

Input for SR VAW's Report on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls.

My name is Bryanna R. Brown. I am Inuk and Mi'kmaw from Nunatsiavut, Labrador. I am 24 years old. At 18 years old I was hit by a vehicle which has caused me to become vulnerable to many human rights abuses from colonial institutions and settlers as well. At 20 years old I became a survivor of human trafficking. I was living in Toronto, Ontario where I was renting a bedroom near York University. The university did not have space for residence until one week after classes started, but I was already living in a bedroom of an infested home on 369 Assiniboine Road where I was harassed by my landlord. I was struggling with unknown injuries from being hit by a vehicle. Initially when I was hit by the vehicle, I was not taken seriously upon arriving to the Emergency Room of the St. John's Hospital in Newfoundland. I had trouble in following visits as I was yelled at by doctors and had not been assessed because they assumed I was either drunk or high. I was walking imbalanced because the car hit me when I was crossing the street and it caused my hip to have bursitis. I was severely injured in my jaw causing trouble with my breathing and I also had a severe concussion. I was dizzy because of the trouble breathing so I suppose I appeared intoxicated to the medical staff upon several visits spanned a couple of weeks. This caused displacement as I could not receive doctors' notes for my university classes to gain accommodations for my new disabilities. This caused trouble in completing my courses. I was given accommodations by the Memorial University of Newfoundland's Blundon Centre however, my professor in my LAW 3300 Human Rights Law refused to read my medically deferred final paper worth 30% and failing me by one percent. I was really sick at the time and healing from my physical injuries as well as psychological ones from the experience of human trafficking.

At 19 years old the Nunatsiavut Government of which I have been a member and beneficiary since birth had told me that I was no longer Inuit. They questioned my family tree and wanted to kick me out. I was really concerned about going to university at this time because the Nunatsiavut Government were funding my school at the time and working was really hard for me to do because of my injuries from the pedestrian-vehicle accident. I did not have support from my parents as there was internal issues concerning intergenerational trauma that strained many familial relationships for me and as a result, isolated me further as well (isolation is one of the main factors contributing to the national crisis that is Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S)).

When I was human trafficked in Toronto in November and December 2017 my case was brought to the attention of the police. It was taken on by the Toronto Major Crimes Unit, Division 52. After what I had experienced the victim services told me that I should leave the province of Ontario and go back to Newfoundland where I had originally moved to from Labrador to complete my Bachelor of Business Administration degree at 18. I felt that the Victim Services did not help very much and I felt re-victimized. The Victim Services Worker I had in Peterborough, ON was not careful with the confidentiality of my case or the sensitive nature of the case as she disclosed information about the human trafficking situation in a very busy public café. When I was hit by a vehicle I got a personal injury lawyer at Roebothan, McKay, and Marshall. I felt my lawyer was more in favour of helping the taxi company's insurance than myself as the insurance representative and the lawyer asked me how I got hit in an intimidating way together. I reached out to the lawyer to discuss the difficulties I had in accessing healthcare, but he did nothing to advocate for me in that vulnerable time. My injuries continued to get worse until I could not work or go to school. For this reason, I moved from St. John's, Newfoundland to Calgary, Alberta where I thought I could access less discriminatory healthcare in April 2019. I was able to

see an orthodontist when I was in Calgary who referred me to an oral surgery office where I was assessed and scheduled to get an emergency oral surgery to remove an infected bolt in my jaw. I also lived in a house in Calgary that was infested with rats where the landlord did not place flooring on the perimeter of each room in the second level apartment. The neighbors who lived underneath my roommate and I was extremely hostile and angry because they could hear us in the overhead apartment. The floors/the neighbors ceiling was not insulated and the perimeters of the rooms of the apartment were literal holes that went down into the next apartment.

