

Transcript of Oral History Interview with Malesia Lyles

Interviewee: Malesia Lyles

Interviewer: Nicolette Paglioni

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Location (Interviewee): Indianapolis, Indiana

Location (Interviewer): Cartersville, Georgia.

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Abstract: Malesia Lyles tells the story of the illness in her family from November 2019 through March 2020, and the steps she went through to get medical help. This involves themes of racism, homelessness, shelters, education, and children.

Nicolette Paglioni 00:00

Okay, I'm recording, and I just have a few things I have to say for the record a little formality. So, today is May 24th, 2020. It is currently 11:45 In the morning, I'm in Cartersville. Georgia. Mimi. Wow Yeah. Where are we?

Malesia Lyles 00:19

Oh, wow. Indianapolis, Indiana.

Nicolette Paglioni 00:22

Oh my god. Okay, perfect. Um, and so your full name for the record?

Malesia Lyles 00:28

Is Malesia Elaine Monteria Lyles.

Nicolette Paglioni 00:33

Beautiful. I love that

Malesia Lyles 00:35

What was it? Spanish? Spanish, Hawaiian. And ex-lover? Ex-husband...name.

Nicolette Paglioni 00:46

Excellent. Excellent. Okay. Um, so I guess if we want to launch into the story first. Because I know that's been kind of on the forefront of your mind. And we'll just we'll jump right in.

Malesia Lyles 01:00

Okay, so I'm gonna tell you the stuff that happened before February 28th. Because February 28th, will be the second biggest day. What I will tell you is I might say names and then switch those names to their business acronyms.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:18

Okay.

Malesia Lyles 01:19

So, when you'll hear if you hear me say different ones that you'll know, okay, she's talking about this person, or this person is because I'll switch it on purpose. I don't want to keep saying today because there's too much time. But so, we came into Family Promise shelter, Indianapolis on November the 19th.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:42

Okay

Malesia Lyles 01:42

Something I don't know; my finances just mess it up and I ended up calling 211. They were like, "Hey, we got a place for you." So, we go there. Family Promise, the way they operate is that a bunch of churches get together. And every week they families are transported from the main day center to a church that designated that whole week. Okay, or however long we got to be there. And so after, so we get there, we leave the day center by five o'clock. Go out to wherever church we're supposed to be at. And then at 4:30 The next morning, we're waking up again...to get back. Yeah, I know. So when we went in, the issue was "your kids E school." So, my kids have been e-schooling, they've been in schooling for a collective number of years. This isn't new to us. So it's like, "okay, um," they were like, "well, you have to do this, this this" and I'm like, "chill." I know what I have to do. And that's okay. Right. We get in. What no one knew is that I was actually the first one sick in my little household. I thought I had the flu. Yeah. But in between, we're still I didn't say anything, because I'm like, "Okay, let me just take what is it? Theraflu?"

Nicolette Paglioni 03:08

Yeah, yeah.

Malesia Lyles 03:10

It's that Theraflu. I'm like, okay, maybe I feel better. But we still...so now we have to transfer my daughter's e-school to their next online school here in Indiana. Okay, so it's called Hoosier Academy of Indianapolis? I'll probably say Hoosier Academy? Right? Or H.A., just let you know. And so

Malesia Lyles 03:36

And so, we're transferring, and by the time we get that around, probably in a probably in the late part of November, the first day, so it's a hybrid online school. We've never done that before, where you go, you e-school Monday through Wednesday, and then Thursday and Friday, they go all day to a brick-and-mortar building. I've never done that before. And yeah, I've never heard of a hybrid school. And I'm like, "Okay, right, let's try this girl." So, you can you know, associate my girls have no issues with social socialization. No, IEPs no 504s. We don't have that. I'm not against any person that does, but we don't we don't have it. And they are testing high anyway. They are reading novels, like big old thick novels. I like I say, where do you get it? So, so we go to the school and the very first day they are in the school, it was testing, you know, the very first day they went, and the teacher was like, Do you know they're testing so high? I'm like, "Yeah, that's Whoa." And so now, here's where I start getting ill.

Nicolette Paglioni 03:36

I'll take notes.

Nicolette Paglioni 04:54

Okay. When is that? That's in November.

Malesia Lyles 04:58

That's in November. Let's see. Yeah, so pretty much when I stepped into that shelter, I started getting sick. Okay, so but it wasn't up to vomiting or anything like that it was just a fever back and forth, back and forth. And I will try to get as much rest as possible. But you still have to understand you got this shelter staff that's like bombarding and then this every day, you know, so just put that all together, right? So, now it is January 6. And I'm sitting up here, and I'm looking at my daughter, Phoebe. She's three minutes older than her sister. So, I just want you to know that she, you know, very particular sometimes. And yeah, and Phoebe says, "Mama, I don't feel so good." So, she starts throwing up. And so, I say, "Okay," well, I bought some meclizine I know about that. They used to that used to be doctor prescribe with to pregnant women back in the day. So, now it's over the counter. Yeah, no. And thank God, I bought it from Amazon. It was like 100 of the packets, like it works for me. And so, for two days, she's thrown up to whole day. And I said, "Okay, let me" you know, I was like, "let me just I'm monitoring this." So, even though I'm in a shelter I have apparently, I was the most like readymade people ever they weren't used to somebody's character first day kit, their own having their own stuff. They weren't used to that you were used to somebody that whatever you defy what homelessness looks like, right? And so I'd never told them my extensive extensive background, and any dealings with education or anything, because I realized that the director hated people that each school he even used his practical to try to dissuade me to put them into a brick and mortar school. And and so this was all happening from November 19th, you know, up to this point. And he even went so far as to come in and he would disrupt my daughter's doing their E-schooling Monday through Wednesday. I hope not. They'll say, "oh my god, yeah, you ain't. You're not there." Oh, well, we get to February 28, and then March the fifth, then you can say, Oh, my God. So, I'm like, I'm trying to keep this like level headed, right? But I'm still like,

