

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EJZ

Support person present: No

1. My name is EJZ My date of birth is 1946. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. I was born as EJZ in Edinburgh. I have always kept my name as it was the only thing I could hold onto and the name was the only thing I had. I didn't change my name when I was married.
3. My father had lost his first wife and he had an older son from that marriage called I completely repressed my memory of this older half-brother who doted on me. I didn't know until my twenties that I had a half-brother. For some reason, I don't know why, my father's first wife died. Then my father married my mother. Her name was and my father was They met through the RAF or something like that. When they married she unfortunately had only three years to live.
4. I can remember holding onto someone who must have been my mother who was taking me to see my grandmother and we were walking along the streets. I remember holding someone's arm and looking up at them. We went to see a very old lady with a shawl and she said to me 'would you like an Easter egg?' and I said yes please, but I never got one. Then we moved to a tenement and whether that was because of my mother I don't know.

5. As a young child I lived in Rosyth with my family and we lived in pre-fabs. I remember that there was a wood stove in the middle of the room that I was told not to touch, but I did and got burned. I have only small memories that stand out.
6. My mother had my brother [REDACTED] two years after me. Around that time she contracted breast cancer. Later on my older half-brother [REDACTED] told me that he used to go to the hospital to get morphine for her for the pain and to stop the screaming. Then she was finally taken in to hospital. I was aged three when my mum died and she took six months to die, according to what [REDACTED] told me. That was in [REDACTED] 1949. My mother's parents wanted to adopt me because I was older, but they couldn't adopt [REDACTED] because he was a baby. There wouldn't have been any support for grandparents bring up two children. My father didn't want us to be separated, but inevitably we were by the system.
7. My father went on a bender and disappeared because he couldn't cope. [REDACTED] looked after us, but he had no money and couldn't tell anyone in authority. The children's authorities stepped in and at some point they put us into a children's home. I've seen in my records that we were taken to Canaan Lodge in Edinburgh. We were separated from [REDACTED] because he was older. I can't say how much older [REDACTED] was than me, all I know is he joined the Highland Regiment as a boy soldier at fourteen.
8. I remember very little about this children's home except the fear. Then we were decanted from there, nobody told us anything and nobody explained, we were suddenly on [REDACTED] EKA-EKB's doorstep. This was our new foster home. We were taken away in a chauffeur driven black limousine. These women in black uniforms came out and we were taken to Rosyth. [REDACTED] was a tiny little thing and he was screaming and crying. I guess he was just over a year old and I was aged three.

**Foster care with [REDACTED] EKA-EKB, Rosyth, Fife**

9. I was in living with foster carers in Rosyth at the ages of four, five and six. According to the documents I have recovered since, they got paid quite well. They got clothing

allowance and food allowance. They called me [EJZ] They wanted me to take the surname [EKA-EKB], but I wanted to keep my surname as that was all I had. They wanted me to call them mummy and daddy and I didn't want to, but I think I must have.

10. I remember this man and a boy turned up and I was looking at them from behind a chair. When I saw them I thought to myself that's my dad and that's my brother come to take us away. [EKA-EKB] said 'o come on [EJZ] that's your uncle come to visit and there's your cousin'. My father and [REDACTED] introduced themselves as uncle whoever and my cousin [REDACTED] There must be reams of child development stuff written about these things that went on in a child's head when I can't believe what I see. If I believe that man is my father and yet he claims to be my uncle, what can I believe? That is torture.
11. [EKA-EKB] were violent, torturing horrors that should never have been let near children. He was in his twenties or thirties and he was English. He delivered stuff in a van. When we first arrived they had two other boys. One was eighteen and about to leave and the other one was younger, maybe twelve or thirteen, and had broken his leg and was going to leave as well. I am not confident that I can remember their names, but one of them might have been called [REDACTED]
12. Then it was [EKA-EKB] and just me and [REDACTED] This was a cold house in Rosyth without central heating and it was post-war times. There was a square of houses and a grass verge outside and a primary school nearby.

### **Routine with [EKA-EKB], Rosyth**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

13. I used to wake up each morning thinking please God, I hope they will take me away from here. I wanted to be taken to a boarding school or to Australia. I continue to feel pity for the small child that woke up every day thinking that.

14. I cannot remember details of the morning routine, other than those I have given in the abuse section of this statement.

*Mealtimes / Food*

15. I was fed adequately on a Scottish diet of sausage and potatoes. I remember very little about the food.

*Washing / bathing*

16. I do not remember the routine for washing and bathing in this home.

*School*

17. I went to the primary school that was very nearby to the foster home. I can't remember the name. I was there for three years. I wanted to please the teachers. I was hard working and getting on well at school. The teachers had no idea of what it was like in the foster home. I can't remember the names of the teachers.

