

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
MĀORI HEARING**

**Under** The Inquiries Act 2013

**In the matter of** The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

**Royal Commission:** Ms Julia Steenson  
Dr Anaru Erueti  
Mr Paul Gibson  
Judge Coral Shaw  
Ali'imuumua Sandra Alofivae

**Counsel:** Ms Julia Spelman, Mr Kingi Snelgar, Mr Wiremu Rikihana,  
Mr Luke Claasen, Ms Maia Wikaira, Ms Alisha Castle,  
Ms Tracey Norton, Ms Season-Mary Downs, Ms Alana  
Thomas, Mr Winston McCarthy, Mr Simon Mount QC,  
Ms Kerry Beaton QC for the Royal Commission  
Ms Melanie Baker, Ms Julia White and Mr Max  
Clarke-Parker for the Crown  
Mr James Meagher for the Catholic Church  
Ms Fiona Guy Kidd for the Anglican Church  
Ms Sonya Cooper, Ms Amanda Hill as other counsel  
attending

**Venue:** Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Tumutumuwhenua Marae  
59b Kitemoana Road  
Ōrākei  
AUCKLAND

**Date:** 17 March 2022

**INDEX**

<b>HARRIS SISTERS</b>	
Questioning by Ms Norton	618
<b>STUART HARRIS</b>	
Questioning by Ms Hill	659
<b>LEE HARRIS</b>	
Questioning by Ms Norton	698

1 [9.51 am]

2 **KAUMĀTUA TAIĀHA:** Tapatapa tū ki te rangi, whakaeaea kau ana. Kei runga te koti pū, kei  
3 raro te koti hono. Kei konā koutou, ngā mātua, ngā tūpuna, mihi mai ai, tangai mai ai, ā, ka  
4 mau te hono. Whiti tua, whiti ara. Rānea te rangi e tū iho nei, te apa e takoto ake nei. Ngā  
5 tūpuna whare e tūtū mai nei. E pupuri mai nei ki te ihi, mana, tapu o tawhiti nuku, o tawhito  
6 rangi. Ko ō koutou manawa, ki ō mātou manawa. Tāne ka irihia, whano, whano, haramai te  
7 toki, haumi e, hui e, tāiki e.

8 [English: Traditional recitement for a safe proceeding today.]

9 E ngā maunga whakahī o tāukiuki rānō. E hono nei ki runga i te mata o te whenua, e tū, e  
10 tū, e tū. Kei ngā wairere o rātou mā, kui mā, a koro mā. E rere mai nei, e rere atu nei, e rere,  
11 e rere, e rere. Kei ngā whare kōrero o te motu. E pupuri nei ki ngā taonga tuku iho a ngā  
12 mātua tūpuna. Tēnei a Tumutumuhenua e mihi nei, e tangi nei ki a koutou, nau mai, piki  
13 mai, kake mai, tau, tau, tau mai te mauri o tō tātou nei hui i te rangi nei.

14 [English: To the ancient mountains joined on on this land, stand firm. To the flowing  
15 waters of the elders, flow and strem on. To the ancient houses that store the narratives of  
16 our forebears, here Tumutumuhenua greets and calls to you, welcome an let the life force  
17 fill this proceeding today.]

18 Nā reira, e ngā rōpū purapura ora, ko koutou te kaupapa. Ka huri te rākau kōrero ki a  
19 koutou mō tēnei rā. Whakawaha nei i ngā kōrero, ngā wheako. Ahakoa ngā mamae kei  
20 roto, ahakoa ngā hōhonutanga. Tēnei mātou e hui nei, e mihi nei ki a koutou, kia kaha, kia  
21 māia, kia manawanui. Kia puta mai ngā māramatanga a Ihoa o ngā mano nei i roto i ngā  
22 kōrero, kia mārama, kia mōhio te tangata ki ngā nawe, ā, ki ngā kōrero kato a e pā ana ki a  
23 koutou, me ō koutou mamaetanga nui.

24 [English: So to our survivor, you are the purpose of today. The speaking mantel is handed  
25 to you, today. Share your stories and experiences. Despite the hurt within, despite the  
26 depth. We are gathered to support you, be strong, courageous and steadfast. To seek the  
27 enlightenment of God in the narratives, to understand, so that people know the concerns  
28 and your entire story and your pain.

29 Nā reira, kia tau ngā tauwhirotanga a Ihoa o ngā mano ki runga i a tātou katoa i tēnei rā. Ki  
30 piki te ora, te kaha, te māramatanga, te rangimārie me te aroha ki runga i a koutou, ki runga  
31 i te Kōmihana, ā, ki runga i a Ngāti Whātua. Kei raro i te manaakitanga o Ihoa o ngā mano.  
32 Tēnei ka mihi, tēnei ka tangi, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, he wai.

1 [English: So may the protection of God cover us all, today. That wealth, strength,  
2 understanding, peace and love finds you, the Commission and Ngāti Whātua. Under the  
3 care of Gad. I thank you and greet you.

4 (Waiata: Ka waiata ki a Maria. Hine i whakaae, whakameatia mai he whare tangata.  
5 Hine pūrotu, hine ngākau, hine rangimārie. Ko te Whaea, ko te Whaea o Te Ao

6 [English: I sing to Mary. The woman who agreeet, to bring forth life from her womb.  
7 Woman who acquiesced, woman of great heart, woman of peace. She is the Mother of the  
8 world.]

9 Ka hoki atu ki tērā kōrero a ngā mātua, a ngā tūpuna. Āpiti hono, tātai hono, rātou te  
10 hunga kua huri ki tua o pae mahara ki a rātou. Āpiti hono tātai hono, tātou ngā mōrehu toa  
11 o rātou ngā mātua tūpuna. Kei aku mana nui, kei aku tapu nui, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou,  
12 tēnā rā tātou katoa.

13 [English: I go back to the words of our forebears, Join and tie those passed on, to  
14 the realm of memories. Join and tie the strong survivors of their ancestors. To my noble and  
15 scared people, thank you and.

16 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** E te kaikarakia, tēnā koe e wātea nei i te taha wairua. Kei  
17 te mihi ki te moana e horo nei ko Te Waitematā, me te Rangi i toto ai. E te whare  
18 Tumutumuhenua tū tonu mai rā. E ngā mate, koutou kua wehe atu ki te pō, moe mai rā,  
19 moe mai rā, moe mai rā. Ko tātou anō o rātou, kia ora anō tātou te kanohi ora. Ngāti  
20 Whātua ki Ōrākei, te mana, te ihi, te wehi, tēnā koutou me ngā manaakitanga. E ngā ringa  
21 raupā, ō koutou, ō mātou, ō tātou me kī. Tēnā koutou i mahi i ngā rangi nei. E mihi ana ki a  
22 koutou ngā purapura ora, koutou i whakauru mai, koutou e mātakitaki mai ana, tēnā koutou,  
23 tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

24 [English: To our spiritual leader, in guidance today, thank you. I acknowledge the  
25 Waitematā harbour and Rangitoto. To the house, Tumutumuhenua, stand tall forever. To  
26 those passed, sleep, rest on. To the roking hands of us, you, all of us. We of those passed,  
27 the living, greetings. Ngāti Whātua ki Ōrākei, the awe and prestige, thank you for your  
28 hospitality, and also to our workers, and last but not least to the survivors and those who are  
29 watching from afar, welcome, welcome. Kia ora welcome back.]

30 Welcome to Day 9 of our Māori hearing at Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei. My name is  
31 Anaru Erueti, nō Taranaki, ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa (warm greetings to you all).  
32 I want to welcome you all as we start today.

33 As always, we want to emphasise the importance of accessibility to our hearing.  
34 I want to acknowledge that we have our sign language interpreters here today. We also

1 have our te reo Māori interpreters who are interpreting into English for the sign language  
2 interpreters, for our stenographer. I want to mihi our stenographer here who is writing the  
3 closed captions for the transcript of the hearing.

4 I also want to acknowledge those who are not here at the tēpu today. I want to mihi  
5 to the Commissioners who are participating via AVL which include the co-chair of our hui  
6 this week, Commissioner Julia Steenson, as well as the Chair of the Inquiry, Commissioner  
7 Coral Shaw, and my colleagues Commissioners Sandra Alofivae and Commissioner  
8 Paora- Gibson who are watching closely from -- from- their homes.

9 I also want to acknowledge, too, the members of our survivor advisory group,  
10 SAGE, who are watching these two weeks of proceedings closely, members of our Te  
11 Taumata, our Māori advisory group. We also have the panel who are participating āpōpō in  
12 the morning who will be talking about their observations and insights, the whakaaro that  
13 they have gained from watching the evidence being presented over the past two weeks. I'm  
14 looking forward to that. And of course we have the Crown, representatives of the Crown  
15 who are watching proceedings and you there, Aotearoa, who are participating too.

16 Ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou (warm greetings to you all).

17 So, Mr Rikihana, before I turn to you, I want to acknowledge, before we start our  
18 evidence this morning, the recording of the Harris whānau, the sisters, while they're not  
19 able to participate here today or via AVL are listening closely to the evidence, so you're  
20 here in spirit. And Mr Rikihana, tēnā koe mō ō kōrero hei timata tēnei rā. Kua rite mō te  
21 kaiwhakarite tuatahi i te rā nei? (Mr Rikihana, thank you for your opening statements  
22 today. Are you ready for our first statements today?)

23 **MR RIKIHANA:** Tēnā koe e te tūru, nei te mihi nunui ki a koe koutou o Kaikōmihana koutou  
24 katoa. E mihi ana ki tō tātou nei minita, Matua Taiaha. Tēnei te mihi ki a koe mō tō tuku  
25 karakia, tō tuku whakawhetai mō mātou, otirā koutou ngā rangatira Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei  
26 me tō whare tūpuna, o Tumutumuwhenua, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. Ki  
27 a tātou ngā purapura ora, tēnā koutou katoa.

28 [English: Greetings Mr Chair and to our commissioners. I would like to acknowledge our  
29 minister Matua Taiaha, thank you for your blessings this morning. And to all of Ngāti  
30 Whātua ki Ōrākei and to the ancestral house Tumutumuwhenua, I thank you all. To all our  
31 living survivors, greetings and welcome back).

32 Mr Chairman and Commissioners, good morning. At the outset I acknowledge  
33 Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei for their karakia whakatuwhera mō te ata nei. Mō tōna āwhina me  
34 tōna tautoko ngā purapura ora.

1 [English: opening prayer for the morning. For the help and support of our  
2 survivors.]

3 I also acknowledge our witnesses, our purapura ora who will be sharing their  
4 evidence today, as well as their whānau, their hapū, their iwi, and I acknowledge all those  
5 who will be listening to their kōrero today.

6 E te tūru, ka whakaaro ake au he whakataukī mō te rangi nei; Tū mai e moko, te  
7 whakaata o ō mātua. Te moko o ō tūpuna.

8 [English: Mr Chair, I'd like to begin with the proverb: Stand, young one, stand tall,  
9 grandchild of your ancestors). Stand tall, o grandchild, the reflection of your parents, the  
10 blueprint of your ancestors.]

11 This whakatauki speaks to the intergenerational connectedness and potential of ngā  
12 tangata Māori, of the hononga or ties that bind ancestors past to people present through to  
13 our mokopuna to come. The ties that connect us are strong and actions which affect us,  
14 also extend back to our tūpuna and onwards to our mokopuna. For our purapura ora who  
15 have experienced abuse in care, the impacts of that abuse are not theirs alone. The impacts  
16 reverberate throughout generations and generations of their whānau.

17 Today we will hear the evidence of five members of the Harris whānau. Their  
18 kōrero is one of multiple generations within a whānau devastated by the impacts of the  
19 abuse they experienced while they were in the care of the State. Their kōrero will begin  
20 with the accounts of Te Enga Harris, Joyce Harris and Mereani Harris, three sisters who  
21 were separated as children and placed into State care along with their other siblings. They  
22 will speak to the devastation State care had on them, on their siblings and on their entire  
23 whānau.

24 Prior to the hearing today the Harris sisters prerecorded their accounts in Te Tai  
25 Tokerau alongside counsel assisting Tracey Norton and Indiana Shewen. Their prerecorded  
26 video is about two hours long.

27 Later this morning we will hear the kōrero of Stuart Harris, who is the son of Joyce  
28 Harris. He will share how his time in care impacted on his life and the life of his whānau.  
29 Stuart's evidence will also be presented by means of a prerecorded statement which was  
30 completed in Taupō with counsel Ms Amanda Hill and Indiana Shewen. This video is also  
31 two hours long so we will start it before the lunch break and conclude after the lunch break.

