

Tuesday, 20 September 2022

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(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome back as we come together again to resume our evidential hearings.

As the period of national mourning following the death of Her Majesty the Queen comes to an end. I'm sure that many of you have been greatly moved by the events during that period and are perhaps still processing all that we've seen, that we've heard and that we're continuing to reflect upon. I appreciate that some of you may still feel distracted and troubled as we drag you back to the normal daily diet of work.

However, one of the many aspects of Her Majesty's remarkable life that has been stressed again and again over the last ten days is that she was uncompromising in her dedication to the public interest. She literally lived a life of public service. It is accordingly appropriate that I reiterate the commitment that I and all who work in the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry have made and continue to make to the public interest, particularly to children in care, in the past, in the present and in the future.

Thank you for returning to join in our important work today as we carry on with the tasks set by our terms of reference. I am confident that Her Majesty

1 would have approved of our doing so.

2 Now we return to some oral evidence to start the
3 day, I think. Is that right, Ms Innes?

4 MS INNES: That's correct, my Lady.

5 The first witness wishes to remain anonymous and has
6 chosen the pseudonym 'Sophia'. 'Sophia' was in the care
7 of Glasgow Corporation and she was in a number of
8 different placements, which I'll outline.

9 She was boarded out with a Mrs ██████ in Glasgow
10 between ██████ 1958 and ██████ 1959.

11 She then went to Clyde Cottage until she was boarded
12 out with a Mrs EZW ██████ in Renfrewshire on ██████ 1961.
13 Mrs EZW ██████ moved to Ayrshire during the time that 'Sophia'
14 lived with her.

15 On ██████ 1963, 'Sophia' returned to the care
16 of her mother. Her mother died on ██████ 1964.

17 After that, on ██████ 1964, she was boarded
18 out with her aunt, Mrs GAO ██████, in Glasgow. Mrs GAO ██████
19 then moved later to East Kilbride.

20 On ██████ 1966, 'Sophia' moved back to Mrs EZW ██████ in
21 Ayrshire, where she remained until ██████ 1968.

22 From that date she lived with a ██████ and
23 ██████ in Beith until ██████ 1968, which as she
24 describes in her statement was when she ran away from
25 there. That placement is described in the records as

1 lodgings rather than foster care. However, 'Sophia' was
2 15 at the time and still under the care of the Local
3 Authority.

4 'Sophia' then lived with Mrs GAO again between
5 1968 and 1969. Again the placement is
6 described as lodgings and 'Sophia' was 16 at that time.

7 After having a baby, 'Sophia' returned to
8 Mrs GAO home in 1969 and was living there
9 when she turned 18 in 1970.

10 Glasgow City Council is the relevant responsible
11 authority.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

13 'Sophia' (affirmed)

14 LADY SMITH: 'Sophia', a couple of things to say before we
15 start your evidence. First, could I ask you to try to
16 keep in a good position for the microphone. It's
17 important that we hear you through the sound system.

18 A. Yes.

19 LADY SMITH: Then you'll see there's a red folder on the
20 desk there. That has your statement in it. You'll be
21 taken to that in a moment. But we'll also put it up on
22 the screen in front of you. You might find that
23 helpful.

24 A. Yeah.

25 LADY SMITH: We'll go to the various parts of it that we

1 want to discuss with you as we go through your evidence.

2 But, 'Sophia', separately from that, could I just
3 assure you that I know what we're asking you to do here
4 is difficult. We've asked you to come into a public
5 place and talk about yourself, your own life and in
6 particular your early life, troubles, difficulties,
7 sadnesses, things that upset you. I do know that people
8 can, however well prepared think they are, find that
9 their emotions catch them out. It's not a problem.
10 I can cope with that.

11 A. (Witness nods)

12 LADY SMITH: And anything that we can do to help you,
13 whether it's giving you a break, just by pausing where
14 you are or leaving the room, please let me know. I want
15 to do all I can to enable you to give your evidence as
16 clearly and carefully as you can, rather than be
17 distracted by perhaps your own feelings.

18 A. (Witness nods)

19 LADY SMITH: So do bear that in mind as we go through your
20 evidence.

21 A. Yeah, I will.

22 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand you over to Ms Innes
23 and she'll take it from there. Is that all right?

24 A. Yes. Thank you.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 Questions from Ms Innes

2 MS INNES: 'Sophia', we understand that you were born in
3 1952. Is that right?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I'd like to go to your statement first of all, please,
6 we give it the reference WIT-1-000000869. If we can
7 look on to the final page of it, please --

8 A. The final page?

9 Q. The last page, yes. I think we see there at
10 paragraph 114 that it says there:

11 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
12 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
13 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
14 true."

15 I think we can see that you signed the statement on
16 3 December 2021; is that right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Thank you. If we can go back to the beginning of your
19 statement again, please. At the beginning, at
20 paragraph 2, you tell us a little bit about your family
21 life before you went into care. At paragraph 2 you talk
22 about your mother and you say that your father never
23 knew about you. You actually found out about him and
24 who he was as an adult; is that right?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You say in this paragraph that you don't remember life
2 at home before you went into care to begin with?

3 A. No, I don't remember anything.

4 Q. Okay. You say that your sister, I think, told you some
5 things about maybe why you were taken into care but do
6 you have any clear idea of why it was that you were
7 taken into care to begin with?

8 A. Well, [REDACTED] never spoke badly of her mother. She just
9 said that she wasn't well.

10 Q. She wasn't well, okay.

11 At paragraph 3 you mention your older siblings and
12 you say I think they were in fact brought up by your
13 mother's parents; is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You didn't know that you had any siblings you say until
16 you went back to stay with your mum when you were about
17 11?

18 A. I didn't even know I had a mother alive.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. Or a father. Or siblings.

21 Q. Okay. So we'll come --

22 A. I was told they were dead.

23 Q. Who told you that?

24 A. Well, when I went to a foster home I was told that my
25 parents were dead and that I was going to a new mum and

1 dad.

2 Q. Okay. Right, we'll come back to that just shortly.

3 In your statement you tell us I think that you
4 understand that you went to Castlemilk Children's Home
5 when you were I think a toddler?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Then there came a time I think that you were introduced
8 to people who were going to foster you?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Is that right? It's redacted on the screen, but on
11 page 4 at paragraph 12 you say there that a family
12 called the [REDACTED] I think came to see you at
13 Castlemilk.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Is that right? You mention that there was a mum, a dad
16 and a daughter?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Was the daughter older than you or younger than you?

19 A. Yes, she was older.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Not much older. A couple of years.

22 Q. Okay. Then if we go on to page 5 at paragraph 16 you
23 tell us there that you were in Castlemilk until you were
24 about five and then you were told that you were going to
25 go and live with the [REDACTED]?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Is that right? I think you tell us in this
3 paragraph that the lady from the welfare who came in
4 a green uniform and in a car with a chauffeur --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- is that right? That she was the one that told you
7 that your mum and dad were dead?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Okay. You also say in this paragraph you were told that
10 you were getting a new mum and dad?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Was that going to be the [REDACTED] ?

13 A. That's right, yes.

14 Q. Okay. You then go on to tell us a little bit about your
15 memories of living with the [REDACTED]. What were they
16 like as people?

17 A. I remember being quite happy there and they had other
18 relatives who I called aunts and uncles and grandparents
19 and I got on well with the daughter.

20 Q. Did you call them mum and dad, can you remember?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You say at paragraph 18 that they lived in a tenement
23 flat in Dennistoun?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What was the house like? Was it comfortable?

1 A. Yes, it was quite a big flat, I remember, a big lounge
2 and two bedrooms and a bathroom.

3 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page I think you tell us at
4 paragraph 20 that you started school when you were at
5 the [REDACTED]?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. How did you get on at school? Do you have any memories
8 of that school?

9 A. Vague memories but I think I got on okay there, yeah.
10 I remember swapping scraps and things in the playground
11 with the girls and playing marbles with the boys.
12 I think I was quite happy.

13 Q. At paragraph 21 you say that you can't remember any
14 social worker or anyone from the welfare coming when you
15 were at the [REDACTED].

16 A. No.

17 Q. As you've already said, you were quite happy there and
18 we know that you left there. What's your understanding
19 of why it was that you had to leave the [REDACTED]?

20 A. I didn't find that out until I got my records.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But on my records it said that I was difficult and
23 moody.

24 Q. Okay. And how did you feel about that when you saw that
25 in the records?

1 A. I was quite surprised because my memory was of I was
2 happy. I was told that I was going on holiday to the
3 seaside, but not with them, so I thought I was going
4 back. But I didn't. I went to a home in Dunoon called
5 Clyde Cottage.

6 Q. Okay. So at the time you were told that you were going
7 on a holiday, thinking that you were going back to the
8 [REDACTED], but in fact you went to Clyde Cottage?

9 A. Yes. But before I left to go on the holiday, I came
10 home from school one day and there was a baby in a cot
11 in our bedroom, in the bedroom I shared with their
12 daughter, [REDACTED].

13 Q. Do you know if that was the [REDACTED] own child or
14 another foster child?

15 A. I'm not sure, but I think I would have noticed if she'd
16 had a big tummy.

17 Q. Okay. Do you think that there was some connection with
18 the baby arriving and you leaving?

19 A. Not at the time I wasn't, but ... obviously later on
20 when I got older I sort of thought there might be a --
21 a connection.

22 Q. Okay.

23 As you've said, you then went to Clyde Cottage and
24 I think there came a point again when you were living at
25 Clyde Cottage and it's redacted in the statement but at

1 paragraph 38 on page 10 that you met a family called the
2 [REDACTED] ?

3 A. What page is that?

4 Q. Page 10, paragraph 38.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You tell us there that [REDACTED] came for the day and
7 took you out. Before you went out with them, did you
8 have any concept of why you were going out with them?

9 A. No. The matron just said that there was a family who
10 would like to take me out for the day.

11 Q. Okay. Do you have any memories of that first visit?

12 A. Yeah, it was lovely. They took me -- well, I'd been
13 obviously there before, down to the beach and there was
14 a little paddling pool there. And we got ice cream and
15 I remember it being a nice day.

16 Q. Okay. Did they have children, [REDACTED] ?

17 A. They had two boys, yes. One was ... a baby. Well,
18 about a year old. And the other one was about --
19 I think he was about seven, seven and a half.

20 Q. Okay.

21 LADY SMITH: 'Sophia', you'd have been about six at that
22 time, would you?

23 A. No. I was eight.

24 LADY SMITH: You were eight when you went to [REDACTED] ?

25 A. Eight and a half, I think. I'm not going by the

1 records, I'm going by what I remember.

2 LADY SMITH: That's fine. Yes, I see.

3 MS INNES: Yes, I think you were in Clyde Cottage for maybe
4 about two years before you went to live with EZW-SPO .

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Okay. If we move on, please, to page 11 and
7 paragraph 43, you tell us there about leaving Clyde
8 Cottage and you say that you were called into the office

9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

10

11 A.

12 Q.

13 A.

14 Q.

15 Secondary and asked you if you wanted to go and live with

16 EZW-SPO .

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What do you remember about that? How did you feel about
19 moving?

20 A. Yeah, I was quite keen to do that, yeah. Quite happy.

21 Q. Okay. You say again that the green car arrived with the
22 lady from the welfare.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Was this the same person that you'd seen before?

25 A. I don't remember. I just remember going over on the

1 ferry with a lady in a uniform.

2 Q. You say that you were told again that you were going to
3 get a new mum and a new dad?

4 A. Why yes.

5 Q. How did you feel about that at the time, can you
6 remember?

7 A. I think I was quite happy to go **Secondary Institutions - to be publish**
8 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

9 Q.

10 A.

11 Q. Mm-hmm. Okay. You tell us about **EZW-SPO** at
12 paragraph 44, so you say that they were quite young at
13 the time. Mrs **EZW** was about 28 and her husband was
14 about 29 when you first went there. You mention the two
15 children that you've told us about. And initially
16 I think you lived somewhere and then you moved to Beith?

17 A. We lived in , which was away in the middle of
18 nowhere, but we went to the village school in
19 and then we moved to -- I liked it there, and then we
20 moved to Beith.

21 Q. At paragraph 45 you describe what it was like living
22 with **EZW-SPO** in terms of what their house was like.

23 A. It was a bungalow and had lots of land round it because
24 my foster father had a business. He had lorries that
25 took animals to market from farms and he had people

1 working for him and my foster mum, she -- there was
2 a [REDACTED] and she tended to that and she took
3 phone calls for the business.

4 Q. Did that carry on when they moved to Beith or were they
5 doing something different when they moved there?

6 A. No, sold the house and land to a friend but my foster
7 dad continued to use the big barn for housing his
8 lorries.

9 Q. Okay. Then as you say you moved into Beith and what was
10 the house like there?

11 A. That was a lovely house. It was a villa with a lovely
12 garden and plenty of room. We all had a room each.

13 Q. And did you -- sorry?

14 A. And a spare room.

15 Q. Did you have to move school when you moved from [REDACTED]
16 to Beith?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. How had you been getting on at the school at [REDACTED]?

19 A. I quite liked that school. It was a small school with
20 mixed ages in each class. There was only about 40 kids.
21 I went to Beith Academy Primary and that was a good
22 school too and I made friends.

23 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page you talk about some of
24 the routine at EZW-SPO [REDACTED] and at paragraph 49 at the
25 bottom of page 12 you tell us that you have a photograph

1 of you, yourself on your ninth birthday. I think you
2 say that other than one photo that you have from your
3 sister, that photo is the first photo that you have of
4 yourself as a child?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You tell us in this paragraph that Mrs [REDACTED], I think,
7 had a number of photographs that she shared with you
8 perhaps when you were older?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Is that right? Okay. You say that in the photo when
11 you were nine you look happy in the photo and you were
12 happy?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. How did you feel about living at [REDACTED]?

15 A. I was really happy there.

16 Q. If we go on over the page to the top of page 13 at
17 paragraph 50 you say that you understand that they had
18 fostered before but not long term.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did they have any other foster children coming to
21 live --

22 A. Not while I was there, no. That was -- it was previous
23 to me.

24 Q. Okay. You say at this paragraph that you called them by
25 their first names?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Did you always do that for the whole time that you lived
3 with them?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Were they happy with that or did they want you to call
6 them something else?

7 A. No, they didn't say anything --

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. -- about it, no. The reason I didn't call them mum and
10 dad was because I'd been told to call someone else mum
11 and dad and look what happened.

12 Q. Okay. You talk about your relationship with the family
13 at paragraph 51 you say that you loved it there, that
14 you loved the boy I think who was closest in age to you,
15 you got on really well with him?

16 A. Yes, [REDACTED].

17 Q. Then there was the younger boy, who was obviously quite
18 a bit younger than you at the time?

19 A. [REDACTED], yes.

20 Q. Okay. At paragraph 52 you tell us that [REDACTED] EZW-SPO
21 treated you the same as their own children?

22 A. They did, yes.

23 Q. So you didn't feel that there was any difference
24 between --

25 A. None at all.

1 Q. -- you and the boys, okay. What would happen if you
2 misbehaved or were naughty at EZW-SPO ? How would
3 they deal with that?

4 A. Well, you got reprimanded but that was it. So did
5 and .

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. Nothing physical, no ...

8 Q. Okay.

9 At paragraph 53 you tell us that you left EZW-SPO
10 How were you told that you were going to be leaving
11 them?

12 A. My foster mum took me on her knee, which she never
13 really did because I was quite big by this time, and
14 said that she had something to tell me, that I was going
15 to live with my mother. And I said, "Well, I don't have
16 a mother, my parents are dead", and she said, "No, you
17 do have a mother and she wants you back", and I said
18 I didn't want to go because I was happy at school and at
19 home and she said that I had to go and there was nothing
20 that she could do to stop and she didn't want me to go
21 either. But ... she couldn't do anything about it.

22 Q. As you told us earlier in your evidence you'd been told
23 before you went to the first foster home that your
24 mother and father were dead and from what you're saying,
25 this is the first time that somebody told you that your

1 mother was actually alive?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And you also say that you were being told that you would
4 have to go and live with her. Can you remember a social
5 worker coming and talking to you about that?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Just remember Mrs **EZW** telling you?

8 A. Yeah. That she'd obviously been or had a phone call,
9 I don't know.

10 LADY SMITH: How old were you then, 'Sophia'?

11 A. I think I was just before I was 11.

12 LADY SMITH: We're talking about 1963, some time around
13 then?

14 A. Yeah.

15 LADY SMITH: There had been no attempt, for example, to
16 introduce you to your mother by means of visit or
17 contact?

18 A. No, never, no.

19 LADY SMITH: The very first you knew was being told you were
20 going to live with her?

21 A. Yeah.

22 LADY SMITH: Is that right? Did you have any picture in
23 your head of what your mother looked like?

24 A. None at all.

25 LADY SMITH: Or what sort of place she lived in?

1 A. None.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 MS INNES: If we go on over the page, please, at
4 paragraph 54 you talk about the man and the woman in the
5 green car coming back. Before the car came back, can
6 you remember if you had any visit with your mother at
7 all or is your recollection that you just went straight
8 from **EZW-SPO** to live with your mother?

9 A. Yes. Straight there.

10 Q. Straight there?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. As you've already said, you told your foster mum that
13 you didn't want to go back but she said she had no
14 choice?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Okay. At paragraph 55 you say that apparently your mum
17 had tried to get you back before?

18 A. Well, I didn't know that then, but my sister told me
19 that she had.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. When I was in my 30s --

22 Q. Right.

23 A. -- she told me that.

24 Q. At paragraph 56 you tell us that your mother was living
25 in the Gorbals in Glasgow at the time?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. You also mention that your mum was living with a man at
3 the time?

4 A. Well, there was a man there when I went in. He went
5 away to work during the week somewhere.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. And she had a baby, about six months old, who turned out
8 to be my sister's daughter.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Her parents were working and living in London.

11 Q. Right. I think you've already told us in your evidence
12 that you had no idea that you had siblings either until
13 you went back to live with your mum, so it was at this
14 point that you found out that your mum had other
15 children?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is that right? What was it like living with your mum
18 again?

19 A. Horrible.

20 Q. Can you explain why?

21 A. Well, I missed my foster parents and my friends so
22 I cried a few times when I was in bed. And she said
23 that I was ungrateful and that I should -- she should
24 have drowned me at birth.

25 Q. Okay. You also talk about the surroundings, so you'd

1 A. I am. Thank you.

2 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes, when you're ready.

3 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

4 If we can go to page 15 and paragraph 59 of your
5 statement, you are dealing there with the time after
6 your mum died. Where did you go to live after your mum
7 died?

8 A. Well, my sister took me to my mother's sister.

9 Q. Is that Mrs GAO ?

10 A. Mrs GAO, yeah.

11 Q. Was she somebody that you knew?

12 A. Well, I had met her once or twice with my mother up at
13 my grandmother's.

14 Q. Okay. And who else lived with Mrs GAO ?

15 A. Her husband and four children.

16 Q. Four of their own children?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What sort of ages were their children?

19 A. The oldest was 14, 12, 4 and 5 -- 4 and 3.

20 Q. Okay. You tell us at paragraph 59 that it was
21 a two-bedroomed flat they were living in?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Where did you sleep?

24 A. In a big bed in a recess.

25 Q. Okay. Was that in a recess off a living room?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Was anybody else sleeping in that room?

3 A. Yes, all the children.

4 Q. Okay. So all -- and did you have your own bed or --

5 A. No.

6 Q. -- were children sharing beds?

7 A. No, it was one big double bed. Some at the bottom, some

8 at the top.

9 Q. Right. If we go down to paragraph 60, you tell us a bit

10 about the children and you say that your aunt later on

11 had another child?

12 A. Not when we were living there.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. When we moved to East Kilbride.

15 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 61 that they moved from the

16 flat in Parkhead I think to a house in East Kilbride?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did you have more room there?

19 A. Yeah, there were four bedrooms.

20 Q. Okay. And were you sharing a room with anybody?

21 A. Yes, with a cousin.

22 Q. Okay. If we go down to paragraph 62 you say that in the

23 first place that you lived in there was no toilet in the

24 flat. Was there an outside toilet?

25 A. There was one in the stair that we shared with three

1 other families.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. On that landing. It was the top floor too. It was
4 pretty dangerous because there was a big well in the
5 middle you could have gone down. You know, a big
6 stairwell.

7 Q. Right, I see.

8 A. Not a water well, a stairwell.

9 Q. Yes. You say there that you don't know what the welfare
10 was doing letting somebody go to stay there. Can you
11 remember a social worker talking to you about going to
12 live with GAO-EZV ?

13 A. Only she asked me in front of them would I like to stay
14 with them and I couldn't say anything else, had to say
15 yes, but I really wanted to be with my foster parents.

16 Q. Okay, EZW-SPO ?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Was this after you had already gone to stay with
19 them that the social worker came to see you?

20 A. No, it was after my mum died, my sister took me over
21 there and I was there I think a few days when this woman
22 came from the welfare department and she said that my --
23 would I like to stay there and my aunt and uncle said
24 they would be willing to have me stay with them. Didn't
25 have any choice really, did I? I didn't get to speak

1 with her on my own.

2 Q. If you had been able to speak to her on her own, would
3 that have made a difference, do you think?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Do you think you would have been able to say that you
6 wanted to go back to your foster parents?

7 A. Yes, because even though I was only 11, I knew
8 I shouldn't hurt people's feelings.

9 Q. So you knew you shouldn't hurt people's feelings?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. When they were there in the room, you felt perhaps that
12 if you said you didn't want to stay with them they would
13 be hurt by that?

14 A. Yes. And also I was quite fond of my oldest cousin.

15 Q. Okay. About how --

16 A. I didn't want to lose them.

17 Q. Sorry?

18 A. I didn't want to lose them either.

19 Q. Okay. At paragraph 63 you tell us about memories of
20 going to the social work office to get clothes.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Can you tell us about that, please?

