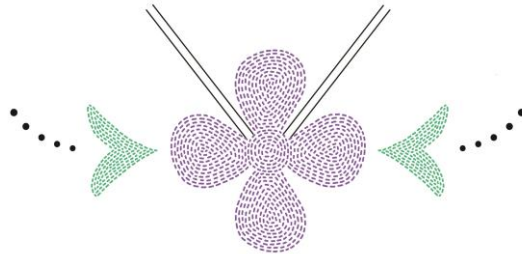


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Statement Gathering
Sheraton Cavalier Hotel
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**



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Statement - Volume 120

Sylvia Grier, In relation to Flora Muskego

Statement gathered by Daria Boyarchuk

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NOTE 1: Where not required by other statute, redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

NOTE 2: The use of square brackets [] in this transcript indicates that amendments have been made to the certified transcript in order to replace information deemed inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriptionist. Amendments were completed by listening to the source audio recording of the proceeding and were made by Bryana Bouchir, Public Inquiry Clerk with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ, May 1st 2018 at Vancouver, BC.

1 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, November 22, 2017 at 14:56

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Hello. My name is
4 Daria Boyarchuk, and I am the statement gatherer for the
5 National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
6 and Girls. Today, I'm honoured to welcome here in
7 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on November 22nd, 2017 at 2:56
8 p.m., Sylvia Grier. Her -- she's here to share with us her
9 story of her aunt, Flora Muskego, who was murdered on
10 December 9th, 1960. And, Flora is also going to be
11 supported here by our health support representative.

12 **MS. PEGGY ALLEN:** Peggy Allen (ph).

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Thank you. Sylvia, I
14 would like to begin by asking you a question. What would
15 you -- what would you like the Commission to know about
16 Flora, about her life?

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I'm here to basically
18 talk to whoever -- to the Commission about my aunt, you
19 know. It's over 50 years later, and I want her story --
20 I'm speaking for her. I'm sure she -- you know, because
21 nobody really knows whatever happened to my aunt, you know?
22 She left a son who has never, ever known his mother. He
23 was just a baby. She's got grandchildren that, you know,
24 that talk about how they had a grandmother that was
25 murdered.

1 But, nobody -- you know, people in our
2 community of Norway House in Northern Manitoba remember the
3 name. But, it's not -- but I think she's -- I definitely
4 believe that she needs a spot in this Commission -- in this
5 gathering of all this tragic, sad, you know, events that
6 have happened to families. And, I really, truly believe
7 that she has to be part of it.

8 Now, I haven't really given it a whole -- it
9 came to us by surprise, actually.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

11 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I was just young. I was
12 only eight years old when my aunt passed. She was young
13 22, very pretty, you know, full of life woman. And, when
14 she passed away, it was like a hush and really like -- she
15 had frozen; she died in the cold. That's what I heard all
16 these years, knew, because my grandmother didn't, you know,
17 my grandmother didn't really speak much of her.

18 And, that is a -- that was a thing in the
19 community. Like, when somebody dies, it was very hush,
20 hush. Like, they would -- their spirits moved on, you
21 know, like. And, it wasn't until just over a year ago when
22 I got a call. My sister called, and she said, you know
23 this Inquiry, this Missing and Murdered Inquiry is coming
24 up, all these Commissions. And, we got a call, she said,
25 from a reporter in Winnipeg.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm. So, this is
2 your sister?

3 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah, my sister had
4 gotten this call.

5 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

6 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And, I said, "Well, what
7 are they looking for?" And, she said, "Well, they're
8 looking for information about Flora Muskego, our aunt."
9 And, she said, "I didn't know her," because you know she
10 was just -- she was just months old when this happened.
11 And, she said, "Well, the only one in our family that knew
12 her is my sister, Sylvia. So, call her."

13 And, lo and behold, a couple months later --
14 I kind of forgot about it, you know? And, I thought, well,
15 this is kind of weird, you know? Why would they be looking
16 for information on Flora now?

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

18 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** But, anyway, she did call
19 me. And, for the first time in over 50 years, she's one of
20 the first Aboriginal women in Manitoba listed as having
21 been murdered. She was one -- they were profiling these
22 women in Manitoba that had gone missing, and were murdered
23 and stuff, and she was one of the first recorded women.

24 And, you know, I was so shocked. I was so
25 shocked at that, because I never ever considered her having

1 been murdered.

2 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

3 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I considered -- I thought
4 that she had frozen, that she had died in the snow, you
5 know? Now, you know, because I was so young, and nobody
6 talked about it, nobody ever really questioned that, you
7 know? It was -- it was a very emotional moment, you know?
8 Like, oh my God, you know, like.

