

## Chapter 6 Case Study

### The Case of Bernard Louis: Part 1

#### *Note Dictated by Psychiatrist, Dr. Kahn, When Admitting Bernard Louis to the Hospital*

UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Intake Note

CONFIDENTIAL

*Admitting Psychiatrist:* Dr. Sally Kahn

Bernard Louis was brought involuntarily to the admitting ward by county police who were acting on a court order to have him committed for 24 hours of psychiatric observation.

Mr. Louis is a large man, well over 6 feet tall. He weighs more than 200 pounds. When he appeared at the hospital, his face was very red, and his hair and clothing were disheveled. Otherwise, he seemed normal. According to his wife, who accompanied him to the hospital, Mr. Louis had been working alone, 18 hours a day, building a "golf course" in their suburban backyard. His plan was to turn their half-acre lot into a private country club with a clubhouse. He hoped to sell memberships at \$5,000 a year. The clubhouse would offer catering facilities as well as a bar and pro shop. He planned to build sand and water traps and to invest in a fleet of motorized golf carts. When his wife suggested that he might be getting a little carried away, Mr. Louis lost his temper, shouted in rage, and threatened to leave her for another woman. He claimed to have four girlfriends whom he regularly "satisfied" ten times a night.

Two days earlier, when his wife had left the house, Mr. Louis had taken all her jewelry to a pawnshop. He had used the money to invite strangers off the street to an all-night party that finally had to be stopped by the police. Mr. Louis had not slept at all for three days before his wife obtained the court order that brought him to the hospital.

Mr. Louis was difficult to interview because he talked nonstop. He complained that he was being persecuted and that his wife was just jealous of the many women who were after him because of his sexual prowess. There was nothing wrong with him. In fact, he claimed "I've never felt better in my life." When asked if he was happy, Mr. Louis responded, "Am I happy? Why, if I felt any happier, you could sell tickets. I'm so happy, it should be illegal."

## **The Case of Bernard Louis: Part 2**

### ***Excerpt From Intake Interview Between Dr. Kahn and Bernard Louis***

BERNARD LOUIS: I don't know what I'm doing here. Here, here ye, the court is now in session. Bring on the witnesses, bailiff. I am an innocent man. The old bag just wants me out of the way so she can keep the country club for herself and get rich. Oh, I wish I was a rich man, all day long I'd diddle diddle dum. Funny, I—

DR. KAHN (interrupting): What is so funny?

BERNARD LOUIS: Funny? Funny? You think I'm funny? Well, people laughed at Einstein, you know, and also at Carnegie. Who are you to laugh at me? You are an incompetent doctor. You just keep laughing. I'll show you. You'll be sorry that you laughed. Laughing on the outside but crying on the inside, just like in the opera.

## **The Case of Bernard Louis: Part 3**

### ***Excerpt From a Social Work Report on Bernard Louis***

*Social Worker:* Li Cheong, MSW

*Referral:* Dr. Kahn requested this report on Bernard Louis, a 49-year-old insurance salesperson who was involuntarily admitted to the hospital last week.

According to his wife, Bernard Louis is one of two children. His parents are deceased, and his sister, Phoebe (52), lives in California. According to Mrs. Louis, Bernard's mother was frequently depressed. Although she was never hospitalized, she was treated with antidepressant medications over many years. Bernard has told his wife that his mother had little to do with the children when they were young. His most common memory was of his mother lying in her bed, alone, for much of the time. Mrs. Louis also reported that Phoebe Louis has had a lifelong tendency to become depressed and is currently being seen by a psychologist.

Mrs. Louis stated, and a check of hospital records confirmed, that Bernard was admitted to University Hospital three years ago after he had gone three days without sleep. On the day of his admission, Mr. Louis had withdrawn all of his savings from the bank and was talking about investing in a diamond mine, which would make him "a billionaire." Mr. Louis responded well to treatment and was discharged after 12 days. He was not seen again in the hospital until the current admission. However, his wife reports that he has consulted both psychologists and psychiatrists in the interim. These consultations were for depression. Mr. Louis was treated with a combination of medications and psychological treatment. Mrs. Louis noted that both of her husband's hospital admissions were preceded by business setbacks. Before his previous admission, he had lost a great deal of money when a business he had invested in had gone bankrupt. More recently, he had found that an employee had embezzled a large sum of money from his insurance firm.

## **The Case of Bernard Louis: Part 4**

### ***Nurses' Notes From Bernard Louis's Hospital Chart***

*23 March 8:00 a.m.:* Mr. Louis is in a state of manic excitement. He alternates between amiability and irritability, sometimes within a moment. He is talking incessantly and is restless, pacing the floor, unable to sit still. He commenced treatment with lithium carbonate.

*25 March 10:00 p.m.:* Although he is still talking rapidly, Mr. Louis has become far less irritable. He has even volunteered to assist with feeding and nursing other patients. This morning, he watched a television show for about 15 minutes, although he kept interrupting by talking out loud.

*27 March 11:00 a.m.:* It is clear that Mr. Louis is improving, in appearance and in behavior. He is much less distractible, he can carry on a conversation instead of a monologue, and he is getting along with all of the patients and staff.

*29 March 2:00 p.m.:* Mr. Louis is no longer manic. Although his mood remains good, he is behaving with decorum and seems almost serene. He has lost his pressure to keep talking, his irritability, and his need to keep moving. He seems ready for day visits home.