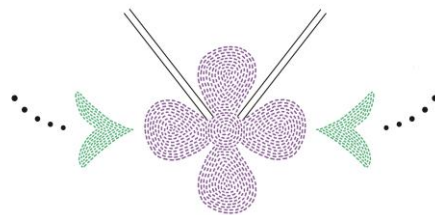


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part I Statement Gathering
Sheraton Hotel
St. John's, Newfoundland-and-Labrador**



PUBLIC

Tuesday October 16, 2018

**Statement – Volume 509
Daniel Benoit,
In relation to Judy Benoit**

Statement gathered by Chanel Blouin

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NOTE

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

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Reporter's Certification 82

Statement gatherer: Chanel Blouin

Documents submitted with testimony: none.

1 St. John's, Newfoundland

2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, October 16, 2018.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** This is Chanel Blouin a
4 statement taker with the National Inquiry into Missing
5 Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls at St. John's,
6 Newfoundland on October 16th, 2018 and the time is 9:59.
7 Today I'm speaking with Daniel Benoit of the Qalipu, First
8 Nation who resides in Stephenville. He's here to tell his
9 truth for his mother named Judy Benoit. She was murdered
10 on July 23rd, 1997 at Port au Port. He's also here to
11 share his truth as a survivor. You are here voluntarily to
12 provide your truth for Judy Benoit, your mother, and to
13 provide your personal truth as a survivor. And you agree
14 to the videotaping and audio taping of your truth?

15 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yes.

16 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

17 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So the story about my
18 mother, it -- you know, the murder took place on July 23rd,
19 1997. That's not to say that there hasn't been issues
20 prior to that date. Growing up my father, Dale Ogden, he
21 was a very abusive man, suffered from, you know, drug abuse
22 and he never really -- he wasn't a normal human being.

23 He had to have control over everybody,
24 whether it was a child, a woman or even another man. So

1 growing up for me, there was me and my sister. I do have a
2 blood sister. We suffered a lot of abuse as kids. You
3 know, we witnessed -- well, my sister was too young so I've
4 personally witnessed my mother being subject to a lot of
5 abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse. I can't really say so
6 much sexual abuse but I'm sure there probably have been
7 issues of that as well.

8 Growing up, you know, there -- I do remember
9 as a child that he had other encounters with other women
10 during the time he was with my mother but he had also told
11 me on numerous accounts that he was going to in fact hurt
12 my mom. When and where, he never did say but I do remember
13 being in the truck with him, because he worked with
14 [Employee] at the time in Stephenville, and he had always
15 made it a point to remind me that this was going to -- this
16 was going to happen. And as a child, I mean, I never did
17 know, you know, the difference between what he was talking
18 about and what he truly meant because I was only three,
19 four years old.

20 So he was the type of man that he came
21 across as a real gentleman. He knew how to say the right
22 things to the right people to make himself look like he was
23 the ideal man. And my mom was very young. And you know,
24 I'm almost walking in her footsteps, you know, story wise.
25 She was -- she had me when she was 21. I had my first son

1 where he was getting more and more physical with my mom so
2 she decided to file for a restraining order. And for a
3 short period of time we did spend some time at the Willow
4 House is Corner Brook but I remember speaking to my aunt as
5 I grew older and she told me that after a few nights of
6 staying at the Willow House my mother had an incident one
7 night where she had felt as if she was being watched and
8 she knew when she looked out the window she had seen a
9 vehicle almost similar to his drive past where we were too
10 and she knew at that moment in time that he knew where we
11 were.

12 So she took it upon herself to leave the
13 Willow House and the protection of the Willow House and we
14 went back home.

15 Shortly after that I -- the timeframe is,
16 you know, a little fuzzy to me because I was so young but
17 on the night of July 23rd, 1997 was the night that the
18 murder actually took place. And my mother always had an
19 axe out on her front patio that she used to use for
20 splitting wood and stuff like that. And, you know, this
21 restraining order was still put in place so he had no
22 reason to be anywhere near us at the time. Though every
23 night he used to drive up and down the street. He used to
24 park at the church hill and just watch the house. And
25 there was always a great, big church in Port au Port. It's

1 still there until today right across from our driveway.
2 And that's where he used to park and just kind of watch to
3 see what was going on. I don't know if he was trying to
4 see if she was involved with another man or -- I guess it
5 was just coming down to the control.

6 So that night he decided to take it upon
7 himself and he entered our home in the night time and I
8 remember he came into my bedroom and when he woke me up he
9 said, "There's a dog in the house and it's trying to hurt
10 Mom." And he had to kill it. That was his excuse. So he
11 woke me up and he led me out of my room and when I went out
12 into the hallway he went in to my mother's room and that's
13 where things took a turn for the worse that I would have
14 never in a million years thought that this was what was
15 going to happen.

16 And he had carried this axe from outside
17 into this house and even telling me that there was a dog,
18 you know, in the house and he had to kill this dog. The
19 dog being my mother. And she was in bed and he immediately
20 went in there and beat her so that when she woke up she was
21 already being beat, you know, physically with his fist. I
22 mean, shattered her nose. You know, she woke up, she was
23 screaming, trying to fight him off. You know, she got up,
24 she tried to, you know, run out of the room. She ended up
25 pulled back in, you know.

1 And I'm watching this and I'm watching my
2 mother kick and scream for her life and that's when he
3 started to use the axe as -- as a weapon. And he had
4 actually beat her so badly in -- in the head, you know, it
5 was a very short period of time that I had to listen to
6 these screams and see these horrifying images through this
7 hallway into her bedroom window -- into her bedroom door.
8 And after a short period of time, I mean, she -- she was
9 beaten very, very bad. I mean, if you can imagine, you
10 know, the back of an axe or the front of an axe, you know,
11 the damage that you can do to somebody's head and body.

12 So once the screams and the crying and
13 everything had silenced, he came out of this room and he
14 had went into the bathroom and cleaned himself up and he
15 took my hand and he went into my sister's room where she --
16 I mean, my sister was only a year and a half. She was in
17 her crib crying because she woke up from the noise that was
18 going on in this room from my mother fighting for her life.
19 And he had took us and left the house.

20 And I remember it was one of those nights
21 that was -- it was almost too perfect to have something so
22 horrible happen. You know, it was a clear -- it was a
23 clear night. You could count every star in the sky. There
24 wasn't a breath of wind to be found. And from my mother's
25 house we had actually walked out the driveway and maybe

1 about 500 metres down the road there was a driveway for an
2 old shed that was on the right hand side of the road. And
3 that's where he had his car parked so that nobody would
4 have known that he was at the house.

5 So he had put us into the -- you know, he
6 locked all the doors, you know, left my mother's body there
7 in cold blood and put us into the car and he had actually
8 drove off to his house which was in Kippens.

9 During that night, somehow he managed to
10 hide the murder weapon and it was never found. They never
11 did find where it was. I, until today, have an idea of
12 where I think it's too because I had witnessed him place
13 markers on trees in areas to which nobody would have
14 expected to look for them. Until today I still got it in
15 mind to go back with metal detector and see if I can't find
16 something.

17 But the next morning when everything was
18 said and done he had actually came back to the house. And
19 being the type of man that he was, the murder didn't bother
20 him. As horrible as what he did that night, it did not
21 bother him whatsoever. He woke up as no different than I
22 am today. No recollection of what he did.

23 When we got to the house he called the
24 house. Obviously there was no answer. Knocked on the
25 door. Nobody came to answer it. He knew what he did. Our

1 neighbours didn't know what he did. Our neighbours,
2 [Neighbour], she -- she loved us like we were her own kids.
3 And he started to panic. Play panic so to say. Because he
4 was that type of individual, he knew how to play the game.
5 And he had actually went over and asked to see if he could
6 borrow a ladder because there was a window in the back of
7 the house that was directly into her room.

8 So knowing what he did, he went and got this
9 ladder and climbed up the ladder and there's my mother's
10 body laying next to her bed and the room is in a complete
11 mess because he literally beat my mother to, you know -- he
12 beat her to death in this room so you can imagine the mess
13 that was in there.

14 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Were you there in the
15 morning?

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yes, I was.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Like, with the ladder?
18 Okay.

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And he went up and seen
20 this. And he had already made me watch what had happened
21 that night. Instead of just leaving me in my room or
22 closing the door and going and doing what he wanted to, he
23 actually woke me up so I could witness this. He decided to
24 take me up the ladder with him again in the morning. So I
25 mean, I'd already seen it that night but the last time I

1 had seen my mother is when I went up the ladder and I seen
2 her body laying in this puddle blood next to her bed. And
3 I mean, this room was in a mess. I mean, the bed that, you
4 know, I slept in many times with them was completely
5 covered in blood. The floor was covered in blood. She was
6 face down on the floor in all this blood, you know.

7 So I had to basically witness everything
8 that I witnessed the night before. I had to see this
9 again. And it put me in shock. Because immediately after
10 that, I mean, the neighbours, you know, ran over, called
11 the cops, called the paramedics and they took me over to
12 their house immediately because they knew that chances are
13 it was him. And it didn't bother him at all. He tried to
14 get into the house and pretend as if, you know, he had
15 feelings.

16 But when the cops showed up he decided to
17 leave the house and he had actually had his car parked on
18 top of that church hill where he had watched us numerous
19 times and that's where they had arrested him.

20 And when I was over at [Neighbour]'s house,
21 the last image I remember seeing of my mother was her being
22 brought out of that house on a stretcher being put into the
23 ambulance with -- you know, in a body bag.

24 Immediately after that, you know, I was
25 taking in police custody for questioning because I was

1 obviously an eyewitness to what had happened and my sister
2 was placed under protective service with -- with social
3 services. And, you know, the overall event was -- it was
4 horrifying. The only way that my mother was identified,
5 they couldn't -- they couldn't pick out what her face was.
6 That's how badly she was beaten. She had a tattoo
7 somewhere around here on her hand, if it was initials or
8 something, and that's how they identified her body from a
9 tattoo that she had on her forearm and a tattoo that she
10 had on her hand, but you could not picture -- you could --
11 you could not pick out the woman from the night before to
12 that morning. She was just -- she had a closed casket
13 funeral. That's how badly she was beaten.