not feeling good. And I haven't even told my girls but they know if I'm taking Theraflu you know, Mama, you okay? My No, Phoebe sick. Two days later, we were on Ivy Tech's campus. So now I have switched from putting us in the shelter for doing their E-schooling and putting us on Ivy Tech Community College's campus. Okay, because I knew we would get the study time. And you know, all of that on top of that, my girls play chess. Okay, Mama, don't play cheap. Natural light. Okay. Um, beat us. Sorry. Oh, no. Yeah. So, they play too, and they play chess with the college students. I thought that was cool. You know, why not expose them to that? As much as I can? And so I say, Okay, well, we're on Ivy Tech's campus and we were in a classroom. And I and my daughter, Hannah, her twin sister. She says my mom dizzy. Immediately. I said, let's go. I just something was just, I just was like, let's go. We get to IU medic Methodist Hospital. Walk in. And I'm just I'm like, "Okay, what's wrong? My babies."

Malesia Lyles 09:10

I walked in and I said it was okay. Can you check both of them because this one has been throwing up and this one is? I don't know. She just said she's dizzy. Well, that's all she is. That's what they said. And I said, I'm gonna listen to my girls because that's what I do. They said ma'am, thank you that you walked them in. I said, "what are you talking about? 102-degree temperatures. No walk in. Wow. And I'm thinking did it get did it come from Phoebe? Right. So, they tested them for the flu. This was January the eighth, very specific. They test them for the flu-negative. They tested em, I want to say for pneumonia, negative. What I will say that we know now is whatever those the kids that are coming out and not in Indiana just said they just got their first case they're lying because my girls is on their charts. They had that red stuff on their face. And on their arm on their legs. I was told that it was an allergy. And I said they have we have allergies, but it has never occurred that way, you know, and I just kind of looked at the nurses. And then I said, "Look, we're in a shelter. And I don't know why we're here this long, right?" It just like I knew that I need to get them out of that type of situation. Because it has been prolonged and I don't get it, you know. So, you know. So, the next thing, they give my daughter's ibuprofen, the big ones, right? And the girl I say "Congratulations, you have graduated to 12-year-old medication for it" so well, and their X rays came up clear. There was no congestion.

Nicolette Paglioni 11:05

And they didn't and they said it was just an allergy?

Malesia Lyles 11:08

So, then I said, "okay, is there anything else?" Well, they have a viral respiratory infection. I said, Okay. All right. What do you think I should do? They prescribed me Zofran and the moment they say Zofran I said, "why are they getting Zofran? Now? Zofran is the stronger brother to meclizine. Okay, being that they usually give peds patients with cancer. It's an anti-nausea. Yes, yes. I got that.

Malesia Lyles 11:47

Oh my gosh.

Malesia Lyles 11:50

To stop nausea and vomiting and I'm just looking at him.

Nicolette Paglioni 11:57

Do my children have cancers or what?

Malesia Lyles 12:01

So, I'm, I'm like, Okay, guys, "we I'm tired. And we've been here for like four hours." Okay, so I said, "All right, what regimen do you need me to put them on?" So, they gave me a script for Tylenol, ibuprofen, rotating every four to six hours, doesn't that so if you if you listen to the concoction, that I'm about to tell you. It's exactly what they were telling people when they first you know when same exact stuff. So, it was Tylenol, ibuprofen Zofran. That's every four to six hours Zofran automatically, and they take allergy medication. So, they're not going to be able to do anything, they are zonked out and they are tired. I'm not forcing my girls at all. Cuz I'm like God heal this. On top of that they had incontinence, diarrhea, we had to buy depends, that's how bad it was. And I got my receipts for when I had to go to the grocery store, and go to CVS Pharmacy. So, I'm kind of I'm gonna just fast forward in time. I'm kind of pissed off now that all of a sudden everybody wants to recognize it. And we had it happen to us in January.

Nicolette Paglioni 13:20

Yeah, you know, I had been thinking about that because [redacted] had it. Not as or not as early as January, but in February she also was on Theraflu. And for like, 24 hours, she was asleep. She was just slept all the way through it. I don't think she ever thought to take her temperature. But for like a week, she was just like zonked, like you said zonked out, and I think, I think too, it's a matter of like, the especially the homeless community and like communities of color and poor communities, like they just don't look at them ever. And I'm like, you don't see that. You know, we get these numbers of cases and they're like, Oh, this is the number of cases I'm like, that's not a real number. You're not counting the people who do like can't can't come forward. Like it's so, its just...

Malesia Lyles 14:10

So, then I don't want to standing there talking to them. I like "Okay, God, do you want me to tell them what like I'm in school for or and I'm continuously being in school for triple major Paralegal Studies computer networking and security and business management."

Nicolette Paglioni 14:30

Wow!

Malesia Lyles 14:31

I'm so I haven't even told the shelter staff. You know, I do believe in God and then you know, sometimes even like David, King David at one point in time had to act like he was crazy to get out of a

