

Final Days

It is the second week of December, 2002 and I am in the middle of my second visit to Child Protective Services this month. Last week, I came down with the children's Guardian Ad Litem to pick the children up after Protective Services decided to remove Jessica and Montie from Patricia's care. The Guardian moved Glen in with a few months earlier and he had not seen his mother in a couple of months

This second visit is to attend a hearing Patricia requested for the purpose of seeing the children returned to her. Patricia spoke for several minutes, not defending or explaining her actions that led to the decision to remove the children, not defending herself as a mom, but attacking me as an individual and a father. She did not argue the children were safe with her, she argued they were not safe with me. The hearing ended when Michelle Herrera, the supervisor, turned to Patricia and told her that she did not find her credible. Patricia left, and a few minutes later Ms. Herrera escorted me to the elevators.

"How did you stay married to that woman for sixteen years", she asked.

"When you are holding the tiger by the tail, you don't let go" I replied

My typical quick and witty response contained a great deal of truth, but not all of it. There are no simple answers and a great deal of guilt. If I had been a better husband.....

One of the reasons we stayed married for sixteen years was a sense of family, a sense of duty. Instead of running away from my wife and children during trouble, I stuck it out and tried to figure out ways to make the family better. I might be numb after fifteen years living with Patricia but I was there.

In this world of domestic violence stereotypes and the essential journey for independence fought by many female victims of domestic violence, the concept of *family* is often lost in the struggle for individual identity.

Many years ago, when I took the class, Sociology defined the nuclear family as the basic unit of society.

The nuclear family – mom, dad, and the kids continues to undergo redefinition in our society. My nuclear family is dad and three kids. Many other families consist of mom and the kids, still others are defined by remarriage, gender, and other possible combinations. Marriage is often not part of the family picture.

What many people lose while arguing about the *structure* of the family is the core concept of the family *together* facing their troubles-- the view of the family as a single unit facing the outside world-- father, mother, and children putting the family first. The belief that the family is the basic social unit, the fabric of our society is rapidly disappearing to be replaced by a new definition resting on individuality. The composition of today's family is irrelevant to this discussion.

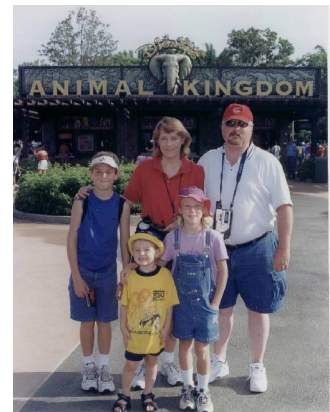
Of course individuality is an essential aspect of our American culture, but what about the kids? Are our children able to fend in an 'every man, woman, or child for themselves' society?

Often when a man places his family first, this is interpreted as being domineering and controlling. When a woman places her family first, she is seen as submissive and passive. The Machine's agenda does not allow for a family member to rise above their individual needs and work for the best of the family.

But a family is not a portrait hanging on a wall, a static point in time. Families evolve and change; children grow up and on occasion, so do parents. The neat organized world Patricia created for us could not last -- the rest of her family outgrew it.

In January of 1998, I began my CPA firm. By July of 1998 it grew to a full time on-going concern. I hired my first employee in January of 1999 and rented my first office. In January of 1999, I finally fulfilled a lifetime wish and began teaching at the University of New Mexico. Patricia often accused me of having the accounting practice to support my teaching habit.

One way to view the final years of our marriage is in terms of our individual growth. Growth for the children and I, stagnation for Patricia. The children, by definition, grew into increasing maturity and activities. By definition they moved away from their parents and began demonstrating some independence, especially the oldest, Glen. Until this time, Patricia controlled all of Glen's social activities. His only friend lived across the street. Now in middle school, Glen began making friends without his mother.



Disney World May '01

People dealing with Patricia on a daily basis often described her mental illness in terms of maturity. People thought of her as about as mature as a twelve year old child. I often told people I had four children, not three.

