

## INTRODUCTION

In 1986, a chain of events began that was to destroy many lives, and leave me in jail, a convicted child molester. I was not guilty of the wide range of sexual offences of which I was accused by my large, morally and legally corrupt social circle. I had begun fostering young people for the Department of Social Welfare in Christchurch, New Zealand, having cared, for several years, for children and young people with behaviour problems. Gradually, men and women from my social circle became sexually involved with my foster boys. The boys were provided with drugs and alcohol, and participated in group sex with many adults. Babies, fathered by my foster boys, were born to several women in this group. The boys became entangled in a web of crime, to support drug and alcohol habits, as addictions took hold. Over the next few years I tried desperately to halt these events. To protect the boys, I sought help from the welfare. They were unwilling to help, and didn't believe me. I couldn't produce any witnesses. Other welfare foster parents became involved, selling or giving drugs and alcohol to my foster boys. Any attempt I made to intervene, was met with the strongest opposition from the welfare, then adults involved and the boys themselves. Finally, after more than two years, and numerous threats made on my life from within the circle, and my own boys, I tried one last time to get the welfare to act. They refused. In desperation, I began reporting my foster boys criminal activities to the police, and the adults sexual liaisons, to the welfare. As the direct result, I was accused of child sex abuse. The welfare instructed its interviewer in the sex abuse team, to believe, without question, the young boys' allegations. I was to be convicted at any cost. No record of these events would ever be acknowledged, by either the welfare or police. This is the true account of those events, together with the traumas associated with the allegations, the secrets, and my life on remand, as a falsely convicted child molester.

## THE NIGHTMARE BEGINS

In September of 1992, I was unlucky enough to be caught up in the hysteria of the time, child sex abuse allegations. As a male foster parent with the department of social welfare, I was only too aware that sooner or later, it would be my turn to have the finger pointed at me. A group of foster children who were in my care at the time, aged upwards of fifteen years, made allegations to the police that I had committed indecencies upon them. This was to start the worst time of my life, as I headed down the road to prison.

As a foster parent, I was well acquainted with methods of disclosure and questioning, so had the absolute knowledge that there was to be no way out for myself.

At a seminar held by the department of social welfare, for the sex abuse education of foster parents, we were told that the word of the child was to be believed, beyond all else.

At around 4pm on a Tuesday in September 1992, I watched out the kitchen window in horror as several police cars swooped on my home in Christchurch. Seven or so policemen climbed out of the cars and walked briskly up the path. Some went to the back door, some to the front and one began searching in my garage.

I had known for several days that allegations of a sexual nature had been made about myself. I had no idea by whom or what the exact nature of these allegations was. All this time, I was living in the most terrible fear imaginable. I was so frightened, my stomach tied up in knots. I dry reached often and became a quivering mess. Never in my life had I had such a strong desire to take my own life, as I felt when the knock came on my front door.

The terror was unimaginable as I slowly made my way through the house. Slowly, I opened the door. Before me stood three policemen. One of them was in plain clothes and the others in uniform. The one in plain clothes was Detective Power. He showed me a slip of pink paper, identified himself to me and asked me if I

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mindful if he searched the house. I was made to feel that I had no choice. I had nothing to hide, so I simply said “Hello yourself.”

I felt so invaded, and although Jason Ng who was an 18 year old ex foster child of mine, and who I later discovered was a complainant, was there with me, I felt terribly alone.

Other officers came in from outside. They had been searching the garage and grounds. I supposed it was all quite legal. After all, that pink paper was a search warrant wasn't it? I watched these policemen rummage through my home, and poke into every corner of my life. Every now and again the detective would look at me and smirk, as he held up something that belonged to one of the kids. As he did so, he said “Jason again,” and “ Notice it's always Jason?” I had no idea what he meant. He would tell me nothing. It was all so impersonal and degrading.

I called my father on the phone. I felt dreadful and shook uncontrollably as he answered. He asked me what was wrong and I struggled to find the words to tell him. All I could say was the police were here and it was something to do with me committing sexual crimes on some child. I could not tell him who, because I didn't know. He told me not to panic, he would be there shortly.

Dad was very fast arriving. I looked out of the window, fighting back my tears. I felt relieved at the sight of a friendly face. As he walked in the back door, I felt less alone.

Dad asked me what was going on. I told him all I knew, which was very little. He went into the room where the police were searching, and asked the detective what it was all about. I listened as the detective told him to mind his own business. Dad told him who he was but that made no difference. The police had no intention of disclosing any information . My elderly dad told the detective, he worked for the police, and I had a right to know why they were turning my house upside down. The detective said, “Then you should know, we don't have to tell him (me) anything. If you don't mind your own business, you will be arrested for obstruction.”

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I was now not only frightened for myself, but for my father. Dad tried to comfort me. He could see and feel the terror sweeping through me.

It was about then, the detective went to a pile of washing I had just done and was about to fold and put away. Picking up two pairs of kid's undies from the pile, he sneered, "What have we here?" I told him that obviously they were underpants. He asked me whose, and I told him they were Jason's. He responded with, "Do you notice how everything's Jason?"

I felt that comment was leading to something serious. Jason was 10 years old. He was the nephew of a high profile Christchurch police inspector. I was confused that detective Power had shown interest only in the underpants. In that pile of washing, there were many other clothes. I was a foster parent. I thought it would be obvious there would be children's assorted clothing. However, he read something into it which was not there. It was very clear to me, I was being forced into a one way trip to jail.

The search went on for hours. Items of a sexual nature were found upstairs. They were the property of one of the residents, Scott B. He was 15 years old and in the care of the department of social welfare. Years earlier, he had been accused of committing sexual acts on his two sisters. I had trouble convincing the police that these items, which included sexually explicit literature, photographs of naked little girls, underwear and empty alcohol bottles and cans were Scott's property, not mine. Luckily, one of the boarders, Jason Ng, was able to tell the police that these things were indeed Scott's.

I had followed the police from room to room as they searched for what seemed an eternity. My dad was at my side. I was sad that he had to be put through this with me but ever so grateful he was there. I could not have survived without him

As we got back downstairs, police were loading possessions of mine into black, plastic rubbish bags. At this time, Detective Power told me he would like me to

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accompany him to the Papanui police station to answer some questions. I asked him if I was under arrest, he said, “No, but I’ll arrest you if you want me to. You wouldn’t want that, would you?”

He told me to call my lawyer, who advised me to say nothing, then asked to speak to detective Power.

I could not hear the conversation. The phone was handed back to me by the detective. My lawyer told me allegations had been made to the police and I should accompany the police without fuss. He did not tell me what those allegations were, although by now I had some idea, but he did tell me it was highly unlikely I would be released once I got to the police station. He told me he would be there as soon as possible.

Now a new terror struck me. Were all those stories about police beating up suspects if they didn’t tell them what they wanted to hear, true? Would I be locked in a cold, dark cell with others who would attack me? What would I do? What would I say. I was a mess. My knees turned to jelly as my dad tried to comfort me.

Finally the time came to go to the police station. I was led down the path to a waiting police car. If nothing else, at least the car was unmarked and no one would be able to tell where I was going.

Getting into that car was an uncomfortable feeling. I felt like a little kid on his way to the headmaster’s office. I had no way of knowing what was in store.

As we headed off, I turned my head to look at what had been my home for the past seven years. That would be the last time I would see it. A tear came to the eye as I saw my faithful old dog ‘Pooh’ watching bewildered, as I was taken away from him.

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I saw dad get into his car and follow us. He was going to be at the police station, for me. I really needed support. I think any of us who are in that situation, need to have someone there.

As we drove along Hills road towards Papanui, I looked up at the sky. I couldn't help but notice it's deep blue colour. It was so friendly and warm, yet at the same time, cold and sad. I wondered how many years it would be until I again stood free beneath it.

From the moment I got into the police car the detective changed dramatically. He was so friendly now, and I was very suspicious of this, especially when he asked a few seemingly unimportant questions. I resisted answering them and in hindsight, I am glad that I did. They

all related to what would later become the reason for my being arrested.

I took the cigarettes from my pocket. I noticed I had very few left. I had been chain smoking through the extreme tension of this crisis. I asked the detective to stop at a shop so I could buy another packet. He agreed and the car pulled up outside a dairy. I went in, bought some smokes and returned to the car. Shortly after, we pulled into the back entrance of the Papanui police station.

When we arrived at the police station, I was ushered into a small interview room and told that my lawyer would soon be there. I asked to see my father and was told I could not. I asked why and was told that I would see no one until the interview was over.

I really needed to see dad, then. I had gone completely to pieces and didn't know what was going on. I asked the detective what I was supposed to have done. He told me I would find out as soon as my lawyer had been. I told him I would not be answering any questions until I was told why I had been brought here.

He said, "You know why you're here. How do you live with yourself?"

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He left the room. The door was left open and another officer stood out in the hall. I tried to put it together and in my head I knew that I had not been arrested. I knew I had not been read my rights or cautioned. I knew that although I had not been arrested, I would be if I didn't answer the police detective. None of this made any sense to me. This was not how I thought justice was supposed to work. I was in for much worse than this though.

It was now around 5:45 pm. I had to wait for about 15 minutes before my lawyer, Mr Bunce arrived. Waiting in that little room was nerve wracking. My lawyer arrived and went off somewhere with the detective. After 10 minutes or so, he returned. I sat with bated breath as he asked me if I knew what was going on. I had no idea. He then advised me not to answer any questions. If I must say something, it should be, "No comment."

The lawyer then asked if I'd understood what he'd said. I told him I did. He looked at his watch. Announcing his evening meal, "Would soon be on the table," he left.

With my lawyer gone, I felt more alone than I have ever felt in my life. There was only myself and the detective now. He had a long red note book which he placed on the table, looking at me and smiling. He sat down on a chair at the other end of a small table, pulled out a pen and looked me squarely in the eye.

I felt so intimidated as he sat there silently for what seemed an eternity. I felt that in his eyes, I was the lowest form of animal life. God, I wished my knees would stop shaking.

The first thing the detective said to me was that I was in fact aware of the reasons for my being brought into the police station. I repeated I had no idea of anything specific, or who, if anyone had made any accusations. It went like this.

Det- "you know why you're here, don't you." Me - "No, I have no real idea."

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Det- “Then you must have some idea.”

Me - “You heard what I said when the lawyer was here. I told you I had no intention of answering any questions.” Det- “Something to hide!”

Me - “Nothing! Why don’t you tell me what this is all about?”

Det- “I will ask the questions. If you are innocent then you won’t need to know; Will you?”

I was very frightened. I didn’t know what he was going to say next. I feared he may physically assault me, if I didn’t do as he said. He had by this time, become annoyed with my refusal to answer questions.

Det- “Look Foote! If you’re unwilling to help me in this enquiry, I’ll see to it that the judge is told that you were very uncooperative. That will get you an extra year or so, don’t you think?”

Me - “For what? I’ve done nothing wrong!”

Det- “Come on Tony, you know what I’m talking about. The Waimak. The boys underpants in your bedroom (they were in the loinge with the rest of the days washing). You’ve got a problem. We both know that, don’t we”

Me - “The only problem I’ve got is, that you won’t tell me why I’m here. You’re threatening me that I’m going to jail. For what? I don’t know.”

Det- “Ok, you answer two or three questions for me, and I’ll tell you what you want to know. As if you don’t know already.”

I agreed to this after the detective told me I could stop any time I wanted and there would be no more questions asked.

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I quickly discovered, once you begin to answer questions you can't stop. Every time you try to stop the questions, the detective accuses you of having something to hide.

The other thing I discovered is that the answers you give, are not always written in the appropriate place in the note book, relative to the questions asked. The detective will ask you a serious question, then tell you to think about the answer carefully; He will then ask you a benign question, which will have the required answer for the serious one. Because

the first question may be quite difficult to answer, and all questions are asked in a most leading and provocative manner (it's quite corrupt and manipulative and worse, they are not only allowed, but paid to do it), you will automatically answer the second, easier question. That answer will then be written down in the note book into which your statement is entered. Your head is spinning by this time and you may have just made an admission to a crime, even if there had been no crime committed by you.

Another thing I noticed was that the detective left several lines between questions and answers. It is in these spaces that entries can be made after you have been arrested. If you have already signed the statement, you are really in trouble. There is no way of denying anything that has been written, when you have signed it. I know this because I made that mistake. Most people have heard the warnings about making and/or signing any statement to the police. From someone who has been there, believe it!

After one or two seemingly innocent questions, the detective hit me with the first of the allegations. Out of the blue he simply said, "What would you say if I told you that Daniel B has accused you of performing oral sex on him on at least 25 occasions?"

I was totally stunned. I felt I'd been hit in the face by a truck going at full speed. A cold, clammy sweat covered my body. I'd had no idea of what I'd been accused of

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until now, and knowing what it was, blew me right out of the window. What struck me at that instant was nothing short of blind panic. I didn't know what to say or think.

Forcing my lips to move I said, "I deny that." It seemed to be the only thing I could do. Instantly I thought of standing in the dock while this charge was read out before 50 people I'd never seen before. I felt as though I could just crawl up in a little ball and die. It didn't stop there. Another young person, a close friend of the first, had made the same allegation. Then a third and a fourth. I was asked if I knew why they would make up these allegations. I said I did and began to give the reason I thought they would accuse me.

I had turned them in only a week earlier, after they had stolen a car, explosive caps and several cycles. The detective expressed no interest in this and said, "We'll get back to this later." We never did. Instead he made use of my emotional state to try and commit me to saying that I had done these things. Between questions he would make sexually explicit comments and smirk. As I continued to deny the allegations he became more frustrated and annoyed. Finally he said, "Look. I know you're guilty, you know you're guilty so why don't you just admit it and save Jason from all the trouble of court.

I broke down as he said, "Look man, Jason cried. He really cried. You can save him from all of that in court. I know you would want to."

I knew in my heart that the allegations were not true but felt powerless to do anything about it.

I said, "Some of the charges are true (but not mine), but for Scott. The rest are bullshit."

That is not how it was written in the statement but I didn't find that out, until the next morning. At this point

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The detective told me to ring my lawyer again. I did. Mr Bunce told me to say nothing else, he'd see me in court the next morning. He then spoke to the detective who informed him it had been, "An excellent interview."

After the phone call ended, the detective told me there had been threats made on my life, from friends of Jason's mother, Margaret. He said, "I shouldn't have said anything to her really. I wouldn't have if I'd have known she was going to spread it about." He went out of the room and returned with a slip of paper. Sitting at the other end of the table, he filled it in. I did not know what it was and was too shattered to even think of asking. After he had filled it in, he asked me if there was anything I wished to add. I said, "No." I was relieved that the interview was over and was looking forward to getting home.

"Thank God it's over," I said, meaning the interview. That was added to my statement later and was made to sound as though I had been caught out at something, and was glad it was over. That was not the case. One must never, ever make a statement to the police, without a lawyer present throughout the interview. That ensures nothing is added after you leave.

I was told the interview had terminated. I was also told I was to be transported to the Christchurch central police station where I would spend the night until court, next morning. I asked to see my dad. He had been in the waiting room at the Papanui police station for the duration of the interview, some two and a half hours. He was told I was being taken to the central police station, that I was being placed in protective custody. I was then quickly whisked away by detective Power, who insisted his shift was ending.

My dad was told to leave. It seems the police have a real aversion to families providing moral support in sex abuse cases. This would surface again as police threatened my elderly parents several times, they would be arrested if they continued to help me. The police called it, "Attempting to pervert the course of justice."

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Dad left and I was escorted to a waiting police car. I got in as did detective Power. We drove out of the police compound and onto the main road. The whole trip was an unreal blur in my head.

The detective asked me things like, “Why did you do it?”, and “Was it only boys, or girls as well?”, and “You know you’ve got a problem.”

Then out of the blue he said, “ Jason cried his heart out. He really loves you.” That was really cruel. I began to cry. How could someone love you and say these terrible things. It was impossible to contain the emotion. I had not done these things yet I was on my way to jail. He also told me Jason continually denied any sexual act had taken place between he and I. He told me that in the end it was Jason’s mother who broke him, after pressuring her son for several days to tell the police what they wanted to hear.

I knew there was no chance of bail. The detective had not said why but he had told me the police would be opposing it.

That was the saddest, most terrifying and confusing ride of my life. I tried to recall the events of the last two days, but it was impossible. Everything was so cluttered together. I felt I was suffocating. All the extreme pressure and stress during the search and the interview, and the humiliation and perversion I was forced to listen to , had. taken its toll.

