

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

EYG

Support person present: No

1. My name is EYG My date of birth is 1971. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Life before going into care**

2. My name at birth was EYG and according to social work files I was born in a Mother and Baby Unit in Marsden Green in Warwickshire. I got shown a birth certificate that had that written on it and said father unknown. I saw it about ten years ago.
3. My earliest memory is being in my nan's flat in Aberdeen and watching my mum going out at night with different men in cars. I was about two or three years old. There was me, my mum, my nan and my grandad in the family. My mum had another baby who I haven't seen since I left care. She is three years younger than me. Her name is and she is my half-sister. She was about six months old when she was put into the same placement as me.
4. My mum's name was but she has changed her name over the years. I met her when I was nineteen and she had a totally different and foreign sounding name. My nan was called but I can't remember my grandad's name.

5. My mum was a young mother. In my records it was mentioned that she'd had a baby adopted that was older than me, and in Edinburgh. I don't know who that was and they were adopted at birth. These details are things I've read in my records.
6. I was taken into care from the age of three and a half. I don't remember what led to me being taken into care. I spent a week in Mastrick Children's Home before being moved to a foster home. I don't remember being in the children's home and it is something I know from having read my records. All I remember is we were taken to this house and I wouldn't let go of my mum. The baby was put on the sofa and I had to be dragged off my mum and she left and that was it. This was the home belonging to the EYH-EYI, my new foster carers. The baby was my younger half-sister.
7. The social worker at the time was Sheila Maxwell. She was the one who knew things were going wrong. She was my social worker until I left the EYH-EYI as far as I knew.

**Foster care with EYH-EYI, Aberdeen**

8. EYI and EYH were a married couple. I called them by their first names and not mum and dad. They tried to get me to do that, but I couldn't as I knew my mum. He was a coach driver. He wasn't around much as he was driving his coach, but I never saw him driving his coach. He didn't have much of a presence around the house. She had black curly hair and he always used brylcreem in his hair. His hair was black and all combed back. He always smelled of Old Spice as well. I hate that sort of smell now and it brings back bad memories.
9. I was put into foster care along with my half-sister, and she was treated differently by the EYH-EYI. They had two sons at home, and and a daughter called. They also had another foster child called and she was the same age as my sister. They were both babies when we went in there. Both of them called EYI and EYH mum and dad.

10. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were much older than us. When I was ten, one of them was aged eighteen or nineteen. [REDACTED] was the oldest child of the three. He was always riding motorbikes. I remember they always played loud music in the boys' bedroom and it was always Meatloaf that he played. [REDACTED] was quite a few years older than me. When they were teenagers we were small children. [REDACTED] was older than us too.
11. EYH [REDACTED] had childminding children too. They were in the house through the daytime. I think her motivation for having so many children in the house was just about the money.
12. The home wasn't big, it was a maisonette. There were three bedrooms. All the girls were in one bedroom and sometimes EYH [REDACTED] slept in one of the girls beds. There was a set of bunk beds and two single beds in the room. They were for me, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and sometimes EYH [REDACTED] too. I shared the bunk beds with [REDACTED] and I was in the top bunk. [REDACTED] had a single bed in the middle of the room and [REDACTED] had another single bed against the wall.
13. When EYH [REDACTED] slept in the girls' room she would sleep in [REDACTED]'s bed. I never understood why EYH [REDACTED] would sleep in our room. It wasn't until later on I began to wonder if she knew what her husband did. She had her own bedroom with EYI [REDACTED] and maybe her motivation for coming into our room was to get away from him. The boys were in the second bedroom and EYI [REDACTED] and EYH [REDACTED] had the other room.
14. It was an upstairs maisonette with a set of concrete steps that went up to the front door. We had neighbours downstairs and they called the police a lot. Inside the front door and up another set of stairs was the hallway. Then the door on the landing led to two bedrooms on one side and one bedroom on the other side. Down a corridor, you would turn right and there was the bathroom, and straight ahead was a living room. Through the living room you could turn into the kitchen. The living space was all on the one floor. There was a shared garden downstairs in the front and the back.

## Routine at [REDACTED], Aberdeen

### *Early memories*

15. My earliest memories were of sleeping on the bedroom floor all the time. Also having to do EYH [REDACTED]'s hair. I had to stand behind her and she sat in an armchair alongside a wooden fireplace with an electric fire. She'd always sit there. I had to brush her hair and put it into rollers. It was just me who had to do that and from a young age.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

16. I was sent to bed at four o'clock every day. This meant I didn't get an evening meal. I was seriously underweight when I left there. I wouldn't sleep when I went to bed and I'd just pretend to be asleep. I was on the top bunk and my head was just by the window and the curtains had big purple flowers on them. I would just stare at them.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

17. Anything could set EYH [REDACTED] off such as if I didn't eat something. I had to stand in the kitchen to eat my meals. They had an old 1960s style kitchen cupboard with a front door that came down. I had to stand there to eat my meals on my own. Everyone else was eating in the living room. I always put it down to the way I reacted about my mum and always wanting my mum.
18. I got up in the mornings and go to the kitchen to stand up and have my porridge. I hated the porridge. She made it. A lot of the time I didn't eat it. I remember one time, out of spite, she tipped a can of shandy into it because I refused to eat it. She told me to eat it and I didn't. She lost it and she lashed out at me.
19. I had to eat what I was given. I wasn't allowed to leave any food that I didn't want. If I didn't eat it EYH [REDACTED] would lose her temper. She used to spike my food at other times to make me eat it or as a punishment if I was caught stealing. I'd be physically stood in the kitchen and she'd stand over me and I'd get hit and she'd tell me I had to eat it.



20. She used to have bottles in the kitchen of something called quash that was dilute juice. It was like a storage cupboard of them and the bottles were all full. When no-one was around I used open the lids and drink some of it because I can't remember having drinks.
21. I didn't always get the same food as the other kids. [REDACTED] was a lot bigger than me so she had sweets and treats and I didn't. I wasn't allowed to help myself to anything in the kitchen. I don't remember any fruit in the house.
22. I had lunch at school. I didn't eat it. I was very tiny for my age and undernourished. Breakfast was porridge, lunch, when I was at home, was fish fingers and beans. Just basic food. Sometimes I'd have meat and potatoes and not very often. The [REDACTED] EYH-EYI prepared the food, but I peeled the potatoes.
23. I remember having an Easter egg. We all had the same egg every year with our names on.