9 So, I explained to her how I never knew that
10 she was in this category of murdered Aboriginal women.
11 And, that took on a whole new context, you know? I started
12 talking to people. I started trying to find out, had she
13 been? And then, of course, CBC was also doing some
14 investigation. So, you know, they asked me if I knew
15 anything about the investigations and stuff like that.
16 But, I didn't.

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, please correct me
18 if I'm wrong. You did not know that your aunt was murdered
19 until last year?

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Until last year, nobody,
21 like in my family.

22 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** But, the sister,
23 though, the younger one who got a phone call, did she know
24 about this?

25 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Well, she was kind of --

1 like all of -- we were all shocked. My mother -- my mother
2 was, you know, we couldn't even talk to her, [personal
3 information]. She wasn't even herself anymore. And, she
4 was the only sibling that was -- that could have offered
5 some answers, you know? And then, you know, they started
6 talking to some people in the community. And, well, this
7 was not -- and I had heard, you know? Like, I grew up
8 knowing that there was more to her death than -- but, we
9 accepted that because that's what my grandmother had
10 accepted. Had -- you know wanted us to know that, you
11 know? I know that if she wanted us to know more, I know
12 that there would have been more, you know? But, I can't
13 imagine what it was like for her to know this all these
14 years. And, it was very traditional -- not so much
15 traditional, but we distrusted the RCMP.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Everybody distrusted the
18 -- any kind of authority ---

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- in our home
21 community. There was very, very little trust. And, years
22 ago -- I mean, years ago, I guess they didn't even
23 investigate. And, that was another thing that I found out
24 from CBC was that -- I said, "Well, we always had a police
25 station in Norway House. We had a massive police station

1 in Norway House." So, there's got to be something there,
2 you know?

3 So, I directed her to the -- to that.
4 There's got to be some record. And, we always had a
5 hospital in Norway House. There's got to be some records
6 in the hospital. And, I thought, you know, being CBC, it
7 should be much -- it would be much easier for her to get
8 those records and ---

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- you know? And,
11 denied. And, sure enough, you know, she -- but there was
12 no investigation. There was a doctor that had pronounced
13 her dead after being brought into the hospital. We know
14 that she had already died, of course. She was already --
15 she had been -- her body had been found; pronounced her
16 dead.

17 I found out just over a year ago that she
18 was actually three months pregnant when she died. So, that
19 -- those were really big. Not only had she not gone; now
20 she's -- she was also -- and she had -- now, she had a
21 baby. She had been pregnant. And, I never really knew
22 about that either.

23 So, it was very, you know, like, all that
24 information was just really, really shocking for all of us,
25 really. And then with the RCMP too, they did contact the

1 RCMP and tried to get some of the records. And, there was
2 no file on her about her death ---

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

4 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- at the local
5 detachment. There was -- not that she could find anywhere.
6 And, the only record that they -- she looked back in the
7 papers, in the Free Press it's called -- the provincial
8 paper in Manitoba. It wasn't the Free Press. It was the
9 Tribune, I guess. It was one of them.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

11 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It was a provincial paper
12 anyway. There was a little article stating, you know, that
13 she had -- that Flora Muskego was found deceased, member of
14 the Norway House Cree Nation, on such and such a date.
15 And, that was -- I guess it was about maybe a month after
16 the -- after the actual death that this little notice ---

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Like an obituary?

18 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** No. It wasn't an
19 obituary. It was just -- it was almost like a news
20 clipping, you know?

21 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Yes.

22 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Of a death -- of her
23 death.

24 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

25 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** But, you know, it -- but,

1 I sort of understand. Like, I know with my -- with our
2 families back then, it was -- it was not a customary thing
3 to pursue such things, because there was so little -- there
4 was so little contact, or little -- no respect whatsoever
5 for the community in terms of policing back then, you know?

6 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

7 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I don't know how much it
8 has changed nowadays. But, I mean, it's -- it was very --
9 so, I can understand my grandfather and my grandmother not
10 pushing this. Or, maybe they did. We don't know, you
11 know?

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Yes.

13 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Like, I was just a kid.
14 I don't know how far they went to try and -- to try and
15 invest how the body -- like, you know? Was she beaten, was
16 she -- I've learned that there was a couple of women that
17 had been with her, and had left her, you know, with a group
18 of people. And ---

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** At the time of her...?

