

It is always difficult to go back and pinpoint incidents that cause a marriage to fail. I found it a gradual build up over many years of various incidents. I have given this matter much thought and will try to put my thoughts and experiences on paper.

I guess from the beginning our married life in Durham things began to change. I am from a large family, one of fourteen children. We are a very happy and out-going family. A family that is very close. I have very fond memories of my childhood. Today we are still a very close-knit family. I can remember when I was younger, how we used to sit around the kitchen table everynight and would discuss the day. We would give our opinions on sports, politics(local and national), our jobs, and our schools. We were taught at a very early age to express our opinions, to be independent of each other, that we did not have to think alike, that we have different personalities, and that we had to learn to make our own decisions. That in order to learn, we had to make mistakes but, to be sure we learned from our mistakes. We were taught to criticize each other, and to be able to take criticism. Today most of us are married and have children but, once a week we meet and discuss and give our opinions on the same subjects I mentioned before. We find these talks to be healthy, and we still respect the right of one another, to have different opinions.

I thought it necessary to tell you a little bit about my family background so that you would better understand the problems I encountered in my marriage

I married Asa in September, 1958. The first year of our married life we lived in Arizona while he was in the service. The following year  $\frac{1}{2}$  we lived in New York. During these years we were very close and we talked about our future together and like most newly-weds confided with and depended on each other.

It was not until we moved to Durham, I think it was in 1961, that Asa began to change. I realized I did not know him at all. While living in Arizona and New York Asa always seemed to be a very strong and independent person. After our move to Durham he seemed to depend more on his parents and would always discuss his decisions and plans with them. He did not feel a need to get my ideas or opinions on things that would affect our lives. When I tried to talk to him He said he did not have time, he was busy building <sup>his</sup> image in the community and trying to make a name for himself. I began to feel very left out of his life. He was trying to establish himself in the community and completely forgot that I also had to live in the community. While I/~~we~~<sup>felt</sup> should build our future together, he felt he was the one to get out, meet people. During this time Asa was working at the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, as an assistant vice-president but, he still wanted very much to to into business on his own. I joined several social clubs and began enjoying my new friends. When I went to work at the North Carolina Mutual, I got the chance to meet people and make friends in the business community, I became involved with my new friends and associates and did not have time to think about being shut out by Asa. I wanted very much to keep the marriage going.

In 1963 our first child Pamela was born. This was when I found

out Asa was definitely going into business for himself. In fact, he visited me in the hospital the day after Pamela was born and told me he was planning to leave his job and start his own business, all the arrangements had already been made, and he was letting me know of his decision. I wanted to express my apprehension but, knew at this point it would do no good, and only make him angry.

Asa became so involved in his business that days would go by before I would see him. He did find time to come to the hospital and bring me and the baby home. He put me, the baby and my suitcase in the house and went right back to work. I felt very lonely and unsure of myself. Here I was left to care for the baby, the house, and there was no one to help me. Asa did not return home until late that night. I began to feel he was not overjoyed about having the responsibility of a baby in his life. My sister called from New York and concerned that I had just had a baby by caesarean section and did not have anyone to help me. She flew down to Durham the next day and stayed with <sup>me</sup> for a week so that I could build up my strength. She was such a welcomed sight.

The next few years were very difficult. Asa spent days and nights building up his business. I was left pretty much on my own to <sup>care</sup> for our daughter and the home. All Asa's money was put into the business and I was told we had to give up our vacation plans. We no longer had money for entertainment, so my only social life was my monthly club meetings. I decided to return to work at this time, I put my daughter in nursery school and got a job at Duke University as a secretary to

Chaplain Wilkinson. The reasons I decided to return to work was that we needed living room furniture and I was anxious to furnish our living room, and have some spending money. When I received my first payment check Asa made it clear that my money would have to be used for monthly household expenses and he cut back on the amount of money he would give me to run the house each month. In other words, I did not have a choice. My money would be used the way he wanted it used. I found this very hard to take and told him so. Before this, while we were both working, the North Carolina Mutual, Asa decided to make a very large purchase, I don't remember what it was, I think it was a car. I told him I did not think we could afford to make such a large purchase at the time. He told me it was his money and he would do what he wanted with it, that I did not have the right <sup>to</sup> question his decision. I knew that the only way I could live with Asa was to let him make all the decisions and not question his decisions. After this I found it very difficult to talk to him about money matters.