#### *Washing / bathing*

24. We'd have a bath once a week on Sunday. I had to share a bath with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We all had the same water and we went in one at a time. I'd be given a bath, I wasn't left alone to do it. I was watched by [REDACTED] EYH or [REDACTED] to make sure I washed myself.
25. I didn't have any toiletries of my own. I can't remember brushing my teeth.

#### *Clothing / uniform*

26. After school I would wear this purple woolly jumper and a pair of dark trousers. Every single day. I got clean underwear, but not every day. I didn't know I had clothes until I left the [REDACTED] EYH-EYI house. I had a whole load of brand new clothes when I left that she'd had all along. The clothes that I'd never seen then went with me.

## *School*

27. I started nursery not long after I arrived. The nursery was near to where we lived. They quickly noticed I was turning up with bruises and unexplained injuries. I don't know how soon after starting at nursery that the injuries were noticed. I found this out from a social worker who obtained my files much later on.
28. At school I wasn't allowed to be EYG [REDACTED] I had to be known as EYG [REDACTED]
29. There was an incident and I don't know if it was recorded by social services. When I saw my records later on I was only allowed to see some of what was written, and parts were blacked out for data protection. The nursery had to put cream on me down below because I was very sore.
30. I was bullied at school because I was a foster kid. I was treated as an outsider and didn't fit in. I felt isolated and on my own. I used to wear the same clothes every day. I used to wet the bed at home and I had accidents at school, because of everything that was going on. I had a uniform at school so I was dressed the same as the others, but the other kids knew I wet myself.
31. Primary school was a bad time for me. I wasn't getting on well at school and I don't remember having any friends at school. I loved drawing and that was the only thing I loved at school. I didn't know until after I left the EYH-EYI [REDACTED] and went to another school that my writing was really bad and my speech was really bad.
32. I used to steal money from [REDACTED]'s school blazer as well. I used to go to the shops and buy sweets, partly because I was hungry. People used to see me pick up food from the floor in school because I was hungry. I never got anything like a play piece to take to school. Other kids had one.

33. I tried stealing from a shop once when I was at school and I got caught and I was in loads of trouble. EYH wasn't impressed and I got beaten. She told me I had no right and she looked after me.
34. I can remember EYH telling the schools that I'd been hurt and in the end I'd say to school that someone had beat me up on the way to school or after school. It got to the stage there was no point in saying anything different as they wouldn't listen.

#### *Religion*

35. I don't know if they were religious, but I remember having to go to church one day with my sister and [REDACTED] and we had to wear these purple dresses and carry posies. We got water put on our heads. I don't know what religion it was. I never went again.

#### *Work/chores*

36. EYH never did anything and she never looked after the house. Her own children didn't do any housework. I had to do cleaning and washing dishes. I was like a slave. I had to sit in a corner of the living room all the time if I wasn't cleaning. In the mornings I'd have to Hoover up in the living room and kitchen before school. After school I had to peel potatoes. I can remember doing clothes washing and using her twin tub for that.
37. If she needed cigarettes she'd send me to the shops with a note. In summer I did the garden, cut the hedge and everything. I learned to cut the hedge at a young age. She got me to strip wallpaper with a scraper. I was just there for her and his purposes.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

38. Holidays were always spent in Blackpool and in a caravan. We'd do a stopover in Perth on the way. All of us went on these trips, including the older boys. I always slept on the sofa in the caravan where the table was in the kitchen area. That was quite

cramped and my legs were knocked about when I was trying to sleep. I was too big to sleep on that sofa.

### *Leisure time*

39. In the living room there was a sofa on the back wall, a plastic black leather type thing, it had orange cushions on it. There were two windows and an old fashioned TV in the corner. There was a big fireplace with wooden shelves and an electric fire. EYH's armchair was next to it.
40. The other kids would be out playing or on the sofa. EYI, the dad would be away driving his coach. I sat on the floor by the windows and the end of the sofa. I was made to sit there because I was a bed wetter and I wasn't allowed to sit on the sofa.
41. I used to hate being in the house because I wasn't allowed out. I learned to be independent at a young age. Weekends were no better than during the week. Life was the same, day in and day out. I used to get sent to Duthie Park which was down the road and I walked there. It was the only place I was allowed to go to.
42. I'd get sent there on my own and I'd have to cross the roads. I'd learned to walk there by the age of six. I don't know why I was sent there, but I wonder if they had meetings. I was given a time to come back. I wasn't given any pocket money when I was out of the house.
43. I can remember playing in this park and it was a big place. It had big slides in the playground and trying to play with other kids there. I had no awareness of stranger danger and I would talk to people and sit with them. I remember having cups of tea with old ladies. Then I walked home and I hated walking home. I'd have to be home by three or half-three and I was away a good couple of hours.



### *Personal possessions*

44. I don't remember having anything of my own. I had a toy penguin that I'd had since birth. I never got it when I left. I never got pocket money from them.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

45. One Christmas, the downstairs neighbour rang the police which I think was because of the noise she heard from the house I was in. The neighbour was called Mrs [REDACTED] and she was an older lady and I liked her. My sister tripped and got a wooden golf club down her throat. I think it was an accident. There was a lot of blood. The neighbour called the police because she was screaming.
46. All I remember was I was sitting on the floor at the time. The police didn't speak to me and they didn't speak to any of the kids. Then they left. They were called out a few times by the neighbours. I don't understand why they didn't do anything.
47. I hate Christmas and I always have. There was a tree at the [REDACTED] but there was no celebration. I can't remember a Christmas dinner. I just have visions of myself sat on the floor in the living room. The other kids got presents, like the golf clubs my sister had. All the gifts I can remember for me was socks in paper bags.
48. For my birthday every year I got socks in a brown paper bag. It wasn't until I left there that I realised they had my birthday on the wrong day. There was no birthday cake. The other kids had loads of clothes and gifts. I remember my sister [REDACTED] wearing different dresses and skirts. She was always out playing and she was quite a chunky girl as well.