14 So he was -- he was arrested by police. I
15 was taken in for questioning. My sister was in protective
16 services. My grandmother had actually been called and she
17 was notified about, you know, the death of her daughter.
18 And you know, the first thing she -- she had asked was, you
19 know, "Where are the kids?" because she had feared the
20 worse too. She had thought that maybe, you know, he would
21 have done something to us. Which still to this day
22 confuses me as to why he didn't. But that's the type of
23 man that he was. He wanted to make us suffer for as long
24 as he could while taking away the one thing that we loved
25 the most and he wanted to make sure that there was no other

1 man out there that was going to be involved with her.

2 So when my grandmother came over to
3 [Neighbour]'s I was sitting on the floor as, you know,
4 paramedics and police were over to the house doing their
5 own thing. And my grandmother came in and she asked me
6 what had happened. And my response to her was what he had
7 told me in the room about the dog. Still as a child, I
8 mean, I was in shock. I -- I seen my mother's body. I
9 seen her being beaten to death. I never, you know, knew
10 exactly what it was that had happened. Even though I did.
11 But I guess, you know, four years old, you know, your
12 mother is your -- your pride and joy, right. You wouldn't
13 -- you wouldn't expect or believe what had actually --
14 sorry, my nose is just running. You wouldn't expect that
15 the worst -- or you wouldn't want to believe that she's
16 gone even though you know that she is. And you know, when
17 my grandmother asked me what had happened, that's what I
18 told her. I -- I didn't tell her that, you know, mom was
19 hurt or mom was dead or -- I told her that there was a dog
20 that was in the house and was trying to hurt mom. Because
21 I was in so much of shock that I basically repeated exactly
22 what he said to me in the house.

23 So when I was taken by the police I went to
24 the police station and they had -- you know, where I was in
25 such shock I was focussed on this dog. I wasn't focussed

1 on what had happened. I was -- I was focussed on this dog
2 that never did exist.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Because you didn't see
4 it you think?

5 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah, but I never seen
6 the dog.

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

8 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I seen the murder but --
9 -

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- just being in shock,
12 for some reason the dog stuck in my head. And they had
13 said, "Okay, well, we'll get you to draw what you had
14 seen." You know, I mean, I was four years old so, I mean,
15 what is a four year old going to draw with regards to a
16 murder? But I had actually drew a picture of my mother's
17 room and a woman's body laying on the floor with a puddle
18 of blood and a man standing up holding an axe. And me
19 standing up in the doorway.

20 So that was their telltale right there that
21 I did in fact see this murder. They couldn't go too much
22 into detail because, like I said, I was in shock at the
23 time so they did what they could to get as much information
24 out of me as they could but in that time they had also had
25 Dale in custody and he was in -- my grandmother had went to

1 the police station and he was actually in there balling and
2 screaming and he wanted to see her. Which is really odd
3 because he knew what he did. He did it in such a
4 horrifying and inhumane way and he was acting like a man
5 who had actually lost a woman that he loved and had nothing
6 to do with it.

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** So he wanted to see her
8 -- it -- he was kind of putting on a charade?

9 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Exactly.

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So you know, this went
12 on for quite some time, you know, bouncing back and forth
13 but, you know, even when the funeral took place, even
14 though it wasn't a funeral that was, you know, peaceful,
15 you know, I -- I wasn't even in the care of my grandmother
16 or my family during my mother's funeral. I wasn't even at
17 the front of the church. I was in the back on the social
18 worker's lap. So I didn't even get to see, you know, the
19 rest of my family during this funeral.

20 And like I said, it was a closed casket
21 funeral because of how badly she was beaten. And I mean,
22 it was horrifying for anybody who would've seen anything
23 like that. And I mean, it's only been the past couple
24 years that, you know, when I finally opened up about the
25 story that people knew exactly what had happened that night

1 and my family understood what it was that happened to her.

2 But with that being said, when Dale was
3 sentenced, the judge told him -- and I mean, he's had a
4 previous criminal record of break and entery, assault,
5 theft, fraud. You name it. He had a long criminal record.
6 And with a murder so severe and traumatizing me at the
7 time, the judge told him that she could have gave him as
8 little as ten years for the crime that he committed but
9 instead she'll give him 14. So that's what she sentenced
10 him to. Fourteen years for the murder of my mother who was
11 a young woman full of potential.

12 And even until this day, he's been released
13 on day parole on three separate occasions, one just being
14 recently. And I've been fighting with them ever since
15 because three times he's been released, three times he's
16 breached his probation and has been put back behind bars
17 including the past couple weeks. I had a call saying that
18 he was released on day parole. He was going to be released
19 to the [Region] region and I was at the movie theatre one
20 night and I had a call from that area and they said, "Can I
21 speak to Mr. Daniel Benoit, please?" I said, "Yes", you
22 know, "speaking." And they said, you know, whatever his
23 name was, he said, "I'm calling from the National
24 Monitoring Centre." He said, "I'm here to inform you that
25 there has been a warrant issued for Dale Ogden's arrest."

1 Now, this has only been a couple weeks ago. They never
2 told me the specific incident as to why and I'm still
3 waiting for answers.

4 But the time before that when he was
5 released he was released to a halfway house and, you know,
6 I did what I could by providing statements and my own
7 personal pain to try and keep him behind bars, which a man
8 like that should be because he hasn't learned and he proved
9 it. When he got out he had actually started up a dating
10 site on Plenty of Fish. He had changed his name, his
11 identity. He had a cell phone and he was in contact with
12 many women. Texting them, calling them. And there was a
13 woman who was in the military and he met up with her on
14 this dating website and, you know, for the longest time she
15 was dating him, he was going to her house, wasn't checking
16 back into this halfway house, going out to fancy
17 restaurants.

18 Where -- where he was getting the money for
19 this is beyond me. It's still a mystery until this day.
20 She said he always had pockets full of cash. Never --
21 never an incident. Always took her to the nicest
22 restaurants, was a proper gentleman, pulled her chair out -
23 --

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** You've met with her?

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah.

1 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay. How did you find
2 out about this?

3 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I had to do some
4 research of my own.

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And when I had -- when
7 he was released on day parole I had went to CBC and they'd
8 made my story. It went national within a day. Because
9 when they finally found out, okay, you know, this man
10 committed this crime and now he's released to the public.
11 So this story took off within 24 hours. I had people all
12 across Canada calling me for interviews and statements and
13 -- I mean, my face was all over TV for -- for days and
14 weeks.

15 And this woman had actually came across the
16 article. And it turned out that she found him kind of
17 strange because aside from him being a proper gentleman,
18 she met with him, he said that he worked at -- at a
19 security job. Said that he worked security. And she was
20 military so she said yeah, you know, they would be a good
21 match, right. They're kind of, you know, compatible. But
22 she said he was very, you know, clingy I guess is a word
23 that you could use for it. He -- you know, he would text
24 her multiple times during the day, he -- if -- you know, if
25 they left a restaurant he'd probably call her five, six

1 times before she even got home. And he was always talking,
2 you know, about how, you know, his kids were going to
3 school and he -- he came up with this fake life that never
4 existed.

5 Now, he did have kids, yes, being me and my
6 sister but it didn't go with the story that he was
7 providing this woman. And she found it really strange.
8 Like, she always found, like, he was lying to something
9 about her because she used to come and pick him up but he
10 always -- he was never getting dropped off at this halfway
11 house. It was always at different spots. I guess he would
12 probably just walk back so you'd never know. And she was
13 wondering, like, why he had to be back at certain times.
14 And there were some times where he did stay overnight and
15 did have sexual encounters with this woman.

16 So when the story came out, she actually
17 came across this article and her brother, I believe, was an
18 RCMP officer who was actually on duty the day that my
19 mother was killed. And he had come across this article and
20 sent her this message saying, "Is this the man that you're
21 dating?" And she didn't want to believe it because she was
22 under the impression that she was dating this man who was
23 in security, who never had a criminal record or anything.
24 That's how well he had this hidden.

25 So the last night when she finally -- she

1 was becoming very scared because he was becoming very
2 attached to her. He was, you know, starting to be very
3 controlling and she was getting worried. So the last time
4 they had went out to a restaurant she had -- she addressed
5 him and asked him if there was anything that he needed to
6 tell her. And he had actually had these papers for his day
7 parole stating that he could leave the halfway house and
8 everything like that. And she had mentioned -- she had
9 seen this article and knew what he had done and she
10 addressed him. And he had showed her the papers and
11 basically, you know, admitted to who he was and what he had
12 done.

13 And she immediately got up and left him.
14 And she told me that in the run of an hour I think he
15 called her over 30 times. Just, you know, would not leave
16 her alone. And she actually feared for her life that much
17 that she had moved from Victoria to Ottawa with her
18 daughter while she had a security company come in and take
19 care of her home before she would go back because she was -
20 - and she had actually contacted CBC and they contacted me
21 and asked if I would talk to her.

22 So I had actually phoned her and she wanted
23 to know everything about this man. And everything that I
24 had told her was exactly what he was covering up. The --
25 the story between how he was with my mother was exactly the

1 same as how he was with her. And she was terrified for her
2 life. She would not go back to Victoria until she knew
3 that he was behind bars.

4 And you know, with all this being said, he
5 breached his probation on many, many occasions. I had the
6 list of things that he wasn't supposed to be at. He wasn't
7 supposed to have a cell phone. He wasn't supposed to be on
8 any dating websites. If -- he was supposed to report any,
9 you know, sexual relationships back to his parole officer.

10 It turns out that ---

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** He wouldn't report any
12 of those?

13 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** No, none of it. There -
14 - like, he wasn't reporting back to the halfway house when
15 he was supposed to. And when it all came around, like,
16 this article that went national brought out a lot of
17 information that was hidden. It turns out his officer
18 actually provided him with the cell phone and put him on
19 the dating website, set him up with the account.

20 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Was the -- did his
21 parole officer receive any kind of, like, disciplinary
22 action?

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Not from what I'm aware
24 because after the story went national -- I was trying to
25 fight for a long time to get a picture of this man because

1 I knew that his release date was coming up soon and I
2 didn't ---

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Of your father?

4 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah, and I did not know
5 what this man looked like because it was 14 years since I
6 had last seen his face so obviously it had changed. But it
7 didn't change that much from what I -- when I actually did
8 receive the picture. But that article had to go national
9 before they released me a picture. But for the group that
10 was involved with him, I don't know if anything ever became
11 of that. I never did hear anything. I don't know if they
12 were ever, you know, suspended or anything for their
13 actions on what they did.

