



NATIVE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES
AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA



Storytelling: Terrie's Story



For years, communities have pointed to the high numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has been honoured to work with families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls to share the story of their loved one. As part of the storytelling process, families' are also invited to share their experiences with the justice system, media, victim services and other institutional and community supports.

Storytelling is a way of teaching and learning. The stories shared by family members are intended to raise awareness, educate, and promote change. They have been told to honour the daughters, sisters, mothers and grandmothers that have been lost to violence and remember those still missing. This is what their stories tell us.

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The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is honoured to work with families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls to share the story of their loved one. To view all of the stories shared, or for more information this work, please visit NWAC's website at www.nwac.ca.



A Life Cut Short: Terrie Ann Martin- Dauphinais' Story

Terrie Ann Martin-Dauphinais was born in February 21, 1978 in Nelson, BC. She was the second of three girls. “Sherry, Terrie and Kerry,” laughs their mother, Sue Martin. When Sue remarried, Terrie’s family grew to include two step-sisters, Heather and Shauna. Born with a bright, captivating quality, Terrie was a happy and strong infant. She could hold her head up almost from birth and was quickly nicknamed “Bobbie-a-

link” because of the way she bobbed her head. Terrie was baptized in the Catholic Church. She loved animals and carried her blanket with her everywhere.

Terrie was a very inquisitive girl. She had an insatiable desire to *know*, to explore. In their infant and toddler years, Sue took her daughters to play groups, to parks and on picnics. Terrie especially liked arts and crafts and story time. Sue smiles as she recalls dancing with her girls to Janis Joplin and Roy Orbison. Terrie was also mischievous and had a habit of sucking her thumb when she was in trouble. Sue remembers taking Terrie to the park and trying, without success, to keep her little daughter from climbing the trees. “I said, ‘No Bobbie, you can’t do that.’ And Terrie goes, ‘But mom...’ And again I said, ‘No Bobbie you can’t do that.’ Well she put her hands on her hips and goes, ‘I’m leaving home.’ And she went running off!” laughs Sue. “She was such handful! She had to investigate everything. Everything and anything, she had to check it out. She was always running around.”

Terrie was only 22 months old when her sister Sherry passed away. Sherry was born with a heart defect and at nine months underwent surgery to have the hole in her heart closed. At first, everything seemed fine and after months of fear and anxiety Sue was overwhelmed with relief. Her baby was finally healthy. But on November 12, 1979, Sherry suddenly fainted. She was hospitalized, put on a special diet and seemed to improve. Then on December 5, 1979, the very day she was scheduled to be released from the hospital, Sherry went into cardiac arrest and passed away. She was barely three years old. Terrie cherished her older sister and Sherry’s death had a profound effect on her. Almost every morning until she was nine, Terrie would wake and say, “I played with Sherry last night Mom.”

Terrie was a gifted girl with many talents. Sue describes how Terrie could pick up an instrument and within half an hour know how to play it. She earned straight A’s in school. She was an artist and a writer and could speak French. Everything came naturally to her. But Sherry was never far from her thoughts. Terrie’s dream was to become a pediatrician. She told her mother that she wanted to save children, so that no other family would suffer the way her family did when they lost Sherry.

Sue’s first husband, Terrie’s biological father, was an alcoholic. Sue describes him as “a nice

man when he was sober,” but dangerous and abusive when drunk. Sue left him when Terrie was still an infant, about a year after Sherry died. Leaving was not easy. Sue was forced more than once to take the two girls and flee in the middle of the night, praying for the chance to start over. “When her real father found us,” Sue remembers, “Terrie and Kerry were petrified.” She hoped Terrie was too young to remember the violence, and for a long time Sue thought she had forgotten. It was many years before Terrie revealed just how much she did remember, how much anger she had towards her birth father. Sue now recognizes the violence Terrie witnessed had a deep impact on her emotional and mental well-being. “She didn’t feel safe,” says Sue. “She didn’t feel safe again until I married Tony.”

