



Jaggss had once stayed at the Brahams' holiday home in Wales, though, again, not with their hosts. Braham would later struggle to remember what they had talked about that night at the Castle. Grumbling about their headmaster perhaps, or the minutiae of football or fishing, two of Jaggs's interests.

One thing they certainly did not discuss – had never discussed, and now probably never would – was the troubling conduct of Jaggs's 22-year-old son, William, himself a former pupil at Harrow – an Old Harrovian – who had been sent down from Oxford a year earlier. He was due to retake his exam within a week or so, in the hope of being readmitted. Braham knew how proud Jaggs had been of his son winning a place at Oriel College. But theirs was not the kind of friendship, or they were not the kind of men, for the sharing of intimacies, and Braham implicitly understood that William Jaggs and his alleged drug-taking and his increasingly aberrant behaviour were not to be mentioned. Alan Jaggs never ever brought it up. Braham privately wondered if Will, as he was known, was having a breakdown. As someone else later said to him, lots of people had noticed signs of troubled behaviour, but nobody realised how psychotic he had become. That was the terrible thing they would all have to live with.

Will Jaggs must have been somewhere nearby that night, wrestling with his demons. He was hearing screams and voices, shouting loudly and angrily at him from inside his head.

Three days later, on September 14, 2006, Braham and his wife, Julienne, went to Hampstead for the evening to see an exhibition of sculpture, and decided to stay on for dinner. Lucy, a 25-year-old fashion designer, was alone back at the house, working on some drawings.

A neighbour, also part of the school community, heard noises next door and at first thought it was a domestic argument and didn't like to intervene. The noises continued and became more disturbing. The police were eventually called and smashed their way in through the back of the house. Inside they found that Jason Braham's daughter Lucy had been stabbed and killed by Alan Jaggs's son William. Unlike their parents, Lucy and the young man who had come to kill her barely knew each other. As the police arrived, William, who was naked, was repeatedly stabbing himself.