I had known for several days, this was coming, but I had no idea what it was going to be like.

Detective Power had earlier promised me a meal when we arrived at the police station in town. I had not eaten in several. days and was terribly hungry. The ride seemed

endless. Suddenly we were at the police station. As the car pulled into the police yard, I barely managed to pull myself together. I did not want to be seen as a

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quivering 'woofter' by any other prisoner. I did not feel like a man. I did not feel like a human being. Inside, I was dead

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It was about 8:30pm. I was led from the police car to the loading bay, at the back of the Christchurch police station. I was fighting to retain my composure, as the loud “clank” of the electric lock on the door to the cells, signalled it had opened. The detective ushered me through the door and along several, pink corridors, to a counter. A policeman in uniform waited there. The slip of paper which the detective had earlier filled out, was presented and I was told to hand over all my personal belongings to this uniformed policeman. I felt tears in my eyes as I did what I was told. I handed him my wallet, drivers licence, the cigarettes I bought on the way to the Papanui police station, my money and so on. I was told to take off my belt and hand it over. Apparently people are often in such a distressed state, they use their belt to hang themselves in the police cells. After signing the receipt for my belongings, the officer noticed I was wearing a watch. I was ordered to pass it over too. Again I did as I was told. •The policeman behind the counter looked at the slip of paper, and then smirked.

“Another one,” he said looking at the detective. I was directed to follow a corridor. As I turned to go, the detective said, “If anyone asks what you’re in for, tell them you stole a lawnmower from a garage down the road, or something. Don’t tell them why you are here or you will get bashed.”

This frightened the hell out of me. I’d heard of •the violence dealt out in prisons, to those accused of sex crimes. I began to wonder if I would get out of this alive. I walked quietly along three corridors. At the end of the third one was a pile of blankets. I was told to take three of them, then shown to a cell at the far end. Before entering the cell, I was told to take off my shoes and leave them outside the door. As I was crossing the threshold of the cell I felt an enormous rush of fear. The remainder of my will wanted to struggle, but my common sense told me the police would use force, if it did so. I slunk into that cell like a weak, helpless lamb.

Inside the concrete cell, was a combination stainless steel hand basin and toilet. There was a concrete slab for a bed. On this slab was a blue and white pin striped, plastic covered mattress, with a matching pillow.

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I desperately needed to urinate, but there was no way I was going to use 'that' toilet. It was right in front of the cell door. Anyone walking past could see me. I was a very private person and had been brought up to know there are some things you don't do in front of other people. Using the toilet was one of them.

The cell door was of the type shown on American tv shows. Nothing but steel bars. A video camera in the corner of the cell, watched my every move.

I lay on the bed with my hands clenched in fists in my pockets. New prisoners came in over the next few hours. I felt defiled, as they stared at me on their way past. I said nothing at all. This was new to me and I was growing more frightened as time went by. I spent what seemed hours lying on that slab, fists clenched, contemplating suicide. Desperately I tried to rationalize what was happening and dreading what was to come. No matter how tough you are, on the first time in this situation, the child in you comes out. I cried, I despaired and I asked myself, "Why?" Each time I heard footsteps approaching, I quickly wiped my eyes. I shook uncontrollably, my sadness profound. I knew, whatever happened, there was no way out.

There is nothing about being thrown into prison for the first time you could even remotely perceive, unless you've been there. The moment one is put into jail, his life will, most definitely, come crashing down. Nothing I had ever experienced could have prepared me for the tremendous rush of emotions which struck me, with such power, in such a terrible and continuous onslaught, leaving my spirit in tatters.

Shock is the first response. Shock at being invaded by police in your home as they poke and pry into every corner of your personal life. Shock at being dragged into a hostile police station by very intimidating policemen and interrogated for hours. Shock as you hear the charges and shock as you are taken into a little cell and the door slams shut. "Crash!" Then, bewilderment when finally left alone in the cell to contemplate what is coming. Shame, as you, a man, cry. Fear, as you lie on a small concrete bed and listen to other prisoners shout, pound and kick the doors and vomit.

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That was a terrible night. I had not been given a meal as

- earlier promised by the detective. A policeman came to my cell at about ten o'clock, though I could only guess the time since I now had no watch. He told me I had a visitor. I was shown to a small room with nothing in it but a concrete bench, and a perspex barrier between me and the outside.

The visitors were my father and brother. It was a shock to see them. It was an acute embarrassment for me. Them too, I suspect. I tried to explain the events of that fateful evening. Dad didn't seem to understand. I didn't either. The visit was short. Dad and my brother told me they would be in court, next morning. I felt consoled at the soothing words. I felt less alone and more likely to get through the night in one piece.

We said our goodbye's. I remember telling dad that I could handle it. Even though I knew I probably couldn't.

After dad and my brother had left, I waited in that cold room, barefooted, until a policeman took me back to that horrible cell. Alone again, I burst into tears. Later, another policeman led me away to have my fingerprints taken. I really felt like a criminal as he took my hands and dabbed them on an ink pad before pressing each finger, then my palm, onto each allotted space on a file card. After this, I was photographed and taken back to 'that' cell. I had still not been fed and was ravenously hungry. I asked a passing policeman for some food. He told me I had to wait until morning. I told him I was supposed to get something to eat when I arrived. He simply said, "Tough luck."

I tried to sleep for the rest of the night but it was Impossible. One of the night officers repeatedly dropped something heavy, with a loud, resounding crash. Between this and all the yelling and screaming from other cells, I got little sleep.

More crashing, as this hellish limbo turns into movement. At last, it is morning.

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IN ADDINGTON

I awoke, stunned and confused. Two officers were bringing around a breakfast trolley. Cornflakes and yogurt were provided for those who wanted them. I didn't. Later, it was time for a shower. Again, only if you wanted it. Again, I didn't. I waited in the cell, dying for a cigarette. An officer came to take me to the 'day room'. I asked him if I could have a smoke. He told me I would be given one, soon.

I don't know where the 'day' comes into it. This was a large, fully enclosed concrete room with no windows. No daylight entered it. There were many video camera's, so any trouble would be quickly handled. Concrete tables and benches, were part of the structure.

There were several other prisoners in the day room. One came up to me and asked what I was in for. I said, "Cheque fraud."

I became very anxious. There were quite a few other prisoners listening. This man was with the answer I had given him and asked a few pointed questions. I answered with inventiveness, exercising care not to overdo

it. Luckily he believed me this time. I was scared to death as a feeling of impending doom surged through my body. I walked around a bit, more like stalk:nu really, as others passed. disbelieving glances in my direction, and talked among themselves. A very large man walked up to me. He asked why I hadn't got bail since fraudsters usually do. I panicked a bit and yelled to a policeman, "Where's that fucken smoke?"

The policeman replied, "You'll get one later."

I shouted, "Fuck you!", hoping he would take me out of there. I was right. A moment later, ~ae and two other officers came and took me back to my cell. Thank Cod! I'm sure I only just evaded a beating.

I lay on the bed for about half an hour until I was taken out of the cell again. I picked up my shoes from outside the door and put them on, then I was taken beok to

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the day room, where the other prisoners were still waiting. Not wanting to piss me off, they said nothing.

Several police came into the room. One at a time, the prisoners were taken through a door. Soon, it was my turn. Through that door was a viewing room. I was told to stand on two, red painted footprints on the floor. Several police sat watching. I was told to hold a card, which contained my name and a number, in front of me. On the wall behind me was a series of height graduations. The watching police were blotted out by a blinding light, glaring in my face. The whole procedure was videotaped.

Through all of this, I felt utterly degraded and humiliated. I nearly collapsed as my charge was read out. A policeman said, in a loud mocking voice, "Foote, Antony Robert. Charged with having anal sex with a boy under 10."

Prior to this time, I had no knowledge of what it was. As it was read out I heard, "tsk tsk," followed by a snigger from those unseen faces. I could see the faintest glimpse of a shaking head as I was taken back to the day room.

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One man protested, ‘ they couldn’t make him do this!’ He was thrust at the door by a policeman who said, aggressively, “Get in there.”

Finally it was over. The others were marched to a police van. I was taken back to my cell. I was on ‘protection’ and was to be kept apart from other prisoners so I would stay in one piece.

I was ordered to take my shoes off again. I was locked up for about ten more minutes, then two policemen came and took me out of the cell. Yet again, the order to put my shoes on, then I was marched to the loading dock and into the court van. Up until now I was terrified what would happen to me in the back of that van. My fears were lightened at least partially, when I discovered the van was divided by a perspex partition. I doubted it would do much towards keeping me apart from those in the back, if they decided to smash their way through it.

I sat in the front part of the van and tried not to panic. I felt those in the back were watching me. I turned side on, trying to catch a glimpse of them without looking directly at their faces, but it was difficult to avoid their gaze.

As the van moved out of the loading dock onto the main road, the men talked quietly among themselves. I heard them discussing me, and the fact that I had told one of them I was in for fraud.

Suddenly, one of them asked fiercely, “Are you a dirty

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kidfucker?” I automatically turned to face him. It was the guy from back in the day room at the police station who had asked what I was in for. I was shit scared as I tried to tell myself, they couldn't get to me through the partition. All I could muster was a blank look. I had never been in that position before. I had no idea what to do or say. Trying to look unbothered, I turned to a small window in the door and stared out. Freedom millimetres away, and me held captive from it.

It was a scary ride. An uneasy silence had crept into the van. Although I heard nothing, I felt they were all staring at me. The tension grew but my fear could grow no more.

My fear was almost indescribable. It was a combination of all the worst emotions. There is an extreme tightness of all the muscles, like being in a small room for hours, with a stereo playing on full, and you can't turn it off. It's like the excitement, when you're watching 'lotto' and for an instant, think you have won a million dollars. It's standing on the edge of a thousand metre cliff with your eyes closed, then suddenly opening them and seeing where you are. I was standing on the edge of a razor blade, waiting to slip.

The ride to the court took only a short time. I was relieved the partition had held and the other prisoners could only shout and threaten. The van turned into an underground car park at the court house. The driver placed a card key into the lock, pressed a few numbers and the door

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opened. It was quite dark inside. The van reversed through another doorway, coming to a halt at a loading dock. An officer got out and opened the rear door. Those prisoners were taken to a cell next to the court room. When they were gone, I was put into an isolation cell, alone

It was about 8:30am. Court was due to start at 10:00am. All I could do was wait. For what? I had no idea but knew that I had never been treated this way before, and felt like an animal. ,

All I could see in my future, was cages and despair.

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It had been terrifying in the police cells, but felt much worse now. It was like a hell on Earth in that small, lonely isolation cell, and I had no idea what to expect next. Slowly but surely I felt myself slipping. I looked around me. There was nothing in the cell. The walls were gray concrete. They were adorned with much graffiti, left there by previous inhabitants. There was a white steel door, with a peep hole,~ through which I could see only part of a corridor. There were black burn marks, where others had ignited their lighters and held them up to the ceiling, writing their names in soot.

I sat in the corner of that cell and wept. Only now was I beginning to realise, there was something happening to me. Something very big and completely outside my control. I sat on the floor, listening to the sounds of people moving around downstairs. They were the other prisoners who the police had brought to court for the mornings session.

An hour or so later, a policeman came and took me downstairs to another cell. It was very small, and contained a stainless steel basin and toilet combination, identical to the one in the police cell, and a wooden bench. The woodstained walls were covered with graffiti and slogans such as, “ Fuck the world (F.T.W.)”, and, “J Bloggs, 2 years, No Effect.” As I sat there listening to tl’ke police talking outside the door, other prisoners swaggered casually past. Without exception, they all looked in at me. Because I was not in the main cell with the others, it announced I was

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on ‘protection, therefore, must be a “kidfucker,” Several passing prisoners shouted insults as they looked in. I couldn’t help but notice the hate on their faces. It frightened me badly, I winced each time.

At that moment, I knew what it felt like to be an animal in a zoo.

I shuddered with with fear and embarrassment as a policeman loudly read out my charge in the corridor, so everyone could hear. He spoke my name very clearly and said, “Shit, boys. He needs shooting, eh?’ They laughed and read out a few other charges, making snide comments.

Soon after, a big policeman came and took me to yet another, much bigger cell. It was empty, and had yellow and gray walls. Like the other two, the walls had the usual graffiti over them. There was a small peep hole in the door. I looked out through it as the policeman shut the door and locked me inside. All I could see outside, was the corridor and lifts. There was nothing else. No life. No movement. No sound. This was the first chance I had in eighteen hours, I could rest in silence. My nerves were shattered. My whole being was incredibly tense.

In the next twenty minutes I calmed down completely. The absence. of sound was totally relaxing. I felt the enormous stress, suddenly turn off, leaving my head spinning.

There was no way to tell the time, since the police had taken my watch. It nearly drove me crazy pacing up and down that cell. I couldn’t sit on anything but the floor, so I

All kinds of things went through my head. Depressed again and with a deep feeling of distress and dehumanisation, I cried. I was a large, 34 year old man, now I felt like such a pussy. I always believed that men don't cry. I was doing it all the time and I felt weak and gutless.

I thought to myself, 'Why can't I handle- this like a man?' At the time it was not clear to me. Now though, I know why. I was in the midst of a total emotional breakdown. Everything seemed so hopeless.

Unknown to me, almost everyone who is arrested for any child sex allegations, will break down. This is what is meant by the police when they say, "The suspect broke down and confessed."

I repeatedly asked myself the same questions,

"Who is accusing me of what,?" and, "What have I done to deserve this?" I didn't know the answers because the detective had not told me anything which made any sense. The police don't like to tell you too much, should you have a way to satisfactorily explain the allegations, during questioning.

By this time, I had eaten nothing for two days. It was just as well, because my stomach was so badly churned up that I would surely have vomitted.

My mind was numb. My heart pounded heavily, as the names of those to go ~,into the court, were called out over a loudspeaker. I had only a short time to wait. My name was~

kept pacing for what seemed like ages.

third on the list.

I stood at the door, panic stricken, as a policeman approached. He called my name from outside the cell. I answered weakly, "Yes."

The door opened and I was marched quickly downstairs, to a small ante room off the side of courtroom 1. I was shown in and the door shut and locked. My lawyer, Mr Bunce, was seated there on the other side of a perspex partition. He told me I would not be pleading today, and he would not be applying for bail, which he told me had been opposed by the police. He said there had been threats made to the police, against my life, by friends of those who were making the allegations, I would be safer in custody. He then stood up and left the room. The door opened and the policeman who stood there, told me to move. He steered me through a short corridor. As I floundered past the main cell, other prisoners hurled obscenities. I flinched at every one of them, trying desperately to retain my composure. I felt I had wet myself. Thank God, I hadn't.

The door to the courtroom was opened and I was led through. The sounds of abuse from that cell were clearly audible in the court. A policeman told the prisoners to be quiet. There's nothing quite like being told you're going to be killed, and that you're a "dirty kidfucker," when you are already falling apart in a room full of strangers.

.As the 'holding' charge of 'having anal, sex with a boy under ten', was read out, I all but passed out. I managed to

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kept pacing for what seemed like ages.

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stay on my feet. My lawyer stood up and told the judge I was not ready to plead, and there would be no application for bail. I attempted to keep my gaze from the many people in the gallery. I tried unsuccessfully, to hide my incredulity and disbelief, by attempting to appear casual. Eventually, curiosity was too great. I looked into the gallery. The people in there stared at me, I saw disgust and hatred in their glaring faces. I watched as two women whispered between themselves, and sniggered.

Finally, the judge said there would be no bail. There was also to be no name suppression. That alone, would cost me any chance of defending the charge.

The judge ordered that I be remanded to Addington prison for one week, to plead. I was led out of the court.

As I struggled to remain upright, the policeman led me back to that quiet cell upstairs. I was almost happy to be safely locked away again. I knew no one could get to me in there.

All I could do was sit, wait, and try to rationalise what was happening.

My mind wandered back to the beginning of my time as a foster parent, for the Department of Social Welfare, and all that had happened between then and now. I prayed it would shed some light on all of this.

## THE FULL STORY

Nineteen eighty six was a good year for me. For many years, I'd been looking after other peoples kids, exclusively those with behavior problems. I had developed quite a knack and the kids all responded well. I looked after them for nothing more than to help them get a decent start in life. It was often a thankless job, full of stress and heartache. Every now and then though, there would be a success, which made it all worthwhile.

For some time, I'd considered taking a more active role in caring for kids and young adults. Fostering was an option, after all, there had been no problem to date I couldn't handle, and the parents were all happy with the results.