After leaving her first husband Sue lived in Calgary. To support herself, she ran a home day-care. “I didn’t work outside the home until Kerry started school,” says Sue. “My children were my number one priority.” She volunteered at Terrie’s school and busied herself with ferrying her daughters from one extra-curricular activity to another (gymnastics was Terrie’s favorite). Terrie was 4 years old when Sue married Tony Martin. The father-daughter bond between Terrie and Tony was immediate. Tony was Terrie’s ‘Papa Bear’ and she was his Daddy’s girl. Working in sales Tony was compelled to “follow the work” and the family was forced to relocate several times. Growing up, Terrie lived in Calgary, Saskatoon, Medicine Hat, Invermere, the Yukon and Winnipeg.

As a youth Terrie excelled in school. She was active in drama and choir and even won first place in a school science fair. “Her teachers used to say, ‘I wish all my students were like her,’” remembers Sue. Terrie had many special relationships, especially with teachers. She was also close with Sue’s girlfriends, women she could call if she did not feel like talking to her parents. Still, Sue and Tony say that as a teenager Terrie suffered from low self-confidence. They say that although Terrie had many friends, she was also seen as somewhat of a ‘nerd’ because she excelled at school and not did smoke or drink. She was not considered ‘popular’ and received little attention from the boys in her classes. These experiences had an impact. Sue and Tony believe it was low self-esteem that led their daughter to Ken.

Terrie was 14 when she started dating 18 year old Ken. Sue and Tony were immediately concerned. “Ken had actually come to live with us when Terrie was 12,” says Sue. “We got to know Ken and his mother when we were living in Saskatoon. Ken had been getting in trouble, but Tony and I felt that he could be a good kid with some guidance. We decided to try to help him before he completely ruined his life.” But when Terrie announced that she and Ken were dating, Sue and Tony were alarmed. They felt Ken was too old for Terrie and the relationship was inappropriate. “We decided we had to protect our daughter,” says Tony, “so we told Ken he could no longer live with us.” They say that although they asked Ken not to communicate with their daughter, Ken and Terrie remained in constant contact through letters and by phone.

In the spring of 1993, Tony was offered a job in Manitoba and the family prepared to move to Winnipeg. Ken moved to Winnipeg soon after and by the Fall of 1994, Ken and Terrie were together constantly. Sue and Tony say Ken drove Terrie, now 16, to school in the morning and picked her up in the afternoon, isolating her from her friends. Terrie became increasingly moody and rebellious. Around this time, Sue and Tony started to notice bruises on Terrie. Despite their panic, they were scared to do anything that might cause her to pull away more than she already

had. “We just didn’t know what to do,” says Sue. “We were terrified that if we pushed her, she’d run away with Ken and we would lose her completely.”

Sue and Tony struggled to find the best way to help Terrie. As survivors of family violence (Tony also experienced violence as child), Sue and Tony felt the decision to end the relationship had to come from Terrie. She could not be forced. Around the same time, Sue’s sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. She asked Sue to come to Ottawa to help her through the chemotherapy. Eventually, Sue decided to go to Ottawa to do what she could. Tony kept his job in Winnipeg, but travelled frequently to Ottawa to be with Sue and her sister. Having promised Terrie that she could finish high school in Winnipeg, Sue and Tony arranged for a family friend to stay with Terrie when Tony was in Ottawa. Recalling this period, Sue and Tony say that Terrie’s mood changed rapidly. One day she was blissfully happy, the next she was terribly depressed. “Ken and Terrie were constantly fighting and making up. On several occasions she told us Ken had hurt her,” says Tony. Tony confronted Ken about the violence, but with little effect. “When Terrie found out I had talked to Ken she got so mad at us,” Tony remembers. Not knowing what else to do, Sue and Tony focused on making sure Terrie knew they loved her. They encouraged her to break-up with Ken and told her repeatedly that they would help her leave him.

