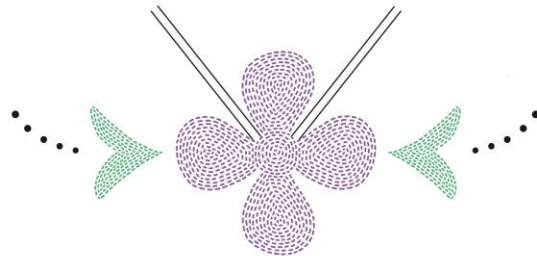


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre
Edmonton, Alberta**



PUBLIC

November 7, 2017

**Statement - Volume 79
Doris Gratton**

Statement gathered by Frank Hope

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NOTE

Where not required by other statute, redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

Edmonton, Alberta

1
2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, November 7th, 2017, at 9:35
3 a.m.

4 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** I really like your leather
5 jacket.

6 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Thank you. My aunty
7 gave it to me.

8 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Yeah. I -- I have one -- I
9 have one similar like that too.

10 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes. If -- when I get
11 out of my depression and get out of my house, I'll start
12 going to the Friendship Centre, and they can teach me
13 beading, and I'll probably use this as a -- put some beads
14 on it because I wanted something --

15 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Yeah, (indiscernible).
16 Yeah, yeah.

17 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Like this.

18 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Yeah.

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** That's nice.

20 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah.

21 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Okay. Here we go. My name
22 is Frank Hope, statement gatherer. Today is Tuesday,
23 November 7th, 2017, and we are in Edmonton, Alberta,
24 Edmonton Inn and Conference Centre. Today we're speaking
25 with Doris Gratton, and in the room we have a health

1 support Kate Langham, and the start time is 9:35 a.m.

2 So we'll start, Doris, what is it that you
3 want the Commissioners to know?

4 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Well, first of all,
5 *tân'si, boozhoo*, hello. As a survivor, I want to share my
6 stories, and I'm hoping it'll help others like me.

7 Again, thank you. My name is Doris Marie
8 Gratton, and I am a recently reinstated First Nation
9 Aboriginal Cree woman from the Driftpile First Nations, and
10 I'm a third-generation residential school survivor, which
11 my grandparents Emma and Albert Noux (ph) attended.

12 Let me begin with my parents. My father is
13 a Métis from North Battleford, Saskatchewan. His mother
14 was disowned from her family because she made children with
15 an Indian. When they divorced, they sold the farm and
16 moved to Edmonton. This is where he met my mother, a
17 Treaty Cree woman from Driftpile First Nations who had been
18 given to a woman from Groussard [sic], Alberta, to be
19 raised because her biological parents had too many mouths
20 to feed, and it was their hope that she would be safe from
21 having to go to residential schools.

22 So as you can see, my conflicts and burdens
23 began before I even arrived at the Royal Alex on
24 [birthdate] 1972, here in Edmonton, Alberta. Both families
25 agreed that if I was to succeed, we must work together to

1 show me their ways, but the hatred proved to be
2 overwhelming, and my father became a terrible alcoholic and
3 severely beat my mother on a daily basis. We were
4 constantly moving, and mom kept making more sisters, and we
5 lost one due to crib death.

6 Many times, my mother tried to take us and
7 run, but he found us. I remember when I was 4 and we were
8 hiding at my auntie's house, and my grandmother just
9 finished telling us or bedtime stories, and we settled in
10 for the night, when my mother heard a noise, and she said,
11 stay here, and ran upstairs. I was so scared and she was
12 taking too long. I slowly crept upstairs to find my father
13 with a knife and my mother in a chair with her head back,
14 and she screamed, go back downstairs. I screamed, no,
15 Daddy, I love Mommy, please, Daddy, no. He grabbed me, and
16 we ran out, and he threw me in the car and told me he loved
17 me, and then the lights came and they took me back home to
18 my mother.

19 We moved again to High Prairie, Alberta, to
20 my mother's adopted mother's house. Shortly after, my
21 father found us, and again, Mom refused to go with him, and
22 he stabbed my grandmother for protecting my mother. So
23 back to the city she came, and these people came and took
24 me and my sisters away and put us into foster care.

25 My father's mother got me out, and my

1 mother's mother got the baby out, but the two sisters would
2 still be there until Mom would finish what they needed her
3 to do. This is where she met my dad, [Step-father]. He
4 helped Mom get a lawyer, and she got us back home. He
5 helped us rebuild as a family. Mom said she was a hippy
6 who had found her military brat. He became our protector
7 and raised us girls to educate our mind.

8 I started school here in Edmonton, not like
9 every other child. I was strapped for stealing money from
10 my parents to buy crayons because I didn't want the
11 24-pack; I wanted the 64-pack. So at 5 years old, I was
12 strapped. Nobody'd ever laid a hand on me before. I had
13 this man strap me, and then he shamed my mother. My mother
14 kicked my butt literally all the way back home, and then
15 when my dad got home, I got spanked again. I can honestly
16 say I had never broken the law stealing. I never stole in
17 my life, as I made sure that nobody would ever strap me
18 again.

19 My next experience was in Grade 4. My first
20 day of class at a Catholic school here in Edmonton, the
21 teacher asked me, if there's one ounce of Indian in your
22 blood, please stand at the front of the class. There was
23 about four or five of us. She began to say that we
24 belonged at the residential school, not in hers to burden
25 her students and her school, for them to beware because we

1 would only become drunks and gamblers playing bingo and not
2 home taking care any of children. She said we can't be
3 taught. I will always remember the smile of that day wiped
4 off my face and replaced with tears. That lasted, yes,
5 even until today.

6 I remember going home and crying to my
7 mother, who walked me back, and we got a half-hearted
8 apology. Mom and Dad tried to reassure me that she was
9 wrong and I could prove her wrong by learning their ways
10 and succeeding. This is when they quit their party and
11 joined AA.

12 By Grade 7, I failed my first year because
13 an uncle had raped me, and I didn't want anyone to know, so
14 they put me with a counsellor and a resource teacher, who
15 would sexually assault me and my sister [Sister 1]. He was
16 dismissed and nothing was said. I remember him saying to
17 me, don't bother telling anyone, no one's going to believe
18 a dirty squaw.

19 By Grade 9 with the help of a great drama
20 teacher, she helped me get back on track. By the time I
21 graduated, I was two years into Air Cadets. I won concerts
22 as an outstanding flutist. I'd become a concession
23 supervisor at the racetrack, and I won outstanding player
24 on my volleyball team that I played with for four years. I
25 made records on track and field, and I was an all-star

1 player for my community league I played for four years.

2 But it was also this time that my mother got
3 terribly addicted to pills. When she let her brother hire
4 me to clean his apartment one night, I ran late, and I
5 stayed in the spare bedroom, and when he came home, he
6 violently raped me, and he kept coming around, and I
7 couldn't take it. I found my mom's pills, and this is the
8 first time I almost took myself, but my cousin Brenda found
9 me and saved me.

10 (Indiscernible) tried to join me with a
11 bunch of nuns, but I wouldn't stay, so they sent me to my
12 mom's biological parents. While I was there, my aunty who
13 was a social worker took me for a drive and told me if my
14 grandfather found out, it would kill him, so I agreed to go
15 to RCMP and drop charges. I didn't want to be responsible
16 for killing my grandfather.

17 This is where I started drinking, just on
18 weekends when Mom and Dad didn't know. I never meant to
19 hurt them. They let me move back home, but I started
20 skipping class, and when my mother got a letter home, they
21 freaked out, and I was sent to live with my biological
22 father on an acreage near Onoway.

23 After a couple of weeks, he convinced me to
24 have my sister come too. Within a month, he was raping us
25 both. One morning, I ran away and came to Edmonton and

1 became the ward of the court, and they helped me get my own
2 place, and all I had to do was just get a job, so I did.

3 I worked two shifts at a 7-11 as a cashier,
4 but the boy I was dating became addicted to cocaine and
5 started beating me, and I lost my place because the
6 landlords ran off with rents and damage deposits. I moved
7 in with my aunty and got a job with her and Mom at
8 Crown Star. This is where I met my husband. At 18, I
9 married a Muslim refugee from South Carolina, and because
10 he was working illegally here in Canada, he was deported,
11 and we left for South Carolina.