*Religion*

18. There was no religion followed in this household.

*Work/chores*

19. They made me do housework and get the shopping. On one occasion I did the shopping from a small shop that was nearby and on the way back I lost the change. It was an old sixpence and it rolled away into a stream. I spent at least half an hour looking for this coin and I couldn't find it.
20. I got home and I was terrified. I knelt down in front of Mrs **EKB** and told her I'd lost the change. She slapped me across the face so hard I fell backwards and called me a liar



and said I spent it on sweets. This was the refrain that followed me in my childhood that I was a liar. I was telling the truth and I was told I was a liar.

#### *Trips / Holidays*

21. EKA-EKB were English. They had friends in the north of England and we went to visit them once for a holiday. It seemed like a land of opportunity. The weather was sunny and not like where I lived.

#### *Leisure time*

22. I remember the Queen's coronation celebration in the big park in Dunfermline. It was a very hot day.

#### *Personal possessions*

23. I think I had some possessions like books or toys, but I can't remember them. I do remember a plastic tea set and I sat outside playing with the little cups and saucers.

#### *Visits / Inspections*

24. People in authority who always seemed so fat and well-fed with their clean, smart black suits came to the house. It was always women. They had enormous power and authority over the other people and they were like beings from another planet. They were terrifying. As far as I'm aware there wasn't any kind of warning. I never got to speak to the people from the authorities by myself. They made comments that I've seen in my records like EJZ is looking well'. The issues I had with asthma and skin problems started around that time so I don't know how I could have looked well.
25. I saw social workers on two occasions and they told me I was a problem child. Their attitude destroyed the glowing reports I got from my teachers at school.

### *Healthcare*

26. I had asthma and it came from nowhere. I had psoriasis at an early age and that's an auto-immune thing. I was given injections. My records are littered with comments saying 'EJZ won't go out or EJZ won't do X'. The only defence I had was my voice. I could speak for myself and I was called a liar and I lost my tongue.
27. I've seen comments in my records about me being small for my age and having flat feet. There was no sense of anyone taking me aside and asking if I was ok and if I was happy. I'm not aware of any medical examinations when I was in a foster placement or leaving it.

### *Running away*

28. I didn't run away and I had nowhere to run away to.

### *Bed Wetting*

29. There were comments in the records that said I was wetting my knickers. [REDACTED] wet the bed. We shared a bed in EKA-EKB house. Mrs EKB was enraged at having to wash the sheets so she put a rubber sheet on the bed and we slept on that.

### **Abuse at foster care placement**

30. I was aged five or six and I was the first to get up in the morning. My alarm would go off at four, five or six o'clock. I would go downstairs to the small kitchen and light the old gas hob to heat the water for their tea that they wanted in cups and saucers with sugar and biscuits. It was the same routine every day.
31. Then I had to take it up the stairs to their bedrooms. They had separate rooms. One cup for Mrs EKB and then one cup for Mr EKA I had to felate him and then give him

his tea. These were the disgusting things that went on. I believe Mrs <sup>EKB</sup> knew what he did. Then I had to take the tea things downstairs.

32. He would bring his male friends round and there were five or six of them. His friends were quite young. One was a tall man and aged about nineteen or twenty. One was an older man. I have no memories of any names.
33. One night Mr <sup>EKA</sup> took me upstairs to have a bath. There were steps going up to the bedrooms. I had a bath and he put a towel round my head. I had no clothes on. He marched me out on the stairs in view of his friends and showed me to the other men saying 'look at this little Indian' and laughing. Mrs <sup>EKB</sup> looked at me and told me to put some clothes on. This was part of the shame and fear I felt.
34. Sometimes she went out to bingo with her friend in the evening. On these occasions when his friends were in the house and Mrs <sup>EKB</sup> was out he would take both me and  upstairs to them with a bottle of Vaseline. He'd put his two friends in two different bedrooms and take one of us into each bedroom to do what they wanted with us. I do not want to give any further details of what happened.
35. Mr <sup>EKA</sup> kept a bendy black stick behind a chair. It was there as a warning if I opened my mouth and said anything. He was very free with the stick. Not just taps, it was bangs with the stick. One day I was late with the tea in the morning. It was so cold and I was so tired. Mrs <sup>EKB</sup> came downstairs and she hit me with it. She hit me so hard I hurt my back on the table. The stick was there when a visitor came, such as from the children's authorities. It was there when my father came to visit. It was a warning to keep my mouth shut.
36. Mr <sup>EKA</sup> had a whole lot of different tortures. He made me or  hold his heavy army boots with our arms outstretched. I found out later it was a punishment in the army. If our arms dropped we'd be punished by being hit with the black stick. That wasn't enough for him. I was made to hit  if he got it wrong. If I did something wrong  had to hit me with this black stick. It didn't work. There was no way I could hit my younger brother. If we wouldn't hit each other Mr <sup>EKA</sup> would do it instead.

