

#### PROTOCOL 4

#### VERBATIM DESCRIPTION - JEFF (SON OF DECEASED)

**RESEARCHER:** I would like you to tell me about the experience of having your father disappear and his subsequent death in detention or prison. Tell me what happened, how it affected you and what you felt during and after the incident.

**JEFF:** For the first nine years of my life I never knew my father. I never questioned his whereabouts or why I did not have one. This is because I lived with a big family in the same house, for example, five uncles, two grandparents and my mother.

It was only in some time April 1989, I was approached by my fathers' family, including his mother to take a picture for the Herald Newspaper, then I realized what happened to my father. At first I was filled with confusions, people expecting some sort of emotion and I keeping my anger, to think, how someone could do such a thing and I was experiencing it at hand (personally), the loss of my father.

**RESEARCHER:** Which thing are you talking about?

**JEFF:** I mean, the death of my father at the hands of those who abducted him.

**RESEARCHER:** What happened then?

**JEFF:** I received sympathy from fellow primary school mates and teachers, not that I was in a state of such anger that it needed to be sympathized. After that, as time passed I began to think less of what happened, until I was told to prepare for the TRC at the age of sixteen to seventeen years (in 1996). Remaining anger was calmed and rationalized after seeing a school counsellor (psychologist). I was taught that feelings are a result of what I thought and thus the main issue was understanding what happened to my father.

At the first TRC hearings of my father, in Durban 1996, I saw people who were involved in the death of my father (Mr Skeels and others). I felt some rage inside of me that I couldn't and wouldn't act on. I once had tested myself to imagine what it would be like if I made an outburst in a public place and the thought felt uncomfortable and unusual for me, so I remained calm throughout the hearing.

I was again called to go to the final hearing (of my fathers' case) in Cape Town, early in February this year. I felt more at ease and relaxed, but a bit frustrated to how the hearings went. Repetition of incidents and questions and denials were really irritating, especially after Mr Skeels confessed his acts and those of his colleagues. I was expecting this hearing to be of the applicants to admit their crimes and ask for forgiveness which is the idea of applying for amnesty with the TRC. The hearing was continued for a week from Monday to Friday, increasing the frustration.

I am not angry with anyone but only upset with their deeds and their denials. I personally believe everyone is the same, and the only difference is in the way that they're brought up (or grow up).

**RESEARCHER:** Could you tell me or explain about whose deeds and denials?

**JEFF:** Oh! I mean the people who abducted and later killed my father.

**RESEARCHER:** Okay, go on.

**JEFF:** And for not questioning the absence of a father in the first nine years of my life, I believe is due to living with a large family and the issue of my father not being brought up. Another important thing is that I don't ever recall us using titles for each other, but called each other by name, unless, of course you just come from initiation and would receive title "Buti", otherwise we called each other on a first name basis.

Only time I have thought of my father is being in other friends' homes and when seen with my father's brother, being asked if he was my father, otherwise I never thought much of having a father until 1989.

'So the way I was brought up never allowed space for anger or hate' only sympathy to family members who knew him personally.

#### NATURAL MEANING UNITS

- 1 For the first nine years I never knew my father as I lived with my grandparents, my mother and five uncles. I never questioned his whereabouts nor why I did not have one.
- 2 It was only in April 1989 that my fathers' family asked me to take a photo with them.
- 3 When this photo was published for the Herald Newspaper, it is then I realized what happened to my father.
- 4 At first I was filled with confusions, people expecting some sort of emotion and I, keeping my anger, to think how someone could do such a thing and I was experiencing it at hand (personally), the loss of my father.
- 5 I received sympathy from fellow primary school mates and teachers, not that I was in a state of such anger that needed to be sympathized.
- 6 After then, as time passed I began to think less about what happened until I was told to prepare for the TRC at the age of sixteen to seventeen years.
- 7 Remaining anger was calmed and rationalized after seeing a school counsellor (psychologist) I was taught feelings are as a result of what I thought and thus the main issue was under-standing what happened to my father.
- 8 At the first TRC hearings of my father, I saw people who were involved in the death of my father (Mr X and others).

#### ESSENTIAL THEMES

- Jeff stayed with maternal grandparents in an extended family system for example with five uncles and his mother. He never questioned the absence of a father.
- Jeff was asked to take a photo with his paternal family.
- Jeff was introduced to the information about his father's death via the newspaper article.
- Jeff became confused, as people expected him to show his emotions while he suppressed his anger. He wondered how one could do such a thing as he was experiencing the loss of his father.
- Jeff's school mates and teachers supported him though he was not in a state of anger that needed sympathy.
- With the passage of time Jeff thought less of what had happened until he was informed about his preparation for the TRC hearings.
- The school counsellor helped Jeff to rationalize his anger and to be calm about it and in this way he was made to understand about the origin of his feelings and to focus on understanding his father's death.
- For the first time Jeff met the people who were involved in his father's death.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

