

1 Friday, 7 October 2022

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome to the last day this
4 week of our evidence in relation to the foster care and
5 boarding-out case study.

6 We start with an evidential link, I see, and it
7 looks as though everything is working. Is that right,
8 Ms Innes?

9 MS INNES: It has been so far, my Lady.

10 The first witness is anonymous and has chosen the
11 pseudonym 'Donald'. 'Donald' and his wife, who has the
12 pseudonym 'Pamela', were foster carers for North
13 Lanarkshire Council. An applicant with the pseudonym
14 'George' was in the care of North Lanarkshire Council
15 and was in foster care with 'Donald' and 'Pamela' from
16 [REDACTED] 2001 to [REDACTED] 2001. 'George's' statement was
17 read in on Day 325, 22 September 2022. Obviously North
18 Lanarkshire Council are the responsible authority.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

20 'Donald', good morning, can you see me and hear me?

21 THE WITNESS: Yes, good morning.

22 LADY SMITH: Good, let me introduce myself. I'm Lady Smith.
23 I chair the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry here in
24 Edinburgh and I'm grateful to you for coming to give
25 your evidence over the link this morning.

1 I'd like to begin by you taking an oath, please.

2 'Donald' (sworn)

3 (Evidence given via video conference)

4 LADY SMITH: If I can ask you, 'Donald', to stay in a good
5 position for wherever your microphone is there, because
6 we need to hear you as clearly as we can over the link,
7 but apart from our convenience, you must let us know if
8 you have any difficulty with the link, if you're having
9 any problems in hearing us or seeing us, do speak up so
10 that we can try and deal with that.

11 Separately, 'Donald', as we go through your evidence
12 I do appreciate that you may find this is a difficult
13 thing to do. You know that you're speaking in a public
14 forum and we're going to have to ask you some questions
15 about the past that may be difficult to remember.
16 I understand that. And you may find it a bit
17 challenging at times to handle.

18 Do let me know if you want a break. We can organise
19 that if you need it, or if there's anything else we can
20 do to help you give your evidence as clearly and
21 carefully as you can, please don't hesitate to speak up.

22 One other thing before I hand over to Ms Innes,
23 'Donald'. You're giving evidence at a public inquiry.
24 This isn't a court hearing. However, you are, as I've
25 said, giving evidence in public. A transcript is being

1 made of your evidence, and it's important that you
2 understand that it could be relied on outwith the
3 Inquiry. So I need to warn you that if you're asked any
4 questions the answers to which could incriminate you,
5 you don't have to answer them. You have a right not to
6 answer them. But of course if you do decide to answer
7 them, you must do so fully.

8 If you have any questions about that at any time or
9 you're not sure, do, please, ask again and we can
10 explain it again. Do you understand that?

11 A. Yes, I understand that.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 If you're ready, 'Donald', I'll hand over to
14 Ms Innes and she'll take it from there, is that okay?

15 A. That's fine, yes.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms Innes.

17 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

18 Questions from Ms Innes

19 MS INNES: 'Donald', we understand that you were born in
20 1952. Is that correct?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. Can I refer first of all to the statement that you gave
23 to the Inquiry and I hope you have a copy of that in
24 front of you?

25 A. (Overspeaking).

1 Q. We give it the reference WIT-1-000001089 and I wonder if
2 we could begin by looking at the last page of the
3 statement, page 23. At paragraph --
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. -- 101 we see there that you say that you have no
6 objection to your witness statement being published as
7 part of the evidence to the Inquiry. You say that you
8 believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
9 true, and I understand that you signed the statement on
10 28 September 2022; is that right?
11 A. Yes, that's correct.
12 Q. Thank you.
13 If we go back to the beginning of your statement,
14 you tell us a bit about your family life. At
15 paragraph 3 you talk about your wife who, as I have
16 already said, has the pseudonym 'Pamela'. You tell us
17 there that she had children and you also had children of
18 a previous marriage; is that correct?
19 A. That's correct, yes.
20 Q. Then you talk about your son and we'll come back to
21 mention him as we go through your evidence.
22 I wonder if we can move on, please, to page 2 and
23 paragraph 6. You say there that you consider that you
24 were support carers for the person that we're calling
25 'George' -- just pausing there because the picture has

1 disappeared.

2 Sorry, you froze slightly and then the picture went
3 away but we've got you, you're back again.

4 At paragraph 6 of your statement you say that you
5 consider that you were support carers for the person
6 that we're calling 'George'. What did you understand
7 being a support carer to involve?

8 A. The (unclear) but he's coming in with us to get relief,
9 independent living and all that. (Unclear) and looked
10 after well just (unclear). I think he was in
11 a (unclear) and do his independent living.

12 Q. Okay, you broke up slightly there in the connection,
13 I think. I think what you were saying was that, as you
14 say in your statement, it was to get him ready for the
15 big bad world and I think 'George' had been in a home,
16 a residential home, before he came to live with you and
17 your wife?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I think you also mentioned that it was to get him -- to
20 put it another way, it was to get him ready for
21 independent living. Is that right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. In terms of being a support carer, did you think that
24 was being a foster carer or did you think it was
25 something different?

1 A. I think -- I don't see much difference between a support
2 carer and a foster carer. I don't really see much
3 difference, to me both(?) is the same type of kid. But
4 after (unclear) to support him going through what he's
5 going to go through to live in the world and help him
6 out as much as we can and see what a normal family life
7 is about.

8 Q. Okay. I wonder if we can look at a document in relation
9 to this, please, and it's at tab 3 of the folder that's
10 in the room with you. It's at NLC-000000153, page 5.

11 A. Aye (unclear).

12 Q. If we look at this, this is a boarding-out report and
13 the things that are blanked out, it's you and your wife,
14 the names there. Then in the first paragraph it says:
15 "This report is to do with the above-named who are
16 seeking to care for 'George'."

17 A. (Unclear)

18 Q. Then if we go down to -- there's a paragraph beginning:
19 "The couple applied to be support carers ..."
20 Do you see that paragraph?

21 A. Yes, I see that.

22 Q. It says:
23 "The couple applied to be supported carers last year
24 and following all the necessary checks they were finally
25 approved on 6 November 2000. These checks meet the

1 requirements of the boarding-out regulations. The
2 carers have now been linked with 'George', who has been
3 enjoying a plan of regular contact with you and your
4 wife, including overnight stays."

5 It looks from that as though you were approved in
6 terms of the relevant regulations and you were linked
7 with 'George' but before him coming to live with you
8 formally, it looks like you had contact with him?

9 A. No, that's not right. We met 'George' once, the social
10 work (unclear). He never had overnight stays, they
11 brought him up to meet us and see how (unclear) to see if
12 we could manage it. Which was ... it was fine, but
13 I can't remember having overnight stays and it wasn't
14 really a -- just gave you the impression it was over
15 a certain amount of time he was coming and going,
16 staying with us. No, I can't remember that happening.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. I can remember meeting him once before he actually came
19 to stay. Then (unclear) took him away, talked about it,
20 (unclear) what to do and then everything was fine.
21 Asked us if we wanted to take him. If we did, that's
22 fine, (unclear) the young laddie, fine, but I can't
23 remember that regular contact they're on about.

24 LADY SMITH: Can I just check, 'Donald', is it possible that
25 these overnight stays did happen a few times before he

1 came to live with you permanently and you just haven't
2 remembered that.

3 A. Possible, but I'm pretty sure that I'd remember because
4 if you do the room up, get it all ready for him.

5 LADY SMITH: You see, this was written by somebody --

6 A. (Overspeaking) possible. It's a long time ago. It's
7 possible, my mind (overspeaking) --

8 LADY SMITH: You see, 'Donald', this was written by a social
9 worker in [REDACTED] 2001, which would be at about the time
10 this was all happening and I suppose the social worker
11 would have no reason for writing that if it hadn't
12 actually been taking place.

13 A. Yes, I agree with you there. It is possible, but
14 I really can't remember. (unclear) my wife, because she
15 could remember, she's ten years younger than me. She
16 knows all about this. But I'm not too sure. But it's
17 possible.

18 LADY SMITH: Thanks. That's very fair. Don't worry about
19 it. This was 22 years ago or so. All right?

20 Ms Innes.

21 MS INNES: To help you a bit further with this, 'Donald', if
22 in the same document, if you move back a page to page 4,
23 and this is an internal memorandum between two social
24 workers and if you look down it says that 'George' moved
25 officially to you on [REDACTED] 2001, do you see that?

1 A. Breaking up (unclear).

2 Q. Okay. Were you saying there that we were breaking up
3 and you couldn't hear what I was saying?

4 A. Yes (unclear).

5 Q. Okay, so I'll start again.

6 In this document on page 4, so the same document
7 that we've just been looking at, NLC-000000153, at
8 page 4 there's a memo and if we look at the text of
9 it --

10 He's disappeared again?

11 LADY SMITH: I think, Ms Innes, if you carry on it should be
12 okay, would that be right? It's simply because the
13 witness isn't speaking so the camera's not being
14 activated at that end?

15 MS INNES: Right, I'll persevere at the moment and we'll
16 see.

17 It says there that 'George' moved officially to you
18 and your wife on [REDACTED] 2001 and then it says:
19 "A memo dated [REDACTED] 2001 in 'George's' file
20 indicates that in the month of [REDACTED] 2000 he had
21 spent a total of 27 nights with you and your wife."
22 From that it may be that you didn't recognise that
23 they were overnight contacts, because 27 nights is
24 pretty much the whole month of [REDACTED].

25 (Pause)

1 SPEAKER: Can you hear us?

2 MS INNES: We can now.

3 Right, did you hear anything of what I said there?

4 A. Yes, I did.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. The only thing I (unclear) the 27 nights is the official
7 date in the paperwork, the official date is there. The
8 only way I can think, he could have been there [REDACTED]
9 before they actually made it official. So that's why
10 they recorded that 27 nights. I don't know, I can't
11 remember. But I'd be guessing on that fact. But 27
12 nights you wouldn't forget, I thought he was officially
13 there 27 nights before he was. That's the only way
14 I can put that.

15 Q. Yes, I understand that and that makes sense, given that
16 it's so many nights in [REDACTED] that you'd probably have
17 thought that was him there full time.

18 Okay, if we can go back to your statement, please,
19 and if we can go back to page 2 and paragraph 9.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You say there that you didn't act as a support carer for
22 anyone else, but then at paragraph 10 you say later on
23 you became kinship carers for your wife's grandson; is
24 that right?

25 A. That's right, yes.

1 Q. And --

2 A. And that -- that's because (unclear) was the -- brother

3 had a problem. And we had to take [REDACTED] when he

4 was about six. The way I took that -- I thought you

5 meant at the time of FWF [REDACTED], at the same time. That's

6 why I said no. I thought you meant we had maybe two or

7 three supported carers at the time of FWF [REDACTED], that's

8 why I said no. But we went to kinship care because

9 [REDACTED] was our grandson. He wasn't going anywhere,

10 he wasn't going to a home or anywhere. He was staying

11 with us.

12 Q. I wonder if I can ask you this. You obviously had the

13 assessment to become supported carers for 'George'. Can

14 you remember if you had to go through some kind of

15 re-assessment to become kinship carers for your

16 grandson?

17 A. Yes, we had to go through Disclosure Scotland.

18 Q. Did the social work come out and interview you at the

19 time that you were --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- going to be taking your grandson on?

22 A. Yes. Well, we knew the social worker because (unclear)

23 it wasn't all of a sudden he was there and he was gone.

24 This happened over about two or three months. So we

25 knew the social worker was involved and we knew it. So

1 she came out and interviewed us and she knew us and
2 I said he's not going into a home, he's saying it us and
3 she said that's good and there was a few other
4 procedures, with Disclosure Scotland and all that.
5 Q. Okay.
6 A. (overspeaking) that kind of a work, so she knew what she
7 was talking about.
8 Q. Okay. Can you remember: did they take references for
9 you at the time that you became a kinship carer?
10 A. I can mind when we applied for the kinship care and the
11 money, right, I think it was £125(?) a week, they had to
12 do a 30-page report on both of us. Of course, (unclear)
13 doing that, but that's about all I can remember.
14 Q. Okay. Can you remember if there was a similar thing
15 before you became supported carers or not?
16 A. No, I can't remember.
17 Q. You can't remember?
18 A. There must have been procedures along that road, but
19 I can't remember.
20 Q. Yeah. We do have in the records something that we would
21 call a Form F, which is an assessment of you and your
22 wife before you became supported carers, so it looks
23 like that was carried out before you became supported
24 carers for 'George'.
25 Can I move on in your statement, please, to page 3

1 and to paragraph 13. You're addressing the issue there
2 of training. Did you have --
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. -- any training before you were -- well, first of all
5 before you were approved as supported carers for
6 'George'?
7 A. Not that I can remember, but you've got to remember, I'd
8 brought up three children of my own. My first wife left
9 us with three children, right, and I brought them up my
10 own (unclear). So I don't know what kind of training
11 they could have give us. But as far as I know, they
12 didn't give me any training.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. But then the experiences I had could kind of speak for
15 itself because they came out pretty good, they were all
16 right, and FWH s in the same position with her
17 daughter. I don't know what kind of training they could
18 have given at all.
19 Q. Okay. You can't remember going to any sessions that
20 were organised by social work that social workers spoke
21 at or anything like that?
22 A. I can't remember anything like that, any classes or
23 anything like that, no.
24 Q. Okay.
25 A. All we got was a couple of pamphlets.

1 Q. Yes, you mention at paragraph 14 that you got a leaflet
2 and you think that was all that you got. You didn't get
3 anything called a foster carer handbook or anything like
4 that?

5 A. No, I can't remember. I don't think so. I can't
6 remember it. But then I don't see why they shouldn't
7 have give me because they had no reason not to give me,
8 so it's very possible they did give it and I can't
9 remember.

10 Q. Okay. You mentioned there your experience of bringing
11 up your own children. Did you think that there might be
12 any different issues taking on a child who had been in
13 residential care and had been in care as 'George' was?

14 A. Yes. Yes, I did. I think he would -- all my children
15 had grown up and moved out and got their own places, own
16 houses, so I had a rough idea that he didn't have it
17 easy, so we would give him slack a wee bit, not so
18 strict, didn't have so many rules. Aye, I knew --
19 I didn't know it was going to be that difficult, but
20 I knew it wasn't going to be easy.

21 Q. Do you think it might have been helpful to do some
22 training on some of these issues?

23 A. No. Just because of my experience, because my laddies
24 and my daughter they had plenty friends in and out the
25 house. So I was kind of used to having young ones about

1 and making themselves a sandwich and cup of tea and that
2 and going in their rooms. It all depends on the
3 training. I don't know, I've never been on the training
4 so I wouldn't know if it's going to benefit me or not.

5 Q. If we can move on to page 4 of your statement, at
6 paragraph 17 you say that you didn't think of yourselves
7 being employed as support carers and at the end of that
8 paragraph you describe it as being "near enough
9 voluntary". Can you explain why you say that?

10 A. Well, before we did all this, (unclear) was -- I can't
11 remember what (unclear) it was, but anyway we were going
12 to take somebody else on, [REDACTED], right, but it didn't
13 work, they didn't want to do it for some reason, I don't
14 know. So the social worker come up with 'George', they
15 came up with 'George'. FWH [REDACTED] knew 'George', [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED] so she goes he's pretty
17 hard, he's (unclear) the run of that place and (unclear)
18 and I says all we can do is give it a try. We didn't
19 give them money, we didn't feel employed, we thought we
20 were giving the laddie a good chance to see what we
21 could do about it. If it didn't work it didn't work,
22 but (unclear) it's not a six-month job. It's like every
23 other child that you've got for the rest of your days,
24 so I was hoping it would go that way but it didn't work
25 that way.

1 Q. You mentioned there that 'George' had been at Pine Court
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]. At paragraph 21, you
4 describe that you had the impression that they wanted
5 rid of him.

6 A. Yes, they did. Because it was coming up -- it must have
7 been coming up to his 15th or 16th birthday and
8 basically once they turn that age they get put out,
9 because they want to get this person off their books.
10 And it's not their fault, because if they get that one
11 off their books they can take another person on the
12 books, but to me the system is (unclear). That's him,
13 done his time, put them out there in the big bad world,
14 no support, no nothing. And I says, well, that's how
15 I feel we were giving him, we were giving the lad
16 support to learn how he was going to survive, basically,
17 living in the world, what the world's about.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. It's not people running after him all the time and
20 getting this and getting that. I'm not saying they did
21 that, but he (unclear).

22 Q. 'George' tells us in his statement that he thinks that
23 Pine Court closed a few months after he left. Do you
24 know if --

25 A. (Overspeaking)

1 Q. -- it was anything to do with Pine Court closing that
2 was meaning that they were trying to find another place
3 or is it because it was his birthday?

4 A. It's possible, it's possible. I can't remember it
5 closing at all, [REDACTED]

6

7

8

9 I can't remember -- I can't remember if it shut down.
10 I didn't even know it shut down. I don't know.

11 Q. [REDACTED]

12

13

14 A. [REDACTED]

15 Q. I see. If we carry on on page 5, at paragraph 23 you
16 say that you had no support from the Local Authority as
17 support carers?

18 A. That's right. I can't remember any support. I don't
19 know actually what you mean with support. What were
20 they supposed to do? The only support I got was the
21 £125. I didn't get -- they'd pop up now and again to
22 check on him and check on us, and that's about it.
23 I can't remember any else that they would give him.

24 Q. Can you remember if you had your own link worker who was
25 working with you?

1 A. I definitely did not. Unless they worked through FWH ,
2 unless they went through FWH .
3 Q. Unless they worked with your wife rather than having
4 meetings with both of you?
5 A. Yes. But that was working (unclear) so it's possible we
6 had a link worker, but they worked through FWH more
7 than anything else. I can't remember to tell the truth.
8 Q. Okay. I think you tell us at paragraph 26 over the
9 page that when you were kinship carers for your
10 grandson, did you have a support worker or a social
11 worker when he was with you?
12 A. Us?
13 Q. Yes.
14 A. Oh no, [REDACTED] had a social worker and a support
15 worker. We didn't.
16 Q. You didn't, okay.
17 I wonder if we can -- well, we'll come back to
18 a couple of documents in due course about the
19 involvement of the Local Authority but perhaps if we
20 just move on to another couple of things in your
21 statement just now.
22 If we can look, please, at page 7 and paragraph 32,
23 you're commenting there on something that 'George' says
24 in his statement, which is essentially that you
25 renovated your house with financial assistance from

1 Social Services. Is that correct or not?

2 A. That's not. No, no. We didn't.

3 Q. I think you explain the financial arrangements that you

4 made there.

5 A. Aye. The house cost £12,000 and I got a £17,000

6 mortgage and then I got a £5,000 (unclear). That's what

7 did the renovations. It was nothing to do with social

8 work. We'd have done it anyway if 'George' wasn't

9 there.

10 LADY SMITH: 'Donald', a little while ago you talked about

11 getting his bedroom ready before he arrived. Did you

12 get any help from social work with the cost of that or

13 with items for that?

14 A. That I can't remember if I did. I don't know. I know

15 we told them -- we picked the colour scheme, whatever he

16 wanted, and we'd buy it. Whether we got money for that

17 from social work I don't remember. I know when he left

18 he destroyed the room and they gave us money for that to

19 get that repaired, but --

20 LADY SMITH: No, I was thinking of the very beginning before

21 he arrived.

22 A. I can't remember.

23 LADY SMITH: Might you have got some allowance for that?

24 A. It's possible.

25 LADY SMITH: Okay.

1 A. But honestly I can't remember.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

3 MS INNES: Just moving down on the same page of your
4 statement at paragraph 33. You talk about the change
5 that you made to the house and that there were
6 originally four bedrooms in the house and you used one
7 of them to knock through to the dining room. You
8 comment on something that 'George' says in his
9 statement, which was along the lines of that once you
10 finished the renovations, he was chucked out of the
11 house at that point.

12 In the time that 'George' was living with you, did
13 he always have the same room or did he have to move room
14 in the house?

15 A. No, he always had the same room.

16 Q. Was that affected at all by the renovations that you
17 were doing?

18 A. No. It was we (unclear) in the back, there was two
19 bedrooms and we've knocked the smallest bedroom into
20 a dining room, because it came off the living room. Me
21 and FWH had the big room, had the middle room
22 and 'George' had the end room. Because all the rest of
23 our children had gone away and we had a spare room
24 anyway, so it didn't -- converting one of them into
25 a dining room didn't took his bedroom over, no. His

1 bedroom was always the same. Always the same bedroom,
2 that's where he stayed, that's what he had unclear. But
3 that was his own personal space.

4 Q. Okay. You mention at paragraph 34 about your son and
5 I think your son was about six at the time?

6 A. Yes, that's right.

7 Q. I think you tell us in your statement that he got on
8 quite well with 'George' at the beginning?

9 A. Yes. Not even -- even at the end he got on great with
10 'George'. [REDACTED] loves company anyway, [REDACTED] always
11 loved company. 'George' would go in the room and play
12 with him with his toys and all that. Great, he's got
13 a big brother, as I said in the statement, he was fine
14 with [REDACTED], there was no problem on that road. But
15 [REDACTED] was only 6 or 7 at the time, so [REDACTED] just liked
16 company, somebody paying attention to him.

17 Q. Okay.

18 At paragraph 37 on page 8 you talk about your wife
19 having some knowledge of 'George's' background, as
20 you've said, from the home, and you say that she wasn't
21 too happy to start with him and why was that?

22 A. Because she had the impression that he was running Pine
23 Court ... [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED] but she had the impression that he was
25 running Pine Court, they were terrified of him, but the

1 social worker turned around and tell her that he's
2 changed, he's more mature, blah, blah, and all of that
3 and he convinced her. Give it a go (unclear) just to
4 give it a try and see if it made a difference. It
5 (unclear) completely taken over his life, just make sure
6 we could try something to help him.

7 Q. When he came to live with you, if we go on to page 9 at
8 paragraph 40, you say he settled in quite easily with
9 you at the beginning and you talk about him decorating
10 his room as you've mentioned and joined in with the
11 family. Then you say that your wife liked a drink at
12 the weekend with her friends or family because you don't
13 drink and you say he was enjoying that as well.

14 A. Yes. FWH's friends would come up on a Saturday night
15 and have a wee drink (unclear) put all of them together
16 and you have a young laddie there, he kind of more than
17 (unclear), but he seemed to enjoy it, he seemed to enjoy
18 the fun. And he never says to me, rightly or wrongly,
19 if he had said to me something was wrong and he didn't
20 like it, I would have stopped it, I would have turned to
21 him and said stay in your room, don't go near them. But
22 they loved him, the young laddie (unclear) was great.
23 They all got the same point of view as us. Let him try
24 and get a normal -- (unclear) life as normal, I don't
25 know whether (unclear), but that was our life normal

1 that you work all week (unclear). And he was involved
2 in that. But he was never any problem. He wasn't
3 cheeky, he wasn't forward, too forward. He was nice and
4 polite. He was great.

5 Q. Okay. You say if we go down to paragraph 42 on this
6 page that towards the very end of the page in the last
7 couple of lines you say that you think he'd been with
8 you between six weeks and two months when his behaviour
9 changed. How did his behaviour change?

10 A. I don't know if I'd put it that long (unclear) if I'm
11 honest, but he was coming in high on dope, drunk, and
12 I warned him three or four times, "You can't do this,
13 not can [REDACTED] in the house". I said, "You can't do
14 this, not with [REDACTED] in the house". I said, "If [REDACTED]
15 wasn't in the house I could try to put up better with
16 it". But he came in and he was noisy -- he wasn't
17 cheeky, he wasn't a cheeky drunk, but he was noisy. And
18 you could see in his face he didn't like getting told
19 off. But I says, "Sorry, FWF [REDACTED], I've given you a lot
20 of chances, but I can't take it any more" (unclear). So
21 that's why I think it didn't work.

22 Q. Okay. When you say you'd tell him off, what would you
23 do?

24 A. Not tell him off, just talk to him, wouldn't tell him
25 off, just talk to him. I would say, "FWF [REDACTED], your

1 attitude might change, you can't do this, you can't come
2 in full of dope, you can't come in drunk, you can't bang
3 your music up loud, it just doesn't work that way".
4 I don't know where he stayed before or if he did this in
5 the home, I don't know, because I have no experience of
6 him in the home, "It's not going to work, FWF, if
7 you're going to keep doing this". And (unclear) and
8 then the next day it would be the same again.

9 Q. Okay. If we can move on a little in your statement at
10 the bottom of page 10 at paragraph 47, you talk there
11 about not putting any strict ground rules about when he
12 should be in. You told him to be in before 11 as that
13 was when the front door got locked.

14 A. Yes, I told him that but I never done it. I told him
15 that (unclear) if 11 o'clock the door's going to get
16 locked and you won't get in, but he came in quite a few
17 times about 11.30/12 o'clock, but I never locked the
18 door on him. So it was maybe a kind of a threat than
19 anything else.

20 Q. Okay, so he was never, for example, locked out of the
21 house overnight or anything like that?

22 A. No. No.

23 Q. Okay. If we move on, please, to page 13 of your
24 statement and paragraph 58, what guidance were you given
25 by the social work department about discipline? Or

1 about managing his behaviour?

2 A. You just -- well, if I can remember rightly they just
3 told us don't lift your hands, don't use violence,
4 right, which I would never do anyway. But any other
5 points was to treat him the same as anybody else in the
6 house, well, when they were younger. Just get to your
7 room (unclear), that's about it. Nothing -- I wouldn't
8 say anything drastic. I wouldn't (unclear) or anything
9 like that. (Unclear)

10 Q. Okay. If we can move on again in your statement,
11 please, if we can move to paragraph 63 on page 14, you
12 say that if he needed emotional support it was there,
13 and in what way did you try to offer him emotional
14 support?

15 A. Well, we let him know if there's any problems let me
16 know, see if we can do anything about it, sort it out
17 for him. But I think the emotional support was really
18 my wife, he would go to 'Pamela'. He talked to her
19 a lot more than he would talk to me. Maybe he felt more
20 comfortable talking to her.

21 I don't know. But it was there. If he needed it,
22 it was there. He'd ask -- so I kind of fix things, so
23 I had a big garage down there and he'd ask if he can go
24 in the garage, where you going, FWF, he wanted to be
25 a joiner, I said take these and see if you can make

1 anything and he spent hours down there because he loved
2 tools and wanted to be a joiner, but that's about it.
3 There was nothing else. But I did that with all my
4 children. They always had support.

5 Q. Okay. If we can move on to page 15 of your statement
6 and paragraph 66, you talk there about something that
7 'George' said that happened and it was your wife's
8 brother that tried to grab his girlfriend's scarf that
9 had the Prince of Orange on it, he then went mental and
10 tried to grab 'George'. What's your response to that?
11 Can you remember that happening?

12 A. Anything like that never happened. [REDACTED] wouldn't do
13 that in the first place, and I can't even remember his
14 sister being up. I can remember his brother being up,
15 but -- and it's [REDACTED] not FWF [REDACTED] who gave us -- [REDACTED]
16 knew the situation he was in. He was the (unclear) he'd
17 be like his big brother. I think [REDACTED] was 20/22 at
18 the time. He'd be his big brother. Maybe carrying on,
19 but no way on this earth was any violence involved in
20 that.

21 Q. I think you're saying that 'George' has given
22 a different name for your wife's brother, but that her
23 brother was about 22 at the time?

24 A. Aye, something like that.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. He maybe carried on with him. I'm not saying that, but
2 in no way was he giving him a (unclear) because he's not
3 that type of person to start with.

4 Q. Okay. Then you mentioned about 'George's' own brother
5 and sister a moment ago and at paragraph 67 you refer to
6 'George' saying that your wife didn't like his sister
7 visiting?

8 A. No, that's not true.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. That is not true. Not even well (unclear) just can't.
11 No, actually I can't remember his sister at all. But
12 no, I can't see that myself.

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. Not in the job she was in. She was really professional
15 and cared about people she worked with, so I can't see
16 her just like ...