14 He was placed behind bars again because he
15 did breach it, and all because of my findings and this
16 woman was still very, very, very scared. She gave a
17 statement to the parole board about her incident but she
18 wouldn't -- she wouldn't, you know, go public with it or
19 she wouldn't show her face or anything. But ---

20 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** How long was he put back
21 in jail for?

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It was only about a
23 little over a year. It wasn't even anything worth looking
24 at because the minute that he was back in there they were
25 already planning courses and things for him to be out on

1 temporary escorted absences and it was a joke. Because, I
2 mean, that incident right there proved -- and I -- I
3 believe it was 16 other women that he was talking to at the
4 time. So I mean, that many years in prison after
5 committing that murder to my mother, they released him
6 thinking that he was going to be, you know, a new man so to
7 say. And he went right back to his old ways. So they put
8 him back in jail for a year and released him out on day
9 parole again and here it is a couple weeks ago there was a
10 warrant issued for his arrest. I mean, is he back out
11 preying on women? Has he gone back after the woman that he
12 was -- you know, that I was in touch with, that she feared
13 for her life? I mean, that's one of the things that, you
14 know, worried me when I first heard about it because, I
15 mean, obviously he probably knows that she did speak
16 because, you know, it was brought up. I mean, is he -- is
17 she in his sights now? I mean, is she in danger? You
18 know, it's one of those things, I mean, could she possibly
19 end up like my mother? I mean, if that story never went
20 national, I mean, how long would he have played that --
21 that role before, you know, things would have gotten worse
22 and, you know, I would have found out that there was
23 another woman murdered by the hands of the same man.

24 So you know, I don't think that the system
25 takes it very seriously and that the people that they have

1 working for them are doing the right assessments because I
2 know for a fact that the police force in [City 1] had
3 actually even sent in a statement that did not support his
4 release to the public in the community. They just -- the
5 halfway house to which he stayed did not welcome him back
6 so they had to find another halfway house.

7 So like, how is it that all these things are
8 being said about an individual and you're still releasing
9 him out to the public? I mean, that incident alone should
10 have proven that he was not fit ---

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- to be out because he
13 really is not. He's not stable. He -- I don't think that
14 the 14 years was enough punishment, for one. Because I
15 mean, not only are you committing a crime as horrifying as
16 what he did to my mother but, I mean, you brought a child
17 into the matter and made a child witness what had happened
18 to my mother. It's not something anybody should ever have
19 to see. I mean, most people go their entire lives and they
20 don't ever witness something so severe. So where's the
21 punishment for that?

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** What was the
23 justification for such a low -- like, for so few ---

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** There wasn't.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- years?

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** There was nothing
2 whatsoever. There was no explanation as to why there was
3 such a low number of years provided in a sentence. And I
4 mean, I don't -- like, I'm not saying this to be sexist but
5 it was a female judge. So to me, I think it was a very
6 unfair sentence because -- and I was surprised when I had
7 went back and actually knew what was said in that court
8 because, I mean, what's 14 years? I mean, most people now,
9 you get more than that for a poaching charge than you do if
10 you kill somebody. So I mean, you should be punished for
11 the crime that you commit. And if you bring any children
12 or anybody else involved, you should be punished for what
13 you did to them as well. Because I lived, yes, but there
14 were times where I did think of taking my life because of
15 what I had witnessed. So if I were to commit suicide,
16 which I'm not because, you know, I got a hold on all this,
17 but if I were to have committed suicide because of what I
18 had witnessed, my death should have fell on his hands.

19 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Because I didn't commit
21 suicide because of something that I couldn't -- you know,
22 something that I brought on myself. That was forced on me.
23 I didn't, you know, volunteer to stand up and watch my
24 mother fight for her life that night. That wasn't anything
25 that I would have done, you know. So -- and I believe that

1 there are a lot of people that are dealing with incidents
2 like this that are too afraid to speak about. And they're
3 just accepting the punishment that's being handed out,
4 which is very minimal, and these individuals are being
5 released back into the public with the possibility of this
6 happening again.

7 I mean, I do know that Canada no longer has
8 the death sentence but if you're not going to have that put
9 in place, shouldn't -- shouldn't the family be at peace of
10 mind once these offenders are, you know, placed in jail? I
11 mean, shouldn't their worry and their stress and their pain
12 be over?

13 Because for us, I mean -- I mean, it's been
14 so long now but maybe he still has it in his mindset that
15 somewhere along the line he's going to come back and find
16 me or find my family or my son or -- I don't ---

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Is -- is that something
18 that worries you?

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It is in one sense. I
20 mean, as I grew older I've learned to, you know, protect
21 myself, protect my family and kind of accept it. But I
22 mean, I can't live a life where I had to be looking over my
23 shoulder 24/7.

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But you do in one sense

1 because you never know where these people are going to be.
2 I mean, I've seen often times now, you know, when there's a
3 warrant issued for his arrest and nobody knows where he is,
4 right. I mean, how far has he travelled before somebody
5 realizes, okay, he's gone? Where -- who is he coming for
6 or where is he going?

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

8 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So you know, in most
9 cases, like, something would happen to -- to me and our
10 family. I mean, we are the ones serving the life sentence
11 because, you know, I lost my mother, my grandmother lost
12 her daughter, you know, my aunts, uncle lost a sister. You
13 know, we're the ones that are suffering for it. Meanwhile,
14 he's going to have another chance to live his life at some
15 point. I mean, if he takes it upon himself to breach his
16 probation, that's his own problem.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But he has the option to
19 walk in the community of [City 2] and work and sleep under
20 a roof and enjoy the beauties that life has to offer.

21 And one of the sad things about it is just
22 last year I had ran into a woman at Pizza Delight in
23 Stephenville. And my mother was a part of the Pathfinders.
24 She dropped out of school and she just didn't like the
25 environment of the people she was with. She was kind of

1 like myself, an old soul. And this woman approached me and
2 she said, "I have something that I think you would like to
3 see." Now, I never met this woman before. And she had --
4 she introduced herself [Employee]. So she gave me her
5 information and I gave her a call and she told me to come
6 up to her house and she wanted to show me something. Now,
7 it's been -- you know, this was last year. I'll be 25 next
8 month. So I mean, after my mom passed away there wasn't a
9 single video of my mother. I didn't know what -- you know,
10 I couldn't remember what my mother's voice sounded like or
11 anything like that which is, you know, very unfortunate
12 because, you know, even hearing a voice sometimes can help
13 bring closure to any open wounds.

14 So I sat down and she did this --
15 Pathfinders had a -- a program going at the time for people
16 doing -- you know, they'd go around videotaping, making
17 commercials and such. So my mother was actually a very
18 intelligent woman. She strived to -- even, you know, in
19 Pathfinders, I mean, people told me that, you know, they
20 couldn't keep her going with work. She was very
21 intelligent. She was always on top of her -- on top of her
22 A game so to say. And they did this commercial of people
23 who were successful. And they wanted to do a story on her
24 kind of like what the NLTA did with me. I did a commercial
25 for it so, you know, like I said, I'm walking in her exact

1 footsteps.

2 And you know, this video had incorporated
3 her life goals and in that video I was only a couple months
4 old so it showed her playing with me and talking to me and
5 so, I mean, that was the first time I'd heard my mother's
6 voice since the murder. And you know, in this video she
7 had -- she had stressed, you know, how much that she -- she
8 really enjoyed school and she wanted to excel in everything
9 that she did because she wanted to go to law school to
10 become a lawyer. Now, I mean, as far as I'm concerned that
11 is a very hard thing to get into. You have to, you know,
12 work extremely hard to make that happen but it's an
13 excellent career. And this is what she had her heart set
14 out to be.

15 And when the video was over, this woman had
16 told me that my mother had took a break from Pathfinders
17 when she had me. And just when I was getting to that age,
18 you know, three, four, she was going to go back to
19 Pathfinders and she was going to finish and she was going
20 to, you know, apply for law school. So in order for her to
21 get the funding and whatnot, she had to have a letter from
22 [Employee] saying -- [Employee] was the girl who brought me
23 in for the video. She had to have a letter from [Employee]
24 saying that she was accept back into Pathfinders.
25 [Employee] was set to go to PEI for a trip so my mom had

1 called [Employee], told her, she said, "Yeah, I'll type of
2 the letter." She said, "I'll leave it at the desk." She
3 said, "I'm leaving for PEI tomorrow. Come down and get
4 your letter." That letter was never picked up. [Employee]
5 typed up that letter, left it at the school. She -- by the
6 time she got in PEI, that was when the murder happened to
7 my mom. My mom never made it to the school to pick up that
8 letter.

9 And you know, that's -- you know, that's
10 very disappointing. It's very sad because she had the
11 potential to be a lawyer. She had -- she could have done
12 anything that she ever wanted to be and she didn't make it
13 there.

14 So I think for me I -- I think, you know,
15 with regards to the murder I think that was probably the
16 hardest part that I had to listen to was the fact that she
17 never did, you know, get to make it that far. You know,
18 she -- like, a lot of the, you know, missing and murdered
19 indigenous women, I mean, for every murder that's -- you
20 know, for every woman that's murdered, I mean, that's a
21 future that's lost. You know, there are a lot of
22 intelligent women that could have been doing amazing things
23 to this community and, you know, this world.

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But they're not here.

1 And she was definitely one of them. I mean, she wanted to
2 be in -- in the legal system. You know, she wanted to
3 better her life so that she could give us a better life.
4 And you know, she -- because of that, I mean, you know, she
5 -- she was murdered and all her potential is gone. And
6 where is the punishment for that? Like I said, you know,
7 the guy that's responsible for this, he still has the
8 opportunity to work. Now, it may not be a position as a
9 lawyer or something like that but he still has that, you
10 know, that right. And you know, that was very difficult to
11 listen to, you know, the fact that she never did make it to
12 pick up that letter. I mean, she had won awards in school
13 for academic excellence and everything. And you know, what
14 -- when she finally, you know, felt that her life was
15 coming around and that she was able to go back to school.
16 You know, she had this letter typed up for her acceptance
17 and she was looking forward to going back and she was
18 murdered and that letter was forever left on that desk.

