



## THE MOVING NIGHTMARE

by Debbie Sue Goodman

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**By Debbie Sue Goodman**

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**PART 1:**

On January 28, 2010 CindyLou, a divorced woman in her late forties, moved back home after her divorce ten years previously. She had a carefree life. She worked full time as a clothing saleswoman. Spent evenings going out with her girlfriends, male friends and had a good relationship with her mother. Sitting in her kitchen one evening, writing her work report while the kitchen television was on. The same television show that her mother was watching. Her mother was sitting on a reclining chair in their house, five steps downstairs in the den. It was a cold evening. The furnace was blowing heat. Her mother "Marge" was watching the television while sipping a cup of tea. A half hour passes by the show is still on. Suddenly, Marge stands up and yells, "I cannot breathe!" (While running towards the front door to get air) CindyLou (Jumps up and out of her chair, leaves the kitchen) and yells, "Where are you going? It's freezing out!" (CindyLou notices her mother's bathrobe is still on the chair and sees her mother standing outside in a sleeveless nightgown gasping for air and holding her chest with one hand. (Frantically) CindyLou tells her to, "Come back in!" She called 911.

After that horrible evening, a series of tragic events occurred for the next year and a half. Little did CindyLou know, after that awful night, that her life was about to drastically change.

Marge was in and out of the emergency room diagnosed with congestive heart failure and went through colon cancer surgery. All the while, CindyLou learned to make decisions she never knew she would have to make all by herself. With no help from her brother and sister who both lived out of state.

After changing her work hours from full to part time she became a part time caregiver to her mother. Taking her to doctor appointments and making sure she took her medication. CindyLou's life changed dramatically. She watched her mother become weak, frail, and progressively worse until she succumbed to her illness and passed away. After her last month-long visit in the hospital.

Following a series of large expenses, she was worried how she could stay in the family home of forty-five years. Considering she was working part time and taking care of their thirteen-year-

old 4-pound Maltese dog. Their Maltese named "Love" was so heartbroken looking for his mother for the next few months. He ended up five months later with the same illness that CindyLou's mother had. The dog's veterinarian prescribed the same medication that Marge had taken. A few months later CindyLou had to take the dog to the vet and make the final decision. The vet said, "It's time." Little "Love" was about to go to heaven to see his mother. Another tragic loss in her life.

CindyLou trying to pay for a large mortgage that she didn't know her mother had on the house, called an agency to ask for help. The agency was trying to help CindyLou get a roommate to move in and help with the monthly bills. They sent three elderly women to the house that couldn't walk a flight of stairs. The home share agency renters couldn't offer CindyLou more than a few hundred dollars a month towards renting a room from her house. CindyLou realized this would not be enough to keep the house along with her salary.

CindyLou got a tax bill for the house in the mail. She then found out that her mother had a senior exemption and homeowner's exemption on the house. Though Cindy inherited the house from her mother, she realized she still could not keep it because she was not a senior yet and the taxes would be exorbitant after a certain amount of time. She called her family attorney and he told her that the taxes will be very high in a year if she does not sell the house.

CindyLou decided to sell the house. But first, she would have to sell one of the family cars. One was twenty years old. One was fifteen years old. She had to decide which one to sell. She decided to sell her mother's car which was a classic car. It broke her heart, but within a month she sold it to a neighbor's twenty-three-year-old son.

CindyLou cried herself to sleep when she realized everything she had lost in such a short time. She wondered how she was going to make the next decision, of selling her family home. She knew it would break her heart. A neighbor, Barbara who was a good friend of her mother's, decided to help her with all her decisions and suggested an idea to her. Barbara suggests that CindyLou have an estate sale. She gave her a name of a company that comes to your home and sets up an estate sale for you. Now, CindyLou had the terrible decision of deciding what to sell in the family home. She knew she needed the extra money to help pay for the monthly mortgage.

After setting up the estate sale, CindyLou knew it was going to be heart breaking to see some of her mother's possessions, clothing, sculptures, and other family items be sold and taken from the house right in front of her eyes. She wondered how she would get through an estate sale. Her mother had hundreds of collections. Over fifty-five years of family heirlooms and collections.

Not everything sold in the first estate sale. She had to have three of them. CindyLou held on to quite a bit of her mother's things because she did not have the heart to part with them.