37. Mrs **EKB** was physically abusive to both of us and free with her hands. She didn't have the stick but she would slap us. I got most of it as **██████████** was so small.
38. I experienced far more abuse at the foster home with **EKA-EKB** but it is impossible for me to discuss or describe the experiences. There are things that happened that I have never told anyone.

### **Reporting of abuse at foster home**

39. There wasn't any adult that I could trust to speak to about what was happening in the foster home. One person I thought I could trust was my father, but he was being presented to me as my uncle.

### **Leaving foster care with **EKA-EKB****

40. I think Mr **EKA** had some sort of mental health issue. He got drunk and he chucked us out of the house to wander about the streets until he sobered up. I have a memory of police cars and ambulances being involved and flashing lights. It seemed like a lot of noise to a young child. I think me and **██████████** might have been taken in by one of the neighbours the night after this incident.
41. According to my records Mr **EKA** was examined by professionals under the Mental Health Act. There is a reference in my records to a Guardian's report being written about us. I also found a letter dated 1956 in my records that references a doctor and police officer deciding that three children should be removed. I cannot remember who the third child was. Then a social worker came into my school in Rosyth and I was taken out of my class by the headmaster. The headmaster told me I was now leaving the school and I was taken into his office to meet the social worker. The social worker, who was one of the women in black, told me I was a problem child. There was no explanation. I felt joy at having to leave **EKA-EKB** house.



42. Then I had a temporary stay in a children's homes. According to my records I was placed in Redhall Children's Home in Edinburgh. All I can remember of the children's home was the smell of cabbages, the polished banisters and there were lots of kids running around.
43. It turned out I was going to the next place and that was in Brechin. Social work did nothing. Every time I left a home I walked out in just my clothes. I had no books or photographs to take with me.

**Foster care with Mrs <sup>EKD</sup> [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Brechin**

44. I remember very little about my placement in Brechin. Both me and [REDACTED] were placed in the care of a woman who had a teenage daughter and they lived in Brechin. I couldn't remember her name and have since read in my records that her name was Mrs <sup>EKD</sup> [REDACTED] and she lived at [REDACTED].
45. I felt scared every day of being called a liar and I was powerless to influence anything that happened around me except by having a tantrum. This led to me being labelled a problem child. The worst thing for me was that Mrs <sup>EKD</sup> [REDACTED] took me by herself to the headmaster's office and told him I was ten, a year older than I really was. I looked at her and I looked at the headmaster and I knew I was either eight or nine years old. The school put me in a class with older kids. They mocked me and bullied me. The syllabus was wrong. Everyone thought I was dumb. I got no help from anybody. I was there a year.
46. On the last day of term a teacher told me she had a special prize for me because I'd worked so hard. She was telling me I had to work hard because she thought I would be ten on my next birthday in [REDACTED] and my Eleven Plus would be coming up. I told her I wasn't going to be ten and I was only going to be nine. She couldn't believe me. That information didn't go into my records from what I've seen.

47. I was taken to Brechin together with [REDACTED], but then we were separated. Dad had disappeared and couldn't be found and he'd already said we couldn't be separated. We fought all the time. [REDACTED] became very violent and aggressive. My records confirm this. I was separated from [REDACTED] not long after we arrived, maybe just a few weeks after. I don't know where he went. We were not able to keep in touch with each other.
48. I think the foster mother was overwhelmed when she took on both me and [REDACTED]. I think her husband had died in the war and there was no male in the house. She had a young, demanding teenage daughter who was aged thirteen or fourteen. The daughter took me to school and I had to walk six steps behind her. I can't remember her name.
49. I must have been in Brechin until the school summer vacation and the teacher bought me a book as an end of term prize as I'd worked so hard to keep up with what was effectively a class that was a year older than me. She told me I should be doing better as I'd be going on to my next school to do my Eleven Plus. That was when I told her I was only nine and her face showed how shocked she was. This must have been the summer of 1955 as I was turning nine.
50. I think I was fed adequately, but I was treated as second class and not treated like a member of the household. I had to brush the daughter's hair. If her hair was knotted and I pulled at her hair she got ratty. The foster mother got angry and I was chastised and she whacked me with the hair brush.
51. The worst thing for me in the placement was that my education suffered. When I look at my records I was gifted in French and English, but struggled with maths. That's why I went on to fail my Eleven Plus.

