

General Information

Private or Public Statement? - Public

Statement Provider: Tyneshia Wright

Date: March 27, 2014

Location: Bangor, Maine

Previous Statement? W-201403-00025

Statement Gatherer: N/A

Support Person: Tonisha Basset

Additional Individuals Present: Public Circle

Recording Format: Video

Recording Length: 8:58

Recording

TW: My name is Tyneshia Wright. Wmm.. and .. really what I'm just going to talk about today, here is the first few years of my life, umm, because those are the ones I remember the most.

umm... I was two and half when I was taken from my mother because she was in a relationship with my stepfather that was not the best... umm.. and... I ended up in a foster home. The police came over at my mom's house that night, and I was hiding between the washer and the wall screaming because things were breaking all around me. They were just arguing nonstop.

I was told that my older brother called the cops... umm... and that they had all come and that we were leaving.

They had placed me in this home which I think is in the middle of nowhere because I still don't know where it was. And... I remember walking through the door and it was just a big giant house, I had never... to me it was a mansion, 'cause I lived in a trailer. And... I remember just... when you walk through the front door you had to walk up a set of stairs to even get to the kitchen.

And... they just showed me around. They... I met their kids, they had 4. They had a little girl around my age and they had 3 older sons. And I just remember that first night I screamed and cried because I didn't know where I was...

[00:01:48.19] The following weeks were pretty good... ummm... they bought me a whole bunch of new clothes, they bought me toys... umm... and I truly believed that the police were right and that people at DHHS were right that this was going to be a new beginning.

(smiles at the baby cooing in the corner) -- [Baby in the background becomes fussy]

And...the following weeks, because I was there for 3 months...umm... started to get worse.

[00:02:21.02] Umm...I remember just not coming home and not grabbing the mail (*inaudible*) walking down the street because I forgot to grab it, I mean I was in a hurry to go play with something...and I remember they would make me eat a whole bunch of food that I didn't like because I had texture issues, I can't have certain things in my mouth... and their favourite one was cottage cheese. And... I still to this day can't eat it.

[00:02:50.28] And I remember just... that was just because I missed the mail, I didn't grab the mail.

It was like that for a few weeks... umm... and then it just seemed like it was just the adults that didn't want me there... but shortly after that their youngest daughter started to pick up on it and when I was carrying stuff from the kitchen to the table like I was told to do for dinner... she would trip me and I would drop everything and it would go all over the floor.

[00:03:23.28] And... her dad would walk in and he'd [*baby screams loudly*] raise his hand and slap me and I'd just fall to the floor and just cover my face because I was afraid...

[00:03:35.22] And... it was... I was scared and he just said, he laughed at me and said just pick it up and get out of my face...So I did as I was told and went to my room after...

[00:03:48.12] And... I remember at night I was always terrified... I would... either get locked in my room because they were afraid I'd run away... or if they didn't feel like locking it that night they tied a rope around the door knob to another door so I couldn't open it.

[00:04:11.26] I remember just hiding in my closet every time I heard footsteps near my door... And... I... I joke with people now-a-days because I'm a vegetarian, and I, I can't look at meat without getting sick... but what I really don't tell people is that...they were hunters, that's all they every did. [*baby cries*] They lived in the woods, I mean it's deer meat all around you... but for my punishment for failing one of my classes in first grade was that I was tied to a chair in the basement and I had to watch them skin a deer for my punishment... and I can't... I can't... look at any meat again without thinking of that day...

[00:04:58.20] I... I can't even...[*baby cries*]...I can't even watch a Disney movie, Bambi, without freaking out... because I get so scared...

I remember just going to school crying because it was time to go home and I didn't wanna go. And there was nothing my teachers could do. It was my word against theirs, and they out numbered me.



[00:05:28.01] I remember... once day I went home because I had told my teacher about the deer and they had gotten so mad... my... my foster mother at the time... brought me back to the garage... and she took out a knife and just cut my back over and over again. And she just laughed... And now the way I deal with my pain is just that... I turned her actions into mine because that's how I grew up learning... that's how I grew up dealing with the things that they did...

[00:06:13.27] I remember I was terrified to take a bath everywhere I went... no matter what foster home I was in. Just because, at night she would run the water as hot as she could... because she thought that it wasn't my skin colour, it was just dirt and she could get rid of it.

I remember just crying because it was so hot.... And I just wanted to get out of there as fast as I could but she wouldn't let me... She just said because I was so little I needed help and that she was the only person who could do it. And to this day I still won't take a bath. All I can do is take a shower... And even that I can't be in there for more than twenty minutes.

[00:07:09.25] I do believe that it was right that I did not live with my mother... Even to this day that I know her, I know that it was not an okay decision for me to be there anyways... but I honestly don't believe that it was a good idea that I was there...and I just... I feel like no matter who I told, the world was against me.

[00:07:37.22] I just remember being 4 years old and praying that God would just give me wings already and that I was done... no 4 year old is supposed to say that, no 4 year old is supposed to want to die because she'd rather do that than be with another family...

[00:08:10.20] I do know that... when I turned 18 I had asked... I had asked my caseworker that following year why I finally left that home... and the only answer he could give me was because I felt like I didn't fit in and that I didn't belong there... But I know very well that that was not a legitimate reason... but that is just what everybody wanted me to know, and what they wanted me to believe...

(Pause)

[00:08:44.24] I'm done....

SWH (Sandy White Hawk): Thank you Tyneshia.

Others: Thank you Tyneshia... you did good.

[END OF RECORDING]