12 The good: My son the Creator gave me one
13 day, truly a blessing in the midst of such darkness. The
14 bad: The loss of my daughter due to a beating I received
15 one night. She had heart failure, and we removed her and
16 held a service. The ugly: My front teeth are dentures due
17 to a car accident I was in with my husband. He warned me,
18 don't you say it again or else, and I meant it, so I said
19 it again, and he hit the brakes. He was probably doing
20 about 180, and I hit the dash three times. I was like the
21 elephant woman, spitting out blood and teeth, and I
22 couldn't breathe, all this because his old stomping grounds
23 got him addicted to crack, and he want wanted to kill me to
24 cash in our life insurance policy so he could raise our son
25 himself. He just got out of prison for murder.

1 I know I wanted to come home a month after
2 our (indiscernible). I got stuck there for five years.
3 After my last beating, I grabbed my son, and I jumped out
4 the bedroom window, and I went to the Burger King and
5 called the police officer, and he -- he knew my husband,
6 and he gave me a card. He took me to the local women's
7 shelter, and we got my tickets, and I was finally coming
8 back to Canada.

9 Dad picked us up from the airport, and he
10 cried because I still had bruising on my face and swelling,
11 and my teeth were gone, but the shock on how I looked, it
12 overwhelmed him. I hugged him, and I introduced him to his
13 grandson.

14 It was a struggle when I first got home. At
15 first, I drank, but Mom found me and told me to smarten up
16 for the boy's sake. One day, I walked with my son and
17 thought about jumping off the Beverly Bridge, but after
18 talking about Mom, she referred me to her therapist.

19 After some healing, I put the boy in day
20 care and I went back to school. I got my marketing and
21 management diploma, and when I finished, I had found an ad
22 in the Edmonton Journal. I got a job, and I was hired as a
23 manager at a local escort company. My city supports
24 legalized prostitution and even human trafficking, and so I
25 was, what, 21? I had gotten a job at a local escort

1 company. They wanted to relocate me to Las Vegas to run
2 one of their businesses there, but I had gotten a call from
3 the day care that I needed to pick up my child because a
4 child had been killed in the playground. I never sent him
5 back, and I quit that job, and after a while, I got Mom to
6 watch the boy and I went back to school again, and I got my
7 home health care assistant diploma. Shortly after, I was
8 hired by the General Hospital.

9 On my last shift, I had a patient go into a
10 seizure in the middle of a lift, and when I went to unhook
11 the harness, we lost both our balance. With me under her,
12 we fell onto the foot rest of the wheelchair. The next
13 day, I could barely walk. I lost my career, and I got
14 nothing from WCB, and Boardwalk Landlords took off with the
15 rents, and then at the end of our court dates, they said
16 that I owed them \$3,000.

17 I needed help with damage deposit, and no
18 one would help me. It was hard being a single Native
19 mother on welfare with an infant, so I went and found my
20 friend, and she introduced me to her friends, otherwise
21 known as johns, who would help me with cash. I could raise
22 money for housing or for me and my child, for food. I
23 remember stopping before I started to pray to Creator to
24 keep me safe: I've got to make it home to my son.

25 Finally, I got the money for damage deposit,

1 but due to a cracked foundation, it flooded three days of
2 rain, and the slumlord wouldn't give me back my damage
3 deposit, so back to the streets I went. During this time,
4 my son and I ended up in the doctor's suffering from mildew
5 and mold-poisoning. It almost killed us.

6 When I got the money, I put us up in a hotel
7 that gave us lice because the sheets were dirty. Then one
8 night, I had a john take me to the outskirts near
9 Sherwood Park, and he stabbed and raped me and left me to
10 bleed to death. I spoke with Creator, and I begged, don't
11 leave me, my son and I, and I walked back to the city and
12 found the Crossroads van and reported my bad date.

13 Then when child tax came in, I took my son
14 and I moved to Prince George, B.C. I am a survivor of a
15 serial killer my city will not acknowledge or bring in
16 front of justice. I live and was told my life don't matter
17 by this government, or that my province does not exist.
18 I'm telling you, I exist, and so does my province.

19 My street smarts failed me. Prince George
20 social services helped me, but we needed -- okay -- but a
21 worker from -- okay, so I've -- I was in Prince George. I
22 started working there, but a worker found me and explained
23 that I fit a description of many girls that are going
24 missing and/or murdered on the Highway of Tears, so he took
25 me to the local Friendship Centre, and that's where I

1 joined a group that was trying to heal 13 Native women. My
2 boyfriend/pimp didn't like this because I didn't want to
3 work the streets anymore, so at knifepoint he kidnapped me
4 and my son and took me to the Greyhound bus station into
5 Fort St. John.

6 We spent the week in a hotel room with him
7 beating me so when I went to the women's shelter I wouldn't
8 say nothing. My getting a place set off a red flag for
9 police because my mother had filed a missing person report.
10 When the police came to check on me and my son, they didn't
11 find my doctor hiding in the closet. He told me to call my
12 mother and just left. My doctor and I got into another
13 fight, and then he went to the kitchen and grabbed a knife
14 and came and said, If I'm not going to love you, no one
15 will, and he cut my throat. I was in shock, but I managed
16 to grab a chair, and I threw it through the window, and I
17 screamed for help. A neighbour jumped in and chased my
18 attacker out of the house.

19 The police came and took some pictures and
20 sent me to the hospital. They wanted to stitch me up, but
21 I didn't want the scars, so I grabbed my son and I called
22 my mother from Edmonton from a pay phone, and her and Dad
23 came and got me.

24 So now I'm back in Edmonton, scared my
25 attacker will find me. I went to the local shelter, and in

1 a week they got me a place with Capital Regional Housing.
2 At first, I didn't want it because it was so close to the
3 ave, and I was scared that my attacker would find me again.
4 They promised me that if I paid my rent for a year
5 straight, they would let me relocate. I've been there
6 15 years, and every year I've asked, and every year I've
7 been denied.

8 I've watched others become home-owners, and
9 I'm still renting, struggling to rent. It's crushing to me
10 because I'm First Nations, and I'm entitled a house, and I
11 can't get a house in my city because Edmonton won't
12 recognize Papaschase Nation and give us back our reserve we
13 had here at one time because my Grandma [Grandmother 1],
14 she told me when I was a little girl that Edmonton should
15 acknowledge and we do have reserve, but what they wouldn't
16 acknowledge those people down at the hill and say that was
17 a reserve. Instead, they broke them up and chased them
18 away, and it hurt people like me that were coming up, and I
19 can't just can't see myself being a home-owner.

20 I started programs for myself and my son.
21 We became proud members of the White Buffalo Drummer Dance
22 Society at the Friendship Centre here in Edmonton. Also,
23 my son enrolled at the Ben Calf Robe School, and I took
24 parenting classes. I found my culture healed us, and they
25 gave me the strength to say stay off the streets, and I no

1 longer -- no longer had the fear of being found.

2 But I had a relationship that ended badly,
3 and I took it pretty hard, and I found myself partying. I
4 got terribly addicted to crack. They sent me to Calgary
5 because I couldn't find anything here in Edmonton to sober
6 me up, and when I got back, I got a job, but I started
7 getting sick. My sister worked at Northeast Hospital, and
8 she red-flagged my name, so when I came in for help, they
9 treated me like an addict and just heavily medicated me and
10 just sent me home.

11 After a year and a half, it took my liver
12 and my pancreas swelling and almost bursting until they
13 finally booked me in for an emergency surgery and removed
14 my gallbladder. Because of this, I got pancreatitis and
15 was told not to drink alcohol, that it could kill me. It's
16 been six years, and I don't drink, and I haven't touched
17 crack.

18 Once I healed, I tried to go back to work as
19 a customer service agent for Cingular Wireless, but because
20 of 9/11 and having to write memos on customers' last words,
21 I quit.

22 I then went back into the nursing, and I got
23 a job with Nurse Next Door, which lead me into being a
24 private home care nurse, but I found myself getting sick
25 again, and I lost my job.

1 That's when they found cervical cancer. I
2 had tested positive for HPV and realized I had never been
3 vaccinated for it, which I feel I should have been.

4 So they booked me for surgery to remove
5 everything. Then they put me in a bladder mesh sling, and
6 I've been in severe pain ever since. The doctor, she said
7 she would remove it if there were any problems, but she
8 just won't see me anymore, all this while my mother was
9 dying from Stage 4 colon cancer.

10 I remembered -- I tried to reach out for
11 help, but I got a printout of a resource list from 211.
12 The Primary Care Network told me to exercise more; this
13 will solve my problems. So I found myself slipping back
14 into a depression.

