

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

ILS

Support person present: No.

1. My name is ILS. My date of birth is 1966. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Background

2. I was born at Stobhill Hospital in Glasgow. I went straight into foster care after I was born. I think I was in a couple of foster placements before going to ILT and ILU. According to my social work records, one of the foster parents said that I would be an embarrassment to their other children. I think they might have been a young couple. I was about eight or nine months old at the time. I think they said that because of the colour of my skin. I went to ILT-ILU when I was about eighteen months old. I remained there until I turned eighteen, other than a couple of spells in Larchgrove Remand Home.

ILU and ILT, Glasgow

3. I was only eighteen months old when I first went to stay with ILU and ILT so I don't have memories of the start of my time there. My earliest memories are really of being at school. ILT-ILU also had . He was two years younger than me and I think he was adopted. He was coloured. They had , who was two years older than me. They had , who we called , who was about four years older than . They also had , who

was their own child. He was probably about the same age as [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had a sister called [REDACTED] who also stayed with us for a while. She might have been about two years older than [REDACTED]. They had another lassie called [REDACTED], who was about eight years older than me. [REDACTED] was only there for a wee while but everyone else was there long term. Their niece also stayed there from time to time.

4. The house was just a normal house. It had a front and back door and gardens. There was a kitchen and living room downstairs and the bedrooms and bathroom were upstairs. I think there were three bedrooms. The foster parents had one room, then there was mine and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] was the other. I don't really know where everyone else slept. It's hard to remember. I think some of the kids moved on. [REDACTED] ended up getting married, [REDACTED] moved out and [REDACTED] was only there for a wee while. It ended up being me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].
5. I think that ^{ILT}[REDACTED] worked in a warehouse. I think that ^{ILU}[REDACTED] worked beside him. I called them ma and da. I tried not to because I knew that they weren't my mum and dad. I was always aware that they weren't my mum and dad. They were a different colour from me. Nobody ever spoke to me about my biological parents or my heritage. I called them ma and da the whole time I was there even though I didn't want to. If I wanted something, I had to call them ma or da. I was never adopted and I kept my mother's surname. I think [REDACTED] was adopted because he was [REDACTED].

Routine at ^{ILT}[REDACTED] and ^{ILU}[REDACTED]'s foster home

Mornings and bedtime

6. Our morning routine was just normal. I would get up, get my breakfast and then I went off to school. The foster mother got us breakfast. We had Rice Crispies, cornflakes, that kind of thing. The foster mum would get us dressed in the morning then we walked to school and back. The walk to school took about half an hour. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would walk with me. I think [REDACTED] was there as well. The kids all walked together.

7. I used to wet the bed at night time. It happened regularly. I think it was because I was so nervous. In my social work notes, it states that the foster woman was very frustrated with my bed wetting. She went through three different mattresses. I didn't get any treatment or help for the bed wetting. According to my social work records, the foster woman wanted rid of me when I was about four years old. She told social workers that she couldn't handle me. She told them that I was aggressive towards the older children. Maybe something happened that made me that way.

Mealtimes/food

8. The family ate meals together in the evening. Apparently I was a slow eater. I always used to be the last one to finish. [REDACTED] would get frustrated because I wouldn't eat. She would take my plate away and give me baby food instead. I think the food was probably good. I can remember beef for Sunday dinners. I just couldn't eat beef because it was too chewy. Still to this day, I'm not into beef dinners. I just didn't like it.

Clothing

9. We sometimes got hand-me-downs from the older kids. We did get new clothes, but I never got to choose my clothes.

Schooling

10. I went to Riddrie Primary School first before moving to Carntyne Primary School. I was only at Riddrie for a wee while. I had a teacher there called Mrs [REDACTED]. I can remember that we had to line up at school. I think I must have been a wee bit out of the line and a boy barged into me. Mrs [REDACTED] dragged me straight out of the line and into the classroom. I had my wee shorts on. She bent me over the desk and whacked me with a big ruler across my legs. I was in a lot of pain and for what? She wasn't a nice woman.
11. My mate [REDACTED] told me that Mrs [REDACTED] put him and [REDACTED] in a cupboard. She came in and swung punches at them. She made a big mistake because

██████████ father was ██████████. He came up to the school and I think all hell kicked off. I think she was reported to the police and was kicked out and not allowed to teach again.

