

Josef Fritzl's regime of terror

Austrian Josef Fritzl – who for 24 years held his daughter captive in a windowless bunker and fathered seven children by her – faces charges of murder, rape, false imprisonment, incest, and abuse



■ **1977:** Fritzl believed to have begun abusing his 11-year-old daughter **Elisabeth**

■ **Aug 24, 1984:** Fritzl allegedly drugs and handcuffs Elisabeth, locking her in secret cellar beneath home extension

■ **Sep:** Story is spread that Elisabeth has run off to join a cult. A letter in Elisabeth's handwriting tells her family not to look for her



40 Ybbstrasse: Original 1890s house. In 1978 Fritzl receives planning permit for extension with basement. In 1983, building inspectors verify extension complies with regulations but fail to discover secret cellars



9,744 days

Period spent by Elisabeth Fritzl in underground cellars without ever seeing natural daylight

1890s cellars

■ **1988-1989:** **Kerstin**, first of Elisabeth's seven children, is born in cellar. An earlier pregnancy ended in miscarriage. Her second child, **Stefan**, is born around a year later

■ **May 1993:** Fritzl tells authorities that nine-month-old baby is found outside family home along with note from Elisabeth asking for child to be cared for. Baby **Lisa** lives with Fritzl and wife Rosemarie

■ **Dec 1994:** Second baby, **Monika**, "discovered" outside home. Elisabeth's parents are given permission to become foster parents

■ **May 1996:** Elisabeth gives birth to twin boys, but one dies after three days. Fritzl allegedly burns body

■ **1997:** Surviving twin, **Alexander**, moved upstairs to main house

■ **2005:** Elisabeth gives birth to another son, **Felix**. He is bought up with Kerstin and Stefan in cellar

New cellars built as nuclear fallout shelter

Total of eight locked doors secure access to secret cellars

Prison: Total floor area of 50-60 square metres. Cellars are just 1.7m high

Two bedrooms plus small living area with shower, sink and toilet. Two-ring cooker to heat food and drinks

■ **Apr 19, 2008:** Kerstin is admitted to hospital with multiple organ failure. Police urge Elisabeth to contact them

■ **Apr 26:** Elisabeth, now 42, and her 73-year-old father appear together at hospital where Kerstin is being treated. Fritzl is arrested on suspicion of sexual abuse and abduction

■ **Apr 27:** Elisabeth and her children are taken into care



■ **Apr 29:** DNA tests confirm that Fritzl is father of Elisabeth's children

■ **May:** Kerstin recovers after one month in coma

■ **Nov 13:** Formal charges laid against Fritzl include murder over death of twin soon after birth. Fritzl faces life-long imprisonment

■ **March 16, 2009:** Josef Fritzl goes on trial