Patricia did not object. She took pride in the fact that she was able to experience a second childhood through the children, as she claimed the first childhood was so horrible. Many of our problems developed when Glen passed her in maturity.

Montie started school and Jessica's relationship with her mother always proved more independent. This did not mean that the children outgrew their mother. It meant that their relationship with their mother needed to evolve. Patricia did not wish or could not make these changes.

While the children grew, my life also changed independent of Patricia, largely due to the success of the CPA firm. I started my own company, began teaching at the university, I served two terms on the state society of CPAs board of directors, I began to receive awards from various parts of the community, and I even bought the car of my dreams – a Mercedes 107 (used).

Patricia sat at home and made telephone calls, no fewer than twenty a day to me, friends, or my mother. When not on the telephone, she helped at the school, and when not at the school she was at the office. Nothing independent, everything she did connected to the family in some way, nothing for herself.

And all the while Patricia stayed at home and lived her life through us. She spent a lot of time at the school and hounded Glen on his homework. Toward the end, she spent a lot of time at the office helping me. Patricia saw this time as helping and supporting us, but Glen needed to do his own homework and Patricia brought chaos to the office. Patricia's life existed only through the lives of the children and I. The children and I acted as an interactive computer program as she directed our lives--- the ultimate 'Sims' game.

As Montie approached kindergarten I attempted to talk Patricia into returning to work. If she did not do so this year her teaching license would expire. I thought she needed to grow, to get out of the house and do things for herself. Initially, Patricia agreed and

landed a job at my old high school. It was a perfect job, the hours allowed her to leave after Montie went to school and return before his return.

Patricia called the principal the day before she was to start and withdrew from the job. She did not tell me until afterwards. She made no excuse for not discussing the issue with me and rationalized the decision because “we needed her”, that Montie’s health did not allow for her to work, that I needed help with the office, and the other two children required her supervision.

I stayed silent. I look back and believe that that job represented our last chance for survival, that if Patricia has taken it everything might have turned out differently.

But she did not take the job and our life turned out as it did.

The purity of my motives in encouraging Patricia to spend some time out of the house and seek individual growth is doubtful. Her interference in our daily lives brought additional stress to all of us.

Every potential employee received a briefing from me about Patricia. This is a family owned business I told them, and as such my wife is in here a great deal. Although she is not an accountant, she is my wife and she helps us in other ways. She calls often and please make an effort to find me when she calls.

Out of the ten or fifteen employees that worked for the firm during our marriage, Patricia hated all but four. She hounded me daily to fire those she did not like.

In December of 1999 we took a road trip to California in our van. We spent Christmas at Disneyland hotel and then spent a day at the Hollywood Hilton and then drove down to San Diego. We stayed in one room at each hotel – two beds and a hideaway bed for Montie.

Patricia and I fought on Christmas Eve. I do not remember what the subject was, but Patricia spent several hours missing that evening. This meant that the kids and I were stranded in the hotel room. We did not dare leave and go to the park in case she returned.

Return she finally did and the fight flared up again two days later on the road to San Diego. I honestly do not remember the subject. Even during the best years, it seemed like we fought all the time. It could be how I folded the towels or that I did not call her back quickly enough, or that I wasted time helping students when I could be billing. The subjects varied and repeated. Often issues from years before would resurrect themselves. I simply do not remember what triggered this fight. Sometimes, I never knew what she was mad about.

I was not going to let Patricia's behavior ruin the family vacation. We headed toward the San Diego Wilderness Park as planned. Patricia stated she would not go in. Typically, this would mean canceling the event, but I decided not to allow Patricia her way. The kids and I went in without her and spent a couple of hours in the park.

I am sure the children were just as nervous as I when we approached the van after our outing. My biggest concern was finding Patricia gone and trying to figure out what to do next. My concern proved wrong, Patricia waited silently in the van. We joined the silence.

I moved out of the parking lot and toward San Diego in the dimming light and toward the setting sun. Patricia remained silent. We moved onto the freeway and began picking up speed.