### *Visits / Inspections*

49. I can remember being taken to an access visit and apparently that was to an auntie. She worked in a light shop in Aberdeen. I never saw her again. I saw my mum two or three times.

50. I saw my nan by accident, I don't think I was supposed to see her. I had to go shopping with EYH as there was no-one to look after me at home. We went to the Fine Fare supermarket and my nan was in a top floor flat, not far away from Fine Fare. She shouted at me and threw a bracelet to me. It got confiscated by EYH. I was still only little when it happened, maybe seven or eight. I knew it was my nan. I remembered she had black curly hair. I wanted to be with her, but I wasn't allowed and I don't know why.
51. Apparently my nan wanted to adopt me when I was five but she wasn't allowed. I got told this by my mum when I first met her. I haven't seen anything in my records about it and I haven't been told officially. A lot of things I wasn't told about until much later on.
52. I don't remember the EYH-EYI having family members round to their house to visit.
53. No-one other than social work came to visit me. I think social workers turned up unannounced and that's why I got dragged out of my bed sometimes. It was always Sheila Maxwell who came from Mastrick Social Services. That was under Grampian Regional Council.

*Siblings/contact*

54. I always knew that [REDACTED] was my sister. We'd gone into the foster house at the same time. We looked like each other, but she was bigger than me. We hated each other. She was very close to [REDACTED] and they had a different upbringing to me. They were out together all the time and they were the same age.
55. I never got on with the other kids in the house. We had different lifestyles. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had nothing to do with me. [REDACTED] the son, helped me once. He saw me getting beaten really badly by his mum and he took me off her. He told me to go to my room. I don't remember what happened after that.

56. My sister [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were only six months old when I started living with the EYH-EYI [REDACTED] EYH [REDACTED] used to look after the babies, fed them and changed their nappies. She was all for babies, but not interested in a girl of my age even though I was very young. She was still interested in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as they got older. They were always out playing and I used to get jealous of [REDACTED] because she wore pretty skirts or dresses. I was always in trousers and a jumper.

### *Healthcare*

57. I've had my arms in plaster as I've had broken bones from the way EYH [REDACTED] treated me. One time we were on holiday in Blackpool. I can't remember how old I was, but I was still quite young. My arm wouldn't move. I can remember I was in pain for quite a while. It felt like a long time. We were all in the caravan and I was sleeping on the sofa. There was a bed made up from the dining table and another sofa. I was sleeping on just one sofa with my legs dangling.
58. I had bruises on the backs of my legs where they kept squeezing passed me all the time. My legs were getting hurt on the sofa. We were walking outside somewhere and [REDACTED] noticed I wasn't moving my arm. The foster mother had broken it. She had a habit of just grabbing my arm and I'd try to get away and my arm would get twisted.
59. I got taken to the hospital in Blackpool, I think the same day, and my arm was x-rayed. They said it was broken. I had to drink this liquid stuff before the X-ray. Then my arm was plastered. I've had both arms broken. The same thing happened with the other arm, but at a different time.
60. I was in pain for a while and I didn't complain as I'd learned to keep it to myself. If I said anything I would have been in trouble.
61. I remember being thrown into rose bushes and covered head to toe in scratches.
62. I can remember walking to the park with both of my ankles hurting and I don't know if it was the bones that were broken or the ligaments that were damaged. I was just left

to get on with it. I just remember walking on them and the pain, and no-one did anything.

63. I can remember doctors taking blood from me for tests. That was from the children's hospital in Aberdeen. That happened several times. I don't know why they were taking blood from me. I never got to the bottom of why this was done. I can remember having my weight measured and sitting on scales. I know that was in the hospital as I remember all the white tiles. No one did anything about me being undernourished.
64. The only times I remember seeing a doctor were the occasions I've given, when my arm was broken, my blood was taken and I was weighed.

#### *Running away*

65. I can remember threatening to run away and the foster dad said 'go on then'. So I did and I only got as far as the end of the road and I got pulled back by [REDACTED] When I got back, EYH [REDACTED] did her usual and started hitting me because I was ungrateful. She knew I didn't want to be there. I was classed as a naughty child by the end because I'd been stealing and running away.

#### *Bed Wetting*

66. I'd get in a lot of trouble for bed wetting. If I wet the bed I wasn't bathed afterwards. I'd just have to go to school as usual. I had to wash my bedding in the twin tub washing machine.

#### **Abuse at [REDACTED], Aberdeen**

67. I was sexually abused by the foster father from a young age. This was especially on a Saturday when EYH [REDACTED] was out shopping. She would leave me at home and the other kids were out. She would leave me behind because I was too much trouble. I can't say



how old I was when it started, I just know I was really young and I used to hate Saturdays.

68. Every Saturday he'd be at home and she'd take the girls out and the boys did their own thing. He'd always tell me it would be quiet and it was always in their bedroom. I can remember their bedroom, it had a horrible smell and it was the colour of the walls. It was like Parma violets, it was that colour.
69. I think EYH knew and that's why she slept in our room sometimes. I tried to tell her about it once and she beat me and said I was lying. The sexual abuse happened until I left the placement.
70. As far as I know the other children were not subjected to the same abuse that I was. I can remember the others out playing and I would be at home and by four o'clock I was in bed. I had the top bunkbed and I could see them through the window from my bed. I was treated differently from the others. I thought it was because I was always on about my mum. I didn't get to see my mum very often. I think I saw her two or three times. All through my time in care, all I wanted was my mum. Everywhere I went I would tell them that and it never happened.
71. If I did anything wrong, I didn't know until my teenage years that EYH was on Valium, and when she lost her temper she really lost her temper. She had a twin tub washing machine that had a metal strip around it that was never fixed and it was sticking out. I used to get thrown against it and I've got the scars on my head from it. I think she was purposely aiming for it.
72. If my head hadn't stopped bleeding I had to sleep on the floor in the bedroom and I wasn't allowed to sleep on the bed. Then the mattress from the top bunk would be put on the floor for me. I slept on the floor quite a lot. It was always EYH who inflicted physical injuries on me. I never got any medical attention for these injuries. EYH used to put some yellow cream on my cuts that she got from a white tube. I've no idea what this was.

