

HEAR ME OUT!

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Acknowledgement: We raise our hands in deepest respect and gratitude to the ancestors and families of the lək̓ʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ nations and to our own ancestors and Nations. We raise our hands to all Indigenous children and youth who have grown up in colonial systems, to those we have lost, and to those who survive, resist, and imagine justice and resurgence. INVINCIBLE is grateful for funding provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Insight grant 435-2020-1191) and the Canet Foundation.

ta'tuusinapšiił Emma John (Emily Hubert) is an Indigenous youth in care and an INVINCIBLE youth storyteller/researcher who has been working with the Kinship Rising research project at the University of Victoria since 2021.

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HEAR ME OUT

Hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen are the 4 main elements in our body, and the 4 main elements in the universe. Not only do we exist in this universe, but it is the universe itself that exists within us. Does that mean we are not special?

Taken from a quote by Astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson in Space Chronicles: Facing the Ultimate Frontier (2012)

***I think it means we are special
in a different kind of way,
because when I look up at the
night sky, I no longer think:
"I'm here, and that is there."***

***I now think:
"We are a part of that."***

***That little association can be
enlightening, humbling and
enriching. In fact, it's almost
spiritual looking up and
finding a sense of belonging,
given what we've learned
about the night sky.***

***I think about this quote from
Neil deGrasse Tyson as often
as I look up at the stars.***



HEAR ME OUT!

***“If you’re always in your
comfort zone, you’ll never
find space to grow.”***

***Quote by a family friend,
medicine woman, auntie***



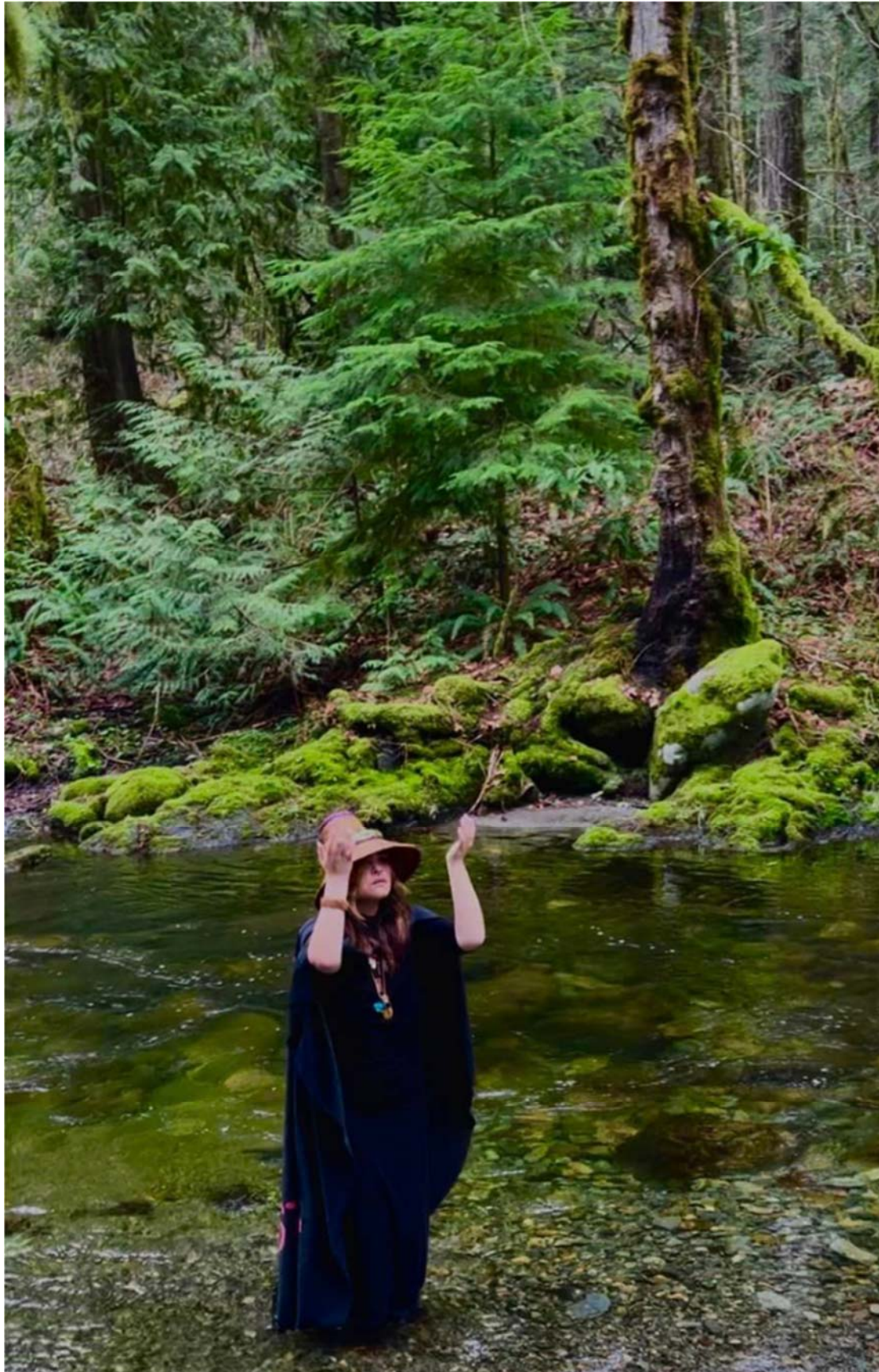
***I've heard the phrase:
"I'll take care of you, if you take
care of me."***