15 So now my son takes care of me, and I get
16 \$600 from Alberta Works, but I feel it's just not enough.
17 They also cut my health benefits because -- because I
18 became First Nations. I used to have both -- like, my
19 First Nations was my primary coverage, and then the
20 Province was my secondary coverage, but they're refusing to
21 that you have both coverages, you can only have one
22 coverage, so now I'm down to the one, where First Nations
23 coverage will cover certain things where the Province
24 doesn't cover certain things, so I would like to have them
25 both back.

1 I'm having a hard time finding a family
2 doctor so that I can get help with getting my -- my bladder
3 mesh sling removed. I'm scared of losing my place, and
4 every morning I wake with the fear of an eviction notice on
5 my door. I am refused with other social housing because I
6 am with Capital Region Housing. I am forced to live with
7 mold and mildew and asbestos in the walls and under the
8 flooring. It killed my poor dog Two-Sock. There is no
9 social housing for First Nations people here in Edmonton.

10 I want to go back to school, but Student
11 Finance wouldn't help me. They told me to go to Indian
12 Affairs, and after five years when I finally got reinstated
13 as a Bill C-3, my mother's band -- see, that's changed
14 because my mother's band has accepted me, but they will not
15 accept my son because my son has a Muslim name, so we're
16 having -- we're waiting with membership.

17 So I feel my band will never be helpful to
18 me or my sisters. I can't get my \$5 a year to live off, or
19 I can't get help with housing, and no help with my
20 education. If I try to go back to the streets for money, I
21 could be killed, and the police say I don't matter, and my
22 son will never get his answers.

23 I believe it's going to take a few different
24 organizations to lead this inquiry. I believe
25 strengthening our First Nations resources with being able

1 to provide necessary healing and options are very
2 important. We need to strengthen First Nations mental
3 health resources for all with a cultural healing centre
4 that practices cultural ceremonies so that we can work on
5 healing as a nation; it -- that it have proper staffing to
6 help with work with local police who will refuse to leave
7 the files unsolved and who will reassure us our lives
8 matter and give us our answers; that the courts will not
9 revictimize families with personal photos of body parts to
10 the public; resources like The Crossroads van and the Hope
11 Missions truck will receive more funding because their help
12 helps; that RCMP investigate any and all reports of bad
13 dates that girls will fill out voluntarily with the
14 Crossroads and Hope Mission vehicles.

15 Again, my killer is still out there, and
16 girls are still going murdered and are missing, so I'm here
17 today in hopes that we find a way to help our women and
18 their families.

19 I would like to see the continuation of
20 involving the victims and their families with the inquiry
21 so we can stop all the assumptions. We can learn what
22 brings them out there and what resources they need to turn
23 their lives around before they go murdered or missing;
24 recording their stories so we may find our answers to
25 solving what has clearly been a disaster for far too long.

1 Thank you for being an ear to listen. It's
2 my hope that my story can be of help in helping others so
3 they don't end up like I did, in the field stabbed and
4 dying and told my life don't matter.

5 I ask the Creator to give you all strength
6 along your way because our lives depend on it, that we all
7 can walk away from this inquiry knowing where to start and
8 get it started right away, not years from now.

9 Mr. Trudeau has recently stated that you
10 can't throw money at the problem, but we all know it's
11 going to take money to fix years and years of trying to
12 destroy a nation. I watched as he's giving money to this
13 and to that, and yet I see nothing happening since the
14 pre-inquiry. It's crushing for me; this, I know.

15 Again, mercy, and thank you for letting me
16 speak today. *Hai, hai.*

17 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Thank you, Doris. That was
18 a very thorough statement you gave. What a -- a lot of
19 history there.

20 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes.

21 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** A lot of history, a lot of
22 detail, so I just want to go -- I just want to backtrack,
23 and just -- there's some points that I -- I have some
24 questions that I put down. I just want a little more
25 clarification into some of these time periods.

1 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Okay.

2 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Because you went through
3 these in -- that's a lot of years and experiences --

4 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Right from when I was
5 born.

6 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** -- so a little more
7 clarification. So let us go back, start with your
8 grandparents. Did your grandparents go to residential
9 school?

10 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes. Alberta, at M and
11 U (ph), yes, and some of my older aunties and -- and
12 uncles, they went, but my mother -- because they had 13 to
13 15 children, and after 13, they started giving the children
14 away. At that time, the -- they always said my mom was
15 given up for adoption, but there's no legal paperwork or
16 nothing. My mother was -- you know, they -- you know,
17 there was another Native lady that lost a child, and she's
18 a great woman, so they're, like, would you take our baby?
19 We have too many babies to feed, and [Foster Parent] was
20 like, yes, and so she took and raised my mom. Yeah.

21 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** So your mom and your dad,
22 also, were in the residential school system?

23 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** No, no. They weren't,
24 know, because they -- my mom went to Catholic schools here
25 in Edmonton because they took her from High Prairie and

1 brought her to Edmonton to raise her here so she wouldn't
2 have to go to residential schools, so she went to a
3 Catholic school here in Edmonton, and that's why I went to
4 a Catholic school here in Edmonton because my mother had
5 gone to one, so I was able to get in on her paperwork.

6 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Okay. So -- and, also, you
7 mentioned that you -- you were put in foster care. Do you
8 remember how old you were, and for how many years were you
9 in the foster care system?

10 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Well, my parents got
11 divorced when I was, like, 4 to 5 years old. That's when
12 they were getting divorced, so it would have been around
13 that time. I wasn't there long because once my grandmother
14 found out that the -- us girls were taken away because of
15 the -- all the violence, because she knew that my parents
16 were fighting, and she came to get me right away. I was
17 one of the -- well, I ended up being -- well, I'm the
18 oldest out of my four sisters, so she came to get me right
19 away, and my mother's adopted mother went and got the baby,
20 so it was [Sister 2] and [Sister 1] that would stay in the
21 foster -- and Mom had to do her courses. Once Mom was done
22 the courses, then she would get the other kids back. Like,
23 they had to quit drinking, because that was a big problem
24 was the drinking because it brought on the fighting, you
25 know, and my parents were very violent. Like, you know, at

1 first when they come home, it'd sound great because, you
2 know, they were playing their instruments, they were all
3 singing. It was a good time, and then it -- then time
4 would go on, and then they -- you'd get loud and you get
5 ugly. The fighting would start. You know? And then there
6 would be times -- you know, like, there was times
7 like -- I'd look outside my door, and I got hit in the head
8 with a beer bottle flying down the hallway because she was
9 trying to hit my dad, who was trying to run to the room,
10 but instead I popped my head out, and I got hit with the
11 bottle, and that's what started the whole thing was they
12 had to take me to the hospital, and I had to -- they had to
13 explain -- because my dad wouldn't lie. You know, my dad,
14 he's a very honourable man, and he comes from a very
15 honourable family, and I grew up watching my dad get beat a
16 lot trying to save us girls from my biological father, and
17 a part of me wanted my dad, but I knew my dad was bad.
18 There was times I'd go on my visitation rights, and I knew
19 that my dad was a bad dad because my step-dad was showing
20 me what a good dad was, so I knew when I went with my real
21 dad, he was being bad, but I never wanted to tell my mom
22 because then I wouldn't get to see my dad, and I loved my
23 dad, so -- yeah, it wasn't good.

24 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** M'hm.

25 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** And I kind of -- I

1 still -- you know, like, they were always there for me.
2 Like, I always thank the Creator for bringing me my dad
3 because he was always there for us girls.

4 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** M'hm.

5 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah.

6 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** So just tell me a little
7 more, like, when -- when your grandmother came and got you
8 out of foster care, tell me about that experience, living
9 with your grandmother.