Suddenly Patricia attacked me. She began hitting me and scratching me as I drove down the road. She grabbed my glasses and threw them out the window. I pushed her off

and stopped the car. Without being asked, Glen got out of the van and recovered my glasses. How he found them I will never know.

I sat there, angry and in complete shock. Patricia's actions not only endangered me, but the children and Patricia herself. These actions were the actions of a person completely out of control. I had very little idea what to do.

I did understand the vacation was over. I got out a map and figured out how to get home to Albuquerque. I do not remember what I told the children or Patricia, but I made it clear that was my intent. The drive home was about eleven hundred miles, I drove it straight through.

I brought this event up a couple of years later with the custody evaluator to demonstrate my concerns about Patricia. The evaluator recorded Patricia's response in his first report:

Ms. Long-Avery acknowledges that she did grab his glasses and threw them out the car window while he was driving with the children. She states she did so out of her frustration at having been raped in the hotel room the night before while the children slept nearby

I am just going to let that defense stand on its own.

I insisted Patricia get counseling and she agreed. She claimed to obtain free counseling from our church. I let it drop.

Five years before this incident I would never display the independence I did. I would never take the kids into the wilderness park without Patricia. Patricia's world was changing around her without any control on her part and her insecurities mounted.

While the typical patterns of control and abuse continued, Patricia offset the negative behavior by beginning to get involved in church. Here at last, it seemed she was taking steps toward personal growth.

Church always proved a sore spot with us. It proved difficult to get Patricia to church and often I took the children by myself. We attended three or four churches regularly after Jessica's birth but Patricia's always experienced some incident that caused us to leave. These were not always her fault. At one church we attended for a couple of years, one member, over my objections, got Patricia involved in a pyramid selling scheme. When the scheme collapsed Patricia would no longer associate with the individual, so we moved on. At two separate churches, Patricia argued with the director of the children's programs and we left.

During the last couple of years of our marriage we attended one of the larger churches in Albuquerque. I did not particularly enjoy the church, but Patricia seemed to find friends there. For the first time in our marriage, she began attending a women's bible study group and began to talk about herself as a Christian.

The negative behavior continued, but I experienced hope. I thought I might finally begin to see the changes I thought so necessary to our lives.

The church activities also provided Patricia with an outlet, an area for personal growth that I believed she desperately needed.

Strangely enough, Patricia attending bible study and other church activities did not result in her attending church with her family. Sunday after Sunday, Patricia begged off and I took the children myself.

It all backfired, naturally. Patricia's personal growth resulted in unexpected change on her part.

What Patricia drew from her increasing church activity proved not faith in God but a bizarre rationalization for any behavior she chose. By cloaking herself in Christianity, she twisted and shaped the cloth into a justification for any action she took. Without true faith on her part, Christianity, as defined by Patricia, became the justification for all her acts.

As the pieces begin to come together, I shake my head with the inevitability of events. As I write, I come to see the causal chain that led to our divorce and the subsequent chaos.

- Patricia as a sociopath with the inability to comprehend normal moral choices yet intellectually brilliant and at least subconsciously aware of her dependence on others to provide moral guidance, to act as her conscience.
- Sitting in the house for several years watching everyone around her grow and develop, the children, me, others. I remember one of her former best friends, a teacher receiving an award for excellence, and how horribly jealous that made Patricia, but not enough to return to work.
- Finally getting out of the house and finding in Christianity the rationalization for anything she wished. Like Jim Jones of Jonestown, Patricia twisted Christianity into what she wanted it to be.
- This newfound belief consciously and subconsciously led Patricia to the conclusion that she could stand on her own. As collateral conclusion she decided I was no longer necessary.

This did not occur overnight, but over a year. Patricia did not reach this point without thought and planning, even if some of underlying motivation may have escaped her conscious mind.

