

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5b

Statement of: KEBEDE, BEHAILU

Age if under 18: OVER 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

Occupation: TAXI DRIVER

This statement (consisting of 5 page(s) 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 in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature: B KEBEDE

Date: 05/04/2018

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

This statement is about a few things I have been asked to clarify by the police.

I have been shown a transcript of the 999 call I made to the fire brigade and have been asked who or what I was referring to when I say "Grab it and leave! What kind of person is she?" I was talking to and about Almaz, the woman who was living in my flat. I was a bit annoyed because I saw her with a heavy suitcase when I wanted everyone to leave immediately and no-one else brought luggage. I'm not sure where I was when I said it, because I was moving around a lot as I was on the phone.

I have been asked about the furniture inside the flat, on the day of the fire. I sent DC NIGHTINGALE seven photos taken inside the flat. I sent these via WhatsApp on 21/03/18. The photos were all taken in 2016 and I produce them as follows:

BEK/3 – photo of front room Flat 16 (double doors) taken in December 2016

BEK/4 – photo of front room Flat 16 (TV) taken in December 2016

BEK/5 – photo of kitchen, Flat 16 taken in December 2016

BEK/6 – photo of kitchen (work top) Flat 16 taken in December 2016

These photos were all taken on a day I had friends round to celebrate my son's birth so I know it was December 2016.

The following were taken some time earlier in the year:

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2018

Signature witnessed by:

BEK/7 – photo of kitchen from front room, Flat 16

BEK/8 – photo of kitchen from entrance, Flat 16

BEK/9 – photo of kitchen entrance and fruit bowl, Flat 16

I can confirm that the photos show the flat in the same condition as it was on the day of fire except for the following points:-

BEK/4 – The coffee table on the right under the window was not there and the cot was also not present nor were there any vases of flowers

BEK/8 – There were no pictures on the wall by the sliding doors

BEK/7 – There was no vase of flowers on the floor

BEK/9 – The cat ran away long before the fire

I have been given a diagram of the flat on the fifth floor above mine in the tower. I can confirm that the layout appears to be the same as my flat, Flat 16. The doors are all shown to be opening correctly in or out.

I have described to DC NIGHTINGALE where all the furniture was and asked her to draw it on to the diagram. Starting from the entrance to the living room from the Corridor. These were double doors but the left door as you enter was always closed because I had a pot in the corner there with ivy in it, which I trained around the ceiling. There was a three seater black leather sofa on the wall to your left. This had two matching chairs, single seater, shown as on the diagram. I bought these a long time ago in a large second store somewhere in Cricklewood. I paid about £2,500 because they weren't actually second-hand, they were ex-display pieces.

There was a large guilt framed mirror above the sofa about 1m 20cm wide and 1m tall, I think from a closing down sale in a shop somewhere in Hammersmith. On the wall to the right above one of the chairs was a guilt picture frame with two pictures inside it, one of the Virgin Mary, from Ethiopia, and one of a flower from Portobello Rd Market. There was a large fish tank in front of the window opposite you as you enter and in the corner there between the sofa and the fish tank was a wooden container with a plant which reached up to the ceiling. I can't remember the name of the plant but it is the same one as shown in BEK/8.

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At the time of the fire I was sleeping on a double mattress on the floor in between the sofa and chairs. As you turned into the living room in the far corner to your left there was NEC TV, flat screen, on a stand, I cannot remember how many many inches the screen was. Next to it is a floor lamp I bought second hand from Portobello Market several years ago. On the floor next to that are two speakers and a tape/CD player by Kenwood the dimensions are visible from BEK/4. As shown in BEK/8, there was then a glass and chrome dining table with two layers and four high backed chairs. I do not know what these chairs were made of but it was not wood. I bought the table and chairs together from an auction in Wembley many years ago, I cannot remember how much for. In the corner next to the table was another plant in a white wooden container (the container was identical to the one used for the plant next to the fish tank). There were no rugs in the flat, the floor was wooden laminate. In the other corner by the double doors was a wooden fruit bowl on legs with fake fruit in, which I bought from Portobello Market.

Coming to the kitchen, the only difference from the photos is that there was an extra tiny fridge on top of the freezer to the left as you enter via the living room. I am not sure of the name of the material used on the floor but the fireman who interviewed me knew what it was.

I do not have any photos of the bedrooms in Elsa's bedroom. I produce the diagram of the flat as BEK/10. I bought the double bed and wardrobe from Ikea. The wardrobe, plain wood with three glass doors. The table was laminate wood. I cannot remember where I bought the bed in Almaz's room, it was a single one I had had for a long time. The wardrobe was a pale wood one from Ikea with a sliding door, about 80cm wide. The table in the corner by window was a folding wooden table which Elsa bought and I stored it in Almaz's room.

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