By this time we knew that our marriage was failing and we made arrangements to consult Dr. Wilkinson of Duke University to try to help us. You can imagine my surprise when Asa started talking about how difficult I was to live with and that I was not the sweet person people thought I was, that I was stubborn, and nagged him, that I did not agree with him, that I had to have my own way. The next

day Dr. Wilkinson told me that he was very shocked by Asa's statements. He had worked with me for quite a while and did not observe any of these characteristics in me. I did not realize until later what Asa meant by my nagging and being stubborn. Asa told me he felt it was wrong for a wife to express an opinion on a subject if the husband had already expressed a different opinion. A wife should always agree with her husband. She should accept his suggestion without questioning him. This was completely against my up-bringing. I started to find it difficult to go out socializing with him, I was afraid I would say something he did not agree with and when we returned home he would be angry and start fussing about the duties of a wife. My life had become so miserable I started going to New York to be with my family as often as possible. I left my job at Duke University that summer and went to New York with our daughter. At the time I was seriously considering staying in New York.

Asa came to New York that summer and apologized for making things so difficult for me. He said he was under tremendous strain because of his business and wanted me to come back to Durham and try to work things out. I returned to Durham with him and for the next several months Asa tried to be more understanding. He even made an effort to come home in the evenings and have dinner with us. Shortly after this I became pregnant with our second child and as soon as this happened Asa went back to his old ways. He would go off for days on so-called business trips and we would see very little of him, the

only time he talked to me about the business was when he needed me to sign some papers for him. I became concerned about signing papers for loans and expressed my concern to him. He would get very angry and bang around the house and continually harassed me until I signed the papers. I knew I was getting deeper and deeper into situations that I had no control over but, knew would have an effect on my life. During my fifth month of pregnancy I developed pneumonia and was hospitalized. When I returned home from the hospital I made up my mind I was not going to let Asa and his business get me down. I was going to do everything possible to deliver a healthy baby. Sometime during the early part of May Asa and I visited the doctor to make arrangements for the delivery of the baby. The doctor suggested either the 21st. or 22nd of May for the delivery day. Asa took out his calendar and said he would like to make the delivery date the following week. He had a business appointment the week of the 21st. and had to go out of town. It ~~was~~ not until the doctor expressed his concern for the health of the baby and me, that Asa finally gave up the idea of holding the delivery another week. I knew he was not happy about the arrangements when we left the doctor's office. On May 22, 1968 our son was born. Because of my weakened condition after the operation I did not come around until the following day. My family in New York was upset, they knew I was going to deliver the baby on the 22nd. and they had not heard from Asa. They tried calling him and was unable to reach him. He never let them know that I was still out and they had not been able to wake me up. I remember it was Dr. Wilkinson and his wife who were in the room when I woke up. It's strange, but I responded to his voice. Things are still very

hazy about my first two days in the hospital, I lost track of days and time. I think it was the following morning Asa came to visit me and tell me that he was going out of town on a business trip and would be back in a few days, I was hurt and disappointed but, deep down I knew nothing was going to interfere with his business trip. He did return to Durham in time to bring our son and me home from the hospital. My sister in New York came the same day to help me. By this time my mother was annoyed with Asa and his attitude toward his family. She was a very strong believer in strong family ties. My mother came to visit me to make sure I was all right and during her visit begged me not <sup>to</sup> have anymore children. She felt I was just not strong enough to go through another operation.

After the birth of our son we drifted further apart. Asa's business began to pick-up and his tremendous ego began to surface. He now resented the time I spent with the children and felt everything should be centered around his needs. His attitude was ~~strictly~~ <sup>strictly</sup> me & mine, never we & us. He was a married man but, he wanted to live like a single man. He came and went as he pleased.

