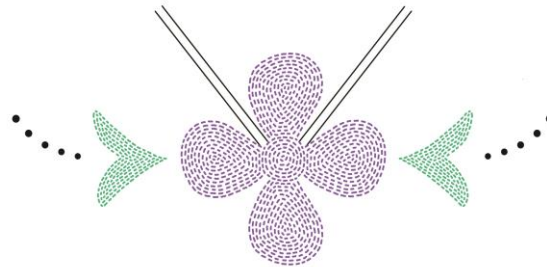


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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**



**PUBLIC**

**Wednesday November 22, 2017**

**Statement - Volume 115  
Debbie Ironbow**

**Statement gathered by Debbie Bodkin**

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**II**  
**ORDER**

Pursuant to Rule 7 of Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice, Chief Commissioner Marion Buller ordered that all names aside from that of the witness be made anonymous in this transcript and any related documents. The order for anonymity was made April 30, 2019.

**III**  
**NOTE**

The use of round 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. Bryana Bouchir, Public Inquiry Clerk with the National Inquiry, made all amendments on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at Vancouver, British Columbia. Ms. Bouchir listened back to the source audio recording to make the amendments.

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Documents submitted with testimony: none.

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

--- Upon commencing on Wednesday, November 22, 2017 at 10:00

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** So, today is Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, and it is 10:00 a.m. We are at the Sheraton Hotel in Saskatchewan. Again, my name is Debbie Bodkin, and I am a statement gatherer with the Inquiry. So, I'll -- yes. I'll let you introduce yourself, if you wouldn't mind?

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Just your name, where you're from, your cultural background. And then we'll get Cora Lynn (sic) to do the same. And then we'll launch into the story, okay?

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** All right. I was born in Marsden, in Saskatchewan, in a small rural community. My mother had been through residential school.

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Sorry, can I ---

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Sorry to interrupt you there. Just your name first?

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Just so we have that.

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** For sure. Debbie.

**MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Sorry?

**MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Debbie Ironbow.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Ironbow?

2                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Ironbow. I-R-O-N-B-O-  
3                   W.

4                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Perfect. Thank you.  
5                   And, you live in Saskatchewan?

6                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I live here in  
7                   Saskatoon.

8                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** In Saskatoon. And, your  
9                   cultural background?

10                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** My cultural background,  
11                  that's sort of why I was getting into it.

12                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Sorry.

13                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** My father was Russian.  
14                  My mother is Cree and Lakota.

15                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay. Wonderful. Thank  
16                  you. And, Cora Lynn, would you like to introduce yourself  
17                  to this Inquiry?

18                  **MS. CORALEE:** I'm Coralee.

19                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Coralee.

20                  **MS. CORALEE:** I'm with the health support  
21                  team.

22                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Wonderful. Okay.  
23                  Couple more things I have to say to Debbie, and then you  
24                  can take over. You had -- you're here voluntarily ---

25                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

1 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: --- to share your  
2 truths.

3 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yes.

4 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, you've given me  
5 permission to video and audio record the discussion. So,  
6 now I will stop talking and let you take over. Again, when  
7 you need a break, please do. Keep this space as feeling  
8 safe, and you're in control, and I think you were headed in  
9 that direction anyway.

10 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Usually giving your  
12 background is starting as chronologically as you're  
13 comfortable.

14 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yes.

15 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Start from there. You  
16 have mentioned that there's one -- there's a lot of things  
17 you want to talk about. But, one person you have named is  
18 [Person X]?

19 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yes.

20 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Who you're going to  
21 speak about?

22 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yes.

23 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, I will let you take  
24 over from here. And, just kindly give us your background,  
25 and go wherever you feel comfortable.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Okay. I was born in  
2                   Saskatchewan, in Neilburg, Saskatchewan. I lived in  
3                   Marsden most of my youth. My father passed away when I was  
4                   seven. He worked for CP Rail, which is the reason we  
5                   weren't taken into care. So, my mother had already lost  
6                   six children to the Sixties Scoop. And, when she met my  
7                   dad, he basically kind of intervened with Social Services  
8                   when they were trying to take us.

9                   So, he stood up. We were able to stay with  
10                  our mother. And, it wasn't that it was the best thing that  
11                  happened to us either. My mother had been through  
12                  residential school. There was a lot of alcohol, a lot of  
13                  drinking. Her family, we were -- we endured a lot of abuse  
14                  in the home. My dad passed away when we were quite young,  
15                  so after that, there was no safe place left.

16                  So, I guess going back to that, I mean, you  
17                  know, we -- I remember contact with police through my  
18                  mother, right? And so, there's some history there. Some  
19                  good, some not so good. She never really -- I guess she  
20                  never really felt that she belonged in that rural town. We  
21                  were the only Indigenous family there. And, I mean, she  
22                  hid everything; sweet grass, things that were cultural to  
23                  her was hidden, you know.

24                  She was very scared of anything happening  
25                  when we were growing up. It was like you were trained to



1 be silent, because if you didn't, it rocked the boat. And,  
2 she was terrified of losing us to Child and Family. She  
3 said, you know, "Don't say anything. Don't say anything."  
4 Well, somebody molested you? I watched my 11-year-old  
5 sister being raped by the store manager; blood running down  
6 her legs. "Don't say anything." So, we were trained early  
7 to be silent, and it affected a lot going forward for me.  
8 Sorry.

9 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** No. You don't have to  
10 apologize. Take your time. Take a break. It takes a lot  
11 of strength to be here, so use it as you need.

12 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Anyway, as young as,  
13 you know, pre-kindergarten, I remember having a tiny little  
14 metal wagon that I'd pull around. I had my cat in there,  
15 and I had my few little things, you know. And, I was  
16 always pulling this little wagon around. And, kids in the  
17 town would, you know, they'd be calling me a wagon burner.  
18 And, I'm like, you know, thinking how can you burn it, it's  
19 metal, you know? I mean, it was the way we were treated  
20 growing up. So, there was like this root always there. It  
21 didn't matter; we were never going to be like them.

22 And so, that sort of was my first experience  
23 growing up here, right? And, I don't really see a whole  
24 lot of change now, and this is how many decades later, you  
25 know? I still see the same things coming out in systems,

1 the same attitude. And so, anyways, that childhood is  
2 filled with trauma, filled with experiences.

3 Moving forward, my first experience away  
4 from home -- I ran away at 11. I was young, very young. I  
5 was a child. And, I did run away because there was just --  
6 it was just too much. I couldn't take the abuse anymore.  
7 And, even though I loved my mother, I understand where she  
8 was coming from now, I didn't then. I just wanted to be  
9 away from it. And, I went from the frying pan into the  
10 fire. My very first experience here in Saskatoon was a  
11 gang rape. And, it was violent, brutally violent. I was  
12 13. It sort of set the -- I guess how I would perceive  
13 being treated by men. And, there was no police  
14 involvement, there was no -- you know. I mean, I grew up  
15 being afraid to make that call. Afraid to, you know.

16 And, as I got older, I sort of pushed that  
17 aside, left it there. I began working here in Saskatoon.  
18 I started as a waitress. And, you know a few years went  
19 by. I was older. I had my first three children here in  
20 Saskatoon. And, I was working here at the Métis Nation. I  
21 spent a number of years there. But, I ended up at a  
22 conference, and this is where this person, this [Person X]  
23 comes into play.

24 It was at a conference, and we were out  
25 after, you know, working all day. There was -- you know,

1 we were supposed to basically ensure that all of the people  
2 who travelled in, the area directors, were taken care of.  
3 And, somehow, I don't know, at some point whether he  
4 drugged my drink. And, the next morning, I remember being  
5 raped by him. And, I remember the next morning one of my  
6 co-workers coming into my home, just coming in to try and  
7 wake me up to come to work, and he was in my bed.

8 And so, the embarrassment, you know what I  
9 mean? Like, you're -- you try to make it seem like it's  
10 normal, you know what I mean? Like, okay, this happened.  
11 I must have let it happen, you know? And so, there  
12 proceeded to be, you know, some type of relationship. I  
13 never felt like there was a love there. It was like I felt  
14 obligated, so that it would save face, so I can keep my  
15 job.

16 And, anyways, further down the road, he was  
17 very violent. He ended up kicking in my door one night.  
18 And, this is after I gave birth to my last child, his  
19 child. And, he broke all my fingers. I broke -- like just  
20 bent them down. And, those incidents, like the one I want  
21 to talk about where the police actually got involved, was  
22 just prior to that.

23 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Before you go there, can  
24 we just put a date on when ---

25 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- this original  
2 incident would have happened?

3                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** It would be in '95,  
4 yeah.

5                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay. Thank you.

6                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. '94, '95, there  
7 was a lot of violence there. He shared something with me  
8 that sort of kept me from, you know, looking for help. It  
9 kept me from -- like, there was so much fear around what he  
10 had said to me. He comes from a northern area, northwest  
11 Saskatchewan. And, he told me -- and his story to me when  
12 we were first seeing each other in this sickness, right.

