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Margaret Scott

Statement gathered by Kerrie Reay

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MS. KERRIE REAY: And we are now recording on the audio tape. So for the record, this is Kerrie Reay. I'm a statement taker with the National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. And today is March the 21st, 2018, and we are in Thompson, Manitoba, and the time is now 2:02 -- or 2:12. With me today is Margaret Scott. Margaret Scott is with the Cross C-R-O-S-S Lake First Nation and has travelled here to Thompson today to provide her truth as a survivor, and as I said, Margaret, I just want to confirm on the record that you're consenting to the disclosure and it being a public statement?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And the time and the space is yours, so I invite you to start when you feel comfortable.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And wherever you want to start?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. I was -- I was listening to a lady speaking yesterday, and it brought up a lot of my -- it took me back in 1980s, around there, '79 or
when I was only 14 years old at that time. And she --
she -- she shared a story she was talking, I see myself
there and it -- I thought I was had healed, I thought I was
on my right healing journey, but in a way, I am -- I am too
but -- but it took a lot of me yesterday, it took a lot out
of me I had to sit down with that lady after to take make
sure they was one of them too to tell her that she's not
alone.

I'm -- it happened when I was 14 back home
and there's just this -- this one man maybe about six years
older than I am at that time and I was -- it was 14, I was,
you know, just a young woman, you know looking, trying to
make myself any possible way that I could look -- you
know -- to look pretty. That I am -- I am pretty, inside
of me. And then this man, like, he was a very good friend
of mine, I used to talk to him before and he always used to
tell me that I was pretty and he always used to -- even if
I seen him, if there was with a dance, I would see him
there, and he would ask me to go dance with him and I
would. And then my friend would tell me, oh, so why do you
have to dance with him? And then -- and then I said, he
wants to dance with me, I said.

So one time, one night, I had -- I had a
little -- I had a drink too. My friends did, and -- and I
came from a good home, a good home. At home, I never used
to wake up when there's alcohol or a bottle on the table, nothing -- or I never used to get -- wake up in -- in the middle of the night, there's a party, I never had that because where I was brought up, it was a very strict home and we were -- and there was always food and there was always clean and I understood that today when my grandma went to residential school and then my mom gave me that.

After that -- so we went to the stands and this guy -- this man, he was a man, I could say he was a man already, so we danced and then the dance was over, we had a little drink with my friends and then -- but I wasn't really drunk, I know everything. And then my friend told me we'll go home together, and then I said. Yeah, then this man came to me after that and then he said, oh, you had a drink, I said, yeah, I said, but just -- just a little bit, I said, and then he said, come here, he said. It was dark. It was dark at night, and then he said come here, like, it's over, the dance was over, somebody is chasing me he said, I don't want to see this person, he said come here, come hide with me, he said and I ran with him and he ran to the bush and then I chased him there. And we were in the bush, and then we were -- we were standing there, I said, where is this person that's chasing you? And then he didn't say nothing, he just looked around. And he said, I'm going now and then he started
talking to me, he said, did you know that you're pretty.
He said that to me. And I said, I don't know, I guess.
I felt scared already there, I know it's not right. I felt scared. Then he punched me. He punched me, and I fought back. I tried to fight back, but he was too strong. Then he was putting his hand on my mouth like this, and I tried to fight back, and then he keep punching me, and finally, probably, it was still dark, he was still, he was on top of me, and -- and then when I woke up, it was the sun was coming up. He was still on top of me, and then I said, I start crying there, and then he helped me. He helped me put on my clothes. And then I was just naked. And then I cried. Then he cleaned me up at the back, like, taking those branches from my whatever, grass, he cleaned me up. And then he said, don't -- don't tell anybody. And I was just scared. I couldn't even say anything then -- then I heard vehicles, and then I didn't want to run, I was scared. And then he -- he hugged me, and then -- and then I seen some people walking around in the highway, and then I seen my friend there with her boyfriend, and she came running to me. I ran to her and I cried to her. I said what's wrong, I said, nothing, just let's go home now. And I was just shaking. I said what's wrong. I said nothing. I said just let's go and that man follow us, I said, let's go, I said. And then her boyfriend said what's wrong,
Margaret, I said, nothing. So we left, I went home.