32 Unfortunately, as you've noted Mr Chair, Te Enga, Joyce, Mereani and Stuart are  
33 not able to join us by live video link today. However, we acknowledge that they are  
34 watching and we acknowledge also the kōrero that will be shared by them today.



1 I'm going to move now to the affirmation. Do you all solemnly, sincerely and truly  
2 declare and affirm that the evidence that you all give to the Commission will be the truth,  
3 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

4 **TE ENGA HARRIS, MEREANI HARRIS AND JOYCE HARRIS (Affirmed)**

5 (Video played).

6 **MS NORTON:** Kia ora. Before we start, I have asked the Harris sisters if they would like to  
7 make opening statements. Te Enga, the mātāmua, (the eldest) has said that she would like  
8 to do that so I will hand it over to Te Enga now.

9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I'd just like to open this up with a thought and a special message going out  
10 to my mokopuna, my oldest mokopuna turns 29 today, that's Nick's daughter, and I love  
11 you, but the rest of this goes towards those that need to know that I'm not happy about not  
12 being able to appear in person to talk about our claims because of the vaccination. I believe  
13 that we should be present. It doesn't feel right in my stomach about prerecording and AVL,  
14 because, rightfully, I believe 57 years we've been waiting for our voice to be heard and  
15 unfortunately this is how we have to do it.

16 I hope that me and my sisters can give you our full truths about what's going to  
17 happen today and everything goes down really cool for our beautiful helpers that have been  
18 taking our case into investigation and really making us feel okay about sharing it. And  
19 I guess that's it.

20 **MS NORTON:** Kia ora, Te Enga. And I just want to add to my mihi how beautiful you all look  
21 today and I want to acknowledge the fact that you've travelled, each of you have travelled  
22 to be here today. So I'm really grateful for that.

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** And all the dramas to get here.

24 **MS NORTON:** Never mind, we're here now.

25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Half past 1.

26 **MS NORTON:** So the first thing - I- think there is only one place to start and that is with your  
27 beautiful parents. So Te Enga, I'm going to turn the time over to you now, you've got a  
28 copy of your statement there, and I'm going to direct you to paragraph 9. Can you give me  
29 the whakapapa of your father.

30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** My father was the eldest of 16 of my grandparents Whareraupo and  
31 Hinerere. My father, I-- always talk about when he was born my Nana must have held the  
32 Government in high esteem because they named him Joseph Ward after the Prime Minister  
33 of New Zealand 1906. I say that because our whakapapa down to my father is all Māori  
34 names, and so I know he's only a name sake.



1           But I'd like to include my mother here, because this is all about our parents. For  
2 those that don't know, but my mother, her mother's name was Te Rokihau Kerei. My great  
3 grandfather, his name was Kiri Kerei. My great grandfather was one of the uris of the  
4 Governor Grey, and so we have a bloodline to the Prime Minister and the Governor through  
5 our parents. And I believe that, as children of our parents and what happened to us in care,  
6 is something important that we need to honour, because they were the most humblest  
7 people in the world and unfortunately - we- are 17 in our family all up, blended family, and  
8 I'm the oldest of the eight, we have elders of my father's first wife and my mum had  
9 children before she met my dad. And the focus is on us eight and what happened.

10 **MS NORTON:** Thank you for that nice lead into my next question, because you three are three of  
11 eight children from your parents. Can I please get you, Te Enga, to walk me through the  
12 tamariki, starting with you. The year you were born and your first name. And then carry  
13 on down.

14 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I was born in Tokoroa on 19 October 1954. My birth was the day of my  
15 namesake's death, my mummy's baby sister, her name was Te Enga, but my koro loved her  
16 so much and the day that she got killed he named me, and it brings to mind the whakataukī  
17 of ka henga tētēkoro, ka haramai tētēkoro (when one frond falls another frond rises). So  
18 that is how I got my name given to me in 1954.

19           In 1956 my brother Joseph was born and he was born in Mangakino because my  
20 dad's following the work. Well, unfortunately, Joseph didn't make it to be the Prime  
21 Minister either, sorry Dad, but after him came my sister Mereani, and she was born in  
22 Putāruru in the beginning of the year and then at the end of the year our brother  
23 Puipuirangi, he was born too on December 23, Mereani was born on 18 January, so we call  
24 them twins even though they were 11 months apart: Puipuirangi was born in TāuponuiT-a-  
25 tia, so that's my father following the work.

26           And then in 1959 I started school in Auckland, dad came to Auckland, and we were  
27 staying with my Uncle Joe in Manurewa at the time, and I had to go to Saint Anne's.  
28 I didn't like school, I didn't like the nuns, I always got the cane and was in trouble. So I  
29 don't know what happened exactly, but in 1961 my parents were back together again and  
30 my brother Mark was born in 1961. 1962, my two little twin sisters were born in Auckland  
31 and in 1963 my baby brother Matthew was born. So the last four children under the age of  
32 3 were born in Auckland. This is where dad was still following the work and he held down  
33 two jobs at that time.

1 **MS NORTON:** Stemming from your eight brothers and sisters are another two generations of  
2 tamariki. How many mokopuna do your parents have now?

3 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I've got four generations in my time. There's me, my children, I have five  
4 children, I have 13 mokopuna and I have five greats with one on the way. And so I'm  
5 speaking on my four generations, because we're all entrenched in some manner or form of  
6 OT, CYFS, OT and me and my sisters are the ambulance at the bottom of the hill when our  
7 kids and our mokopunas get into trouble. And at the end of the day, it is intergenerational,  
8 they pick on our DNA. I've always asked what was our crime, because we had an awesome  
9 upbringing. My mum and dad, when my kids were born, they had happiness because they  
10 had lost all their children until they were 18, 17, 18, and we were all kicked out, and we  
11 came back to our parents damaged goods, broken wings, and all sorts of atrocities were  
12 done to us.

13 **MS NORTON:** Okay. So I'm going to move on and get you all to kōrero about the early days.  
14 I appreciate you, Joyce, won't have a lot of memories because when you were removed you  
15 and Toni were only about two years old, so really it's Te Enga and Mereani that can speak  
16 to those early days. So for me and everyone watching on this video, I'll get you both to  
17 share your memories about what life was like growing up with mum and dad.

18 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** We had an awesome childhood as far as I can remember. My dad used to  
19 take us places and one of his favourites was the Glendowie dump. He made all of our toys  
20 when we were younger, like bikes and gokarts and we used to share and play out on the  
21 street with all the kids, and we were pointing the -road - down the bottom from us was a  
22 beach, that was our beach and we -lived - at the back of our school, the primary school, we  
23 just had to jump over the fence to go to school. Our punenga- school, our head mistress  
24 and master, they were the Eatons, and they really liked my mum so they used to give us  
25 food and help us out with clothes. We were just ordinary children having a really good life  
26 with our parents. We weren't flash or anything, but we just had a lot of good childhood  
27 remembrance.

28 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, we were real little native children enjoying life.

29 **MS NORTON:** Tell us about that, Mereani. What do you mean?

30 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I loved my mum and dad, they were so awesome. I just remember mum  
31 singing a lot and me helping her and --

32 **MS NORTON:** You'd help her in the kitchen, right?

33 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, well, I'll help her, I'll sit there while she's baking and tastings and  
34 talk to her and that was my help, but I enjoyed it. I just enjoyed being with mum and dad.

1           Our dad was never dull, he was never boring, he always had something to do or places to  
2           go to that I love going with him, I just adored them, and I think that's why when this  
3           happened, it just blew my mind out of proportion, you know, why did they take us from our  
4           loved ones like that? It was just so cruel.

5   **MS NORTON:** We're going to talk about that day.

6   **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yes, I know.

7   **MS NORTON:** But Te Enga, while you've been sitting here listening to your sister, any other  
8           memories come to mind for you?

9   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I know that as a family unit, well, I got the hard yards because I'm the  
10           oldest, and I know that everywhere my dad, he took us to places and he took us as kids so  
11           that we can enjoy the beach, or we're going to the mountains, he used to take all of us, and  
12           at the end of the day -- he was working and mum was at home with the kids, and it was like  
13           a normal life, we had a tuck bill at the shop, so that if we ran out of anything we could go  
14           and book it up at the shop.

15           There was any never any alcohol in our house, and so at the end of the day my dad,  
16           he was taken away by his family to do fund-raising to get -- it was called we're  
17           campaigning, to get the wharekai at Mangamuka built, and I remember that very well  
18           because I went everywhere with my dad, so I guess I was about 8 the first time I came to  
19           Mangamuka. I know that I was allowed to go everywhere with my dad because sometimes  
20           my mum couldn't handle me because I used to play up because I was mad about having to  
21           change four nappies of the babies and mum didn't want Joe because Joe was this king, so he  
22           was allowed to go play at the beach and so Mereani was his sidekick. So they didn't really  
23           have to do too much of the domestic stuff.

24           And my mum never had a washing machine, and so when it came to washing she  
25           did it in the scrubbing, you know, those - with- the sand soap and the scrubbing brush and  
26           in the bucket and I know because I had to be the one that did the e--mptied the stuff out of  
27           the baby's nappies rinse it for mum and soak it. Well, mum was okay, but the other two  
28           being out of the way so that she could just concentrate on the younger ones.

29           And I remember if we got the measles, once one got sick it hit us all and we lived in  
30           the darkness for over a month, and that was a really hard time for us, because mum didn't  
31           really have much food, because dad was out supporting the whānau to get the bricks, so it  
32           would have been okay if they only did it like once a month or once a fortnight, but they  
33           came every week. So he didn't really come home with much pennies in his pocket, and I  
34           had to go and book up at the shop and the shopkeeper told me I had to go home, we can't

1 have anything. And I remember that was really hard on mum during the time when we had  
2 the measles.

3 And so that was my mum, she had her hands full and really they didn't - she- wasn't  
4 helped at all. Joyce was really sick as a young baby because they didn't even know that  
5 mum was having twins and so she sort of popped out 20 minutes later all bruised up, so she  
6 was sickly all of her life, and well when Matthew come along, mum had already gone  
7 through all of this hardship, this is the build up before we were taken, and it ended up on  
8 the day, getting to the day that it actually happened, well, dad was at work and a neighbour  
9 had rung up and had been complaining about my mum was making noises and ranting.

10 Then I remember that the Police arrived and the doctors arrived and they were  
11 trying to knock on the door and mum refused to open it. We were all gathered around her  
12 and sitting on the couch, and we were scared, we didn't know what was happening, and  
13 they broke the door. They broke the door, they walked in and they just manhandled my  
14 mum, put her in handcuffs.

15 **MS NORTON:** Where you were going with your evidence was there was a buildup to, you know,  
16 your mum and what she was going through. So if I can just go through it. And you've  
17 touched on a lot of it. One of the twins was sickly, your mum had four children under five.

18 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

19 **MS NORTON:** Dad was a hard worker --

20 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Two jobs.

21 **MS NORTON:** -- and away doing a lot of mahi for Mangamuka.

22 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, he'd left Mangamuka.

23 **MS NORTON:** Oh, I mean going back to support the wharekai.

24 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

25 **MS NORTON:** There was one other major thing, and this is perhaps what I was directing you to  
26 at D. Your mum had some news about your father --

27 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, I was coming on to that.

28 **MS NORTON:** Can you share that with us.

29 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, because - I- forgot where I was up to. Anyway, during all of this  
30 time that we were sick and my mum found out after she had our brother Matthew that my  
31 koro, that I knew all my life, the only koro, had passed away and her family chose not to  
32 tell her. But you can't hide the dead and my mum did find out and unfortunately for us  
33 that's when she began on her -- it broke her, it broke her, she had a breakdown. And

1 through that, well, that's basically how we were taken, because she was still going through  
2 the breakdown when the cops arrived, she'd only just gotten the news about her father.

3 **MS NORTON:** She was close with her father?

4 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Oh very.

5 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Absolutely, because, you know, her baby sister died the day I'm born,  
6 because she only had three sisters, her older sister, my aunty, passed away when she was  
7 49, so there was really only dad, only my mum and my uncle that were still alive. So mum  
8 didn't take it very well. Well, who does that, who wouldn't tell you about your father?

9 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, who would do that, eh?

10 **MS NORTON:** Do you know why nobody told her?

11 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yes, I do, or I've got a clue, because apparently that lot down there in  
12 Raetihi, they thought my mum was loopy, a mental patient, especially my  
13 sister -- redacted -- and they had a lot to do with them, even my uncle -- redacted -- they all  
14 had a lot to do with don't telling.