I lived in a flat in Christchurch and Danny, aged 13, lived with me. His mother was middle aged and couldn't handle him. He was getting into all kinds of trouble.

Danny had been a six year old, red haired, little monster when his father left them. Now, at 13, he was full of mischief. It was common for him to break windows, in any buildings. He took what he wanted from shops. He was often violent, as his father had been, frequently losing control and lashing out at everyone and everything. He had been sent to Christchurch hospital's ward 24 for children with extreme behavior problems. This course of action induced him to totally lose control. In desperation, his mother asked me if I was prepared to help her with Danny. It had to be all or nothing. After much soul searching, I finally agreed to that depth of commitment.

I knew only too well I could be getting in over my head.

However, I consented and Danny moved into my home.. This was the beginning of a totally new phase in my life.

Danny and I got on like a house on fire and this reflected in his behavior. Slowly, over the following months, he stopped stealing and his rages became less prevalent.

Finally he was able to stay at school all day, without being sent home.

Later that year, another young person indicated his interest in coming to live with Danny and me.

At eleven years of age, Justin was a state ward. He'd been in the care of Social Welfare for most-of his life. I'd met him a couple of years earlier, while visiting a friend's son, who was also a state ward, at the Opawa group home in Christchurch. Justin latched onto me immediately, but we'd lost touch when the other boy left the home.

Justin attended the same school as Danny and was thrilled to discover Danny lived with me.

Justin went to see his social worker, informing her he wanted to live with us. The first I knew of this, was when his social worker appeared on my doorstep. Naturally I was curious and invited her in. She told me Justin's family history, then out of the blue, she said he wanted to live with Danny and me. At the time he was living with a family member. The placement was unsatisfactory for Justin and it showed. He was always unhappy. This stemmed from his spontaneous actions and the accompanying rejection.

I arrived at Justin's to drop him off after school one day. His relative came out to meet me. A string of criticism about Justin followed. One - of those criticisms was typically Justin. The night before, he had been left at home to look after the relative's young children. They had matchbox cars and wanted a road on which to play with them. Justin had gone to the oven, taken out the roasting dish half filled with melted fat and tipped it on the kitchen floor. To all accounts, when it set, it made a really good road when the cars were pushed through it. I found it quite amusing. His relative was furious. -

A few weeks later, Justin moved into my flat. He was a scatty, but likable kid. He and Danny got on reasonably well, although it was different living together as

opposed to just being friends at school. They had the odd tiff, but overall, things went pretty well.

Justin's mother was-unhappy about the-move to our place. She wanted it stopped, but the welfare approved the move regardless. It was what Justin wanted-.

The two boys improved- slowly at school, and they caused less and less trouble.

It was a chore getting them up for school. Boys being boys, they would -rather stay in bed all morning. However, they always managed to arrive at school on time.

This was a whole new opportunity for me. It was a huge challenge, and one I knew I must meet. There could be no going back. I had to put the boys before all else. It would not be fair to the boys for me to fail and have to send them away. It had happened to them many times before and I was determined it would not happen again. I was totally committed. -

At the Glenroy family home in Christchurch, also run by the welfare, I had a friend in Harry. He ran the home for boys, with behavior problems, on his own. I'd known Harry for several years. I'd met him through a friend of mine, Eddie-. It was Harry who helped me become a foster parent. He had been working with boys in their- early to late teens for many years and was highly experienced. I often took advice from Harry, and that advice proved very effective. He was an elderly man. Because of a problem with one of his hips, Harry walked with the aid of a cane. He was well traveled, having been all around the world. On these trips, he would take one of his boys, either a Welfare one or one of "his own", with the permission of the boys parents. He gave the boys at Glenroy family home anything they wanted. Gifts would include stereos', video games or television sets'.

As his boys reached driving age, Harry bought some of them a car. .The social workers who visited Harry regularly were annoyed at this. Harry told me that he was getting •"sick of the grief" -the social workers were giving him, and was

particularly annoyed that all of his social workers were women. On a number of occasions he told me they "had it in for-him". He really believed that, and although I thought he was paranoid, I said nothing. All that mattered to the boys - and me was that Harry was there for us, and we visited him several times a week. It was a good way for me -to pass the time while the kids were at school, and an excellent opportunity for Harry and I to compare notes. Harry and I had much in common. We were both single, believed in our boys, and we knew that love, consistency and routine would bring their own rewards. Harry had one important piece of advice to give me. He said, "You must always follow one main policy. Love your boys, give them anything they need and most important of all, never ever turn your back, Or they'll stick a knife in it." I didn't know what he meant at the time.

The boys loved going to Harry's. They played pool, video games and so on and Harry's boys got on well with mine. Harry and I spent the time talking, discussing our boys problems and the best ways of resolving them. Life was becoming much easier as everything fell into place, My boys went from strength to strength.

Justins' social worker was thrilled with his progress. She wrote in a document on his file, "Justin has improved in so many ways. He is able to complete his schoolwork to a reasonable standard, and - is more stable than I have ever seen him."

It was belatedly decided by the welfare, that I would need to be registered as a foster parent if the boys were to remain in my home.

Harry was instrumental in my registration process. By this time he knew me very well, and gave testimonials as to my ability and motive. He was well aware of these two factors since they were identical to his own. I was required to fill in the appropriate forms, and was submitted to a rigorous police check to make sure I did not have a hidden record of any form of child abuse. I was interviewed by members of the welfare and submitted to vigorous cross examination by a welfare psychologist.

As the welfare were highly impressed with the results I was achieving with the boys they were very impatient to push my registration through. I was quickly registered as an approved foster parent, for teenage boys only.

The boys were at an age where they wanted privacy, and room to move. We collectively made the decision to move to a larger, more satisfactory dwelling. We had been living in a two bedroom flat in the centre of town. It was an old run down building which shook frighteningly, each time a bus or truck went by. I applied to Housing NZ (then housing corp) for a state tenancy. Because of the special circumstances, and the welfare speaking for us at housing NZ, it took only two weeks to be granted a tenancy. The two boys and I drove into town and picked up the key.

As we drove into Cargill Place where the prospective tenancy was, anticipation grew. Anything new is exciting, even more so a new home. I turned the key in the back door, and the boys rushed in. They wanted to stake out their territory. Each of them picked a room. I was left with the last, which was the smallest.

We decided that this was our house. Harry and Eddie helped us move in. Eddie had also given testimonials to the welfare in support of my fostering application.

He was a double amputee, having lost both feet to a disease. His marriage had broken down several years earlier, after a violent and troubled relationship. He had a 10 year old son, Teddy. Because he had no one to help with his son, I stayed with them for sometime, helping out wherever I could. Teddy did his best to make everyone who visited, feel unwelcome. He and Eddie fought constantly. Eddie frequently drove to Ashburton, to see his girlfriend. I looked after Teddy. Danny often came over to visit me at Eddie's before he (Danny) had come to live with me, often arriving in the early hours of the morning. It was also while I was living at Eddie's I met Michael D. He was 9 years old, and mentally very slow. This was apparently the result of a road accident in which Michael received head injuries. I'd met his mother through a mutual friend, Craig. She was having problems with Michael, mostly due to his mental condition. He'd been behaving aggressively towards his family, stealing and causing problems at school for a long time. His family could take no more. I agreed to help. I didn't mind because

it took some -of the load off his mother, who had several other children to look after. I found Michael D to be no trouble, although speaking with him was difficult. He didn't seem to understand much that I said. He responded well to affection though and we got along quite well. Most of his problems had arisen from his limited ability to communicate.

Michael D's mother was impressed with the way he was opening up. A friend of hers was having difficulties with her son, Shannon. She was at her wits end and didn't know where to go for help with him. Michael D's mother put her in touch with me. It was arranged for me to visit Shannon's mother, Leonie, and about a week later I went to her home. I hadn't been told that Shannon was only two and a half. I'd never been asked to help with anyone that young before. When I arrived at Leonie's home, I saw Shannon for the first time. He was riding a tricycle at full speed, and running down two kittens on the path. He made repeated passes over the kittens, before I reached him and put a stop to it. Shannon had the look of the devil in his eyes. A sort of terrifying glare which went right through me. When I went inside to meet his mother, I found her boozing up with a group of very dirty young men. The stereo was playing so loud I couldn't hear myself think. It was the sort of music played at punk parties. Leonie turned it down for a moment, and didn't waste any time in asking me to look after Shannon, the same as I was doing for Michael D's mother. Under the circumstances, I felt there was no choice. This was not the way I would ever have brought up a child.

I began picking Shannon up and taking him out for the day. I treated him with tender loving care and he behaved very well. When he was with me and I had no trouble with him. Both Michael D and Shannon were part of our family unit along with Eddie, Teddy and Harry.

Danny, Justin and I, were happy to be moving into a decent place of our own. It didn't take long to bring all our belongings to Cargill Place, because we didn't own much. We had very little money, but gradually bought new furniture and a few nice things to make our house a home. Friends helped out, we did OK.

Getting the place sorted out took a few months. The boys helped around the house, and we each took turns cooking, doing lawns and so on. /

Every now and again, Teddy came over for a weekend. He loved staying with us because he was allowed to do the things boys love to do, bike riding, swimming, fishing and so on. We were now a very happy family- and I was proud to be a part of something so good.

The only income we received was my unemployment benefit, a boarding allowance for Justin, and Danny's mother paid me fifty dollars a week - for his keep. Justin's boarding allowance was around eighty dollars a week. I brought in about one hundred and thirty. That made a total of just over two hundred and sixty dollars a week. It didn't go far though. The boys were big eaters and I made sure there was always plenty of food available for them. I made this a priority because I believed that diet, health and behavior are all linked. We didn't often have prepared puddings or foods with additives. The mostcommon meal was a roast, with all the trimmings. The boys enjoyed their meals. Often there was a spare roast which I would cook up for supper. Instead of puddings, I kept a constant supply of fresh fruit, which I bought in twenty kilo boxes fresh from the orchard. The boys helped themselves when, and as often as they liked, as did half the kids in the neighbourhood.

In early 1987, my brother and his wife, who already had two young children of their own, applied to take on a foster child. They were assigned one. He was 13 years old and a pile of trouble. Initially, Jason Ng was to stay with them for two weeks, a sort of 'getting to know you' arrangement. Unfortunately, Jason Ng turned out to be more trouble than they realized. He disappeared at all hours on his bike and returned with -all manner of stolen property. My brother and-his wife were uncertain what to do about this, and realized there was no way Jason Ng could live with them. It's a pity really because they went out of their way to make him feel welcome. He was given whatever he asked for, but he wanted more. He was often very late coming home and when he did, there was no explanation as to where he had been or where he acquired the money and/or property he now possessed. It's unfo>tunate that many foster kids in the same- position as Jason

Ng, see the indulgence of a foster parent as a weakness to be exploited. They frequently make use of it, often with disastrous consequences. -

Although Jason Ng was to stay with my brother, initially for two weeks, after only one week they sent him back to the family home from which he'd come. During that one week, he'd visited us regularly. My brother and his family lived only a few streets from us, and my boys visited them often. When Jason Ng had been sent back to the family home, my boys felt

sorry for him. It was decided by a unanimous vote, we should ask him to stay with us for the other week. Jason Ng quickly agreed and we picked him up from the Holly House family home.

The first week he stayed with us went very well. He wet his bed but that -was overlooked for the sake of his self esteem. The three boys, Danny, - Justin and now Jason Ng had a lot of fun. They went out together and there seemed to be no problems with Jason's stealing. I'd made it clear to him from the beginning, it would not be tolerated. He agreed and -appeared to have kept his word. - I made sure all the boys -had pocket money, so stealing would not be necessary.

When the time came for Jason to return to the home, he didn't want to go. He was very upset and cried. It broke my heart to see him in such distress. He asked me if I -would consider allowing him to live with us. I told him I would ask the others. -

In accord with general family policy, we called a family meeting. It took only minutes for the other two boys to agree. They, as did I, felt sorry for Jason. It was my turn to vote, but there were issues to consider, the most important of these being privacy. The boys now, didn't think that was very important. Justin decided he would let Jason Ng live in his room. When all the issues were considered, I agreed to let Jason Ng move in with us. My vote was cast and the decision made.

I called the family home, who agreed to let Jason Ng stay until his social worker was contacted. The people who ran the family home, knew of me and that I was

a registered foster parent. If they had not, Jason Ng would have been returned to their care.

Several days later I telephoned his social worker, Carol Hood. I explained Jason's wishes and our family proposal to her. She felt the idea had merit, especially as Jason Ng was extremely hard to place. He'd deliberately done something to ruin each of his many former placements. It was a very short time before the decision was made by the welfare. Jason Ng would be officially placed with us.

With Jason came many problems. He was very small for his age. He was part Chinese which made him the butt-of racial jokes at school. This made him very angry. Being very "cute", he was able to-twist most people around his little finger.. He soon discovered it wouldn't work with either me or the boys. After a few months, with my help and the understanding of the boys, he had brought his bed wetting under control. / This boosted his self esteem, and his behavior and confidence improved. -

He was attending a different school from the other two. Since he was always in trouble at that school and wanted to be with Danny and Justin, I agreed to let him change to their school. With best wishes from Jason Ng's old school, and, I suspect, relief, he joined Danny and Justin at Catholic cathedral College. Our lives once again, were orderly. There was not the exasperation of trying to keep track of Jason Ng. He was with the others and if something was out of place, either one would tell me so the problem could immediately be resolved. This worked well for all four of us. It was not a matter of spying. As a foster parent, the- unity of the family is the top priority. Trust, is the goal.

Jason Ng was worried about his height, and concerned about the size of his penis and testicles. The problem had surfaced in mid 1987, during a routine check up by our family doctor. It was very embarrassing for both Jason and myself, but in a quiet moment, he chose to discuss his fears with me. The doctor had advised me Jason Ng would need specialist treatment.

Neither Danny nor Justin were enlightened. I considered this was Jason Ng's personal business. He was worried enough without adding further embarrassment. I wondered if they suspected sthne thing was wrong, when Jason Ng was always the last to get changed to go swimming. He always found the need to hide his body from everyone.

Another appointment was made for Jason Ng with our doctor. The doctor told him the condition was treatable and an appointment was made for him, with a specialist, at Princess Margaret hospital. In one way, Jason was relieved. In another, he was terrified. He had no idea what would happen, but knew it would mean somebody touching his genitals. He -was reassured by the doctor, who told him his insecurity probably stemmed from his fear of someone seeing how undersized his penis was, and making-fun of him.

Together, Jason and I visited the specialist. After an examination, it was decided Jason Ng would need hormone treatment. He was prescribed Oxandrylone, which would increase the production of Testosterone, and was expected to accelerate the growth of his body.

After a couple of months, the Other two boys discovered Jason Ng's problem. He was very embarrassed, especially when the, news arrived at school. The effect of the ribbing he received was short lived because the drug, Oxandrylone, was working. About every two months, he asked me to check and see if there was any growth. I was flattered that he trus-ted me enough to ask, so I visually-confirmed his development. An action I now severely regret.

Between this and the usual family commitments, the time sailed by quickly. Danny and Justin were getting in a bit of strife at school occasionally, but it was never anything serious. Things were still running very smoothly at home.

New neighbours moved in. Our house was half of a double unit, 'they lived-at the other end. There were three people in their family. Christine was the mother. She was staunchly, religious and expected the same commitment from both her daughters.

Greta, was her youngest at 14. She lived with her mother. The other daughter had moved to Australia. She couldn't handle her mothers obsession -with religion. Christine's husband had just announced to her that he was gay. He'd run off with hià lover. She was unhappy with our family situation, and considered it unnatural for a single man to -be caring for boys. She and I argued about this often, usually ending with me telling her to ,“Fuck off,” and, “Mind your own business.”

Christine complained on a number of occasions, in an attempt to get the welfare to remove the boys from my care. According to her I was blaspheming, destroying the boys faith in god and not permitting them- to attend church. I found this ridiculous, after all, the boys attended a Catholic school and undertook all of their chosen doctrine. Her problem lay with my refusal to allow her to interfere with the boys religious instruction. She belonged to the Baptist church and had tried frequently to convince the boys to attend her church, and leave their school. She told them the Catholic religion was evil, and their- “souls will burn in hell,” if they did not renounce their faith. I am Church of England, and did not force my religion upon the boys as is so often done by foster parents. It was the boys parents 'wish that they retain their beliefs, and that was what I supported.

