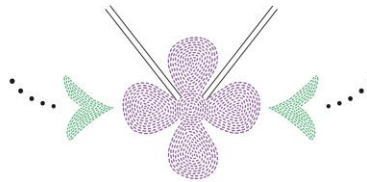


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-gathering process – Part I Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Britannia Ballroom
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



Public

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

**Public Volume 81:
Cynthia Cardinal & Bonnie Fowler
In relation to Georgina Faith Papin**

**Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller
Commission Counsel: Fanny Wylde**

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II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Government of British Columbia	Jean Walters (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Anne Turley (Legal counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	No Appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	No Appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co- operative Centre	No Appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	No Appearance
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	No Appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation	No Appearance

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**Cynthia Cardinal and Bonnie Fowler,
In relation to Georgina Faith Papin**

1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 16:36

3 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Chief Commissioner, good
4 afternoon. I would like to present your next family. I
5 have here Cynthia Cardinal and Bonnie Fowler. They're here
6 to share the story of their sister, Georgina Faith Papin,
7 who disappeared in March 1999 and was found three years
8 later. Georgina's remains and DNA were found at the
9 Pickton Farm, so they're here to share their story.

10 And, before they do, I would like to ask Mr.
11 Registrar to please swear in the witnesses, and both of the
12 witnesses would like to provide oath with an eagle feather.

13 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Good afternoon,
14 Cynthia. Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you'll
15 share this afternoon will be the truth, the whole truth and
16 nothing but the truth?

17 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** I solemnly swear.

18 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Thank you. And, it's
19 Bonnie? Okay. Bonnie, do you solemnly affirm that the
20 evidence you will share this afternoon will be the truth,
21 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

22 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** I swear.

23 **MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Okay. Thank you.

24 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** I got a rock. She
25 will hold -- our Elder will hold our feather. Thank you.

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1 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. So, we will
2 start with Cynthia.

3 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** First of all, I would
4 like to introduce our Elder, Taz Bouchier, who we've become
5 to know and love, and I'm so grateful that she's here.
6 Just letting you know who this beautiful woman is sitting
7 beside us. I'm going to read my story, so just bear with
8 me. I tried to do it -- I edited it about a hundred times,
9 so here we go. Okay.

10 My story, my truth. We are a large family
11 of nine: six girls, three boys, all born between 1960 and
12 1970. Our mother gave birth to our older sister, Deborah
13 Bennett Rattlesnake, in 1960. I, Cynthia Cardinal, was
14 born in 1961. Our brother, Richard, Rick Papin, was born
15 in 1963. Georgina Papin was born in 1964, which was two
16 days after our mother, Maggie Alice Papin married George
17 Papin Senior. He was the father of Rick, Georgina and
18 Tammy.

19 Our mother then gave birth to George Papin
20 in 1965. Our sister, Tammy Papin, was born in 1966. Then,
21 our mother gave birth to our brother, Randall Travis
22 Knight, in 1967. Our sister, Elana Papin, was born in
23 1968. Lastly, our sister, Bonnie Fowler Papin, was born in
24 1970.

25 Our mother had joined the Canadian Army for

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1 a short time after leaving the residential school in
2 Hobbema, Alberta, which is now known as Maskwacis. I only
3 know this because I saw a photograph of her in uniform
4 once. My older sister and I were being raised by our *kokum*
5 Clara May Lee (ph), and our (indiscernible) James
6 Rattlesnake.

7 I clearly remember one fatal day. It was
8 raining heavily, and my uncle, Richard, was driving, and we
9 spotted my *kokum* walking on the side of the road. My uncle
10 tried to pull over and stop to give her a ride; however, it
11 was too slippery, and he accidentally hit my *kokum*. I
12 remember her flying over the car. She passed away later in
13 the kitchen of her home. She died with her arms around my
14 sister and I. I was 2-and-a-half years old, but I remember
15 it like yesterday.

16 My first memory of Georgina was when I was
17 4, and I was trying to give her a bath. I put her in the
18 tub, and -- I filled up the tub and I put Georgina in it.
19 She screamed, and I pulled her out. The water was too hot.
20 Our mother had left us alone, and I'm not sure how long,
21 but I recall an intoxicated man coming into our house. He
22 pulled out his penis and started urinating everywhere in
23 our living room. My sister, Deborah, and I grabbed
24 Georgina and Rick, and we escaped by climbing out the
25 window and up the backstairs to where people were living

1 upstairs.

2 We ended up in a children's home somewhere
3 in Calgary, Alberta. This is when child welfare separated
4 Deborah and I from Georgina and Rick. That would have been
5 around 1965. I reunited with Georgina on her 14th birthday
6 in 1978. I was 16-years-old and pregnant. I couldn't
7 believe how pretty she was. She told me how she found our
8 mother. Apparently, our mother, not knowing her, would
9 catch Georgina staring at her and would give her angry
10 looks. Finally, they talked, because Georgina said she
11 felt that this was her mother, and she was right. A couple
12 hours later, Georgina wanted to go meet up with her friends
13 to celebrate for her birthday. She got up and said, "See
14 you later," and walked out the door. The next thing I
15 heard, she had moved to Las Vegas.

16 When she was 18, she came back to say hello
17 and to also pick up her trust fund from Enoch Cree Nation,
18 where she is from. Georgina only stayed for about a week.
19 She came to my sister, Deborah, and I, who I was visiting
20 at the time, to say goodbye to us. She also mentioned that
21 our sister, Tammy, was going back to Las Vegas with her.
22 They got a chance to get to know each other as sisters.