13                   He told me that him and several of his co-  
14 workers and relatives, cousins, were in the lodge for a  
15 meeting. And, he's old. Like, this would have been like  
16 the seventies when this happened, when he was young. And,  
17 he said that they had come across -- they were partying,  
18 come across a young girl. She was a teenager. And, he  
19 laughed about this when he was telling me. He said that  
20 they gang raped her and they murdered her. They beat her  
21 to death. Each of them gang raped her. And, he said that  
22 they took her body across the lake by boat and buried her.  
23 He said no one would ever find her.

24                   And, to this day, like, that bothered me so  
25 much all through the years. Like, I was terrified to speak

1 about it. And then after I lost my own child, you know, it  
2 really hit me how this mother may never know what happened  
3 to their daughter. And, he did name some of the people  
4 that were with him when that happened, and it was a meeting  
5 that happened in the lodge.

6 So, I'm sure that the meeting aligns with a  
7 missing person there, do you know what I mean? And,  
8 something -- I don't know, you know, what they were doing  
9 when they came across her, but she had been drinking. She  
10 was out, and she was just a young girl. And, he -- the way  
11 he explained it to me was to instill the fear. Like  
12 anything, if you say anything, the same thing is going to  
13 happen to you, you know? My family can do this, you know?  
14 My -- you know, it was asserting that power.

15 And, when I finally picked up the phone and  
16 called Crimes Stoppers -- I did. And, this was after my  
17 daughter died, because I couldn't get that out -- I  
18 couldn't shake that, you know -- a mother. Like, I had my  
19 child's ashes, you know? I knew she was with me. But,  
20 this mother may never know. And so, it just ate at me.  
21 And, I was, like, I got to call. And, when I did, they  
22 took the story. They didn't even give me a file number,  
23 nothing, you know. It was like they just took the story  
24 and left it. And, to this day -- and this is already  
25 years, right, 2014.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** That's when you made the  
2                   call?

3                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** When I made the call.

4                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay.

5                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** He's running around.  
6                   He's doing whatever, you know I mean? Like, nothing was  
7                   ever done. And, it -- to me, it's just like everything  
8                   else, right? Like, I mean, he -- I can't explain this  
9                   situation fully, I guess. It's so extensive around this  
10                  person, you know, and the violence. This is the beginning  
11                  of most of the fear that I've had, and the beginning of a  
12                  lot of trauma.

13                  He found me downtown. And, I was with my  
14                  friends, and my friends are all, you know, like, you know,  
15                  try to keep me safe from him, you know. Take me -- one of  
16                  my girlfriends took me -- we went to a little Asian place,  
17                  and we were having, you know, soup and tea. And, as she  
18                  was talking to me, I get home, he was in my apartment,  
19                  hiding. He had thrown all my garbage, and spread it all  
20                  across the floor, and rubbed it in. He had urinated inside  
21                  my shampoo bottles. He did these kinds of things. And, he  
22                  was hiding in my walk-in closet.

23                  When I went into my room, I was just looking  
24                  around in shock. He came out and punched me in the side of  
25                  the head. And, I dropped, and he just dragged me. I was

1           brutally raped that night. He slept behind me with a  
2           knife. And, my face dried to the pillow with blood. He  
3           finally passed out and it was daylight. I crawled out my  
4           window. I got away. Crawled out my window. I went to the  
5           payphone and called the police.

6                        There's no feeling like basically just being  
7           told that they can't help you, you know? I told them to  
8           get him out of my house. And, they were just trying to not  
9           to get involved, you know what I mean? Like, I was  
10          standing there with no -- I didn't even have pants on. I  
11          had to, you know, just throw whatever I could grab to throw  
12          over, and run out of there. And, I'm standing there in the  
13          middle of the street. And, they just kept talking to me,  
14          and embarrassing me, and making me feel like I was just  
15          nothing to them. I was bleeding. My mouth was bleeding.  
16          My face, my hair was just dried with blood. They didn't  
17          take me to the hospital. They didn't -- they charged him  
18          with common assault. He got a \$125 fine for doing that.

19                      **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** When was this, Debbie,  
20          the date for that?

21                      **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** That would have been  
22          probably 1994 -- '93, '94. It's like, you know what I  
23          mean? It's 20 -- over 20 years ago. But, it's things that  
24          are just so brutal, you know? And, the minimization from  
25          the police like it was -- it was as if they were laughing

1 at me. They were -- wouldn't take me to the hospital.  
2 They didn't even offer that, you know? This is a rape  
3 like.

4 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** What police are we  
5 talking about?

6 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Saskatoon City Police.  
7 And, they -- where I lived was Avenue Y, and there's a  
8 little Petro Can. Now, it's Cree Way there. But, it was  
9 that street. I ran from Y down the alley, down to the  
10 payphone there. And then they just let me stand there on  
11 the street. They didn't even help me, like. I walked back  
12 to my place.

13 The way the police treated me at that point,  
14 the one time I reached out, always one of the biggest  
15 reasons I didn't tell them about the girl. And, I'm sure  
16 there's other people that he's brutalized, you know? But,  
17 they won't step forward. Or maybe if they did, you know,  
18 the time's gone past. Nobody would ever care.

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Take your time.

20 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I just have pushed so  
21 much down, because there's nowhere to go with it, you know?  
22 And, from that, it's just this internalization of all this  
23 pain and suffering. I'm just hurt and broken, and there  
24 was never any help. It was always -- I remember him. I  
25 was pregnant with my daughter. And, he threw a rotten deer



1 carcass down my stairs, and he said that would feed me.

2 It was the degradation and the way that  
3 things happened that the police didn't care, you know what  
4 I mean? They didn't care. It was like, well, you deserved  
5 that, you know? The treatment was very much like that.  
6 "We can't help you. I don't know what you're expecting  
7 from us." And, that was told to me so many times. "I  
8 don't know what you expect from us." To do your job, to  
9 help me, you know? And, none of it ever happened.

10 And, there's just so many things. And,  
11 it's, you know, it's over the years. And, it's happened,  
12 you know, where I had somebody stalking me years after  
13 this. I had somebody stalking me. I think it was about  
14 six years later in another relationship. This person  
15 basically just, you know, I knew that he was going to begin  
16 to be abusive, and he did. And, I had a judge put an  
17 interim order in place. And, at that point, it was the  
18 judge; it wasn't the police. I phoned at night, and I got  
19 a hold of a justice place instead of the police, because  
20 they wouldn't listen. They didn't care. And so, the judge  
21 gave me the order.

22 But, this guy stalked me. He stalked me.  
23 He was following busses here. He was doing everything for  
24 about a year. And, he finally pulled up by my sister's  
25 townhouse where I was. And, I went outside, and I was

1       like, "What are you doing here?" And, he said, "Well, I  
2       just want to talk for a moment, hey." And, I thought, you  
3       know what? I need to deal with this. I need to tell this  
4       guy to stop following me, you know?

5                       And, of course, I'm not thinking that he's  
6       going to do anything, but he did, and he drove me out of  
7       town. He had me down on the floor by my hair, and he told  
8       me that I would never see the lights of the city again.  
9       And, I really believed I was going to die, you know, being  
10      punched in the head, pulled down, and pushed down. Again,  
11      nothing from the police. I'm sitting there, and nothing.  
12      No charges. Nothing.

13                      **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Tell me what -- how that  
14      came about. Like, when did you call the police and what's  
15      this person's name?

16                      **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** His name is [Person Y].  
17      I'm sure he's working somewhere with some [Employment].

18                      **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Was he First Nations  
19      himself?

20                      **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes. Yes. Very  
21      disturbed person. And, it's all of this abuse, you know,  
22      through most of my life. And, I tried so hard, so hard to  
23      overcome that, you know? But, I just broke. I just broke.  
24      And, I ended up becoming somebody I am not, you know? And  
25      so, I went through the prison system. I -- you know. And,

1 it helped me. It literally saved my life, you know?

2 But, to go through all of your life never  
3 really knowing that there's something better, it feels like  
4 such wasted life. I feel like I didn't have -- I didn't  
5 have what other people had, you know, ever. And, but I --  
6 things are different now for me. Like, I love my grandkids  
7 so much. After my daughter, my last child, like, that fear  
8 of systems comes into play. Fear of everything. I was  
9 taught to fear the Child and Family Services. I was taught  
10 to fear the police. I was taught none of this was ever  
11 going to help me. And then, you know, my children, even  
12 having my children, it was violated there too, you know.

13 I had C-sections at [Hospital 1]. And, my  
14 doctor at the last C-section, he told me about a week --  
15 this was planned. He planned it and made the appointment  
16 for when I would go into the hospital. And, he said -- he  
17 said if you have another C-section, you're going to die.  
18 Like just literally just like that. And, was like -- I  
19 felt very afraid of the fact that, you know, who would be  
20 there. Who would be there for my kids if something  
21 happened to me, you know? Going through all this with a  
22 partner; going through the things that I was going through.  
23 I was like oh my God.

24 So, when I went in, I didn't do anything.  
25 It was just that, you know, that he said that. And, of

1 course, you know, I'm in fear thinking about it. Going to  
2 the hospital to have my daughter, and at that time it's  
3 just, you know, I didn't know, you know, it was going to be  
4 a girl or anything. I just went it for the C-section, and  
5 I'm strapped down on that table, and they had already done  
6 the epidural. I was already there. The curtain was  
7 already up, because they put a curtain there we're you're  
8 going to have your child. And, I was awake for the  
9 surgery.