As this evolution worked its way through Patricia's soul, her traditional patterns of behavior brought additional stress. Patricia needed to place her actions into context of her new understanding of herself.

Beating the children was maybe the easiest. There are a couple of thousands years of Christian thought, starting with 'spare the rod and spoil the child' that rationalized Patricia's abuse of the children. Patricia simply 'punished' the children. Any punishment was justified as part of her God appointed duty to raise the children properly.

This theory about Patricia's behavior during the last few months of our marriage sheds light on her actions against Glen in November of 2001. The incident I discussed previously where Patricia began beating Glen with me in the house and after I separated them, Patricia demanding that I tell Glen she was justified in her acts.

Previous to Patricia's new 'Christian' context of herself, Patricia would never attempt to justify her actions beyond the normal assertion that any action she took was the result of something the other person did. Patricia would then process the moral clues I provided, apologize, and get on with her life. She never really understood what she did wrong and her insecurity about her actions proved endless.

Now with this 'Christian' framework, Patricia proved confident in her actions. The need for moral guidance previously provided by me and those before me disappeared, replaced by Patricia's 'understanding' about Christianity.

Another example occurred a few months before, in September of 2001. This story shows the transition in Patricia as it evolved. Patricia was in the process of getting the children off to school and asked Montie to tell her that he loved her. He refused and Patricia became angry.

Typical to Patricia's historical behavior, Patricia called me at the office and complained about Montie's actions. I told her not to worry about it, that this was typical of a five year old and not to personalize it. I knew she was still angry, but I thought that I had addressed the problem.

Six months previously the odds are that I would have been correct; Patricia would have steamed about Montie's behavior, but the incident would end with her phone call to me.

To my surprise Patricia called back a few minutes later to report that she had solved the problem by taking Montie's clothes off and placing him in a cold shower until he told her that he loved her. Not only did Patricia report this 'resolution' to me, but she called my father with the story, feeling completely justified in her actions. Obviously, our five year old failed to heed the commandment to 'Honor your father and mother'.

Mental Health

Patricia adopted this Christian framework within her mental illness, within the context of her primary problems. This form of rationalization complicated

Patricia's extensive mental health problems, problems I illustrated through highlights about our marriage and problems that magnified when we separated.

Patricia's mental illness can be described but not understood. That is a common problem faced by those confronting mental illness in others, we keep looking for a rational motivation for their actions, for some type of structure that allows us to empathize and understand a little. Time and time again I would attempt to figure out Patricia's motivation, why she took the actions she took, why she said what she said. Patricia constructed her motivation out of her own mental illness and it could change as the wind.

Our family doctor described one of Patricia's problems with a concise but accurate comment. "Patricia believes everything she says". Patricia was a liar without logical reference. Most people keep track of their lies. "Did I tell Mom I was still dating Bill?" or "What excuse did I use last time I called in sick". Patricia never bothered with this. For Patricia, whatever she said became the truth. There was no foundation of truth that she could refer back to because Patricia's sense of truth was tied to the needs of the moment with no objectivity.

This did not mean that the same lies did not repeat themselves again and again, only that what determined this was the circumstances, not a need for consistency.

The best example of Patricia's problem with the truth occurred during the vacation to North Carolina where I showed the children the room where their mother and I met.

We planned the vacation out a couple of month's ahead. First on the agenda, two days visiting with Patricia's family, primarily staying with her sister Donna. Next a visit to Patricia's surrogate family at their beach home near Wilmington, North Carolina. After two days there we would shoot up north for a day's visit to Fort Bragg and Campbell College. Finally, several days spent in Washington DC.

Patricia looked forward to seeing her surrogate family. She told the children again and again how much they would enjoy the beach. Patricia told me the island was small and that we would have no problem finding the family.

Well, the island was small, but packed with beach homes and people. Patricia tried calling but there was no answer. I told Patricia that we would simply drive to the house and wait for the family to return. Patricia wanted to drive around the island and see if we could find the family.

