

Aethusa: Intensity Turned Wayward

Learn a Remedy Through Cases

We have already made a beginning with *Opium* and *Ambra-gresia*. This is the third remedy we are going to understand through cases. Happy hunting!

CASE I

Miss TP, 23 yrs old, consulted Dr Rajan Sankaran for

1. Bilateral oedema of feet since several years, in the evening, and < hanging down,
2. Scanty menses since 4 years. The swelling of the feet also occurred when menses is suppressed by bathing. Patient stated that during menses if she had a bath, the menstrual flow would cease abruptly and resume after 3-4 days. The menses would leave indelible stains as also her perspiration. She also *had numerous complaints before examinations*- urticaria the evening before the exams, sleeplessness, hair fall, nausea and giddiness. She had a craving for sweets, chocolates, fish and spices. *She was averse to milk* and does not like meat. She has *fear of darkness*, robbers, ghosts and high places; marked fear of dogs. She has a strong image of what she has to be; very self-conscious. Finds it difficult to mix with others; shy of public places, people. Speech is fast and tense. *Cannot sleep in total darkness; if she wakes up in darkness feels breathless and anxious*. Cannot tolerate hunger.

Rajan Sankaran analyses his cases in terms of miasms and had identified some in-between miasms to narrow down the choice of the remedy. In this case, both acute and sycotic miasms are involved; the external threatening factors are fear of dogs, robbers and ghosts, darkness, high places and point to *Stramonium* for the

acute; the other symptoms of timidit, appearing in public, fear of exams and conscientious about trifles may lead to *Silicea* (Sycotic). The remedy should, therefore, cover both miasms.

He has taken the following rubrics:

1. RM 999-Anxiety, darkness agg: *Aeth, Calc-carb, Carbo-an, Carbo-veg, Hypoth, Nat-mur, PHOS, Puls, Rhus-tox, STRAM, Zinc* (I have used Robin Murphy's repertory-KV)
2. RM 1115: Timidity appearing in public: *Aeth, AMBRA, Arg-nit, Ars, Carbo-veg, Dys-co, GELS, Lyc, Med, Phos-acid, PLB, SIL, Staph, Thuj*
3. RM1046-Fear, examination, before-*aeth, anac, arg-n, carc, gels, lyc, pic-acid, sil*
4. RM 284-Delusion, dogs sees, *aeth, arn, aur, BELL, calc, calc-ars, cal/sil, lyc, merc, puls, sil, stram, sulph, verat, zinc* (the remedy does not occur in fear of dogs)
5. RM 191 -Breathing difficult, dark in the-*aeth* (only remedy)
6. RM 4920- Menses suppressed, bathing from; *aeth, ant-cr, calc-ph, cup, nux-mosch* (In many rubrics *Aethusa* comes in second grade but due to italics it is not possible to depict it)
7. RM 544- Milk, aversion to- *acon-l, AETH, ant-t, arn, ars, bell, bov, bry, cact, calc, calc-s, carbo-veg, carc, cina, guai, ign, lac-d, mag-m, mez, NAT-C, nat-mur, nat-s, phos, puls, STAPH, Sul-ac, Sulph, tub*

Aethusa-cynapium is in each rubric and hence was selected as the remedy; it was prescribed with good results. Dr Rajan Sankaran has not given detailed follow-up.

(Source: The Substance of Homoeopathy, pp48-49)



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CASE 2: PORTIO DYSPLASIA

A 38-year-old woman consulted Dr Corrie Hiwat of Netherlands for two problems—one for severe allergy to sun and the other one was recently discovered PapIII. She is well dressed, modern looking with lips and fingertips painted bright red. Face is red and has a starry look. She lived with a man without marriage and has 2 cats as pets of which she is very fond.

LIFE SPACE:

She is an art teacher and likes to work with modern and bright colours. Only child of her parents. As her father died several years ago, she looks after her mother, a psychotic patient, though she dislikes her. She says that her mother was egotistical and selfish and did not look after her father when he was afflicted with cancer. "He was dying but she would complain how hard everything was." Her mother weeps daily after her husband's death from cancer. The patient conceived when her father was sick but later had an abortion, saying that "it is impossible to have child when my father is dying" as if it was an unethical thing to do. But later after her father's death she had again an abortion, and it was found *that she did not like children at all*. She was a member of almost any organization set up to protect the animals. She would weep over the suffering of an animal, *but the sight of a baby suffering did not move her at all*. Her pet cats sleep with her in her bed and have the best of everything. In her words, "Animals are innocent, loyal, and don't betray you." She smoked, drank alcohol and went to bed at late hours. She had a strong aversion to milk, since childhood. Thirsty and drinks all day; does not like sweets. Chilly and cannot stand the heat of the sun. She likes to keep the windows open. At the end of interview she told that she has abdominal pains every evening for a long time.

