

Native Legal Info

THE EXPLOITATION OF ELDERS

Éducaloi, in collaboration with the Quebec Native Women's Association, presents Native Legal Info. It is intended to inform Aboriginal women of their rights and the legal actions that can allow them to defend those rights.

Agathe goes to visit her aunt Harriette, as she always does on Monday nights before Bingo at the community hall.

Agathe: You're not ready yet, Harriette? We're going to be late because you make such a fuss over yourself. We're not going to a wedding (they laugh)! I bet all this fuss is for Joseph (laugh)!

Harriette: (laughing) Stop teasing me! We're going to be late; Bingo starts in a half hour!

(they hear a door open...)

Agathe: Oh! Hi Paul!

Paul: Hi! Ma... I need some money, lend me \$100.

Harriette: (her tone drastically changes) No, I don't have any money! All I have is my old-age pension, how do you expect me to give you any money? It's bad enough I lent you \$200 last week and you still haven't paid me... You never pay back any money I lend you.

Paul: Ma, don't play games with me! I really need that money. I know you have some, you just got your pension! "Come on", lend me \$100.

Harriette: (in a lower voice) Paul, you know I have to buy food, and pay my electricity and phone bills.

Paul: Ma, I'm the only one of your children who takes care of you! I deserve it!

Harriette: I told you already, I can't lend you any money. I won't have enough to get through the month.

Paul: Do you want me to stop visiting you? Is that what you want, to be alone? ... (voice getting louder) Nobody to shovel your walk in winter, nobody to

help you do your grocery... huh? You don't think I do enough for you, is that it? Maybe you'd rather live in a nursing home... If I'm not there to take care of you, you know what will happen!

Harriette: Here, take this, it's all I can lend you and don't come and ask me again! That's the last time.

Paul: I won't get very far with this, but it will do for now. Bye!

Harriette: He's not doing very well. You know, ever since his wife left him, he's been a bit depressed!

Agathe: Don't make excuses for him, auntie. I always knew that Paul wasn't quite well, but I didn't know that he had resorted to taking advantage of his own mother! You can't let him do this to you. It's financial abuse and you have to stand up for your rights!

Harriette: But what can I do? He's my son, after all...

Agathe: You can report the situation to the *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* (Quebec human rights commission), who will investigate. If the *Commission* finds that you are the victim of financial abuse, someone will help find solutions for you, your family and the people around you, so that the abuse stops and your living conditions improve.

If you are an older adult experiencing a similar situation, you must defend your rights. Speak to those around you or to any interveners working with you. They can help you to get informed and help report the situation to the *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* in your area.

Native Legal Info is made possible by the financial collaboration of the ministère de la Justice du Québec.