bad situation. And sometimes I'm just being quiet. Yeah. And I get you just you could talk crazy, right? So, I'm, I'm like, okay, so they give me this. So, you also have to understand to on the same day, the shelter was trying to kick us out. Because I Yes, because so Veronica, who was the case manager there, she's calling me an ER and I'm like, I'm not talking to you. I picked up the phone the third time, and I'm not talking to you, my girls are in. We're in an ER, bye. That was it. And so, what they were kicking meet us out for was because we I didn't, you know, go out and look for a job. I told him what job I wanted. And they told me that it was not considered a job, Uber and Lyft is not considered a job. I said, Okay, well, I don't, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter, because it didn't fit in with a man that wanted control. You can't deal with a person that's in a shelter that you also see her potential, but she won't tell you all the way. And I'm like, I'm just let you act food. So and at the same time, we're sick, right? No one is acknowledging that we were ill. So now I you know, I'm like, Okay, we got to go to the, to the pharmacy to go get it. The pharmacy, you know, after my daughter's went to sleep for two hours out of the four hours after taking that medication in the in the hospital, I got up, got them up, you know, and we walked to the three blocks to the CVS pharmacy, I give them the script for this Oh, friend waited because it was a long line. And what I will say is this, when we went into that room, that er, everybody was wearing masks, everybody, and everyone's like, well, you have the flu? And I'm like, Nah, we don't. Instinct said, No, this is going to be worse than what you think mama? And I'm just like, Okay, let's not try to think about it. Let's focus. And so, it takes an hour for me to get up to the register again. And come to find out this and I wasn't mad at CVS pharmacy because it wasn't their fault. Apparently, the Medicaid that they have. Or that my daughter's half does not cover the Zofran. I said thank you, my girls, you literally could see them in the waiting chairs, sweating. They're just lifeless in the chair. And I could see Phoebe's breathing being very labored. And I immediately pulled out of that insurance card and call Anthem pharmacy and I call anthem customer service, like I am not leaving until we get this medication, period. It took two and a half hours for us to get that those meds. I said that's okay. You know, I mean, it's not right, but it's okay. You know, and so, here's Veronica, the case manager, I call her I said, we're ready to go back to the church, which at that point was on 21st and Post that we were staying in. Because there's other families to better their and so she calls for Lyft. So, did you hear that right? The shelter Executive Director Mike who is her boss? They have a business account with Lyft but says that's not a job, that's right. You just mad. I just that I was

Nicolette Paglioni 18:49

And they and they want to kick you out?

Malesia Lyles 18:56

Yes.

Nicolette Paglioni 18:57

And I just don't understand. I don't understand it. Like I can't

Malesia Lyles 19:03

Yes.

Nicolette Paglioni 19:04

.... comprehend it

Malesia Lyles 19:04

Oh, no, go up but don't comprehend yet. Because [hard to understand] he did something much more crazier than that, you know, so I just, I was just like, so we're gonna be picked up by Lyft that he's, there's no job to take us to this. Okay. So, we get in a lift car. We get to the church. And every church, the crazy experience is, Mike is getting all these great things, because the people at the church are telling me, but they also understand that I am not as dumb as he thinks I am, because they're telling him you know, "she's like really highly educated." She just did. Just kind of like, see, we're not in that shelter for domestic violence. We're not in there for that. We just need a housing. Can you help us get housing that's all on me. To do so, Lord, we get back to the church and the churches like what's going on. At this point I have bought like four boxes of masks. The great news is, is that CVS is right across the street from Walgreens. So, I have bought masks there, and bought masks at CVS, because I knew at this point, okay, their face needs to be covered something is really wrong. The church that we were at old Bethel, he said, The older man, Mr. Rick, he was like, what's going on? I said, I don't know. But this is strange. And I told him and he said, "Well, maybe it's just the flu. I was like, "Okay." For the next 20, the 28 days they couldn't eat. They could not hold out even chicken broth. I overheard and I knew they needed real soup, not just Campbells you know, it's cool to have Campbell's and all that. Sometimes you got to have real homemade soup. So or at least restaurant made so I would Uber that in. And it was hard as a parent to watch what happened, that I got to pick these girls up like their body was lifeless, that I have to take them to the bathroom. Make sure they got showers. And the temperature wouldn't stop. It wouldn't stop.

Malesia Lyles 21:39

And so, like a few days ago, way before you even emailed me, I finally grieved over the process of everything that happened, right? Because I didn't even have time to do that. Since we were going we're about to be bombarded again. And so, like having being sick was not enough. Right. And I just, you know, to be able, as a as a mom to just, you know, I just told my girls a few days ago, I thought they were going back because they were that ill. Yeah. So, I knew if I took them back to the ER, that they were going to give me the same diagnosis, right, I knew it was gonna be the same. We'll keep going mom, and blah, blah, blah. And I was just like, okay, all right. Um, by the beginning of February, they go back to school, they cannot. So, for almost an entire month, they have not been online. They are they're just they're gone. And it was weird, because you could hear something is in their chest. What you couldn't hear. You could hear congestion, but it wasn't there. And it was it was just it's just, it's a different type. It's just a different type of breathing. Yeah. So, I was just like, okay, but here's the catch. Mike. So that's his name Mike shop around his staff. Him, that's Executive Director, Lena, and Miss

Deborah. So, Lina is the aftercare specialist. Ms. Deborah is the front desk staff. [redacted] kept saying she has something that she couldn't get rid of. And she'd been having it since November.

Nicolette Paglioni 23:33

Oh, my goodness. And she kept coming to work?

Malesia Lyles 23:38

All of the kids in there and the mostly the adults got sick with the same exact stuff.

Nicolette Paglioni 23:44

I bet because she kept coming in...

Malesia Lyles 23:47

Yes, [redacted] get sick too. So did [redacted], so did apparently [redacted] recently. That was the front desk office dude but all and [redacted] got sick. The ones I know [redacted] was sick with the site. Same exact thing. And so, I said, "Okay, y'all passin some stuff." But I'm like OCD clean. So, I'm like Lysol clock, the staff would laugh at me for wiping down everything with a mask all. I'm like...

Nicolette Paglioni 24:24

I'm gonna do what I have to.