12. Quite a lot of kids moved to Carntyne from Riddrie because I think they were short of pupils. It was a Protestant school. I used to get a lot of stick at school because of the colour of my skin so I was always fighting. Glasgow was very tough at that time so I had no choice but to fight. ██████████ and I were the only coloured children in the whole school. Other kids would call us names. I had to fight every day because of the colour of my skin. It turned out I was a very good fighter so boys wouldn't want to fight with me.
13. When I was only about five or six, I started fighting after school. Boys at school would say, "Wait till the Fenians get you." I would ask who the Fenians were and the boys would tell me they went to the Roman Catholic school. They said that I was a Protestant, just like them. When school finished, we would meet the Catholic school and it used to be a free for all. It was one mad fight with everybody. I would walk up the road and realise that the Catholics were my enemy. People didn't like me because of the colour of my skin and they didn't like me because I was a Protestant.
14. I found it hard to read and write at school. I don't know whether I was just a slow learner. Maybe I was dyslexic and they didn't understand. One of the social workers describes me as 'a retard' in my records. I also had issues because of the colour of my skin. My primary school teacher at Carntyne Primary School didn't like me. Her name was Miss ██████████ and she was a right bitch to me. My desk and my chair were out in the corridor quite a lot of the time. She wouldn't let me in the class. Unfortunately, she was my teacher the entire time that I was at primary school.
15. Miss ██████████ would put me out of the classroom for laughing or smiling. She would say, "Right, ILS ██████████, out. You're getting the belt." I've always got a smile on my face. I used to get six of the belt. If it was a cold day, it was pretty bad. When it came to a lassie, she would start crying before she got the belt. I can remember the teacher saying, "Right, ██████████, out. You're getting the belt." She would start crying. I

would wonder why she was crying because she hadn't had the belt yet. The teacher used to tap her with the tip of the belt and send her back to her seat. She was still crying. She just got a tap but I would get walloped.

16. I've got two school reports in my social work records. It just says, "Poor, poor, poor, poor." Because I struggled to read and write, I had to go to Haghill Primary School in Denniston for one-to-one learning. I would go there about once a week. I can't really remember if it was helpful. Maybe it was, but I still couldn't read or write. I didn't learn to read and write until I was in a young offenders institution at the age of eighteen. I was never diagnosed with any kind of learning disability. I learned from my social worked records that because my mother was epileptic, they thought I might have that. It turned out that I was fine.
17. I went to Smithycroft Secondary School. I was in the lowest class and I never got any homework. For some reason, none of us got any homework. The French teacher, Murdo McKay, said that there was no point in teaching us French. He said that we'd be lucky if we ever saw France, let alone speak the language. He was right, really. He used to tell the girls that they would probably be single mothers before they were eighteen. He used to say that most of the boys would be in and out of prison for most of their lives. Again, the guy was right.
18. I used to love PE. I was very good at sports, but there was no encouragement from the school whatsoever. I left school early. I think I was fifteen. I wasn't going to get any qualifications or anything like that so it was a waste of time. I think the school was glad when I left. I think the only one of my friends who didn't get into trouble at school was [REDACTED]. They were too scared to get him into trouble because of his father.

Leisure time

19. We got pocket money, but it wasn't much. It was maybe about 50p. I was in the Boys' Brigade for a few years. It was okay. I was in the BB football team for a couple of years. I used to play football with my pals after school. We always ended up fighting.

We would climb trees. We were typical boys. At the weekends, I did the exact same. I would play in the garden or try and get out and play with a couple of my pals.

20. Football was always my thing. I played for a couple of clubs and I was pretty good at it. The foster parents did buy me football boots and things like that, but they never came to watch me play. The last team I played for was [REDACTED] team and then I ended up going to prison. I had to stop playing when I was about nineteen. I lost the cartilage in my knee cap. I was devastated. The doctor said I would never play football again or I'd end up a cripple. I took up boxing instead.
21. I can remember when video recorders came out and we would watch videos. A lot of them are banned now. They were quite bad. The foster man used to buy *Experiment Camp*, *Spit On Your Grave* and *Driller Killer*. *Spit On Your Grave* was about a woman being raped by men. At the end, the woman is in the bath and she cuts one of the men's penises off. I think *Experiment Camp* was the worst. We used to watch snuff movies. The foster man would bring them into the house. I would watch them with [REDACTED]. The foster man used to have blue movies as well. We used to watch them as well, but not with the foster man. I watched those movies when I was about twelve, thirteen, fourteen. I would get videos as well. I picked violent films. I wouldn't blame it all on the foster man.