23 A. My aunt used to take me in to I think it was
24 John Street. It was a big building with arches, you
25 went through arches, and then you went into a big room

1 and I was asked what size I was and she gave me two
2 skirts, two blouses, two -- two of everything.
3 Nighties. Coats. And that's the only clothes I ever
4 got, yeah. They were new clothes, but not what
5 everybody else was wearing.

6 Q. You describe at the top of page 16 that you weren't
7 allowed to get anything from the shops, that in this
8 office there were shelves full of clothes and that's
9 where you got your clothes from.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. From the office. Okay.

12 Then at paragraph 64 you tell us about school and
13 you say that you passed your 11 Plus and was that
14 followed up by you going to the correct school that you
15 should have gone to, having passed the 11 Plus?

16 A. I passed it in -- when we lived in Glasgow and I went to
17 Eastbank Academy, which was the high school. The way
18 they worked it then, if you didn't pass you went to the
19 junior school. But when we went to East Kilbride they
20 sent me to the junior school there.

21 Q. Okay. And you say that you came top at the junior
22 school quite a lot?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. At paragraph 65 you describe that your aunt went out to
25 work?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. What then happened when you came home from school? What
3 sort of things did you have to do?

4 A. Well, when we lived in Glasgow when we came home from
5 school, my cousin who was a year -- six months younger,
6 we had to go to Dennistoun to pick up her younger
7 brother and sister who were at nursery, an aunt there
8 picked them up from nursery and we had to bring them
9 back home on the bus. Set the fire and the table and do
10 the housework and look after these two children. And we
11 were only 11.

12 Q. Okay. And you talk about there being a shop at the
13 bottom of the stair. Did you have to go there to get
14 supplies?

15 A. Yeah, I remember going there to get bread and milk.

16 Q. Then I think at paragraph 66 you tell us about the visit
17 that you can remember of the social worker coming to see
18 you and you've already told us about that.

19 If we can move on over the page to page 17 and
20 paragraph 67, you say that you know that GAO-EZV got
21 paid for having you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. How do you know that?

24 A. Because when she took me in to the welfare department to
25 get clothes and she introduced me to people as her

1 foster daughter.

2 Q. She didn't call you her niece?

3 A. No.

4 Q. You say here that you remember challenging her about
5 that?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And what was her response?

8 A. She didn't say anything much at all.

9 Q. Do you know if the money that she received was spent on
10 you?

11 A. She fed -- I got fed there. I don't remember anything
12 else.

13 Q. Okay. And you say at the end of this paragraph at
14 paragraph 67 that you don't think that they would have
15 taken you on if they hadn't been getting money for you?

16 A. I don't think so but at the time I wouldn't really know
17 that. But when I got older I put two and two together
18 because her husband -- well, they weren't married. Her
19 partner was a drunk and spent all his money on himself
20 and she worked and that was the only money she really
21 had.

22 Q. Okay. You talk about being bullied by your cousin at
23 paragraph 68 --

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. -- and that sometimes she would make reference to the

1 fact that you were in care or being kept by the state.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Then at paragraph 69 you say:

4 "My uncle used to get drunk and throw us out."

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Are you able to tell us about how he behaved when he was

7 drunk?

8 A. Yeah, he would come in and we'd be in bed and he would

9 have an argument with my aunt and then he would come up

10 the stairs and tell us all to get out of bed and get out

11 of the house. And he would say to my aunt -- he threw

12 her out too, "And take that black bastard with you".

13 Q. And was that referring to you?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. You say in that paragraph that sometimes when these

16 things happened the neighbours would call the police?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Did the police ever speak to you about what was going

19 on?

20 A. No. They would come down and take him away but she'd

21 let him back in again.

22 Q. At paragraph 70 you also tell us that your -- you say:

23 "My uncle started to touch me in inappropriate

24 places."

25 And that he sexually abused you and you talk about

1 later on as well when you were older.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Was there anybody that you felt that you could tell
4 about what was going on?

5 A. Well, I didn't know anything about things like that.
6 Well, I didn't understand. And I just used to do that
7 (gestures).

8 Q. Just to try and push him away?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Okay. If we go on to page 18 and paragraph 72, you say
11 there that you told him that you were going to tell your
12 aunt. What was happening, so at paragraph 72.

13 A. Oh yeah.

14 Q. What was his reaction to that?

15 A. He said no one would believe me. And that I would cause
16 trouble. I was a trouble-maker.

17 Q. And did that affect you thinking that you were going to
18 tell your aunt about it or not? Did that influence you?

19 A. He said that I would go back into care.

20 Q. I see. You say that you didn't see a social worker so
21 you couldn't tell them and you say that you weren't able
22 to tell [REDACTED] until after you'd run away. So at
23 this point when you were living with [REDACTED] did you
24 have any contact with [REDACTED] ?

25 A. Yes, I did. I think I went for a weekend once.

1 Q. Okay. And I think you're saying there that you weren't
2 able to tell them during the time that you were living
3 with GAO-EZV and you were too embarrassed, you
4 didn't know how to put it into words?

5 A. I didn't understand it.

6 Q. Yeah.

7 A. I knew it wasn't right and I didn't like it.

8 Q. Okay. Then there came a point that you left GAO-EZV
9 at that stage and how did it come about that you left
10 them?

11 A. Well, I didn't get any clothes out of shops so by this
12 time I was 13 and my cousin who was the same age as me
13 was getting clothes from shops, she got fashionable
14 clothes, and I wanted a pair of blue jeans and my older
15 cousin, who was working, gave me the money -- it was 17
16 and 6 -- to buy the jeans. But my cousin, the younger
17 one, told her mum and the mum came up and battered me
18 and took the money off me and said, "Don't you take
19 money from her, she's got to work all week for that".

20 Q. Okay. When you say that she battered you, what did she
21 do?

22 A. She slapped and punched me. Pulled my hair.

23 Q. Is that something that had happened before or not?

24 A. Yeah. Just once before.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. I went on a cruise with -- the welfare department
2 arranged it and me and my friends that I just met on the
3 cruise, we were late coming back for the ship, a couple
4 hours, because we were allowed to roam about on our own
5 in Madeira. And we held up the ship and she must have
6 got to know about it and she battered me for that.

7 Q. You tell us that after this incident that you're
8 describing at paragraph 73 that you ran away at that
9 point and where did you go?

10 A. Got a bus into Glasgow and then into Beith to my foster
11 parents.

12 Q. What was the reaction of EZW-SPO to you?

13 A. Well, they were shocked. Because I had two friends with
14 me.

15 Q. Okay. And what did they do? Did they contact anyone?

16 A. Well, they contacted the friends' parents, who came and
17 picked them up the next day. And they contacted --
18 well, they must have contacted the social work
19 department or the welfare.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And I was allowed to stay.

22 Q. Okay. And if we go on over the page to page 19 and
23 paragraph 75, you say that you can remember somebody
24 coming from the welfare department and asking you if you
25 wanted to stay with EZW-SPO.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Can you remember them exploring with you why you had
3 left GAO-EZV ?

4 A. I told them about my aunt hitting me and I didn't like
5 my -- her partner.

6 Q. Were you --

7 A. And I didn't like my cousin [REDACTED], because she was
8 a bully.

9 Q. Were you able to tell them what was happening with your
10 uncle?

11 A. I told them that he was throwing us out and calling me
12 names.

13 Q. Okay. What was their reaction to that, can you
14 remember?

15 A. Don't know, she was writing in a book. (Witness shakes
16 head)

17 Just asking me questions and she was writing it all
18 down.

19 Q. You mentioned about your uncle telling the social worker
20 that your uncle was calling you names and throwing you
21 out and suchlike. Were you able to tell the social
22 worker about him touching you at that point or not?

23 A. I can't remember that, because I still didn't know what
24 he was doing or understand what that was about. I think
25 at that time I was more annoyed about being hit.

1 Q. Then you say that you were able to stay with [REDACTED]
2 and you went to Beith Academy?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And you passed all your exams and what happened after
5 that, were you able to stay at school?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Why not?

8 A. Because my foster mum -- I don't remember my foster
9 father ever saying anything about it -- she thought that
10 it was a waste of time for a girl to stay on for further
11 education because they just got married and had
12 children.

13 Q. Okay. And how did you feel about that at the time?

14 A. I was really upset because my best friend was allowed to
15 go to college.

16 Q. Was allowed to go to college, okay.

17 A. And that's what I wanted to do.

18 Q. Instead of that did you have to leave school?

19 A. Yes. And get a job in [REDACTED].

20 Q. You tell us about that at paragraph 77.

21 You say at paragraph 78 that you remember speaking
22 to a social worker about the job. You told her that you
23 didn't like it. You did it anyway. You say:

24 "I had no choice."

25 A. No, I didn't have any choice. And I didn't like it at

1 all.

2 Q. You say at paragraph 78 that you started work in fact
3 when you were 14, so you were 15 in the following
4 [REDACTED], you think.

5 A. Yeah. I left school in the end of July and I wasn't 15
6 till [REDACTED].

7 Q. How did you get on with [REDACTED] at this point when you
8 were living with them?

9 A. Yeah, I think we got on okay and I remember going on
10 holiday to Butlins and ... but then I started --
11 I wanted to go to -- my friends were all going to
12 a disco. I wasn't allowed. And so I started sneaking
13 off to the café to listen to music and drink Coca-Cola
14 on a Sunday afternoon instead of going to Bible class.

15 Q. What was [REDACTED] reaction to that?

16 A. They didn't know.

17 Q. Okay. Did they ever find out about that or not?

18 A. I told them later.

19 Q. Okay. If we move on, please, to page 20 and
20 paragraph 80, you talk there about your reflections, you
21 talk about not being able to stay on at school, and at
22 paragraph 80 that you were all mixed up because you'd
23 been back and forward.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Do you think that what had happened in the past, that

1 you've already told us about, that you were with the
2 EZW-SPO and then moved back to your mum and then moved to
3 GAO-EZV, do you think that then had an impact on you
4 when you went back to stay with EZW-SPO ?

5 A. A definite impact.

6 Q. What sort of impact did it have?

7 A. Well, when I lived with my mother's sister and family,
8 we were allowed more freedom. Well, we went swimming,
9 we had to go and pick up kids from school, from nursery
10 or whatever. I found my foster mum a wee bit strict.
11 I still had to be in bed at 9.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I just ... it was fine till I left school.

14 Q. At paragraph 81 you describe that you had an argument
15 with your foster mum one day and I think in the context
16 of this argument she slapped you; is that right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Had she hit you before or not?

19 A. No.

20 Q. And how did you react to that at the time?

21 A. Well, it was because -- because I was going to the café,
22 she didn't know that, I wanted to wear a coat that
23 wasn't too -- not for church. And that was what the
24 argument was about. When she slapped me, I was really
25 upset because she'd never done that before.

1 Q. Okay. After that happened, did you carry on living with
2 [REDACTED] or did you leave?

3 A. No. No, I went to the café. And my friend -- told my
4 friends and she said, "Well, that's terrible, they're
5 not your parents, you can go and live with my aunt and
6 uncle", so she took me to her aunt and uncle's.

7 Q. Okay. And you talk about this couple, I think they're
8 called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and I think we know that their
9 surname is [REDACTED], so you went to stay with this couple
10 who also lived in Beith. Is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Did the social work know that you had moved to
13 live with them?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. At page 21, paragraph 83 you say that you can remember
16 a social worker coming to inspect the house?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And they were a couple, they didn't have children of
19 their own?

20 A. No, they didn't have any children.

21 Q. How did you get on with them?

22 A. I got on really well. I went to work. They always had
23 a nice meal in the evening and -- yeah, they were a nice
24 couple.

25 Q. Then at paragraph 84 you tell us that there came a point

1 where you left them and how did it come about that you
2 left their care?

3 A. Well, Mrs [REDACTED] told me that her and her husband were
4 splitting up and that I'd need to go to a hostel in
5 Glasgow.

6 Q. How did you feel about that?

7 A. Devastated.

8 Q. What did you do? Did you wait to be taken to the hostel
9 or not?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. So you tell us I think in this paragraph that you
12 and your boyfriend decided to run away?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. But then ultimately you were taken back to Glasgow
15 I think first of all to a remand home and then to
16 Arnprior Hostel?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. If we move on, please, to page 22 and paragraph 88 you
19 say that after being at the hostel you got a job as
20 a mother's help and you lived in?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Then you tell us that you went back to live with the
23 GAO-EZV [REDACTED] again?

24 A. Yes. Because Giffnock wasn't far from East Kilbride, my
25 cousin, I was in touch with her and she said to go over

1 to my aunt's, she'd like to see me, and she asked me to
2 go and look after her youngest daughter [REDACTED] while she
3 went to work. And I did it. Stupidly.

4 Q. Okay. At this point was living with GAO-EZV [REDACTED] any
5 better or worse than it had been before?

6 A. I wasn't there that long, because I was still seeing my
7 boyfriend. We'd meet up in Glasgow at weekends and ...
8 I did look after the house and her -- my aunt's
9 daughter. But my cousin [REDACTED], who was a bit of
10 a horror, started being horrible again so my boyfriend
11 suggested that I go and live with his aunt and uncle in
12 Kilbarchan.

13 Q. You tell us about that on page 23, paragraph 91 and how
14 did that work on, staying with your boyfriend's aunt and
15 uncle?

16 A. It was okay at first, but my boyfriend's mum and dad
17 weren't happy about him seeing me because I was the
18 wrong colour, but he'd been living with them so they
19 agreed that if he went back to live back with them, they
20 wouldn't mind me -- him seeing me.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. But while I was there, well our plan was stupidly,
23 because we were so young and we wanted to get married,
24 which seems stupid now but at the time we were serious.
25 If I got pregnant we would get a house and, you know, be

1 together.

2 His aunt was lovely but his uncle ... was horrible.
3 She went to visit her mum with the children one day at
4 a weekend and my boyfriend had fallen out with me and he
5 came back and he had been drinking and I came back to my
6 bedroom and he pushed me into his room and tried to rape
7 me. I was pregnant at the time. And I had to kick him
8 off. Punch him. And -- it was horrible.

9 Q. Did you leave --

10 A. The next --

11 Q. Sorry. Did you leave their house after that?

12 A. I had nowhere to go. No, [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED], intending to kill myself.

14 Q. And I think you were taken to hospital?

15 A. In Johnstone.

16 Q. After you came out of the hospital, did you go back to
17 live with your boyfriend's aunt and uncle or did you go
18 somewhere else?

19 A. No, I had to, I had nowhere to go.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. I had to go back.

22 Q. Sorry?

23 A. I had to go back.

24 Q. Okay. Then on page 24 at paragraph 93 you tell us that
25 you were contacted I think by friends of [REDACTED] EZW-SPO ?

1 A. Yeah, the ones in [REDACTED] who had bought the house.

2 Q. Okay. You talk about the welfare officer at the time,
3 a Mr Caldow. Was he involved because you were pregnant
4 at the time or was he --

5 A. No, I was still under the welfare department, Children's
6 Department.

7 Q. Can you remember meeting him?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Can you remember talking to him about where you were
10 going to live?

11 A. He came to see me when I went to stay with [REDACTED] and
12 [REDACTED], friends of my foster parents'. My foster
13 parents had moved down to Nottingham a couple of
14 years -- I think the year before. So they didn't know
15 anything about anything. And [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had
16 a restaurant built onto the house and they offered to
17 give me a home and a job and then suggested they adopted
18 my baby because my boyfriend got into trouble with the
19 police and they wouldn't -- didn't want me having
20 anything more to do with him.

21 Q. Okay. And you tell us at paragraph 95 that you were in
22 a mother and baby home for a period but then after that,
23 when you went back to the [REDACTED], you had to watch
24 your baby and pretend that she was your sister?

25 A. Foster sister.

1 Q. Okay. You say that you just couldn't do it and did you
2 move from them?

3 A. It wasn't that I just couldn't do it. I didn't want to
4 give my child up, but I had nowhere to go. And I had
5 no one to help me.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. So I agreed to let them adopt her, but then when I came
8 to sign the papers I couldn't do it.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. They put me out in the street there and then.

11 Q. You say that your daughter, I think, was perhaps taken
12 into care at that point, you had to apply to get her
13 back?

14 A. No, she wasn't taken into care.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. Mr Caldow came along and I went to stay with a friend --

17 Q. Right.

18 A. -- for a week. Mr Caldow came and took me to the
19 [REDACTED] to pick up my daughter.

20 Q. Okay. So your daughter was still with the [REDACTED]?

21 A. Yes. This was the next day or the day after.

22 Q. Right, I see.

23 Then on page 25 at paragraph 97 you describe that
24 you then went back to GAO-EZV [REDACTED] again?

25 A. Yeah, well, I had nowhere to go so Mr Caldow phoned the

1 GAO-EZV and asked if I could stay there and they said
2 yes. Because I was still too young to be on my own.
3 Q. How did you feel about going back to them at that point?
4 A. Didn't have any choice.
5 Q. And -- sorry?
6 A. I didn't say anything.
7 Q. Sorry, I thought I interrupted you.
8 You tell us then it was a disaster, it was back into
9 the frying pan, you say?
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. I think at this point your uncle, you say, made your
12 life a misery and he sexually assaulted you?
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. Okay.
15 A. I mean properly. He said that ... I knew what it was
16 all about now so ... yeah. He thought it was all right
17 to ... sexually abuse me.
18 Q. Okay. At paragraph 99 you talk about reporting what had
19 happened at GAO-EZV and you say that Mr. EZV was
20 telling you that you'd end up out on the streets and
21 that nobody would believe you.
22 A. Yeah.
23 Q. Did you go and tell anybody about what had happened?
24 A. I went to the doctor.
25 Q. Mm-hmm.

1 A. And he told me that I should have my child adopted and
2 I'd be able to get away and make a better life on my
3 own. I went to social work department in East Kilbride
4 and they got me a job away.

5 I had a job, I got out of the house because I got
6 a job when my child was two months old just to be out
7 there so I wouldn't be there when he -- because he was
8 a painter and decorator. When everyone was at school
9 and my aunt was at work he came in sometimes during the
10 day and that's when he abused me. So I got a job. Most
11 of my wages went on the nursery. But then he did get me
12 on my own one day and I just couldn't take it any more
13 so I went to the social work department and they
14 arranged for me to get a job in Coatbridge, live-in
15 looking after three children for a guy who was going
16 through a divorce and he had custody of his three
17 children but his elderly mother, he had to look after
18 her in her house so he had me look after his three
19 children in his house.

20 Q. Okay. And was that a live-in job?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And he paid me as well.

24 Q. Sorry?

25 A. A live-in job, I didn't have rent to pay, and I got

1 paid, yeah.

2 Q. Other than the social worker finding you a live-in job
3 and enabling you to move out of GAO-EZV, do you know
4 if anything was done about what you'd said about what
5 was happening to you?

6 A. No. Nothing. I never heard anything about it.

7 Q. Okay. And later on in life, have you ever reported what
8 happened to you at GAO-EZV? Have you spoken to the
9 police, for example, about it?

10 A. No. I think I just buried it and got on with my life.
11 I had a young child. I was 17 years old looking after
12 four children and a house.

13 Q. Okay if we can move on, please, to page 27 and
14 paragraph 105, you say what you've just mentioned there
15 in your evidence, and then you say that you did tell
16 your family about what Mr EZV had done years ago and
17 what was their reaction?

18 A. Not to say anything because it would ... my cousin who
19 I loved said it would kill her sister, who had a very
20 nervous disposition.

21 Q. Did that mean that you did stay quiet about it?

22 A. I did tell a friend, my good friend .

23 Q. Okay. How did you feel about your cousin saying you
24 have to keep quiet about this?

25 A. Don't know. I just didn't want to upset the family.

1 Q. Okay. You tell us if we just go up a little on this
2 page at paragraph 104 that you stayed in touch with your
3 foster family, [REDACTED], throughout your adult life?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. Is that right? So when they were alive you kept in
6 touch with [REDACTED]?
7 A. I went to visit them and they came up to visit me in
8 Edinburgh.
9 Q. Okay.
10 A. And with my children, I took them down.
11 Q. Your foster brothers, you've also kept in touch with
12 them?
13 A. Yeah, my foster mum and dad are dead now, but I did
14 visit them and I visit -- still visit my brother.
15 Q. Okay. If we look down to the bottom of this page,
16 please, and paragraph 107 you talk about the impact of
17 what happened to you. You say there that you've had
18 quite a low opinion of yourself because of the way you
19 were brought up and because of your colour. Can you
20 tell us a bit more about that, please?
21 A. (Pause)
22 Well, it means I've never really had a high opinion
23 of myself. I've always felt there was something wrong
24 with me. I was rejected. Unwanted. And just
25 a nuisance. And, yeah, my colour did have an effect

1 too, which can't do anything about that, but not so much
2 as I got older. But it was more the way I was treated.
3 And I have got a very low opinion of the welfare system
4 at the time, because I blame them.

5 Q. Okay. Can you explain why it is that you blame them?
6 What --

7 A. Because they didn't give me care. At all. They put
8 me -- they put -- I know it's about foster care, but
9 they put you into children's homes where you get no
10 encouragement, affection, anything other than a roof
11 over your head and fed. And they didn't explain. And
12 they lied.

13 Q. You've also told us of course that you were removed from
14 a foster home in which you were happy --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- to be sent back to your mum's.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. When it came to being placed with GAO-EZV or being
19 boarded out with GAO-EZV, do you think that the
20 social work department scrutinised that to any extent?

21 A. Not at all, none.

22 Q. Why do you think that there was no scrutiny?

23 A. Probably because she -- my aunt GAO was a blood
24 relative. I don't know. I haven't a clue.

25 Q. Okay. You tell us if we just move on to paragraph 111

1 on page 28 that you've had some help I think from Future
2 Pathways?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. I think you've found that to be a positive experience of
5 help?