Asa continued to tell me that we could not afford to go out or take vacations, as he put it "we had to tighten our belts" but, during this period I noticed, the children and I were kept on a very strict budget but, Asa was going to all the better stores in Durham and purchasing a new wardrobe. We lived like this for the next several years. Asa going his way and the children and I going our way. When he was home he slept and had very little time for the children.

He said he never learned to feel comfortable around children . Our daughter Pamela, who was now in school, had so little chance to get to know him. He came home late at night and left the house early in the morning.

During the summer of 1973 I visited my family. My mother was very sick, and the doctor told us she would not live much longer. I wanted to spend as much time with her as possible. She adored the children and no matter how sick she was she enjoyed having them around. While I was in New York Asa took my car (a Cougar) and traded it in so he could buy a Lincoln Continental, he replaced my Cougar with a Ford Pinto. You can imagine my surprise with I came back home and found a different car in the drive-way. From the very beginning Asa let me know that the Lincoln was his car and he did not want me to drive it. He had become selfish about everything we owned. I never drove the Lincoln and had no desire to anyway.

Asa began to treat the children and me in the same manner he treated his employees, always in a business-like manner. When he called the house he always spoke in a very business-like manner, not in a casual manner that a husband and wife should speak to each other. He even used this manner with the children. Our daughter was very aware of this and just did not go to him for anything. He became almost a stranger to her.

In early 1974 my mother passed away and it was a terrible loss to me.

Her death created a big void in my life. I missed her terribly. It was a time I really needed someone to comfort me. But, Asa and I had grown further apart and we now longer lived as husband and wife. We just went our separate ways. I tried to get him to spend more time with the children, they needed to know that they were loved and that he was interested in them. It was just a responsibility he did not want to deal with at the time.

In 1975 Asa's business began to fail and he asked me to come to the office and help him. I knew that he was under a tremendous strain and I wanted to help. It was the first time he asked me to help him with his business. Asa and Carolyn Hurley had been running the business together for several years. I was surprised at the control she had over Asa. I felt it was really Carolyn who ran the business, she could talk Asa into almost anything. It was strange to see the man you live with, who did not need or want your advice regarding matters that would effect our lives, being controlled by another woman. Having me and Mrs. Hurley together at the office became very awkward. I found myself becoming very suspicious about their relationship. I knew that they made many business trips together, and that for the last several years Asa had become indifferent toward our sex-life. Asa was a man who had to have his way at home, who <sup>insisted</sup> ~~insisted~~ that our lives be centered around him, a man who was extremely self-centered. He always made me feel that he was better than the children and me, and that he and he only should live a certain life-style. It was a shock to see this dominating man being so controlled in the office by Mrs. Hurley.

the second shock I received while working at the office, was the fact that Asa and Mrs. Hurley had formed another company and I was never told about it. When I confronted him about the company, he told me that it did not concern me. The money they made from the company they formed, was used to keep this company going. I ~~XXXX~~ never believed this. By this time I knew I had had enough. I just no longer trusted Asa.

I knew at this time the marriage could not last under these conditions. It was beginning to take it's toll on the children. Our lives had centered around <sup>Asa</sup> for the last several years and the children could not develop to their potential. They were maturing too fast and I wanted them to have a child-hood. I wanted them to be children. There was plenty of time later for growing up. I wanted them to look back on their child-hood with fond memories.

With the business failing I knew that I would be needed to help sign papers, so I did return to the office until things were straightened out. Asa was very depressed about the loss of his business and was anxious to get started again in a new business. He opened a Travel Agency and I went to help him get started. I did not stay in the office long, he did not want my advice or help. As he put it, he did not want to be told what to do. He had had enough of that with his other business. I left him on his own to do what ever he wanted to do.