10 And, he leaned over and asked me if I wanted  
11 the cut or tied. And, all I could think of was, oh my God,  
12 you know? What do you mean, you know? Yeah, cut, you  
13 know? And, I'm not even thinking of what he's actually  
14 saying to me. There were -- it just happened just like  
15 that. So, you know, I didn't even really think about it.  
16 I thought it was normal. And, you know, okay, I'm going to  
17 die if I have another C-section. Find out later on that  
18 that's not the case, you know? I was young, I was healthy.

19 I felt like -- like it took away something  
20 that if I ever got married, I couldn't have a child with a  
21 husband, you know? I couldn't do that, you know? So,  
22 every partnership I had, every relationship after was  
23 always -- always tainted by that, you know? It was like I  
24 was not a woman. I was not woman enough to -- to be  
25 important for that person, or to be important any more.

1                   And so, I didn't even find out until years  
2 later. And then it's just recently that other women  
3 experienced the same thing here, and it just like literally  
4 was like getting punched in the stomach. It was like this  
5 didn't have to happen that way. It didn't. I feel like  
6 I've never been able to be who I should be, ever, not ever  
7 in this province.

8                   My daughter, my oldest child had passed  
9 away. She had a similar experience in Battleford. And, at  
10 that time, her last baby, they used also a mesh inside, a  
11 wire mesh. And, she suffered so much. Like, she was  
12 always feeling -- like, she just felt like she was always  
13 needing to go to the bathroom, you know? Like, she said  
14 there's so much pain. Every time she had her period, she  
15 would just suffer. She'd be laying there crying. And, it  
16 happened to her, too. And, I couldn't say anything because  
17 I didn't know at that time, you know, that they shouldn't  
18 have done those things, you know? So, you trust these  
19 systems. You believe that something isn't going to hurt  
20 you like that, you know?

21                   And, she passed away in a house fire in  
22 2014. She didn't know, you know, that this was going to  
23 come out. But, I'm sure she would have been like me, you  
24 know? She would have been hurt.

25                   Like, there's so much around the

1 mistreatment that the police have done, so much around just  
2 the way that you are viewed, you know? And, there's a  
3 perception there that you're not equal; you will never be  
4 equal. I can tell you, honestly, the times that I've had  
5 experiences with the police in that capacity. Asking them  
6 for help, I felt like an animal. I'm standing there with  
7 nothing, you know, just my underwear; the blood and  
8 everything, and just standing there. My teeth, he had hit  
9 me in the mouth. I had scars inside my mouth. I'm  
10 standing there, and I felt like I was nothing. I felt like  
11 I was -- I was dirty to them.

12 And, I missed one incident that just is  
13 really difficult to talk about to you. This is -- I'm  
14 trying to remember exactly what year it was. I was out at  
15 my mother's, and she lived in Marsden. She stayed there  
16 like most of her life. She ended up moving to Neilburg, a  
17 little town about eight miles from there to be closer to  
18 the hospital before she passed away.

19 But, when she lived in Marsden, I used to go  
20 and just try and spend time and stay with her. Like, she  
21 helped me raise my older children and, you know, we were  
22 very close, you know, when I got older. I was out there,  
23 and my brother -- I don't have contact today with my  
24 family, my siblings, no one. I just absolutely refuse to  
25 endure anymore, because it's like they're not moving

1 forward, you know? They're not trying to heal. And, I  
2 feel like every time I step in, they're going back into  
3 that chaos, back into that abuse.

4 So, years ago -- my son must have been a few  
5 years old. So, it's like 26 or 25 years ago, maybe. My  
6 brother came by. We were at my mom's for Christmas. And,  
7 of course, my mom's having a few drinks. She's sitting  
8 down. We're all -- yes, everybody was happy. We're at the  
9 table, we're talking about Christmas Eve, and mom was  
10 making -- cutting up meat and cutting up cheese. We were  
11 trying to make cheese trays.

12 My brother happened to be drinking in  
13 Lloydminster, and then somehow managed to drive down from  
14 Lloyd to Marsden. My brother is six foot three. He came  
15 in the house and just started, you know, kind of attacking  
16 my mom, you know, verbally. And, I said something to him.  
17 I said, you know, I said you don't have to be here. Like  
18 everybody's happy. This is a good, you know, good thing.  
19 Everybody's happy. Please don't do this. And, he was in  
20 some kind of rage.

21 And, my brother, he's always been this way.  
22 Like, he used to shoot at us when we were kids, with a  
23 pellet gun. Like, shoot at -- sit at the window and shoot  
24 at us. Like, he was very aggressive, and he just attacked  
25 me. Like he attacked me. This is a six foot three guy.

1 And, dragged me into the living room. And, I was trying to  
2 defend myself. He picked me up, and he did these like  
3 wrestling things, and you know. And, literally, I've  
4 gotten injuries to my back, and injuries all over. And, he  
5 -- my mom didn't have a telephone at home, so we couldn't  
6 call the police. He ran to the pay phone and called the  
7 RCMP, Cut Knife RCMP.

8 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Your brother ---

9 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

10 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- who did this?

11 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** He did this. He made  
12 it sound like he was attacked. And, my mom was trying to  
13 tell them, you know, like, that's not what happened, you  
14 know? But, they were just disregarding -- they took me by  
15 ambulance first, because I said, you know, I can't even  
16 move, you know? You need to -- I need to get to a  
17 hospital.

18 I go by ambulance to Neilburg. The doctors  
19 are telling the police you can't take her like this. You  
20 can't. They took me from there to Cut Knife and put me in  
21 the cells there overnight with, you know? There was a tiny  
22 little woolen blanket in the wintertime. This is  
23 Christmas. It was minus 36, and I stayed overnight in  
24 there, sitting there trying to keep warm.

25 In the morning, the officer arrested me for



1 assault, right? Assault. I got arrested for assault with  
2 a deadly weapon, right, because my brother had this big  
3 story about what happened. And, I spent the night there,  
4 and then the officer came in the morning. And, he  
5 fingerprinted me, and all this stuff, formally charging me.  
6 He didn't charge me the night before. And, here, I was  
7 just injured, you know? And, I had on a thin jacket and  
8 not even socks in my boots. And, this is -- and I'm going  
9 to say it, you know. Like, I mean, this is an Indigenous  
10 RCMP officer.

11 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Sorry, it was or was  
12 not?

13 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes. It was.

14 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** It was.

15 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, I was 42 miles  
16 away from my mom's home on Christmas Day, on a route, like,  
17 highway from Cut Knife to Marsden. Not one car in seven  
18 hours. I asked him after all of this, you know, like, how  
19 do I get home? He wouldn't even let me use the phone  
20 there. My mom didn't have the phone at home. I had  
21 nobody. And, he left me on the corner right by the  
22 Crossroads Hotel. He left me on the highway there in the  
23 winter.

24 I stayed out there for seven hours. I  
25 walked across. There was no traffic, and it was getting

1 close to evening. I was so cold. I went across in a  
2 little entrance way in the hotel there. It was open, but  
3 the lobby was closed, so there was no heat in there. But,  
4 there was a phone. And, I didn't know who to call.

5 And, I thought, you know, there's got to be  
6 somebody. And, I was so afraid of dying out there. Like,  
7 there was nobody coming. I thought about my mom's  
8 neighbours, you know? I phoned one of them. They weren't  
9 -- there was no answer, like calling collect. I called the  
10 neighbour across my mom, and that was the pastor for the  
11 United Church, and he answered the phone. And, he drove  
12 there to get me.

13 When I got home, I had blisters for -- my  
14 entire bottom of my feet peeled off from the cold, and I  
15 spent a year checking in every Friday with those same  
16 police, every Friday, because that was the ---

17 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Part of your release?

18 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I had to stay in that  
19 area, even though my brother was around there, until that  
20 trial came up. And, the first day of the trial, the judge  
21 knew he was lying. He actually wrote it out. He admitted  
22 to it. And, all that year, I suffered so much. It's just  
23 how little they have belief in us. We're nothing to them.

24 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** So, you were not charged  
25 with the offence, I presume?

1                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I was charged. I was  
2 charged. I spent a year of that recognisance. And then it  
3 was an absolute discharge because he admitted he lied.

4                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Oh.

5                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** But, the suffering, you  
6 know? And, if I had actually not been able to find someone  
7 that night to come and get me, I would not be sitting here.

8                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

9                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, no one would know  
10 that story. Everyone would have believed what he had said.

11                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, you said when the  
12 police came to your mom's home, and your brother told the  
13 story, they did take you to a doctor but then they took you  
14 to the police station afterwards, even though the doctor  
15 had said not to?

16                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes. Yes.

17                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, where did they take  
18 you?

19                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** To Cut Knife, to their  
20 holding cells.

21                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, sorry ---

22                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, it was a Doctor  
23 [H.] in Neilburg that said to them you can't take her.  
24 She's been injured, you can't take her. Like this is --  
25 she's got injuries here. They didn't care. They just took

1 me anyway.

2 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, sorry, what year  
3 was it?

4 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** It was 25 years ago for  
5 sure, yes.