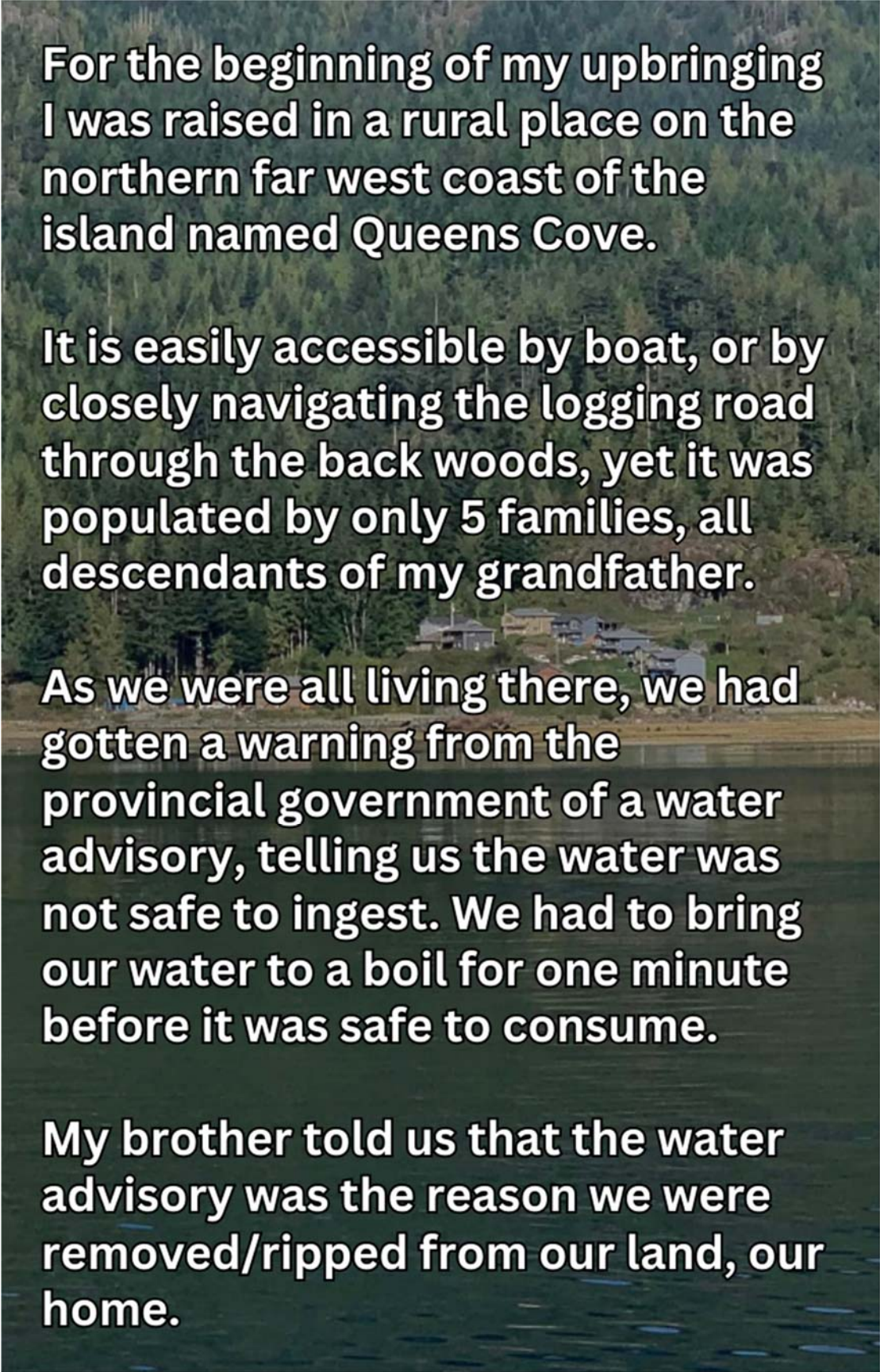
***But I've realized how shortened
or selfish that phrase can be;
I'll do this for you, if you'll do
that for me.***

