

RESTRICTED (when complete)

MG 11 (C)

WITNESS STATEMENT

CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of **John PAPE**..... URN:

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Age if under 18 **Over 18**..... (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: **Producer/editor**

This statement (consisting of: **3**..... pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything in it which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature

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Date: **08.09.14**

Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

This statement was taken over the phone. I am the named person above this statement refers to Gabriel KOVARI. I first met Gabriel KOVARI on the 14th JULY 2014 via a dating website app known as BENDER. We met and remained friends. I messaged him first and he mentioned that he was looking for accommodation to rent. I had a spare room and was thinking of renting the room out. I met up with him and he was staying at THE GREAT EASTERN HOSTEL on the Isle of Dogs. He had just got a job in a SLOVANKIAN shop in Richmond. He said to me "IF I CAN'T FIND SOMEWHERE TO STAY, I'LL SLEEP IN PEOPLE'S GARDENS". I sympathised with his situation as he was a young gay man wanting to make a life for himself in London and I am an older gay man established in the city. As I got to know him it became clear that he felt Slovakia was too conservative/intolerant and he was intent on living in London. He had two apps he used to meet other gay men in the city GRINDER and BENDER, his profile name for BENDER was NEW3OY ('new3oy'). I initially told Gabriel he could stay for two weeks whilst he looked for somewhere else to live and on 16TH JULY 2014 he moved into my flat. After two weeks I told him he was welcome to stay longer and that he should prioritise finding secure employment over the need for new accomodation. Whilst Gabriel was living with me I once came home and found him in my flat with a black male. Gabriel told me the man lived in East London. There were some nights GABRIEL wouldn't come home and I presumed he was staying with this male. He said he had watched the film The Conjuring when he stayed overnight with a male. Gabriel had the job at the shop for a month whilst he lived in my flat. He quit this job due to the way he was being treated. He was not immediately paid after he left. Gabriel grew anxious about this and even tried to get official advice from government agencies. I'm not sure if he every got paid for the time he did work there. Gabriel spoke about his mother and sister casually in conversation. He told me he hadn't told his mother he was in London (she thought he was in Spain) but in the days before he left my flat for Barking, he said he was intending to Skype her to tell her of his intention to stay in London longterm. He also intended to buy a plane ticket to go to SLOVAKIA in September, for one week, as he was graduating. He once invited me to come, but we didn't follow it up. I'm not aware of any medication

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2006/07(1); MG 11(F)

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Continuation of Statement of **John PAPE**.....

condition for Gabriel KOVARI. However, he always struck me as very thin and although I did not think he had an eating disorder, left to his own devices he did not eat well. He said his mother is a pharmacist and he said to me he had lots of pharmaceutical drugs (I presumed painkillers) if I ever needed any. He would drink socially but I do not think he was a heavy drinker. The week before he left I saw he had written a poem in English about his loneliness. Gabriel seemed pensive at times and I know he was anxious about receiving his pay but there was nothing obvious that concerned me greatly about his mental wellbeing. He was always a quiet person. A few days before he left my flat, Gabriel said he was leaving to go and live in BARKING as he had found a room to rent for £100 a week. I asked him a few questions and he said there was no contract tying him to the room and he didn't have to pay a deposit. I got the impression he would be living with 1 other male who owned the flat. I didn't fully understand why he was so keen to leave as I thought we were getting on fine, I was not pushing for rent and was charging only £50 a week. Despite my assurances that he could stay longer, Gabriel said that he was only supposed to stay in my flat for two weeks. He also said my flat was small and chaotic due to the work I was having done but I don't believe this was the reason to leave. Thursday 21st AUGUST 2014 was the last time I remember seeing Gabriel. However, it is possible I saw him on the morning of Friday 22nd as I did most mornings before leaving for work. On the evening of the 21st we went for a drink in a local bar known as THE JOB CENTRE. This was around 2100-2300hrs. I had one drink and then we both came home together as I was pre-occupied with the issues involving the work on my flat. Gabriel left my flat during the day on Friday 22nd, as when I returned to my flat after work at approx 1900 HRS he had gone. He had taken his personal items with him except some food, these items included a white smart phone, a laptop - grey in colour, a suitcase about a meter long dark colour, it had a depth to it of about a foot. He had two leather/plastic looking, wind-breaker jackets one blue and one beige/brown. He also had jeans a white pair and a grey pair, white trainer's chunky shape, and a pair of smart grey suede shoes. There were also numerous shirts, t-shirts and a hooded sweater. On FRIDAY 22ND AUGUST 2014 at 21:35pm I received a text message from a mobile phone number I did not recognise saying "HI JOHN, ITS ME GABRIEL I WAS JUST ABLE TO BORROW A FRIENDS PHONE. I WILL COME IN THE MORNING BECAUSE I HAD TO LEAVE ABRUPTLY TO VIEW A ROOM, I WAS PICKED UP BY A CAR, AND THEN I AM MEETING A FRIEND LATER. SORRY. HAVE A NICE EVENING". This confuses me slightly as he had given me the impression prior to this that he had already viewed the room in Barking. I now know the number he texted from belonged to Cosmo CUPID or Cosmus MARKUS on Facebook. I left the flat on SATURDAY the 23RD AUGUST 2014 at approx 8:30AM to go to the ISLE OF WIGHT. I later received a text message from GABRIEL (from his own phone) at 3:23PM "HI JOHN, DID YOU ALREADY LEAVE FOR THE FESTIVAL". I texted him back "SORT OF. I'VE GONE TIL MONDAY. YOU OK?" he texted me at 21:33 "ALRIGHT. I'M ON MY WAY FOR BARKING NOW. I LOCKED YOUR DOOR AND WILL GIVE U KEY WHEN YOU'RE HOME. HAVE FUN." He still had a key to the flat and I had told him that if things did not work out in Barking he was always welcome. I presume from this text message he had been back to my flat