Miracles of miracles we encountered the wife walking with the children back from the beach. She led us to the house they were sharing with three other families. The place was packed.

This is when I came to suspect that we were uninvited guests, and the family had no clue that we were going to show up. I suspected Patricia did not even have an address for the family's beach house and only what our daughter refers to as 'Avery Luck' allowed her to run into the family on a island packed with thousands of people. This seemed clear, despite all of Patricia's statements over the previous several weeks. The husband confirmed this in a conversation with me. I packed up my family and we headed to Fayetteville.

My wife directed us half way across North Carolina to impose on a family without an invitation, without any knowledge that the five of us would arrive at their doorstep. Only by an act of God did we stumble on the wife and only by some discreet conversations between the husband and I were we able to navigate through this scene.

Patricia simply told herself that we were invited for a couple of days and the lie became reality. I saw this same type of event again and again throughout our marriage. She rationalized our sudden departure as easily as she rationalized our arrival, deciding that the other two families were the uninvited guests and that we had been nice enough to depart and save people the embarrassment.

The incident reminded me of the scene in George Orwell's *1984* where the enemy changes in the middle of a speech and everyone goes along with the change despite years of evidence to the contrary.

The psychological need for some lies was evident. Patricia's brother committed suicide during Jessica's first year. At the time of his death, Patricia was mad at him for reasons unknown and had refused to talk to him for several months. Within minutes of learning of his death, Patricia began telling everyone that she had sensed there was something wrong and she had made several valiant attempts to contact her brother in the couple of weeks before his death.

There was her successful bout with ovarian cancer as a teenager. This one got a little offensive when she tried to advise my sister-in-law during her long unsuccessful fight with breast cancer.

Early in our marriage Patricia had the habit of putting me in the middle of one of her lies. There would be a problem with some repair shop and Patricia would demand that I call them to straighten them out. Every time I would discover a radically different story from what my wife had told me. She also did this with employees of my firm. Patricia would demand that I discipline or terminate an employee over some alleged behavior or statement that could never be supported and was unlikely. I did have one employee smart enough to take advantage of this; obviously this employee and I parted ways quickly.

Even Patricia's simple lies still haunt us. As a single father, I began to take the children with me grocery shopping. To my surprise, the first thing they did when we entered the store was to get doughnuts from the bakery and begin eating them. When I told the clerk about the doughnuts so I could pay for them, my children informed me that the doughnuts were free. That is what their mother told them.

How I dealt with the lies is another example of how Patricia and I got things functional. After several years of having again and again been placed in this position where Patricia demanded that I support her lies, I simply refused. Patricia would call and demand that I deal with something. I would respond that I could not because I could not rely on her version of events. We developed language over the years that she would accept --- "Patricia, you have a perception problem because of the strong feelings you display, emotions that make you a wonderful mother, but make it difficult for me to figure out what is going on. This is further complicated by your poor memory". Needless to say, this was the source of many fights for

several months, but I had made my decision. I wish I could be clear about the results, I know Patricia's lies did not stop, but she stopped asking me to support them with outsiders.

It is essential to realize the lies as part of Patricia's mental illness. Patricia could not conceive of her lies being untruthful so she would tell lies that could not be supported without a second thought, like the five year old telling you that his invisible friend broke the lamp. But, I still think the five year old knew she was lying, none of us believe that of Patricia.

Of course Patricia's lies became a critical part of our lives as Patricia lied about me and the children time and time again. Lies about domestic violence, lies about behavior, lies about events.

Instinct draws a connection between Patricia's inability to tell the truth and Patricia's inability to distinguish right and wrong. Both aspects of her personality indicate a view of the world that simply does not include the same reference points or foundations that the majority of us find within ourselves. I truly can not imagine living without the ability to process right and wrong, but I can tell what it is like to live with someone who can not.

I imagine there are psychologists that argue that our knowledge of good and evil is learned, that we pick it up as children and integrate the knowledge into our core personality. There is evidence of this in children, somewhere between five and seven years old, children begin to demonstrate the ability to make moral choices. But what if that ability is never learned, what if a child grows up that never

successfully made that integration? What if a natural, fundamental part of most humans is missing, replaced by an intellectual construct?

