National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Truth-Gathering Process

Part I Statement Gathering

Radisson Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta

Saturday November 17, 2018

Statement - Volume 584
Crystal Saskatchewan,
In relation to her cousin “Tom”

Statement gathered by Marie-Audrey Girard

International Reporting Inc.
41 - 5450 Canotek Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1J 9G2
E-mail: info@irri.net - Phone: 613-748-6043 - Fax: 613-748-8246
II
ORDER

On March 5th 2019, Chief Commissioner Marion R. Buller ordered that, with the exception of the witness’ name and that of “Tom,” all names in this public transcript and any related documents must be rendered anonymous. This order was made pursuant to Rule 7 of Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice.
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Statement Volume 584**  
**Witness:** Crystal Saskatchewan  
**November 17, 2018**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testimony of Crystal Saskatchewan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporter’s Certification</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statement Gatherer:** Marie-Audrey Girard

Documents submitted with testimony: none.
--- Upon commencing on Saturday, November 17, 2018 at 8:25 p.m.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Hi, Crystal, so I -- what I was saying is that -- like, now the camera -- the camera recorder and the audio recorder are on. My first question for you is are you okay if we record the session tonight?

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Yes.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Good. Okay, thank you very much. Well, my name is Marie-Audrey. I work with the National Inquiry. We are in Edmonton, here in at the Radisson, and it is 8:26 at night. So I would ask everybody in the room to -- if they would kindly introduce themselves, their full name and where they're from, please.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Okay. I'm Crystal Saskatchewan. I'm from Samson Cree Nation in Hobbema, or Maskwacis, Alberta.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Thank you, Crystal.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Just your name.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Just your name and where you're from, please, and why you're here.

**MR. LARRY PAPIN:** I'm Larry Papin. I'm from Enoch Cree Nation.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Thank you. And you're -- I understand that you're here to support Crystal tonight.
MR. LARRY PAPIN: Yes, I am.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Okay, thank you very much.

So Crystal, as I said, my first question -- first questions here for you tonight will be, what would you like to share with us? What would you like the National Inquiry to know?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: That my sister/cousin.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, I’m sorry.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: No worries.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Well, she's my cousin, but we grew up as sisters. That she was a beautiful woman inside and out, and we miss her. And -- what was your question again?

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: What would you like to share --

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Share about --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Yes.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- her?

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: So what was the name of your -- your sister?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: [Tom’s full name]. Just how she was -- how -- what kind of a person she was. What kind of a mother she was. How dedicated she was to
her children. Her life growing up.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Can you tell us what happened to [Tom]? To [Tom]?

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** She was found in a one-bedroom apartment that she just moved into. I think it was, like, maybe a week she was in that place. And she -- her kids were -- her two babies were with her mother-in-law on the reserve.

And she was found by one of her friends that -- that she was using with. And she -- her friend called the ambulance and she was found in the bathroom. She had no clothes on. She had two needles in both her arms, in both sides, and she had bruises all over her body, inside her thighs, on her face, her arms, her side of her -- her sides. And -- yeah, she was -- and there was blood all over the bathroom and the bathtub and all that. And the cops never investigated, nothing. They just marked it off as an overdose.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** And, Crystal, when did that happen exactly?

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** When?

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** When?