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Continuation of Statement of John PAPE.....

whilst I was on the ISLE OF WIGHT. On TUESDAY 26TH AUGUST 2014 I texted Gabriel "HEY, HOWS IT GOING IN BARKING?" but got no response. On THURSDAY 28TH AUGUST 2014 I was informed that Gabriel KOVARI had been found dead in a church yard in Barking. After the initial shock, I felt a need to know more about what happened. At this point I did not know who Cosmo CUPID was. Gabriel had never mentioned him or mentioned having a friend near to me in Lewisham. All I had was a mobile number so I texted it asking if he was a friend of Gabriel KOVARI and to ring me. On SATURDAY 30th AUGUST 2014 Cosmo rang me back. I told him Gabriel had been found dead and he reacted very shocked and upset. Over several conversations over three days his emotional response was not suspicious to me. However, Cosmo divulged that he had been in the army and was currently on leave with post-traumatic stress. He also informed me he had been in my flat with Gabriel KOVARI and they had drunk some of my alcohol. He said he had first had contact with Gabriel two years ago when they had met online. During one of the conversations he started talking about intimate details to do with his physical relationship with Gabriel. However, Cosmo said he had recently told Gabriel that he did not want a relationship with Gabriel at this time. Whilst Gabriel was looking for somewhere else to stay in London, Cosmo said he had taken Gabriel to meet his grandmother and had told Gabriel he could stay with her or him. However, he said Gabriel became intent on moving to BARKING. Cosmo said he had driven Gabriel on FRIDAY 22nd to Upton Park, Stratford area and dropped him off. Gabriel was going to meet another male and would go onto BARKING where he would be staying. Cosmo thought Gabriel had used his phone to send a text message to the person he was staying with. Cosmo could not find the text message on his phone and believes Gabriel may have deleted it. Cosmo then called his phone provider and there is a number that was called at approx 1020hrs on FRIDAY 22ND AUGUST 2014 from Cosmo's phone which he does not recognise. He thought the call was probably made by Gabriel as he was with him at this time. The number is [DPA]93. Cosmo gave me the number to call because he said he could not think straight. At 14:54PM on 31ST AUGUST 2014 I texted this number to contact me in regards to Gabriel (I did not say he had been found dead) but have received no reply.

After finding out about Gabriel's death, I repeatedly checked his Facebook page to see if there was any indication his friends or family knew of his death. I was worried that his family did not know. On MONDAY 1ST OF SEPTEMBER 2014, I friended Gabriel's former boyfriend THIERRY AMODIO via Facebook and he immediately engaged me in an online messaging conversation. I did not reveal that Gabriel was dead at this time but expressed concerns for his whereabouts in the hope that it would become clear if Thierry and the family knew. Thierry did not know, and whilst I was trying to ascertain if he was in contact with Gabriel's family, he mentioned that he had not heard from Gabriel for a week. He also said that Gabriel had been seeing two black males. Cosmo and someone else called 'KARL'. Thierry said he had 'broken up' with Gabriel 'a week ago' because of Gabriel's involvement with the two males. At present I receive occasional messages from Thierry regarding Gabriel's death on facebook. I am no longer receiving or instigating contact with Cosmo.

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