15 I don't know how anybody cannot tell you that your father passed away, but they  
16 didn't, and she found out and that's what broke the camel's back. You know, we went  
17 through all of that stage up to that one and mum did really well, but unfortunately.

18 **MS NORTON:** Yeah, as you said, that was the straw, understandably, that broke the camel's  
19 back. That really brings us to that day in May, in May 1984, and I'm sorry, Joyce, you still  
20 can't speak yet because you were only --

21 **JOYCE HARRIS:** 1964.

22 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** 1964.

23 **MS NORTON:** 1964, sorry, I've got it here right in front of me. And again, I'm going to turn to  
24 both you, Te Enga and Mereani, to talk about that day, to share your experiences, and  
25 maybe we'll give Te Enga a rest and maybe start with you, Mereani. What is your first  
26 memory of that day and what do you recall if you could share that with us now?

27 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I just remember waking,-- I believe it was the screams of my siblings that  
28 woke me up. I don't know if I was on a bed or on a mattress but I just remember seeing a  
29 stranger coming towards me and I was already freaked out about all the strangers  
30 surrounding and grabbing up my siblings, that scared me, so I flew -- well, I was only  
31 small, 5 and a half, I could fly through her, not a problem, and I did, I flew off the mattress,  
32 I just remember flying down the stairs as fast as my little legs could take me, screaming  
33 hysterically for my mum, just to come to the kitchen door and freeze in horror because  
34 I saw two strangers in uniform manhandling her and thinging her to the floor, slamming her

1 to the floor on her back and then dropping his weight on her with his knees and then the  
2 other one went around her, grabbed her hands, put them together, shackled them, handcuffs.  
3 And then they stood up and the worst thing they could possibly do to a little girl who loved  
4 her mother, they laughed, like they had achieved a great feat, is how I put it.

5 And it just broke my heart when they grabbed a handcuffed hand each and dragged  
6 her out the door. And I just remember I watched my world getting dragged out until the  
7 last of her foot disappeared and then I just - seven years later when I met my sister she  
8 filled in the gaps, -I can't remember.

9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It was pretty horrific because all the kids are screaming, as you would  
10 think.

11 **MS NORTON:** How old were you, Te Enga?

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** In '64 I'm 9 going on 10.

13 **MS NORTON:** And Mereani, would have been how old?

14 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I was 5 and a half, and I'd never seen anything, I've never seen violence,  
15 never, I've never seen my dad hit my mum, my mum and dad never hit us, you know, so I  
16 didn't know what violence was until I saw that. And that was horrific. That just blew my  
17 mind.

18 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** While that was all going down I had to quieten the kids as you will know,  
19 we were all traumatised, we were all crying, we don't know what's going on, we don't know  
20 who these strangers are. They surrounded us and that was it, they took our mother away  
21 and then we were taken away.

22 **MS NORTON:** Where was dad?

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** He was at work, they didn't even bother to come and get him. That's rude,  
24 you know, he came home to his family's all gone.

25 **MS NORTON:** I think in your evidence you said that he had left and you believed that they  
26 waited for him to leave before they did what they did.

27 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Most probably.

28 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, he had to go to work, he went to work every day, that's all I know, he  
29 had worked as a seagull down at the wharf, if he could get it, because that was good money.  
30 Then after that he came to work, I think he had the afternoon shift at the meatworks. So,  
31 you know, he was doing his family duties and he was a hardworking man. So this  
32 happened after he was gone anyway, it all happened while he wasn't around, he was at  
33 work.

1 **MS NORTON:** Okay. So where I want to turn now to is actually your time in care and, Te Enga,  
2 you talk about that in your statement. So let's start with you, Te Enga, and then what I want  
3 to do is move to Joyce and talk about her time in care. When you were removed from your  
4 mother's care, ultimately your parents, where were you children taken?

5 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** We were actually taken to my uncle GRO-B -- and- my aunty GRO-  
6 B-- -- the whole eight of us but GRO-B-- -- got shipped, so this was when they threw us out  
7 to every which where and changed us into - I- ended up going to GRO-B-- - and me and my  
8 brother Joe and my brother Puipuirangi, both are dead, they -came - there- was a lot of  
9 discrepancy about us going anywhere near any of the families because none of them wanted  
10 us. But once we went into Social Welfare care, well, hey, they put their hands up.

11 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Mmm, because they'd get paid.

12 **MS NORTON:** How do you know none of your whānau wanted you?

13 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because of my dad.

14 **MS NORTON:** He told you?

15 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** He told us and it's written on - even- my mum told us. She's got this letter  
16 talking about how dad and Uncle Joe, went around to see my older sisters, my aunties and  
17 uncles, they had asked, just to keep the family together, and they said, it was my sisters(sic)  
18 that said, "Put them in the DSW" and I'll never forget that. And at the end of the day,  
19 nobody wanted us, not even my mum's family.

20 **MS NORTON:** So mum and dad really tried hard --

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** To keep us together --

22 **MS NORTON:** -- to get whānau to take you --

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** -- as a family.

24 **MS NORTON:** -- to keep all eight children together?

25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because we thought - because- my mum was made well within a year, we  
26 thought we might be given back but it never happened. We didn't know about State Board  
27 Care and about unfit mothers and the Mental Health Act and all of that stuff, we weren't  
28 about -- that was the excuses they were using to keep our family --

29 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Apart.

30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** -- apart and scattered and get sent further and further away as the years  
31 went by. And all we did most of that time was run away to find our parents. That was our  
32 really only crime.

33 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, I can't get over that either.

34 **MS NORTON:** Let's talk about the --GRO-B. So they were living in Otara.

1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

2 **MS NORTON:** So what was life like?

3 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** We would get hidings from our aunty. She was really cruel and then when  
4 she complained about us, we'd get another extra hiding off her husband. And then my  
5 cousin, she'd decide to slap us around too. We were treated like slaves, we got hidings for  
6 any reason, didn't matter if it was good or bad. We used to get taken by our ears up to the  
7 shop and showed our faces, that we are not allowed in there without a note, because  
8 I started rebelling and I used to steal their money and flush it down the toilet. I couldn't get  
9 out because they searched us.

10 It was a really horrible time, but when I was - I- was about 10 and a half when we  
11 went there. By the time I was 11, within the first year I was there, I was being  
12 raped - GRO--B - and- that caused a lot of ugliness because he turned it around and made  
13 me be promiscuous and stuff like that, the story, and the thing was, was that I ran away and  
14 when I ran away - because- I was trying to protect my two brothers, I never spoke to them  
15 about it because I was threatened by them if I said anything. So when I ran away it made it  
16 worse for them, they got it even worse, and at the end of the day, somebody believed me  
17 because I ran away to find my mother. And I didn't even know where Pt Chev was, she  
18 was in Oakley, and so on the way it took me five days on the run, they had an all points  
19 bulletin out for me.

20 **MS NORTON:** How did you survive in those five days?

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, I got raped along the way, anyway. I just kept walking and asking  
22 people, and when I was told a direction I just followed it, I don't know I'm still a kid, never  
23 been there before in my life, I got to the hospital.

24 **MS NORTON:** Five days later?

25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah. And anyway, on arrival they had already known that I would  
26 probably come there so they were waiting.

27 **MS NORTON:** Who was waiting?

28 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** The hospital were waiting because there's an all points bulletin out for an  
29 abscondee, so you know they're all notified. Well, when I got to the hospital I insisted.  
30 Now, I'm half wild, you can't get near me, I'll bolt or I'll smash you, that's how hurt I was  
31 about things and I just wanted to see my mum. Anyway, what ended up happening was, so  
32 they went and got her to keep me there. When my mother got rolled out in a wheelchair my  
33 mother's eyes were glass red, her tongue was hanging out, she'd just come out of electric  
34 shocks, and even though I'm calling out and crying out to the her - I- know my mum can



1           hear me but she just looked like she's -- straight ahead like she's just zonked. And it was  
2           during those times, well, the next thing I know, the Police are there, and --

3   **MS NORTON:** You talked to your mother then though, eh, at that time?

4   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah. Yeah, no, I'm talking to a blank canvass. I am screaming at her and  
5           telling her --

6   **MS NORTON:** What did you say to your mother?

7   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I'm telling her what was happening to me, that I'm getting raped, talking  
8           about getting bashed, everything that was going on at that house.

9   **MS NORTON:** Was there anyone else listening to that conversation?

10   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, they had people in the room because, you know, they are going to  
11          make sure that I'm not going to take off.

12   **MEREANI HARRIS:** I believe mum heard.

13   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** The next thing you know I'm surrounded by the Police and CYFS -- not  
14          CYFS, the DSW, they'd come. Anyway, they take me in the room and they take my  
15          statement and I told them what was happening. So they had the meds done, and they found  
16          that I had been sexually abused.

17   **MS NORTON:** What do you mean by "meds"?

18   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I had to go and have a doctor's -- to find out if I'd been raped, if what I was  
19          saying was true. So they did, they took all of that and they wrote --

20   **MS NORTON:** They took you to a doctor?

21   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

22   **MS NORTON:** They gave you an internal to see --

23   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, and they've got on the doctor's reports, and it's in my files, they took  
24          all the reports, they wrote whatever they had to say about it and that's all that happened.  
25          They didn't press charges or do -- but I wasn't -- they wouldn't let me go back because  
26          I said I'm not going back to that place, so they kind of believed me, but they did nothing  
27          about it. It wasn't until years later when I picked up my files and I got a sensitive claim  
28          made out of it because they just filed it and they believed the word of the paedophile not of  
29          me.

30   **MS NORTON:** I want to go back to that, because in your evidence you say that you disclosed the  
31          abuse, you had a medical examination that confirmed the abuse but nobody believed you.

32   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, they must have believed me because they didn't send me back. But  
33          all they did was write a report, that's all I know about it. So I was taken straight away and  
34          treated like a prisoner and dumped in the girls' home at, what was it, Allendale.

- 1 **MS NORTON:** I want to go back to that actual disclosure because in your statement you say that  
2 they spoke to - GRO--B.
- 3 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 4 **MS NORTON:** -- the perpetrator, about your disclosures, and he denied it; is that right?
- 5 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, that's absolutely right. He went down there to the office and it says it  
6 in the files, that he was talking with them and pointed the finger at me for being - I- didn't  
7 even know what sex was. And anyway, well, I don't know, they shouldn't have even been  
8 listening to his story because I'm the one that's in their care, but yeah, they took the side of  
9 him, that's why I think nothing was done about it, only to sit and rot in my files until  
10 I asked for it. And yes, he did blame it all on me, and that's why my family --
- 11 **MS NORTON:** A 10-year-old child?
- 12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It turned out that my family believed him too, so our family has been left  
13 with that stigma I'm full of it, but I wasn't lying. And no, nothing was done until later on in  
14 life when I took out -- and they found it, it had been reported and nothing had been done.
- 15 **MS NORTON:** Knowing what happened to you, how has that affected your entire life?
- 16 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, I hate sex, I hate it when, like, I've had four partners that I've buried  
17 but, you know, alcohol was involved so every time any man comes near me with the smell  
18 of alcohol I think I'm being raped at gun point all over again. So it was for years sex wasn't  
19 even -- meant nothing to me, it actually disgusts me. And so mentally I recall anything to  
20 do with sex, because my uncle was threatening he'll kill me, so I'm so scared of him  
21 because he was horrible, he was mean, and yeah, we got hidings.
- 22 **MS NORTON:** So after you removed --
- 23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Things broken on us, like we had the hidings with the brooms, the straps,  
24 anything that they can get, and if we don't cry, well, we're going to get made to cry and  
25 when we cry we're going to get made to shut up. All of that head stuff.
- 26 **MS NORTON:** You said your uncle threatened you, did he threaten you daily while you were  
27 living under the house, under his roof or did he --
- 28 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Every time he came to me, which was nearly every week, when they  
29 finished their boozing they'll come looking for me in the middle of the night, I'll be hiding  
30 way under my cousin's bed, and I can hear him, and he's pulling out my clothes and  
31 wanking on it, they're wet when I come, but I'm hiding away, scared for my life, anywhere  
32 in the darkest places because I know. But, you know, he must have told the world about it  
33 because there were a couple of others that happened, it wasn't only him, but he started it,

1 and at the end of the day, my head was so yuck and I didn't know what to do, I  
2 was -- redacted.

3 So instead of doing that I thought I'll run away and find my mum and my dad, so  
4 that's what I did. Only for it to be the blame on me and that stigma is still there today  
5 about --- so I'm the one that's made by the family to look like I'm full of lies, but I wasn't  
6 lying, I was telling the truth. And I didn't know anything about sex or anything like that,  
7 and it was the worst time in my life, being raped.