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** At the time -- yeah, that
21 evening that they were -- the evening that they were
22 together, but that they had left her, you know? So, it's
23 really -- it's such a mystery, like, you know? Did
24 somebody, you know -- did somebody strangle her? Was there
25 any marks on her? Like, there's just nothing there.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, even though they
2 found out that your aunt got murdered ---

3 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** --- you found out
5 about a year ago, you still to this day do not know how she
6 died?

7 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** We still to this ---

8 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Under what
9 circumstance?

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- day do not know how
11 she physically died.

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Or, if there has been
13 a suspect. If he has been ---

14 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah.

15 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** If there's justice?

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** There was no -- nothing
17 that we know of that, you know, that -- of anybody that was
18 even -- like no word. Like, even in the community. Like,
19 the two women. Well, one of them has passed on. But,
20 there's one like -- and still to this day, she, you know,
21 she says she's told my sisters, "I wished I wouldn't have
22 left -- I wish we wouldn't have left her there," you know?

23 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

24 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** "I wish we would have
25 waited for her," you know, or whatever.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Sylvia, these pieces
2 of information that you're putting together into this one
3 big puzzle, the newspaper clippings, the stories of these
4 women who were with your aunt, where did you -- where did
5 you find that? Did someone -- like, did someone contact
6 you, and tell you this? Or, can you tell me more about
7 this?

8 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Well, once I found out,
9 you know, once we kind of recognized or understood the ---

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Right.

11 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- this new reality
12 that, you know, that she hadn't just passed away and, you
13 know, just laid down in the snow. Maybe she was drunk. I
14 don't know, you know? Had she been drinking, you know?
15 Lots of people freeze to death wandering around in the
16 cold, you know? Was this -- was this how she died? But,
17 it's just not -- in Norway House, there's such an
18 underground of, you know, like, of people that, you know,
19 had suspected, you know, things. And, but, you know, like,
20 it's -- all of it is hearsay like, you know? And, most of
21 them are passed on. Getting back to Flora though, she had
22 left the community of Norway House.

23 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

24 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I'm not exactly sure when
25 she left. She would have been in residential school. She

1 would have probably gotten out when she was 16, you know,
2 because most of the kids got out of Res, you know, when
3 they were 16. And then she had travelled to Winnipeg. She
4 worked in Winnipeg. She worked in a hospital. I've heard
5 in both the Health Sciences Centre, which is, you know, and
6 the St. Boniface, possibly also, in those two hospitals as
7 a cleaning lady, you know. I have ---

8 **MS. DAYA BORACHUK:** She was a nurse, you
9 said?

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** No. No. She wasn't a
11 nurse.

12 **MS. DAYA BORACHUK:** She wasn't a nurse?

13 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** She wasn't a nurse. She
14 was a, you know, like a cleaning -- they clean the
15 rooms ---

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And, stuff like that, you
18 know? I have -- the picture that I have of hers ---

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Would you mind showing
20 us that?

21 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Oh, I wish I would have
22 brought the full. But, she's standing with her uniform,
23 you know? Like, they all have the same uniform, her and
24 her friend. But, anyway, this doesn't really do her a
25 whole bunch of justice, but she's -- it's a very small

1 picture for one thing.

2 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you.

3 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: I'll just show you. And,
4 that's just part of the story, that was in the profile,
5 that CBC sent me -- or that they put out.

6 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

7 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: But, anyway, she got
8 pregnant, and she couldn't work. Like, it was very hard
9 for her to work, you know.

10 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: And, I imagine that --
12 you know, she decided to come home with her baby. Now, he
13 had been born in June of 1959. He still lives in Norway
14 House. Her one and only son.

15 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: How old was he at the
16 time?

17 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: He was just over a year
18 old.

19 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

20 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: A year and a half, pretty
21 much. Yeah. June to December. So, anyway, I remember
22 this woman. Like I say, I was only -- you know I would
23 have only been seven years old. But, I have such an
24 amazing memory of this woman, you know, making her way
25 across the river -- we lived right by the river in Norway

1 House. And, she had this bundle, you know, walking across
2 the lake, you know? It was all frozen and stuff. And, you
3 know, bringing her -- you know, she was coming home to
4 stay. She, you know, she needed family.

5 Yeah. So, it was wonderful having her. Of
6 course, you know, being a little girl, she was this
7 beautiful big, big sister. And, she showed me things that,
8 you know, little girls are, you know. She had beautiful
9 clothes, and she had makeup, you know, and she would do me
10 up and stuff like that. It was so, you know. And, she was
11 -- she was just -- actually, she was very much more like a
12 -- much more like a big sister to me in that year. And, I
13 remember it so vividly, you know? And, I only knew her for
14 such a short time. We were walking to the -- going to the,
15 you know. She'd take me to the -- we had a little picture
16 show hall, you know, where they had movies and stuff.