## Leaving foster home in Brechin

52. In the summer I was turning nine I left. I think the foster mother couldn't cope with me. I was angry and distressed and lonely and probably shouted at her. I was being moved to Inverness. I must have been told that I was moving as when the teacher gave me a book I'm sure I knew I was going to Inverness and a new school.
53. They claimed they couldn't get places for children any nearer in the post-war time and there was a shortage of people willing to look after difficult children and many men had died in the war. I think I read that in my records. When I was to move the female social worker, who was again dressed in black, who had told me I was a problem child turned up to take me to Inverness in a car. The implication was that it was my fault I was having to move. I remember it was a big car and we had a driver. I had a lecture about how the people looking after me were good people.
54. I was considered a problem child by that stage. It was my fault I was having to move. [REDACTED] wasn't in the next foster home in Inverness with me. I think he was placed on the croft at [REDACTED] that I went to later on. At this stage I would have loved to have gone to a children's home. I think my dad didn't want me to go in a children's home and I think that's a memory that has been triggered by having read my records.

## Foster care with Miss <sup>EKF</sup> [REDACTED] and Miss <sup>EKG</sup> [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Inverness

55. I lived with Miss <sup>EKF</sup> [REDACTED] and Miss <sup>EKG</sup> [REDACTED] who was her niece. These were the names I had to call them by. I remember the niece was [REDACTED]. I lived with them for two or three years. They ran a B&B in [REDACTED]. They made me sleep in the summer house in the garden in the warmer weather when they had guests. It was too cold to be in there in winter so then I slept in the house and they didn't have any guests and I had my own bedroom in the guest house. They lived in a beautiful bungalow.
56. In the summer house there was an entry porch and inside there was a bed, sink and bed clothes. There was a couple of windows. There was a window next to [REDACTED]

which was then a big privately owned building and there were gardens and people wandered about. One night a man forced his way in to the summer house through the porch. Fortunately he went out again, but it wasn't a secure, safe place. It wasn't locked.

57. I didn't have any maternal warmth from them. There were no cuddles and no kindly human sense. There was the north of Scotland thing where people didn't do cuddles. I used to tell myself, this time they're going to hug me, this time they're going to hold me. It never happened.

58. One of them had adult relatives who lived nearby, a man and a woman. They were in their twenties and married.

#### *Food and mealtimes*

59. They cooked beautiful meals. I was well fed.

#### *Washing and bathing*

60. I can't remember if I could lock myself in the bathroom in the house. They had no problem with coming in and poking around and looking at my things.

61. I didn't have a bathroom in the summer house and had to wee in garden. Otherwise I had to walk up the garden path and into the kitchen where there was a toilet and sink.

#### *Clothing*

62. They chose my clothes for me from the clothing allowance they got for me. I wasn't allowed to wear trousers, I only got skirts and woolly jumpers. I wasn't allowed to forget that I didn't belong. They were looking after me from a sense of duty. I had to be grateful to them



### *School*

63. I failed my Eleven Plus when I lived with Miss <sup>EKF</sup> and Miss <sup>EKG</sup>. I was there for two or three years. I got a very high mark in my English, but my maths score was too low. There was a gap in my education and it was never filled by my school. I had missed too much in my maths classes to catch up.
64. If I had passed the Eleven Plus I would have gone to Inverness Academy and my life would have been very different. I went to Inverness High School instead. I had a choice of studying home economics and shorthand typing, French and English. The boys had woodwork or engineering. Miss <sup>EKF</sup> and Miss <sup>EKG</sup> thought girls shouldn't sit the Eleven Plus exam.
65. When I was at secondary school. I had a French teacher called Miss Reith. She was impressed with my English and my fluency in French. She spoke to Miss <sup>EKG</sup> and Miss <sup>EKF</sup>. She told them I would benefit from a trip to France. So I went on a trip to Paris and stayed in a hotel. It was extraordinary. That was a holiday that was paid for by the school. I could never thank her enough for that. I have good memories of that trip.

### *Visits*

66. I had books in the house. The social worker came into the house and saw the bookcase in the front parlour. I explained they were my books. I always wanted books to read and I loved my books. They just kept giving me ribbons. I loved my Puff The Magic Dragon book. It might have been a birthday present from my half-brother, but my memory is suppressed. I had no contact with my own family.

### *Religion*

67. Miss <sup>EKF</sup> and Miss <sup>EKG</sup> were a bit narrow minded and of their time. They did their best but it wasn't a suitable place for an eleven or twelve year old girl. The Wee

Frees had a grip over that community in Inverness and the Wee Presbyterians were very strict. Miss <sup>EKF</sup> and Miss <sup>EKG</sup> may have been from the Church of Scotland. They weren't especially involved in religion themselves. They read the Readers Digest and they liked to keep the house spotlessly clean.