17 Q. Can you remember 'George's' sister visiting or not?

18 A. No. No, I can't remember his sister. I remember his
19 brother.

20 Q. You remember his brother, okay.

21 A. But I can't -- because his brother stole £20 out of
22 FWH 's purse. But FWF 'George' he went down and
23 got it back off him, that's why I can remember him.

24 Q. Okay. Then you say at paragraph 68 on this page you
25 refer to 'George's' social worker visiting and you think

1 that was maybe once every three weeks but you say you're
2 guessing as you really can't remember?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. It might have happened, I guess, when you were out at,
5 work, as you've mentioned already?

6 A. (Unclear). They came out and take him out and bought
7 him McDonald's and asked him if there's any problems, if
8 everything's fine, you know. That's about it. I mean
9 I wouldn't swear on my life it was once every three
10 weeks. It could have been, as you say I was working so
11 I don't know.

12 Q. I think you tell us in your statement that you spoke to
13 the social worker yourself and you've already mentioned
14 in your evidence a lack of support. I wonder if we can
15 look at another document, please, so first of all it's
16 at tab 4 of your folder, NLC-000000154, page 3.

17 A. Right. What am I looking for?

18 Q. Sorry, I just need to get it up myself. Just bear with
19 me a moment. Page 3 is a placement review --

20 A. Right.

21 Q. -- on 2 April 2001. I just want to look at the first
22 paragraph of this, which says:

23 "The writer opened meeting by stating six-week
24 review should have occurred after 'George' had been in
25 placement for six weeks. However, due to extenuating

1 circumstances, this was cancelled on numerous
2 occasions."

3 It looks like the first review of 'George's'
4 placement with you was at the beginning of April 2001,
5 so by that time, as we've seen, he'd been with you
6 officially since [REDACTED] and prior to that he'd been
7 having quite a lot of contact with you.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. The next thing that I'd like to look at is if we stick
10 with the same document I think that might be easiest, so
11 page 1 of this document. This is headed, "Placement
12 breakdown meeting".

13 A. Right, I got you.

14 Q. You were at this meeting and it's 22 May 2001, the
15 purpose was to discuss the placement breakdown. If we
16 go down to the final paragraph of this page, on your
17 copy it will be, "[Blank] expressed concerns", do you
18 see that paragraph? The very last paragraph on this
19 page.

20 A. Right.

21 Q. What that says is:

22 "Your wife expressed concerns over the frequency of
23 visits by 'George's' social worker and that it was her
24 who initiated introductory visits between them."

25 It looks as though your wife was raising some issues

1 about visits at that point.

2 If we just go over the page, please, and if we look

3 at the third paragraph on this page, which refers to

4 your wife:

5 "Your wife spoke about the week leading up to

6 'George's' departure."

7 Do you see that?

8 A. Right.

9 Q. So it says --

10 A. Right, aye.

11 Q. So she spoke about --

12 A. (Overspeaking)

13 Q. -- the week leading up to 'George's' departure, how he:

14 "... blatantly abused house rules, didn't respect

15 you and your wife, consuming alcohol within the house

16 despite being asked not to and there was an atmosphere."

17 Is that a fair reflection of what happened at the

18 time in the lead up to the breakdown?

19 A. I would say that was a fair assessment, but as I say ...

20 I can't remember. But that would be kind of a fair

21 assessment.

22 Q. If we just go down on that page, there's a paragraph

23 with bullet points where it says:

24 "Martin summed up by highlighting lessons to be

25 learned."

1 Do you see that?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Then the bullet points are:

4 "Draw up contracts between carers, young person and

5 workers to give clarity."

6 The second one is:

7 "Better communication between all parties."

8 Then:

9 "Carers notify if any problems in placement."

10 I think the social work department might have been

11 saying that you and your wife hadn't been telling them

12 if there were problems?

13 A. No. Look at that our way. I could turn around and say

14 the social work never gave us the right story when

15 'George' -- never gave any background on George. No

16 background of what was going on in Pine Court. We told

17 the social worker what the problem was and what was

18 happening all along the road. We had no reason for us

19 not to tell her. And (unclear) professional her job

20 she'd know (unclear) and she knows the rules, so she

21 probably looked -- I don't agree with that myself.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. (Overspeaking) I mean I don't agree with that. But

24 I think that's like her side of it.

25 Q. If I can ask you to look at another document, it will be

1 tab 6 of your folder, NLC-000000156 and page 4. It's
2 headed, "Coatbridge social work department case note
3 continuation sheet".

4 A. Aye, got you.

5 Q. The worker is a Vanessa Leitch, do you see that? Then
6 it says "transfer summary"?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. There is no date on this document, but if we move down
9 it's during the time that 'George' was with you and
10 there's a paragraph beginning:

11 "This placement is going very well. 'George' has
12 settled in quickly and established relationships with
13 all family members including your young son."

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. "There been a few incidents, for example 'George'
16 staying out all night and also sneaking his girlfriend
17 in to stay overnight, but these have all been addressed
18 appropriately by the carers and 'George' has responded
19 positively to the limits placed on him."

20 Then it says:

21 "Little support is required for this placement.
22 Telephone contact is maintained and home visits as
23 appropriate to meet with the carers and/or 'George'."

24 That seems to be what -- it looks like maybe there
25 was one social worker handing on to another social

1 worker and that was her assessment of how things were
2 going at the time, that little support was required.
3 A. (Unclear) that's right, but I can't -- I can't remember
4 (unclear) was on about. Aye, they did (unclear), yes,
5 right. (Unclear) all night, was I can't remember.
6 I can't remember -- I didn't even know he had
7 a girlfriend. Sneaking his girlfriend in. I can't
8 remember that. Little support -- we never got much
9 support to start with. I tell you (unclear) make that
10 out to you, some of it's true and some of it is
11 elaborated a wee bit. I don't know. I don't know what
12 it means, to tell you the truth.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. (Unclear) was fine, and it wasn't.
15 Q. Okay. That's fine.
16 I understand that you stopped being supported carers
17 a wee while after 'George' left your care. Why was it
18 that you and your wife stopped being supported carers?
19 A. Well, basically they sacked us.
20 Q. Why did they sack --
21 A. Because if a laddie come into problems with his
22 sexuality, right? By the way we're not biased against
23 anybody's sexuality, that's the (unclear) the story, but
24 because we (unclear) and the laddie they wanted to take
25 in had problems with his sexuality, probably he's gay

1 and I says no, I can't do that and explained to the
2 situation why we can't do that and then the next day
3 they came up and they say if you can't take the laddie
4 in well, basically you're (unclear). So they weren't
5 going to tell me who to take and who not to take.
6 (unclear) if we couldn't help that laddie, I could be
7 able to help somebody else, but that's not the way they
8 looked at it.

9 Q. Okay.

10 I think just in terms of the documents again if you
11 could look, please, at tab 7 at NLC-000000157. This is
12 a letter from North Lanarkshire Council to you and your
13 wife dated 17 December 2001.

14 A. All right.

15 Q. Do you have that?

16 A. Got it, yes.

17 Q. It's a letter and it says:

18 "I'm writing to advise you of the outcome of the
19 recent supported carers panel. I understand you were
20 notified would be taking place following discussions
21 with through care team staff. The panel acknowledged
22 your previous placement and the service you provided at
23 that time. Your views of a young person's sexuality and
24 concerns about the perceived risk a homosexual young
25 person might pose came to light. These views would have

1 implications for future placements and unfortunately we
2 were unable to resolve the issues through support and
3 discussion. Therefore the panel regretfully reached the
4 decision that you would no longer be registered as
5 supported carers with the social work department.
6 I have accepted and agreed with this recommendation.
7 I would like to thank you for your service over the past
8 year and the hard work you put in to sustain a difficult
9 placement."

10 I think that was the letter that you got at the time
11 reflecting the outcome of the panel's discussion?

12 A. (Unclear) sacked me -- well, sacked us (unclear). But
13 I couldn't see why. I still can't see the reason. They
14 actually turned around to tell me who to take in and who
15 not to take in, right? I mean I don't agree with it
16 because of my young laddie. But that doesn't mean to
17 say I couldn't have took on other people, other young
18 people in there that I could have took on and maybe got
19 somebody worse, maybe they went the same way as
20 'George', I don't know. But I never got a chance to
21 find out.

22 Q. Okay. If we can move back to your statement, please,
23 and if we can move to page 20, paragraph 92, where
24 you're quoting something that 'George' said in his
25 statement.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. I know there's an issue there about holiday, but I want
3 to ask you about something within this where 'George'
4 says that he knew what you were like with a drink in
5 you. You were always quiet and grumpy but with a drink
6 in you, you had the potential to get physical. Is that
7 correct?

8 A. No, I don't drink so I don't know how he knew that,
9 because I'd maybe get a pint now and again but
10 I wouldn't get drunk (unclear). Physical? I never had
11 fight with anybody in my life. No, I don't agree with
12 that. In fact, I'm pretty angry about that. He
13 shouldn't have come out with that one.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. Not true.

16 Q. Okay. Then if we move on, please, to page 21 and
17 paragraph 93 where he describes your house, he talks
18 about your wife's friends being round and he describes
19 it like a smoking and drinking den, is that a fair
20 reflection?

21 A. No. Nothing (unclear). I don't know what you want me
22 to say, because it's totally not true. I mean
23 (unclear), FWH was working so FWH was on a Saturday
24 night which happened very often, have a drink with
25 friends. (Unclear) we explained it with [REDACTED]. Why

1 would we have a smoking and drinking den with my
2 7-year-old in the house and I'm that concerned about him
3 because of his attitude. Now these things annoy me,
4 because they're total lies and those three people there
5 that are FWH's friends, three of them are in social
6 work, two of them are protestants, and he's coming out
7 with all this. Somebody please tell me why is he saying
8 these things? Not true. I haven't got a clue why he's
9 come up with that. If he didn't agree with me, didn't
10 like me, blah, blah, blah, but why come out with this
11 sort of rubbish?

12 Q. At paragraph 94 on the same page, this I think is
13 'George' speaking about the way in which --

14 A. Aye.

15 Q. -- he says he was told that he was going to leave.
16 I just want to ask you about a couple of parts of this
17 where he says that you said to him to get a van to
18 collect his stuff or else you would bite his nose off.
19 Was that something that you said to him?

20 A. First of all, when I come home from work and I come in
21 the house about 7.15 at night I seen FWF going away
22 in the van. I knew he was (unclear) his stop and all
23 that. When I come in the house and the room was
24 wrecked. So I never even talked to FWF and I've
25 never seen him that day since. That was he was in the

1 van and I was driving up coming from work, so I've never
2 even talked to him, so this biting his nose -- I don't
3 even know where that saying comes from, bite his nose.
4 Not true.

5 Q. He then goes on to say that -- he talks about you saying
6 to him to get his gear and to beat it:
7 "I asked him where I was supposed to go and he said
8 he didn't care as long as I didn't come back."
9 If we think about prior to 'George' leaving your
10 care, is it possible that that type of conversation
11 happened before he went away in the van with his stuff
12 on another day?

13 A. No. No, because I didn't even get to talk to him.
14 I didn't even give him the time -- I didn't turn around
15 and say, "Right, FWF, it's not working, out you go",
16 I didn't do that.
17 In about a week, two weeks, he made arrangements.
18 So he had that time anyway to make arrangements to get
19 gone. I didn't come in and say, "Pack your bags and
20 go", no, I didn't do that, no.

21 Q. How did you tell him that he was going to be leaving
22 your care?

23 A. It was the night before, I think, before he left.
24 I said:
25 "FWF, this is not going to work?

1 "Why not?"

2 "Because the neighbours are complaining about your

3 music and you're smoking dope and you're drunk."

4 I said:

5 "It's not going to work."

6 I tell him two or three times before this the same

7 thing and say, "You need to start picking yourself up".

8 I say:

9 "It's not going to work, we'll contact the social

10 work tomorrow and let them know it's not working."

11 He never answered me back, he wasn't cheeky or

12 anything, he didn't get in a strop or anything, he just

13 went into his room.

14 That was basically how it happened. But he wasn't

15 told to leave there and then. He was given about a week

16 or two weeks to get himself organised. I wouldn't have

17 put him out to the street anyway, I would have put up as

18 long as he needed it. But he sees it that way, I can't

19 do anything about it.

20 Q. Just finally in your statement on page 23 at

21 paragraph 100, you talk there about needing to get

22 someone independent of the social worker to go into the

23 family and talk to them. Can you explain your thoughts

24 in relation to that? Why does it need to be someone

25 independent of social work?

1 A. You need somebody with experience. When (unclear) come
2 up and say you were the boss, he must have been about 15
3 or 16, he was only a young laddie. No children, no
4 experience of life to bring into a family and you need
5 to put people who have that life bringing up children,
6 dealing with the problems and all of that, not somebody
7 coming straight from school and telling you how to bring
8 your family up. I know quite a few people think the
9 same way. What gives them the right to come in and
10 tell, they have no children, they've never experienced
11 a family, but because they've got in a book that's the
12 way it's supposed to be. So you need to get somebody
13 with experience in that kind of a way you're living and
14 (unclear) and is independent of the social worker.
15 Because social workers are tied to what management tells
16 them. This is your project. This is what has to be
17 done. This is why this has to be done. But if you get
18 an independent person in there, it's nothing to do with
19 social workers, they can't tell them what to do. They
20 can make an assessment and see if it's going to work or
21 not. That's why I said that.

22 MS INNES: Okay.

23 Right, thank you very much, 'Donald', I have no
24 questions for you.

25 There are no applications, my Lady.

1 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
2 questions of 'Donald'?
3 A. No.
4 LADY SMITH: 'Donald', that does complete all the questions
5 we have for you. Thank you for engaging with us, both
6 by providing your written statement, which is part of
7 your evidence, I have read that, and I see it, it has
8 more detail in it than we were able to discuss today,
9 but what has been very helpful is to hear from you in
10 person regarding those points that we were keen to
11 discuss. Thank you very much for doing that and thank
12 you for being prepared to do it over the link. I know
13 that can be a bit more effort sometimes than people
14 expect.
15 A. (Overspeaking)
16 LADY SMITH: But at the end of the day it seems to have
17 worked.
18 A. (Overspeaking).
19 LADY SMITH: Sorry?
20 A. I got my opinion over, personally (unclear) myself
21 (unclear).
22 LADY SMITH: I'm glad you feel you've been able to do that.
23 Thank you, 'Donald', I'm able to let you go --
24 A. No problem.
25 LADY SMITH: -- and the link can now be switched off.

1 A. Thank you.

2 (The witness withdrew)

3 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

4 MS RATTRAY: Ms Rattray has a read-in that can be done

5 before the break.

6 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

7 Yes, Ms Rattray.

8 Alexander McLean (read)

9 MS RATTRAY: Yes, the first read-in is a read-in of

10 a witness, an applicant who has waived anonymity. His

11 name is Alexander McLean. His statement is at

12 WIT-1-000000934.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 MS RATTRAY: Alexander was in the care of Dumfries and

15 Galloway Regional Council. He was in six foster

16 placements.

17 The first with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Stranraer from

18 [REDACTED] 1986 until [REDACTED] 1986.

19 The second with Mr and Mrs EPL-EPM [REDACTED] in Drummore from

20 [REDACTED] 1987 to [REDACTED] 1988.

21 The third with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] in Stranraer from

22 [REDACTED] 1988 to [REDACTED] 1989.

23 The fourth with Mr and Mrs EPQ-EZB [REDACTED] in Moffat from

24 [REDACTED] 1989 to [REDACTED] 1990.

25 The fifth with the [REDACTED] family in Kirkcudbright

1 from [REDACTED] 1992 to [REDACTED] 1992.

2 The sixth with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED] I think it's the
3 same couple as the first one, in Stranraer, from
4 [REDACTED] 1992 to [REDACTED] 1992.

5 The successor authority is Dumfries and Galloway
6 Council.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 MS RATTRAY: "My name is Alexander McLean. My contact
9 details are known to the Inquiry. I was born in 1983.

10 I was born in Stranraer, my dad was a very abusive
11 man, he was an alcoholic, that's why I was in and out of
12 the care system from when I was three years old until
13 I was 16 years old.

14 My first memory of when I went into the care system,
15 when I was three years old, when I was at Windsor
16 Lodge."

17 From paragraphs 5 to 7, Alexander speaks of being in
18 Windsor Lodge and his parents going through a divorce at
19 the time.

20 Moving to paragraph 8 on page 2:

21 "After being in Windsor house I went to stay with
22 a couple called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], but I couldn't tell you
23 their surname. They adopted a girl, but I can't
24 remember her name.

25 I had a Christmas at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s house. They

1 were really lovely people. I wasn't at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s
2 house long before I was moved again. They cried when
3 I left. If they see me down the town, they still
4 remember me.

5 When I went to EPL-EPM [REDACTED] I was four years old.
6 I only remember Mr EPL [REDACTED] s name, which was EPL [REDACTED].
7 I can't remember Mrs EPM [REDACTED] s name.

8 The foster carers' farm was about 20 miles from
9 Stranraer. The house looked like a cottage. It had
10 upstairs and downstairs. I was only there very briefly
11 before I was removed again.

12 The house was weird. I felt EPL-EPM [REDACTED] were
13 involved in some kind of cult. I believe they were into
14 witchcraft or something. There were weird feelings in
15 that house. I know that might sound crazy, but I am
16 a strong believer in the paranormal.

17 I had my own room at EPL-EPM [REDACTED] house. When
18 I went to bed at night EPL-EPM [REDACTED] would say good night
19 and shut the door. I used to see a black figure in the
20 corner.

21 They used to force us to eat things we didn't like.
22 There were these white beans, I think they were called
23 butterbeans, and I didn't like them. They forced me to
24 eat them. I was told I better eat them or I would get
25 a slapped hand or something like that. I forced them

1 down even though I didn't like them.

2 I wasn't old enough to go to school when I was at
3 EPL-EPM, I was on the farm with EPL. I don't
4 remember EPL-EPM being religious or taking us to
5 church.

6 They had a pen out the back with geese and chickens.
7 I used to feed them in the morning but I was too young
8 to do any heavy lifting or anything like that.

9 We did have to go out in the morning to milk the
10 cows. I got trapped in a pen with a bull when I was
11 four years old. I can't remember how I got into the
12 bull's pen. Luckily the bull didn't do anything, but
13 I could have been killed.

14 I remember my social worker at the time. His name
15 was John Small. He used to work as the reporter to the
16 children's panel as well. He was based in Stranraer.
17 He is retired now.

18 saw him a couple of times at EPL-EPM. He
19 came to the farm. I made allegations of being hit and
20 John Small removed me from there. I remember having red
21 marks that I showed him. On the same day I showed him
22 with teddy bears what EPL-EPM adopted daughter had
23 done to me and I was removed straight away.

24 EPL-EPM did lift their hands to me but it was
25 more the wife than EPL. She would slap your

1 bum or your hand but she would do it aggressively. It
2 wasn't a light tap like you would give a child. It
3 happened more than once.

4 I fell in a ditch at EPL-EPM farm. I was four
5 years old and didn't know what a ditch was. I got hit
6 by Mrs EPM for that. EPL was more of a soft man,
7 he wasn't really physical, but she was.

8 EPL-EPM adopted a girl. She told me to put my
9 hand inside her. I was only four years old, I didn't
10 know it was wrong. Obviously a four-year-old isn't
11 going to know. I can't remember her name but I remember
12 her face. I can't remember how old she was but she had
13 pubic hair below. She was probably between 14 and 15
14 years old. She was old enough to know that what she was
15 doing was wrong.

16 As I got older, I realised that she shouldn't have
17 told me to do that. I think the social workers thought
18 I would forget about that.

19 EPL-EPM adopted daughter also abused another
20 foster boy. She had sex with him. He told me about it
21 years later. He would have been six or seven years old
22 when that happened. She had long hair at the time and
23 she seemed tall to me.

24 The adopted daughter is now working as a carer in
25 Stranraer, that's what I got told. I don't know if

1 she's in childcare, care of the elderly or what. I told
2 the social workers that years ago but they never did
3 anything about it.

4 The social workers removed me from EPL-EPM
5 because of the abuse. I showed them with teddy bears
6 what the adopted daughter had told me to do. The funny
7 thing is that my files mention the foster carers' farm
8 briefly, but they don't mention that I was removed from
9 there because of abuse.

10 I got moved to EPQ-EZB from EPL-EPM the
11 same day I told the social workers about the abuse I was
12 suffering. I stayed with EPQ-EZB for roughly one
13 year. EPQ-EZB didn't have any other children
14 staying with them when I went to stay there.

15 EPQ-EZB were EZB and EPQ, but he was
16 known as EPQ. I couldn't tell you the age of them but
17 EPQ died a couple of years ago. As far as
18 I know, EZB is still in the Dumfries and
19 Galloway area.

20 EPQ was a very moody man, he was not a nice
21 man. EZB wasn't very nice either. She never
22 hit me but she didn't come across as a nice person
23 either. It was work for them, they were getting paid to
24 look after me. I'm not sure if I knew at the time they
25 were getting paid, but it is in my records.

1 The house was like an old-fashioned Victorian house.
2 When you went in the front door, the stairs were right
3 in front of you. On the right was where EZB and EPQ
4 EPQ slept and I slept. On the left-hand side was the
5 living room. The kitchen was at the back, they still
6 cooked on a stove. EPQ-EZB farm was about a mile
7 away from another farm. At that time the road to the
8 farm only went to the farm. There was nothing else
9 apart from the fields.
10 EPQ-EZB forced me to call them mum
11 and dad. I couldn't understand why, but I did it
12 because I was told to. It's in my files that they were
13 trying to adopt us. Luckily that never happened.
14 I was up early in the mornings, about 5 am.
15 Sometimes it was EZB who would wake me up and
16 sometimes it was EPQ. It varied between them.
17 I would go up to where the chickens were and feed
18 them. The cows would just be lying there doing their
19 own thing. I was mostly on the farm helping at that
20 time.
21 We ate our meals in the kitchen. The food was the
22 stuff you would see on a farm, they grew their own
23 vegetables. They had their own potatoes and carrots.
24 I remember eating sweet potatoes for the first time at
25 EPQ-EZB.

1 I couldn't really say there was anything wrong with
2 the food at EPQ-EZB . I remember I got fed my
3 breakfast, lunch and tea. I maybe got a bit of toast at
4 night.

5 I wore wellies and cords around the farm. I had
6 a school uniform.

7 I was always working on the farm. EPQ-EZB never
8 took me anywhere like swimming or things like that. It
9 was always the same thing every morning, you had to feed
10 the chickens and do things like that. I never got to
11 play, I just had to do what EPQ told me to do.

12 The only interaction I had with children of my own
13 age was either at school or at the Beavers or Cubs.
14 I can't remember which one I was in. The only other
15 leisure time I remember was if I went out with my mother
16 or father when they visited. I can recall a toy chest
17 with a couple of toy cars but I don't recall playing
18 with them. When I got back from school, I was either
19 doing homework or chores on the farm.

20 I don't remember watching TV much. I remember
21 watching ET but the only other time I remember being in
22 the living room was when the police interviewed me.

23 I know through my files that they did take me on
24 holiday once to Weymouth. They took me to stay with
25 EPQ family down there. They had children and EPQ

1 told me they were my cousins.

2 I went to school in Moffat, just [REDACTED] miles
3 away from the farm. I think it was called Moffat High
4 School. It was a big building, it was for primary and
5 secondary school children. I think it was from the age
6 of five up to 16 years old. I remember the lollipop
7 lady would make me paper aeroplanes. EPQ-EZB [REDACTED] took
8 me to school in their car, a red Panda.

9 I would say that I had learning difficulties at that
10 time. I think it was both from the abuse at home and in
11 care. I've got it in my records that I was fully
12 dyslexic, even though I like to read a good book. I got
13 mixed up with letters and numbers and I couldn't count
14 properly. I would have to use my fingers. People would
15 come and they used to do tests on me as a child.

16 I had friends at school and I used to go and visit
17 the janitor. At that time, school was okay but
18 I couldn't go and play with the other children after
19 school or have them round to play with me at the farm.
20 I was told by both EPQ [REDACTED] and EZB [REDACTED] that
21 I couldn't do that. I had to do farm work when I got
22 home from school.

23 I was under the care of a psychiatrist later on as
24 a child. I trusted her and told her about the abuse
25 from EPQ-EZB [REDACTED]. She told them that and I got

1 a beating that night. I don't know if she is still
2 a psychiatrist but she should have been fired for that.
3 I trusted her as a child and I got a beating as
4 a result.

5 I don't remember EPQ-EZB being religious.
6 I don't remember ever going to a church with them.

7 I would have been five years old and I had to feed
8 the chickens. It wasn't done as some kind of enjoyable
9 thing, I just had to do it and I didn't like being
10 around the chickens.

11 Although I was at EPQ-EZB for about a year,
12 I don't remember celebrating my birthday or Christmas
13 there.

14 I don't really recall getting any toys or things
15 from EPQ-EZB.

16 My mum used to come up and visit me. So did my
17 father, even though I didn't want that at the time.
18 I would see my mum and dad on different days, although
19 my mum was back and forward with my dad and the abuse.
20 My mum was terrified of my dad. That's what people
21 don't understand about domestic violence and people
22 going back to it. For my mum it was because of fear.

23 Sometimes I would just see my mum or dad in the
24 farmhouse, sometimes they would take me to Dumfries.
25 They used to take me to the Wimpy in Dumfries for

1 a burger and a blether but they never took me to a park
2 or swimming or stuff like that. John Small the social
3 worker was with us but he just observed.

4 I would see the social workers when my mum and dad
5 were coming up for access to me. The social workers
6 would bring my mum or dad to EPQ-EZB farm and take
7 them back again. I feel that they were there to
8 supervise the access with my mum or dad.

9 I was too young to run away from EPQ-EZB house.
10 Also, because the abuse started when I was at such
11 a young age, I just thought it was normal. I didn't
12 know any different. It was only as I got older that
13 I questioned it.

14 EPQ had two dogs. He had a boxer called
15 Bonnie that stayed in the house. He had another dog
16 that stayed in the barn to protect the barn. I can
17 remember EPQ taking me down to feed the dog in the
18 barn and I put my hand out to pet it. EPQ slapped me
19 right around the face. I started crying. I couldn't
20 understand why he had hit me for going to clap the dog.
21 He tried to explain that the dog was there to protect
22 the barn, but he shouldn't have slapped my face.

23 EPQ was always hitting me. EZB
24 never lifted a hand to me but EPQ did. The last time
25 EPQ hit me they had visitors over. I had to go to

1 bed. I was jumping up and down on the bed, just being
2 a typical child. EPQ came up the stairs in a rage and
3 hit me with a slipper to a degree where the back of my
4 legs, my backside and my back were all bruised. It
5 wasn't over my clothes. He hit me on my bare skin.
6 I can prove that because it's mentioned in my files.

7 EPQ was an aggressive man. He was very
8 moody. He trapped my fingers in the tractor door, he
9 was always frustrated about something and I think he
10 just took it out on me. I don't think he should have
11 fostered children. I heard through the grapevine that
12 he abused other children.

13 I had a nightmare one night and I went through to
14 EPQ-EZB room. I told EPQ I had a nightmare
15 and he told me to put my hand out. Then he hit my hand
16 twice with a slipper and told me to get back to my bed.

17 The thing that makes me angry is EPQ-EZB
18 response to why I was hit with a slipper. They said it
19 was because I deserved it. I have got it in black and
20 white in my records.

21 Back in the 1980s kids might have got a pat on the
22 bum or whatever, but they didn't get battered and I got
23 battered black and blue. My mum saw it when she came up
24 to visit the next day. I was getting changed in the
25 kitchen and she saw the marks. She swore, asking what

1 that was. She said that she didn't hit me and she
2 didn't expect them to hit me.

3 John Small was still my social worker and he came up
4 the same day. The police were involved as well. He was
5 called PC Nish but I can't remember the names of the
6 other ones. There were definitely Polaroid pictures
7 taken of the bruises on me. I had to take my clothes
8 off for my injuries to be photographed. I got removed
9 from EPQ-EZB the very next day.