17 Anyway, but then all this trauma. She lived
18 a whole year. And then ---

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, did she live alone
20 with her baby?

21 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** No, no, no. She lived
22 with my -- with us, actually, because -- oh, this is such a
23 complicated -- my mother and father had their own house.
24 My grandmother and my grandfather, you know, we had our own
25 house. My oldest brother and myself were pretty much

1 migrated over to my grandmother's. And, my -- it was
2 actually our grandmother that raised my older brother and
3 I.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

5 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** So, when Flora came, you
6 know, like that's where she was. But then, of course, my
7 mother, you know. So, it was all family. And, she had
8 another sister that, you know, that lived in Norway House,
9 you know. All these brothers. She had two brothers, two
10 of my uncles. So, there was lots of family around, but she
11 lived with my grandmother, with us. And, when she was
12 gone, of course, my grandmother assumed responsibility for
13 the baby, so.

14 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** [Custody of the child]
15 (~~Indiscernible~~).

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. So, you know, she
17 raised my nephew, [Nephew 1].

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

19 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And, until I left -- I
20 left to go to residential school when I was, you know, just
21 around 13 turning 14 anyway. So, I -- when I left, you
22 know, he was eight, seven -- he would have been about six
23 years old by then, you know, six, seven years old when I
24 left. But then, you know, it's so -- it's so hard to -- to
25 believe that, you know, the story of her freezing to death

1 not be, you know? It's so much more easier to contend
2 with, you know, that she did something.

3 But, the murder part of it has really,
4 really shook -- but it seems like so many people have -- a
5 lot of people in the community had accepted the fact that
6 something had happened to her, but nothing was ever done
7 about it. We had two tragedies that same year. My father
8 passed away. Again, you know, it was June of 1960.

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** So, he passed away in
11 1960. And then a few months later, Flora was gone. And, I
12 know, and I talked extensively with my mom about my dad, my
13 father.

14 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

15 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Because he was -- it was
16 an accidental death which was never, ever investigated
17 either. And, you know, they're always -- again, there was
18 very little -- there was very little respect for the law,
19 like, you know? It was -- the police was, you know, you
20 didn't run to the police for anything back then.

21 So, you can see, like, the trauma that all -
22 - you know? And, you can almost accept that, yes, that's
23 how these people -- you can imagine how the police were
24 always involved and, you know? Picking us up to make sure
25 that we were sent away, you know? Like, you know, like the

1 police came if you wouldn't -- if you weren't going to
2 allow your children to go to residential school, you know?
3 The police were always -- you could never make trouble
4 because -- but making trouble would be trying to -- let's
5 say trying to see your child in residential school, like.
6 So, there's very, very little respect, you know, either
7 way.

8 So, I don't know if all that is all part of
9 it, you know? Did they not want -- did they not want to
10 investigate? Why did they not investigate? That's the
11 question, like, you know? Like, it's really -- like, it
12 boggles my mind why.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Is there something you
14 would like the Commission to help you with, to help you
15 investigate and solve the unresolved murder of your aunt?

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Well, I think in some
17 ways, yes, absolutely. It would be wonderful to, you know?
18 Like, to have somebody look at it a little deeper, or --
19 you know? Like, is there something else that could be
20 done, you know? Is there something else that could be
21 looked at, you know? Her death caused quite a -- quite a
22 -- how would I call that? Lots of anxiety in the
23 community, her death.

24 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

25 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** There was a massive

1 gathering to put a stop to the vendor sales. We had a --
2 there was a local pub in Norway House.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

4 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Like, in the Métis
5 community, the off-reserve community and, of course, we're
6 all one community pretty much, just little lines drawn
7 between -- between the community. And, they had a vendor
8 where you could actually go get your booze. And, most of
9 the areas -- like, a lot of people would just go and drink
10 in the bushes.

11 So, there was a lot of drinking going on,
12 you know, in the community. And, lots of, you know. And,
13 the reserve was, you know, like it was receiving the brunt
14 end of all this, you know, drunkenness, and you know? But,
15 when she died, they made a concerted effort to put a stop
16 to the liquor coming out of the -- out of that vendor.
17 And, they did for a short period of time.