8 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I reckon.

9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It was like having a broom shoved up you, yeah. We were just their money  
10 cow because, you know, when it used to come to us getting new clothes, we didn't --- they  
11 might put them down with our name but we never got them, they went to the rest of the  
12 family. We were just treated like we were big slaves, from early in the morning, waking up,  
13 doing all the lunches, cleaning the house before we left, and look out if you get back after  
14 half past 3 --

15 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Mmm.

16 **MS NORTON:** Did you know love in that home?

17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, there was no love. There was only abuse. That was sad, because  
18 that -- redacted -- and my dad, you know, he used to come there, they used to come there  
19 now and again -- not very often because it would always end up in a big argument because,  
20 my brother Joe used to try and tell them what was happening. They wouldn't leave us in  
21 the room with them for one second, so we always had their glarey eyes when my mum and  
22 dad came, and my mum and dad would come with stuff for us, you know, little presents and  
23 things. We never got them, they got taken. We didn't get any Christmas presents or  
24 anything. Even our clothes that we get from the Social Welfare, it wasn't for us, it was for  
25 their kids.

26 So if you can imagine Cinderella, hell man, she's got luxury to how we were treated.  
27 And they used to take us to Miha Māori once a week,-- once a month, and they'd go  
28 [inaudible], he's snoring in the back, the perpetrator, while we're at the mass, so how  
29 hypocritical is that? No, our life there was the worst that I could ever, ever wish on anyone.

30 **MS NORTON:** Have you ever processed that harm that was done to you?

31 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, hey, I've put it in the past, you can't change it, and moved on from  
32 there. Didn't even affiliate with those cousins of mine, because they got another story and  
33 they believe that story, so it put a big wedge, it's like us and them with our whole family.

34 **MS NORTON:** Is that wedge there still today?

- 1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, yeah. Nothing was done about it. So we're still those welfare kids,  
2 with that stigma stuck with us.
- 3 **MEREANI HARRIS:** It's still those little idiots that are causing trouble up Makene Road. The  
4 same --
- 5 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** We are, us eight are the black sheeps and the outcasts of the Harris family.
- 6 **MS NORTON:** Is that because of the -- redacted?-
- 7 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Oh, I think there's a whole - more- than that, it's more than that. Whatever  
8 it was, there was a lot of jealousy around us having a mother and a father. We were  
9 brought up with my elder brothers and sisters of my father going: your father, your father,  
10 your father. My - elder- sister of my mother's: your mother, your mother, your mother.  
11 And my dad's Catholic and my mum's a Rātana so we had all this conflict anyway. We  
12 were born in. And unfortunately for us, sorry, unfortunately for us, well, that's everybody  
13 else around us, all we cared about was our - running- away to find our mother and father,  
14 all of us.
- 15 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 16 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** That was our centre point as we were growing up, was that.
- 17 **MS NORTON:** After your disclosures and you said earlier that you were placed outside of  
18 the -- redacted -- home, where were you taken?
- 19 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I -- for a lot of the time they didn't know what to do with me, so  
20 I remember from leaving -the - redacted- -- we went to the Star of the Sea, I think we had  
21 (inaudible) or whatever you call it.
- 22 **MS NORTON:** Who's "we?"
- 23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Quite a few of us. Well, I remember me, Joe and Bones, we were sent to  
24 the Star of the Sea. That was where, it's like a holiday camp where kids that are  
25 malnutrition, they put them in there and make them -- feed- them up or whatever, they  
26 were just placing us haphazardly with foster people, at the girl's homes, at the family  
27 homes, just about through the whole of the country.
- 28 **MS NORTON:** Didn't you end up in Allendale?
- 29 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, that's where they first took me.
- 30 **MS NORTON:** From the -- redacted -- they placed you in Allendale Girls' Home and you were  
31 placed in lock-up. Tell us about that.
- 32 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yes, the secure unit. Well, hey, I'm still young, because they had  
33 the - -- -there were the older girls there, so 15, 16 upwards, so I'm only going on 12, and  
34 they didn't really know what to do with me, and -places - they ended up putting me forward

1 to go to Fareham. But along the way things happened, like I went for one night, I stayed at  
2 the family home -under -redacted- for one night, I ran away from all of them, even down in  
3 Margaret Street down in Palmerston North, ran away from there.

4 **MS NORTON:** Let's talk about that because, reading your evidence you went to Allendale Girls'  
5 Home and you were in lockup for a little while.

6 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

7 **MS NORTON:** Then you were placed in a receiving home in Hamilton.

8 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yep.

9 **MS NORTON:** Do you remember how long you were there?

10 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, it was less than 24 hours because I ran away.

11 **MS NORTON:** Because you --

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Then not only that, I think they caught up with us somewhere down the  
13 line.

14 **MS NORTON:** Well, you ended up in a receiving home in Palmerston North, yes?

15 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Palmerston North, yeah. And I always sort of had a red flag against me  
16 because most of the places I went to I absconded, and I --

17 **MS NORTON:** And you absconded because?

18 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I'm trying to find my mum and dad, you know, it was really serious for me,  
19 I don't know who these people are, I don't know what I did wrong. At the end of the day,  
20 where's my mummy and my daddy? Because I'm only, what, a young kid that  
21 really --- and I wasn't bad, it's just that I'm running away, I'm trying to find mum and dad.

22 **MS NORTON:** Because you said earlier that you thought it was going to be temporary.

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, yeah, we didn't know it was forever.

24 **MS NORTON:** And that temporary kept going on and on and on and you're getting more  
25 confused about why you're not being taken home, is that the right --

26 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, absolutely.

27 **MS NORTON:** -- position?

28 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** As far as - well-, I was under the delusion at that time that we're going to  
29 go back to our mother and father, but it just seemed like that they're not going to do that  
30 and they just keep dumping us here, there and everywhere. So I thought, oh well, one of  
31 my main crimes in the care of the Social Welfare was I ran away.

32 **MS NORTON:** Well, let's talk about Fareham House, because after the receiving home in  
33 Palmerston North, you ended up in Fareham House.

1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** In Miramar. I ended up in Miramar down in Wellington and from there  
2 I got taken to Fareham. And on arrival in Fareham I was put straight into security. And  
3 this security was a room that was like a cell, and they hadn't been using it for a while,  
4 because I think all the bad girls had left or they'd quietened down. The girls were a lot  
5 older, they were - they usually let them go between 15 and 16, and so I'm only 12. I met  
6 one younger — she's dead now, but she was 10 at the time, **Virginia Davis**. So we were the  
7 two youngest really and most of my time was spent in lock-up because they couldn't trust  
8 me because I would run away and I'll take anybody with me, so ---

9 **MS NORTON:** Because you were a runner and they knew it so they locked you up.

10 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

11 **MS NORTON:** What did lockup look like?

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, I vandalised the whole room, it was like a clubrooms, I just smashed  
13 everything up.

14 **MS NORTON:** Was it a small room?

15 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, a tiny little room.

16 **MEREANI HARRIS:** (Inaudible).

17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** One little room. It had a bed in it, a mattress, and it had a bucket and it has  
18 bars on the window.

19 **MS NORTON:** What was the bucket for?

20 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** To have your toilet.

21 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Ablutions.

22 **MS NORTON:** You didn't even have access to the toilet, you had to use the bucket?

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, not until they come and opened the door up. Yeah, used the bucket.

24 And they had three securities in this place, one was the attic, and I had — did time in there,  
25 and I did time in the security and I did time in -the — there's- one other room, it's like light  
26 security. For the first month or so, my life in Fareham House was locked up. And  
27 our -- redacted -- was the guy that was our Superintendent and he did not like me and I did  
28 not like him.

29 **MS NORTON:** So for a month you had no contact with any of the other girls at Fareham House  
30 and no contact with staff?

31 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Anybody, nothing. Oh, yeah, he used to come up and see me, and the staff  
32 that fed us, they would push it underneath the door, your food, most of it I used to throw  
33 back at them because I was really rebellious.

- 1 **MS NORTON:** Okay. After Fareham House, you ended up on a farm with the **GRO-B**. Do you  
2 want to tell us about that?
- 3 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** That's quite funny because I got an exemption when I was 14 and three  
4 quarters and the **GRO-B** had actually had a list of girls sent to them and they chose me.  
5 And so I got an exemption to leave school and I was doing my 5th form, I was in the 5th  
6 form, we did correspondence. And I would have passed my --- I loved school, that was our  
7 escape.
- 8 **MS NORTON:** Do you remember how old you were then?
- 9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, I was 14 and a half –
- 10 **MS NORTON:** 14 and a half.
- 11 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** – When I got my school exemption on our School Cert year.
- 12 **MS NORTON:** Sounds like life was pretty good and it's good to hear. I mean, you had spent five  
13 years away from your parents and the first four years sound pretty horrific.
- 14 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** When I left Fareham I had a different lifestyle and they chose - (-inaudible)  
15 was a whole different story again. But when I left them I came home, I chose to, they  
16 didn't want to let me go home to my mum and dad, but I was adamant that, no, now that I'm  
17 going to be released I want to go home.
- 18 **MS NORTON:** How old were you then?
- 19 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** About 16.
- 20 **MS NORTON:** So you were 16, so you'd effectively aged out of State care?
- 21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** 15 and a half, somewhere around there, I'm getting ready to be released  
22 anyway.
- 23 **MS NORTON:** You just finished saying that around 16 and a half you left the **GRO-B**.
- 24 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yes.
- 25 **MS NORTON:** And you made your way home.
- 26 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** **GRO-B**. Yeah.
- 27 **MS NORTON:** I want to ask one question before we do and I want to pick up on School C,  
28 because that meant a lot to you when I read your statement. You said that you were exempt  
29 from sitting School C because you were sent away to yet another ---
- 30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** To get the job.
- 31 **MS NORTON:** - --- placement.
- 32 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 33 **MS NORTON:** What is the impact of not having sat School C on you? What was the impact?

1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, I knew I would fly past it because once I settled down with school,  
 2 I loved school because we had correspondence and at Fareham we had a lot of extra things,  
 3 like we learned how to do crafts, things like leather work, poker burning, smocking, playing  
 4 guitars, they had extra activities that we all picked up on, from the other girls as well, and  
 5 like --- and I was doing well at school, my school was really good and I was --- I know  
 6 I would have flew through it. The impact on that was, well, --- -I -couldn't - in those times  
 7 - I was going to be a nurse, or a nun, nurse or a nun. I already had this in my head, and  
 8 then, when -I --- well, I'd rather go to work, the choice was to go to work- and I went to  
 9 work. And left behind, and left behind

10 **MS NORTON:** We will talk about that because that's when you went to work with mum. But to  
 11 be in ---

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, no, I went to work at the GRO-B farm.

13 **MS NORTON:** I'm talking about when you aged out of care.

14 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yep, that was the exemption on my School Cert year. And then when  
 15 I came home, yeah, we went to crown min(?), me, her and Joe, before mum, but mum took  
 16 me with her and I ended up being a ward's maid at Brightside. I love work.

17 **MS NORTON:** So you had a dream, and that was to be a nurse or a nun. To be a nurse you  
 18 would have needed as a minimum School C.

19 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

20 **MS NORTON:** So do you feel ripped off about that?

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Not really, because I accept things as they are. I feel sad that I didn't get it  
 22 and I know I would have, probably still can, but at the time, well, it didn't happen so I guess  
 23 it just didn't.-- It doesn't matter. It was a disappointment.

24 **MS NORTON:** So you ---

25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because I probably would have went for UE and all of that.

26 **MS NORTON:** Yeah, and gone on maybe to university.

27 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah. No, not maybe, I would have. But it didn't happen, it didn't pan out  
 28 that way.

29 **MS NORTON:** So you age out at 16 and a half, how did you go home, and that's a very deliberate  
 30 question.

31 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, how did I go home? Well, the GRO-B had sold their farm for a  
 32 kickoff-, so that was the end of my stay there, and I had been offered to go --- my social



1 workers didn't really want me to go back to my parents, and I wasn't having a bar of it,  
2 I wanted to go home.

3 **MS NORTON:** So social workers came to see you?

4 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

5 **MS NORTON:** And they said you've aged out and we want to take you home?

6 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, they didn't want me to go home, they wanted me to go anywhere else  
7 but to my mum and dad. And actually, they were pretty good, because — but like, they  
8 were going to set me up and help me get a job and, you know, all of these things, so I ended  
9 up getting myself anyway, because I didn't really like being a little street urchin, then  
10 I came back a little bit sophisticated and, yeah, and I like money. Well, wages weren't all  
11 that in those days, but I was willing to go to work, like yeah. Me and my brother and  
12 Mereani, we tried out -crown mint.