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** About -- it's probably going to be 2014, 2013 or '14. Actually 2014, yeah. And it was in summer, I think, summertime.
MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: And do you know when was the last time [Tom] was seen before her friend found her in the -- this one-bedroom apartment?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: She was with -- she was with her common-law, and he was there with them. But the person that found her said that he was there when he left, and he was the only one with her. And -- yeah, he just took off and left her like that.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And -- yeah. He didn't come to the funeral right away or the -- the wake. He showed up one day for -- like, an hour or two and he left. And -- yeah, pretty much everybody was mad at him.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And he just -- he didn't -- he wasn't really there. And her babies were -- since the mother-in-law had -- had them she -- they -- she had been involved with child welfare. Like, her nickname was "Tom". She was involved with child welfare for a long time, but they -- they would always check up on her and, like, they -- they let her keep her kids, but they would always, you know -- like, a family enhancement program and so she -- once that happened to her, they got involved, and whoever their kids were with at the time, they're staying with that person now. And it was up to her if she wanted
to bring them or not, and she brought them, like, when [Ex-partner 1], I mean, the father came and -- and then I think to the funeral.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Nice.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: But -- yeah, we were -- we wanted them over -- overnight and, you know, for the whole four days, but it didn't happen.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Do you know how old was [Tom]?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: She was 44. Her birthday is coming up. She's going to be 45 in heaven. We're a month apart.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Oh, you are?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Yeah.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: And when you started you said she was like a sister for you.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Yeah.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Can you describe this relationship you had with her?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: My mom -- my late mom and her late dad are brother and sister. And when I was -- we both didn't have a very good childhood, so we were always bouncing from her dad's to my mom's. She lived with us. My mom took care of them for a while. And then as we got older we would just, like, end up at the same
place, either her dad's or my mom's, or wherever.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** We started getting into mischief together. And I remember one time, I think we were about five or six years old, we were with my mom, my late mom, and she was looking for her car when her sister was driving her around. It was funny because my mom and -- she was with -- looking for her car, and her common-law had her car, but he was drunk and he was with -- with another lady. So me and my sister, Tom, we watched my mom beat up this woman.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh, my.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** And then she threw her out the car and we threw out everything out of the car and she told us to get in, and she comes out with ice cream and we're -- we were just eating ice cream, looking outside, and wondering and talking about that, and -- yeah, that was funny. But me and her, like, everything wrong -- like, a teenager shouldn't do, we did together.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Like, our -- our first time drinking, smoking, getting into drugs, drinking, yeah, just everything until I had my -- my daughter, 2002.

I drank, like, a year after I had my daughter. Like, probably about -- when she was about six
months 'til just after her birthday when I -- I, kind of, stopped and I moved away, to Calgary, and I -- we -- that's when we just lost connection.

I came back home and she kept -- when I got -- before I had my daughter, we -- we used to come to Edmonton and go to bars on -- and that's when we got into hard drugs. And I remember she would just buy it and buy it and I'd never have to buy it, and I couldn't take it anymore, so I stopped doing it and she just kept -- kept on. And it just got worse and worse and into heavier, more drugs.

She had -- she would have had seven or eight babies. I think two or three of them passed away. No. Seven -- wait. Yeah, she would have had eight, two of them passed away. And that really devastated her. She had a -- both of them stillborn.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** And I -- the first baby was with her first common-law, the children's dad. The last two are from the one that she was last with.

I think after her losing her babies she just, like, kind of, went into a depression. We were always drinking, and all that.

And they carried out -- they wrapped up her baby in a moss bag and the father brought out the baby from
the hospital, and it was stillborn, and they -- they took
the baby right to where they were going to have the wake.
And -- yeah, that was -- that was really hurtful to see.
And her -- her -- her husband at the time, he was -- he was
carrying the baby and he was -- she was in a moss bag.  It
was a girl.  They named her -- she named her [Daughter 1].

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:  M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:  And her dad -- her
ex was named [Ex-Partner 2], so she always matched up her
names --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:  M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:  -- with her --
with him. And she was walking behind him, crying, and it
was just really heartbreaking.

She was a good mom. She -- even though she
did all the drugs, like we did. I was always with her, but
she always had a babysitter and the kids were always safe.

So that was her -- her biggest thing in the
world that she loved. She had five children with -- his
name was [Ex-Partner 2], but right after him, she had --
she had six kids with him.