Following the estate sale she looked at the calendar. She realized time was running out before the taxes would soon skyrocket to an amount she could never afford. Winter arrived and now she had to pay for the snowplow service after a six-inch snowstorm. She realized her mother paid for the maintenance of the house and the mortgage from her mother's social security check. Her mother also worked full time and there were never any worries about paying the bills.

CindyLou had consulted with the family attorney on many occasions. He had instructed her that it would be of her best interest to sell the house and move into something more affordable. The family attorney, Ronald told her that she was running out of time. That the taxes will soon be too high to afford. He was worried she might lose the house if she did not sell it before the end of the year. He also told her that since it's an older house it may need some major repairs in the near future. CindyLou told him that she agreed and would call one of her mother's friend's Shellie, who was a real estate agent.

She woke up the following morning and got dressed to go to work. It was pouring rain for several hours. The rain kept her up in the middle of the night. She decided to go in the basement to check to make sure everything was okay from the rain. Her mother had previously fixed the basement tile due to seepage. That's when she discovered an inch of water in the corner of the basement. The tile flooring was sticking up in the air underneath a pool table that they had in the home which was not sold during the estate sale. She ran upstairs to get a mop to try and push the water into a sewer drain in the middle of the room. She had to get to work soon. She found the name of the repair man that her mother used and called him.

The repairman came over the following day and told her there was seepage coming from the wall and it needed \$350 worth of repairs. She charged it. She met with the real estate agent Shellie three days later. The realtor informed her that it's difficult to sell a house in the winter, but she would try her best. After CindyLou was very busy during the winter season in her job. There were a few house showings, but no one was interested. After a month of showing the house, there was a twelve-inch snowstorm. CindyLou had to call the snowplow company her mother used for previous snowstorms. She went into the living room because she saw something on the ceiling but didn't know what it was. It appeared to be a damp spot. She stepped on a step stool, felt the ceiling and it appeared to be wet.

Handyman repairs.

Fifteen-year-old car battery and radiator repairs.

Cement around house was buckling from the snow repaired.

A piece of the fence needed repairing and right gutter flew off and garage door handle broke.

She had an offer on the house. The buyers had family that lived in the area. But the potential buyers wanted a lot of expensive repairs done before they bought it, so she had to turn the offer down.

A good offer was finally made. These buyers also had family in the area. They wanted to buy the house. Even though it needed a new roof and some other repairs. She could still show the house to other buyers until a contract was signed and it was sold.

CindyLou would only have 6 weeks to find a place to live if she sold the house to the last potential buyer. They wanted to move in quickly. She couldn't get a mortgage because she only worked part time in which case her attorney advised that she rent an apartment until she could get more hours from work.

In the following week CindyLou was picking up cartons from the grocery store. She sought the help from one of her best girlfriends and the guy she was dating for the last few years.

CindyLou was at work and the real estate agent called her and tells her that there is yet, another family interested in seeing the house. The realtor told CindyLou that she needed to be there to show the house because he had a family party that he had to attend. She agreed she would be home at 6:00 pm to show the house.

CindyLou gets home a few minutes before 6:00 pm and the prospective buyers were late. CindyLou always kept the house immaculate so there wasn't much to clean up. At 6:30 pm CindyLou calls her realtor to ask if the people are still coming to see the house. The Realtor sends her a text message that they are going to be there in fifteen minutes.

CindyLou is looking out the window. She is waiting for the people to arrive so she can show them her house. After five minutes goes by Cindy receives another text message from her realtor again. He tells her that in a half hour there's another prospective buyer that wants to see the house. The realtor tells her that it's another husband and wife that flew in from out of town. The husband was being transferred to Chicago and they needed a place rather quickly. The realtor told Cindy that there will be a realtor with each family to show the house with Cindy. Cindy thanked him and she will let him know how the showings go after they leave.

Both families looked through the house and within forty-five minutes they all left and Cindy did not know if either family liked the house or if they would make an offer.

Cindy sends a text message to her realtor telling him to please let her know if he hears anything from the families if they like the house or not.

The following morning Cindy is getting ready for work and she receives a phone call from her realtor.

He says, "It looks like the family from out of town is very interested in the house. They would like to see it again this evening and I hope you will be home to show it."

Cindy replies, "You won't be here to show it with me"? The realtor responds, I have another apartment showing in downtown Chicago and I won't be able to be there, I'm sure you will be fine showing the house again. Cindy, "Ok, I will let you know what happens."