And then after that, my mom was a single mom, just my sister and my three brothers were there, my four brothers were there. But they were just kids and then it was during Indian days, like, when we have these summer festivities. That was the time, then I took off my clothes, and I had -- I hid them, I put them in a plastic pipe and I put on my nightgown, and I was just -- I was just sore. And then I crawled in to bed with my sister and then my mom, my mom woke -- what time did you come home, my mom said? I said, I come home -- I came home anyway, I said. And then my mom told me, said well, since you didn't have enough sleep, I'll let you sleep this time. We're going to go a watch the games, and then I said -- I didn't say nothing. I just lay there. And then my sister said, where are you -- my sister said to me, she said, you should come with us. I said no, I'll just stay. And then as soon as they left, and then I -- before bathtubs, we had these big basins, big pans, and I put water there, I pulled water, put it there, and I was just sore, my body was just sore. I felt there was nothing in me, everything was gone in me and then I put -- I put water there, and then I took it -- and I took it to the room. I carried that basin there, and I put some more water. And I put a -- a knife on the door to lock it, and then I sat there, and I took
off my clothes and I had bruises all over me, my breasts, even my neck. Marks, fingerprints and right here too, when I washed myself, I just, all over. And then I start -- I cried and I just cried and I cried. And then there was a knock on the -- on my bedroom and my mom said Margaret and then open the door, I said, we forgot something in the room, she said. And I said, wait, wait mom as I tried to wipe my tears and wash my face so he won't know. And then my mom couldn't wait, and then that push it a bit like this, and my mom saw me, and I was sitting there, my mom saw my bruises. Then he -- she just looked at me. She didn't say nothing. She left. And then my mom left. She knew I had these bruises. And then so I -- so I sat there, and I washed myself and I dumped the water, I did everything on my own and I sat -- and I lay on the bed there, like this cuddling and I cry and I couldn't even more. It was so sore. I was just shaking and I wiped myself, and I was bleeding lots, keep going to the toilet and it was awful. I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror. And after that, I sat there and then my -- my mom never asked me anything, she never did.

And after that, I was so scared all the time. I couldn't even go anywhere by myself after. I had nightmares. I was sweating a lot. Even if I hear something, I would cry. Even if I go for walks, if I'm
alone in bush, I'll have an anxiety attack because I seen
that bush if I look down, I will have that -- and I just
come up and we would go berry picking with my mom, and I
would say, I'll stay home and she wouldn't ask me why. I
don't want to go. I'll just say I don't like bees. I'll
just say that, she won't ask me. There's lots of things my
mom didn't want to ask me after that. I don't -- and then
so one time so it went on and on and on and I used to see
this -- my perpetrator in the community and he would make
fun of me, he would make jokes on me and he would say
things to me when he sees me in a public area, making
stupid remarks or laughs or -- it was just too much and I
start going to school taking -- going to university, taking
counselling, sexual abuse courses, and I found myself
there. This is not normal for me to live like this to live
in fear the rest of my life I said that to myself.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you remember how old
you were when you were having that self-talk?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: That -- when I was
about probably about 21.