### *Chores*

68. I had to do dusting and polishing every day and wash the dishes. I did cleaning and I would show people round the B&B or point them in the direction of other places to stay if the house was full.

### *Healthcare*

69. I was eleven years old when my periods started. It was autumn. I was in my bedroom in the house and I thought I was sick. I was bleeding. I started crying and making a noise. Either Miss <sup>EKF</sup> or Miss <sup>EKG</sup> asked me what the matter was and why was I making a noise. I told her I'd started my periods and she smacked me across the face and said, 'clarty midden', wanted to know how I knew about periods and who had I been talking to. I'd heard about it from other kids in school. She went and got some old shirts and I cut them into strips so I could use them and wash them.
70. They also had some old bras from the relatives and I had to sew the bras flat to wear. They told me nice girls don't show their chests. Sometimes I've asked myself over the years if I imagined this, but I remember sitting there to sew them flat to wear them.

### *Discipline*

71. The women rarely used physical punishments, apart from the one slap described above, and there was no violence. They thought I was a horrible little eleven or twelve year old tart that they had to put up with.

*Leisure time*

72. I was allowed off the property. I had a bicycle. After I did my chores I used to cycle out to Culloden with a friend of mine. I loved that. I got a small amount of pocket money.
73. In my records I read that Miss <sup>EKF</sup> told a social worker I had walked home from school through puddles deliberately to get muddy so I wouldn't have to go to school. This is evidence of the psychological stuff that went on. Not the smacks and not the sticks. There was this expectation of girls to do what you were told and behave yourself, keep your knees together and defer.

**Leaving foster care with Miss <sup>EKF</sup> and Miss <sup>EKG</sup>**

74. They thought I was ogling or flirting with a younger male relative. I was twelve or thirteen. Every night I had to wash in the kitchen, then put my pyjamas on and go out to the summer house. One time the male relative was in the kitchen with his wife. I was very worried as I had to change my clothes. I tried to sneak my clothes off and put my pyjamas on. Shortly after that they said I was batting my eyelids at him and smiling at him. It was horrible. They had something on me then.
75. Shortly after that I was taken in a big car to my next foster home at the croft. I was aged about fourteen by then. I wasn't allowed to take my belongings and my books with me. I was too fearful and scared as a child to ask if I could. I didn't have any courage.

**Foster care with the [REDACTED] on a croft at [REDACTED], Nr Inverness**

76. I went to live on the croft next. I was aged thirteen or fourteen when I started living there. This was a small farm about [REDACTED] miles from Inverness. There was a road or dirt track up to the croft. At the time there was no running water. There was a hose pipe running down from the spring. There was an outside toilet.

77. It was a fantastic place and I loved it. I lived there with a brother and sister called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. She was known as [REDACTED]. Neither of them were married. They had been working in other places. They were in their forties.
78. The croft was renovated by the laird who owned it. Then they started running electricity. There was a plan to put in running water in. The house had a small kitchen and small living room and an old fashioned box bedroom and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] shared a bed in there. There was a big parlour with fancy china. Only the vicar went in there. There was one big bedroom upstairs and two small ones.
79. Another girl on the croft was called [REDACTED] and she was spoilt. She had been there from being a baby and she was the apple of their eye. She was aged eighteen, nineteen and twenty when I was there. She got whatever she wanted. She went to live in London later on and got married. They thought the world of her. She was a pretty girl
80. There had been other children on the croft. Some of them had moved on to other farms. There was a common thing at the time in the north of Scotland called baby farming. They could be children who had lost their family. Children, who were physically and mentally handicapped and nobody wanted them, were placed on crofts. The kids would get an allowance, but the people running the croft kept the money. The child would do farm work. I got a small amount of pocket money.
81. They still had [REDACTED] living with them. He had learning difficulties. He was aged in his late thirties or forties, but mentally he was fifteen or sixteen. They had relatives who lived on a different croft nearby. There was also an old lady called [REDACTED] who lived on another croft nearby and she had been there all her life as a kitchen maid. She had worked at another farm where [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]'s sister [REDACTED] lived with her family.
82. Other children came to live on the croft. There was a girl called [REDACTED] and she came after me. She was the same age as me. Me and [REDACTED] had one bed each. She had mobility problems and couldn't walk far. She was aged about sixteen and had a mental



age of ten or eleven. It was a common feature that farm workers had good homes, but money from the state went to foster parents.

83. There were many children placed on farms like this. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] didn't have the training for dealing with children with additional needs. It was the start of the 1960s and new ideas and fashions were coming in and they were from the Victorian era and had very different attitudes. There was no sense of offering any affection and reassurance to children and I longed for that.