- 9 I felt rage inside of me that I couldn't act on and wouldn't act on. I once had tested myself to imagine what it would be like if I made an outburst in a public place, and the thoughts felt uncomfortable and unusual for me, so I remained calm throughout the hearing.
- 10 I was again called to the final hearing of my father's case. I felt more at ease and relaxed but a bit frustrated to how the hearings went
- 11 Repetition of incidents and questions and denials were imitating especially after Mr Skeels confused his acts and those of his colleagues. I was expecting this hearing to be of the applicants to admit their crimes and ask for forgiveness which is the idea of applying for amnesty with the TRC.
- 12 The hearing was continued for a week from Monday to Friday, increasing the frustration.
- 13 I am not angry with anyone but only upset with their deeds and their denials.
- 14 I personally believe that everyone is the same and the only difference is in the way that they are brought up (or grow up).
- 15 And for not questioning the absence of a father in the first nine years of my life, I believe is due to living with a large family and the issue of my father not being brought up.
- 16 Another important thing, is that I don't even recall us using titles for each other, but called each other by name, unless of course you just come from initiation and would receive title 'Buti', otherwise we called each other on a first name basis.
- 17 Only time I have thought of my father is being in other friends' homes and when seen with my father's brother, being asked if he was my father, otherwise I never thought much of having a father until 1989.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

- Jeff controlled the rage he experienced during the hearing by using imaginary techniques, thus remaining relaxed and comfortable throughout the hearing.
- During the final hearing, though he felt at ease and relaxed Jeff was frustrated about the manner in which the hearing proceeded.
- Jeff was irritated by the applicant's denials as he expected them to speak the truth about their crimes and to ask for forgiveness in order to qualify for amnesty.
- Jeff's level of frustration was increased by the lengthy duration of the hearing.
- Jeff does not have feelings of anger towards applicants but he is upset at what they did and denied.
- Jeff believes that people are the same but differ in the manner of their upbringing.
- Jeff believes that his unquestioning attitude with regards to his father was influenced by his family system as it was an issue that was not discussed.
- Jeff recalls that they used first names to address each other at home instead of titles (Mr, Ms, etc) unless one had undergone circumcision when he would be referred to as 'Buti' (big brother).
- Jeff is reminded about his father when he is visited by his uncle as questions are raised about their relationship. He never thought about not having a father until 1989.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

18 So, the way I was brought up never allowed space for anger or hate only sympathy to family members who knew him personally.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

Jeff does not harbour any feelings of hate or anger due to his upbringing but feels sorry for family members who had a relationship with his father.

**MARLENA - JEFF'S MOTHER**

**VERBATIM DESCRIPTION**

**RESEARCHER:** I want you to tell me about the experience of having your boyfriend disappear and his subsequent death in prison. Tell me what happened, how it affected you and what you felt during and after the incident.

**MARLENA:** May be let me start by explaining to you how I got to know Jeff's father. Our families were family friends so we grew up together and we even played together as children. When we were older we went our different ways as we studied in different boarding institutions. In 1978 our friendship became intense and we went to the same university where we began dating. I fell pregnant with Jeff and gave birth to him in 1980. When I returned to the University there was an unrest situation as students were boycotting classes. Jeff's father and some of his friends were arrested as they were identified as student leaders who were involved in this boycott. When they were released they were remanded to appear in court at a later date and the authorities at school decided to close the institution for the whole year. During this time while appearing in court on and off for this case, he would come to my house, help in caring for Jeff and play with him. Our relationship as lovers was over but we were friends with a child, so we had an understanding about Jeff.

On returning home one day, from my typing lessons, I discovered that Jeff's father had stopped by, played with Jeff and waited for me. I returned late that day, so he left before I could arrive, but when I got the message I didn't think much about this as I knew that he would come again. After two days I was told by one of his friends that, he had skipped the country. This was odd. What about our child?, I thought. Why, he never hinted this? Also not believing if this was true. After

some weeks, I received a lengthy letter from him explaining things, but this did not make an impact on me. After some time he started phoning me and would talk to Jeff as well but wouldn't tell us where he was. I understood as the security policy would also make trouble for me if they knew this.

There is this particular day when he called again, talked to Jeff first, and then myself. For some reason I didn't want him to put the phone down, I didn't want him to say good-bye and he kept promising that he was going to phone again. The conversation was abruptly ended, as if the phone is interrupted and it was just dead. I waited, not knowing what happened, thinking that he's going to call again but nothing. That was the last day I spoke to him, and remember!, by this time I was so used to receive his calls that I missed them a lot. I missed him too.

**RESEARCHER:** What happened then?

**MARLENA:** After this, rumours were circulated about him that he was an 'impimpi' (informer). Most of his friends shunned me now. I was uncomfortable, worried about this, as during those days to say this word 'impimpi' about people was just enough to cause people to be burnt or their homes to be petrol bombed. I feared for my parents, Jeff and myself.

