

*First, let me just say how pleased I am to find an organisation which allows me to tell of my experiences within family law via this fantastic online diaries link.*

*I hope that through my diary I will be able to warn all parents of just how angry and confused the whole divorce issue can get when you enter family courts, I am not going to mention my Gender until the end, because I would hope you will all read this without prejudice and with an open mind, Because I feel that there are organisations out there that thrive on pitting women against men and vice versa, When the only issue that is (or should) be important is that of the children's rights and happiness.*

*Ok so now I've got that off my chest I will try my best to explain a little about me, my experiences and emotions/feelings throughout my time at the hands of the uk family law system.*

*I was happily married for 5 years and shared 4 wonderful children with my ex partner until we hit what can only be described as a total lack of interest in the marriage by my ex. I had pleaded with the x to try to sort out the problems via mediation but they just had no interest in making it work so it was decided (not by me) that the best solution was for one of us to leave the marital home (in order to give us both time out to consider our positions. This was decided by my ex on the agreement that it was in our children's best interest to stay in the family home with their primary carer, and with a promise of reasonable contact with our children.*

*It was four clear days later that I received a letter from the ex's solicitor advising me that they had been approached and asked to issue divorce proceedings and that they felt that it was not in my children's best interests to have contact with me for at least 4 weeks. Contact was eventually agreed directly through my ex for 3 weeks after my departure from the family home (after I had received phone calls advising me that my ex was having an affair with a close friends partner).*

*I had arranged to collect our children from the family home at 4.00pm and this was done, but given the distance (200 miles) between their home and mine, I was worried about the effect any travelling could have on our children, As I had suspected the journey was very long and timely (it had taken 1hr to travel 15 miles), so I rang my ex to suggest that I spent a few hours with them and then returned them the very same day (which I deemed reasonable, given that I was supposed to have full weekend contact returning Sunday and I felt this was in all four children's best interest), I was frankly amazed when I heard "this is my night out and my time without the children so you have got to keep them*

*because im in a cab going clubbing" and then came the words I wouldn't wish on a adult let alone one of my children "you just make sure you return child B,C,D on Sunday but you can keep child A (the eldest aged 7 at the time) because I don't love him and we can no longer live with him" I could have died and asked her to repeat it because it was so totally out of the blue and unexpected. I asked the ex "how do you expect me to explain this to him" and was told to hand the phone to him. Again I could not believe that the ex had actually told him (our child aged 7 ) the exact same chilling words.*

*On Sunday the day I was due to return the children I contacted X again to see if this was some kind of sick joke or whether there was a reason for this to which I was told of a new idea the X had " No I meant it and I have reconsidered, I want you to keep child A and I will take child B on a 2 week trial (child B was aged 5 at the time) and if you can get a letter I will sign it to this effect". It was at this point I knew I had to seek legal help and guidance.*

*Child B never came to live with us but to this day child A remains with me, Although he has been dragged through the legal rollercoaster that is family law. I have tried my very best to adhere to all of the directions made at court, which included sending my now resident child for contact with the X totally against his will, Which resulted in his removal by the police because he didn't want to be their and the X had no interest either (resulting in his beating at the hands of the X and new partner) all because CAFCASS and the courts had decided that this was the very best place for him to be and that this was in his BEST interest, I am still at a loss to see how subjecting any child to abuse can be in their best interest.*

*I have heard my 3 yr old daughter tell me horror stories of what X's new partner had done to her and where she has been touched, And informed the police who intern informed the child protection team and Social Services, Medicals where carried out and scaring to indicate sexual abuse was discovered. This was relayed to me by a very concerned Child Protection officer but never confirmed or even followed up by social services despite my continual persistence to the court, Infact little did I know at the time but by going to the police and raising these concerns with them (as I would hope all parents would do, and as was my responsibility) I would alienate not only myself but my most importantly my son from child B,C & D's lives forever. Again this is yet another failing of the whole system that is supposedly set up to put the best interest of children FIRST.*

*Ever since I made that statement to the police I have been granted access by the courts and then been refused by the X, I have returned to the court to get*

*them to enforce the very contact order they had written, But to no avail. They have allowed the X to remove not only me from my children's lives, but most unbelievably of all they have allowed my X to tear my son from his siblings and them from their entire extended family without as much as a second thought. When I first entered into this almost 4 years ago I foolishly believed that as a married and named FATHER I had what they called parental responsibility, and that this would guarantee me equality and a place in my children's lives whilst they were growing up! What fast became apparent to me was that parental responsibility was nothing more than two words cleverly dreamt up by somebody to give the illusion of equality in front of the iron curtain of secrecy of which the gender unbalanced, cruel and unjust systems of family law, CAFCASS and the (sarcastically named) FAMILY COURTS hide.*

*It has now been 3 years since I not only last saw B,C&D (another example of the secrecy that forbids me to tell you their names) but 3 years since my son (A Who is now 10) has seen,heard or had the chance to contact in anyway (even by e-mail or text message). This is because all avenues have been exhausted and the X is allowed to break order after order and change address 3 times in that 3 year period and despite court orders being in place allowing us access or contact, We rely upon unethical means to trace their whereabouts just to send them a birthday and Christmas card in the slim hope that oneday they will know that throughout everything DADDY NEVER STOPPED LOVING OR THINKING OF THEM ALL EVERYDAY.*

*My vision for the future is that one day somebody will open the courts and make this injustice visible, somebody will allow equality to pump through the veins of Family law, False allegations of Domestic Violence will be investigated and equal punishment will be dealt to the alleger, Children's basic Human Rights will be acknowledged by the system that pretends to put them first, Grandparents will be allowed equal rights to see their grandchildren, the age old tradition that is family will be reinstated as a pivotal role in our society,*

*I know you may think this is not allot to ask, But without this I fear for my children, Your children and every child that falls victim to the ever increasing divorce rate. I have tried to keep this very short and have obviously left large portions of my story, But please rest assured the only crime I feel I may have committed was to love my children A,B,C&D.*

*A LOVING FATHER.*