MS. KERRIE REAY: 21.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So seven years you had
lived with that fear and that anxiety?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.
MS. KERRIE REAY: And that secret?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, that secret, after that, I couldn't even tell my -- I got married when I was 22. I couldn't even tell my husband anything. When I first met my husband, when I first liked him, I could never be alone with him when we were going out. We have to have a friend, have to have a friend with me. Too many times he wanted to break up with me because of my fearness, and I couldn't tell him.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Did he ask?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: He asked me one time, and I said, there's nothing wrong with me, it's just that I'm not ready you know, and that was his friend that -- and every time I was with him, if he sees us, he'll come and talk to him. You know, it just used to make me feel like -- said come to a party, bring Margaret, he's a party animal and when we were going -- he said, why does he say that, you know, I don't know. And then it went on and on and on. And finally my husband told me -- I told him, I said, I have to tell you thing, I said I said, it's -- it's in the darkroom. You know, the room was -- I have to keep this room dark. He said why? I said that's the only way I can tell you. He said, okay. And that's when I told him my story and he turned on the light and then I (inaudible) please don't hurt him. He said, no, I won't. I won't hurt
him. But yeah, he did, he did hurt him. He -- he beat him
up. He went to go look for him. And I told him, I said, I
wanted to even though I didn't -- I didn't feel right but
the way you told me your story, he said it's just not you
that he made fun of, he was my friend and make fun of the
other girls too, he said. And then maybe he did the same
thing to him, he said, I said maybe. So that was it. And
then after that I became a mature woman and then I met him
in an elevator at the band office. And -- but he was still
doing that to me after when he still got beaten up. He was
still doing that to me but my husband carried that.
Sometimes when he would get mad, he'll bring that to me,
because that was his close friend. Maybe you were asking
for it, and then I said, why did you have to make me tell
you and now you don't believe me. I told him, I shouldn't
have told you my story now that you bring me these back to
me. I said you're hurting me again By not believing me and
you're giving me this. And then after that -- and the
after that this guy he wept on the elevator, and I said,
okay, Margaret, go, I said to myself. It was on the second
floors, in that elevator, and there he was. I ran and I
went to the elevator with him. I said, what. He said -- I
said, I'm married now he told me. Yeah, I said, I'm mature
enough now I said, I'm not 14 anymore. I said you took
everything away from me when I was 14 and I'm still haunted
with it. I said, you make me feel dirty when I was 14.

You took everything away from me when I had -- you make me feel so ashamed. And at that time I couldn't help myself. You always used to make fun of me and then he said, open this elevator, let me go or I'll start screaming. I said, scream. I'll scream what you had done to me when I was 14. I'll tell the people that you work with. Scream. They'll listen to you. But nobody listened to me. Nobody heard my voice, I said, scream, and I'll scream back to you what you had done to me. And when I was done, he took off, he had a papers like this because he worked there and he took off. He never came back. I didn't see him for a long time. And then it became even though he was an alcoholic before he used to drink a lot, and then after that, he drank for so many weeks and then he came to me at the -- he never used to do that to me after what he had done he came to me and I looked at him. And I said, what? What? I'm sorry, he said. And I looked at him and still I didn't accept it, he was drunk and he passed. He died of a heart attack. He passed away. And when he died, I don't know what I felt, but I -- but I did what I had to do. To go on my healing journey.

And then after that, I start sharing my stories with my friends and my relatives. And then one of my -- my auntie, she's an eldest, oldest auntie, I told her
my story and I said to her my mom knew, my mom knew about
my process. My mom knew I was hurt, but she never asked
me, I said. I said when my mom used to hug me, I said, she
would hold me tight and she would kiss me in my forehead.
I always wanted my mom to ask me what happened to me. But
she never asked me, I said. I wanted my mom to hold me, I
said. The what happened to me, but -- but to hold me and
tell me what happened to you, but still she never did, I
said. Does that mean she didn't care for me. My auntie
looked at me she said no, something happened to us. But it
was more to your mom she said. She said don't blame your
mom, don't blame yourself, she said. And then I ask her
again, I said did something happen to my mom? But I don't
want to share with you. She said that's why she didn't
want to, she said she's -- she shut downright there I said
only me and my sister knew. My mom knew you were like
this. I told her, I'm ready to tell me her story I said, I
know -- I'll know when you're ready to listen, she said.
My oldest aunty is still alive. I went to her grave alone
and I told my mom. I said, all this time I blame
everything. All this time, I thought you don't even care,
but you did care. The wind was blowing in to my face and I
have kids of my own today, they're adults now, they have
nieces and nephews. If I see a bruise on any of them, I
always ask what happened. I don't want them to go through
what I went through. Even if they have bruises in their
legs where -- I always ask, what happened. Even if they
have a little scratch. What happened? I don't want them
to go through what I went through. Because I had that pain
with me still today it hurts me and when I use the
washroom. What damage he had done to me. What that lady
said when somebody examined -- when the doctor had examined
me, I was just crying. When I go for my women's personal,
I just cry and that -- and they always help me, that's how
bad it was for me to get raped.