Malesia Lyles 24:26

Yeah, like I'm trying to disinfect as much as possible, because the day center is not a closed area. Everything is open. So, you can't even lay on the couch and not have it not be cordoned off or door shut because other people can lay in there too. Thereby the passing you know of it going and I'm just like, okay, not for a month. The flu does not last for a month. Nobody's gonna ever tell me that flu normally lasts for an entire month. Never ever in life. No. So I say okay. I don't care what you offer. feel, but it feels it seems like my daughters were coming out of it. So by the beginning of February, around February 2, they, you know, I was monitoring their temperatures, you know, everything. And I said, Okay, you can go back to school now. I will make sure they know that you'll be wearing masks. So understand too, that I have been in contact verbally, physically, and email with the school staff for the entire month of January, right? I even emailed them and said, hey, they're coming back to school, they seem like they're feeling better. I will have them wear a mask, if any of them feel bad. Just call me. And you know, I'll come and get him. Okay. Well, when they were going to the school, they were at Thank you, God, the Ivy Tech that we were at was is on it's on 56 and Post. So, by Lawrence is in Lawrence Township, but literally is not even that it's like five to seven minutes away from their school on the same street. So that worked, right. So, I said, Okay, well, like I said, I've been sick the whole time. Yeah. Which means I could have exposed everybody else between December and January, right? And I'm like this, then I remember the emails from the teachers themselves, that their own children were out two or three weeks. Their own actual key, and I'm just, you know, I keep thinking back to this. And I'm like,

Okay, here's February, they go back. And I'm just proud that the first two days they were in their brick-and-mortar part. I was like, Ooh, they survived. Oh, my gosh. And Baby, baby did vomit once. But the nurse was like, you know, Mom, you already gave us the information. I'm like, yeah. Are you sure you want to cook? She was like, No, we got I'm like, Okay. So, we're gonna fast forward to February the 28th. Okay, and between the time my daughters went back to school now that I am sick. Mm. Well, before February 28. I am at all souls Unitarian Church, and I will sit in at the table talking right? And then I just remember me slumping.

Malesia Lyles 27:44

My girls had to shake me. Mama, you okay? And I said, No. So, when you're in this shelter, and most shelters, you can't leave your kids by themselves, right? Or even with them. Even though my girls know what to do. They know what to do.

Nicolette Paglioni 28:00

Right?

Malesia Lyles 28:01

It was my turn.

Malesia Lyles 28:04

Go to community, North Hospital Community North is very important because it's gonna come up twice. Three times total. But community north I went in there in the ER, and all you could hear is that weird, dry cough. Everywhere. It was everywhere near and I'm like, Why in the heck. And we finally get seen. I come in with a 101-degree temperature. The diagnosis I've never had asthma all of a sudden I have asthma. And then it says common unspecified diagnosis. Now I'm not a medical student, billable Yes. It comes up as pneumonia-billable. But what in the heck this unspecified? Organism me? Right? So, I'm like, "Okay, what do you want me to do?" Same thing that I was given for Phoebe and Hannah, right? And I said, Okay. Yes, diarrhea, incontinence. My arms were red. They were all like red everywhere. I'm like, is this allergy? You know, I'm still kind of questioning it. Right. At this point in time. The President of the United States was at a rally in January and was telling people at this rally that COVID-19 was a liberal, liberal, liberal and democratic hoax. Right. And so remember, it was only supposed to happen to people that traveled to China want to change the old people, right? And then three, you had to have been a traveler anywhere to expose anybody. Well, the only person I knew that traveled everywhere was Mike.

Nicolette Paglioni 30:01

Wow

Malesia Lyles 30:02

He don't know I know that information because you know, I'll just leave you right there. Yeah, no, I know that because I listened very well. And I was just like, okay, maybe, you know, right now I'm still, I'm still not putting two and two together yet, because what I'm hearing, you still don't know what COVID-19 The description of it is right all the way.

Nicolette Paglioni 30:28

And this is in February before we kind of get to I mean, it was way before quarantine. But yes, before we get even the list of symptoms,

Malesia Lyles 30:36

Yes. And so, I'm like, okay. Yes, you do not if you ever have it, don't go. And someone said, Well, maybe you didn't have it. Don't tell me what I didn't have. I know what I know what I know. And I know that they did not have testing available to us, right. And not just homeless. Just a lot of people. Right? They didn't have it. And because if the leader of the world is saying, hey, it don't exist. I'm not gonna sit there and be lying and be like, yeah, don't exist. No. So I'm going on because I'm dealing with it. Yeah, same thing. Can't hold down food. And you do lose your taste. All three of us lost our system. Yeah, all three. And so that's nothing new. Like all of a sudden that's coming down past three weeks, three weeks. I'm like, now too late. And so I said, Okay, I went through my schpeel. It took almost an entire month. Same thing, kind of the same timeline. And on top of that, I forgot to add in. So not only did we have to take, well, the twins had to take Tylenol, ibuprofen, Zofran, albuterol and Fluticasone. Now add from add, for me, Ben's annotate those Teflon pearls for cough and naproxen. So, all of us is just doped up.

Nicolette Paglioni 32:06

I was gonna say I was like, "How can you even move after that."

Malesia Lyles 32:11

But the shelter was still expecting that. Yes, yeah. So, what So we're still we're sick.

Nicolette Paglioni 32:20

We haven't gotten to the part where I'm supposed to be angry.

