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**The State of Mississippi versus Jamie Scott and Gladys Scott:
My First Encounter with Justice Denied
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BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator**

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While driving the moving truck from South Carolina to Chicago, Illinois in July of 2005, many things ran across my mind as I took the solo trip. I pondered receiving the Master of Jurisprudence degree from Loyola University School of Law and later a career as a governmental regulatory compliance manager. It never dawned on me that I would receive a brutal education in social justice; an education that would prove to be more valuable than sheepskin from any institution. This would become an education that re-directed every thought flowing as I drove that big truck from South Carolina. I left Chicago with the Master of Jurisprudence and absolutely no desire to follow my original dreams.

I secured a position as a Community Services Consultant with Rainbow/PUSH Coalition while completing my studies. I will never forget the frigid, Chicago morning when I opened a letter from Mrs. Evelyn Rasco, a mother and widow. She told the story of her daughters, and said she had written Rainbow/PUSH for 11 years, without a response. She redirected her strategy this time and wrote Congressman Jackson in a plea to get the letter to his father's (Rev. Jackson) office. The letter was hand delivered. I called Mrs. Rasco and promised to get back in touch. Her approach is consistently that of a persistent mother – determined to secure help for her two daughters, who are serving double life terms each, in the state of Mississippi, for armed robbery.

Allegedly, 9, 10, or 11 dollars was stolen. No one was injured, murdered or taken to the hospital. Though often discouraged, I've found out, through my interactions with Mrs. Rasco, that she is rich in perseverance and her belief in God.

The following months would comprise of in-depth research efforts, on my part, on

behalf of the Scott sisters. After reading the transcripts, as well as other documents, many times, I spoke with various legal experts – one of whom passed away before completely assisting with the case. Subsequently, I was convinced that a grave injustice had been wrought from the judicial bench. This injustice has proven to be the misrepresentation of poor Black women seeking justice in Mississippi's legal system. Justice was denied. I left Chicago with a commitment to somehow free Jamie and Gladys Scott.

The parents of Jamie and Gladys Scott had felt that life for the family would be better in Mississippi than in Chicago. They had left the Chicago South Side and moved to Mississippi. Instead of finding a more peaceful, safe environment, they found a racist town where the white man's spoken word is the law and justice for poor Black people, absent.

On December 24, 1993, Scott County Sheriff's Department arrested the sisters for armed robbery. *In October of 1994, Jamie and Gladys Scott were sentenced to double life terms in prison. That's double sentences each! Neither sister had prior convictions.* Three young Black men confessed to the robbery, but implicated Jamie and Gladys in the crime. The three young men, all related and ranging from ages 14 to 18, confessed to committing the crime. Coercions, threats and promises later led these men to turn state's evidence on the Scott Sisters. The 14-year-old testified that he signed a written statement without an attorney present. He was told that he would be sent up to [Parchman Farm](#) – the notorious Mississippi Penitentiary/Plantation – if he did not cooperate. In addition, he was told that he would be "made out of a woman" (raped by men) at Parchman. The 14-year-old witness had spent 10 months in jail and was, at this point, ready to get out. His confession was a condition of entering a plea agreement for strong-armed robbery, which does *not* carry a life sentence. The 14-year-old *never read* the statement. He only signed it.

In 1998, one of the Patrick Men wrote an affidavit telling the truth – that Jamie and Gladys were not involved. The court never heard the affidavit. There are presently three affidavits which state that Gladys and Jamie had nothing to do with this robbery.

According to the Request for Commutation of Sentence and/or Pardon prepared by attorney Chokwe Lumumba, the Scott Sisters challenged their convictions on direct appeal; arguing that there was insufficient evidence to convict them, and the guilty verdict was against the overwhelming weight of evidence, which should exonerate them. The court of appeals found no error and affirmed the convictions on December 17, 1996. As a result, they filed a Petition for Writ of Certiorari to the Supreme Court, which was denied on May 15, 1997. They consequently filed an Application for Leave to File Motion to Vacate Conviction pursuant to the Mississippi Post Conviction Collateral Relief Act. The Supreme Court also denied that application.

The attorneys from the lower court failed to interview and subpoena witnesses for the hearing. The jury never heard the testimony from the victims. Their attorney only called one witness, when there were several. The sisters did not testify on their own behalf, because both their attorneys advised them not to. The attorneys failed to interview and subpoena the witnesses.

The affidavits of 3 witnesses were newly discovered evidence, and were unknown

during the lower court trial. Attorney Chokwe Lumumba submitted a request for commutation of sentence and pardon to the governor. It was denied.

Gladys and Jamie's older brother is presently serving in Iraq for the US Army, while Americans have wrongfully placed his sisters in prison on double life terms. No one was murdered, injured or taken to the hospital.

Their children have suffered the most from justice denied.

To assist with the struggle for exoneration of the Scott sisters, please visit:

<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/Free-Jamie-Gladys/index.html>

<http://www.freewebs.com/nlockha/index.htm>

<http://www.squidoo.com/WRONGFUL-CONVICTION-OF-JAMIE-AND-GLADYS-SCOTT>

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/5974654/The-Wrongful-Conviction-of-Jamie-and-Gladys-Scott>

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BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator, Nancy Lockhart, is a legal representative and community organizer, living in South Carolina. She has worked tirelessly - for no pay - on the case of two Black females illegally charged and sentenced to double life. [Click here to contact Ms. Lockhart.](#)

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