

34. The Child

(In a hotel room. #1 is pacing and waiting. He/she checks his/her watch. There is a knock at the door. #1 goes to the door, but doesn't open it.)

- #1:** Who's there?
#2: Joe/Jo, it's Bill/Barbara.
#1: Are you alone?
#2: Did you tell me to come alone?
#1: Just answer the question.
#2: *(Pause)* Yes, I'm alone. Let me in. *(#1 opens the door and let's #2 in. He/She looks around then sits.)* Nice place. I think it has a minus four star rating.
#1: Well, when one wants to be lost, one usually doesn't go to the Hilton.
#2: Where's Carrie?
#1: Not here.
#2: What is going on? You know she was supposed to be here.
#1: Wrong! On the phone you said you wanted to see me. Not the kid.
#2: I want to make sure she's OK.
#1: Give me a break. You know she's fine.
#2: Then why can't I see her?
#1: Because I don't trust you. You're my ex-wife/ex-husband's lawyer. For all I know, you brought the cops or the FBI with you.
#2: You're over-blowing your own importance, you know.
#1: And you're playing games with me, you know. Bye. *(Starts to exit.)*
#2: Wait...
#1: *(Turns back.)* No, you wait! You and that...person I was married to were the ones who went on the news and gave interviews. You said you just wanted to talk. Well, here I

am, so talk!

- #2:** Helen/Howard wants Carrie back.
#1: You want to tell me something that most of the continental United States doesn't already know?
#2: We thought that if you were asked in person, you might give her back.
#1: Well think again.
#2: What do you hope to accomplish by doing this?
#1: How's being with my daughter for starters. Not being denied visitation.
#2: No one was denying you visitation.
#1: Really? What do you call one weekend a month and every other holiday?
#2: I call it the judgment the courts handed down.
#1: Do you call it fair?
#2: *(Pause)* It's the judgment of the courts.
#1: And it's garbage, so please spare me the rhetoric, counselor.
#2: And you think this is going to make things all better? When you get caught, and you will be, they'll never let you see her.
#1: OK, let's play this game. Let's say for the sake of argument, I give up. I take Carrie home, Helen/Howard and I make nice, what happens in a month? What happens with the new job?
#2: What job? What are you talking about?
#1: See, this is why we can't talk. You can't talk straight with me about anything.
#2: If you're referring to Helen's/Howard's new job... nothing is definite. It's...
#1: ENOUGH! Stop lying. Just once.
#2: *(Pause)* OK...he's/she's taking the job.
#1: 3,000 miles away?
#2: *(Pause)* Yes.
(The two just stare at each other.)

- #1: You know, when Helen/Howard and I first talked about getting divorced, we agreed that we'd have joint custody. So I just couldn't figure out why he/she started fighting so hard for sole custody. Then a friend of mine, a detective, did some checking and we found out that he/she was offered a new position with her/his company ...across the country. Well, if we shared custody she/he knew I'd never agree to let Carrie move, so things started to make sense. Then, you entered the picture.
- #2: You make it sound like a plot.
- #1: Wasn't it? Once we got into court you took innuendo and turned it into fact, took personality traits and made them character flaws. In short, you pretty much made me about one step below Hitler. I wouldn't have given me custody based on what you said.
- #2: I didn't make anything up! I don't set out to make villains, I...
- #1: Of course you do. It's your nature. Lawyers like you have this inbred quality – very much like attack dogs. Nurtured correctly and pointed in the right direction, you'll destroy anyone.
- #2: Was I the one who told you two to get married? Did I then make your marriage go sour? No. You two did that on your own. I was simply hired to do a job.
- #1: And you did it extremely well.
- #2: And if you're expecting me to apologize for that, well, don't hold your breath.
- #1: And you don't care who you hurt, whose life you ruin.
- #2: You want to give it a rest? There're no reporters or cameras here, so get off the soap box. I'm an attorney. My colleagues and I aren't angels of death. We just try cases. Know what I think? I think that if I had been your lawyer and things had turned out differently, we'd probably be having dinner right now and you'd be toasting my courtroom expertise. You don't hate me, you hate what I did.

And the facts are, I don't hate you...I pity you because I'm forced to sit and listen to the rantings of a bitter man/woman who screwed up his/her own life and marriage and is trying to blame it on everyone else. Well, I'm not to blame. I just did my job...and did it well!

- #1: Including making stories about my "problem"?
- #2: Did you or did you not go into a treatment program?
- #1: Three years ago after a knee operation, I had a slight problem getting off the pain killers. On my own volition, I went to a spa to get some therapy on my knee and clean out my system.
- #2: This "spa" was a registered rehab center, was it not?
- #1: Yes it was, but...
- #2: That's all I said.
- #1: Oh, come on, the way you told it I was on the streets knocking over liquor stores.
- #2: Look, we can go all day saying who did what to whom, but it won't solve anything. The courts made their decision and as of right now you're a kidnapper. That's all anyone's going to see. Why don't you just give up?
- #1: (Pause) Do you have any kids?
- #2: No.
- #1: Then you have no idea what it's like. The prospect of not being able to see your kid when you want.
- #2: Even if you had joint custody, you wouldn't see her every day.
- #1: You just don't get it. No I wouldn't have liked it, but a couple of miles away is liveable. Three thousand miles away is unacceptable and I won't have it.
- #2: And what about Helen/Howard? Aren't you doing exactly to him/her what you say he/she did to you?
- #1: You reap what you sow. If he/she hadn't tried to get everything his/her way, had she/he just been honest, we wouldn't be in this position, and that's the truth.
- #2: So what are you going to do? You can't run forever.

- #1:** I can run as long as necessary. Don't underestimate me.
- #2:** Then don't be an idiot. We'll work something out. I promise.
- #1:** *(Laughs a bit.)* Let's just say your credibility is lacking. You go home, talk to that...him/her and I'll get in touch soon.
- #2:** When?
- #1:** Soon.
- #2:** She/he won't like this.
- #1:** Ask me if I care? You just tell him/her that he/she can... tell him/her I said "hi." Now get out.
- #2:** *(Starts to exit.)* I'll see you in court.
- #1:** Looking forward to it.
(#2 exits.)

35. The Client

(At a table in a restaurant. He/she is dressed pretty well, looking somewhat overdressed for where he/she is. He/she takes the last sip of a drink, then calls for a waiter.)

- #1:** Excuse me. *(Pause)* Hey, waiter! My glass seems to be empty. You wanna do something about it? *(#2 enters and goes up to the table and looks at #1. #1 sees him/her.)* You don't look like my waiter, but you'll do. *(#1 hands waiter a glass. Waiter puts it back on the table and sits.)*
- #2:** I've been looking for you everywhere. Where have you been?
- #1:** *(Looks around.)* My first guess would be...here. Then again, in my condition, I might be wrong. I could be there.
- #2:** Well, just for your information, there's a room full of people, not to mention about 15 senior partners who are expecting to see you tonight.
- #1:** Oh, come on. Do you really think that in a room of a hundred plus lawyers, one absent attorney is really going to be noticed?
- #2:** Ordinarily, no. But when said attorney also happens to be the guest of honor, his/her presence is usually expected. Don't you agree, counselor?
- #1:** Your Honor, I object to this line of questioning.
- #2:** On what grounds?
- #1:** On the ground that you're making too much sense and I'm in no mood.
- #2:** Objection overruled.
- #1:** It figures. This just isn't my day.
- #2:** It's not your day?! You were officially made a partner in the firm today. That's what the party is about. Remember?
- #1:** Oh, that's right.