6 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay. Take your time,  
7 Debbie. You are incredibly strong to be repeating all  
8 this. Your emotions are likely overwhelming, so just take  
9 your time. Look after (you) (~~indiscernible~~).

10 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I just don't want to  
11 see my kids and my grandkids go through so much, you know,  
12 because it's still happening. My daughter was beaten up in  
13 Calgary by the police not very long ago. I'm sorry. I  
14 just haven't talked about a lot of this to anyone.

15 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** You don't need to  
16 apologize. Just take your time. Do you want an actual  
17 break? Do you want me to cut the recording off?

18 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No, it's okay.

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** (You're good? Just take  
20 a minute) (~~Indiscernible~~).

21 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I feel like everything  
22 that's supposed to be there to help us has failed. I felt  
23 so isolated most of my life from ever being able to have  
24 any support. I felt diminished all of my life. And, I  
25 never knew how much until recently, you know? I just kept

1 going, kept going, and focusing on other things, helping  
2 other people, and not looking to see how little I had  
3 actually experienced that was good. You try to pull  
4 happiness out of trauma, you know? And, it's just we're  
5 fine to think of everything, all those events that -- my  
6 mind can cope with individual things, you know? But, when  
7 it came to that whole life story, it was like oh, my God.

8 I feel like -- like there's so much, you  
9 know, that needs to be let go; that needs to be out there.  
10 Like, this doesn't have to happen. It doesn't. I'm  
11 terrified for my family too, you know? I lived with that  
12 all of my life.

13 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Terrified like in  
14 general because the system isn't working, or from specific  
15 people?

16 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No, terrified because  
17 if they reach out -- if my daughter experiences domestic  
18 violence, she's been treated similarly, you know.

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Is this the daughter in  
20 Calgary?

21 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes. Yes. She -- and  
22 this is quite recent too that she was pulled out of a  
23 business. And, the officer said they were charging her.  
24 And, they didn't. They didn't charge her. He drove her to  
25 a female office where the female officer began to beat her

1 up. And, she suffered broken ribs, a dislocated jaw.  
2 Like, there was never any formal charges. But, her health  
3 records have been sealed. Like, she's trying very hard to  
4 have some accountability, you know, from them.

5 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, is this [Police  
6 Service 1]?

7 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

8 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, how you say  
9 recently -- this year or...?

10 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Last year. Yes.

11 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, what's your  
12 daughter's name?

13 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Her name is [Daughter  
14 1]. It changed her. Like, it really did. Like, it's like  
15 I see these events happening with her. She explains  
16 things, but you can see the rage behind it, you know? And,  
17 I can see it. It seems like I'm always, always on alert  
18 for that.

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

20 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Everything that has  
21 happened, I always felt like I had no meaning to anything.  
22 And, when this came up, this opportunity to speak, I wanted  
23 to feel like my life had some meaning. And, lots of the  
24 women who experience these things, a lot of them will never  
25 talk about it.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** You're showing  
2                   incredible strength to be able to do so.

3                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** It's not strength; it's  
4                   fear, you know. Fear for the future. What happens when  
5                   I'm gone, you know? Will my kids be able to endure? I  
6                   feel like this systemic racism is (the) root. This ugly  
7                   that's underneath has just hurt so much. Like, the  
8                   potential in people, you know? And, that's so  
9                   heartbreaking to me. It is. We shouldn't have to fight so  
10                  hard. I knew it was going to be very hard for me to do  
11                  this.

12                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** (Absolutely)  
13                  (Indiscernible). Let's just talk about something else for  
14                  a minute.

15                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes.

16                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** How do you look after  
17                  yourself now? How did -- like are you taking care of  
18                  yourself? Do you see someone to help you ---

19                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No. I tend to isolate  
20                  a lot, because I have difficulty with being around people,  
21                  being in crowds. I had PTSD diagnosed years ago. I  
22                  remember when like even to, you know. I mean, there's  
23                  failures in all of it, you know? I mean, even to myself,  
24                  you know, for not speaking up sooner. I feel like if I  
25                  had, would my children have had more, you know? Would

1 things have been better?

2 I don't know. It's so hard. It is hard.  
3 It is. I do try to spend as much time with my grandkids,  
4 you know, trying to help them understand that life is not  
5 like what I have known. It's better. It could be better,  
6 you know? They're a great source of strength for me, you  
7 know? They're my deceased daughter's, you know. I see her  
8 in each of those kids, you know? I still have a lot I  
9 fight for, and that's why, you know, I'm here.

10 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

11 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** You know? They're the  
12 reason I am here.

13 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, how many grandkids  
14 are there?

15 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I have six grandkids --  
16 seven grandkids, actually, in total. I have five with me,  
17 and two that don't live with me. My youngest had a baby a  
18 14, and I kept that one since she was born, so. Then, when  
19 my deceased daughter passed away, I had her kids. And them  
20 too, you know, like Child and Family Services placed them  
21 with known drug users.

22 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** When your daughter  
23 first passed away?

24 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah, because the dad  
25 said that was fine. He just basically signed them over as



1 the surviving parent. And, my grandkids, two of my  
2 grandkids suffered through sexual abuse in that home. I  
3 fought to get them back, you know, get them safe. I knew  
4 it was going to happen the moment I knew where they were.  
5 And, it was like, I mean, the girl -- these are a strange  
6 family that my grandkids were placed with. The girl -- my  
7 sister's daughter, came out of the house with -- when we  
8 had the court order to get the kids for custody, she came  
9 out. She had bruising all up and down her arms, carrying  
10 her baby. The police saw it all, but we didn't have it on  
11 the order that the police could take the kids out of there.

12 So, we had to drive all the way back from  
13 Regina. The lawyer went to court the next morning and got  
14 that order. So, we got the kids safe, you know? It was  
15 horrifying to see my grandkids looking out the window, you  
16 know? "Why isn't Grandma coming to get us?" you know?  
17 And, the guy, like that guy, stranger to my grandkids,  
18 stranger to me, was crawling into bed with my eight-year-  
19 old granddaughter. But, Child and Family Services  
20 determined it was safe to leave them there.

21 So, these are the failures, you know? These  
22 are the things that need to change. They do. Like, that  
23 generation was already harmed at that moment because of  
24 that decision. My daughter wasn't allowed -- my deceased  
25 daughter wasn't allowed by the worker to take -- to take a

1 job in Oxville. And then she ended up in Esther (ph), and  
2 that's where she died.

3 So, you know, I mean, this decision making  
4 doesn't make sense to me.

5 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

6 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** They wouldn't listen to  
7 anything I said. They allowed her -- my daughter, at that  
8 time, she left the father of her kids. He was really  
9 abusive to her. He drank every day. He was a heavy  
10 alcoholic. She came to me for help, and I kept the kids.  
11 And, they were just sick and, you know, like they were  
12 malnourished. They were just -- it was horrifying to see  
13 the conditions of the kids.

14 I kept them, and I tried my best to tell  
15 her, you know, get a place. I'll help you, I'll support  
16 you. Please, let's work together, you know? She met some  
17 guy. She was going online on these things and met some  
18 guy. The workers here let her move the kids in there after  
19 she'd known this guy online for a week. I don't even know  
20 if that's justifiable, you know? And, after she got her  
21 child tax with him, she paid all of his bills -- his rent,  
22 all the bills he had built up, and he kicked them out, and  
23 they spent Christmas in a shelter. And, that's how she  
24 ended up out of Saskatoon, because of the poor decision  
25 making of these workers. They didn't understand the

1 history. They used my criminal past against me.

2 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, that's why you  
3 couldn't ---

4 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. Yeah.

5 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: They didn't place them.

6 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Oh, they didn't place  
7 them with me, you know? But, that, you know, I mean, they  
8 were safe with me. And, if a judge can see that, but Child  
9 and Family Services can't, you know, where's the ---

10 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Mm-hmm.

11 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: --- actual, you know?  
12 I guess to me it would be like the law could see that, you  
13 know what? If someone has done something, it doesn't mean  
14 that they're still that same person, you know? They look  
15 at everything from that point. What is this person; who  
16 are they today, you know? They go and put them with this  
17 guy. And, he throws them out after his bills are paid.

18 My grandkids suffered a lot too, you know.  
19 And, that's why I just, you know. This is important.  
20 There's a lot of anger I have towards these systems, these  
21 workers. They apologized after the fact when she was dead.  
22 "Oh, we're so sorry. You know, we should have, you know,  
23 we should have done things differently." You think?

24 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, how long have you  
25 had your grandkids?

1                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I've had them since  
2                   2014. I got them the end of May. And -- but they were,  
3                   you know, for three or four months with this family, long  
4                   enough to cause harm, long enough to give them memories  
5                   that they'll never, ever forget. And then, too, you know,  
6                   we took them -- when my grandkids disclosed this, they  
7                   didn't disclose right away. I didn't know that that  
8                   happened right away.

9                   Again, their contact with the police; the  
10                  police didn't believe them. That officer terrified them.  
11                  I wasn't allowed to see that video tape. They took them  
12                  into the room on their own, little kids with an officer who  
13                  already decided that I was having them to this to get  
14                  custody, even though I already had custody. She had  
15                  determined that. She didn't believe them. And, that guy's  
16                  walking around free, you know? So, it's okay to molest  
17                  those kids, crawl into bed with them. We don't even know,  
18                  you know, what really all was done to the little ones, eh?