Malesia Lyles 32:22

Yeah, no, no, oh, no, you ain't gonna get angry yet? No, no, no, no, but February 28. This is where you gonna, you know, may feel some type of way because I know I sat there and be okay, so I get called. I get a phone call from Child Protective Services. She meets with me, her name is Emily Smeets. So that's the one. So, I must call her CPS. Right. So, if you hear it again, I'll say CPS for her name. Okay. So, she meets. And I'm asking her like, why are you meeting with us? Because this is strange. And this was February 28, at 8am. And she said, Well, I need to talk to your girl. So, she has this really, really light

tone of voice. I'm thinking that child is a baby. She's like, 20 something years old, she a baby baby like it. So, you know, from a life experience? And I said, Okay, so we go into one of the roles. She asked my daughter's what happened to them in January. They tell her that they were sick. I said, Do you need their medical records? She said, "No." I said, "Can you tell me? Who made...I don't even know what this is about?" What are you allowed? And she said, "Well, we can't tell you anything." I was like, okay, so she's asking the girls all these questions. And then she asked them about school. And I'm sitting there confused, because I'm like, Wait, why she asked him about school. So, then she says, Well, I have to take a picture of the girls so that they know that I'm here. So apparently now this is this new thing was, and I've never had to deal with them before. So, Child Protective Services. Some of them I don't know, all but this one takes pictures of the kids when they're there when they need them to put it into a file. And I said, Well, what's going to happen after this? Because you know, and they had to be at school by 830. So, we already missed an hour of school. And she was like, Well, I think my they're gonna close it because it just doesn't sound like a big deal. It's like, No, it's not. And I'm right. You also, I'm sitting there wearing a mask. And she's like, what's wrong? What is going on with you? I said, I'm sick or whatever my girls had. She said, Okay, straight overhead, the stuff and so she leaves, right. And here is Mike I need to see you in the office as well. Okay, I said, Well, we gotta go. Can you see me after I dropped them off at school? "I need to see you." You know right now. Okay, fine. I said, "So what's going on?" So, I'm now I'm slumped back in the chair with this mask on because I'm like, I'm really tired. I'm exhausted from not talking because I'm really good at that. But I am exhausted because I'm tired, and I'm sick. And what is going on? He and Veronica, he's sitting at a small table on the right, Veronica is sitting in her swivel chair on the left, and I am sitting to the right ahead of him near the door. He tells me, he tells me Lord, all I heard was Womp womp, womp. And then one thing I heard for certain that I had to make sure he said out loud, he said, and when we looked at your files, when we have staff meetings, we noticed that you've intentionally been getting sick. I said, "Come, wait." That's when I sat up. What? I said, "Come again." He said, "You've intentionally been getting sick. So that's a pattern." I said, I don't have Munchausen by proxy, I'm sorry for you. And he looked at me like you didn't know I knew that. See? And I said, Really, and I've just said it again. And then all of a sudden, I sit back again, and just do this.

Nicolette Paglioni 36:40

I mean, what else can you do? What else can you do? And I can't believe it. And he's the one that like, got everybody sick.

Malesia Lyles 36:50

But remember is still hasn't been recognized in the states all the way yet. We only hear about Seattle and Cali. We don't hear about New York wasn't even thought about? Right. You know, not just yet. Right? Yes. So, I'm just kind of like. Yeah. And then he says, and I quote...

Nicolette Paglioni 37:18

Oh, no.

Malesia Lyles 37:19

..."If you don't find a place by March, we are going to kick you out of the shelter." Do you know my answer was this, okay?

Nicolette Paglioni 37:36

Honestly...

Malesia Lyles 37:37

it gets even better. Oh, then he says, "and we've heard from different staff from the churches, when we need this assistance from that you've been complaining about your exit dates. And because you've been complaining about it, if we hear it again, we're going to put you in a hotel or a motel until March the eighth. And you can stay there and figure out what you're going to do again." Like your facial expression, my thing was in my brain, I'm sitting there saying, how would that be bad? Yeah. I can be in one place. Try to feel better. Instead, here's what my answer was. I was like it. I finally did. I said, "alright."

Malesia Lyles 38:29

So, he leaves abruptly and Veronica is still sitting there. And so now we're going to go into what I found out. That's the other reason I clicked kind of that weird laugh. Around January, let me see, hold on. We got in. I went to the doctor, January 8, there was a one of the clients in the shelter, say, and they call me Mimi, Mimi. Hip is supposed to come over. I said, What the heck is hip? I don't even know that is. And she said she's younger. She said it's called the homeless initiative program. They help with housing, which is really the only thing I needed to take care of. Everything else is going to come because I already knew what my plans were. I'm very detail oriented. So I said, "Okay, well, what I'll try." Well, I went to the head of job fair one day, and it was round January 12 to the 15th I went there and my daughter's had to sit in the waiting area with masks on their face, right. And I said, Okay, I need to be seen by somebody but oh, they have a job fair. It's not that I was looking for work. It was just like, I don't want to go nobody's job [gake coughing sounds]and I'm not crazy. I'm not going to do that. That is not the best.

Malesia Lyles 39:51

So, I go into a case manager for HIP. Her name was Amber Heard And I said, Miss Amber, I don't know what's going on. I said, but this is happening a Family Promise. And she's like, do you know when you came in? I was like November 19? Do you know what you signed paperwork? I was like November 23. And she just cuts me this. Like, she was like, have you remember all those days? I said, because I do. I'm like that. And she says, Let me look this up, she's typing. And then this her whole facial expression, totally changes into bad. And already, I'm just sitting there. Like, I found out that Veronica and Mike withheld my Coordinated Entry survey in order to put into a pool to pick people's names out so they can help the house.

Malesia Lyles 40:54

So, by the time February 28th, come, he doesn't know that I know that. And that's why I can laugh at Oh, like it doesn't even like you talking real crazy. And so yes. And so, Veronica, after he leaves, Veronica that I asked her, I said, Are you serious? You all are really trying to say that I intentionally and my girls, and I just intentionally got sick on purpose. Hey, is she "well," I said "shut up." Just said it out loud. And see, I also understood what I had always I had been seeing when I came in there. You can't be homeless and be smart. You can't be homeless. If someone thinks that you are out to take their job, that you are like, there's some type of competition going on. Yeah, I am there for one issue and one issue only, right? I don't need the assistance for everything else. I'm good. Just get me in. I'm good. That's all I need. And so, I said, Okay, this is right after I just talked to CPS, right. So, I told the girls, I was like, we gotta get ready to go. Wait a minute, why did they order a lift for us and said, as of that day, I said, they're gonna be ordered a lift this whole time? Because I do not. Like I'm getting, they hear me say that. But my girls did. I was like, Nah, they're gonna pay for the Lyft to take us there. They're gonna pay for the Lyft, pick me up. They're gonna pay for the lift to take us back. I'm just done with him. And so, I that was it. And guess what? happened, right? But remember, every time they order a lift, it's not a job right? On top of that, I received a little bit of child support been consistent for 15 years, when they dad tried to budge one time. I was like, we're gonna go there. And he stopped. Right? And I don't play that. So. So I said, and he was the one his mom told him to go get it. But got mad that he started it because you told him, okay, I had a better I had a better negotiation. And the prosecutor said, why didn't you take her to negotiate...