In January 1976 Asa came home one evening and told me he was moving out of the house. After living with Asa for seventeen years I knew nothing I said would stop him. I did ask him to think about it and to be sure that this was what he really wanted to do. He said he had already given it a lot of thought and it was something he had to do. He said he had been apartment hunting and as soon as he found what he wanted he would move out. I expressed my concern about the children and he said he would talk to them before moving. The first Saturday in February a moving van pulled up and Asa was already up and getting his things together. He did not tell me the night before that he would be moving the next day. Asa took all his clothes, the Den furniture, and one of the beds out of our son's room. He also took the safe with him. I told him I had some paper in the safe that I needed. I needed the childrens birth certificates and health records and my stock certificate. (We had bought stock in Mechanic & Farmers Bank several years ago). Although we pooled our money to buy the stock, Asa had put all of them in his name. When I found this out, I bought some in my own name. Asa promised to give these things to me as soon as he got settle in his apartment. Today, after asking for these papers many times, Asa has not turned them over to me. When I moved to New York I had to write for copies of all our records in order to enroll the children in school, and for me to get a job.

When Asa moved out of our home he told me to call his mother if I wanted to contact him. <sup>He</sup> ~~MY~~ would not tell me where he was moving

to, or leave his telephone number with me. He said during the day I could reach him at his office, if I needed to contact him in the evening to call his mother and she would get in touch with him.

Shortly after Asa moved out of the house, I began to get harrasing phone calls from his creditors and life became miserable for the children and me. I was working as a teacher's aide and going to school at night. I found that Asa had not paid most of our monthly bills and the children's school tuition was over-due, the gas bill was overdue (I found out that Asa went to the Gas Company and had the bill put in my name, and they started harrasing me. It was very difficult to come home from work everyday and deal with Asa's creditors. I also found out that Asa had let our Insurance policies lapse. It seemed Asa owed everyone in Durham.

Life became pretty miserable for the children and me. The children would answer the phone while I was in school and did not know how to deal with the creditors, all this was making them very nervous. I told them not to answer the phone when I was not at home.

One night when I came home from school I received a call from the bank holding Asa's car loans. Asa was behind in his payments for the Pinto. I was told that if ~~it~~<sup>I</sup> did not make a payment by the following day, they would have to come get the car. I explained to the caller that we were separated. He said it did not make any difference, a car payment had to be made by the following day. He suggested I come to the

bank the following morning before it opened with the payment or lose the car. I took the last of my savings and went to the bank the following morning and made the car payment. I knew I could not get the children back and forth to school everyday without the car. I called my son's school and told Sister Mary Elizabeth that Asa had moved out of the house but, I would try to contact him and have him contact her about the school tuition. After making the car payment I no longer had the money to pay for the school tuition or the gas bill.

It was in June of 1976 that I was visited by a Mr. Brown of the SBA and was told the house was going to be foreclosed . I was in the middle of studying for my final exams and and this was the biggest shock of all. I called Asa at his office and told him about Mr. Brown's visit. He did not seem too surprised, so I guessed he already knew about it. He said he was talking with his lawyer and would get back to me later on. <sup>Asa</sup> Gas called back and told me we were losing the house the SBA loan had not been paid. The following week Mr. Brown came back to the house and posted a foreclosure sign on our front lawn. ~~I was~~ <sup>was</sup> told we had to be out of the house by the end of July. I spent the next few days in total confusion, I know we did not have the money to keep the house and that I would have to start packing our things to move. I remember Asa coming over to explain how the house was lost but, by this time I was in such shock and confusion I don't remember what was said. I only knew that the children and I had to leave our home. It was so very difficult to explain all this to the children, when I did not fully understand everything myself.

I walked around for days trying to figure out what I was going to do. I finally decided I would just have to take things day by day. I was able to continue by working and finishing up the last few weeks of school. After my final exams, I called the Red Bell Storage Company and made arrangements to store our things. I started listing all the things in the house. I went down to the fire station and got an I. D. Gun to mark all our things, and spent days marking and listing everything we owned. While all this was going on I learned Asa was running for Secretary of State (which surprised me.) and saw very little of him and his family. Shortly after I learned about Asa running for office, Asa decided he wanted to move back into the house. I think the reason for this was to establish credibility in regard to his campaign. I refused to let him back into the house. It was only a matter of a few weeks that the children and I had to be out of the house and I could see no reason why he should be here. I also received a visit from Asa's parents at this time asking me to reconsider my decision and let Asa move back into the house. I again refused and it was at this time that his mother wished me luck and hoped that I got all that I wanted but, Asa was her son and she would do all she could to help him. Strange, she did not feel that way about helping her grandchildren.