19                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** What year was that, that  
20                  you -- you took the kids, obviously, to the police?

21                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes. Yes. It was same  
22                  year. Like, I mean, after they disclosed it. It was  
23                  probably a month after they came home when my granddaughter  
24                  told me that she remembered laying in bed. Like, they --  
25                  that girl had all the kids kind of in different like

1 crowded little rooms. And, he crawled into bed with my  
2 [Granddaughter]. And, he crawled in behind her. She said  
3 she could feel this guy, you know, the weight of him. And,  
4 when she told me that, like the way her face changed, eh?  
5 "I felt his weight behind me, Grandma. And then, he did  
6 things, you know?" So, when she disclosed, you know, it  
7 took everything to take my heart, you know, from just ---

8 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Be strong for her.

9 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, I was listening,  
10 and I let them speak, you know? And then, once I knew that  
11 that had happened for sure, I knew, you know, get them down  
12 there, you know? To me, it was like okay, you know, this  
13 isn't 1995. This is not, you know? There should be  
14 something there for these kids. Maybe the police would  
15 treat them differently, and they didn't.

16 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, what police are we  
17 talking about?

18 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** It was whatever  
19 their ---

20 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** RCMP?

21 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No, city police here.

22 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Here?

23 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. They have some  
24 special unit that they have here.

25 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** For sexual assaults?

1 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. And, she had  
2 already determined that it was related to custody, and it  
3 wasn't. I already had custody, you know? It was her ---

4 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: ( -- mindset already)  
5 (~~Indiscernible~~).

6 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: When she took them in  
7 there, the kids all told me that she intimidated them.  
8 They all said that they were scared to talk.

9 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, what year is this?

10 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: That was in 2014. I  
11 have never been allowed to see those videos, even as their  
12 legal guardian -- their legal, you know? I'd love to see  
13 them, to see how they were talked to.

14 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, what happened from  
15 that?

16 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Nothing.

17 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: It was ---

18 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. She said that  
19 there was no ---

20 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: What was the man's name?

21 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: No. It was a female  
22 officer.

23 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: No, sorry, but the man's  
24 name.

25 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Oh, the guy. I don't

1 know his name.

2 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Oh.

3 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. That's why I  
4 said, you know, a stranger to us.

5 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Right.

6 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: And, the girl, my  
7 niece, my sister's daughter. I can't even call her a  
8 niece. She's not really -- I don't know them that well.  
9 She kept telling the worker that guy wasn't living there.  
10 And, she'd say, when the workers would come through her  
11 place, she'd say that the men's clothes were my grandson's,  
12 you know? So, she'd try and lie, and say the guy wasn't  
13 there. So, none of the workers knew that -- well, I mean,  
14 they probably knew he was there. They just ignored it, you  
15 know?

16 All of that lack of caring, the lack of --  
17 that lack of equality, you know? It comes down to that.  
18 That we our, you know, we're just disregarded in so many  
19 ways. And, I think that that's why this is so important.  
20 This inquiry has to be done. People need to see, you know?  
21 Like, our experiences have to be able to change something.

22 Like I said, my daughter, you know, has  
23 definitely changed, you know, as a result of her  
24 experiences.

25 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: You want to talk about

1 it?

2 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. She's not the  
3 same. She's hard. She's changed. And, that -- you can  
4 just see it. My son, [*one line redacted - personal*  
5 *information*]. My family's broken. We've been broken since  
6 I don't know when.

7 I'm doing my best to keep the kids in a safe  
8 place. But, in my heart, every time I see my own kids,  
9 because I can't save them. I couldn't save me. We're  
10 surviving. That's all we're doing.

11 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Well, again, you're  
12 certainly showing an incredible strength to do this for  
13 them, which I understand you're doing it for them, for  
14 their future. And, hopefully, it will change things.

15 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I hope. That's my  
16 hope. I'm sorry. I'm kind of jumping around with all of  
17 it. It just seems like so much.

18 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** It is so much. So, do  
19 not apologize. Just take a minute. I do have a few  
20 questions just to clarify a few things, but when you're  
21 ready. Just take your time.

22 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** It's so tiring.

23 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** (Indiscernible).

24 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Absolutely. Please.

25 **(MS. CORALEE GAUDRY) ~~DEBBIE BODKIN:~~** You



1 know what? This is (has been a) (~~indiscernible~~) process  
2 for you going through (and like you said you haven't)  
3 (~~indiscernible~~) brought it altogether at once, right?

4 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

5 **(MS. CORALEE GAUDRY) ~~DEBBIE BODKIN:~~** And,  
6 you know, (it's just that overwhelmingness) ~~it's~~  
7 ~~overwhelming us~~ right now. So, I was just thinking if we  
8 could just take a moment (even just to ground yourself in  
9 where we are right now) (~~indiscernible~~).

10 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. Absolutely.

11 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** So, we'll shut the  
12 recordings off, and just take five minutes just to breathe  
13 and relax. Let's do that, okay?

14 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

15 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** It's 10:54. I'm going  
16 to shut off and take a break here.

17 --- Upon recessing at 10:54

18 --- Upon resuming at 11:14

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, it's 11:14, and  
20 we've resumed the audio tape. So, Debbie, we took a break  
21 there ---

22 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

23 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- just so you could,  
24 you know, gather yourself, and put yourself in a more  
25 grounded and a better place, which is good. I do have a

1        few questions. Just to go back to a few of the  
2        incidents ---

3                    **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

4                    **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- if you're okay with  
5        that?

6                    **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. I'm fine.

7                    **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Not in great detail.  
8        Just a few. One of the first things I wanted to ask is,  
9        where is [Person X] now?

10                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I believe he's still in  
11        Northern Saskatchewan, [Community 1].

12                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay.

13                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

14                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, do you have a fear,  
15        concern, ongoing still in regards to him? Like when is the  
16        last time ---

17                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No.

18                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- you've had contact  
19        or...?

20                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I, you know, I don't  
21        have contact with him. I have seen him around. Like, he's  
22        -- him and his wife play in the casinos. And, they're  
23        occasionally -- once in Battleford, I went there with my  
24        sister who lives in Battleford, and he was there with his  
25        wife. But, it's not a fear of him. Like, there were other

1 people involved in that.

2 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Right.

3 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: He wasn't the only one.  
4 There was a [Person Z] involved, and his cousin, [Person  
5 A]. There was, I believe, five of them. I don't remember  
6 the other two. I know those three.

7 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, you're talking  
8 about involved in the ---

9 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: In that.

10 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: --- murder of this girl?

11 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: This girl, yeah. She's  
12 a teenager.

13 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Okay.

14 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. He is -- oh, how  
15 old is he now? He must be close to 70.

16 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: [Person X] is?

17 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. So, when he was  
18 [Employment information], there had to have been a meeting  
19 in that area, in La Loche, because it happened in the bush.  
20 That's what he told me. It was a bush party.

21 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Okay.

22 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: They were drinking.  
23 They came across this young girl. Like, it was some time  
24 in the early morning or, you know, through their partying.  
25 But, all I know is what he said. He said they gang raped

1 her, each of them, beat her. He said it felt good to beat  
2 her. And, they drove -- or they took her body by boat  
3 across a lake.

4 So, I don't even know how La Loche is, like,  
5 as far as their lakes and things like that, where they  
6 were, actually, because physically I've never -- I've been  
7 to La Loche, but not, you know, not seen the -- how it's,  
8 you know, the bush is, where people live, or anything like  
9 that. Just in one particular place I've been, and that was  
10 just for a meeting. So, I've never been outside of that.  
11 But, he said they took her body across the lake and buried  
12 her. So, there's a body, you know. There -- she's out  
13 there.

14 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, was she Métis  
15 herself, too, or no?

16 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** She was Indigenous for  
17 sure. Yes. Yes. She was just a young girl. They said  
18 teenage girl, so. And, they knew her. So, you know, there  
19 is contact there at some point.

20 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, you said in 2014  
21 you called Crime Stoppers about that?

22 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

23 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, did you also go  
24 into the police station or anything ---

25 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** No.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- or just Crime  
2                   Stoppers?

3                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Just Crime Stoppers.  
4                   At that point, it was like, you know, Crime Stoppers,  
5                   usually they take these things seriously, you would think,  
6                   you know?

7                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

8                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, to me, it was  
9                   anonymous way of doing this, and I didn't have to worry,  
10                  you know, that he was going to send family after me, or  
11                  whatever, you know? Because that was the threat behind it.  
12                  It was his cousin that was with him when it happened.  
13                  There's a lot of people that are related to these people.

14                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

15                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, that area, if he  
16                  wanted to, he could definitely do some harm, you know?  
17                  And, that -- that is a concern. But, at the same time, you  
18                  know, when I think about it, standing up and saying, you  
19                  know what? I know this story, and you need to open this  
20                  up. You need to admit what you've done. And, to me, he  
21                  said it to me, but he used it as a tool to keep me in line,  
22                  you know, to keep me afraid of him.