After spending ten months with Sue’s sister, Sue and Tony decided to relocate permanently to the Ottawa area. Again, they asked Terrie to leave Ken. “She flat-out refused to leave him,” recounts Tony. Terrie then told her parents that she and Ken had decided to move in together. Terrie was now 17 years old. She had graduated from high school with honours and refused to listen to anything her parents had to say. Over the next several months Tony made many trips to Winnipeg to visit Terrie. He says she often had bruises on her arms, face and neck. Tony tried desperately to get Terrie to come home, but she insisted that she “knew what she was doing.” She said that if her parents tried to interfere she would not allow them in her life. Torn between their desire to protect their daughter and their fear of pushing her away, Sue and Tony felt helpless. There seemed to be no alternative but to accept Terrie’s involvement with Ken.

In August 1996, Terrie visited her parents in Ottawa. It was the last time they saw their daughter alive. Two days after returning to Winnipeg, Terrie called home crying uncontrollably. She told Sue and Tony that Ken had hurt her again and that she wanted to come home for good. Terrie asked her parents to send money for a plane ticket so she could fly back to Ottawa. Sue and Tony transferred the money, but Terrie never went to pick it up. Several hours later, Terrie called her parents and told them that she and Ken had made up. “She said their fighting was all her fault and that her relationship with her family was causing all the trouble between her and Ken,” remembers Tony. Terrie went on to say that she and Ken had decided to get married. Frustrated and terrified for Terrie’s safety, Sue and Tony decided that they could no longer accept Terrie’s relationship with Ken. “We told them we would only support the marriage if they went to counselling for the violence going on between them,” says Tony. Ken refused. When Terrie hung up the phone, Sue and Tony realized that their worst fear had finally been realized: they had lost their daughter.

Soon after this phone call, Ken and Terrie disappeared from Winnipeg. Frantic, Sue and Tony contacted the Winnipeg Police Service and attempted to file a missing persons report. The officer

who took the call refused. “They said Terrie was an adult, there was nothing they could do,” Tony recalls. With no help from the police, they decided to ask a friend who was a private investigator for help. Seven months later, the private investigator located Terrie and Ken in Calgary. Tony phoned the house and left several messages for Terrie. A short time later, Terrie called. “She said she was a big girl with a good head on her shoulders and just to leave her alone,” remembers Sue.

Terrie still spoke occasionally to her sisters and in 1998 Tony and Sue learned that Ken and Terrie, now 18, were married. Terrie gave birth to her first daughter soon after. Following the birth of her baby, Terrie finally contacted her parents. She was eager to rebuild their relationship. After a few months of telephone calls, Terrie asked Sue and Tony to come to Calgary for a visit. Terrie was very excited, and in the days leading up to the visit Sue and Tony talked to Terrie almost daily. Then, without warning, everything changed. The day before they were scheduled to arrive in Calgary Terrie suddenly became very cold and withdrawn. “She said Ken was not happy we were coming,” says Sue. Frustrated and bitterly disappointed, Sue decided to “practice tough love.” It would be her last conversation with Terrie. Sue and Tony continued to receive news and updates about Terrie from their other daughters. In 2002, they learned that Terrie had given birth to her third child.

Terrie was found murdered in her home on April 29, 2002. She was killed during the night, her children locked in their bedrooms. In the days following Terrie’s murder, Ken was identified as a “person of interest.” Terrie’s children were placed in the temporary custody of foster parents. Sue and Tony would later learn that Terrie had separated from Ken three months before her murder and was in the process of having the separation made legal. They were also told by investigators that Terrie had called the police to her home on March 8, 2002. According to one of Terrie’s friends who was there at the time, the officers who responded interviewed Terrie and contacted social services, but no one was charged. 52 days later, Terrie was murdered. She was only 24 years old.

From the beginning, police believed that Terrie knew the person who killed her. There were no signs of forced entry and the killer was able to enter her house, which was situated on a quiet street in Calgary’s northwest, unnoticed. In addition, Calgary police have since revealed that the killer knew the layout of the home. Staff Sgt. Craig Cuthbert was one of two primary investigators originally assigned to the case. In an interview with CBC News, Cuthbert explains the process behind the investigation: “You have to look at who has access to the home? Who has access to the individual? And who could possibly do such a thing? And of course we had a person of interest in her former husband, or estranged husband.”