It was very hard when I seen these missing
and murdered women and girls, imaging them what they --
what they go through tortured. That's why I always wanted
to be a participant in these because I was raped, and it's
not a very good feeling to carry that. And that's why I
always say I was brought up in a strict home, it was like
shh don't say that you know. And then people are brought
up in an alcoholic home, they're the ones that are more
open they could tell, but they did not listen, and me, when
I brought up in a strict home, it was just because my
granny went to the Residential School. Everything has to
be perfect, the house. Even the clothes. Even the food.
Even just the way we are. The way -- I'm not saying we
come from a -- a good or bad family, but we come from a
family that, that were there, but we didn't have much of
that time to share about our feelings. The true feelings.
And I wanted to say that if you carry things too much in
you, you know, your body will act up on you.

Ever since I start on my healing journey,
before I share my story, I always used to have a bleedy
nose for no reason, and then I noticed myself, I was --
this elder, she told me -- I told her, do you still have a
blesdy nose. I said no, because it was in you when he used
to carry that, he said. Right away, and that's why I
wanted to encourage all the young women, not just women,
but men also, young boys, you know, I didn't go to the
police. I felt that I would be laughed at if I go forward.
I felt so ashamed. Like I felt it was me that was asking
for it. But now, as I become mature woman, I didn't ask
for it. I didn't deserve it. And I'm always happy when
tell on other people the times they had done to that
because I didn't help this guy what he had done to me, I
helped him to hurt other women. If I would have that time
go forward maybe he would have put to a stop -- maybe it
would have stopped. But I didn't help him. But I didn't
do that, I help him more to help other girls.

And then I had shared my story at one
other time, four women came to me that was the same guy who
did that to me too, and I encourage anybody too, don't let
anybody do that to you, you know, as a woman, you know, be
strong. You're not alone. You were weak at one time, but now, we are strong. There's people -- there's a lot of people that are supporting us, resources.

As Aboriginal women, as a Cree woman from back home, from Cross Lake, I don't think I'm not going to allow for my sisters, Aboriginal sisters to go through what I went through, that's why I'm sharing my story. Because it's not easy. It's hard to victim, a victim of -- I'm a victim of being a survivor when I got brutally raped, and that's why I encourage all the people, all the women not to feel alone. There's a storm once in my life, the life today, I'm living in this -- I'm in peace because I'm on my healing journey and I'm trying to help other women as much as I can. Whatever happened to you or to me or to anybody, it's not our fault.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. But thank you for listening to me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And thank you for sharing. If I -- if you don't mind, one of the things that has struck me is the strength that you have found in your journey.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And for those -- for those young women and those young girls what was it for you
that you found that strength to -- or what happened for you
to make that decision when you were 21 that you realized
that you needed too do something for yourself?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Because I didn't want
to feel so scared anymore and I didn't want anybody to put
me down for, you know -- especially when I -- it wasn't my
fault.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Mhmmm.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And I went to school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Now, did you go to
residential school?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I went to the
residential school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I went there for four
to five years.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And how old were you when
you went there?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I was -- when I was
13, 14, and I came out when I was 18.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. And I seen him
one time when I was getting off the bus and he knew I was
on the bus and he wrote me a letter, the perpetrator, and I was just shaking, it was a very nasty letter.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And so your -- when you said you went to Residential School, was that a day school, did you go there during the day or did you stay there?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: No, I stayed -- I stayed there, like, I only come home Easter and Christmas and summer, yeah. When I went to the Residential School, he wasn't there, he was back home and I felt that freedom, but when I used to come home, I didn't feel like coming home, but I had to come home for my mom.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right, right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And for the commission, coming back to your community realizing that the perpetrator was still part of your community, how many people live in Cross Lake, how many people in your reserve?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: At that time, probably, right now, or before then?