And right after him -- right after Tom passed
away, not even -- I'd say -- I don't know, within two,
three months, maybe six months, within that timeframe, he
-- he committed suicide.
And he's the one that really, really took it hard during her wake. Like, he really, really — all his emotions. Like, he'd just cry every time he'd come in. He'd be — he was a firekeeper all weekend. And he was hard on himself. He didn't want to get rest or anything. Every time he'd come into — to the wake, he'd look at her body and he'd cry. And I remember all that. And, like, I was — it was really sad to see that her first baby daddy would be there more than her — the current one.

And, yeah, it was — it was just — I don't know, I was — I was angry. I was really mad.

And I was sitting at her coffin — that when her — the one she was — when she passed away, the one she — the person she was with, her — her partner, was sitting at her coffin, and he came in there and he said — he kneeled down and he was looking at her.

I was just — I remember looking down, watching him and, like, touch her face, everything. And I was just really angry and I just wanted to ask him, "Did you give her those bruises?"

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** "Are you the one that did this to her?" Like, and then he turned to me and he just looked up and he just — like, he kept saying, to me, "I don't know. I don't know." "I just" — and he kept
saying, “Crys (ph), Crys.” “And I don't know.” I -- I -- that's all he kept saying. And I was like, “What?” “What are you -- what you don't know?” And he's, like -- and then he put his head down. He just shook his head, and -- and I don't know. I was just -- I just wanted to -- I just wanted to hurt him, but I know that wasn't the right place --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- time or place.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: And afterward, did you get more answers? Like, no?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: No. I've asked him -- I've asked him what happened. He's the only one that knows what happened. I messaged him.

Not even a month after she -- we buried her, he was -- he was already with another woman. And I remember who -- I know who she is. And that woman that he was with was Tom's -- supposed to be Tom's -- one of her good friends.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And that just -- and she gave her, like, a place of -- always, like, if she needed a place to stay, she'd give the -- this woman that, or she'd help her in any way.

Like, she was just that kind of a person.
Even if she was on her, like, last loaf of bread she'd give you half of it, or she'd tell you, “Come and eat with me,” you know. She was -- she was very kind hearted.

    Every time I came up from Calgary, I'd -- I'd come and stay with her.

    MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

    MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Or she'd come to Calgary. She'd either stay with me or her other friend. I forget her name, and she would -- that's how it was.

    Like, every summer me and my girls would go to Frog Lake powwow, and we'd always leave a week before and we'd go spend that week with Tom and the kids.

    She was either in a hotel or just moving into a place. She only had her two babies, but the other ones that were PGO. They would -- she would have visits with them. They were older.

    She was -- she was very beautiful. She had such -- she was so beautiful. Like, I don't know why she was with -- with him.

    MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

    MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: But, you know, she -- she had a -- she always, you know, stuck with one person and -- I don't know. But she was very beautiful, and she rarely -- she rarely gave herself any credit. She always, you know, she never ...
I remember Pink was coming to town and I was at her apartment. And she's like, "Crys" -- no, it was Dixie Chicks. She goes, "Crys, let's go to Dixie Chicks for our birthday. Come on, it's coming up. Our birthdays are coming up." She goes, "I'll buy all the tickets." And I said, "All right, sure." So we were going to go to that, but I don't know what happened.

Something -- something happened with her funds, I think, she didn't get them on the time she wanted. Her -- she was waiting for some kind of money, but she didn't get it from the time we -- the concert came, so.

Yeah, that was ...

We had so many funny moments too. I don't know. There's so much things I can say about her. And she had a beautiful heart and soul.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** What's your favourite memory of her?

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** My favourite memory would be, we used -- I think we were about 13, and we used to -- I -- she used to make me go steal cigarettes from my mom. And so I told her, "Okay."

So we're all -- we're sneaking up, because was the stairs going up to my mom's room. It was always creaky. And we were -- we were just sneaking up that stairs and real slow and whispering. She kept pushing me
from behind. I’d tell her, “Just wait.” And so I went in
and I got a smoke. My mom was a deep sleeper, but her
husband wasn’t and, I guess, he knew about it.