6 A. Yes, in that they got me some proper counselling because
7 of ... I've tried to take my life on a few occasions and
8 I couldn't because I ... (Witness shakes head)

9 And I tried to get counselling before but it was
10 never continuous. You would get them for a couple of
11 weeks and then they'd leave and -- but the counselling
12 they got me really helped.

13 Q. Okay. If we move on to page 29, please, and at
14 paragraph 112 you say that you obtained some of your
15 social work records in 2005. How you did you feel about
16 getting your records?

17 A. Well, it was something that I could actually look at,
18 read and try to make sense of. It actually made me
19 really think about my childhood. That was when
20 I really ... started to want to know why I was messed
21 about.

22 Q. Did seeing the records give you answers to the questions
23 that you had or not?

24 A. No, not really. They weren't very good records, and
25 they didn't have anything in about when I went to the

1 social work department or anything to tell what was
2 happening to me. So obviously they didn't listen.

3 Q. You talk about them being redacted and a lot of it was
4 written by hand and it wasn't copied very well.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. In paragraph 113 you mention some things there that --
7 lessons that we should learn from your experience and
8 you say first of all that children need to be told the
9 truth.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Is that reflecting on what you were told about your
12 parents right at the outset of the time that you went
13 into foster care, that they were dead?

14 A. Yes. Children have to deal with death at some point in
15 their life and just because they're children, you have
16 to be honest.

17 Q. You say that the people who foster should be looked into
18 more.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Is that again particularly reflecting on what we've
21 talked about in relation to GAO-EZV and the lack of
22 scrutiny at the time that you moved there?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Okay. You say that children grow up, that's what people
25 need to remember, so --

1 A. Yeah, and they have long-lasting effects of how they're
2 treated when they're children. Right into childhood, if
3 they're treated badly.

4 Q. You talk about the need for children to be treated with
5 respect and dignity, being listened to and asked what
6 they want, the way a good parent would ask their
7 children and listen to them?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You think that the same -- that social workers, for
10 example, should do the same thing, listen to children?

11 A. Yes, definitely.

12 MS INNES: I don't have any more questions for you,
13 'Sophia', and there are no applications, my Lady.

14 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
15 questions of 'Sophia'?

16 'Sophia', that does complete all the questions we
17 have for you today. It only remains for me to thank you
18 so much for engaging with us as you have done, both by
19 providing a written statement that's full of detail and
20 thoughtful reflections which really help me to see
21 things through your eyes and what your eyes were when
22 you were a child and I really need to have that sort of
23 information. I'm really grateful to you for it and
24 being prepared to put yourself through the public outing
25 that I'm now glad to say has finished and I can let you

1 go and hopefully relax for the rest of the day.

2 A. Thank you.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

4 (The witness withdrew)

5 LADY SMITH: Just before I rise for the break, let me
6 mention names that we've used that are actually
7 protected by my general restriction order and they
8 include the [REDACTED], EZW-SPO, the [REDACTED], Mr EZV
9 and the [REDACTED] and that may not be surprising to those
10 of you who are now up to speed on who is entitled to
11 anonymity in this part of our case study.

12 Time for the break, Ms Innes, yes?

13 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady.

14 We'll have another oral witness after the break.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

16 (11.27 am)

17 (A short break)

18 (11.51 am)

19 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

20 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

21 The next witness has chosen to remain anonymous and
22 is using the pseudonym 'Rachel'. 'Rachel' was in the
23 care of East Lothian Council. She was in foster care
24 with a Mr and Mrs GEB-SPO in Prestonpans between
25 [REDACTED] 1997 and [REDACTED] 1998.

1 She was in a further foster care placement with
2 a Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] also in Prestonpans, between
3 [REDACTED] 1999 and [REDACTED] 2000.

4 Accordingly, East Lothian Council is the responsible
5 authority.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

7 MS INNES: I should have said that there are special
8 measures in respect of this witness.

9 LADY SMITH: We're going to use screens for this witness,
10 yes, please.

11 'Rachel' (sworn)

12 LADY SMITH: 'Rachel', that sounds as though you're in
13 a good place for the microphone. We do need you to use
14 the sound system, please, if you can try and maintain
15 that.

16 Your red folder has your written statement in it but
17 we'll also bring it up on the screen. You might find it
18 helpful to use either or neither and you'll be taken to
19 the red folder in a moment.

20 A couple of other things to say before we begin.

21 Firstly, you'll see we have a screens arrangement.
22 You cannot be seen by the public. You can be seen by
23 those who are within this area here and that is all.
24 You will be able to be heard. And although we will open
25 the large curtains behind this curved curtain, that

1 doesn't mean you can be seen but it does mean that I can
2 see what's going on in the area where the
3 representatives sit, and the public, which is important.

4 Other than that, please bear in mind I do understand
5 that what you have agreed to do here isn't easy. We've
6 brought you into a public place, even with the screens,
7 to talk about your personal life and your life as
8 a child and things that were difficult and upsetting
9 when you were a child, and I do know that your emotions
10 might catch you out, however organised you think you are
11 and however well prepared you think you are.

12 I understand that, and if there's anything that
13 I can do to make it easier, you must let me know,
14 whether it's having a break, sitting where you are or
15 leaving the room, it's no problem. Anything I can do to
16 help you give your evidence as clearly and carefully as
17 you can, I'd like to do.

18 A. Thank you.

19 LADY SMITH: If that arises.

20 Unless there are any questions you have at the
21 moment, we'll go on to the next stage and get these
22 other screens open and then I'll hand over to Ms Innes.
23 Is that all right?

24 A. Yeah, that's fine.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 Ms Innes.

2 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

3 Questions from Ms Innes

4 MS INNES: 'Rachel', we understand you were born in 1984.

5 Is that right.

6 A. That's right, yeah.

7 Q. If we can look first of all at your statement, please.

8 We give it the reference WIT-1-000000667, and I want to
9 look at the last page first, page 54. At paragraph 269
10 you say there that you have no objection to your witness
11 statement being published as part of the evidence to the
12 Inquiry, you believe the facts stated in the witness
13 statement are true, and I think you signed this I think
14 perhaps electronically on 20 April 2021. Is that right?

15 A. That's right, yeah.

16 Q. Thank you.

17 If we can go back to the start of your statement,
18 please, you tell us a bit about your family life before
19 you went into care and you talk about living with your
20 mum.

21 A. (Witness nods)

22 Q. I think you mention that you had two younger siblings at
23 paragraph 5?

24 A. That's right, yeah.

25 Q. So you lived with your mum and your younger siblings?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. Did they have a different dad to you?

3 A. They did, yeah. So I had a dad who left when I was two
4 and my younger brother and sister had a different dad,
5 so it was my stepdad that we were living with.

6 Q. Okay. I think you describe your stepdad at paragraph 3
7 and I think you tell us there that at times there was
8 food but there were lots of times that you were hungry?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And also that your stepdad was violent and abusive
11 towards you.

12 A. Yeah. (Witness nods)

13 Q. Okay. If we go on in your statement in the next couple
14 of pages of your statement you tell us about abuse that
15 you suffered as a result of your stepfather's behaviour.
16 I would like to move on in your statement, please, to
17 page 6. At paragraph 28 you tell us that there came
18 a time that your mum was seeing another person?

19 A. Mm.

20 Q. So she and your stepdad had separated?

21 A. Yeah, that's right. My stepdad had left and then she
22 started seeing -- it was our neighbour across the road.

23 Q. You talk about being left to look after your younger
24 brother and sister when your mum went away to see the
25 neighbour.

1 A. Mm-hmm.

2 Q. And you talk about I think again not having food and it
3 being cold in the house.

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. Did there come a point then that you moved from
6 there? I think you moved to your grandmother's house?

7 A. Yeah, I think it just got a bit too much, you know,
8 I think being 12 and there was a world of responsibility
9 that I had on my shoulders and I remember just one day
10 like it was too cold, there was no food, like I couldn't
11 feed my siblings, and I think at that point I'd just had
12 enough and got in touch with my nana and she got a taxi
13 to get us and picked us up and we went to stay there for
14 a short time.

15 Q. Okay. At the bottom of this page at paragraph 31 you
16 say that you're not sure how long you stayed at your
17 nana's, but there came a point when you were taken into
18 care?

19 A. Yeah, that's right. And I can never remember how long
20 that was. But I remember the social worker coming to
21 visit us and then I locked me and my brother and sister
22 in the bathroom because I thought, you know, this
23 woman's going to take us away and it was that sort of
24 unknown, so it was round about that time.

25 Q. Okay.

1 You tell us at paragraph 32 that you were told then
2 that you were going to be taken into care but your
3 brother and sister were going to be put into a different
4 foster home?

5 A. Yeah. I remember the social worker had said that, you
6 know, because I had so much responsibility it would give
7 me a wee break and I remember quite reluctantly agreeing
8 to that, but on that condition, that I would be reunited
9 at some point, so I kind of had that assurance that this
10 is a temporary arrangement, it will give you a wee rest,
11 and then in the back of my head I thought, oh, we'll be
12 back together soon anyway. But it was quite a traumatic
13 thing, being separated.

14 Q. Okay. Did it transpire that you saw them again and were
15 reunited with them?

16 A. We were never -- never to live together again. That was
17 it.

18 Q. Did you have any contact with them when you were
19 a child?

20 A. It was very limited. Which was really tough because
21 like I had been their young carer, like their parent
22 figure, really, so that was like -- it was like being --
23 you know, losing an arm, you know, to us really and that
24 was our support network. We all kind of like got each
25 other through some of the toughest times in our life and

1 then when we went into care, like especially in my
2 foster family that I was in, they didn't like me having
3 contact with my other family, you know they just kind
4 of -- they didn't like the phone ringing a lot and --
5 I don't know, I was made to feel quite guilty, like, you
6 know, if I was on the phone for any length of time and
7 I was always hurried up to get off the phone because
8 they were waiting on other calls or they just wanted me
9 off the phone really.

10 But in terms of like visits, there wasn't -- I don't
11 remember any when I was in foster care with my brother
12 and sister, and then as I moved through the care system
13 it was very limited, because like I had a lot of
14 behavioural difficulties and things, I was deemed to be
15 a really bad influence on my younger siblings. So it
16 was in their best interests not to see me, which was
17 heartbreaking.

18 Q. Over the page you tell us at paragraph 33 that when you
19 were initially placed into care, you understand that
20 your mum signed what you say is a section 25 form for
21 the supervision order.

22 A. (Witness nods)

23 Q. So I think we'd understand that as she's voluntarily
24 putting you into care?

25 A. (Witness nods)

1 Q. Then you say that after that there came a time when
2 decisions were made by the social work department in
3 consultation with Children's Hearings.

4 A. (Witness nods)

5 Q. Did you have any understanding that things changed and
6 the Children's Hearings became involved?

7 A. I don't remember bits of that. My memories of the
8 hearing were more when I was in residential care. Like
9 I can't really remember back to what that was like in
10 foster care. So I remember the social worker telling me
11 that this is where you're going to be living, so it very
12 much felt like there was decisions being -- like or
13 discussions being held away from me and the decisions
14 were made without any consultation with me. I didn't
15 really feel like I had a voice at all at that point.

16 Q. When you first went into care you tell us that you were
17 taken into foster care in Prestonpans.

18 A. (Witness nods)

19 Q. You describe the couple as being older.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Do you have any sense of what sort of age they were at
22 the time?

23 A. I think as a 12-year-old I think I thought they were
24 maybe in their 60s or something.

25 Q. Did they have children of their own?

1 A. I think they have -- or had a son and daughter.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. I remember seeing the daughter and they certainly had
4 a grandson, I remember him.

5 Q. Okay. So were the son and daughter living out of the
6 house at the time that you were living with --

7 A. Yes. They also had a foster daughter as well that was
8 already living there. I think she was maybe a couple of
9 years older than me.

10 Q. You describe her at paragraph 34 as having been fostered
11 for a long time and you understand that they eventually
12 adopted her?

13 A. Yes, aye, that's right. I mean I remember my foster
14 sister calling the foster mum "gran". She kind of
15 started referring to her as "gran", and then eventually,
16 yeah, that was very much her home.

17 Q. Okay. What did you call the foster parents? Did you
18 call them by their first names or did you call them
19 something else?

20 A. First names, yeah.

21 Q. At paragraph 35 you say that when you were staying with
22 them, they were fostering babies on an emergency basis?

23 A. Aye. There was wee babies that came to stay for
24 short-term arrangements, and there was like -- I think
25 there was one that almost like respite, that kind of

1 thing. And that was quite difficult. I remember --
2 I've spoken about this before -- I always felt that that
3 foster family should have been concentrating on my
4 foster sister without any distractions of other
5 children, because I think like they were already
6 stretched, but they just seemed to -- aye, there was
7 just -- the house was always really busy and, you know,
8 I felt there was maybe pressure on them to take -- you
9 know, take in this other wee baby, especially because
10 the baby had known them, so rather than putting the baby
11 somewhere else, you know, it just felt like the right
12 thing to do.

13 Q. How did you feel that that impacted on their care of
14 you, them having the foster sister and the babies that
15 they were looking after?

16 A. I think like I was -- I was kind of used to just doing
17 a way and looking after myself, so I just kind of went
18 into that mode but I don't feel like, you know, they had
19 any -- they didn't really know what was going on in my
20 mind at the time and I just felt very disconnected from
21 them a lot of the time.

22 Q. You say at paragraph 36 that you remember going there
23 and being there in the evening I think the first time
24 that you went to stay with them. What were your first
25 impressions of them?

1 A. My first impressions were you know it was quite -- it
2 was a scary thing. My only reference to foster care was
3 Home and Away at the time and I was like, "Oh, this is
4 a real thing", so I was quite shocked. They seemed
5 really nice, they were quite welcoming and what have
6 you, but I remember the sort of foster father, like he
7 was quite cold, like I just got a sense that, "Oh,
8 here's another one", and not long after I had moved in
9 he had showed me like this book that he had and it had
10 every kid they had ever fostered. It was a huge list of
11 names. And he said, "So this one, they left because
12 they were stealing, this one used to drink a lot", and
13 there was always a reason why they had left and
14 I remember thinking like, "Oh, what am I going to do?"
15 What will my name have beside it?

16 But I remember being, you know, just kind of a bit
17 worried at that point, you know about -- aye, how was
18 that going to end for me?

19 Q. You say at paragraph 36 that you think that your going
20 there was driven more by the mother and the father was
21 less keen. What gave you that impression?

22 A. Yeah, I think like the foster mum, she was very much
23 like -- she knew how to look after you, you know like
24 she had the breakfast bowls all out and the cereal was
25 there and she'd ask me questions like, "Have you got

1 enough socks? Have you got this?" And she'd make sure
2 that I had clothes. I remember her daughter had worked
3 in Adams at the time, the clothes shop, so she used to
4 just bring in clothes for me and things like that, and
5 aye, I mean I did feel like, you know, she cared and she
6 wanted to make an effort, whereas the foster dad just --
7 it's like he was living almost a separate life. But
8 then he had a lot of love for the other daughter, the
9 kind of one that went on to be adopted and -- but even
10 the baby, I don't think he took much interest in us, you
11 know.

12 Q. Okay. At paragraph 37 -- sorry, just going back to
13 paragraph 36, you say that you understood that you were
14 to be there for three weeks but it ended up being longer
15 than that?

16 A. (Witness nods)

17 Q. Did you think you were going to be going back to your
18 gran or did you have any concept of what might happen?

19 A. I remember thinking my mum needed a break and I had to
20 be away so my mum could rest and I thought maybe three
21 weeks, you know, that will be it. That will be it. So
22 I kind of assumed -- I was told three weeks initially,
23 that was my wee break from my brother and sister, that
24 was my mum's break from all of us, so at the end of that
25 I was aiming to get home and that's what I thought the

1 plan was. But then all of a sudden it just felt like
2 everything had changed and then I was there longer term,
3 like to the point where they moved my school as well.
4 But again all of this was done like with very little
5 consultation with myself. It all kind of felt well out
6 of my hands and it was kind of what suited the foster
7 family and the social worker, it felt like.

8 LADY SMITH: Who told you it would be three weeks?

9 A. I still remember the three weeks. It was the -- I think
10 it was my social worker, the one who had taken us into
11 care initially. I think she had said, "Oh, it will just
12 be a wee while", and then there was maybe a later
13 conversation where I remember three weeks as a kind of
14 initial assessment period or something.

15 LADY SMITH: Right. But you're saying you have no memory of
16 anybody then telling you, "We've now decided you're
17 going to stay here longer, not just three weeks"?

18 A. Aye, I don't -- I just remember -- it wasn't like
19 a conversation. It just kind of started off -- it was
20 more the foster carer. She was like, "So you're going
21 to be here, you know, longer than planned, so we'll look
22 at your school, we'll change school, you're not really
23 happy there anyway, are you?" So I kind of felt there
24 was a lot of words being given to me and it was kind of
25 being directed by the foster mum, so she had decided,

1 yeah, we'll keep you for longer than that.

2 LADY SMITH: How old were you by this stage?

3 A. I was still 12, I'm sure I was -- yeah, I was still 12

4 at this point.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS INNES: You talk about the house that they lived in at

7 paragraph 37 and you had your own room in the house.

8 A. (Witness nods)

9 Q. You say that your mum had moved house again and was

10 actually staying in the same street as you?

11 A. That's right, yeah, she was just along the road, yeah.

12 Q. How did you feel about that?

13 A. I never seen her. Which sounds bizarre, because she was

14 just along the road, but there was -- there wasn't --

15 everything had to be agreed and that wasn't agreed,

16 especially by the foster mum. I did feel like they were

17 almost trying to break the bond between me and my mum.

18 Q. How did you know that she'd moved into the same street?

19 A. I can't remember. I can't remember how I knew. But

20 yeah, like I had -- aye, I had been to the house, I had

21 definitely seen it. But yeah, there wasn't like any --

22 like quality time spent with my mum at all.

23 Q. Then you talk about the room that you were in at

24 paragraph 38 and you describe it as being like a blank

25 canvas --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- for whoever moved in there. How did you feel about
3 that, the fact that it was just completely neutral?

4 A. It was quite shocking. I remember it felt almost like
5 a cell, just walking into this white room. It was
6 really, really odd and didn't feel like it could be for
7 a child, if that makes sense.

8 Q. Were you able to kind of put things in it and put
9 pictures or posters up or things?

10 A. Aye. I think when we had known I was going to be
11 staying longer, the social worker brought like, you
12 know, bags of things, you know, from my own house with
13 my mum so I was able to kind of personalise it a wee
14 bit, and the foster mum, like I'm sure we went to the
15 shops or something, or maybe it was a catalogue,
16 I remember a catalogue, like picking out a duvet set and
17 stuff like that, you know, just to make it my own.

18 Q. You talk about going to the caravan so did the foster
19 parents have a caravan that they went to?

20 A. Yeah, I loved it. I remember really enjoying the
21 weekends away to the caravan. It was pretty much every
22 weekend. So there was like -- I don't know, I just
23 felt -- I suppose like I was being a wee bit selfish for
24 a wee while. I hadn't really had a chance to be a kid
25 and I think being at the caravan I was meeting other

1 kids the same age as me. It really gave me that chance
2 just to be a child, really.

3 Q. Okay. You talk about the foster parents being quite
4 strict about bedtime, for example.

5 A. (Witness nods)

6 Q. But you think that the foster daughter had -- it was
7 different for her?

8 A. Yeah, it was very different rules I think for both of
9 us. She appeared to have much more freedom, like you
10 know she was out until sort of 2 in the -- it felt
11 like -- I'm saying 2 in the morning but it felt a lot
12 later than me, but I was expected to be back really,
13 really early.

14 For example, like there was one point, I see it
15 written in my statement here, about the karaoke
16 competition and basically I had won it, I was really,
17 really chuffed but I had to get home after I had sang so
18 I came back and then it was my foster sister come
19 running up the road and she was like, "ESB [REDACTED] won, can
20 she go back down?" And yeah, I can't remember if I went
21 back. I can't remember the rest of that.

22 Q. If we go over the page at page 8, at paragraph 39 you
23 talk about the book that you've already mentioned.

24 At paragraph 40 you say that the parents made it
25 clear to you that "the other girl was their daughter and

1 that I was just there for a short time".

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. How did they make that clear to you? Did they say that?

4 A. They didn't say it. It was just that was how I felt in

5 that space. Like I didn't feel like -- I don't know,

6 I think like my foster mum, I think she resented my

7 family, like especially my nana who, you know, she

8 didn't give up, she kept trying to phone and she did

9 really want to see me but we were busy at the weekend,

10 we had things on. But, aye, I think the more as time

11 went on, I think she realised like, "I can't keep

12 **ESB** -- you know, "I can't keep 'Rachel'". Sorry.

13 LADY SMITH: That's okay. Don't worry. It's fine.

14 A. Aye, so it just felt -- I've lost my train of thought.

15 Sorry, I'll just be a second.

16 LADY SMITH: 'Rachel', the only name that will appear in

17 your transcript is "'Rachel'".

18 A. Thank you.

19 LADY SMITH: All right?

20 While we're talking, let me ask you this. The other

21 girl was already settled in the home when you arrived,

22 do I have that right?

23 A. Yeah, she was.

24 LADY SMITH: Had you any sense of how long she'd been there?

25 A. I think she had -- she had come from America, I do

1 remember that. Like the year before or maybe two
2 years -- two or three years before or something, and she
3 was only supposed to be there for a year or something
4 but then it extended and it was all agreed that she
5 would just be really long term.

6 LADY SMITH: When you gave your statement you said you
7 thought she was maybe about three years older than you;
8 is that right?

9 A. Yeah, two or three years, yeah.

10 LADY SMITH: So a girl who was already settled into the home
11 and was older?

12 A. Yeah.

13 LADY SMITH: You arrive, you're younger --

14 A. Yeah.

15 LADY SMITH: -- you have family who are wanting to carry on
16 being in touch with you?

17 A. Yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: Do I have the picture right that these are
19 things that all seemed to put you at a bit of
20 a disadvantage anyway as compared to her?

