

## AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS

BEFORE ME the undersigned authority personally appeared HEIDI LAW who being first duly sworn deposes and says:

1. My name is Heidi Law, I am over the age of 18 years, and make this statement on personal information.
2. I worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant at the Palm Gardens nursing home from March, 1997 to mid-summer of 1997. While I was employed at Palm Gardens, occasionally I took care of Theresa Schiavo. Generally, I worked the 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. shift, but occasionally also would work a double shift, until 7 a.m. the following morning.
3. At Palm Gardens, most of the patient care was provided by the CNAs, so I was in a good position to judge Terri's condition and observe her reactions. Terri was noticeable, because she was the youngest patient at Palm Gardens.
4. I know that Terri did not receive routine physical therapy or any other kind of therapy. I was personally aware of orders for rehabilitation that were not being carried out. Even though they were ordered, Michael would stop them. Michael ordered that Terri receive no rehabilitation or range of motion therapy. I and Olga would give Terri range of motion anyway, but we knew we were endangering our jobs by doing so. We usually did this behind closed doors, we were so fearful of being caught. Our hearts would race and we were always looking out for Michael, because we knew that, not only would Michael take his anger out on us, but he would take it out more on Terri. We spoke of this many times.
5. Terri had very definite likes and dislikes. Olga and I used to call Terri "Fancy Pants," because she was so particular about certain things. She just adored her baths, and was so happy afterward when she was all clean, smelling sweet from the lotion her mother provided, and wearing the soft nightgowns her mother laundered for her. Terri definitely

did not like the taste of the teeth-cleaning swabs or the mouthwash we used. She liked to have her hair combed. She did not like being tucked in, and especially hated it if her legs were tightly tucked. You would always tell when Terri had a bowel movement, as she seem agitated and would sort of “scoot” to get away from it.

6. Every day, Terri was gotten up after lunch and sat in a chair all afternoon. When Terri was in bed, she very much preferred to lie on her right side and look out the window. We always said that she was watching for her mother. It was very obvious that her mother was her favorite person in the whole world.

7. I worked side-by-side with another CNA named Olga and could tell that she and Terri were especially close. Olga took a definite personal interest in Terri, and Terri responded to her. I could tell that Terri was very satisfied and happy with Olga’s attentions to her.

8. When Olga was talking with Terri, Terri would follow Olga with her eyes. I have no doubt in my mind that Terri understood what Olga was saying to her. I could tell a definite difference between the way Terri responded to Olga and the way she reacted to me, until she got used to my taking care of her. Initially, she “clammed up” with me, the way she would with anyone she did not know or was not familiar or comfortable with. It took about the fourth or fifth time taking care of her alone, without Olga, that Terri became relaxed and cooperative and non-resistant with me.

9. Terri reacted very well to seeing a picture of her mother, which was in her room. Many times when I came on duty it would be lying face down where she could not see it.

10. At least three times during any shift where I took care of Terri, I made sure to give Terri a wet washcloth filled with ice chips, to keep her mouth moistened. I personally saw her swallow the ice water and never saw her gag. Olga and I frequently put orange juice or apple juice in her washcloth to give her something nice to taste, which made her happy. On three or four occasions I personally fed Terri small mouthfuls of Jello, which she was able to swallow and enjoyed immensely. I did not do it more often only because I was so afraid of being caught by Michael.

11. On one occasion Michael Schiavo arrived with his girlfriend, and they entered Terri's room together. I heard Michael tell his girlfriend that Terri was in a persistent vegetative state and was dying. After they left, Olga told me that Terri was extremely agitated and upset, and wouldn't react to anyone. When she was upset, which was usually the case after Michael was there, she would withdraw for hours. We were convinced that he was abusing her, and probably saying cruel, terrible things to her because she would be so upset when he left.
12. In the past, I have taken care of comatose patients, including those in a persistent vegetative state. While it is true that those patients will flinch or make sounds occasionally, they don't do it as a reaction to someone on a constant basis who is taking care of them, the way I saw Terri do.
13. I witnessed a priest visiting Terri a couple of times. Terri would become quiet when he prayed with her. She couldn't bow her head because of her stiff neck, but she would still try. During the prayer, she would keep her eyes closed, opening them afterward. She laughed at jokes he told her. I definitely know that Terri "is in there."
14. The Palm Gardens staff, myself included, were just amazed that a "Do Not Resuscitate" order had been put on Terri's chart, considering her age and her obvious cognitive awareness of her surroundings.
15. During the time I cared for Terri, she formed words. I have heard her say "mommy" from time to time, and "momma," and she also said "help me" a number of times. She would frequently make noises like she was trying to talk. Other staff members talked about her verbalizations.
16. Several times when Michael visited Terri during my shift, he went into her room alone and closed the door. This worried me because I didn't trust Michael. When he left, Terri was very agitated, was extremely tense with tightened fists and some times had a cold sweat. She was much less responsive than usual and would just stare out the window, her eyes kind of glassy. It would take much more time and effort than usual to work her

hands open to clean her palms.

17. I was told by supervisory staff that Michael was Terri's legal guardian, and that it didn't matter what the parents or the doctors or nurses wanted, just do what Michael told you to do or you will lose your job. Michael would override the orders of the doctors and nurses to make sure Terri got no treatment. Among the things that Terri was deprived of by Michael's orders were any kind of testing, dental care or stimulation. I was ordered by my supervisors to limit my time with Terri. I recall telling my supervisor that Terri seemed abnormally warm to the touch. I was told to pull her covers down, rather than to take her temperature. As far as I know, Terri never left her room. The only stimulation she had was looking out the window and watching things, and the radio, which Michael insisted be left on one particular station. She had a television, and there was a sign below it saying not to change the channel. This was because of Michael's orders.
18. As a CNA, I wanted every piece of information I could get about my patients. I never had access to medical records as a CNA, but it was part of my job duties to write my observations down on sheets of paper, which I turned over to the nurse at the nurses station for inclusion in the patients charts. In the case of Terri Schiavo, I felt that my notes were thrown out without even being read. There were trash cans at the nurses stations that we were supposed to empty each shift, and I often saw the notes in them. I made extensive notes and listed all of Terri's behaviors, but there was never any apparent follow up consistent with her responsiveness.
19. I discussed this situation with other personnel at Palm Gardens, particularly with Olga, and another CNA, an older black man named Ewan Morris. We all discussed the fact that we could be fired for reporting that Terri was responsive, and especially for giving her treatment. The advice among the staff was "don't do nothin', don't see nothin' and don't say nothin'." It was particularly distressing that we always had to be afraid that if Michael got upset, he would take his anger out on Terri.
20. I recall an incident when Olga became very upset because Terri started to get a sore

spot, because it might lead to a bedsore. Michael was told about it but didn't seem to care. He didn't complain about it all, in fact, saying "she doesn't know the difference." When Terri would get a UTI or was sick, Michael's mood would improve.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.

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Heidi Law, Affiant

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of September, 2003, by HEIDI LAW, who produced a Florida Driver's License as identification.

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Notary Public

My Commission expires: