Experimental Soccer and the Good Life
Cheryl Mattingly

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This chapter sets out the parameters of the book as a whole, proposing a first-person virtue ethics as a way to understand the moral projects of African American parents caring for children with severe and chronic illnesses and disabilities. It opens with an “experimental” soccer game in which a boy in a wheelchair has been included in a children’s neighborhood soccer league. Drawing upon this example, the chapter outlines the key claims of a virtue ethics framework in which parents struggle over how to provide their children a “best good life” and the dilemmas and tragedies that entail their efforts to care for these “intimate others.” The first-person framework that is offered draws both upon philosophical virtue ethics and hermeneutic phenomenology.

Moral Tragedy
Cheryl Mattingly

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Chapter 5 involves an ongoing debate between a mother and clinicians, especially her daughter’s primary physician, a hematologist who is treating her daughter for sickle cell anemia. This mother, clinically informed and passionately involved in her child’s care, strenuously advocates for a highly risky and experimental bone marrow transplant that clinicians deem too medically unsafe. Why is the mother so ready to pursue something so dangerous? What is at stake for her, morally speaking? Conceptually, this chapter challenges an overly narrow focus
on concepts such as biopower and biosociality and argues that moral
vulnerability is about more than being morally subjugated. A conception
of tragedy is central to moral life and a first-person virtue ethics is
invaluable for its exploration.