Think of an intelligent illiterate individual, brilliant but they never learned to read. There are stories of such people fooling those around them for years, employing excellent memory and some fine acting skills to hide their illiteracy.

Patricia's brilliance first attracted me. She used that intelligence to construct a moral model for her to refer to. For most of her life, the model was dynamic in that she based it on a close association with a moral person or persons. First, the surrogate North Carolina family that took her in and then me.

Eventually, Patricia replaced the dynamic model with a static one, her warped view of Christianity. Everything Christian is laced with ethics, whether you agree with the ethical position or not, Christian music, Christian books, church services, and even conversations between Christians. Once Patricia entered that world, as one sensitive to ethical signposts, she found an abundance.

Unfortunately, history is redundant with those that took these ethical signposts and read them as they wished. The Reverend Jim Jones comes to mind and how he used his version of Christianity to exploit others sexually, economically, and otherwise. Patricia's static model failed her because she could not interact with it. She looked at her Christian signposts and drew her own ethical conclusions. Previous to this, she would tell or ask me what she was thinking or planning, and then make her decision based on my response.

The inability to distinguish truth combined with the inability to differentiate between right and wrong combined to form dangerous behavioral patterns. When

you consider Patricia's last major behavior, the events that followed almost seem inevitable.

We identify many people with a temper, many people with a violent temper; but most of these individuals still maintain some level of control. Patricia's temper manifested itself often and with very little, if any, control.

The incident on the California highway is an example, granted an extreme one. Patricia's rage ran so high that she placed her own life in danger to assault me while I drove, but example after example existed over the course of our sixteen years of marriage. As finely honed as Patricia's survival instincts were, they all flew out the window when she lost her temper.

Although Patricia's temper flared, the fire could burn for a long time. She held grudges for years and the very mention of an unfavorable name could result in rage and new plans of revenge.

I helped Patricia work to control these three main behavioral traits, amorality, lying, and temper over the years. At times, we succeeded and at times we did not. As with many dealing with mental illness, the struggle for control is often over a lifetime.

Once I was out of the picture, no one supported Patricia, no one provided any help. These 'no ones' included mental health professionals, women support groups, Patricia's new church, and her new husband. It may be that events spiraled out of control so quickly that no one could help.

Independence

After the incident where Patricia beat Glen in my presence, I insisted Patricia attend counseling. I made a couple of points. First, I would not consider marriage counseling at this time. The issue in front of us was not our marriage, but Patricia's problems. I would not allow her to divert from the need to address these problems by dealing with the *effects* such as the damage to our marriage.

Second, I wanted to see receipts. In the past when Patricia promised to seek counseling and I pressed her for details, she would tell me that she saw a counselor at the church and there was no charge. I told her that I wanted to see a bill.

When I related this story to a client of mine, a mental health professional, she told me that these actions often end in divorce. Often when only one spouse goes into counseling, that spouse will decide to divorce and she warns clients about this.

Well, this certainly proved true in our case, and as I thought about it, I saw the pattern. As a general rule, counseling focuses on the individual seeking treatment. As a general rule, those seeking treatment are going to present themselves in the best light possible. As a general rule, one of the objectives of counseling is to support the individual counseled as they attempt to work through the problem. As a general rule, I imagine the absent spouse ends up as a focal point for the problems. After all, the absent spouse is not there to present the other side of the story.

Ginny Sanchez, Patricia's best friend before the divorce, notes that Patricia never accused me of domestic violence during the three years they were friends. She thought this unusual considering the stories Patricia told about others, about her childhood, and her willingness to express anger about me. She felt confident that Patricia would have confided in her if such act of violence were in fact a part of our lives as Patricia would later allege.