Trips/holidays

22. I can remember going on a Sunday school trip to Edinburgh Zoo. That's the only trip that I can remember. The foster parents didn't take us on any trips. They were too busy working. They didn't work at weekends, but I know the foster man used to do a lot of nightshifts.
23. The foster parents would take us on holiday to Saltcoats. It's supposed to be 'Sunny Saltcoats', but it was always raining. We would stay on a caravan site there about once a year. The holidays were okay. They were nothing special, especially when we were doing it every year. We never went on any foreign holidays or anything like that.

Religion

24. I went to Sunday school every week until I was about seven or eight. I realised that it just wasn't for me. When I was about five years old, I remember being told that God would be there. I thought, "Brilliant." I was waiting for this guy called God coming in. It had been about an hour and he hadn't made an appearance. He didn't show up so I thought it was rubbish and it wasn't for me. I wanted to be out playing football. The last place I wanted to be was at Sunday school. I used to speak to the minister and he told me about the son of God. I knew that I had a father and God wasn't my father. I just thought it was a load of rubbish. I told the foster woman that I wasn't going to go and she was alright with that.

Healthcare

25. My health was brand new. I used to go to the dentist and the doctor. I hated the dentist. In those days, you'd get gas. I can remember the dentist forcing the mask around me. I can remember going to the doctor in the Gallowgate or Bridgeton. I think I had regular checks but I can't really remember. I think I was small for my age, but that was just the way I was.

Birthdays/Christmas

26. We got birthday presents and Christmas presents. We just got whatever they got rather than something we wanted. The foster man and woman's family would come at Christmas. At New Year, they would be drinking. When they were getting drunk, we would get a shandy. They would be getting drunk and I would take a couple of cans up to my bedroom. They didn't notice.

Alcohol

27. The foster man was a heavy drinker. He used to go off to the pub. He kept his beer in the fridge and he had his Eldorado wine and his whisky. The wine was always open. The foster woman would say that it was my turn to make a cup of tea and I would say,

"No bother." I used to have some of his Eldorado first, a wee drop of whisky and some of his beer. Every time they said it was my turn to make the tea, I would say it was not a problem. I think that's why I learned to drink at an early age. I started drinking at the age of eight or nine.

Visits/social work involvement

28. Although there are social work records about me, I have no recollection of seeing a social worker when I was in foster care. I can't remember any social workers coming to the house. They probably did come round, but I can't remember it. I think they were very poor when it came to seeing me. In my social work notes, one social worker complains that it had been years since someone had last seen me. All of these things were happening to me and yet nobody came to see me.
29. When I started getting into trouble, a social worker called Liz Rae started seeing me. That was probably in about 1980. I might have been about fourteen. Nobody had ever talked to me about my biological parents until Liz Rae became my social worker. I wanted to find them. My foster parents didn't speak about my biological parents and I didn't ask them. They didn't speak to me about the colour of my skin. I probably did have Afro hair, but it was always shaved. I wanted out of the foster home. I used to think that one day my mum and dad might come and get me. After a while, I realised that was never going to happen. That was my life and I had to accept it. I knew that once I was eighteen, I would be out of that place.
30. Liz Rae told me that my mum was raped at a party by a black guy. In my social work papers, it says that he was American and it also says that he was Jamaican. It turns out that he was Nigerian. I don't think I really understood what Liz was saying because I was a glue sniffer by then.

Solvent abuse

31. I buzzed glue from the age of twelve until the age of eighteen. That was basically what was happening in Glasgow in those days. Most of my mates were doing it too. When

I was about twelve, I can remember licking envelopes. I said to the teacher at Haghill that I liked the taste of it. The teacher said that I liked glue. She knew straight away that I was a glue sniffer at that age. The social workers didn't know I was sniffing glue. They said in my records that I didn't look like a glue sniffer, but I did it almost every single day for about six years.