A social worker from the welfare came to my home. She informed me of the complaints, but not who had made them. I was asked to respond to the allegations. I told her they were a load of rubbish that she should ask the boys. She did. They boys confirmed what I had already stated and the complaints were put on the back burner. The welfare were satisfied and took no further action. The whole business was extremely annoying, and the first of many complaints from others as righteous as Christine. It annoyed me that there were so many employees in the welfare who were so one eyed, and couldn't find any good motive in my caring for the boys. The seeds of suspicion were sown.

## WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

10 year old Grahame, had been staying with us for the odd weekend. His mother and father were separated. His father lived with his girlfriend, her young daughter and Graham's baby brother, David. Grahame's father was also David's father. Both the girlfriend and Grahame's father had lived together for several years. They both drew individual Domestic purposes benefits made sure a room containing the girlfriends property, was kept set up. This was to allay suspicion, should the welfare ever visit. The father told the welfare, his girlfriend was staying with him, rent free, in return for looking after Grahame. The welfare believed Grahame's father had no idea David was Grahame's brother. Grahame had wanted nothing more than his fathers love, but was constantly pushed to one side. His father was subservient to his girlfriend, who despised Grahame. He was constantly beaten by the girlfriend for even the smallest transgression. His father, spurred on by the girlfriend, began sending Grahame to stay with us, for weekends. They believed he would be punished for giving the girlfriend a hard time, and "beaten into shape," by me. Instead, Grahame got love and understanding, lots of it.

He was very nervous and timid from all the beatings he'd received. It really surprised me no one at his school, ever questioned the cause of his bruises.

Grahame wet his bed every night, and occasionally soiled his pants at school. As the direct result, Grahame smelled permanently of urine. The kids at his school insulted him. One day at school, Grahame received several kicking's from other students. He was very distressed when he arrived home. I was visiting his father at the time. I asked Grahame, what was the matter? I noticed severe bruising on both of his legs. Tearfully, he told me what had happened. As he turned to leave the room, I saw a note pinned to the back of his jersey. The note read, "I'm a raggamuffin. Kick me!" It had been placed there by his fathers girlfriend, who took considerable pleasure in Grahame's distress. I felt so terribly sorry for him. He had lived with this torment almost since birth.

Grahame became known as "Raggamuffin" by his peers. At home he was shouted and sworn at and abused so frequently, it became part of his normal life. Fearing for his health and safety, I and others approached the welfare on several

occasions. Grahame's abuse and living standards were shocking. It was bad enough that he was subjected to constant violence and deprivation, but his home was a pigsty. There was not a single, clean part of the house. The girlfriend never did house work. Everywhere were dirty dishes, covered in mould. Soiled babies nappies, urine soaked clothes and animal excrement littered the childrens' bedrooms. Several cartons containing copies of "Penthouse", "Playboy," and other sexually explicit material spilled out onto the bedroom floor, from Grahame's wardrobe. Because the house was never cleaned, the filth grew, layer by layer.

Grahame's bed wasn't changed. Every night he slept in the urine from the night before. The toilet was so filthy, visitors threatened to call the health department.

Still the welfare refused to act. There had been no complaint from Grahame's school or doctor, so they considered the allegations unfounded. They hadn't visited Grahame's home. Quite naturally, running away became Grahame's only escape. Grahame learned to lie so well, that in his eyes, lies became his truth. He was a sad, lonely and unwanted little boy.

When Grahame first began staying with us, Jason Ng was very jealous. He didn't see why Grahame should be allowed to stay, even though Jason Ng had seen the violence inflicted on Grahame by his parents. Jason Ng did what he could to make Grahame feel unwelcome, but Grahame ignored his abuse. He had known me all his life and he knew he was safe.

I did all I could to stop the friction between them, but Jason Ng continued constantly, to pick at Grahame. I could have refused to allow Grahame to stay, but having him at Cargill place gave him a break from his parents' violence, and his filthy home.

Despite the difficulties between Grahame and Jason Ng, everything was running well.

Mid 1987, I received a call from the welfare. They had a 12 year old boy, Steven H, who needed an emergency placement. I was told nothing about him, except his foster family of several years, was moving to Australia to live.

They were not taking Steven H. I told the welfare I would think about it. I didn't get a chance to call them back.

One afternoon at 5pm, there was a knock at the back door. I opened it to find a young boy, complete with luggage and BMX bike, standing in my porch with his ex foster parents. They dumped Steven H, then left. It was extremely difficult for me, and I suspect, Steven H. He had been given no choice in the matter; Neither, had we. Steven was there to stay.

Danny, Justin and Jason Ng were very annoyed. One of them would have to share their room with Steven. Since Justin and Jason Ng already shared a room, Steven had to share with Danny. Danny was furious. He was 15, and demanded his privacy.

Steven was quite chubby, and tall for his age. He said little, and what he did say carried no emotion. I could understand his distress, after all he'd lived with his former foster parents for several years, only to be dumped on my doorstep like a sack of potatoes.

He was very moody and the boys took an instant dislike to him. He didn't like to touch other people, even for hugs, and wouldn't let anyone touch him.

Stevens social worker arranged for him to transfer from his previous school, to Catholic Cathedral College. This helped, as the boys all had cycles and rode to school together. With encouragement from me, the boys settled down. Again.

There were now four boys living with me permanently, at my home, in Cargill place. They now all went to Catholic

cathedral College and interacted reasonably well together. Jason Ng was the only voice of dissension. He'd met Brian and Marie E, who were also foster

parents for the welfare. They were fostering 9 year old Kevin O, who Jason Ng had known for some time. They'd been in the same family home together. Because Jason Ng, now 14,. got on well with Kevin, it was suggested by the E's that Jason Ng live with them. Jason Ng was adamant hs was going, but I opposed his move.

Kevin's mother had a serious drug problem, and was unable to care for him. His father had beaten both Kevin and his mother regularly. He too had a drug problem and was a drug dealer. He was separated from Kevin's mother, who, with the help of her parents, still cared for Kevin's little brother, and older sister. The welfare had removed Kevin from his mother when his behavior had become completely unmanageable. Kevin's parents were friends of Eddie, and Teddy.

Kevin's foster parents, Brian and Marie E, were using drugs. This was accepted by their social worker, Ailsa T, who stated 'it was their own business.' Both the E's drank heavily. I visited them on a number of occasions in the middle of the day, and found them both drunk.. They had three small children of their own. Brian told me they took on fostering because they needed the money.

Because Kevin was so badly disturbed, they received a high board payment. Much of this was spent on Brian and Marie E's many old cars, alcohol, drugs, and second hand items for resale. Kevin saw little of the money.

Although a special clothing allowance was paid by the welfare for his clothing to be replaced, Kevin wore old or second hand clothes. Brian once told me, it was "pointless buying him. (.Kevin) new clothes, because he wrecks them."

Social workers regularly visited the boys and me at my home in Cargill place. When the social worker arrived, I left the boys to talk to her alone. The boys' privacy needed to be preserved, wherever possible. When the social worker had finished talking individually, to the boys, I was asked into the room, to discuss the progress of the boys. These visits were to ensure the boys' needs were met, and they were happy. If there were any complaints, I'd never been informed of them.

Jason Ng finally accepted he wouldn't be permitted to live with the E's, and settled down. Again. For several months, there was a tenuous peace. We went out to the Waimakiriri river quite often. Some of the boys fished, some swam and others rode their bikes among the trees on the river bank. We took with us, Pre-cooked sausages, bread and other food. Between us, we gathered wood and lit a fire, even in the wet. We cut sticks from the Willows, and fashioned them into points so the sausages wouldn't split, when skewered. The boys prepared their own food exercising the good hygiene and safety practices I had taught them.

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These outings were part of life for all the boys who either lived, or stayed temporarily, at Cargill place. I considered them to be part of the boys development, and they seemed to ease any tensions which arose from time to time.

With as many as 10 boys, either living or staying weekends at Cargill Place, things were becoming quite hectic, though I always managed somehow.

Nine year old Daniel was a long time friend of Grahame. The two boys lived a few houses apart and their parents were friends. One afternoon when I was visiting Grahame's father, Grahame brought Daniel to meet me. Grahame had been wanting to do so for quite some time.

Daniel was very small. Long, unwashed red hair hung down over his dirty face. He wore thick lensed glasses and had buck teeth. His clothes were rags and he was filthy.

At first, he wouldn't speak to me. Later on that week though, Daniel persuaded Grahame to ask me if he could come to my house. I agreed. Two weeks later, Daniel wanted to stay for the weekend. As Grahame was staying with me as well, I agreed. It would be good for both of them to have someone their own age to play with.

Several weeks later I met Daniels mother, Glenis. She'd seen my car arriving at Grahame's father's home. She specifically sought to talk to me. I discovered she had another son, Christopher. He was six years old, intellectually handicapped

and couldn't talk. He just screeched. Glenis had trouble communicating with him. Christopher attended Ferndale school for intellectually handicapped children. Both of her boys were very undernourished.

Christopher and Daniel had no idea who their respective fathers were. Glenis had brought so many men home over the years, there was no way to tell. She told me Christopher was the result of a rape, by a Samoan man she'd brought home from the pub. Three years previously, another of her many men friends, had allegedly torn Daniel's pyjama's off and had sex with him. The friend was babysitting at the time. Glenis was terrified someone would molest one of her kids again. For this reason, she was extremely over protective of her boys. She believed every man was a pervert. I found her attitude disturbing, and wondered if she was hiding something.

Daniel began staying at Cargill Place with Grahame, quite regularly. The two were inseparable. It was a complete change of lifestyle for them both. Daniel got on very well with the older boys, who had by then become accustomed to younger kids being around.

The welfare placed another boy with us, Hayden. He was only six or so, but got on famously with everyone, especially Daniel. Hayden was only with us for two weeks, while his foster parents had a holiday. He was easy to look after, although he had to be taken to school, and picked up each day.

Glenis attached herself to me. I didn't feel anything for her, though she followed me around like a puppy. She rang me frequently and wanted to be a part of everything I did, although only when the boys were around. Soon after we'd met, Glenis decided to move to Shirley, the area where I lived. The boys, and Eddie and I, cleaned up her section so she could get a transfer of Housing Corp tenancy. A week or so later, we all helped her move into Emmett St. Her new house was only a couple of streets from us.

It was only a few weeks later, Danny and I had a major argument. He'd come home from school in a bad mood, and begun throwing Justin's bike around the

back yard. As a direct result, he left Cargill place and moved back home with his mother. He left school and got a job, Gib fixing.

Danny and his mother fought constantly. He'd got to know Glenis quite well, and after a few months, he'd moved out of his mother's home, and in with Glenis. I was apprehensive as I helped him shift his belongings into her home.

Glenis and I had become quite close, though I felt ill at ease in her company. People I knew who were close to Glenis, told me on a number of occasions, that she was having sex with Danny. I knew Danny was only 15, and couldn't believe Glenis would manipulate such a young boy, for her pleasure. I confronted her with the rumoured allegations. Of course, she denied them, saying weakly, "I'm not a child molester".

My other boys had all been visiting Glenis regularly. They'd begun getting into trouble at school, and I was having problems with them at home. All they wanted to do was "go to Glenis's". Each weekend, they wanted to stay with Glenis, for the night. I didn't understand why, and when I asked them, they were evasive. I felt I was losing them and didn't know why.

Steven and Jason Ng had been caught shoplifting. They had stolen stupid things. . Steven H stole chocolate and was caught on video. Jason Ng stole money from my sister. It was her son's book money for school. The boys and I had been visiting her. On our way home, Jason Ng asked me to stop at a dairy. He wanted to buy something. Although I gave the boys plenty of pocket money, I knew Jason Ng had spent all of his. I asked him where he got the money. He said he'd found it on the way home from school. Doubting his story, I took the money, five dollars, from him. When we arrived home, I telephoned my sister. and asked her if she'd lost any money. She told me five dollars had gone missing from her son's book folder. I took Jason back to my sister's home, where he was made to return the money, and apologize. He was not invited to return.

I was beginning to feel the effects of stress. I was easily irritated, and edgy. I went to the welfare, and asked for help. They told me I would have to wait, citing huge case loads as the reason. Eventually though, I did get a visit from a social

worker. I informed her of the boys' stealing, and that I suspected there was something wrong at Glenis's. She told me not to take things so seriously, that it was good for the boys to have a woman's influence. According to the social worker, I was feeling rejected, by my boys, which was making me paranoid. She advised me to leave the boys alone, and everything would be alright.

Jason Ng's social worker suggested I arrange for him to join the cricket team, with Justin. I expressed doubt that playing cricket would have a good outcome for Jason Ng, as I felt he needed constant supervision. I was told by the social worker, not to interfere. Amazed at her indifference, I complied with her orders.

On the way to his first game of cricket, Jason Ng robbed a supermarket, assaulted an elderly woman and fought with the police, as they attempted to arrest him. As he was protected by the welfare, no charges were to be laid and Jason Ng was not held responsible. I was unsatisfied with this outcome and sought advice, again from the welfare. I was told to "Let them go. They are responsible for their own actions", a completely opposite, and confusing response. Until now, the boys had all been well behaved.

Justin was causing a bit of trouble too. He'd been at school, and had inexplicably set fire to a waste skip. Other boys in the vicinity put out the fire. Justin immediately re-lit the fire. There was no explanation, as a sheepish Justin stood before the head teacher. This sort of behavior was unusual for Justin, so he wasn't punished. Although there were a couple of minor incidents later, he didn't pose any serious problem. His incidents were done to show off, rather than out of malice.

I couldn't understand why the boys appeared to be coming apart. I suspected. Glenis was the key, but was unable to obtain proof. I went to see her one evening. I didn't knock. I walked into her house. I was shocked to find Danny smoking cannabis and drinking alcohol. I was furious, but could do nothing. She yelled at me for not knocking, as I stared blankly at Danny. Her sons', Daniel and Christopher, were sitting beside Glenis and Danny on the couch. I aired my indignation, then left. The boys' visits to Glenis's home became more frequent.

Jason Ng, was a regular visitor to the Elliot's, often staying the night. One Sunday morning I went to pick him up. We were going to Ashburton, and I wanted the boys with me. As I approached the front door of the Elliots's, someone yelled out for me to come in. I did so. I walked up the corridor and opened the door to Kevin's room, where I knew Jason Ng would be. Marie E called out to me from the kitchen, "Wait!". It was too late. I stood there in horror, as Jason Ng and Kevin O, both naked, dived for their clothes. Jason Ng shouted to me to "Fuck off." Kevin appeared quite frightened. I shut the door, and walked out of the house. Marie Elliot walked behind me, urging me to, "Wait a minute." I kept going. I needed to regain my composure, before I even thought of tackling this seemingly indecent incident.

I didn't see Jason Ng for the rest of the day. None of us went to Ashburton. All kinds of thoughts raced through my mind. Justin and Steven H were very quiet. They knew something was wrong, but had no idea what.

I couldn't believe what I had seen, and not for one minute, did I believe that Marie E was unaware of Jason Ng and Kevin O's actions. I may have been wrong, but I didn't think so. I wondered if I was jumping to conclusions, but what reason would there be, for two boys to be in bed together, naked? None of my boys would've been seen dead, naked, or so I believed.

At about five thirty that night, I went to see Glenis. I wasn't terribly surprised to see Jason Ng there. He refused to look me in the eye, and made no mention of the earlier incident. Without speaking, I motioned for him to follow me. Surprisingly, he did. 1

The ride home was. strangely silent. Jason Ng shuffled his feet and stared out of the car window. I glanced at him. He looked up briefly and said, sarcastically, "I'm sorry". When we arrived home, Steven H and Justin had gone out. I sat Jason Ng down, and we had a long talk. He insisted the incident wasn't what it seemed. I'd seen nothing sexual, so had to give him the benefit of the doubt. He promised that "it", would never happen again. Still shell shocked, I couldn't help but wonder, just what "It", was.

For a while, Jason Ng settled down, yet again. Although I thought it unwise for him ever, to stay at Kevin's, I could do nothing to prevent it. The E's urged me to say nothing to the welfare about the incident. Brian E warned me, they would make it reflect badly on my care of the boys, so that the welfare would blame me, for Jason Ng's behavior. I believed the E's threats, and said nothing.

After this incident, Jason Ng quietened down. Although he was causing serious trouble at school, he was still well behaved at home. I made our family outings more frequent. This was a serious effort to shield the boys from any influences I thought were causing their behavior problems at school.

