

Title: *Boston Evening American* Final Edition

City, State: Boston, Massachusetts

Date: 26 August 1953

Page: 2

**Police, Kin
Fear Smith
Girl Suicide**

Wellesley Police Chief Robert B. MacVey expressed [expressed] fear today that pretty Sylvia Plath, 20, brilliant Smith College student who vanished mysteriously [mysteriously] from her Elmwood st., Wellesley, home, may have committed suicide.

The chief said the girl's mother, Mrs. Aurelia S. Plath, Boston University professor, and several of her closest friends whom he had questioned [questioned] all agreed that Sylvia was depressed and "that it was very apparent that suicide was on her mind."

MacVey said the student was a patient of Dr. Kenneth J. Tillotson [Tillotson], a psychiatrist, and that on Monday morning, a few hours before [before] she dropped from sight, a Wellesley druggist had filled a prescription for 50 capsules of a sodium-base sedative which she had obtained from the doctor.

The girl's mother gave her two pills Monday noon and put the bottle with the other 48 capsules under lock and key," the chief reported. "Her mother left for Boston early in the afternoon leaving Sylvia at

**home with her maternal grand-
parents [grandparents].**

**"When Mrs. Plath returned
home about 4 p.m., the grand-
parents [grandparents] said they had been
sitting outside all afternoon
and had not seen Sylvia's note,
saying she had gone for a long
hike and would return the next
day. It wasn't until much
later that Mrs. Plath found
the bottle of pills was missing,
too."**

PENS 'MAD GIRL' POEM

Sylvia's mother said she be-
lieved [believed] her daughter's actions
were brought on by a temporary
nervous affliction induced by her
intensive literary work. Sylvia
was a guest editor of the current
issue of the magazine "Mademoi-
selle [Mademoiselle]," which prints a digest of
her brilliant scholastic achieve-
ments [achievements] and her latest poem, en-
titled [entitled], "Mad Girl's Love Song."
The poem is reprinted on this
page.

Police today concentrated their
search for Sylvia in the dense
woodlands at the dead end of
Elmwood st., not far from her
home. Officials believe she could
not have gone any great distance
because she had little, if any,
money with her, and she took no
extra clothing.

"Only a week ago, Sylvia visited [visited] a close friend and spent considerable time in a discussion [discussion] of suicide," Chief MacBey

said. "The girl mentioned nothing [nothing] about suicide personally, but talked about the subject generally [generally]."

The chief said his discovery of this incident, the mother's fears and the fact that the bottle of pills was missing, all increased the already mounting fears for the missing student's safety.

SCOUTS JOIN HUNT

Boy Scouts and other volunteers [volunteers] joined police today in the woods search. Leaders of the hunt were upset over the inability [inability] of a State Police bloodhound to pick up a scent in the woods, and police admitted they were further puzzled by failure to find any neighbors who reported seeing [seeing] the girl walk toward the woods on the afternoon she vanished [vanished]

Sylvia's mother said she feared The girl's intense application to her studies and her literary endeavors [endeavors] had caused her depressed attitude.

"She recently felt she was unworthy of the confidence held in her by the people she knew," said Mrs. Plath. "For some time, she has been unable

to write either fiction or her more recent love, poetry."

"Instead of regarding this as just an arid period such as every writer faces at times, she believed something had happened [happened] to her mind, that it was unable to produce creatively any more.

"Although her doctor assured [assured] us this was simply due to nervous exhaustion, Sylvia was constantly seeking in which to blame herself for the failure, and became increasingly [increasingly] despondent."

Mrs. Plath was at first hopeful that her daughter might try to communicate with her sponsor, Mrs. Olive Higgins Prouty, authoress [authoress] who wrote "Stella Dallas" and other books, but learned that Mrs. Prouty is vacationing in Maine from her Brookline home.

The girl, daughter of the late B.U. Prof. Otto Plath, won two college poetry awards and had stories and poems published in several leading national magazines [magazines].

Mad Girl's Love Song

By SYLVIA PLATH

Smith College, '54

Reprinted from August, 1953, issue of Mademoiselle by permission

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;
I lift my lids and all is born again.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

The stars go waltzing out in blue and red,
And arbitrary blackness gallops in:
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed.
And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite insane.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

God topples from the sky, hell's fires fade:
Exit seraphim and Satan's man:
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.

I fancied you'd return the way you said,
But I grow old and I forget your name.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

I should have loved a thunderbird instead;
At least when spring comes they roar back again.
I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead.
(I think I made you up inside my head.)