

19 March 2007

Re: Parole Hearing for Patricia Murtaugh – Inmate # 06G0955

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the son and only child of Elisabeth Shanks, one of Patty Murtaugh's victims. I apologize for sending this to you on the eve of Murtaugh's parole hearing, but I learned of it just moments ago.

Briefly, the actions of Murtaugh have caused my mother irreparable harm. They have caused her emotional and physical suffering from which she will never recover. I am not alleging any physical contact by Murtaugh – but Murtaugh's actions have caused my mother's physical condition to rapidly deteriorate to a state where she is almost bedridden.

Before Murtaugh's theft of my mother's money, my mother was an extremely independent woman. Well into her 90s, she lived alone in her apartment in the Bronx. She did all her own grocery shopping at near-by stores and prepared her own meals. Because her hearing was deteriorating and she did not want to lose the ability to communicate, she was taking a sign-language course in mid-town Manhattan. She traveled alone on the bus and on the subway to these classes. She would have been remarkably spry for a woman a decade younger. For a woman her age, her ability to live and travel without assistance was amazing.

What Murtaugh did changed that. My mother's condition has deteriorated dramatically since she was victimized. She now requires an attendant be with her 24 hours a day. She cannot move from her bed, even to the bathroom without assistance. Her will to live has also deteriorated. She constantly asks why Murtaugh did this to her.

From my conversations with the Assistant District Attorney who prosecuted her case, Greg Pavlides, I have learned that Murtaugh insists she had my mother's permission to open a joint bank account and that she is in a state of denial about the harm she has caused.

I assure you, Murtaugh was never given permission to have access to my mother's money. Murtaugh phoned me in Canada where I live to try to get my approval for Power of Attorney. I told that there was no need for that. I asked only that she make sure that my mother was writing monthly checks for her rent and utility bills. In phone calls with my mother, she told me she had no intention of giving Murtaugh access to her bank accounts.

Murtaugh took advantage of a vulnerable elderly woman – solely for her own financial gain. She also exploited a family connection to gain my mother's trust, something I find almost as reprehensible as the theft itself. (Murtaugh's mother was a friend of my

mother's sister – although Murtaugh herself never had any prior contact with either my mother or my mother's sister.)

Murtaugh stole my mother's future and destroyed any chance of my mother enjoying the few remaining years of life she has left. My mother spent her entire life helping others. She worked as a physician long past the retirement age of most of her colleagues. She also planned and saved for her future. Now, her future is bleak.

As I have mentioned, her physical and emotional health has suffered. Not only does she now require round-the-clock care, it appears she will be unable to spend her remaining years in the apartment she has loved living in for so many years.

Murtaugh stole almost every penny my mother saved during her career. What little Murtaugh missed, is rapidly being spent on home-care. When it is gone, my mother will no longer be able to afford to live in her apartment and will have to go to a state-sponsored nursing home. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with what institutions are available in the United States, but from my knowledge of state-sponsored nursing homes in Canada, they are a far cry from the conditions my mother had hoped to spend her remaining years. It is not an understatement to say Murtaugh ruined my mother's life – and stole her future. Murtaugh took what my mother had worked so hard to save, destroyed any chance of living her final years in her own home, and made her into just a shadow, both physically and emotionally, of what she had been, just months before.

In addition to just learning of the parole hearing, I have also just learned that my mother's 94 year-old sister has flown from England where she lives so that she can testify about the terrible impact Murtaugh's actions have had on my mother. Unfortunately, a death in the family means she will not be able to attend the hearing.

So, it is up to me to try to convince you, to urge you, to require Murtaugh to serve her full sentence. From what I have been told, Murtaugh continues to refuse to accept the seriousness of her actions. She has made no attempt to make any restitution other than what was ordered by the court. Our calculations are that she stole close to \$200,000 from my mother. The District Attorney was unable to trace all the money that disappeared from my mother's account and accepted a guilty plea to a lesser amount. But even this amount is considerable and the court-ordered \$2,500 my mother received is negligible compared to what was taken.

Given the amount stolen, the lack of any attempt at restitution, the lack of remorse, the abuse of family trust (the use of her mother's relationship with my mother's sister), and the devastating effect this has had on my mother, I ask that Murtaugh's request for parole be denied.

Thank you for assistance in this matter.

Jonathan Shanks (306-537-9482)