***I know it's an equal exchange,
but what if we start to say:
"I'll take care of me for you, if
you take care of you for me"?***

***The best thing you can do for
those around you is to better
yourself and your medicine
wheel. Personal development
is the best medicine you can
offer to yourself, your peers,
and your community.***

***A cultural/spiritual twist of my own
on the quote by Jim Rohn,
philosopher/author***



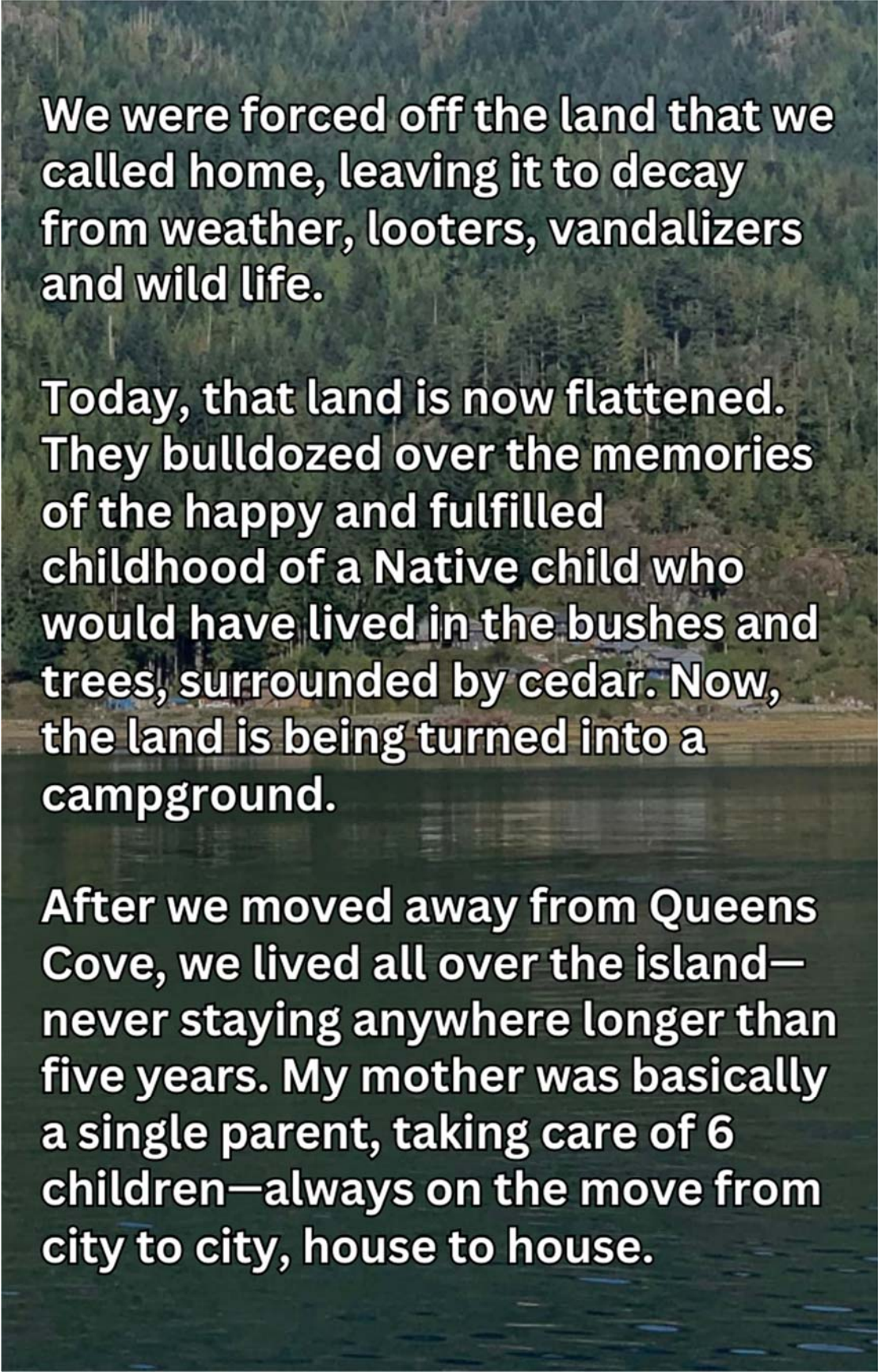


For the beginning of my upbringing I was raised in a rural place on the northern far west coast of the island named Queens Cove.

It is easily accessible by boat, or by closely navigating the logging road through the back woods, yet it was populated by only 5 families, all descendants of my grandfather.

As we were all living there, we had gotten a warning from the provincial government of a water advisory, telling us the water was not safe to ingest. We had to bring our water to a boil for one minute before it was safe to consume.

My brother told us that the water advisory was the reason we were removed/ripped from our land, our home.