It would then seem that the creation of me as a brute occurred about the time Patricia went into counseling. It did not help matters that events created even more distance between us. The beating of Glen upset me. My nightmare that I thought we had held at bay for several years walked into the reality of daylight and confronted me in the form of my oldest child. If my marriage was unhappy before November of 2001, it was miserable after that.

To add to this, I started a new company that for the first time in our marriage required travel. The decision to start the new business, as most of all major decisions in our marriage resulted as a joint decision after extensive discussions between Patricia and I. The only exception to this pattern of mutual decisions that comes to mind was Patricia's decision not to take the teaching job when Montie went into kindergarten. As a rule, our marriage, good, bad, or otherwise was a partnership.

In August of 2001, we combined business with a family trip and visited New York and Washington DC. Later in August, I traveled alone to a training class in San Jose. In October I spent a week in Chicago. In November I visited DC again.

As an aside, my trip to DC in November 2001 included a visit to the Pentagon shortly after 9/11. The MPs belonging to the guard detail came from the 18th Airborne Corp. My old division, the 82d Airborne, is part of the 18th. As usual with my life, 'Avery Luck' the young sergeant in charge of the guard detail knew my old platoon sergeant, now a command sergeant major, and hated him as much I did. This resulted in a tour of the destruction. I collected a couple of pieces of scrap. They sit in a display case on my desk as



Avery Children in front of WTC August 2001

I write. Never to forget the horror of the act, the cowardice of the terrorists, and the bravery of those on Flight 93 along with the firefighters and police officers that served that day.

We also picked up a client out of town that required several overnight trips. Before 2001 I had been lucky in that my travel was very limited and most of this travel involved training for our new product line and was a one time event.

Patricia was not happy with the travel. During my time in Chicago she demanded that we take a weekend trip with just the two of us. We had not done this since before Jessica was born.

As usual I agreed and booked a dream weekend at the San Diego Hilton on Mission Bay. Our weekend included whale watching and swimming with the dolphins. Unfortunately, I was sick at the time and felt miserable the entire weekend.

All said and done, I thought it a pleasant weekend. I do not believe we fought and the activities, despite my illness, proved fun. The only point of contention was my insistence we plan our return to Albuquerque before Glen's birthday.

Patricia was deeply involved in planning the divorce before we went to San Diego. This would imply that she made her decision sometime before the San Diego trip and after my trip to Chicago in October. Again, it seems likely that she began making plans after the incident with Glen and when she began counseling.

The trip was already planned and paid for. It may be that she thought of this weekend as our last chance.

In retrospect the clues proved obvious. She began grilling me about the worth of the business. She demanded that I transfer significant funds into our personal account.



Patricia Long Avery in San Diego 2001

When I asked why, she would only say that it was our money and it belonged in our personal account. I explained the corporate structure and how I was drawing a salary and the dividend structure. We could always pull the money into our personal account if we needed it.

Patricia was a signatory on the corporate account. I guess she had forgotten that until she talked to her divorce attorney, knowledgeable in finding ways to fund his work. . She experienced no problems draining both the corporate and personal accounts the day she filed but before I knew we were getting a divorce. Patricia also made friends with one of the women in the office, pumping this employee for information before and after Patricia filed for divorce.

Patricia also began taking advantage of the nights out I offered her. Often two or three times a week. I suspected a boyfriend when she took *Knights Tale* to watch. She hated that movie. She told the kids and I that she was spending time with ladies from church. Her email was just a little different. I was use to being accused of being mean and not paying attention to her, but the emails differed by painting herself as the lovely attentive wife. This set up a contrast that I missed completely. She also demanded and observed me deleting all of our old email correspondence. She wanted no reminders of the old Patricia.

Lover?

I do not believe that Kyle Self was Patricia's first lover during our marriage but he was her last. Patricia told people either she met him online or in a divorce support group. I believe the latter is what she told me. My guess is that they met on line and got together sometime in November of 2001.