### Reporting of abuse at foster placement with EYH-EYI

73. I even told school what was going on. One day I had a really thick ear and all badly bruised. I had cuts on my head as normal. I also wet myself at school a lot and at home. I was in the head teacher's office and her name was Mrs Reid. She was quite an old woman. I can't remember the name of the primary school. It wasn't far from the house and I had to walk to the school. The head teacher asked me what happened and I said it was the foster mother and I told her about the foster father as well. I told her about the physical abuse and the sexual abuse as well.
74. So she called the foster mother in to school. EYH told Mrs Reid I was lying and I was just trouble, because I was a foster child. Maybe I was about eight years old. I got hit for it, in the office and in front of the head teacher. The head teacher said I was ungrateful because EYH took time to look after me and I shouldn't be saying things like that. EYH hit me across the head in front of Mrs Reid. It was always my head that got hit.
75. I didn't find out until the age of seventeen that it had been reported. All incidents were reported, but nothing was done because I didn't give the name of an abuser to the social worker. The schools reported unexplained injuries to social work.
76. The social worker, Sheila Maxwell, kept picking me up and she knew something was going wrong. I remember she picked me up one night when it was dark and she took me out of bed and wrapped me up in a coat. She had a big brown fur coat and she wrapped me up in it and carried me out to the car and took me to the children's centre. It was not far from where I lived. I had to sit there drawing pictures. I think I was about seven or eight. She kept taking me to this centre to draw pictures. It happened quite a few times, but not in the middle of the night.
77. Sheila picked me up after school as well. I think she'd ask me if I was ok and I'd sit drawing and I remember drawing lots and lots of pictures. I can't remember her asking

me to draw anything specifically. I only remember I had to sit and draw. To me, she knew and she didn't do anything. I can't remember her asking any direct questions about what was happening at home. If she had, I don't know if I would have told her.

78. EYH didn't say anything to me when I came back. EYI told me to keep quiet because no-one would believe me.
79. I saw Sheila Maxwell quite a lot. I don't think I ever disclosed the abuse to her. I had tried telling someone twice, that was EYH when I told her about her husband and she told me I was lying and I was causing trouble. I was really young when I told EYH that. I remember her beating me in the kitchen for it. The other person I told was Mrs Reid at the school. After that there was no point in trying again.

#### Leaving foster care with the EYH-EYI

80. I got told one day by Sheila Maxwell that I was being moved to another family. There was no explanation. It was just me who was being moved and not [REDACTED]. I got taken to see this new family. I went to meet the family once as a visit while Sheila was there to look round. She asked if I wanted to live there and I said yes. The car was packed with all this stuff that I didn't know I had. It was all new clothes and I think EYH had them all the time.

#### Foster care with EYJ-EYK [REDACTED] Aberdeen

81. The new foster parents were called EYK and EYJ and I called them by their first names. They tried to get me to call them mum and dad or mummy and daddy. I just couldn't. I could never work out how old EYJ was. He seemed older. They dressed old.
82. They had not long moved from Australia to Aberdeen. They were Scottish and had been teaching in Australia. They'd adopted two girls in Australia and didn't have



children of their own and didn't want any as she didn't like babies. One of the girls was the same age as me and there was just six months difference between us. Her name was [REDACTED] and the other one was called [REDACTED]. She was about two years younger. I was ten and a half when I went to live with them. I was a messed up child by then.

83. I was excited because it was a new house and like nothing I'd seen before. They had their own house, it wasn't a flat. They were posh and they seemed really friendly at the time. At the age of ten I just jumped at the chance to get away. My first impressions were that they were a nice family. Their house was big.

#### **Routine with the** [REDACTED] EYJ-EYK

##### *Early memories*

84. The day I arrived at my new home I tried on every single piece of clothing that had come with me. I'd never seen them before. They told me off and told me to stop changing my clothes. They got rid of all the clothes and bought more new ones that they liked. We, the three children, had to dress a certain way. The parents were quite middle class.
85. The other two girls were well spoken. I felt quite common. After the visits with Sheila Maxwell started dying down, they'd be correcting the way I spoke as they said it was really bad. I had a broad Aberdonian accent. They couldn't understand what I was saying. They were teaching me how to speak properly. That made me feel bad. They said I had to change my writing as well as they didn't like it. I had to learn to do cursive writing which I struggled with but I had to keep doing it.
86. I shared a bedroom at first with their eldest, [REDACTED]. We clashed and we didn't get on. She threw my mum in my face and I lost my temper. She was saying I was no good and I would be just like my mum and have kids. Her parents said that I was going to be just like my mum as well and homeless, unmarried with kids. That was [REDACTED] EYK



and EYJ who said that. I'd been there for two or three years before they started saying that to me. They'd say that sort of thing when I wanted to see my mum.

87. I tried telling them both about the abuse as well, I think after I'd been there a year or so. They said it wasn't true and they didn't believe me. I'd told them about EYI and EYH. Its written in my file that I said I was abused which I found out later on, but surely they would have seen that or been told it.

88. After a couple of years things started breaking down. At the start it seemed all new.

#### *Mornings and bedtimes*

89. On a typical day, they were very strict. I had the same routine as the other girls. I had to get up early. I had to wash myself and get ready for school and teeth brushed and get my homework ready and bag ready. They checked my bag to check everything was in there and I wasn't taking stuff that I shouldn't.

#### *Washing and bathing*

90. I had showers supervised by EYJ to make sure I washed my hair properly. I was a teenager. That made me feel dirty. I felt dirty anyway, but they couldn't see that. When he supervised me, the door was open. It seemed normal to them. The other girls didn't get this supervision as they did what they were told and kept themselves clean and they said that I didn't. They even got the oldest daughter to supervise me. I couldn't be trusted to do anything.

#### *Food/mealtimes*

91. I was given lots of food and there were a couple of medical issues because they overfed me and put me on high calories. I had to have Complan, meal replacement drink, with every meal. That was to bulk me up. Then they changed it to a high fibre diet and everything I ate had to be high fibre. A doctor told them off and said they had to stop as my bowels were swollen. It was too much for me. They still carried on.