13 And there was all sorts of other things going on, because we met up with street  
14 urchins that ended up being gangsters and like - then my sisters and that started running  
15 away and then I had a boyfriend or two and they kept in contact with me up to 1973. I had  
16 my son in 72, my old social workers and stuff, they just come to see that we were okay,  
17 settled in at home really well, but when I was pregnant, when I came home and I was  
18 pregnant, my mother kept rubbing my stomach and telling me about “My mokopuna, my  
19 mokopuna.” I kept fighting with her because I told my mother who had 11 children that if  
20 I'm pregnant I'm going to be like this, and my mother wouldn't listen to me, because  
21 mothers know, so just to make -her — just- to prove a point I said, okay, then I'll come to  
22 the doctors.

23 And I was very silent because I was 7 and a half months with my — and my mum  
24 and dad, their eyes and their life lit up, they had a mokopuna, and he was the king. So he  
25 was the first mokopuna and he was called for – my mum called him, so at the end that's  
26 what happened, when I went home, I was going to work, and when I got pregnant, and  
27 I dished the father because he slammed me. Then I picked up the Samoan one after that, I  
28 was still carrying so he know- it wasn't his baby, and so yeah, life started a little bit  
29 differently after, well, when I came home, got pregnant, had my baby and then ---

30 **MS NORTON:** Tell me about going home, because you said earlier that the social workers didn't  
31 want you to go home. Why?

32 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because my mum and dad, they were in a condemned house.

33 **MS NORTON:** Whereabouts?

1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** The first one was at 7 Milias Street and it only had gas, and my dad, he was  
2 a sifter. He gathered and collected all kinds of junk and cars and the roof was stacked up, it  
3 was a fire ready to happen, with his collection of junk, and I remember that the fleas, they  
4 loved me, the fleas just loved to eat me to pieces, and I would cover my bed with a white  
5 sheet and in the morning I'd wake up and have a glass that would be full of fleas that I'd  
6 stayed up all night trying to kill off. But mum and dad only used that place to go to sleep.  
7 They'd go to work, come home, go to sleep, go to work.

8 **MS NORTON:** How did that feel going from that Pākehā home to ---

9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It felt really wonderful. I didn't care, I was the happiest kid in the world  
10 because I had my mother and father and I didn't care that we lived in squalor.

11 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Me too, I was really wrapped.

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** So it was home. And I finally --- coming from the flash upbringing and all  
13 of that stuff, I don't care. And it was joy and happy in the family. And you know, while  
14 my mum and dad are at work, all the runaways would be at our house because, you know,  
15 about 30 or 40, including my brothers and sisters, they will go out and they will go and  
16 steal the pies and the cakes that they used to leave outside the shop. So our place was a  
17 whole house full of runaways. As soon as 6 o'clock came, they would all disappear  
18 because Mum and Dad came home from work.

19 **MS NORTON:** How did they know to come to your house?

20 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because my brothers and sisters came with them.

21 **MS NORTON:** So they brought them?

22 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yes.

23 **MEREANI HARRIS:** No, they followed me.

24 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Anyway, the Police used to come looking for them and they'll shine the  
25 light on them and they'd go, "Are you Joyce?" No. "Are you Toni? No. And it was them.  
26 But, you know, we were younger then and we were urchins --- well, I wasn't but my  
27 brothers and sisters, they were in with all the criminals and hierarchies that ended up being  
28 gangsters, they knew them young. I met some of those big chief leaders of Black Power  
29 and they were only 14, and --- but we weren't into any of that, we were into --- we were  
30 just into running away, we drank the worst plonk that you ever could drink, I don't know  
31 how we looked at that stuff, but we were young and blung, I didn't really like that life very  
32 much, but I used to tag with the younger ones.

33 **MS NORTON:** Did mum and dad know that there were other children ---

1 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, they were at work. But sometimes they were too late and Mum will  
2 just put her hand underneath the bed and ask that one under there for a smoke.

3 **MEREANI HARRIS:** They kind of knew, they knew.

4 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** They knew.

5 **MEREANI HARRIS:** They were so awesome, our Mum and Dad.

6 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** But as long as we were at home and the house was safe, not burned down  
7 on anything. They just went to work, sort of kept their nose clean but hey, they were  
8 protecting all of us who were bringing home all the urchins, so that was the street life then.

9 **MS NORTON:** And they didn't mind?

10 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, no, not really because they didn't know half of it, but they didn't mind  
11 because, well, we're home.

12 **MS NORTON:** Do you want to add any more to your kōrero about going home to Mum and Dad?

13 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It was the best decision I ever made in my life against the DSW's wishes.  
14 They really didn't want me to go back there, they had attitude about it, and so I didn't really  
15 care. I wanted to go home finally after - I was only released, you know, they keep us until  
16 about 17, and so I had the least time with them, because these ones had to carry on until  
17 they were the same age, and so I was really happy to go home, Mum and Dad were really  
18 happy to have me home and the best gift I gave them that filled them with joy was their  
19 first moko-.

20 **MS NORTON:** Brendan.

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

22 **MS NORTON:** Okay, thank you."

23 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kua tae tātou ki te mutunga o tēnei wāhanga (we have come to the  
24 end of this session). We will have a break now, 15 minutes, and we'll be back, kia ora.

25 **Adjournment from 10.57 am to 11.16 am**

26 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koutou katoa (greetings and welcome back) and welcome  
27 back. We're going to return to the Harris sisters' testimony, the prerecording, kia ora.

28 **MS NORTON:** "Kia ora, Joyce, I'm going to turn to you now, and I don't think that there is  
29 anywhere that we can start except for your twin sister Toni. It's appropriate that we start  
30 there, firstly because she's not here; secondly because when I've read your statement I can  
31 feel that love that you have for one another and that bond that you had is really not of this  
32 world, eh?

33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.

1 **MS NORTON:** Because there are things that you experienced when she was away from you that  
2 noone else would have ever experienced. But I'm not going to take that away from you,  
3 because I'm going to let you speak to that.

4 But my starting point for you is, I would really love for you to share your story  
5 about having Toni as your twin sister, what that was like for you growing up, what sort of  
6 person she was, and what it is that you loved about her.

7 I know that's a lot, that's a threefold question, but let's just start with telling us a  
8 little bit about Toni.

9 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Okay. Kia ora, my name is Joyce Ariki Harris, and I'm number seven out of  
10 eight of us. Toni, my twin sister, she was 15 minutes born before me. Me and my twin, we  
11 were unseparable. I don't recall anything about my real parents or family, but me and Toni  
12 were brought up with our foster side, when we were nearly two years old.

13 I guess for the first six years of our beginnings with our foster side we had a good  
14 upbringing up north in Whangape. Toni was always – like with twins there's always a  
15 negative and positive, Toni was always the positive and I was always the sickly one  
16 anyway, and slow. Toni was quite brainy and clever and pretty and, you name, I'm the  
17 opposite of her, or I always thought I was. She'd even stick up for me, if anybody bullied  
18 me.

19 We had a good upbringing in Whangape where our foster mother was from with  
20 riding horses, and getting the cows for our aunties and uncles, and living off the land and  
21 the sea. Never knew what cities were or shops or money even.

22 Toni used to always get the prizes from sports and exams and I always felt like I  
23 was the slow one and didn't have many brains like her. That's when we were little, but we  
24 were very close, we pined for each other if we were apart. She was a beautiful sister  
25 anyway, my twin, still is to this day.

26 **MS NORTON:** That's – thank you for that. So-- when you were -- when you and Toni were  
27 removed from Mum and Dad's care you were around two years old and you were  
28 placed -with – we'll call them Mr and Mrs T, okay?

29 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.

30 **MS NORTON:** And that was in Glen Eden. I've read your statement, and if I look at paragraphs  
31 four through eight, you describe a time that was --- it was okay, if I can put it that way,  
32 things were pretty uneventful. You were just little kids growing up in the countryside --

33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Mmm.

- 1 **MS NORTON:** --- and being little kids, but all of that changed when you and Toni were about  
2 seven years old, is that right?
- 3 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 4 **MS NORTON:** It starts really at paragraph eight of your statement, but when you and Toni were  
5 about seven years old you moved to Kawakawa and in your statement you say everything  
6 changed.
- 7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 8 **MS NORTON:** What changed?
- 9 **JOYCE HARRIS:** From being brought up staunch Catholics and praying and got taught to obey,  
10 we-- were always taught to --always listen to your elders and never answer back and just do  
11 as you're told, but then --redacted,-- sorry. He started -- when we used to bath, 'cause- me  
12 and Toni would bath together, and we had a stepbrother as well, but me and Toni, he started  
13 coming into our, --the bathroom to watch us and ---
- 14 **MS NORTON:** How did you feel?
- 15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Uncomfortable really, but then --redacted - but- I don't know, we just took it  
16 as it was, but then he started, I suppose, wanting more, I take it as, while we were growing  
17 up and...
- 18 **MS NORTON:** So you talk about a time then when you moved to Hamilton.
- 19 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 20 **MS NORTON:** Let's talk about that time. In your statement you say that your foster mum – and  
21 we'll call them your foster mum and dad, if that's what you would prefer, but you talk about  
22 your foster mum working.
- 23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, she was a good mum to us, actually. She never knew anything what he  
24 was doing to us, and - I- forgot what you just... --
- 25 **MS NORTON:** What was he doing? When you moved to Hamilton, in your statement, you say  
26 that your foster mum was working.
- 27 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 28 **MS NORTON:** You and Toni were at school.
- 29 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 30 **MS NORTON:** He would make you come home at lunchtime.
- 31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 32 **MS NORTON:** What would happen when you came home at lunchtime?
- 33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, he would send us to the room and start molesting us, both of us.
- 34 **MS NORTON:** And you talk about a time where your foster dad would go to the pub?

- 1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 2 **MS NORTON:** You talk about your foster mum locking herself in a room.
- 3 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes. She --- I don't know what M--um was like --- they must have been  
4 having marital problems or something because she, all of a sudden she wasn't there  
5 anymore. She was always in the lounge, but she locked it and like the foster father would  
6 come back from work very late and it was sort of like once mum's asleep and you can hear  
7 her snoring she won't get up until it's morning so he sort- of like played on that to come into  
8 our room. Yeah, we'd wake up and he's in bed. Sometimes we'd sleep together and  
9 sometimes we were in separate beds, but he was always in one of our beds.
- 10 **MS NORTON:** Why was he in our bed?
- 11 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I don't know, just to tutu with us.
- 12 **MS NORTON:** Do you remember that? Do you have any memory of that?
- 13 **JOYCE HARRIS:** A couple of --- yeah, I do but it's like I blocked all the, I don't know, but  
14 I blocked it in my head when I was 12.
- 15 **MS NORTON:** And that's fine we won't labour that.
- 16 **JOYCE HARRIS:** But he did threaten us if we told anyone, like ---
- 17 **MS NORTON:** What did he say he would do?
- 18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** It was sort of like, yeah, threats and, what do you call it? Nebulate(sic), he  
19 just told us never to tell nobody, and sort of like we had to listen, so --- sorry, not threaten,  
20 but brainwash us, I suppose, into not saying it to anybody.
- 21 **MS NORTON:** And you listened to him, because you didn't know any different.
- 22 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, we didn't know it was --- we didn't know what sex was, we weren't  
23 brought up anything about sex, it was like Mum --- it was like a swear word, I suppose,  
24 if -anybody --- I- don't know, we never knew what sex was at all really.
- 25 **MS NORTON:** Do you think your foster mum knew what was going on then?
- 26 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Well, she --- it's a bit hard because why did she go in her room all  
27 the -time? - I- mean, into the lounge, and lock herself in? Unless it was him brainwashing  
28 her too, I feel.
- 29 **MS NORTON:** Now Toni was about nine or 10, and she was taken away from you... --
- 30 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 31 **MS NORTON:** The foster home, wasn't she?
- 32 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 33 **MS NORTON:** Do you remember why?