23 In July of 1979, our mother passed away at
24 the age of 37. She died of cirrhosis of the liver and
25 cancer. She had been addicted to heroin and unable to look

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1 after us. Our mother was well-known on the streets, even
2 here in Vancouver. She had made many friends. She was
3 kind to people, but she was also strong and never took shit
4 from anybody. She was still so young and had experienced
5 many hardships. There was a quote from a social worker in
6 one of my sister's files that read, "Finally, when Alice
7 Papin kicked the bucket." We couldn't believe how she
8 actually wrote these words in her file.

9 We were all part of the Sixties Scoop, so
10 after suffering abuse in foster homes, we all ran away and
11 grew up on the streets, the same streets our mother grew up
12 on. Georgina moved back to Canada in 1985. She was 21-
13 years-old with a beautiful baby girl she named Christina.
14 This is the same year all nine of us reunited. It was
15 awesome to see all my siblings for the first time.

16 In 1988, our sister, Deborah, passed away.
17 She had been using cocaine and died of heart failure. I
18 remember that because when she was born, she had a heart
19 murmur. She was like a mother to me. She taught me a lot
20 about how to look after myself, for example, hygiene and
21 using condoms. Georgina and Debby got along well. Their
22 personalities were a lot alike. Deborah often babysat for
23 Georgina and vice versa. Deborah also had two children,
24 Michael and April. They were great moms.

25 Like myself, Georgina had seven children:

**Cynthia Cardinal and Bonnie Fowler,
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1 Christina, Stewart, Leslie, also known as Alana, Dylan,
2 Autumn Wind, Winter Star and Little Storm. Her last two
3 were born twins in 1998, only a year before she went
4 missing. Her last known whereabouts is on record. She was
5 at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver on March 21st, 1999.
6 She had abandoned her IV pole there.

7 Kathleen Smith was a very good friend of
8 Georgina's and convinced my sister, Bonnie, that something
9 was wrong, because she had never called her. It had been a
10 long time. Georgina had been living with Kathleen for a
11 while until Georgina began using again. Kathleen said she
12 didn't want her children to see that, and she would have to
13 go, so Georgina asked for a ride to the Downtown Eastside.
14 That was the last time Kathleen ever saw her.

15 In 2001, Kathleen Smith convinced my sister,
16 Bonnie, to drive to the Mission RCMP detachment and
17 reported Georgina missing. Six months later, our brother,
18 Rick, called me and said Georgina was put on the missing
19 women's list. To me, it didn't feel real. I never heard
20 of this list. I was given a number for Victim Services
21 when I called and gave them my name and told them Georgina
22 Papin is my sister. They said, "Okay. We will put your
23 name on the family member's list." There was no mention of
24 keeping me updated or keeping in touch with me from
25 thereon.

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1 Georgina's remains were found at the Pickton
2 Farm. I found out by reading it in the Edmonton Sun
3 newspaper. I remember that I couldn't stop shaking and
4 crying with disbelief. That was September of 2002. They
5 had found fragments of her hand bones in the slaughter
6 house.

7 The Pickton trial started on January 22nd,
8 2007 five years after Georgina's remains were found. My
9 life changed. I wanted to know more about what happened.
10 It became overwhelming, so much so that my friends got
11 tired of listening because it became so evil and
12 disgusting. I realized then I was on my own. No one
13 wanted to listen, so I became physically silent and
14 painfully silent. No one seemed to care, and their lives
15 would go on oblivious to what happened to our sisters and
16 what still continues to happen. It makes me angry that the
17 VPD in Port Coquitlam and the RCMP neglected their duties
18 because of who are sisters were and their lifestyles. Our
19 sister, Georgina, may still have been alive today have they
20 listened and acted sooner.

21 I think about her children every day and how
22 Georgina missed out on having a chance of seeing her
23 beautiful grandchildren. Listening to the evilness of what
24 Robert Pickton was doing to the women became even more
25 disgusting when the witnesses involved came forward and

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1 talked about what happened at the Pickton Farm.

2 Take for instance, Diana Taylor. She shot
3 and killed at least three of the victims. She also lured
4 women from the Downtown Eastside to meet Pickton, who would
5 then drive them to his Port Coquitlam pig farm. So, why is
6 she free and walking the same streets where family members
7 look for their loved ones? She should be behind bars for
8 the rest of her evil life.

9 Dave Pickton was also charged with sexual
10 assault in 1992. He threatened his victim, and she was
11 warned by a worker at her job site that she should get away
12 if she didn't want her body parts scattered everywhere.

13 Dave Pickton also lived on the farm. He
14 knew what was going on. When the police finally went to
15 search the farm, he called his brother, Robert Pickton, and
16 warned him not to go home, that the cops were everywhere.
17 Dave Pickton knew about his brother's sick and demented
18 habits. He should be charged for accessory for helping his
19 brother cover up his evil deeds. And, Mr. Chubb stated as
20 a witness that Dave Pickton had called him after Robert
21 Pickton's arrest, and told him, "If Willy goes down,
22 everyone goes down." Mr. Chubb stated that he was scared
23 because Dave Pickton associated with the Hell's Angels.

24 Lynn Ellingsen's greed and addiction stopped
25 her from calling authorities after she said she saw a woman

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1 believing to be Georgina hanging from her feet in the
2 slaughter house. Lynn also lured women from the Downtown
3 Eastside to the farm. She was a heartless woman who was
4 blackmailing Robert Pickton for our sister's murder.

5 Pat Casanova, another witness, who worked at
6 the Pickton Farm, he has known the Picktons for 20 years,
7 and he claims he knew nothing about the murders. He
8 admitted to buying sex from the victims. His DNA was found
9 on some of the remains.

10 Bev Hyancen (ph) was employed at the
11 Coquitlam RCMP detachment as a telecoms operator. She knew
12 the Picktons personally. She even attended Piggy's Palace
13 and recalled seeing Don Cray (ph) there on New Year's 1999.
14 Two weeks later, Don was reported missing. Georgina would
15 still be alive that day. Why did she not say anything
16 sooner? She even mentions that her son found bloody
17 clothing in the truck owned by Robert Pickton.