Looking after the boys was very time consuming. To lessen the load on myself, I hired two cleaning ladies. At last I had time for myself, as well as an opportunity to increase the time I spent with Justin, Jason Ng, Steven H and the weekend boys. The ladies did a good job, but I often found that personal items and documents had been displaced. Even my answerphone was cleared each time they came. I imagined I was becoming paranoid and that the cleaners were spies for the welfare. I dismissed my suspicions, telling myself I was under too much stress, besides the ladies had been put onto me by a friend, who I trusted implicitly.

Justin, Jason Ng and Steven H, were still regularly visiting Glenis's, and although I was still worried about her influence over them, I was forced to tolerate it.

Jason Ng, stayed at the E's periodically, and there appeared to be no trouble. He spent many weekends there, during the daytime only. I believed the E's were treating him appropriately, and had no problem with him visiting them.

Almost as soon as he arrived, Steven was beginning to do odd things. He would have unexplained falls, appear vague at times and occasionally tip things over. One morning, he brought me in a cup of coffee in bed. He glanced at the television, which was on and threw the coffee at me. Immediately afterward, he appeared vague and disoriented. Initially, I thought he was being stupid. I was

scolded by the coffee, and very irate. I asked him why he did it. He simply answered, "I don't know."

Early 1989, I was approached by a friend of Glenis's, Margaret K. She had a seven year old son, Jason K. He was uncontrollable and his mother asked me to help with him. She had heard of the work I was doing with boys displaying serious behavior problems. I met Jason K shortly afterwards. He was trouble! He ran away, stole things, behaved violently to women and other children and wouldn't stay at school. After careful consideration, I agreed to help his desperate mother.

Margaret K requested Jason K stay with the boys and me, every second weekend. I agreed to this, but soon discovered Jason was a handful. I found it hard to believe anything he said. He lied about everything, was aggressive with the other boys and smashed things. I frequently considered not allowing him to return to Cargill place, but I'd promised his mother I wouldn't let her down. A promise is a promise I'd always believed. Over the next few months, I did all I could to stabilise Jason K's behavior. By March 1989, he'd begun to settle down. The other boys had become used to him, and like them, he had become well behaved, while at my home in Cargill place, though not at his own home.

April that year, Steven H suddenly announced he was Epileptic. He made this startling revelation, during an altercation with one of the younger boys, which culminated in Steven H throwing the other boy to the ground and kicking him. The older boys who were there at the time, attacked Steven H. I had to pull them off him. I reprimanded Steven H, who cited "Epilepsy", as the cause of his aggression. I called him aside and asked him how long he had been Epileptic. He replied, "For years." I was unsure whether or not he was telling the truth, so I telephoned his social worker the following day. She checked Steven H's file and stated Steven H had never been diagnosed with this condition. She told me, "He's faking it to get sympathy." I thought about this for a while, but when Steven H fell off his cycle into the path of a moving bus during a seizure, I was unconvinced. One of Steven H's friends had seen him take the seizure, and called me from the hospital. I drove there immediately to be with Steven H.

Although Steven H's cycle was destroyed, fortunately he was not seriously injured. I was extremely worried for his future safety. Despite the comment from his social worker that "he was faking", I made an appointment for him with our family doctor. The doctor concurred with me that Steven H, may have been telling the truth, and referred him to a specialist. I brought this up at the next visit of our regular social worker. Still, she remained adamant, Steven.H was "just attention seeking." I told her, I knew Steven H reasonably well and believed there could be something wrong with him. I had informed her of the earlier incidents and my concerns. She insisted I was being "fooled".

In April 1989, I took Steven to a paediatrician, who gave him a thorough examination. He subsequently sent a letter to our family doctor, containing the preliminary results, and expressing hith concern for Steven H's safety., He wrote the following exerpts.

"Steven say's that he had fits or turns for at least 3 years and they have recently become more frequent and severe. The fits consist of muscle jerks, myaclonic jerks in which his arms shoot out and more recently his legs have been involved as well. He has fallen off his bicycle and at school fell downstairs. The jerking movements come out of the blue and are generally not associated with disturbance of conscientiousness." He further states..

"These episodes of jerking or myaclonic turns are occurring daily, there are no known precipitating causes or factors. There was .one episode of a blackout in his last foster placement which may have been a fit. Currently he is having up to 20 a day. Because of the dangers to Steven at school it has . been requested that he stay away until there is better control of his fits."

An Electroencephyagram was ordered for Steven H. For this I took him to the christchurch hospital. Steven H, was diagnosed as having a form of Epilepsy. This was treated with Epilim 500gm tablets. Steven H hated taking his tablets. I stood and watched him to ensure he took his medication. He did appear to be taking them as prescribed. His fits didn't appear to be lessening, and I was beginning to wonder if he was actually swallowing the tablets. A few weeks later, the kitchen sink became blocked. I removed the '5' bend to clear the blockage,

and found thirty or more of Steven H's Epilim tablets. Making Steven H take his medication was an ongoing struggle. I could tell when he wasn't swallowing his tablets, because his fits would return. The social worker who had originally doubted Steven H's condition, never acknowledged her mistake. Had I not have persevered and sought medical help for him, Steven may have been involved in a fatal accident.

The school was not prepared to take responsibility for Steven H's safety, so I was required to tutor him at home for two months or so. During this time Steven H completed school work set by me, to a high standard. His teachers were impressed with his progress, especially as they were unable to get him to work at school.

Jason Ng had reached a plateau at school. His behavior rocked precariously between acceptable, and poor. He was barely .keeping in line. I didn't offer any help to the school, because I couldn't see their problem. Jason Ng was constantly coming home distressed, saying the teachers were picking on him. He .was also having trouble with a boy at school, Michael C, who was also a welfare boy. Jason Ng

couldn't understand why this boy was not severely punished for the many destructive and violent things he did at school. Jason Ng felt if they didn't punish Michael C, they couldn't punish him. He was beginning to rebel against the school authorities.

On May 19th, 1989, the welfare received a visit from two foster parents, about me and the way I cared for my foster boys. The visitors were the two cleaning ladies I had hired only a few months before. I hadn't been aware they were welfare employees. They made observations to the welfare about me, and insisted they were not making them due to "malicious intent".

They told the welfare,

1/ That there was little food in the house.

2/ That I admitted hitting my teenage boys, using a tea towel to ensure no marks were left,

3/ That I admitted not allowing the boys to see their social workers, alone.

4/ That I had little respect for women.

5/ That I said, "I have no sympathy. It serves her right," when my sister (both of my sisters are fit and well)drowned in Timaru.

6/ That the boys sleep with inadequate bed clothes, blankets, sheets etc.

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7/ .That the women once found a note, supposedly written by me saying "Dear ? (name not remembered by them), You know I love you very much, and long to hold you in my arms." (The alleged note was never produced because it never existed).

The women said they had become increasingly concerned about the care I gave the boys. They stated that this information was for the welfare's information only. They were unwilling to have their names revealed, because they said, they had mutual friends of mine.

Another foster parent, Marie E, had previously told this social worker, • identical allegations about my care of the boys. Marie E was a mutual friend of the person who recommended the cleaning women, and of the women themselves. Marie E, also refused to allow her name to be revealed, citing she thought it would be detrimental to my boys, if her name was revealed to me.

The writer of the document from which this information originated stated that she had never met me, and although she recorded the details, the information was hear say.

A meeting was held at the Shirley welfare office, on the 20th July 1989. I was the topic of discussion. There were 4 social workers in attendance. All women. The,

decision of that meeting was a decision that I would be called to the welfare office, to answer the allegations. During the course of their meeting I had been accused of using violence' and emotional blackmail, and the 4 social workers were critical of what they saw as my "Bad" attitude towards women. The meeting decided I should undertake an anger management course, run by the welfare.

The meeting had also put things in place to remove all of the boys from Cargill place, On the say so of the cleaning ladies and Marie E. As yet, I had not been spoken to, so the welfare had no idea whether or not the allegations were malicious and untrue. Plans were made to place the boys into new foster homes. I wasn't surprised Marie E had offered to take Jason Ng. Family homes were considered for the other two boys.

On the 13th July 1989, Marie E visited the welfare office in Shirley, to make her previous complaint official. She stated she had been concerned for some time, about the standard of care I was giving the boys. Her concerns were identical to those of her friends, the cleaning ladies'.

In a Department of Social Welfare document containing these allegations, the welfare stated that Kevin O, refused to stay at my home in Cargill Place with Jason Ng, because I allegedly "put down his mother". The welfare further stated, in the same document, "she (Kevin. O's mother) was a whore and would never get off the pills !"

Marie E, through the welfare, accused me of beating Jason Ng, and throwing him down the stairs, of only having kids for the money; belittling Steven H because of his Epilepsy; stomping Jason Ng's infected toenail; abusing Justin by calling him a "poof"; making derogatory comments about the boys' parents and teaching them to hate women. The following day, a telephone call was made to our volunteer social worker. She agreed that she too, had the same opinions about my care of the boys. Her opinion was that the boys should be removed.

Jason Ng's behavior was now causing trouble at school. He'd been good at home since the incident at Kevin O's. At school, Jason Ng had been caught smoking. He was called to the principal's office and chastised. The principal was

a nun. Jason Ng retaliated by calling her a “slut.” She was understandably angry at his insults and suspended him.

Being suspended pleased Jason Ng. He boasted to the other boys as they headed off to school each morning. I refused to allow him to sleep in, and made him work at home during school hours. Jason Ng complained to his social worker. She told me to, “Lighten up,” on him. I was incensed at her flippancy and told her, I would look after my boys, my way. After all, I knew them better than anyone.

The welfare’s constant, “Leave them alone” attitude, seriously undermined any attempt I made to modify the boys behavior.

There was more trouble at school. Upon his return from his suspension, Jason Ng had smashed school property. The principal telephoned me, insisting I do something about the boys’ behavior. I responded by informing the principal that what the boys do at school, must be handled by the school. I would take care of them at home. My statement was not well received. The school contacted the welfare, and lodged a complaint about the boys behavior. I was accused of failing to keep the boys under proper control, a situation which had been taken out of my hands by the restrictions, constantly imposed on me, by the welfare.

At home, the boys were well behaved. They did as they were told and completed their chores, without complaint. I found it a matter for contention, that my boys were being accused of causing so much trouble at school. I believed they were being persecuted by the principal, who had, on a number of occasions, questioned the appropriateness of a single man looking after the boys alone.

Because there was a discrepancy between the behavior of my boys at school, and how they behaved at home, our regular social worker questioned my motives and methods. She told me the school had asked the welfare to talk to me about the boys behavior. Apparently, an entry had been made in my fostering file, that I was secretive as to the methods I used. There was suspicion by the welfare that I was using intimidation and force, to make my boys behave at home. Quite the opposite was true. Our home was run with the use of discussion and democracy.

I attempted on many occasions to explain this to respective social workers. Quite simply, they didn't believe it could work.

Whenever there was a conflict among the boys, we called a family ~ The problem was discussed, then resolved by vote. This was the only way my foster home could work. Any dissension caused instability, which if not resolved, could have caused chaos amongst the boys.. I had nothing against discussion and democracy, and I often wondered what the welfare's policy was, if they didn't believe in it. It was just another of the mixed messages sent by the welfare, to me. Despite my explanations, yet another investigation was ordered by the welfare.

I had no idea the investigation was under way. Everything appeared normal, and I was not informed of it by our regular social worker. I had a feeling though, that something was wrong; A sort of unexplainable anxiety, emanating from the welfare's conspicuous avoidance of me.

One afternoon, I was telephoned by one of the social workers, and asked to go to the office, immediately. Any hint of trouble was disguised by the caller. I was told something had come up, but not what it was. I was suspicious, as it was about 3:45 pm, and the boys hadn't arrived home from school, and uncomfortable at not being there for them, when they arrived.

As I walked into the office, I saw my boys standing there, fidgeting and confused. A social worker ordered me not to talk to them. Justin shrugged his shoulders, as I was ushered into an interview room, and instructed to sit down.

Shortly after, two female social workers entered the room and sat facing me. I was told there had been a complaint. I asked, "By who," but was not told. One of the social workers told me concerns had been raised about my boys. I asked what the concerns were, and by who were they raised. I was angry and defensive.

The first of their concerns was about the behavior of the boys, at school. Their women teachers had apparently all expressed concerns that the boys had no respect for them. The teachers considered the boys were learning this, from me.

I reminded the social workers that all of my boys, had serious relationship problems, with their respective mothers, and had no respect for them. That information was in the boys' personal files. This had been the initial reason they'd been placed in welfare care, long before I had become involved with any of the boys. I also stated that the boys all had regular contact with women. Our own social worker had insisted I allow the boys to visit Glenis. She said it would be "good for their development", even though I had expressed my suspicions regarding Glenis's motives, citing the recent developments between Glenis, and Danny.

The welfare workers also feared I might be using violence and intimidation, to keep the boys under "control". I queried what was meant by, "control". I felt it was an allusion, to suggest I may have had dubious motives. It was intended that way, and that is how I interpreted it. Before any answer was forthcoming from the social workers, I was subjected to a tirade of veiled accusation and innuendo. I tried very hard to answer the questions put to me, but the social workers, interrogated me in such a way that whatever I replied, could be taken any number of ways. I felt there was some hidden agenda behind all of this. None of the women in that room, would come right out and say what they really meant, whatever that was.

Another two women came into the room. One was our regular social worker, the other was a senior foster parent. The latter explained that she was there to protect my interests. I found that very hard to believe as she too she had joined the others, questioning me. I felt intimidated and cornered.

I found myself forced into the position where I had to explain and validate my opinion of women, while sitting in a small room with four of them attacking me from all sides. It was excruciating. I explained that I held women in high regard, and I didn't find them in the least bit threatening. The women looked at each other with eyebrows raised. I felt I had given the wrong answer, and they neither expected, or believed' it.

Suddenly, one of the social workers said, "Don't you worry what people think of you? A man on your own looking after young boys." Everyone in the room stared

at me. I knew I was being baited, but at first didn't realize the significance Of that question. When I did, anger washed over me. I had realized exactly what they were getting at. It was that old prejudice again.

I had to think for a moment. I knew the answer to that question was vital to them. I simply asked, "Why, do you have a problem with that?" There was no reply, from anyone.

The question of control and punishment arose. It was put to me, that maybe I was under stress, and occasionally lost my temper. I answered if this had ever happened, it was news to me. One of the social workers told me I had been seen smashing things, and beating the boys. I was led to believe the complaint had come from my brother, and sister in law. I didn't believe what they were telling me, and remained unaffected. I was attacked for that too. The social workers accused me of being "blasé". I responded by saying, " the boys' behaviour at home is fine. They don't need to be hit. Physical discipline is wrong!"

I was asked what form of discipline I did use. I answered, "Self discipline!"

The depth of the interrogation was suffocating. The questions and intimations flew thick and fast. The women were very hostile and seemed aggravated that I remained unruffled. Another woman entered the room. One of the others left. She was going to another room, to interview Jason Ng, and Justin, although Jason Ng had already been interviewed at school, with the permission of the headmistress.

Without relief, there were more questions. Again it was put to me I was violent. An alleged incident was mentioned, in which I had supposedly thrown cups at one of the boys,. while shouting obscenities at him. It was said to have ended with glass smashed all over the house, and a terrified young man cowering 'in a corner. The allegation was untrue. I denied it, but knew the women had no intention of believing me. I was then told the boys had been picked up from school, and were being questioned. I asked why, and was told that they wanted to make sure there was nothing going on. Our regular social worker said she'd been to the boys school to talk to them. She'd asked them if they were happy

living with me, saying that if they weren't, she would have them moved immediately. Her concern was that because the boys were in all kinds of trouble at school, and well behaved at home, I must be using violence on them to make them behave. 'She wouldn't believe it could be done any other way.

Although I remained composed, the constant deliberate attacks on my character by the women, had left me seething. To add insult to injury, they all concurred with each other that I needed to undertake an anger management course, run by the welfare. That statement infuriated me, but I didn't show it.

Finally, after two hours, my interrogation was over. Our regular social worker told me I had nothing to worry about, I had given all the right answers to the questions. I replied, "I simply told the truth."

Two of the 1women left the room. One remained to prevent me talking to the boys. I now knew what it felt like to be a parent, accused of abusing your child in some way. I was shaking profusely. I felt dirty, violated, angry and useless.

All of the problems I had to deal with up until yiw, had involved women only. I was made to feel that because I was a single man, I was not wanted as a foster parent, and this had been an contrived attempt to dislodge me from being one.

