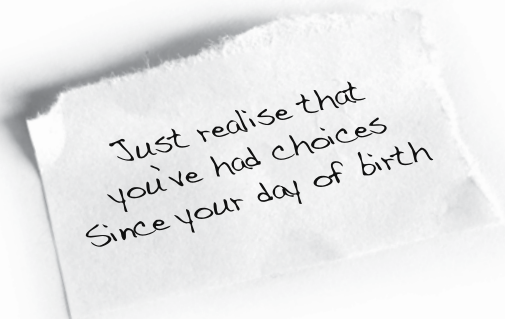
I wish that in your afterlife
You find peace at last
In your heart you find a way
To forgive me for the past

I'll spend my days just missing you
And times we should have had
I love you son ... miss you daily
Your regretful ... loving dad

Chapter 7

Message from self and the angels

“*Writing from a spiritual space
I leave you with the last two poems.
One from your true self ...
the second from your guardian angels*”

A small, rectangular piece of white paper with torn, deckled edges is centered on a larger, slightly tilted white card. The paper has three lines of handwritten text in black ink.

Just realise that
you've had choices
Since your day of birth

You only glimpse me in your sleep

Can you hear me?
I am yourself ... buried down so deep
We seem to have lost contact of late
You only glimpse me in your sleep

You have started to rely too much
On your mind as if somehow
It will give you all of the solutions
For where you're at right now

Your mind however is controlled
By ego which lives off fear
I need you to stop ... listen to me
Or you may not survive the year

Remember when a child you were
A candle burned inside
Full of life and confidence
Back then your ego would hide

As you grew ... life's lessons came
A test from which to grow strong
Each wrong road taken was to be
Learned from ... not seen as wrong

All the fears that you now have
The mind/ego has produced
The resulting loss of self esteem
As your true self was reduced

I need you to take back control
Block out your fear and stress
You are not your thoughts / your mind
This is all another test

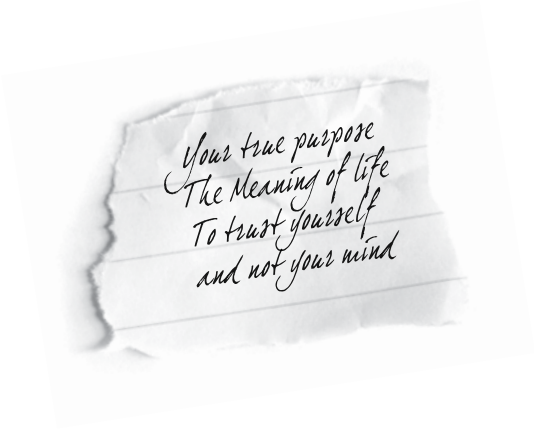
Your life drama is just a script
Your mind has prepared for you to read
If you choose not to read it
You choose to succeed

To pass it all you need to do
Accept just where you are
Everything for a reason happens
In life you are the star

Your true self feels no pain
No emotions, no fear you know
You need to trust it and take stock
Then your strength will grow

There is no handbook given out
On how to live each day on earth
Just realise that you've had choices
Since your day of birth

There is nothing wrong if you admit
That you don't have answers to your strife
Seek out professionals with the right skills
They could just save your life

A photograph of a small, rectangular piece of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The paper has a torn, deckled edge on its left side. It is placed on a light gray, textured surface. Handwritten in black ink on the paper is the following text:

*Your true purpose
The Meaning of life
To trust yourself
and not your mind*

What are you doing here
my son?

As the young man slowly makes his way
Towards heaven's Pearly gate
The angels sent to welcome him
Stood and stared in quite a state

What are you doing here my son?
You don't choose your time to leave
Your lessons on Earth remain undone
Not yet have you learnt to believe

Why have you come back so early?
You were to see the brutal truth of life
You were meant to change your ways
Not just focus on the strife

Only 15 earthly summers pass
Since we sent you back to find
Your true purpose "The Meaning of life"
To trust yourself ... and not your mind

Human beings can be so cruel
Through both their words and deeds
They are but an opinion from the past
On your strength their hunger feeds

You must now return to earth
Discover the correct path to take
Go back and learn to believe in self
Or again this journey your soul will make

Make a change for other's souls
Live your life ... don't hesitate
Be an angel for those who are in need
Then your soul can walk through this gate

What I'd give for a bedside story read to me by Mum or dad

When I wake up in the morning
I look around and something just not there
No mommy ... No daddy to wake me up
It really isn't fair

I have 60 friends to share my time
And there are my carers too
Sometimes we get volunteers
For excursions at the zoo

My clothes are all packed away
In my slide-out draw
My shoes are stacked in a row
With 59 others ... at the door

I have food in my belly
Bath twice a day ... it's really not so bad
But what I'd give for a bedside story
Read to me by Mum or dad

At least I am healthy
Unlike some children ... Who have HIV
Sometimes they cry out late at night
I'm glad it's them not me

What did I do that is so wrong?
What have I done so bad?
That I should have to live my life
Without both mum and dad

I have lived here since I was one
That was five years ago
Sometimes life just flashes by
But some days it goes real slow

I wake up often in my sleep
I'm afraid of to lose my toys
When I turn seven ... Is time to move
To live with 175 older boys

No more girls to play with
I won't be the big boy any more
I've heard from other boys who've
moved And I'm afraid of what's in store

For 10 more years I need to wait
Until the day that I'm set free
When I can finally leave this orphanage
And rely just on me

I promise that when I have children
I will be there ... To take care
To tuck them in to bed at night
And let them know I'm there

If you can share some of your wealth
For a better future is my goal
Knowing your money is helping orphans
Will be like feeding your own soul

Touching the silence



*This is a poem for my little friends
at the Chiang Mai Orphanage.*

*These children are so happy ... They are well
fed well clothed, but what they miss most of all is the
hugs and kisses that our children were brought up with.
If you enjoyed "Touching the Silence" all I ask in return
is that you visit my foundation called
"Happy Hands Foundation" and make
a donation to help my little friends.*

www.happyhandsfoundation.com