19 It's -- you know, my life was very difficult
20 growing up because after that murder took place we were --
21 we were placed in foster care so I still didn't completely
22 understand the fact of, you know, what had happened to my
23 mother because I remember often times, you know, even
24 though I did witness my father murder my mother, I -- as a
25 four year old, you just want to be with your parents. You

1 know, I remember, you know, crying for my father even
2 though he committed that murder and I witnessed it. And it
3 terrified me but the body's natural response is that you
4 want your parents at that age. I mean, you're trying --
5 you're being put into a home with strangers that you've
6 never met before. And you know, it's a scary time. And --
7 -

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Were you and your sister
9 placed together?

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** We were placed together.
11 You know, I went there shortly after she did. I guess
12 because I was in so much questioning and stuff like that.
13 But the home -- the first home that we were placed in, they
14 didn't really -- as far as I'm concerned, they shouldn't
15 have had a foster care license because we weren't properly
16 looked after. You know, my first Christmas in a foster
17 home -- you know, when I was living with my mother, I mean,
18 she always made sure that we had, you know, everything we
19 ever wanted. I mean, you know, she -- she was never a rich
20 woman but she would have sold the shirt off her back if it
21 meant putting a train under the tree for Christmas, you
22 know.

23 And my first Christmas in that foster home,
24 we received all second hand toys. And I can understand
25 that, you know, we weren't theirs. However, they were

1 being paid for us so why is it that we had toys that were
2 just basically beat up and used and like we were nothing.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

4 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So under -- also while
5 we were under the care of that home, my sister had took
6 sick. And she was very sick. It started off as just a
7 regular flu but, you know, there's no reason why you
8 shouldn't take a year and a half old to the doctor and get
9 it checked out. They neglected it so much to the point
10 where my grandmother decided to take her and go to the
11 hospital and get it checked out. And it turns out that my
12 sister had severe pneumonia. And it was that severe that
13 by the time the doctors had realized it was in one lung,
14 they airlifted her to St. Johns and it spread to the second
15 lung and she was fighting for her life. So yeah, she --
16 she spent a couple -- I -- I'd say probably well over a
17 month she was in St. Johns, you know. She was -- she was
18 to the point where they almost lost her. So not only did I
19 lose my mother, you know, within that same year my sister
20 was fighting for her life as well and it was just me. My
21 grandmother was in St. Johns, you know, with my sister.
22 You know, I was with this family that I never knew who
23 never, like, never properly took care of me.

24 So after that had happened to my sister and
25 she, you know, miraculously made a recovery, my grandmother

1 automatically got custody of my sister. Now, I was still
2 placed under the same care as that family. I was there for
3 a little while after before my grandmother went to the
4 courts and -- because that was my grandmother's wish --
5 that was my mother's wish and my mother told my grandmother
6 often times that she was going to -- she was going to die
7 and that she wanted us to be placed with her. She told --
8 she told my grandmother that multiple times. She knew she
9 was going to die. She -- she was not going to live a full
10 life.

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** By the hands of your ---

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah.

13 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- of ---

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** She -- she knew. And I
15 don't know if she accepted it but she knew it was coming.
16 So when we were placed in -- when -- when I finally got in
17 custody with my grandmother, I mean, it was -- you know, it
18 was a bit much for my grandmother to handle because, you
19 know, obviously growing up I went through this, you know,
20 the stress of dealing with what I had witnessed and it took
21 me a -- a really long time to grow out of the things that I
22 had seen. You know, often times I remember from when I got
23 with my grandmother right up until I was probably in about
24 Grade 9, I couldn't even so much as look at a picture of my
25 mother without throwing up because I was that -- you know,

1 every time I seen a picture of her I would automatically
2 think back to the murder and I would get sick.

3 But just the stress of, you know, the things
4 I was going through became too much for my grandmother so I
5 was placed into another home. And I was there for a short
6 period of time. Back with my grandmother. Something would
7 flare up and then I was placed with another foster home out
8 in Lourdes which I stayed until I was, you know, graduated
9 high school and went to university.

10 But you know, there's always -- you know,
11 even growing up, I mean, right now, you know, I'm not
12 crying because of the murder. You know, the thing that
13 broke my heart the most was that letter with the lawyer
14 because I'm -- you know, right here, right now I'm the same
15 age that she was when she lost her life. So aside from
16 that, you know, there were a lot of things in life, you
17 know, growing up in that -- in the foster home that, you
18 know, I never -- you know, I never got to experience like
19 the other kids that I grew up with. I mean, there were --
20 there were times where sporting events, I never had parents
21 on the sidelines watching me. You know, concerts, there
22 were nobody in the stands, you know, waiting or clapping or
23 just happy to see me. Kindergarten graduations, you know.
24 My Grade 12 graduation, confirmation, birth of my son, my
25 wedding. I mean, she's not going to be there for any of

1 it.

2 So it -- you know, it is upsetting, you
3 know, and that was one of the things that I had to learn to
4 cope with and accept was that, you know, for the longest
5 time I held myself responsible, believe it or not. I mean,
6 I was four years old but I held myself responsible because
7 I stood up and watched this happen. And no, there was
8 nothing that I could have done at four years old, which,
9 you know, anybody would agree with me. And -- but it took
10 me a long time to accept that fact. And it was only I'd
11 say probably back in Grade 12, maybe Grade 11 was when I
12 finally got a hold of everything that has happened and I
13 was able to sit down like I'm sitting here today and, you
14 know, being able to share my story and do public events
15 and, you know, really, you know, shed some light on, you
16 know, the struggles that can come from these incidents and,
17 you know, the type of lifestyle that I had to live because
18 of somebody else's anger and stupidity is what I like to
19 call it.

20 But you know, it hasn't been an easy road,
21 you know. Even now, you know, I try and incorporate my
22 mother with, you know, in a positive aspect with everything
23 that I do. You know, I try and do as many events like this
24 as possible, as many speeches, because when I first started
25 doing this, the amount of people that reached out to me and

1 thanked me and told me their story when they'd never told
2 anybody else was unbelievable. And some of the things that
3 I had sat down and read were, you know, some of them were
4 probably just as bad as what happened to my mother and some
5 of them, you know, were minor stuff. But people looked at
6 them in a different way. And you know, I took time, you
7 know, for weeks I -- you know, I took time to send off an
8 email or, you know, just to speak with these individuals
9 and, you know, share with them my experiences and how I
10 grew out of it and the things I learned to accept to try
11 and make it a little bit easier on them because a lot of
12 people are scared. And it may be because, you know, they
13 hear stories like mine and they realize that yeah, these
14 people are being released and it's not over for us because
15 some offenders get out of jail and they're pissed off
16 because, you know, somebody gave a statement and they feel
17 that they've put them in there for longer so when they get
18 out of jail, they're going to go back and target them. And
19 a lot of people won't give a statement because of that.

20 And it's unfortunate, they -- you know, they
21 shouldn't have to feel that way.

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** They should feel secure
23 that they're being protected and that they can trust ---

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Exactly.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- law enforcement. I

1 know.

2 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** For me, I always felt
3 like the offender was being protected. It wasn't so much
4 the victims that were being protected. It was always the
5 offender. I mean, if you call them and asked them any
6 information, if he's being released, well, "Where is he
7 being released to?" "Well, I can't tell you that. Well,
8 he's going out on a -- a temporary escorted absence."
9 "Where to?"

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** "We can't tell you
12 that." "He breached his probation." "What did he do?" "I
13 can't tell you that either." "What can you tell me?"
14 Right? "Why can't you tell me this?"

15 Like, I -- I should have some sort of a
16 legal right to understand where it is that this man is to,
17 who he's in contact with, the things that he's doing
18 because that will secure my safety. Because if he's in
19 contact with somebody, say, he knows somebody from
20 Newfoundland and ---

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Does he know that you
22 live in Newfoundland?

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Chances are. There's
24 not a doubt in my mind. I mean, if he knows somebody from
25 Newfoundland and they decided to take a trip over to

1 Vancouver and all of a sudden, you know, they reach out to
2 him, shouldn't I know who he's in contact with? Because
3 that person's going to come back here, you know. When I
4 was working offshore, one of my biggest fears for the
5 longest time was that, you know, when I leave I was gone
6 for a month at a time. You know, was there somebody there
7 taking pictures of my family or could possibly harm my
8 family while I was gone? And the last thing I ever want to
9 do is have my family subject to the same things that I was
10 subject to growing up. I mean, that was one of the
11 promises that I made to them was that I was never going to
12 put them in -- you know, in a -- in any event that would
13 cause them to live with the same things that I lived with
14 because it -- it's very, very -- it was very difficult.

15 You know, I've -- you know, I've always
16 strived to be the best individual that I can be. Right
17 now, I'm -- you know, I'm finally in the -- the final
18 stages of becoming a police officer which is, you know,
19 beyond what most people who've dealt with what I've dealt
20 with ever make it to.

21 And you know, I've stressed to people many
22 times because I'll do a public speech and people will come
23 up to me and, you know, they'll either ask me how do I do
24 it or they'll say, like, you know, "I wish I could take
25 your pain away." Or something like that. And the reality

1 of it is, you know, I'm very upset with what happened to my
2 mother and I wish that she could still be here today to,
3 you know, see me accomplish the things that I've
4 accomplished and, you know, be there with my son. But you
5 know, I can't change the things that have happened. And
6 you know, as much as I wish that she could be there, you
7 know, I'm glad that it happened to me because I had the
8 mental strength to work through it. Anybody else, and I
9 mean there are a lot of strong people but there are a lot
10 of weak people as well. And this is nothing against them,
11 I mean, but some people, you know, take their own lives or
12 they go down the wrong paths in life because they, you
13 know, need drugs to either help them forget what has
14 happened or, you know, whatever -- you know, for them I
15 guess it's a matter of finding their comfort. It may not
16 necessarily be the right way but, you know, if it didn't
17 happen to me it would have happened to another woman. And
18 if there was another child involved, I mean, that child
19 could have possibly be harmed or harm themselves. So I
20 mean, by it happening to me and the fact that I was able to
21 overcome this and accomplish great things, yeah, you know,
22 in one sense I'm thankful that, you know, I was as strong
23 as I was and that my mother gave me the life that she did
24 before she parted because, you know, there's no doubt in my
25 mind that other people may not have handled it the same way

1 that I had.