Anyway, I grabbed two of them. We went on
top of the roof. It was a split level, like this and then
like this and there was a third one, but we always went on
the middle one. And we're sitting up there. It was such a
clear night, just all the stars were out and it was
beautiful. Wasn’t pitch black. The moon was out. And
we're just lying on our roof smoking our cigarettes and
talking about what we're going to do when we're older, and
all that.

We pretty much did everything bad together.
Yeah, it was just -- that's my favourite memory.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** That's a nice
memory definitely.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Yeah. I think
after that night, the next night I think my brother -- he's
passed away recently, and he -- I was -- they thought I
went to bed and my -- her sister came, [Sister 1], and it
was [Sister 1], [Tom] and my brother, they were all
outside, and I -- I woke up and I was looking around for
them and I heard them outside, and I looked outside, “What
are you guys doing?” And they were all sniffing --
sniffing gas. And it was real funny because I went out
there and I caught them, and they were all, like, telling me to go inside. And I told -- told them, “Chill. You probably come -- come inside too. You're -- we're the same age.”

But I ended up trying it. And she was standing right beside me, and that was the only time I ever tried it. I never -- always tried something once.

And she was looking at me, and I was looking at her, and all of a sudden she started going, like, far, far away from me, and I was like, “Come here, Tom.” She's like, “I'm right here.” It was funny. That was -- when we're sad -- we always used to sit on the roof.

But that night when we had our smokes, we were talking about our -- what we want to do when we're older, and she always said she was going to be a cop, or a hairstylist.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M’hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** She wanted to be that. She -- because she loved fixing herself up and, you know, that's how we were growing up. Just trying to be the best and all that.

And I don't know how she met [Ex-Partner 1]. Well, her -- the guy that she had children with, her ex-partner. But he just finished doing -- he just came out of jail -- out of the Pen, and he was being -- he was going
out with everybody until he met Tom. They hooked up, and all that. But he always left her with the kids and she'd have to -- she'd go out there and look for him, I remember that. She did that with her first one too. Whenever they'd leave her, she'd go out and find them and give them a licking.

But, yeah, she's -- she's got a grandchild. Her oldest son's got a daughter, and she's so cute. So chubby. She, kind of, looks -- reminds me of how her baby was, that she lost, that's how she was. She was, you know, chubby and cute. And I remember how big she was when her dad was carrying her. She was, so -- yeah.

And, I know she would love her grandchild, and her birthday's coming up soon, in a couple weeks, maybe in three weeks. Her -- her kids are still in -- in care. They're with their foster families. Like, she -- she has two grandchildren, yeah.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Her daughter had a -- a baby too. His name is [Grandson].

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Oh.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** She had a boy and she named him [Grandson]. I know her mom would have liked that name. Yeah, she was -- I don't know, I haven't seen her daughter in a while. She hasn't been doing good.
She's taken a much -- much -- like, her lifestyle isn't -- is, like, ten times worse than what her late -- her late mom went through. So she's not doing good. Like, I haven't seen her in a couple of years. But I -- I always make sure to ask about her. And there was a missing person on her, maybe six months ago, was shared, and from [City 1]. And I started boxing people, "Where is [Daughter 2]?
"Like, is she okay?" And then somebody commented that -- they said that she was okay.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And that the police put her name out there because they just wanted to pick her up. She was on some kind of a warrant.

So, you know, I'm always scared for her daughter. Like, she loved her daughter so much. She did anything for her. But she's, like -- it's really -- her lifestyle scares a lot of people. She -- she gave up her baby to adoption to a Christian family. But the baby was born with -- like, addictions --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- too. Yeah, I remember, like, she's got -- I don't know, like, her -- her children -- like, I wished they would come together and be as one, but they're all over. They're scattered all over.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: But her -- her two youngest ones remember me. I was hoping they would remember me. I seen them last year at a Christmas party. Her son, [Son], is his name, he -- he came running up to me, “Auntie.”