10 I got examined by a doctor in Stranraer after that.
11 I can remember a few medical examinations after leaving
12 EPQ-EZB.

13 My mum had seen bruises on me before that. She had
14 come to see me one day and took me to the toilet in the
15 EPQ-EZB farmhouse. She reported that to the social
16 workers as well but nothing was done about it.

17 Although I was happy about getting removed from the
18 EPQ-EZB house, I was forced back to my father's house.
19 He was a very abusive man.

20 I was back at my dad's house from the age of about
21 five until I was about seven years old."

22 Now to paragraph 67 on page 13:

23 "I spoke out about the abuse by my father and got
24 removed to foster care. I went to stay with

25 [REDACTED]:

1 "██████████ was a very caring woman. I am
2 still in touch with her through social media. I was
3 only with ██████████ for about three weeks. When I stayed
4 with ██████████, I went to Kirkcudbright Primary School.
5 Then ██████████ lost a close friend and she couldn't cope.
6 She didn't feel it would be fair on me to stay when she
7 couldn't cope so I went to stay with another woman
8 called ██████████.

9 ██████████ was a foster carer in Stranraer. I can't
10 remember her surname or her husband's name. She had
11 a son too, but I can't remember his name either. Then
12 I was forced to go back to my dad's. I told the social
13 workers I didn't want to go but the social workers
14 forced me."

15 From paragraph 70, Alexander speaks of his
16 experiences at home and in other residential care
17 settings. He says he experienced abuse ██████████ at home
18 from his dad ██████████. He speaks of his life after
19 care and the impact. As the details of impact on
20 Alexander have to be understood in the context of his
21 overall experiences I'll move to paragraph 229 on
22 page 45 where Alexander speaks about records:

23 "I've got all my files now. The social work
24 department told me a lot of lies. When I was 17 years
25 old, they presented me with the files they had but

1 I said it didn't add up because there was a lot of
2 information missing. When I got my records and I saw
3 the things like the abuse at EPL-EPM foster care
4 were missing, I said to the social workers that they
5 were trying to hide things from me.

6 From what I have read in my files I would say about
7 20 per cent of that is the truth and 80 per cent is
8 lies. It says I wasn't well-behaved at EPQ-EZB but
9 I was terrified of EPQ. In my files it
10 mentions that EPQ-EZB admitted to hitting me.
11 EPQ is dead now."

12 To paragraph 232 on page 46:

13 "My lawyer is dealing with the historical abuse.
14 She has read through my files and knows that social
15 workers lie to cover their own tracks. She is going to
16 check with Dumfries and Galloway Police about the
17 EPQ-EZB, because when I tried two years ago they said
18 they couldn't find any record of EPQ-EZB. It's got
19 to be somewhere because there are pictures and the
20 police and John Small wrote things down when they
21 removed me from EPQ-EZB."

22 To paragraph 234:

23 "I am grateful that the Inquiry is happening. Maybe
24 other kids will come forward and something will happen
25 and maybe the people who abuse children will be brought

1 to justice. I think if someone was to get a really
2 proper sentence it would scare some of the others and
3 stop them.

4 All I can hope for is a bit of justice for kids who
5 are abused in the care system. I believe that kids who
6 have been abused in the care system should get
7 compensation. Regardless of where it may be, it will
8 still be happening somewhere.

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

13 Alexander signed his statement on 9 March 2022.

14 My Lady, Alexander mentions records.

15 LADY SMITH: Yes.

16 MS RATTRAY: Whilst I'm not going to bring those on the
17 screen, I can give a brief summary.

18 LADY SMITH: That would be helpful, thank you.

19 MS RATTRAY: The records we have show that in February 1990
20 Alexander's mother reported to the social work
21 department that Alexander had been hit by Mr EPO with
22 his slipper and said that he had been bruised. The
23 hitting was said to have taken place in December 1989.
24 Alexander's mother reported the allegation, apparently
25 as soon as she became aware of it.

1 There was an investigation within the social work
2 department, which concluded that Alexander had been
3 chastised in this way by Mr EPQ after repeatedly
4 being told off. It was noted that EPQ-EZB had no
5 experience of fostering before this placement and had
6 received inadequate support from the social work
7 department to manage foster children whose behaviour was
8 considered to be very difficult. It was found that the
9 foster carers were entitled to a high level of support
10 from social work and they should have had a link worker.
11 A social worker was nominated but because of staff
12 changes, they say exacerbated by the Lockerbie disaster,
13 the support was not forthcoming and the only contact the
14 foster parents had was with the children's social
15 worker, who was Mr Small, which is referred to in the
16 statement, and he was over 100 miles away, so he was
17 based in Stranraer but the placement was in Moffat.

18 Other records suggest that with Alexander being
19 placed with EPQ-EZB in 1989, there were
20 social work visits but from April 1989 until
21 January 1990 there weren't any visits.

22 The social work department concluded after their
23 investigation that they weren't taking the matter
24 further, but they then decided in April 1990 to report
25 the matter to the police and it appeared that that

1 decision was taken in light of pending civil
2 proceedings. Essentially the birth parents, Alexander's
3 parents, were contesting the Local Authority assuming
4 parental rights and so there were going to be court
5 proceedings and in that context they decided to report
6 it to the police and there is evidence on the file that
7 there was a police investigation and in the course of
8 both the social work and police investigations, both
9 Mr and Mrs EPQ-EZB admitted that Mr EPQ had hit
10 Alexander with a slipper on his bare bottom, but when
11 they saw that he had marks as a result of that, they had
12 decided not to do so again, and especially as it had not
13 had the required effect on Alexander's behaviour.

14 There is a record of the police having made a report
15 to the Fiscal, but there's no record of what happened
16 beyond that.

17 It would appear, from what I've seen, that Alexander
18 remained in the placement during and after both the
19 social work and police investigations, with the
20 exception of a period of respite care which was arranged
21 to give EPQ-EZB a holiday in around 1990.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. That's a very helpful
23 summary. I see that EPQ-EZB not only admitted
24 hitting the child with a slipper on his bare bottom but
25 also that they left marks on him by doing so.

1 MS RATTRAY: Yes.

2 The discussion within the police investigation was

3 the extent to which that chastisement was excessive, but

4 they did pass a report to the Procurator Fiscal but it

5 doesn't look like any proceedings were taken.

6 LADY SMITH: Alexander would have been about six years old

7 at the time, I think, wouldn't he?

8 MS RATTRAY: Yes.

9 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Well?

10 MS RATTRAY: Perhaps this is a convenient time then for the

11 break.

12 LADY SMITH: Certainly. We'll take the morning break just

13 now, noting before I rise that two foster care homes

14 were mentioned there, EPL-EPM and EPQ-EZB and

15 they're not to be identified outside this room.

16 Thank you.

17 (11.31 am)

18 (A short break)

19 (11.48 am)

20 LADY SMITH: Yes, Ms Innes.

21 MS INNES: My Lady, the next witness is also giving evidence

22 remotely. She is anonymous and has the pseudonym

23 'Emma'.

24 'Emma' and her husband were initially approved as

25 short-term foster carers by Strathclyde Regional Council

1 in February 1994. They withdrew as foster carers in the
2 summer of 1996 but were reassessed and reinstated as
3 temporary carers by North Ayrshire Council in
4 September 1997. They withdrew as carers in 2002 and
5 that was recommended by the fostering panel and endorsed
6 by the agency decision maker on 20 August 2002.

7 An applicant with the pseudonym 'Jamie' gave
8 evidence on Day 327, 27 September 2022. He was in
9 foster care with 'Emma' and her husband between
10 [REDACTED] 1998 and [REDACTED] 1999.

11 North Ayrshire Council is the responsible authority.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

13 'Emma', good morning. Can you hear me and see me?

14 THE WITNESS: I can hear you. I can't --

15 LADY SMITH: Can you see me now?

16 THE WITNESS: No -- yes. Yes, I can.

17 LADY SMITH: Let me try again.

18 Good morning to you.

19 THE WITNESS: Morning.

20 LADY SMITH: Let me introduce myself as well. I'm

21 Lady Smith, I chair the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry
22 here in Edinburgh. Thank you for joining us over the
23 link this morning. Before we start your evidence, I'd
24 like you to take an oath to tell the truth, if that's
25 all right with you?

1 THE WITNESS: Yes.

2 'Emma' (sworn)

3 LADY SMITH: 'Emma', the link seems to be very clear at the
4 moment, certainly I can see you well and I can hear you
5 clearly. If you have any difficulties with the link at
6 any time, please do let us know and we'll do what we can
7 to sort it out because it's important, of course, that
8 we hear your evidence as well as we possibly can and
9 also are able to see you when you're giving evidence so
10 that we can engage properly.

11 'Emma', I know that we're asking you to do something
12 that's quite difficult, although you're not physically
13 here, you are connecting with a public hearing where you
14 will be listened to by others. We're also going to be
15 asking you to go back in your memory to things that
16 happened a while ago. I do understand that you may not
17 remember everything and that's perfectly fine. Just
18 tell me if you genuinely don't remember.

19 I also understand that it may feel anxiety-inducing
20 and it may be upsetting to take you back to some of
21 these events. If you want a break at any time, let me
22 know, we can do breaks, or if there's anything else
23 I can do to help you give your evidence as clearly and
24 carefully as you can, you must say, all right?

25 A. Okay.

1 LADY SMITH: One other thing, 'Emma'. This is a public
2 inquiry, it's not a court hearing, but you are, as I've
3 said, giving evidence in public. A transcript is being
4 made of your evidence and it's important you understand
5 that it could be relied on outwith the Inquiry.

6 In these circumstances, I want to warn you that if
7 you're asked any questions the answers to which could
8 incriminate you, you're not obliged to answer them. You
9 don't have to answer any such questions.

10 A. Okay.

11 LADY SMITH: It's your choice, but of course if you do
12 choose to answer them, I do expect you to answer the
13 questions fully. Do you understand that?

14 A. Yes.

15 LADY SMITH: If you have any doubts about that or want
16 reminded as you go along, it's no problem, just ask
17 again.

18 A. Okay.

19 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes and
20 she'll take it from there, okay?

21 A. Okay.

22 LADY SMITH: Very well.

23 Ms Innes.

24 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

25 Questions from Ms Innes

1 MS INNES: 'Emma', we understand that you were born in 1952.
2 Is that right?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. I'm going to refer first of all to the statement that
5 you've given to the Inquiry and I hope you have a copy
6 of that in front of you. We give it the reference
7 WIT-1-000000935, and I'm going to ask you to begin by
8 looking at the back page of the statement, so page 21,
9 the last page.
10 A. Okay.
11 Q. At paragraph 86 you say:
12 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
13 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
14 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
15 true."
16 I believe you signed your statement on
17 10 March 2022; is that right?
18 A. Yes. That's right.
19 Q. Thank you.
20 I'm going to go back to the beginning of your
21 statement again. At paragraph 2 --
22 A. Uh-huh.
23 Q. -- you tell us there that you got married in 1979 --
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. -- and I think you have three daughters; is that

1 correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. You tell us at paragraph 3 that you started

4 childminding between your second and third daughters; is

5 that right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Were you doing that privately or was that something that

8 you were doing through the social work department?

9 A. I was registered through the council.

10 Q. Okay. You were registered through the council but were

11 you taking children privately or --

12 A. Yes. Yes.

13 Q. Okay, so the children that actually came to you, it

14 wasn't the social work department that was organising

15 that, it was a private arrangement?

16 A. Yes. You were put on a list and people could go on and

17 see who was available.

18 Q. Okay. Then they could approach you directly --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- and make an arrangement?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. In terms of the childminding, were you doing that

23 during the day when your own children were at school or

24 were you doing sort of picking up children before and

25 after school?

1 A. No, kids -- the children all got dropped off at the
2 house --
3 Q. Okay.
4 A. -- by their parent.
5 Q. Were they pre-school age, these children?
6 A. Some of them were. I think maybe one was still at
7 school -- was at school.
8 Q. Okay. That child I assume you would either take to
9 school or look after them after school was finished?
10 A. No, his parents would take him. They dropped the
11 younger brother off with me and took him to school for
12 9 o'clock.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. And I think they then picked him up and came and got the
15 wee one.
16 Q. Oh, I see, okay.
17 At paragraph 4 on this page, you talk about becoming
18 a foster carer.
19 A. Yeah.
20 Q. Why was it that you decided to become a foster carer?
21 A. I think because we've always had kids round about, even
22 when I was young everywhere we went kids seemed to
23 congregate round about and we just always thought it
24 would be a good thing to do and when we moved to that
25 house, we had a bit more room and we decided, well,

1 let's have a go and see what it's like.

2 Q. Then you tell us at paragraph 5 that you applied to the

3 council in Irvine?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I think that would have been Strathclyde Regional

6 Council at the time, because I think we know --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. -- that was in maybe 1993/1994 that you approached the

9 council?

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. But it was the Irvine office that you approached?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Okay. At paragraph 6 of your statement you say that you

14 didn't get any training prior to becoming foster carers?

15 A. No. No. We had -- they came to the house a couple of

16 times and just sort of spoke to us and checked what toys

17 we had, what room we had, you know things like that, but

18 really that was it. Told what to maybe expect with

19 certain kids and gave us a rough idea, but that was --

20 as far as I remember, that was it.

21 Q. Can you remember attending meetings with other foster

22 carers, for example?

23 A. Yes, later on, uh-huh. Not too many.

24 Q. Sorry --

25 A. Not too many, but there was training days.

1 Q. Okay, so after you'd become a foster carer there were
2 some training days that you went to?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you have any recollection of what those training days
5 were about?

6 A. No, sorry.

7 Q. That's okay.

8 A. No.

9 Q. If we can move on to page 3 of your statement and
10 paragraph 8, you say there that you didn't really
11 consider yourself to be employed as a foster carer and
12 how did you view your role as a foster carer?

13 A. I was there to help children that needed help, that
14 couldn't stay at home for any number of reasons. And
15 they would come to us and be looked after until they
16 could go back and move on.

17 Q. You say in this paragraph that you felt the children
18 were there to be looked after like your own children
19 were looked after?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Obviously the children that came to you for foster care,
22 they would have been removed from their parents and they
23 might have been in care elsewhere.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Did you feel that there might be differences in looking

1 after children who were in care to looking after your
2 own children or not?

3 A. No, I think they came into our house and it took them
4 usually a few days to settle and understand that they
5 were quite safe where they were, and we just treated
6 them along the same as we treat our kids -- unless they
7 were having problems and you'd try and work through it
8 with them.

9 Q. I was just wondering if you thought that maybe you might
10 have benefitted from some training about, you know,
11 particular challenges or issues that might arise for
12 children --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- that have been taken into care?

15 A. Yes, definitely.

16 Q. If we go on to page 4, please, and paragraph 13, you
17 talk about the accommodation that you had.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You say that you had an upstairs and a downstairs?

20 A. Mm-hmm.

21 Q. Were the bedrooms all upstairs?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. How many bedrooms were there?

24 A. There was three.

25 Q. Okay. There would have been one for you and your

1 husband?

2 A. Mm.

3 Q. Then you say at the time I assume that you started

4 fostering you had two daughters at that time?

5 A. At home, uh-huh, aye.

6 Q. And they shared the big room?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Then there was a single bedroom, you say?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You then go on to say that there was a change when you

11 started fostering in terms of the sleeping arrangements

12 in the house and what was that change?

13 A. Well, it was just if we had more -- like if it was

14 sisters or brothers or whatever that was coming, they

15 would go into the big room and my girls would use the

16 small room. If it was just a single boy or single girl,

17 they had the small room.

18 Q. Okay. From what you say, do you mean that your own

19 children were having to move from one room to another

20 depending on the make-up of who was coming to stay?

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. How did your own children respond to having foster

23 children in the household?

24 A. I think they enjoyed it. They liked having other

25 company. They liked playing with them. They just

1 accepted it.

2 Q. If we go on to paragraph 14, you talk about the age
3 range of children that you fostered?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. You say they were always supposed to be younger than
6 your youngest daughter, who was four at the time?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Did that happen? Were the --

9 A. No.

10 Q. -- children who came to you always younger?

11 A. No. Quite a lot of them were older. They would ask you
12 to take them because maybe they had a younger sibling
13 that was going to come, so you would take both.

14 Q. How did you feel about that, having older children than
15 you had planned for?

16 A. Only the one when he was quite a bit older -- I can't
17 remember what age, he would maybe be nine or ten, and it
18 caused a bit of problem then, but other than that we
19 were okay. We managed to cope with it.

20 Q. Okay. Then in the next paragraph at paragraph 15 you
21 say that you were supposed to have no more than two
22 children at the one time --

23 A. Mm-hmm.

24 Q. -- but quite often you would have three?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. How would you accommodate them then? Is that what you
2 were meaning about you'd move the foster children into
3 the bigger room?
4 A. Yes, uh-huh.
5 Q. In the bigger room, what beds did you have? Did you
6 have bunk beds?
7 A. Yes, we had two sets of bunk beds in the big room.
8 Q. Okay.
9 A. A set of bunk beds in the (unclear).
10 Q. Can you remember what the maximum number of children
11 that you would have at any one time then?
12 A. The most we ever had from them was three.
13 Q. Three at the one time, okay.
14 A. They were siblings, I think. That was the only time.
15 LADY SMITH: 'Emma', you've said you were supposed to have
16 children who were younger than your youngest.
17 A. Yes.
18 LADY SMITH: You were supposed to have no more than two at
19 a time.
20 A. Mm-hmm.
21 LADY SMITH: And I think you go on to say you were supposed
22 to have short-term placements only.
23 A. Yes.
24 LADY SMITH: Are these matters that were specifically
25 recorded anywhere in a document or in a letter or

1 anything of that sort?

2 A. I don't think so. They just -- the social work knew
3 that it was supposed to be two and the age range, but
4 they would just ask us to take other kids because they
5 there were no placements left.

6 LADY SMITH: When you're talking about them knowing how
7 things were supposed to be, is that because social work
8 had promised you --

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: -- that that's how it would be or that they had
11 noted what your preferences were?

12 A. No.

13 LADY SMITH: Do you see what I'm getting at?

14 A. They had told us that there would be no more than two at
15 a time and they would always be under [REDACTED]'s age.

16 LADY SMITH: The same with the number of children?

17 A. Yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: The same with the length of time they'd be with
19 you?

20 A. Yes.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MS INNES: My Lady, it's not with the witness because it is
23 an internal document, but there is a document in the
24 bundle at NAC-000000368 and page 1 is an example of
25 where the Local Authority say that 'Emma' and her

1 husband had originally been assessed to be suitable to
2 have two children aged 0 to 4. The registration
3 criteria was not adhered to, and it was discussed that
4 that was the responsibility of headquarters childcare
5 team to ensure that the children being placed are within
6 the registration criteria.

7 LADY SMITH: Yes.

8 MS INNES: 'Emma' is correct when she says that they were
9 supposed to have children that were younger, but that
10 wasn't adhered to, and it was the Local Authority that
11 were obviously placing children with 'Emma' and her
12 husband in breach of that criteria.

13 LADY SMITH: I see that this then was a Local Authority who
14 was actually recording these criteria at the outset, as
15 we've seen in some cases, but not others. In others
16 I think it was a bit looser.

17 MS INNES: Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 Thank you for that, 'Emma'. You'll have heard what
20 Ms Innes just explained to me.

21 A. Yes.

22 LADY SMITH: Your recollection is not just correct, but it
23 seems that it was backed up in writing in the records
24 that the Local Authority were keeping. Thank you.

25 MS INNES: 'Emma', if I can go back to your statement at

1 page 5, paragraph 17, you're talking there about the
2 amount of notice that you would get before children --
3 A. Yeah.
4 Q. -- came to you. Did you get a lot of notice?
5 A. Sometimes, but most of the time you would get a phone
6 call to say, "Be prepared for ..." and tell you the
7 number of kids that was coming and they would let us
8 know later on that day when they were going to arrive.
9 Somebody at social work would just bring them over.
10 Q. When they came, did you know how long they'd be staying
11 with you for?
12 A. No. No.
13 Q. Did have any even broad sense as to whether it would be
14 days, weeks or months?
15 A. Not really, no, because they never knew whether they
16 would manage to get them back home, what would be
17 happening to them, so ...
18 Q. Okay. At paragraph 18 you talk about the type of
19 information that you would be given and you say:
20 "Some social workers were really good and provided
21 quite a lot of background information."
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. The implication might be from that that others didn't
24 give you as much information; is that right?
25 A. Yeah, uh-huh.

1 Q. Then you also say:
2 "Most children came with very little in the way of
3 belongings."
4 A. Mm-hmm.
5 Q. Did you have to supply them with things? Clothes?
6 A. Yes, if you needed clothes you could approach your --
7 either their social worker or our link worker and you
8 would eventually get money to get them clothes.
9 Q. Okay. If we can move down to paragraph 19 where you
10 talk about the sleeping arrangements and you talk there
11 about when 'Jamie' came to live with you.
12 A. Uh-huh.
13 Q. You say that you already had two girls staying with you,
14 presumably plus your own daughters at that time?
15 A. Yes.
16 Q. Where were they sleeping?
17 A. We had spoke to the social worker -- we spoke to the
18 social worker about it and they said it would be okay to
19 put them in with our two, so that the two sets of bunks.
20 Q. Where did 'Jamie' go when he stayed with you?
21 A. He was in the single room.
22 Q. Okay. You know that 'Jamie' says in his statement and
23 he has given evidence that at some point he had to sleep
24 on a mattress on the floor because there wasn't enough
25 room for him. Is that correct?

1 A. No. No, never.

2 Q. If we can move on, please, to paragraph 23 and you talk
3 about your garden at the house and what was in it and
4 you talk about a patio and then the garden being up
5 a set of stairs.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. You'll know that 'Jamie' in his statement refers to
8 a rabbit hutch?

9 A. Yeah. We never had a rabbit hutch.

10 Q. Okay. Did you have any cages or -- well, cages for
11 birds?

12 A. We did long before that -- or was it after that? I'm
13 not sure when we did have, but not while the kids were
14 there, not while 'Jamie' was there.

15 Q. If we see in the social work records reference to you
16 having an owl and a buzzard at the house; is that
17 correct?

18 A. Yes, aye.

19 Q. And your husband having an interest in falconry?

20 A. Yeah, it was actually a friend of ours who's now
21 a father -- well, he died but he was a father-in-law to
22 my oldest daughter, and he was the falconer and he would
23 take JBY away.

24 Q. Your husband?

25 A. Yeah. To do --

1 Q. Okay. Is it possible that it wasn't a rabbit hutch but
2 it was some kind of construction or cage for a bird?
3 A. Could have been, but I don't know. I don't remember it
4 being there at that time when 'Jamie' was there.
5 Q. Okay. If we've heard evidence from him that he
6 remembers being handcuffed or attached to this cage with
7 birds screeching at him, what's your response to that?
8 A. No. Definitely not.
9 Q. Okay. If we can move on, please, to page 10 and
10 paragraph 38, you talk there about discipline.
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. What methods of discipline did you employ with the
13 foster children?
14 A. Well, there wasn't any discipline other than if they
15 were doing something wrong, you would sit them down and
16 try and explain to them what they were doing that wasn't
17 good or whatever. That was the only really way -- you
18 would sit them down beside you for -- chillout for five
19 minutes till they calmed down if they were getting wound
20 up.
21 Q. You talk there about timeouts.
22 A. Mm-hmm.
23 Q. Were the children ever sent outside as a timeout?
24 A. Oh no. No.
25 Q. If we move on, please, to page 13, paragraph 52, you

1 talk there about the social workers coming to visit.

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 Q. What was your relationship with the children's social

4 workers like?

5 A. I think it was okay. We had a few that would come if

6 there was kids' birthdays due and they would phone up

7 and find out if we were doing anything and they would

8 come over to have cake and sandwiches with the kids that

9 were under them. And I think we got on really well with

10 most of them.

11 Q. You tell us, I think, in this paragraph that there was

12 a lack of consistency in terms of the number of times

13 that social workers would be at the house?

14 A. Yes, mm-hmm. Some were really good at coming. Other

15 ones -- I don't know whether they were too busy or what

16 and now and again you'd get a phone call, but that would

17 be it, just to see how things were.

18 Q. You say that you know the social workers were run off

19 their feet --

20 A. Mm-hmm.

21 Q. -- but they should have spent more time coming to see

22 the kids.

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. How did you get the impression that they were run off

25 their feet?

1 A. Because they were always busy and if you tried to phone
2 one to ask about something, you would -- it would take
3 ages or days sometimes to get a reply.

4 Q. Did you have your own social worker or link worker?

5 A. You did, uh-huh.

6 Q. Was that the case for the whole time that you were
7 fostering? Did you always have your own link worker?

8 A. I think we did, he did go off ill I think at one point
9 and I don't think we had anybody then that would be
10 there to help us.

11 Q. Would he be your main point of contact if there was
12 an issue or would you contact the child's social worker?

13 A. If there was an issue with the child it would normally
14 be the child's social worker we would phone.

15 Q. Okay. What sort of issues would you speak to your link
16 worker about?

17 A. Just if we weren't getting the help that we were trying
18 to get. If kids -- you know, if -- some of the times
19 contact wasn't working right, parents weren't turning up
20 and you would speak to your link worker about it.

21 Q. Did he also come to visit you?

22 A. He did, uh-huh.

23 Q. Was that something that he did regularly?

24 A. That I'm not sure about. I don't remember him coming
25 too much, but he did -- if he thought there was

1 something that we needed help with, he would nip in and
2 see you.

3 Q. Would you have more contact with him by phone maybe?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Okay. Did you get the impression that he was run off
6 his feet as well? Was he always busy?

7 A. He was always busy as well.

8 Q. At paragraph 55 at the bottom of this page you say that
9 you weren't required to keep formal records but you kept
10 diaries at the time?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. You think that the department asked you to keep diaries.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. What was the purpose of these diaries?

15 A. Just to note if there was anything like they tripped up
16 and fell or they'd had a bad day at school, anything
17 that was to be noted down, you know, for you to
18 remember.

19 Q. Would the children's social workers or your link worker
20 ever look at these diaries?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay, so it was for your own reference?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. It helped with when you were going to children's

1 meetings or panels, that you could look back.

2 Q. Okay. Then you say you got rid of all of the diaries
3 after you stopped fostering, at paragraph 56, so you
4 didn't have to hand them over to the social work
5 department?

6 A. No.

7 Q. We know that you started fostering I think in round
8 about 1994. Our understanding from the records is that
9 you withdrew from fostering in 1996. I wonder if we can
10 look at a letter that you sent to the Local Authority at
11 that time. It's at tab 11 and it's NAC-000000372,
12 page 30.

13 Okay, so do you see that's a letter --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- dated 22 July 1996?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. I think this is signed by both of you.

18 A. Mm-hmm.

19 Q. And it's addressed to, "Dear Robert".

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. Do you have any idea who that --

22 A. That would be our link worker.

23 Q. Okay, that was his name. Okay.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. It says both you and your husband:

1 "... deeply regret that you no longer wish to remain
2 foster parents. This decision has not been easy when
3 you consider the enjoyment we have had from the children
4 who have been at our home and we have always tried to do
5 our best for them. The deep satisfaction we as a family
6 have had from having [it's a little boy] ..."

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. "... with us for two years will never be forgotten and
9 our memories will be with us always. Our reasons for
10 this decision we do not wish to discuss at great length,
11 but it must be said that the lack of backup and false
12 promises from certain social workers and certain remarks
13 that have been made by them we feel has been totally
14 unprofessional and has not done fostering any credit.
15 When we made complaints about one particular social
16 worker, we were promised that our complaints would be
17 taken further but then ultimately brushed aside. We
18 felt that foster parents and not just ourselves were not
19 being given the opportunity to be heard and we felt that
20 we were not being given the assistance we required to
21 carry out a difficult job. There are other foster
22 parents that we have spoken to who feel as strongly
23 about social workers and their attitude towards us as we
24 do. We are sorry that it has come to this, but we have
25 suffered enough."