18 Towards the end of the trial, all the family
19 members were at the courthouse. Victim Services were also
20 there, and they had a lack of sympathy towards my sisters
21 and I. One day during the trial, they gave us a letter
22 saying we had to leave the Hyatt and move luggage to the
23 Metropolitan Hotel. Everyone had to be downstairs by 8:15
24 a.m., and my sisters and I got out at 8:15 a.m.

25 When my sisters and I got to the lobby at

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1 the Hyatt, one of our bags fell off the trolley and spilled
2 out all over the floor. We were embarrassed because it
3 contained our feminine hygiene products. Victim Service
4 worker, Elizabeth Murtagh, yelled out, "They need a garbage
5 bag. Can someone get them a garbage bag?" We were even
6 more embarrassed because people in business suits were
7 looking at us. It was very chaotic, and we were very
8 emotional from the trial.

9 And then one day, oddly, Victim Service
10 worker, Frieda Anski (ph), gave me and my sisters a deck of
11 cards and told us to go wait on the fourth floor of the New
12 Westminster Courthouse. We thought they would be coming up
13 to speak to us. We looked down later about an hour later
14 and saw that the families were sitting down there eating
15 KFC. We were never offered any, and no one ever did come
16 up to speak to us.

17 But, by this time, we had the honour of
18 meeting Bernie Williams, Poitras and Gladys Radek. Bernie
19 had known Georgina. We could feel that these women cared
20 about us because they never left our side, even to this
21 day. During the trial, Bernie and Gladys opened their
22 homes to us. We got the privilege to meet their families
23 who, by the way, are all awesome.

24 Bernie and Gladys both witnessed how Victim
25 Services were treating us. They segregated us from other

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1 family members and told them that we were trouble and to
2 stay away from us. This was told to us by other family
3 members. On another incident, a Victim Service worker
4 approached us with a family member who was sick from her
5 addiction and asked us to look after her. Immediately,
6 Bernie said, "Yes, we will look after our own," but wasn't
7 that their job?

8 Victim Services had also neglected to tell
9 us that we would be hearing the horrific way in which
10 Georgina was murdered. They told us as we were walking
11 into the courtroom. They warned us too late. My sisters
12 and I left the courthouse, and I was extremely sickened by
13 the details. The visuals I was having were of Georgina
14 hanging upside down, her head decapitated, and her toes
15 were painted red. What was ironic is that I had painted my
16 toes red that day not knowing it would be mirrored in
17 court.

18 We left the courthouse really nauseated, and
19 eventually Bonnie, Elana and I made it back to our room and
20 cried. Victim Services did not even take the time to see
21 if we were okay. Again, if not for the support of Bernie
22 and Gladys -- they helped us manage to stay grounded and
23 they made us feel strong.

24 When the verdict was in, it followed with a
25 press release. When it was over, Victim Services told my

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1 sisters and I to go to the Spaghetti Factory in New
2 Westminster and wait for them as they would give us our bus
3 tickets back to the room in Vancouver. We waited there for
4 a long time, and no one showed up. We kept phoning Victim
5 Services. No answer. Again, if not for Bernie and Gladys
6 who helped us get a bus, we would have been stranded in New
7 Westminster. We found out later that all of the rest of
8 the families were sent to another restaurant while they
9 celebrated the outcome of the trial.

10 The National Inquiry with Wally Oppal was
11 the most frustrating experience we have ever had. All the
12 officers from the VPD and RCMP each had their own lawyers.
13 Meanwhile, the families had the wonderful Cameron Ward and
14 assistant, Neil Chantler. At first, we thought we had the
15 support of the Indigenous organizations, then all of a
16 sudden they all excused themselves from the Inquiry. It
17 would have been more supportive had they sat with their
18 families, instead they formed demonstrations of where the
19 Inquiry was taking place.

20 Our lawyer, Cameron Ward, received documents
21 that were so redacted it frustrated him. It was very
22 difficult to make sense of them. No officers never have
23 ever been held accountable for their neglect of duty to
24 this day.

25 After the Inquiry was over, the family sat

1 and watched the lawyers giving each other gifts. How
2 heartless of them. This was in front of families already
3 felt helpless and defeated. It felt like I failed the
4 children of the victims. They still suffer from the
5 injustices done towards their mothers. Georgina's children
6 have not yet reunited. Her daughter, Christina, asked me
7 if I could arrange it. I need help to make this happen.

8 In September of 2010, my sisters and I
9 travelled to Vancouver to get Georgina and bring her home.
10 The coroner at the time was Owen Court. He invited us to
11 sit down, my sisters, myself and Georgina's daughter,
12 Christina. We listened to what he had to say, which was
13 that he had looked after her remains with respect. He said
14 he personally took her to the crematorium, but the person
15 who does the cremating wasn't around. He said he took it
16 upon himself to cremate Georgina.

17 The reason I brought this up is because
18 family member, Lynn Frey, sent Marnie Frey's remains to
19 forensics in Calgary because they could hear rattling in
20 the urn. They were told that her bones may have been
21 crushed, not cremated. So, did he just crush Georgina's
22 remains? After talking to the Freys, we found out he gave
23 them the same story he told us. We also found out that he
24 gave us fake death certificates, another negligent
25 official.

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1 When we brought Georgina to rest in peace,
2 three of our siblings were incarcerated at the Edmonton
3 Remand Centre. We called and spoke with a man in authority
4 and requested that our siblings, George, Rick and Tammy, be
5 able to attend Georgina's funeral. They refused saying
6 they were all high risk. Therefore, they have never had
7 the closure they needed, and they struggle with that to
8 this day. They never got to say goodbye to our sister,
9 Georgina Faith Papin. Rest in peace.