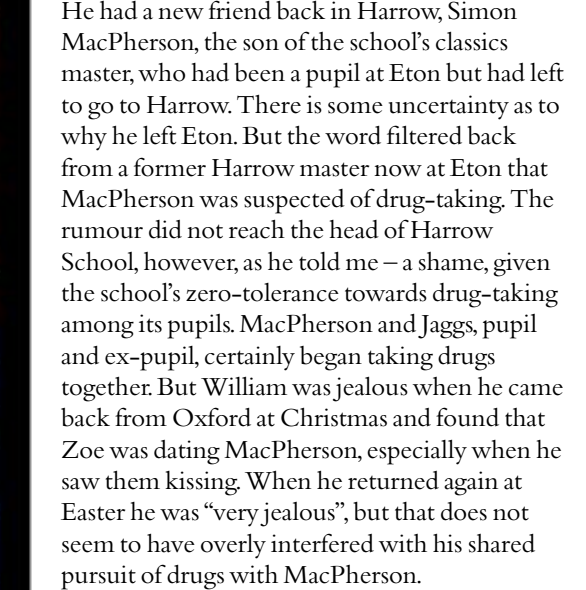
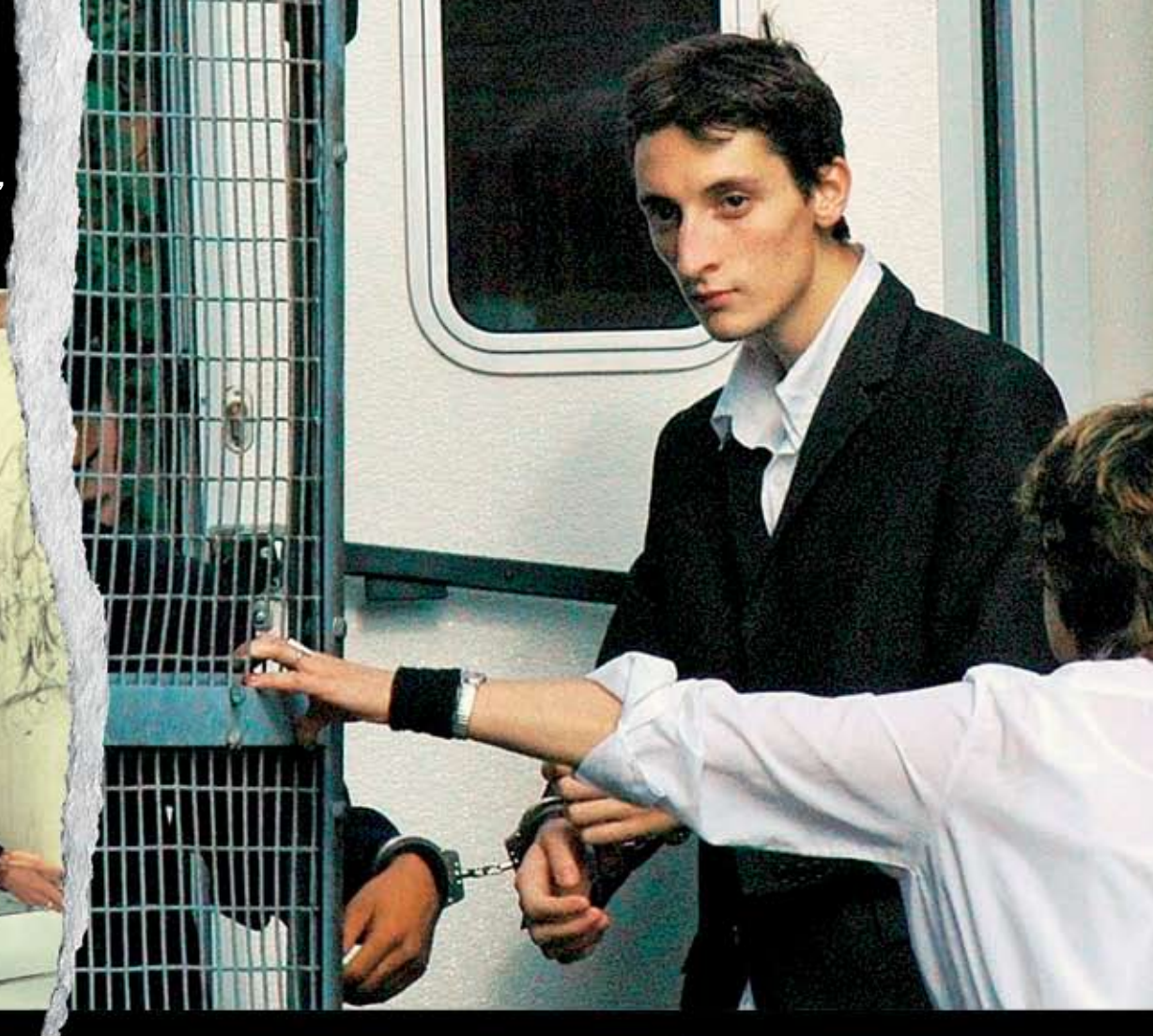
The officers thought he wouldn't survive and managed to obtain what they anticipated would be a dying confession. Were you responsible for the injuries to this girl? Yes. It was the last time for months that William would admit anything.

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Harrow School is not an easy establishment for outsiders to enter or understand. Today there are 800 pupils, and during this last year they each, or most of them, paid £26,445 for the privilege.

Pupils start at the school when they are 13. They're known as "shells" until the second year, when they are "removed from under the shell" and so become "removes". Shells are looked after

**Below: Lucy Braham at work on a piece of art. Bottom: her father, Jason Braham, former head of art at Harrow, instructing pupils. Right: Jaggs at Harrow magistrates' court. Far right: the kitten he wanted Lucy to have is taken from her parents' house**



## He began having auditory hallucinations – hearing voices. He produced a knife at a party and visited a prostitute in Harrow



by an older pupil, a "shepherd", when they arrive, to prepare them for the new boys' test after three weeks, when they will be expected to know the names and colours of all the houses and the school's slang. If you fail you get "double" – a punishment (the word is derived from lines written out on special "double" paper).