1 A. I'd forgotten all about that.

2 Q. Do you have any memory of why it was that you were
3 sending this letter to the department?

4 A. I think at that time was we had two girls with us as
5 well as the boy and we had a -- they were a lot of work
6 and they had a lot of problems. It was like hitting our
7 heads off of brick walls trying to get help for them.

8 Q. You mentioned two girls that you had with you at the
9 time.

10 A. Mm.

11 Q. I think that there had been some problems with their
12 placement and there were a couple of times where it
13 appeared that they had some injuries and they were
14 investigated by social work? Do you remember that?

15 A. Yeah. Yeah, uh-huh.

16 Q. I'm just going to look at a couple of these examples.
17 The first is at tab 4 and it's at NAC-000000368,
18 page 11. This is Strathclyde Regional Council, it's
19 dated 12 March 1996. It refers to a joint visit and it
20 refers to two girls, care of you and your husband.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. It says:
23 "On 31 February 1996, coincidentally following
24 a meeting chaired by area manager David MacRitchie to
25 discuss the children's placement, a referral was

1 received from the headteacher of a primary school.
2 Mr McMaster was expressing concern at a statement one of
3 the girls had made to him about her sore back. The
4 child had a scrape upon her back old enough to form
5 a scab. The child has on many occasions made
6 allegations naming individuals but retracting or
7 changing her story when questioned by adults."
8 Then if we go to the next paragraph, there's
9 reference to the social worker collecting the two girls
10 from school.
11 A. Mm-hmm.
12 Q. It says:
13 "At the child's request, Linda looked at her back.
14 There was a partially healed graze or scrape. This
15 looked sore. There was a bruise not mentioned by the
16 headteacher. The child joined in saying that you had
17 hit her."
18 A. (Witness shakes head)
19 Q. "The other girl then joined in saying that you had hit
20 them because they wouldn't get dressed."
21 Then we see that there was a discussion in the next
22 paragraph between the social workers.
23 A. Mm-hmm.
24 Q. There was a discussion and the two girls were returned
25 to you:

1 "They appeared bright and cheerful, greeting the
2 members of your family who were at home in a relaxed
3 manner."

4 Then it says:

5 " NB the headmaster was contacted. There had been
6 no bruise or reddening visible when he had looked at the
7 girl's back. It was present late in the afternoon. It
8 is therefore most likely it was acquired when the child
9 was out of the foster parent's care, for example at
10 school during the afternoon."

11 Then there's reference to social workers coming to
12 see you.

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. If we go on over the page, it says:

15 "The purpose of the visit was explained to you. You
16 weren't unduly upset by their appearance or
17 explanations. You were relaxed, spoke openly and denied
18 there had been any fracas the morning before. She did
19 speak of all the difficulties both girls present, for
20 example refusing to wear certain clothes, throwing
21 tights out of the window and some quite serious
22 incidents between the two sisters, including stabbing
23 a leg with a fork."

24 It says in the next paragraph:

25 "Overall your responses were down to earth and gave

1 no obvious indication of any issues or events we are not
2 alerted to and attempting to address."

3 If we just look into the next paragraph, it says:

4 "The writer took the opportunity to talk about the
5 pressures the foster parents are under, the number of
6 children in the household, in reality four children who
7 need much support and practical input daily, the special
8 needs of the girls, the length of the placement and the
9 uncertainties and events in your own family, including
10 the recent illness of your mother."

11 A. Mm-hmm.

12 Q. That seems to be suggesting that there was a time when
13 you had four children with you who were in foster care.

14 A. I can't remember ever having four, I don't.

15 Q. And these two girls had particular needs.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. As well, you also had some family issues with the
18 illness of your mother?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Then there's discussion about the pressure that you were
21 under and then there's a paragraph, it'll be blanked in
22 your copy, so:

23 "[Blank] was advised ..."

24 So:

25 "You were advised that you should alert social work

1 staff and seek attention for bruises and scrapes that
2 children acquire, including the graze to the child's
3 back which is clearly causing her discomfort."
4 Then if we go to the final paragraph, it says:
5 "In the discussion after the visit the two social
6 work staff were of the opinion that although there are
7 concerns about the quality of care offered to the girls
8 there is no real indication that the girl was assaulted
9 by you. Therefore, no action can be taken except to
10 support and monitor the placement and actively seek
11 alternatives for the two girls."
12 A. Yeah.
13 Q. Had the two girls been with you for longer than you
14 anticipated, can you remember?
15 A. Yeah, they were there for quite a while I think until
16 they moved on. I honestly don't remember how long.
17 Q. Okay.
18 I'd like to look at another investigation of injury.
19 It's at page 3 of NAC-000000368.
20 A. I'm lost. This one, okay.
21 Q. It's, "Investigation of injury to children in foster
22 care", do you have that?
23 A. Aye.
24 Q. This is again about the same girls and this is dated
25 25 April 1996.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. It says:

3 "The basis of the investigation was to explore the

4 circumstances relating to three specific points.

5 "One, an allegation that one of the girls had been

6 hit by you because she hadn't eaten her porridge.

7 "Second, an allegation that the girl had been put

8 under an outdoor tap.

9 "Three, the source of injuries to her right foot and

10 groin."

11 A. Mm.

12 Q. Do you have any recollection of these things being

13 raised with you?

14 A. The one with the toe, yes. Porridge, we never ever gave

15 the kids porridge. It was always breakfast cereal.

16 They got the choice of what they wanted.

17 Q. Okay. Then it goes on to record the meeting with you.

18 A. Mm-hmm.

19 Q. If we see in the second paragraph below the numbers, it

20 says:

21 "Mrs [so that's you] stated that the girl had

22 injured her big toe at school but could not recollect

23 any injury to her foot."

24 You stated:

25 "She'd had a shower on the morning of her move to

1 somebody else's care."

2 So I think these must have been issues that were

3 highlighted after the children had moved to adopters,

4 would that be right?

5 A. Maybe, I wouldn't ken.

6 Q. You say that you hadn't noticed anything wrong with her

7 foot.

8 You also advise that you would have logged any marks

9 or bruising in your diary, is that something you would

10 have done?

11 A. Yes. Oh aye.

12 Q. You also volunteered that the girl was always picking at

13 scabs and had used stones etc to dig at these and as

14 such was always marked or scarred.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. So that's something that happened?

17 A. She just -- she was really bad for picking at her skin.

18 She was -- always had sores. Her sister, she used to

19 pull her hair and she -- her older sister had hardly any

20 hair because she would twist it until it came out. And

21 after they'd been with us for quite a while it kind of

22 stopped, the hair pulling --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- but the younger one was really bad for just hurting

25 herself.

1 Q. Then in the next paragraph it says:

2 "The couple were advised that the girl had alleged

3 that she had injured herself on a water tap and that the

4 back door and bathroom tap had been mentioned. Your

5 husband advised that the cold water tap, which is

6 situated on the back wall of the house, would be too

7 high in terms of her sustaining an injury to her foot."

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. "He also stated the ground below is level and therefore

10 she couldn't have knocked her foot against bricks,

11 et cetera."

12 Then they appear to have gone and looked at the tap.

13 A. Mm-hmm.

14 Q. Then there's discussion over the next page about

15 porridge and this was on the morning of their transfer

16 and it says in the third line up from the top of this

17 page:

18 "You advised that the children had had porridge for

19 their breakfast but that the girl very quickly vomited

20 over her clothing and hair."

21 A. It wouldn't be porridge. It would be -- oh, what do you

22 call it? Is it Ready Brek --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- that they would have, it wouldn't be proper porridge.

25 Q. Then, because she'd vomited, you'd gone and taken her to

1 the bathroom where you'd undressed and showered her.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. You say that you'd, I think, given that explanation to

4 the social worker at the time that she came to collect

5 the girls.

6 A. Yes, mm-hmm.

7 Q. If we can move down again a little, there's

8 a paragraph which again -- there's a paragraph which

9 begins, "Mr Diamond" in about the middle of the page?

10 A. Right, uh-huh.

11 Q. The next paragraph below that is:

12 "Mrs [blank] advised that she keeps a diary ..."

13 Do you have that?

14 A. Mm-hmm.

15 Q. "You advised that you keep a diary in which you log

16 meetings, incidents, injuries, marks and bruises etc.

17 You consulted the diary and advised that on

18 10 April 1996 you had noted that the girl had bruising

19 to both knees, bruising and grazing to both elbows and

20 a bruise on her groin. She stated that the marks and

21 bruising were noted following the children's return from

22 their visit to [the other people that they'd gone to

23 live with], which was also the day on which the transfer

24 medical examination was conducted."

25 A. Mm-hmm.

1 Q. Then you go on in the next paragraph to say:

2 "The bruise on the child's groin was tiny and
3 circular in shape and was situated in the fold of skin
4 between her leg and torso. You couldn't be specific as
5 to whether it was on the left or right side. You did
6 ask her how she sustained the bruise on her groin but
7 the child did not know. You said that she regularly
8 alleged that she'd been assaulted, for example her
9 teacher who had hit and kicked her and the person who
10 she went to live with had locked her in a cupboard on
11 the day of 10 April. You stated that you didn't believe
12 half of what the child told you."

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. Just again, finally, if we go on over the page on page 5
15 and it says:

16 "In summary, the result of this investigation is
17 inconclusive in terms of identifying how the pelvic and
18 foot injuries in respect of the child were sustained."

19 So that was the --

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. -- conclusion -- well, the inconclusive conclusion that
22 the Local Authority came to at that point.

23 Did what happened with these girls and these
24 investigations, did that have anything to do with the
25 fact that you then withdrew as foster carers? Or is it

1 unconnected?

2 A. Yeah. I think between that and the wee boy that was
3 with us at that time -- sorry -- had left and we'd had
4 him since he was a baby --

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. -- so we were upset at that point.

7 And then the girls, we weren't getting help with
8 them either.

9 Q. Okay.

10 I'd like to move on to speak about the things that
11 'Jamie' has said that happened in your care. We've
12 already talked about him saying that he was sleeping on
13 a mattress on the floor.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. If I can move on, please, to paragraph 71 on page 18 of
16 your statement.

17 A. Paragraph 71?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. Right, okay.

20 Q. It says there that in his statement **FED** said that when
21 he left your foster care placement he had fewer clothes
22 than he went in with and he refers I think to records
23 suggesting that you received allowances for clothing but
24 it was never passed on.

25 A. Mm.

1 Q. You say that when he left you think that there were two
2 black bags that he went away with?

3 A. Yes. He went with one on the day he left, I think it
4 was, and then when we cleared out the room we got all
5 the rest of his stuff put together and they were given
6 over to the social worker.

7 Q. When you say black bags there, do you mean like bin
8 bags?

9 A. Yes, aye, because they never ever had bags. They never
10 came with like cases or anything.

11 Q. Okay. Would you normally just put their clothes into
12 a black bin bag?

13 A. Yeah, that's what we were told to do.

14 Q. By whom?

15 A. The social work. They wouldn't buy us cases or anything
16 for them, so they just said to put them into carrier
17 bags or whatever.

18 Q. Okay. If we move on to the next paragraph,
19 paragraph 72, 'Jamie' says there that he remembers
20 having a present of a key ring that he'd got from his
21 mum and that that was stolen from him and you didn't
22 seem to bother about it. Do you have any recollection
23 of that happening?

24 A. I don't even remember his mum coming to visit the house
25 ever at all. I mean, there would never be anything

1 stolen. They got to keep their own toys, so it would
2 never have been taken away or stolen from him.

3 Q. Then in the next paragraph, paragraph 73, 'Jamie' says
4 that while he was in your care he was subjected to
5 physical, psychological and emotional abuse with most of
6 the abuse coming from your husband. Is that correct?

7 A. Nothing. No.

8 Q. Then in the next paragraph he talks about being
9 handcuffed to the rabbit hutches I've already mentioned.
10 He talks about your husband being a security guard and
11 having handcuffs?

12 A. He's never been a security -- he's never been a security
13 guard. Ever.

14 Q. Were there ever any handcuffs in the house?

15 A. Not until the last few years and it was for a hen night.

16 Q. Were there any toy handcuffs that the children had?

17 A. No, no.

18 Q. At paragraph 75, you're referring there to 'Jamie'
19 saying that your husband stood on his toe and broke the
20 nail. Can you remember that happening?

21 A. No. Not at all.

22 Q. Is it possible that it's something that happened?

23 A. No, he never had steel-toe-capped boots.

24 Q. What about any kind of heavy boots?

25 A. No. It was always trainers or shoes that he wore and

1 they were not that heavy.

2 Q. At paragraph 76 'Jamie' talks about a Buzz Lightyear toy
3 being taken away from him and I think put into your
4 room?

5 A. Yeah. No. He put -- he took his toy up and he kept it
6 on the -- at the top of his bed.

7 Q. Then at paragraph 77 he describes being hit with a belt
8 by your husband?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Did your husband ever use physical punishment with the
11 foster children?

12 A. No, never. None of the two of us would do it with our
13 own kids. We wouldn't do it with somebody else's.

14 Q. Then over the page at paragraph 78, you refer to what
15 'Jamie' says about being forced to eat a meal and being
16 sick and eating the vomit. Did that happen?

17 A. No. No. No. That would be vile.

18 Q. Then at paragraph 79 he talks about you and your husband
19 punching him essentially on either side of his head with
20 earmuffs on.

21 A. No. No.

22 Q. Can you remember anything like that happening which
23 might have been a game?

24 A. No. No.

25 Q. Then at paragraph 80 you refer to 'Jamie' saying that he

1 was made to sit on the wall and bang his head against
2 the wall.

3 A. No. Definitely not.

4 Q. Okay. He says that when the social work collected him,
5 after he left your care he was taken to hospital because
6 he had concussion. Did you know about that?

7 A. No. He was a wee -- he was a typical wee boy that
8 always ran about and jumped and he had always bruises on
9 his knee or he's always banging something. But we never
10 ever touched him.

11 Q. At paragraph 83 over the page on page 21 you talk there
12 about something that 'Jamie' -- you're aware that
13 'Jamie' has said and I think he said this in his
14 evidence to the Inquiry, as in the oral evidence that he
15 gave --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- about you having boxing gloves. Did you ever --

18 A. Again, no. We would never have -- I wouldn't -- I don't
19 like boxing gloves or guns I don't like.

20 Q. Okay. When you say guns, do you mean toy guns?

21 A. Toy guns, yeah. I just don't like them at all.

22 Q. Okay. I'm going to ask you to look at some more
23 records, please. At tab 6, this is NAC-000000371,
24 page 7.

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. This is an internal memo from a Sadie Burns at North
2 Ayrshire Council. Do you know who Sadie Burns is? Do
3 you remember her?

4 A. Yes. That was -- she was the head social worker and we
5 asked her for help with the two girls and her opinion
6 was, "We'll just remove them" -- oh no, sorry, that was
7 with 'Jamie', earlier on. We couldn't get his social
8 worker, that's what it was, and I finally spoke to our
9 link worker and he had said, "Well, phone the senior
10 social worker and see if they can help", and when I told
11 her what it was, she just said, "Right, we'll just come
12 and remove him", and we said:

13 "No, that's not what we're wanting, we're wanting
14 help with understanding how to deal with this."

15 And she just was really nasty with us from then on
16 because we complained about it.

17 Q. Okay. Before we look at the document, just to follow
18 through what you were saying there, after you'd had this
19 conversation with Sadie Burns and she suggested that
20 'Jamie' be removed and you said no, did he carry on
21 staying with you for a little while after that?

22 A. No, not for very long, because she just -- there was no
23 help was coming and with all the girls in the house we
24 just felt that we were having to watch him all the time.

25 Q. Okay. I think you describe in your statement that there

1 had been some issues with his behaviour?

2 A. Yes, aye.

3 Q. Okay. When it came to him being removed, did you ask

4 for him to be removed or did the social work department

5 say that they were taking him away?

6 A. Well, eventually I think it was us because we weren't

7 getting the help that we were asking for.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So we finally had to say, "Look, I'm sorry, but ..."

10 Q. We can look back to this document, please, and this is

11 an internal memo between Sadie Burns and Lorna Murchie.

12 Do you know who she was, Lorna Murchie?

13 A. I think she might have been his social worker, I'm not

14 sure.

15 Q. Okay. I think you're probably right about that. If we

16 look down to the text, it says:

17 "As you are aware, the above-named child moved from

18 the care of you and your husband. There were a number

19 of issues that have been brought to the writer's

20 attention following his move from your care."

21 It says:

22 "He was accompanied to Harley Place by both the

23 writer and social work assistant. He complained of

24 a bump to his head and would not allow workers to touch

25 it. He informed the writer that he had fallen outside

1 at your house and that they were aware of the injury.
2 This information had not been passed on to the workers
3 at any time. Throughout the course of the evening,
4 'Jamie' was violently sick and very distressed. The
5 child was taken to the GP the following day and he
6 expressed concern about the injury and requested the
7 child be taken to Crosshouse Hospital for further
8 examination. He was fully examined at hospital and was
9 initially to be kept in overnight for observation.
10 Given the trauma that he had experienced with the
11 breakdown of the placement and the fact that the
12 consultant felt that he was over the worst of the
13 injury, he was discharged later that evening. The
14 writer is concerned that an injury such as this was not
15 reported either to myself or care staff."

16 Do you have any knowledge of this injury?

17 A. I honestly don't remember. As I said, he was always
18 falling and always banging himself and bumping himself,
19 but I don't remember him complaining at all about
20 anything.

21 Q. Okay. Then in the next paragraph it says:

22 "He had been in your care for nine months and on
23 admission had sufficient clothing which had been
24 provided by his mother. At Christmas she also provided
25 additional clothing for him."

1 Then it says:

2 "On [REDACTED] 1999 he was discharged with certain
3 clothing."

4 Then if we go on over the page it says:

5 "The majority of these clothes had been purchased
6 when 'Jamie' was previously in Harley Place and by his
7 mother. The clothing, in particular the underwear, was
8 aged three to four years and inappropriate for a child
9 of five years. The writer is concerned about the
10 quality and quantity of clothing which was passed on
11 with him."

12 A. I don't remember his mum ever buying him clothes. And
13 as I said, there was another bag of clothes and toys
14 passed on later on, once we -- there was some in the
15 washing and some in his room lying about the. Once we
16 collected it all together.

17 Q. Okay. Then it goes on to say:

18 "In working with 'Jamie' in recent weeks he has on
19 numerous occasions informed the writer and social work
20 assistant that he had been handcuffed to the rabbit
21 hutch at your home and that when his behaviour was
22 difficult he was put outside in all weathers."

23 A. No.

24 Q. "He becomes visibly distressed when discussing these
25 incidents and requires constant reassurance that such

1 incidents will not reoccur."

2 We've already talked about the rabbit hutch. Was he

3 put outside when he behaved badly?

4 A. (Unclear) no. No.

5 Q. Then it refers to in the next paragraph that on initial

6 admission he slept in a bunk bed which was adequate.

7 Then it says:

8 "However, following the admission of two other

9 children, he says that he slept on a mattress on the

10 floor inside a sleeping bag."

11 A. No, because he had his own room.

12 Q. Okay. I want to move away from that document and I want

13 to have a look at another couple of documents which are

14 a bit later on. We know that I think you stopped being

15 foster carers in about 2002. Why was it that you

16 stopped being foster carers? Why did you stop it?

17 A. Because I think we were just so fed up of not getting

18 the help that we were trying to get for these kids and

19 social workers weren't coming to the house, and then

20 they were due a panel or a meeting they would phone you

21 up and ask for what had been happening with the kids.

22 And then when you went to the meeting, it was as if they

23 had been coming to the house all the time and, you know,

24 seeing the kids and they just weren't.

25 Q. Okay.

1 Now --

2 A. And we had -- sorry, we had spoken to other social
3 workers, the other foster parents at the time, and they
4 all felt much the same, that they were just not getting
5 the help that we felt we should be getting.

6 Q. If we can look then, please, at tab 8, which is
7 NAC-000000372 and page 3, which should be a meeting held
8 on 12 June 2000.

9 A. Uh-huh, I think so.

10 Q. Yes, so it's -- just checking that I have the right
11 reference. It should be tab 8 and it's a meeting held
12 on 12 June 2000.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. This is a meeting that was held and you were attending
15 this meeting together with somebody who's called the
16 principal officer for specialist services and
17 Mrs S Burns, who I think is the Sadie Burns we've
18 already talked about?

19 A. Yes, uh-huh.

20 Q. It says:

21 "It was clarified that the meeting was to consider
22 comments and complaints made by you about the Ardrossan
23 team and any issues which related to your practice as
24 foster carers."

25 There had been previous attempts to meet which had

1 been cancelled for various reasons.

2 Then it goes on to say:

3 "You identified a range of concerns resulting from

4 their time as carers for 'Jamie'."

5 A. Mm-hmm.

6 Q. You talk about various issues. You commented on the

7 fact that the mother had gone for good and then

8 returned? So it --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- looks like his mother did come back at some point --

11 A. I don't ever remember her coming to the house, though.

12 I mean I don't remember that at all.

13 Q. Okay. Then it says:

14 "You expressed concern about missed appointments by

15 the social worker."

16 A. Yeah, mm-hmm.

17 Q. Then in the next paragraph:

18 "They were asked if there were any complaints as

19 initially identified around this time last year about

20 the other social worker from Ardrossan who was involved.

21 They identified no comments but were concerned that

22 sufficient work had not been done, particularly with

23 another girl prior to her moving out of the home to go

24 to long-term carers. She was allegedly identifying that

25 you were throwing her out and didn't have knowledge of

1 the process and you acknowledged that there had been
2 an apology for that situation."

3 Then in the next paragraph, the last sentence of it
4 says that you were concerned that you'd had no further
5 placements?

6 A. Mm-hmm.

7 Q. It looks like there had been a gap where placements
8 hadn't been made with you.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Then it says:

11 "There was some discussion around the fact that they
12 were very experienced, approximately seven years'
13 experience, and acknowledged that there had been
14 problems in the past and that there had been previous
15 investigations. They acknowledged that these processes
16 should have given some insight into the reasons of why,
17 for example, were Social Services staff can consult with
18 psychologists but have to wait for the child to actually
19 be seen by one. This discussion was in some detail and
20 also considered their registration. There had been
21 a recent review from which the relevant paperwork had
22 been forwarded to them which identified the new age
23 groups that they would accept. They thought that the
24 age group of children was not as had been agreed and
25 were planning to contact their link worker to have the

1 changes made."

2 That seems to go back to something that we talked
3 about at the start of your evidence --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. -- about the registration criteria.

6 A. (Witness nods)

7 Q. Then over the next page it says:

8 "The conversation then moved to consider a variety
9 of comments which had been made over the years. Among
10 these included the fact that children had said that they
11 had water thrown on their face, et cetera. You and your
12 husband identified that as an aspect of play in which
13 they had specialised."

14 Do you know what's being talked about there?

15 A. Not a clue. I'm sorry, I honestly don't know.

16 Q. Then it says:

17 "The couple said that they understood that once
18 an issue was dealt with, that it was over and done with.
19 It was clarified for them that in childcare nothing is
20 over and done with and that issues around, for example,
21 patterns of behaviour could and would be referred to at
22 any time. The issue of needing police reports,
23 et cetera, for the whole of one's life was touched upon
24 as an illustration of that."

25 Then it says:

1 "At the end of this discussion it was made clear by
2 Mr Beattie that he would closely monitor any future
3 placements in the interests of both you and any child
4 placed with them. It was seen as a useful and
5 constructive way forward by all involved."

6 It looks from that that there was -- well, this
7 meeting between you and some senior members of the
8 social work department where on the one hand you were
9 raising concerns about social work support and issues
10 that you've mentioned, but the social work department
11 were also indicating concerns that they had about your
12 care of children?

13 A. Yeah. I don't remember at all. I vaguely remember
14 going to a meeting, but that's so long ago.

15 Q. Then I think approval of your withdrawal as short-term
16 foster parents was confirmed formally later on, so
17 I think you withdrew as foster carers --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- then that was formalised by it going to a panel?

20 A. Mm-hmm.

21 Q. If we look first of all at NAC-000000373, so this is at
22 tab 12, page 1, so this should be a minute of
23 a fostering panel:

24 "Approval of your withdrawal as short-term foster
25 carers."

1 Do you see that?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. It says:

4 "A letter had been received from you and your
5 husband requesting acceptance of your resignation as
6 foster carers. Mr Beattie informed the service had some
7 concerns as there appeared to be a pattern of the couple
8 not dealing with foster children appropriately and that
9 the service would be unlikely to make any further
10 placements."

11 A. Mm-hmm.

12 Q. Would you accept that you hadn't been dealing with
13 foster children appropriately?

14 A. No. Not at all. I don't remember ever seeing that
15 before.

16 Q. Then it says:

17 "When concerns that some of their practices were
18 unacceptable to the service were discussed with you, you
19 stated that you would resign."

20 A. Yeah, I remember we said we'd had enough.

21 Q. Okay. Then it says:

22 "The panel recommended approval of your withdrawal
23 as short-term foster carers, with the caveat that the
24 serious concerns of the service be noted and that should
25 the couple reapply to this, or any other organisation,

1 that early discussions are undertaken with the panel and
2 depending on the panel's recommendation a full
3 assessment be undertaken."

4 I appreciate that that's a minute that you've
5 probably not seen, but perhaps if we can move to tab 7,
6 which is NAC-000000372, page 1, which is a letter that
7 was sent to you after this panel, this is
8 20 August 2002.

9 A. Aye.

10 Q. From North Ayrshire Council. This letter says:

11 "Thank you for your letter asking that you be
12 withdrawn as short-term carers. The fostering panel
13 held on 19 June 2002 recommended your withdrawal and
14 I am endorsing this recommendation. The fostering panel
15 noted that there had been a number of issues raised
16 during your period of time as foster carers. The panel
17 have therefore requested that should any other authority
18 make an approach regarding your suitability as foster
19 carers, these issues would have to be shared with them."

20 A. Mm.

21 Q. It looks as though here the Local Authority have
22 obviously accepted your resignation but they're saying
23 that if you were to apply to anybody else to be foster
24 parents, they would share the concerns that they had
25 about you with them?

1 A. I don't know what concerns really, because we did
2 everything we could, so I don't know what the concerns
3 really were.

4 MS INNES: Right, 'Emma', I've come to the end of my
5 questions for you.

6 There are no applications, my Lady.

7 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
8 questions of 'Emma'?

9 'Emma', that does complete all the questions we have
10 for you. Thank you for engaging with us as you have
11 done. I have your detailed statement, which of course
12 is part of your evidence and I have read that, and it's
13 been very helpful to me to hear from you in addition to
14 that today.

15 Thank you for bearing with us and thank you for
16 answering the questions as well as you've been able to
17 do.

18 I'm now glad to say that I'm able to let you go and
19 the link can be switched off.

20 Thank you.

21 A. Okay, thank you.

22 (The witness withdrew)

23 LADY SMITH: We'll now have the lunch break and we'll sit as
24 soon after 2.00 as we can.

25 MS INNES: Yes, it's read-in evidence this afternoon.

1 LADY SMITH: If you just keep in touch with my availability
2 then.
3 Thank you.
4 (1.00 pm)
5 (The luncheon adjournment)
6 (2.00 pm)
7 (Proceedings delayed)
8 (2.05 pm)
9 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon.
10 Ms Rattray.
11 MS RATTRAY: Yes, my Lady.
12 'Donna' (read)
13 MS RATTRAY: We complete today's evidence with some
14 read-ins.
15 The first is in connection with a witness whose
16 cypher is FHO and is an applicant who has the pseudonym
17 'Donna'.
18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
19 MS RATTRAY: Her statement is at WIT-1-000000222.
20 'Donna' was in the care of Strathclyde Regional
21 Council. She was in a foster placement with a couple in
22 Glasgow from [REDACTED] 1986 until [REDACTED] 1986. The
23 successor authority is Glasgow City Council.
24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
25 MS RATTRAY: "My name is 'Donna'. I was born in 1973 and my

1 contact details are known to the Inquiry."

2 From paragraphs 2 to 15, 'Donna' speaks of her life
3 before care. She was one of 13 children. Her dad died.
4 Her mum was physically abusive to her. 'Donna' was
5 taken into care when she was aged about 7 or 8 and
6 stayed in Maxton House, Glasgow.