10 I just want to ask my children for
11 forgiveness and understanding. I had the same pattern as
12 my mother, and I neglected my children as well, so I'm
13 fighting so that it won't happen to them.

14 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Chief Commissioner, I
15 would ask for a recess as the next witness would like a
16 short recess of 5 minutes, please? Thank you. We will
17 take a recess of 5 minutes, please.

18 --- Upon recessing at 17:01

19 --- Upon resuming at 17:13

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** We are ready to continue,
21 Chief Commissioner. So, Bonnie.

22 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** Yes. I'm Bonnie Fowler,
23 and I'm the youngest of nine siblings. I was born on April
24 30th, 1970 to Alice Margaret Papin, aka Maggie Rattlesnake,
25 was her maiden name. I was in five different foster homes

1 by the time I was 5, and in those five years being in these
2 homes, I was also being shuffled in and out of my mother's
3 life.

4 Life with my mother was rather chaotic. I
5 have heard stories and have few memories, so I know life
6 wasn't a perfect one for a young child to grow up in. It
7 was a life where you had to grow up awfully fast to survive
8 it. I remember hiding a lot, and I thought of my older
9 sister. I thought my older sister, Cindy, was my mother
10 for the most part. She seemed to watch out for me a lot as
11 she does to this day.

12 It was a struggle for me at a very young age
13 and for anyone who was around and living this life back
14 then. I remember the police coming in different homes that
15 we had had to take my sister, Tammy, away numerous times,
16 and I remember my mother fighting with them, yelling at
17 them not to take her babies away. It was a scarier deal
18 back then, and my mother really put up a fight. So, it was
19 as pretty violent and nerve-racking as I remember.

20 I remember -- I recently received a file
21 from child welfare, and I have been researching myself and
22 trying to make sense of the whole ordeal. I am still
23 dealing with some of the issues I endured during this time.
24 I was saddened to read about my mother fighting for me in a
25 letter she wrote to get me back. On the other hand, I was

1 so happy she did because the letters proved her love for me
2 after all these years I had been told that she hated me and
3 that she wanted me dead. I grew up fearing a monster and
4 having my nightmares in my younger years. My foster home
5 completely brainwashed me that my mother was truly evil and
6 wanted to kill me, and I believed them.

7 All of us kids were taken at some point or
8 another. We grew up as strangers for the most part. We
9 were all put into foster care. I remember my sister,
10 Tammy, and I being placed in a foster home together. The
11 foster home said they didn't want her and they wanted to
12 keep me. I think it was because I barely talked, and I
13 figured I was easier for them to mould to their liking.

14 I was taken to various places in Central
15 Alberta. This family managed to take me to Williams Lake,
16 B.C. I was so far away from my family now. There are
17 papers in the file that state that I was to be severed from
18 my sister's first, and finally severed from my family for
19 the rest of my life. From then on, I survived a multitude
20 of scenarios of abuse from the foster home that took me to
21 B.C.

22 I grew up as, what I called, a robot. I
23 just did everything I was told and barely spoke. I was
24 constantly in mental health buildings when I was young. I
25 remember they would take my ponytails out all the time and

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1 talk about what could have happened. To this day, I have
2 two places on my head where my hair doesn't grow normally,
3 so a story we'll never know. The foster dad always seemed
4 so nice to me, even though I seldom saw him because he
5 worked night shifts and jobs that took most of his home
6 time.

7 He was my bather, and I know now what he was
8 doing to me. He was my sexual abuser, and the mother was
9 my physical and psychological abuser. She would wait until
10 the dad left and come after me. She would tear the bedding
11 from me almost in a rage and started stripping my clothes
12 off. Then, sometimes, it was buckets of cold water on me
13 or the belt. Now, I put it together and I know it was
14 because she was jealous of me, because of the dad.

15 I remember being terrified every day. I had
16 two foster brothers in the home. One of them liked me and
17 the other one didn't. The older one was always tattling on
18 me for something, things like I saw his dad with his
19 undershirt on or I looked up when I should have looked
20 down. I couldn't really do anything. Whatever I did, I
21 got in trouble for it, even laughing, so I just didn't.

22 The other brother was six months younger
23 than me, and we would get along all right. The main thing
24 I liked about this brother is that he would try to protect
25 me at times. He would actually jump on the mother and

1 start hitting her while she was beating me or pouring water
2 on me. I knew he knew it was wrong, what she was doing. I
3 think he was embarrassed as well since I was always naked,
4 sitting on the kitchen floor while they ate breakfast and
5 got ready for school.

6 I hardly went to the private schools they
7 had me in, especially the one where I was the only girl. I
8 was always too damaged to go due to swollen hands and
9 pulled out hair, et cetera. I had to heal up first, and
10 sometimes it would take a long time.

11 So, there are many odd and sad stories to
12 this story. It would take a book to tell it all. I've
13 started writing. Hopefully, I will be able to finish one
14 day. I feel there are others that would benefit from the
15 story they could relate to.

16 I ended up running away from the home when I
17 was 12, and finally the social workers were on the case,
18 and they immediately removed me from the home that
19 psychologically, sexually and physically abused me. I
20 remember seeing photographs of Native girls on the wall for
21 all those years. They had headshots of these girls only.
22 They were school pictures, I think. I would find myself
23 wondering about them and wondering if they had to endure
24 what I did. I remember wishing I was them because they
25 were no longer there. I was forced to say I wanted these

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1 people to adopt me for years. I feel the Creator or
2 something was out there keeping that from happening, so I
3 am so fortunate.