2 But all I can do now is continue to spread
3 the word for violence against women and continue to share
4 the story of my mother and my journey through life and
5 everything that I've done and overcome. And the story of
6 my mother is not a very pleasant story. You know, I've
7 learned to basically tell it now with a straight face and,
8 you know, go home and play with my son. But the reality of
9 it is it's very graphic, it's very horrifying, it's -- you
10 know, and it's difficult to speak about, you know,
11 especially to people who, you know, look at me, I mean,
12 they see me for the first time and they don't ever expect
13 that something like that has happened to me because it's
14 the way that I carry myself. I'm a very -- I love to
15 consider myself as well put together and, you know, cool,
16 calm and collected. But, you know, they sit down and they
17 hear this story and it's -- you know, they never in a
18 million years would have imagined that something so severe
19 would have happened to me but, I mean, that's just my
20 story. I mean, there are so many other people with women
21 who have it a lot worse than what I have it right now.

22 And this stuff will -- you know, we're
23 trying to prevent it as much as we can. We're trying to
24 put so many things in place to protect women and children
25 but that has -- you know, we can only do so much as

1 individuals. You know, the justice system itself needs to
2 be adjusted so that what we do works with the justice
3 system. Because right now it's almost as if they're
4 working against us because no matter what we put in place,
5 yeah, they're going to put these -- you know, these
6 offenders in jail for a short period of time and then
7 they're going to be released back to us and then it becomes
8 our problem again. And then you're jeopardizing the lives
9 of other people.

10 If that don't change, you know, this whole -
11 - you know, every woman that goes missing, that goes
12 murdered, that's going to continue to happen for years to
13 come. There's going to be no way to prevent that unless
14 there are stiffer sentences put in place and, you know,
15 better precautions put in place for the families.

16 And every time I've done a speech before,
17 you know, it's important that as many people come forward
18 as possible because, I mean, these stories are what -- you
19 know, it's what's going to benefit, you know, trying to
20 make this happen, because if we don't talk about the
21 stories of these women, you know, they're forgotten. If
22 they're forgotten and their stories are forgotten, what do
23 we have to come back on? You know, what do we have as
24 proof or evidence that, you know, these are the effects of
25 what has happened and this is what's going to continue to

1 happen for years to come?

2 A lot of the articles that I've read, you
3 know, from, you know, people who've had murders and stuff
4 like that is that when the offenders are released, often
5 times they reoffend. And I mean, that's something that
6 should be picked up before they're released. I mean, if
7 you're sitting down with -- with a designated professional
8 in their field you should be able to know somebody's
9 psychological, you know, stability ---

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- and know if they're
12 going to, you know, reoffend or if they're actually, you
13 know, a new man and can be within the public. And I don't
14 think that it's being done that way. I think that they're
15 just -- they're sitting down. They may have a short
16 conversation with these individuals and, I mean, if you're
17 good at talking ---

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah, if you're charming
19 and...

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know? I mean,
21 you're just going to -- they're going to continue to be
22 fooled. It's wasted resources. I mean, you're paying
23 these people the biggest kind of money to sit down and make
24 sure that these people are properly evaluated. And all of
25 a sudden you get a report saying that they breached their

1 probation and it's all because of these reasons and they're
2 going back in for psychological assessments, but shouldn't
3 that have ---

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Happened before.

5 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah. I mean, like I
6 said, it's extremely wasted resources and it's unbelievable
7 that it continues to happen. I mean, how many times does
8 this need to happen again and again and again before they
9 finally get a hold on something and say, "Okay, like, you
10 know, this needs to be put in place and, you know, you're
11 going away for X number of years." I mean, like, in my
12 father's case, I mean, this has been the third time. The
13 third time that he's been released and put back in jail for
14 six months at a time, a year at a time.

15 You know, right now I know he was only going
16 to be put back behind bars for a month and then he was
17 going to be re-evaluated, probably put back into a halfway
18 house with more probation ---

19 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Like, how much can
20 things change in a month, you know ---

21 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah.

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- with this history?

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And that's the thing,
24 it's not going to change. I mean, you know, he's been, you
25 know, in prison since I was a young child. If anything was

1 going to change it would have -- it would have been changed
2 by now. But the fact that he went right back to his
3 original ways shows that, you know, chances are he is never
4 going to change as an individual.

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Which, you know, I can't
7 say I -- I agree on whatsoever. You know, I think that --
8 and like I said, one of the most important things that, you
9 know, I think can be taken from this video is the fact
10 that, you know, the punishment should go beyond just the --
11 the crime. It should go for those who are affected. I
12 think that there should be, especially if they're being
13 sentenced to years, I think that they should look at the
14 victim statements and how they were impacted and how their
15 lives were impacted and they should place, you know, a
16 number of years, you know, because of that.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Because it's not fair to
19 the families. I mean, the families go through a lot of
20 pain and struggling every single day. And I mean, that's
21 for those who, you know, like my mother who, you know, her
22 body was found in a house and, you know, I was there to --
23 as a witness. I knew what happened. The person was
24 arrested. But I mean, there are a lot of indigenous women
25 who are murdered and missing and families go without even

1 having a grave to look at because they're still in search
2 of their daughter or, you know, their mother or whatever
3 the case may be.

4 I mean, for instance, I mean, I don't know
5 if they're indigenous or not but there are two women here
6 in Newfoundland, Courtney Lake (ph.) and Jennifer Hillier
7 (ph.) and they have been missing and have never been found.

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Is this recent because I
9 think I saw the posters in town?

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Jennifer Hillier has
11 been missing for about 18 months or so.

12 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And she went missing in
13 St. Johns?

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** St. Anthony.

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** They're -- you know, I
17 can't too much. There has been a publication ban on it so
18 I'm ---

19 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- not going to say a
21 whole lot about the issue. There were suspicions that she
22 was murdered by her partner but I can't say that for sure.
23 I don't know about the story. And the same with Courtney
24 Lake. You know, they have videos of her getting into her
25 boyfriend's vehicle and she went missing and then, you

1 know, her boyfriend ended up committing suicide so the only
2 lead that they had onto it is gone. And her family are
3 still searching for this body.

4 So for me, and like I said, with a lot of
5 indigenous people, I mean, I'm fortunate enough now that,
6 you know, I can go to a grave and lay flowers and know that
7 my mother's remains are in a very peaceful place which
8 brings me peace in -- of mind because I know that she's
9 there.

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But how many people are
12 still left, you know, wondering where their mother is to or
13 where their daughter is to? And, you know, I mean she
14 could be back in a field, you know, tossed like a piece of
15 garbage which is not -- it's not right at all.

16 So I mean, yes, what I had witnessed was
17 terrible and it -- it -- and it hurt for a long period of
18 time, but I'm sure that the people who have yet to find
19 some closure, I'm sure they're dealing with a lot more than
20 what I'm dealing with right -- you know, or what I dealt
21 with. I can't say what I'm dealing with now because, you
22 know, I've took on a life of my own and I'm doing
23 everything I can to live the life I know she would have
24 wanted me to live. But I think -- I feel for the people
25 who don't have the closure that I have.

1 And you know, I think -- I mean, like I said
2 with Courtney Lake and Jennifer Hillier, I mean, that's
3 just two ladies -- or two women in Newfoundland that have
4 not been found yet. I mean, there's been a couple that
5 I've heard of in -- in the news that have been found. But
6 the sentences that are being handed are very minimal and
7 they don't fit the crime at all.

8 And I mean, it really -- it really does have
9 to change and the question is, I mean, how many people have
10 to come forward and tell their story before this takes
11 place? And I -- I think back to the judge that sentenced
12 my father was saying as little as ten years and -- but
13 she'll give him 14 instead. I mean, if that was her
14 daughter ---

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- would she have given
17 the same sentence? So -- so like, where does fair come
18 into play with this? I mean, how do you justify 14 years?
19 What's the reason?

20 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Did you feel that race
21 had something to do with it or you felt like it was more --
22 -

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** My mother was actually a
24 white individual.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And my father was, you
2 know, African American. My mother was, you know, a very
3 light skinned woman. But -- so I can't say that race was
4 an issue. I -- I don't know if maybe -- to be honest, I
5 can't pinpoint a specific reason as to why. I don't know
6 if maybe it was because my mother wasn't, you know, a
7 wealthy individual or well known. I mean ---

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** So maybe more class and
9 ---

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And that could be it
11 too, right. I -- I mean, you know, she was a -- I can't
12 say my mother was a low class individual by any means
13 because, I mean, she -- you know, she made do with what she
14 had, but ---

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you know, she was a
17 -- I guess she was a hard case growing up and, you know,
18 she had two kids and, I mean, maybe the judge just didn't
19 take it very seriously because, you know, maybe she didn't
20 -- didn't, you know, respect the fact of my mother's age or
21 ---

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I -- I really can't say
24 for sure what it had been, but you know, 14 years was a --
25 was a slap in the face to our family. It -- it really was.

1 And even until today, I mean, yes, as of right now he is
2 still in prison, but he do get released on day parole.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

4 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Day parole to some, I
5 mean, yes, you do have your restrictions but he is still
6 released. So ---

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** He's in the world and
8 he's ---

9 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It's -- you know, the
10 crime itself, I mean, there -- I mean, within this national
11 inquiry, I mean, you're probably going to have people that
12 have had a hell of a lot more, you know, trauma than what
13 my mother endured but, you know, she went out in a very
14 tragic way. And you know, it's a -- it's a picture that
15 will forever be in my head. It no longer -- I don't think
16 about it unless there comes a time when I'm doing an event
17 like this where I need to go back to that particular night,
18 but you know, I mean, to do something that -- that inhumane
19 to, you know, a young woman and beat her to the point where
20 she can't even be identified, you know, with your child
21 watching you, and you know, have the rights to work, to go
22 out to a restaurant, to be in another relationship,
23 possibly have another kid. I mean, he has no -- everybody
24 has potential but he does not have the potential that she
25 had. I mean, I would have loved to have seen what my

1 mother would have been able to accomplish. There's not a
2 doubt in my mind that, you know, she probably would have
3 been a lawyer today. But you know, she's not. So it's --
4 it's upsetting to that extent and I'm -- that it's -- you
5 know, I hope that with all of this there comes a time where
6 somebody gets the right sentence and I can say that, you
7 know, this is what we've been waiting for for a long time.
8 It don't even have to be my father because I know that his
9 time is -- his time is done now but I would like to see --
10 I -- I don't wish any crime on any woman ---

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- or child or man or
13 anything like that, but in the event that a crime would
14 occur that's similar to what happened to my mother or
15 anything whatsoever, I would like to see once that somebody
16 got a hard enough sentence that the family will never have
17 to worry about it ever again.