7 She was then returned to the care of her mum, who
8 continued to abuse her.

9 Again she was taken into care, this time to
10 Inver House, Glasgow, when she was aged 12 to 13. She

11 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

12
13 moved as an emergency to foster care by her then social
14 worker, Marie Valente.

15 Moving now to paragraph 83 on page 14.

16 "I stayed with foster carers who were a couple in
17 Glasgow. Two of their sons also stayed there. One of
18 the sons ..."

19 Called 'Neil' and, my Lady, 'Neil' is a pseudonym.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MS RATTRAY: "... was in his mid 20s and had a big nose and
22 we called him 'beaky'. The other was older and was
23 totally blind.

24 There was also another boy and girl staying there.
25 She was a toddler, about a year and a half or two years

1 old. I remember she had long red hair. The boy was
2 just a wee baby. They were both fostered.

3 The house was an old tenement close with three
4 bedrooms. It was all on the one level. The foster
5 parents were in one room, 'Neil' and his brother in
6 another and I think the wee boy was in the third room.
7 The girl was in a cot in the living room. I remember
8 she got taken away when I was there.

9 I was in foster care with them for about two months
10 in 1987, but I can't remember all the dates exactly
11 because I just kept getting shipped about. I didn't get
12 a chance to meet pals or anything like that, because as
13 soon as I met anybody, the next thing I was getting
14 taken away again.

15 I just stayed on at the same secondary school when
16 I was there. I just went there to take the piss out the
17 teachers. I just wanted away from the place.

18 The foster mother did wash my clothes, make me
19 something to eat and give me my pocket money but I more
20 or less brought myself up in that house.

21 They all said things about me all the time. The
22 foster mother would say things like, 'No wonder your mum
23 didn't want you' and, 'No wonder your dad's dead'. Then
24 the son, 'Neil's' brother, was saying those things as
25 well.

1 I think my mum was telling them things when she
2 visited, because I just stayed outside when she did
3 visit. She didn't come round often but she did come in
4 taxis sometimes and I would stay away. My mum was
5 a horrible wee woman and I wasn't going near the house.

6 My mum accused me of having sex with other bairns
7 and was telling the foster parents all things like that,
8 saying that I was a 'wee midden', whatever that was back
9 then. 'Neil' told me all that.

10 The foster parents both liked to drink a lot of
11 alcohol. They drank every weekend in the house or
12 sometimes they went out to another family. They were
13 related in some way and they lived in the next close and
14 were foster carers as well.

15 'Neil' was just a pure beast. He asked me if I knew
16 how to kiss a boy, then he said he would show me.
17 I said I didn't want to be shown but then he started to
18 kiss me. He started touching me. Everyone else was out
19 the house and it was just me and 'Neil'.

20 He kissed me and touched me in places I didn't want
21 to be touched. He tried to have sex with me but
22 I didn't want that. He had his hands inside my clothes
23 and he asked me to strip down but I didn't do that. He
24 had all his clothes on when he was doing it.

25 'Neil' did that in the house and he also took me to

1 Anstruther caravan park and touched me up in a caravan
2 there. We were at the caravan park for a week's
3 holiday. He tried to have sex with me there as well but
4 I told him no, I wasn't like that, I wasn't brought up
5 like that. He kept forcing himself trying to kiss me
6 but I wasn't having it and I kept pushing him away.

7 I told the foster parents about 'Neil' touching me
8 after we came back from Anstruther caravan park but they
9 didn't believe a word of it. They didn't want to
10 believe it and called me a liar. 'Neil' denied it and
11 kept on denying he did anything to me.

12 After that the foster parents were always telling me
13 my mum didn't want me and no wonder as I was just a born
14 liar and stuff like that. They started to be like that
15 because of me telling them about their son.

16 I went round to see Marie Valente, my social worker,
17 and she was the only one who believed me. I had a man
18 social worker at that time, Tony Brannan, but I didn't
19 want to tell him in case I wasn't believed so I walked
20 round and got to speak to Marie Valente.

21 I told her 'Neil' had sexually assaulted me twice
22 and she believed me. Marie got me moved out that house
23 and that was when I got put into Fairfield.

24 I was too embarrassed to say anything to my teachers
25 or anyone at school, because of the stigma and the

1 comments people would have said.

2 I went back to stay with the foster carers' family
3 for about two weeks after I had told Marie Valente about
4 the sexual abuse. I was scared to be back there. I was
5 scared to go to sleep in case 'Neil' came creeping into
6 the room. Nothing else happened though.

7 Marie had said to me that because she wasn't my
8 social worker that she would need to contact Ruckazie
9 social work department to get me moved. I don't know
10 what happened about that, no one ever came and asked me
11 any more about it.

12 Marie was writing things down at the time I told
13 her. I said I had been sexually abused twice, in the
14 house and in the caravan at Anstruther caravan park near
15 St Andrew's and she was writing that all down."

16 From paragraph 104, 'Donna' speaks of her
17 experiences in Fairfield Children's Home in Glasgow

18 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

19 'Donna' then describes her life after care and the
20 impact on her. As the details of the impact on 'Donna'
21 have to be understood in context of her overall care
22 experiences, both in and out of care, I'll move to
23 paragraph 205 on page 32:

24 "I have never applied for any records. I really
25 wouldn't know how to go about doing that. I would want

1 to see my records, if that was ever possible."

2 Moving now to paragraph 210 on page 33:

3 "People need to be held liable and accountable for
4 what they have done to children in care. You need to
5 get the truth and get people to admit what they've done
6 to young people.

7 They have to do proper checks with the police to
8 stop these monsters working with kids. I don't care
9 what it takes, they should all be investigated, even if
10 they've kicked a dog, they need to be investigated
11 before they can work with children.

12 People working with kids need to be up to scratch
13 and they need to start stripping kids down in front of
14 people to make sure there's no marks or bruise.

15 I have no objection to my witness statement being
16 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

17 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
18 true."

19 'Donna' signed her statement on 20 January 2020.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 'Neil' (read)

22 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, we will now turn to the statement of
23 'Neil', and 'Neil's' statement is at WIT-1-000000994.

24 As explained in the last statement, 'Neil' was the
25 son of foster carers in Glasgow who fostered 'Donna'.

1 Although all of 'Neil's' statement relates to foster
2 care, I will read only parts of it:

3 "My name is 'Neil'. I was born in 1968. My contact
4 details are known to the Inquiry.

5 I was born in Glasgow. My parents have since passed
6 away. I have two older brothers, one who's registered
7 blind and the other who joined the army.

8 I am presently unemployed and have been for four or
9 five years but previously worked in a warehouse and
10 before that worked in customer service. I had mental
11 health problems which was brought on by stress at work
12 but am now actively seeking employment again.

13 I was 16 when my parents decided to become foster
14 carers in 1984. I don't know why they wanted to become
15 foster carers but they loved children and me and my
16 brothers were of an age where we would soon be moving
17 out so that probably had something to do with it. They
18 spoke to me about it and I said I was fine with it and
19 thought it was a good idea. My other brother had left
20 the house by then when he joined the army.

21 My parents used to go to half-day parent training
22 meetings before becoming foster parents but I don't
23 recall how often they went. At the time I was busy
24 doing voluntary work at a school for the physically
25 disabled getting wheelchairs on and off the bus. My dad

1 was also doing voluntary work for the school and was
2 driving for them.

3 I don't know if my parents received any training
4 material but a female social worker used to call in,
5 maybe four or five times during the two years that I was
6 there. I wouldn't be in the room when she spoke to my
7 parents.

8 I don't know any qualifications that my parents had.
9 My dad left school at 15 and my mum left when she was
10 16. The only training they had with regards to
11 fostering is what I've already said though I know they
12 did go to a couple of training sessions while they were
13 fostering.

14 The home at Easterhouse was a three bedroom flat on
15 the second floor. When you entered the front door there
16 was a bedroom in front of you and a bathroom to the
17 right. Then there was a bedroom that my parents used.
18 You then walked up the hall where you had the kitchen,
19 then a third bedroom that my brother and I used. At the
20 top of the hall was the living room. Bunk beds were put
21 in the first room for any children coming in and a cot
22 was put in the living room for any babies that arrived.

23 My parents moved to Baillieston in 1989 which was
24 a four-in-a-block, though both myself and my brother had
25 moved out by then. I would have had nothing to do with

1 any kids fostered by my parents at that time as I had
2 moved to Livingston.

3 My parents fostered children aged from newborn up to
4 about 7 or 8 years of age and I think 'Donna' was the
5 oldest at 12 years of age. Most of the children were
6 there only short term. I was 17 when she arrived and
7 I think this was about eight months after my parents had
8 started fostering and I think she was there for about
9 nine months, I'm not sure.

10 My parents started fostering in 1984 and stopped
11 doing it in 1992. I left the family home in 1986.
12 I would say that in the two years I was there they
13 fostered about 15 or 20 children.

14 The most children that my parents would foster at
15 any one time would be five, four in the bedroom and one
16 in the cot."

17 To paragraph 16:

18 "My parents usually got emergency placements and
19 would just receive a call saying that a child was being
20 brought round. I don't know what sort of information my
21 parents were given about the children they were about to
22 foster but on the odd occasion my mum would tell myself
23 and my brother that the children coming had been
24 physically abused and would tell us not to be fighting
25 as teenage brothers tended to do.

1 No social workers spoke to me and my brother about
2 the children coming and we never met any of them prior
3 to their arrival. The kids would just arrive and we
4 would introduce ourselves and maybe have a wee chat with
5 them. I think checks were done on both me and my
6 brother and my parents before they started fostering but
7 I can't be certain.

8 As I said, the foster children slept in bunk beds in
9 the third bedroom and there was a cot in the living room
10 for the babies. The children would get up about
11 6.30 am, then get washed, fed then ready for school. My
12 dad was full time involved in helping with fostering
13 other than when he was volunteering doing the driving
14 for the school and drove most of the foster children to
15 school though 'Donna' took the bus."

16 From paragraphs 19 to 26, 'Neil' describes aspects
17 of the daily routine of the household.

18 Moving now to paragraph 27 on page 6 where 'Neil'
19 speaks about trips and holidays:

20 "I think my mum and dad sometimes took the children
21 to the baths at Easterhouse but they didn't take them
22 away on trips. Grandad had a caravan at Anstruther that
23 my parents took some of the children to but I was never
24 there at the same time as any of the foster children.
25 I stopped going to the caravan when I was 14 because

1 there was nothing to do there and I would go to
2 Blackpool with one of my friends while my parents were
3 at the caravan.

4 The caravan had two bedrooms, one of which had bunk
5 beds and the dining room could also be converted into
6 a bedroom. My parents would take the kids there for
7 a week once a year, but like I say, I didn't like it so
8 would stay with a friend while they were at the caravan.
9 When I was older I would maybe decorate the house while
10 my parents were away."

11 Moving to paragraph 34 on page 7:

12 "I did babysit some of the children now and again,
13 maybe once a month when my mum and dad would go up to my
14 auntie's house. Most of the time the kids would be in
15 bed by the time my parents went out. 'Donna's'
16 statement says 'the foster parents both liked to drink
17 a lot of alcohol. They drank every weekend in the house
18 or sometimes they went out to another family'.

19 That's not true. They didn't drink every weekend.
20 They couldn't afford to drink every weekend plus they
21 had the kids to look after. That is not a true
22 statement, though the other family were my aunt who also
23 fostered children. Sometimes when my mum was visiting
24 her she would take some of the children and they would
25 play with the children my aunt fostered.

1 I didn't really have a relationship with any of the
2 foster children as I was 17 and had things of my own to
3 be interested in. I would say that my mum and dad were
4 as loving with the children as they were with me and my
5 brothers. They weren't treated any differently and
6 would often be given a cuddle by my mum if one of them
7 had a fall or something like that.

8 'Donna' in her statement says, 'They all said things
9 about me all the time. The foster mother would say
10 things like, "No wonder your mum didn't want you and no
11 wonder your dad's dead" then 'Neil's' brother started
12 saying those things as well'. That is total rubbish.
13 When I read her statement I just thought that no way did
14 my mum say anything like that. There was no way any
15 such thing was ever said to any of the children.

16 I don't know if the children kept in contact with
17 their parents, though one foster girl's mum came to see
18 her but that was supervised. I don't remember what sort
19 of relationship 'Donna' had with her mum. In her
20 statement 'Donna' says 'my mum accused me of having sex
21 with other bairns and was telling the foster parents all
22 things like that, saying I was a "wee midden" whatever
23 that was back then. 'Neil' told me all that'.

24 I don't recall that and knew nothing about 'Donna's'
25 parents. I couldn't tell you what sort of relationship

1 my parents had with 'Donna's' mum.

2 I don't remember the children having any visitors
3 other than the social workers who would call the house
4 before they dropped in. I never spoke to any of the
5 social workers, who I think came once or twice a week
6 for about half an hour. They spoke to mum and dad but
7 I don't recall seeing them talking to any of the
8 children."

9 Moving to paragraph 43:

10 "I don't have any convictions relating to the abuse
11 of children or any convictions relating to children at
12 all.

13 I am not aware of any of the children fostered by my
14 parents being abused in any way. I never saw or heard
15 anything in the way that children were dealt with that
16 caused me any concern.

17 Nobody has ever made a complaint against me in
18 connection with any of the children fostered by my
19 parents being abused, there was nothing that ever
20 happened for anybody to complain about.

21 No report has ever been made to the police about
22 children being abused while being fostered by my
23 parents.

24 This is the first statement I have ever given to
25 anybody about any allegations concerning the children

1 fostered by my parents."

2 In relation to 'Donna's' allegations of sexual abuse
3 by me in the foster home:

4 "That never happened. I don't recall every being
5 alone with 'Donna'. I remember her as a cheeky wee sod
6 who was forever asking me for cigarettes to which
7 I always said no. Her headteacher told my mum that she
8 was using lunch money to buy cigarettes. It simply
9 didn't happen."

10 In relation to 'Donna's' allegations of sexual abuse
11 by 'Neil' in the caravan at Anstruther, 'Neil' says:

12 "That didn't happen and couldn't have as I was never
13 in Anstruther when any of the foster children were
14 there."

15 In relation to 'Donna's' allegations that she
16 reported the abuse to the foster parents who didn't
17 believe her and called her a liar, 'Neil' denied it.
18 'Neil' says:

19 "This also didn't happen and I have no recollection
20 of 'Donna' making any such allegations at the time. It
21 was only when I read her statement that I became aware
22 of her making such allegations. The passage of time has
23 not affected my recollection of these things. They
24 simply didn't happen. I have no idea as to the
25 circumstances of 'Donna' leaving the foster care of my

1 parents or where she went afterwards.

2 I have not got a clue why 'Donna' would say the
3 things she has said about me and my mum and dad. I am
4 especially annoyed and amazed that she would make any
5 allegations against my mum and dad. I couldn't believe
6 she was saying such things. They met up with her about
7 ten years after she left and she'd had three kids by
8 that time, they had a cup of tea with her in the house
9 and apparently the meeting was extremely cordial.

10 There's nothing much else I feel I could say that
11 would help the Inquiry.

12 I have no objections to my witness statement being
13 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

14 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
15 true."

16 'Neil' signed his statement on 30 May 2022.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, I do have some records to look at and
19 at the time of signing her statement 'Donna' said she'd
20 not seen her records, but she has been contacted and is
21 aware and comfortable with the fact that we are looking
22 at her records in the hearing.

23 LADY SMITH: She knows. Thank you.

24 MS RATTRAY: I think the first general point to clarify from
25 the records and indeed from the statements is the ages

1 of 'Donna' and 'Neil' at the time of the placement.
2 'Donna' was aged 12 and turned 13, and 'Neil' was aged
3 17 and then turned 18.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 MS RATTRAY: The first record I want to turn to is at
6 GLA-000001900, page 5. In general terms this is
7 a residential worker's review form completed at
8 Inver House for a review on 24 March 1986. This is
9 shortly before 'Donna' goes into foster care.

10 Secondary Institutions - to be published later
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20 Generally the records also confirm that her social
21 worker at the time was Marie Valente, but that she was
22 leaving her post and her new social worker when in
23 foster care was Tony, short for Anthony, Brannan and the
24 records say that the case was transferred to
25 Anthony Brannan on 7 April 1986.

1 Generally there's no record of the report of abuse
2 that 'Donna' said she made to Marie Valente, who 'Donna'
3 says was the only person who believed her. However,
4 there are other records that might allude to a situation
5 in which 'Donna' was making statements about members of
6 the foster family which were not believed and considered
7 to be malicious lies.

8 In relation to this entry, some of that information
9 is there but I'd also want to use this as a snapshot of
10 the impression the staff there had of 'Donna' before she
11 went into foster care. If we look at the bottom of
12 page 3 where it says "Behavioural problems", it actually
13 says:

14 "'Donna's' behaviour gives no concern at the moment
15 at all. When asked to do anything, eg chores, she is
16 more than willing and offers to help staff around the
17 unit."

18 If we now turn to page 7, which is a continuation of
19 this document, this review, and if we scroll down to the
20 entry number 12 which says, "Remarks", it says:

21 "'Donna' is a happy-go-lucky youngster with a good
22 sense of humour. She wants to settle and make friends
23 within Inver House but is having great difficulty as the
24 other children do not seem to accept her."

25 That is a snapshot of one carer's view of 'Donna'

1 generally.

2 The next record I want to go to is on page 33. This
3 tells us this is a record of a planning meeting that was
4 held on [REDACTED] 1986. What I want to take from that is
5 under the foster parents' report, this is shortly after
6 'Donna' arrives, there is reference to the fact that the
7 foster arrangements at lines 3 and 4 have two sons
8 living at home, so that confirms that information.

9 If we then turn to page 34, which is a continuation,
10 and what this is telling us is about access arrangements
11 for 'Donna' and it says:

12 "Access by family members is allowed only in the
13 foster home with one day's notice to the foster
14 parents."

15 That might account for when 'Donna' suggests that
16 her foster parents had some contact with her birth
17 mother. There does seem to be that there was a chance
18 for that to happen.

19 The next document I'm looking at is on page 8 and
20 these are some handwritten case notes and it would
21 appear that they would probably have been handwritten by
22 Tony Brannan, her new social worker.

23 The first thing is at the top of the page there's
24 an entry of 11-18 August and there's a reference here to
25 'Donna' being back from holiday with the foster family

1 between it looks like the 18th and 2 September. So once
2 again there's a reference -- and then in the margin:

3 "'Donna' on holiday to 2 September."

4 Then we see there's an entry of 17 September, which
5 says:

6 "However there has also been an apparent irrevocable
7 breakdown between 'Donna' and the foster mother over
8 incidents that happened during the recent holiday. The
9 upshot was that the foster mother requested that another
10 placement be fund for 'Donna' asap. However, the foster
11 parents were prepared to allow this to go ahead on
12 a planned rather than emergency basis, in the
13 realisation that it may take a couple of weeks to find
14 a suitable placement. Admissions were notified."

15 Then there's an entry of [REDACTED] 1987 -- it says
16 1987, but I think we're actually in 1986, but:

17 "'Donna' admitted to Fairfield Children's Home,
18 Pollokshields."

19 Turning now to page 24 of this record, and this is
20 the foster parents' review form, which is elsewhere
21 dated 24 September 1986, prepared in advance of a review
22 meeting. If we turn to page 25, under the heading,
23 "Details of incidents of importance since last review",
24 there's reference by the foster parents:

25 "Still telling lies, causing arguments and enjoying

1 results. Has twice asked to be shifted from foster
2 home. Has tried to make out she is being used as
3 a Benson (servant). Will not even make her own bed.
4 Writing on back close walls and shouting abuse at other
5 children from veranda. Still desperate for contact with
6 her mother and a complete breakdown in foster home.
7 Still attending school. Not very bright unless a lot of
8 help is given to her."

9 That's what the foster parents are recorded as
10 having written at that time.

11 Going to page 26 and this is the social worker's
12 review form dated 23 September 1986, I think prepared
13 for the same review meeting.

14 If we turn to page 27, about halfway down the
15 page there's a part which is headed, "Areas of concern".
16 There's reference to her mother's "apparent lack of
17 interest in 'Donna' despite efforts and assistance to
18 get her to visit", and I think 'Donna's' statement says
19 she did visit but it wasn't very often.

20 Then we see reference to:

21 "'Donna's' worrying behaviour -- telling lies
22 designed to cause trouble and seemingly enjoying the
23 results, violence towards smaller children, allegations
24 that she is being used as a Benson by her foster parents
25 (similar allegations were made against her mother), her

1 obsession with returning to Inver House, which may be
2 connected with the dislike she expressed about secondary
3 in that she may feel that a return to Inver House may
4 provide her with better opportunities for not attending,
5 since there is less structure there than in her present
6 placement. The present placement has now suffered
7 an irrevocable breakdown."

8 But she's "obsessed" with returning to the location
9 Secondary Institutions - to be published later

10

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 MS RATTRAY: I think it's striking how the foster care
13 echoes in the foster parents, they are on the same page,
14 they are almost using the same language here.

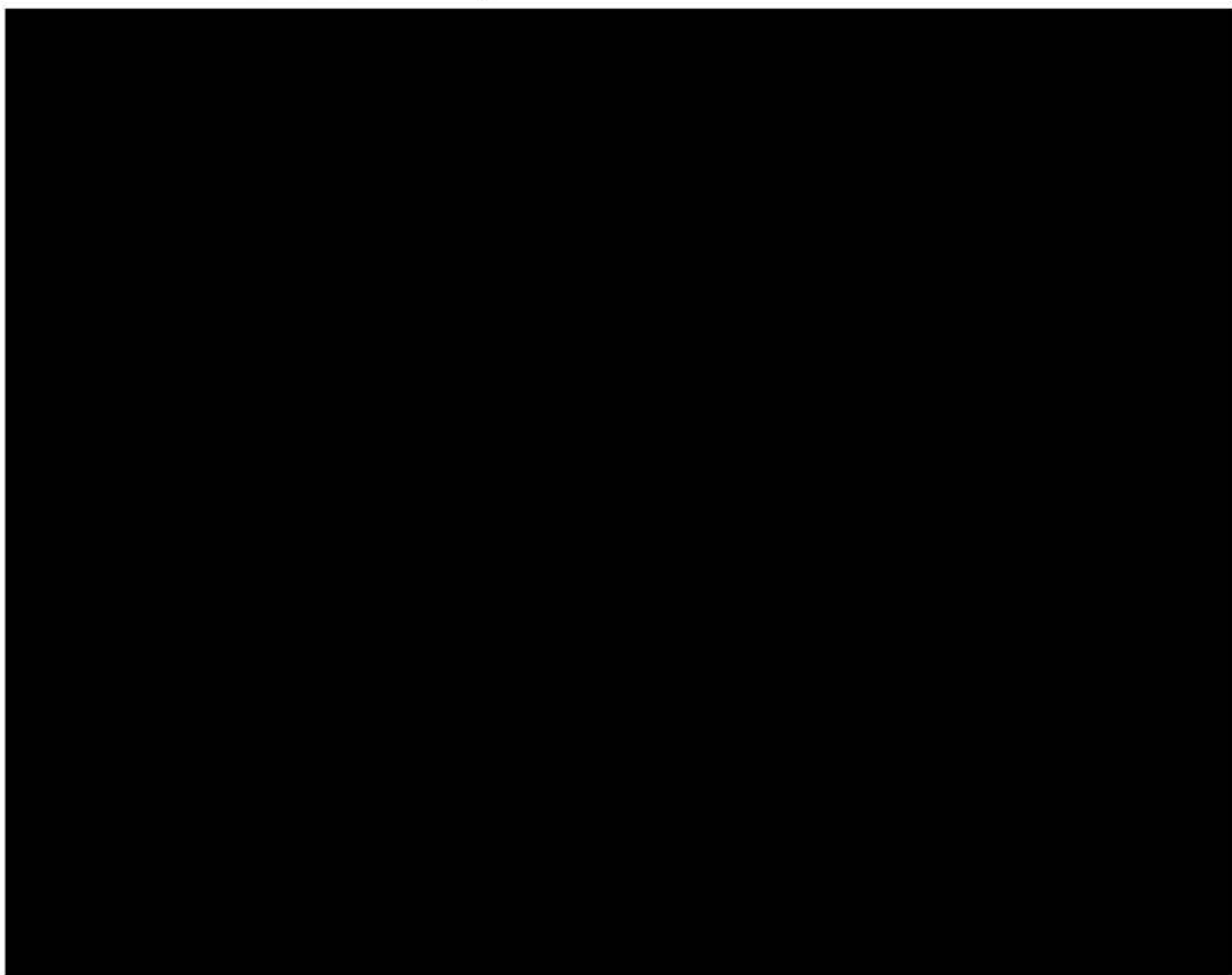
15 The last record to look at is on page 29 and this is
16 the minutes of the review meeting for which these
17 reports were prepared and the review meeting's on
18 25 September 1986. We see, "Areas of concern":

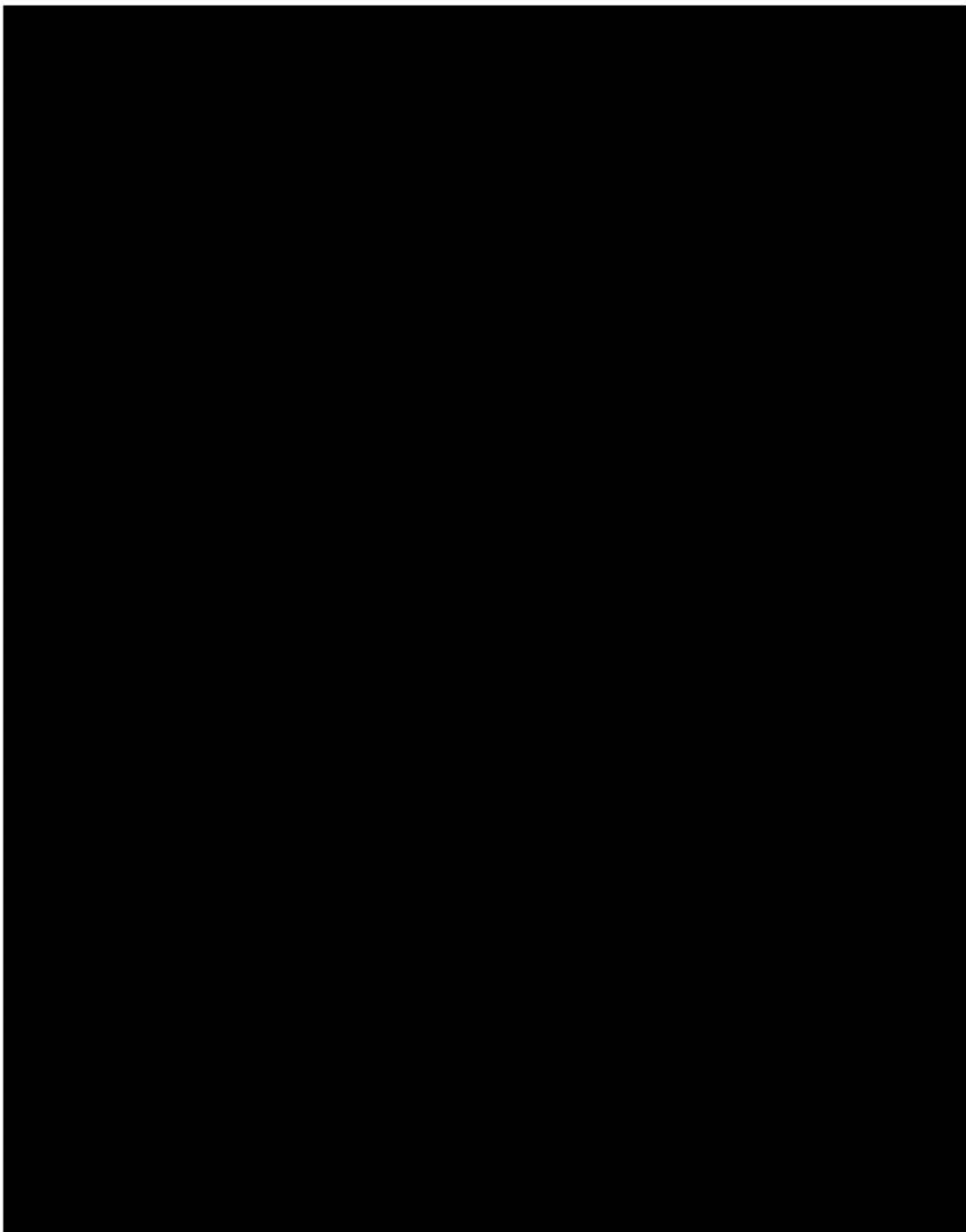
19 "'Donna' continues to spread malicious stories
20 designed to cause arguments between family members, and
21 in this way was responsible for the early return to
22 Germany of the foster parents' son who was on leave from
23 the army. She has also been violent towards smaller
24 children in the area. The placement has now broken
25 down."