4 I heard there were investigations done on
5 the family, but I never heard the outcome except that they
6 were never allowed to foster again. I was terrified to say
7 anything to anyone. I always thought I could get sent
8 back, so I kept pretty quiet just like I had done already
9 in my life. I remember social workers and family support
10 workers trying to pry information out of me about this
11 family. I couldn't talk.

12 I was placed in another foster home for a
13 short while, and then finally I was placed with the
14 Fowlers. I was given the choice of where I wanted to live,
15 and I chose the Fowlers. They seemed to be easy going and
16 they felt safe for me. I had never felt this in my life
17 before. The Fowlers wanted the best for me. They adopted
18 me right away. They knew it was important that I be
19 reunited with my biological family. I was not aware how
20 much this family cared for me at the time. They went as
21 far as taking me to Edmonton to find out who my family was.
22 This was around the time when my sister, Georgina, phoned
23 me. They must have been doing some searching.

24 Georgina introduced herself. She told me
25 she was my older sister and that she loved me very much.

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In relation to Georgina Faith Papin**

1 She told me I had a big family that wanted to meet me. I
2 remember her voice was incredibly loving and nurturing. I
3 believed that she loved me, another feeling I was not
4 familiar with. Georgina made me feel like I belonged
5 somewhere that day. I'll always remember her that way.

6 I started to know my family. I didn't start
7 to know my family until I was 15 years of age. My sister,
8 Georgina, was the first sibling to find me, and I will
9 forever remember the way she talked to me. My brother,
10 George, also contacted me through a letter and a picture he
11 had of he and my brother, Rick, when they were young. I
12 treasured those pictures for a very long time after.

13 My life changed from that point just to know
14 that there are people out there who knew who I was. I was
15 mostly happy with my new adopted family. But, in 1984, I
16 ended up running away from Williams Lake, hitch-hiking to
17 Prince George, and then started hitch-hiking Downtown
18 Vancouver. I hitch-hiked a lot. Everywhere and anywhere
19 looking for me, I guess.

20 Eventually, I made it to my hometown, which
21 was Edmonton, and then started looking for my biological
22 family. Another few chapters of my life went on. In 1985,
23 I met all my siblings for the first time. It had been the
24 first and, I think, the only time we were all together. We
25 were happy to meet each other, but I don't feel that we

1 were -- we knew what we were expecting. I felt we were
2 pretty much strangers.

3 There were many struggles in this part of my
4 life, trying to survive the cruel world of drugs and
5 prostitution. The high-risk life I lived was scary, but
6 almost comforting to me at the same time because I didn't
7 have to answer to anyone but myself. The abuse and pain I
8 was already used to, and I would let everybody and anybody
9 do whatever they wanted to me. I don't really like to
10 think about this part of my life, but it happened, just
11 like it did to my sister, Georgina, and many others.

12 I ended up leaving Edmonton and returning to
13 B.C. in 1992. I lived in Hope for a few years and found
14 out that Georgina lived in Mission, which is very close to
15 Hope. So, my boyfriend at the time and I started visiting
16 her and her little boy, Dylan Skye. She was pregnant with
17 Autumn Wind. She seemed to have a lot of friends. There
18 were young mothers and teens that would come to her home,
19 and she would help them out all the time, food, money,
20 clothes, whatever she could do to help these people.

21 I grew to admire her and the way she reached
22 out to so many the way she did. We had some things in
23 common. I thought it was pretty cool that I had an actual
24 sister that had some of the same ideas and beliefs that I
25 had, along some coincidences, that we had just read the

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1 same book, and it was an eye-opener for the both of us.
2 She gave me the follow-up book and inscribed it to me, and
3 I treasure it to this day, and this is the book she gave
4 me, and she's inscribed it. It says, "Happy birthday,
5 little sister. Within my prayers, it seems I could but
6 only find love, peace and harmony. I am blessed to share
7 so much needed sisterhood. I love you, my little sis,
8 Bonnie. Through life we grow, we cry, and let your spirit
9 fly. You are so very beautiful, and I am so happy that
10 we've become closer. Love in sisterhood, Georgina Faith.
11 Dreams do come true."

12 We all went on with our lives, and I moved
13 to Mission in 1998. I had started seeing less of Georgina
14 by now. My boyfriend had two kids, so they kept me busy.
15 I started going back to school, and I was also teaching at
16 a Montessori preschool, so my life was taking up most of my
17 time.

18 Georgina ended up having two more babies.
19 They were twin daughters, Winter Star and Little Storm.
20 These girls were adorable, and I was in their life for a
21 little while when they were tiny. I had asked Georgina --
22 I had noticed Georgina fighting with her boyfriend on
23 numerous occasions, and she ended up leaving him. And, I
24 think from then on, life for Georgina started to go
25 downhill.

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1 I remember a time Georgina came and invited
2 me to meet a guy at a restaurant. The guy had offered her
3 a job driving a packer, and she said I could get hired as
4 well. I was in for sure, and Georgina said she would try
5 it too. I was really excited about it, so we went.

6 We had fish and chips and beers. We ended
7 up leaving there and going to the Sasquatch Inn, a bar
8 that's on the highway. I don't remember the guy's name who
9 invited us at all or any of the people we were with. It
10 had bikers and a rough looking crowd, and we ended up
11 drinking too much. I know I did. I was so drunk. We
12 ended up driving to a dirty old trailer somewhere. I don't
13 know where I was, but I know now. Now, when I think of it,
14 I really believe it was affiliated with the farm, or it may
15 have been the farm. We were very close to that area
16 anyways.

17 We ended up getting drugs from somewhere. I
18 had never done heroin before, but Georgina said she would
19 take care of me, and I believed her. So, we did the drug.
20 I didn't enjoy it at all. I was afraid all of a sudden and
21 I wanted to leave. I found Georgina in another room, and I
22 told her I had to leave right now. She did take care of me
23 and immediately got me out of there.