Nicolette Paglioni 43:15

With a paralegal major, like...

Malesia Lyles 43:18

that's why that makes sense. Right? So, I'm just sitting there, like up, you know, I'm like, okay, so I know how much we get. However, um, the Zofran could not be reordered. So, I had to pay all hundreds of pocket for that. That's okay. That's okay. Because it goes to help as much as I could with my girls, whatever. On top of that, because Mike did not like E-schooling. I have had to pay for Lyft and Uber to take my girls back and forth every Thursday and Friday. So obviously, that's going to decrease our funds. Right? And I'm like, I don't know, and I don't care. They're still gonna be in a school. That's all. That's Yep. What he doesn't know. And I can tell y'all because I don't have a problem. They used to have their own small business in 2016. We're going to be reopening in a few more months. Oh, my God. Yeah. Hey, I'm good. Right. I'll go good, because they're good. Right. And I also do not live vicariously through my children either. Because I don't I actually have a 20 year old son, who is going to Pacific Northwest College of the Arts in Portland, Oregon. Wow. They didn't know nobody knew about him. Like I didn't tell anybody. Because no one would be able to handle that. They couldn't have if you can't handle this type of situation. I'm not going to even trust you with with the other stuff.

Nicolette Paglioni 44:43

Because you aren't allowed to be homeless and accomplished and help yourself.

Malesia Lyles 44:48

Yes. Yeah, you're not. And so, I said, Okay. Now also, I'm a techie. So, I've been keeping up with a whole lot of stuff like I'm doing with SARS. cov to like Right. Yeah. Right. And so, I'm like, Okay, what type of this? What is this the sister? Yes. Pretty much is the sister to SARS. Yeah, it is. And so, I'm sitting there. And you know, like, my brain is like, Ah, right. So, we go back at this point it is March the fourth. Right? So, it's March the fourth. This is a few days after the 28th. I'm at the Ivy Tech campus downtown. And then lady by the name of Miss Diane. I love her. Every time I saw her, we will be up in this area, Crystal house crystal doors is they teach people how to get to get their GED, right? And different different countries and everything. You know, look at the exposure. There's like, Oh, yes, I love it. I love being around academia and learning and listening to other people's language. I love that. Like, I can be a nerd. But I still can't be a nerd up in that shell. Like I can't show it. Even now at the age of 41. I still couldn't show it. And so, I said, Okay, Miss Diane walks up. She's like "Mimi" And she has his little biddy voice. "Mimi can you tell me why your girls are always sleeping?" I said, I just took this very heavy side and said, "We've been living in a shelter since November." And she's like, "what?" And she said, "Well, you don't look homeless?" I said, "Yeah, apparently the definition of homelessness is different for everyone." Um, but because she's she always came and gave me a hug. Right? And she always gave us love. I said, "but the reason I have them sleep because it was 730 in the morning. So I did say, Miss Diana, you do understand it's 730 in the morning." So, she didn't know that we had to get up at 430. Mike would not let us stay in the day center and catch up on any sleep at all. So, we have sleep deprivation going on, on top of illness, right? You got all of that collectively happening. So, as she's talking to me, apparently some lady this random lady comes over and says no, no, no, no, no. And I'm just kinda like...It was somebody older than me, but I've seen her, but she says Mimi. All right.

Malesia Lyles 46:51

She said Mimi. Yes, ma'am. She said, "I need you to talk to me after you're done with Miss Diane." Miss Diane says "No, you go ahead and talk to her." And like I said, I believe in God. So, first thing I'm thinking is Holy Spirit. Should I talk to this lady? Because I never heard of her. She walked up. I don't know what she's talking about. And [fuzzy sound] said yes. So okay, so she's asking me all these in depth questions right about us being in the shelter. She's our cell phone walking away, back and forth. I don't know what's going on. And then she says, I need you to get a letter that says that the twins are attending that charter school. I said, Okay. She said, How long do you think that's going to take? I said today? She said, Okay, I get on the phone and email Miss Lois from Hoosier Academy. HA. And I tell her what was going on. Apparently, she's the admin and she didn't know that was happening. But their admin is in a totally different building than the school building itself. And so I said, Okay, she says that to me via email, the lady whom I still don't know her name, gives me her email address. And now I see Okay, gotta be there. It's got to be that, but I'm not gonna call her that until she tells me we're in Amy's right. And she never be right at that point. And so, she brings me so I forward that email, she brings me

the copy of it over let me tell you the exact time was 11:56am. On March the fourth, when I received that email that says, hey, these girls attend this school. And so I was like, we good. She said this. So she comes back with it. And she says, This is what I need you to do. You got two hours to get to Dayspring center. I said Dayspring won't let online parents or homeschooling parents because I called them a long time ago, like way back in November before I got the Family Promise. I said they said no, they don't take home schoolers and high schoolers. And she said, Hold on, let me like Just hold on. I was like, okay, she walked off on the phone come back. She said yeah, they will make sure you take those two papers and go, I say oh, Okay, so I get I get the girls packed up, call a lift, right column. And take and take us to Family Promise, we arrived there, I pull out mostly everything that I could. And so, the twins because they got, you know this is now I'm feeling better it is March the four. I'm still kind of woozy a little bit. But I'm like, we got to get up out of this. Um, so I pull, you know, stuff out of our closet Lord. And that's why I keep all this stuff in a closet as much as I did. And it was super organized and everything. And I'm pulling stuff while Mike is there. And he says, Where are you going? Like that was the actual right. And he didn't know that there was another family that heard him saying like that. Oh, I bet. I say no. I just kept pulling. stuff. So, the twins we were there downstairs. And apparently, they he asked them, "Where were they?" My girls told him, ask my mom. Well. That's awesome.