She had anticipatory anxiety before the examination.

At the age of 22 she had a gallbladder operation.

After she was administered *Aethusa* all her complaints disappeared including the abdominal pain. (Details not given). Her Pap became normal. The situation with her

mother is still the same but bothers her less. (See the analysis at the end of the third case)

CASE 3:

Another lady, aged 38 yrs old, consulted Dr Hiwat for severe pain in her left knee, since past 2 years. The knee gets swollen and she can hardly walk.

She finds life to be very difficult wondering that she should not have been born. (right after birth she did not breathe and it took a lot of effort to revive her). She is incapable of working, feels insecure and without self-confidence and she is undergoing psycho-therapy.

"I am a loner, afraid to be a burden to someone. I am afraid to be abandoned; I do not form ties easily and find it hard to trust people. *I hate children and do not like them and I do not want them*. I fear that when I beget children I would reject them. *I have more affection for animals* (she has also two cats); *they are sincere without egotism. I treat them as my children.*"

"I have always been in search of genuine love; though I had slept with more than 100 men what I got was only sex. That does not interest me. I always wanted the love of my parents, never from anybody else. It has to be them. So I do not let anybody come close, not even my boy friend. It is hard for me to trust anyone. My mother stood between my father and me. I hate her". She is chilly and cannot stand the heat of the sun at all and it makes her sick. At night her feet get hot and she puts them out on the cold floor. Wakes up suddenly during sleep with palpitations.

She is not thirsty (in the earlier case the patient was very thirsty) and has a *strong aversion for milk and meat but likes sweet*. She said in reply to a query *that her mother did not nurse her for more than 10 days*.

Rx: After *Aethusa* (no potency indicated by the author) everything was said to be fine. No pain in the knee (See stitching pain, knee on standing) She could cycle for hours. What was important was that after the remedy her parents visited her home for the first time after several years and she was reconciled to them and felt that she did not understand as to why she hated them



so much. Right after the remedy she had a lot of abdominal complaints: diarrhoea, empty hungry feeling etc – typical *Aethusa* symptoms. - (Dr Corrie Hiwat)

Dr Hiwat summarizes as under:

1. Both the patients were dressed well and had bright make-up. They were < from heat; the staring look and red cheeks.
2. Both had aversion to children (There is no support in the materia medica as far as I could see and it is probably a clinical symptom which has to be looked for in future-KV)
3. Their love for animals. (Here again there is only a symptom delirium- sees cats and dogs . it does not say whether they are happy to see them or afraid of this must be a clinical symptom from George Vithoulkas and R Morrison's clinical practice_kv)
4. Both had anticipatory anxiety before examination.
5. One patient wept a lot while in the other case her mother wept all the time.
6. There was overt or introverted hatred for the mother- one patient said that she hoped that her parents would die on their journey and was angry when they returned safely.
7. Some rigidity in the opinions of these patients; it seemed once they formed an opinion they would not change it.

“Something seems to have gone wrong with *Aethusa* patients in early childhood during the breast feeding period- some deep disturbances between mother and child resulting in closing off the emotions and developing hatred.” (Perhaps the absence of bonding between the mother and the child, which comes from breast feeding and motherly touch during such periods may account for such a hatred for mother especially. I wonder whether the mother's state during pregnancy if enquired into would throw some light. - KV)

(Corrie Hiwat-*Aethusa*- Homoeopathic Links, 3/95)

CASE 4:

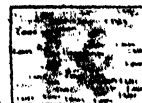
This is another Rajan Sankaran's case . Only reportorial rubrics are available in the case summary given by

Dr Gunavante on this remedy in his book “ The Genius of Homoeopathic remedies.”