24 I didn't go out with her anymore. She asked
25 me a couple times, but I was busy with the kids and work.

1 I would see Georgina at times. She had a boyfriend she was
2 hanging out with and would often leave the kids with her
3 friend to babysit. I would hear stories about what
4 Georgina had been up to the night before, like getting into
5 all sorts of trouble. I was sad that she wasn't the
6 healthy woman I was getting to know when she was being a
7 mom.

8 Time went on, and nobody saw Georgina at
9 all. She was hanging around Vancouver up to no good.
10 Eventually, her friend who was babysitting was getting
11 worried, and one day she told me she hadn't seen Georgina
12 for a while, that we should go look for her. When we
13 couldn't find her, her friend had gone back to look for her
14 on various occasions in Downtown Vancouver. She convinced
15 me that something was not right and went to the police
16 station and we filed a missing persons report.

17 Georgina's friend, Kathleen, was more
18 concerned at the time than I was. This being because I had
19 always thought of our whole family as being missing most of
20 my life. We all were living in our own separate lives and
21 never saw each other or talked to each other on a regular
22 basis, and this was normal to me. The day we went to the
23 police station to make a missing persons report, again I
24 felt as if it wasn't real because, to me, the police
25 responded as if I was making a lost wallet report. I guess

1 I felt as if they didn't take it seriously.

2 Time went on, still no news of Georgina's
3 whereabouts. Life was a confusing time back then. A lot
4 had happened in my own life. I had left my boyfriend and
5 the kids. I remember moving back to Edmonton once again,
6 and I started another life. In this time, I personally had
7 no follow-up from the police or anything. I don't believe
8 they had contacted any of our family for updates to search
9 either. I know some family members, like our Auntie
10 Parlene (ph) had contacted Georgina's eldest, Christina,
11 who lived in and still lives in Vegas to see if anyone over
12 there had seen or heard from her, and there was nothing.

13 Yes, I was growing concerned now, but I
14 still figured Georgina was just doing her thing and staying
15 away. I had done this in my life, so it was, again, normal
16 to me. I'm not sure exactly when, but police put
17 Georgina's picture on the missing persons list and posted
18 it. I saw it a lot.

19 In this time period, I had lost my way as
20 well. I ended up turning my life into turmoil. I was in
21 Toronto living a very high-risk lifestyle. When I was
22 there, I would see Georgina's picture on the TV once in a
23 while, and even still I was waiting till they would say,
24 "We found her," and that was pretty much the only response
25 I ever -- that I thought I would hear. My brother, George,

1 found out where I was and told me to come home immediately.
2 He was worried, so he bought a plane ticket for me to
3 return to Edmonton.

4 It wasn't long after that I got a call from
5 my brother, George, and he told me the police were looking
6 for me. I was afraid because at the time I had a warrant.
7 I remember getting angry at him because he told me that he
8 gave them the address I was at. George told me that the
9 police did not care about the warrant and had to talk to me
10 specifically about something very important. He said they
11 wouldn't tell him the urgency, that I was the only one they
12 could talk to about this.

13 Two police came to the door, a man and a
14 woman. They told me to get into their SUV and we were
15 going for a little drive. They drove a few blocks and
16 parked. They told me the news of Georgina. They told me
17 they had reason to believe she was murdered by Robert
18 Pickton, that her DNA was found on the farm. I was alone,
19 and I was very nervous. I was still not believing what I
20 was hearing. The police ended up dropping me off at the
21 place they picked me up, and I started telling everybody,
22 including George, and from then on, it was havoc.

23 I really don't remember a lot of that time
24 because the news was getting around to the family, and I
25 remember us gathering more and realizing what had happened

1 and what was happening. I remember it was horrifying the
2 more it was being talked about and becoming the reality. I
3 don't know why, but there seems to be such a gap in between
4 us getting the news and the time I went to the pre-trial.
5 From that day, most of our family had really come together
6 as brothers and sisters anyways. We still didn't know each
7 other at all that well, but we seemed to have a closer
8 bonding experience.

9 We have a brother named Randall. He was
10 raised in the States that we had never met. I'm not sure
11 how we got in touch with him, and I can't remember if he
12 heard the news from down there or where. He ended up
13 telling us he wanted to be with us and he was going to move
14 to Canada. We were all very excited about this. Our
15 family was coming together, and it felt really good to all
16 of us, I felt, considering the circumstances.

17 He came to Canada and started to get to know
18 us. He was just as lost as we were, but we were all used
19 to being lost, I guess. We all have a sense of humour, and
20 we would tell each other how we were alike and compare
21 ourselves to each other. I found this incredible and
22 surreal.

23 I don't recall too much from the police for
24 a while. I remember the media having a hay day with us and
25 our story. They insisted to twist it into some kind of

1 entertainment. I remember I was telling the media we
2 didn't want to talk to them anymore. Our brother, Randall,
3 told them, "No more questions on updates or how we feel."
4 He told them he was going to make a website, so they could
5 refer to it for information.

6 The very next day, an article in the
7 Edmonton Journal that stated, "Slain hooker siblings build
8 website." We were angered by this and went to the Edmonton
9 Sun and made a complaint of them trashing our sister. The
10 Edmonton Journal actually apologized and rewrote Georgina's
11 story in a respectful way and told of her children and the
12 love she had for them and the way she loved her culture.

13 A lot was happening with our family uniting
14 and getting to know each other. The media had calmed down,
15 and we just kept on living and surviving whatever was
16 happening in our lives. I ended up moving out of Edmonton
17 again, this time to Winnipeg. Then, not long after
18 struggling there for a while, I got a call from the same
19 police that had given the news of Georgina. They told me I
20 was to go to Vancouver and be a witness for the pre-trial
21 for Pickton. I was really unstable, and I felt very
22 vulnerable to these police or detectives. I just did
23 whatever they said with no question.