All pupils must keep their shoes polished and their Harrow hats – which look like boaters – in good condition. Their trousers are "greyers"; their blazers are "bluers". On Sundays they wear pinstripe trousers and tail-coats. If they are sick they will see "mates" – matron – and if they're

naughty they may end up being "rusticated" – suspended. A bath or shower is a "tosh"; "flicks" is lights out. There are many traditions, such as the annual cricket match against Harrow's rival in the top public-school stakes, Eton. And just as Eton has its "boating song", so Harrow has its own repertoire of songs, such as Forty Years On.

Winston Churchill is just one of seven British prime ministers educated at Harrow. The playwrights Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Terence Rattigan both went there. More recent celebrated old boys include Patrick Lichfield, Richard Curtis and James Blunt.

William Jaggs began his time at Harrow with a reputation as the cleverest boy in his year. Some who knew him would say it was only after he left the school that his problems really began. At Harrow he could be pleasant and charming. He liked to play chess. He did not seem "weird" – just a bit theatrical and eccentric. But in reality, the warning signs were there from an early age. When he was 15 he allegedly sexually assaulted a fellow boarder, a younger boy, just 13, forcing him to participate in oral sex. The boy complained to the school but, I was told, his parents didn't want to make a fuss. The police were not informed, the matter was dealt with internally, quietly, and William was not expelled

## Did spurning knifeman's kitten cost Lucy her life?

nor even invited to withdraw – a handy euphemism sometimes to avoid the humiliation of expulsion. His family was merely told he would no longer be allowed to board and would have to live with his parents instead.

The pupil sons of staff liked to board, I was told, because it was more fun and because they didn't want to be the odd ones out. Barnaby Lenon became head in 2000, as William was starting sixth form. He did not know about the alleged assault until after Lucy's death, and would not comment on how it had been handled by his predecessor. I was told William began a course of counselling after the incident, but the course was not completed. I approached Alan and Stella Jaggs with a request for an interview through their son's solicitor but never heard back from him.

William would later say he had some mutual sexual contact with fellow pupils of the same age around this time. And by his own admission he began taking drugs at 16, smoking dope and using cocaine. He also started what would become a string of short-lived relationships with young women. The following year, aged 17, he

had a relationship with a woman of 23. She was so old she seemed like his mother, he told a psychiatrist later. When she went to the US, he felt rejected and began drinking. It was the start of his depression. When they finally read the psychiatric reports, the police noted the theme of rejection and the brevity of all his relationships. As one policeman put it, "When they found out what he was like, they binned him."

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William left Harrow in 2002 with As in English and biology and a B in computers – not exactly brilliance. Just before going to Oxford he had a three-week relationship with Zoe, the daughter of another of his father's colleagues, Rob Collins. He was by his own account worried about Oxford, so much so that he "freaked out" about it, had panic attacks and began thinking about death, reading Nietzsche, and *The Outsider* by Albert Camus. When he started at Oxford he was still troubled and went to see a GP, who noted that he was "narcissistic, arrogant and manipulative", just how many people saw him.

William completed his first year at Oxford, taking stimulants and antidepressants to help him study. He just passed the end-of-year exams before returning to Harrow for the summer.

Not long after he killed Lucy, a story about William – "My Terror of the Harrow Knife Killer" – appeared in *The Mail* on Sunday. This was Michelle Venis, a woman from the town, a heroin addict and shoplifter, who described taking crack with William and MacPherson. She explained that she had stayed at the home of MacPherson's parents – two doors away from the Brahams – that summer, while his parents were away: "We were smoking crack and there was a big grand piano, antique vases and all these books and a posh school uniform hanging up. I remember thinking that if this boy's parents could see what we were doing in their house, they'd have a fit." Venis was staying there with her boyfriend's uncle, a convicted armed robber. She left when she heard that William had suggested to MacPherson that they rape her. "He was very quiet and would just sit there staring at you. It was really unnerving." This newspaper story sent a second wave of shock through the school community when it appeared after the murder. Two worlds had collided. On the grapevine, people heard the uncle had just come out of prison after serving time for GBH. How did he end up inside the school community?

William later claimed that he was taking much more than crack during this period – ecstasy, cocaine, mushrooms, cannabis – all with MacPherson. He was also drinking heavily and found it hard to concentrate when he returned to Oxford. There was another relationship with a woman at Oxford, but that too ended after three weeks.