Eventually we had to move out due to experiencing racism from the downstairs neighbors, and unsafe, unsanitary living condition. I told an anti-human trafficking organization's representative at RESET Calgary what was happening. I was inquiring to see if they had any professional development courses available. I was then asked to be a house mother for homes where there are survivors of human trafficking. I then became a house mother, but I felt coerced to do so. I was told that the house mothers would receive 'petty cash' of about \$100 each month to pay for cleaning supplies and extra things the house may need like toilet paper, but when I became a house mother I was expected to spend my own money. The people at this organization were not accepting of my culture as an Indigenous person and were more interested in asserting Christianity. The women in the house were detoxing from various substances and meth, but I was never exposed to any of this nor did I ever try any drugs. I felt exploited by RESET Calgary. I was yelled at by other house mothers and staff. I was also talked about behind my back often by them. This caused me to want to move out after two months of living there where I became vulnerable to another predatory male. I moved out and got a roommate in an apartment where the male told me that he was gay and would like to live with someone who is accepting of them. I thought it would be safe to live together, but police were called on September 2 because the roommate threatened to 'lose his temper' on me while locking me in a bedroom. I then lived in the Awo Taan Lodge for Indigenous women fleeing violence. I was living there for 12 days and being stalked heavily by the past roommate. The workers at the shelter were scared for my safety and encouraged me to leave the city because the stalking did not stop, and the police did not lay any charges. I then decided to move to Ottawa, Ontario where I made arrangements to live at Tewegan, a transition house for Indigenous women. I was told by staff there that I bring violence on myself because I do not act white enough. It was very traumatizing to be living in a house with workers like that. I brought this to the attention of the executive director, but she was best friends with the worker who said that to me. When I moved to Ottawa on September 12 2019 due to the stalking in Calgary, I scheduled another emergency surgery for my jaw, because I was not able to stay in Calgary long enough to get the surgery that was scheduled for October. This caused me to get the surgery on December 3, 2019 in Ottawa at Argyle Associates.

Later in May 2020 when I was living on my own away from Tewegan, I was living alone through the pandemic. I was approached by a man who later became very violent towards me. As a result, he went to jail in August 2020 and was charged with four charges:

1. Harassment by repeatedly following a person
2. Harassment by communication with a person
3. Harassment by threatening conduct to other person
4. Harassment by watching a besetting.

The man who did this is well known for doing this to women. I have been summoned by the court to be a witness to his trial on February 2, and February 3 this year, 2022. I was being groomed to potentially

be human trafficked through indentured servitude as I was fraudulently put on a car loan for a 2019 Dodge Charger that the abuser registered in his name. Richard Dunwoody at Project Recover had help from his lawyer to identify it was a fraudulent car loan approved by TD Bank. Richard was able to consult with TD Bank to have my name taken off of the car loan as he was the person who had created TD Bank's policies a few years prior. I was coerced into almost marrying this man. He was violent. I was told by him that he was a financial advisor at the Royal Bank of Canada. The Ottawa Police identified that he was not.

When I showed up for protests in Ottawa as a Land Defender with other Indigenous groups I was met with snipers pointed at peaceful us protesters. It was frightening.

I am really tired of being treated this way in Canada as an Indigenous woman. I have since been working on improving my life through creating workshops on the topics of anti-human trafficking, and climate regeneration. A more specific workshop that I have available is called Self-Empowerment Through Climate Regeneration, Reclamation of Self-Sovereignty, and Healing from Human Trafficking Through an Indigenous Lens. This workshop includes information touching on: personal experience of navigating various human rights violations that has caused vulnerability to human trafficking experiences, and how these experiences were used to expand my knowledge on human rights law, health studies, traditional knowledge, as well as business consultation to eliminate violence in my life and reduce human trafficking in surrounding communities. If you know of anyone who may be interested in contacting me regarding this workshop please let me know. Thank you for your time.

Here is some further, more positive information about myself:

Bryanna Brown is Inuk and Mi'kmaq from Nunatsiavut, Labrador. She is the originator of the "Land Back Movement" to advocate for sovereignty in Indigenous peoples, as well as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities, and to promote land ownership and reclamation as a means of environmental protection, and self-determination. Bryanna is a traditional storyteller and knowledge keeper. Bryanna is a professional public speaker who has held speaking engagements across Canada and internationally. She is on *Indigenous Climate Action's* National Steering Committee and Climate Policy Advisory Council. Bryanna has completed the Indigenous Community Support Worker diploma program with Willis College and works as a support to communities in various capacities. Bryanna is honoured to currently be working with Keepers of the Circle, and the Climate Emergency Unit with the David Suzuki Foundation to establish a Just Transition campaign in Newfoundland and Labrador. She is a business consultant working in anti-human trafficking as well as climate regeneration to protect the land and Indigenous communities with previous and present experience working with universities across Canada, healthcare facilities, Indigenous NGOs, Black and Indigenous grassroots organizations, and international climate and policy organizations. She advocates for the rights of women, Indigenous Peoples, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), environmental injustice in relation to MMIWG and persons with disabilities (as someone with lived experience), with efforts to change public policy in order to reduce harm to Indigenous, BIPOC communities and the land.

Sincerely,

Bryanna R. Brown

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