MS. KERRIE REAY: Back then when you were --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, maybe about 3,000.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, the population is getting higher, yeah.
MS. KERRIE REAY: So the difficulties coming back to the community for you?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. It was difficult for me when I used to come back and I couldn't share it with anybody.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right, right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And sometimes I didn't feel like coming home.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And then you started your healing journey, you were saying at 21 --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- about. Did you leave your community or were you able to do that within the community, did -- were there services in Cross Lake that helped you?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: When I went -- when I went to university, like, I used to work and go to school one week, and we had a lot of healing where we were going to school because they always used to tell us to work in the field, like, as a -- to help -- to help people in our community that we had to heal ourselves before we could --

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: So that's how I became to do my -- to work on myself and when I was going to school and that's where we were told you won't be able to
help anybody if you -- you have to help yourself first.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. What about services for -- and I do recognize this is the '70s that we were speaking of?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: What kind of services were on the reserve to help young women at that time?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: No, I didn't see anything that time.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. And was the policing on the reserve or was the detachment somewhere else?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yes, yes, there was a policeman -- yeah, policing there already.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. And you didn't feel comfortable going?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: No, I didn't want to go. I wanted to, but I didn't want to go.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I really wanted to go.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And it's hard when you're so young?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, it was so hard.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And not feeling -- and I sense from what you've shared today, it was isolating and
for whatever reasons your mom had --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- from what you've learned from your auntie --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- she wasn't able to be there for you?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And it sounds like that was quite isolating for you that you really felt that you were on your own?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I was on my own.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And your sisters?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: My sister.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Your sister, right, because you had three brothers?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Your sister knew, you never shared?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: No, that was my second -- I'm the oldest, and she was the second sister, and then, no, I couldn't -- no, I couldn't tell her. I didn't want to, but -- but I looked after her real good, you know, if we go to the dance together, I make sure that I'm with her.
MS. KERRIE REAY: So it sounded like your life became always about safety --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- for her?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Still today.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Still today?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Still trying to make sure people are safe?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I'm trying to look after my nieces and nephews and my brothers for them to be saved.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Have you shared your story with your family now, you've talked about sharing and others --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, I saw -- like, I'm telling my nieces and my brothers, I think that they're ready to listen to me, I share it with them.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And how have you felt being able to share with your siblings?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: It felt good and they came to me and tell me this is what happened to me too.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So they have some secrets as well?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, they have
secrets too, and they tell me, I need to tell you this, this is what happened, and like they're I don't want -- I never want to tell them, you know, keep quiet, you know I always tell them, you know what, I said we've never going to tell our kids to shut up. I said we're never -- we're going to listen to what they have to tell us.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So the experience from your grandmother's experience in residential school, did your mother go to residential school?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Day school.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Day school. So could have had similar experiences as your grandma as well?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: What about your dad, did he go --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: My mom was a single mom.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And I don't really want to go further on -- my I never wanted to find out who my dad is.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: That's why I don't --

