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Paedophile changes name and converts to Islam in jail

Apr 7 2008 Exclusive by Amy Devine

A PAEDOPHILE has converted to Islam and changed his name behind bars.

Paul Falconer, 40, now insists bosses at Peterhead prison call him Mohammed Farooq instead.

Falconer's case made legal history when his five-year-old victim gave evidence by video link to a court 40 miles away to ease her ordeal.

He was jailed for almost eight years for sexually abusing her and another girl. His ex-wife was last night shocked at his identity swap.

Mum-of-two Melanie White, 41, raged: "Paul should not be allowed to go by any other name. People should be warned about this in case he tries to hide his past when he gets out."

He committed attacks on the girl in Prestonpans, East Lothian, in 2004 and a second girl, two years older.

Now Falconer claims he has found Allah while locked up at the Aberdeenshire jail. He faces Mecca to pray five times a day and enjoys a specially prepared halal diet.

A jail source said: "He is now living life as a Muslim and he refused to respond to his Scottish name when he was called over by a prison warden.

Other inmates think it is an early attempt to convince parole bosses he's a changed man."

A spokesman for the Scottish Prison Service said that in cases where prisoners changed their names, both names were kept on record by the SPS and are registered by authorities on release.

Muslim leaders welcomed Falconer's switch to Islam.

Chairman of the Scottish Islamic Foundation Osama Saeed said: "People have more time for contemplation and reflection in jail and there are many reasons why they would decide to convert.

"But they have to do their time and change their ways."

Falconer is not the first Scots prisoner to convert to Islam. Rapist George Clark, 46, is now known as Yusuf Ansari. After finding his faith he advertised for a wife on the internet from jail.

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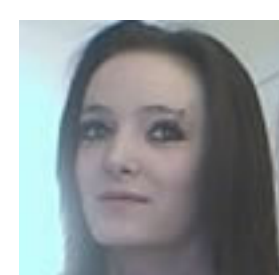
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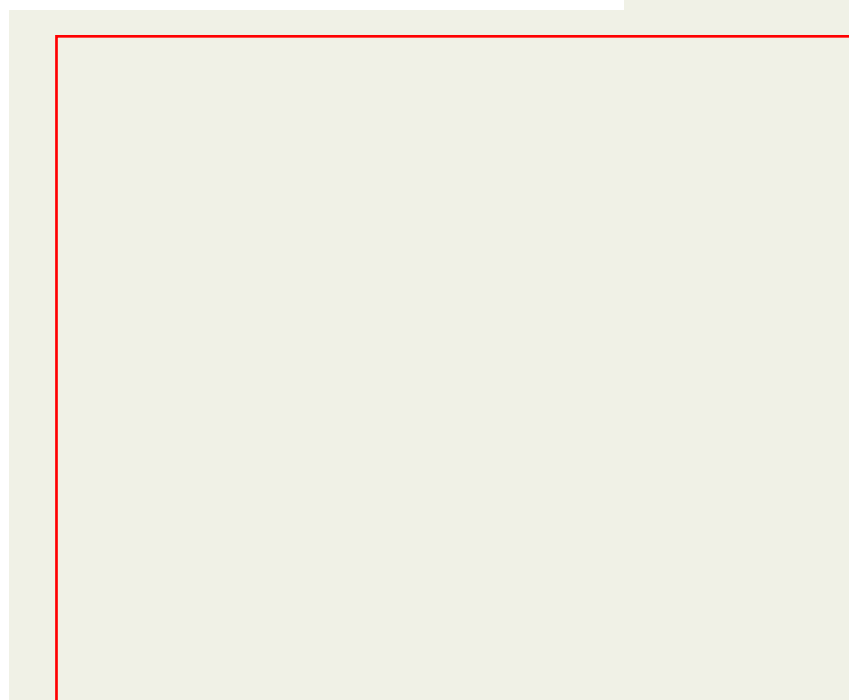
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