Initially, police seemed confident in their ability to arrest Terrie’s killer. In April 2002, Cuthbert was quoted in the *Calgary Herald* as saying, “The person who did this should understand that it’s only a matter of time before we have him or her in custody.” But no one was ever charged. Terrie’s murder remains unsolved. Through police, Sue learned that after completing a 16 day parenting course Ken regained care of the three children and moved to Saskatchewan. Homicide detectives have attempted to visit Ken in Saskatchewan but he refused to speak with them. “Since the initial investigation, [Ken] has not contacted myself or any other member of the homicide unit. He has never asked for any assistance or follow-up,” said Cuthbert in 2008.

Recalling the night she learned of Terrie's death, Sue's voice is soft but her memories are vivid. She was watching TV in her bedroom (she remembers the show—it was *Investigative Reports*), when she heard the phone ring. Shauna, who was visiting at the time, answered. A few moments later, Sue heard Shauna cry out, "Terrie's been murdered!" At first, Sue and Tony did not believe her. Sue describes the next few moments as oddly disjointed. Her own terrified screams, Shauna saying, "Daddy, the police want to talk to you," Tony telling Shauna to hold on to Sue while he grabbed the phone. "I was suicidal," says Sue. "I didn't want to live because my whole world was destroyed again... such an evil crime." She recalls the agony of waiting for the next plane to Calgary. In her dreams, Sue could hear Terrie calling "Mommy, Mommy." All she could think about was seeing her daughter. "I thought if I could just see her, I would be okay," says Sue quietly. After Terrie's murder everyday occurrences, things normally taken for granted, assumed new meaning. The routine greeting of a friendly flight attendant, "Are you going to Calgary for pleasure?" was suddenly traumatic.

They had to wait a few days before they could see Terrie. Sue recounts seeing her daughter on a steel slab, a single sheet covering her body and Tony's legs buckling at the sight of her. "He had so many dreams for her," says Sue. "She was going to succeed in life, she was going to change the world. She was supposed to accomplish it all." Terrie's parents went to Calgary expecting answers, expecting justice. Instead, they left with their daughter's remains, a single portrait of Terrie and the cherished memories of a single, hour long visit with their three grandchildren. "I love them so much," Sue says. "I want them with me. I just want them to know how much their Grammy and Papa love them." It was a few years before the weight of Terrie's death finally overwhelmed Sue. Grief caused her to say "ugly" things to people she loved. She was suffering panic attacks, something she had never experienced, not even when Sherry died. Sue wanted to run away. "I'd had enough," she says simply. "I didn't want to face it anymore. I didn't want to deal with it anymore. I just wanted to die and end my pain." Finally, she accepted an offer to go and stay with a close friend and Native Healer. Sue spent a week sitting with the Healer and two Elders. They talked about Sue's childhood, what she went through as girl and the violence she experienced as an adult. With the guidance of the Elders, Sue cleansed, reflected and talked. She made a list of all the people who had hurt her. "They can't hurt you anymore," said the Healer. "It's over." It was soon after, Sue says, that Terrie's spirit first came to her. "Terrie touched my heart and said, 'No more, Mommy. You didn't do this. No more.'"

"She touched me," says Sue. "And she took away the anger, all the hate, everything that I was feeling inside, she took it away."

Sue and Tony are very frustrated with the justice system in Canada. They have little respect for some of the officers who have worked on Terrie's case. While they praise certain detectives, in particular Staff Sgt. Cliff O'Brien, Sue and Tony say that other officers have done little to keep them informed of their activities or progress. Even when they called to ask for updates, their messages often went unreturned.

Sue emphasizes the need for police to communicate with families: answer their questions, explain the process and maintain regular contact. Sue and Tony understand that in the context of an open investigation there are things the police cannot disclose. But they still need to need to

address families' questions, even if it is only to explain *why* they cannot share certain information. Sue and Tony say because some officers failed to call or update them regularly, they were often left to assume that nothing was being done. They felt like Terrie, her life and the fact that her case remained unsolved, were not important. Sue also notes the need for resources for *families* of victims, rather than limiting eligibility for programs and services to the so-called 'next of kin.' Sue and Tony were unable to access any Victim's Services funding, such as reimbursement for their plane ticket to Calgary or other related expenses, without Ken's permission. Sue says all the funds went to Terrie's husband as her 'next of kin.'