10 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** It wasn't for very long
11 because my mom had met my dad, and my dad got my mom a
12 lawyer, and my mom was able to work on doing what she
13 needed to do to get us back, so I wasn't with her for very
14 long until my mom took us back, and my dad, you know, got
15 us into school, you know, like, got us into, like, the
16 community league, into programs. I went into the -- my
17 sister ended up drowning in the pool one night when we were
18 being babysat, and it encouraged my parents to put us in
19 with the YMCA, and we learned how to swim, and eventually I
20 ended up becoming a lifeguard, following through with that,
21 and I was actually trying to be in the Olympics because I
22 knew the Olympics were going to be in Vancouver, and I
23 wanted to be in the Olympics as a platform diver because I
24 had a teacher in Grade 6 that -- his sister was an Olympic
25 volleyball player, and that's what got me into volleyball,

1 it's because I had come through this -- like, teachers were
2 very influential in my life. I was very blessed to have
3 some good teachers that -- that introduced me to there is a
4 better life, you know, with -- there's power in educating.
5 I think that's why I've always educated myself, but I think
6 with the racism and the -- like, the teachers -- like, that
7 teacher I met in Grade 4 there, [Miss M.], she really
8 traumatized me to where, yes, I wanted to prove her wrong,
9 and I would succeed, but I never went to any of my
10 graduation ceremonies because I was giving into -- I didn't
11 want to go and gloat about how I was right and I could
12 prove her wrong, so I never went to any of my ceremonies
13 to -- because for me, it was, like, I done -- I'm done,
14 it's done. You know, I don't need to go to your ceremony
15 and get my piece of paper. You know, I think we get so
16 caught up on pieces of paper that it's left people
17 suffering because I think people -- there's good people who
18 can help us, but because we had our -- our hands tied in
19 getting that education to get that piece of paper, now we
20 don't have people there helping people when we could have
21 had people there helping people, but because we rely on a
22 piece of paper, you know, we don't have the help.

23 But I understand the need for the piece of
24 paper. You know, I've spent a lifetime earning pieces of
25 paper. I've got a booklet at home full of pieces of paper

1 finally got that back, so I got reinstated, and -- and I've
2 gotten the rest of my family to be reinstated, you know,
3 and -- but there's still struggles within -- there's just
4 so much to try to understand when it comes to all of that,
5 and I can just put it as simple as, you know, like, there's
6 no resources here in Edmonton for urban First Nations.
7 Like, you know, I can't go to a First Nations office and
8 say to them, well, I'd like housing. You know, where's my
9 housing? Why do I have to go drive four hours away to
10 Driftpile to get \$5 a year to live off of? I don't
11 understand why my grandparents or my parents, why did
12 they -- somebody not say to somebody that \$5 is not enough
13 to live off of a year? \$5 is a slap in the face to me as a
14 third -- third-generation, that's three generations of
15 slapping me in the face and giving me \$5 and saying, here,
16 go live the year. I can't do that off of \$5. I can barely
17 survive the \$600 a month I get off of social services. You
18 know, everybody likes to think social services gives you
19 all kinds of money to live off of, that you're some kind of
20 millionaire when you get on social services. I'm telling
21 you, no, you're not. I get paid three times less than when
22 I work. I would much rather be working and getting more
23 money than to sit there and have to beg for scraps. It's
24 humiliating. It's degrading. It's like I'm taking money
25 out of people's personal pockets, and then I have the nerve

1 to watch online about how everybody tells everybody -- you
2 know, like, they just don't understand.

3 Like, I tried to say that the reason why I
4 was out on that corner is because -- and it was true. I
5 needed money for rent. I needed money for food. I -- I
6 got into a -- a style of living where I -- if I needed
7 this, I went and got the money to get that, you know? You
8 know, not all my dates were bad, but I went through a lot
9 of bad dates to get that, you know? But it was providing
10 me a life that -- it was the only resource I was out there
11 to provide the life I needed just to be able to get by, you
12 know, to -- to have groceries for the month or my son to
13 have those diapers or -- you know, I wasn't -- I wasn't
14 working it to get the -- like, I can understand how some
15 girls use the drugs to medicate themselves because,
16 absolutely, you do need the medication. You need the
17 medication to be -- you think you're tough. You know, I
18 was tough, and you think you can survive the things that
19 are done to you and that it's easy. No, it's not.

20 It's -- it's ugly out there. I can't tell you how
21 ugly -- how terribly ugly it is out there and what we got
22 to do in order to get a buck to just try to survive, but I
23 can honestly tell you, if those resources were properly out
24 there, if I had the mental resources to help convince me
25 that I didn't have to go stand on that corner, and I didn't

1 have to let those people do what they needed to do just so
2 I could be able to survive, if those resources were there,
3 a lot of those women's faces that you see out there
4 probably would be alive today because they wouldn't have
5 the need to go out there and be on the corner. You know?

6 And that's why I've always been an advocate
7 for shutting down these -- these parlors that the city
8 allows. I worked there. I know my struggles with that. I
9 know -- I know for a fact that that's legalized
10 prostitution, and that's why I'll always advocate to shut
11 those things down because I myself was put in there. I
12 know of buildings here on 118th Ave. where upstairs, they'd
13 have room fulls of girls on mattresses on the floor,
14 selling them -- selling them. A lot -- there was one house
15 that I went there, there was girls coming from that -- that
16 China place, they were bringing them over, and they were
17 selling them out of there, and meanwhile -- and I used to
18 go online, and I used to tell them, shut that place down,
19 and they used to tell me, no, no, it's a business, it's a
20 legal business, and it's, like, no, that's an illegal
21 business masking, you know, as a legal business, and this
22 city allows that, and I don't feel that's right, and I feel
23 that should stop. One day, I hope we get there.

24 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** You mentioned your sister
25 drowned. How -- how old was she, and -- how old was she,

1 and how did -- when she drowned, you were -- you were in
2 care with your stepfather by then?

3 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** No, no, no. We were
4 still with Mom -- there's high-rises downtown, and in
5 between two high-rises, there's a pool, and -- like, the
6 grown-ups had gone to bingo and left us to be babysat with
7 the older cousins, and my older cousins had taken us
8 downstairs to swim earlier in the day, and -- but we had to
9 go upstairs and have something to eat and everything, so we
10 had left the pool and went upstairs, and in the process of
11 making something to eat in the kitchen, my youngest sister
12 slipped out of the -- out of the apartment, and she made
13 her way downstairs to the pool, and, of course, when I
14 couldn't find her in the apartment building, I knew we had
15 just come from the pool downstairs, so I had gone down
16 there, and, like, the way this -- this place is, it's all
17 glass windows, so when -- I couldn't get in the door
18 because the door was locked. I went to look in the side
19 where the glass was, and I could see my sister in the pool,
20 and there was a man who was getting off the elevator, and I
21 yelled to him saying that my sister's in the pool and she's
22 in the deep end, she's drowning, and the man used his key
23 to open the door, and he jumped in there and grabbed my
24 sister out of the pool and -- and -- and brought her out
25 and gave her CPR, and she survived, and -- but that would

1 lead to us going into swimming lessons and learning how to
2 swim because that wasn't going to happen again. Yeah.

3 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** And later on, you said you
4 started to get into addictions. When did you start? When
5 did you start...

6 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** I was a young teenager,
7 so probably -- well, right after my uncle raped me, I
8 started -- I started drinking. I'd say -- I'd go stay at
9 my friend's place, and there's a few times there I actually
10 came home drunk, and so then my parents became aware of
11 that I started to struggle with drinking, and -- and at the
12 same time there, I had a lot of pressure from school, and I
13 ended up dropping out of -- I ended up doing a lot of
14 skipping school because I was hanging out in the pool
15 halls, making money on the pool tables, and so they sent a
16 letter home telling my mom I was skipping class, and, of
17 course, my mom freaked out, and -- like, she'd always
18 threaten me -- when I was bad, she'd always say to me, oh,
19 I should send you to go live with your father, and because
20 I never knew my father, I said to her, well, maybe you
21 should, maybe it's time I get to know my father.

22 And so she called him, and that's when he
23 came to get us, and -- well, he came to get me first, and
24 it was probably, like, a week after that he convinced me to
25 go get my other sister [Sister 1]. Yeah. And the one

1 thing about [Sister 1] and my dad, they ended up having a
2 child. I was at -- I went to Sturgeon High School, and I
3 had a friend at high school there who had got rushed to the
4 hospital because she had -- her appendix burst, so when my
5 sister [Sister 1] got rushed from the hospital, the
6 lady -- the secretary told me, oh, by the way, your
7 sister's been rushed to the hospital, and I said, oh, and
8 she goes, oh, it's like the other lady. I said, oh, well,
9 she must have appendicitis. So I called the hospital to
10 find out about my sister, and they told me that it wasn't
11 appendicitis, that my sister had given birth to a child.