18 Now, I don't know if that was -- I don't
19 know if that was the only thing they could do, you know? I
20 know that the whole community was very affected by it.
21 And, that -- and actually made it happen. But, as far as
22 -- as far as, you know, was there somebody else, you know?
23 I don't know. And, nobody else seems to know. The people
24 that might have known, why didn't they -- you know, when
25 they pronounced her dead, you know, did they look at the

1 body to see if there was anything wrong?

2 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

3 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Like, but there's
4 nothing. Like, they couldn't find any information.

5 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: You were eight years
6 old at that time.

7 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Yeah.

8 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Do you remember that
9 day at all, or do you remember how ---

10 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Oh, I remember the
11 confusion -- I mean, the whole, like, everybody being so
12 crazy sad.

13 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: (Indiscernible).

14 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Plus the wakes, and oh,
15 my God.

16 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: It was like, you know?
18 Like, in those days, like, they were massive gatherings.
19 And, everything happened at the house, and -- you know?
20 The whole community. And so, I do remember. Like, my
21 father's had just happened too a month before this.

22 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So, one of the adults
23 told you -- told you that Flora had frozen too in the snow,
24 right?

25 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Yeah.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** And, [little kids will
2 believe that] (~~indiscernible~~)?

3 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** No. Well, we -- yeah,
4 like, it was almost -- it was almost like -- and I, I
5 guess, you know, from my -- I'm just happy that she -- her
6 baby. Like, I think she -- he was -- he was the glue in
7 our family, like, you know? Somebody was left behind, you
8 know? There was a piece of her that still...

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** How is [Nephew 1]
10 doing today?

11 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** [Nephew 1] is not a -
12 [Nephew 1] is married, and you know, he's -- he has four
13 daughters. [*13 lines redacted - Rule 55*].

14 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** (~~Indiscernible~~) and
15 kids.

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. He's loving, he's
17 got the grandchildren come and go there. [*Three lines*
18 *redacted - Rule 55*]. He kind of called my mom, Mom, all
19 these years too, you know? Because, you know, everybody
20 else called her Mom, so, you know? And, it wasn't until
21 late, late, late, like he realized that -- that he had a
22 different mother.

23 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Oh.

24 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. He didn't even
25 realize that that was not his mother, you know, his real

1 mother, until he got old enough. And, I think -- and I
2 think that that's probably how it was done within the
3 family, you know? [*One line redacted - Rule 55*].

4 But, yeah, lots of -- I think for my -- I
5 don't know how my grandmother survived all that grief. My
6 mother, you know? And, it's quite amazing to, you know,
7 like, to think that she -- that she did (indiscernible).
8 Was it my next door neighbour? Like, I don't know. Like,
9 we don't know. Was she walking somewhere, and did somebody
10 -- you know? Like, somebody ran into her, you know?
11 Because we have lots of scooters, lots of, you know. I
12 mean we didn't have cars back then but, you know.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** To think about the
14 suspect who might have been involved in Flora's death
15 is ---

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah.

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** --- you know walking
18 on the streets today.

19 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah.

20 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** And, he's -- like you
21 said, a next-door neighbour.

22 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. Like, we just
23 don't know, you know? And, so many people commit suicide.

24 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Have you ever received
25 any phone calls, or any kind of -- has there been contact

1 with you or other members of the family from unknown,
2 unidentified people who wanted to talk about Flora?

3 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** No. Mostly, you know, I
4 think mostly from -- that's why we were so shocked. It
5 was, you know, mostly from -- it all started with Marsha.

6 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Who is Marsha?

7 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It was the CBC person.
8 What the heck was her name again?

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Anyway, she started --
11 that's how it all started was, you know, that she had --
12 that she was doing this investigation and doing a profile
13 on her. And then (indiscernible) you know. No, that's,
14 you know, I tried to tell her. I said, no. And, she said,
15 yeah, she's identified in their search for all the
16 different names and people in Manitoba that -- in
17 preparation, you know, with all this Commission coming up.

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** How is Flora
19 identified on the CBC list, unsolved murder or ---

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yes. Pretty much
21 unsolved. Yeah, unsolved. Yeah. So, it's -- now, I don't
22 know. I mean, it certainly would be wonderful if, you
23 know, somebody -- if there was even something that could be
24 done, you know? Like, I don't know where to go next
25 either, you know? Like, I don't know, should we be talking

1 to a lawyer, should we be talking to somebody, you know?
2 Like, should we be talking to some kind of an investigator,
3 you know.

