

## Psychiatry in pictures

CHOSEN BY ROBERT HOWARD

Do you have an image, preferably accompanied by 100 to 200 words of explanatory text, that you think would be suitable for Psychiatry in Pictures? Submissions are very welcome and should be sent direct to Dr Allan Beveridge, Queen Margaret Hospital, Whitefield Road, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 0SU, UK.



Stephanie Collins (b. 1985), sketch number 14.

'Before I became seriously ill I had always had a passion for art – with an eye on going to either the Ruskin School or doing an Art History course at Cambridge. At school I gained the Sixth Form Art Scholarship, but simultaneously began to develop severe depression. Eighteen months later, I was being held on a Section Three in a local adolescent mental health unit. During my stay at the hospital I recorded events in my sketchbook, from my voluntary admission through to discharge five months later. Any words written in the pictures are generally things I remember hearing other people say. Sometimes I found this the best way to record things – using other people's descriptions of events where I felt unable to use my own'. This sketch is one of a series of 28 covering the period of Stephanie's hospitalisation, serious suicide attempt and nasogastric tube feeding (intrusive hallucinatory voices stopped her from eating). Of this particular sketch she says: 'On one-to-one observations as I had been throughout my Section, I was bombarded with threats and consequences. I was informed that a bed at the Infirmary was reserved from the morning onwards and that if I didn't drink before 4 pm I would be taken there immediately'. Later sketches in the series detail her experiences with the nasogastric tube: 'Keep swallowing, keep swallowing. Just another foot to go'. The starkness of the images, combined with unforgotten throwaway lines of routine clinical contact, convey her sense of alienation from those charged to help her. Although she missed the A-level examinations because of her illness, Stephanie has been accepted on an Illustration HNC course and is very positive about the opportunities that this will give her to continue drawing as a career. With thanks to Stephanie Collins for permission to reproduce her sketch.