While I waited in the interview room, Jason Ng and Justin were questioned. Justin had dismissed all allegations against me. An entry in my fostering file stated "Justin was quite clear that he felt o.k about living with Dad, as he calls Tony". Jason Ng, when interviewed at school, had suggested something was bothering him. His interviewer had listened intently,

Jason Ng assured the interviewer, Carol R, that everything was fine at home, but he was having a few problems at school. The interviewer wasn't satisfied and suggested to Jason Ng that I may be abusing him at home. Jason Ng responded by telling her of an incident, years ago while he stayed, with another foster family. According to the file entry regarding this interview, "Jason Ng had been walking through the tunnel at Lyttelton with the T-S's and had jumped in either a puddle or a pile of soot. He had been made to take all his clothes off and put a rubbish

bag over himself. On reaching home he had been shut in the garage. A wooden spoon was fetched and he was beaten with this by either (Mr. or Mrs T-S) as punishment.” The document further states, “I (interviewer) agreed with Jason that it was not okay for him to be beaten like this and that if anything like this happens again, then he was to inform me.

I had informed the boys social worker, Githlion Sloane, of this incident several months after Jason Ng had come to live with us. I was not believed and action was never taken.”

Steven H had not been interviewed because the interviewer couldn't find him. His answers would have reflected the same opinions as the other boys, so he wasn't pursued.

Despite the boys expressing that they were well treated and properly cared for, subsequent entries in the minutes from that meeting, between the four women and myself, insisted I was “not truthful”. Truth is relative to the individual and the plain truth, differed from that which the women preferred to hear.

Only one person benefitted from this situation,. Jason Ng. He later boasted to the other boys and myself that he'd suggested to the interviewer that things might have happened to him at Cargill Place. As the interviewer pressed for him to say more, Jason Ng “cunningly” mentioned that I refused to allow him to smoke (he was 14 yrs old). He told her I became angry if I caught him smoking, then he became quiet. This had aroused her suspicions and she had to know more. He then asked the social worker for permission to smoke saying he was doing it any way, and indicating he would tell her anything she wanted to know, about me. The social worker in her wisdom agreed. Jason told her, “Nothing happened.” The interviewer had been very annoyed. She had realized she'd been fooled by Jason Ng.

When we were finally permitted to go home, Jason Ng and Justin told me they had been offered alternative placements, and the welfare had considered the allegations against me, “As good as proven.” The boys both complained the interviewer wouldn't listen to them.

When we got home, we were all exhausted but relieved. Jason Ng lit a cigarette and I told him to put it out. He refused saying Carol R (the interviewer and social worker) had told him he could smoke. He told me to ring her if I didn't believe him. I did so, and she confirmed what he'd said. I was annoyed and asked how dare she undermine my authority with the boys. She reminded me that as the boys social worker, her decision about anything to do with them, was final.

## JUST BEFORE THE COPS CAME

The welfare made things even harder for me. I now had no right to stop the boys doing anything. During their interviews with the social worker, they were told they were no longer answerable to me. If they wanted anything they were to go to their social worker, and she would arrange it.

Jason Ng and Steven H would no longer tell me where they were going. I'd ask but would be told they were going "out", The destination was usually Glenis's home.

Jason K had become a regular visitor. He knew Glenis's son Daniel and the two got on well. When one stayed for the weekend, so did the other. They played well together, which kept them out of the older boys hair. However, not everyone was happy about Jason K's visits.

Daniel had been Grahame's only friend for several years, now he found himself pushed to the side. When Jason K was there, Grahame followed me around like a puppy. It was extremely annoying, but I never told him to go away. Grahame and Jason K were always trying to get each other into trouble. I treated it as rivalry and didn't take it~ very seriously. The two boys were fighting for my attention, a~though it didn't quite come to blows at that time.

Jason had a mound of problems. He was a very angry and lonely, boy. When she wasn't drunk, his mother was stoned on cannabis, often.

There was something personal wrong between Jason and Margaret, his mother. She once told me that she "Hated" Jason because he was handed to his father immediately he was born. Margaret had felt "robbed". She called it "Separation anxiety". As the result of this attitude, Margaret screamed at Jason constantly. Even at seven years old, he was beaten daily.

About August 1989, I received the shock of my life. Shannon W and Teddy were staying for the weekend. Jason K had come over to Cargill place, bringing Daniel

with him. Jason Ng was there as was Steven H and Justin. It was a cold day, overcast and drizzling so the boys were all inside. I had sent them all upstairs to play, checking on them~ every now and again to make sure they weren't fighting with each other. To my surprise they were all playing quietly together, a most unusual occurrence. They had been playing a game the older boys called "Submarines". Jason Ng explained the game to me. Two boys would get under the steel bunks which made the submarine. The other boys had to sink the submarine by shooting at the boys in it. For this purpose, both teams had a ray gun. These, guns were part of a set, requested by Jason Ng for Christmas 1988. They were electronic and would register a direct hit by making a "Screeching" sound. When a direct hit landed, the submarine was sunk and a new team would crawl under the bunk. The game would begin again. This kept the boys busy for two or three hours until it was time for lunch. Everything was going so smoothly that I left them to it and made lunch for them all.

When I'd prepared a meal for the boys I called out to them. They were totally engrossed in their game and I had to call several times. Finally, I went up the stairs to get them to come down. As I reached the landing, the boys appeared. They rushed down to the kitchen and gulped their meal, just as quickly, they disappeared back upstairs. I was happy to see them all enjoying themselves so much. I thought nothing of it because I knew how engrossed children became when playing a favourite game, and how anxious they were to return to it.

Suddenly, I realized everything had become silent upstairs. I was suspicious of the silence and even more suspicious of the quiet giggles I could hear. Very quietly I climbed the stairs and approached the boys bedroom door. Suddenly, someone shouted, "Shit!" It was too late, I'd already seen them.

All of the boys, except Justin, were in Jason Ng's bedroom. Steven H stood there looking stupidly at me. Daniel B, with his finger in his mouth looked at the ground, next to him, 'Shannon W was smiling nervously. In front of, and facing Shannon stood Teddy, doing up his fly. In the middle of the room stood Jason Ng with the electronic ray gun in his hand.

Before him knelt Jason K, who was performing oral sex on him. Neither of these two boys seemed bothered in the least. They carried on for several seconds after I'd entered the room. I knew I was supposed to keep control of myself and be rational with the boys but this was different, a shock far bigger than seeing Jason Ng in bed naked with Kevin O. Justin yelled out from his bedroom, "Its' got nothing to do with me."

I didn't know how to handle this situation. I was aware of the fact I hadn't reported Jason Ng to the welfare with regard to the earlier incident with Kevin O, and the reasons why. I wondered what would happen if I reported this last incident. I did the only thing I could think of at the time, I lost my temper and subjected the boys to a tirade of insults, threats and anger. I didn't hit any of them. I didn't feel it was appropriate.

Jason Ng was the first to respond. He said "It was only a bit of fun." He explained that it was a game called "Submarines." He and Steven H had created it. In this game, beneath the bunks was the submarine. One of the boys, armed with a raygun had to get in the submarine. The other boys took turns shooting at him until someone was shot. The boy who was shot was then forced to perform oral sex on the boy who shot him. A handful of hair was grabbed and the raygun was held to the head of the boy performing the oral sex act. I told Jason Ng he was 15 years old, and asked what the "hell" was wrong with him. I shouted at Jason Ng, it was disgusting, and I was telephoning the welfare. I turned to leave the room to make the call. Jason Ng followed me down the stairs to the lounge, and said, "You tell anyone, anyone at all •and we'll all tell the pigs (police) you did it.to us. They'll lock you up." Steven H, had followed Jason Ng downstairs. He looked at me and nodded.

The situation had grown into something beyond my most terrifying nightmares. I didn't make the call to the welfare. I didn't make the call to anyone. I knew only too well that if I called Jason Ng's bluff and went to the welfare, he would in all probability carry out his threat. If that happened, I would surely end up in jail. It was the policy of the welfare to believe the child at all costs, and I didn't believe the boys would turn on each other. They wouldn't want to have to tell people they

played sex games with each other, logic decreed they would take the least embarrassing way out, for themselves. -

After I was threatened, Jason Ng and Steven H went back upstairs. I followed them up, and told Daniel, Jason K and Teddy to go home. I telephoned Teddy's father, Eddie, to come and pick him up. He asked why but I couldn't tell him that his 12 year old son was involved in sex games with young children. He would take the decision out of my hands and go straight to the authorities. I simply told him that an emergency had arisen. When Eddie had picked Teddy up, I took Shannon W home. On the way to his home, he told me he wouldn't say anything because he didn't want to get "Jason Ng" into trouble. I felt sick as I dropped Shannon off at his home. I was torn between doing the right thing and turning the older boys in, or protecting myself. Although I didn't realise it at that time it wouldn't have made any difference. I believed their threats. My fate was sealed.

As the days went by, my anxiety grew. Strangely, the boys had' become very stable and well behaved around home. That helped to ease the stress I felt. They began doing little things for me. I'd constantly find notes beneath my pillow expressing the boys love for me. Sometimes they would be in a bought envelope, sometimes one was specially made. I don't know whether or not it was guilt on the part of the boys that made them feel they had to do this, but it made me feel better regardless. From then on all the boys who visited drew pictures and wrote notes on them, again expressing their love for me. It was something altogether new. I had always shown the boys the love they lacked and I felt they might have finally noticed I really cared.

The boys who stayed on weekends still came. I did my best to keep the older boys away from the younger ones, but that was not always possible. When they were together, I was there too, making sure nothing untoward was going on. In my mind I wanted to believe the "submarine" incident was a one off event,; but I had a nagging doubt. This doubt grew more intense as the next few months went by. The boys behaviour was almost perfect, almost too perfect.

Steven H came to the fore again. He was on one of his daily visits to Glenis's home. Christopher, Glenis's youngest boy was upstairs in his room getting

dressed after his bath. Glenis asked Steven H to go up and check on Christopher to make sure he was dressed. Steven remained upstairs for what seemed an unusually long time, and Danny, who was still living with Glenis went up to check on him.

Danny opened the door to Christopher's bedroom and saw Steven H standing there with his trousers down. 8 year old Christopher was playing with Steven H's erect penis. Danny rushed downstairs and told Glenis. She refused to believe Danny. She yelled, "Your'e just trying to get Steven back for something."

Christopher couldn't confirm the incident because he was unable to communicate. I began questioning Steven when he came downstairs, but Glenis stopped me. I was told it was none of my business and I should keep my "nose out of it". Later in the year, Jason Ng was asked to baby sit for my brother's two children. I knew nothing about the arrangement until it was time for Jason Ng to go to their home. When I was told by Jason Ng, he would be baby sitting. I was worried and thought it would be dangerous for my brother's two kids. One was 3 years old, a little boy, and the other a little girl who was 4. I telephoned Jason Ng's social worker expressing my discomfort at Jason Ng baby sitting. I didn't tell her why, but I told her I knew Jason Ng better than anyone and I thought it unwise for him to be left alone with small children. The social worker told me I was being "Paranoid", and I should let him baby sit. She felt it would give Jason Ng "responsibility". I couldn't tell her I was concerned Jason Ng would sexually abuse the children. Selfishly maybe, I was still trying to protect myself. I was told by the social worker to allow Jason Ng to babysit my brother's children.

Kasey was Glenis niece. Glenis went upstairs to check on Christopher and Kasey, only to find both children naked and in bed together. Kasey was on top of Christopher, gyrating in simulated sex motions. Glenis yelled at the children and dragged them apart. The next day Kasey's mother was told. She called Kasey a "dirty little bitch" and the blame was conveniently placed on Christopher because he was intellectually handicapped.

Two weeks later, Christopher was involved in a sexual encounter with a 12 year old boy at his school, Ferndale, a school for handicapped children.

The older boy had tied Christopher up by the neck with a pair of women's panty hose. The two boys had then been caught by one of the teachers, playing with each others penis's. Glenis found it suspicious when Christopher arrived home with burn marks around his neck. He couldn't explain them. Glenis had only discovered this encounter when the parents of, the other boy laid a complaint with the school. Glenis was spoken to on the telephone by the school representative who quite clearly stated, "penis playing happens here all the time. We have to accept it as part of the territory. The kids don't know any better." Glenis promised she'd keep an eye on Christopher and the incident was shelved. Initially, the other boys parents wanted to involve the police. The school, fearing scandal, prevented this handling the situation internally.

In November that year, Glenis held a party for Danny's 16th birthday. There was alcohol and cannabis which had been supplied by Glenis. She'd bought the cannabis from Margaret K, Jason Ng, Justin, Steven H and two other young boys were at the party. None of the boys was older than 15, and the youngest was 12. Glenis, also an Epileptic and very aware of the effect of combining Epilepsy medication and alcohol, encouraged them to drink as much as they wanted. I tried to discourage Steven from drinking alcohol especially since he was Epileptic. - It surprised me that Glenis persisted in getting him to drink anyway, stating that it "wouldn't hurt him," she "did it all the time" and was epileptic herself.

Arrangements had been made, with all of the parents of the boys, to stay at Glenis's home for the night. Glenis had told the parents that her "sons" were having a video evening and she would be supervising. Glenis did not own a video.

I was unhappy about the boys drinking, but since they were going to do it anyway, I remained to ensure nothing untoward occurred.

We were all sitting at the kitchen table. Glenis took her shoes off and began rubbing her feet along my thigh. Her legs were wide apart and she was wearing

no knickers. I slammed- my Coke on the table and snarled, "get your fucken feet off me before I break your toes."

"Don't be like that," she whined as she placed her feet on Steven H's legs. Someone took my empty glass and refilled it with Coke then returned it to me. The room suddenly became silent as I took two large gulps. The Coke tasted bitter. I took another mouthful then sat the glass on the table. It had Vodka in it and I never drank alcohol as it's poison in my system and would cause me serious illness or worse.

It was about 10pm, Glenis began wriggling closer to the boys. As they all became very drunk she made advances to Steven H, who was 13. I was told to leave. The boys insisted on it.

Although I was aware of what was probably going to happen after thy departure, I was in no position to refuse to leave. It was Glenis's house after all. I was pushed out the door. It was obvious the boys knew I would not approve of what they were about to do. I had no choice, so I went home.

When I arrived at Cargill place, I was desperate. I didn't like what was going on, but I would be cutting my own throat if I reported my suspicions to the welfare. About an hour after I arrived home, I was violently ill. I'd felt sick since leaving the party at Glenis's home. Right through the night I vomitted repeatedly.

The following day, I was still very ill. I couldn't stand without staggering and I was still vomitting. I had to go to Glenis's to pick up the boys because they were to receive their weekly visit from their social worker. When I arrived at Glenis's home, Christopher and Daniel were the only one's up. I knocked on the door and Daniel answered. He shouted to Glenis, I was there. She opened her bedroom's window and shouted down to me, "You can't come in at the moment. It's inconvenient", then shut the bedroom window. I asked Daniel where the boys were. He answered, "They're in Mums (Glenis) bed", then closed the door.

I rang the social worker and told her that we were going to be in Ashburton for the day, visiting friends. I made another appointment. The last thing I needed

was for her to visit when the boys were all suffering from hangover's and wouldn't come home.

The boys were still not home by 5pm so I returned to Glenis's to collect them. When I arrived, they were all strangely silent. I asked them to come home, and amazingly they did without any argument. On the way home I asked Jason Ng if he'd slept with Glenis. He shook his head and said "No, Steve did." Nothing more was said. I felt totally and utterly helpless.

I couldn't help wondering why a woman in her thirties would want to have sex with young boys. It made me feel responsible. I felt I should have done something to stop her, but what?

Margaret K moved into a Housing Corporation house opposite Glenis. It was closer for Jason K to come and stay at Cargill place, but it was to prove too close in some respects. Margaret was still having trouble with Jason k at home, but things were reasonably even with him everywhere else. Jason Ng had begun to visit Margaret K often staying the night. I was later asked by a neighbour of Margaret K's if I knew Margaret was having sex with Jason Ng. I had no idea but I was in the same situation with Steven, Danny and Glenis. I went to see Jason Ng's social worker. I told her, Ailsa Turner my concerns. She just laughed and replied "What's she got that you haven't?" and that it was "healthy for my boys to have exposure to the women." The social worker- believed Glenis and Margaret were a "good influence" on the boys, and I was "over reacting". I left the office feeling humiliated. At last I had tried to do something about what was going on, and I wasn't believed.

Before Jason Ng was to go to my brother's home, the childrens' mother bathed and dressed them. I went with Jason Ng and stayed there with him as long as I could, before I was called away by Justin, who was in yet another crisis. I had to go. Before I went, I took Jason Ng into another room and warned him - about sexually interfering with either of the children. He promised that there was "no way" he would, and told me I was "in no position to threaten him," but he "wouldn't touch them anyway." I didn't believe him, but since there had been

nothing sexually obvious with Jason Ng for the past few months, I hoped he'd be true to his word.