4 Like, I said to my sisters. I said, well,
5 you know, why don't we just have a community meeting in
6 Norway House and just invite anybody that has any
7 information, you know?

8 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Yes. Yes. That's a
9 wonderful idea, actually. Yes.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And, just have a -- we
11 haven't done it yet.

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

13 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** But, I mean, you know,
14 it's something that we could -- that we maybe could do, you
15 know? And, you never know. There might be somebody come
16 out of the wood work and say, you know, "I saw her walking
17 here."

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

19 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And then, "I saw so and
20 so," you know, like.

21 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** A community effort.

22 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. Yeah. Try to make
23 it more of a community effort. You know, as far as [Nephew
24 1] goes, he's absolutely convinced. Like, he wasn't even
25 shocked, because he had already been convinced -- this is

1 her son.

2 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right. Right. He was
3 convinced of?

4 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: That he had -- he was
5 convinced that she had been murdered.

6 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

7 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: And, I later found out
8 that some -- actually, one of the ladies, you know, that
9 had been with her ---

10 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: --- that had left her
12 wherever it was.

13 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: I guess they were drunk
15 and partied together, you know?

16 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Like, she had come up to
18 [Nephew 1].

19 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.

20 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: And, said, you know,
21 "I've always been sorry." Like, I mean, I don't know what
22 her exact words were.

23 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right.

24 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: But, more or less saying,
25 you know, that your mother was, you know. I have always

1 been sorry that we left her where we did, type of thing,
2 you know? She would be -- she would be here today.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

4 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** And then the same thing
5 with, you know.

6 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, did they leave her
7 on the -- near the Fort Island, or? Because the article
8 that you shared with us ---

9 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It -- yeah, it was on it.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** It describes that, you
11 know, they found her in the snow ---

12 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Mm-hmm.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** --- in the airport
14 island.

15 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Mm-hmm.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** And, is this somewhere
17 -- is there where those women, her friends, left her?

18 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** That has never, ever
19 really been absolutely clear to me, anyway, not to me that
20 they have in fact -- no. This is -- Fort Island is this
21 kind of like a big, massive island. It's not the mainland
22 of Norway House. And, half of it -- most -- about three
23 quarters of it is reserve ---

24 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

25 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- and then there's

1 these bits and pieces that are where the bar is. And, I
2 believe that this is where her body was found, either near
3 that area ---

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm. So, what do
5 these women who were with her that night -- how do they
6 describe this bar? Where did they go? What did they do?

7 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I haven't physically
8 talked to them myself.

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It was just -- I know
11 that [Relation 1] -- as a matter fact, my [Relation 2]---

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

13 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- his wife, this is his
14 wife's mother. Now, she is ---

15 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** This is his ---

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** This is one of the women
17 that ---

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Who was ---

19 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- that was with Flora.

20 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** --- with your mom.

21 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** That was with Flora.

22 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Sorry, with your aunt.
23 And, who felt sorry leaving?

24 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah. Yeah. And, she's
25 the only one -- she's the only one that remains today, in

1 fact.

2 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

3 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: And, I have asked. In
4 fact, I have asked somebody to approach her. Like, I don't
5 know her, you know? I mean, I know her to see her. But, I
6 -- I don't know what she wants to tell, you know? Why
7 hasn't she said anything more about it? Like, you know?
8 Like, why would she go up in a drunken haze to a drunken
9 kid and say, oh, you know.

10 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Like, I remember your
12 mom. Sorry that we left her. That type of thing. Where
13 did she leave her, you know, like.

14 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Have you ever thought
15 of getting in touch with her or...?

16 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Oh, yeah. Absolutely, I
17 have. As a matter of fact, I did, past summer, 2016, when
18 I was there this past summer. But, she's not a very well
19 woman either.

20 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: You know? Like, she's
22 very -- she's -- like [Woman] says -- like, her own
23 daughter says, I mean, she's drunk 90 percent of the time.

24 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

25 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: She's very ---

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Alcohol dependency?

2 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Bad alcohol. But, I
3 think -- I think that was my primary thoughts was to share
4 her, you know. Like, to share that. I mean, there's
5 rumours, there's -- yeah, some speculation of the -- which
6 I didn't even know about that. That's what really caught
7 me, you know [off guard in terms of...] (~~Indiscernible~~).

8 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, how do you think
9 the Commission can help you?

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Oh, my gosh. How can
11 they help?

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** What would you like
13 the Commission to -- do you have any recommendations?
14 Like, you can see the Commission help you, help your
15 family, and help other families resolve these unsolved
16 murders of women and girls?