92. They made our packed lunches and it was all very healthy with wholemeal bread, peanut butter, sultanas or peanut butter and banana or peanut butter and cucumber. I started to not eat them. I didn't get any pocket money. I didn't get any sweets as they didn't believe in them.
93. When I got home after school I got my bag checked. They'd realised that I'd stopped eating lunch. They weren't happy about that and I had to write an essay about why I wouldn't eat my lunch. I explained I didn't like it and he said that's not good enough, its healthy food. I didn't get any other food. They just kept putting it in my bag. I just kept hiding things so they wouldn't find them.
94. Dinner time would be a very healthy meal made from scratch. We all had to sit at the table. We had certain manners and after we'd taken a mouthful we had to put our knife and fork down and put our hands on our lap. If I didn't want to finish my food I still had to stay there until I'd finished it, even if it took all night.

#### *School*

95. I changed school. I was in Primary seven when I left the [REDACTED] I then went to the same school and same class as their daughter, [REDACTED]. It didn't work. It might have been Underhill Primary School. I got moved to a different school that was my secondary school. I then went to Dyce Academy and [REDACTED] was in another Academy as we weren't allowed to be in the same school. We were fighting all the time.
96. We had to change bedrooms as well and I had to share with the youngest, [REDACTED] I got on better with her. Me and [REDACTED] just clashed from day one. She was the oldest just six months younger than me and I came along and she wasn't the oldest any more.

### *Leisure time*

97. When I moved there I had a thing about dolls for a while. They would buy me a doll all the time. I used to try and sneak one into my bag to take to school. In the end I got fed up with dolls. I got a play piece for school.
98. Then I taught myself how to play the guitar. I started to cut myself off again and I wanted to do things on my own in my room.
99. If I had free time in the evening to watch TV it had to be programmes that they recommended. It couldn't be the things that other kids at school were watching, it had to be educational. In the evenings I had to sit to do my homework and they'd check it. If it wasn't right I'd have to do it again until it was right.
100. I wasn't allowed to go out with my own friends or choose my own clothes as I got older and into my teens. They were still really strict. I wasn't allowed out to the cinema. It wasn't educational and it was a waste of money. I didn't get pocket money.
101. At weekends, we went to the boat that they'd bought. We had to help them do it up and do sanding and varnishing. Everything was supervised.

### *Trips/holidays*

102. The holidays were good. We always went away for six weeks abroad. It was France mainly. They'd have their own boat or their own caravan. They were quite well off.

### *Chores*

103. The chores I had was to keep the bedroom tidy, as did the other two and we had to do homework and do reading. The mum did the cleaning and washing. I had to dress a certain way. I had to wear Clarks' shoes, a lacey shirt done up to the neck. At school I had a uniform of shirt, tie and skirt.

### *Religion*

104. They weren't religious. They didn't believe in God. No one explained to me if I was baptised when I was with the EYH-EYI. I still have no idea.

### *Christmas and birthdays*

105. Christmas was probably a normal one. We had food, opened presents and we were grateful for what you have. We didn't get gifts like make up or perfume and the three of us wanted them. I still wasn't keen on Christmas. It was just another day. EYK was into the nativity story and she had old fashioned story books with Christmas activities that we had to do. We hated it.
106. It was different from not having a Christmas or birthdays to having them. A birthday would be a family celebration. I'd get a cake baked by EYK and I'd get to choose what meal I wanted. As we all did. I wanted any meal with chicken in it. Junk food wasn't allowed. I got presents of dolls. As I got older I started to hate dolls. The gifts changed as I got older and they brought me a guitar. I'd just shut myself in my room to play it. I loved drawing but they said there was no career in drawing.

### *Visits*

107. At the start I would get visits from Sheila and she would be there every few weeks. She visited the house, and didn't take me out. She spoke to me in front of them and not by myself. She'd ask how I was getting on and I'd just say 'fine'. Sheila turned up one day saying that they were going to adopt me. I'd not been there for a year before that happened. She asked how did I feel about that and I just said ok. That was in front of them as well. No-one else spoke to me prior to the adoption other than that. Once the adoption was going through that was it and I never saw her. I was with them from being ten and a half to sixteen. I don't remember seeing a court order finalising my adoption.



108. EYJ [REDACTED] mum was really nice and bubbly. I couldn't understand it and it threw me completely. We were quite close and she liked it when I did drawings. She treated me like a girl. His mum got leukaemia and died when I was with them. He also had an auntie [REDACTED] who lived in Ayrshire. She was really nice and she was into painting. She tried to encourage me and he told her off for it and putting silly ideas in my head.

#### *Sibling contact*

109. I wasn't allowed any contact with my natural family. I didn't understand why. I never saw [REDACTED] after I left the EYH-EYI [REDACTED]. I didn't see my mum again until I found her when I was nineteen.

#### *Healthcare*

110. When I was fifteen. I'd had enough. I tried [REDACTED] when I was with them. They told the people at the hospital that I was just attention seeking and there was nothing wrong with me. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
111. I got taken to hospital. They got told off at the hospital as she'd given me salt water to make me sick. They told her that was dangerous and she could have drowned my lungs. I told people at the hospital that I wasn't happy and I didn't want to be with the EYJ-EYK [REDACTED] and I was sent home the next day. I wanted to be with my mum. I was crying all the time in hospital. I told them about the physical chastisement. Then EYK [REDACTED] and EYJ [REDACTED] turned up and said I was attention seeking. I was sent home with them. There were no social workers again and no counselling.
112. I also [REDACTED] when I was in school. They said I was attention seeking. The head teacher saw what I'd done. The teacher spoke to me and I told her what had gone on in my life with both families and said I wasn't happy. She spoke to EYK [REDACTED] and EYJ [REDACTED] and was told I was a very troubled girl. They were both teachers and knew how to talk to other teachers.