For 10 years Sue and Tony struggled to find the best way to protect their daughter. Looking back, they wonder what, if anything, they could have done to prevent her death. Although she recognizes Terrie's murder was not her fault, Sue is haunted by their final conversation. Frustrated and feeling as though she had tried everything else, Sue adopted a "tough love" approach to Terrie's involvement with Ken. She believes that was a mistake. "The 'tough love' thing just doesn't work," Sue says quietly. "People need to know that." But perhaps most painful is the loss of her grandchildren. Sue and Tony say that Ken has prohibited them from having any contact with their grandchildren. The separation is devastating. Not only have they lost their daughter, they have lost their grandchildren as well.

Almost seven years have passed and Terrie's murder remains unsolved. Still, Sue and Tony are determined to see someone held responsible for Terrie's death. Sue travels to Calgary when she can to talk with the police and to try to keep her daughter's case in the media. In April 2009, Sue will travel to Calgary to hold a vigil in Terrie's memory. It will be Sue's second vigil for her daughter: the first was held in April 2008. Sue and Tony try to stay positive but the process is frustrating. They are sure someone knows what happened to their daughter and are pleading for anyone with information to come forward. The silence needs to be broken. "We need the truth. Our daughter was murdered... why protect that person?" they ask.

Staff Sgt Cliff O'Brien was the third primary detective to look at Terrie's case. He echoes Sue and Tony's call for new information and remains confident that Terrie's killer will be held accountable for her death. He states:

I have no doubt that someone out there has some information that will move this investigation forward. I urge anyone with information, no matter how seemingly insignificant they think it might be, to call the Calgary Police Service or Crimestoppers. For years now I have watched the pain and anguish that Terrie's parents and family are going through and I would like nothing better than to bring the person responsible for Terrie's murder to justice; I think that Terrie, her parents, siblings and children deserve at least this much. We will continue to work on Terrie's case and follow up on leads that come in until we get justice for her and her family. The person responsible for the murder should know that we're not going away; at any time on any day we may get that crucial piece of information we need and show up at the killer's door to make the arrest. I look forward to that day!

Sue knows that Terrie will always be with her. "It is not that Terrie's gone, it's the way that she died," says Sue. Sue and Tony firmly believe they know who killed their daughter. They want

justice and they refuse to wait in silence. “If I can save one family from going through what I went through, if I can prevent more children from losing their Mother, then I’m here,” explains Sue. “And I’ll never stop being a voice.”

Anyone with information regarding Terrie’s murder is asked to call the Calgary Police Service at 1.403.266.1234 or Calgary Crime Stoppers at 1.800.222.TIPS (8477) to leave an anonymous tip.

Sue and Tony would like to acknowledge Jason van Russell of the Calgary Herald for his commitment to keeping Terrie’s case in the news. They would like to thank Theresa Ross for her support and friendship of their daughter Terrie and for caring for Terrie’s children in the months following her death. Sue would also like to thank Heather Johnson for her ongoing friendship, support and guidance. Finally, Sue and Tony would like to thank the Calgary Police detectives that took the time to talk with them and answer their questions truthfully. In particular, they would like to thank Detective Cliff O’Brien. “We need more detectives like Cliff who care and have a good heart,” says Sue.

The following poem was written by Terrie’s father, Tony, in her memory.

To Terrie:
And what is the memory that’s valued so highly
that we keep it alive in that flame?
What’s the commitment for those who have died,
when we cry out they have not died in vain?
We have come this far always believing that
justice would somehow prevail.
This is the burden, this is the promise,
and THIS is why we will not fail.
Don’t let the light go out
It’s lasted for so many years
Don’t let the light go out
Let it shine through our love and our fears and
Our tears
Love, Papa Bear