

# From Generation to Generation

Maude Casey

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With regard to your comments on the mothers issue of *Self & Society*, I am puzzled by your words 'it would be only fair to include Ruby'. If you would like Ruby to write something of her own about the whole business of having a new baby (sharing her parents, widening out the relationship to include the more complex networks of relationships between herself and mother, father, brother, and also parents-children etc) then I should think that could be fine if she felt like doing it as a piece in itself. However, if you feel she should do this in response to a reading of a piece by me, then I must disagree.

I would write as an adult (with all the experiential and emotional baggage of having been on the planet for 42 years, carrying my own infancy and childhood and upbringing and relationships with my own parents and siblings, having been through two (no three) pregnancies, two labours and two babies' infancies etc) for a readership of other adults. As such, there is no way that I would want Ruby to have to take on my psyche and my struggles and journey. It would make her most insecure, and would worry her a great deal, to have to take on adult stuff

in this way. It is none of her business, is quite separate from the stuff that happens between herself and me, herself and Peter, herself and Fintan, all of which is there in her day-to-day life. It is not her responsibility to take on her mother's stuff.

However 'grown-up' Ruby can be in her thoughts and perceptions, the fact is that she is a child, and these 'grown-up' thoughts and perceptions are the result of the security which she feels as a child. Peter and I are the adults who are learning, have learnt, to find our own adult selves via the sense of responsibility we feel towards the child, children, we have brought into the world, and these adult selves are the ones which interpret, guide, draw boundaries and order the very chaotic or confusing world that we all live in.

It changes all the time, as the child changes and grows, and it widens and deepens, but it is still the child's place that we have to focus on. It's for this reason that I'm puzzled about your use of the words 'only fair'. Do you feel that anything I may write about my feelings would be unfair to my child? If so, I must disagree. My stuff is mine, and hers is

*Fran Mosley, one of the S&S editors, wrote to her friend Maude Casey to ask her to write something about being the mother of two children, and in particular about how it was to have a second child. Fran suggested that 'it would be only fair' for Ruby (the older child) to see what her mother wrote and to add her comments. This is Maude's response. Maude Casey is a teacher and novelist who lives in Brighton.*

hers. That's why I go to analysis, so that my stuff does not spill over and give anxiety to my children. I do not read her journal, and she does not read mine. Some things are private, and should be so, I feel.

My parents are Ruby's grandparents, and my child-in-relation-to-my-parents is not someone Ruby needs to know, in all its greed, need, terror of change, fear of loss and abandonment. Just because I went through all of that, I don't see that Ruby has to. That inner child is the crea-

ture that becoming a mother resurrected in me, brought me slap-bang up against, the one who never was recognised or allowed to just be. Therapy is healing this lost little soul, and my real children are showing me another child, who can play and be a proper child, even though she was never let be one the first time around.

I've used far too many words here to try and be clear about this with you. It comes down, I think, to a clear boundary between the child and the adult, and to the responsibilities of being a parent.

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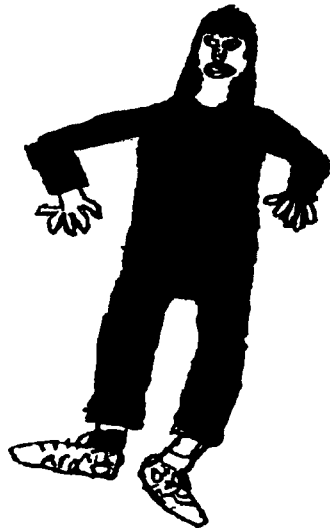
## ***A Case of Mistaken Identity***

*Eric Whitton*

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**M**ost people have a strong desire to be close to another person. For some it forms the central point of their lives. Others are scared of it or have given up hope of finding it. Although it is the most natural impulse, the pathway to intimacy has for many been overlaid with false trails. I believe it is possible for any two people to be intimate and open with each other, given certain conditions. But there are a number of obstacles which keep us from closeness, and we need skill and awareness to overcome them and recover our ability to be close.

Many of the difficulties in relationships arise from what I call a case of 'mistaken identity'. When we look to another person for closeness based on fulfilling a role



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