## **Routine**

### *First impressions*

84. My first impressions were that I loved it on the croft. There were wide open spaces and there were cows and dogs and sheep. I enjoyed seeing the mountains after having lived with [REDACTED] and in Brechin and the constricted life in Inverness.

### *Mornings and bedtimes*

85. Life on the farm was very labour intensive. From the start of the day it would involve making breakfast, cleaning things or clothes washing using a mangle and ironing. We had animals to feed and milk and eggs to collect. It was a fantastic life.

### *Food/mealtimes*

86. The food was prepared by [REDACTED] and we had fresh food. There was standard stuff like meat and potatoes. A salad was an ornament on the plate and you didn't eat it. We made butter. I turned the butter churn.
87. A teacher at Inverness High School, Miss Reith, got me interested in veganism and vegetarianism. On the farm I had to eat my meat and potatoes and veganism was something I knew I had to look into much later on.

### *Clothing*

88. I didn't have the freedom to buy my own clothes. There was a party at the end of term at school when I was sixteen. They got me a pair of white satin shoes and dyed them. They had control over that sort of thing and I didn't have the courage or energy to challenge it.

### *School*

89. I loved reading and so I took books out of the school library. I did well in English and French classes. I continued going to Inverness High School to study. I went to and from on a bus and had to walk three miles for it. I carried my books to the main road to get to the bus stop. They tried to make me stop doing it as it was unladylike. I wore a school uniform.
90. The teacher, Miss Reith had no concept of the [REDACTED] at the croft. She was a member of the Order of the Cross of St John. She was involved in vegetarianism and veganism. She gave me a New English bible as a gift. If the [REDACTED] had seen it, it would have been burned or the bible would have been burned. I wrapped the bible in a silk scarf and buried it. I couldn't take it home with me.
91. I won a prize. The English teacher at school who took an interest in me suggested I go in for this speech making prize. I was terrified and worked hard on it. I was shaking but I won and I was featured in the paper next day. The [REDACTED] were not interested in education. They saw my achievements as a bit of fun. They were more interested in everyday work and God, and they saw God in everything. God made the rain and the sun and made the cow produce milk.
92. I left school at seventeen or eighteen.

### *Religion*

93. The [REDACTED] were people of their time and background. Within their own limits, they were generous, hospitable and kind. They were never cruel or violent, but they were very rigid in their views because of their beliefs. They were Wee Frees. Every morning before breakfast [REDACTED] would read from the bible. We all sang a psalm, not hymns. They had a literal interpretation of the bible. One time they spotted the minister approaching and I was working outside and wearing trousers I was sent upstairs to change into a skirt because it said in the bible that girls didn't wear trousers.
94. We went to a new church that was a couple of miles away. We went in our best clothes and hats. The service was part in Gaelic and part not. I was very interested in the bible, but it would incense me. It was my fantastic introduction to English Literature. The words were amazing. It wasn't my place to question the bible and they would discuss it and got angry and dismissive of me.

### *Christmas and birthdays*

95. A couple of birthdays on the farm stick out in my mind, such as turning sixteen. At Christmas I got small gifts. In Inverness people celebrated Hogmanay more than Christmas. There was no Christmas tree..

### *Work/chores*

96. Washing the clothes involved putting them through a mangle. My hands swelled up from being in so much water. I was milking cows and feeding chickens and taking eggs to the marketing board.

### *Trips/holidays*

97. There were school bus trips to Ben Nevis and to Glen Affric.

### *Healthcare*

98. I had hay fever, allergies, terrible psoriasis and bad asthma. I got some treatment with creams and shampoo, but it never got to the root cause. I wasn't able to grow my hair long because of it.

### *Personal possessions*

99. The [REDACTED] were not interested in material possessions. They had the basics that they needed and they were comfortable. I got some pocket money, but not for doing farm work.

### *Visits*

100. [REDACTED] came to the croft. He didn't stay more than one or two days. He was rude to everyone and he was booted out because of the violence. There was a gulf between us. He was a stranger. I think they knew he was coming to see me.
101. [REDACTED] was very, very damaged by his experiences. I didn't know where he was living. He had no insight into it himself. There may have been other intermittent visits since we were in Brechin together. I don't remember.
102. I had some occasional visits from social work. There would be a table set with scones and jam. My social worker came up from Edinburgh as I was still under the city council social work as I had been from the start. The social worker didn't see me alone. I saw them on the croft and had to tell them how happy I was, which I was on the croft.

### *Running away*

103. I ran away later on. I was aged about seventeen or eighteen when I left the croft.



## *Discipline*

104. There were chores to do and that was expected in our lifestyle and that wasn't seen as punishment. They couldn't understand why I might want to read books instead of doing farm work.