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: “Hold me.” I grabbed him and I held him so tight. Her -- his sister, she was -- she's like, “Hi, Auntie.” And I'm, like, “Oh God, you guys are so cute. Just like your mom. You just look like your mom.” [Son]'s ten years old now.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: I know, because him and my girl are the same age too. And they're actually the same -- like, a month apart too.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: So I have tons and tons of pictures of Tom on Facebook, her -- of her kids, yeah.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: And, Crystal, can I take you back a little bit? At the beginning, you mentioned the police investigation. Do you have more details about it?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: No. That's all. That's all I know is that they -- they -- written it off
as an overdose.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Just an overdose.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Drug overdose.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: But you think it was maybe something else?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Yeah. I know it was because she couldn't get two needles in her arm, and she knew how much to take.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Right.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: She's been doing it for years, so. And I know she didn't want to die. I know. I know she wanted to live and get all her babies back.

And that's all -- like, I've asked questions. I've asked around to other people. There's been rumors -- rumors that -- about him, and this and that. And there's only one of our family members that's seen the place after she was taken from there. Was her -- her little brother, [Brother].

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: I mean, [Brother]. And he said that her bathroom was -- the whole place was all bloody. Said it just looked rundown, and it didn't even -- it looked like she didn't even fully move in yet.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And he said, he was just -- he cried when he seen her place. And he -- he right -- and he was living at a place -- like, a block away from -- from where it happened just recently. I don't know if he's still there, but he'd always message me and say, “Sis, I -- I walked by Tom's old place today.” I wish I can go there and smudge, you know, go smudge that place. And -- but I know she's gone to heaven.

And now there's this -- another reason why I think what I think is because I actually went to a psychic.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: I mean a medium.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: And it was really -- like, the way my -- my -- my hairs on my body were just, you know, they were just standing up, and that psychic knew stuff that I didn't tell her obviously.

That whole week, [personal information]. I was living in Calgary and [personal information] I needed to start walking, going on a treadmill [personal information].

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- and then -- so that whole week I kept finding shoes, like, online, or I mean, through Kijiji, like, you know, people selling shoes
on Facebook, or whatever. And every pair of shoes that I
 got was either too tight or was my size, but it fit too
 small, or -- and they were hurting my feet.

And so I went and seen this psychic and she
 was -- she was really good. She -- she -- at first my mom
came in. I was testing the psychic. I had my mom's jacket
 on, and she -- she wrote something down. She was closing
 her eyes. She had her eyes closed and she was writing like
 this, and she opened them, looked at her thing and it said,
 "Jacket." And I -- I started crying. I was bawling.

And -- and then she said -- the psychic said,
"Did you lose somebody violently?" And I said, "No. No, I
don't think so." And she said, "How about -- you know --
you know, like a stabbing or a gunshot?" And I said, "No."
She goes, "What about a car accident?" I said, "No." She
goes, "Huh, well, it's like -- there's -- I'm getting this
thing that -- like, a sister. Did you -- a sister, or
something, did they pass away violently?" And I said,
"No."

And then I started thinking about it and I
was, "Well, I have a cousin that we just buried, and I have
suspicions about how she passed away." And she goes,
"Where did this happen?" And I told her, "In Edmonton."
She goes, "Because I'm" -- she's like -- She goes, "I
wrote" -- she looked at her thing and she's, like -- went
like this, back and forth, and she goes, “That's a highway.” I said, “Oh.” And she said -- she said, “You know, I'm feeling like this is your” -- I told her, “Well, this cousin -- I -- we grew up like sisters, so.” And she goes, “Okay. Okay. This person is saying she wants you to stop.”

Oh, how I knew it was Tom was she said -- the psychic goes, “She's saying -- she's standing right behind you and she's saying she doesn't want you to do anything about what happened to her. She wants you to just let it -- let the Creator take care of it. And she knows -- she knows that you know what happened to her.”