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And for you that would
19 be, like, a life sentence?

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yes.

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** So that ---

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But ---

23 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- they're locked up.

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But an actual life
25 sentence. Because the life sentence in Canada now is 25

1 years. So you know, if you look at the fact that right now
2 I'm almost 25. If I go and commit a murder, I get the life
3 sentence of 25 years, it's going to be a lot less than that
4 ---

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** You're 50.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I'm -- I'm going to get,
7 you know, good behaviour, that sentence is going to knock
8 down.

9 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I'm out again before I'm
11 50 which is younger than what most people retire. So how
12 is that a life sentence? I mean ---

13 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- that does not make
15 any sense to me whatsoever. I mean, life sentence should
16 be that your life right from, you know, the day that you
17 get in there to the day you take your last breath is within
18 that penitentiary.

19 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Life is not 25 years.
21 Twenty-five years from now I'll be 50. I won't even be
22 retired. I hope that I'll be in good shape still but the
23 reality of it is I'll still be a man who can go out and
24 enjoy life.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** That's not a life
2 sentence. A life sentence means that you took a life and
3 now you pay with yours. You'll spend the rest of your life
4 in this penitentiary until you take your last breath. You
5 shouldn't have the same rights as anybody else.

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

7 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I mean, you took it upon
8 yourself to take the life of an individual. By them
9 releasing, you know, my father out to the public, you know,
10 my mother lost her life and she lost every bit of
11 potential. You know, she never got to see us grow up. She
12 never got to see her grandchild. And they're trying to say
13 that that's a fair -- like, my mother was kind of wiped
14 away like she was -- she was nothing, right.

15 And it should be a life for a life. I mean,
16 I'm not saying, you know, bring in the death sentence and,
17 you know, give somebody a lethal injection but if you're
18 going to put the definition of life on a sentence, make it
19 life.

20 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

21 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Twenty-five years is a
22 sentence. You can sentence somebody for 25 years, you
23 know. If -- I could have done a crime hard enough when I
24 was 20 and I'm still out at a young age.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I mean, but that's where
2 I -- where, like I said, you know, if -- if you're going to
3 sentence somebody, I think the crime should be taken into
4 account, the severity of the crime, how a crime was
5 conducted.

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

7 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Because, you know ---

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And the effects on the
9 victims.

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** The effects on the
11 victim is definitely the most -- well, I couldn't say -- I
12 can't say it's the most important because the initial
13 sentence is definitely the most important because it was a
14 crime committed against the individual. However, there are
15 individuals who are going to live with that for the rest of
16 their lives. So there should be something put in place for
17 that. There should be punishment because, you know, right
18 now, I mean, while I go to a graveyard to visit my mother
19 this man has -- can just go and visit his family. I don't
20 know if his mother is still alive. He may be able to see
21 his mother. I don't know.

22 So like, while this man has the right to go
23 see his mother after committing such a horrible crime, for
24 me, I have to go and, you know, bring my son up to a
25 graveyard and lay a flower next to a headstone and, you

1 know, speak to a stone that can't speak back and just hope
2 that something is being heard, which, you know, I didn't do
3 anything to deserve that. She didn't do anything to
4 deserve that. Our family didn't do anything to deserve
5 that.

6 But that's' what we get in return. We have
7 to live with the loss that we've suffered and we also have
8 to try and live with this man who could possibly come back
9 and pose a threat to us. We don't know where, we don't
10 know when and we don't know how. But as long as that man
11 walks in the community, that potential is there. And it's
12 -- it may not be with my family. Like I said, he already
13 targeted one woman and spoke with many, but you know, other
14 women have the -- you know, they can possibly be severely
15 harmed by the same individual. So I think that all the
16 system is doing is setting the community up for further
17 crimes that have already been committed.

18 MS. CHANEL BLOUIN: I know that in the
19 United States, for instance, if you are, like, a sexual
20 offender you're then on a registry and then you have to go
21 and introduce yourself to your neighbours and that kind of
22 thing, which is still, like, a very, you know, you're still
23 able to be out in the community. Are there any similar
24 restrictions once he is free and ---

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, I ---

1 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- would there be any -
2 - like, is there any way that other people would know about
3 what he had done if you hadn't, for instance, been on CBC
4 and ---

5 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And that's the thing,
6 like, had I not made my story public, which is why I don't
7 mind doing this because I know that, you know, I could have
8 possibly saved that woman's life by putting my story out
9 there because she was completely blindsided by this man who
10 -- who -- who she had thought was somebody else.

11 So I think that if anybody is to be
12 released, I think that there should be, you know, like --
13 like you said, a registry. Something that somebody can go
14 on a look. So I mean -- because you never know who you're
15 dealing with but now a lot of people can come off and tell
16 you a name that don't even exist. I mean, he did that
17 already ---

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** True. Yeah.

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- so how do you -- you
20 can be on a registry but if I come to you today and say
21 that my name is, you know, Marcus ---

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you know, I'm moving
24 here from Saskatchewan ---

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- well, that's not,
2 you know, Dale Ogden that's on the registry. You know,
3 this girl was under the impression that he was a different
4 name, he worked security. She didn't know. I think the
5 only -- and I don't know what you would be able to put in
6 place to stop that because anybody can tell you false
7 information. I don't know if there's a way that, you know,
8 it -- I can't even say that on camera because that just
9 don't sound -- that just don't right.

10 There should be something or some way
11 somehow that even if it's so much as a -- a tattoo with a -
12 - with a number ---

13 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- to identify this
15 individual because, you know, you can never prevent
16 somebody from lying about their true self. And I think
17 that's one of the most difficult things when it comes to
18 offenders is people who have been involved with crime,
19 often times they know what it's going to take to hide the
20 crimes that weren't detected.

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** They know how to sweet
23 talk individuals. And I mean, they've done it before. I
24 mean, you know, my father could have walked in this room
25 right now and sat down like I'm sitting here and talked to

1 you as if he was a different man, a different name and
2 never committed what he committed.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

4 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So like, that's why I
5 can't say that I agree with the release of any murderer. I
6 mean, if it's something severe like what my father did,
7 there's no excuse for why they should be released to the
8 public. If it's something accidental, if you're -- if
9 you're in a fight with somebody, and not saying if it's
10 with a man or a woman now, like, if I'm in a fight with
11 another man and, you know, somebody gets hit and he falls
12 back and smacks his head on a curb and ---

13 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- he passes because of
15 his injury, well, that's something that yes, it's severe
16 because you -- you are responsible for that death.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** However, you didn't
19 intent -- you know, when -- anybody that fights, they don't
20 have intentions to kill somebody unless they're using
21 weapons. If you're in a fist fight and somebody falls back
22 and hits their head and they die, well, you know what, you
23 were never under the intentions on killing that individual.

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So if they go to jail

1 and they serve a couple years and they still live, you
2 know, with regret for what they did then, yeah, that means
3 that they've actually felt for the crime that they've
4 committed and, you know, they -- they were never -- they
5 never had murderous intentions.

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right. They don't pose
7 a threat for the future. It kind of -- it was accidental
8 in a sense.

9 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But this man had planned
10 out what he was doing.

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** He knew when he was
13 going to do it. He told me numerous times. My mother was
14 scared for her life. I mean, she -- she used to have the
15 windows and everything barred in the house just so that he
16 couldn't get in through the windows.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And so he -- he just
18 came through the door?

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** He came in through the
20 door. So he had this planned. And I mean, if you're going
21 to do something like that, he did it in a sense -- by
22 beating someone to death, it's not quick. It's not like
23 you're walking up to somebody and shooting them point blank
24 and it's over and done with, they don't -- you know,
25 obviously, you know, a gunshot wound is definitely fast and

1 you would pray that they don't suffer because it's so blunt
2 and so fast, but it would take a man with severe mental
3 issues to beat somebody to death, because you don't die
4 instantly. You have to enjoy doing that because, I mean,
5 how do you beat somebody to the last breath that they have
6 in their body which could take a long time depending if
7 you're using, you know, a weapon or your own bare hands.

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

9 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I mean, that's not
10 something that's instant. That's something that takes time
11 for somebody's strength and, you know, life to leave their
12 body. So I mean, he enjoyed what he was doing. You know,
13 an axe of all weapons to use, you know, to beat my mother
14 so badly to -- and even for me to have listened to those
15 sounds, those screams, cries, you know, and for him to
16 completely act as if nothing happened with no -- no regret.
17 No ---

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Remorse or ---

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Nothing. He enjoyed
20 what he did. And there's not a doubt in my mind that if
21 he's released in the community that there's going to come a
22 day where this is going to happen again. And I'm sure it's
23 the same with most offenders who commit a severe crime like
24 that. If you can plan out a crime, you can do it again.
25 They had the intentions on doing it the first time.

1 You know, it's something that, you know,
2 some people are just born a natural cold blooded killer.
3 You can't change their intentions. You can't change their
4 mindset no matter how many years you put behind bars. I
5 mean, if you look at a drug addict, I mean, they can be
6 sober for years and the minute that they get the
7 opportunity, I mean, some people are strong enough to say
8 no but there are some people that will relapse ---

9 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- and they will be
11 even worse than what they were before they started. And as
12 far as I'm concerned, that is the same as a murderer. They
13 will be released in the community and my father had a taste
14 of what it was like to get back into his own ways. He had
15 a woman basically eating out of the palm of his hand, which
16 is exactly what he wanted.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And he was treating her
18 in a very controlling way and repeating, you know, like --
19 repeating the patterns of, you know, your mother's
20 experience of having this controlling person who, you know,
21 like, it was -- he seemed to be grooming this new woman and
22 then ---

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** He was basically leading
24 her right up to her -- to her own death. He was -- if I
25 was a betting man I'd say he was probably plotting that in

1 his head, because if he would have got even more connected,
2 if my story didn't go national and it -- I mean, she
3 probably would have went a long period of time. The
4 relationship may have worked out. Then he may have got
5 more so on the controlling side and she -- you know, she
6 probably would have tried to have left the relationship
7 like my mother tried to do and that's where things spark.
8 Because if he gets it in his mindset like he got in with my
9 mother basically, "If I can't have you, nobody's going to
10 have you."