- 1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, wouldn't have a clue, because even our stepbrother Howard, he was taken  
2 away as well quite a few times, because he was naughty.
- 3 **MS NORTON:** So how did that happen? Were you there when they were taken? How did that  
4 happen?
- 5 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, I don't remember her being taken, I just remember coming home and she  
6 was gone. It might have been on one of her sick days at home.
- 7 **MS NORTON:** And do you remember how long she was gone for? How long was it before you  
8 saw her again?
- 9 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Wasn't until a couple of years, sort of thing, because it wasn't - I didn't- know  
10 she was in a girls' home and I was --- I ended up pregnant in Bethany and I pined for my  
11 twin, because she was gone for a couple of years, sort of thing, or a year.
- 12 **MS NORTON:** So when Toni was sent away did the abuse stop?
- 13 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No. No, it was all on me.
- 14 **MS NORTON:** So did it get worse because she wasn't there?
- 15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Well, I'd say yes.
- 16 **MS NORTON:** I want to come, fastforward to when you turned 12 years of age. You were  
17 actually sent away from your foster parents' home, weren't you?
- 18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 19 **MS NORTON:** And you went to live with another foster mother, is that right?
- 20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 21 **MS NORTON:** And you were feeling sick?
- 22 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, the foster mother saw I kept going to the bathroom in the mornings and  
23 spewing up. I kept spewing up, I don't know what I --- I didn't know nothing about  
24 pregnancy or anything. -But she saw like it must have been a few mornings I was  
25 always - straight after breakfast I'll be just going to the bathroom and spewing it all  
26 out. -And then she - I- think she might have caught me spewing up and she took me to the  
27 doctors.
- 28 **MS NORTON:** And you had no idea what was coming at that point?
- 29 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.
- 30 **MS NORTON:** The foster mother takes you to the doctors.
- 31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 32 **MS NORTON:** And then what happened?

- 1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Well, what I know now, they gave me a, what do you call a, yeah, they  
2 just - a- swab I suppose, I'm not sure, internal, now that I know now, and yeah, the doctor  
3 said I was pregnant.
- 4 **MS NORTON:** And did you know what that meant at 12?
- 5 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.
- 6 **MS NORTON:** And your foster mother did something, didn't she?
- 7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 8 **MS NORTON:** Do you want to talk about that?
- 9 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Because, yeah, I was pretty scared and crying and, because I thought they  
10 were angry. - I don't- know, things were just --- I was only a kid really, but then the foster  
11 mother was asking how did I get like -how did I get pregnant? And I didn't know what she  
12 was talking about at all, and then they said, she or the doctor grabbed some toys, I think it  
13 was, and they were asking me questions of who's- the person that was doing  
14 these --because she showed me on the toys, and I said, "Yeah, that's" - and- she asked who  
15 did it and I said ---
- 16 **MS NORTON:** Just to be clear, she got two toys and she simulated or ---
- 17 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, like on top of each other.
- 18 **MS NORTON:** - -- a sexual act?
- 19 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 20 **MS NORTON:** Just for those listening so we get a clear picture of what's going on. Then you  
21 said to the doctor and your new foster mother, "Yes, that's what happened to me." Is that  
22 ---
- 23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I said, "Yes, it's my dad." Yeah.
- 24 **MS NORTON:** And you talk about feeling bad, you talk about looking at their faces and seeing  
25 looks of disgust.
- 26 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 27 **MS NORTON:** Do you remember that?
- 28 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 29 **MS NORTON:** And do you remember feeling whakamā because of that? You were a child who's  
30 12.
- 31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I just kept crying and crying, but I didn't know what was going on and that. It  
32 was all strange. And even though she had the toys like doing intercourse sort of thing, I  
33 can't remember that, I blocked it all out. But I knew it was him that was doing what  
34 the - when- she showed me on the toys.



- 1 **MS NORTON:** So that act with the toys, it was only ever the foster father?
- 2 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, well, he was the only one that ever done that to us.
- 3 **MS NORTON:** Okay. And from there, your new foster mother didn't want you, is that right?
- 4 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.
- 5 **MS NORTON:** And you ended up in Bethany, didn't you?
- 6 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, because I kept pining for my twin and for my foster mum.
- 7 **MS NORTON:** Tell me about Bethany, what was that?
- 8 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, it was a home for unmarried or underage mothers.
- 9 **MS NORTON:** Single mothers?
- 10 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, single, that were having babies and -- they were nice people, the
- 11 Salvation Army, I remember Sergeant -- I can't remember her name, but she was one of the
- 12 main leaders, and yeah-, they were shocked to see a young girl in there, and I felt
- 13 uncomfortable in there because I always pine for my twin and I always pine for Mum, but
- 14 there was a lot of other girls in there too, but they were all like 16 years and up.
- 15 **MS NORTON:** Were you the youngest one there at the time?
- 16 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, I was 12.
- 17 **MS NORTON:** So did you not feel comfortable with the older girls?
- 18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I just wanted to go home, back home. I didn't like it in there because there
- 19 were strangers in there and ---
- 20 **MS NORTON:** Home back to your foster mother?
- 21 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 22 **MS NORTON:** And your foster father?-
- 23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I knew nothing of my real parents until then, until we met our real family,
- 24 which was - I- was there in Bethany when they picked me up and the twin was in Bollard
- 25 Girls' Home.
- 26 **MS NORTON:** Well, I am going to talk about the reunion with your whānau, but I want to finish
- 27 the questioning around you being in Bethany.
- 28 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 29 **MS NORTON:** Because you talk about Toni being at Bollard Girls' Home.
- 30 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 31 **MS NORTON:** And you talk about a time where you were running away.
- 32 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 33 **MS NORTON:** Tell us about that.

1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Okay. I suppose it would have been about maybe three, four months after  
2 I arrived there, and actually they were good to me in there because they taught me how to  
3 make clay -- crafts, all art stuff, and I used to love drawing Māori things, they let me do the  
4 art room all in -- like how you walk -in a marae, and you've got all the panels, and I drew  
5 all that. And then because I kept pining for Toni- they used to get a hold of our social  
6 worker, Mr Gerrard, and he used to let her come.- They used to organise for her to come  
7 and visit me from the girls' home and send her back. And then he came and says that they  
8 found our real parents, would I like to meet them. -And I go -and our family. -And I was  
9 so happy and said yes, and so they organised a few months later they organised for us to be  
10 picked up, because that was the reunion then.

11 **MS NORTON:** Let's talk about that, because you've kind of segued into that quite nicely. That  
12 reunion took place in May in 1974 and what I want is for each of you to share your  
13 memories of that day and I'm going to leave you there for a minute Joyce and I'm going to  
14 go back to you, Te Enga, to talk about that reunion.

15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Hang on. Only because it was when we first got to meet our real parents and  
16 when I found out where they lived I kept running away, so...

17 **MS NORTON:** Right. Thank you for finishing that off. But you always got brought back to  
18 Bethany?

19 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

20 **MS NORTON:** And at one point you went to a home, didn't you?

21 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, to Allendale.

22 **MS NORTON:** And they put you in secure?

23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah. And it had a - same- as what Te Enga was just saying, I had a  
24 bucket. - I had a bucket, a bed and a mattress and sort of like those silver sink I think to the  
25 floor and yeah, a bucket for a toilet. -And I was actually about eight months pregnant or  
26 seven and a half months pregnant by then. And I was in, what do you call, it maximum  
27 security. I was locked up for two weeks, but one of the staff always left my door open, I  
28 don't think they were supposed to, but she did, just in case I needed to walk around or  
29 whatever.

30 **MS NORTON:** So she felt sorry for you?

31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, there were quite a few of them that would say I shouldn't be in  
32 this, - who's- doing this, you know, a 12-year-old.

33 **MS NORTON:** So let's just break that down. You're 12, you're eight months pregnant, you're in  
34 residential care in secure lockup.

- 1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 2 **MS NORTON:** And you're in there for two weeks.
- 3 **MEREANI HARRIS:** With a bucket. So sad.
- 4 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, I was in and out of there quite a few times. Because once they let me  
5 out I used to run away, even with my big puku, I used to just take off.
- 6 **MS NORTON:** And you ran away every time back to Mum and Dad's because that social worker  
7 had shown you where they lived so you knew how to get there.
- 8 **JOYCE HARRIS:** [Nods].
- 9 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** They lived in the same area, anyway, Mum and Dad were in Grey Lynn  
10 and that was in Grey Lynn, Bethany.
- 11 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, right up the top (inaudible).
- 12 **MS NORTON:** So let's go back to the reunion. And we'll go back to you, Te Enga. We'll start  
13 with you, and then your sisters will share their memories of that day.
- 14 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** The day we met it was a big occasion for us because, like, I'm carrying my  
15 daughter and it's 1975 and she's carrying her daughter.
- 16 **MS NORTON:** She's hapū, eh?
- 17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, but she has her daughter before me, and my daughter's my third  
18 child. I came prepared, I had the camera and this was going to be so exciting because we  
19 haven't seen our babies since they were little.
- 20 **MS NORTON:** Can I just clarify something, though, and this is a really important fact that I want  
21 to share. If we go right back to the day that you were removed from your parents' care and  
22 we fastforward- to what ---
- 23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** 11 and a half years.
- 24 **MS NORTON:** Thank you. So we're looking at the reunion, you have not been together as a  
25 family for 11 and a half years.
- 26 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Mmm.
- 27 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** And that was the only ever time too, by the way, that reunion, it never ever  
28 happened again in our life time.
- 29 **MS NORTON:** Incredible.
- 30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** But the main reason that that happened, and we were all looking forward to  
31 it, was because the DSW had to tell my parents that my sister was pregnant to her foster  
32 father. They didn't even offer the baby. So it was more or less gather us together, tell my  
33 parents and let us spend the day and oh, they were everywhere, they were all over the  
34 boards and doing art and my kids were -- I had two kids, my two sons, and here's me taking

1 all these photos of this beautiful day, and I actually had the cap over, I didn't know you had  
2 to take the cap off, so the pictures didn't turn out. What a waste-.

3 **MS NORTON:** Can we just go back, I've done that before myself, it's not a nice feeling. Can we  
4 just go back because I want a clear picture of where you were taken and who was there.

5 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Okay, we were taken to the Bledisloe Social Welfare, in town, Building  
6 because it's huge.

7 **MS NORTON:** In Auckland?

8 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** In Auckland.

9 **MEREANI HARRIS:** (Inaudible) State building.

10 **MS NORTON:** Queen Street?

11 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Queen Street, yes. But I think a lot of the old ones,  
12 I remember -- redacted -- because she was notorious on that, our family are pretty  
13 entrenched in there, so all the old ones, our files were so big. So they knew the Harris  
14 family. But that was the first time ever that we actually got brought together, brought  
15 back - well, I had kids of my own. -Were you ---

16 **MEREANI HARRIS:** No, I buried Paula(?).

17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** She had lost hers. On this big day, well, it was to be a day of celebration  
18 because it was a big move on our part and we were so excited.

19 **MS NORTON:** So there was mum and dad and all your siblings?

20 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Was Joe there?

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah, all the kids.

22 **MEREANI HARRIS:** No, Joe wasn't there.

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, he was there that time, we had another meeting later on and he couldn't  
24 get out.

25 **MS NORTON:** So your oldest brother Joseph wasn't there?

26 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, he was, all of us were there, this is the only time, ever. That was  
27 another time later. No, we were all there and, like, we were all artists and we were all,  
28 well, hey, we were young and like this is our first ever meeting. I couldn't even believe that  
29 my sisters, I remember them as babies, holding them as babies, and to come back and,  
30 wow, one of them's pregnant? That was a big shock for me, you know, because we didn't  
31 even know why we were coming to have this meeting, we weren't told until we got there.

32 **MS NORTON:** So the social workers never told you, they just picked ---

33 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** They said that there were - we had to come in, there's going to be a family  
34 reunion. We didn't know why but we needed to be there, and so all of us, our Mum and

1 Dad and – like I said, I already had kids of my own, so yeah-, the whole eight of us were in  
2 the one room with our parents and our kids that were around at the time, well, mine were.  
3 And yeah, it was for them to tell my parents about Joyce having this baby to her foster  
4 father.

5 And so, you know, that was a big shocker. And like Mum – my parents, what  
6 could they do? They weren't even offered the baby-. It would have been nice if they had  
7 been offered – because they would have loved to have a moko, because I know they loved  
8 the ones I started having.

9 **MS NORTON:** What were they like when they saw Toni and Joyce?

10 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Well, they hadn't seen them for so long.- We were all excited, we just loved  
11 each other-. So if you can imagine that you never saw your own and then 11 and a half  
12 years you'se were all there, well, there's magic in the room. And, like, we were all artists,  
13 the kids were drawing, we were all talking, the kids were playing, we were all talking, it  
14 was a day that we had a family reunion, first time ever and it was never to happen again.

15 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I got a shock, I didn't know we had little siblings.

16 **MS NORTON:** How long did you spend together?