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Well, I think, number one
18 -- number one, I hope the Commission really pushes
19 government, really pushes for, you know, like, real
20 investigation into these -- into people that are missing.
21 Like, I know that you have to wait 24 hours, you know? I
22 know, you know? Like, there's -- we hear so much, "Oh,
23 well, she was, you know, walking the streets," you know?
24 But there's never -- I think there's got to be an
25 investigative team, almost. But, it has to be very

1 culturally -- almost culturally appropriate, you know? It
2 has to add to that, because you know, it is so -- I work
3 for the courts.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

5 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I work for the legal
6 system. And, only because I -- you know, I -- the Manitoba
7 government was doing a pilot study to see if maybe a couple
8 of Cree-speaking people within the justice system might
9 help solve some of this nobody understanding what the
10 heck's happening to them in court.

11 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

12 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** So -- and it was a two-
13 year study, which still goes today. It was wonderful. We
14 worked strictly for the defence team, and it was mind-
15 boggling.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It was mind-boggling for
18 me, you know? But, even more so for people that had no
19 clue what kind of a justice system it was. What the
20 justice system really was, you know? You're trying to tell
21 -- you're trying to tell a 30-, 40-year-old that's been
22 charged with whatever, "Well, there's no evidence here."
23 You can't plead guilty just because -- well, you might have
24 done it. But, they have no evidence that you did it, so
25 you plead not guilty. If they find out -- if they bring

1 more evidence and prove you guilty, that's our system.
2 That's how our system works. You don't come in here and
3 say, well, I'm guilty, you know?

4 So, it's -- and I think it was -- it was
5 very interesting because, I mean, even the legal teams were
6 very, very unaware, you know? Kids sitting with their head
7 down ---

8 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

9 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- while they're being
10 -- you know, the judge, and prosecutor, and whatever.
11 That's a sign of respect, I mean, you know. Like, how many
12 kids would -- and then the judges would yell at them, "Look
13 at me when I'm talking to you," you know? That's a sign of
14 disrespect. You know, it's staring at you in the face.
15 So, I really hope that if one thing, that there's some kind
16 of a team. And, to make it -- and to make this like a real
17 problem within society. Like not just in the Native
18 society.

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** This missing, like,
21 people just -- just don't care. There's very, very little
22 thought when they hear of Aboriginal women. And, I don't
23 know how you fix that, but it's -- it's something that has
24 to change. And, it's not just, you know. I know that
25 Aboriginal people also have to change. And, we as

1 Indigenous people have to change. We as, you know, society
2 has to. And, I don't know who forces that, who -- you
3 know? Like, is there somebody running around across this
4 country, over and over, and over again murdering women, you
5 know? Like, how do we know? How do we have tears? Like,
6 because, they're not being -- nobody is investigating.

7 Helen Betty Osborne from our own community;
8 if it wasn't for that Constable Urbanoski that really had a
9 like a real push to find out what happened to that girl,
10 and was genuinely pushed, there would not be a single
11 person in jail for that murder. But, I think that that's
12 -- so, we need more of those kind of people, I think. And,
13 you're going to have -- there's going to be so many
14 revelations, and I can't even imagine what the finale is
15 going to be.

16 But, I think my -- my part in it all is just
17 to -- is just to be involved. And, can I -- like, if I
18 find out more information, is there somewhere I can take
19 that, you know?

20 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** So, like, more
21 services to -- or, let's see, like a list of resources that
22 you can go to.

23 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah, resources.

24 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** You know, when
25 something happens to family, so they know ---

1 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Yeah.

2 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: --- who to call, who
3 to contact.

4 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Oh, gosh, yes. That is
5 so -- that is so desperately needed.

6 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So, it's kind of like
7 we know that, you know, we call 911 when something happens.

8 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Yeah.

9 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: So, it's something --
10 something similar to that, in that context; right?

11 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: Oh, absolutely. And, the
12 trauma, like, you know, to understand the trauma ---

13 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: --- that these people --
15 that the people are going through initially, you know?
16 Like, I remember my youngest daughter years and years ago.
17 She was only 13 years old. She was hiding at a friend's.
18 And, we had a rash of -- there was cab drivers, there was
19 all kinds of suspicions with a couple of women that had
20 been driven out on the highways and, you know, north of
21 Thompson, you know.

22 MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. SYLVIA GRIER: And murdered. And, I
24 will never, ever, ever forget that moment when we couldn't
25 find her. And, the kids told us, oh, she took a cab home.