About an hour after I'd left Jason Ng at my brother's house, my brother and his wife arrived home. Jason Ng had bathed the children again, they were still in the bath. My brother and his wife were very suspicious of this. Later that night, my brother's wife telephoned me. She asked me if Jason was prone to sexually abusing children. I informed her I couldn't disclose anything with regards to my foster boys, because it would be a breach of the privacy act and the welfare insisted upon keeping a foster child's confidentiality absolute. This didn't satisfy my brother's wife. She told me Jason Ng would not be allowed to baby sit again and she wanted him kept away from her children and her home.

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Glenis was having a lot of trouble with Christopher, her youngest son. He was about 8 years old and sexually very active. One night Glenis was baby sitting her nine year old concerns and asked her advice.

Jason Ng had continued his contact with the E's. He'd stayed there on a number of occasions, sleeping in Kevin 0's double bed with Kevin 0 each time. Very early one morning, Kevin 0 came to my home in Cargill Place with Jason Ng. Jason Ng had stayed there for the night. Kevin 0 was upset and in pain. He'd come to get help from me for a burn he'd received whilst in bed. He and Jason Ng had been smoking in bed when the end of the cigarette dropped off Kevin 0's cigarette, landing on his chest. The result was a circular festering burn. He didn't want to tell the E's and told me not to tell them either. Jason Ng had told him I would say nothing. I dressed the burn and the two boys left. Later in the day I went to the E's. When I arrived there, Jason Ng and Justin were sitting in the lounge with the E's. The boys were drinking beer given to them by Brian E. I protested loudly to Brian E, who stated that the boys should have the odd beer. "It'll make men out of them," Brian mused. I asked Brian E if the welfare knew he gave beer to young boys and he told me "they know and think it's ok". -

I was worried about these influences the women and the E's had over my boys. The E's were heavily into the use of cannabis, a habit they told me was condoned by their social worker, Ailsa Turner.

I couldn't believe the welfare would allow this behaviour in a foster home so I went to see the E's social worker Ailsa T, at the Kingsley resource centre in Christchurch. I brought my concerns regarding the E's providing alcohol to my boys, and their use of cannabis to her attention. I was told to mind My own business by Ailsa T. She also told me she couldn't discuss other foster parents of their foster children with me because it would be a breach of the privacy act. She also warned me not to "make waves", because "shit stirring in the department (social welfare) had a habit of backfiring on the one who started it". I felt that was a threat and f~]4ng I was getting nowhere, I left the office.

Two days later, Justin told me Ailsa T had been to see the E's and informed them I was "shit stirring", against them. Brian E came to my home. He told me what Ailsa T had said to him and informed me I was on "borrowed time". He said I was interfering and would bring trouble down on the E's from the welfare. He then made a series of threats, one of which was that he would "nail" me "to the wall." He would get my boys to turn on me and seemed confident they would. I expressed my concern that he and his wife were supplying alcohol and drugs to my boys. I was told it was none of my business and I should "stay out of it", or I would "go down". It seemed to me, the more I tried to keep everything proper, the more threats I received.

Things were getting no better at Glenis's with the boys. There was a new boy in Glenis's stable of underage sex partners. Grahame K. He was 14' years old and attended Shirley boys high. He often visited me at lunchtimes, because he didn't like going home to an empty house for lunch. He was an acquaintance of the boys. Like the other boys, it took only a short time for Grahame K to find himself in Glenis's bed. By this time though, nothing Glenis did surprised me and- I was powerless to intervene anyway.

One evening I visited Glenis. -As I approached the front door I glanced at the lounge window. The curtain was partially open and I couldn't help but notice what

was going on in there. Glenis lay stark naked on her back, on the lounge floor. Steven H, also naked, lay upon her. They were having sexual intercourse. At the other end was Grahame K. He had knelt on all fours above Glenis's face and was receiving oral sex from her simultaneously with her having sex with Steven H. On the coffee table stood an almost empty bottle of rum and several beer cans lay on the floor and table. The light had been turned off but this was clearly visible in the light emitted from the television which was on. - -

I didn't go in. I was disgusted with what I had seen and made up my mind to go to the welfare and disclose what was going on. I knew it would make trouble for me, but at that point I was prepared to do it anyway. The day following the group sex incident at Glenis's home, I went to the DSW office in Shirley. The sex going on between the two women, Margaret K and Glenis, and my boys, was beginning to consume my life. Knowing what was going on and not being able to stop it was causing me extreme anxiety. When I arrived at the office, I was asked to wait while the duty social worker finished her phone call. After ten minutes, Carol R came out and directed me into her office. Before I could open my mouth, she asked if I had come to make trouble. She informed me she had spoken to Ailsa T at Kingsley and had been told of the allegations I had made regarding the E's. She also told me there were those who were beginning to "wonder" about my "stability". I thought for a moment, carefully weighing up the situation. I wondered what would happen if I told her about the group sex at Glenis's or the alcohol at the E's. It became quite clear to me very quickly that I would be cutting off my own head should I open my mouth. There was an uncomfortable silence in the office as I decided what to say. I said nothing about the sex. I had considered it detrimental to myself. For some reason the welfare were trying to prevent me from speaking out. It quickly became clear to me. I would have to try and fix the situation myself. There would be no help forthcoming from anyone else, but I had to-at least attempt it.

It was now 1990. All of my boys were running wild. They were doing burglaries, going out boozing all hours of the day and night and sleeping with either- Glenis or Margaret nightly. Justin had moved in with Glenis, Steven and Jason Ng were still living with me. Jason Ng had become involved in Devil worship and this made him act stupidly and dangerously, walking along Worcester street late

at night with Scott Batchelor punching in windows on cars and later on, glass in petrol pumps at a garage requiring medical treatment.

Grahame was still coming to stay, but things were getting much worse for him. His father's girl friend had beaten him very badly, leaving Grahame severely bruised. Grahame came to Cargill place, to get help from me. I wasn't there, but Jason Ng was. He took Grahame in to the Christchurch Central police station to lay charges against Grahames' fathers' girlfriend. Grahame had a medical examination at - the CHCH hospital and photographs of Grahames' injuries were taken by the -police, who were keen to press charges.

The girlfriend was unrepentant. She insisted Grahame had "deserved all he got". Grahame revealed to the police that he had been punched in the face several times and thrown across the -room by the girl friend. His father hadn't been there at the time. There was a family meeting of Grahames' family. His father and the girlfriend lied to- cover up what had gone on. The rest of his family knew what had happened but didn't want trouble from the police. The family meeting came to nothing with no one wanting to tell Grahame to call the police off, but being put under pressure by the girl friend through threats and intimidation. All this time, I supported Grahame and his need to bring charges against the girlfriend. The night of the- -family meeting, Grahame received a visit from his father -and the girlfriend. They told Grahame, where I could hear them, that if he didn't call the police off, His father and the girlfriend would go to the police and accuse me of sexually molesting Grahame and every boy I ever knew. They then left. After they'd gone, I told Grahame not to be afraid of the threats. I told him if he didn't put a stop to the beatings and terrible abuse handed out to him by the girlfriend, it would never stop. Worse still, it would be passed on to David, Grahames' fathers' new son.

The following, morning, Detective Leggett came to Cargill p1 to see Grahame. Unfortunately Grahame had decided to believe the threats made against me by the girlfriend. He told the police he would not lay charges. Detective L was very annoyed. As he left the house he said angrily to Grahame.

“This really fucks me off! Don’t come crawling to me if she smashes you again. “ I was shocked by this attitude. Grahame was only 11. He’d been through hell and back and he didn’t deserve to be treated like that especially by a police officer. The upshot of this was, no charges were laid. Grahame had given away any chance of redress, by misguidedly trying to protect me. The welfare though had finally become involved. Although Grahame’s father tried to interfere, Grahame was sent to live with his natural mother in Wellington. Once away from his father, Grahame did well. He rang me several times a week, often several times, in one day, collect. He needed reassurance I was still there, and he could contact me at any time. The phone calls caused me much financial distress, often running my phone bill into many hundreds of dollars. This was money I could not afford at that time and there was a real reason for this.

Since the day I caught the boys indulging in the sex game, “Submarines” upstairs at Cargill p1. The older boys had been asking for money, stereos and the like. I was made to feel I had no choice, although no direct threat had been attached to these things at that time. Because the demands had become so constant, I had ended up paying off large hire purchase accounts to satisfy the boys demands. Justin demanded nothing. Steven H and Jason Ng were the worst offenders. The hire purchase of stereos and so on ran into the thousands of dollars. I found it necessary to try and get more money from the DSW for the care of the boys.

Paying out all this money had a secondary effect. The younger boys who came to stay on the weekends wanted things too. They couldn’t see why they couldn’t have them as well. I refused a couple of times when asked for a stereo, by Jason K, and a new bike, by Daniel B. Glenis was annoyed because I had refused Daniel. One day when I was sitting in her kitchen, she asked me, “What have the boys got over you that you should buy them things and not Daniel and Christopher.” Margaret K was in the kitchen at the time. The two women looked at each other and sniggered.

A few minutes later Jason Ng walked into the kitchen. Margaret K- looked him squarely - in the eye and said, “You must give good blow jobs”. She and Glenis laughed. I was incensed but thought that leaving the room would have indicated

there was something to it. Jason Ng just sneered at the two women. He had not heard the conversation and had no idea what they were talking about.

Later that night, Jason Ng came to talk to me. He asked why Margaret had made the comment regarding "blow jobs". I told him the reason, explaining the conversation which led up to it. He was 16 and knew what I was- talking about. When I told him the women thought I was paying the boys in kind for sexual favours, he looked embarrassed and more than a little shocked.

"Fucken dirty bitches!" was his response. I reminded Jason Ng that these were the women he and the other boys - were spending their days, and sometimes nights with. I also advised him that if they were saying these things about me, then what were they saying about him and the other boys, since the neighbourhood knew about the sex sessions at Glenis's house.

Jason Ng said nothing more. Following this discussion, he and the boys tended to keep clear of both Glenis and Margaret. They began staying home, and the only sex- they may have indulged in from that time, was with girls their own age. The penny had finally dropped and we were on the road back to -being a happy, straight family.

The boys had- actually believed Glenis and Margaret were keeping their sexual exploits with the boys secret. Things had been so crazy for such a long time. Now though, I had a chance of putting it all right. I called a family meeting! I would be there, as would Jason Ng, Steven H and Justin. Jason K also sat in. I could not take all the crap any longer and had been waiting for a chance to air my distress, since the meeting with Carol R in the DSW office, at which I was warned off making any complaints.

I found the boys more than receptive. I believed this to be due to the recent events with Glenis and Margaret K and the embarrassment suffered within the neighbourhood, by the boys.

The family meeting went well. After much soul searching on the part of all of us, we decided to make a fresh start. Jason Ng, Steven H, Jason K and I made a

pact. There would be no more sex in the group, no more drugs or alcohol from Glenis, Margaret K or the E's and no more burglaries or other theft.

Between the boys and me, we decided to go back to the lifestyle we enjoyed before either Glenis or Margaret K came on the scene. We resumed our visits to the 'Waimak' river, barbeques, birthdays and all round fun. Things were beginning to look up for the residents of Cargill Place.

Steven H began to cause a few problems. For several months, he had been skipping school. I had no idea this was going on. I would have expected someone from the school to ring and tell me if one of the boys wasn't there. I only discovered he was 'bunking', when I was driving through town one afternoon with a friend and saw Steven H walking, his arms about the shoulder of a very young girl. I did nothing at the time, but waited until he got home after school.

After Steven H arrived home from school, I asked him where he had been that day. He replied he had been at school, and he had a good day. I wasn't annoyed at that time. It seemed as though it was a game to Steven H. I asked him what he would say if I said someone told me they had seen him in town with a young girl. He told me he would call them "a liar". I've never seen a more stupid look on anyone's' face than I did that day, when I told Steven H it was me who had seen him. He simply shrugged his shoulders and said nothing more on the subject. I didn't pursue it.

## TO THE END

Things were starting to happen on the Emmett St front. That is where Glenis lived. Danny left Glenis's place because of unwanted sexual advances made to him by her. Justin was in the process of moving in Jason Ng had been back with us after an absence of several months. I. Le had been into drugs and alcohol in a big way, which led him to taking Morphine intra. veinously. Scott B came to live with us through the DSW. He was. A known child sex offender, although I was not told this until after he moved in. He was very violent, intimidating and a glue, drug and alcohol abuser.

Andrew Ackermann came to stay on a few occasions. .It was not long before he revealed to us all, that his father forced him to have sexual connections with him when he slept in his father's bed. His mother, Margaret, did say that Andrew slept with them and became defensive. She seemed to be terrified of her husband. He was an extremely violent men and would bash her and the kids regularly. I saw him on one occasion, punch 12 year old Andrew square in the face, making his nose bleed. Andrew had been his fathers favourite until then, when his younger brother Nathan had taken over after Andrew was dumped. Nathan went on t become a notorious fire bug throughout Canterbury rural areas, along with. His father was investigated after suspicion that he may have been molesting his daughter arose at a CHCH health camp. It was inconclusive because the girl was fearful of her father and would not talk

Andrew and his father had regular fights, of such intensity that Andrew would go berserk and destroy his room.He hated it when Andrew went away and was unusually possessive of him.Each time Andrew went home, his father would ask him if anyone had molested him.

It was not difficult to figure out why Andrew didn't want to go home after a short stay with us.

It was only a matter of a week or so, after Scott B moved in, for Justin and Jason Ng to move out. Trouble had begun immediately with Scott. .About 5 weeks into his stay with us, he became involved in a fight with the boy who lived next door to Andrew's house. Scott terminated the fight with a boot knife he had concealed

under the front seat of my car. He stabbed the other boy about 5 times, causing serious wounds to his back, side and chest. The outcome of that fight was that Scott was sentenced to 150 hours of community work. Of these he did only 20. He managed to convince the fellow who ran the community centre where he was supposed to undertake this work to write it off.

The DSW looked on but failed to check properly, that he had in fact completed the 150 hours.

After the incident with the knife, everyone in my social circle was terrified by Scott. He took the name "Slash" for himself, refusing to answer to any other. He ruled the lot of them under a reign of terror which was to last nearly two years. During the handling of that knife incident, I discovered that Glenis had been having sex with all but one of my DSW foster boys. She was going into the Shirley Lodge pub and buying them alcohol. She was also giving them the drugs which she used to control her epilepsy. The drugs were Frisium and Tegretol. The boys would become stupefied under the influence of the drugs and alcohol and sex would follow. Often, Glenis's young sons would see the going's on. I went to the DSW offices in Shirley, Chch. I could no longer sit idly by and allow all of this perversion to continue. I a social worker, Rob Richie that these things were going on. He said that he would follow it up. Later that day, I had to tell him that I was wrong. Jason Ng, and Steven H had renewed their threats of sexual allegations should I proceed with the complaints. The whole thing, the sex, drugs, perversion and filth was completely out of control I felt like scum, because I was letting my fear of being accused of sexual abuse stop me from protecting the kids.

By now, Scott had begun staying the night at Glenis's place. It was with the knowledge of the DSW, who thought that the boys should have a mother figure. If only they knew that she was having sex with them. I don't think another would do that with her own kids. The only one of all the kids who still wanted to be around me at all, was Jason I (I decided to spend all of my time on him. If nothing else I thought I could bring him past all of that. He went everywhere I went and really looked up to me. I taught him to fish, ride a motorbike and drive a car. We went camping periodically and he learned how to light a campfire and so on. It was the one good thing I had felt since 1986, when I got started on this road to hell.

He had to be taken to school each day, because if he was sent on his own, he would come to my place instead. I taught him at his school, when teachers refused to have him in the classroom because of his behaviour. When he did run away from school, it was easy to find him. He always came to my place. We also went on a couple of trips to the West coast. The others didn't want to know me until then, so I refused to take them with me, although one other came along for the ride. You learn a lot on those trips. We only went three times, but the magic of the West coast lives on in my heart, haunting me often. There was such an immense release of pressure when we went over there. I could get away from the perversion. I long for that time again.

All of this time, the other boys were drugged up to the eyeballs. The DSW were well aware of the problem but wouldn't act as usual.