I have to back-track here, shortly after Asa moved out of the home, I went to visit a lawyer I chose one that I had met before, and had given a reception for a candidate he was backing. I can't at this time remember his name. He was very nice and explained to me that he was a close friend of the family and did not want to handle my case. He suggested I contact Mr. Robert Cooper of Chapel Hill to represent me.

I talked to Asa and told him I was planning to move back to New York and that I was putting everything in storage until I could find a place to live in. My two sisters who are single offered to let us stay with them until my divorce was settled. My sisters came to Durham to help me pack. While they were there, Asa visited me and told me he would have the things in storage sent to us by September.

I left Durham on July 9, 1976 with the children our dog and cat and drove to New York by car with my sisters. When I arrived in New York, tired and still in a daze about all that happened to me. I had exactly \$150.00 with me and was hoping that by the time school opened the children and I would be settled in our own place, and our things in storage would be sent to us.

While in New York I received a call from Mr. Cooper. (I had left my New York address and telephone number with him before I left Durham). He told me I had a court date in September. My sister realized that the children and I were under a great strain and they did all they could to try to keep the children busy sightseeing and visiting relatives to help them unwind. My sisters were such a big help and very understanding. After a while the children began to relax and adjust to their new surroundings.

About the middle of August the children became really nervous for the first time. They were watching their friends and relatives getting ready for school and became concerned about their own schooling. It was during this time Asa called and I asked him to send the children's birth certificates and health records so I could enroll them in school. I also asked about my stock

certificate , he said he would look for them and send them to me. In the meantime I was out every day with the children checking on schools in the area. I knew that I did not want to put them in public school here and looked for a private school that would not be too expensive. After much searching I found a Lutheran Day School that charged \$160.00 a month. I called Asa's Mother and asked her to have him contact me as soon as possible. He called me that day and I told him about the school and asked if he would pay the tuition. He said he could not afford to pay for their schooling. I also asked again <sup>for</sup> the children's records. He said he had some damage to his apartment and he could not locate the records at the time. By this time I knew that he had no intentions <sup>of</sup> sending these papers to me. He was not going to help me and the children. You can imagine the situation, Here I was in New York with two children and just a few days before school opening and no <sup>tuition</sup> money for school, no money for school clothes and no job. I was frantic. I borrowed over one thousand dollars from my sisters . took care of the school tuition and school clothes. I bought a new outfit for myself and started job hunting. Jobs in New York at that time were very scarce and I knew it would take time to find one. I also knew I had to get a job as soon as possible. I did not want to get any deeper in debt. I was hoping my day in court would end all this and I would be getting more help with supporting the children. Asa was at this time sending \$150.00 a month support for both children. I became more concerned every day, I knew the children would be needing their winter clothes soon.

I left New York and returned to Durham the early part of September. I stayed with a neighbor. She was kind enough to keep my sister and me in her home

for the night. I again had borrowed money from my sister to make the trip to Durham, she also traveled with me to give me moral support. This was my first experience in court and I came out shocked, disillusioned and mentally beaten. My lawyer never spoke a word, the only thing that concerned Asa's lawyers and the judge was Asa's visiting rights. Nothing was mentioned about the needs of the children, or about the need of their clothes and other things still in storage. All Asa's lawyers talked about was his expenses and how he could not afford to support his children as he should. They seemed more concerned about ~~his~~ <sup>the</sup> loss of his business. The judge expressed how sorry he felt for Asa going through a business loss and having to start over again. No one mention what the children and I were going through, we were suffering so much more than Asa. He moved out and left us with the burden of his creditors, He never lost any of his personal possessions, He had all his clothes and furniture in his apartment. The children and I had nothing with us but our summer clothes. It felt so strange sitting and listening to these men talk about all that Asa had lost, and never mention anything about what we had lost, (the children and me.). The judge did look-up a federal guide to check the amount of money should send each child every month, I think it came to about \$100.00 a week for each child. He waivered this because he was convinced Asa just could not afford to support his children in this manner at this time. He felt the \$150.00 he was sending was adequate. The question of alimony for me came up, and the Judge told Asa and his lawyers to get together and decide what would be an adequate amount. By this time Asa and his lawyers could hardly contain their pleasure. It was also decided that I return to Durham at a later date