113. We'd moved to England by this stage and I was in another school. We moved to England when I was thirteen. We moved to [REDACTED] in Buckinghamshire. I got moved to an all-girls' school called Brudenell Girls Academy in Amersham as they didn't want me mixing with boys. I was troubled. I was a day pupil. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to two different schools.
114. I started self-harming and [REDACTED] before we moved to England. When I went to hospital because of [REDACTED], I'm sure it was in Aberdeen. I wasn't taken to hospital in England after [REDACTED].
115. I used to have my ears pierced from a very young age at the EYH-EYI and EYJ [REDACTED] took out my earrings. He said I wasn't allowed to wear them. I had to have an operation on my ear lobe as it was infected. That was when I lived with the EYJ-EYK [REDACTED] and because my earrings never got changed when I was at the EYH-EYI [REDACTED]. I think the operation took place at the sick kids hospital in Aberdeen.
116. When I started my periods with the EYJ-EYK [REDACTED], I was given a packet of sanitary towels and I started to get embarrassed about having periods. I knew they were keeping track of my periods. I ended up hiding my sanitary towels as I felt so ashamed.

#### *Running away*

117. I ran away once from the EYJ-EYK [REDACTED] house when we were living in England. I think I was fifteen. A police dog found me at two or three in the morning. I told the police I didn't want to go back but I'd told the police why I didn't want to go. The police officer had a conversation with the EYJ-EYK [REDACTED] and left me with them. I told the police I was being physically hurt. I don't know what was said. I didn't go back home after school that day I ran away. I just walked and walked and hid in a park.

#### *Discipline*

118. EYK [REDACTED] was a remedial teacher and EYJ [REDACTED] was a head master. I can't remember what schools they worked at, but not the ones I went to. It was hard work, it was like

being at school 24 hours a day. In my first year with them, it was strange we had to write essays on 'why did we do this?' They had this thing called, who, what, why, where, when and how. We had to write essays about it. They would read it and if they didn't like it we had to re-write it, over and over again.

119. We also had to do this exercise as well that they called 'Bobbing up and down'. You'd have to stand up, then sit on the floor cross legged, then stand up, then sit down and keep doing it as a punishment until they said we could stop.
120. We all had these red books, our punishment books that we had to write our essays in them. They were red spiral books.
121. I wasn't allowed to wear make-up, I wasn't allowed to wear jewellery. I had to wear what they said. It had to be sensible at all times. I wasn't allowed to mix with boys. It was quite prim and proper. I didn't have make up and jewellery to wear but I'd use girls' make up from school. I'd forget to wash it off before I came home. I was a rebellious child. To me I was too old to be adopted into a family that I hardly knew. It was just after a year with them that I was adopted.
122. In that first year it seemed alright at first with the EYJ-EYK until things started settling. I was learning all these punishments, re-learning how to speak how they wanted and it was like doing education all over again. I wasn't at a level that their daughters were. It was constant homework and they checked my homework. If they didn't like it, I'd have to do it again, again and again until it was right. I just hated it because I felt I could never do anything right.

#### **Abuse at the EYJ-EYK**

123. I did start smoking. That didn't go down well. I was caught and they took the strap to me. I had PE the next day and I wouldn't get changed. I was strapped all down the backs of my legs and the marks were up my back. It was EYJ who did it because I was smoking. The school saw the marks on my body in PE. I was about twelve or



thirteen by this stage and they'd adopted me. The teacher asked how did it happen and I said I got caught smoking. I don't know what they did after that. No one spoke to me about it again.

124. That wasn't the only time the strap was used. They used to have a table tennis bat as well. That was used as punishment if I'd done something wrong. I would be hit across the bum with that. That happened over or under clothes, so I could be hit with it on my bare bum. That was done by either EYJ or EYK. The other two girls got it too, but I was the main trouble maker so I got it more than them. I got it for smoking and I was rebellious in everything. I tried running away. I was getting older and it didn't matter if we'd hit puberty, we still got hit.
125. I got the strap for not doing my work properly, hiding sandwiches and it got to the point I couldn't tell them anything so I'd hide everything. I got physically punished once or twice a month, maybe more.
126. I was adopted at eleven and a half and I wasn't getting social work visits anymore so I had no one to turn to. My school could see the strap marks. I was classed as an attention seeker and the EYJ-EYK said that to the school. I didn't have any other adults to speak to. I didn't think anything would get done anyway.
127. The physical chastisement with the strap and the table tennis bat continued throughout my time with the EYJ-EYK. I learned not to do anything to annoy them in the end. I would think about what I was doing in case I got physically punished.
128. The supervised bath times stopped by a certain age. In his eyes I started to clean myself properly and washing my hair. I wasn't allowed to use the lock on the bathroom door. I was still sharing a bedroom with [REDACTED] when we moved to England. It was only [REDACTED] who had her own room.
129. I had a lot of strange behaviours. It was partly because of how I was brought up. They found me to be strange and I was a messed up kid.



### Leaving the EYJ-EYK

130. I did all my exams in the summer I turned sixteen. I got my results in the August of that year and I passed them all. It wasn't good enough in their eyes as it wasn't straight As. I got O'level Art, CSE Grade 1 in English and maths, Grade 2 in Music, Grade 3 in geography and French. They wanted a straight A student who went to university. The ultimatum was to re-sit my exams or leave. So I left them after we came back from a six week holiday abroad. We came home and I got my results that were waiting for me at home.
131. I didn't know I had pocket money until I left. They gave me £50. Apparently it had been saved up and I didn't know I had it. I just took my clothes. I never spoke to them again and I never saw them again.
132. and stayed. I don't know what happened to them. They'd been with the EYJ-EYK since a young age. They were also treated strictly by EYJ and EYK and they weren't allowed out with their friends either. They had a vision of how children should be brought up.

### Life after being in care

133. The EYJ-EYK got me a live-in job as a carer in an old people's home. They organised that because I didn't have anywhere to go. I didn't like that job. It was in a Quaker home and I'd never worked with old people before and had to learn on the job. They tried ringing the place where I worked to speak to me and they were told I didn't want to see them. They were told I was doing well. I had no one to turn to and there was no social work involvement. I lasted in that job for about seven months. Then I tried training as a hairdresser.