24 So, they flew me to Vancouver where they met
25 me off the plane. I was so nervous on the inside, but I

1 was trying to act like I wasn't. They were trying to make
2 me feel at ease with random jokes, and they took me out for
3 dinner. This was so uncomfortable to me. They also had to
4 get an adjoining suite at the hotel and told me they were
5 going to be on the other side, but the door had to remain
6 open, so they could keep an eye on me. I smoked back then,
7 and even when I went for a cigarette, they would come with
8 me. I didn't get much sleep having two police in my room
9 watching me. It was not pleasant.

10 The next day, they took me to the courthouse
11 and told me to stand or stay in a couple of locations in
12 the hall and told me not to look at anyone or talk to
13 anyone. They told me when I go in the courtroom to
14 testify, I wasn't to look at Pickton's eyes, so I didn't.
15 I did glance very quickly and saw him briefly. It was
16 creepy. I remember Marilyn, Johnny and Frieda Anski being
17 there to support me at court, which I was happy for even
18 though it would have been easier to have family there.
19 They gave me a medicine bag that made me feel a little bit
20 better, maybe in a sense safer.

21 I lived at -- I was living in Winnipeg in
22 another unhealthy relationship. I was addicted to drugs
23 and using. I always worked and covered up the fact that I
24 did drugs and managed to keep it together. I had the right
25 mind to get out of my situation though, and I moved back to

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1 Edmonton to be with my family that it seemed to get closer
2 after we had the news of our sister, Georgina.

3 There was a short time period after hearing
4 about Georgina I thought we had an actual family that loved
5 and cared for each other. We had so much in common with
6 each other, it was fascinating to be a part of this group
7 of people. Time and circumstances changed things, and now
8 we have almost become strangers again, except for Cynthia
9 and I. We have a connection that I believe we always had
10 even when I was very young, so I'm so grateful to our
11 relationship and bonding that has taken place in the last
12 17 years. And, that's what I have written on my life.

13 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you to both of you.
14 I just have a few questions. I'll start with Bonnie. Can
15 you tell us how you remember your sister, Georgina? What
16 were her strengths, her personality, how she was?

17 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** She was so funny. She
18 had such a sense of humour, and she just seemed to have
19 this free spirit about her. Her kids always were laughing,
20 and she was teasing them, and playing with them all the
21 time, and she just joked around all the time. And, her
22 smile, and she was so beautiful.

23 She played the guitar. She played for my
24 birthday. She had -- she always made really good bannock,
25 and she loved making it. She was always cooking for

1 everybody, cooking for people, and serving people
2 constantly. The whole time I knew her, she always did
3 that.

4 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And, she was a mother of
5 seven children; am I correct? And, what happened to those
6 children after she died?

7 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** All the children are
8 separated. They're living all over the place in foster
9 homes, and -- well they're getting older now. Most of them
10 aren't in foster care anymore, but they've all -- they've
11 lost their way. Christina's still doing good, and I think
12 that has something to do with Georgina instilling a lot of
13 her culture and her ways and her beliefs into Christina. I
14 think that's -- she was a good -- what do you call that?
15 Influence on her.

16 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And, I don't know if you
17 would like to share some information about the challenges
18 of Georgina as she grew up and the environment of her
19 childhood, and what brought her to the path of leaving and
20 running away from foster home?

21 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** I think that...

22 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** There was sexual
23 abuse in the foster home that me and Rick had attended --
24 that were in, and that's the home that she had ran away
25 from. Apparently, our brother Rick witnessed her in bed

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1 with the foster father so, yes, that was the time she ran
2 away to Calgary.

3 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** And, I have a question for
4 you, Cynthia, as you mentioned earlier, the way the Victim
5 Services -- the way they interacted with you during the
6 trial. Can you explain why you were not included from the
7 rest of the families? Do you know why?

8 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** I'm not really sure,
9 but I think it's because I'm Native. There were a few of
10 the women that were Native that were murdered, but there
11 was also a lot of other races, so I'm not sure why they
12 segregated us and treated us the way they did. I have no
13 idea, but that's the only one I can think of, was because
14 we were Native. We didn't know them and they didn't know
15 us, so I have no other explanation.

16 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. I don't have
17 any more questions. I do believe you have recommendations
18 and observations to provide to Chief Commissioner?

19 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** We would like to read
20 a poem Georgina wrote while she was actually in BCCW down
21 here. That was probably about 1994 or 1995, and it's very
22 gripping, so...

23 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** Okay. By Georgina
24 Papin. It's called, "I Will Fight".

25 The look upon your face, innocent you are,

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1 sentenced for a deadly crime. The system's gone too far.

2 I will fight for freedom in a positive way, I will fight

3 for you, my people, because there is no other way.

4 We hold the key to the missing link.

5 Taxpayers are hereby sentenced you to think. Take a good

6 look at the white man's liars, oppressive justice system,

7 do you hear the nation's cries?

8 The resistance continues, the Indigenous are

9 strong. We lived in the right, white men lived in the

10 wrong. I will fight for my people, feather in my hand. I

11 will fight for the unjust judgments, the diseases upon our

12 land. My brothers, my sisters, we must make our stand.

13 Together we will fight, the truth is close at hand.

14 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. That was

15 beautiful. Can I maybe have one last question, how do you

16 keep going? What keeps you moving forward?

17 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** Her spirit. Her very

18 strong spirit. And, also, getting to know about what was

19 going on by these beautiful women behind us were so

20 supportive and kept us up to date and let us know what was

21 really going on, and that our sister had gone through all

22 that pain and yet ended up a victim. So, we keep going.