regarding the alimony. I knew that I was over my head in debt and could not ask my sisters to lend me anymore money. I had to think about the children's needs and repaying all the money I had borrowed. A trip back to Durham was impossible. The next day on the train back to New York with my sister I felt for the first time in my life completely alone. I knew my sisters would help me in any way they could, but I knew that I had the responsibility of two children and that I would have to be the one to take the "bull by the horn" and take care of them. I would have to gain employment and soon. Within less than a month after my last trip to Durham I began working for an Insurance Company here in New York. To this day I don't know how I was able to pass the test for employment, I was under so much stress. I had returned from Durham with the children's clothes, book, and personal things, and no more money to help support the children, other than the \$150.00 a month for both children. Asa did call during that summer and asked to come back to Durham and if we did not come back he would do what he had to do. I did not know what he meant by "do what he had to do" until later. I recall

a time in the past when Asa told me he would not support his children if they did not live with him. I did not believe he meant it at the time,

*Now I know better. He also said he would never let his family continue to live in a home or apartment that he was helping to pay for because he didn't*

One of the hardest things I had to do during this time was to come back to New York and try to explain to the children that I was unable to get the money for their schooling and was unable to get their clothes, furniture and personal things. It was very difficult explaining all this to an 8 year old

and a 13 year old, without making them feel unwanted and bitter, the one

*didn't see another way except saying "he had to do it for"*

thing I told myself all during the last year in Durham, I did not want them to ever hate their father. I once begged Ass to keep things on a basis where we could remain friends for the sake of the children. He made this almost impossible. I can never forgive him for the way he treated his children.

That evening I sat down with the children and explained to them that we were starting <sup>a</sup> new life in New York and we would have to put our life in Durham behind us. I felt at the time that this was ~~an impossible~~ <sup>a way to make</sup> things easier for them. I must say I'm very proud of my children they took their new life in stride. Both went to school and no trouble adjusting to the change. I noticed they were able to keep their grades up with any difficulty. I was working and putting aside a certain amount of money each week in order to pay back the money I had borrowed. It took me 3 years, but I paid every one back. After 4 years I was finally begining to see a little day-light. This past year I was saving money so that the children and I could get our own apartment. We really needed the space. Pamela is now a senior in High School, and ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> looking forward to attending college. I was concerned about the school Timmy was attending, I felt he needed more of a challenge in school. Ass is now sending ~~me~~ <sup>me</sup> \$300.00 a month for both children. With prices so high now this amount still doesn't relieve the burden of raising two children for me.

In July of this year the children and I moved into our own apartment in Brooklyn. We desperately needed the space. I knew that things would be difficult for us because our expenses would be higher, but we really needed to be on our own. My biggest problem was a school for Timmy, Pamela