134. I went off the rails, big time in the old peoples home. I found alcohol. It drowns everything. I didn't have a social circle of friends, it was just work people. They'd buy me drink. Alcohol got me through a lot and it got me into some tricky situations too. I was a promiscuous teenager and that was all I knew. That started when I started drinking. I was being let into pubs even though I was under age. I found a room in a shared house and rented that for a couple of months and tried the hairdressing. It was less money.
135. I started a downhill spiral after that. I was sofa surfing. I ended up contacting social services. That was Ruislip Social Services in London. I was seventeen. I ended up in a homeless hotel in Hounslow, London. It was a huge place with different types of families in it. I had a really nice social worker who came to see me and read my file. She'd got it from Scotland and she read everything. I think her name was Sue and I can't remember her surname. She said I wasn't safe in the hotel.
136. Sue got me put into foster care with a family in London. The mother was called [REDACTED]. She had her daughter and three boys of her own, an adopted girl with Down's Syndrome, an adopted black girl and she was an emergency carer for children.
137. I got pregnant when I was in foster care, by [REDACTED] son. He was also seventeen. There were three bedrooms upstairs and the dining room was a bedroom. She had a husband called [REDACTED] who was anti-social and he was beer drinker who didn't speak to me. There was nine of us in the house. I was there for a couple of years. It was a hectic household and stressful. I wasn't working and claimed Income Support and gave rent money to [REDACTED]. I don't know when I officially stopped being under the care of social work.
138. It was through her I found my mum and my nan. I ran away when I found my mum when I was nineteen and with the baby, a girl called [REDACTED]. My mum turned up out of the blue and wanted to take me away, but I didn't speak to her. She had a fourteen year old with her who was my half-brother. I had a phone number for my nan and I spoke to her and she said she'd told my mum to see me.

139. I later left the [REDACTED] house to look for my mum who was in Bridport, Dorset. She was engaged to someone who was the same age as me. She wasn't impressed that I had a baby. I was in a bad way and depressed and she said I wasn't fit to look after a baby and said the best place for [REDACTED] was in care. I wasn't drinking by this stage. My mum spoke to social services and she then told me she knew what happened to me in care all along. She said my nan had told her this. My nan knew this because she'd tried to adopt me, but it didn't work out. I stayed with my mum for a month.
140. The baby went into care then the [REDACTED] family in London started fighting to get her. I didn't want her going there so I was fighting to keep her but the court went against me. I had a different social worker and she was really nasty to me and told me I had no chance of keeping [REDACTED]. In the end [REDACTED] was taken to London to live with the [REDACTED] family. I rang them up to try to see her and they told me if I came to London to see her I'd be dead.
141. I was living in a bedsit in Bridport and returned to drinking. The day I was told I couldn't have [REDACTED] back I had to take all the stuff I'd bought for her back to the shops. It broke me. the social worker seemed happy that I didn't get [REDACTED]. I was on a downward spiral and ended up pregnant again. I was just existing and bouncing around from pillar to post. I found it hard bringing up a baby, [REDACTED] on my own at twenty or twenty-one. She did go into care a few times. I struggled and I was depressed a lot of the time. I was in a horrid flat in Bridport. I went to social work for help as I couldn't cope. [REDACTED] was a colicky baby and it turned out there was a muscle that hadn't developed in her stomach and it was hard work.
142. Then I settled down in Portland, Dorset and met someone and we were together a few years. I got pregnant with [REDACTED] who was born with a rare disease. I ended up going to Great Ormond Street Hospital with him for a major operation to have 90% of his pancreas removed. If it wasn't done by the age of six months he would have died. [REDACTED] was five at this time so I was around twenty-six. It meant [REDACTED] became a Type I diabetic and I had to learn to administer insulin to him. I felt like a nurse more than a mother.

143. While I was in London, [REDACTED] stayed with [REDACTED] dad and his family. Allegations of abuse were made when I got back, [REDACTED] against my son's uncle. The police were called, she was examined and statements made. I threatened to stab him as this was history repeating itself. My partner's name was [REDACTED] and his brother who was accused was called [REDACTED]. There was also a third brother called [REDACTED]. There was another young girl involved and she made a statement. [REDACTED] couldn't say his name on tape and he wasn't charged over her. They did an examination and there was evidence of penetration.
144. I had a breakdown and I took my kids to live in Southampton to a grotty bedsit. I had to get them away. Social services put me in a refuge for a while. I had no support in the bedsit. [REDACTED] was bed wetting all the time. The baby was ill a lot of the time. I couldn't cope and put both of them into care. [REDACTED] used to write letters to me and when I met her later on when she was a teenager she said she understood as no one else could have coped. She ran away so she could get full contact with me. She's been fine ever since and never blamed me which I found hard to accept.
145. Social services in Southampton apologised to me when she was eighteen as they handled everything really badly through my life. A social worker said sorry to me as I'd needed help. I told them an apology now was no good to me.
146. After [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went into care I asked a doctor to section me as I felt like destroying Southampton. I went to a psychiatric ward for a few weeks. It was the first psychiatric help I'd had. When I got out I went back to the bedsit and on anti-depressants. I was nearly thirty. I got a job in a pizza shop in Southampton.
147. I met someone new, [REDACTED] who was really bad for me. There was domestic violence. I got pregnant with [REDACTED]. He didn't want him and I was told to get rid of him. I went to the police as he was going to kill me with a baseball bat. He was known to the police and they advised me to go straight into a refuge. He'd put another woman into intensive care through his violence.



148. I was moved out of county to Salisbury in Wiltshire to another refuge. I was sent straight to hospital as I was in a bad way. Doctors in Southampton had made a mistake and given me Valium, sleeping tablets and an anti-depressant. I'd turned blue and my hands were curling up as well as being pregnant. My blood pressure was dropping and I was taken off the medication or I would have lost the baby. I stayed in the refuge until [REDACTED] was three months old. He was born prematurely and with a lot of health issues and I was still sent back to the refuge.
149. Southampton social services got in touch with Wiltshire social services as they were concerned they couldn't find me. The police hadn't told them I'd been moved for my safety and they thought I was a missing person. There was no communication. They put [REDACTED] on the At Risk Register before he was born and that was because of his dad. I was in the refuge for six months in total. When [REDACTED] was three months old I got temporary accommodation in Wiltshire. I settled there for while and felt safe. I had a nice social worker and she picked up on everything on the mistakes that had been made. Her name was Nettie Lee. She got every file she could on me and read the history and told me I had been severely depressed and had no support. A lot of mistakes were made. She fought my corner and I kept [REDACTED]
150. I got a flat. I realised that there was something wrong with [REDACTED] and he wouldn't turn his head and wouldn't move one of his hands. He failed development stages and had to have physio to help him crawl and walk. There was still something not right. He lost speech and had behavioural problems. I told the social worker that I suspected he was autistic.
151. It took until [REDACTED] was eight for him to be officially diagnosed. I was a full time mother to him. He was able to attend mainstream school and there were problems. I moved cities to Nottingham and I got better help in school for him there. He now no longer has a speech and language disorder and has been through college and is now at university. I no longer have social work involvement, and haven't for some time.