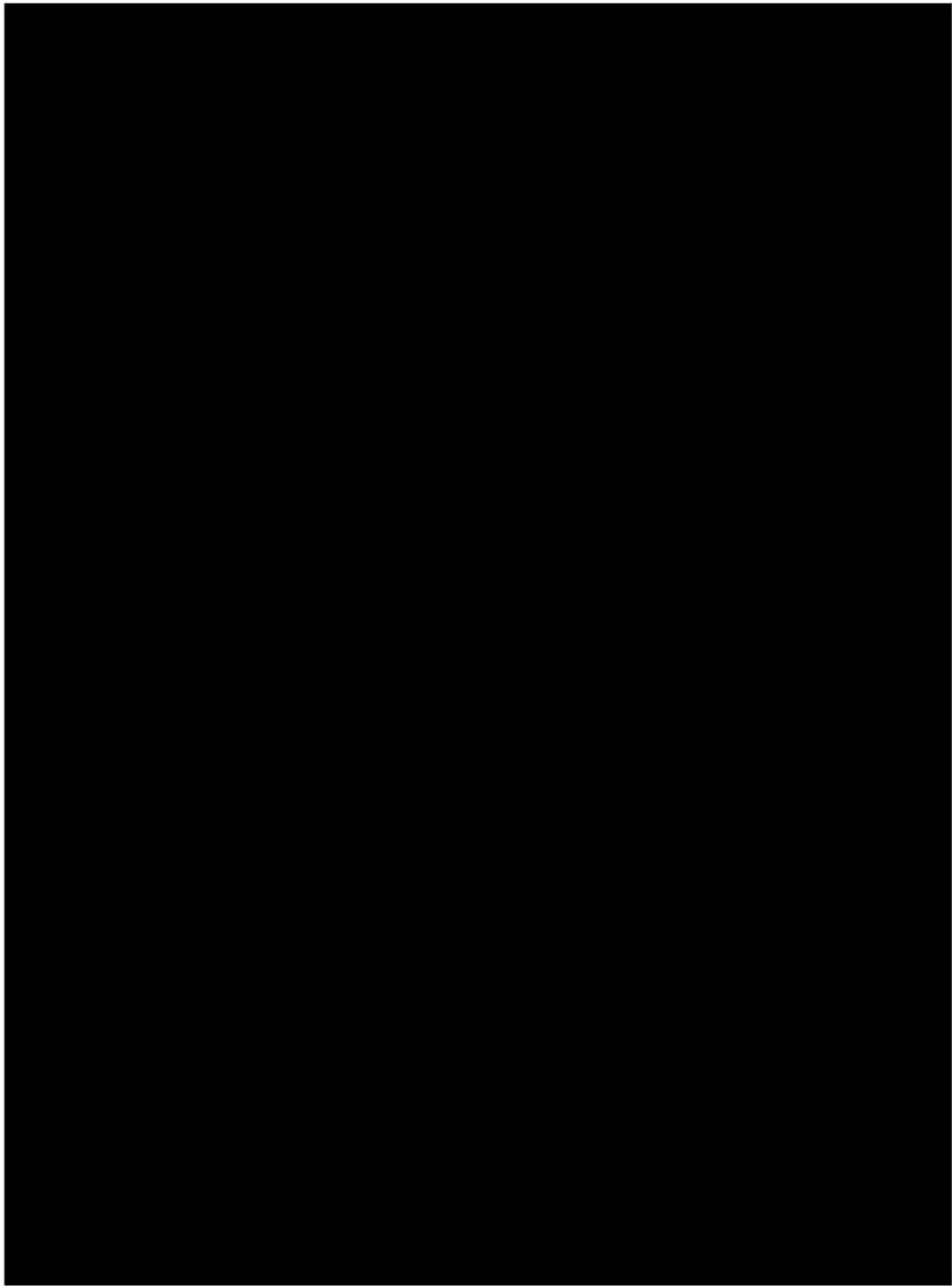
1 There's reference to allegations about being treated
2 as a servant, but that seems to be a distinct and
3 separate issue to the "malicious lies, causing arguments
4 between family members", but nowhere in the records are
5 we told what those apparent supposed "malicious lies"
6 are.

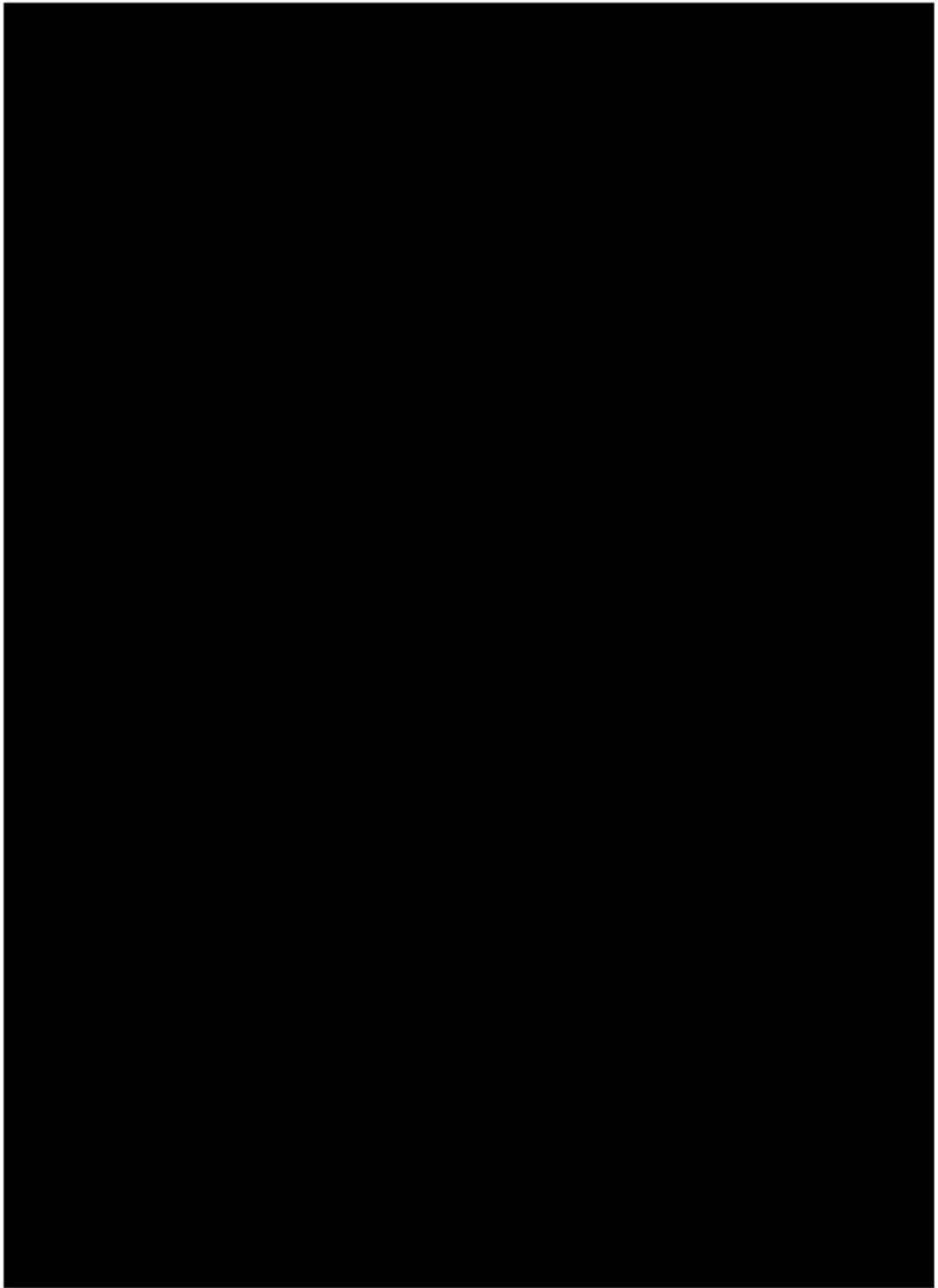
7 That concludes that read-in.

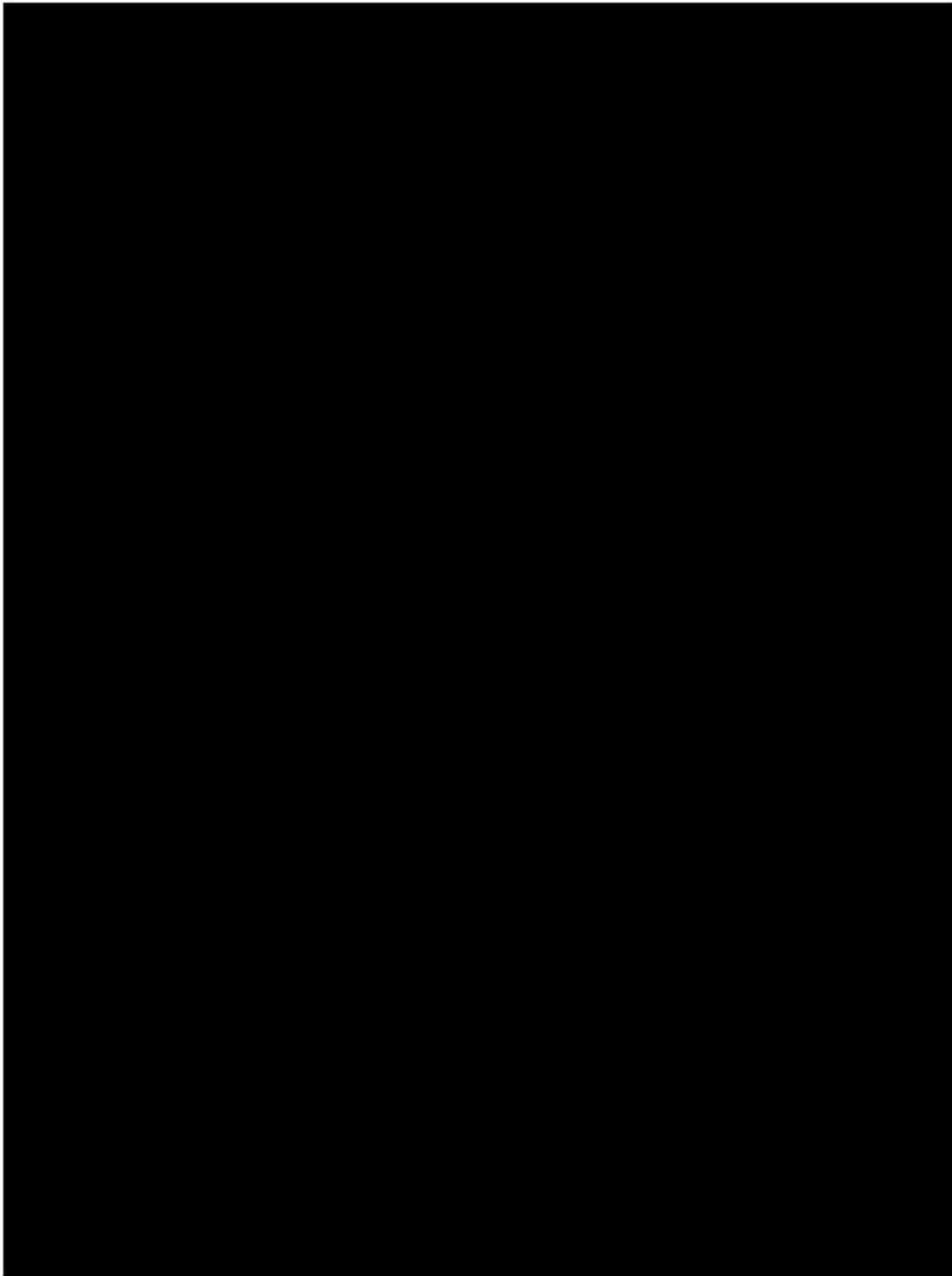
8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

