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Case of Heloderma (1)

Tommaso is a 7 year old child brought to me by both parents for serious school problems. I agree with the mother over the phone to talk that I will talk with her alone before I see the child, but I have a feeling that she doesn't like my request very much. The parents and child arrive at my office, but Tommaso and his father wait outside in the waiting-room while I start my conversation with the mother. The lady seems very aggressive with rude manners, she doesn't like me very much. When I ask her who gave her my address she answers that it was her sister in law, who has been a patient of mine, she advised her to bring Tommaso to me. She informs me that she has already consulted various specialists and that now she wants to try homeopathy. I sense she has lack of confidence in me and from the tone with which she speaks of her sister in law, I sense that between the two of them there is no mutual understanding. The lady spontaneously says:

'We don't know what to do for Tommaso anymore, we have tried everything ... from logopedia to psychotherapy even with the rest of the family or by himself ... we also took him to a priest but there is no way of making him speak properly ...'

ask her what does she mean by the word properly:

'Since the beginning he has never spoken well, he just says the words in which he's interested. He often skips the verbs, the verbs are the most difficult thing to make him pronounce ... at the beginning he skipped entire sentences and expected us to understand him ... or he would get angry. It's strange because his teachers have always said that he's intelligent and that he has passed all tests until now. But he doesn't want to speak properly.'

ask the mother to give me an example:

'It's difficult but now you will see ... I just wanted to add that we thought it was a psychological problem because Tommaso began having troubles when he was 3 years old when his little sister was born ... at the beginning he was very jealous and started to talk only to his elder sister and stopped talking to us. The only one who has always understood him is our elder daughter, who is 5 years older than he is. She understands everything he says and Tommaso ... never gets angry with her. To tell you the truth he had already shown some reticence in expressing himself since he was very little, but since the other one was born ... '

ask her to explain what she means when she says that Tommaso gets angry:

He insists on repeating what he was saying over and over again; even 30 times in the same way without changing even a single comma. He repeats it louder and louder, and in the end he shouts.

ask what was Tommaso's reaction when his little sister was born:

don't know what to say but he says that he has only one sister and that the little one isn't his. He says that he hadn't wanted her and that she bothers him and since then he is aggressive with his sister."

ask the mother what does the father do for a living:

"He owns a bar and we work together. I know that this is a problem but we can't do it differently. He gets up very early in the morning and when Tommaso wakes up his grandmother is there. He sees us at night when we come back tired ... but don't think wrongly, we love our family and we have three children for that. We were told a thousand times that we should spend more time with Tommaso but we must be fair to all of our children ... he isn't the only one, even if he does everything he can to attract our attention. The doctors we have seen so far have told us that he isn't ill and that when he has grown up everything will be alright- we should take care of him more."

After saying this the lady is very cross and she can hardly hide her disappointment. I ask her something on the relationship between Tommaso and his grandparents:

"Well, this too came out during the therapy: the grandparents had only sons and could hardly wait to have a daughter. For this reason maybe Tommaso lost his role as youngest in the family after his sister's birth ... my in-laws have a preference for our first daughter. But at the end it's a talking ... his problem remains."

ask the mother how does she think Tommaso reacts to this language difficulty:

"Who knows? Sometimes it seems like he's making fun of us ... because if he has to write things he does it properly but he doesn't say them entirely... I don't know what this means. We were also told that he has a very strange form of language problem because children usually skip the name of the verbs...at the beginning he skipped almost everything, but now he is stubborn about the verbs."

ask the lady to let her child and husband in. Tommaso is a chubby boy with a frowning look. He seems very suspicious. Once in, he looks around with his eyes lowered, turning them from one corner of the room to the other. He looks at me with his head down. I ask Tommaso when he was born and he answers correctly. I ask him what his favorite activities are: Colors, drawing: paper...white sheets of paper. Not too big...

ask Tommaso if he wants to make a drawing for me: colors, drawing... okay. He draws very synthetically and with few well defined lines, as if he were a comic-strip artist. He works in the middle of the page and with few lines he represents an indefinite animal. The mother interferes: "It's a dragon ... he is very fond of them ... even when he was smaller he always wanted to see the little house where there were little Chinese things and a procession with a dragon ... Tommaso owns and looks towards his mother and says: "Dragon hidden ... egg big."