Nicolette Paglioni 49:22

I love that.

Malesia Lyles 50:29

So I said, Okay, well, let's just keep going. Right? So I get downstairs to the kitchen, and I'm about to pull some stuff out of the kitchen. And he starts pacing back and forth in the hallway towards the kitchen. And he says, Where are you going? Well, at this point, I'm on the phone with the staff at Dayspring. I haven't told him yet. Haven't told any staff yet. And he's still trying to overtalk her. And then as a parent, this is what I did. I couldn't even believe I did to a grown man. I went [makes X gesture].

Nicolette Paglioni 51:54

Oh, I know that Oh. That's struck fear in my heart just now.

Malesia Lyles 52:01

This man by age now I he says, oh, so I need to be quiet. I said "yes, you do." He then stops off like this is not an over exaggeration. This dude stomped off. First, you're pacing and now you're stomping off. And so, now I'm heading toward the front door for in the hallway towards the left to turn left to the front door. And this is what I see at this big, gigantic conference table in their office. And the front office is just like a gigantic conference table. At the when I'm standing, and I turn around at the left upper hand corner of the brown desk. Mike is standing here. And diagonally next to him is Deborah, Lena, and Veronica. The this is where culture comes into play. He asked, "Where are you going?" And with a soft tone of voice. Because really, I really want to say some crazy, but you know the Holy Spirit's don't do

that. "Right now, we need to get y'all out of here. Right?" I said we're going to Dayspring Center. He says well, they don't take off. I said we are going to Dayspring center. Well, you need to get your stuff out today. I watched and I say it like that because that's the way he did say it. And I looked because Mike is a skinny tall guy, tall white guy. And the other three are black women of different ages. And all three women were just like this [makes x gesture] in front of my girl, and didn't say anything. And all I could hear was slave master like. That's all. Neither one of them stood up and said that was wrong. You don't belittle people like that. Nothing. I just you know, it was just like, What are y'all gonna stand up and say, you know, this is wrong. Like you don't do people like this. So I'm not gonna wait on that because my Lyft arrived and so the girls start loading up, I started loading up and then Mike says "I told you you need to get your other stuff out today." I said in a nice voice, "I will come here on Thursday and Friday and Pick everything I see. I see"

Nicolette Paglioni 54:58

My quiet...

Malesia Lyles 55:00

So that's March the fourth, right? The next date that's coming up is March the eighth. We are have now been four days and today's spring. CPS shows up at Dayspring. I think that's right. Hold on. Let me make sure because March the fourth was a Wednesday. Looking at my Yeah, that was a Wednesday, it will be March 9, which was a Monday. So, it was March 9, not Sunday. So, March 9, CPS shows up and that's Emily. And she says I have been summoned to appear to court because we supervisor has decided to keep keep my case open. What? On top of that, I have a hip appointment. Thank you God, right. Like see, we have to go back then. Remember when I told you there's a lot of moving parts? Yeah, these are when they the parts start moving really badly. And so, I said, I was like, Okay, wait, I have a hip appointment the next day, I can not miss that. I don't care. I'll miss court. You're not gonna have me miss this hip appointment. I already have on February the sixth. Right now, have another and they didn't know about it. They Family Promise didn't know about that one. February 6 why am I going to tell you, but now that I know what you've been doing, I will tell you nothing. And even when I went to that appointment, apparently Mike was following us. He came to that appointment. And then B rated and reviewed the case manager who now no longer works for him. Just let you know. Yeah, just because what he did, right, how you just disappear like that. But anyway, I'm like, I'm not gonna miss that. And she was like, Well, I'm gonna have to talk to my and my supervisor, you talk to her all you want to I'm not gonna show up. We don't show up. Because this is the second one that is major. So, she's like, okay, so she called me later on. My supervisor says that you I was like, it wasn't gonna matter. Anyway. So. So, um, but I'm still trying to figure out okay, what is going on, because I don't understand why this is staying open. When the girls are started. They've gotten better. They've been catching up with their schoolwork, you know, as best as we can. All this such and such. March 12, we go into juvenile courtroom, their court, the building, and 30 to 30 minutes to an hour prior to me. Apparently, this juvenile court, like puts all the parents that have been accused of whatever into a room where the judge sits down in front of you, and tells you what your rights are people sitting there crying, I'm like, what

they signed up for I don't even know why I'm here. And she gives like this overview of everything. And I'm sitting here saying your legal stuff. Thank you. Thank you. Ha, what did I say a parent Legal Studies. Thank you, God, I'm taking those, you know what I'm saying? So, I understand. That's why I'm sitting there saying why are we here? I don't even understand all this. This is totally a misunderstanding. And but before then, they gave me the documents. It is too massive world to me. There are massive packets. But you don't even give me them until we get into the courtroom or get in the court building. They don't give me them. They have me meet up. So in the waiting room, they have me meet up with my girls. They try to separate my girls in the waiting room for me. No. And they will know how to answer anyway. And it's not even about knowing how to answer but I know what you do it and at least to a little bit. So they had me meet with a DCS. So, here's here's acronyms, the DCS case manager. Her name was Carrie Harris. And then there's man I've never remember his name. I'm sorry. But he was he was the guardian ad litem for the girls. Why my girls getting guardian ad litem, wait a minute what is going on? Finally, Emily, DC, CPS. CPS walks back to me and hands me this paperwork. So, I'm like, Well, how long do I have left to read it? Well, you probably got about 15 minutes. 15 minutes to read all of this. Wow. So, I'm just like, What in the world? So, I get the first packet. I'm like, Okay, wait, okay, that's just court stuff. Right? That's just blah, blah, blah. We gave the paperwork to her. This one was the big one. And so, I'm flipping through the paperwork. And then that's when I realized what happened. Apparently, according to this petition The anti-social social worker at HA, who had never been involved with what was going on, and the emails that have been emailed to for people at HA to keep in contact with me when these girls were sick, right? He filed educational neglect on me, yes.