12 So my father and my sister had made a baby,
13 and when I went back there, and -- my sister tried to raise
14 her baby, and of course, I was threatening to run away at
15 the time. Of course, I was drinking heavily at the time,
16 and -- and I was dating a guy named Darren (ph), and he
17 used to bring me to the city all the time. I could always
18 escape on the weekend and come run to the city, and -- and
19 later on that would help me when I -- when I finally ran
20 away one day. I couldn't take my sister [Sister 1] with me
21 because I didn't even know where I was going to live, so I
22 had to leave [Sister 1] at that house with him, but [Sister
23 1] ended up giving that child up for adoption, and I think
24 they sold that child for, like, \$10,000 to a family, and
25 that's the only thing I knew because I hadn't -- I ran away

1 after that, and I ended up -- I walked from Sturgeon High
2 School, and I hitchhiked back to Edmonton where I stayed
3 with a friend, Sabrina (ph), and then I went to -- I think
4 it was called Job Corps at the time for youth here in the
5 city, and that's when they introduced me to a social
6 worker, and then the social worker introduced me to a
7 judge, and that's when the judge made me a ward of court,
8 and they helped me take care of myself. I was able to get
9 an apartment, get a job. You know, I just wanted to do
10 what I needed to do just to be able to keep that shelter
11 and not have to -- because when I was younger, I didn't
12 want to get into prostitution. I hustled the pool tables.
13 I took in bottles. You know, I'd search the garbage can
14 for bottles. You know, I did things where I wouldn't have
15 to go be a prostitute, so -- but later on in life, by the
16 time I was 20-something, I finally had to give in to it and
17 say, you know, it's the fastest way. Like, you know, I
18 under -- yes, I understand going to work from 9 to 5, but
19 what people make that month, I can make that in, like, one
20 day. You know, you make a thousand dollars a day? I can
21 make that in a day. That money was faster. You know, when
22 it's not ugly, the money was good, you know, and,
23 like -- it was giving me something, something that I didn't
24 have. Like, you know -- I don't know if it's so much,
25 like, why you need your dad for -- I didn't know a

1 dad -- well, I knew my real dad -- my step-dad, right? I
2 knew the good, but there was something else I was missing
3 in that because Dad -- because my step-dad, his father,
4 too, comes from a reserve in Manitoba -- from Manitoba, so
5 Dad never told us what his experiences were with his dad
6 coming from the reserve or residential school, so, you
7 know, even my -- my step-dad had a lot of -- where he was
8 closed off. He wasn't very -- you know, I didn't just run
9 and give my dad a hug, you know? I'd tell my dad I'd want
10 to hug him, but I never actually went and hugged my dad.
11 You know, I can't remember the last time my dad and I have
12 actually hugged, but yet we know in our minds we love one
13 another, but we don't just tell each other that or hug each
14 other. We just should know that, right? So it's
15 different.

16 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** M'hm.

17 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** You know? And I was
18 searching for something, and being out on that corner gave
19 that to me, but that -- that's because I wasn't mentally
20 healthy. If I was mentally healthy, then I probably
21 wouldn't have been stuck with that.

22 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** The sexual -- the issues
23 you experienced, has -- were anyone charged during those...

24 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** My uncle, no. We kept
25 that within my family, because -- it made it hard because

1 we're family, so it's, like -- you know, first, I would
2 have dinner, and then they would say, okay, well, why don't
3 you go to your [Aunt 1] and go get the -- go get buns from
4 [Aunt 1], and when I would be sent to another family
5 member's house, they would slide him in so he could have
6 his quick dinner and that, and then he could go out, and I
7 could come back. Like, he was never charged -- him and I
8 finally had to talk to each other, and I told him, I said,
9 you know, I can't live like this, you know? I need to know
10 that you know that what you did was wrong, and he said,
11 no -- he goes, I know what I did was wrong. You
12 know -- somehow -- somehow him coming from -- you know,
13 having an abusive father and then him passing that down
14 and -- and me feeling the repercussion of that, you know,
15 we had to somehow make it okay because I was struggling
16 with it. You know, I -- suicide, I was trying to kill
17 myself where I'd never thought of that before. I don't
18 know what came over me, and then that -- that wouldn't be
19 the first time. Like, there's been many times I tried
20 suicide. *[Six sentences redacted pursuant to Rule 55].*
21 You know, nobody's -- nobody's come to me and asked me.
22 They all just kind of -- I always say I'm the lone wolf.
23 I'm the lone wolf with the huge family, and that's
24 heartbreaking, and it's so heartbreaking that, you know,
25 when my family couldn't be there, I wish -- I wish my

1 people could be there. You know, I wish I had someplace
2 that I could go to, and you know, I could sit there and
3 say, okay, this is my struggle today. Like -- you know?

4 Like, I reached out to the Primary Care
5 Network, and I do their programs and everything, and -- and
6 I still sit in there locked inside my house. I still don't
7 have my medication because I've spent five years looking
8 for a doctor, and all I did was get my uterus and my womb
9 removed, and I still don't have my medication. I
10 just -- I'm also -- I'm also -- I'm also frustrated because
11 we're here again to do this again. Two years ago, I sat in
12 a room and I told my story in front of all my people, and
13 now I can't even show my face around the roundhouses or
14 nothing like that because at one time people respected me
15 because they didn't know that I was actually a prostitute
16 on the corner, and then when I went to the pre-inquiry and
17 I stood in front of a room full of Enoch Cree women and
18 told them that I was a survivor and I told them my story, I
19 no longer felt comfortable amongst my people. No, I
20 just -- I'm just glad to be able to tell my story today,
21 and I hope that the -- I hope the help comes soon because
22 we need it yesterday.

23 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** It's an important one.

24 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes.

25 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** (Indiscernible).

1 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** All over the place.
2 Yeah, I still see people -- like, you know, there was this
3 little girl that I watched from a baby grow up, her friend
4 was murdered about a month ago. They broke in -- they were
5 attacking two doors ahead, but they -- instead they
6 attacked her and they killed her, and it broke my heart
7 because, you know, here I am, two years, fighting to get
8 help for us, and I'm still watching as girls in my
9 neighbourhood are being killed, and I -- and I can't help
10 but think, you know, I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry that this
11 isn't -- this isn't stopping, that the help is not here
12 like it should be.

13 I watched a drunken mother cry over her
14 child's memorial, and I just keep thinking about how that
15 could have been my mother and how I never want that to be
16 me, and that's why I got to share my story because I don't
17 want people to think that, you know, it doesn't happen here
18 because it happens here also. I think this is something
19 that's happening everywhere because I got this side and my
20 Native side that I see this in, but I also see this on the
21 Muslim side that I married into. You know, I see the girls
22 being abused there. My husband was actually supposed to be
23 in an arranged marriage, and as far as I'm concerned,
24 that's an abuse too. That's abusing their women. You
25 shouldn't be forced to have to marry somebody. Like, I

1 watched my sister-in-law -- I had to go rescue her from her
2 husband trying to beat her to death because, you know, she
3 couldn't be controlled because they're strong people.
4 They're not meant to be controlled like that, so -- and
5 that's why my husband married me because he wasn't going to
6 be forced to do an arranged marriage. He wanted to marry
7 for love, and that's what we -- we started off was, was
8 marrying for love, but -- because his parents struggled
9 with being in camps, like in Germany and London and being
10 in the camps trying to flee Idi Amin, you know, he was
11 raised in kind of -- you know, not a residential school,
12 but he was in camps, which is also a type of -- a genocide
13 or a type of extinguishing nation -- a nation or a culture.

14 You know, and then -- you know, and then,
15 no -- no healing, no acknowledgment and no healing to
16 begin, so it leaves people, like -- like, my son's never
17 seen his father since he was, what, a year old, and he's
18 trying to go see his father, but because Trump's got in
19 there, now all of a sudden he's changing the immigration
20 thing to where my son can't even go even if he wanted to
21 go, he'd not be allowed to go. So he's not going to see
22 his father, and I don't know when that'll ever happen
23 or -- but...

24 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** M'hm. You
25 mentioned -- when you were on the streets, there's two

1 events that you mentioned. You were stabbed, you were left
2 to die; another time, you were -- had your throat cut.
3 There's a lot of violence within that lifestyle you were
4 living. Can you tell me about the police involvement in
5 those cases?

6 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Well --

7 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Were those resolved? Was
8 there a case? Can you tell me about the police
9 involvement?

10 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah. They came
11 in -- sure. Like, the -- the one where I got my throat cut
12 in B.C. there, they did come and take pictures and
13 everything, but I never heard anything about that since,
14 and I actually --

15 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** How long ago was that?