ask Tommaso what his favorite food is. The mother interferes again, she doesn't let him talk freely:

"He is crazy about eggs ... he would eat them everyday if he could."

give the lady a sign to let her son talk, the boy says:

'Good eggs. Not too big ... pasta too, rice, tagliatelle ... eggs best of all.'

notice that Tommaso wears a heavy wool sweater. I ask him if he likes the mountains:

'Too cold. Better seaside ... Not as cold, better the heat. Nice sweater very warm.'

the mother intervenes again saying that this is characteristic of Tommaso. Since he was very little he has felt cold and we have had to dress him a lot ... he is very lazy and he doesn't like to move to participate in sports ... maybe this is why he doesn't like to feel cold. When he was little we went a lot of time in the open and he didn't feel the cold. At this time Tommaso stops the mother: cold ... cold. You don't know I called and you don't know, you don't know, you don't know having said this the child blushes with an angry look.

ask Tommaso which games he prefers: computer, television, checkers ... Ken with his camper (thanks to my non recent culture in toys I remember that Ken is Barbie's friend Tommaso's sister both have many of these dolls) I ask what does Ken do with his camper: he travels a lot, during the day ...

ask him what does Ken do during the night: in bed alone. The girls sleep together ...

ask Tommaso what his room is like: big bed not very ... many pictures on the wall ... television computer ... bedside with lamp.

ask him what the light is for: I don't like to sleep in the dark ... everything dark fear.

ask him what frightens him but he doesn't answer me. The child stops looking and turns his head away not to look at me. I ask Tommaso if he wants to make a drawing about fear. The boy draws carefully paying almost obsessive attention to the particulars about his house. He spends a number of minutes finishing the flowers on the sofa of the sitting-room and to draw all the objects and nick-knacks in the various rooms. While waiting for him to complete the drawing, I leave the office and the parents show an evident impatience. In the end Tommaso draws his parents leaving the house. The mother is cross and is trying to move the conversation to another topic: Tommaso always says that he wakes up at night and feels something bothering him in his legs. He has to run them to let the formication go away and he wants to come and sleep with us.

ask him to explain:

mother) He has been doing this for months he says that he feels like little animals are walking on his legs ... once he was scared by a millipede on a wall. Since then he says that he feels them walking on his legs. Tommaso stops her: It's not true ... it's not true ... it's not true it walks on the wall and comes in my bed ... what if it comes in the bed ? You are with daddy I'm alone.

ask the mother something about the child's sleep.

he's very agitated, he rubs his legs very often with his hand ... seems that he wants to warm them up not. It's not an itch- I have never seen him scratch. In the child's remote case history nothing particular shows up only the fact that he hasn't had any exanthematic illnesses and that he was vaccinated for everything possible. I believe they didn't do anything against yellow fever only because there is no risk in the Po Valley.

lan: Remedy 10M k

After a few days I get a call from the mother who tells a tonsillar symptomatology of the child. I see Tommaso and I confirm tonsillitis with hypertrophy on both tonsils. It is so swollen that the tongue is almost touched. The submandibular lymph nodes are hypertrophic but they don't hurt. His tongue is dirty and patinated with white, the breath is smelly and reminds me of a sulphurous smell. He has a temperature of 39.8;

I prescribe a placebo and after 2 days the situation is normal again. I see Tommaso again after 2 months. Like the previous time I first have chat with the mother. I'm astonished by the fact that even though the child has made great progress (which the lady admits) she doesn't express any enthusiasm: We are very happy because we have seen an improvement.

Tommaso has begun to talk to us and every now and then he says some verbs. The teachers are very surprised by the fact that the child is not as obstinate as before- on the contrary he seems to look for other ways to build the sentences. He is more willing to make himself understood. Considering the mother's coldness, I let Tommaso in.

The boy tells me spontaneously: The 2 of us without mother ? I ask him if he wants us to speak alone but he shakes his head to say no: Your mother is not with you doctor ? I ask Tommaso if he means that my mother is not present while I work: Right ! He answers satisfied with a smile. I answer that I didn't know that he worked at school: If you in bed you don't eat ... if I'm in bed no eggs nor tagliatelle. The mother interferences: You shouldn't take everything so seriously ... I ask to explain: Today he said that he doesn't want to go to school anymore and we told him that going to school is his work and that if he doesn't work he doesn't eat.