21 A. Yes, aye. Because she didn't have any like -- there was
22 no kind of strings attached to her. It was much easier
23 for them just to kind of bring her into the family and
24 she had her own identity as one of them, whereas for me
25 it was just like I wouldn't give up on -- I suppose my

1 nana wouldn't give up on me. I had a real longing to
2 see my brother and sister. The relationship with my mum
3 was really difficult. I remember just being really
4 hurt, you know, that she had decided to put me into
5 care. There was no explanation, you know, when it
6 became long term -- so it started off just three weeks,
7 then it became a longer-term thing. There was no
8 explanation as to what my mum was thinking and
9 I remember just having all these unanswered questions
10 about why.

11 LADY SMITH: What was it like, having been the oldest sister
12 and I think you said there is something like six- and
13 seven-year age gaps between you and your birth
14 siblings --

15 A. Yes.

16 LADY SMITH: -- and then going into a household where you
17 were the younger one?

18 A. It was quite nice. I remember feeling like, "Oh, this
19 is really exciting, I'm going to have a big sister", and
20 there was quite a freedom in that, you know, that maybe
21 this girl would look after me and look out for me the
22 way that I would with my younger ones, you know. But it
23 didn't kind of work out like that.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 Ms Innes.

1 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

2 You go on on this page at paragraphs 41 and 42 to
3 talk about the meals that you were given and you say
4 there was plenty food, in fact the portions were quite
5 large, and because of your experience living with your
6 mum you say that you found it difficult eating in front
7 of them and also you say the father would make comments
8 about how much was being wasted.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How did you feel about that?

11 A. I remember having like a lot of stomach pain and stuff
12 like that. I mean years and years later it's transpired
13 that I've got coeliac disease so I can't have gluten, so
14 I do think there was maybe wee clues that something was
15 up, but also, having grown up in a house where there
16 wasn't food, I almost didn't know how to eat like
17 a large plate of food and it was quite overwhelming. So
18 I was more a kind of picker, I'd just have little bits
19 of things. And also like I felt quite anxious a lot of
20 the time, so if you're feeling anxious like that, the
21 last thing you're going to want to do is have a big
22 plate of food. But the foster dad made me feel
23 terrible. You know, just I remember him quite angrily
24 scraping the food off into the bin and just moaning
25 about how much was wasted.

1 Q. Did you have any sense of your foster parents having any
2 information about how things had been for you at home or
3 did they ask any questions about food or eating at home
4 or anything like that?

5 A. No. I'm sure there was maybe a chat about what things
6 they like, you know, what sort of foods do you like,
7 that kind of thing when I first went in, but they really
8 didn't have any idea about what I'd experienced prior to
9 being in care. I don't remember any discussion or --
10 I do just feel like -- you know, I had went from quite
11 a traumatic experience at home with my stepdad, then
12 there was this kind of depression, I suppose, when it
13 was just my mum and there was no food and it was just
14 survival, really, and then to go into this situation
15 where it was like almost being placed into a normal
16 family and just being expected to go with that flow and
17 that was really, really difficult, just to kind of be
18 normal was a real challenge. Like getting up for school
19 in the morning, like having a routine. I found it all
20 very, very difficult to do.

21 Q. Have you had any reflections on how things could have
22 been improved for you by going into -- do you think that
23 going into foster care was the right thing for you or
24 not?

25 A. I think like if I was in charge and looking back, you

1 know, if that was the situation, I would have wanted to
2 keep the three kids together, 100 per cent keep them
3 together, possibly go into foster care for like a couple
4 of weeks, but actually like have family support in place
5 to help my mum, because I think, you know, she was
6 crying out for support. I think when she signed
7 section 25, that was her cry for help, and I suppose
8 now -- you know, I do have quite a good relationship
9 with my mum. That's taken years and -- maybe about 20
10 years to repair all the damage and we're still working
11 on it. But I think when we both look back on that time,
12 she often says she wishes that social work just helped
13 rather than -- it felt like a sticking plaster, you
14 know, let's just take the kids away, but actually all
15 her issues were still there and she was still
16 struggling.

17 Q. At paragraph 44 you talk about phone calls being made to
18 the house and you've mentioned this already in your
19 evidence, that the foster parents weren't happy about it
20 and they would ask them not to phone the house as much.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. You've also seen in your records that your foster mother
23 was saying that there were too many calls?

24 A. Yeah, and I remember it was maybe -- I mean it was every
25 day that my nana phoned and later on, you know, she

1 really was my rock, like a real sort of person of
2 support, and even as a child I was regularly seeing her
3 every weekend, that was where I went and it gave me some
4 sort of reprieve from what I was going through, so that
5 was a real -- again, it felt like I was missing a limb
6 not having my nana there. So she tried to keep up that
7 and I could see it when I was reading my files that she
8 was obviously trying to reach out and talk to me every
9 day and obviously like I would welcome that contact, but
10 I remember just feeling torn between two families. Like
11 they just didn't want the hassle of having people phone
12 all the time.

13 Q. If we go on over the page and if we can go down, please,
14 to paragraph 48 you talk there about moving school as
15 you've already mentioned, that when you went to live
16 with the foster parents you were at one school and then
17 it came that you were moved to another?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. How did you feel about the move of school?

20 A. I remember just thinking I didn't really have a say. It
21 wasn't a -- it was for -- I think looking back, I mean
22 me now I know what it is to speak up for myself and
23 things like that, but I think as a child I just assumed
24 that children were seen and not heard sort of thing so
25 I didn't expect to have a voice or an opinion. But

1 I was okay moving school and I think because like my new
2 big sister was there, there was something quite exciting
3 about that and I thought she would really look out for
4 me, that kind of thing, but, aye, it wasn't what I had
5 imagined it to be, really.

6 Q. When you say it wasn't what you'd imagined it to be, are
7 you talking there about your relationship with your
8 foster sister or --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- your school? The foster sister?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. How did things turn out in your relationship with the
13 foster sister?

14 A. It was quite -- it was quite bitter. It was a horrible
15 relationship. You know, like I know now looking back
16 with hindsight and just being a grown-up and looking
17 back, I know that she was likely stealing cigarettes and
18 blaming it on me and again looking back at all the other
19 kids that were getting in trouble for things and having
20 to leave that placement, I do suspect it was because of
21 the actions of the foster sister, but ultimately because
22 of the foster parents and how they handled that
23 situation.

24 But, aye, I think it was -- it was a difficult one
25 and it was quite heartbreaking I think for me because

1 I had put trust in this person -- like another person
2 that had come into my life who I thought was going to be
3 a real champion for me, somebody that I could trust, but
4 I felt like she had stabbed me in the back, you know, so
5 many times, and like later on in my statement as well
6 you know I was kind of convinced that I was evil,
7 because my mum had a set of tarot cards that she had
8 gave me and my mum's always been involved in that kind
9 of spiritualist church and stuff like that and as
10 a child I was quite susceptible to all that, I was, "Oh,
11 this is interesting", and because they were quite
12 a religious family like they just kind of turned on me
13 for that.

14 I remember the foster sister kind of being part of
15 that and, you know, it would just be quite manipulative,
16 like things being planted in my head about being
17 followed by the devil and I remember her making a little
18 crucifix and she put it on the back of my ponytail and
19 she said, "That will stop the devil coming up behind you
20 and stuff", and I was genuinely terrified. But she did
21 it in such a way that I had to rely on her because she
22 knew about all this, but -- aye, it was just -- it was
23 not a nice -- it was quite a toxic relationship.

24 Q. Okay. You say at paragraph 49 that there were a couple
25 of times that you suffered from bed-wetting when you

1 were living with them?

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 Q. How did they react to that?

4 A. Again like the foster dad was just horrible, like

5 just -- I felt humiliated. He got really, really angry

6 and like you know it's something I just couldn't

7 control.

8 Q. It's okay.

9 A. But the mum was -- she was very sympathetic. She was

10 really understanding and she helped getting things

11 cleaned up and stuff like that. But, yeah, that was

12 really difficult.

13 Q. Okay. Over the next page on page 10 at paragraph 54 you

14 talk about being given a typewriter at Christmas.

15 A. (Witness nods)

16 Q. You describe that as being the most amazing thing that

17 you'd been given at that time?

18 A. Yeah. I had never experienced like a gift like that.

19 It was something that was really expensive, for one.

20 I felt like I'd won the lottery. My dream was to be

21 a writer. I used to love writing stories, with broken

22 pencils and stuff, I used to find a way, but the

23 typewriter was quite significant. And I felt really

24 loved, you know. I thought they've listened to what

25 I like to do and they've gave me this really special

1 gift, yeah.

2 Q. Then you mention at the bottom of this page at
3 paragraph 55 what you've already just mentioned in your
4 evidence about your mum buying you a set of tarot cards
5 and the reaction of the parents. And you say the mum
6 "... even brought the sister and they all treated me
7 like I had brought the devil into the house".

8 A. Yeah. I still remember the sister's eyes. That just is
9 imprinted in my brain. She just kind of -- when
10 I walked in the room it was like they had this family
11 meeting and the sister was staring at me like that and
12 she was like, "What have you done?" And I remember the
13 foster dad like he was very, very angry and he said, "If
14 anything happens to my wife, you're to blame", so I was
15 terrified, like, I thought what have I done, you know.

16 And I think, again looking back, if I look at my mum
17 now I can see she's very vulnerable, she's got
18 disabilities, but then like you know I thought --
19 I didn't see that. You know, this was my mum, this was
20 a responsible adult, I suppose, and I thought I was
21 quite safe to do something like that. But then like to
22 be in an environment where it was like no, you've
23 brought something in and it's going to curse us sort of
24 thing, it was a really, really terrifying thing.

25 Q. You talk at paragraph 56 at the top of the next page

1 about the impact that this had on you and you say that
2 you started imagining the devil was in the house, you
3 would waken up during the night, you were having night
4 tremors, the father would shout at you?

5 A. Yeah, it was a terrifying time. I remember even during
6 the day like imagining like shadows following me and it
7 was very, very real, like thinking back on it, aye, it
8 was, it was like living in a horror film. And I think
9 night times, like I struggled to sleep anyway because of
10 childhood and things like that, but that just made it
11 ten times worse. You know, so I think -- you know,
12 I was waking up with terrors and like -- aye, it was
13 mixed with sort of memories and then there was like this
14 kind of evil spirit that was following -- oh, it was
15 just horrendous.

16 Q. At paragraph 57 you say that you can remember seeing
17 your social worker occasionally?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. You mention meeting her or her taking you to McDonald's.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. What sort of relationship did you have with that social
22 worker, can you remember?

23 A. I hated her. Absolutely hated her. I really did. Like
24 we just didn't gel and that was like throughout my
25 relationship with her. She was the one with all the

1 power and I think that immediately -- you know, and
2 a lot of the time she would be having discussions or
3 making decisions about me so I instantly just didn't
4 like her. I didn't think she listened to me and when
5 I was being accused of stealing cigarettes and money and
6 things like that for the house, you know, she didn't --
7 she didn't believe me. There was no point -- she just
8 kind of started from the point of, "You've been
9 stealing, why are you doing this?" It wasn't, "What's
10 happening, I heard that this situation's came up?" It
11 was very much that she sided with the family. And
12 I think what it was because the foster carer had been
13 around for a long time, she was a good resource for the
14 Local Authority, they didn't want to lose her. So, in
15 my mind now I'm looking back and thinking they really
16 didn't want to do anything to upset this foster carer.
17 So of course they would side with her, because she was
18 a really good resource for them.

19 Q. You mention in the next paragraph about not being able
20 to see your brother and sister when you were there and
21 you understand that they were in different foster
22 placements at the time?

23 A. (Witness nods)

24 Q. You say that you asked the social worker if you could
25 see your siblings?

1 A. Mm-hmm.

2 Q. What was the answer?

3 A. I can't remember -- again I can't remember what the
4 reasons were, but there always seemed to be an excuse
5 about why. They were maybe busy, that -- and you know
6 like I know East Lothian really well and it's not that
7 far away. There would have been a way to have brought
8 us together and maintained that. Even telephone contact
9 would have been something. But it was devastating and
10 I didn't think that that was a priority.

11 Q. Then at paragraph 59 you talk about things going missing
12 in the house and you've mentioned this in your evidence
13 already and you say at first some money started going
14 missing and some cigarettes and you never stole
15 anything, but what was the foster parents' reaction to
16 things going missing?

17 A. Oh, it was horrendous. I remember like spending a lot
18 of time in the kitchen or the living room and it was
19 like an interrogation. You know, it would be maybe
20 start off with a pound went missing then one cigarette
21 went missing, then two, but it felt like -- you know, it
22 became more and more frequent. And I remember like even
23 questioning myself at points. I was like, "Am I maybe
24 doing this and I'm not aware of it?" Like I actually
25 thought I'm maybe going a bit mad here, you know.

1 And I remember even my nana, there was
2 a conversation I had with her where she said, "Look,
3 I believe you. Whatever you tell me I'm going to listen
4 and I'm here for you, but tell me the truth, did you
5 steal?" And I said, "I swear I have not stolen
6 anything", and to this day -- you know, I'm
7 a 37-year-old woman now, I have no reason to lie.
8 I never stole those cigarettes.

9 I did smoke, but I was never a thief. And even at
10 my worst, you know, I would be quite abusive to people,
11 you know, I ran away, I was a bit of a tearaway, but
12 I had standards and I remember there was a group of
13 teenagers, just to illustrate this, that had said to me
14 like, "Come on, we're going to go and steal clothes off
15 the washing lines", and I walked away because I was like
16 I'm not a thief. It's not a thing that I would ever do.

17 So, yes, I honestly thought I was losing my mind.
18 And then the questions, it was like they kind of had
19 that approach that if they asked me enough, like maybe
20 I would just admit it and I think I probably did at one
21 point like just to go on just leave me alone, yeah,
22 whatever, I'll take the punishment sort of thing.
23 Because it was hard just constantly being doubted like
24 that.

25 Q. Then you tell us at paragraph 60 about the dad coming

1 into your room and speaking to you about typing at
2 night?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. Can you tell us about that?

5 A. So I think again this is something that I -- to this day
6 I swear I did not do. You know, I wasn't typing in the
7 middle of the night. There's no way that I'd be up
8 doing that. Because I was respectful of them and I was
9 a people pleaser. Like I didn't want to do things wrong
10 and just like, you know, I thrived when I was doing well
11 with things and that's just the type of kid that I was,
12 so I wouldn't do anything like to purposely annoy
13 anybody. If anything, I'd go under the radar.

14 Yeah, so during the night like at just random times
15 he would just come storming in and start shouting,
16 "What's all this noise? Stop typing". And I'd be lying
17 in my bed nowhere near the typewriter, but this kept
18 happening like all the time. And then like I just
19 didn't sleep, I remember just being so exhausted the
20 next day at school because I was too scared to go to
21 sleep in case -- I remember even thinking like what if
22 I get up through the night, what if I'm almost sleep
23 typing or something like that? So I just genuinely got
24 too scared to go to sleep.

25 Q. Over the page you tell us that there came a time when

1 you left the foster family that you were living with and
2 do you know why it was that that placement came to
3 an end?

4 A. It was devastating. I do remember this in quite a lot
5 of detail. I remember going to my mum's for the weekend
6 and there was a phone call, she was taking a phone call
7 and she sounded really upset and I was like, "Oh, what's
8 happened?" And then -- do you know, I'm reading and
9 talking at the same -- I'll just ignore that and just
10 talk.

11 So I remember my mum came off the phone and she
12 said, "Oh", she just looked so upset, she said, "I'm
13 heartbroken for you, but you can't go back, they're not
14 going to take you back", I think there was too many
15 things that had went wrong in that placement and I was
16 basically told that I had to stay away, it had to come
17 to an end.

18 I remember getting all the boxes, like the social
19 worker brought loads of boxes of stuff and there was the
20 typewriter box and I remember like one of the first
21 things, it was my treasured item in life, went in and it
22 was just dolls and things like that and I was like:
23 Where did it go? So I phoned up my carers and I spoke
24 to the foster mum and she said, "Your foster dad says
25 that the typewriter belongs to the house" and I just

1 remember being so devastated like, possibly more about
2 the typewriter than the loss of the placement.

3 But it was just -- aye, I thought that's the end of
4 that then. And there was no explanation, you know. But
5 I remember the foster mum sounding quite upset. I think
6 it wasn't about her. I do think it was possibly the dad
7 that just went, "This isn't working out, that's it", but
8 there was no real debrief or -- like the social worker
9 didn't sit me down and have a discussion about it.
10 There wasn't -- it kind of came out of the blue.
11 Although it wasn't going well, it would have been nice
12 to have had some sort of discussion about what was going
13 wrong, is there a way that we move forward, but there
14 was none of that. It really felt like the rug had been
15 pulled from under me, really. And then I was back in
16 the house with my mum and nothing had been fixed there,
17 so like it was just -- it was not easy.

18 Q. Okay. You tell us in your statement I think that again
19 you were with your mum for a time, you were with your
20 nana for a while, and then you were put to something
21 called the Pathways Resource Centre.

22 A. Mm.

23 Q. From there I think you went to St Katherine's Secure
24 Unit?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And then back to Pathways again?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

4

5

6 A.

7 Q. What impact did your experiences that you'd had in
8 foster care have on your ability to tell anybody about
9 what was going on in the later placements?

10 A. I think that had probably like the -- aye, like the
11 biggest impact was that very first placement, because
12 that was my first impression of what the care system was
13 and what that was -- that placement told me was that,
14 number one, you won't be believed, you know, if you tell
15 anyone how you're really feeling. It wasn't a safe
16 place to be. Social work wasn't a good thing, you know,
17 it was very negative and it was people in power that
18 were very resource driven and it was about them rather
19 than me.

20 So as I moved through the care system **Secondary Institutio**
21 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**, like I really
22 didn't feel -- well, you know, number one I felt like
23 I deserved it, I felt like I was an evil person because
24 I was basically brainwashed by that foster family and
25 saying, you know, you're genuinely evil, and I think if

1 you're told that so many times like you believe it.
2 Even in the care files I remember the word "devious"
3 being used in a description of me and that's devastating
4 to read, you know, as a child and being labelled as
5 that, as someone that's evil, that's devious. Like
6 there was no real -- aye, I didn't think was any
7 goodness in me at all.

8 So almost like when I was being abused at different
9 points, I was like, well, I deserve that, really. So
10 I kind of had dehumanised myself because of that
11 experience. And it was just layers of trauma upon
12 trauma, I think, and that's taken me a long, long time
13 to be able to function, you know, after an experience
14 like that.

15 So I'd say like the impact's been -- you know, it's
16 impacted my ability to trust people. I mean there's
17 been a few people that my life have been lucky that
18 they've stuck by me, you know, like my nana, the person
19 that's my husband now, you know, people like that, they
20 were with me and held my hand through it all sort of
21 thing.

22 But, yeah, I was left very, very vulnerable and
23 I think that was by chance that I had these people
24 around me, but I don't know what would have happened if
25 I hadn't and the damage like just possibly would have

1 got worse and worse and worse.

2 Q. Okay. I'm going to move on to talk briefly about the
3 next foster care placement that you were at after you
4 went to Pathways and St Katherine's. Before I do that,
5 is there anything else that you wanted to say about this
6 first foster care placement that you were in?

7 A. I think I've just got a -- I'll maybe leave that to the
8 end, actually, because it kind of wraps it all up.

9 Q. Okay, that's fine.

10 If we can move on, please, to page 33,
11 paragraph 165, you tell us that you went to live with
12 a foster family in Prestonpans again, a different foster
13 family. You'd obviously been at Pathways and
14 St Katherine's. Do you know how it came about that you
15 then went into foster care?

16 A. Aye. I actually think this decision was driven by my
17 key worker, who was lovely, and I remember him saying,
18 "You just want to be loved, you just want a family", and
19 he hit the nail on the head with that, and he said,
20 "I would foster you", but he had a lot of family things
21 going on in his own life so he just couldn't, he
22 couldn't do it. So what he said is, "Have you thought
23 about going back to foster care?" He said, "I think
24 that would be so good for you, you'd be in a family
25 environment". Because he used to take me up ... I used

1 to sit with him and his wife at his house and watch
2 Eastenders and just have that wee bit normal family life
3 and I loved it, it was really nice. So he thought if
4 that works really well for her, having an actual family
5 would be brilliant, so that's kind of how that came
6 about.

7 Q. When you went to this foster family, did you have any
8 understanding of whether that was going to be
9 a long-term or a short-term placement?

10 A. So in my mind I thought that would be my last placement.
11 I thought this is my chance to have a place to call
12 home, really, you know, because I did feel like I was
13 just pinballing all over the care system and not really
14 finding a place to belong. So I had a lot of hope going
15 into the start of this placement. I really liked the
16 family. And I loved the daughter who lived in Tranent,
17 she had a wee baby. I used to love going to visit the
18 baby and just helping out, just being part of the
19 family. I did sort of be excluded from school or not go
20 to school to do that, but it just -- it wasn't a time
21 where I felt like I could learn. I had all of that kind
22 of trauma and challenge, it was very difficult to just
23 go back to school like everybody else. So I did find
24 that really hard. So I just really wanted to be home
25 and be cosy and safe sort of thing.

1 Q. You talk about issues at school at paragraph 166. You
2 say you weren't happy about being in school so had you
3 been out of school while you were in the secure unit and
4 at Pathways?

5 A. Aye, it was really -- I suffered from a lot of bullying
6 at school and then, I'm quite ashamed to say but
7 I became a bully as well. It was just my way of taking
8 control of that situation. Then I didn't like who I was
9 at school and then I would walk in the door and then
10 literally walk out the back door and I would often
11 get -- you know, into arguments with teachers and
12 teaching staff and stuff and they just wrote me off.
13 They just didn't want me in their classroom. I think
14 I'd missed so much school it was very difficult just to
15 go in and pick up where the class was. It was
16 impossible for me to do that and I just couldn't cope
17 with the routine and stuff like that, to be honest.
18 I remember really struggling in the mornings and still
19 not sleeping at night and stuff like that, so it was
20 difficult just to function the next day.