32. I would go to B&Q and nick glue from there. If we didn't have enough money, we would get butcher pokes. We would go to the Pakistani shops. The guy would pour glue into the poke and charge us 50p. In the end, the cops started cracking down on those shops. I would glue sniff and drink and the foster man and woman didn't know. The foster woman would complain that I was staying out late. I was always with my mates.

Discipline/dealings with the police

33. Other than beatings, sometimes I would be grounded. I wasn't allowed to go out. I got a lot of racial abuse from the police when I was younger. They were always picking on me. There was nothing for us to do back in those days. There were no community centres or anything like that so we had to make our own entertainment. We would be out playing football until it got dark and we couldn't see the ball anymore. We were all glue sniffers so we would get into trouble with the police. We would get chased by the cops. They always knew me because of the colour of my skin. They would call me a 'nigger' and a 'black bastard'. There was a lot of racial abuse by the police.

Running away

34. I think I ran away from the foster home a couple of times. I just went to my mate's. Sometimes the cops were looking for me. When I was fifteen, I ran away after I battered [REDACTED]. I had been on the glue and I also nicked £300 from the house. The police found me and that was when I ended up going to Larchgrove.

Abuse at the Foster Home

35. I didn't really like the atmosphere in the house. I could tell that there was an atmosphere straight away. Because I couldn't read and write, I was always getting beaten by the foster man. The beatings started when I was about five and I had started at primary school. I couldn't read or write at all when I was at school. I used to have the *Janet and John* books. The foster man would tell me to come and read to him. I couldn't read. He would tell me again to read to him. I would look at him and tell him that I couldn't read. He used to say to me, "If you don't fucking read, you're going back in the home." He would then start slapping me about. He would take his belt off and batter me with the belt. This used to happen every single day after I started school. I just took it as normal.
36. I used to pee the bed. I don't know why I peed the bed. I think it might have been because of nerves. I used to get another beating from the foster man for that. He would always rub my face in the pee. It was humiliating. I think he was trying to break my spirit. He couldn't break my spirit and I think that used to frustrate him. The beatings were every day, every week, every month. From an early age, I just knew that man was not good. I probably used to have marks from being belted, but I never showed them to anybody. I would have had PE at school, but if a teacher did notice the marks then nothing was ever said. I just used to get on with it. Maybe I was very strong at that age. I probably didn't realise what was happening. I just used to take it that the beatings were a part of life.
37. The foster man used to beat [REDACTED] as well. [REDACTED] was very weak. One time, I locked the kitchen door because I could hear the foster man driving in. I must have been about ten and [REDACTED] was about eight. We were dummy fighting in the kitchen. The foster man came in and said, "Who locked that fucking door?" He was raging. I wouldn't say a word and [REDACTED] wouldn't say a word. We got a beating and I still kept my mouth shut. [REDACTED] couldn't take it anymore. He said that it was him so he got a bigger beating. The foster man then went off to the pub. [REDACTED] said to the foster woman that it wasn't him, it was [REDACTED] ILS [REDACTED] I can remember their son-in-law, [REDACTED], saying

that I had done well because I had taken one hell of a beating and kept my mouth shut. He said that I would be a good criminal when I was older.

38. ██████ had asthma. He would breathe noisily when I was sharing a room with him. When he was about eight and I was ten, the foster man came into our bedroom and punched ██████ a couple of times in the face. He just walked out again. I looked at ██████ and he looked at me and then we just went back to sleep again. It was because ██████ had asthma and he must have heard him breathing. That was just normal.
39. I never got any affection from the foster parents. They weren't affectionate towards ██████ or ██████ either. I saw them being affectionate towards their granddaughter, ██████, who was two years younger than me. I can remember ██████ and me jumping on the couch. I was about seven so ██████ would have been about five. I was battered by the foster man and sent to my room. He went absolutely mad. He didn't touch ██████. He told me to go to my room and said that if he found me playing with any of my toys, I would get another beating. I was in my room and ██████ and ██████ were there. They said that my toys were there. I said that the foster man had told me he would batter me again if I played with my toys. They told me that he wouldn't. They left the room and I was playing with my toys. The foster man came in and caught me. He battered me again.
40. I didn't look at it as child abuse. I just looked at it as normal every day stuff. When I was about twelve years old, I told the foster man that if he ever hit me again I would stab him. After that, he never hit me again.
41. The foster woman also raised her hands, but not on regular occasions. One time the foster woman was brushing my hair. I was five or six years old. She skelped me in the face with the brush. I had all these wee spikes in my face. She sent me to school. The teacher asked me what had happened to me. I told her that the dog had scratched me. I think she realised that a dog doesn't make that kind of mark. I think the foster woman just hit me, but she could have hit the other kids when I wasn't there.