By January 2005, William was back in Harrow and "feeling outraged", he later told a psychiatrist, at his rejections from women. He was resentful towards MacPherson, and vengefully told MacPherson's new girlfriend that MacPherson was still having sex and taking drugs with his old girlfriend. William is then alleged to have set fire to MacPherson's car. It was hard to get facts on this; it doesn't seem to have been reported ➤ ➤ ➤

**‘I’m seeing a shrink today – as you correctly noted I’m a total psychopath. Have a nice day’**

**A text message William Jaggs sent to Zoe Collins, pictured here with Simon MacPherson**



to the police. This was another incident that never reached the ears of Harrow’s headmaster.

William said from this period onwards he was smoking skunk and taking methylphenidate, an antidepressant used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He went back to Oxford and started a new relationship. He gained the woman’s consent to tie her up for sex, but when he did she cried, so he left and the relationship ended. He began following her around Oxford, like a stalker. He began having auditory hallucinations – hearing voices. He produced a knife at a party while he was drunk, and visited a prostitute back in Harrow.

In recent years Harrow School has been marketing its brand, opening two schools in its name in Asia and developing the work of Harrow School Enterprises Ltd (HSEL), with a focus on summer schools for outsiders, using young people from the school community as staff. Jaggs and MacPherson took part as staff during the summers of 2005 and 2006. They were suspected of drug-taking and of stealing. In the worst incident, MacPherson was entrusted with £2,000 to bank downtown. He returned saying he’d been mugged and the money was gone. He was suspected of stealing it and the police were called. His room was searched and “drug paraphernalia” was found, including, allegedly, a set of scales you might use if you were dealing in drugs. He was expelled.

William failed his second-year exams at Oxford and was sent down for a year with the chance to retake them. But he was becoming increasingly removed from reality. In April 2006 he was in two performances of the Harrow School players’ production of Love’s Labour’s Lost. Lenon saw the first night’s show and saw nothing strange, but to others Jaggs’s over-the-top, shrieking portrayal was a sign of something seriously wrong. The next night he went mute in the middle of the play, and at the after-show party he slapped MacPherson and threatened to stab another man who intervened when he was harassing a young woman.

He described some of his internal mayhem in an e-mail to his Oxford tutor, Dr Glenn Black, which he sent the day before he killed Lucy. He was descending into what would shortly be diagnosed as schizophrenia. He could hear people having sex at houses on the Hill. “By now I was starting to put two and two together. Sixty bats had suddenly taken up residence in the



**Left: Michelle Venis, who reportedly took crack with Jaggs and MacPherson while staying at the latter’s house. She said she left after hearing that Jaggs had suggested to MacPherson that they rape her**

## Jaggs took a chainsaw from his parents’ home some days before Lucy’s death and went to find MacPherson and kill him

window frame of my bedroom and would fly around our Victorian manor at night.”

One night he sat in the Castle talking in French. What once seemed like harmless eccentricities now seemed disturbing. William had always enjoyed showing off his wit, but now seemed to enjoy messing with people’s heads, as if to disconcert them and make fun of them. What were his parents thinking or doing? His younger brother, James, by all accounts a kind, stable young man, was also reportedly at his wits’ end and was desperate to help.

There was another, older man who hung around with William and MacPherson and was suspected of taking drugs with them and of being a malign influence on William. Jason Braham thought of MacPherson as a serpent and later called this other man a “pornographer”. The man has since left the Harrow area, but one night in the Castle before he went away, William tried to strangle him, and was banned from the pub.

Jason Braham had left some pupils’ exam work of large canvas paintings on exhibition in the art department. While he was away on a school trip, someone got in and slashed the paintings with a knife. Braham thought: “This isn’t just vandalism, this is someone who’s got a serious mental problem.”

The police were notified after more thefts from that year’s summer school and further acts of vandalism, though again there does not seem to have been a formal investigation. The head of HSEL went to see the head to complain about William. Lenon says this is the only time anyone made a direct complaint to him about William. Another adult involved with the school invested some energy in trying to find proof of Jaggs and

MacPherson’s drug-taking, so that some action could be taken. He even scabbled around in some bushes where he’d heard the two young men had been seen, but there were no clues to be found. Still, William was asked to leave the summer school and his parents took him to Devon, to get him away and perhaps in the hope that he would focus on his studies, with the Oxford exam to retake.