His father (grandfather-paternal to Jeff) enquired about Jeff's father's disappearance but the security police agreed that they had arrested but had later released him. During this time, I had gone back to study further at university and my parents were caring for Jeff.

In 1991 a certain Mr Skeels from the security police came with the information regarding hit squads and revealed what happened to apartheid victims including Jeff's father, my ex-boyfriend. Jeff's paternal grandparents came to my house and asked permission from my parents to take a photo with Jeff. This photo with an article detailing what happened to Jeff's father appeared in the local newspaper. When I heard this, I phoned home to ask my parents to conceal this information

in the paper from Jeff.

**RESEARCHER:** Why?

**MARLENA:** Because we as a family, had never informed Jeff of his father as he called my father, 'Daddy'. My phone was late<sup>1</sup>, as he had heard from his friends at school asking what was he doing in the paper. He responded to them, that it was not him but his cousin, but the real matter is that he got to know about his father for the first time.

**RESEARCHER:** Go on.

**MARLENA:** I noticed a change in Jeff. When I got home for holidays, he's normally a quiet person but he was awfully quiet and morosed. After we chatted about those events, difficult as it was to explain to him all this, he suffered from meningitis and was hospitalized. I thought that this was caused by stress raised by the whole issue. Things quietened down until 1996 and he was in Standard 8 now.

We heard about the TRC process as Jeff's paternal grandmother was interviewed over the Radio Xhosa news about her missing son (Jeff's father). As we listened, she quoted Jeff, as her grandson who has to accompany or to be present in the TRC hearings. I did not like this as she (paternal grandmother) did not consult with my family about this but we decided that we would all go to the hearings. I noticed that Jeff became awfully quiet again, would lock himself in his room and complained of being awake most of the nights. I phoned his school and he was referred to a school counsellor. His principal was considerate and gave me supporting words.

We went to the TRC hearings sitting both in Durban and Port Elizabeth. There was a lot of irritating and painful information but the denials of how Jeff's father was abducted was frustrating. They (the security police

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The phone call was made too late as the information had already been given to the child



applicants) lied about what they did with his remains after they had burnt him. I think Jeff handled these very well as he refused counselling on site stating that he had his own shrink. He passed Std 8 at the end of that year. I was happy with his progress as I am striving for his education since his father is no more.

The final amnesty hearing was in Cape Town and we listened to applicants' testimony. This made me to be depressed. I consulted a psychologist who helped me to come to terms with the loss. I had feelings that Jeff's father had also betrayed me by dying as I wanted him to be there for his son. My son needed a role model as his uncles (brothers to Jeff's father) are staying in a town far away from us. Now Jeff, has to go to an initiation school and his paternal family would play a big role in his make up. His paternal grandmother also keeps on promising that he will send him this and that but at the end never does.

One thing that scares me about this whole thing is that Jeff does not share much of his feelings with me as his mother and I am in an awkward position as I don't know how to get through to him. Right now I'm doing all I can to deal with the situation, and I pray all the time that I don't fail him. In the last hearing in Cape Town, I encouraged him to talk to his fathers' abductors, Mr Skeels and others, and he agreed, so I told him to say what he wants to say, and what he feels inside him. I think that the whole situation has helped him to grow as a person.

I guess I am doing fine, to try to live my life but providing for what I can until he is independent. We are trying to put all things behind us, accepting that we will never see Jeff's father again, as we see him in pictures only of the albums we keep. We can look at the past happenings and analyse what happened. Even talking to you today in this conversation has helped me to do just that.

**RESEARCHER:**

I want you to tell me about the experience of having your boyfriend disappear and his subsequent death in prison. Tell me what happened, how it affected you and what you felt during and after the incident.



**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

- 1 May be let me start by explaining to you how I got to know Jeff's father. Our families were family friends so we grew up together and we even played together as children. When we were older we went our different ways as we studied in different boarding institutions. In 1978 our friendship became intense and we went to the same university where we began dating.
- 2 I fell pregnant with Jeff and gave birth to him in 1980.
- 3 When I returned to the University there was an unrest situation as students were boycotting classes. Jeff's father and some of his friends were arrested as they were identified as student leaders who were involved in the boycott.
- 4 When they were released, they were remanded to appear in court at a later date and the authorities at school decided to close the institution for the whole year.
- 5 During this time while appearing in court on and off for this case, he would come to my house, help in caring for Jeff and play with him. Our relationship as lovers was over but we were friends with a child, so we had an understanding about Jeff.
- 6 On returning home one day, from my typing lessons, I discovered Jeff's father had stopped by, played with Jeff and waited for me. I returned late that day, so he left before I could arrive, but when I got the message I didn't think much about this as I knew that he would come again.
- 7 After two days, I was told by one of his friends that he had skipped the country. This was odd! What about our child? I thought, why he never hinted this? Also not believing if this was true.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