16 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Oh, that happened
17 back -- because I was in Prince George at the time that we
18 thought the world was going to end, so that was 1999 to
19 2000. I was in Prince George at that time, so it would
20 have been maybe even 2001. I still have my lease that I
21 was forced to sign while I was under duress, as I was a
22 kidnap victim. I signed a lease, and it was funny because
23 as a kidnap victim, when I came back home to Edmonton, and
24 I was a struggling mother, my first cheque that I ever got
25 from help from this Province, they actually took half of my

1 cheque to pay back me leaving Prince George as a kidnap
2 victim. They still charged me one month's rent, they.
3 Still charge -- took my damage deposit to pay for the
4 furniture that was left in the house after I was
5 kidnapped --

6 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Who -- who kidnapped you?

7 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:**

8 My -- the -- the -- well, my boyfriend/pimp that I was
9 living with. He was my pimp. After the while, it became
10 more he was the pimp than more -- at first he started off
11 the boyfriend, but then he ended up being the pimp because
12 it was violent and abusive and -- you know, and -- yeah, so
13 yeah, I ended up getting -- like, they charged me all kinds
14 of stuff -- okay, and then when I called my parents and I
15 came back to Edmonton, that could be another reason why
16 nothing was ever done because I came to Edmonton, and I
17 never did -- the only reason why I started inquiring lately
18 is because the inquiry. That's the only reason why I
19 called to check on -- check -- check to see what's
20 happening with it, and I know nothing was done.

21 I actually ran into him up at Northgate Mall
22 about a couple of months ago. My son had gone in,
23 and -- he got hurt on the job, and WCB was not going to pay
24 him nothing and was just writing him off, so my son had,
25 like, four bulging discs, and they found a curved spine, so

1 they really hurt him bad at work, and we went to social
2 services to get help, and as we were up there, that
3 attacker walked into the -- walked into social services,
4 and of course we spinned on our heels right away because
5 it's like I didn't want him to recognize me, and we ended
6 up leaving there, and -- but I told the woman, there's
7 somebody who called me with regard to this -- this inquiry,
8 and I told her that information, and she said that she was
9 going to call and see what was happening with the file in
10 B.C., so that's the one with -- that cut my throat. My
11 uncle, nothing ever happened to my uncle.

12 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** And -- and the stabbing in
13 Sherwood --

14 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** The stabbing, okay.
15 Yeah.

16 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Yeah. Tell me about that
17 one.

18 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah. I was on the
19 corner here. I was probably on 118th Ave. and probably
20 about -- there used to be an old Safeway there, and
21 there's, like, a drugstore there and a bus stop. Well, I
22 used to sit at that bus stop every day, and when I -- when
23 I -- sometimes if it's too dangerous to sit still, I'd
24 walk, so I would back down to Beverly, walk back up
25 118th Ave, go down 95th Street to downtown, and then I'd

1 walk back, and that would be my route whenever I worked,
2 and if I got tired, I sat at that bus stop.

3 So he picked me up at that bus stop, and we
4 were going to look for a place to do it, and -- and, of
5 course, I go to north side, I'm on the north side, so I go
6 to the north side spots, and one of the north side spots
7 is -- like, you go down Victoria Trail, and you can either
8 go -- at the very end of Victoria Trail, you can go off
9 this side road that takes you to a little opening where
10 there's a park there, and -- and this guy, you know, he
11 didn't look dangerous, you know, but he wasn't
12 really -- like, I was trying to make small talk, that gives
13 me kind of an idea of what kind of character you have, you
14 know, but he wasn't talking. He was just staying focussed.
15 He had no expressions at all to what I was saying, and I
16 was kind of getting nervous about it, and -- but I -- you
17 know, I really wanted the money, so there -- we -- there
18 was somebody at this spot, so we didn't go there.

19 I ended up taking him to the outskirts, and
20 there was, like, zig-zagging through roads, and I know,
21 like, you go over the railroad tracks, and, like, you go to
22 the right, and there's, like -- I know there's a farmhouse
23 here. It's, like, side roads off in Sherwood Park, eh?

24 And so we get there, and he stops the car,
25 and I'm still trying to make small talk, and he's not

1 really talking, and he goes and he -- his arms come out,
2 and he starts stabbing me, and I start begging, don't kill
3 me, don't kill me, you know, I have a son, and -- and
4 because the whole -- when I was talk -- I think it was my
5 small talk on the way there because I was telling him, you
6 know, how I was a nurse and how I was struggling, and
7 I -- and -- and I think it was my small talk that maybe
8 even saved me because he didn't -- like, he hurt me, but he
9 didn't kill me, you know? And he raped me, and then he
10 told me get out of the car, so I got out of the car, and he
11 just backed up and drove off and left me there, and -- and
12 I stood there in shock, but it was -- it was winter time,
13 so I didn't have time to really stand around. It was cold,
14 and I knew I was far from the city, so I just got back on
15 those roads and just started walking back, and -- I was
16 staying at the -- the Beverly Motel, and before I went to
17 my hotel room, there was a Crossroads van, and -- and I
18 know the Crossroads van. They tell you that -- like,
19 because you can get, like, socks or gloves or a hot drink.
20 Like, I used to get my condoms there, you know, because I
21 always used protection, so I get my condoms from the
22 Crossroads van -- and Candora actually told me about that.
23 There's a place up at Abbottsfield Mall, Candora Society,
24 that they would give out free condoms, or if I needed to
25 see a doctor because of a bad date or something went wrong,

1 they would let me see one of the doctors there, and -- so
2 I -- and Crossroads van, when you talk to them, they have
3 this thing where you can report a bad date. If you go with
4 somebody and you have information, I think it was RCMP
5 actually had this form that you could -- if you had a bad
6 date, you would go to Crossroads van, they'd fill that out,
7 and I did that, and I never heard anything else after that
8 because I -- I ended up getting child tax, which was on the
9 20th of that month, and I took what I had, and I got us on
10 a Greyhound, and I got out of the city because I couldn't
11 work the streets no more, and -- and, you know, I was
12 already in a hotel room, and the whole reason why I was in
13 a hotel room is because the slumlord took my -- my -- they
14 wouldn't give me back my damage deposit, and I needed that
15 damage deposit to get a place, and yet I couldn't get
16 damage deposit anywhere.

17 I had asked family to help me. Family
18 wouldn't help me. I went to my grandparents to ask them,
19 but my dad got mad because it was shameful to him to have
20 one of his daughters, especially the oldest one, be less
21 than; you know, like, I shouldn't be so dire straits,
22 especially a baby, you know? But -- and I think they were,
23 you know, disappointed that I was divorced and, you know, a
24 single mom, and, like, I failed at everything that I was
25 supposed to do, and -- and I'd like to say I was sabotaged,

1 but -- and I worked hard. I worked hard to really try to
2 make it.

3 You know, I just -- you know, I'm 45 now.
4 I'm just happy to be alive. I've learned how to find
5 pleasure in the little things. I got a great cup of tea
6 with my dog who really, truly loves me. That makes me
7 happy. You know? I -- I find the sales so I can get a big
8 bag of potatoes for ten bucks so I can have potatoes for
9 the month. Like, I -- I work smarter where when I was
10 younger -- you know, it's just that I don't make that a
11 solution anymore. Yeah.

12 But I really would -- I really don't want
13 the other girls to keep making it one for them. You know,
14 I wish that there was ways that we can convince them not to
15 even be out there, and then this can all stop, you know? I
16 really -- and I do believe, too, if we stop those johns
17 from being out there, you know, we'll stop the girls from
18 being out there because that's what kept me out there was
19 those johns, as long as they're purchasing me.

20 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** So that case -- there was
21 never a case, that man that stabbed you?

22 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** The serial killer. No,
23 I just filled out a paperwork with the Crossroads van --

24 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** (Indiscernible).

25 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** -- and that was it.

1 Yeah. No, because I left -- I left the city, I got out of
2 the city, and when I came back, I was scared.

3 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** So how -- how would you
4 describe the police involvement and the police support or
5 lack of support --

6 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah.

7 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** -- over the years? How
8 would you describe that?