17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** We had the whole day, we had the whole day, and it was catered for by  
18 them, they laid on a day, well since we had the court case at the Supreme Court and, you  
19 know, at the Supreme Court when we were taken. We were allowed to look at our mother,  
20 who was sitting over there, but we weren't allowed near her, but when it came to meeting  
21 the kids, well, it was a whole different thing. So we were allowed to be with them, touch  
22 them, Mum and Dad could give us cuddles, give them cuddles, because they only had the  
23 big ones, and these little ones were coming. That would have been Mum and Dad's joy  
24 I guess that day. Unfortunately it was never to be again.

25 **MS NORTON:** Never to be repeated.

26 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It did happen again later on at another time but we couldn't get our brother  
27 out, so that's why he was missing at that one, but at that first one, we were all there.

28 **MS NORTON:** And Mereani, what are your memories of that day, of that reunion?

29 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I just remember her big stomach, the sister when she went past, oh my  
30 goodness, and then I looked straight at Mum to see – I could see she was happy but upset,  
31 yeah. And I just couldn't get over it. But wow, are they ours? Is that our brother,  
32 because- he was so tall.

33 **MS NORTON:** Which brother is this?

34 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Oh, Mati, the baby.

1 **MS NORTON:** Oh, the baby?

2 **MEREANI HARRIS:** He just towered over us, he was so tall. Wow, is that our sisters?

3 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** So he would have been 11. --

4 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Because I didn't know, I didn't know when I was five and a half and got  
5 stolen from my family that I had little siblings.

6 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because we weren't - they didn't encourage us to come together, even  
7 though I had a couple of holidays with them, but that was just once or twice along the way.  
8 But yeah, no, I'll never forget that day because -- --how one minute you just know what we  
9 know and then all of a sudden we see them and we know that they're ours anyway and  
10 they've come back so big. And so just like blown away stuff.

11 **MS NORTON:** Joyce, I want to turn to you now. Can you share with us your memories of that  
12 day?

13 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, I remember, I got picked up by Mr Garrett and we picked Toni up from  
14 Bollard and went down to the Department down Queen Street, or off Queen Street, or  
15 somewhere, the Social Welfare, and we were sitting in the car, I think it was a carpark  
16 down the bottom. We were sitting there and we see all these cars coming in and out and  
17 seeing all these Māoris get out one at a time, not knowing they were our brothers  
18 and --- but Social Welfare cars, then I was thinking, jeez, Mum and Dad must have a big  
19 family, I thought they owned the building and all the cars.

20 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Well, we practically do.

21 **JOYCE HARRIS:** When we -- I remember when they took us up to this big room, conference  
22 room, and we were sitting there, me and Toni, I think Matthew --- no, hang on, but  
23 I remember Mum and Dad were the first ones in and I remember them stop -- they all came  
24 in, you were all together, and Mum and Dad saw --- looked at me and Toni, and I could see  
25 Mum was really happy, and they were both happy but curious too, why am I - looking at  
26 me in a certain way, and then Te Enga came in -- we were all in the one room but they came  
27 to harirū us and all that, and I remember she looked at Toni, looks at me, and looks at Toni,  
28 looks at me, and I'm sure she said to me, "What happened to you?" And thinking, oh, I'm  
29 not pretty like Toni. That's all I can think why she said that. I didn't realise it was my  
30 puku-.

31 And then my brother Joe, as soon as he met me, he goes -- he was happy to meet  
32 his twin sisters, and he looked at my puku too and he goes, "Are you doing that shit  
33 already?" I still didn't understand what he meant. -Then he says, "I'm going to get whoever  
34 done that and knock him out." And I was -- I -felt - yeah-, I did feel belonging, me and my

1 sister, because she was hapū, I got a big sister that will look after me because I'm having a  
2 baby too. And my brother, when he said that I was happy too because, yay, I've got a big  
3 brother to look out for me and my twin.

4 **MS NORTON:** So it felt good?

5 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, it felt good just knowing we've got a big family.

6 **MS NORTON:** Can I just get something clear in my mind. Up until that day, you had social  
7 workers come to your foster parents' home?

8 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes. Not all the time, but when they did do a home visit with both of them  
9 and with me and — it was mainly the- parents and the social worker.

10 **MS NORTON:** There's a couple of questions I want to ask you. The first one is, in any of those  
11 visits, did the social workers who came to see you ever talk to you about your parents or  
12 your siblings?

13 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.

14 **MS NORTON:** So up until that day ---

15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Not that I can remember.

16 **MS NORTON:** — u--p until that day in 1975 when you had the reunion, you had no clue, no clue  
17 who your parents were and no idea that you had seven —

18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Nothing.

19 **MS NORTON:** — beautiful and handsome brothers and sisters-?

20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, six.

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Because they were only two when they were taken.

22 **MS NORTON:** Well, two. (Multispeakers).

23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Six or seven out of eight, but no.

24 **MS NORTON:** Okay. Was that the same for both you, Te Enga?--

25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, I knew who they were.

26 **MS NORTON:** Yeah. Because you were older. --

27 **MEREANI HARRIS:** I didn't.

28 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** I changed their nappies.

29 **MS NORTON:** You didn't, Te Enga, because you were only five.

30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

31 **MS NORTON:** So prior to that day, the reunion, did social workers share with you --

32 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Nothing.

33 **MS NORTON:** — anything about your parents, anything about your siblings-?

34 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Nothing.

1 **MS NORTON:** So that was virtually the first day that you knew about all your brothers and  
2 sisters?

3 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Mmmhmm.

4 **MS NORTON:** Thank you for clearing that up. I guess that leads me to that second question that  
5 I wanted to ask you: When social workers were coming to visit you while you were with  
6 your first foster parents, did you ever disclose to them about what was happening to you?

7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, didn't know I could.

8 **MS NORTON:** Was there a reason for that, that you can remember, and if you don't that's fine.

9 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, I was too young I suppose, I didn't think or anything.

10 **MS NORTON:** You didn't even know what was happening to you.

11 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Once he said not to tell noone, we were just stuck.

12 **MS NORTON:** Is there anything more that any of you want to add about that reunion?

13 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** That was the best time of our life, one of the very few that we had during  
14 our State ward care.

15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, that was the first and the last time. After that, after it was over we were  
16 all dispersed back to where we came from.

17 **MS NORTON:** Have you reflected on that day and do you hold any anger or animosity towards  
18 the State for doing that to you? Keeping you apart for 11 and a half years?

19 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Now I do.

20 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Yeah, now I do. Now that I've gotten older I do kind of I hold it against  
21 them and at the same time because they're not doing anything, until we met you'se, and then  
22 I just pushed it aside, you know, you've got to soldier on.

23 **MS NORTON:** Okay.

24 **MEREANI HARRIS:** But then you'se came along and wow, kind of reopened it again in a good  
25 way.

26 **MS NORTON:** I'm glad to hear that. I want to come back to you now, Joyce. Because after that  
27 visit, you were taken back to Bethany and then not long after that you were taken to  
28 hospital where you have your baby.

29 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

30 **MS NORTON:** Tell me about the birth.

31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Not good. I had nobody with me, just the social worker, - the- foster mum,  
32 the second --- I'm sure she was there, and maybe one of the, what do they call them,  
33 sergeants from the Salvation Army from Bethany. No family. But I don't know, I was  
34 just -- it was a really painful experience and...--



- 1 **MS NORTON:** You were in labour for 24 hours, right?
- 2 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, and -- most of the time I slept. But knowing now, back then it was sort  
3 of like I just had to do it, I couldn't talk to noone- or anybody.
- 4 **MS NORTON:** Did anyone talk to you about pregnancy, did anyone talk to you about what you  
5 could expect?
- 6 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, in Bethany I learned all that.
- 7 **MS NORTON:** They did, okay.
- 8 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 9 **MS NORTON:** So you were educated around that.
- 10 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Mmm.
- 11 **MS NORTON:** Did that help with baby's birth?
- 12 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, luckily because I wouldn't have known what to do, but it was, it  
13 was - -- -for a 12-year--old, I just -- actually, I-- just turned, because our birthdays are in  
14 April, me and Toni's, and I just turned --
- 15 **MEREANI HARRIS:** 12.
- 16 **JOYCE HARRIS:** -- 13 when I had Rangī.
- 17 **MS NORTON:** Rangī Louise was born.
- 18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 19 **MS NORTON:** It was your twin who named her, wasn't it?
- 20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, when she was in the girls' home, she asked me.
- 21 **MS NORTON:** Before we turn to baby, you'd had complications -- --
- 22 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 23 **MS NORTON:** -- -- associated with the delivery. Can you talk about those complications?
- 24 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I didn't really know I did really until I ran away. -- I mean, when I was in  
25 another foster home after having Rangī and leaving her at the hospital  
26 and - I wasn't -really - they wouldn't let me hold her or anything. I think I did get to hold  
27 her once. But I was that tired I just went back to sleep and I can't- remember how many  
28 days I was in there, but I was put straight into a foster home without the baby.
- 29 **MS NORTON:** If we go back to the birth, though, because I've read your statement, you had a  
30 collapsed lung?
- 31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, apparently. I didn't know at that time, I didn't know until I was on the  
32 run, when I ran away from the second or third --- they put me in a home, foster home when  
33 I had gave birth to Rangī, about --- might be a few days later, but I kept running away from

1           there and it wasn't until I was --- because everywhere, no matter what, I always ran back to  
2           Mum and Dad's in Holland(?) Street.

3 **MS NORTON:** But you would have been sick because you had a collapsed lung.

4 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah I was, I had pneumonia.

5 **MS NORTON:** You had pneumonia, but you also talk about the hospital staff not getting all of  
6           the placenta out.

7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, that's what I found out after when the Police had come to Mum and Dad's  
8           looking for me, and we were --- I was hiding underneath the house with Toni and I could  
9           hear everything they were saying, because I think it was only about two weeks after I had  
10          Rangi. I was already on the run, and yeah, I was sick, I had pneumonia, I didn't know that  
11          but the hospital told Mum that if I did turn up there for me to go to the hospital straight  
12          away because I could die because my after birth wasn't fully taken out, and my lung  
13          collapsed. But I didn't know all that at the time, I just wanted to get out of there, the foster  
14          home to go back home. And I was sick for about eight, nine months. And I used to always  
15          have fevers. It was horrible.

16 **MS NORTON:** In your statement you talk about baby, you talk about delivering her, and she was  
17          taken away from you, and then you talk about them bringing her back to you the very next  
18          day and you got to hold her.

19 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

20 **MS NORTON:** And that's the only contact that you talk about in terms of baby.

21 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

22 **MS NORTON:** Is that right?

23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.

24 **MS NORTON:** Then you talk about being made to sign some papers.

25 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, I remember that because they kept putting this form in front of me to  
26          sign it, and I don't know what was telling me not to because I didn't know what the form  
27          was about anyway.

28 **MS NORTON:** Did anyone explain to you what those papers were?

29 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I think they did but I wouldn't sign it, I can't really remember.

30 **MS NORTON:** That's fine. You were only 12.

31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, and I wouldn't --

32 **MS NORTON:** What do you think those papers were now?

33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Could have been adoption papers, could have been -- I don't- know.

34 **MS NORTON:** Nobody ever explained that to you?

- 1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, no, never.
- 2 **MS NORTON:** Okay. So let's just talk about after baby's birth you were reunited with Toni,  
3 weren't you?
- 4 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 5 **MS NORTON:** You got labelled "the terrible twins."
- 6 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, that's what they named us.
- 7 **MS NORTON:** All right. So tell me about that period in your life.
- 8 **JOYCE HARRIS:** It was horrible, we were always put down maxi secure. There's a medium and  
9 a maximum, and the medium, if you're well behaved you get out faster than you're in there  
10 for. The maximum, you got to stay in there and do your whole, like, isolation. Usually  
11 around about two to three weeks, depends on your behaviour. And me and Toni always got  
12 up to mischief when we were in the same cell, she used to always bully me, Toni. But met  
13 some good mates in there, and some of their experiences were sort of the same, but they  
14 weren't pregnant. A few of them, our mates were abused, sexually abused.
- 15 **MS NORTON:** Where was this?
- 16 **JOYCE HARRIS:** In Allendale, Bollard, Weymouth, and even Fareham House.
- 17 **MS NORTON:** So this is a period of time when you were being placed in multiple different  
18 residential homes, but you also talk about a period when you were back basically living on  
19 the streets.
- 20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.
- 21 **MS NORTON:** Living rough? And you were, at that stage, 13 years old and you were into drugs  
22 and alcohol.
- 23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 24 **MS NORTON:** And actually prostitution to make money just to survive. Tell me about that  
25 period.
- 26 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, well, that was horrible, but I don't know, it was just a way to live on the  
27 streets. Me and Toni always had a -- not that we were always together, she ended up  
28 getting locked up or I'll end up getting locked up and then carry on on the streets  
29 really. -We had our own little --- I remember it was a wedding gown bouquet down Queen  
30 Street, and they had a bit of a-- like a walk-in -- was like that, and you had a bit of space  
31 before you got to the shop, into the shop, and we used to always sleep around the corner of  
32 that, and like next door was a bakery. So we used to steal a pie or a bun, they delivered  
33 about 5 o'clock in the morning. We would just go on our way and meet all our other mates,  
34 we met and end up at discos, or whatever, with the drag queens, and they looked after us

1           too. -I don't know, dispersed back to Mum, Mum and Dad's, and sometimes the house is  
2           too full, so we'd go somewhere else, back to town.