## **Leaving the croft**

105. I left the farm and I wanted to go to Edinburgh. I was aware that care went to the age of twenty-one. Things were falling apart on the farm. There was a huge gulf between me and the [REDACTED]. I just had to start afresh. I was a terrible cuckoo and they thought I would grow out of things and become compliant and more grateful like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was in fact more questioning of them by then. I just left when I knew I was free to go at seventeen or eighteen. This was in 1964. I hitched a lift and met people. I had just a small suitcase and I knew I was leaving the croft for good.

## **Life after being in care**

106. From the ages of seventeen and eighteen to twenty-three was a very complex time for me. I had two nervous breakdowns. I was in a fugue state. I don't want to give any further details. It is difficult to talk about now. My memories all blend together and trying to put them together is very difficult. I was lucky to get through it and must have been protected by some god or other.
107. In that period of time I was fortunate to have travelled overseas for several years with people I met. I left Edinburgh and I went to Jersey and I blagged a job as a housekeeper. Then I travelled overland with a group of people across Europe. We ended up in Greece in the Peloponnese. We then headed to Izmir in Turkey. We wanted to go to Calcutta to work with Mother Theresa. It wasn't realistic at that time. We travelled to Afghanistan and the Khyber Pass. I had the most wonderful time of

my life. We went into Pakistan and across India and got to Calcutta. I got very ill and had to come back to the UK.

108. This all made sense of what I wanted to do with my life. I found myself in London and I got a job. I went to evening classes to get qualifications and studied Greek, Russian and ancient history. A sky opened up for me. I did medical secretarial work at the National Hospital for Neurological Diseases and the people at the evening classes suggested I applied for university. I couldn't go to Edinburgh as it was too painful.
109. Then I took a scholarship exam for Oxford. I couldn't get a full grant because of being Scottish. I had to do a dissertation and that was on Lord of the Rings. I had to pass an interview and then got a scholarship place at Somerville College, Oxford to study Philosophy, Psychology and Physiology (PPP). I started my studies in 1974.
110. I went back to the farm at ██████ to visit and I went to tell them I was going to study at Oxford. I told them it was Somerville College and they commented that wasn't Oxford University then, and I had to point out to them it was. They had to cut me down.
111. The same year I wrote to Edinburgh City Council to ask for my social work records and was told they had been destroyed in a fire. At this time they had no idea where my brother ██████ was, but a letter from me asking for contact with family members, somehow found its way to ██████. In 1974 or 1975, ██████ phoned me when I was at college. He introduced himself as my brother ██████ and I denied I had a brother by that name. I'd suppressed everything I knew about ██████. He was shocked that I didn't know who he was.
112. From ██████ I filled in details about my mother dying and my dad going off elsewhere. After she died, ██████ looked after me and ██████ until the children's authorities caught up with us. When ██████ was only twelve or thirteen he was taking care of youngsters. He had no idea what had happened to me. I met up with ██████ in Edinburgh. He had his own family there and he was a playwright.

113. ██████ was close to our father and ██████ was protective of him. ██████ couldn't accept the things that had happened to me and he was shocked. He asked me not to tell my father as it would upset him. I asked him why he hadn't tried to contact me and ██████. ██████ thought I would be a housewife in Fife, all happy and content. It was an enormous blow to him. He had no idea of what had happened to me.
114. I met my husband ██████ when I was in my second year at university. I met him at a party hosted by close friends in London. He was so intelligent, kind and generous and we clicked. He was just back from Australia having got his pilot's licence there. His background was different to mine and he was from a big, close family.
115. I wanted ██████ to meet my father, so later on we went to meet him together. My father was living in Wiltshire with his new partner. We went to meet him there. He was dismissive of me and when the three of us went out for a drive in the car my father pushed me to sit in the back seat of my own car. I knew my position. I didn't have a relationship with my father for long. I found out some more about my mother. I didn't know about her time in hospital and he knew nothing. It was ██████ who did all the work and took care of my mum, and not my dad. My dad had by then lost two wives and was now onto his third.
116. I completed the three year degree. I loved it. It was incredible. My luck changed all the time. I graduated in 1977 when I was thirty-one.
117. ██████ and I got married in 1976 because his mother didn't approve of us living together. He was working at the forefront of IT development in voice recognition and was frequently head hunted by big companies. ██████ was driven by his work. His job meant we moved around a lot and lived in the USA. This had an effect on my career and I never got it started because of the lack of continuity caused by moving so often. We never settled anywhere. This pattern of packing up and moving was similar to my childhood of moving around between homes.
118. I couldn't live like that any longer. I've lived in Stroud myself long term since 1989. ██████ and I were divorced. I couldn't cope with moving around so much. We later

remarried in 2000 as [REDACTED] was unwell and came to convalesce with me. He subsequently became more and more unwell until he passed away in 2019.