MS. KERRIE REAY: No.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.
MS. KERRIE REAY: So back to your healing journey because part of the commission is the legacy for future generations, and to learn from experience such as yourself as an Indigenous woman who is a survivor, who is really become a bit of a warrior for your family and ensuring the safety and the care of your family, for other families, when we were talking about that journey, and you were saying you were learning about self-care and sharing when you were university, how -- how did you continue that being married, raising a family, because at first you didn't share with your husband, any insight as to because it sounds like you struggled.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, I struggled.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Because when you finally did share with your husband, he brought it up at times when you were in disagreement or in argument, and then -- and then it -- then it felt from what I heard you say is that it became your fault that you were hearing from him?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So thoughts for the commissioners in terms of -- in every situation is different, but in terms of your own, were you and your husband able to reconcile that, you know, this isn't something that should be said to a woman who has suffered such violence?
MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, like when he used to say to me after, he always used to -- he always used to suck me down almost, almost -- almost, and then I would just, okay. Then, nobody doesn't believe me, you know, and then I would go up again, and said, no, I'm not going to let him do that, no more, I said, no more am I going to let anybody do this to me, you know, I would stand up.

MS. KERRIE REAY: But it took a lot to stand up?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, it took a lot, and it took a lot argument, but I wouldn't keep quiet. Until --

MS. KERRIE REAY: So maybe that's part of your story?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: That's what makes me strong.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Is making sure you stand up for yourself?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: I stand up for myself.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And find the confidence and the strength to do that because that does take a lot.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You know, especially when
you're young?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: But one thing I wanted to make sure that when we used to have this disagreements and I'm glad he never did, he wouldn't hit me. He would never hit me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So a healthy relationship.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Healthy relationship.

MS. KERRIE REAY: No violence?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: We would argue, but he wouldn't hit me, that's one thing, he -- like, he wouldn't do to me, and he would be the first one to walk out the door, he said you always have to win, and you know, and I said, he'll come back, I know he'll come home. Don't start anything, I just want to come and sleep. So I'll just leave in peace.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And how many children?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Three.

MS. KERRIE REAY: You have three.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmmmm. I have three. My oldest is 34, 29 and 27, and I'm a foster parent of three.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, okay.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. I'm a -- I lost my husband eight years ago.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Oh, I'm sorry.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. And ever since I lost him, I opened my house for other kids because my kids are all adults and they have their own lives.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Lovely.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And I always tell the kids that I'm having in my home, foster kids, I said always feel safe here. If you don't feel safe, don't take it somewhere else, let's deal with it here.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right, right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: They're very lucky to have you.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And on your community, in terms of the services, are they any better? Like, for young girls?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, yeah, they have lots of resources now. I always tell them that when I get calls in the nursing station or RCMP when somebody gets raped, I always tell them, you're very strong that you come forward. You're a strong woman or young man because when I was your age, I said, I wasn't strong enough like you. I gave them that power.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So you're sharing your
1 strengths now in your community?
2 MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.
3 MS. KERRIE REAY: And that's a part of your
4 legacy to your to your community for the future, for future
5 generations?
6 MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.
7 MS. KERRIE REAY: Helping to teach is what
8 I'm hearing, helping to teach? Would you have any
9 recommendations for the commission in terms of how to --
10 what -- what ways could we help Indigenous women and girls
11 to be safe in their communities, and outside of their
12 communities?
13 MS. MARGARET SCOTT: For living in the
14 reserve for so many years, what I would like to see, when I
15 listen to the news all over, all over the nation, there's
16 always housing problems in every reserve, maybe if they
17 have -- like, get more houses in our communities, maybe the
18 young women will not move out from the reserve. I think
19 that's the reason most of them moved out because there's
20 lack of housing in our communities.
21 MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay.
22 MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And then some of them
23 get stuck there, and they raise their kids there, you know,
24 that's when they lost this things (inaudible) in the
25 reserve because in the city they just live in a life that
that they only see lights and lots of things that are
happening in the city.

MS. KERRIE REAY: The excitement.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: The excitement, more
excitement, and then when they were raised here, the kids
on the reserve, it's more like land, there's a difference
between -- it's about housing.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Safe housing.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Safe houses, and also,
you know, get their own place, apartments, and independent
living.