- Marlena fell pregnant from this relationship and delivered Jeff in 1980.
- On returning to the university, Marlena finds an unrest situation as students had boycotted classes. Jeff's father together with his friends, were identified as students leaders and arrested.
- Jeff's father and his friends were released but remanded to appear in court at a later date but the authorities decided to close the institution for a year.
- According to Marlena, Jeff's father and friends were remanded to appear in court and lost the whole year of schooling as the institution was closed.
- Although, according to Marlena, her relationship with Jeff's father was over, they had an understanding with regards to Jeff's care, so Jeff's father was available to help babysit in between his trials.
- On returning late from the typing lessons, Marlena finds that Jeff's father had visited, played with Jeff but Marlena was not worried by him leaving before she could reach home as she hoped he would visit again.
- Marlena is informed after two days that Jeff's father has left the country and she registers anxiety about this act, doubting if there was truth in it, while wondering at the reason of Jeff's father keeping it a secret from her.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

- 8 After some weeks, I received a lengthy letter from him explaining things, but this did not make an impact on me. After some time, he started phoning me and would talk to Jeff as well but wouldn't tell us where he was. I understood as the security police would also make trouble for me if they knew this.
- 9 There is this particular day when he called again, talked to Jeff first and then myself. For some reason, I didn't want him to put the phone down. I didn't want him to say 'good-bye' and he kept promising that he was going to phone again.
- 10 The conversation was abruptly ended, as if the phone is interrupted and it was just dead. I waited, not knowing what happened, thinking that he's going to call again but nothing. That was the last day I spoke to him, and remember!, by this time I was so used to receive his calls that I missed them a lot. I missed him too. (Marlena - emotional, crying).

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

Marlena receives a lengthy letter from Jeff's father explaining his position. Subsequent phone calls followed and the caller would talk to Jeff as well but would not disclose his hideout. Marlena seems to have understood the secrecy as the police would make trouble for the whole family.

When Jeff's father phoned this day, talked to his son, and lastly to Marlena who experienced a need to talk more, not wishing Jeff's father to put the phone down, not wishing him to say 'good-bye'.

Marlena experienced their conversation as being cut off as the telephone became dead. She waited in vain for another call as she became confused about what had happened, not knowing it was the last day they spoke to each other. She states that she missed both those calls and Jeff's father (emotional - crying).

**RESEARCHER:** What happened then?

- 11 After this rumours were circulated about him, that he was an 'impimpi' (informer). Most of his friends shunned me now.
- 12 I was uncomfortable and worried about this, as during those days, to say this word, 'impimpi' people was just enough to cause people to be burnt and their homes to be petrol-bombed. I feared for my parents, Jeff and myself.
- 13 His father (paternal grandfather to Jeff) enquired about Jeff's father's disappearance but the security police agreed that they had arrested but had later released him. During this time I had gone back to study further at university and my parents were caring for Jeff.

Marlena learns about rumours circulated about Jeff's father being an 'impimpi' (informer) resulting in Jeff's father's friends shunning Marlena.

Marlena was uncomfortable and worried about these rumours as people labelled with this name 'impimpi', were burnt to death together with their homes. She lived in anguish of what might happen to her family.

According to Marlena, Jeff's paternal grandfather started enquiries about the disappearance of his son from the security police who were knowledgeable about his arrest but stated to have released him at a later stage. Marlena had returned to school while her family cared for Jeff.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

- 14 In 1991 a certain Mr Skeels from the security police came with the information regarding hit squads and revealed what happened to apartheid victims including Jeff's father, my ex-boyfriend.
- 15 Jeff's paternal grandparents came to my house and asked permission from my parents to take a photo with Jeff. This photo with an article detailing what happened to Jeff's father appeared in the local newspaper. When I heard this, I phoned home to ask my parents to conceal this information in the paper from Jeff.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

Marlena states that in 1991 Mr Skeels from the security police leaked information about hit squads, recounting the events that occurred to apartheid victims and Jeff's fathers' name was included.

Jeff's paternal grandparents asked permission from Marlena's parents to take a photo with Jeff which appeared in a local newspaper a story about Jeff's father disappearance. On hearing this, Marlena asked her parents to conceal this information from Jeff.

**RESEARCHER: Why?**

- 16 Because we as a family, had never informed Jeff of his father as he called my father, 'Daddy'. My phone was late, as he heard from his friends at school asking what was he doing in the paper. He responded to them, that it was not him but his cousin, but the real matter is that he got to know about his father for the first time.
- 17 I noticed a change in Jeff. When I got home for holidays, he's normally a quiet person but he was awfully quiet and morose.
- 18 After we chatted about these events, difficult as it was to explain all this to him, he suffered from meningitis and was hospitalized. I thought that this was caused by stress raised by the whole issue. Things quietened down until 1996 and he was in Std 8 now.
- 19 We heard about the TRC process as Jeff's paternal grandmother was interviewed over the Radio Xhosa news about her missing son (Jeff's father). As we listened, she quoted Jeff, as her grandson who has to accompany or to be present in the TRC hearings.