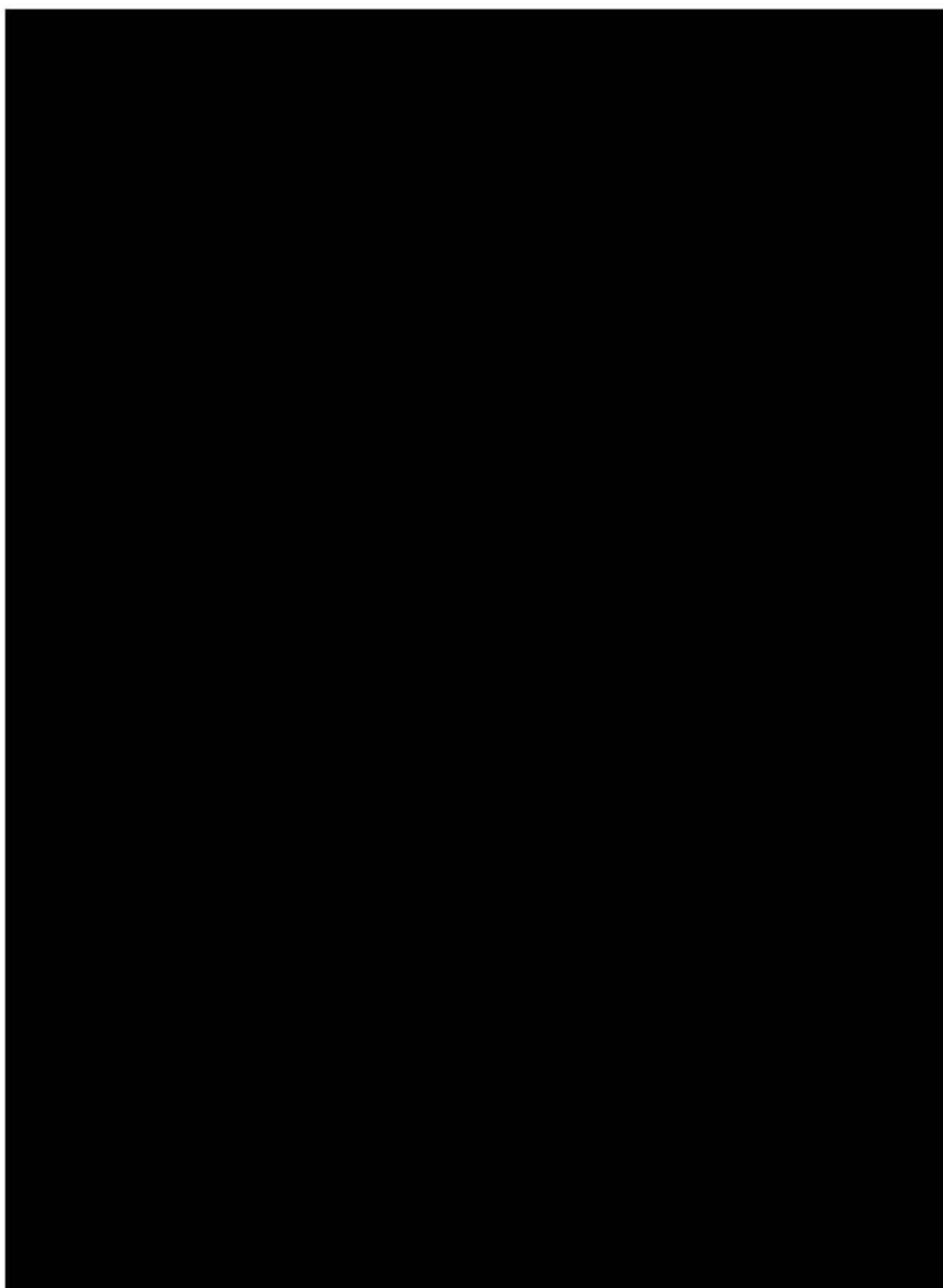


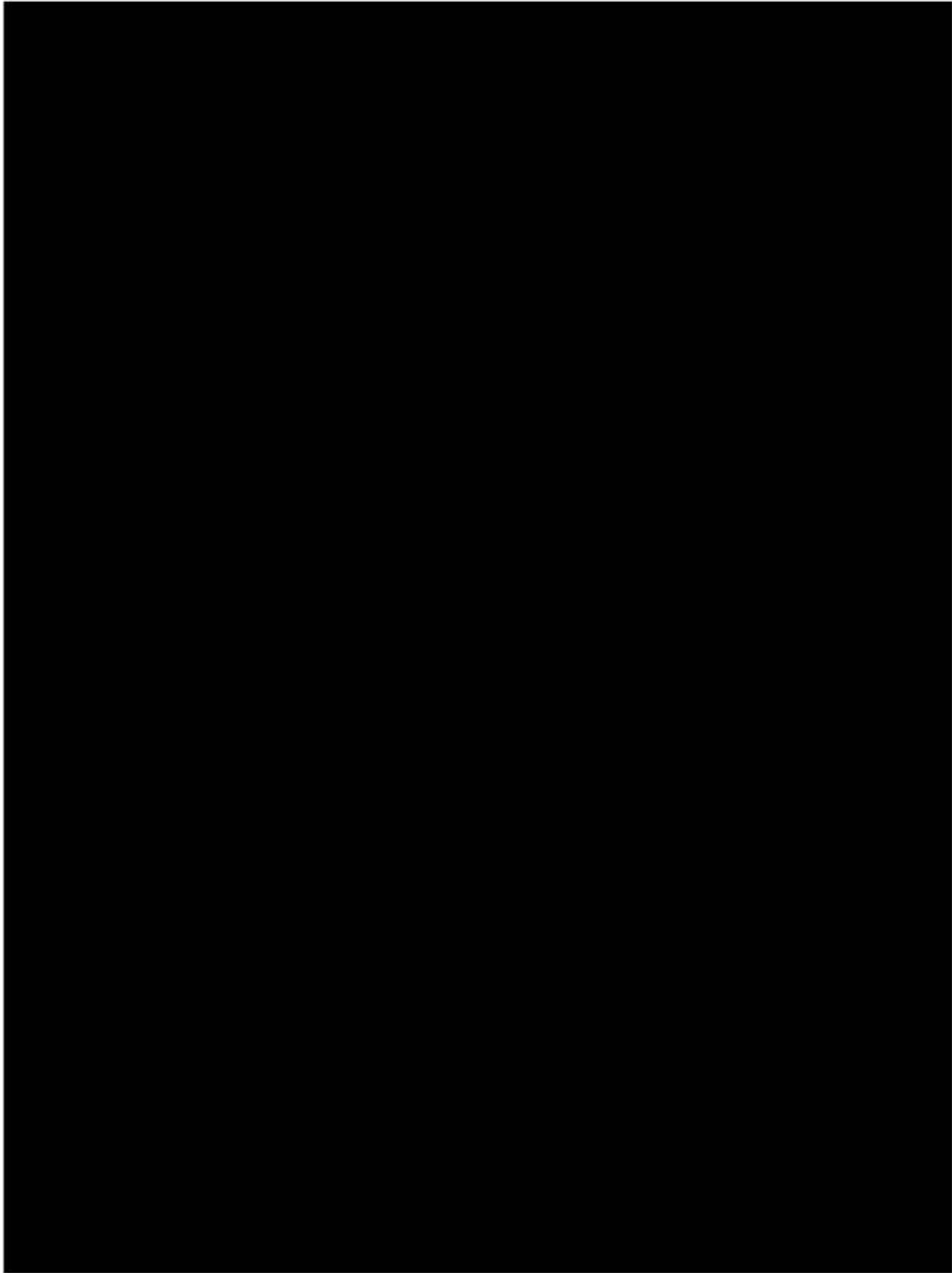


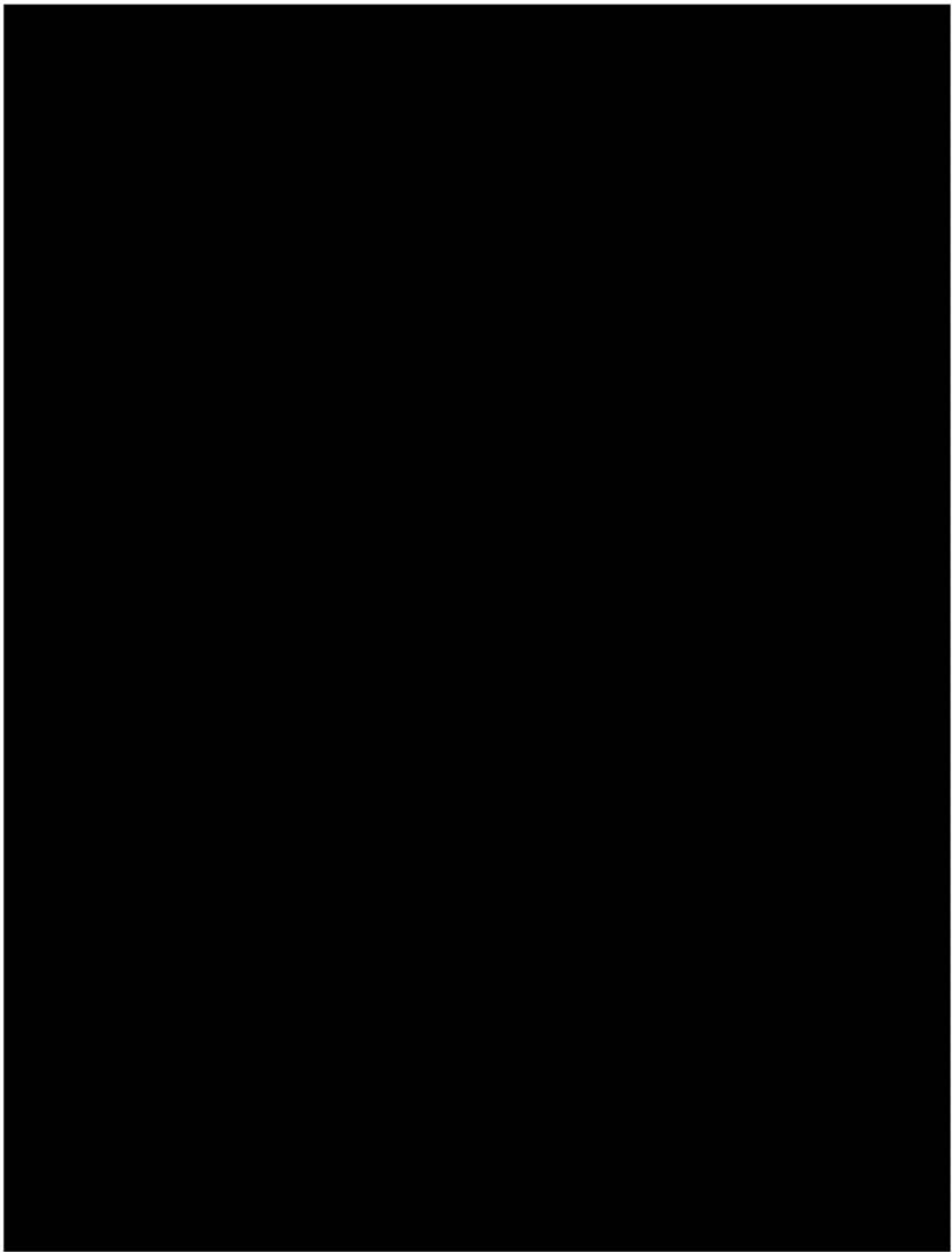


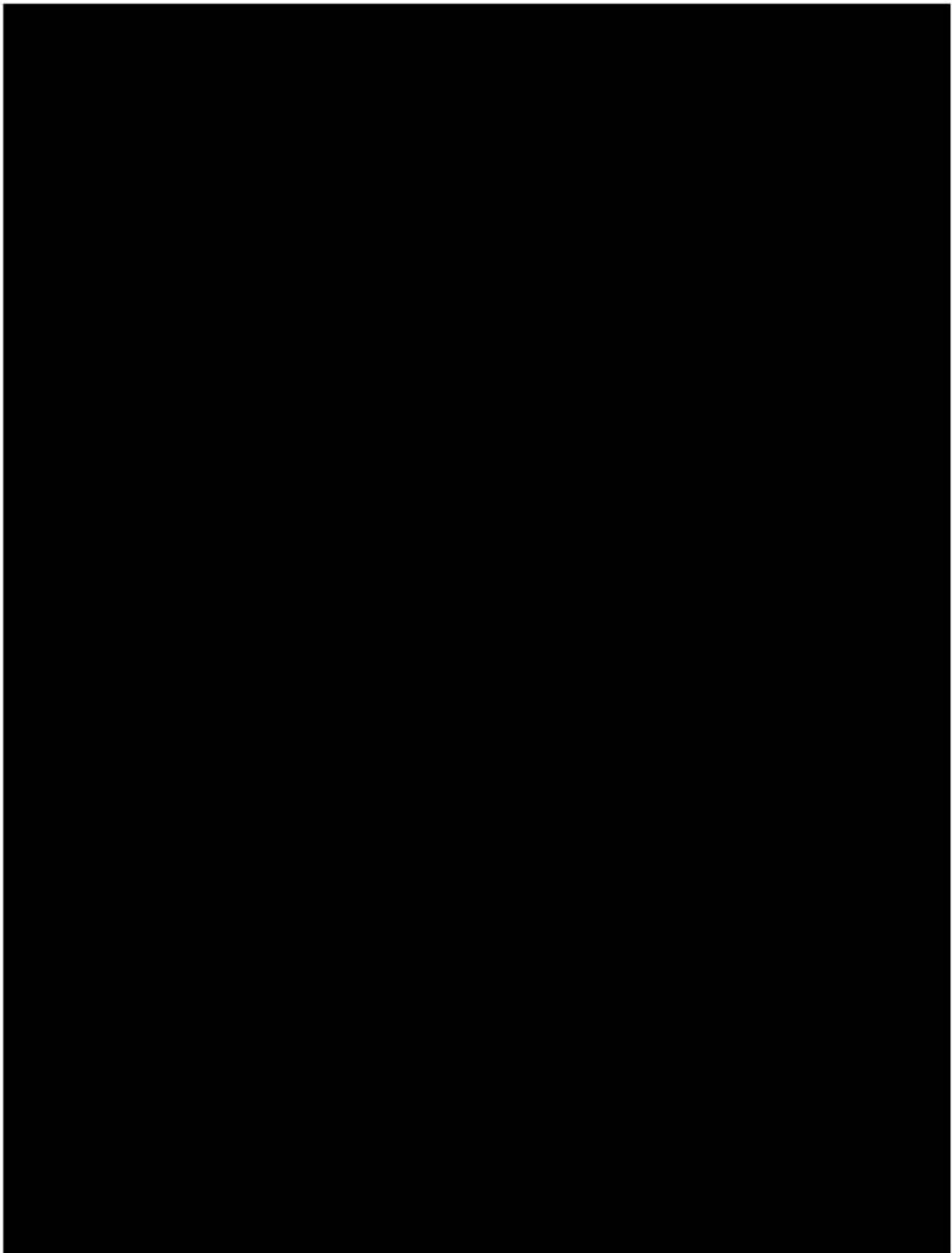


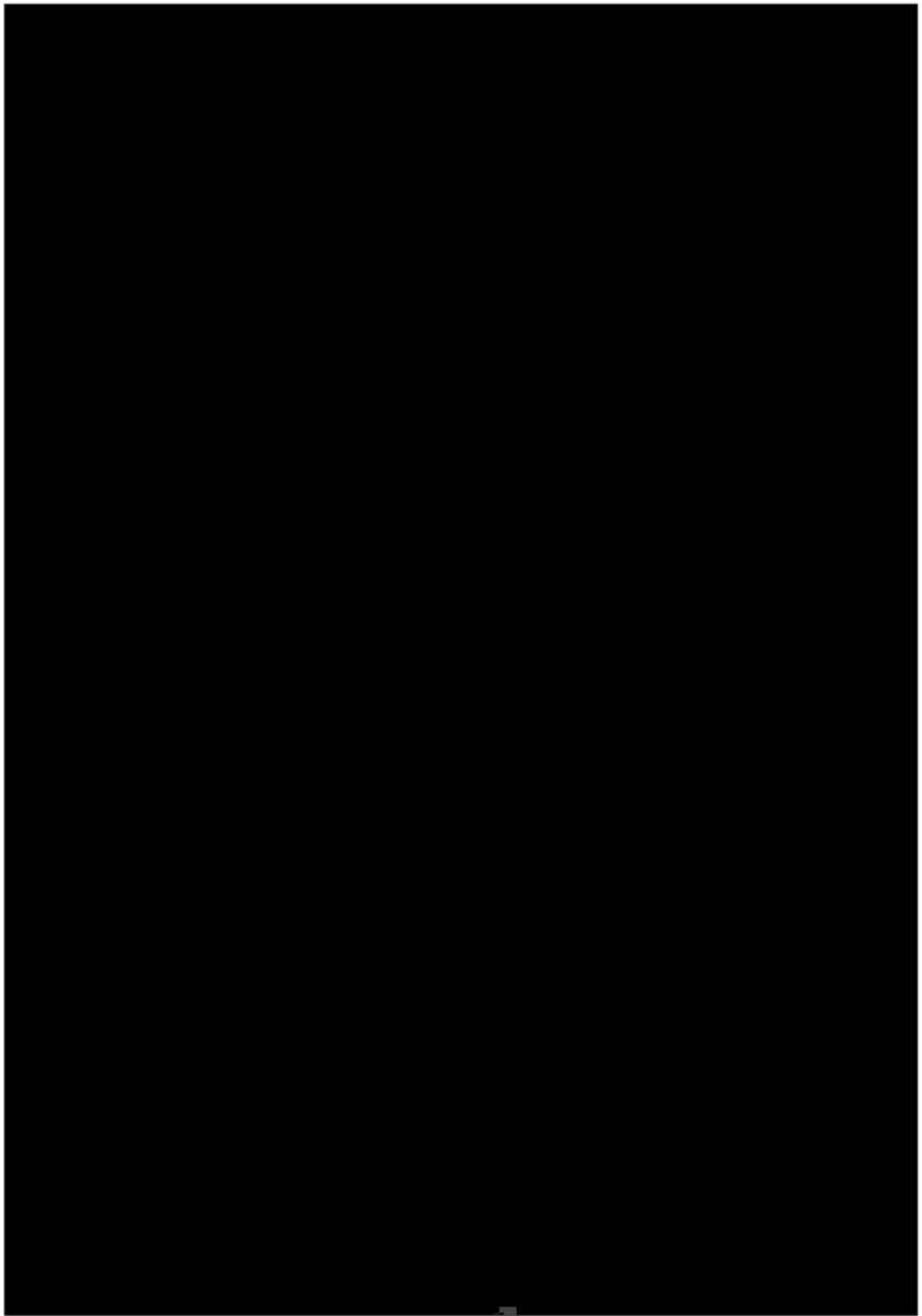


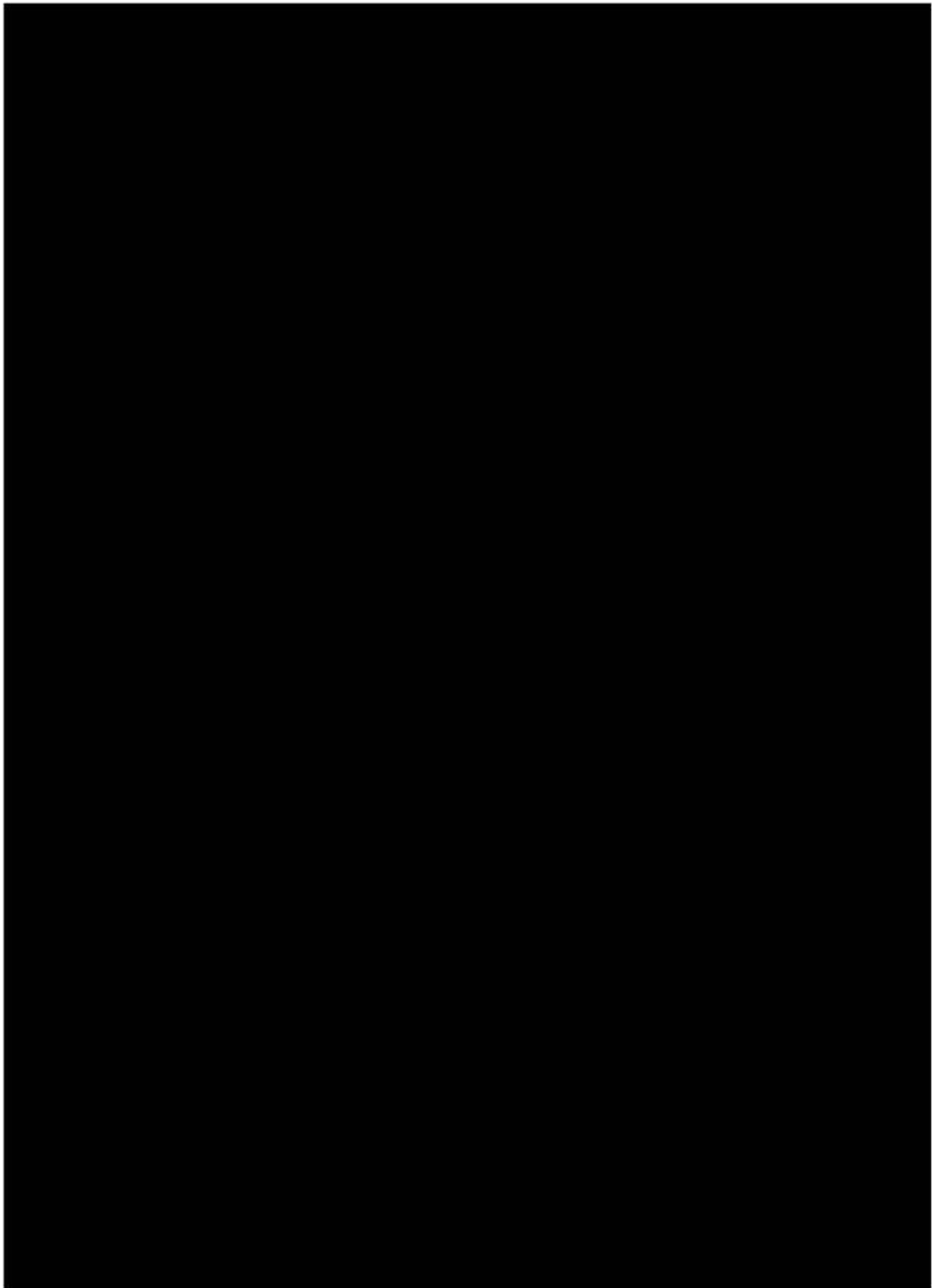


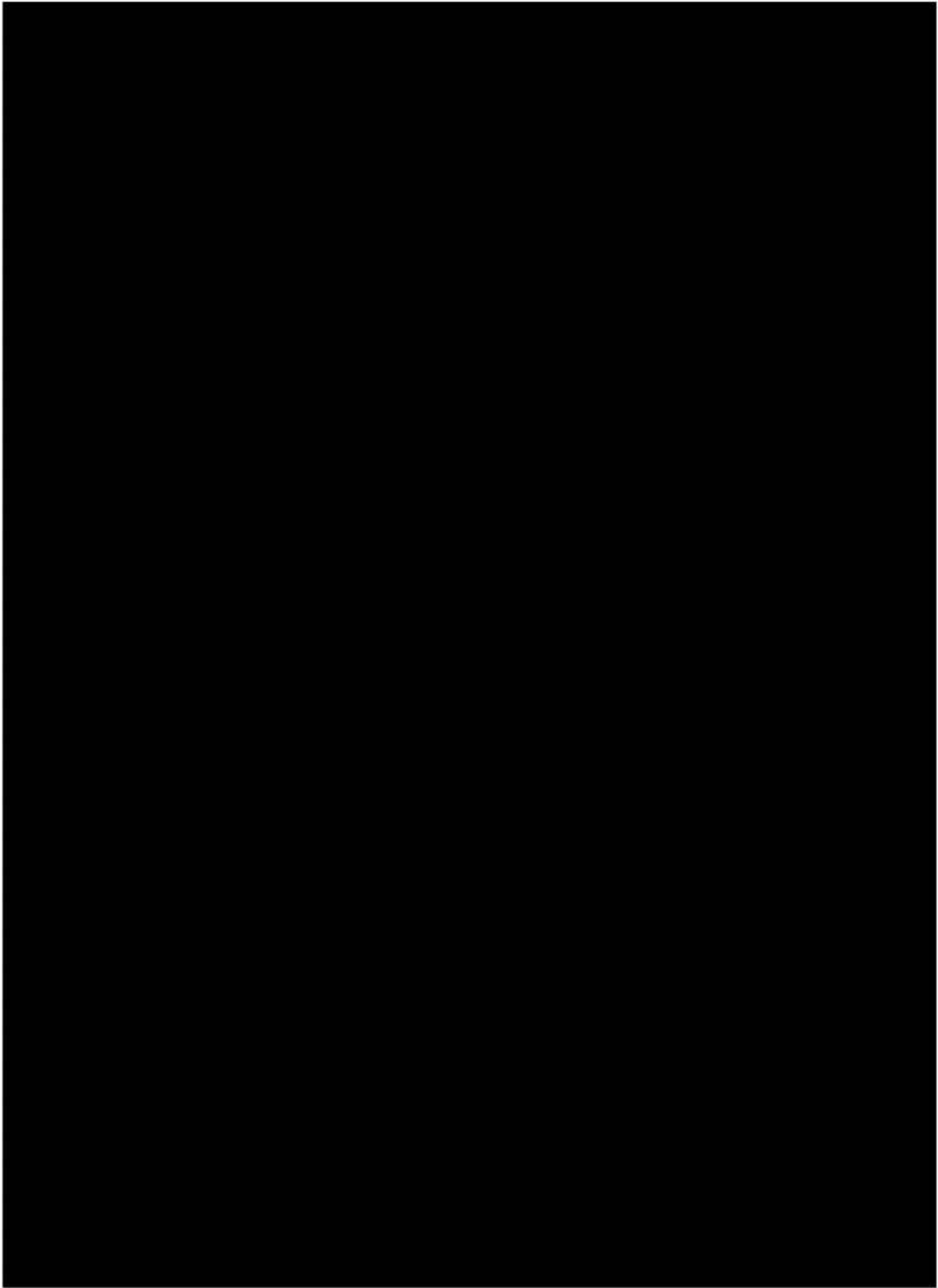


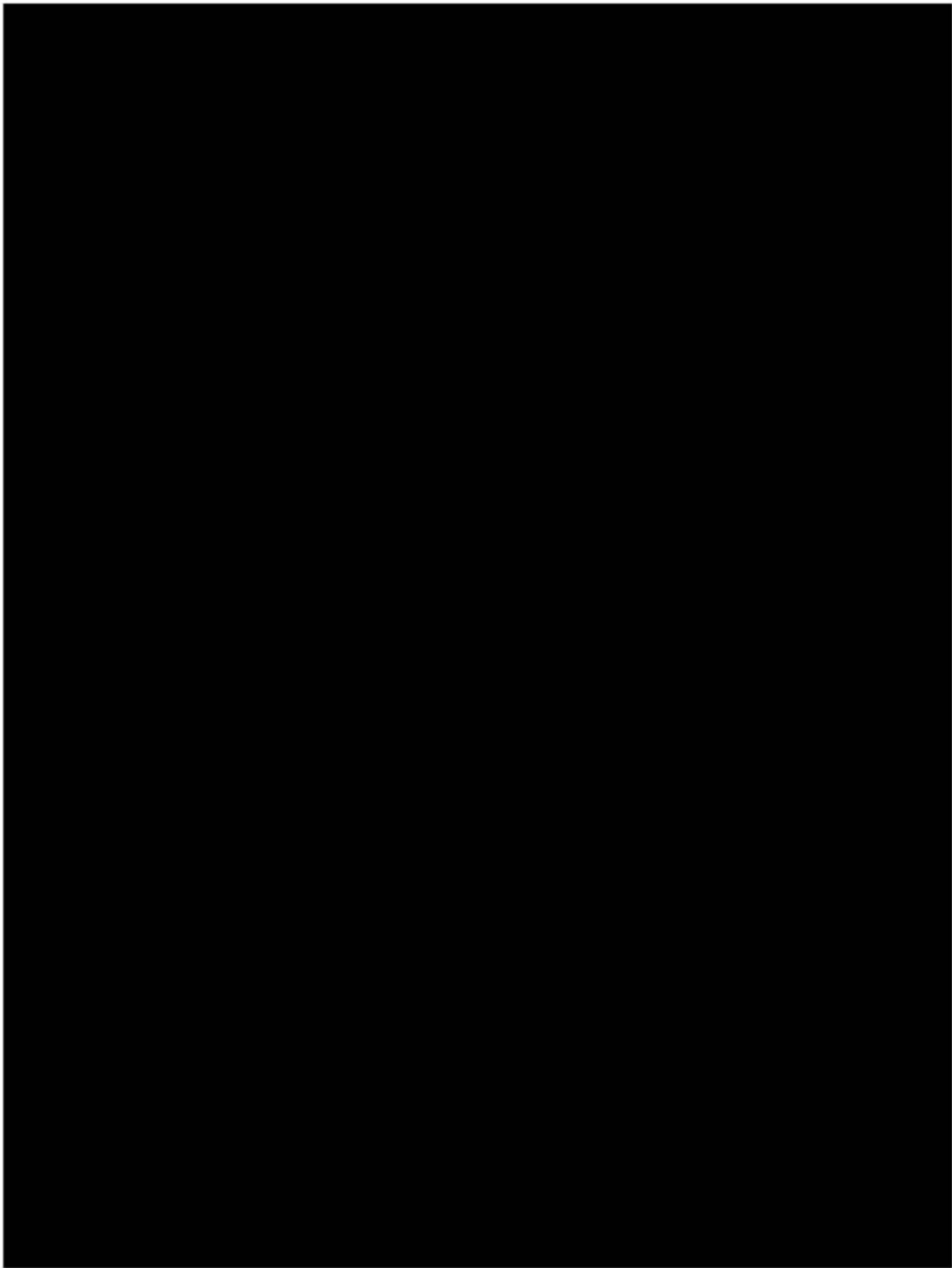


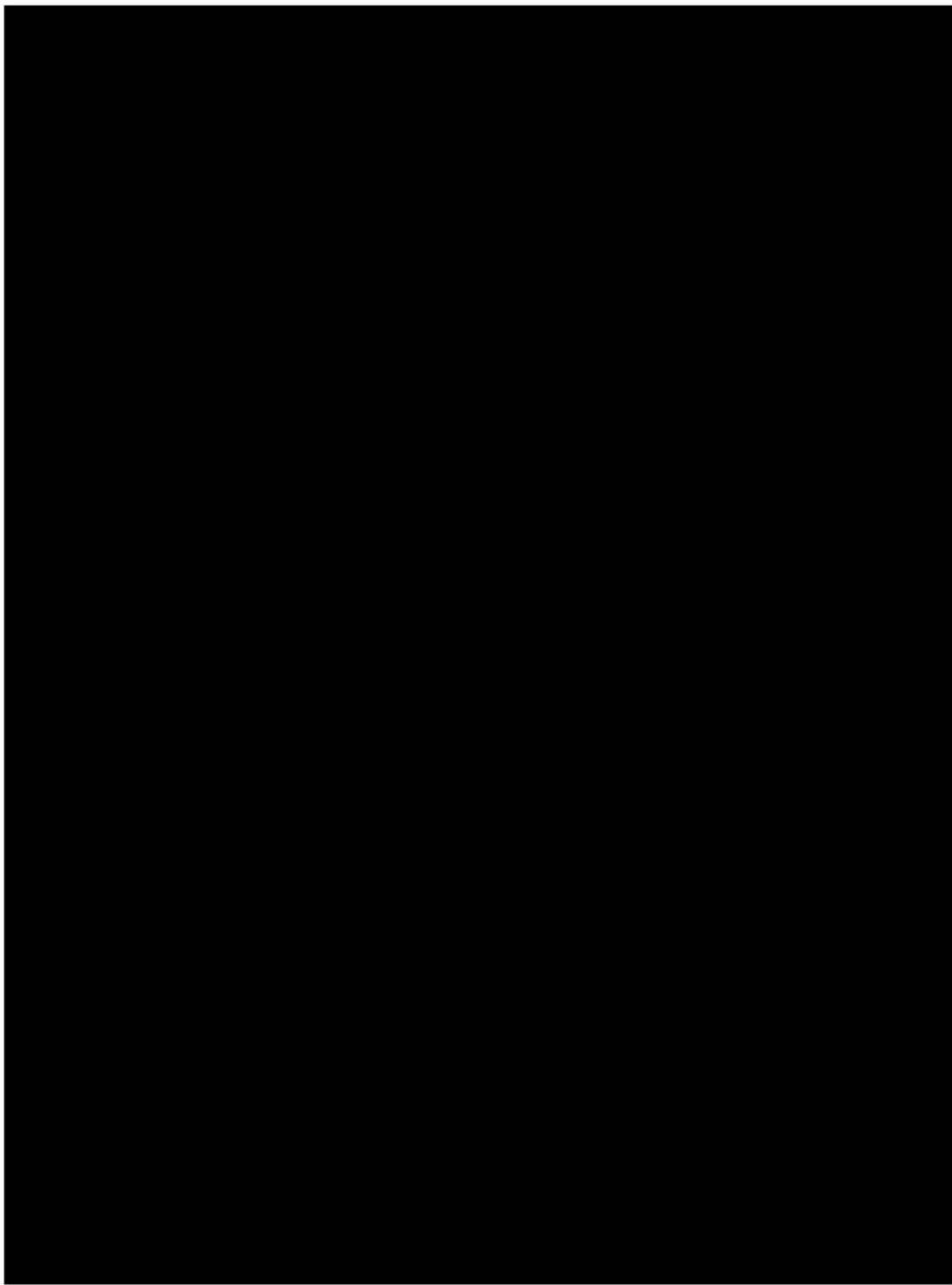


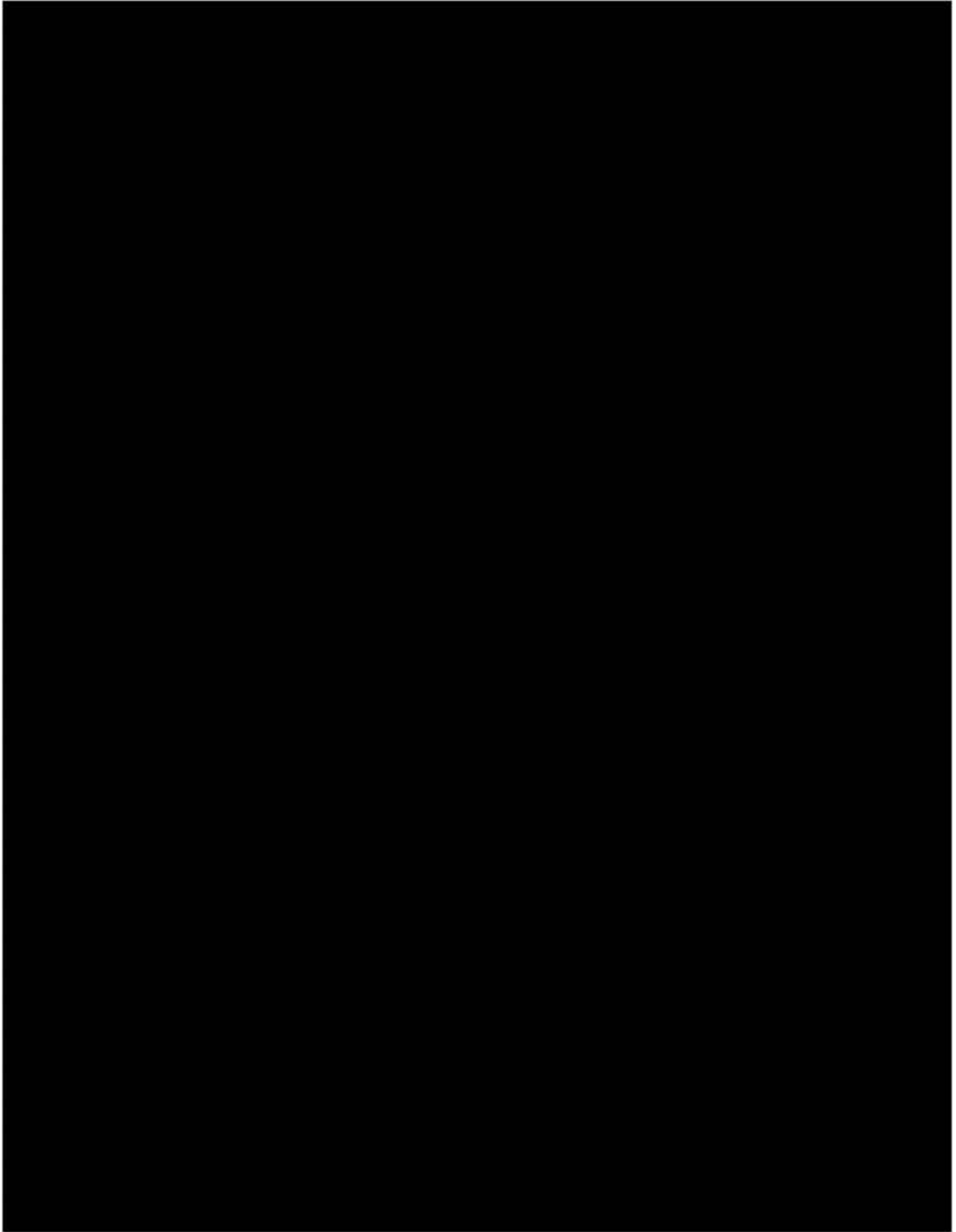


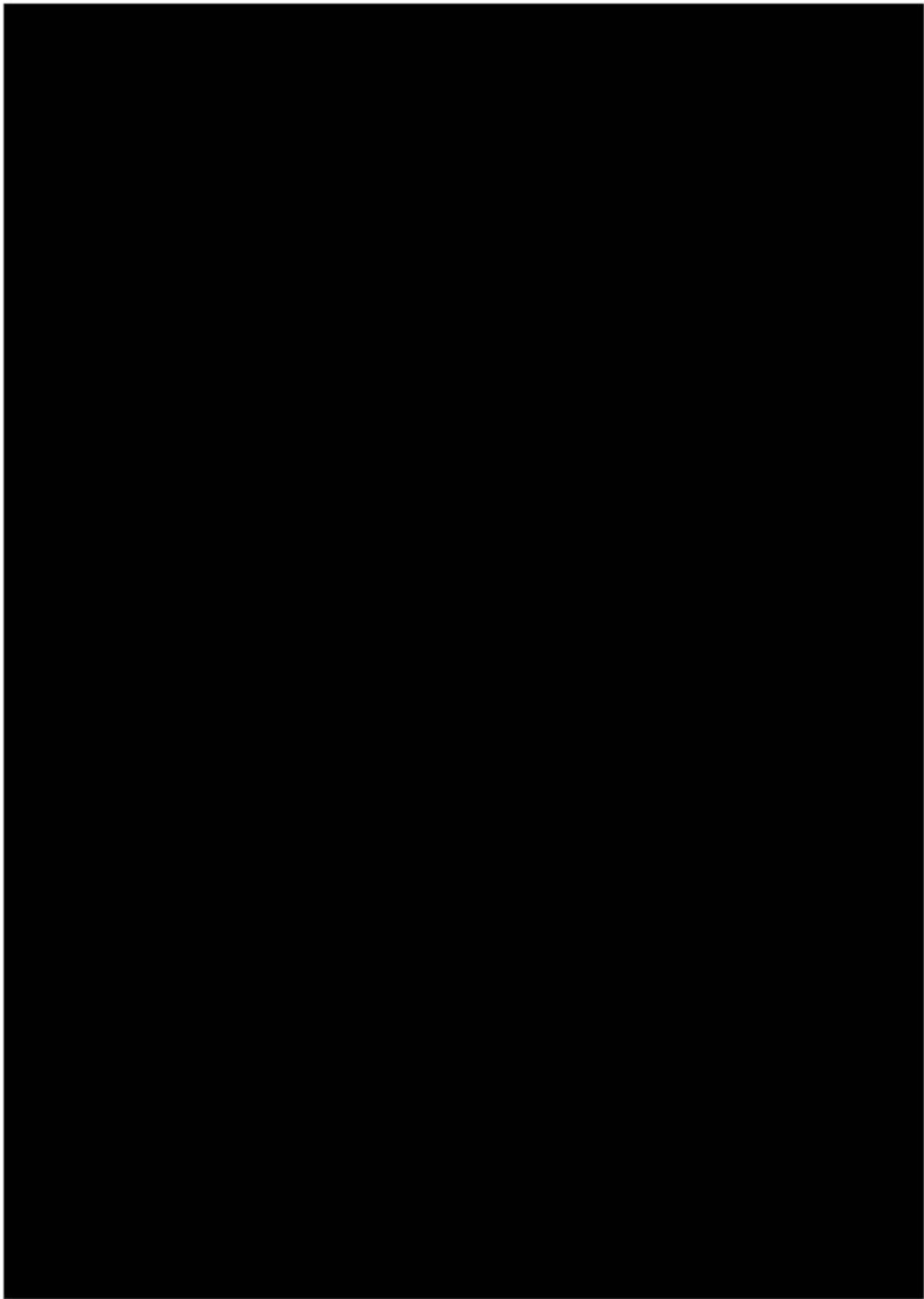












4 MS INNES: I'm going to turn to the last read-in, which the
5 cypher is PBG and the pseudonym is 'Kate'.

6 LADY SMITH: Yes.

7 MS INNES: 'Kate' was a foster carer for Strathclyde
8 Regional Council. 'Kate's' son, who had the pseudonym
9 'David', gave evidence on Day 322, which was
10 26 August 2022.

11 An applicant, 'Lauren', was placed in the care of
12 'Kate' and her husband in Beith from [REDACTED] 1985
13 until [REDACTED] 1991.

14 The successor authority is North Ayrshire Council.

15 Tuning to 'Kate's' statement, which is at
16 WIT-1-000001076:

17 "My name is 'Kate'. I was born in 1947. I have no
18 qualifications. Between the ages of 15 and 18 I worked
19 in dress making, I was a machinist. I was married
20 before and had a son with my ex-husband. My son has now
21 passed away.

22 I divorced and married again eight years later. My
23 husband worked in security at Glasgow Airport. He
24 worked shifts.

25 My husband is two years older than me, he's 77 now.

1 We have two sons together, one of which is 'David'. My
2 husband's sister passed away and her daughter came to
3 live with us. She was 10 or 11 years old at the time.
4 My oldest son was only six months older than her and my
5 other two boys were four and five at the time.

6 That was in our old house round the corner from
7 where I live now but in the same street. By the time we
8 moved here some six or seven years ago after taking in
9 my niece, both my oldest son and my niece had moved out
10 of the house."

11 From paragraphs 6 to 11, 'Kate' describes becoming
12 a foster carer for her niece. Her niece was living in
13 Manchester at the time and 'Kate' thinks that the
14 arrangement was handled more by the Manchester social
15 work department.

16 Moving to page 3, paragraph 12:

17 "I didn't have any training or qualifications before
18 becoming a foster carer. There were certainly lots of
19 checks made on us.