42. I don't really believe in fortune telling but I thought I'd get it done anyway. The first time I ever got my fortune told, the woman told me that someone had tried to murder me when I was a baby. She said that my lifeline had been cut. She told me not to worry and that I'd live to a grand old age. Something must have happened to me when I was a baby but I don't know who it was.

Leaving foster care

43. After I battered [REDACTED] and stole money, the foster man reported me to the police. I was arrested on a Saturday morning. I was sniffing glue in a swing park with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There was a big fence and a bowling green so the coppers knew that they couldn't get in. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I ran in different directions. I ran into my mate [REDACTED] garden. The sirens were going off. After fifteen minutes, I thought the coast was clear. I walked out and there was a big sherpa police van. I went straight into another garden and it was as if I was doing the Grand National fences. There was a patch of grass. I knew that if I could make it by the houses and by the main road, I would be safe. I just needed to run up and get to Blackhill. The cops wouldn't come into Blackhill because they would be ambushed and attacked. I never made it.
44. I have a memory of getting up and trying to run away. The cop said, "Stop or I'll shoot." I don't know whether I was hallucinating. I don't know whether the cop had a gun. Before I knew it, I was down on the ground with the handcuffs on. My mate [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had already been caught and was in the police van. We were taken to Easterhouse Police Station. [REDACTED]'s dad came to get him but I went straight to Larchgrove. According to my social work reports, they were going to take me to Longriggend but they sent me to Larchgrove instead. I don't think I went to court or a Children's Panel first.

Larchgrove Remand Home, Glasgow

45. I was fifteen when I first went to Larchgrove. I think I was there three times for a few weeks or a few months. The foster man didn't want me back in the house so my social worker would take me home and then the foster man would take me back to Larchgrove. I can't remember who ran the place. I can't remember any staff, but they were all male. They were known as 'screws'. We didn't talk to the screws, just like in prison you don't talk to the screws. It was all boys there. I think they were all about the same age as me. It was quite a big place. There were maybe fifty or seventy boys there. St. John's Approved School was next door to Larchgrove. It felt like a prison.
46. I can't remember a lot about the daily routine in Larchgrove. I think sniffing glue messed up my head. It kills off your brain cells. I also went on to do boxing. If you get a right good punch, your brain hits off your skull at such a speed. That also messes up your brain.

Routine at Larchgrove

First day

47. I can remember arriving at Larchgrove. The police took me, but I can't remember if anybody met me. I wanted to keep myself to myself, but before I knew it trouble had started. I think there was a riot on my first day. I got swept along. I can remember boys had barricaded the dorm so the screws couldn't get in. Some guy said we should start a fire. I didn't think that was a good idea. After a few hours of that, I got fed up so I went to sleep. I was tossing and turning. I woke up and the place was on fire. We all woke up. We managed to get the barricade down and get out. I think two of the boys were arrested for arson.

Mornings and bedtime

48. We slept in dormitories. There might have been about twelve boys in each dormitory.

Mealtimes/food

49. Everybody used to go to the dining hall to get their food. I can remember that. The food was lovely. I had no complaints at all. I quite enjoyed Larchgrove.

Education/training

50. I don't think I was still going to school when I was in Larchgrove. I think I'd left school early because there was no point in me being there. I wasn't going to get any qualifications or anything like that. It was a waste of time.

Leisure time

51. We didn't do any chores in Larchgrove. We just spent our days messing about and chilling out. We just wore our normal clothes in there. After the boys came out of the dormitories and started glue-sniffing, I thought that I needed to get out of there. I thought that I was going to get the blame.