Marlena agrees that her family, never told Jeff of his father as he referred to his maternal grandfather as 'Daddy'. When she phoned it was too late, as Jeff had already been told by his friends at school about this photo in the paper. He denied it was him but had stated it was his cousin. According to Marlena he heard this information for the first time.

On arrival at home for the vacation, Marlena noticed a change in her son as he seemed to be awfully quiet and morose.

Marlena experienced difficulty in talking to her son about all the events that had happened, after which, Jeff suffered from meningitis which required hospitalization. Marlena attributed this sickness to stress induced by all these events but in 1996 it was a settling time for Jeff.

Marlena and her family heard about the TRC process as Jeff's paternal grandmother was interviewed over the radio news with regards to her son's disappearance. She quoted Jeff as her grandson who she wanted to be present in the TRC hearings.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

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| 20 | I did not like this as she (paternal grandmother) did not consult with my family about this but we decided that we would all go to the hearings.  | Though dissatisfied with paternal grandmother's actions, Marlana felt it necessary to attend the TRC hearings with Jeff.  |
| 21 | I noticed that Jeff became awfully quiet again, would lock himself in his room and complained of being awake most of the nights. I phone his school and he was referred to a school counsellor. His principal was considerate and gave me supporting words.                                     | On observing that Jeff had become withdrawn again, Marlana consulted his school and Jeff was referred to a school counsellor. Marlana found the school principal considerate and supportive.  |
| 22 | We went to the TRC hearings/sittings both in Durban and Port Elizabeth. There was a lot of irritating and painful information but the denials of how Jeff's father was abducted was frustrating. They (the security police) lied about what they did with his remains after they had burnt him. | Marlana's family attended two sittings of the TRC hearings which were irritating, frustrating and painful as Marlana thinks there were denials about Jeff's fathers' abduction. Marlana thinks the police lied about the disposal of Jeff's fathers' remains. |
| 23 | I think Jeff handled these very well as he refused counselling on site stating that he had his own shrink.  | Marlana thinks that her son coped well with these hearings as he objected to the coined-selling services which were offered on site believing in his own counsellor/psychologist.   |
| 24 | He passed Std 8 at end of that year. I was happy with his progress as I am striving for his education since his father is no more.  | Marlana is determined to strive for her son's education and was happy with his progress at school during that year as he passed Std 8.  |
| 25 | The final amnesty hearing was in Cape Town and we listened to applicants' testimony. This made me to be depressed. I consulted a psychologist who helped me to come to terms with the loss.   | According to Marlana the final amnesty hearing resulted in her experiencing depression which was relieved by a therapeutic intervention by a psychologist who helped Marlana to accept her loss.  |
| 26 | I had feelings that Jeff's father had also betrayed me by dying as I wanted him to be there for his son. My son needed a role model as his uncles (brothers to Jeff's fathers) are staying in a town far away from us.  | Marlana also experienced feelings of being betrayed by Jeff's fathers' death as she needed a role model for his son.  |
| 27 | Now Jeff, had to go to an initiation school and his paternal family would play a big role in his make up. His paternal grandmother also keeps promising she will send him this and that but never does anything at the end.   | Marlana is concerned about imminence Jeff's rites of passage which would be meaningful for him if his fathers' family would participate. She seems not to be convinced by Jeff's paternal grandmother's promises which are never fulfilled.                   |

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

28 One thing that scares me about this whole thing is that Jeff does not share much of his feelings with me as his mother and I'm in an awkward position as I don't know how to get through to him.

Marlena raises her fears about her son's lack of self-disclosure to her as a mother because this prevents her from reaching out to him.

29 Right now, I'm doing all I can to deal with the situation and I pray all the time that I don't fail him.

Marlena states that she tries to deal with this situation but can only pray that she does not fail her son.

30 In the last hearing in Cape Town, I encouraged him to talk to his father's abductors, Mr Skeels and others, and he agreed. So, I told him to say what he wants to say and what he feels inside him. I think that the whole situation has helped him to grow as a person.

Marlena encouraged her son to talk to his fathers' abductors during the last TRC hearing session, persuading him to state what he wanted or felt from within. She hopes that this whole situation has led to Jeff's personality growth.

31 I guess I am doing fine, to try to live my life but providing for what I can, until he is independent. We are trying to put all things behind us, accepting that we will never see Jeff's father again as we see him in pictures only of the albums we keep. We can look at the past happenings and see what happened. Even talking to you in this conversation has helped me to do just that.

Marlena thinks she is going on with her life while providing for her son until he is independent. She states her wish to put all that has happened in the past but accepts the reality of Jeff's father absence for good, though reminded of him in the pictures she keeps. She testifies to the importance of the analyses of past happenings. She sees the interview as a medium of revisiting the past.

**VERBATIM DESCRIPTION**

**(BETTY - GRANDMOTHER PATERNAL TO JEFF)**

**RESEARCHER:** I would like you to tell me about the experience of having your son disappear and his subsequent death in prison. Tell me what happened, how it affected you, and what you felt during and after the incident.