20 I can't remember if I needed any references to
21 become a foster carer. I couldn't even tell you how
22 long the process took. It did take a long time before
23 my niece came to stay with us. The foster care in
24 Manchester was different from up here. The foster
25 children were kept separate from the foster family's own

1 children. My niece couldn't understand how we all lived
2 as one family when she moved up here.

3 Once my niece was living here, the local social
4 workers would come now and again to see how things were
5 with her. I had her here for six or seven years before
6 I took any other kids.

7 I suppose that's when we saw more of social workers
8 up here. When we started taking kids from round here.
9 There would have been checks and assessments carried out
10 then. We also had reviews every so often but again I'm
11 not sure how often that was, maybe once a month the
12 reviews were. I really can't remember.

13 I don't think I was given any training or advice on
14 taking children with different needs or children who had
15 suffered different types of abuse. There was no child
16 protection training either, not that I can remember.

17 I had no training on disciplining children. That
18 would probably be because all the kids I had were quite
19 young."

20 Paragraph 18:

21 "I don't know if we had any training on emergency
22 foster care or training for short or long-term
23 fostering. I really don't know it's so long ago.

24 We weren't given any instructions or even a guide
25 book on foster caring or what our role was. Not that

1 I remember, I don't think so. We weren't really told
2 what was expected of us. We just went to the review
3 meetings every month where they would go over things.
4 We used to go to one in Ardrossan. That's around nine
5 or ten miles from here. It wasn't in a social work
6 office. It was just a building and we were in
7 an upstairs room. There were social workers there.

8 I really don't think that foster parents get told
9 enough about fostering. They only tell you the good
10 bits. I don't mean that in a bad way. They tell you
11 the good bits but they don't explain to you how things
12 could go bad. They really don't tell you enough.

13 I would say I saw myself as being self-employed.
14 I worked for myself.

15 I didn't really get to pick what children I got or
16 for how long I would have them. I think it started off
17 more short term and then some of the kids I had for two
18 years. The majority though were for short term. The
19 longer term ones weren't scheduled to stay here for two
20 years or more, it just went on and on. I was never told
21 how long they would be with us for.

22 I was used for emergency care. I didn't mind that
23 at all. To be honest, emergency care, short-term care,
24 long-term care, it didn't bother me.

25 I think our social work support was provided by

1 May Henderson. She was my social worker for a good few
2 years. She was fine. I would sometimes see her a lot
3 and other times it would be a good wee while in between
4 seeing her. She was based in Kilbirnie social work. We
5 also had Bridie McHugh. She was our social worker too
6 at some point.

7 I had no other support. I would say the support was
8 all right sometimes and other times it wasn't. The
9 social workers would visit me at home but not often.

10 I didn't do foster caring for the money, that's for
11 sure. Back then you didn't make much money out of it.

12 I do think foster carers should have qualifications.
13 I think that would help. Every child is different but
14 you get kids coming from a bad background. I was lucky,
15 all the kids we ever had were really good.

16 We didn't do it as a profession, that is not why we
17 did it. I don't know what should be changed really.
18 It's so different from when I did it. I think a lot of
19 people do it now as a profession. We just didn't do it
20 for that.

21 We were never paid a wage as such. The money wasn't
22 good years ago. It wasn't a job to make money. At the
23 time we did it they gave us bedsheets and things like
24 that. We were given an allowance for clothes and
25 things. Also for birthdays and Christmas. We also got

1 an allowance for school clothes but that stopped before
2 we stopped fostering. We were never paid a set amount
3 per kid or anything like that.

4 If we needed new mattresses or beds we would get
5 that. We wouldn't get support to buy the kids toys, we
6 had to pay for that ourselves. I think the support was
7 adequate. It wasn't hard to cover the things they
8 needed.

9 Saying that, though, we took the kids on holiday.
10 They were family so we always took them with us.

11 In the other house I had my three boys plus my
12 niece. After my oldest son and niece moved out, we
13 started fostering other kids."

14 The top of page 6:

15 "Then we moved down to this place. My sons were
16 around 10 and 11 by then.

17 When I started fostering I spoke to my sons about
18 it. They were both quite happy about it.

19 I can't remember how it all came about. I suppose
20 we initially had contact with social workers because of
21 my niece but I can't remember how it all started. But
22 it would probably have been through May Henderson or
23 Bridie McHugh from North Ayrshire social work."

24 Moving onto the next page at paragraph 40:

25 "We've actually fostered 160 children over the 32

1 years we fostered. I did have a diary which had the
2 name of every kid, when I got them and when they went
3 away written in it.

4 The youngest, I got her when she was five days old.
5 She's now my daughter. The two oldest were 'Lauren' and
6 her sister. I'm not sure how old they were when they
7 came to us. Maybe 8 and 10.

8 The most foster kids I've had at any one time was
9 four. I've actually had a few fours and each four were
10 siblings.

11 I've never been related to any of the foster
12 children. The only one would have been my niece.
13 I never knew any of the kids we fostered before they
14 came to us, they were all placed here by the Local
15 Authority in North Ayrshire.

16 The only foster child who changed her name was my
17 niece. She didn't want people at school to know about
18 her so she changed her surname to ours. 'Lauren' and
19 her sister did too, but don't ask me how. I don't know
20 how or why they changed their name to ours. I really
21 can't remember why. Two other children's names were
22 changed to ours but we adopted them. That's the only
23 children whose names were changed.

24 We got a boy just before his second birthday and
25 adopted him."

1 Moving over the page to paragraph 47:

2 "I would first be notified by a phone call and just
3 asked if I could take the child or children. We could
4 be phoned any time, even through the night. We have had
5 emergency placements and received the child a few hours
6 later. I feel I always had the opportunity to refuse
7 children if I wanted to, but I don't think I ever did.
8 I don't think any children we fostered was ever
9 deliberated matched to me as a foster carer. They all
10 fitted in well to the family though. Sometimes I was
11 told about the child's background, sometimes I wasn't.

12 I don't think I was ever given any care history or
13 child's educational history. I don't remember getting
14 any medical information either. I really can't
15 remember. They just came and placed the children.

16 There weren't many of them but some would still be
17 in contact with their parents. After the children were
18 placed with me, they would tell me that."

19 Moving to paragraph 52:

20 "We were never given any sort of care plan. This
21 was all young children that I had. We never really got
22 anything like a care plan or anything that told us about
23 the history of the child. Quite a lot of the children
24 we had were emergency placements. The kids were taken
25 off the parents and brought straight here. Other

1 children had previous carers but I never met any of
2 these carers. I never met any of the children before
3 they came to stay here either. I was never asked to go
4 and meet with any of the children and they never came
5 here to visit.

6 I never had problems settling the children in. They
7 were fine. My own children were fine with it too.
8 I think the kids settled in easier because of my own
9 kids being here. They would sit with the kids and play
10 with their toys with them. They interacted with the kid
11 well."

12 Moving down to paragraph 59:

13 "The two older children, 'Lauren' and her sister,
14 never did any chores around the house. They did
15 nothing. My sons never really did any chores either.

16 The older girls slept in the side bedroom. My boys
17 were in the back room and we were at the front.

18 'Lauren's' sister was a bed-wetter. I don't
19 remember any of the others wetting the bed. If she wet
20 the bed she was told to bring her sheet down. She was
21 only here three weeks before she stopped wetting the
22 bed. During those three weeks I think she wet the bed
23 nearly every night. Then she stopped. I would just ask
24 her to bring her sheet down. That was it."

25 From paragraphs 62 to 90, 'Kate' describes some

1 aspects of the daily routine in the home in foster care.

2 Moving to paragraph 91 on page 14:

3 "We didn't really have anyone to discipline because
4 they were all kids, bairns. 'Lauren's' sister was the
5 only one I had to keep on top of. I didn't discipline
6 them. When 'Lauren's' sister did what she did, she knew
7 what she had done.

8 She stole out of every local shop. It didn't matter
9 what it was. I didn't discipline her. What I did was
10 I took her back to the shop she had stolen out of.
11 I told the shopkeepers what she had stolen so they knew
12 what she looked like if she went back. She was there
13 with me. That was to every shop.

14 But it wasn't worth my while, she just kept
15 stealing. I couldn't discipline her for something she
16 was constantly doing. There were a lot of shops in the
17 area at that time. Nothing seemed to get through to
18 her.

19 I knew because 'Lauren' told me every time her
20 sister stole. It was more or less to let us see that
21 she was the good one and to get one up on her sister.
22 I didn't know that until quite a while after that that
23 'Lauren' was outside the shop when her sister was in
24 stealing. I asked her where she was on one occasion her
25 sister stole and she told me she was outside. That's

1 how I found out. I asked her what happened with the
2 stuff her sister stole and if she had eaten it and she
3 said that she had. I told her that she was as bad as
4 her sister in that case.

5 Her sister was probably 11 or 12 at the time, I'm
6 not sure. We even tried to get the local policeman to
7 help. He knew everybody. But even that didn't stop it.

8 The social work knew about it and one of them asked
9 us if we could give her a bit more pocket money so that
10 she didn't have to steal. We said everybody in the
11 house was the same and she wasn't being singled out and
12 given more than the others were getting.

13 We were never given any advice on disciplining. The
14 social work always seemed to stick up for the kids.
15 Everyone in the village knew me so they more or less let
16 'Lauren's' sister off with it every time. I think that
17 got to her, knowing that she got off with it. I didn't
18 keep any record of her stealing.

19 The children were never physically punished. I did
20 hit 'Lauren's' sister one day with a slipper. I don't
21 know whether I hit her with it or threw the slipper at
22 her. I can't remember. I was getting so uptight with
23 this constant stealing. That was the only time I ever
24 did that.

25 I don't know if that was the time I had gone into

1 the side bedroom. There were big cupboards in there.
2 I don't know why I was in her cupboard. There was
3 a pile of stuff in there. There was everything. There
4 was more stuff in there than in the local chemist.
5 I never usually went in that cupboard. I don't know if
6 'Lauren' had told me that day or not. The amount of
7 stuff in there was ridiculous. Stuff she wouldn't even
8 use. It was all out of the local chemist.

9 She continued to steal after that. Not sure if she
10 was 10 or 11 at that time. I got called to the school
11 three times because of her. The first time it was
12 because she had stolen lots of things out of a shop.
13 Another time it was because she had stolen money out of
14 the teacher's desk. There was another time 'Lauren's'
15 sister had told someone she was sexually abused. The
16 school got the police in. She said her uncle had
17 sexually abused her. I told them that she didn't call
18 my husband uncle, she called him her dad. But she said
19 her uncle had sexually abused her when she was one year
20 old and when she was sitting in her pram.

21 The police just stood and shook their heads as she
22 said she was one year old. The social work was informed
23 about that. I think that was before she went to the
24 high school so she would have been 11.

25 I got on well with my foster children. I treated

1 them all just like my own kids. I showed them affection
2 and supported them when they were down. I didn't have
3 many problems with them really.

4 I would say there was a good relationship between
5 the foster kids and my own children. My husband got on
6 well with them as well. The foster children were
7 treated the same as my own children. There's no way
8 I would treat them any different."

9 Moving on over the page to paragraph 108:

10 "We fostered siblings quite a few times.

11 I don't remember 'Lauren' and her sister having
12 contact with their sister. Their brother was in
13 a List D School nearby but I don't know if 'Lauren's'
14 sister ever went to meet him."

15 Moving down to paragraph 112:

16 "'Lauren' and her sister's social worker would
17 visit. They didn't visit very often but they did come.
18 If they wanted to speak to the girls alone they would
19 take them away somewhere and take them for a drink or
20 something. I think Liz Johnstone was one of their
21 social workers before they went into the home.

22 I would say all the kids' social workers got in
23 touch now and again.

24 My husband didn't really get on with the social
25 worker managers. He didn't believe the things they were

1 saying. He walked out a meeting once and asked one of
2 them to leave our house. That was Moira Campbell from
3 Largs. She wasn't our social worker but was involved in
4 some things. She was one of the head social workers.
5 For some reason she wanted to take the bairns from here
6 and place them somewhere else.

7 We never had inspections or visits to look at the
8 placements. I think they knew everything was all right.
9 When 'Lauren' and her sister came, the social worker did
10 come to the house and my husband took them upstairs to
11 show them the girls' bedroom. My husband had decorated
12 it and they thought it was nice. That's the only time
13 I can remember our house being inspected. That was the
14 girls' social worker that came.

15 I think I went to social work reviews every three
16 months. A social worker would come and get me and the
17 kids and take me to the review. There was a panel and
18 they would decide whether the kids were to stay with us
19 or to go back home. I didn't really have too much of
20 an input at the meetings. They asked me how the kids
21 were getting on and how I was coping. That was all.
22 I was just there for the kids and to talk to the
23 parents.

24 I don't remember ever going to a Children's Hearing.
25 The social work knew about 'Lauren's' sister stealing

1 before she came to us and they did tell us about it.
2 She was here about two years I think, but I don't think
3 there was ever a children's panel for 'Lauren's' sister.
4 I'm not saying for definite because I don't know.

5 If social workers wanted 'Lauren' and her sister's
6 views they would probably ask that when they took them
7 away for coffees or whatever. I never asked them how
8 they were feeling because they always seemed all right
9 to me. I'm not sure how often they went out with their
10 social worker, a couple of times, I don't know. That
11 was to give them some space and be able to tell the
12 social worker if there were any problems.

13 In my opinion, you have to watch what's being said.
14 I've got a grandson who has just turned four two days
15 ago. Some of the things he comes out with. If you
16 weren't here, you wouldn't believe what he says. My
17 grandson would come in and say his mum shouted at him.
18 I know his mum doesn't shout at kids. You just can't
19 believe everything kids say. You have to watch what
20 kids are like. I'm not saying they always tell lies,
21 they don't, but you have to look into it.

22 Kids are good at saying things. I can understand
23 the social work department believing kids. They have
24 to. But I've always believed the social work believe
25 the kids no matter what they said. Instead of enquiring

1 into it and trying to find out the truth. The social
2 work always believed them. I know they've got to do
3 their job, I'm not saying that, but they have to try and
4 find out the truth before they go any further. I feel
5 that was never done.

6 I know they have to listen to the kids to see what
7 they are saying. I just don't think they should believe
8 everything they say. They need to enquire into it and
9 not just accuse people. It's not just me that I'm
10 talking about. I'm talking about different things that
11 have happened with other foster carers I was friendly
12 with. Things were said and they believed the kids. One
13 thing I remember that a kid had said that they didn't
14 get a knife and fork to eat their dinner. It was a load
15 of rubbish. Just silly things but it's kids saying it.
16 Do you believe them?

17 I was never given any advice on keeping records. If
18 there was things like health issues I would just phone
19 the social work. I wouldn't write anything down about
20 it.

21 I did keep a record of every kid I ever got, when
22 they arrived and when they went back home or for
23 adoption. If I knew the child's mum and dad's name
24 I would write that in the book as well. That was my
25 book and only I had access to it.

1 The police took that book. A policewoman came in
2 here and asked me for it. I don't know how she knew
3 about it. I phoned, tried everything, but it's never
4 been returned to me. We've never had the photographs
5 the police took back. We've had nothing back and that
6 was 16 years ago.

7 For me all of this stems from when I threw 'Lauren'
8 out the back door. I told her not to come back. That
9 was 21 years ago. It was something to do with money,
10 I can't remember. 'Lauren' was made bankrupt, twice.
11 It was also to do with 'Lauren's' wee girl. I watched
12 her until 'Lauren' came home from her work. I'm the
13 old-fashioned type, 5 o'clock is dinner time. Some days
14 'Lauren' would come in here quite the thing and eat her
15 dinner. Her daughter and the foster child I adopted
16 would eat their dinner quite the thing. But when
17 'Lauren' had a boyfriend it was different. The
18 boyfriend would stand round the corner. She would come
19 in and drag the bairn away. She wasn't allowed to
20 finish her dinner or anything.

21 I always knew there was a guy there when she did
22 this. I was getting angry because it wasn't fair on the
23 child. There was only a year between 'Lauren's'
24 daughter and my adopted daughter and they were really
25 pally. I was fed up with the way she was treating the

1 bairn. I couldn't take it any more. It just blew up
2 from there and I put her out. I missed the bairn,
3 I must admit. I classed her as my granddaughter.
4 Really, it stemmed from there.

5 Keeping records would be a good thing. Although
6 would kids at that age like what's being written down?
7 We didn't keep records, not then. I don't know what
8 it's like now."

9 Moving on to paragraph 133 on page 21, just over the
10 page:

11 "When 'Lauren' left here she went to the Dalrymple
12 Place. I don't know where her sister went to. I can't
13 remember her leaving. She used to phone 'Lauren' and
14 tell her she should be in the same place she was in.
15 She would tell 'Lauren' that she just needed to rip her
16 trainers and she would get a new pair and that she just
17 ripped her jumpers and they had to buy her new ones.
18 That was all 'Lauren' would tell me when she came off
19 the phone having spoken to her sister. I think that is
20 why 'Lauren' went back into care. Her sister taunted
21 her so much telling her how good things were.

22 'Lauren' used to phone and ask us to come and see
23 her. We visited her a few times there. It was
24 a 10-mile drive from here. She wanted to keep seeing
25 us.

1 I don't know how long 'Lauren' was here after her
2 sister left. It was all written down in my book.

3 I don't think there was any complaint system for
4 foster carers if they weren't happy about something. If
5 the social work said the kids were going back, there was
6 nothing you could do about it.

7 I have no previous convictions.

8 I have never seen any behaviour by foster carers
9 that I would say was abusive. Not in my 32 years of
10 fostering.

11 There is no discipline I saw in the past that
12 I would now consider abusive.

13 I had a pal who lived down the road. If me and my
14 adopted daughter argued about something, she would say
15 she was going down the road to my pal. That would be
16 the same for 'Lauren' and her sister. They could always
17 speak to my friend. She was a good listener and I think
18 the kids would feel they could speak to her.

19 I would also speak to my friend if I had worries or
20 anything. We were close, more like sisters. I knew her
21 from when she was 14. She died five years ago.

22 I think this is why 'Lauren' has brought all of this
23 up. She knew the ones that knew her are not here now.

24 I never saw or reported anything that concerned me
25 about things happening to foster children. The only

1 thing I reported was 'Lauren's' sister stealing. That
2 was causing me concern. I told the local policeman who
3 I was friendly with. He was good and good with my two
4 boys too. I contacted him and he came round to the
5 house. 'Lauren's' sister was never reported for
6 anything. The policeman just tried to help.

7 I'm not aware of anyone else reporting concerns they
8 had about foster children.

9 Apart from 'Lauren', I've never been complained
10 about in relation to abuse of foster children."

11 I'm just going to move into the next section at the
12 bottom of this page, which is to do with specific
13 allegations.

14 LADY SMITH: Yes.

15 MS INNES: I will not repeat the allegations in the quote
16 word for word, I will be summarising them to some
17 extent.

18 LADY SMITH: We have heard them already in 'Lauren's'
19 evidence and some have been alluded to in the course of
20 this statement so far, I can see that.

21 MS INNES: Yes, my Lady.

22 I will of course read the responses out in full.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 MS INNES: At paragraph 149:

25 "'Lauren' has said in her statement to the Inquiry

1 that there was no choice for breakfast. If not eaten,
2 cereal would be put down for lunch and dinner and that
3 they weren't allowed to drink. The thing is that
4 I didn't put their cereal out to start with. They put
5 their own out. They were big enough to do their own.
6 I never punished 'Lauren'. That's one thing I never
7 did. I did not abuse her. I've never done that with
8 any child I have ever had. I mean if they didn't eat
9 their breakfast they didn't eat it. I remember those
10 times well and my memory has not been affected by the
11 passage of time. This has been said because of revenge.
12 If a child was treated in that way, I would say that
13 would be abuse.

14 'Lauren' has said that if you didn't like the food
15 you had to eat it and gave an example of me buying
16 a whole cow's tongue one time and boiling and peeling it
17 in front of us."

18 'Kate' says:

19 "I maybe cooked a tongue. I would have taken the
20 skin off it. I did that for my adopted daughter and her
21 partner about two years ago. The look of it was enough
22 for them. I asked them if they wanted to try it and
23 they said no. I would never have made anyone eat tongue
24 because it's not a thing that people like. I don't
25 think I would have ever done that in front of 'Lauren'.

1 You couldn't get it like that. I don't think Morrisons
2 does it now but you used to get it in quarters.
3 I wouldn't give anyone tongue. It's not everyone that
4 likes it. That allegation is wrong. It's just rubbish.
5 The passage of time has not affected my recollection.
6 Not to that sort of thing. She's just saying everything
7 to try and get back at me. If a child was treated like
8 that, I believe it would be abuse.

9 'Lauren' has also said that there was never any
10 affection from me, that I constantly shouted and that it
11 was pure aggression from me all the time. I've got
12 a lassie of 25 who would tell you herself that if I was
13 to do that to her she would go off her head. She never
14 sat on my knee. She did as a baby. Even her two bairns
15 will not give me a kiss, cuddle or anything. It's
16 ridiculous to turn around and say that. What would she
17 want me to say, I love you? The passage of time has not
18 affected my memory. This has been said to get revenge.
19 In terms of that being abuse, I would say yes and no.
20 It isn't everyone that wants that. My husband would not
21 have sat on your knee as a child. Or give you a kiss or
22 a cuddle. No way would he have done that. It's not
23 every kid that does that.

24 'Lauren' has said that she had to wear my son's
25 hand-me-down clothes. She refers to us as the people

1 who were supposed to be adopting them but thinks I was
2 getting too much money for fostering her and that's why
3 the adoption didn't go ahead. That is lies. The social
4 work tried to push us into adopting. They kept asking
5 us to adopt them and we said no way. My reason was that
6 I knew the problem and there was just no way we were
7 taking that on. That was the reason we didn't adopt.
8 They knew what 'Lauren's' sister was like before she
9 came here. The bit about boys' clothes? I have photos
10 there of them with the clothes on. There is no way that
11 they are in boys' clothes. My memory has not been
12 affected through time. I'm not that thick. It's as
13 I've said, for revenge. I would say that would be abuse
14 if a child was treated like that.

15 'Lauren' has also said that I put my son 'David' in
16 the bath with her and my other son with her sister. She
17 has said that the boys wore swimming trunks and the
18 girls were naked. She says that they had no privacy in
19 the bathroom and they weren't allowed to lock it and
20 there was a glass door. That's rubbish. I didn't
21 realise that my adopted son was here when 'Lauren' was
22 here. It was a green door on the bathroom. We did not
23 have a glass door until my adopted son was quite a big
24 age. I don't know the dates they left here. I have
25 a photograph when my adopted son was around four and the

1 glass door wasn't there then. I don't know why these
2 things have been said. It's just badness. If that was
3 true, I accept that would be abuse.

4 'Lauren' further said that I got her and her sister
5 up every Saturday morning at about 8 o'clock to scrub
6 the kitchen and bathroom from top to bottom and clean
7 the living room while my sons stayed in bed and didn't
8 have to do anything. That is a joke. I had lino in the
9 bathroom and the kitchen. The kitchen was small. Where
10 do you scrub lino? To get up and do the housework is
11 a load of rubbish, absolute rubbish. They did nothing.
12 I never asked any of them to do anything. They didn't
13 even wash or dry a cup, nothing. My memory of this has
14 not been affected through time. It is the same answer,
15 revenge. I don't know if that would be abuse. It
16 depends what people class as abuse but I wouldn't make
17 bairns do housework.

18 'Lauren' has said that her experience with us was
19 the worst she had in her whole time in care. She says
20 that she got battered by me for little things, that
21 I would slap her repeatedly on the body and head. She
22 says that she would be terrified and left with bruises
23 quite often. That's lies. That's absolutely rubbish.
24 It's not possible time has affected my memory. This has
25 been said for revenge. I accept that if a child was

1 treated like that, it would be abuse.

2 'Lauren' says that she ran away one time. She says
3 that I beat her with a Boys' Brigade belt when she came
4 back. She says that she had marks on her back but she
5 never showed them to anybody. I don't understand her at
6 all. It's just wrong. It's not possible I've forgotten
7 over time. I'll say it again, this has been said for
8 revenge. I accept that would be abuse if true.

9 'Lauren' has also said that she had problems with
10 bed-wetting. She says that I would make her change her
11 sheets and ridicule her. She says that she was not
12 allowed to get out of bed. This is just revenge to get
13 back at me for putting her out the house. The passage
14 of time has not affected my memory. If a child was
15 treated like that it would be abuse.

16 'Lauren' has said that when she was about 10, I put
17 a terry towelling nappy on her because she had wet the
18 bed and sent her to Sunday School in it. Can you
19 picture a lassie going out with a terry towelling nappy
20 on? I don't know how it would have fit right. What's
21 the first thing you would have done if you went out with
22 it on? You would take it off as soon as you could.
23 Take a pair of pants with you and put them on. It's
24 lies and said for revenge. The passage of time has not
25 affected my memory of this. It would be abuse if it

1 happened. It's not very nice, is it?

2 'Lauren' has also said that her sister got battered
3 more than her because she used to steal, that I didn't
4 hit my sons but they were often present when the girls
5 were being beaten. It's lies. The passage of time has
6 not affected my memory. She has said this for revenge.
7 I would accept treating a child like this would be
8 abuse.

9 'Lauren' has said that she was regularly sexually
10 abused by my son 'David' in the house and that as far as
11 she is concerned there was no way that I didn't hear
12 what was going on. She says that I had three older
13 brothers and she believes that I was abused myself and
14 therefore thought it was acceptable. That is terrible
15 saying that. That is absolutely shocking. I'm not even
16 answering to that. Did you hear my adopted son coming
17 down the stairs for his lunch? Well, you should have
18 heard him. It's not possible the passage of time has
19 affected my memory. No, it's not. You know what it is?
20 Said for revenge. That would be abuse if a child was
21 treated like that.

22 There have been so many people accused of things.
23 When they said those things, the social just shut us
24 down like that, without finding out or enquiring into
25 it. I feel the social work department were a lot to

1 blame.

2 I had one child going for adoption at the time. The
3 couple adopting him were visiting him here. They left
4 him here for a couple of weeks after the allegation. It
5 was to save putting the child somewhere until he went to
6 the couple. They just left him here until the couple
7 got him. That was it. Because of the allegations, we
8 never fostered again. That wasn't our choice.

9 Why would 'Lauren' come back here? Why would she
10 leave her daughter with me to go to her work? We took
11 her daughter to Spain with us. Why would she allow us
12 to do that? Why would you leave your child with someone
13 who was abusive in the way she's described? I can't
14 fathom that out. Because if someone was like that to
15 me, there's no way my child would be near them. We have
16 lots of photos of 'Lauren' enjoying herself. Photos of
17 her with all her clothes on, not with boys' clothes on.

18 I felt sorry for her daughter. There was only
19 a year between her and my adopted daughter and they were
20 so close. My adopted daughter missed her. I'm angry.
21 Imagine saying that about my three brothers, that is
22 shocking. One of my brothers is awfully clever and he
23 would take her to the cleaners. I think it's
24 an absolute disgrace, terrible.

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 'Kate' signed her statement on 15 September 2022.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS INNES: My Lady, that concludes the read-ins for today

7 and the evidence for this part of the Inquiry.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 MS INNES: The case study, rather. We will have evidence

10 again from Local Authorities commencing on 1 November.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 That's approximately four weeks of no evidence and

13 then back to probably two weeks, is that the current

14 plan?

15 MS INNES: Yes, so it's three weeks with no evidence.

16 LADY SMITH: Sorry, three weeks with no evidence, yes.

17 MS INNES: And then two weeks of evidence from Local

18 Authorities.

19 LADY SMITH: Hopefully that will bring us to the end of the

20 oral evidence in relation to this case study; is that

21 right?

22 MS INNES: Yes.

23 Then thereafter there will be obviously closing

24 submissions. The dates will be confirmed in due course.

25 LADY SMITH: (Overspeaking)

1 Thank you all very much indeed. I'll rise now until
2 we sit again in November and it just remains for me to
3 wish you all a good weekend.

4 Thank you.

5 (3.40 pm)

6 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on
7 Tuesday, 1 November 2022)

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