(KR43) Fear on closing the eyes *Aeth*, *Caust*, *Carban*); fear before sleep, (KR47) to close the eyes lest should never wake up (*Aeth* is the only remedy); (KR769) Respiration difficult in the dark (*Aeth* is the only remedy) *Aethusa* was prescribed. The second symptom of this case seems to be characteristic of this remedy as pointed out by Dr George Vithoulkas – (see how beautifully the above case confirms the symptom)

I came across two good write-ups on this remedy from the pens of George Vithoulkas and Late Dr Sarla Sonawala, who had a penchant for coining appropriate words to give the essence of remedies. In her view the essence of this remedy is “ Intensity turned wayward” (That is hence the caption of this article). She says “ in contrast to *Agaricus*, *Aethusa* is endowed with powerful emotions. An intense person, his attachments are deep and involve a select few. (DD *Ambra-gresia* also has restricted affection to his family and close relations -KV). Here in lies the nucleus of the remedy and its vulnerability. Any blow to this emotional center may initiate a chain of afflictions of mind and body and the blow may come as death of the loved one or rejection.”

I QUOTE FROM VITHOULKAS: “In regard to mental-emotional characteristics, we frequently find that the *Aethusa* individual remains separate from others- a man apart. He is withdrawn in a singular way. Inside he experiences very deep, intense emotions yet he does not communicate these emotions to others. He may be moved to tears, but tears do not come. He may be friendly but he appears aloof. . . .It seems at a certain point *Aethusa* person decides to refrain from communicating with others; the emotional injury or disappointment may be mild. We do not find in *Aethusa* a prolonged history of any bitter disappointments. . . .In other cases we find instead a slow-growing disillusionment. A sense that no one has fully understood or responded



to the patient's emotions. The patient may feel that communicating with other people is not worthwhile... Thus the *Aethusa* person becomes a loner, though not out of insecurity or fear."

Such intense emotions, however, must find an expression and the *Aethusa* person has a single outlet- animals. He may have extraordinary communication with the animals and develops an exaggerated attachment and communicates all of his primal emotions to them. He loves animals more than he loves a human being. In some cases he may collect dozens of animals or run an animal farm as Dr Sarla Sonawala says *a form of vicarious ventilation*. Surrounding himself by hordes of animals *Aethusa* talks, listens, feeds and cares for them: an animal farm of George Orwell?

George Vithoukias writes in his *Essence of Materia Medica* "Crazy for animals, cats and dogs etc- looks after them with unnatural passion. Talks to animals, when he does not talk to people. Reserved and self-contained but with strong inward emotions. If someone were to throw a stone on one of his pets he could become livid and literally have an urge to kill that offender. (This is clearly evident in the cases nos 2&3). Roger Morrison adds in his *Desktop Companion* "Devotes entire life to animals and becomes intensely attached to his pets. Collects pets in great numbers." After treatment with *Aethusa* these animal collectors will begin to give away their animals; this change of behaviour demonstrates the pathological nature of their attachment to animals.

"There is an alternative path for the release of emotional energy; the patient may become extremely involved in social work. Through the social work he expresses his love but without need to directly communicate about his feelings. (*Or is it his feeling for the less fortunate in society-KV*)

"This overloading (of emotions) sets the stage for much of the pathology of *Aethusa*. we may often see, as the brimming sub-conscious mind overflows the patient begins to talk to himself (*DDStaph*). He may not even notice people around him as he voices his thoughts out loud."

"He has host of fears at night. He is aggravated by the dark and the darkness seems to permeate his being producing a heavy sensation on his chest: fears suffocation in the dark. He also fears death; this is peculiar and striking in that it tends to occur just at the moment that the patient is falling asleep; just as he falls asleep subliminal, tumultuous emotions force themselves into his awareness threatening to overwhelm him and he starts with a marked fear of death. In the repertory *Aethusa* is the only remedy listed under the rubric "Fear of sleep-fear to close his eyes lest he should never wake"- a very impressive and highly characteristic fear of this remedy. (See Rajan Sankaran's case above). In many cases the *Aethusa* patient does not want to sleep (George Vithoukias).

GEORGE ADDS IN HIS ESSENCE: - Intensity comes out in sleep-sleepwalks; salivate during sleep; cannot control his breathing -have to get up; fear of not waking up after operation.