**BETTY:** I knew my son was involved in politics at school. He used to be amongst the student leaders when doing a law degree, who were arrested at one time at university. He was released and had a trial that went on for a long time as he was accused of inciting other students. He was expelled at the university, and the same year the whole university closed for a year, so he came back to stay at home. I used to talk to him to stop all this as it would hamper him in finishing his degree.

He escaped because he was harassed by the police. He was supposed to go for a trial, maybe he knew that he was going to get a heavy sentence. He went to Maseru and while there had a problem with his girlfriend. According to the story he wanted the girlfriend to go to Maseru. He got a car from Vic so that he could go and phone his girlfriend. According to the story, the telephone at Maseru were not working and he decided to go to the border gates to phone, that is where he was arrested. Perhaps because he was driving Vic's car, I think, the security police thought that he was Vic. I understand that he was close to Vic. He used to look after Vic's house when he was away.

I did not know that he was arrested. I used to phone him but all of a sudden he was nowhere to be found. I phoned his father (my ex-husband) to enquire about him. He told me that they were busy tracing my son's matter (his son as well). All in all he told me that my son was missing. I never thought that he had been arrested. I thought that he might have gone to another country. His father wrote to the Commissioner of Police concerning my son's disappearance. The police commissioner told him that my son, Wally, was arrested but was later released. He told him (Wally's father) that Wally was arrested from July until August of that year. The police said that they released him, where he went they did not know. I, the mother, claimed that after his release I never saw him.

Wally's story was confusing, the liberation movement or organisation said that his father must pay for the organisation's car since Wally stole it. When I got to Maseru in a house where I used to stay, to look for Wally, my son, the people of that house told me to leave Maseru immediately. Organisation members told me they knew where Wally was. Others claimed that Wally was not kidnapped by the boers, as the boers could not get into Maseru. To me this was surprising because the boers did get into Maseru and kidnapped people. They said that Wally was kidnapped in the outskirts of Maseru, not in Maseru. I used to pray day in and night asking God to reveal the whereabouts of my son. We were even alienated by the liberation movement he was fighting for, it



was difficult to attend meetings.

I used to read each and every newspaper hoping to get clues about what might have happened to my son. Police would come to my home and my in-laws' home to look for him.

It is only after nine years that there was a clue which was denied by the police when the security police Mr Skeels revealed what happened to my son and others as he claimed responsibility for abducting and killing him. The whole story was in the newspapers and my sisters brought the New Nation newspaper to me which contained the whole story, how he was abducted, killed and his body burnt. That is how I got the information.

**RESEARCHER:** What was your reaction to this news?

**BETTY:** I was confused not knowing how to mourn appropriately. I used to wear half-dark clothes, worsened by the fact that the remains of my son were not brought to me. His father wanted us not to talk about this. This was a difficult time, also saddened by the fact that the liberation movement never apologised about the labels they used against my son when they said he was an 'impimpi' (informer or blowing the whistle).

I travelled to the site which Mr Skeels had identified as a place where they killed him and collected some soil which I hope we will bury one day appropriately, to give my son the respect he deserves as he would be proud even today of what he fought for.

The news people took a photograph of my grandson Jeff with the paternal grandparents and wrote stories which were heartbreaking for me as Jeff did not know about his father. This happened before I testified in the TRC as I said something about Jeff's father to an interview over the radio news. Meanwhile, Jeff never knew about his father.



As far as I am concerned, Jeff should be treated by a psychologist. It was necessary before going to the TRC that Jeff should have been told about his father but everything went wrong. During the last TRC Amnesty hearing it was certified that he was Wally's son, and I think each child needs a sense of belonging.

I see no point in the boers killing the children instead of taking them to jail or sending them home. What did they get? There are police who were named in the TRC, I see nothing that is being done by the TRC. The only thing that I like about it, is that we are informed of what happened to our family members. The problem is left with the Amnesty.

As a family we're trying to cope against all odds, for instance one of my children, a sister to Wally, was badly affected by all this matter. She is receiving psychiatric treatment even at present. His brothers miss him as he was the older one who was a role model to them. We will continue to live to cherish what Wally stood for, and I can say though he died painfully but he died a hero, of what he believed in and I am a proud mother as he honoured us by dying such a death.

You do not stop living because one child has died you live for the others, so I have to go on to give support to Wally's siblings. We hope that one day we as a family will bury the soil I picked up from the site where he was killed and we will honour him by building a memorial on his name. He would have loved that, and this will also help us to complete this chapter of our lives.