21 Q. You talk about going to a panel and the reaction of the
22 foster parents to you not attending school.

23 A. (Witness nods)

24 Q. Can you remember what they said at the panel?

25 A. I remember them saying that like during the day that was

1 their time with their family and they needed me to be in
2 school so they could do that. They basically said,
3 "She's not in school, she can't stay with us because
4 that is our family time". And that was quite
5 devastating because I remember thinking I thought this
6 was my family. That's certainly how the daughter had
7 made me feel and her wee baby, like I was just one of
8 them and it was lovely and I didn't think I was causing
9 that big a problem. Aye, so I was quite shocked that
10 that was the condition, you know, that I had to attend
11 school. And for me that was impossible at that time.
12 I just couldn't do it.

13 LADY SMITH: 'Rachel', how old were you then?

14 A. I think I must have been about 15.

15 LADY SMITH: Okay, thank you.

16 MS INNES: Are you saying that the condition of you staying
17 with them was that you had to go to school?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you couldn't keep to that continue and therefore you
20 were moved?

21 A. Yeah. So then I went back to Pathways for a very short
22 time and then I appeared at another Children's Hearing
23 and it was about six months before my 16th birthday and
24 they put me in residential school, which was again
25 really devastating because it was in Bathgate, it was

1 miles away from my family, Secondary Institutions - to be published later
2 Secondary Institutions - to be p. So, aye, I remember at the time
3 thinking I have six months left, is it that big a deal?
4 And the school knew that I wouldn't be able to get good
5 exams and stuff like that, like that was never going to
6 happen. So I do feel like it was a huge argument over
7 nothing. I wish that they had kind of, looking back,
8 that they had dealt with the trauma and all the other
9 stuff, you know, so I could function, and then look at
10 school. That was -- aye, that would be the next bit.
11 Q. You go on to talk about going back to Pathways and then
12 going to Moore House Care in Bathgate?
13 A. Yeah.
14 Q. And to Cauvin House?
15 A. Yeah.
16 Q. Then I think you spent some time in what might be called
17 supported accommodation?
18 A. Yeah.
19 Q. Or a bed and breakfast?
20 A. Mm-hmm.
21 Q. I want to move on to ask you now about your life after
22 care and just a couple of things within that. If we
23 move on, please, to page 48, you tell us in your
24 statement that you started to work as a residential care
25 officer?

1 A. Mm-hmm.

2 Q.

3 A.

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17 Q. At paragraph 242 you talk about going to a particular
18 course that affected you and you say at the end of this
19 page from then on you knew that everything that you did
20 would be to change the way that things happened to kids
21 in care.

22 A. (Witness nods)

23 Q. Can you tell us a little bit about that and how you
24 changed what you were according at the time?

25 A. Aye. It was a huge, huge time in my life because I had

1 just lost my nana, she had died, and then I had had my
2 first baby, so it was like two huge life-changing things
3 and then I took this course by an amazing woman called
4 Edwina Grant, I think her name was. It's different,
5 it's a different name. And it was Dyadic Developmental
6 Practice and I remember it was all about relationships
7 and as residential workers we're there as people, we are
8 there as individuals, and not just people that are going
9 to an office every day. It's more than just a job, it's
10 a vocation. And I remember that, that was the time when
11 I really changed how I was going to approach my work.
12 You know, I was going to be a relation -- you know, kind
13 of driven by relationships and not overthink what I'm
14 doing. Like, you know, I think I often refer to the
15 care system as the fear system and that's because like
16 even the staff are quite scared to make decisions,
17 because you need to check with so many people and
18 there's just there's a lot of systems and structures in
19 place that really make it difficult to hold nurture in
20 relationships.

21 Q. You go on in your statement to tell us about some of the
22 things that you've done I think as a result of -- that's
23 flowed from that talk in particular and you go on to
24 tell us about that.

25 Can we move on, please, to page 51 and you talk at

1 paragraph 253 about some of the impact and you've
2 already mentioned a little bit about this in relation to
3 the impact that your experiences in foster care had on
4 what then happened while you were a child?

5 A. Mm-hmm.

6 Q. Are you able to say what impact those experiences in
7 foster care had on your life thereafter?

8 A. Yeah, I think it would -- it would definitely be like my
9 self-esteem, my confidence, like who I felt I was as
10 a person, all of that stuff, like you know it was
11 real -- I would say when I look at all the abuse I've
12 had in my life, that was probably one of the most
13 damaging because it's your mind. You know, that's not
14 an easy thing to heal when you're kind of brainwashed
15 into thinking how evil you are. It takes a long, long
16 time to be able to recover from something like that,
17 definitely.

18 And I would say like even during my studies and
19 things I would always question myself and there's even
20 moments now, you know, where in my own work where
21 I feel, "Oh, should I even be here doing this? Like
22 what gives me the right?" But then quickly bring myself
23 back to all the recovery work that I've done and
24 understanding that that was about the people that were
25 in the system and not me, and I was a child. You know,

1 I keep thinking back that if it was me now I would say
2 something, but being a 12-year-old child, it's very,
3 very difficult to find your voice when you're that
4 beaten up by life.

5 Q. Over the page at paragraph 259 you mention your
6 relationship with your siblings. I don't want to ask
7 about the detail of their lives or anything like that.
8 Obviously you've explained to us that you were separated
9 from your siblings and that you didn't really have much
10 contact with them again during your time in care.

11 A. Mm.

12 Q. How has that impacted on your relationship with them as
13 an adult?

14 A. It's really -- it's difficult. It's really, really sad,
15 actually. There is a real distance between us. I know
16 sibling relationships in everyday life, they can be
17 challenging and stuff, but, aye, like it's -- it can be
18 quite triggering, I think, especially for my wee sister.
19 So she's really distanced herself, you know, from us as
20 a family and it's left her quite vulnerable at times,
21 which is just -- it's difficult for me and my brother
22 because we want to kind of have that sibling unit, but
23 it's kind of steeped in challenge, really, because of
24 what the system has done to us like as individuals and
25 as a group. You know, we don't have that -- the same

1 kind of -- I suppose like because I was a young carer
2 there's that dynamic. It's difficult to go from being
3 someone's parent to being their big sister. But nobody
4 kind of helped us navigate that and it's the lifelong
5 like just adjusting to different phases and, aye, it's
6 been really, really difficult. It's just really sad
7 that where we're at a point where we do have our own
8 lives and stuff but we're not as close as what I think
9 we could have been with the right support.

10 Q. At the bottom of page 52 at paragraph 262 you talk about
11 getting your records. What was your experience of
12 getting your records like?

13 A. So I remember like I was working full time at the time
14 and I decided to take three months off work. I'm pretty
15 sure I did that unpaid and stuff like that at the time
16 or I used like some annual leave and bits like that, but
17 I needed the time. It was a time in my life where I had
18 to kind of write it in my own words because there were
19 so many -- you know sometimes like there was lies
20 written about the experience and I had to rewrite it in
21 my own words. It wasn't about going to get it published
22 or anything like that. It was a very personal thing.
23 And I still have the 86,000 words that I had wrote. But
24 it was for me and it was to write in my own words this
25 is what happened. So when they were writing down how

1 devious I was, actually I was grieving for the
2 relationships that I had lost and I was upset about what
3 I was going through at the time. So it wasn't that
4 I was being devious. I was showing behaviours in a way
5 that was a cry for help.

6 So, aye, it was a powerful experience to get those
7 records and just see like all the different opinions and
8 I think seeing something in black and white was
9 difficult because, aye, you know, this is what people
10 really thought of me at the time and actually these
11 people were supposed to be caring for me, they were
12 supposed to be the people that you look up to, the
13 responsible adults in your life, but to see them kind of
14 describe me as being manipulative, dangerous, devious,
15 damaged, like that hits -- it hits you quite hard. And
16 all of that did kind of trigger what I had been through
17 and stuff, so I think I needed that time, that three
18 months, just to go through it. And, aye, it was like
19 therapy, really, for me to be honest to go through that
20 and I'm glad I did it but I would say to anyone getting
21 your records, it needs to be really well supported
22 and -- aye, because it's a right, it's something we're
23 all entitled to do, to get those, but it needs to be
24 done in a much more supported way, I think.

25 Q. You go on on page 53 to talk about some of the lessons

1 to be learned from your experience. At paragraph 264
2 you talk about people in the care industry who are in
3 the role just as a career shouldn't be looking after
4 children. I think you mentioned it in the context of
5 residential care already, would the same also apply to
6 foster carers?

7 A. 100 per cent. And I think -- you know, I've seen this
8 in my working life where I've met foster carers and I've
9 heard stories from young people that I've worked with
10 and certainly what I've seen in the care system, like
11 when things were going really well, my foster family
12 would almost like be really proud, but proud of
13 themselves and what they had done for me, and if it
14 wasn't for them I wouldn't be where I was, and I've seen
15 that so many times where they kind of take the credit
16 for the kids and what they've had to overcome and
17 I think that's all the wrong reasons to get to become
18 a foster carer. If it's about ego and power, like they
19 just shouldn't be in that role.

20 And even thinking about it as a career, it was even
21 like how I looked at my role as a residential worker.
22 I didn't see it as a job. Like I genuinely seen it as
23 a vocation. It was a privilege to be in these young
24 people's lives and to be part of their lives for that
25 time, but I don't think everybody has that same

1 attitude. I think it is like -- even like the way it's
2 advertised, "Oh, come and get this great big salary,
3 take one or two kids, you get this amount of money",
4 it's not the right incentive to bring people into
5 something like that.

6 And I think like for me, you know, the two
7 placements I had, you know, because they had -- they are
8 parents themselves, they've brought up their own
9 families and stuff, they almost expect the kids to come
10 in with no issues, to just fit in, to go to school, to
11 not misbehave, to not steal like or whatever, to not do
12 any challenging things. But actually they've not come
13 from nice settled families.

14 You know, they're in foster care for a reason and
15 I think they need to be up for a challenge. It's not
16 going to be easy and I just think if you're going in as
17 a career, it's not a job, like this is your family life
18 so you need to be willing -- and I think both parents
19 need to be willing and be all in or not in at all,
20 because I think people that are kind of half there or if
21 you have one foster parent who really wants to do this
22 and another one that's just not, the damage that that
23 does to someone's self-worth and self-esteem is just
24 devastating.

25 I think that that's one of the biggest things about

1 my -- in my life, one of key themes, I would say, is
2 rejection. Like when I think back to when I was a baby,
3 like I was rejected by my dad and then he disappeared
4 and then like I've had a lot of adults that have come in
5 and out and just like disappeared, so it's kind of that
6 expectation that adults are not going to hang about.

7 And then even like when I met my husband, I thought,
8 you know, at some point he was going to disappear, so
9 like he really got put through the mill with me to be
10 honest with you and he stuck by me, because he
11 obviously, you know, loves me, but that was hard and
12 I think like you need to be in it and you need to be --
13 and it's going to be hard, but that's the bit about
14 where love needs to be part of the -- or there needs to
15 be the conditions for love in the care system, because
16 it's the only thing that's going to get you through the
17 hardest times with the children that really need it, you
18 know.

19 Q. You mentioned there that the incentive shouldn't be
20 money, so how do you get the right sort of people to be
21 foster parents?

22 A. I think, you know, doing a kind of values-based
23 recruitment process. That's really important. I mean
24 even thinking about the -- how the Children's Hearings
25 recruit now. You know, they -- even thinking about

1 their campaign at the moment, the word "empathy" just
2 stays in my head so much, because like that's the bit
3 for me that was missing. I didn't feel like the foster
4 family had much empathy for how I could be feeling at
5 that point in my life. They didn't really see it --
6 they didn't see how important these other relationships
7 were and just kind of keeping these connections and
8 stuff like that, just -- and I think if you had empathy,
9 you would understand that sort of thing.

10 So I think values-based recruitment.

11 Also training. Like during my working life I had
12 met a woman who delivered fantastic training around
13 relational working and stuff and she was actually
14 an adopter and she had two boys and she knew it wasn't
15 going to be easy so she did training on attachment, you
16 know, I think one of them had autism so she went away
17 and did a course specific to that and she just had that
18 attitude, she was like, do you know, I'm their mum and
19 if this is what they need, I need to go and learn what
20 they need to be the best mum I can be, and I remember
21 just thinking if every foster carer had that attitude,
22 we'd win. Kids would actually be loved and cared for in
23 the way that they need to be.

24 Because like you think about all the qualifications
25 that is needed to do residential care work now. We

1 don't expect that of foster carers, but actually -- and
2 it's not even so much that. I think it's about them
3 having the training that's required to look after that
4 specific child. I think having like bog-standard
5 training for everybody isn't the right approach either.
6 It's about being a really good parent and understanding
7 the needs of that child and they might not come out and
8 say, "I've got ADHD and I've got this so you need to go
9 and study that". They're going to tell you in different
10 ways. So it's understanding what cues they're giving
11 you so you go away and you do that.

12 They talk about -- like during that training it was
13 a dance of attunement that a baby and a parent does and
14 it's just understanding each other and that's almost
15 like what a foster parent needs to do, they need to kind
16 of do that understanding. Like through just spending
17 time together to understand who this person is, where
18 they have come from and knowing how to address whatever
19 issues are coming up for that person.

20 Q. At paragraph 266 you talk about nothing happening for
21 kids who are suffering trauma in care or those adults
22 who have left the care system with remaining trauma.
23 You say there needs to be a person who listens to your
24 needs and understands you while you are in care and
25 after. Can you tell us a bit more about your thoughts

1 in relation to that?

2 A. I'm thinking about friends that I've known over the
3 years that have died after their time in care, you know,
4 one was a drug overdose, one was just one of these -- it
5 was an accident, it wasn't -- but you know, when I think
6 about what they had tried to overcome, you know, they
7 had tried to get help but there was no open door for
8 them. Especially the person that had died with the drug
9 overdose. They were in the system, they were around it.
10 On paper, like their inspection report would be
11 fantastic, like they'd probably have good reviews from
12 the Care Inspectorate, but that's a kid that left with
13 no support and they went back home to a situation where
14 there was no family work had taken place. So they
15 literally went from an abusive home to the care system,
16 back to the abusive home, and that's where I think this
17 person was really, really let down.

18 I do think about so many children that I looked
19 after as well where I knew we were setting them up to
20 fail. There was one kid that I was looking after where
21 I knew he was moving onto his own accommodation but
22 I knew it wouldn't work, it would be a short term and
23 he'd get kicked out or something would happen and
24 I remember talking to the social work department and
25 saying, "Please, can we keep his bed open? Like just

1 let me keep it open for him so he can come back if he
2 needs to". And they wouldn't do it. It was very --
3 again, it's that resource-driven situation. It was like
4 well actually someone else needs his bed so he's out of
5 the picture, and lo and behold, he did end up losing
6 that place and he ended up homeless and that's -- you
7 know, there was never an open door for me either.
8 I kind of went from Pathways to residential school to
9 supported accommodation, but within the supported
10 accommodation again it was all conditions. Secondary Institutions

11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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23 So I think trauma's something that's massively
24 overlooked and in the long run it costs the country
25 money anyway. I just think if you invest in families

1 like way at the beginning so they don't have to go
2 through that or, you know, if they -- you know, for
3 whatever reason have to go into foster care or
4 residential care, just put the right support in place,
5 like therapy. You know, just having access to
6 counselling or even like sports activities like things
7 just regular stuff that you would do for your own child,
8 you know, if I knew that my kid was struggling, I would
9 be like what do we do? Who do we get involved? And
10 I think that's the approach that the system has to take.

11 But also that lifelong thing. So like I've got
12 another friend who's quite seriously ill just now as
13 a result of substance abuse and stuff like that, and
14 that's somebody that I think although they're
15 37-year-old, they still need that kind of nurturing and
16 support that they never had growing up and they went
17 through the homeless system and now they're in adult
18 mental health services and things like that and health
19 services are involved, but I just think we really
20 missed -- as a country, we're really missing a lot
21 around making sure that people have an open door they
22 can go to for support.

23 Q. At paragraph 268 you say that there needs to be
24 an apology for the mistakes the care system has made and
25 the government needs to take responsibility as well as

1 those who had children under their care.

2 I wonder if you can explain a little bit further,
3 because it might be said, well, there has been
4 an apology or people have apologised for abuse that was
5 suffered in care. What's your response to that?

6 A. I think, you know, there's two bits to that for me.
7 There's the bit about you know children and young people
8 that have went on, left the care system and subsequently
9 died you know as a result of trauma -- I suppose you can
10 look at it as trauma in its broadest sense about what
11 has happened there. So there's an apology for that to
12 the families that have lost people, friends that have
13 lost friends.

14 There's also another bit for me and it's quite --
15 a generic apology isn't meaningful. It needs to be
16 something that's quite specific to individuals that have
17 experienced specific experiences, if that makes sense.
18 So like you know I remember years after I had left the
19 care system I was in a professional capacity and I had
20 bumped into my old social worker. That was the one
21 I had spoken about earlier. And she was just heading
22 for retirement at this time and I remember her just
23 pulling me to the side, "Do you mind if I ask you a wee
24 question?" I was like, "That's fine". She was like:

25 "The cigarettes, did you steal those cigarettes?"

1 And I said, "Look, I have no reason to lie to you
2 now, no, I didn't".

3 She said:

4 "You know, that was something that always bothered
5 me like throughout my journey in life and throughout my
6 work, I always thought she didn't steal the cigarettes."

7 And I think to hear that -- she didn't apologise,
8 she acknowledged that ... there was an acknowledgement
9 that something wasn't right, but I think she went away
10 and she must have thought to her like what was
11 I thinking, but I think I personally I would like
12 an apology from the Local Authority to say I'm so sorry
13 that we didn't help you and your family, like, and there
14 is lifelong consequences to that. I'm still supporting
15 my mum. She's went on to have two other children who
16 are now navigating the housing and homelessness system,
17 which is just -- they just shouldn't be doing that. And
18 I think had my mum been given that support long ago, we
19 wouldn't be in this situation now and history wouldn't
20 be repeating itself sort of thing for them.

21 MS INNES: Okay. I've come to the end of my questions for
22 you, but I know that you brought some notes so if you
23 just want to let us know if there are other things that
24 you wanted to say that we've not covered in your
25 evidence.

1 A. I wrote down around language and how records are kept
2 around children that are in care. I talked about the
3 word "devious" being used to describe me, I would say
4 something that's so important is the way that we
5 record -- you know because it's not just records, like
6 this is someone's life and children in care -- I always
7 talk about -- I've got kids now and I keep wee memory
8 boxes for them and things and put wee things that
9 I think will be important later on when they're trying
10 to piece together their own life, but for me I look back
11 on a box of case files and I see words like "devious"
12 and "damaged" and that's really sad and I just think no
13 child should look back on their childhood with labels
14 like that. We really need to think carefully about
15 these are children that are going to grow up and read
16 them.

17 I have seen some lovely examples of that. One
18 residential house that I know of in Glasgow I think
19 somewhere, they write letters, so the residential staff
20 write letters to the kids. So instead of saying,
21 "Such-and-such appeared to be quite anxious today" or,
22 "They ate a hamburger for their dinner", instead of
23 doing that, they'll say, "How are you feeling today?"
24 Just kind of having a bit more conversational or record
25 nice memories like, "Do you know how funny you are?" Or

1 these nice things about people. There's no kid that's
2 born bad and there's no kid that's evil. It's systems
3 and people that describe them that way and we need to be
4 really careful about how we describe people, because
5 that really cuts deep.

6 And also like thinking about Children's Hearings,
7 like I've got very patchy memories of the Children's
8 Hearings, because it was sometimes I went in under the
9 influence to be honest with you, because I thought it
10 was going to be easier just to get through it because it
11 was traumatic in itself, going in with a big table and
12 three people making big decisions about my life.

13 And even like the way that it's set up, although
14 there's different ways that a child's view can be heard,
15 I think that advocacy is so, so important, especially in
16 the Children's Hearing system where you have someone
17 that's educating you about children's rights, that's the
18 first bit, so you understand what you're entitled to,
19 what sort of life you should have.

20 When I was going through the system I just expected
21 abuse. I remember really thinking like this was normal
22 and I think growing up in an abusive environment -- like
23 I was in a community where abuse was normal for the
24 kids. So even like a friend of mine, we would talk
25 about being hit, "I'd better get home because I'm going

1 to get battered", and that was just normal, like
2 a completely normal way of life, Secondary Institutions - to be published
3 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
4 Secondary Institutions - to be published later . That's normal because
5 that's just what you're growing up and seeing every day.

6 But I think having that kind of children's rights
7 just everywhere, like have it in schools, have it just
8 so people are aware of it and know that abuse is not
9 a thing that should be tolerated anywhere by anyone.
10 And then having someone outside the system almost like
11 not in a kind of monitoring way but somebody there that
12 can see the bigger picture that might be going on.

13 So for me like the social worker, the foster family,
14 they were so in the system and the situation in being
15 resource-led or meeting their own needs. There was
16 nobody outside seeing kind of that picture and seeing it
17 from a child's perspective. So I think something around
18 advocacy. We need to make sure that every child has
19 access to that and every child knows their rights.

20 MS INNES: Thank you very much, 'Rachel'.

21 There are no applications, my Lady.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

23 Are there any outstanding applications for questions
24 of 'Rachel'?

25 No?

1 'Rachel', that does complete all the questions we
2 have for you. It just remains for me to thank you so
3 much for engaging with us as you have done, both to
4 provide the written statement regarding your own
5 experiences over quite a long period in care, including
6 foster care, but I see that you've covered other types
7 of care as well, and for your thoughtful and articulate,
8 if I may say, reflections on the systems and how and why
9 they let you down and no doubt let others down as well,
10 from what you say, and your thoughts about how things
11 could be improved for the future. It's all such a help.