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So you know, that may
13 have taken a year. May have taken a month. You know,
14 who's to say? I mean, one of the things I got nervous of
15 when the story went national and she met with him was what
16 was he going to do to her then.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, that's another
19 thing too, right. I mean, you know, it's one thing that,
20 you know, I exposed him to the public but it was another
21 thing that she was still with him during that time.

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So I mean, if he got
24 really angry, I mean, she's lucky she got out of there when
25 she did. I mean -- I mean, they were in restaurant

1 setting. I mean, what would have happened if she would
2 have been in her house and they were having supper at her
3 house?

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** So this is when, like,
5 she confronted him about it?

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah.

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

8 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So I mean, you know,
9 they were in a public area but what if they weren't in a
10 public area? What if they were ---

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

12 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- say on a nature
13 trail or at her house or somewhere remote? You know, I'm
14 sure he probably would have disposed of that woman so that
15 she wouldn't expose him.

16 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

17 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, anymore than
18 what he -- what he already was. That's what -- you know,
19 and I -- I still feel for this woman because, you know, if
20 he was actually falling for her, I mean, he -- that was his
21 recent relationship after being in prison for so many
22 years. I mean, what's his mindset now? You know, how does
23 this woman feel? I mean, she's living -- right now I'm
24 sure that she's living the same fear as what my mother
25 feared.

1 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

2 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And it was because of a
3 dating website. And that's another thing that most women
4 have to worry about now is dating websites.

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Anybody can go on and
7 make a fake account. You know, falsify information and
8 you're basically setting yourself up for something like
9 that to happen. I mean, you know, he was -- he was an
10 offender with a serious murder charge, got on this site,
11 played innocent. You know, women are -- you know, who are
12 looking for relationships, I mean, a lot of people do seek
13 dating sites. But you should have faith in these sites
14 that you're protected, that the people who are on these
15 sites are innocent ---

16 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Who they say they are.

17 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- individuals. Yeah.
18 And who they are. But you know, she -- she found out the
19 hard way and it could have been a lot worse. It -- it
20 could have been a lot worse. And that's just one
21 individual. I mean, that's just my story. I mean, how
22 many other people are going through the exact same thing,
23 if not, worse where it goes undetected? And we would never
24 have had to deal with this if those people were put where
25 they need to be and left where they need to be.

1 But I don't know -- that's the biggest
2 change that I would like to see. And that's' the one that
3 I can stress the most is proper sentencing. Because people
4 look at it now as a joke. Any kind of crime that's
5 committed is a joke. I mean, I'm going into police work so
6 I'm going to see a lot more of it as I, you know, move
7 along as my journey as a police officer. However, in my
8 community alone, you know, there's a lot of petty crimes
9 that are going on. But you know, most of the guys who
10 commit these crimes, they're never caught. They're -- when
11 they do get caught they get probation. You know, assault
12 charges -- I mean, if you were to look at the court dockets
13 for Stephenville, say, if you were to look at the number of
14 assault charges placed on, you know, male individuals in
15 Stephenville, it is -- it's frightening. A lot of the
16 people that you know, some people you don't know, but there
17 are numerous assault charges.

18 Now, that's just a start to something. I
19 mean, you -- you take somebody to court, they're charged
20 for assault, you let them go on probation, they go back
21 after the individual who pressed charges because they're
22 pissed off ---

23 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- or they still like
25 them. The next time around they get back, they have more

1 assault charges, they get released again. You know, how
2 long does that go on before the individual finally snaps
3 and takes the life of that woman so that she can't press
4 charges on him no more? Now he's going to be charged with
5 a crime, obviously, but you know, if I go back in the woods
6 and I shoot the wrong sex of an animal while I'm hunting, I
7 -- and I stumble across a warden, you know, I get 20 years
8 in jail for it. However, if I shoot the warden that caught
9 me, I get less time for it. That's the reality of it.

10 You know, people see the -- like, the --
11 people see the crimes and the punishment as a joke. Unless
12 you put something in place that's going to seriously scare
13 individuals and say, "You know what, I'm not doing that
14 because I'm not dealing with -- with this" ---

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- "you know,
17 punishment" people are just going to continue to do it.
18 They're going to continue to do it over and over and over
19 again no matter if it's murder, impaired driving, assault
20 charges, you name it. Until something gets put in place
21 that's going to tell people no, like, I'm -- you know, that
22 scares them, they're only going to look at it as a joke.
23 They're going to continue to do it. They're not going to
24 care who it's to or who it affects because they know that -
25 - I mean, I've heard people, you know, joke about it

1 before, like, you know, basically say, like, "Oh yeah, I'll
2 do this. I'll only get a slap on the wrist", or you know,
3 "I'll be out in a couple of years." That's how they look
4 at it.

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** That's crazy.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** That's how a murderer is
7 going to look at it. You know, right now, I mean, what's
8 stopping somebody, you know, who absolutely hates somebody
9 and wants to see them, you know, off the face of this
10 earth? I mean, how are you going to scare somebody with
11 ten years?

12 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

13 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You're not going to do
14 it. I mean, if you had a death sentence put in place, you
15 know, if you don't want to die yourself, you would take
16 somebody else's life. Well, yeah, you may not want to do
17 that. But if you do that and you get ten years, you know,
18 that's not very frightening especially if you have nothing
19 to lose. You know, if you're an individual who, say, came
20 out of a divorce and, you know, your ex-wife has gone on
21 with somebody else and, you know, you lost everything you
22 ever had and ---

23 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you know, the
25 streets are the only place you have left, you know, that

1 wife may not be lucky. She may be in danger. In his eyes,
2 what more does he have to lose? He's already at rock
3 bottom.

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

5 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** He's going to get ten
6 years in jail and he's going to be released again. So this
7 is where the problem is coming from, in my eyes, is that
8 the -- the system is not -- the system is taking it too
9 easy on offenders. You know, they're -- they should be --
10 there should be stricter, you know, a lot tougher sentences
11 put in place to put fear in the individuals who are
12 committing these crimes to stop it. And until that
13 happens, you're going to see it every day.

14 Crime rate is going to continue to climb.
15 You know, missing and murdered women are going to continue,
16 you know, to come out because there is nothing put in place
17 to tell people that they're not taking it lightly anymore.

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** No. I have a question
19 about -- so kind of in this vein, I was wondering if we
20 could go back to the -- sorry, my mind is drawing a blank,
21 but when your parents were separated or -- and your mother
22 had a -- yeah, like, a restriction against your father.
23 Like, a -- so can we talk about the incident that -- that
24 caused that to happen? And also -- because I'm trying to
25 get at, like, how -- how -- how this was even able to

1 occur. So kind of just, you know, who she reported it to,
2 who put that on and ---

3 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** She hadn't initially --
4 like, I don't know what had led up to the restraining order
5 other than the fact that, I mean, I -- my grandmother does
6 have an album at home and there are pictures of her hugging
7 me and my sister and she's bruised. She's, you know, black
8 around the eyes. She looks like somebody who, you know,
9 had a hard time. And I guess at that point it was when she
10 -- you know, it -- it was probably around that timeframe
11 where she may have just finally had enough.

12 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

13 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And she knew that, you
14 know, this time is getting very short now. And I guess
15 because of us, I mean, she never wanted to leave us, you
16 know. I mean, we were her kids. I mean, it was everything
17 that she lived for.

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So you know, I get she
20 went to the courts and she got this restraining order put
21 in place. But a restraining order is -- restraining order
22 is a piece of a paper. I mean, regardless of which way
23 that you look at it, I mean, yes, it's -- it's a way of the
24 court saying that, you know, this person can't come within,
25 you know, so many hundred feet of where you are too.

1 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

2 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And that's fine, like --

3 -

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** But it's not -- you
5 can't be, like, this is the piece of paper, you have to --
6 you know, it's -- if someone is going to not respect that
7 because they're going -- they have the intention of ---

8 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yes.

9 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- ending someone's
10 life, a piece of paper is not enough.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, that night
12 that he came in the house, I mean, my mother could have
13 been standing there, like, showing him the piece of paper -
14 --

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- but I mean, the
17 reality of it is, I mean, for a police officer to come from
18 Stephenville to Port au Port, I mean, you're looking --
19 even if they're speeding, you're looking at ten, 15
20 minutes. I mean, that was the amount of time it took him
21 to beat him to death. So what's a restraining order going
22 to do? I mean, even if -- you know, I've had a restraining
23 order put in place for family members before ---

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- but it's you can't

1 be within 500 feet of an individual. Well, a gunshot can
2 go a lot further than 500 feet.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah. And anyway, it's,
4 like, you're going that far, it's ---

5 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yeah.

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** When she felt that she
7 was being followed, did she report it, or?

8 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** There were multiple
9 times where, you know, I guess it wasn't within the
10 boundaries of the restraining order from where the house
11 was to the road but, I mean ---

12 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay. Yeah.

13 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- numerous times, I
14 mean, you know, she had, you know, told my grandmother or
15 people that she knew that, you know, his car was driving up
16 and down the road in the night time. I've seen it myself.

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, as a child.
19 But you know, he was -- that's how he was. Like, he -- he
20 struck fear into the people that he wanted to fear him.

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, he knew that
23 it was an intimidation factor. Like, you have a
24 restraining order but I'm still going to be present, you
25 know, where -- wherever you're to and wherever you're to,

1 wherever you are ---

2 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

3 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you will see me.

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Do you have -- because
5 the commissioners will be watching this, so in terms of the
6 recommendations that you've suggested are presented, you
7 know, with, like, stricter sentences, do you have kind of a
8 recommendation that you would want to see put in place in
9 terms -- and maybe in lieu of a restraining order or would
10 there be, like, for instance -- like, one thing might be
11 better support for when, you know, a restraining order is
12 put in place but you feel that someone is following you
13 that, like, you have the support and feel that you can go
14 to someone and then maybe a different level of restrain be
15 put in place or something like that?

