

In May of 2002 I relocated from Shreveport, Louisiana to Grayson, Georgia to live with my daughter, Dianne Hamlin and her husband, Pernell in order to be near family. I enjoyed my stay and felt very comfortable and accepted as part of their family. My living conditions were such that I had total privacy with my own room and a private bathroom; however I wanted to maintain my independence, and thus began my search for affordable housing in that area. I was surprised to find that having a savings account would prevent me from getting senior assisted housing with completing depleting my life's savings rendering me indigent.

After discussing my dilemma over several months with my youngest son Robert Watts and his wife, Jolita they researched and shared with me that Ohio had programs more geared toward assisting senior citizens in my condition which includes being dialyzed 3 times a week in a clinic setting. Therefore, I was invited to move to Ohio to live with them until my apartment was ready within 30 days of my arrival. They then requested that I send them all pertinent information such as, rental history, prescription receipts, and social security benefits, etc. in order to secure my apartment and receive senior citizen benefits. I was anxious to see he and his family for I had not seen him in over 12 years, and also looking forward to seeing 2 of my grandchildren for the first time. With that in mind my daughter and her husband moved me to Ohio during the month of March, 2003.

Upon arrival I learned that my son and his family lived in government subsidized housing, of which there was really no room for me with four children and two adults already living in a 3 bedroom apartment. Their living room area became my bedroom, therefore I had no sense of privacy. Anyone entering their apartment through the front door was immediately in my room. This arrangement was neither discussed nor expected by me. I was under the impression that I would at least have a bedroom in their apartment until my apartment was ready within the 30 days of my arrival as promised. I later found that they had another plan for me. There was never any attempt to get me an apartment, and they began to suggest that I live with them indefinitely because of my age and physical condition. They told me that they were planning to buy a new home with adequate space for me. I knew that I was able to live alone. I had lived alone for at least 5 years while on dialysis prior to moving to Georgia. My only reason for relocating from Louisiana was to be near family.

Things began to change after I had settled in and decided to cope with the overcrowded deplorable living conditions that I was subjected to live in. Since I knew that I was relocating to a new area, I withdrew my life's savings of ten thousand in cash to deposit in a bank near my new residence. With that in mind I asked my son to take me to the bank to obtain a safe deposit box to secure my funds until I could decide what next steps to take protect my savings. After my son found out that I had that sum of money in cash, he and his wife changed dramatically. I was given drugs and forced to sign a "Power of Attorney" form with my son as appointee which gave him control over all of my assets, namely my cash.

Shortly thereafter, one night he and his wife attacked me by standing over my bed yelling and demanding that I give them my safe deposit box keys. After fearing for my life I gave in and surrendered the keys. He and his wife went to the bank took my \$10,000.00 and opened an account in his name at the same bank (Bank One) with my money.

Prior to each visit to all doctors, I was given drugs, which made me very sluggish and impeded my understanding and ability to effectively answer questions about my own personal being. My speech was very slurred and I could hear the questions, but was unable to hold my head upright and answer while sitting slumped over in a wheel chair. While taking the excessive amounts of drugs my health deteriorated to a point that I only had enough strength to walk back and forth to the bathroom, while being totally confined to a wheelchair and/or walker. (This was totally in contrast with my condition while in Georgia, as I frequently took morning strolls through the neighborhood.) They repeatedly told the doctors that attended me that I was “**slightly demented**”. Since I was unable to speak for myself, my son was able to convince the doctors that I was demented, and later obtained a letter from one of them stating that I needed a representative to take care of my personal affairs. He immediately became the payee of my Social Security benefits, therefore I never saw another Social Security check during my entire stay in Ohio.

I began to feel as though I was in prison. I was not allowed to prepare meals for myself. I was also forbidden to answer the door or go outside. The only times I was allowed outside was on my trips to and from my dialysis clinic to receive my treatment. All of my telephone privileges were suspended and I was even unable to call my daughter. When she called she was told that I was asleep. In most cases I was asleep because of constantly being given drugs. My son also told me that any conversations that were made on any phones in his house were being monitored and recorded. Subsequently all of the phones were locked in their bedroom while they were away from home. They made all attempts to prevent me from telling anyone about my horrible living conditions.

As my physical condition began to deteriorate they would tell me repeatedly that most dialysis patients die shortly after being on dialysis, and that my death was imminent (at no time did I believe that, since I have been on dialysis for the last 12 years leading a normal life to include traveling on occasions). They then contacted an insurance agent to come to the apartment for them to purchase life insurance on me as they planned my funeral. So they purchased a life insurance policy on me and I was not allowed to speak to the agent or comment on anything regarding my welfare. They sat in the kitchen made arrangements as I sat on the side of my bed helpless and ignored.

To insure that I would not escape I was threatened by my son and told that if I spoke to anyone about what was going on in that apartment, that he would know about it. Robert and Jolita took all of my identification, to include by Social Security card, State ID, Medicare card, credit cards, and of course all of my cash. I was stripped of all of my dignity and independence. The entire, family to include my grandchildren were told not

to do anything for me as they treated me with little or no respect by ignoring anything I asked them to do (things as little as bringing me a glass of water).

Robert and Jolita immediately begin spending my money and using my credit cards while forging my name. They began to buy new wardrobes for the entire family, of course except for me. I was given my daughter-in-laws old shoes to wear that were too small and hurt my feet. To continue with insults, Jolita, without my consent cut my hair very short so that I would not have a need to go to a salon. This was yet another attempt to reduce my chances of having contact with the public to seek help and possibly escape this environment.

Penniless and begging for a coke at my dialysis clinic, I was asked by the social worker if everything was ok at home. I explained my horrible life threatening situation, and she pleaded to her for help. The social worker contacted the Department of Adult Protective Services who spoke with me and immediately contacted my daughter, Dianne to make arrangements to take me back to Georgia.

During one of my routine visits to my gynecologist I was left alone by Robert during my examination long enough to explain my situation to the doctor. She allowed me to call my daughter and explained the situation. My daughter then told me that she had already spoken to the social worker and was making arrangements to pick me up in a couple of days.

When my daughter arrived she met with the representative of Adult Protective Services, Judy Depew at my dialysis clinic. Judy contacted the police for an escort to my son's apartment to gather a few of my personal belongings to include medications, and finally my personal documents and credit cards which were severely over the limit, and delinquent. We were unable to get access to any of my other personal items to include furniture and clothing because Robert refused to give us the key to the storage unit where my items were stored pending me getting my own apartment.

After returning to Georgia on July 22, 2003 my health has vastly improved, and I am able to occasionally take my morning strolls through the neighborhood again. I am completely mobile again without the assistance of a wheelchair or walker. I have even begun to go on shopping trips by myself pushing a shopping cart in excess of an hour, on several occasions.

I have forgiven my son and his wife for the abuse that they subjected me to; however, the only thing that I request is the return of my **money** and my additional **personal belongings** that were left in storage.

A word to the wise, ***“Do not be afraid to pray and ask for help. When you receive the answer, act upon it!”***