was already settled in one of the best High Schools in New York, and I wanted a good Junior High School for Timmy. I checked a number of schools in Brooklyn and finally found one that Timmy liked and felt comfortable in. The only problem was the money for the school, it was more expensive than the school in Queens. I took my savings from my income tax return and paid for the first half of the school year, and talked with the Director of Admission about the possibility of getting financial aid for the second half of the year. I'm still waiting for word about this. Before our move to Brooklyn I explained to the children that we could not afford to move into a nicer area of Brooklyn at this time but, we would have a little more space and they would find it easier to study. I know people here and we could count on them to help us when we needed it. I also explained to them that in order to make the move we would have to do without a lot of things, and it would not be easy. They both agreed to making the move. We did not have furniture or any of the things needed to set-up an apartment. With the help of friends and family I was able to get beds, blankets, plates and the other things necessary to get started. One of my married sisters give us her old sofa and card table ~~to use~~ until we could get our own things. My family and friends helped me paint the apartment. This is how things stand today. Timmy loves his new school and hopefully I will be able to keep in this school. Pamela is trying to get into New York University, the cost is our biggest problem, she has the grades to make it. The children and I have had to change our life style considerably in the last four years and responsibility of raising and supporting the children has been mine for the last four years. I feel that Aaa should give us more support financially to insure that the children will get a proper education.

Asa's summons for divorce came at a time when I could ill-afford ~~any~~ another expense, somehow I feel Asa knows this. He is again putting me in debt. It seems like every time we start to make head-way, he pops into our lives again to harass us in one way or another. I truly hope that this time the divorce will go through and we get the financial help we so desperately need. I'm tired of having Asa disrupt our lives every time he gets a whim. I know now he will always try to make our lives as difficult as possible. As my daughter put it "Can't we stop him from harassing us?".

I forgot to mention that I left my car in Durham because it was in dire need of repairs. My niece who was attending school in Durham drove the car to New York for me. Before she left Durham the car broke down and she called me and asked ~~what~~<sup>De</sup> what she should do. I told her to contact Asa about getting the car fixed. She called his office but, he never returned his call so she took the car to the garage we usually used and tried to get the car repaired. They told her that Asa did not pay his last bill and they refused to service the car. She took a terribly chance, and drove the car to New York. She drove the car in front of my sister's house and the car just died. With the help of my brother and brother-in-law I was able to get the car working again. They were amazed that my niece made it to New York with the car. At the end of the year I asked Asa to send me the registration for the car and to take care of the car insurance. He told me he was going to cancel the insurance on the car and he would send me the title to the car. The car sat in front of the house for two years before he sent the title to me. I had a car I could not drive for two years. The car was hit by another car while parked in front

of the house. I again got in touch with Asa's parents and asked to have Asa call me. I told him about the accident and gave him the name of the person and his Insurance Company. He said he would take care of it. Today the car still has a dented rear fender. I don't know if he ever contacted the man or his Insurance Company. All I know is that the car was never fixed. The car still needs alot of repairs it has big rust spots and needs to be painted. I have been depending on my brother and brother-in-law to keep the car running.

I have been putting things down on paper each day as they come into mind so I know that I have jumped around and everything may not be in order. I have also tried to remember all that went on in the last four years.

My decision to remain in New York with the children and not return to Durham was not a quick or easy one and I know our lives would not be easy. I found after Asa moved out of our house, that a great pressure had been lifted from me. Until that time I was unaware of the strain I was living under. The children began to develop talents that never showed up while living in Durham. They both love to draw and are quite good at it. Pamela was even able to pass the test for The High School of Music & Art. She also passed the test for Stuyvesant High School, she decided to attend Stuyvesant. The school was aware of her ability to draw and put her in special art classes. Timmy is now writing for his school paper and draws a lot at home. Pamela turned 13 the day before we left Durham, she was very withdrawn at that time, she is now much more out-going and friendly. The only concern the children have expressed about the divorce is that they do not want to go back to Durham under any circumstances. They said they do not feel comfortable with their

father because they don't feel close to him now and never did. I know that no matter what Asa is still their father and is entitled to visit with them, although in the four years that we have been in New York, he has visited them one time. He has not in the four year asked them if they needed anything or if he could help them in anyway. Asa has only once offered to

*bring for the children: clothing, stationery & New York, and that*  
*happened in July of 81 - through a letter from his lawyer.*

To bring these papers up-to-date I have to tell you that the children received a phone call from their grandparents for the first time in four years. Two weeks after the call I received the summons for divorce. They said they wanted to talk to the children but, I think they wanted to get my new address and telephone number.

The End, The End, The End.