And I just -- I told her -- I started crying. I said, “Yeah, that was Tom.” “She was -- she was about -- she looks really young.” And I said, “Yeah, she was pretty -- same age as me.” And then she said, “She wants you to stop hurting your feet.” And I said, “My feet?” She goes, “She was just laughing at you. She was -- she's -- she sees you buying all these shoes and they don't fit you and she wants you to quit doing that to your feet.” I said, “Oh, my God.” And I started laughing and she was I was like her. She always had to throw in something funny.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Yeah, she's got siblings, but everybody knew how close we were growing up.
And her dad -- he looked like a white man. They call him -- he even had a -- a Cree Indian name that called -- his name was A White Man, in Cree. And after he passed away, that was another devastation for her and she got more into the -- but, yeah, I see him every now and then. And he's not looking too good.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I see.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** And I was -- I look at him and I'm like, “My God,” like, I wish he'd just tell me what happened that night. He doesn't talk to me when I see him.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Before we were really good friends, but now, he doesn't talk to me, or he won't even try to talk to me. I seen him, like, across the street when I'm in my vehicle, and he just looks really rough, and his life isn't going too good. And I believe that’s the Creator's way of, you know, because -- I believe he -- he's, I know he did something. I just wish he'd tell what happened to her. But if he did, then maybe he'd go to jail or something. I don't know.

I really, really miss her. I don't like the city --

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** -- because she was
Statement - Public
Crystal Saskatchewan
(“Tom”)

here. It was hard to move back here from Calgary. It was hard though at first because Edmonton was the only reason why -- she was the only reason why I came to Edmonton. And she just -- yeah, like, I had my first few months here, I had no one to go see. No one to visit or hang around and that's when I'd miss her the most.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** M'hm.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** And her kids.

Like, our kids and her kids we would be always -- we'd always do something with them, like, to the park or go eat or something like that. But, yeah.

Even now it's just so -- it feels like yesterday. I get -- I think about it and it gets me so mad because she could still be here. Like, (unreportable sound), but I know what happened.

Like, even for out of this -- you know, like she told me not to -- that the Creator will take care of it. But I just -- you know.

You know, the police shouldn't do that. They should have investigated. They should have did everything, like fingerprint, stuff like that. I don't know.

Everybody thought that she got raped, but the coroner said that she didn't.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** Why do you think people thought that she has been raped?
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: She had bruises right here.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: All over her legs.

Her sisters, one of them -- can I get some water?

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Of course. I think there's still some here.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Thank you.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: You're welcome.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Her sisters were the ones that went to view the body and, like, to confirm it was her. [Sister 2] and [Sister 3], they -- they had to dress her. Put -- braid her hair. And they looked all over her body. And they're the ones that said her body -- they were just crying when they were telling me that, "She's got bruises everywhere on her body." Even right on her face, right here, right here, on the forehead.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Do you know if, prior to her death, she was a victim of domestic violence?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Her brother, [Brother], seen her, like, two days before.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: He said she -- she looked just fine.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: He's the last person -- he was the only one that seen her during that -- probably, two -- two weeks before she's -- that happened. He was the only one in contact with her, like, to see face-to-face and ...

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Yeah, and he -- he said that he was going to move her in -- like, go get all her furniture from storage, and all that. She had a storage -- I don't know what happened to that storage, or if anybody went and got her things from there. But she kept a lot of photos. I don't know where they are, or who has them. But, yeah, he said that she was -- she didn't look -- look like that when he seen her, so.

And plus, it's been -- it happened before -- like, all the time, he was -- he was an abusive partner. He always -- just every which way a person can be abusive, that was him. He would -- sometimes she'd have black eyes, or bruises on her face, and I'd be like, "What happened?" And she'd be, like, "You know." And then I told her, "But why do you stay? You should just leave him." She goes, "I don't know. I'm dumb." She'd say. I'd tell her, "You're not dumb. You're just stuck."

