

To the NH Citizens Commission on the State Courts,

My name is Sue Reeves. I quit my computer programming job 6 months after the birth of my first child. My ex husband and I agreed that I would stay home with the kids. I had 2 more children within the next 3 years. That gave me a 3 year old, 2 year old and a newborn to take care of while the kids' father went to work at a job with my father. I loved every minute of being a "mom"!!!!!! I have beautiful memories of my times spent with those kids growing up. I volunteered in the kid's school until my youngest went to first grade, and then I started to substitute teach at their schools. I went to work for money along with taking care of the three kids 24/7.

Unbeknownst to me, as my ex-husband was purchasing my father's business, he was also setting himself up for the "perfect divorce". When the deal was done with my father and the company, my ex-husband turned on me. And he was ready. I had no clue my ex was planning a divorce, **never did I expect to get divorced.**

I had started working at my father's office on the wishes of my ex husband. He forced me to leave the substituting job I loved so I could work with him after the purchase of the business. He NEEDED me!! He pretended he wanted me there. Little did I know when I passed the last two tests to validate the employment requirements for the company, my ex would turn cruel and verbally and emotionally abusive in the Office. It was just he and I. Three weeks later, from the beginning of my ex becoming the owner of the business my ex fired me from the business on a Sunday night. The Office is open M-F. He had set me up to think we would work together and everything would be wonderful. Behind my back he was meeting with a financial advisor and an attorney for some time working on setting him self up for a divorce and control of all the money. Every thing was in "his" name only, except the mortgage on the house.

I THOUGHT ALL THAT WAS BAD...THEN I LEARNED WHAT HELL REALLY IS LIKE THROUGH MY EXPERIENCES WITH DIVORCE AND THE STRAFFORD SUPERIOR COURT AND MY EX'S CUTTHROAT, GO FOR THE JUGLAR, GET EVERYTHING YOU CAN, ATTORNEY.

Four months after being fired, my ex said he wanted a divorce. I said no. We had just achieved everything we had been working towards for 12 years, the kids were doing great, but my ex became sooo angry.

Within three to four weeks a sheriff came to my home and in front of my three children handed me the cruelest, rottenest, meanest divorce petition a person could read. I read the petition alone and was totally shocked at what I was reading. Most of it wasn't even true. It was just mean.

My ex had control of all the money. How am I supposed to do what ever I am supposed to do next? Someone told me to get an attorney. This was not a divorce, it was a one sided war and the ruination of a human being(me). I had no clue how this was done. I hired an attorney on the recommendation of an Uncle in Keene. This attorney was from Manchester NH. The attorney told me he knew my family, the other side, but would not tell me how until the case was over. He never told me. But I found out later. He had had a 2 year extra marital affair with my first cousin while she was working with him in the same Office in Manchester NH several years before. She broke it off and the attorney was devastated. I guess from what I have been told, my cousin moved in with her father and stepmother in Dover NH. The attorney would come to the house and bang on the windows in the evening trying to get my cousin to at least talk to him. She would not. She moved on with her life. He got dumped and I don't feel his ego liked that.

I feel that type of relationship should have been discussed with myself and my father who was with me that day, by the attorney, before we hired that attorney so we could decide if there was a conflict of interest. Had I known this attorney had had an affair with my cousin, and then a nasty breakup, I would NEVER have hired him. He put me in a big black hole. He spoke on several occasions, 4 that I know of, with an attorney in Dover that my ex had tried to hire but couldn't because of the Financial Advisor business going on in the same office. My ex had developed a business relationship with the Dover attorney, and I believe that my attorney was discussing me and my ex with this attorney.

At first the attorney said this was a piece of cake. And I believe it was, the divorce petition was so far out there. How could my ex prove what is not true? Then after the phone calls, my attorney treated me with disrespect, and he did not believe in me. He would ask me if I was on drugs. He would ask me a question and I would try to answer and he would get all flustered. He would tell me NOT TO LIE TO HIM, and I never did. I told him the truth. He had changed. He was not on my side anymore. I can tell you I have checked around on this attorney's reputation, and he is an excellent attorney. So, I know he was NOT interested in my case. I believe with all my heart he screwed up intentionally. He is far too smart to have lost.

