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I got married in 1982. Things were alright for quite a long while. In 1992, I noticed the level of violence was increasing. She was kicking and punching, and there was mental abuse too. She was expert at that, mental put downs and things like that. It increased in frequency. It started off once a month and then it was every fortnight and then every second day. One day she bragged about carrying a knife upstairs to the bedroom. I never saw it, but she was bragging about how she could have done something to me.

In August 1992, it came to a head. I was in bed asleep. She woke me up. She was upset. She started punching me. I have never punched a woman no matter what. But I tried to hold her hands, and she got bruised wrists. I'm a big fella, about 6 foot. She's about 5'6". She's still quite strong. One punch got through and broke my eyelid. I had blood pouring down my face. My eye closed up.

I moved out. I went to the police to report it. All they did was laugh. I went in and I had blood pouring down my shirt. I explained what happened. They said they could charge her and laughed. I wasn't looking for revenge, I was just worried about my son at the time. The police said there's nothing they can do unless I charge her. I was worried that would inflame things even more, so I left it. There seemed to be no middle ground.

When I moved out, she retained both houses (one was the place we lived and the other was an investment property, which she used for her [REDACTED]).

After I moved out, I would make arrangements to see my son. She would break these arrangements left, right and centre without any notification.

One time, when I picked my son up, I didn't shut the back door of her car when I got him out of the car. She got grumpy. She followed me in her car, and bumped my car with her car.

Another time, she wanted to come over to my place to use the computer to write a resume for one of her friends. I consented until she started picking up the keyboard and dropping it on the floor and generally abusing my PC. She had [REDACTED] in her car parked across the street. It was in April, it was a cold night. I went and got [REDACTED] and brought him inside. I pushed her outside because she was abusing the computer, then she smashed the glass in the front door. She smashed her fist through the glass, cutting her wrist. I wrapped up the wrist in a tea towel and let her back in the house. She started waving her arms and blood was going everywhere. So I had to push her outside. She started banging and yelling. I called the police. Four cars turned up. And after some backwards and forwards between her and the police they convinced her to leave.

Sometime later, probably six months, an AVO was delivered to my door very apologetically by one of the police who was in the cars that came that night. The basis of the AVO was that I would make phone calls and abuse her. But most of these phone calls were as a result of her breaking arrangements for me to see my son with no notification and that sort of thing. When I told my lawyer about her violence – breaking the front door and so on – he said that would be classed as irrelevant because it happened six months previously.

The psychological mucking around that she did, poisoning my son's mind against me, pushed me towards suicide. I get very upset when I hear about the women who get killed, when there is no

mention of the men who kill themselves as a result of the loss of rights they suffer as a result of the family court system.

I never considered taking out an AVO against her. I didn't know much about them. Once she had taken one out against me, I thought taking out one against her would inflame her.

I wanted joint custody and she refused. I think she was trying to use the AVO as leverage against me.

The Family Law Court found that she was unstable, but they still gave her full custody.

I think police need to be trained so that they realise that not all men are bastards. Women are not the only ones who are affected by violence. I rang Lifeline once, when I was feeling very down, but they couldn't really help.

She lives in [REDACTED]. I'd pay for a seat on the plane for my son, and she would suggest to him that he shouldn't hop on the plane. I had a court order ordering her to send him, and she'd take him to the airport and say, "You can go, but you know I'll be here on my own."

I was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2003. Even that didn't change her attitude to my son coming to visit.