

DISPUTE OVER DEAD MAN'S HOUSE

# Widow sues relatives to recover over \$2m

They allegedly got part of sales proceeds from late husband's brother

■ BY SELINA LUM

TWO years ago, Madam Wendy Chen Tsui Yu won a lawsuit against her brother-in-law over \$4.8 million in sales proceeds from her dead husband's house.

But Mr Loo Chay Sit, 62, failed to cough up the money despite repeated demands.

Now Madam Chen, 57, has sued four other family members to recover more than \$2 million they purportedly received from him.

They are her mother-in-law, Madam Tan Chan Tee, 83; Mr Loo's wife, Madam Chia Beng Eng, 57; and his sons Vuitton Loo Hong Kiat, 32, and Robin Loo Xiong Sheng, 28.

In separate court proceedings earlier in 2008, Madam Tan, Madam Chia and Mr Vuitton Loo affirmed in affidavits that they had received the sales proceeds or the benefits of the sales proceeds from Mr Loo Chay Sit.

This was in the form of \$1 million in cash to Madam Tan, \$200,000 to Madam Chia and \$85,000 to Mr Vuitton Loo.

Another \$332,000 was used to buy a warehouse in Kallang in the names of Mr Loo Chay Sit and Madam Chia.

A shophouse in Ang Mo Kio was also



Madam Wendy Chen Tsui Yu (left) had won a lawsuit against her brother-in-law, Mr Loo Chay Sit, over the sales proceeds from her late husband's house but did not receive the money. She is now suing her mother-in-law, Madam Tan Chan Tee (right), and three other family members to recover more than \$2 million they allegedly received from Mr Loo. ST PHOTOS: AZIZ HUSSIN

Madam Chia and her two sons.

The remainder of the sales proceeds has since been dissipated by Mr Loo Chay Sit through other ways that are now untraceable. But the defendants are now seeking to disavow those affidavits and recant their statements.

"They are caught between a rock and a hard place," Madam Chen's lawyer Chi-

ing his case in the High Court.

Mr Chiah argued that they are liable whether they received the proceeds or not. He said if the defendants did receive the sales proceeds, they are liable to return the money.

And if the defendants prove they did not get anything from Mr Loo Chay Sit, that means they had lied in their 2008 af-

This amounted to "dishonestly assisting" Mr Loo Chay Sit to avoid paying the sales proceeds into court, which also makes them liable to pay.

The case revolves around a house in Margate Road, bought in 1979 under the name of Madam Chen's late husband, Mr Charles Loo Chay Loo. It has since been demolished.

The couple moved to California - where Madam Chen still lives - in 1993 with their adopted son, Benson.

In 2005, Mr Charles Loo attempted suicide while in prison awaiting trial for allegedly killing 17-year-old Benson.

He fell into a coma but as he lay dying, his older brother, Mr Loo Chay Sit, filed court papers from Singapore to his hospital bed staking a claim to his home.

When Mr Charles Loo died at the age of 51, Mr Loo Chay Sit served the writ on Madam Chen by way of a newspaper advertisement, even though he had her address in the United States.

In her absence, Mr Loo Chay Sit obtained judgment in his favour, transferred the property to himself, then promptly sold it off for \$4.8 million.

But Madam Chen later returned to Singapore to set aside the judgment and got a court order for Mr Loo Chay Sit to pay the proceeds into court.

When he continued to disobey the order, she took out contempt of court proceedings against him.

Faced with the prospect of going to jail, Mr Loo Chay Sit said he had dissipated the money through his family members. Madam Tan, Madam Chia and Mr Vuitton Loo filed affidavits in March 2008 to support him, saying the proceeds were with them.

In 2009, Mr Loo Chay Sit lost his claim on the house and the High Court ruled that Madam Chen was entitled to the sales proceeds.

In her judgment, Justice Judith Prakash said his conduct in the suit "left much to be desired", and the whole proceedings "smacked of opportunism".

He appealed, but the Court of Appeal upheld the High Court decision.

The trial continues.