

Transcript of Ian in Distress after suicide attempt, 10-8-05

Background: Several months prior to this incident, Ian admitted covering up abuses in his home to protect his father. He has already said that he had previously tried to kill himself, and his school has recognized his need for help socializing with peers.

On 10-8-05, angry after arguing with his brother, Ian stood at an upper-floor window and said he was going to kill himself; then he tried to remove the screen.

(Ian cries for people to leave while Mom asks Sterling to leave the room. Ian has already said he wants to kill himself.)

ian *Go. Mom, either leave this room right now or leave my lifetime forever. Go away.*

Mom I will not do that.

ian *Mom, go away.*

(Mom tells Sterling she wants to talk with Ian privately while Ian cries out over her voice for people to leave. Sterling argues. Door closes.)

Mom I'm sorry, Ian. Oh, my goodness, this has been a hard day for all of us.

ian *Mom, go away. Please, do me a favor and just go away.*

Mom Where would you want me to go?

ian *I don't know, just anywhere...*

Mom ...it hurts that much...

ian *...just not around me.*

Mom It just hurts that much?

ian ***I just hate life.***

Mom You hate life?

lan Yes...

Mom Oh, lan.

lan *My whole life sucks. You have to watch people die sometimes. It just sucks. You're going to die sometime, why not just die right now?*

Mom Honey, ...

lan *...you're going to die in a year anyway, don't put my attention to right now.*

Mom You want me to die right now?

lan **No, me. I hate my life. 2:25**

Mom **You want to die right now?**

lan **...yes...**

Mom ...oh, lan...

lan **...I hate life!**

Mom Oh, lan. My goodness, I wish I could...

lan *...you just go AWAY.*

Mom lan, I'll be here for the hard part.

(lan goes to the bathroom and keeps talking. Mom tells those in the next room to go elsewhere; Sterling balks. Doors slam as Sterling and Jim leave while Mom admonishes them to not make too much noise. lan wants Mom to go, too. Doors slam.)

lan *Mom, why can't you leave?*

Mom Because I care so much for you. I want to make sure you stay safe...

lan *...yeah, do you think I care?*

Mom lan, I want to make sure you stay safe. I see you—that's why I come every week to see you. *(lan sobs)* That's why. I'm always...

lan **Mom, what's the point of life? You just die anyways. What's the point of even living?** *(sniffs)* Well, what's the point?

Mom To learn things, to grow.

lan *And then it'll all just die! And go away. Completely. Never even—no one will ever even know I existed. Several years from now, people won't even know, won't even know who I am. I'll just be a dead corpse to them. Cause they'll get the dead corpse and go put it in the graveyard and go say "Oh, Boo Hoo," and move on with their life. What's the point? They'll never even remember me. So what's the point in living? 5:08*

Mom lan, you know how—lan, you are so much worth loving, you are so much worth caring for.

lan *Not in my mind.*

Mom In my... Oh, lan, I wish you knew how much you are loved. I wish you... 5:50

lan ***You have no way to know how many ways I know to commit suicide in this one room in like ten seconds.***

Mom Well, I want you to make me a promise.

lan *There's so many ways. Get that key right there from the lamp, rip it out, and go like that, and life seeps—that's one way you can die in like 10 seconds. Open that window, punch in the screen, jump out—you can die within 10 seconds. Go in there, break the glass; get the glass and cut right here—you can die in 10 seconds. Go in there and fill it with water, and be underwater—you can die within about 30 seconds. There's so many ways you can die. 6:00*

Mom lan, you know I don't make promises, and I don't make you and Sterling promise. But I do want to get one promise from you.

lan *What?*

Mom That you won't hurt yourself. That you won't kill yourself. 6:35

lan ***That's the thing that's stopping me from pulling my rope. 6:45***

Mom What's that?

lan ***The guilt in knowing that I'm the one who killed myself.***

Mom Oh, honey...

lan *That's the one and only thing that is stopping me.*

Mom Honey...

lan *Go away!*

Mom I'll sit over here, it's all right. Please let me know when I can hold you. I think you need it, you're worth it. I stayed in here with you, lan, because I care so much for you.

lan *If you do then why don't you just go away?*

Mom No, I'm not going to let you hurt yourself.

lan *I won't.*

Mom All right.