23                  But, that body has to be there. And, that  
24                  little girl, her family doesn't even know, you know? He's  
25                  never been accountable for it, and he laughs about that.

1 That's the other thing, is that how many of these guys have  
2 gotten away with these kinds of things? And, some of them  
3 are Indigenous, some of them are -- you know what I mean?  
4 They've gotten away with it, you know? I know the  
5 community likes to point fingers, and say oh, it's not the  
6 Indigenous men. But, you know, I mean, the most violent,  
7 most abusive things that happened to me were -- they were  
8 both Indigenous. And, it's not that I'm painting them all  
9 with the same brush. I know a lot of people are very good  
10 people, good traditional people. But, these people are,  
11 you know, they've gotten away with a lot.

12 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Yeah.

13 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. And, that's, to  
14 me, somebody who is capable of murder has been running  
15 around all this time. What else has he done, you know, if  
16 he got away with it once? Those other guys know about it,  
17 and they've kept it silent, you know? That's their big  
18 secret. And, maybe I'm the only one that's been told. I  
19 hope not. I hope not. I hope that they can rattle it  
20 enough to find out where she is, you know?

21 And, it was me having my daughter's urn,  
22 burying my child, you know what I mean? Like, not burying  
23 her, but having her funeral, having that loss, that deep  
24 sense of loss, you know? When I thought of that story, and  
25 it came. It was like it was part of that, you know? It

1 was a loss. It was a mother's loss. And, it was then that  
2 I fully connected to what I needed to do for her, you know?  
3 And, that's when I picked up the phone.

4 And, it was like -- and they didn't even  
5 give you a file number or anything. Nothing. Like I said,  
6 2014, and he's still running around happily, you know?  
7 And, she, where is she? Which lake did they take her body,  
8 you know? Where is it buried? Somebody needs to bring her  
9 home, you know? Maybe her mother has passed away if it was  
10 in the seventies. I was thinking about that. My mom's  
11 gone, you know? She would have been older than -- maybe  
12 even older than me.

13 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Perfect. Thank you for  
14 clarifying. You mentioned being stalked by a gentleman,  
15 [Person Y]?

16 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah, [Person Y]

17 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Oh, [Person Y].

18 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, you called a JP,  
20 and got an order against him ---

21 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

22 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** --- and so on. What  
23 police -- you said police were involved there, too?

24 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. Yeah.

25 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** What police service was

1           that?

2                           **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** That's Saskatoon City  
3           Police.

4                           **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Saskatoon as well.

5                           **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

6                           **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, around about was  
7           that, date-wise?

8                           **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Oh, goodness. I'm  
9           trying to thing now. Three -- maybe 2000. Yeah.

10                          **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Thank you.

11                          **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I was sitting in a  
12           police car, and literally had my hands full of my own hair  
13           where he had dragged me across the floor, pulling out my  
14           hair. He sat on top of me, and he would hit me open hand  
15           so that there was no actual, like, you know bruises, and  
16           the blackening of my eyes or anything like that. He'd hit  
17           me open hand. He sat on top of me, and just back and  
18           forth, back and forth.

19                           I could swallow my blood, you know? And,  
20           when I was in the police car, they didn't charge him. I  
21           had to call my friend, because I had to leave. You know  
22           what I mean? Disregard right there again. Like how much  
23           -- I don't know. Like, for me, I just feel like, you know,  
24           I battle every day to feel like a woman. I battle every  
25           day to feel like I'm worth something.



1 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, you certainly are.

2 Are you okay?

3 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. I'm okay.

4 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: When you talked about  
5 the C-sections ---

6 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah.

7 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: --- the C-sections that  
8 you had, and the comment that the doctor made after you had  
9 had the epidural.

10 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah.

11 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Can you give a time  
12 frame on all that, and which hospital it was?

13 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: [Hospital 1], yeah.

14 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Okay. And ---

15 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: I had all my kids at  
16 [Hospital 1].

17 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: In what year?

18 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: That was '95.

19 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Okay.

20 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. Yeah. October  
21 30th, '95.

22 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And ---

23 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: But, it was a week  
24 before that, and I don't know which, like, exact day. But,  
25 it would have had to be at least a week when I had that

1 appointment where he said if you have another child, you're  
2 going to die. I didn't find out until about probably eight  
3 years after that that was a lie, you know? I was strong, I  
4 was healthy, you know? And, my body could have -- you  
5 know? There was no -- there was no real reason to  
6 sterilize, you know?

7 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Yeah.

8 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** You weren't preventing  
9 a death. You were preventing me from having a child, you  
10 know? So, really, that's sort of where it came down to,  
11 is, like, that wasn't even his decision to make. But, it  
12 was the way it was done, you know? It was like put the  
13 fear there. "I'm going to tell her this, and she's going  
14 to agree," you know?

15 So, I didn't feel like I had control over  
16 that at all. I mean, I was already strapped down. I had  
17 IVs in. They had already done the epidural. I remember --  
18 basically, I don't remember the face even of the  
19 anaesthetics guy, because it's like you're so drugged up to  
20 have that C-section. That's a major surgery. They put --  
21 pump a lot of drugs. Everything seemed cloudy. I just  
22 remember his face coming over and leaning over like that,  
23 you know? He'd already had his surgical stuff on. They  
24 were ready to do the surgery.

25 So, whether they were already cutting, I

1           wouldn't have known, do you know what I mean? So, he just  
2           leaned over. So, obviously, the baby was already -- they  
3           had already taken the baby, and then, you know, do you want  
4           cut or tied? So, he had already had me open. Do you know  
5           what I mean? Like every time I think about this, the face  
6           of him, the curtain, me laying there, and the cloudiness of  
7           it, is all I can really remember, you know? And, it's like  
8           -- I feel like it's some kind of dream, you know? Like,  
9           it's not -- it's not part of who I am. Maybe I'm denying,  
10          you know, that I should have -- I should have questioned.

11                           **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** You can't blame  
12          yourself. Do you happen to know the doctor's name?

13                           **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. Yeah. His name  
14          is [Doctor], believe it or not. Yeah. But, it's just, you  
15          know, I don't even remember signing a document. How could  
16          I sign, you know? My arms are strapped down. I couldn't  
17          have signed, you know? It was just like that drug haze,  
18          you know what I mean? I don't know how to describe it.

19                           Most people are not awake through major  
20          surgery. But, they do with, you know, with C-sections.  
21          They will allow you to be a part of the birth. And, I  
22          wanted to be awake, you know? So, I pushed for that, eh?  
23          And, you know, it was very, very cloudy. But, that --  
24          those certain things, eh?

25                           **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

1                   **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** The fear going in there  
2                   and thinking what's going to happen if anything happens to  
3                   me. If I die because I have another child, there's no one  
4                   to care for my kids, you know? A single parent, a single  
5                   mother. But, they knew that, you know what I mean? The  
6                   nurses and -- it was -- the first child, great, you know.  
7                   I could go in. I bought -- you know, got my private room.  
8                   They didn't question too much because, you know, you're  
9                   doing things a little differently. There's no Child and  
10                  Family Services, eh? But, when it came right down to it,  
11                  you're single, you're Indigenous, and that last surgery was  
12                  different, you know.

13                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And so, with all three  
14                  children you had a C-section?

15                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah.

16                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Okay. Do you remember  
17                  the reasoning why you had a C-section?

18                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. My first one was  
19                  breech, and her leg was up.

20                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Mm-hmm.

21                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Like, she would have  
22                  gotten stuck. Like, everything. It would have ----

23                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Right.

24                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** She might have broken  
25                  her leg, or she would have been -- I wouldn't have been

1 able to give birth. And, I went into labour with her,  
2 right? So, that's my deceased daughter now, yeah.

3 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Oh, okay.

4 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** But, even with that,  
5 there's no medical reason to say that, you know? There's  
6 no -- I read that after, right? I was like reading about  
7 it. And, it says, you know, clearly, if you're healthy and  
8 you're strong, there's no reason why you can't have another  
9 one.

10 Well, why would you say that then? Why  
11 would you plant that knowing, you know, that that -- it  
12 would be something that I would be thinking about, you  
13 know? Like, there's so much that happened around that, you  
14 know? It was like every time I had a relationship after  
15 that, when someone talked marriage, I pushed it back, you  
16 know? I was like no way. No. Because I will never be the  
17 woman you need. I would never be able to give you what you  
18 need, what you think a family should be. And, there was  
19 always something. There was a block, a wall there. I was  
20 not a woman anymore; do you know what I mean? Like, I  
21 don't know how to describe it.

22 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** No, you're doing just  
23 fine. So, just so I'm very clear, though, that when the  
24 doctor made that comment, was that your first C-section or  
25 that was?

1 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: At the last.

2 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Last.

3 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: Yeah. At the last.

4 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: And, just -- so the  
5 first one, you said, because your daughter was breech. And  
6 then?

7 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: The second one was just  
8 like I assumed, because I had had a C-section, it just kept  
9 -- you know what I mean? Just kept doing it that way.

10 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Yes. Okay.