9 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Oh, definitely lack of
10 support. I had my -- recently, I had my best friend's
11 boyfriend rape me, and because I waited two days to go and
12 I couldn't do -- they didn't even tell me to go -- like,
13 northeast police station has a hospital right on the other
14 side of the parking lot. They never told me to go there
15 and do the rape kit because it had been two days. He told
16 me he was going to go and arrest that man for raping me in
17 my house, and yet because that man called me a crack-whore,
18 he never got charged. He never got charged. When I called
19 and said, where's my file, what are you doing with my file,
20 they said that they're closing my file, so that man got
21 away with raping me, and now he's telling everybody in
22 Barrhead and everything that, oh, D's a crack-head, you
23 know, she's a crack-head prostitute, you know? Like,
24 what -- you know, it doesn't matter. You know?

25 Like, you know, it's hard because I -- you

1 know, his girlfriend is my best friend, and my best friend,
2 I used to have respect from her because she didn't know
3 nothing, but because she met the guy that cut my throat,
4 his sister's on her -- her Facebook, and when she talked to
5 the guy that cut my throat, he convinced her I was just
6 some dirty prostitute, and that's why now my friend doesn't
7 even treat me like she used to because she talked to my
8 attacker and listens to my attacker but doesn't listen to
9 me.

10 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Is this, like, recent?

11 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah.

12 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Yeah?

13 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes. Yeah, it's hard.

14 It's hard to live with that, you know, when the only friend
15 you got is one that will side with your attacker and won't
16 side with you, and that's supposed to be your best friend?
17 But that's all I got to talk to. There's nobody else. I
18 called my Friendship Centre. They -- you know what they
19 want to -- do arts and crafts? They want to teach me a
20 language that -- you know -- you know, this whole teach me
21 a language, I -- when I was -- first started school, I
22 spoke fluid French, and I spoke fluid Cree. I didn't even
23 speak English. They sent me to the Glenrose Rehabilitation
24 to speak with a tutor because I stuttered, I stuttered when
25 I tried to learn about the language, so I couldn't really

1 speak English well, but in that, I lost how to speak.
2 I -- yes, I learned English, but then I lost the French,
3 and I lost the Cree, and now I'm 45 years old, and now they
4 want me to speak Cree? And it's like, who am I going to
5 speak to now? All those -- all those that spoke Cree are
6 gone, you know? I understand, yes, it's important, because
7 if we don't -- if we don't, we'll totally lose it forever.
8 That's why I understand, yes, it's important to learn the
9 language, but -- that's why I say again, you know,
10 like -- I don't know, like -- like, with the healing, you
11 know, like -- I went to a sweat because when my son wanted
12 to know my culture, I went to a sweat, and a sweat
13 actually -- because at the time, I was struggling with
14 the -- the crack, and I wanted to get off the crack because
15 I found out my mom was dying, and I -- I thought, you know
16 what, I've had it. I'm not going to be strong no more.
17 I'm going to find out why my marriage ended. I'm going to
18 find out why these guys are suddenly smoking this crack,
19 and all of a sudden I'm nobody, I'm nothing, because I went
20 and tried it. It was supposed to be a weekend thing, but I
21 tell you, it turned into a year. I lost everything. I was
22 pawning everything in my house. I listened to my son cry
23 in pain because he was so scared that I would die because I
24 was so high that I didn't know -- I didn't think or feel,
25 and -- and I stayed out night after night, got myself into

1 some pretty bad situations, but...

2 But it was -- was -- you know, there was
3 this show, it's called "Intervention." I was watching
4 "Intervention." I had come home from one of my binges, and
5 I was sitting there watching "Intervention," and I had a
6 bunch of the young guys in the neighbourhood. They came in
7 and they wanted to do what they heard about was an
8 intervention, and they said they -- they loved [Son] and
9 they loved [Son]'s mom, and they knew that they didn't want
10 to see me doing this no more, that they wanted me to be a
11 good woman, to get clean and get off the drugs and be there
12 for [Son] and be there for myself, so I think it's not just
13 the show, but I think those children saved me, and I know
14 the internet saved me because, as funny as that sounds, if
15 it wasn't for these internet and these games keeping my
16 mind occupied, like, my mind would really try hard to
17 convince me, too, that -- that, you know, you lived a hard
18 life, things are so bad, you know, don't give a shit, just
19 go get high; you know, it won't get better.

20 And, you know, the strength in me because of
21 my strong people I come from told me no, you know, stay
22 clean, and every day I fight to stay clean. I still do
23 every day. You know, I intended to go out there and be
24 stupid, but I don't want that life anymore.

25 You know, I survived too many times. Like,

1 I've had the hospitals treat me like an addict. A year and
2 a half, every day, I was in a hospital, in an ambulance,
3 and -- right after I ate supper, I was calling an
4 ambulance, and I went to Royal Alex hospital every day for
5 a year and a half. It took me dying in an ambulance for
6 them to book an emergency surgery because I was
7 First Nations and the they treated me like I was just a
8 drug addict, and yet it wasn't about the drugs. I wasn't
9 there for the drugs. You know, I get better drugs out on
10 the street, you know? I'm not the type of person that go
11 to the hospital for my drugs. I get better drugs out on
12 the streets. I was there because something was seriously
13 medically wrong with me, and because of their ignorance and
14 their racism, you know, I got -- I got a Sinclair that
15 actually, you know, died in Manitoba because of the way the
16 hospitals treats First Nations. Not only did I see
17 that -- family's in Manitoba, but I seen myself in B.C. how
18 First Nations are treated when they arrive at the
19 hospitals, and it's prejudiced, and it's being racist, and,
20 you know -- and yes, I may have been an addict, but I
21 wasn't there for the drugs. I was there for a legitimate
22 reason, and if they would have taken care of that when I
23 first showed up there, it wouldn't have taken a year and a
24 half for me to get that fixed.

25 But yeah, no, I -- I really haven't had

1 justice when it comes to any of my attacks. You know? And
2 that's why -- you know, that's why people like me, we need
3 those resources so there is counseling, so there's
4 meetings -- like, I've always liked the -- the support
5 groups. I liked the idea of AA, how you could gather with
6 like people, you know? But I want that with my people,
7 with my culture. I want to be able to gather and share our
8 stories and get strength from one another so we can become
9 strong again. There's too much separating going on and not
10 enough of us coming together, and I think we need to come
11 together to get strong once again. We can help heal one
12 another because that's what it's going to take. It's going
13 to take us working together to heal one another.

14 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Okay, I don't have any more
15 questions, so I guess we can just start wrapping up, but
16 before I wrap up, I just want to give you just one more
17 opportunity, if there's anything that you may have missed,
18 or you're okay to end right there.

19 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yeah, I'm okay. I think
20 I've said it all. I've told you everything about myself,
21 you know, and I'm -- and I'm telling you this because,
22 like, you know, I get a lot of people that yell at me all
23 the time because they'll see my name, and they'll see my
24 name as Gratton, G-R-A-T-T-O-N, and -- but -- like, my
25 family name is Noux (ph) or -- Giroux (ph). If I would

1 sign it Giroux or Chalifoux (ph), then, of course, right
2 away, they'd be, like, oh, she's First Nation, but because
3 my name is signed Gratton, right away, they're like, oh,
4 she's a white lady, then -- and then, what would she know
5 as a survivor? She's a white lady. Because of my name?
6 No. You know, there's so much more to me than this face
7 that you see on the display picture on the internet.

8 There's so much more to my story. You know?

9 And that's why, you know, I feel it's very
10 important because we need to speak to those people that are
11 out there who have survived because that's where we're
12 going to find our answers. We'll find out who's doing
13 this, you know? Like, that's the one thing that really
14 upsets me, you know, after all this time because I was 21
15 when I started out there. I'm 45 years old now, and not
16 once ever has the City ever admitted that there is a
17 problem with people being murdered or going missing, when
18 I'm going up in that, and I -- I've watched older cousins
19 grow up and die in that, you know, be downtown, you know,
20 and -- and go through all of that, so, you know, we're
21 getting to -- I don't want my son or his children to -- you
22 know because, like, with my son -- like, we had to -- his
23 best friend's -- who I consider like a son because I raised
24 him because his -- his parents ended up having to go to
25 jail, so I pretty much took him in and raised him, too, but

1 he had found a girl, and him and this girl with the help
2 from the Province had gotten a place, but the child that
3 they had, because the -- the house smelled like marijuana,
4 they took the baby from the boy and his woman, and
5 they -- about a week later, they got visitation rights, and
6 the child was sick, and [D.] told her, my son's sick, you
7 should get him medical help, and a week later, I was
8 still -- I had to go meet this baby that was just born. I
9 still -- I was so busy with everything that I finally got a
10 call. [D.] called the house to tell us that his son had
11 died while in care, so I was heartbroken because I didn't
12 get to meet him, and I felt like a grandmother, even though
13 I wasn't a grandmother, but -- you know, I raised that boy,
14 and, of course, when you raise children, you often wonder
15 what those children's children would look like, so I ended
16 up going to his funeral. I had to smudge that baby because
17 these kids didn't know much about the culture because us
18 grown-ups are too busy being stupid and -- and not teaching
19 the children right, and -- and so they came to me, and I
20 had to smudge the baby. It's, like, we can't send this
21 baby out off without smudging him, and from there, because
22 my son's not making children, you know.

