

## Forced Adoption

I've been told I was born on December 2nd, but who knows? There's a lot of uncertainty and many 'facts' are hidden from the child when the government takes them from their mother. I was eventually 'bought' by a good catholic family as most were and with dreadful allergies and eczema tied to my cot hands and feet, splayed, for years with a bottle propped in my mouth. I was told nothing of my heritage and 'unknown' is not an option on govt forms, including the census. Yet I can't get some medication on PBS without claiming a certain 'heritage'?

Eventually I got old enough to go to school, my nose bleeding from where mum rubbed it into the wet sheets when I wet the bed from asthma. The visits from Child Welfare 4 times a year never happened, not one visit in my whole life. The government never cared. I was sent to boarding school Kellerberrin Preventorium in grade 2 with 'failure to thrive' physically. Top of the class mentally but with my allergies and adults unwilling to serve alternative foods I mostly went hungry. [REDACTED] described me as looking from 'Belsen Bergen Camp'.

Kellerberrin Prev was a 'hoot', the nuns would fiddle with your undies at 4am and if they were wet (from bedwetting) then the marble sized rosary beads would come down heavily on your back to wake you up, I still can't sleep past 4am. Yes, this fine establishment is on the 'Redress Scheme' but for me to lay prostrate and beg before the catholic church and govt that caused my mental fragility is not in my own best interest.

One of my allergies (anaphylaxis) is eggs, sometimes the nuns would serve boiled egg for breakfast, egg sandwich for lunch and an omelette for dinner to 'starve' the allergies out of me. After the 4am wakening I had to wash and 'mangle' my bedding before mass and was not allowed clean undies so I'd go to

school stinking of piss. My only respite was the hospital when the asthma got to cyanotic stage. Kununoppin and Kellerberrin Hospitals always tried their hardest to put some weight on me, gave me meals I wasn't allergic to, snacks on demand almost. They were a highlight of my childhood. I saw my parents 3 times a year on holidays (there were only 3 school terms back then) and my 'mother' also refused to serve alternative foods to those I was allergic to..

I could rattle on and on, but the damage is done. I have been diagnosed with PTSD and had a nervous breakdown when a lifetime of hypervigilance and living in fear and neglect became too much. My health suffered even further and I was found unfit for work, and now am on a disability pension on which I struggle to provide for myself. I was then made homeless due to the Public Trustee (govt) . Thankfully a community group housed me after 6 months of rough sleeping, though it is far from my family and support. Being evicted by the Public Trustee was my final blow from the government, they can't do any more than remove me from my mother and then put me on the streets. They'd already ignored my adopted father who fought in WW2 and got trench foot and malaria. I'm appalled at how low they went for the sake of \$8k from my sister's Estate. I can't afford the therapy I need and sometimes can't afford the medications I require and I most certainly can't afford the meat my dietician recommends.

How could the government help make life easier? Fuel/vehicle and parking vouchers for frequent medical needs which include a dietician (still underweight), hepatology, respiratory, gastroenterology, access to therapy (counselling, swimming pool, physio, pottery, art etc). I've gone broke on paying for psychology and trying to go back to work, I'd appreciate travel allowances and access to continued support as I believe the need now is ongoing. I'd appreciate being housed closer to family and support that can assist me to live independently but with ongoing support.

Unsupported adoption was an unforgivable path for the govt to go down when we

children (already one of the victims) are further alienated by not knowing our roots, not being individually assessed so our needs can be met and never once being followed up on or checked on. It's not too late to help make a difference to some of our lives, though unfortunately slow action may see many more fall before help arrives.