Nicolette Paglioni 1:00:32

Even despite all the emails you were sending to the teachers?

Malesia Lyles 01:00:35

She never told CPS or DCS, she never told them. Huh.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:00:42

Are you sending emails? They never been ever knew?

Malesia Lyles 01:00:45

The school never even so here's the deal. As I'm reading this, I'm now looking at the four to five people that not only have I talked to in email, you've been covering this for her. The people that I've talked to. Miss Dimir, the girls teacher, Miss Kathleen Stanley, the Secretary Tolentino, the principal Meghan Traum the attendance officer, Amy Nichols who may told me was the social worker at the school constant contact with her all of those people I've talked to the person that filed this I've never talked to...

Nicolette Paglioni 01:01:30

Right?

Malesia Lyles 01:01:31

...never I've never talked to her. And so when I read I said, "Hold on. Let me make sure I read this correctly." And so and so I'm I'm a reader of just a few things about it. But I don't mind it I honestly don't care you get a copy because this story gonna be told the right way. And ha will never be able. They're not gonna like me, but that's okay. That's the other part of my definition of money. So this is what she she told them now listen to the date of it. On February 6th, stop right there. Yeah, go back...

Nicolette Paglioni 01:02:24

February 2nd they started coming out of it and you sent them back to school

Malesia Lyles 01:02:35

Okay, so here's the next because, you know, I'm trying to hurry up and read all of this. Before I go in this courtroom and I'm reading I'm like, Wait, man, hold on. On February 6, 2020, the Indiana Department of Children's Services central intake unit received a report of neglect. The victims are listed as Phoebe and Hannah Thomas, 12. The perpetrator on the report was me. The report alleges that Phoebe and Hannah are enrolled, and Hoosier Academy, they attend the hybrid school or in class physically on Thursdays and Fridays. The family is currently homeless, their date at the shelter should have been one, their end date at the shelter should have been 1/31/2020. And Miss Lyles was granted an AHA right? Okay. And Miss Lyle was granted an yes an extension based on a contingency plan. what contingency plan? The contingency plan included the children are you remember remember I said this is what's in the report. The contingency plan included the children being in a physical school and Miss Lyles needed to find employment to support paying for housing. Miss Lyles is not wanting to engage with the contingency parameters. There are also concerns about the school being a good fit for the children. Transportation is not provided for the two in person days a week. Wait, Miss Lyles takes the children on public transportation. They take wait let not yet you got heard it yet. Three transfers and walk 45 minutes to get to class. We ain't done. We're not done we're not Nope, not yet. They have they now have 14 and a half days of unexcused absences. This there was winter break. They're not meeting projected academic progress in class. Miss Lyles is not engaging the children in schoolwork while they have digital learning days. They are either doing very little or no work. They are required to log in and some days log in. And in some days they do on somedays they do not. Okay. Did you hear anywhere that they were sick?

Nicolette Paglioni 01:05:07

No.

Malesia Lyles 01:05:08

None.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:05:12

I just...and I have no idea where they're getting the transportation situation like,

Malesia Lyles 01:05:22

Oh, you're gonna find you're gonna find out where they got it from. So, so here's the thing. I'm breaking down all of it. So, on the day, I said February 6, I say, wait a minute, okay, we're gonna stop right there. And then I pulled out my records. And I said, Okay. My Records love medical documents, right? I pulled out my records. I'm like, Wait, man. That was okay. So just exactly what you came up with. I'm like, I've never taught who did this. I still don't know who I know who wrote this report of the summary. That's right. And so, I I say, Okay, well break that down. When was my exit date? January 31. He said March the eighth. Okay, so who got that information, right? Um, the contingency plan? Yeah, no. I don't want to engage. Number one. We were sick. Right. So okay.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:06:31

And not just sick, like a little cough. I mean, you had the virus?

Malesia Lyles 01:06:36

Yes.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:06:37

You were bedridden.

Malesia Lyles 01:06:38

Yes.

Nicolette Paglioni 01:06:39

For a month. So its not like a little cold, and...

Malesia Lyles 01:06:46

I'm like, okay, guy. This is bigger than me. Right? And so I say, well, they would I don't mind the unexcused days because they were sick. But the thing is, I've been in contact with the school, so I don't understand what's going on with that. And so I said, Okay, let me just keep going. Right. So, it says that, okay, they were 161 lessons behind, and which I understood, they were sick and entire month. I mean, that happens, but no one was recognizing that they were making up the schoolwork. They were We were chipping it off. So when they started feeling better, obviously that makes sense for us to go back and do this stuff. Right? And so I was like, okay, here here's wait a minute. Here's another one. Miss Lyles, report it Phoebe a Hannah had Ms. Three and a half weeks of school and Jane were due to being ill. Because in the report, Ms. Lyles report provided the school with documentation on 01/08/2020 from IU Health Emergency Department regarding fee and Hannah's emphasis. Now we get to who did this, Phoebe and Hannah, were then.... [recording ends]