MS. KERRIE REAY: So --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Parenting skills, more
parenting skills. More sex education, sex education
classes because there's kids that are having kids at an
early age.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. Do you continue
where you live in Cross River?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Cross Lake.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Cross Lake, do you still
see the residential -- the systemic issues that continue
from the residential school experience?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Oh, yeah. Oh, it will
always be carried on. It will never be cured, yeah. It
will always be there. Yeah, pass on and pass on, yeah.
MS. KERRIE REAY: Do you have any thoughts about what could be -- what could help to stem that ongoing flow of systemic racism?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: It depends -- it depends, like, I guess there's this one time, like, it -- if there's an ongoing thing in a family, like, domestic violence and only one person has to come out to tell there's a lot of violence going on for that violence to be stopped. It only takes one person. But if it doesn't -- if it doesn't stop, it will pass on to generation to generation. Yeah, that's the way for me as worker in my community, that's the way I see it.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Is there anything else you would like the commission to know, anything else you would like to share, or recommendations?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: No.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Well, I would really like to thank you Margaret, it took a phenomenal amount of courage and strength to come and share such a personal story.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Such a personal truth.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Mmhmm.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And would like to thank you on behalf of the commission for coming and taking the
time, you've travelled some distance to be here, about
three hours you said, so I would just like to again thank
you for that.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Thank you. Okay. So
it's -- it looks like, I'm sorry, 3:05, we're going to
conclude.

(Off the record)

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. We are going back
on the record, it is 3:08 and Margaret has a few things
that she would like to share, and Margaret, please.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: After, after -- I'm on
my healing journey, but before on my heal journey, I used
to smell him, how he really traumatized me. I smell that
cologne or I could smell the grass and it wasn't a very
good smell that -- the smell of -- the grass of outside
or -- I don't know, but after, when I heal myself, on my
healing, that -- I noticed myself, I don't smell it no
more.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Okay. And then now,
on my -- I was thinking about this a lot, and I think I'm
ready to go for -- 36 years ago, where he 56 minus 14, I
don't know, how many years is that?

MS. KERRIE REAY: 42.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: 42, 42 years, I wanted
to go back where he did -- where I got -- where I was -- where I got raped and I want to ask my chief, Kathy Marik (phonetic) to come with me, just me and her to do some with -- because I know my chief is a believer in traditional way.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: And I really want her to come with me. She's a very strong believer, things like that and I want to ask her to come with me.

MS. KERRIE REAY: And that's one of the things actually that we didn't speak to when we were speaking earlier, and that was about your culture and your traditions and how has that played a role in the strength that you've had on your journey?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: What do you mean?

MS. KERRIE REAY: Just like are you using traditional means, smudging, are you using the traditions in your culture --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yes, I am.

MS. KERRIE REAY: -- to help you move, to help you move on your journey, your healing journey and what would those be?

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah. Even though I'm a strong Catholic, but I still believe in what they believe in because there's only one man upstairs, and when I was
1 growing up that, I hardly seen that, but when I was on
2 my -- on my healing journey, I used -- I seen them doing it
3 a lot and I watched and I start doing it too and it really
4 helped me a lot.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Okay. Good.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: It just makes me feel
after when I do my smudging and all that, it makes me feel,
like, more, more powerful as an Aboriginal, as Cree woman,
as a Muskeg women, and that's why I wanted to ask Chief
Merik to come with me. I know where it is, I seen it every
day, and I'm ready to go there.

MS. KERRIE REAY: Right. I would like to
invite you to speak in your Cree language, if you would
like to your end your testimony today in your own language.
I invite you to share or say something or --

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: Yeah, okay.

MS. KERRIE REAY: If you would like.

MS. MARGARET SCOTT: (Speaking Cree) I'm
about three hours away from where I live. (Speaking Cree)

MS. KERRIE REAY: Thank you: it is now
3:15.

--- Whereupon the statement concluded at 3:15 p.m.
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best of my skill and ability, accurately transcribed from a pre-existing recording the foregoing proceeding.

Stephanie Menard, CSR(A)