11 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: I didn't think that you  
12 could have had natural birth after that. They just kept  
13 doing the C-section, scheduling me in. And, you know,  
14 there was -- like, to this day, I still suffer problems,  
15 eh? Like, I mean, there's scar tissue, there's pain,  
16 there's more pain than should be. Things are not a normal  
17 woman's kind of experience, you know? And, you don't feel  
18 the same, you know? Like, you just don't feel the same.  
19 There's something different about it, eh? So, that  
20 experience is very hard for me. But, I thought it was  
21 normal, do you know what I mean?

22 MS. DEBBIE BODKIN: Yes.

23 MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW: I went through all  
24 those years thinking that that was okay. Okay, it hurt,  
25 yes. I can't have this, you know? Because I've had four

1 C-sections, I cannot do this. I can't be a wife to  
2 somebody. I can't give them a family. I kept that and  
3 carried it until I heard that first story. And, I -- you  
4 know, everyone attacked this woman. The community attacked  
5 her, you know? "Well, what are you doing having so many  
6 kids?" Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. There were so  
7 many comments when that first story came out.

8 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** This is the first story  
9 from the Inquiry?

10 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yes, from the -- yeah.  
11 And, she talked about a similar thing being told by her  
12 child worker not to have any more children, the doctors and  
13 the combination there. So, when she was speaking about  
14 that, there was too much in common, right? And, I was,  
15 like, this isn't happening. This is not real, you know?  
16 And then, another woman and a similar story. And, I was  
17 like how long have they being doing this? Why -- why us,  
18 you know? Everything, everything took something from us,  
19 you know? Every system, including the one system I  
20 believed was doing the right thing, you know?

21 So, that is new to me, all that. That  
22 experience right now is very new, because now I'm sharing  
23 that with other women. There's other women who have had a  
24 similar experience and had that taken from that too. And,  
25 to me, it's like a rape. It feels like that. It feels

1       like someone did something that I didn't want, but I had to  
2       be quiet. That's what it feels like.

3                   And, I remember all of that around, you  
4       know? Like, I'm very sure, you know, as I go through the  
5       memories, you know, there'll be a little bit more. But, it  
6       was so -- like I was already drugged. They had already  
7       done that epidural. My arms were on those -- there's  
8       things that they strap you down to. And, I remember laying  
9       there. And, I saw the IV and the anesthesiologist. I  
10      can't even remember the face, but he said something about  
11      how I was feeling, eh? And then he leaned over that  
12      curtain, and that was it. And, that was it. And, it was  
13      done. And, it was normal. And, it was okay, you know?

14                   I left the hospital thinking that was  
15      normal. Finding out that it -- a bunch of us were treated  
16      like animals. Like cattle, like some big dogs, you know?  
17      And, that's horrifying in itself. I didn't think they  
18      could take any more than they already did, you know? And,  
19      they managed to do it. And, I think that's why I'm having  
20      so much trouble now, you know? It's like the one thing  
21      that -- the last invasion.

22                   **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** I don't have any more  
23      questions that I have jotted down about all this, all the  
24      things that you've shared with, but I wondered if you would  
25      talk a little bit more about an incident that you brought



1 up when we were off camera there, the being diagnosed with  
2 COPD (and the incident that you went through)?  
3 (~~indiscernible~~)

4 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Oh.

5 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** And, the treatment that  
6 you went through -- your treatment, yes. Where was that,  
7 and when was that?

8 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** That was 2014. I had  
9 my spinal surgery in May, May 20th. And, it was in the  
10 summer that I contracted strep. I thought it was a cold,  
11 like a bad flu or cold. And, of course, you know, you're,  
12 you know, coughing, and you don't generally feel good.  
13 You've got a fever. I go -- I kind of think, you know,  
14 it's going to go away on its own.

15 So, I just kept, you know, taking cough  
16 medicine, doing things, you know, trying. And, of course,  
17 I'm on, right after spinal surgery, on heavy painkillers.  
18 So, I'm not noticing how badly this is changing. And, it  
19 was when I was struggling to breathe that I finally -- I go  
20 to [Hospital 2]. And, this is like probably August of  
21 2014. I had already lost over 25 pounds in six weeks --  
22 six weeks. I was so sick. And, I go there, and they told  
23 me that it was probably just a flu.

24 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Is this in emerg?

25 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** And, there was no need

1 -- yeah, in emergency -- no need to see a doctor; it's just  
2 a flu. Sent me home. I go back again. "Well, you know,  
3 there is a flu that's going around, you know?" They send  
4 me a way again. This is four months after. Already I've,  
5 you know, four plus the six, so almost six months.

6 I go to [Hospital 2]. I take my grandkids  
7 with me. And, we're, you know, I go up there and they put  
8 that little thing on to check your blood oxygen. My blood  
9 oxygen was like 83. That would probably have people  
10 slipping into unconsciousness. They didn't give me oxygen.  
11 They didn't help me. They told me to go and wait in the  
12 waiting room, so we did. And, I didn't know at that time,  
13 you know? Like, I mean, I was struggling, struggling.

14 I had the kids in the waiting room; we're  
15 sitting there and sitting there. Little ones, you know?  
16 These are five years old, and four years old -- three of  
17 them. And then the older kids are like eight and eleven.  
18 It was so hard to just sit for that length of time, you  
19 know? Like, I was in a lot of pain too, and that's with  
20 the heavy painkillers. I was in so much pain. It hurt to  
21 breathe.

22 They didn't see us after seven hours, and I  
23 had to make arrangements for the kids. I thought, you  
24 know, I'll take them home, and I'll call Crisis Nursery to  
25 see if they can go there. And I can come back and wait,

1 because I didn't know how long it would take to get in.  
2 But, I thought, you know, I can't leave, because I can't do  
3 this anymore, eh? I just felt so sick.

4 And, at that point, I was spitting up like  
5 really -- like, I mean, stuff that would clog up my throat  
6 at night. I couldn't breathe. It was getting to the point  
7 where I knew something was so seriously wrong. Every  
8 breath I took hurt. And, we walked there, you know? My  
9 oldest grandkids came back with me after Crisis took the  
10 kids. They took them over to Crisis Nursery. The two  
11 workers that were there, when I told them how long we had  
12 been waiting she said, you know what? She said, "That's  
13 insanity. You need to go back there and let them know you  
14 need to get in right away."

15 And so, we went back. And, this older --  
16 and, I don't know, she was, like, 60 maybe, glasses and  
17 kind of curly hair. She leans over in the registration,  
18 and says to me, "Are you going to stay this time?" The way  
19 she treated me right off the hop, after all of that, I  
20 walked home, got the kids, I walked back, I was just so  
21 beat at that point. And, to hear her talk to me like that,  
22 I was like oh, I just can't do this, you know? And, it's,  
23 like, I don't even care, you know, if you guys can't care.  
24 I'm tired of fighting this, you know? And, I went home.  
25 Took the kids and went home. I was so tired.

1                   And then I just kept -- you know, my days  
2                   got busier with the kids. And then I went to a little  
3                   clinic. It can't be that much later after that. But, they  
4                   still didn't give me antibiotics, because at that point, he  
5                   didn't know what it was. So, he did the throat swab. And,  
6                   it was about two weeks after that, that the results came  
7                   back that it was strep, and I had pneumonia in both lungs.  
8                   So, I'm living like that. Now, I have COPD because of the  
9                   scarring. I shouldn't be this unhealthy right now. So,  
10                  essentially, taking away some of my life, you know?

11                  And, it's that kind of treatment that's so  
12                  common. Like, when I had spinal surgery, too, if I went in  
13                  for extreme pain -- it's sometimes, oh my God. I would sit  
14                  on my couch like just cringing, you know? I couldn't move.  
15                  I was just in so much pain, the inflammation around my  
16                  surgery, and things like that. Like, this scar is from  
17                  that. And, where the surgery is, is so close. Like in --  
18                  just sort of at the base of the neck. And, it affects  
19                  everything in my right side sometimes when there's  
20                  inflammation around there.

21                  If I go to the Emergency -- and they treat  
22                  me like a drug seeker, you know? Like, Toradol is an anti-  
23                  inflammatory, you know? Something like that to bring the  
24                  inflammation down. Help me, help me here, you know. And,  
25                  they treat you like you're a drug addict, right away.

1 "We're not going to give you opioids." I'm already on  
2 them, you know? I don't need that. I need something to  
3 bring the inflammation down, you know? And, I knew that  
4 there's certain things that work. Toradol works, you know.  
5 It actually helps, and then the next I am able to move;  
6 things kind of go back.

7 But, every single time, every single time,  
8 treated like a drug addict and a useless Indian. "You are  
9 here looking for this." You know what? I have a class 1A  
10 licence. I am a welder. I'm a trained counselor. I've  
11 also got my business management. I look after my  
12 grandkids. I don't always dress nice, because I don't like  
13 attention. I don't do things anymore the way normal people  
14 do as a result of all that, but it doesn't make me stupid,  
15 and it certainly doesn't make me someone who you need to  
16 diminish, you know? And, that's why it's important to  
17 speak.

18 So, you know, it's just coming back here --  
19 I worked in B.C. before I came back here. And, I had a car  
20 accident in 2010 that caused all of the injuries to my  
21 back. So, they weren't just, you know, things that  
22 happened over time; they were things that happened. Like  
23 we were run off the road, and I was going highway speed.  
24 It was either t-bone the guy -- he ran through the stop  
25 sign -- or hit the ditch.