12 A. (Witness nods)

13 LADY SMITH: You'll be exhausted when you leave here I'm
14 sure and I'm glad to be able to say once we get these
15 screens pulled across again, you're free to go and
16 hopefully relax for the rest of the day.

17 A. (Witness nods)

18 LADY SMITH: If you just wait a moment, you'll see they'll
19 be pulled across now.

20 That's it. That's it, 'Rachel'. Do feel free to
21 go. Thank you.

22 (The witness withdrew)

23 LADY SMITH: Two sets of foster family names there, GEB-SPO
24 and the and they're both covered by my general
25 restriction order and these people can't be identified

1 outside this room.

2 It's time for the lunch break, Ms Innes.

3 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady.

4 LADY SMITH: I think we should probably try and resume just
5 a little bit later, 2.10/2.15, will that work for the
6 next witness?

7 MS INNES: I'm sure that will work, yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Very well, let's do that.

9 (1.17 pm)

10 (The luncheon adjournment)

11 (2.15 pm)

12 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. I see we're ready with the
13 next witness.

14 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady. The next witness is an applicant
15 who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the
16 pseudonym 'Ruth'. 'Ruth' was in the care of the County
17 Council of the County of Stirling.

18 'Ruth' was in two foster care placements.

19 The first was with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Tullibody
20 from [REDACTED] 1962 until [REDACTED] 1962.

21 The second was with a couple in [REDACTED] from
22 [REDACTED] 1962 until [REDACTED] 1970, when the couple
23 adopted 'Ruth'.

24 The current responsible authority is Stirling
25 Council.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

2 'Ruth', before you give your evidence I'd like to
3 either put you on oath or invite you to make
4 an affirmation to tell the truth.

5 'Ruth' (sworn)

6 LADY SMITH: A couple of things that I'll explain to you
7 before we begin.

8 First of all, we'll be putting your statement up on
9 the screen, you might find that helpful as you go along.

10 The other thing to be conscious of is the
11 microphone. It's really helpful if we hear you through
12 the sound system, if you can keep bearing that in mind.

13 Otherwise, 'Ruth', I know that what we're asking you
14 to do here isn't easy. You've come here to talk about
15 private matters in your own life, particularly in your
16 childhood, when things were difficult and maybe
17 upsetting for you to talk about. I get that. I do
18 understand. If there's anything I can do at any time to
19 help you to give your evidence as clearly and carefully
20 as you can, you must let me know. If you need a break,
21 that's absolutely fine. If it would be better to have
22 your break out of the room, please don't think that's
23 too much hassle for us, it's not. So that would work as
24 well.

25 The key really is if it works for you to help you

1 give your evidence, it works for me. Please don't
2 forget that. If you're ready, I'll hand over to
3 Ms Rattray and she'll take it from there, all right?

4 Ms Rattray.

5 Questions from Ms Rattray

6 MS RATTRAY: Hello, 'Ruth'.

7 A. Hello.

8 Q. 'Ruth', you've given a statement to the Inquiry and that
9 statement has a reference which we've given it, which is
10 WIT-1-000000335. Shortly that should appear on the
11 screen in front of you.

12 There we go.

13 To start with, 'Ruth', what I'm going to ask you to
14 do is to look at the paper version, which is in the red
15 folder on the desk in front of you. If you could
16 actually go to the back page of your statement, which is
17 page 19.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Do we see that you have signed your statement?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. The last paragraph, 130, you say:

22 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
23 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

24 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
25 true."

1 Is that right?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. You can put that to one side now, thank you.

4 What we'll turn to first, 'Ruth', is what you know
5 about your life before care. You tell us in your
6 statement that you were born in 1962, and also that you
7 were put up for adoption as a baby, but I understand you
8 have since learned something about your background and
9 your birth family. Is that right?

10 A. About them turning up again?

11 Q. No, I'm talking about the circumstances when you were
12 born and when you were placed in care.

13 A. Well, what I believe is the birth mother was like 15 or
14 whatever when she fell pregnant with me. She gave birth
15 in a home in Dundee and I was placed with the family in
16 Tullibody who were going to adopt me from birth, but
17 shortly after I was placed with them, the lady was
18 diagnosed with leukaemia, which in 1962 was a death
19 sentence, so basically the adoption couldn't go ahead
20 and then they couldn't even foster me because she was
21 ultimately going to die, and I went back into the care
22 process again and my family in [REDACTED] had decided
23 to start fostering.

24 They went to collect their first foster child, who
25 was unwell on the day, and they were asked if they

1 wanted to pick any other child, and my brother was
2 there, he was like -- my adoptive brother. He was
3 I think seven at the time and he wanted the little brown
4 baby. So that was the reason I was picked to go with my
5 family.

6 Q. Okay. I think you refer to your colour there, 'Ruth',
7 and I think you tell us that you have learned that your
8 mum was from a mixed-race heritage?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. As you say, that she became pregnant at 14 and had you
11 at 15.

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Your understanding is she wasn't fit to care for you at
14 that time?

15 A. Definitely not.

16 Q. Your new foster home, not obviously the first one but
17 the one which became your family home, because you were
18 eventually adopted, who all lived in the home?

19 A. At that time there was -- I had five sisters and
20 a brother. And my mum and dad and me. And in time,
21 while they fostered me my mum also fostered other
22 children. There was always a baby, at that time it was
23 babies, and there was always a second child being
24 fostered while I was there and six kids in
25 a three-bedroomed house.

1 Q. How did your parents manage that?

2 A. Oh, they managed. Bunk beds, sharing rooms. There was
3 room for everybody. It worked.

4 Q. What did you call your foster parents?

5 A. Mum and dad. They said as soon as I was sort of out of
6 the baby stage they became mum and dad because that's
7 what they were referred to by everybody else so they
8 didn't contradict it, they just let me call them mum and
9 dad.

10 Q. You tell us that you always knew you were fostered?

11 A. Well, they couldn't disguise because of the colour and
12 it's like why am I different to everybody else? So they
13 always were truthful about what my background was.

14 Q. Whilst you have a mixed-race heritage, the family you
15 were placed with were all white?

16 A. Mm-hmm.

17 Q. Did your foster parents have jobs?

18 A. My dad, I think at the time I was placed with them, he
19 was a supervisor [REDACTED] in Stirling, so that was
20 his background and he worked in another factory in
21 Stirling. And then went in to do office work later
22 until he retired.

23 Q. How about your mum?

24 A. No, she was at home.

25 Q. She had her hands full there.

1 A. Yeah, yeah. She was like the only daughter, so was
2 expected to provide care for her mum and dad. They all
3 lived in the same village. I had another uncle who
4 lived in the village and my other uncle was in England.
5 He never came back after the war, he married and stayed
6 down in Gloucestershire. And my mum married early,
7 married young because my dad was getting sent to France
8 during the war, so she was 16 in the [REDACTED] and got
9 married on [REDACTED], and on [REDACTED] my dad got
10 sent to France. He was with the engineers.

11 Q. Right.

12 A. So he went off to war, so she was married young, had
13 a family and was always at home.

14 Q. I think at paragraph 12 of your statement, 'Ruth', you
15 speak of your earliest memories --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- and that they're happy memories?

18 A. Yeah, definitely.

19 Q. Can you tell us a bit about your early happy memories?

20 A. Well, as I say, I had five sisters in the house and
21 a brother -- sorry, four sisters and a brother, and my
22 sisters were Brownie leaders, Guide leaders, Sunday
23 School teachers, that sort of thing. There was always
24 people in the house, always somebody had friends in.
25 There was lots of singing and music being played and

1 just my mum and dad welcomed people at the house, they
2 were happy to have people at the house rather than the
3 kids going out when they were young, so my memories were
4 always of happy times, family get togethers, friends
5 being there, friends being welcome.

6 Q. You say also that you describe the home as a child
7 friendly home?

8 A. Mm-hmm.

9 Q. In what way was it child friendly?

10 A. Just that anybody was welcome. If anybody came to the
11 house they were welcomed in. My mum and dad never said,
12 "Oh, tell them to go away" or, "It's too late" or
13 whatever. People were welcome in. My mum and dad
14 included any visitors as part of the family. So if they
15 were there at teatime they had dinner with us. If they
16 were there at night they had supper. It was just
17 welcome.

18 Q. You tell us at paragraph 14 that you felt part of the
19 family?

20 A. Mm-hmm. Always. I don't know if it was because my
21 sisters -- the nearest sister to me was ten years older
22 than me. I think the eldest one would have been ...
23 maybe about 17/18 years older than me. So, really, by
24 the time I went there the oldest ones were getting ready
25 to marry and leave home, but I think because I was there

1 as a baby and there long term, they were attached to me.
2 Other foster kids would come and go, but because I was
3 there permanently I was just counted as one of the
4 family. My sisters as they got married and I was still
5 a foster child then, I was always the flower girl.
6 Cousins in the village, my uncle's son and daughter,
7 I was their flower girl as well. Everybody was mixing
8 regularly, families were close then, and I just felt
9 part of it. And even as I got a bit older, as my eldest
10 sisters were having kids, I was auntie FAK, even
11 though like the older ones are only three, four, five
12 years younger than me, but I was always auntie FAK
13 even though I was at the primary school.

14 Q. In relation to other children being fostered in the
15 household, how did that make you feel? Was that
16 something you were happy with or not?

17 A. No, I liked it, I liked it, especially as I got older
18 and it was babies, I always loved having babies at the
19 house. So we were included. My sisters always used to
20 sit with the babies after school or when they came home
21 from work. It was always sort of like play time and
22 mixing and what have you, so I enjoyed it. I hated it
23 when they went away. Always cried when they left.
24 A lot of them were getting placed for adoption from
25 being in care with my mum and dad so I always had a cry

1 at the door when they left.

2 Q. Were the foster children placed with your mum, were they
3 all babies or were there older children sometimes as
4 well?

5 A. No, I just remember babies.

6 Q. In relation to chores in the house, were you having to
7 do chores at all?

8 A. I believe my sisters and my brother did, but I don't
9 think I really did because I was a baby. They always
10 had -- my mum, because there were so many in the house,
11 she had quite a routine with how things worked and who
12 did what, so they always had their chores to do if they
13 wanted pocket money at the weekend, but because there
14 was a big age gap, I kind of got away with murder when
15 I was young.

16 Q. As you grew up, and I think you tell us in your
17 statement when you were adopted you were aged eight --

18 A. Mm-hmm.

19 Q. -- but either before or after that, was there a time
20 when you were old enough to take on chores?

21 A. Yeah. Eventually. At the weekends I used to help mum,
22 she used to have a lot of brass ornaments and I used to
23 polish them up and that sort of thing. So as I got
24 older, yes, I had to start doing things. Washing
25 dishes.

1 Q. You mentioned pocket money. Did you get pocket money?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Your pocket money, were you allowed to spend it as you
4 chose or --

5 A. Yeah, but frequently it was on books and magazines.
6 There used to be a store in Stirling, Homes(?) it was
7 called, and I used to go in there. I would spend all
8 afternoon. It was like downstairs it was books and
9 upstairs it was stationery and that sort of thing. And
10 I always found books I wanted to get, at that time it
11 would be like the Famous Five, Enid Blyton, they were
12 really, really cheap so I always used to get a book on
13 a Saturday.

14 Q. In terms of the sort of general routine in the house, in
15 paragraph 24 you tell us that at night all the packed
16 lunches were made and the clothes were ironed for the
17 next day --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- all the shoes would be lined up at the door for the
20 morning, and everything just ran with military
21 precision, but it was also a lot of fun --

22 A. Mm-hmm.

23 Q. -- and there was also laughter and music and it was
24 a happy place?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. In relation to food and meals, you don't tell us about
2 this in your statement, but who was it who did the
3 cooking in the house?

4 A. Well, my mum always did the evening meals. My dad made
5 breakfast on a Sunday for everybody and my sisters back
6 and forward, because they were getting ready to get
7 married and move out, they would do a bit of cooking to
8 help mum.

9 Q. What was the food like, was it good?

10 A. Yeah. My mum was very much a sort of meat, potato and
11 veg and I remember my dad introduced spaghetti bolognese
12 and she nearly fainted, she said, "I can't manage these
13 sort of things", and she used to day like I'll buy a tin
14 of spaghetti bolognese and my dad would be no, no you
15 have to make the real thing, it was the same with
16 curries and what have you. It was just alien to my mum.
17 But she made really good mince and potatoes and stews
18 and soups and things.

19 Q. What happened if someone or a child who was eating the
20 food didn't like what they were eating? What was the
21 response to that?

22 A. Well, it would depend. And I had a thing, sometimes
23 I wouldn't want to eat meat and if it was stews and that
24 sort of thing I would say I didn't want the meat, so
25 I would get the gravy and I convinced myself that was

1 good with potatoes and veg, but my dad was the soft one,
2 so he would say what would you like and my mum would be
3 trying to say, "Look, she eats the same as everybody
4 else, this is how we've always managed", but I would
5 chance it every now and then and say can I get something
6 different.

7 Q. In terms of your clothes, were you well dressed?

8 A. Never went without.

9 Q. Were you allowed to choose your own clothes?

10 A. Yes, yes.

11 Q. Turning now to paragraph 28 on page 5 of your statement,
12 and here you tell us about school.

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. At school did the other children know you were in foster
15 care?

16 A. I would guess so, because as I was asking why I was
17 different, I'm sure they were asking as well.

18 Q. Was there any sort of different treatment because you
19 were in care?

20 A. Because I was in care? No, I don't think so. The only
21 time like at primary school the time I remember anything
22 being different, there was a sewing teacher and she used
23 to come in, she was quite a posh lady who would waltz
24 into school with her fur coat on, she had a driver that
25 would bring her up and she would come into school a few

1 days a week and we got sewing lessons from her and she
2 was always quite hard on me and I couldn't work out why,
3 and then I remember at the time my adoption came through
4 and she made a point of saying my surname, my
5 pre-adoption surname and I deliberately didn't answer
6 her and she was like -- she said it again and I ignored
7 it and she was like, "Why are you not answering me?"
8 And I said well, "That's not my name now, my name is"
9 and I gave my new name and she said, "Why is that your
10 name?" And I said, "Because I've been adopted", and she
11 was like, "Rubbish, don't believe it", and she was
12 really nasty about it. So the next day my mum was down
13 at the school speaking to the headmaster but I think
14 that lady -- with hindsight and reflecting on it,
15 I think maybe there was a touch of racism there.

16 She was a much older person. I don't know what age
17 she was, but to me she seemed really elderly at that
18 time and she was different to how the teachers were in
19 the school.

20 Q. I think you tell us at paragraph 30 of your statement,
21 'Ruth', that she said that a white family wouldn't adopt
22 a black kid?

23 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

24 Q. And once your mum had marched up to the school and told
25 the headmaster, she was pulled up and had to apologise

1 to you and your mum?

2 A. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

3 Q. Did you encounter any other racism?

4 A. Not in the school. I'm quite sure -- I mean the village

5 I grew up in, everybody knew everybody and things were

6 really good. Back and forward over the years, a slight

7 comment, I would wonder what was behind it and I realise

8 now -- I realised as an adult that although people can

9 be nice to your face, not everybody's genuine in that,

10 so I'm quite sure there was a few people in the village

11 maybe had a few prejudices and what have you and maybe

12 came away with negative remarks. Nothing obvious, but

13 when it happens over and over and over a number of

14 years, you wonder if there was more to it, compared to

15 other friends who were doing the same things as me and

16 never had the same grief, that sort of thing.

17 Q. The community you grew up in, was it a diverse community

18 at all?

19 A. No, I was the only person non-white in the village.

20 I doubt there would even be -- there would maybe be

21 a couple of Polish families in the village at that time

22 but everybody else were local people.

23 Q. Did anyone in the family encourage you with your

24 education?

25 A. Yes. My sisters -- my mum and dad always encouraged all

1 of us to learn what we could, to work hard so that we
2 had choices in education when we left school, so there
3 was always somebody helping me with homework or telling
4 me to read a book or what have you.

5 Q. Turning to the question of social work visits and you
6 tell us about that from paragraph 34 in your statement,
7 what do you remember about any visits from a social
8 worker?

9 A. It wasn't a regular thing in my mind. It was now and
10 again and mum would get word that they were coming on
11 whatever day so she would say to me, "You be straight
12 home from school on Wednesday because social workers are
13 going to be here" and I would sort of rush in from
14 school, dump my stuff and want to go out and play and my
15 mum would say, "No, you have to wait on them coming".
16 It would either be -- there was a couple of lady social
17 workers, who again seemed a lot older than what my
18 mother was, that would be like a grandparent image sort
19 of thing, or men. People that you would see once and
20 never again. But it was like men in suits. And I was
21 very young, obviously, being with my mum and dad since
22 such a young age, so I couldn't really relate to them.
23 They would come in and they would say, "How are you?"
24 And I would go, "Fine, bye", and run out to play and
25 that was it.

1 Q. Did any of the social workers ever make the point of
2 having a chat with you on your own when your mum was not
3 there or other family wasn't there?

4 A. Yeah. Mum would make tea or coffee or whatever and I'd
5 be left in the sitting room with them and they'd just
6 ask me, "How's things? What have you been doing? How's
7 school? What do you like doing when you're not at
8 school?" So I would answer the questions and leave.

9 Q. I think perhaps there was a level of anxiety on your
10 part --

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. -- about the purpose of those visits?

13 A. Yeah. By that time the abuse had started and my
14 grandfather used to say that if I said anything or if
15 anybody got any idea what was happening, I'd be removed.
16 So if I wanted to stay with the family I had to say
17 nothing and give away nothing, if I wanted to stay. So
18 for me, social workers coming, they could maybe see
19 something and I would slip up and be removed from my
20 family and I wanted to stay with my mum and dad.

21 Q. In relation to contact with your birth family, you tell
22 us that there was some ongoing contact for a period of
23 time?

24 A. Yes, she was allowed to see me because I was still
25 long-term fostering, so every now and again she would

1 come to the village. She used to spend more time with
2 my mum than me because at that point my sisters were
3 older than her, more or less, and she used to get on
4 with my mum and treat her like a sort of mother figure
5 and tell her everything that was going wrong in her
6 life, so again I got to go out and play and then just
7 spend a little time with her but we weren't close.
8 There was always something between us that I -- I wasn't
9 comfortable with her.

10 Q. I think you tell us as well that after that she had
11 a little boy --

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. -- and sometimes he would come?

14 A. Yeah, [REDACTED]. He used to come and visit and he looked
15 like me, but he was white, relatively white -- pale
16 skinned with blonde hair, but we looked similar and he
17 got to come and visit obviously up until the adoption
18 and then it stopped. But in the last few years he's --
19 well, the whole family found me through social media.
20 I'm in contact with [REDACTED], but none of the rest.

21 Q. Looking back on it, you were adopted at the age of eight
22 and you said the sort of contact stopped then?

23 A. Mm-hmm.

24 Q. Would you have wanted contact to continue?

25 A. I don't know. I don't -- like my kids, when they

1 were -- when I had my own kids and they were asking
2 obviously as they got older about circumstances and what
3 have you and they were aware I had -- it was
4 a half-brother. They were aware of him and what his
5 name was, but I don't ever remember feeling that I lost
6 something losing contact, and now we are in contact it's
7 like a friend. He doesn't -- I mean he'll call me "my
8 sister" and I'll say he's "my brother", but he's just
9 like a friend because I had enough within the family
10 that I had. We were close and that was it. And that
11 was my family.

12 Q. I think you tell us at paragraph 42 of your statement
13 that you went to church and Sunday School?

14 A. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

15 Q. Was that something you enjoyed?

16 A. Yes, I liked it because my sisters were teachers and
17 what have you at the Sunday School so it was just
18 different from the relationship we had in the house.
19 I had to call them Miss Whatever. I enjoyed going, but
20 as time got on, I stopped. Like my dad, I wasn't
21 particularly religious, so I was able to get out of
22 going. What I did enjoy was at Easter we always got
23 a new dress and coat. We used to go into Stirling and
24 there was a shop in Stirling, you got to pick a hat and
25 a coat and things for Easter, so I enjoyed it for that

1 reason.

2 Q. You tell us at paragraph 43 that you were baptised again
3 when you were eight years old after being adopted and
4 with your new adopted name?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. You don't tell us anything in your statement about
7 discipline, but what would happen if you weren't
8 behaving? Were there any punishments? In what way did
9 your parents respond to misbehaviour?

10 A. I don't remember ever getting into trouble with my mum
11 and dad. I don't know if it's because when I was very
12 young and the rest of the family were there, there was
13 always somebody supervising, keeping an eye on you, and
14 because the house was so busy -- as I say, we had
15 friends in, or if it was just us we would be doing
16 things as a family -- it sounds about like the Waltons
17 but it was like that then. There was always things --
18 as long as all the work was done in the house, my
19 sisters and my brother doing the chores that my mum and
20 dad gave them, my mum and dad were quite laid back.
21 I don't remember many raised voices or that in the
22 house. Everything just seemed to be right, what are we
23 doing next, and we did A, B, C, went to bed, and got up
24 in the morning and went back to school the next day.
25 I don't remember when I was young.

1 When I was a teenager it was different, I'm quite
2 sure my mum and dad had many hard times with me, but
3 when I was young, no.

4 Q. When you had hard times when you were a teenager, and
5 I appreciate you weren't in foster care at that time,
6 you were adopted --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- what was their response to that?