1 And, you know, the most wonderful thing about that was
2 everything was mobilized immediately. We called the RCMP.
3 We said she got in a cab; this was the colour of the cab.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

5 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Go find her. And,
6 everybody -- like, everything happened so quickly. But, I
7 worked for CBC Radio. Everybody knew who I was. And, you
8 know, but if I would have been General Jones, you know,
9 like I know nothing would happen. And, that's what hurts.
10 That's, you know. But, I will never forget when the RCMP
11 came to my house that night about 3:00 in the morning ---

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

13 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** --- and they were asking
14 us about our daughter's marks, identifying marks on her
15 body.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

17 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Like, it was just so, you
18 know. I can't -- my mind just completely -- I completely
19 lost it. But, you know, here a few hours later, we found
20 her. But, those two hours were brutal, absolutely brutal.
21 And -- because I had all the -- like, my husband is non-
22 Indigenous so, you know, it just seemed like it was
23 everybody did what they (indiscernible). They did it for
24 her. Nobody did anything, not for Flora. Nobody [looked
25 for her] (indiscernible). Nobody tried to find her. No

1 information for her.

2 And, I raised my girls to be so tough and --
3 statistics out there. I have been in residential school,
4 been hunted down, you know. Like, gone through the whole
5 fricking gambit, but [anybody] ~~nobody~~ could do whatever to
6 us. [Nothing was ever done about it] ~~They better find~~
7 ~~another place.~~

8 And so, I know it's [asking a lot]
9 (~~indiscernible~~) lots of -- lots of stuff asked of the
10 Commission. And, I hope -- I really hope, and I pray that
11 something constructive comes out of it. It's been -- so
12 much has been happening to derail this whole -- to derail,
13 it seems, the whole Commission the time that it's been on.

14 But, you know, it's something. It's --
15 yeah, and we're -- we did it. Like, I mean, we mothers.
16 It's us that's been screaming for something to be done. We
17 can't do anymore. We have to -- we're losing our children.
18 We're losing people we love. Like, just how do you
19 explain, you know, lots of people that say, "Oh, my God,
20 no. You didn't go to residential school." Well, of course
21 we did.

22 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** You didn't have a
23 choice.

24 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I didn't have a choice.
25 My parents didn't have a choice, you know? Like, I was

1 very lucky; I didn't have to go when I was five. My father
2 and my mother -- and I remember visiting cousins between a
3 chain-link fence, visiting them at the residential school
4 in the backyard on the occasional time that we were allowed
5 to visit. But, yeah, so there's not -- I just can't even
6 imagine how much more Aboriginal people -- I mean, we as --
7 I don't know how we survive all this. It's just -- but, we
8 do.

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Mm-hmm.

10 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** It's -- I mean, it's too
11 bad that, you know, that Flora never got her -- anyway,
12 it's not going to bring her back. But, it upset me, you
13 know, there's still -- there's a new kind of heaviness
14 about her, her being [gone] (~~indiscernible~~), which -- I
15 can't talk anymore.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Would you like to stop
17 and take a break, or would you like to continue?

18 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I think I'm good. I
19 think I'm going to have to be done.

20 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

21 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I don't know if there's
22 -- you don't need anymore? You don't need anymore.

23 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** You would like to
24 conclude this?

25 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yeah.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** As long as you're
2 comfortable to do that. And, I will stop the video and
3 audio as well. It is 3:59 [in the afternoon]
4 (~~indiscernible~~).

5 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Okay.

6 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** And, this can
7 conclude.

8 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Yes.

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Do you feel like your
10 story has been heard? Do you feel like you have given the
11 voice to Flora?

12 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Oh, I think so.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

14 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Like, absolutely so.

15 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Okay.

16 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** As long as it's, you
17 know, like -- and to the -- did you turn it off already?

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Oh, no, it's still
19 running.

20 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** I just want to say I know
21 it's long and drawn out, but I hope somebody listens
22 because, you know, she -- she was somebody. She was a
23 loved one. She was an aunt. She was a mother. She's a
24 grandmother now. She could have been. Anyway, I think I'm
25 done.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Thank you, Sylvia.

2 **MS. SYLVIA GRIER:** Because I get silly.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUK:** Thank you. It is 4:00

4 p.m., and we will conclude our statement with Gloria --

5 Sylvia, sorry, Grier, and her giving the voice to Flora

6 Muskego, her aunt, in the case of an unresolved murder.

7 --- Upon adjourning at 16:00

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LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a horizontal line at the bottom, positioned above the printed name.

Shirley Chang

March 14, 2018