152. I've not been able to work as I was a full time parent and it was difficult keeping [REDACTED] focussed on school, college and exams. He doesn't believe he'll ever be able to live independently.

### **Impact**

153. I have serious physical health issues. I have fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis and Functional Neurological Disorder (FND). The first two were diagnosed in 2013 or 2014. I was diagnosed with FND in 2015. There's not a lot known about FND, but it mimics five neurological conditions and these include MS, dementia, epilepsy, Parkinson's Disease and another who's name I can't recall. FND is an umbrella term.
154. My neurologist thinks it is down to childhood trauma, both physical and psychological. The fibromyalgia could be related, but I don't know for sure. It was explained to me that my central nervous system had re-wired itself to cope differently. The fibromyalgia gives me muscles pain and spasms. FND affects my memory and causes brain fog, it can also mimic a stroke. I can get seizures and my face will droop. My speech can fade away sometimes and becomes slurred and I stutter. My balance can make me look as if I'm drunk. I get a lot of pain through my hands and tremors. I can't take medication anymore and the FND has caused me to build up an intolerance to medication. My doctors have tried a number of medications and none work now.
155. The only psychological support I've had since I was an in-patient on a psychiatric ward has been from FND on managing functional seizures. With regard to possible counselling for childhood trauma I was given a list of phone numbers, but I've not had any counselling. I've only had the chat with a psychologist that you have after an [REDACTED]. The last time this happened was when [REDACTED] was seven and before I we got his diagnosis. He was a very violent child and I couldn't take it anymore. I was in hospital, very seriously ill and nearly died. I had two sessions with a psychologist and he asked why I was still here. All through my life I've been trying to cope, then not coping and then trying and not coping and trying again and no one has helped me.

156. I was undernourished when I was with the EYH-EYI and over fed when I lived with the EYJ-EYK. I'm very conscious of what I eat and I won't have scales in my house because I'd be forever checking my weight. I think that's because in part of my childhood I ate very little and in another part of childhood I ate quite a lot. I've had stomach issues and I find it hard to eat on some days and some days I just don't feel hungry. I have problems with sickness which could be down to my conditions, I just don't know. Also I have IBS and I can't eat certain foods like bread.
157. I think about my time in foster care and my own family a lot. It's hard to explain to my own children what happened to me. When they were younger it was hard for them at Christmas and birthdays. They would hear at school about other kids going to visit their relatives and they didn't have that, it was just me and I ended up over compensating at Christmas and birthdays. They didn't have relatives to turn to or go and stay with. I've been determined to give them what I didn't have and I'll go without for them. I know what it was like to have nothing as a child.
158. Certain smells are a trigger for me. A sickly smell in a room reminds me of the Parma violet smell at the EYH-EYI. My neighbours daughter knows someone who has recently come out of foster care and that conversation is a trigger that brings back memories for me. I know that feeling of coming out of care.
159. I can't form relationships now. The trust goes straight away and I choose a bad person anyway. I stopped trying and I'd rather be on my own. Even socially I keep to myself and I keep people at arm's length now. It takes a lot for me to trust someone and once that trust has gone, its gone for good and I can't forgive easily.
160. My education was affected. I had two different styles of education. One where they weren't bothered about me and one where they were really strict. I've always made education important in my children's lives. I've always wanted them to have what I didn't have.
161. I never saw my mum again after I saw her at nineteen. I didn't get to see my nan either and I heard rumours that she had passed away. I've not had had any contact with

either the EYH-EYI or the EYJ-EYK or their children after I left their homes. I don't even know where my sister is.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

162. When I was seventeen and living in London I had a really nice social worker called Sue who got my files from Aberdeen. She called the police in so I could make a statement about the EYH-EYI I spent a day with the CID in the homeless hotel I was staying in giving a statement. They got in touch with police in Aberdeen and sent them my statement. I didn't hear anything until I was eighteen.
163. I don't know what happened after my report to the police about the EYH-EYI that I made when I was seventeen. All I know is I was told the EYH-EYI were struck off the fostering register. I don't know if there was a court case or if they were charged. I didn't tell the police anything about the EYJ-EYK at that time. I think that in that time period you were allowed to physically discipline your child. I haven't spoken to the police again.

### **Records**

164. Everything was written in my records and the social worker in England couldn't believe it when she read them. This was when I was seventeen. She typed out a couple of sheets that I was allowed to read. That was Sue. She told me some of it was blacked out. It was known that abuse was taking place and nothing was done. There were reports given to social services. There were reports of sexual abuse and unexplained injuries given by my schools when they rang social services.
165. She pushed me to do a statement to the police. The way it was handled was all wrong. All the evidence was there. it makes me wonder if that's why the police statement got rushed and done and that was it.



### Lessons to be Learned

166. Adults need to listen to the child and look at how they behave. There's always a reason for their behaviour. Talk to them and don't brush them away. Have patience because not everyone can say what happened straight away due to fear, but the signs are there. The social services should have acted sooner, as soon they got the first phone call about the first injury. The police should have reacted on that first report and they could have moved us to safety if they had concerns and they didn't. Social services should vet their people properly and do their checks on them properly.
167. I think the adoption process was wrong. It was rushed. I was too old to be adopted. I think social work involvement should carry on after the adoption has taken place. An adoption can break down at any time and anyone can put on a front for a social worker, no one knows what happens behind closed doors. There should be better support for children leaving care when they have lost their family. They are left on their own in a big and scary world and they only know being in care.

### Other information

168. I changed my surname to EYG by deed poll. That was to escape my violent ex-partner and he couldn't trace me or [REDACTED]
169. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... EYG [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 18<sup>TH</sup>/11/21 .....