Tommaso says: Grandfather likes to go for walks.

The mother says: Grandfather has worked a lot when he was young. Tommaso says: me too. I'm impressed by his sharp answer. I decide to intervene and I asked Tommaso if his grandfather liked his job: Grandfather old carpenter, you can see what he has made. A lot of furniture, doors and window frames. Daddy's work you don't see ... the coffee goes in the belly. I ask Tommaso to help me better understand something about his work: strain ... but not very much, but enough to make the table, the homework, the drawings, the room, the toys. Everything always in order. Having said this Tommaso hides his face like the previous time.

I ask the mother if Tommaso had any tonsillitis before.

Mother: I had forgotten to say, but you know ... with three children ... he often got ill because of his throat and we gave him many antibiotics. Then the pediatrician prescribed PENICILLIN for almost a year. Since then he has been well.

I ask when all this happened.

Mother: When he was 3 years old ... but I don't think this is related to the birth of his sister. When I was a child I too suffered from tonsillitis and I wasn't jealous. She is very annoyed, without me having said anything about the sister's birth.

I prescribe: Remedy Helo 200 C

After 4 months I see Tommaso again this time accompanied by the father. The father doesn't seem to like me very much either. He talks as if he would like to apologize. I brought my son because my wife says that she is not able to establish a good relationship with you. She says that

ne felt judged ... but my wife has always had this problem, everytime we went to see a psychologist ... besides this, she told me to tell you that we are very happy because Tommaso is recovering. At school the teachers say that he's making rapid progress and that he's doing a little mimicking too. His taste in food has changed: He eats less sweets and doesn't ask for eggs anymore. He now sleeps well alone in his room and doesn't want the light on to go to sleep. Tommaso speaks and I notice that this time he uses more verbs and speaks in a natural manner not afraid anymore why should I be scared ... I know there is no one in the dark and besides sleep with Lucia (youngest sister). Now we made peace and we sleep holding hands. We love each other and I'm teaching her to talk. I've studied speech so much that by now I know everything ... and can teach better.

The father says: We are very grateful ... your cure seems to work very well. I ask Tommaso to make me a drawing and he draws 3 parrots: The animals are of 3 different dimensions, the one in the middle has an open beak. I ask the boy what the parrots are doing: The one in the middle has just woken up and yawns ... the other 2 are waiting so they can sing together afterwards. I ask Tommaso if these 2 parrots are his father and mother: They look for food (the parents) while the little parrots are having fun ... I ask what happens when they come back to the nest: They go to sleep because they are tired. I ask what the little parrots do: They must sleep ... but the one that is yawning has just woken up and doesn't feel like sleeping. His parents scare the shit out of him (the boy means that the other 2 little parrots are afraid of their parents and so they sleep even if they don't like to). I prescribe a placebo. After that visit I hadn't seen Tommaso for a long time. The father called me once because Tommaso had chicken pox: I prescribed a placebo and let the illness run its normal course. I receive news of the child from his aunt whom I see regularly. It looks as if the mother harboured a deep grudge against me. The only thing I can honestly think of to reproach myself over was in the difficulty I had in controlling my facial expressions during the 2 visits in which we had met. I'm very satisfied with Tommaso's evolution and the aunt has confirmed that the speech problems and tonsillitis have not presented themselves again in these last 2 years.

A year after Tommaso's improvement, his mother got very ill—a nervous breakdown, according to the aunt. At the moment the mother is seeing a psychiatrist and has been hospitalized in a clinic for mental illnesses. I was only able to see Tommaso again a few weeks ago after I asked the aunt to bring him in with her daughter. I wasn't able to speak much to Tommaso but still I noticed a richness of words and a clearness of exposition. When I spoke to him he did not skip any verbs and spoke fluently. The aunt has made the child take the remedy at 2 different occasions: For a sore throat last winter and a few weeks ago. Tommaso has recovered well without any tonsillitis. The woman confessed that her brother didn't think it was necessary to bring the child back to me because he considered him completely recovered. I also know that Tommaso's father is tired of seeing doctors and that he considers me the last link of a chain of doctors who have made his wife ill. Fortunately the aunt is a very well balanced woman. Since the first hospitalization of Tommaso's mother the aunt takes care of the boy and girls daily. She seems to have a very good relationship with them.