In the e-mail to his tutor, William said he spent a lot of time copying out extracts from the works he was supposed to be studying. After 20 pages of scribbles, a change occurred. “I found myself tuned to a higher level of auditory hallucinations. Language had no meaning for me as I now considered it a lie.” He heard screams, which became louder when he returned home. There was loud screaming of sex taking place. “I should add that it turned me on.”

According to William, he took a chainsaw from his parents’ home some days before Lucy’s death and went to find MacPherson and kill him. He was only prevented from gaining access to MacPherson’s parents’ home by a

change to the key-code. He said he told Zoe to warn MacPherson. He had earlier sent her a text: “I’m seeing a shrink today – as you correctly noted I’m a total psychopath. Have a nice day.” That was a lie, or half one, as he was not seeing a shrink at all.

According to MacPherson he had begun to distance himself from William in the months before Lucy’s death. He cannot have seen much of William while he was in Devon, but there is evidence that they were still hanging around together, taking drugs.

One day, Alice Braham was visiting her sister Lucy and heard the conversation of two men walking past, the words “shag her senseless on the kitchen floor” distinguishing themselves. Alice was shocked and went to look out of the window, but Lucy said: “Don’t bother looking, it’s just Jaggs and MacPherson.” When I asked him about it, MacPherson said it wasn’t him.

On September 13, Jaggs sat down to write the long e-mail to his tutor at Oriel, in which he outlined the full measure of his psychosis and his murderous intent. “Dear Glenn, I must apologise if this message is unexpected,” he began. “I must also apologise for the length...” It ended: “Glenn, this is a paranoid delusional nightmare brought on by the use of drugs. Otherwise I am in good health and hope you are too.”

The Jaggses’ family cat had given birth to kittens. Alan Jaggs apparently suggested to his son that he could give or sell the kittens to their neighbours. William had taken no medication that day, or any drugs, he said. There were no voices, not to begin with. He went out into the street and saw Lucy and asked her if she’d like a kitten, but she said she could not look after ➤

**Barnaby Lenon, Harrow School’s current head, who stresses the school’s zero tolerance towards drugs and reputation for pastoral care**

it. When he went home, William heard a voice telling him to make sure she took a kitten, so he went to her house and handed one to her and walked away before she could give it back.

After a few minutes she called his home to say she was bringing the kitten back. He went out and met her in the street and took the kitten. She said the kitten had enjoyed a fun adventure, but William felt rejected and unhappy. He went home and felt angry at Lucy. He decided to go back and force himself into the house as a game to show the kitten around. She was smiling when she opened the door and he tried to charm her. But, he said, as he went into the house the kitten was becoming irrelevant.

He tried to kill himself afterwards, he said, so that they could both die and be together.

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Four weeks after the murder, a team of inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate began a four-day examination of Harrow. Their report made special mention of the school’s excellent pastoral care but failed to mention that a former pupil, the son of a head of department, had killed another member of the school’s community on school premises a month earlier.

Even Jason Braham concedes that the school makes great efforts to care for the pupils. But what about the staff and their families? Why had nobody put two and two together and realised Jaggs was ill? Why hadn’t his parents expressed concern about him? Why did Lucy have to die? Alan Jaggs continued teaching at the school. As far as the Brahams knew, he had never offered to resign. He had sent them a “nice” note – not an e-mail, as was reported at the time – expressing his regrets about what had happened. “It was nice of him to do that,” said Jason.

Jason said he never really felt angry towards the parents of his daughter’s killer, though he thought they were naive. “No, I felt bad for them actually because, you know, the last thing... They wouldn’t have wanted to hurt Lucy, or hurt us, and they would have been... It must have been shattering for them, I should think.” Jason’s wife, Julienne, invited Alan’s wife, Stella, round for coffee – not to talk about the murder but just to see how they were coping.