There is another peculiar fear: he may dread the thought of a family member dying. The emotions that he invests in his family may be so intense that he feels that he would not be able to cope with such an eventuality. (*DD Ambra*) He fears that such a grief will cause him to lose his emotional control, that he may go insane. However despite such a passionate attachment to his relatives direct emotional contact between himself and his family is non-existent. (*GV Cases 2 &3*)

Because of the suppressed emotions irritability arises and in women it can occur two days before menses and reduces with menstrual flow and an increased sexual desire. But this desire wanes after the cessation of menses and it may become aversion to sex. (In case no 3 the patient, though she had sex with several men said that she was not interested in sex and blamed the men as only interested in sex.)

Other characteristics: peculiar flushing of face; the face becomes red; In other cases the face becomes furrowed and makes the person look old; Colitis is common chronic condition in *Aethusa*. There is of course marked aversion to milk.



There will be marked yellowish vaginal discharge and Vithoukaskas says that *Aethusa* should be added to the rubric "Yellow leucorrhoea, stains linen."

"DD: *Aethusa* should not be confused with certain other closed personality types such as *Ignatia* or *Natrum-mur*." These later types are highly refined, oversensitive people in whom hurts and grief produce a type of emotional cramping or hardening. *Aethusa* is not hypersensitive not so refined. He has intense emotions, which are more robust, more primal and strong – like a child's emotions; embitterment is unlikely and the fragile, hysterical elements of *Ignatia* and *Nat-mur* are not found in this remedy." (Vithoukaskas)

"Instead of giving vent to grief, *Aethusa* swallows it within. Nonetheless the disease expressions of each remedy may differ (See article on *Ambra* where grief arising from death of family members or close relations has a devastating effect KV). All communications are stopped and *Aethusa* withdraws and retires from the world. Are vertigo and somnolence symbols of the same withdrawal? He carries the idea that he stands apart, unlikely to be understood by ordinary mortals." (Dr Sarla Sonawala)

"Yet the power of his suppressed emotions is such that they smoulder within, their smoke may suffocate. Hence the need for vicarious ventilation!. Their flow deviated, the emotions turn to non-human species – the animals. If there be any social contact that will be at the level of impersonal activities with no deeper, personal involvement. *Aethusa* abhors milk, rejects it by vomiting it out. Does the malady of milk-allergy symbolizes rejection of life itself?" (Dr Sarla Sonawala)

Fears and anxiety writ large on his face, paranoid delusions as well as convulsions further remove him away from the world he inhabits in."

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread- Is this the moral of *Aethusa Cynapium* alias "fool's parsley". (Dr Sarla Sonawala)

OTHER POINTS:

Aethusa is known as fool's parsley and it is indeed a medicine for fools. There is great weakness of mind and body, writes Clarke. The characteristic symptom

is inability to think or fix the attention. Guided by these symptoms he gave this remedy to an undergraduate preparing for the examination. In this case also the patient had great fear of examination.

Another marked characteristic is *Intolerance of milk: vomiting of everything taken, especially milk*. For regurgitation of food an hour after it is taken, this drug is invaluable, according to Guernsey. The child is so exhausted after vomiting that it falls asleep at once. It awakens hungry, eats and vomits again.

Dr CLARKE in his preface to this remedy further writes, "Violence is one of the notes of its action- violent vomiting, violent convulsions, violent pains and violent delirium." There is great weakness of mind or body-one characteristic is inability to think or fix the attention. Dr Clarke cites two cases of students where this remedy was given to remove this complaint of inability to have concentration on studies and one of them suffered from headaches in the process.

Guernsey says" The mental symptoms peculiar to children and frequently adults are, great anguish and crying. As the disease progresses the patient becomes more retired in his disposition and more inclined to weep."

One feature noted in cases Nos 2 & 3 are that the patients clearly said that they do not like children. It is not clear as to why they said that. This point does not come out in either Vithoukaskas's or Sonawala's write-ups. This aspect may have to be watched in other cases of *Aethusa* in future clinical practice.

The chart prepared by Dr Sarla Sonawala gives a graphic picture of this remedy and it is appended to this article. (see next page)

Sources:

1. Substance of Homoeopathy- Dr Rajan Sankaran
2. *Aethusa*-Corrie Hiwat- Homoeopathic Links-3/95
3. Essence of Materia Medica- George Vithoukaskas
4. *Aethusa*- Intensity turned wayward- Late Dr Sarla Sonawala
5. *Aethusa*- George Vithoukaskas
(Both articles appeared in IJHM issue –April-June 1986)
6. Dictionary of Materia Medica- Dr Clarke
7. The Substance of Homoeopathy.(pp48-49)- Dr Rajan Sankaran