23 And then I had another friend [S.], his son
24 was killed in care. His son had -- they were getting him
25 out of the bathtub, and he fell and banged his head,

1 and -- and his child was killed.

2 So I had children all around me, and, like,
3 the guy that I was dating who I just currently broke up,
4 he -- he was put in foster care because his children -- his
5 parents were doing a lot of drinking and stuff, and his dad
6 was very abusive, and I was worried about [K.] being
7 abusive, but [K.] not abusive in that way. He's more an
8 emotional and mental abusive than a physical abuser, and he
9 doesn't seek treatment, so he doesn't understand that even
10 what he's doing is abuse. You know, I -- I love going for
11 treatment. It does help, and it works for me, and, you
12 know, I always want to encourage others to do that, too,
13 you know? But I couldn't get him to do it.

14 So I'm still an advocate for children in
15 care; one, because my sister, I almost was there, you know,
16 but because I'm still dealing with people who are dealing
17 with foster care who have lost children. It affects me,
18 you know? So I have to be an advocate for them because I
19 went online there on social media, and I tried to tell
20 people about that child that was killed in care, and they
21 actually came after me, and they -- they wanted to know the
22 name of the baby, who the parents were, they needed to
23 verify my story, and when they verified my story and found
24 out everything that I was saying was true, I never heard
25 from that politician again. Because the children were

1 young teenagers, they just kind of hush-hushed it,
2 and -- and nothing was ever heard from again, but I will
3 always be an activist for that child because I had to
4 smudge that child, and the day I have to bury a baby is the
5 day I'm never going to shut my mouth because that child
6 should not have been killed in care. As far as I'm
7 concerned, that child should not have even been taken. It
8 was taken over the smell of marijuana. There was no actual
9 marijuana at the house. There was no child at the house
10 that they were there. It was just somebody, you know, was
11 new to the job and, you know, this is what the rules are,
12 and they just took the child, you know?

13 But the thing that that I'm upset about is
14 that lady, she's still caring for other children.
15 Those -- what children were there weren't taken out of the
16 home. They continue to put children in her care, and she's
17 never had any kind of repercussion for killing that child,
18 and that -- that still what upsets me today about that,
19 about how that foster care system is -- is a tragedy.
20 Like, it really needs to be looked at and see where the
21 problems are and what solutions we can come to to help
22 that, you know, whether it's getting the resources together
23 to -- so for mental health or whatever the families need,
24 but I really feel that we should try to keep the children
25 in the home if we can, you know, or put them with First

1 Nations people, so -- I know children in care need to stop
2 dying, yeah, and I would love to be able to see that happen
3 in my time because my grandmother's gone now, my mother's
4 gone now, so my -- my grandmother didn't even get to see
5 the -- the story. You know? I got to live to see that
6 story, but what -- what does that story mean if I'm still
7 having to live off of \$5 a day? What does that mean? You
8 know? It doesn't mean nothing to me, you know?

9 "Sorry" -- "sorry" doesn't put a roof over my head. I
10 still have no housing. I won't have housing, you know? I
11 sat there and watched how band members and council members
12 have made other people entitled to rights that I have to
13 fight years to get, and still, I have nothing, and yet they
14 have a house, and yeah, I was entitled to that. That's my
15 right. You know? I don't think it's right.

16 I think -- I think in school, I should have
17 been taught Canadian laws, but you know what? I should
18 have also been taught Aboriginal laws. I should have been
19 taught my culture in school. I should have had that
20 option, not only French, but -- and drama and art. I
21 should have had Cree. I should have had my culture on
22 there to learn. You know?

23 And to tell you the truth, you know, I don't
24 like this word "Indigenous." I'm sorry. I don't. I think
25 when you say the word "Indigenous," all of a sudden it

1 becomes the world, and it becomes all sorts of people that
2 you forget about little people, you know, people right here
3 that we need to worry about. Before we can start taking
4 care of everybody else around the world, we need to focus
5 on what's going on here because would knowing it, the
6 ugly's only getting uglier, you know? Nobody likes to talk
7 about it. A lot of it is hush-hush. The only reason why I
8 even talk now, it's because this -- this inquiry, because
9 this -- because people are coming out wanting to know.

10 Somebody told me that here in Edmonton, that
11 we don't have a problem here in Edmonton, and that
12 motivated me to come out and say, oh, we got a problem here
13 in Edmonton. I've been trying to survive Edmonton for
14 45 years, so, you know -- and, like, you know, my people,
15 it's hard enough my people make us feel bad because my
16 ancestors, they -- they said -- when their government said,
17 you have to go live on a reserve, my ancestors said, no,
18 no, no, no, I don't have to live on a reserve. I'll go
19 across the highway, I'll put my trailer up there, and we'll
20 call this town Foss (ph), and we'll start -- we'll start
21 our settlement, we'll start to grow as people, and that's
22 what my grandfather did, so that's where I come from.

23 So to have people come to me now and try to
24 make me feel bad about -- to label me colonized; okay, I
25 don't know why, but there's something in that word that

1 really hurts me because, you know, I had to lay my head in
2 defeat as a child and say -- and say, you know what, I'll
3 give up my people and my ways to join your school, your
4 Catholic school, and -- and learn your ways, be what you
5 want me to be, but don't come to me 20 years later and tell
6 me that I'm the bad guy because I ran. I ran away from
7 having to live on reserves, and then I went to conform to
8 learn, to earn your many papers that you wanted me to learn
9 because they promised me, if I learned -- if I earned those
10 pieces of paper, my life would be better, yet my life never
11 got better, and yet I did what I needed to do, but yet they
12 weren't doing what they needed to do.

13 You know, just -- you know just like now, my
14 social worker, I don't understand why -- like, they have me
15 right now in a room where, you know, 13 people could
16 potentially be my social worker. There's not one person
17 who focuses on me, focuses what my needs are or what I need
18 to have a better life or live comfortable or safe in this
19 life. I don't have a social worker to do that to me, and I
20 want to know why. Is that not what their job is? Like,
21 what do they do? Because, I -- you know, they don't help
22 me with housing. I called up there to say, why did you cut
23 off my medical? They had the nerve to say to me, are you
24 an Indian? I said, yes. And they said, well, you don't
25 get medical if you're an Indian. Well, that's surprising

1 because I only had it for how long before you suddenly
2 decided -- oh, Ms. Notley says no, so it's no? They just
3 take things from you. They don't ask you anymore. They
4 don't ask you if they can cut this off, cut that off. They
5 just do it. And can you -- can you be against it and say,
6 oh, reinstate it? No. No. A little man like me, a little
7 person like me, this is the only time I'm going to have the
8 power to have any kind of change happen, because now it'll
9 be my -- the people who -- who -- like, my Chiefs, you
10 know, those are the ones they'll listen to before they get
11 to somebody like me, and yet they need to. Sometimes we
12 need to humble ourselves, humble ourselves and go to the
13 middleman and see what's going on. If you want to know why
14 those girls are out on that corner, go to that corner and
15 ask that girl on the corner, why are you out here? You
16 know? Instead of going to an organization, a head of an
17 organization who never deals with those people on that
18 corner, and you're going to listen to them tell you what we
19 need? No. You go to that girl on that corner and ask that
20 girl on that corner what she needs because it'll get lost
21 because there's an assumption being made on what that woman
22 actually needs. So...

23 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Thank you.

24 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Thank you.

25 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Thank you. Thank you. So

1 it's a good place to end right there?

2 **MS. DORIS GRATTON:** Yes.

3 **MR. FRANK HOPE:** Okay. So just for the
4 record, I want to note that you have made some
5 recommendations in your statement, and that brings the time
6 to 10:55 a.m. Just one second.

7

8 --- Upon adjourning at 10:55 a.m.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Jenessa Leriger, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that
I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
matter.



Jenessa Leriger

March 13, 2018