Visits

52. I think my girlfriend came to visit me a couple of times. I had met her in my local area. Girls were the only people I didn't get into fights with and they seemed to like me.

Abuse at Larchgrove

53. I saw boys being beaten up in Larchgrove. Maybe they had been misbehaving. I just remember boys being beaten up by the screws. They were giving the boys a right good beating with their fists. I saw that happen on quite a number of occasions. I couldn't give specifics because I was just trying to look after myself. I was just a young lad and it was dog eat dog. I think the beatings might have been why the trouble started with the riots. I was never beaten at Larchgrove because I was willing to fight anybody, even the staff.

Leaving Larchgrove

54. The foster man didn't want me in the house after I was in Larchgrove. I think Mr ILT wasn't happy because one time I came to his door with a note from Larchgrove. Liz Rae wasn't happy that Larchgrove did that either. I don't know whether that was after the second or third time. I did go back and live with the foster mum and dad. I told Liz Rae that I wanted to go back to them. She said that they'd take me back if I wasn't glue-sniffing. I didn't really want to go back, but it was the only place I knew.
55. The foster man asked me how I had liked that place and I said that I loved it. I'd rather have been at Larchgrove than with him. I think I would have preferred to be in a home rather than in foster care.

Leaving care

56. I knew that I'd be free when I reached the age of eighteen. I wanted to go and live in a flat. I asked Liz Rae if she could get me a flat. She said that I had to do that on my own. I thought that when you came out of care, they would give you a furnished flat or something. Liz Rae told me that I had to look in the papers and all that kind of stuff. She said that when I turned eighteen, I was no longer in care and I had to do things for myself. I didn't get any financial support from social work. I wasn't given any help so I ended up going down to London. I didn't have any contact with social work after that.
57. When I was in foster care, there was nothing that made it feel like I was in a family. I remember when I was leaving to go to England and the foster man said I would be with my own people. I didn't know what he meant by that. I then realised that he was talking about the colour of my skin.

Life after foster care

58. As soon as I left foster care, I went straight down to London. [REDACTED] was a chef in a casino and he got me a job as a kitchen porter down there. I did come back to Glasgow once or twice and I saw the foster man and woman. I then got arrested when I was still eighteen. I was convicted of robbery and wounding and sentenced to six years concurrent and six years consecutive. I received that sentence when I was eighteen.
59. I can remember meeting one of the boys from Larchgrove in prison, [REDACTED]. I don't know whether it was Wormwood Scrubs or Wandsworth. I was being taken to see the governor. The screws stopped at a gate and I saw this ginger-haired guy brushing the landing. I said, "[REDACTED]." He said, "ILS [REDACTED]." I asked him what he was doing there. I asked him how long he was doing and he said he was doing three years. I told him I was doing twelve years.
60. I stopped sniffing glue when I was in the young offenders. I got some glue from the workshop and started sniffing glue in my cell. Sometimes, [REDACTED] would come and visit me when I was there. Sometimes, he would stop at a pub with his mates and they'd forget all about me. I'd go into my cell and smash up my cell. The screws would fling in a couple of joints. They told me to smoke it and it would calm me down. I used to smoke the weed and it did calm me down. I still do that to this day because it calms me down. I also still drink.
61. I served just over four years of the six. I still have six years hanging over my head. If I was convicted of another robbery, I'd have to serve that six years before starting any sentence I got. I was in so many prisons that I can't remember them all. I was remanded to a young offenders institution. I learned to read and write when I was in the young offenders'. It was compulsory that we had to do education and PE. Once I turned 21, I was moved to adult prisons. After I was convicted, I went to Chelmsford Young Offenders Institution. I was then moved to young offenders' wings in a high security adult prison. It was a kind of psychiatric prison. There were very dangerous men in there. I was classed as a very dangerous young man. I used to go looking for

policemen to rob when I was younger. I thought that policemen were criminals, just like myself. I thought that they were fair game.