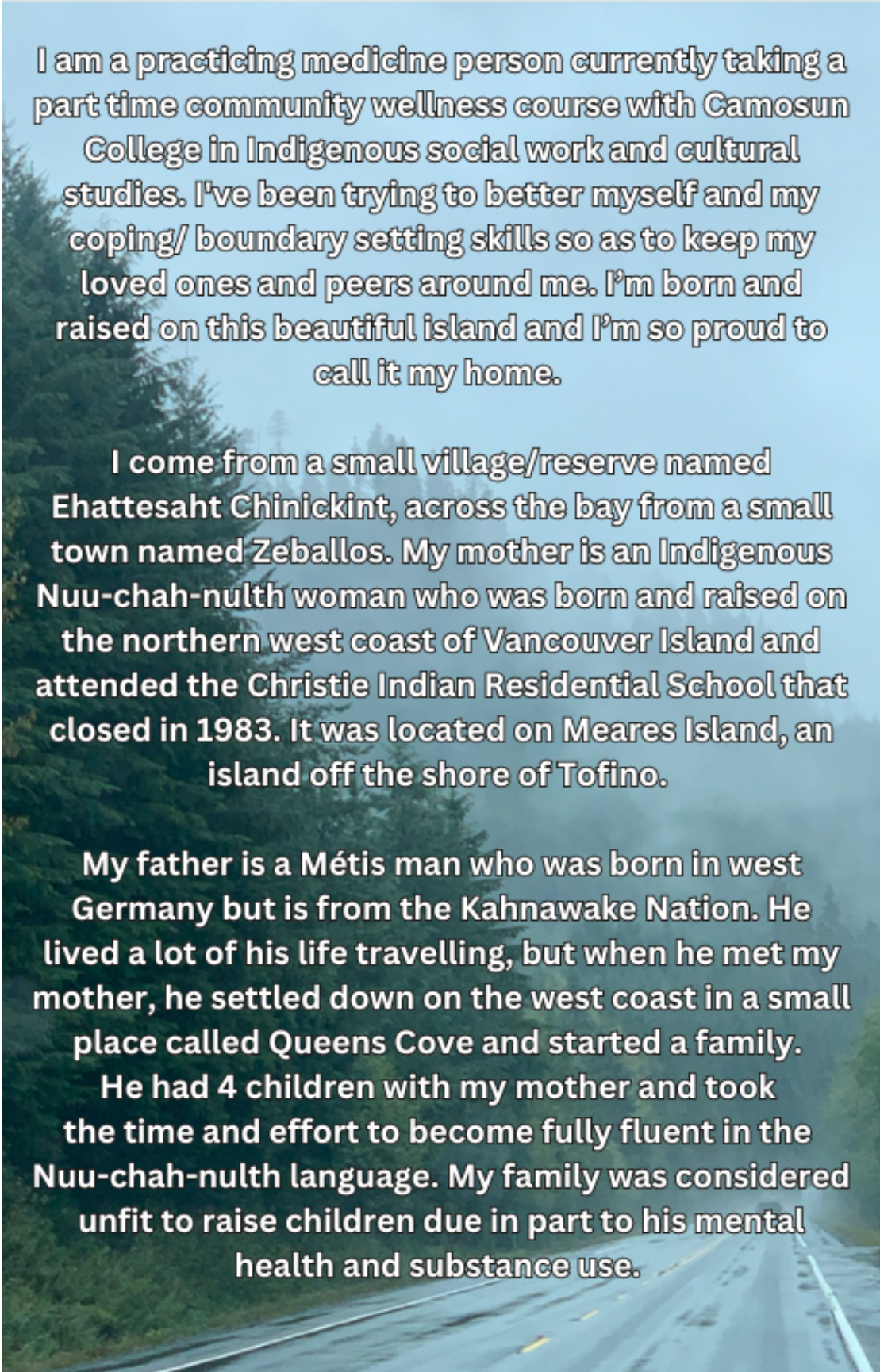


We were forced off the land that we called home, leaving it to decay from weather, looters, vandalizers and wild life.

Today, that land is now flattened. They bulldozed over the memories of the happy and fulfilled childhood of a Native child who would have lived in the bushes and trees, surrounded by cedar. Now, the land is being turned into a campground.

After we moved away from Queens Cove, we lived all over the island—never staying anywhere longer than five years. My mother was basically a single parent, taking care of 6 children—always on the move from city to city, house to house.





I am a practicing medicine person currently taking a part time community wellness course with Camosun College in Indigenous social work and cultural studies. I've been trying to better myself and my coping/ boundary setting skills so as to keep my loved ones and peers around me. I'm born and raised on this beautiful island and I'm so proud to call it my home.

I come from a small village/reserve named Ehattesah Chinickint, across the bay from a small town named Zeballos. My mother is an Indigenous Nuu-chah-nulth woman who was born and raised on the northern west coast of Vancouver Island and attended the Christie Indian Residential School that closed in 1983. It was located on Meares Island, an island off the shore of Tofino.

My father is a Métis man who was born in west Germany but is from the Kahnawake Nation. He lived a lot of his life travelling, but when he met my mother, he settled down on the west coast in a small place called Queens Cove and started a family.

He had 4 children with my mother and took the time and effort to become fully fluent in the Nuu-chah-nulth language. My family was considered unfit to raise children due in part to his mental health and substance use.