1                   So, I suffered injuries, my daughter  
2                   suffered injury, and this all happened as a result. But,  
3                   to be treated that way, you know? It's like your life  
4                   doesn't matter if you are First Nations. The moment they  
5                   see who you are, they don't look at anything else. Like,  
6                   they could care less if I walked in there and said, you  
7                   know what, I have to be at my semi tomorrow. You know, I'm  
8                   here to get a Toradol shot. I'm here to get something for  
9                   my inflammation. "Well, we're not giving you opiates," you  
10                  know. Toradol is not an opiate. Please don't talk to me  
11                  like that, you know?

12                  But, this is the treatment. And, this is  
13                  why it has to stop. They need -- and I've said this. I've  
14                  said this about Saskatoon. They need to have that cultural  
15                  sensitivity training. They need to understand that there's  
16                  a history there, and that treatment does harm. It harms  
17                  families. It harms us in generations. It doesn't just  
18                  happen at that moment. It culminates. It culminates and  
19                  destroys. And, that wave, that's affecting so many people  
20                  out there, you know? And our own -- and I'm going to say,  
21                  you know, our own leadership has ignored it. It's not just  
22                  society. It's not just out there in the non-Indigenous.  
23                  It's in the Indigenous community too.

24                  If we reach out -- I've seen NDP candidates  
25                  and Sask-Party candidates on my doorstep more often than

1 I've ever seen a First Nations representative of my own  
2 government. So, that tells me that maybe we don't really  
3 matter there either, you know? And so, there needs to be  
4 some communication happening to us, you know? Like, we  
5 have to have some part of that. We have to believe that  
6 that covers us, and blankets us, and holds us. And, it  
7 doesn't.

8 So, we're rejected over there; we're  
9 rejected over here, too. But, we're not rejected on the  
10 street. We're not rejected in a certain category, do you  
11 know what I mean? So, that's where we gravitate. That's  
12 where we go. And, we feel like we don't belong. Isn't it  
13 enough, you know?

14 So, it has to be accountability at all  
15 levels. It can't just be to one thing -- to the police  
16 service, yes; to social services, yes. But, how about our  
17 own, you know? That stuff isn't always there for us, you  
18 know? This is the first time -- and I'm so grateful that  
19 you're here from STC. STC has a little board. Like, I  
20 believe that those services coming from the tribal councils  
21 actually do far more than the political representation that  
22 should be advocating for us.

23 So, the system's got to be reworked.  
24 There's got to be something there that I feel I can trust.  
25 Because right now, if someone came in, beat me up in my

1 house, I probably wouldn't call the police, because I'd be  
2 the first one they'd blame. I'd be the one that they  
3 looked at. And, I'd be the one that probably, you know?

4 My own daughter, you know, she's violent,  
5 and she likes to drink a lot, and party a lot. And, she's  
6 young. And, of course, with the kids around, you know, I  
7 don't want that in the home. She's actually, you know,  
8 punched me, broke my nose like literally. I went around  
9 the corner, and she hit me; broke my nose, broke my  
10 glasses. And, I asked the police, you know, listen, this  
11 kid needs to be accountable. She's an adult now, you know?  
12 This is not okay. No charges, you know? And, to me, if  
13 she had that put on her, she wouldn't have assaulted me  
14 again in Calgary. She would not have assaulted me again  
15 recently. Do you understand what I'm saying? Like,  
16 there's a lack of concern. And so, this is perpetuating.  
17 These kinds of things, it's okay. It's okay. The family  
18 dynamic is that way, you know?

19 I am sitting there going oh, my God, you  
20 know? If I think about it, as a young adult, had certain  
21 things happened where there was a concern from the justice  
22 system, concern from certain things, would I have made a  
23 different decision? Possibly. She may not be on the path  
24 she's on if there was some accountability that she had.  
25 She did that in front of the kids. So, my grandkids now



1 have that memory.

2 These are the things that are going through  
3 our families. And, it's rippling from every -- every part  
4 of the system. Every part. It's not just one thing. So,  
5 I hope that everything gets looked at. I hope that even,  
6 you know, even to -- you know, I sent links to my own band,  
7 you know, concerning things, you know? Attention -- let's  
8 bring some attention to this. Let's get involved in these  
9 things. Total just, "No, can't deal with it. No. We're  
10 only for on the reserve."

11 We need to decolonize, too. And, we need to  
12 bring our people tougher, because there are two different  
13 communities. There's one that's working and getting  
14 paycheques, and as soon as everything's done, their day is  
15 done. Our 24/7 is going on over here. We're dealing with  
16 other things. We're having this -- this ripple effect in  
17 the community, and we can't get healed. We can't fight it.

18 I'm terrified, you know, that the future's  
19 going to be like that. And, that's why I think we have to  
20 look at things different, you know? And, that's my  
21 opinion. But, you know, I've been persecuted to no end on  
22 every angle, you know? It's like I think that  
23 reconciliation is about acceptance of responsibility from  
24 both parties, because I don't think I've ever had an  
25 Indigenous representation when I was in a hospital. I

1 don't think anyone ever came to me when I had to deal with  
2 police. Not at all. An Indigenous officer left me to die  
3 in freezing temperatures. So, there's responsibility on  
4 both, you know?

5 I don't see things the same way. I don't  
6 blame everyone. I see my role; I see their role. I see,  
7 you know, what can change. And, I want and hope that that  
8 does change, because if I can say something, I'm going to  
9 talk about things like that. It's not going to be just  
10 about one particular area. You can't just fix one thing.  
11 It's like, you know, you fix one wheel on a car, and the  
12 other three tires are flat, you're still not going to go  
13 anywhere, you know? So, it has to be done properly, you  
14 know, where everybody has to mean something.

15 And that going forward, it can't just be,  
16 you know, about money and compensation. It has to be about  
17 people understanding that there's a journey here. And,  
18 we've come through enough. We've lost enough. So, help us  
19 to build again, you know? We don't see things the same  
20 way, you know? Like, the ownership, and the money, and all  
21 that, Indigenous people have a very hard time understanding  
22 that we own something. We're more comfortable not doing  
23 that. Some are comfortable, because they've grown up in  
24 it, but very few. Most of us will say, you know, that it  
25 goes against how we believe that we walk this earth, right?

1                   My tradition is so strong that I actually am  
2                   poor people who live that way, because I see that as a  
3                   worship. I see that as a, you know, you're spending more  
4                   time with that than you do with Creator, than you do with  
5                   the prayers, than you do with the things that matter --  
6                   your children, grandchildren. You're so busy owning and  
7                   building.

8                   But, we need to build differently. We need  
9                   to have some healing. We need to do that, put that  
10                  foundation in place in a good way, because right now, I  
11                  just feel lost, and I'm not the only one.

12                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Thank you for sharing  
13                  all that. You were a wonderfully eloquent and powerful  
14                  speaker, the way you share your feelings and everything you  
15                  said there.

16                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I have to speak, and  
17                  it's in my heart. I get up every day thinking that there  
18                  could be change. There could be.

19                  **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Yeah. And, you're  
20                  making a huge step towards that.

21                  **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I get to feel very  
22                  humbled by all the women who their families and loved ones  
23                  coming here to tell that story. I was lucky, you know,  
24                  that I made it through those experiences, you know? And,  
25                  I'm here to raise my grandkids. I feel very blessed. But,

1 I feel very honoured, you know, to be part of this process,  
2 because I think it's so important. You guys have the job  
3 now. We gave you -- we gave you. We're putting our  
4 burdens here. And, I appreciate that so much that I don't  
5 have to carry this alone, because it's so heavy.

6 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Well, I'm honoured that  
7 you were able to share it with us today.

8 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Thank you.

9 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Do you feel that you've  
10 been heard and shared what you needed to?

11 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Yeah. Definitely, you  
12 know? Like I said, you know, it's just been a lifetime of  
13 this.

14 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Well, again, you're an  
15 incredibly strong woman to have lived all you've spoken  
16 about, and then have the strength to come here and speak  
17 about it in order to help future generations.

18 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** (Indiscernible).

19 **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** Thank you.

20 **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** I believe that this is  
21 the beginning of something really good. I do. I pray to  
22 God it is. I know that it is. And, I -- I know that a lot  
23 of forces come against us, you know. But, I know that the  
24 way will be clear, because so many of us believe. There  
25 are women here; I know they're laying that burden down. I

1           just want my heart to be free, to be like everyone else.  
2           And, I thank you for giving me this chance to say it, to  
3           let it go.

4                       **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** You're very welcome. We  
5           thank you in return. Well, if there's nothing else, I will  
6           shut the video recorder off, and we'll just have a little  
7           discussion (about after-care for yourself) (~~indiscernible~~).

8                       **MS. DEBBIE IRONBOW:** Okay. For sure.

9                       **MS. DEBBIE BODKIN:** So, it's 11:50. And,  
10          the video is off.

11          --- Upon adjourning at 11:50

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1 LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

2

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

7

8

9



10 Shirley Chang

11 March 13, 2018