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: And do you know if
she ever reported those behaviours to the police? Has she ever --

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: I'm pretty sure there -- there were probably a few reports there.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Even with the child welfare.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Because that's how they got involved, when there was a domestic going on --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- and child welfare would show up. And -- yeah, I'm -- I'm sure there's -- I'm not sure how many files, or reports there is, but there's probably a few. Maybe more than a few.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: So he's always been like that.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Do you know if he's ever been convicted?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: I'm pretty sure. Yeah, I'm pretty sure he went in for -- a few times for assaulting her. Yeah.

I know sometimes he'd -- in the beginning, I know that he would try and get after her older kids and
she'd -- she'd defend them, like, she'd fight him, or anything. I don't know. It was just -- like her mama -- mama bear's instincts. That's how she was.

Yeah, I think I need a break.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** It's okay. And me, like, I'm, kind of, done with the questions I want. If you have more to share, we can take a break, but if you think that you have shared everything that you wanted, I'm -- me, like, I think I -- I -- on my side, ask all the questions I wanted to ask.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Okay.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** So if you --

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Do you have any more questions?

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** I have one last question.

**MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN:** Okay.

**MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD:** It's a more general one, which is -- usually we ask everybody, like, if they have any recommendations that they would like to make for these kind of -- those kind of situation, to never happen again. So how can we put in place a system that will make sure that we never have to lose sister -- or sister or aunts, or mother, like Tom -- like, what happened to Tom. If there's anything at one point that we can put in place,
as in institutions, that can help these women, our
sister --

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: (Indiscernible).
MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: -- our family.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Well, for women
that are in -- are in relationships -- I know for her, I'd
tell her, "Go to a shelter." And she said, "I'd never --
those places are always full."

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: "Can never get
in." Like, I don't know. There needs to be more places
for women to go.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Yeah.
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: They need to --
that's probably what I would -- more people out there on
the street to help them.

I worry about [Daughter 2]. I don't know, it's just so hard to get -- I don't know, addiction is so
hard. It's more harder on the family. I don't know. My
mind is blank right now.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: That's -- no,
that's really good. That's -- those are --

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: But I know more --
MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: -- really good --
MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- shelters.
MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: More shelters.
Those are really good recommendations.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Because there's
never any places for them to go. I know a few of my
friends and my other cousins, they're like, “Oh, it's
full.”

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: “So I'm just going
to stay another night.” Stuff like that.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: It's difficult, I
see.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Even on the
reserve. There's --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- they have no
phone. They have no way to contact anyone. The shelter on
the reserve is always full because they'd bring in -- bring
in out-of-towners. Like, it's not only for the reserve.
So they -- when they're transporting somebody, you know --
so, yeah, I'd say more shelters on the reserve.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Well, like I said,
that's all the questions I wanted to ask.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: M'hm.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I want to just
really say thank you for coming here tonight and sharing
your truth and, well, talking about your sister, your
cousin, Tom, with us, and it's important to us to know
about her, so thank you for trusting us enough to come here	onight and to share with us.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Okay.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: I don't have any
more questions. Is there anything else that you would like
to share with us tonight?

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Well, if people
see my -- my video, and if it's public, then I think that
one last thing I'd like to share is our Native men should
get more help, because half the time our women are getting
hurt by our own -- our own Native men when they should be
protecting us. They need to be more aware of, you know,
stuff like that. Like, how him -- he -- he didn't know
what he had until he lost, and he was the reason why --

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: M'hm.

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: -- she's gone.

Yeah, that's about it.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: Well, thank you
very much. If it's okay with you I will turn off the
camera and --

MS. CRYSTAL SASKATCHEWAN: Yeah.

MS. MARIE-AUDREY GIRARD: -- the video
recorder. Okay, so it's 9:20 and we are turning off the
camera.

--- Upon adjourning at 9:20 p.m.
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Shannon Munro, 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.

Shannon Munro

January 4, 2019