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I know that it can put
17 more work on law enforcement agencies with restraining
18 orders, you know, with people reporting it. But I think
19 that a restraining order is more -- I think if they put in
20 place, like -- like, I have no contact geographically with
21 my -- with my father which means that he cannot be in any
22 province to which I am.

23 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I think that a
25 restraining order should be -- like, my mother was living

1 in Port au Port at the time. He was living in Kippens.

2 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

3 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** I think her restraining
4 order should have restricted him from entering the town of
5 Port au Port.

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

7 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And if for any reason,
8 say, you know, if I'm in Stephenville and I get a
9 restraining order that prevents somebody from coming to
10 Stephenville, I think you should alert the authorities when
11 you -- if you have to go in for groceries or go in for
12 work, you should alert them when you leave in the morning,
13 say, "I'm -- I'm going to work." Call them when you get to
14 work.

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Call them when you leave
17 work. Call them when you get home.

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Because they'll know the
20 time that it's going to take for each. If there's any gap
21 in between that you didn't alert them, say you were
22 stopping for something else that you didn't tell them,
23 well, "Why didn't you report it?"

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

25 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** You know, I think that a

1 restraining order should prevent them from coming in the
2 region to which they are. If they have to come in for work
3 or something like that, like, I'm not saying you should
4 stop somebody from working.

5 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But I'm saying that, you
7 know, they should be reported, you know ---

8 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

9 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- that they're going
10 to work and vice versa because at least then the person ---

11 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** So it -- so it would be
12 the person who this restraining order is against that would
13 be reporting?

14 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Yes.

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Because I mean ---

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And there can be, like,
18 an app for that, for instance. It wouldn't have to be,
19 like, necessarily -- and it could alert them.

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Exactly. I mean, that's
21 the only way that, you know, the individual -- or the
22 victim would feel somewhat safe. Because, like, for me I
23 know for a fact that, you know, if he come -- if he crosses
24 into a province to which I am, he's going to be locked up,
25 you know. And it should be the same. Like, if I have a

1 restraining order against somebody in Stephenville, you
2 know, if they're not living in Stephenville and they decide
3 to take it upon themselves to come into Stephenville at two
4 o'clock in the morning and it's not reported, what are you
5 doing in Stephenville at two o'clock in the morning?

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

7 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Right? I mean, my
8 mother was murdered at night. What are you doing --
9 everything is closed.

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So what are you doing
12 there? You know, I think that that is one direction that a
13 restraining order can go in that, you know, it's -- it's at
14 -- you know, all and all it's still not bullet proof
15 because, I mean, I know a lot of people out in my hometown,
16 I mean, they may just drive on into Stephenville, and I
17 mean, the police, unless they're looking for you or
18 somebody reports that they seen you, I mean, they could
19 drive into town and drive right back without being
20 detected.

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So I mean, it's -- it's
23 hard to pinpoint one area but I think that for one would be
24 a possibility because all in all the restraining order,
25 like you said, is, you know, is just a piece of paper. My

1 mother had one. It didn't prevent her from being murdered.
2 I mean, he came right into the house.

3 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

4 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It wasn't like he had
5 found her somewhere else or anything like that. I mean, he
6 came right to where she lived. I mean there was no -- no
7 restraining order, door lock or anything. The only thing
8 that would stop was, you know, if a police officer would
9 have been there waiting ---

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- waiting at the door,
12 right. I mean, you know, if there were any suspicion that
13 he was on his way, you know, there could have been a police
14 officer present which could have arrested him on the scene
15 and which possibly would have saved my mother's life that
16 night. But there wasn't. And you know, she lost her life,
17 you know, under a restraining order.

18 But all in all, I mean -- I mean, that's the
19 main points that I can target here today. It's not to say
20 that I won't think of anymore.

21 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

22 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** So -- because I mean, a
23 lot of this stuff is -- you know, it's a lot to take in,
24 it's a lot to talk about because you're reflecting on ---

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you know, 20 -- 20
2 years of, you know, life experience and, you know, the
3 murder itself. I mean, looking back on that, I mean, you
4 know, you tell the story as -- as you remember it but
5 there's a lot of life that ---

6 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

7 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- happened in 20 years
8 that if I had to reflect on, I mean, I'd still be talking
9 in this camera until next week. But I mean, the -- what I
10 hit on today was the severity of my mother's murder and
11 what I had witnessed and how it affected my life. My life
12 after the fact and, you know, everything that's in the
13 process right now with my actual father being released.

14 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

15 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And you know, the things
16 that I've noticed in the justice system that are -- that a
17 lot of people don't detect because they don't have -- they
18 have fear in them that they, you know, they're scared to
19 ask for this information or they're being denied this
20 information when really they have the legal right to have
21 it.

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And you know, some of
24 them, like I said, are scared to give their statements.
25 But you know, these are just some of the points that I've

1 hit on with my own experience. And you know, like I --
2 like I said earlier, my hope is that one day that somebody
3 is going to put in place, you know, sentences that are
4 actually going to put fear in other offenders that they're
5 not going to commit, you know, or another crime like that
6 ever again. Because I'm under every impression right now
7 that, I mean, my father being one of them, that, you know,
8 he has the potential of committing the same crime again.

9 And that's just one individual. You know,
10 there are a lot more individuals who get away with murder,
11 who -- you know, a lot of the women that are missing. I
12 mean, how can you place a charge on somebody if you don't
13 have a body to place a charge on.

14 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** They're just out there.

15 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** There's people, you
16 know, in Newfoundland alone, there are people that have
17 committed murders who walk -- they pass you on the side of
18 the road and you would never know it, because somebody goes
19 missing and their body is never found, so how do you say
20 that this person murdered somebody? You know, some people
21 are -- it's a -- it's a hard way to put it but some people
22 are, like I said, natural born killers and they can commit
23 a crime and hide it so well that they may never -- I mean,
24 there could be 20 years go down the road before they find a
25 trace of a -- a bone fragment and realize that that was for

1 the murder of this woman. Meanwhile, the individual lived
2 his life and he probably died a year ago and he went
3 amongst the community without even being detected as a
4 murderer.

5 But it's very -- it's very alarming. I
6 mean, you know, it's a scary place to live in where, you
7 know, people are going missing and, you know, obviously if
8 they're missing for a long period of time, I mean, there's
9 only other -- there's only one other thing you can assume.

10 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

11 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It's not that they ran
12 away because, you know, sometimes you'll -- if somebody ran
13 away, I mean, you may hear of a report somebody seen them
14 in Ontario or ---

15 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

16 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- Alberta or thought
17 they had seen them. But most people that go missing, they
18 go missing without a trace. And I mean, you can only
19 assume that they were murdered, kidnapped or -- but -- and
20 you -- you don't -- most of the times in Newfoundland, when
21 you hear of a woman that's gone missing, she's gone missing
22 without a trace. And it was often times the last person
23 she was involved with was her partner. Courtney Lake.

24 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** It's -- it's not, like,
25 random. It's ---

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** No, it's ---

2 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- it's really ---

3 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- like ---

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** --- kind of like a
5 domestic violence situation.

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Jennifer Hillier, she
7 went and stayed at her husband's place the day that she
8 went missing. The night that she went missing she was at
9 his house. Was never seen after that. Courtney Lake was
10 last seen getting into her boyfriend's truck. Was never
11 seen after that. Most of the men that go missing in
12 Newfoundland, you'll hear tales -- people tell stories,
13 "Well, they went out berry picking", or, "They went out
14 hunting and never came back." And it turns out, well,
15 like, recently there was a guy who, you know, went out
16 berry picking or something and got lost and they found him
17 in a river. He slipped and fell or something like that.
18 But like, at least you find the bodies because ---

19 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

20 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- people know, like,
21 okay ---

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** He was there.

23 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- he went berry
24 picking in this area.

25 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Right.

1 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** But these women were
2 last seen with these men and they were never seen again.
3 And nobody seems to know anything about it. Like, that's
4 what really -- it's either, you know, there are a lot of
5 crimes that are going on that people are aware of and are
6 too afraid to speak of it and it's hiding valuable
7 information that can really make a difference and solve
8 some of these cases.

9 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

10 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Or they're just
11 extremely good at what they do and they make do with these
12 women and they're never found and no charges are ever laid.
13 And I mean, that's just what I've seen, you know, so far.
14 You know, it's frustrating to the -- you know, to the
15 families. I mean, you know, I know these people would love
16 to have closure. I mean ---

17 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

18 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** --- you know, it's one
19 thing to not have anybody charged for a murder but it's one
20 -- you know, it's another thing to not even have so much as
21 a -- you know, a grave.

22 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** And not know what
23 happened.

24 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** And not -- you know, I
25 mean, most people, you know, even, you know, as dramatic as

1 the story may be, I mean, even if they knew the cause of
2 the death it sometimes just helps them out that much
3 because a lot of the people, they want to know if their
4 daughter or their mother suffered. Right? That's one of
5 the biggest things that you'll -- you know, anybody who
6 lost somebody or an accident or something like that, I
7 mean, the first question is, "Did they suffer?" Because
8 they want to -- they want to know. They want something to
9 hang onto or something to tell them, "Okay, well, no, he
10 didn't suffer so, you know, I can let that go now. I can -
11 - I can start healing." But these people don't have
12 anything besides hope that they're going to stumble across
13 the slightest bit of information to just find them the
14 body, let alone a charge. But even if they don't find a
15 body, I mean, that murderer is still out there in the
16 community. The potential of another person going missing
17 in still there.

18 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

19 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** It -- it's -- it's
20 frightening and it's only going to get worse, like, you
21 know, until something changes. You know, I'm under the
22 impression it's going to continue to get worse and, you
23 know, I just pray that nothing like that ever happens to
24 any of my family or friends. But it's a different world
25 that we live in now.

1 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Yeah.

2 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** That's -- that's what I
3 can -- that's mainly what I can talk about today.

4 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay. Great. Is there
5 anything else that you wanted to add, or?

6 **MR. DANIEL BENOIT:** Not that I'm aware of.

7 **MS. CHANEL BLOUIN:** Okay. All right. So
8 let's stop now.

9

10

11 --- Upon adjourning on Tuesday, October 16, 2018.

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

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



Ashley Robertson

November 6, 2018