

Mikki Cooke – 90 second speech (240 words)

Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my courageous constituent, Mikki Cooke.

Mikki's courage is two-fold. Firstly, because she was brave enough to choose to become an author, and secondly, for her choice of subject matter.

Mikki, who is now in her late 70s, chose to write about the most painful thing in her life – her childhood. Mikki's early years were not just ones of neglect and deprivation but also cruelty, on an almost daily basis.

Mikki somehow survived this and would later marry and have her own family, a daughter Linda and a son John (who coincidentally became a schoolfriend of mine) but she was haunted by her childhood.

As testament to her courage, not only did this brave woman withstand such a terrible childhood experience she chose to share her pain with the world in her book 'The Hunger'.

Mikki had a genuine fear that by going public with her story that she could cause renewed suffering for her siblings, further fracturing their estranged relationships.

But, when she shared her manuscript with her brothers and sisters, to Mikki's delight' it had the opposite effect - it healed old wounds, provided some answers, and brought them all closer together.

So, by writing about a truly horrible experience, that most people would probably prefer to keep hidden, Mikki was able to help herself and her family and hopefully this book will assist others who choose to read it.

Speaker, I applaud the courage of my constituent Mikki Cooke, for not only surviving a terrible ordeal but then bravely choosing to tell her story publicly in 'The Hunger'.