9 A. I think they used to pull their hair out with me a bit.
10 I think because they had tried their best to get me on
11 this path as the others had with education and trying to
12 get a -- do well at school so that you had choices in
13 your life and I think when I was a teenager and like
14 a lot of teenagers running a bit wild, I was smoking, if
15 we could get a carryout from the local Co-op at the
16 weekends, there was drinking and things, all the
17 teenagers were doing it at that time, and I was smoking,
18 and I think my mum and dad got a bit exasperated by me
19 at times. By then I was the only one in the house or my
20 brother was maybe still there, initially, but I'm quite
21 sure I got up to all sorts. I never got into trouble
22 with the police or anything, but I got up to mischief
23 with the gang that we ran about in and my mum and dad
24 used to say, "When are you going to get over this? When
25 are you going to settle down? Things have got to get

1 better".

2 But my brother died when I was 16 and that was
3 a wake-up call for me, because they were absolutely
4 devastated, this family of girls and the one boy and he
5 had cardiomyopathy and in these days all they did was
6 replace valves and things, that nowadays it would be
7 like a heart transplant you would need and he died when
8 he was 23. I'd just turned 16, and with that I realised
9 I had to get rid of all the nonsense. My mum and dad
10 needed support at that point, so I stopped being up to
11 mischief at that point.

12 Q. I think, as we move on, we'll hear about why you were
13 perhaps rebelling.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Before we do move on to that, when you reflect upon your
16 early years in foster care, what you're telling us today
17 is a very positive experience?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. The nature of this Inquiry, being an Inquiry into abuse,
20 is clearly we hear a lot of experiences where people
21 didn't feel part of the family and didn't feel accepted
22 and were very unhappy. From your experience and looking
23 back, what is it, do you think, that your parents got
24 right or the system got right to make your experience
25 within your family such a happy one?

1 A. I think because I was placed with them at such a young
2 age, I never knew anything different and there was
3 a large family who included me in things so I never ever
4 felt different -- other than the colour, but that wasn't
5 an issue, it was just, "I'm this colour, you're that
6 colour".

7 If I could pick the ideal mum and dad for me, that
8 would have been the ones that I had, and I think because
9 they just had big hearts, they loved kids, they enjoyed
10 fostering and we were just all close.

11 Q. Thank you, 'Ruth'.

12 At this stage I'm going to move on to what you tell
13 us about abuse you experienced whilst both in foster
14 care but also for a period of time after you were
15 adopted.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You have alluded to this earlier in your evidence and
18 you mentioned your grandfather.

19 A. Mm.

20 Q. Tell us about your grandfather.

21 A. My gran and grandad lived in the village as well. He
22 was the manager of the [REDACTED] and he was
23 a choirmaster, church organist, Sunday School teacher in
24 the village and in [REDACTED] as well.

25 When I was very young, I remember him as being quite

1 large, portly build. He always wore a suit and he had
2 a bowler hat like Winston Churchill. He seemed like
3 a normal grandad, very, very nice, but then I discovered
4 another side of him from a really young age.

5 Q. How was it you came to discover this other side?

6 A. My gran had dementia. I didn't know what dementia was
7 at the time, I just remember she was eccentric. At that
8 time my gran and grandad lived in the same street but at
9 the opposite end to us, so when all the kids went to
10 school, my mum used to go round to help with gran while
11 my grandad worked, but then he retired and was in the
12 house but obviously 24/7 with somebody with dementia was
13 hard going, so my mum would go every day and help with
14 housework and meals and what have you, and if it was
15 a nice day she would take my gran out for a walk and
16 sometimes I went with them and that was fine. But if
17 they were going shopping or if my gran was distressed,
18 she would take her out on her own just to walk up and
19 down the streets a bit for fresh air and I'd be left in
20 the house with him.

21 We would always have things -- he was a good baker
22 so he would say things like, "We'll make pancakes while
23 they're out", and then I'd be in the kitchen and aware
24 he was right behind me when I was washing dishes and
25 what have you, pretending to wash dishes because this

1 was pre-school age, so I was really young and there was
2 a sort of footstool I would stand on at the sink to wash
3 dishes and he was very close to me behind me and I would
4 kind of pull away and that's how it started.

5 Q. So it started with him being very close to you --

6 A. Mm-hmm.

7 Q. -- and how did it move on from there?

8 A. To touching. To him holding me down, because obviously
9 I was trying to get away from him because I knew
10 whatever was happening wasn't a nice feeling. So
11 verbally he would -- his tone changed completely and he
12 would speak a lot negatively about me and then threaten
13 me with, "If you say anything, you'll be removed".

14 And then from touching it ended up I was raped
15 before I started school and I know it was before
16 I started school because I remember outfits that I wore
17 and years later when I started having flashbacks about
18 it and remembered things happening, I would say to mum,
19 "Do you remember that dress that I had, that wee lemon
20 dress that had white lace and what have you?" And she
21 would say to me, "Oh, that was the one you got for
22 Easter, it was before you started school", and I knew
23 I was being raped then so -- and I started school at
24 four and a half, because I was of age to.

25 Q. I think you tell us about that yellow dress at

1 paragraph 54 of your statement --

2 A. Right. Yeah.

3 Q. -- and you describe what happened to you when you were
4 wearing that dress.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. Is that something you're able to speak about today?

7 A. Yeah, it started in the kitchen. My mum had went out
8 with my gran and we were in the house and he started the
9 usual pressing himself up against me. He was just -- he
10 had his arms around the front of me so that I couldn't
11 get away from him and then he ejaculated and obviously
12 messed my dress. And what he did was he went through to
13 the sitting room, there was a coal fire and he got some
14 coal dust and put it on the dress so that he could then
15 take it off me and wash it and put it outside and he
16 said that I'd been playing with the soot and got that on
17 the dress and he knew my mum would be upset and he
18 didn't want it marking it because it was my favourite
19 dress so he had washed it. When my mum came back I had
20 a towel round me, my underwear on but a towel round me
21 sitting waiting, so of course I got a row for playing in
22 the soot, but it covered up what had really happened,
23 that it was him.

24 Q. You've told us that it progressed from touching to rape.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And that was at a pre-school age.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. How often did this happen, do you think?

4 A. I don't think it happened like every week, but it was
5 regular enough that I didn't want to go often to the
6 house. But because I wasn't at school and all my
7 sisters and family were and my dad worked and my gran
8 had dementia and my mum had to go over there every day
9 Monday to Friday so I had to get reluctantly taken round
10 with them. So I really don't know how often it
11 happened, but I know it was pretty regular.

12 Q. You talk of him saying negative things to you?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What kind of negative things did he say?

15 A. He would say like obviously that I had to stay quiet, it
16 was our secret and that if anybody found out anything
17 I would be removed so if I wanted to stay with my mum
18 and dad I had to put up with what he was doing. He
19 would say about, "And who else would take you? Nobody
20 else wants a little nigger girl", that sort of thing,
21 "a little black girl". He said that when I grew up
22 I would want to wear lots of jewellery and bright make
23 up and what have you and that basically I would be
24 second class always. That was my place.

25 When you're really young hearing that, you just

1 believe it. I know nobody else gave me that idea that
2 that's how life would be. You tend to listen to the
3 negativity. So always in my mind I was to know my
4 place, say nothing, not complain. Or my life would
5 change dramatically.

6 Q. I think you tell us at paragraph 63 of your statement,
7 'Ruth', you know, he also would say that you were black
8 and nobody believed black people.

9 A. Yes. Yeah.

10 Q. You also tell us at paragraph 67 of your statement about
11 when the abuse came to an end.

12 A. Yes. I think I must have been about 10 then and I was
13 a lot -- I was quite tall amongst my peer group at that
14 time and he wasn't that tall and by then he was becoming
15 unwell. He had lost a lot of weight and he was still
16 chancing it if he was on his own with me, but I was
17 getting to an age where I could physically fight back
18 a bit more and I'd just had enough at that particular
19 time and I kneed him and he reacted bad -- like it was
20 painful and he was in pain and he sort of jumped
21 backwards and I warned him if he did that again I would
22 tell my dad, because I think in my mind I was adopted so
23 I was a permanent member of the family so I could speak
24 out. So I sort of threatened him, "If you touch me
25 again I'm going to tell my dad".

1 By then children that I played with were speaking
2 about things like periods and wearing bras and things
3 because you were getting to that age, aware of what your
4 sisters -- what they were getting up to and talking
5 about as you were growing up, so I was -- I knew what he
6 was doing wasn't right and I didn't think it was
7 happening to my friends. So I thought I would chance
8 just saying to him, "I'm adopted, I am a member of this
9 family" sort of thing, "So I'm going to speak out if you
10 touch me again". And he never did, that stopped it.

11 Q. When it was happening, was there anyone you could have
12 spoken to?

13 A. No, because I didn't know what he was doing. I didn't
14 understand it. Because it happened from such a young
15 age, it was something horrible that happened and
16 I didn't know if it was happening to other people, but
17 I didn't know how to verbalise it. A three-, four-,
18 five-year-old, how do you tell people that's what's
19 happening? I wondered if it happened to other people.
20 I hoped it happened, it wasn't just me. I thought
21 please let this be what's meant to be normal if this is
22 what is happening and not just to me, but I wouldn't
23 have had anybody that I could have spoken to at that
24 time.

25 Q. Up until the age of eight when you had social work

1 visits, was there any opportunity, do you think, to you
2 being able to tell the social worker?

3 A. No, no, I wouldn't have, because it was so fixed into my
4 head that I would be removed and there was no way
5 I would have said anything.

6 Q. Your mum? Could you have spoken to your mum or your
7 sisters?

8 A. No. No. No. Again, I was still -- because the nearest
9 sister to me was ten years older, she was at a different
10 stage in her life. We were close and her and I are
11 still very close to this day, and when I did speak out
12 eventually it was her that I did speak to about it, but
13 at that stage, no. I still didn't know what it was that
14 was happening so I couldn't have spoken to her about it.

15 Q. I think you tell us that when you spoke to one of your
16 sisters you learned something?

17 A. Yeah. He had abused her before me. And we were able to
18 work out the timescale that when he stopped on her he
19 turned to me and he stopped on her because she was 13,
20 she had just got her periods and he stopped abusing her.
21 He never raped her, but he did everything else and she's
22 10 years older than me so it fits in, I was three. But
23 she couldn't speak up either. She never told anybody.
24 She told her husband, but I was the first person,
25 otherwise, that she spoke to about it because I went to

1 her.

2 Q. You make the point at paragraph 57 of your statement,
3 'Ruth', that your personality changed --

4 A. Mm-hmm.

5 Q. -- around the time that the abuse started?

6 A. Mm-hmm. I used to like -- before this started,
7 I remember like in the house as I say there was always
8 family gatherings and my sisters all sang, some of them
9 sang in groups, like church groups and folk music and
10 that sort of thing. There was always somebody singing
11 in the house and when the family got together, everybody
12 had to stand up and sing a song or what have you.
13 I used to sing along with them as best I could at
14 a young age, but after that happened I just to just like
15 to sit and watch. I loved observing things but I hated
16 being in the middle, the spotlight or people looking at
17 me. I just never liked it. And at school I became
18 quieter. I would go in and do my work but I became
19 a bit quieter and then, as I said before, obviously when
20 I hit the teenage years I just went OTT out there.

21 Q. You feel that your behaviour or what you were up to,
22 drinking or smoking or whatever as a teenager, you
23 relate that back to your experiences?

24 A. Yes, yeah. I mean it was my choice to do that, but by
25 then what had happened, I could never ever and still

1 don't understand the process that you go through these
2 years of abuse and something switched off in my mind and
3 I completely forgot about it, closed it off wherever at
4 the back of my mind and it wasn't until I had my first
5 child at 25 I started getting flashbacks and that's how
6 it all started coming back. Within five years I had
7 three kids and I knew exactly what I was having
8 flashbacks about, but up until then I would have argued
9 black, white, nothing had happened with him. But it
10 came back to me then.

11 Q. At this stage I'm going to move on and you tell us
12 a little about the adoption process --

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. -- from paragraph 70 of your statement and whilst
15 technically adoption is not within our terms of
16 reference, I think it would be helpful for you to
17 perhaps explain to us was there anything about the
18 adoption process that you think could have been done
19 differently such that perhaps it would have been
20 an opportunity to speak up about the abuse at that
21 stage?

22 A. I don't think anything that happened at that point
23 I would have spoken up about it. I was just delighted,
24 I'd went from a short-term fostering to long-term
25 fostering and then the birth mother finally decided

1 I could be adopted and it worked out quite well for me
2 because the systems were changing.

3 The way I understood it was social work were
4 starting to say that children should be appropriately
5 placed and obviously I wasn't appropriately placed with
6 a white Scottish family, but I don't know where I would
7 have went to find the same mix as I had. So what they
8 had said to my mum and dad, who had spoken to them
9 before about adoption, if they wanted to go ahead, now
10 was the time to do it because the rules could be
11 changing.

12 So it seemed to go through quite quickly and I just
13 remember there was a whole load of people, men in suits
14 and social workers in and out of the house speaking to
15 me, speaking to family. I think even spoke -- or if
16 they didn't speak with my headmaster, they got a report
17 from my headmaster and my GP, that they had to get
18 medical reports on my parents and me, and all of
19 a sudden the adoption was hurried through.

20 I remember coming in from school one day and all the
21 family were there and I thought like what's going on,
22 because by then my sisters were all married, it was just
23 my brother and I in the house with mum and dad and it
24 was like an impromptu party because the adoption was
25 through. They hadn't wanted to say to me that the

1 hearing was coming up in case anything went wrong.

2 I didn't go, but they went in and came back with another
3 child with them permanently, the adoption was through,
4 and I was really happy.

5 Q. 'Ruth', moving on to impact, from paragraph 113 of your
6 statement you tell us some about impact. For you what
7 has been the main ways in which the abuse you
8 experienced has affected you in your adult life?

9 A. Yeah. I had a very good career. I went into nursing
10 when I was 18 and into management later on until I was
11 55, I had to stop because of my health issues. I was
12 always very good at work. I got on well with my
13 colleagues. I was the person if anybody had problems,
14 they would come to me and I would help fix them.

15 I had a lot of friends. I had a few really close
16 friends who I still have to this day, but I had people
17 that I knew rather than close friends and my personal
18 life was a disaster from my teenage years. If you could
19 pick between the boyfriend everybody would want you to
20 have and the one they would never want you to go near,
21 I would go to the bad one every time. I just made lots
22 of bad decisions for my own personal life.

23 As time has gone on, once the flashbacks came back
24 and over the years, how I came to reflect on it was it
25 was all to do with these words that he put in my head at

1 such a young age, that I believed it. It was -- even
2 though I had forgotten all about the physical abuse, the
3 words stayed. And so I had low expectations, low
4 aspirations for myself. My mum and dad pushed me to go
5 into nursing. They felt that for me I would have a good
6 chance of promotion, that my colour wouldn't hold me
7 back, so she encouraged me to do something like nursing
8 where you should be able to get on by ability.

9 So I did enough to get through school to get into
10 nursing and what have you, and as I say that side of my
11 life was good. I was successful, I was happy. I did it
12 for like 38 years. But my personal life was just
13 a disaster.

14 Q. But even in relation to your career, I think in your
15 statement you reflect upon the way you didn't apply
16 yourself at school after --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. -- the abuse started and you wonder whether you might
19 have been even more successful?

20 A. Yeah, definitely. At primary school I always remember
21 like at that time you had to sit in groups and there was
22 a top group and the second group and I was always in the
23 first two groups of everything and the headmaster used
24 to say to my mum and dad, "Oh, you're doing such a great
25 job with her, she's doing really well, she'll be able to

1 do whatever she wants to do", then once I got to like
2 10, 11, 12, 13, and at secondary school, I was the only
3 person there that wasn't white and again I was back to
4 this, "Oh God". I went to -- at that time it was called
5 the High School [REDACTED]. Before it used to be you
6 went in if you were academic, but we were at the age
7 group where suddenly you went to your local secondary
8 school so we had to go to the nearest high school to us,
9 which in our case was the High School [REDACTED] and
10 while the teachers were really nice, at that time a lot
11 of the teachers they used to wear black capes and hats
12 and caps and what have you and they resented that kids
13 from council estates and what have you were suddenly
14 going into their school, which had been purely academic
15 up until then. So I became aware that some of the
16 teachers never really liked me as well. Not a big
17 issue, but just enough to knock away again at
18 self-esteem.

19 Q. I think you tell us as well that as an adult you have
20 significant health problems --

21 A. Mm-hmm.

22 Q. -- which you've been told by those treating you could
23 well be linked to childhood trauma.

24 A. Yeah. When I had my kids, as I say I had my three kids
25 in five years, six years, I got my periods when I was in

1 Primary 4 at school and I remember he used to say to me,
2 "That's because you're black, because black women mature
3 sooner, so you'll get boobs and that sort of thing,
4 because this is how you are", because I was the only one
5 in my class -- we used to go to swimming from Primary 5
6 and I was the only one who couldn't go swimming because
7 of my periods.

8 After I had my kids I developed quite a few gynie
9 problems like fibroids and the gynaecologist I remember
10 asked what age I'd got my periods at and said that it
11 was really, really young. I then discovered years later
12 when I went to see a psychiatrist to see about getting
13 therapy that it was common in kids who had been abused
14 to have periods from a really young age and gynie
15 problems.

16 I have fibromyalgia, that's extreme pains in my
17 legs, and again while they can't positively say that
18 abuse can cause fibromyalgia, there's a really high
19 percentage of people with fibromyalgia who come from
20 an abusive background.

21 Q. Turning now to paragraph 128 of your statement and to
22 finish up you tell us about perhaps some lessons that we
23 can learn from your experience in relation to
24 safeguarding children in care from abuse.

25 A. Mm-hmm.

1 Q. What do you think could be done in a different way to
2 safeguard children?

3 A. I can only talk about what my experiences were and
4 I would like to think that things have moved on a lot
5 now for children in care. I just feel maybe if I had
6 had younger social workers, not people turning up in
7 suits but people casually dressed who came to play with
8 me rather than question me about things, maybe I would
9 have opened up, maybe I would have felt more able to
10 speak about things.

11 I think if children in care could meet other
12 children in care, that would maybe be another avenue as
13 well for social workers or whoever to pick up
14 something's wrong, because maybe I would have spoken to
15 other kids, asking if they were experiencing any of the
16 things I was experiencing in care. As I say, I didn't
17 know anybody else who was being fostered or who was
18 adopted. I didn't know anybody else my colour. So
19 maybe if I had had bits of that in my life I could have
20 opened up. Maybe just by asking: does this happen to
21 you?

22 But I just feel children should be heard. They
23 should -- every opportunity should be given so that they
24 can speak up, because I realise that at 60 I still carry
25 a lot of the negativity that he gave me. I've been

1 having -- I've had six months of counselling by the
2 local Rape Crisis centre, I've been having light therapy
3 treatment at Forth Valley for over a year, and it's good
4 and it's brought a lot more to the fore, crazily, that
5 I can describe wallpaper that was in each room of the
6 house that before it was, oh, they had flowery
7 wallpaper, but I can actually sit and draw the design of
8 things, because this therapy really brings it out and
9 the idea is eventually I'll get rid of all these
10 memories and sort of be at peace with myself, but at my
11 age of 60, I'm not at peace with myself, all because of
12 what he did at a young age. I feel that my kids lost
13 out as well, because ultimately their dad and I split up
14 because they were really young, I hadn't told him
15 anything about the abuse. We eventually split up
16 because I didn't want him near me as the flashbacks
17 started to make sense. I just didn't want any male near
18 me at all.

19 Then a few years after we split up, he said to me,
20 "Who harmed you?" And that was what was the start of me
21 speaking about it, but my kids lost having their dad
22 there. I certainly didn't want another man near, so
23 I've remained single. But as I say, my professional
24 life was good but my personal life has been rubbish all
25 the way through and I know now that it goes back to what

1 I believed from such a young age.

2 So any way that kids now could be helped so that
3 they have a chance if they've been through an abusive
4 experience to get the chance to move on with their lives
5 and get on with their lives and not carry it like I have
6 would be good.

7 MS RATTRAY: Thank you very much, 'Ruth'. That concludes
8 the questions I have for you.

9 My Lady, I'm not aware of there being any
10 applications for questions.

11 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
12 questions of 'Ruth'?

13 'Ruth', that does complete all we have for you this
14 afternoon. Thank you so much for going to the trouble
15 of coming to engage with us today in addition to having
16 given us this really helpful written statement. It's
17 added to my learning and understanding considerably.
18 Thank you for that and thank you for delivering hard
19 messages with such good humour and frankness and
20 openness. It's not missed.

21 I'm sure it's been exhausting for you getting here
22 today and I hope you're able to get a bit of rest once
23 you get away from here.

24 A. Yeah.

25 LADY SMITH: I'm able to let you go.

1 I think what I'll do, because we usually have
2 a break in the middle of the afternoon anyway, I'll go
3 off the bench now so don't feel under pressure to rush
4 getting away from your seat with me looking down on you.
5 But thank you very much for being here.

6 A. You're welcome.

7 (The witness withdrew)

8 (3.16 pm)

9 (A short break)

10 (3.30 pm)

11 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

12 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady. We have some read-in
13 evidence.

14 The first statement that I'm going to read in is the
15 statement of an applicant who wishes to remain anonymous
16 and has chosen the pseudonym 'Mandy'.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 MS INNES: Her statement is at WIT.001.002.3831. 'Mandy'
19 was in the care of Aberdeen City Council. She was in
20 three foster care placements. The first was with MQP/MQQ
21 MQP/MQQ in Dunfermline from 2005
22 to 2007.

23 The second with a Ms in Lochgelly from
24 2007 to 2007.

25 The third with a and in

1 Carnoustie from [REDACTED] 2007 until [REDACTED] 2007.

2 It appears from the records that while the placing
3 authority was Aberdeen City Council, the foster carers
4 were provided by Swiis Foster Care.

5 LADY SMITH: All right, thank you.

6 'Mandy' (read)

7 MS INNES: At paragraph 1 of her statement 'Mandy' says:

8 "My name is 'Mandy'. I was born in 1992. My
9 contact details are known to the Inquiry."