I will stand before my accusers as not a great husband. I never cheated on Patricia but really did not care about what she did as long as the children were protected. Patricia began threatening me with an affair. Telling me that if I did not treat her better or do as she said, she would get a lover. After starting therapy, she called me one day at the office and told me that her therapist had diagnosed her as depressed and that meant I had to do what ever she wanted.

The lover threats were often sex related but as often not. Patricia seemed to enjoy sex when she was angry, especially enraged. Often, sex seemed a way for her to obtain control of herself. I did not feel the same way. Sex when angry seems too much like rape to me and, despite later accusations, was not something I enjoyed.

I do not want to sound vague, but Patricia was vague, her demands were open ended and not specific. She simply threatened me - either I behaved however she wished or she would find a lover. Specific demands I addressed one way or another – we vacationed in San Diego, I did not transfer all of our money to the personal account.

Given this choice, I told Patricia to do whatever she wanted as long as she did not involve the children. Part of me hoped I was calling a bluff. Part of me knew it was not even a threat but a Patricia rationalization for an action already taken. Yes, Patricia was perfectly capable of sleeping with someone and forcing me to agree to it afterwards. Part of me actually looked forward to her spending time away from me.

Not for a single second did I ever believe that Patricia would file for divorce. I mean, that would be *crazy* on her part. I knew perfectly well that Patricia's mental illness would not allow her to survive without the emotional and ethical support I provided her. I knew she had no where to go. Who in their right mind would put up with her and provide

the support she needed. Idiots like me were not born every day. She was trapped by her illness and I was trapped by my oath, my wedding vows.

It was crazy and so was Patricia. Whatever last thread of reason that floated in her brain telling her she needed me was blown away. She decided she did not need me. She decided she could have her lover, her house, her car, our money, and our kids without me.

In January of 2002, Patricia began talking about divorce. At first I ignored it, but the talk did not go away. The pattern of conversations proved typical of many of our non enraged negative conversations. “I think we should consider a divorce” Patricia would say, “What do you think?” “Patricia, if I wanted to divorce you I would have done so years ago and what about the kids?” No answer.

No conversations about what was wrong with our marriage, no discussions of what we could do to improve it, no discussions about how we might be better off separated.

Within a week or so, Patricia was insisting on separation. Within another week or so, I became convinced she was serious. Her insistence convinced me and I got the idea she was serious when she brought her boyfriend home and introduced him to the kids. The fact that I was still living there did not seem bother either Patricia or the new boyfriend.

The boyfriend introduced to the children was named Kyle Self. For better or worse, Kyle became a part of our family when Patricia became involved with him. He was her extra martial lover, live-in lover, and second husband. One official record indicates they married a few hours before our divorce, and at best they married within a few hours of our divorce.

I know little about Kyle but much more then I would like to know. He is about Patricia’s age of 38, adopted, grew up in Albuquerque, and is a computer geek. He was

divorced and had been released from bankruptcy shortly before I became aware of him. His adoptive parents seem the honest salt of the earth and all of my dealings with them have been forthright. All of dealings with Kyle appear forthright also, but he slept with my wife, lived off both the community money and my money. Kyle admitted that valuable items had been stolen while in his keeping. The website that raised money by alleging horrible acts on Glen and mine's part was registered in Kyle's name. Kyle was part of actions that Protective Services found abusive of my children, and Kyle met his next girlfriend while visiting Patricia in jail.

I remember one night Glen railing about what a loser Kyle was, I laughed and remarked that he had only been with Glen's mother for a short while.

Kyle had a long way to go before he caught up with me.

In short, he strikes me as a nonentity, a bit of a dreamer, and a woose. I believe he made some attempts to support Patricia but was simply not strong enough. Many people feel sorry for him until I remind them that of everyone involved in this story, Kyle was the only one that came out ahead, mainly with six digits of Patricia's and mine's money.

The Stage was set with most of the actors engaged. Patricia and her boyfriend wanted me out. I wanted what was best for the family and the children just sat back and observed the farce that quickly dissolved into tragedy.