The other things, not forgiving these security police who killed my son, will not help me, so I've forgiven them although they denied about what they did to the remains of his body, as you know the President of this country preaches this reconciliation daily, so I've forgiven them.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | I know my son was involved in politics at school. He used to be amongst the student leaders when doing a law degree, who were arrested at one time at university.  | Betty explains in detail her son's involvement in political activities at University which resulted in his arrest.   |
| 2 | He was released and had a trial that went on for a long time as he was accused of inciting other students. He was expelled at university and the same year the whole university was closed for a year, so he came back to stay at home. I used to talk to him to stop all this as it would hamper him in finishing his degree.                                 | After his release the trial continued as her son was accused of inciting others resulting in expulsion from the university which later closed its doors for the whole year. Betty discouraged her son from these activities as she feared that he might not complete his degree. |
| 3 | He escaped because he was harassed by the police. He was supposed to go for a trial, maybe he knew that he was going to get a heavy sentence.  | According to Betty her son escaped before his trial due to police harassment, maybe in anticipation of a heavy sentence.   |
| 4 | He went to Maseru and while there had a problem with his girlfriend. According to the story, he wanted his girlfriend to go to Maseru. He got a car from Vic so that he could go and phone his girlfriend. According to the story, the telephones at Maseru were not working and he decided to go to the border gates to phone, that is where he was arrested. | Betty's son escaped to Maseru where he wanted his girlfriend to join him. He received a car from Vic to travel to the telephone centres in Maseru but unfortunately was arrested at the border gates as the telephone in Maseru were not working.                                |
| 5 | Perhaps, because he was driving Vic's car, I think, the security police thought it was Vic. I understand that he was close to Vic. He used to look after Vic's house when he was away.   | Betty thinks that her son was arrested in a case of mistaken identity but understands that he was close to Vic as he would take care of Vic's house while away.  |
| 6 | I did not know that he had been arrested. I used to phone him but all of a sudden he was nowhere to be found.  | Betty seems to have been unaware of her son's arrest.  |
| 7 | I phoned his father to enquire about him. He told me that they were busy tracing my son's matter. All in all he told me that my son was missing.   | To enquire about her son, Betty contacted her son's father who told her that he was tracing him as it was reportedly that he was missing.  |
| 8 | I never thought that he had been arrested. I thought that he might have gone to another country.   | Betty never thought her son was arrested but thought that he had escaped into exile.   |

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

9 His father wrote to the Com-missioner of Police concerning my son's disappearance. The Police Commissioner told him that my son, Wally, was arrested but was later released. He told him (Wally's father) that Wally was arrested from July until August of that year. The police said they released him where he went they did not know. I, as a mother, claimed that after his release I never saw him.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

According to Betty, her son's father enquiries from the Commissioner of Police revealed that he was indeed arrested for 3 months but was later released. The mystery was his whereabouts.

**RESEARCHER:** And then, what happened?

10 Wally's story is confusing, the liberation movement or organisation said his father must pay for the organisation's car since he stole it. When I got to Maseru in a house where I used to stay, to look for Wally, my son, the people of that house told me to leave Maseru immediately. Organisation members told me they knew where Wally was. Others claimed that Wally was not kidnapped by the boers as the boers could not get into Maseru. To me this was confusing as the boers did get into Maseru and kidnapped people. They said that W was kidnapped in the outskirts of Maseru, not in Maseru.

Betty finds Wally's disappearance confusing as in Maseru the liberation organisation demands that his father pays the car he allegedly stole.

The confusing situation is exacerbated by the unwelcoming attitude shown to Betty and by the denials by members of this organisation that Wally could not have been kidnapped by the boers as they could not get into Maseru.

11 I used to pray day in and night asking God to reveal the whereabouts of my son. We were even alienated by the liberation movement he was fighting for, it was difficult to attend meetings.

Betty sought her answers about her missing son from prayers and newspapers as the police seemed to be looking for him too.

I used to read each and every newspaper hoping to get clues about what might have happened to my son. Police would come to my home and my in-laws' home to look for him.

12 It is only after nine years that there was a clue which was denied by the police when the security police Mr Skeels revealed what happened to my son and others as he claimed responsibility for abducting and killing him. The whole story was in the newspapers and my sisters brought the New Nation newspaper to me which contained the whole story, how he was abducted, killed and his body burnt. That is how I got the information.

Betty learns after nine years about her son's abduction when the story is published in the New Nation newspaper, as a certain Mr Skeels from the security police leaks this information. However, the police denied this information.

**RESEARCHER:** What was your re-action to this news?

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

13 I was confused not knowing how to mourn appropriately. I used to wear half-dark clothes, worsened by the fact that the remains of my son were never brought to me. His father wanted us not to talk about this. This was a difficult time, also saddened by the fact that the liberation movement never apologised about the labels they used against my son when they said he was an 'impimpi' (selling out other or blowing the whistle).

14 I travelled to the site which Mr Skeels had identified as a place where they killed him and collected some soil which I hope we will bury one day, appropriately, to give my son the respect he deserves as he would be proud even today of what he fought for.

15 The news people took a photograph of my grandson Jeff with his paternal grandparents and wrote stories which were heartbreaking for me as Jeff did not know about his father. This happened before I testified in the TRC as I said something about Jeff's father on an interview over the radio news. Meanwhile Jeff never knew about his father.