62. I was racially abused a lot by the police when I was growing up. It was still the exact same when I came out of prison. There was a copper in Glasgow called Stevie Gray. He was always arresting me. I ended up reporting it to the top cop in Glasgow. He came out to see me when I lived in Cranhill. He said it was my word against his. I didn't get the same treatment in England. In Glasgow, all the cops knew me.
63. I've been in and out of trouble with the police for most of my life. I moved back to Glasgow after I was released from my prison sentence in England. I was with SACRO, who looked after offenders when they came out of jail. They got me a flat in Cranhill. After I had been out of prison for about eight months I was arrested for an assault in Glasgow city centre, which I didn't commit. I wasn't even fighting. I had done nothing. My case kept on getting adjourned. The sheriff was getting annoyed about it. He told me he wasn't adjourning the case anymore and found me guilty. I was sentenced to six months imprisonment. Before I knew it, I was in Barlinnie Prison and from there I went to Low Moss. I was going to appeal against it, but if I appealed it meant that I would miss the World Cup. I decided just to do my time and I was released after four months.
64. I went to the Italia 90 World Cup when I got out of Low Moss. I then lived in Amsterdam for a year. I worked as a door-to-door salesman for ten years. I was self-employed. I've always worked. I've worked in warehouses in England for fifteen years. I was out of work for a while because China didn't open up after the pandemic. People have been getting laid off left, right and centre. I'm now back working in a warehouse.
65. I no longer have any contact with my foster family. The last time that I saw Mrs ILU, she was in a car. I might have been in my thirties. She had a baby in the car with her. I was raging. I couldn't believe that she was still fostering or adopting. I was shocked and appalled. I don't know how they were able to get away with it.

66. I'm glad the foster parents kept my surname because I always wanted to find my mother. I found her when I came out of prison. I was about 22 or 23. There were no hugs or kisses. She kept her distance. It didn't turn out very well. I don't think her family wanted anything to do with me. She didn't want anything to do with me. It was because of the colour of my skin again. Her brother told me to go and start my own family because they didn't want anything to do with me. I've met him once or twice. I've never met my mother's sister. She lives in Kilmarnock. I'm about nine years older than my sister, [REDACTED]. My mother told [REDACTED] not to tell anybody anything about me. It's a lie.
67. As a mother, you would say, "This is my son." But that definitely didn't happen. I don't think that my mother was raped by my father. I think it might have been a one night stand or maybe they were boyfriend and girlfriend. The police were never involved and it was never reported. I asked my mother what my father looked like and she said she didn't know because it had been dark. What comes out of her mouth is just lie after lie after lie. I think I saw my mother last year for the last time. I'll never see her again. It's her loss. As far as I'm concerned, I'm a nice man and she's just wasted her entire life not wanting to know me.
68. I don't want to talk to my mother and my sister again. My sister has made her bed. I'm gutted that I'm never going to see her again. My niece is only eighteen. To think that I'm never going to have a relationship with her is heart breaking. I used to give her £300 every time I saw her.
69. I ended up doing a DNA test to find out who my father was. I did two searches on DNA ancestry and it turned out he was Nigerian. He was a seaman and I think he was in the Navy. I found my father's side of the family and I'm now in contact with them. I made contact with them about eighteen months ago. My mate introduced me to a woman who was into finding long lost families. She managed to find my family in Nigeria after about fifteen months. I then got a text from a woman in America, saying that she was my cousin. She put me in touch with another cousin in Nigeria, who contacted me on Skype. He said that I was the spitting image of his father and that he didn't think we were cousins. He thought that we were brothers. Our fathers had the same name. Unfortunately, my father died three years ago so I never got to meet him.

70. My Nigerian family live in a village and my father was the king. It turns out I have royal blood. I'm a prince and my brother's a prince. My uncle is the king of the village. After he dies, I think I'll be the king. My brother told me that my father only had one child to his mother so he's my only sibling. I can't wait to see my brother, but I think I need to get a Nigerian passport. I don't know whether I need to change my name to my father's name, but I want to be able to go to Nigeria any time I want. I can't go to America to see my cousin there because of my criminal convictions.
71. I felt a connection when I spoke to my brother in Nigeria. He told me that when I come over, there'll be two armed policemen waiting for me. I said, "Gie's a chance, I've not even committed a crime yet." He told me that it was because Nigeria was very dangerous and there's a lot of crime. He said that I'd be staying with him in the village. I asked him how big the village is and he said it's rural. It's out in the sticks so there are no pubs, clubs, bookies or shops. He told me that there is oil in the village. I've got lots of cousins there. I have so much to look forward to when I get to Nigeria. What do I know about oil? What do I know about being a king? I'm just wee ILS.