If you ever read the Temporary Hearing transcript you would know there was an attorney present but he was not there to fight for me against that divorce petition. He did not even submit any paperwork. The first thing the Judge said to him was don't you have a cross petition or any other paperwork that you want to give me, and the attorney said he had 30 days to do it, he gave some date. I had no clue at the time what she meant. I was told by the attorney to sit and don't say a word.

No one ever told me anything about mediation, all I knew was I had to go to Court. I did not know what the Temporary Hearing was for. No one explained

anything to me, and I was in shock that my husband was doing this to me. My ex had become so psychologically and emotionally abusive at the house that when he came home I would go to my bedroom to stay away from him. I told the attorney and he said he was not my therapist. The attorney screwed me at the Temporary Hearing. I still don't know how I ended up at one of those.

I wasn't really worried about what the results of the Hearing would be because I hadn't done anything wrong. My ex's attorney's claims were so outrageous I thought no one will believe that. There is no proof. I didn't do anything wrong. This is about the business. But my ex's attorney stood and slandered me, and said the most horrible things like they were facts. My attorney did not defend me. He never met with me before the Temporary Hearing. He had said 2 weeks before that he was too busy. My father and I told him we wanted to know what a Temporary Hearing was!!!! Well, in my case, I had to live through one to learn what it is.

"A TEMPORARY HEARING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT 15 MINUTES OF YOUR LIFE. IT WILL DICTATE THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. 99.9% OF THE TIME, A JUDGE'S RULING AT A TEMPORARY HEARING WILL BE YOUR DESTINY." That is my definition, and I believe I am quite accurate.

Just to get the time frame down. The business deal was done mid October. I was fired by my ex at the end of October on a Sunday night after a kid's soccer banquet. Totally unexpected. January my ex stopped talking to me and suddenly turned into a Disney Daddy to the children. It was amazing and out of character for him. End of February I was told there would be a divorce. Received the divorce petition March 22. Was in Court for a Temporary Hearing a month later, May 9. The last week of May the Judge's Order came out.

I was booted out of my home. I was court ordered to leave my home and children no later than June 30, and preferably the sooner the better. If there was any trouble at the house, I would be forced to move out immediately.

My ex needed NO PROOF. All his attorney needed to do was say the words and they were golden. I was destroyed at that Temporary Hearing. Every accusation my ex had made about me became "truth" to regular people, because the Judge said so.

Then there was a trial....it cost me \$138,000.00 plus, and the other side lied and won. The Judge liked him better.

I felt the Judge, a different Judge, favored the other side. Even though I had primary custody of my three children, there was a schedule that allowed me to have them one weekend out of every four. I got them Sunday nights through

Thursday when they were in school. I got the school work and the ex got the long weekends.

I filed a Motion for a change in the schedule. I wanted 50/50 quality time with my kids. My ex DID NOT want to give up his 3 weekends and 2 days during one of the weeks. So, I watched my children change just like it says in the books on alienation. It was a process. A sad, heart breaking process. It took the GAL 15 months to send in her recommendations on the schedule change. It was documented May 2005. The Judge did nothing. No one told me what to do. I thought it would be accepted by the Judge.

Still no news. In August my father died, and my ex sent in a Motion to have sole primary custody of my son. I had done nothing wrong as a mom. Someone had been screwing with my son's head because I was watching him change each time he came over. My ex got a live-in girlfriend who has been very helpful in working to turn my kids against me. The Judge granted my ex's request to have my son meet in his chambers. I had no chance to defend my side. My ex's attorney was crediting my ex with all the things I did with my son. If the Judge looked at the visitation schedule he would have known my ex could not have possibly done those things. I didn't know what I was defending anymore because I didn't know what the heck was going on. The Judge came out of the chambers in an outrage and took custody of my son from me with a very limited visiting schedule for me. I thought I would die. I was asking for counseling for alienation for the family, 50/50 quality time with the three kids, and instead I get this. The Judge did NOT let my attorney talk in regards to his decision. I don't know what my son said, but what ever it was, he had been prepared by someone. I am a great mom and to be stripped of custody and visitation was wrong wrong wrong. Only my ex and my son knew at the time that his Dad had signed him up for an \$1800.00 baseball program with practices in Hampton/Ports. 4-5 evenings a week and including Saturdays. My ex made visits impossible. My son couldn't be on the team and spend time with Mom.