There was a new local boy involved with all of this now. His name was Graham Kettle. He supplied Glenis with Cannabis at a cost which often left her young sons without food to eat. At this time I took a trip to the West coast. Glenis was supposed to be looking after the boys and had apparently arranged it with a DSW social worker, Rob R. Instead of looking after them.

Glenis had begun a relationship with Scott, who was 14 now. She believed that she had fallen in love with Scott. Although this was the case, she was still having sex, with any of the boys, who she desired at the time. The only one who didn't get involved, was Justin. He was into the drugs and alcohol, but not the sex. She used him to look after the kids, while she went on rages with the older kids. He could not stand what was going on, and left. He moved to his aunt's home.

1991. 92 was the worst period. The drugs etc became so common that other people in the street were supplying my foster boys now. Brian and Marie Elliot, foster parents with the DSW had, on several occasions, given cannabis and alcohol to my kids. I saw it myself, and told them that I would pass the information on to the DSW. I made official complaints, in writing, to the DSW. In particular Jenny W of the Shirley office. She refused to act, saying that she had spoken to the Elliot's, and they had denied it. They did admit though, that the DSW was well aware of the fact that the Elliot's used both drugs and alcohol.

At this point, I was told by Jason Ng that Brian and Marie Elliot had told both he and Scott, that " If they put their heads together, they could put me away" and

"make some money", confirmed by Graham Kettle who overheard this and also told me. He warned me not to say any more about the drugs. The man who lived next door to Glenis, Kevin G, made home brew. He sold it to Scott, Jason Ng and other youngsters for \$15 a crate. Many a time, I saw young boys coming out of that house so drunk that they collapsed on the grass, vomiting. On one occasion, Scott had been over there drinking, with Glenis. There was talk of a sexual foursome, with Kevin G, his wife, Glenis and Scott. Scott went berserk .and was assaulted, by Kevin G. As a result, Scott ran into Glenis's place and barricaded the doors. He had a bottle of methylated spirits with a rag in the end and every time Kevin G went near the door, he would light the wick and threaten to blow the house up. I was paged and told of this emergency. Although I had little dealing with Scott, It was me they called to get him out. When I arrived, there was a large crowd on the road near Glenis's house.. They all turned and looked at me as I approached at speed. I was waved down and told what had happened, minus the sex and booze. I then drove into Glenis's driveway and parked. Kevin G was on the front doorstep shouting abuse at Scott. He was telling him, that if he opened his mouth he would kill him. He had, according to witnesses, only minutes before, threatened Scott with a rifle. I really had no idea of what to expect. As I walked cautiously to the front door, I was met by this violent man, Kevin G. I asked him to move away from the door. He refused. I asked him again, and he became aggressive. Scott was screaming inside, He appeared to be terrified. I did not ask Mr C to move again.! forcibly removed him. He went to the group who were standing on the road, shouting that Scott needed a "good hiding".

It took only moments for Scott to open the door and let me in. Once inside, he hugged me so tight that I felt him trembling. The police were there by then, but the work was done, Scott calmed down and the police were speaking to Mr G.It was over, but I was shaking with the stress of it all. I asked Scott to stay at home from now on. He agreed, but it was only a matter of time before he was back at Glenis's again, She would not stay away from him. They say love hurts. Not long after this, I was accused, along with Jason Ng, of molesting Glenis's son Christopher. The DSW investigated it and found that there was no evidence to support the allegations. I was not worried, for I knew that I had done nothing wrong. After the incident at Glenis's place, ! had taken steps to put a stop to all

the crap. I had decided, that no matter what happened, I would go through with it this time.

Jason Ng, was no longer in the care of the DSW, nor was Justin. Scott, and Steven were. Scott had taken up with Terrena S, a '13 year old girl, and Glenis was very angry. She could not reconcile with the fact that Scott wanted nothing to do with her any longer. That it was only the drugs and alcohol which kept him there. She tried to interfere between he and Terrena, which caused all kinds of problems. Scott, and Jason Ng, decided to go to Timaru to see Terrena.

The only way they could get there was to steal a car, since neither of them had any money for a bus, or train ticket. The car that they stole, belonged to Glenis. She had allowed Scott to drive her to the supermarket and had left him in the car, to wait for her. She also left him with the keys. Seeing this as the perfect chance, he drove the car away. He arrived shortly after at my place to pick up Jason Ng. Having done this, the two drove to Timaru. Glenis was very annoyed and called the police. She told them the address that the two boys had gone, and they were arrested soon afterwards. I was asked to drive to Timaru that night to pick the boys up from the police station, but refused. While Scott was being questioned by police, he made allegations of sexual abuse against Glenis Ball. The complaint was taken by the police, but never acted on. The boys returned the following day, with a social worker from Timaru.

Upon their arrival back in Christchurch, I went to a meeting with the DSW, to discuss the conditions of them coming home. An agreement was drawn up and they came home. However, that lasted only two or three days. They went back to Glenis's again and all the trouble started over. More drugs, more alcohol and Glenis was now pregnant to Scott B. He was also, beginning to stay the night, with a homosexual man, by the name of John Wylie. He was a tow truck driver for a S.O.S towing and panelbeating company. I, and others spoke to this man. He admitted that "something" had happened between them and that he was terrified that Scott. was going to go the polióe. He was, as were many others, afraid of Scott. His manner was incredibly violent and intimidating and as a result, he usually got what he wanted. Scott had already pulled a knife on John, and it was feared that he might use it. Shortly after, Scott robbed my home, and then

the home of a friend, of John W's. The knife was pulled yet again and the police called.

Through all of this, I was spending most of my time with Jason K. I'm glad that I did, since the pressure of all of this trouble had broken me mentally. I was living on the razor's edge and about to slide down the blade I could actually feel myself coming apart and was having difficulty focusing on anything. I was also becoming suicidal. I felt that I was completely unable to handle anything at all. The guilt of allowing the sexual abuse of the younger boys, by the older one's to continue because of my fear for myself was taking its toll. Then, early in 1992 I took the plunge. I went to Rob R, at the DSW again. I told him that I suspected that Scott was molesting the younger boys. It was decided that Scott should undertake the "STOP" programme in Chch, for males who sexually abuse children. After refusals and arguments, Scott finally agreed to go. I had talked him into it. I went with him for two sessions. After this I was told not to come back, and that Scott was to attend on his own. Scott immediately used this as an excuse to have the DSW buy him a brand new 10 speed cycle.

He never attended any more sessions, and sold the bike to buy drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. I told Rob R, that Scott had a drug and alcohol problem. He simply said not to worry about it, that it would be better for Scott to smoke dope than to sniff solvents. "That was pretty much the attitude that followed me, right through the six or so years of fostering. Attempts were made to get Scott back to the counsellor, Richard T, at the DSW office in Sydenham. He was the therapist in the sex abuse team. I was again told not to go, and it was decided that his mother would attend instead. That session ended with Scott jumping out of his seat and threatening to "slit" the throat of the interviewer. I was accused of sabotaging that session. I had no real control over Scott. That was the way he was to everyone. About then, Scott and Jason Ng concocted a story that Scott had been sodomised by "a guy called Dick", when Scott was 5 years old. It was done to obtain \$10,000 in accident compensation. I was not part of it, but they believed that I would say nothing, for fear of being turned in over the threats that Jason Ng had earlier made. Scott had been told of them during an argument between myself, and the both of them, by Jason Ng. Nothing ever came of that claim, although police did investigate. A camp, for boys who sexually abuse

other kids, came up..Scott's name was put onto the list to attend.To try and get out of it, Scott feigned a suicide attempt, by sitting in front of Glenis, and her kids, slashing at his wrists with a very blunt kitchen knife .

The DSW social worker, Rob R. took him seriously and I was dragged over the coals in a full turnout meeting of DSW staff for not seeking a social worker. The fact is, that I tried many, many times over the course of the day to do this, but could not get a social worker at all. Scott told the meeting, that they 'were "Fuckwits", and walked out. I was told not to stop Scott from doing what he wanted to. That what he did away from home was"up to Scott". This left me. with no control at all. He began coming in early in the morning.drunk and/or stoned. He played up merry hell. Stealing cars, doing burglaries and having sex with whoever he pleased, whenever and wherever he pleased. The worst thing out of this was, that he was doing all of this under the control of Margaret K(Jason K's mother) and Glenis.

Again I went to the DSW.This time it was the community alternatives office at the Kingslea resource centre in Christchurch.I told Ailsa T, that although Scott was only 15, he and the other boys had been having sex with Glens B for a couple of years. She answered. "What's he got that you haven't", and laughed. I was.deeply incensed, more so when she told me to report

it to Scott's new social worker, Noel D.It later turned out, that this man was an ex lover of John W. I thought it very inappropriate indeed. Scott knew this fact 'and threatened to "nark"Noel and John off if he didn't get what he wanted.Well, he didn't get what he wanted from Noel, but he did from John~John W who could not afford to be involved in anything scandalous, because his boss was a city councillor and wanted no scandal.

By now, it was around March 1992. A new allegation of sex abuse had broken out. I was again accused of molesting Christopher B. From then on, ! was threatened, called a "Kidfucker" often, and had to fend off other allegations as the weeks went on.

At about this time, I had become so depressed, that I was now suicidal. In the following months, I was to make an attempt to take my own life. Nov of that year, saw things at their worst. I was at an all time low and had been pushed out of everything. Worst of all, Glenis was my fiancée, and she was regularly having sex with all of my kids. I had made out that I had no idea. It stopped arguments between myself, and all the others. She wondered why I refused to sleep with her. I just kept telling her, "Don't you know?" .

Anyway, things got so bad, that I decided to end it all. I felt sort of stupefied, in a daze My body was racked in an all encompassing hot, dryness and my limbs ached all of the time, but that terrible depression. A sadness Of the strongest kind. I felt completely forsaken by everyone I knew.

It got so that I was afraid to walk or even drive down the street. People from Emmett St drove past and shouted insults at me. I had not done anything wrong and this all terrified me immensely! I could actually feel my life coming apart. The DSW investigated fully, and found nothing out of place again. They placed another boy at my home. He was Shannon W. 8 years old. It was only to be for a couple of months, but I had to terminate his stay, when Scott and Jason K, beat and kicked him so severely, that he was heavily bruised. My nephew was blamed for it, but it was not him at all. He was only six at the time. Scott was now totally out of control. One night, he threw a heavy bread board at Glenis's head. He intended to kill her and shouted it out, calling her a "slut". They had not got along at all for a couple of weeks. It was the last of the fight over Terrena.

After this, Scott began terrorising the neighbourhood with his threats of "slitting" peoples throats. He pulled his knife on so many people, that a street meeting was called. I was asked to come, and was told that if I "didn't do anything, they would kill Scott". Kevin G, was going to shoot him. That was how afraid they all were. Because there was nothing that I could really do, I went to the office of David Caygill, our M. P. Through him, I lodged a complaint against Scott, and the DSW for their failure to control Scott, and the extensive damage that he, and others had done to my home. At the time, Mr Caygill warned me not to "try to take the DSW down." He said, "they are a force unto themselves, and you will get hurt."t

The complaint was answered by a letter from the minister of social welfare, Ms Jenny Shipley, in which she thanked me for the

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“Excellent work” I had done with the boys, but there was “nothing that could be done” – by this stage, Glenis was being bashed, and her kids were being molested by Scott. He was having sex with mother and sons. There was no way to stop him – I went away, for another break. I felt as if I would explode at

any moment. I took Jason K, and my brother Geoff with me. Even that break turned to crap, when we were thrown out of Han Han by a group of Maoris. We had done nothing wrong. For one night, we had stayed at the house of a friend. Because we were not Maori, we were told to leave. They would not return our gear, so it was necessary to call in the police. After negotiations, we were given 5 minutes to pick up our stuff and leave. We spent the night in the car at Lake Lanthe, South Westland. This put us in a difficult position as we had no money for accommodation. The next two days were spent in a riverbed near Greymouth, camping, until the bank opened and we could get more money. When I returned from that trip, I had the strongest feeling that

something was terribly wrong. Everyone was being very nice to me. That was in direct contrast to the way I was treated before I left. People were talking to me and giving me things. I had no way of knowing that it was the fattening of the lamb” before slaughter.

After only a week though, trouble erupted between myself, DSW and Brian and Marie E, again. Kevin, their foster son had run away from school with another boy. They had stolen 2 bikes. They had also burgled the Shirley intermediate

school in Christchurch, and Kevin had stolen caps from a starting pistol, and other things. They believed that I would not turn them in, for the same reasons that Jason Ng, aAd Scott did. I did though. I called the police, and they went out to see Brian and Marie E. This was only a couple of weeks before I was picked up by the police. I was abused for interfering, by them, and Jenny W of the DSW in Shirley. Later that week, Kevin and.: Jason K stole cannabis from Margaret K. They had smoked some of it, by the time that Brian E caught them. He knew that they had it only because I told him. He and his wife refused to report this to the DSW and warned me off saying anything about it. Brian told me that he would "Take me down" if I did. This was just another problem to add to the growing list. I called the DSW anyway. They didn't believe me, and I was accused of stirring. I could no longer handle what was going on, in any rational way. Something had snapped inside me and I was now running purely on adrenalin. I felt hollow. The way you feel when someone close to you passes away. I had burnt completely out. You feel it as it rushes you, very suddenly.

A few days went by. Scott had not come home at all. I thought he was at Glenis's place. He had, for some obscure reason moved into Brian and Marie Elliot's. I was basically on my own except for Jason K.

There was a strange air about the place. It was so unnerving. I wondered what was going on. They say you can feel evil being planned. Maybe that was it. Now, Jason Ng, Scott Batchelor and Grahame .Kettle stole another car. It was a White Triumph 2000. Scott had taken the stereo out of it and taken it to a secondhand shop in CHCH. He had told the owner of the shop that the radio was from his own car. The only car Scott had was the hulk of a white Triumph 2000, like the one he stole. The idea was to change over the number plates from the hulk to the new car. On the afternoon that Scott sold the stereo, he came home for a quick visit. He walked in the back door and without so much as a "hello, how are you?" He instructed me that if Stuart, the owner of the second hand shop asked if the radio was from Scott's old hulk of a car; I was to say it belonged to Scott. I told Scott to "piss off." I also told him, that I would not lie for him, or anyone else, especially to a answer to a theft inquiry. He snapped back at me that if I didn't, he was going to put me in prison and didn't care.

Stuart did ring. I told him that I was coming to see him shortly. Jason K was with m~ all the time that this was go on. He came with me to the secondhand shop. Jason K told him where the radio had come from. Stuart rang the police. Nothing

happened for a couple of days then Scott called me on the phone, telling that I was "Finished." I simply hung up. He was at Brian and Elliot's place when he called. The final straw came when Jason and Scott decided to throw a party, and use my house to do it. Scott had invited a friend by the name of John. He was a drug addict thief. We did not get on. I told them that I would not allow a party at my house, and did not want John there. Jason Ng argued, then the two of them began abusing me. I could not take it any longer, and chased Jason up the stairs. I shouted in his face, that there would be no party, and no "fuckwits", in my home. He took a swing at me, but missed. I attempted to grab him and throw him out and he took a pen from the shelf of an open cupboard. As I approached him a second time, he stabbed me in the mouth with it. I lost my temper. I felt that this 19 year old man, once one of my beloved boys was going to seriously injure me if I did not defend myself. Scott was in the next room and saw nothing of this. I took Jason by the jacket and, threw him in the direction of the window, though not at it! I really don't know why, but I felt that my self control had been pushed to the limit. I punched Jason out of self defense. In the fracas, the room was demolished. Nothing was left in one piece.

The fight lasted only around a couple of minutes. I had by then subdued Jason. My mouth was still bleeding when the police arrived. He called them. In the meantime, John had pulled up in his car. Graham Kettle arrived too. The four of them stood out on the street, shouting obscenities at me. There were two police cars in attendance. One cop spoke to the four of them and one to me. I was asked If I had attacked Jason Ng. Naturally, I said "No" because I had not attacked him – he attacked me and stabbed me in the mouth with a pen. If the police had asked me if I had hit him..! would have said "Yes", and told them why. While the cop was talking to me, Jason Ng said "I'm going down to the DSW and tell them you're a kidfucker, you fat cunt!" It was easily audible by police, although, they said nothing. Well, they certainly did that, only a few days later. That Sunday, Margaret K told me, that I had been accused of molesting all of the boys, although she was' not specific as to who the allegations were. about For two or three days before the police arrived. I received many anonymous phone calls at any hour of the day or night and hadn't slept in days. I just fell to pieces and waited in terror, for the imminent to happen. It did.