23 We have -- she started an organization in

24 honour of Georgina. It's called Edmonton Sisters 4 Sisters

25 Society. We are now in charge of the February 14th walks

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1 that happen nationally. We're very proud to have that
2 position. We're struggling. We still need some more
3 members, so -- but we wanted to use it to help the families
4 so that we could be -- we could speak among ourselves.
5 We're growing. We're going to grow, and it's going to be
6 good.

7 We had a great round dance this year for
8 February 14th, which I'm really glad of because we had to
9 borrow insurance liability from another organization. And,
10 that day of the round dance, it was really -- it was just
11 ice outside, so I'm glad nobody had to walk on it. That
12 was probably another Georgina sign. Yes, she's very
13 inspirational. She keeps us strong. That's the only way
14 we can keep going is through her, and women like these.

15 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. Any
16 recommendations?

17 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** Mostly for the
18 children. They really need to be looked after and they
19 really need to be taught that this is wrong and kept
20 educated as to how the Indigenous people are -- how we live
21 and, you know, just -- I really, really want to encourage
22 that the children are helped, that the children of these
23 women are reunited with their siblings, with their
24 families. You know, because family's very important.

25 **MS. BONNIE FOWLER:** I agree with -- we need

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1 to have healing for the kids. I know from my own
2 experience that they need it really bad, and they're
3 growing up really fast. Most of them are adults now. And,
4 they're still feeling the loss and the hurt, and they're
5 not knowing exactly who they are and who their mother was.
6 So -- and it's not money that's going to fix that, it's
7 love and culture and us. So, that's what we need to do.

8 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** Just having them --
9 like if you can't be in one -- in a family, in a relative's
10 home, not a stranger's home. They're not going to find
11 love in that stranger's home, but you will find it with
12 your family, with your relatives, because that's yours.

13 There's probably more, but I can't -- I
14 really wanted to show the video of Georgina at the park,
15 which was so beautiful. It only took this lady here three
16 days to get it done and it was all setup. She's amazing.
17 Amazing. All of them. These two. I don't -- I have so
18 much love for all these women behind me. I'm so grateful
19 to have them.

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, Chief Commissioner, if
21 you don't have any questions or comments, the family would
22 like to share a tribute video of their sister.

23 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Just one
24 comment. Cynthia, based on what you just said, if
25 something does come to mind that you would like to

1 recommend, please let Fanny know and she'll get it to me;
2 okay?

3 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** Okay.

4 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Let's see
5 the video.

6 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** Thank you. So, I would
7 like to invite the technical team to show the video. Thank
8 you.

9 **(VIDEO PRESENTATION)**

10 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Thank you
11 very much for that. I just want to share a little story
12 about how the Commissioners started our work. We were --
13 back in September of 2017, when we first met here in
14 Vancouver, we were strangers to each other. We didn't know
15 each other, and we wanted to start our work in a good way,
16 in ceremony. So, we went to the memorial at Crab Park, and
17 that's where we started this work.

18 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** You were there?

19 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** We were
20 there with some flowers from my garden at home and some
21 tobacco, and we -- that's how we started our work with that
22 focus. So, I just wanted to share that because it may --
23 in the video.

24 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** Wow, I wish we had
25 known you back then, but I sure am grateful I do now.

1 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Well, it
2 -- we want -- we knew we had to start our work in a good
3 way and that's what we did. So, thank you for bringing
4 that beautiful memory back for me of -- it seems like a
5 lifetime ago now, but it wasn't, and that was how we
6 started.

7 What you've said today is very important to
8 us and the work that we're doing, so I want to thank you
9 for that. Personally, what you've said to me has been a
10 bit of a trip down memory lane because very early on, I
11 issued search warrants for the Pickton Farm, so this is
12 bringing back some memories for me too.

13 So, thank you for that, because it was a
14 very moving time for all of us who worked in the Port
15 Coquitlam Courthouse because we could see out of our -- one
16 of our big windows, the machinery working to excavate the
17 farm. So, it was a legacy that we lived with everyday, not
18 in the same way you did, and it never will be, but we
19 really felt as though we were there, so it was moving for
20 us. So, personally, I thank you too.

21 **MS. CYNTHIA CARDINAL:** You're welcome.

22 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** We have
23 gifts for you because you've given us so much. We were
24 told by the matriarchs and Bernie that we had to give you
25 gifts and -- to lift you up and support you because of the

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1 pain that you have. So, we have eagle feathers for you,
2 and I've learned all across Canada there's slightly
3 different stories and beliefs that they're pretty much the
4 same. We're pretty much the same across Canada.

5 The eagle feathers will hold you up and lift
6 you up when you need to be held up and lifted up. And,
7 when you're ready to take the next step and move on, the
8 eagle feathers will hold you up and lift you up. So, in
9 moments when you need that lift, please call on our gift to
10 you to lift you up.

11 We also have seeds for you because what
12 we're seeing all across Canada is, out of this pain and
13 grief is becoming healing and new birth and growth. And
14 so, we're going to ask you to plant the seeds, and if
15 anything grows, will you please take a picture and send it
16 to us for our archives? Because we want this to be about
17 new growth as well. So, thank you both very much. As I've
18 said, what you've shared with us today is very important,
19 and I'm very grateful. So, thank you.

20 **MS. FANNY WYLDE:** So, may I ask, Chief
21 Commissioner, to adjourn this session?

22 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Yes, this
23 session is adjourned. Thank you.

24 --- Exhibits (code:P01P15P0104)

25 **Exhibit 1:** Folder containing x digital images displayed

1 during the public testimony of Cynthia
2 Cardinal and Bonnie Fowler.

3 **Exhibit 2:** Commemorative Video.

4 --- Upon adjourning at 18:00

5

6 LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

7

8 I, Shirley Chang, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I
9 have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
10 accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
11 matter.

12

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15

Shirley Chang

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April 12, 2018

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