119. I started volunteering and did a college course in social work, but it was awful and I couldn't do it. I settled into doing voluntary work. I had big struggles getting help for [REDACTED] when he was ill. Now I'm by myself I'm fortunate to have some very good and supportive neighbours.
120. Whatever bad things happened to me at the start changed. I feel I lived my life backwards from a terrible start to getting better and better. I have met people and accomplished things that I wanted and I never imagined. I think most people's lives start very well and it gets more and more difficult when they have a family and suffer illness as they get older.

### **Impact**

121. Growing up in care had a huge impact on my education and I didn't achieve my potential until late. Moving around impacted on my relationship and gave me a lack of security as an adult and it was too much like being in care. The contempt the people had for me and [REDACTED] We were considered as just things or commodities to be moved around and I was being labelled as a problem child.
122. There has been an impact on my physical health in the long term. I have asthma as a result of the stress of living in [REDACTED] house in Rosyth. Some asthmas can be caused by stress. I possibly had a physical tenancy to breathing difficulties and that was exacerbated by the stress. I continued to physically shrink and freeze if other people came near me as a startle reflex as a complex mix of fear and anxiety. I developed a constriction in the back of my throat that is still with me now as a response to anxiety.
123. The social worker I saw in the office in Edinburgh said there were some things better off not known. That was a pivotal thing for me. Why would anyone say that. My life in

care has never left me. Had it not been for ██████ who was extraordinarily supportive, I would have been totally crushed. I can't go into certain social places because of the terror inflicted on me every day in childhood by Mr EKA ██████. Also, I was told I was lying all the time. I was told I was a happy and well child, but in reality I had serious physical health conditions. I think about my experiences in care at least every week.

124. I am having bereavement counselling from the hospice near to where I live. The first time was quite recently because of lockdown. There was no way I could have gone through counselling any sooner than the last two years because of ██████ death and then the lockdown.
125. With regard to the foster carers I don't know if any of them are alive. I have no wish to find out. If Mr EKA ██████ was alive I would have wanted to kill him or do him damage. When I think back to the ██████ I think they did their best for us.
126. I find it difficult to speak to people about my experiences. It's not an easy topic for most people. There was ██████ ██████'s family who were foster carers to a number of children and I tried telling her I had a bad experience in foster care and I was dismissed. It turned out later on that there was abuse in their family as perpetrated by their son, and it had been ignored.
127. I had a need to please ██████ on the croft. I desperately needed a cuddle from her and some warmth when I was just doing my best to help her. She wouldn't do it. My throat would seize up so I couldn't talk anymore. That still happens to me. If people are sympathetic to me, my reaction is to please.

## Records

128. I went in person to children's social work offices in Edinburgh when I was living there. I spoke to a woman in a tweed suit and told her I wanted to find out about my parents and family contacts. She told me there were some things I was better off not knowing. I was under the age of twenty-one, I think I was seventeen or eighteen, and I was told



I was too young to know. I tried to tell her and another man in the social work office what happened to me in care. They told me I was a liar and physically pushed me out of the office and told me not to come back.

129. Then in 1974 I contacted social services at Edinburgh City Council by letter to ask for a copy of my records. I have a letter dated 21 February 1974 from Miss Wilson a Principal Social Worker. They initially told me the records had been lost in a fire. I wrote again much more recently and I have a letter from 2020 telling me there had been a fire that destroyed the paper documents, but they had found the records stored on microfiche. I received copies of the documents sometime in 2020. They are all handwritten and in very small script. They are very difficult to read and decipher.
130. My records are littered with references to 'EJZ won't do X' or 'EJZ is lazy' all negative, apart from 'EJZ is quiet and well-behaved'. It was written by someone who worked in the children's authorities. They turned up two times and told me I was a problem child. I was about eight then and I had a glowing report from my school, but the social workers saw me differently.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

131. There needs to be more money and resources and better training for social workers. They need to be focused on the needs of the child as an individual when they consider the suitability of the foster placement. There have to be social workers watching over the carers to ensure safeguarding and supervision of the placements and regular visits to the home, and not just accepting the words of the carers that the child is fine when she or he is not fine. There needs to be better and more interaction between the child and the social worker alone, who becomes a familiar adult that the child can trust to report to. There needs to be more social workers in order to do that.

**Other information**

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

Signed.. EJZ  
[Redacted Signature] .....

Dated... 30th NOVEMBER 2021 .....