lan *(sniffles from a runny nose)*

Mom Uh Oh, it sounds like you're getting backed up.

lan *(loud sniff)*

Mom Let me know if you need me to rub your nose area so, so it will run. I don't want it to get clogged up because that causes a headache. If it goes back to that bone up there at your nose—I'll rub it if it starts getting backed up for you.

lan *How will you see if it starts getting backed up?*

Mom Because it's coming out. You've had a lot of tears.

lan *(sniffs)*

Mom It's all right.

lan *Mom, What **is** the point of living? 8:25*

Mom Are you asking me like you want me to answer? Or do you want to tell me what you think?

lan *I'm asking you a question. What's the point of living? In a hundred years, or probably even less, I'll just be another dead corpse in a graveyard.*

Mom Hmmm, your spirit lives on.

lan *My spirit would be sad. What's the point?*

Mom It would be sad?

lan *It will be sad anyways that I died. It would be sad that I was dead.*

Mom Do you...

lan *...what's the point in living?*

Mom Mmm, if...

lan *...if your spirit will live on forever and ever and ever, you will always be sad about dying, about me dying. So what's the point of living?... 9:00*

Mom ...w...

lan *...if you die you get to go into another body and start a whole new life, perhaps a better life, so please go away...*

Mom ...honey, it's my understanding that spirits that have died aren't sad.

(door slams)

From my understanding the spirits that died are not sad. Maybe there's things during this life they could have been sad about. That's why...

lan *What is there in my lifetime that would equal, **what is it that's good in my lifetime that would equal all the bad stuff in my lifetime.***

Mom Honey, your life is so early...

lan *Yes, I know, Mom. If my spirit does go into another body, good, **I want to die. I get to start a whole new life, a happy life.***

Mom Hmmm, I don't know if happiness is guaranteed. Sometimes the challenge that God gives us is to find happiness wherever we are. It's a deeper understanding...

lan *...I see no happiness in my life at all. 10:00*

Mom You see no happiness at all? A little bit?

lan **Nothing.**

Mom What would bring you happiness?

lan *(tears well, voice chokes)*

Mom, having to die one time is bad 'cause you don't know, once it's through, they don't know anything about you. And when you're not here, they'll forget about you... 10:45

Mom ...oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no... 10:48

lan *...you'll just be a dead corpse...*

Mom ...no, no, no, no, no, no. I can guarantee...

lan *...you're laughing...*

Mom ...I'm not laughing. I'm starting to get tears in my eyes.

lan *sniffles*

Mom You're 10 years of age. Do you have any friends who have died yet? 11:00

lan *No.*

Mom All right. Well, I'm 50, and my grandmother has died, my grandfather died, and my brother died, my youngest brother, the one that you're named after. And do you know why I named you after him? Because he lived on in my heart. And in my love. The memory of my brother

David, I can tell you all kinds of things about him. And we've read some stories about him. I can tell you all kinds of things about you, too, from when I've been around you, that will never go away in my heart. When you die, you don't just die and disappear. You live on in memories, and in your...

lan *Well, yeah, whoopee fuck, whoopee shit. Memories, oh yeah, it's so big—not.*

Mom Okay.

lan *Memories are nothing. Nothing but a mere invention of the mind.*

Mom What, memories are an invention of the mind?

lan *You can believe in anything if you make your mind believe it. **That's why different people keep away from court with such a straight face when they say they didn't, cause they're actually making the society believe that they didn't.** A mere invention of the mind. The mind can trick the body into thinking that they didn't. That's why they keep such a straight face.*
12:34

Mom Do you know anybody who can do that?

lan *Yes. Me.*

Mom **You can keep a straight face when you lie? 13:00**

lan ***It's simple.***

Mom Honey, you shouldn't have to do that.

lan *You know, if you reach right about a certain age, you can make your mind think that you are not actually that age. You can make snapshots of what you were, of what you were doing in that time.*

Mom Is that how you covered things that happened that you don't like?

lan *No (face immediately and dramatically changes). Please leave...*

Mom ...all right...

lan *...no, I didn't... (sadness dramatically deepens)*

Mom ...lan, lan, it's all right. It's all right. Honey, ...

lan *... leave, Mom. 13:42*

Mom All right.

lan *Please.*

Mom Shhhh, all right, sweetheart. I already know some things, lan.

