

Glenna Elaine Cole

by

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caveat lector

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Context and Circumstances

I was married to Glenna Elaine Cole Milam for about 14 years. In general, I considered it to be a good marriage. It wasn't a perfect marriage but no marriage ever is.¹ On November 9, 1983, I wrote a letter to Ann Landers, in response to something that I'd read in one of her columns. In that letter, I described my marriage to Elaine as being based on "love, trust, and honesty". Copies of the Ann Landers column, and of my letter, are available in the Appendix. I thought that it was a good marriage and that it was worth preserving. I intended to stay with her for the rest of my life. I didn't have the remotest clue, as I wrote that letter, that less than four months later, on February 28, 1984, Elaine would orchestrate a phoney surprise birthday party as a trap to surprise me with the announcement of a divorce.

This memoir tells that story. The material presented here was originally taken from *Thanks for the Mammaries: a Ma'amoir*. When I took the material for this memoir from that document, I revised it where appropriate so that it would make sense in spite of the large amount of related material that's included in the *Ma'amoir* but that isn't included here. Since that beginning, this memoir has departed somewhat from the original material. The substance of the story hasn't changed but I've polished the presentation of it a little and added some additional information, even some information that isn't included in the *Ma'amoir*. Where appropriate, I've hidden the identities of some of the people who're mentioned in this memoir, for the sake of their privacy. I don't intend to do that when I eventually release the *Ma'amoir*. When that eventually happens, then those people will just have to take their lumps or their credit, as appropriate. As the feminists like to say, they can "deal with it" or "get used to it". If they're up to the usual feminist standards, then they'll probably sue me. What a bunch of whiners.

As you read this memoir, you'll notice, if you haven't noticed it already, that I'm still angry. On a few occasions, when I've mentioned that circumstance to one woman or another, she usually volunteered the unsolicited opinion that I should "let go of the anger". Screw 'em all. I addressed the anger issue in my article *Purity in Anger*, in the April 2011 issue of the *Frontiersman*, and I haven't changed my opinion since then. I've known plenty of women who were still angry at their mothers, or their fathers, or at somebody else for things that happened years and years ago. They like to give the advice but they don't follow it themselves so I'll be angry if I choose and it's none of their damned business. With that in mind, if you don't like what you read in this memoir, then concern yourself with your own failings before you try to give me unsolicited lectures about mine.² I've been criticized for presenting this story here but I'll do it anyway. I want the truth to be told and I have the power to tell it. Here it is. Every circumstance or situation described herein is completely true.

1 No marriage has "worked out" until you die in it.

—November 10, 1989
Milam's Notes

2 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

—Luke 6:41-42
Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version

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The Witch Plots a Party³

On Monday, February 27, 1984, Elaine's mother called me on the telephone and said that she wanted to visit us on Tuesday evening to celebrate Elaine's birthday. She said that Catherine, my daughter, had selected a birthday cake and that we could have a surprise birthday party. I'd already planned to have a surprise birthday party for Elaine on Tuesday evening. As the cover for the party, I'd suggested that Elaine and I could go shopping after work to buy her something for her birthday. That allowed me to be confident that she wouldn't make any conflicting plans. I also particularly requested that she not plan anything else for Catherine, so that Catherine could go with us. I wanted Catherine to be at the party. We had a long history of socializing with Elaine's mother and her suggestion sounded like it would make my surprise birthday party even better. I was happy to have her at the party and I happily agreed to her suggestion.

On Tuesday morning, after Elaine left for work, I arranged party balloons and birthday gifts in the kitchen and then went to work. After I arrived at work, I happily told my boss about the party and got his permission to leave work early that afternoon. I got home early, showered, and put on some better clothes.⁴ Shortly afterward, Elaine's mother, Elaine's stepfather (Herb), and Elaine's sister-in-law (name not worth remembering and I don't remember it) arrived. They were the only guests who showed up. Herb and I went out and bought some ice cream. Herb, who was a very good friend of mine at the time, was unusually quiet. We got back well before Elaine arrived. I got my camera ready and, when she arrived, I took two surprise pictures of her as she came through the door. I've presented one of them just to the right of this paragraph. The shoulder that's visible at the bottom left of the picture is that of the witch.



3 By Elaine's own account, her mother was a witch. Elaine's favorite story in support of the claim was that of a dinner party that her parents gave for the boss, many years earlier. While Elaine's mother was preparing the fancy table, complete with candles, she couldn't get rid of a fly that had found its way into the dining room. As the arrival of the guests became imminent, the fly was still buzzing around. In desperation, she looked at the fly and said, "Drop dead!" upon which the fly immediately flew through the flame of one of the candles and dropped dead. She eventually turned out to be a witch in my own estimation, as well, but in a different sense.