Jason soon realised that to go back to school would have been to carry on as if nothing had happened, which would have been impossible. So he left, while Jaggs stayed on.

During my recent interview with the head, Barnaby Lenon, I said how strange it looked that the father of the killer remained at the school while the father of the victim had felt obliged to leave. Had Jaggs never come to him and offered to go instead? The head would not tell me what had been discussed between him and Jaggs. He said Jaggs, while longer-serving than Braham, was actually younger and not yet ready to think about retiring.



whereas he thought Braham had already decided to go anyway, before Lucy was killed.

Even though we talked for many hours, I don’t think Braham was ever sure he wanted the article to appear. There were certainly things he wanted to say, warnings he wanted to give that might save others. He was concerned not to come across as bitter, anxious to convey that he did not feel angry, though in truth I suspect he felt very angry indeed. He said there was a lot of denial about Jaggs’s behaviour. I think he was right, but perhaps he too was reluctant to admit just how angry he really was.

He certainly believed, at the time of her death, that the school had failed his daughter. But he also, I think, was being torn apart by grief and distress on the one hand and, on the other, the same loyalty to the school and its community that everyone else involved seems to feel. This

## He told psychiatrists the knife was a substitute for his erection. It went along with the themes of rejection and inadequacy

was a private world that, if not exactly secretive, was certainly not a place to put its dirty linen on public display. The police were surprised the case didn’t receive more attention. As one officer said to me, they thought this could be the case to blow the lid off that private world.

Jason Braham spoke movingly about the contrast between Lucy – “our lovely, funny, creative, principled daughter” – and the young man who tore her from them, “the selfish act of a depraved, woefully immature young man in the grip of, it seems, schizophrenia”.

Some four psychiatric experts examined William and all reached the same conclusion, which meant he couldn’t be convicted of murder but of manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. He’d go to Broadmoor as a patient rather than to jail as a prisoner.

William told the psychiatrists the knife had been a substitute for his erection and, to the police officers in the case, this suggested a condition known as pica, in which the perpetrator derives sexual pleasure from stabbing his victims with sharp objects. It went along with the themes of rejection and inadequacy.

For Braham, William’s crime was all the worse because of the elite world he had been born into. “Over-privileged and self-satisfied drug-users are the more contemptible than those born into disadvantage.” He blamed too the “drugs-taking

fraternity at Oxford”, which he also saw as encouraging William.

His tutor would not comment on the case except to say that he had forwarded William’s e-mail to the college provost, who had passed it on to the police. It arrived too late. I was told that many people at the school wondered why William’s parents had been unable to seek help for their son. Did they perhaps feel they would be judged or shamed by the admission that help was needed or that their son was sick?

Lenon told me the school has now changed its policies to make it clear that medical resources, including a newly appointed psychologist, are there for staff and families who need them. He was keen to stress the school’s zero tolerance towards drugs and its reputation for pastoral care. He thought I ought to study schizophrenia and pointed out how difficult it was to diagnose.

He was right, of course. All those things were true, but I also noted how little he knew of the events at the school that preceded the killing. There was little police involvement or investigation of the incidents of stealing and vandalism that might have led to action and could have disclosed a troubled psyche. It is, however, easy to be wise with hindsight.

In the meantime, Jason Braham was left wondering whether William’s illness was induced by his drug-taking or if the drug-taking was a symptom of his psychotic illness. Braham

read up all he could on the proven link between the use of cannabis and marijuana and the onset of psychosis. The experts said that William’s schizophrenia had probably been developing in him since he was 14 or 15, which was around the time he started taking drugs. There is certainly good medical evidence that some drugs, including amphetamines, cocaine and cannabis, heighten and increase the schizophrenic’s experience of hallucinations.

William’s condition was said by his lawyer to have improved dramatically once he was in Broadmoor and being properly treated. He was said to have become suicidal all over again when the enormity of his offence hit home. He wished he could apologise to Braham. When I told Braham this, he said he hoped he would have the grace to accept William’s apology when it came. He knew being forgiving was supposed to help, but for the most part he just felt pity for William. Pity, and a lot of contempt ■

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**‘At Haut de la Garenne, criminals were thrown in with children who had done nothing wrong’**

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