lan *Go away from my bed please go, leave the room. 14:00*

Mom lan, if you say you can change things in your mind because you want them to be different, that means you can also change them for the better. Like when you say you have nothing happy in your life, you can look for the things that are happy and then know that with more importance.

lan *(sniffles)*

Mom Sometimes that's the challenge that God gives us.

lan *Mom, you could—then you could say you couldn't even buy me that cheapy little shotgun thing? When I went back there, I saw two adults, two guys, go in and buy their five-year-old—no, seven, six-year-old—son the same thing, the same shotgun thing and one of those pistols and the BB gun, pellet gun, and two air guns—their six-year-old son. I'm ten. You can't even buy me one of them.*

Mom Well, not today.

lan *Go do it this weekend. Answer! 15:34*

Mom lan, it has a lot to do with maturity...

lan *...just as in life, it never changes, always the same thi—damned thing.*

Mom What is the hardest part about life for you? 16:00

lan *Actually, living.*

Remember how I'd never even need them [referring to guns]? I thought you would be helping then. And you can go away and then I'll feel bad. 16:06

Mom Oh, you...

lan *...oh wow, I get a day doing it [shooting guns]. I remember doing it.*

Mom When do you feel the most alive or happy? 16:30

lan *Once a year, on my birthday. And even then, I only have one person come to my party, and if he brings me a present, it's usually something that's not very good. His parents won't let him buy very much because he's so young. So if he even gives me a present, it's not very good. He's the only person that comes to my birthday, if anyone even does come to my birthday, well, in even like a year... 17:00*

Mom It's a happy day and only one person comes?

lan *It's the happiest it gets.*

Mom Oh, lan.

lan *Even then I don't get to have much fun because I know the party's for Sterling and I. If it was just for me, it would be more fair.*

Mom Wha...?

lan *...it's never just for me.*

Mom Because it's never just for you?

lan *It's never for me, nothing's ever for me. 17:30*

Mom Do you think Sterling gets a lot more attention than you?

lan Yes.

Mom And that makes you feel left out. Is that why it's hard for...

lan *...Mom, the only other kids I'm actually friends with at my school are in other grades, and they're always younger than me. And then when I see them it's only in class and that's the only time I can see them, and then my classmates are like, "you're going to be so impossible cause when you get out with 'em," and then they glue my leg and stuff with hi—with them. 17:55*

Mom Oh, my goodness, that's the age you are. You're right, kids do pick on each other for the oddest reasons.

You know one of the things I have admired so much in you, Ian? And I mean it's a standout, it's a big one, a big standout. It's one of your—maybe some of your strength that you've gained out of the hardships, because I know you've had some hard things in your life. But sometimes you get gifts out of it, and I've seen some gifts... 18:30

lan *(sniffles loudly, nose drips)*

Mom ...Let me get you a napkin. I've seen some of the gifts that you've gotten. Hold on (looks for tissue.)

lan *Eeeuu, that's a sock!*

Mom Yes. I'm going to wash them tonight. Back of the door? (laughs) Okay, I'll wash those too. And that.

lan *Yuck.*

Mom Yum. All right. Now, do you want to tell me—to tell you some of the gifts that I see in you?

lan *What?*

Mom I was thinking this earlier today, matter of fact, and I didn't say it out loud. One of things I really think is a standout about you...

lan ...Mom, it's not easy. I never get any parties. It's everyone but me.

Mom Oh, I'll try to get you one.

lan *It's always for me and my brother. And the worst part about that is Sterling has like twenty-six people come. And I only have one. It's sad ... 19:45*

Mom And it's hard to share a birthday with somebody else?

lan *And his friends are the rich kids who have uncommon stuff, and he gets real expensive presents in like hundreds of dollars, and I just get like ten dollars from Walgreens. Not even ten dollars, what was it, two dollars and fifty cents. 20:00*

Mom Who was it, you know...

lan ...I was never planned. 20:23

Mom Do you know who would understand how you feel on that one?

lan Who?

Mom Your Uncle Richard and Uncle Jay. Their birthdays were on exactly the same day. They were both born on June the 9th.

lan Then they're twins?

Mom Nope—six years apart. But...

lan ...six years?

Mom But every year we had their birthdays together. I remember we went to the beach one year, both of them, their birthdays together.

lan Mom...

Mom Maybe it was a little easier for them...

lan ...Mom...