10 From paragraphs 2 to 15, 'Mandy' speaks of her life
11 before care. She was born in Aberdeen, one of her mum's
12 nine children. Her dad, who had seven children,
13 sometimes lived with 'Mandy', her siblings and her mum.
14 He was an alcoholic and violent. There was social work
15 involvement with the family and 'Mandy' said that they
16 knew what was happening because she told social workers
17 that her dad was hitting her mum and her.

18 Her mum sent 'Mandy' to live with one of her mum's
19 friends. Whilst there, 'Mandy' says that she was
20 sexually abused by a relative of the friend. He was
21 arrested and 'Mandy' was then taken to Netherhills
22 Children's Home in Aberdeen when she was 11 years of
23 age.

24 From paragraph 16, 'Mandy' describes her experiences
25 at Netherhills and then at Seaview Children's Home. [REDACTED] Secondary

1 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

2

3 Moving on to page 12 and paragraph 66:

4 "I was taken to live with MQP/ MQQ
5 in Dunfermline, Fife. I was about 12 years old.

6 MQP was nice, MQQ was not.

7 I didn't see a doctor or a dentist during my time at
8 MQP/ MQQ .

9 I had an accident when I was playing on my bike one
10 day and pulled the wrong brake. I went flying into the
11 garage and cracked the bottom side row of my teeth.
12 I had terrible toothache and used to complain about the
13 pain to MQP/ MQQ . They used to give me a hot
14 water bottle to hold onto my face. MQQ used to put
15 Southern Comfort on it. I used to cry and rock back and
16 forth. MQP used to get up in the night and tell me
17 to shut up as I was keeping them awake. I have suffered
18 from toothache ever since.

19 I went to see a psychiatrist. She didn't listen and
20 she would ask too many questions. She would ask one
21 question and I would answer it. Then she would ask me
22 the same question again in a different way.

23 I moved to MQP/ MQQ in [redacted] and they
24 promised me that I would get home for Christmas.
25 I never got home for Christmas. As presents I got

1 hand-me-downs from their nieces. I never got actual
2 presents.

3 For my birthday, MQP/MQQ told me that if
4 I stopped smoking for three months then I would get
5 a bike. I stopped smoking and got the bike. When
6 I left their care, MQP refused to give me my bike
7 back.

8 MQQ put a camera in the shower. It was in a Deep
9 Heat box in a sort of toilet roll thing. There was
10 a box that had a red light. There were glass panels in
11 the shower. I was in a shower for a while before
12 I noticed the red light flashing. It was only when
13 I was washing my hair that I noticed it. I got out of
14 the shower and took the box down. I saw there was
15 a camera inside it so I took it to my room. MQQ came
16 running up the stairs and knocked on my door. MQP
17 was at the hairdresser. I had to let him in because
18 MQP wasn't there. He told me that if I said
19 anything, MQP wouldn't be happy. So I gave him the
20 camera.

21 I told the foster care agency about the camera.
22 I think they were called the Swiis Foster Care. I told
23 them that I wasn't going to go back to MQP/MQQ.
24 They had wanted me to go back to MQP/MQQ while
25 an investigation took place. I didn't want to go back.

1 I was sick of it. The foster placement people got the
2 police and I was moved to respite care.

3 [MQP/ MQQ] were still fostering after I reported
4 [MQQ]. I think they were just getting boys. I saw them
5 about a year later at school when they came with
6 a little boy.

7 The police were called at the time of the abuse.
8 I spoke to the police about what had happened with [MQQ]
9 and the camera.

10 I went from [MQP/ MQQ] foster placement to stay
11 with an old couple. It was a respite placement.
12 I can't remember the old couple's names. They lived
13 just down the road from [MQP/ MQQ]. There
14 was a road that [] in Dunfermline. They
15 lived up there. They were really good to me for the
16 while that I was there. I stayed with them on and off
17 for about a year.

18 I then went to a few respite places. I can't
19 remember all of their names. I remember Lumphinnans,
20 Lochgelly, Ladybank, Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes, Dunfermline
21 and Bathgate. I remember I really wanted to stay at the
22 second respite place. They had a big house in
23 Kirkcaldy. It was really nice but I wasn't allowed to
24 stay with them. They told me I couldn't because it
25 wasn't a foster placement.

1 I then moved to [REDACTED] in Lochgelly. When she
2 went on holiday she promised that she would take me.
3 She didn't. She took her daughter's friend instead.
4 I can't remember how long I stayed in Fife altogether.

5 I saw my mum every second week I think. I would
6 travel up to Aberdeen by train by myself. My foster
7 carer would take me to the train station and put me on
8 the train alone. Sometimes I would stay with my mum in
9 Aberdeen but I didn't like it. I didn't want to go.
10 For a while my mum came to see me in Fife but she didn't
11 really stay. She went away to Bathgate to meet another
12 man. That was the only reason she came to see me.

13 I never really saw my social workers much. They
14 just took me to Dunfermline and left me. I always had
15 social workers that were based in Aberdeen. They were
16 never from Fife even though I was living there."

17 From paragraph 79, 'Mandy' describes her experiences
18 in Bathgate secure unit.

19 Moving on to page 16 and paragraph 88:

20 "I left Bathgate secure unit and went to a foster
21 placement with a couple called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]
22 and [REDACTED] lived at Carnoustie. They were quite good to
23 me. I was 14 when I went to stay with them.

24 I don't remember the social work ever coming to
25 visit me. I remember speaking to them on the phone.

1 I always phoned them, they never phoned me.

2 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had fostered another boy. He was
3 the only other child that came into that placement with
4 me. He was a lot older than me. I think he was just
5 about ready to leave care. He was from Dundee, I think.
6 He was okay with me to start off with.

7 We were allowed to go to Dundee swimming pool on our
8 own sometimes. I had been a couple of times and the
9 older boy had been fine. The last time we went swimming
10 he had other boys with him. I didn't know any of them.
11 I met them for an hour or two. After I got out of the
12 swimming pool, he and his friends were waiting for me.
13 They came to the locker room and sexually assaulted me.
14 All of them sexually assaulted me.

15 I told my social worker but I didn't tell [REDACTED] and
16 [REDACTED]. The older boy had threatened me if I told them.
17 I don't remember the name of my social worker at that
18 time but it will be in my paperwork.

19 After the incident at the swimming pool I beat up
20 a girl that I knew. She lived not too far away. She
21 had been saying bad things about my mum and my sisters.
22 I beat her up so that I could get moved."

23 From paragraph 92 'Mandy' speaks about her
24 experiences in Oakbank Residential School in Aberdeen,
25 then her life after care and impact. She says that her

1 physical and mental health and education suffered. She
2 lost all trust in people.

3 As the details of what she describes ought to be
4 understood in the context of her overall experiences
5 rather than specifically foster care, I will move to
6 page 26 and paragraph 140.

7 "I have not read any of my records. When I got out
8 of care I read some notes but I never got to keep them.
9 They wanted £50 for them. I don't have £50. I find it
10 hard enough to feed myself, never mind get £50.

11 I have been in touch with Future Pathways but I do
12 not know if they can help me with my records. I have
13 a woman called Lisa who is supposed to contact me but
14 I haven't heard from her yet."

15 Then at paragraph 143:

16 "I would like better knowledge and care for the kids
17 that are in the care system now. I would like to make
18 sure that abuse doesn't happen to them. I would also
19 like justice for the people that hurt me and the other
20 kids and babies. It is hard enough as a child getting
21 taken away from your parents to then get abused in care.
22 I also think there should be better things for the kids
23 to do. Better education and just a better life.

24 You need to actually sit down and listen to the
25 kids. Sit down and listen to what they have to say.

1 Social workers always tell kids that they know what they
2 are doing and that they have been to school, college and
3 university. That is rubbish. Just because they have
4 got a degree it doesn't mean that they know anything.

5 The social workers should have listened to me and
6 visited me regularly. They could have taken me away
7 from my mum and put me in a place that was stable for me
8 and able to meet my needs. I was quite a vocal kid and
9 I was challenging. I think the social work and care
10 staff just thought that I was a little brat and a bad
11 kid. I wasn't bad. I was just trying to deal with
12 things. If they had actually taken the time to listen
13 to me and put me somewhere that I felt safe and where
14 I was able to go to school then there wouldn't have been
15 all of the abuse. Kids don't get listened to and the
16 staff get away with far too much.

17 I did not find speaking to a psychologist or
18 counsellor useful. Kids that are in care go through
19 things that are hard enough. People they don't know
20 asking them questions and poking their nose in really
21 doesn't help. In fact it makes it worse. When you are
22 in care you have to explain yourself to so many
23 different, social workers, three care workers, different
24 staff and foster parents. You don't need a counsellor
25 or shrink to tell as well.

1 I think it would be helpful if a child had one
2 social worker who saw them regularly and got on with
3 them. I tried to change my social workers a couple of
4 times but they never really listened to me. The social
5 workers I saw were all from the Aberdeen social work
6 department. Even when I was in Fife my social workers
7 were based in Aberdeen. I think that they can keep kids
8 safer by not moving them about so much. Not passing
9 them from pillar to post. The kids should stay in one
10 place long term. Routine is important.

11 If anyone is applying to work with children they
12 need to be checked. Everything about them and their
13 past needs to be scrutinised. Everything. I don't
14 think any of the people that I lived with in the homes
15 and foster placements had been properly checked. Proper
16 police checks and background checks are needed."

17 Then moving on to the end of paragraph 150:

18 "I think the whole time I was in care I only got two
19 clothing grants. Foster carers didn't buy me clothes
20 because they said it wasn't up to them.

21 My kids are in care now and I really hope that
22 things will be better for them. I don't want my kids
23 going through the same experiences I had. If anyone
24 ever touched my kids I think I would kill them.

25 I have no objection to my witness statement being

1 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
2 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
3 true."

4 'Mandy' signed her statement on 30 January 2019.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

6 Ms Rattray.

7 'Angelica' (read)

8 MS RATTRAY: We have a further read-in of a statement and
9 this is a statement of an applicant who has the
10 pseudonym 'Angelica'. 'Angelica's' statement is at
11 WIT-1-000000780.

12 'Angelica' was in the care of Strathclyde Regional
13 Council and then Glasgow City Council. She was in two
14 foster placements.

15 The first was with foster carers in Kilmarnock from
16 [REDACTED] 1995 until [REDACTED] 1995 and again from
17 [REDACTED] 1996 until [REDACTED] 1996.

18 The second placement was with a Mr and Mrs EUD-EUE in
19 Cumbernauld from [REDACTED] 1996 to [REDACTED] 1996.

20 The successor authority is Glasgow City Council.

21 "My name is 'Angelica'. I was born in 1984. My
22 contact details are known to the Inquiry."

23 From paragraph 2 'Angelica' speaks of her life
24 before care. She lived in Glasgow with her parents and
25 three siblings. She says there was no closeness or

1 trust. Her mum drank and self-harmed. She was
2 physically abusive to 'Angelica' and her sister. The
3 social work department was involved with the family.
4 'Angelica' says that she too self-harmed when in primary
5 school. She says she feels as though she was used as
6 a scapegoat and being blamed for things so she became
7 unruly. She recalls being admitted to Urrdale
8 Children's Home with her brother for several months
9 before being returned again home.

10 Moving now to paragraph 30 on page 6, where
11 'Angelica' speaks about foster care.

12 "I was cast in and cast out, going back in and out
13 of care. I'm not sure how I came to be in foster care.
14 I went to the [REDACTED] and to the EUD-EUE [REDACTED]. I'm not
15 sure which I went to first, but I think it might have
16 been to the [REDACTED]. I can't remember any social work
17 meetings before going there. I don't know how long
18 I was home before going to the foster carers. I wasn't
19 11 yet. I think it was within the space of a year.

20 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were quite an old lady and man,
21 they lived in a lovely bungalow house, it was spick and
22 span. I was the only child there. Then after a while a
23 newborn baby came. I was so excited about the baby
24 coming. One day after the baby came I burst out
25 laughing or made a noise and [REDACTED] gave me seriously into

1 trouble. I wasn't being naughty, I was just excited.
2 The baby was just like a wee dolly and I was loving
3 having this little presence about me.

4 After that I wasn't allowed to interact with the
5 baby. I don't know if I wasn't trusted or if she was
6 being extra protective because the baby was in her care.
7 I wanted to be hands on with it. I was sent to my room
8 and would have to sit there. I would be in my room for
9 hours on end after school. I wasn't allowed to touch
10 anything in the house.

11 I went to primary school. It was a little school.
12 I loved it. I was happy there. I had met a little
13 friend and up until then I hadn't been able to keep
14 friendships.

15 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to the Salvation Army every
16 Sunday. They always took me with them. I didn't like
17 it. I told them that I didn't want to go but they took
18 me anyway. It just wasn't my cup of tea. I come from
19 Govan and wasn't used to things like that. There were
20 lots of old ladies there who were trying to talk to me.

21 The building where we went to Salvation Army was
22 round the corner from my mum and dad's home which
23 I found hard because I didn't want to be there. The
24 [REDACTED] would dress me up in white tights and a dress
25 and put my hair in pigtails. I had never worn white

1 tights in my life. They turned me into something else.
2 I felt like I was their accessory. It just wasn't me.
3 I didn't dress in that way and it wasn't how other
4 people dressed in Govan. They cut my hair. I didn't
5 want my hair cut. It was horrible. I liked having my
6 long hair. I haven't had a haircut in about ten years.

7 I think they were trying to make me into somebody
8 I wasn't. They even put my own things in my suitcase
9 and kept them under my bed. I wasn't allowed to have
10 them. It was as if they were putting on a show. It was
11 completely different to how things were at home.

12 I was always told to be quiet and I wasn't allowed
13 to talk. When [REDACTED] came home from work everything
14 went quiet. I don't know if that was his rule or just
15 the way they lived. I was always to go straight into
16 the bedroom.

17 I can remember going over the Forth Road Bridge and
18 to a wee place near there. They took me to their
19 daughter's house. We also went on a trip to Edinburgh.
20 We walked around and they took me to a clothes shop
21 called Mark One. They bought me the white tights.

22 One day I was told there had been an accident and
23 [REDACTED] had fallen and broken her hip. I had to go and
24 stay with [REDACTED] friend for a very short time. After
25 that I had to go to an emergency placement. I think it

1 was a house in Cumbernauld. It was a lady and her two
2 daughters. After that I went to another foster
3 placement, [REDACTED]. I didn't see the wee baby again.

4 I can't remember arriving at [REDACTED] but
5 I remember being in their house. The man was called
6 [REDACTED] and his wife was [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. I can
7 see her face but I'm not sure about her name.

8 I can still picture the house. Although I can't
9 remember the bathroom. They lived somewhere in
10 Cumbernauld. I can't remember if I had my own room
11 there. They had lots of dark pine furniture and I can
12 remember thinking it was expensive.

13 They fostered a wee girl, I think she was only about
14 one year old. There were other kids there who were
15 their own kids, but I can't remember much about them.

16 I went to high school from [REDACTED]. I had just
17 started first year. They dropped me off early in the
18 morning at the local train station. I was petrified
19 because I had never been on a train myself. It was dark
20 and they would drive away and leave me. It was so
21 scary. I had to make my own way to Hillhead. I would
22 get the train into Queen Street and then I would have to
23 get the subway. I had never been allowed into town
24 myself at my mum and dad's. I think it might have been
25 during wintertime because I wore a big green parka.

1 One time they won money at the bingo and there
2 seemed to be loads of people coming into the house,
3 there was a big celebration. They bought me a wooly
4 'Kicker's' jumper with some of their bingo winnings.
5 I have no idea why.

6 I had started my period by then. I was still at
7 primary school in Govan when it happened. My mum hadn't
8 told me anything so I'd been using toilet paper or
9 stealing my sister's sanitary products.

10 I had been given a pair of pink pyjamas when I was
11 at the emergency placement before going to [REDACTED].
12 They belonged to the lady's daughter but they were too
13 small for her so she had given them to me. I hadn't
14 ever had pajamas like that. I loved them. I'd had
15 an accident and they were bloodstained. I panicked,
16 tried to clean it and wrapped them up and hid them with
17 my clothes. I took them with me to [REDACTED]. I hid
18 them in a drawer when I was putting my clothes away
19 because I was scared and embarrassed.

20 When I came home from school one day, Mrs [REDACTED]
21 rubbed them in my face. She told me that I was
22 disgusting. I was crying and ran away and hid. I felt
23 dirty and vile. I didn't see my pyjamas again.

24 I can remember there being lots of alcohol and a lot
25 of family coming over. They were Celtic fans. I was

1 called an orange bastard. My dad is half Malaysian.
2 [EUE] would call my dad a 'chinky'. I specifically
3 remember him saying that about my dad. They were
4 horrible people.

5 I can remember being hit with rolled-up tea towels
6 by [EUE]. He would whip me with them. I can't remember
7 any reason for him doing it other than he seemed to
8 think it was funny. I can remember him laughing.
9 I don't know what he was getting out of it. He would
10 hit me over and over on the back of my legs and my
11 backside. It was stinging and I was crying. I had
12 marks and red raised skin all over legs. He did this to
13 me in front of his wife.

14 It was dreadful. They shouldn't have been in
15 control of kids. They shouldn't have been left with the
16 responsibility. I can't remember them punishing their
17 own children.

18 I can't remember any social workers coming to see me
19 there. My mum and dad came to visit me regularly. They
20 would take me out in the car and we would sometimes go
21 to a wee café. I wouldn't want to go back to the
22 [EUD-EUE]. It was like a feeling of dread. I really
23 didn't want to be there. Things weren't perfect with my
24 mum and dad but I would rather have been at home with
25 them. Instead I was with people I didn't know.

1 One time EUE was hitting with the tea towels when
2 his wife was out at the bingo. He wouldn't let me out
3 of the kitchen. I wanted to phone my mum and dad but he
4 wouldn't let me. I was petrified and didn't want to be
5 in that house. I was really upset. After a while
6 I managed to calm down enough and he let me use the
7 phone. I phoned my mum and dad and told them that EUE
8 was hitting me with tea towels. They told me to pack my
9 suitcase so I packed my things and my case was put at
10 the front door.

11 My mum and dad came to get me that night. I don't
12 know how long it took them to get me. EUD-EUE
13 weren't happy. It was a bad atmosphere when my mum and
14 dad came. I remember it being dark outside. I think
15 I felt relieved. The placement ended there.

16 I can't remember the social work's involvement but
17 I'm sure my mum and dad would have had to tell them
18 because they had taken me from there. I don't know if
19 any action was taken against them. I can't remember
20 anything being said by my mum and dad about it. There
21 is a report which mentions EUD-EUE. It was a very
22 short placement because I continued with first year at
23 school after I left."

24 From paragraph 55, 'Angelica' speaks of her life
25 back at home and running away a lot. She recalls being

1 on a placement with a foster carer in Baillieston around
2 this time too, who she says was a nice lady.

3 'Angelica' says she ran away from there too but went
4 back that night because she felt guilty that she would
5 be worried about her.

6 'Angelica' then describes her experiences in other
7 care settings **Secondary Institutions - to be published**.

8 From paragraph 173, 'Angelica' speaks of her life
9 after care and impact. As the details of the impact on
10 'Angelica' have to be understood in the context of her
11 overall care experiences I'll move to paragraph 195 on
12 page 36, where Angela speaks about lessons learned.

13 That obviously is not the right reference to the
14 pages.

15 LADY SMITH: Well --

16 MS RATTRAY: It is, sorry. Apologies, I'm confused by the
17 statement that's underneath this one:

18 "I had seen advertisements on TV and Facebook about
19 the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. I think if people
20 from outside, such as inspectors, had listened to us,
21 things could have been better. The children weren't
22 listened to and we weren't separated from the adults at
23 the time. We didn't have an opportunity to speak out.
24 We weren't asked questions at children's panels.

25 No one ever tried to understand why the kids were

1 running away. There was no relationship with my parents
2 or drug counselling or mediation.

3 I think that experience is necessary for certain
4 roles. I don't think that people who have direct
5 experience of being a child in care are necessarily the
6 best-placed people to work with children in care today.
7 I think they have to have themselves sorted out first.
8 In my view, the majority of the staff were simply there
9 for the pay cheque. They couldn't be bothered with us
10 as kids. They were only interested in their own
11 children.

12 I would like things to change, for me, if I know
13 that speaking out can change at least one person's
14 experience, perhaps for them to be heard. I felt like
15 I was shouting to be heard but I never was. In the past
16 year, I have found it easier to talk and to be heard
17 because people are actually listening to my past.

18 Things have to change for the children of the future
19 who don't feel they are able to speak at home. Children
20 shouldn't be stuck in a situation where they are unable
21 to speak freely. We were just taken out of our homes
22 and put away somewhere and forgotten about. I was
23 basically taken away because my mum had issues. I ended
24 up going downhill after I ended up in the care system.

25 I have no objection to my witness statement being

1 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

2 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
3 true."

4 The statement was signed by 'Angelica' on
5 5 August 2021.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

7 It's coming up for 4 o'clock, Ms Rattray.

8 MS RATTRAY: Perhaps that would be an appropriate time to
9 finish.

10 LADY SMITH: An appropriate time to stop for today.

11 The plan for tomorrow?

12 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady, tomorrow morning we have two oral
13 witnesses. There is an oral witness scheduled for the
14 afternoon, but it's possible that that witness will not
15 be attending, in which case we have read-in evidence to
16 present.

17 LADY SMITH: Very well.

18 I'll rise now until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning,
19 reminding everyone that we've used foster parents' names
20 again this afternoon, Mr and Mrs [REDACTED], MQP/MQQ [REDACTED],
21 EUD-EUE [REDACTED] and I think the [REDACTED] as well.
22 They're all protected by my general restriction order
23 and they can't be identified outside this room.

24 Thank you very much and until tomorrow morning.

25 I will rise.

1 (4.00 pm)

2 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on
3 Wednesday, 21 September 2022)

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