3   **TE ENGA HARRIS:** All the runaways.

4   **JOYCE HARRIS:** We couldn't really – if you come to think of it, we were little shitheads,  
5           naughty, not listening to stay home and all that. We were runaways anyway, so — but- we  
6           loved going back home.

7   **MS NORTON:** In your statement you talk about ending up at Fareham House and that's when  
8           you realised, hey, my big sisters had been here and left their mark. And then you talk about  
9           Te Enga coming to get you both and taking you home.

10 **JOYCE HARRIS:** That was when we were sent back to Weymouth. No, no, from Fareham  
11           House they wouldn't let me go home for one holiday --- actually, we hardly ever did come  
12           home for holidays, eh, because we weren't allowed. Mum always ended up going in and out  
13           of Kingseat or the places, mental homes, I think.

14 **MS NORTON:** Te Enga, do you remember going to get them?

15 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Vaguely. What, from Fareham?

16 **MS NORTON:** Yes.

17 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No, from Bollard.

18 **MEREANI HARRIS:** From Weymouth.

19 **MS NORTON:** Your statement says Fareham, but it talks about Te Enga coming to get them and  
20           basically you've ended up being rebels and ---

21 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Was I at Morningside?

22 **MEREANI HARRIS:** (Inaudible) we used to go everywhere to pick them up.

23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** (Inaudible) borrowed dad's car (inaudible) they came and got us. Because we  
24           were actually discharged in Weymouth, that's when we turned 17, and the social worker  
25           came to let us know we're no longer in Social Welfare, but then they left us in the home  
26           because there was nowhere to put us. We couldn't go back to Otara where Mum and Dad  
27           were, and they were just waiting on a home. Actually, they didn't really care about us,  
28           I suppose. We were waiting for someone who could take us.

29 **MS NORTON:** I think this is a good time to really talk about Toni because in your statement you  
30           talk about Toni falling pregnant to a prospect.

31 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.

32 **MS NORTON:** And the state taking baby off her.

33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** That was her second daughter. Her first daughter -- redacted -- she was 15  
34           when she had -- redacted -- eldest and at the time when she was 15, she had done a -- she

1 was ready to go to either, like – what do you call it, a girls institution or the prison, the girls  
2 prison, and she was pregnant – and I remember me and Toni we tried to – we went to our  
3 aunty's-, that's to the first foster parents, and she lived on -- redacted -- the aunty, and Toni  
4 went to see her to see if she'll raise baby, because Toni knew she was going to prison sort  
5 of thing. And Aunty, she was really happy to have the baby and --- but that was the other  
6 thing, once she's got her, she's going to keep baby, but still knowing that Toni's her mum,  
7 the mum. And then- when Toni had her baby -- I can't remember which hospital she was  
8 in, but baby was sort of, her name -- redacted - she -was - the social workers were  
9 organising her to be adopted or made a State- ward.

10 **MS NORTON:** A ward of the State? Yeah.

11 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, and I don't know who the adopted parents were, I do now, they  
12 were - redacted- - so it was straight after Toni had baby and baby was, I don't know how  
13 long she -had - redacted- -- for, I don't even think she did have her.

14 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** No, not long.

15 **JOYCE HARRIS:** She was taken as soon as she was born, Toni was put into Arohata Girls'  
16 Institution, and she was only 15 then.

17 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** And a couple of years later she had her second one.

18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, that was to the patch, he was prospecting.

19 **MS NORTON:** A prospect.

20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** But he took off with - redacted- - he took off with her when she was about two  
21 years, not even -two, actually. He took --

22 **MEREANI HARRIS:** He threw the patch in and took his daughter and -- (-multispeakers-).

23 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Actually, they went to court and called her an unfit mother to get custody  
24 and she went into withdrawal.

25 **MS NORTON:** And that's where you see Toni's decline, right?

26 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** Yeah.

27 **JOYCE HARRIS:** She started getting depression.

28 **MS NORTON:** Having lost both her babies.

29 **MEREANI HARRIS:** Two children, yeah.

30 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** She went straight from the Social Welfare care straight into mental health,  
31 she was 17.

32 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I remember she actually signed herself into Auckland Hospital because she  
33 was depressed when her daughter got -- redacted -- took off with her, their girl,  
34 and -- redacted -- from there, from depression and then they put her into Carrington.

- 1 **MS NORTON:** In your statement you say she was in and out of different institutions –
- 2 **JOYCE HARRIS:** After that.
- 3 **MS NORTON:** – Carrington, Kingseat, Porirua.
- 4 **JOYCE HARRIS:** I stole her out of there. I mean, I walked her out of there.
- 5 **MS NORTON:** And because she fell into this deep depression you talk about electric shock
- 6 therapy.
- 7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 8 **MS NORTON:** And when we started this kōrero I talked about that pain that you felt because you
- 9 were so connected to her, is that right?
- 10 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, yes, I felt all of them, I was down in Wellington and she was up in
- 11 Carrington or Kingseat and I felt all of them.
- 12 **MS NORTON:** What did you feel?
- 13 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Horrible. Just headaches, really bad headaches and it was horrible, like you're
- 14 dead and then, like, I'll ring up to someone out of the family and they'll say she's in
- 15 Kingseat or -- and she told me herself she was getting shock- treatments.
- 16 **MS NORTON:** I want to talk about something really personal to Toni. That's about the time that
- 17 she made a couple of attempts to end her life, she was – you know, not in a good way.
- 18 **JOYCE HARRIS:** No.
- 19 **MS NORTON:** And I'm thinking about the incident that occurred on 13 June 1988.
- 20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 21 **MS NORTON:** You got a phone call from the Police and they'd asked you to ID somebody in
- 22 Wellington Hospital. Do you remember that?
- 23 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.
- 24 **MS NORTON:** Tell me what happened.
- 25 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** It was her second time, eh?
- 26 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, I didn't know nothing about that first time.
- 27 **MS NORTON:** I'm just going off her statement, but we'll come back to that first time.
- 28 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, I'd actually got a call from her that morning, around about say nine
- 29 o'clock, and she was saying she's coming over home because she lived over Wainuiomata
- 30 and I lived in Lower Hutt, Stokes Valley, and, like, how many times she rang me, "Come
- 31 over, I'd love to see you", and, you know, I always liked to be with her, plus the kids, that
- 32 was their favourite aunty, or only aunty, really, that --- with me down there, she was down
- 33 there, and she had a good bond with the kids as they were little.
- 34 **MS NORTON:** Especially Tracey, you talk about that.

1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Tracey and (inaudible) yeah, because they both got -- they both had Toni's  
2 name, Toni May. She rings me and said- she was coming over and like my boyfriend at the  
3 time, he kept yelling out, "Nah, stay. T--ell her not to the come." I said, "Nah, she's  
4 coming." Anyway, she --- it was during then, I think it was when she was walking along  
5 the road over there and that's when she got hit by a van.

6 **MS NORTON:** Just as Te Enga said, she'd done it earlier and she had pretty bad injuries.

7 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

8 **MS NORTON:** But the second time she did it, her injuries were worse, right? She was actually in  
9 a coma.

10 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah, for 11 and a half months.

11 **MS NORTON:** A long time.

12 **TE ENGA HARRIS:** She had a stroke.

13 **MS NORTON:** When she woke up she had a stroke.

14 **JOYCE HARRIS:** She had actually had died three times in her coma, but no, it was just that  
15 machine that was keeping her going. And since the first foster side – like how prayed every  
16 day, every night, you know, and then when I was taken off, when I was 12, I never, ever  
17 thought of religion ever again, but that day when she was in her coma at the ICU I just  
18 prayed and prayed for her --

19 **MS NORTON:** It came back to you.

20 **JOYCE HARRIS:** -- never to let her die.

21 **MEREANI HARRIS:** And the three holes in her head, eh? She's got three skull ---

22 **JOYCE HARRIS:** One big one.

23 **MS NORTON:** Was that from that June incident?

24 **JOYCE HARRIS:** That was from her accident. That's actually what made her brain damage, it  
25 was because she didn't get hit by the front of the van, she got hit from the back, and they  
26 didn't - they- said they saw her walking. I never met them but these are what I -- statements,  
27 but then they just heard this bang, like she walked into the back of the van while it was still  
28 going and the impact of her head hit --- she hit her head straight away on the concrete or  
29 the road, and that's what made her brain damaged, because they took --- she ended up  
30 clotting in her brain, and they had to operate on her, on her head to get the clot out, and  
31 she's still got that hole in her head up here.

32 **MS NORTON:** Why do you think she would have done something like that not once but twice?

33 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Well, I tried myself but it didn't work. I mean, given what we went through, I  
34 suppose, it would be, because even her going in and out of mental homes and being abused

1           when we were kids and sexually abused and --- of course it will get to you. And  
2           never - you know, my place -at - down- Wellington was the safest place for her, but then it  
3           was my partner that wasn't getting on with her, and she'll go back --- she had a boyfriend at  
4           the time too where she was living.

5   **MS NORTON:** You talk about her having a stroke, but you also talk about the doctors telling you  
6           that she would be wheelchair bound.

7   **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.

8   **MS NORTON:** And there's a kōrero that you share that I want you to share now.

9   **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes.

10   **MS NORTON:** About -- I'll- let you tell it.

11   **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah. I was up by her side practically every day, but --- at the hospital and  
12           the doctor told me that she's going to be wheelchair bound because her spine was all  
13           crooked and everything, and she had broke her pelvis, her collarbone. She wasn't supposed  
14           to live actually. And what happened, he says -- but I used to always go up there, me and  
15           the kids would go up there and give her rides on her wheelchair when she finally came out  
16           of her coma.

17           And she knew. It was like she will always light up when she sees me because she  
18           remembers me, and I don't know how she did that, but I didn't like leaving her on her own  
19           up there either -- let her know she's got me, still got me. And the doctor says, yes, she'll  
20           never walk again and like about, not too far away from when mum and Te Enga picked her  
21           up, like a couple of months beforehand, they says -- I used to take her for a ride and they  
22           said that she can't -- she won't be able to walk, and all of a sudden she used to get up and  
23           walk, get out of her wheelchair and she started walking, and every time I was going to  
24           leave when I'm going home, then one day, like, she'll get up but not start walking, she'll just  
25           try and stand up, and she could, and like about a few weeks after that and then, hello, she  
26           just got up and walked and never sat back in the wheelchair again.

27   **MS NORTON:** So she proved the doctors wrong.

28   **JOYCE HARRIS:** And she's still walking today.

29   **MS NORTON:** Despite all of those terrible injuries.

30   **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yes, and like even where she is today in Bupa, she's been in there for about  
31           five years now, she's talking, they've been giving her speech therapy, and --- but she'll copy  
32           me, what I say or whoever's talking to her, they reckon it's me because they've never heard  
33           her talk like that before and I know they're teaching her, she won't say anything.

34   **MS NORTON:** Unless it's you.



1 **JOYCE HARRIS:** When did I turn up she ---

2 **MS NORTON:** You helped her walk and you helped her talk.

3 **JOYCE HARRIS:** Yeah.

4 **MS NORTON:** I'm going to change the conversation now, but thank you very much, Joyce, for  
5 bringing us through all that beautiful kōrero about your twin sister, and her journey,  
6 because she wasn't able to talk to us about that, so that fell on you as her twin. So I'm  
7 grateful for that."

8 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā tātou, katoa (greetings again). That's the end of the  
9 prerecorded evidence of the three Harris sisters, Te Enga, Mereani and Joyce. We're going  
10 to thank the whole Harris whānau at the end of today's hearing. But now we're going to  
11 take a short break after which we will start the evidence of Mr Stuart Harris. So we'll be  
12 back in 15 minutes at 12.30, kia ora koutou.

13 **Adjournment from 12.14 pm to 12.33 pm**