Mom ...because they're six years apart instead of two...

lan *See, I'm not really interested in games. I'm not really interested in anything other than guns. Because it's really the only physical thing that I don't have to put much energy into. 21:00*

Mom You don't like putting much energy into the things you do?

lan No.

Mom I guess the guns have power. And that's the kind of thing that you want more of, isn't it?

lan *(lan snuffles and nods his head up and down)*

Mom Yeah, I see your head nodding.

lan *It's not only that, now it's I like them for a hobby.*

Mom Oh, lan. Do you get many choices when you're at home?

lan *No.*

Mom All right. Do you get many choices at school?

lan *No.*

Mom Do you feel that you have much...

lan *...at school?...*

Mom ...UmHmm...

lan *...Oh yeah, I'll give you a choice. Do I use a mechanical pencil on my paper or do I use a normal pencil on my paper?*

Mom (laughs) Okay, I'll stand corrected...

lan *...we have recess, I'm excluded.*

Mom Yeah...

lan *...I get so many insults, go to the class and they said, "you cannot exclude, kids can do what they want to do." Well, here we are at recess. "(unintelligible), we'll just go and see it..." 21:50*

Mom ...hey, wait a minute. On a Wednesday I saw you, I saw you going out and joining some of the others. And they were doing something you liked, you joined them...

lan *...you were there...(Mom's voice indistinguishable in the background)*

Mom *...yeah...are you saying...*

lan *...why would they do that in front of you?*

Mom Are you saying they behave differently on Wednesdays?

lan *Because you were there.*

Mom That makes a difference...

lan *...that's why adults never know. Cause every time when they're doing it and adults come around, the adults never know, and then the kid gets in trouble for it and the adult—because the adult thinks that, "Oh, you're lying, they're not doing anything." And then the kid is getting*

bullied, but it's coming from the adults. And you would never have believed, where is the class—laughing. 22:30

Mom If I came—are you saying if I came on a Thursday, then kids would probably be more accepting of you on a Thursday too?

lan *Duh.*

Mom What was...? Well, any day that you want me there, let me know, Okay?

lan *(cries, face softens)*

Mom If it makes a difference for you. I can just be on the table talking while you're with the kids, I wouldn't have to pull you away or talk with you, you wouldn't have to spend any time at all. If you think it makes a difference, I can just sit right there on the table and, and watch. Fine?
23:00

lan *But Mom?*

Mom Um Hmmm.

lan *Even my best friend is getting mad at me at school.*

Mom Who's that?

lan *Paul*

Mom Paul's your—Paul Tata?

lan *Well, he's not my best friend, he's my only friend. And he sucks at being a friend.*

Mom Badly. Is he other—is he right now...

lan *...can we put the boat in the lake tomorrow?*

Mom Oh, that's a good idea. Well. I think we can do that.

lan *Mom?*

Mom Yeah.

lan *Do you know anybody who has a car strong enough to put it in the lake?*

Mom Um Hmmm. Uncle John does.

lan *Uncle John?*

Mom Sure. Why don't you talk to him about that? I think he would enjoy that.

lan *The thing is, I don't want him there.*

Mom Uncle John?

lan *I don't want anyone there except for you and me. Sterling can be there thinking that we're just going out to go like to the restroom and talk or something.*

Mom Hmm.

lan *I don't want anyone there. That's the thing. Whenever I do something there always has to be people there. Why can't I just do something and do it with one person?*

Mom You need more one-on-one time with people, don't you, to help your heart grow right in here.
24:40

lan *Mom?*

Mom Yeah.

lan *It is so like right now. If I want to do something, Oh, sure, I'll get Uncle John to go. It never can just be you and I.*

Mom Well, 'cause he has the trailer hatch—the trailer hitch.

lan *And Mom, you were right. 25:00*

Mom What?

lan *You are the only person who ever listens. And today, even if you could stop to talk with me, it's like being a (indistinguishable). You were very, very right. 25:00*

Mom Oh, sweetheart. I saw that and I (hugs lan, says something indistinguishable). I think that's where the hurt comes from.

Ian complains about Sterling and about being ignored; Sterling enters room and both boys bicker; Mom helps Ian clear his sinuses, lots of laughter; Mom cajoles Ian into helping prepare a meal in the kitchen with T.V. in background ... tape ends at **31:54**