16 As far as I am concerned Jeff should be treated by a psychologist. It was necessary before going to the TRC that Jeff should have been told about his father but everything went wrong. During the last TRC Amnesty hearing it was certified that he was W's son and I think each child needs a sense of belonging.

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

Betty experiences uncertainty about mourning rituals, her father seems to be in denial. The situation is aggravated by the inability of the liberation movement to apologise for the labels attached to her son.

Betty hopes to bury the soil linked to the site of her son's killing and this seems to her an appropriate task that will befit her dead son.

Betty experiences sorrow on learning about the newspaper publishing stories of her grandson who did not know about his father until this incident.

Betty feels that psychological intervention is necessary for Jeff who she feels, had a right to know about his father before the TRC sittings.

**RESEARCHER:** How do you feel about what happened?

17 I see no point in the boers killing the children instead of taking them to jail or sending them home. What did they get? There are police who were named in the TRC, I see nothing that is being done by the TRC. The only thing that I like about it is that we are informed of what happened to our family members. The problem is left with the TRC.

Betty sees that police wasted the lives in killing children instead of bringing charges against them. She experiences ambivalent feelings about the TRC process but she is happy about revelations with regards to their family members.

**NATURAL MEANING UNITS**

**ESSENTIAL THEMES**

- 18 As a family we're trying to cope against all odds, for instance one of my children a sister to Wally, was badly affected by all this matter. She is receiving psychiatric treatment even at present. His brothers miss him as he was the older one who was a role model to them.
  
- 19 We will continue to live to cherish what Wally stood for and I can say though he died painfully but he died a hero of what he believed in and I am a proud mother as he honoured us by dying such a death. You do not stop living because one child has died, you live for the others, so I have to go on to give support to Wally's siblings.
  
- 20 The other thing, not forgiving these security police who killed my son, will not help me, so I've forgiven them though they denied about what they did to the remains of his body, as you know, the President of this country preaches this reconciliation daily, so I've forgiven them.

Betty discloses hardships experienced by the family since this loss.

Betty stresses her will to find sense and meaning in her existence while remembering with pride what her son died for. This to her, seems to be an honour.

Betty forgives the police who killed her son though they denied certain information. Seemingly she is motivated by the action of the President of South Africa who advocates reconciliation.

**SITUATED STRUCTURE**

**JEFF'S FAMILY**

The experiences of the loss of a son by Betty, a son's father by Marlana, and a father from Jeff's point of view is reflected in different ways by this family. Jeff's life is placed in turmoil when he learns about his father for the first time as he has grown up in an extended family system. Jeff becomes confused about his emotions but has a supportive network in his school that helps him to cope with this situation. Jeff becomes part of the story through the public acknowledgement that he had a father and that his father had been killed. It seems that Betty, Jeff's paternal grandmother, who knew about his son's political movements while at law school is confronted with the similar confusion when she travelled to Maseru to look for her son who had disappeared. To her surprise, the liberation organisation accuses her son of stealing a car, which makes her feel alienated and rejected. These feelings becomes worse when they accused him of being an 'informer'. Marlana is also doubtful about the news of Jeff's fathers' disappearance but is reassured by a letter and phone calls which were ended abruptly leaving her in limbo. In her own way she struggles with this pain of separation while having to cope with

labels of Jeff's father as being an informer, which resulted in her being shunned by Jeff's fathers' friends. She lives in anguish of what might happen to her family.

When the news about what became of Jeff's father is leaked in newspapers, the whole family is thrown into a difficult situation. They become unsure of 'mourning processes' as the remains of Jeff's fathers' body were never brought to the fore. Jeff is expected to respond to this news as a person who had a meaningful relationship with his father. He becomes angry about the killing, not so much about the loss of the father he never knew, whose presence is introduced paradoxically through the newspapers which detailed the circumstances surrounding his death. This revelation leads to the TRC process which requires that they all sit and listen to the stories. The reliving of this story becomes painful, they are frustrated and irritated by the denials and the duration of the TRC process. Although Jeff remains angry and describes 'rage inside me' he does not describe the source of the anger as he tries hard not to make a spectacle of himself in the public. Marlina is helped by the psychologist to cope with the side effects of this story which is relived, while Jeff handles this situation well due to Marlina's encouragement for him to continue his therapy sessions with his psychologist. The effect of blaming each other does not escape this family as Jeff's paternal grandmother feels that Jeff had a right to information about his father while Marlina was trying by all means to conceal this from Jeff fearing its consequences.

However, Jeff manages to come through as a better person from this experience because he had the opportunity to articulate his feelings to his father's abductors. While Marlina has fears about her son's guarded self disclosure to her as a mother she is positive about supporting Jeff until he is independent. At times Marlina feels that Jeff's father betrayed her by dying because she wanted him to be a role model for Jeff.

Betty, feels that her son's death was unnecessary as he could have been imprisoned, but she will continue to live in order to support other children. She takes strength from the fact that her son died fighting for what he believed in. As a family they hope to honour him by putting up a memory one day in his name.