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promotion at work, and was financially stable due to inheritance he had received when his mum died. He seemed positive about his life. It was because of his past struggles that I found the news that he had committed suicide more plausible.

I was clutching at straws and suggested they might be wrong and expected that I would immediately have to identify the body. I recall this is what my dad had to do when my brother died years ago. The officers told me they had documents that could identify Daniel and they were pretty sure so it was not necessary to identify him. I was not happy that I was unable to see Daniel's body for a long period of time, 17 days I believe, after the police came to tell us of Daniel's death. My mother, who was very close to Daniel, did not want to see him after this period of time in case of decay and we remain unhappy about this. The police explained this delay was due to forensic tests that needed to be done but thinking about it now, I don't understand why there would be this need if it was for a straight forward suicide. I now wonder if that would have had to happen in a straight forward suicide situation. I thought it was unusual but the police didn't seem to think so.

I have no criticism of the two police officers who delivered the news of Daniel's death to us. The officers left less than half an hour after they had arrived, saying if there was anything they could do to let them know. I cannot remember if they made any mention of future contact we would receive from the police.

The next time I heard from the police was when I had contact with DC Slaymaker. I think this might have been on the phone but I cannot recall when this was. I do not believe it was the same day we were informed Daniel had died but I am pretty sure it was soon after. Most of the time DC Slaymaker contacted us he would speak with Mandy rather than with me.

A good while later we received an email from the police, I am unsure of the department, saying they had a note and they would like us to look at the handwriting. They didn't show us the whole note, just the bottom part of it which was the signing off part. I cannot remember exactly when it was but Mandy and I viewed it, not Ricky. They wanted us to confirm if it was Daniel's handwriting but I was unable to do this as I was unsure. I think I

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goes about. To be honest, the handwriting didn't look like Daniel's. His writing was child-like and big whereas the writing on the note was quite neat. However, people do tend to write big in cards and these were the only examples of his handwriting I could give police. I informed them that Daniel was left handed in case this helped them as I fully assumed they would be checking it with handwriting experts and not just with us. I made this assumption because the police told me they had handwriting experts that would know that.

I cannot remember how this visit to Barking was organised but I believe we were told before we went that we would see the full note. During this meeting Mandy asked what GHB was as it had been referenced within the note. One of the officers, I cannot remember who, said we should talk to Ricky about it as he would know. I think the idea of the comment was that Ricky would know about the drugs because he was a gay male rather than because he was Daniel's partner.

The note made mention of a Gabriel. We were not told anything about why this name was mentioned in the note. We had never heard of a Gabriel before. We were told the date Gabriel had been found dead and we just couldn't place a gap where Daniel could have been missing in that month without it going unnoticed. We were quite fierce in telling the police that.

About 17 days after Daniel passed away, Mandy, Ricky and I went to view his body having made the arrangements with DC Slaymaker. I am struggling to remember if this was before or after we met DC Slaymaker, Paul and Jackie in Barking. I had assumed I would see him soon enough following his death but the days passed. I made it clear to officers that I wanted to see Daniel's body but I can't remember how often I told them this. I cannot remember the location we went to see Daniel's body but I know it was the other side of the river from where I live.

In between this and the inquest in June 2015, most police contact was done through Mandy. They had her number and they would also text her phone. She would relay any information they gave her to me but I cannot remember any significant information she told me.

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I attended the inquest into Daniel's death in June 2015. We went down there with DC Slaymaker and the other Paul following a cup of tea and a chat in a café. They said we wouldn't find out any new information at the inquest, it was just to tie up loose ends and for the Coroner to give a verdict. However, we did find out new things. We discovered Daniel had been found in a blue bed sheet but we were unaware of this. It turned out Port's DNA was found on it but it wasn't checked. When the Coroner was asking the boss, Shamberger I think his name was, whether it was tested he said it hadn't been as he didn't feel it was conducive to the case. There might have been a few other things we found out there but I just can't remember. I don't feel the Coroner was entirely happy with the work the police had done because she was saying the sheet could have been tested. Following the open verdict, the police said to us that that was that and my mum said there must be foul play or more to it. We thought there was a third party involved somehow, perhaps a drug dealer, but we felt there was more to it than just suicide. My mum asked the police if they could reopen a case with an open verdict and the police said they couldn't. Ricky was very angry with the police and told them in a raised voice that they had not done their job properly. They asked Ricky if he wanted them to run through what had happened until he felt happy with it, which he declined.

I felt DC Slaymaker was a decent person doing his job. He seemed in control of the situation and I did trust him, I didn't have a choice. One of the police officers said to us that they had more resources than we did and that they would deal with the investigation and we didn't have to. This was following some reading we had done on the Barking and Dagenham Post and information Ricky had found out about other similar deaths in the area. They told us to leave them to it and on some level we had to take that on board and trust that they were doing their jobs properly. Knowing what I know now, nobody is happy with what they did to investigate the deaths but that is with hindsight.

I don't think I received any contact from the police between the inquest in June 2015 and October 2015 when I was informed someone had been arrested for Daniel's murder. I was at work when Mandy called me to tell me about the arrest. I did not speak to DC Slaymaker

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