My ex lied to the Judge through an ex parte. It affected my custodial time with my son. The judge took my visitation weekend away from me on an ex parte for a baseball practice I had offered to bring my son to. I brought the e-mails to court. The Judge did nothing.

During my visitation time my ex would not send my son. He was too exhausted. Yes, and he was too busy for time with mom. The Dad was successful in turning my son against me. The judge did nothing.

My ex files a Motion. He gets whatever he wants.

Has this had an effect on my three children? You better believe it. Two children 13 and 15 are under the spell of my ex and hate me and will not speak to me. When my daughter (15) had just gotten herself into some illegal trouble and I

caught her, she ran to her father. If she wanted to stay at the family home that was fine with me, it's a mansion, I had only hoped my ex would support me. But no. He denies all that I had told him and he brings me to Court to get sole custody of my daughter. This is just weeks after the Judge stripped me of my son. The judge granted it!!!!!!! I stayed at home, I gave up my career to take care of those kids 24/7 and now a man in a black jacket strips me of two of my children???? How can he do that?? Because I am NOT THE ONE WITH THE CUT THROAT ATTORNEY and I AM NOT THE ONE WITH THE MONEY.

My other daughter lives with me and visits her father. I have not kept her from visits with her father. I don't want to do to my ex what he has done to me. I don't want her to be filled with anger and ruined.

The story of my three beautiful children is a nightmare. They should never have had to go through what they have been put through. I have come to realize for myself, that if that kid doesn't have blood coming out of them the Judge won't care and won't do anything. Except when it comes to my ex. He is granted his every wish.

The Judge has been so one sided, unfair, sexist, does not require proof to back up what the other side is saying, just read the paperwork.

I filed a Motion for Recuse. And my ex wrote a glorious answer to the Court on how wonderful the Judge was. And who decides my motion????? The Judge we have does!!!!!! I didn't know that when I wrote the Motion. I have been told Judges don't like it when you write a motion of recuse. Now I can see why, they answer them. I can tell you I do not regret for one second writing and sending in that Motion of Recuse. And I meant every word I said!!!!!! They can deny it, but at least it's out there on the table. The Judge denied my Motion for Recuse. It is better to look right then to ever admit you may have made a mistake in this system.

Too late for me. If you go to Court, in a trial, I have learned this. There is a judge who will decide your fate. It is not about who is telling the truth. As my ex told me shortly after sending me the divorce petition, "you have to lie to win." He has proved himself. The mission of the two parties is this, to get that Judge to like you better than the other guy. Who ever gets the Judge to like them best, wins. I went with the truth and I have suffered greatly because of it.

THIS IS NOT A JUDICIAL SYSTEM FOR FAMILIES. IT'S A SYSTEM THAT DESTROYS ADULTS AND CHILDREN.

ps. The GAL was a joke. Maybe if someone had told me what her purpose is rather than, whatever you do don't get the GAL upset...nope, it wouldn't have mattered. The Judge went over her head on a recommendation that took her 15 months to prepare.

I am still going to Court, spending the very last of my money to try to get to spend some time with two of my kids. We need time away from the father's influence but no one cares if MOM doesn't get to see her kids. And a child should NOT hate their parent. Right there that would say something's wrong. One parent is not all good and the other parent all bad. This system is sick!!!!

Unfairly treated and judged,
Sue Reeves

Correction: GAL's recommendations on the Motion for a Change in the Custodial Schedule was submitted May 2004.

(ABOVE SENT FROM SUE REEVES)