Reporting of Abuse

72. Claire Campbell, my advocate from Who Cares? Scotland, suggested that I contact the Inquiry. She told me that what had happened to me was child abuse. I hadn't taken it as that until I met her. She's helping me apply for compensation with Redress Scotland as well. I didn't do any of it for money. I did it because I wanted to get my social work records. I've never reported anything to the police. I just thought it was normal and that they would laugh at me.

Impact

73. I just thought that what happened to me in foster care was normal. I thought it was just what happened in Glasgow. It wasn't until I got in touch with Claire Campbell that I realised it wasn't. She told me that what had happened to me was child abuse. She

said that she thought it had affected me and that I was traumatised. I contacted her because I wanted to get my social work papers. If it wasn't for Claire, I don't know what I'd do.

74. I'd talk to other children when I was a child, but I didn't talk to adults. I think it was because of what was happening in foster care. My social work records say that I would clam up when the foster man came in. They also say on a number of occasions that I was very timid as a child. I knew at the time that I didn't talk to adults. I just didn't trust them. They must have done something to me as a child that affected me at that age.
75. I had a lot of anger when I was a young man. I didn't understand where it was coming from. I despised the foster people. I think that's where my anger came from. It also came from the police because I used to get a lot of hassle from the police. I think that anger is what caused me to become involved in crime. It's affected my whole life, especially relationships. I find it very hard. I think this will probably happen till the day I die. I push people away. I've never had any affection in my life. If girlfriends give me hugs and kisses, sometimes I have to say no because I've never experienced that. Three times I've been asked to get married and three times I've said no. I don't know whether I have any children.
76. What happened in foster care was an absolute nightmare. I hated every second of it. I think about it quite often. It's always in my mind. It's always there. It makes me feel angry and sad. I wish the foster carers dead. Sometimes I find myself crying for no reason. Sometimes my hands shake because I get nervous. That still happens to this very day. I haven't seen a doctor for about fifteen years so I've never been diagnosed with anything. I've never thought about getting any counselling because I've always thought there are people far worse off than me.

Records

77. I became curious about my biological family and started looking for my records about two or three years ago. It took me about eighteen months to get my social work records

from Glasgow City Council. At first they said that I didn't exist and they had no record of me being in the care system. It was strange because I had been in the care system for eighteen years and they were trying to say that they had no record of me and I didn't exist. It wasn't a very good start. I then got an advocate involved to help me. Her name is Claire Campbell and she's based in Glasgow with Who Cares? Scotland. Before I knew it they had found my social work records. They said that they had been short staffed because of the pandemic.

78. My advocate, Claire Campbell, read my records before me. She said that the names the social workers used to describe me were appalling. I was a child. I think it was because I wouldn't talk to people. I'd talk to other kids, but if an adult came near me I wouldn't talk to them. A social worker described me as a 'retard'. Another one described me as 'it', saying that they "didn't know what to do with it." 'It' was a human being. Another social worker described me as very backwards. I felt pretty bad reading that.
79. I've highlighted certain things in my records with a yellow pen. You can see that some of the social workers were shocking. They very rarely came to see me. I'm just going to post my records to Redress Scotland. I've told them that they can destroy them. I don't want them back.

Lessons to be learned

80. My experiences in foster care might have been different if social workers had come to see me on a regular basis. I think that they would have taken me out of that place straight away if they'd known that I was in danger. The foster parents could have killed me or [REDACTED]. Anything could have happened to us. I don't think those people should ever have been allowed to foster children. There was about a seven or eight year period when I didn't see a social worker at all in foster care. I think the social work totally let me down. I think that social workers made a big mistake. I think the social workers have got a lot to answer for and I have a pure and utter hatred of them.

Hopes for the Inquiry

- 81. I think that the social workers have to be held accountable for what happened. There was a lack of care. They never came to see us. The foster parents are probably dead now, but the social workers have to take responsibility. They put us all in danger.

- 82. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed... ILS

Dated... 27.7.2023