4 I worked at Camino Camper at the time so my normal clothing was too grubby for a party.

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When Elaine arrived, I saw that Catherine wasn't with her. I asked her where Catherine was and she said "with a friend." Since we had guests, I didn't pursue the matter. We all sat at the table and Elaine opened her gifts. After that, Elaine said that she'd decided to buy herself a birthday gift. She said that she'd spent \$1500 on it. I tried to laugh, for the benefit of our guests, and said, "That was a little more than I'd planned to spend." She said "I bought a divorce." Everybody present except me had already known about it. The surprise birthday party that I'd planned had been corrupted into a sham by Elaine's mother, the witch. The whole thing had been arranged so that Elaine and her mother could gang up on me and subject me to an Unholy Inquisition.

Unholy Inquisition

Poor Herb, who was my best friend at the time, sat silently during the entire Unholy Inquisition, staring at his hands in his lap. After that evening, I never saw him again. However, Elaine, her mother, and her sister-in-law had plenty to say. They spent the next three hours accusing me of everything that they could imagine.

They accused me of having extramarital affairs. They didn't want to talk about Elaine's extramarital affairs or the fact that she'd had more of them than I did. They wanted to ignore the fact that, for most of the years of our marriage, we'd had an open marriage. We'd never tried to hide that fact from anybody and Elaine's mother was well aware of it. Nobody wanted to acknowledge that the open marriage had been gradually instigated by Elaine. I'd been raised as a conservative Bible Belt yokel. Elaine hailed from San Francisco. She was the flower child of the relationship. During the early years of our marriage, she'd gradually conditioned me into the idea of an open marriage with such comments as, "It's OK to eat out just so long as you come home for dinner", accompanied by a suggestive smirk. With regard to one particular instance of infidelity of which they accused me at the Unholy Inquisition, I reminded them that Elaine had been in bed with me and the other woman at the time. That revelation resulted in a sudden change of subject. That wasn't a problem for them. They had plenty of subjects available.

They accused me of many other things besides marital infidelity. They said that if Catherine grew up with me then she'd have warped values and identity problems because I didn't hide my Playboy magazines from her. They didn't care to remember that neither Elaine nor I had ever been bothered by the magazines before. They didn't want to admit that Elaine bought the magazines for me and that she read them herself. She'd even had a letter to the editor published in one issue, although she hadn't had the courage to let them use her name. However, I knew immediately when I read it that she'd sent it because I recognized the situation that she described. Nobody wanted to consider that neither of us had ever had a nudity taboo within the family. In fact, Elaine and I routinely wandered around the house without any clothes if it happened to be convenient. We'd always agreed that it wouldn't hurt Catherine to know what adults looked like. We even took Catherine to a nude beach with us. It was even Elaine's idea to take her there. To this day, I'm convinced that Catherine has a healthier attitude because of that early, honest, and untainted exposure to nudity.

They said that Catherine had serious emotional disturbances that would get worse if Elaine and I stayed together. They claimed that, on the other hand, the divorce would provide the stability that Catherine needed. There was a lot more of such nonsense.

Near the end of the Unholy Inquisition, I asked Elaine why she'd invited her family into the discussion. She said that she was afraid that her announcement would cause me to commit suicide. To this day, I don't have any idea which compartment of her addled brain generated that stupid notion. Then I accused Elaine's mother of having known about the plan from the beginning. She said that she'd refuse to answer the accusation. I'd spent about three hours trying my very best to defend myself against all of their lame-brained accusations, when none of it was even any of her business,

and then the witch didn't even have the decency to admit that she'd planned the event.

Elaine wanted me to go back to Texas to live with my family. I refused, so they packed most of our possessions and moved her out of the house that very night. I even helped them move things and load the truck, which they'd conveniently brought with them to the surprise birthday party. At the gate, just before Elaine walked out of the yard, she returned our wedding ring and suggested that she was glad to be rid of it. I asked her for a goodbye hug and she refused. The last thing that she said before she walked out the gate was, "Now, I don't have to tell you who my lovers are any more!" An aspect of our open marriage had been that we wouldn't hide anything from one another. For several months prior to the surprise birthday party, she'd been refusing to reveal the identity of her current flame. I'd complained that it was contrary to our agreement but she wouldn't tell me who he was. I never did find out who he was.

Regardless of my situation or my condition, I still had to go to work the next morning. Shortly after I sat down at my desk, my boss wandered in with a big smile on his face and asked me how the surprise birthday party had gone. I looked at him and gulped. I couldn't get my mouth to work. I tried to talk and, suddenly started to cry, right there in front of him. I think that I was even more surprised than he was. I told him the story and he went away. He must have issued some special instructions on my behalf because, for the entire day, nobody bothered me about anything at all, for any reason. I was completely alone with my thoughts, all day, in my little office.

Fair Weather Feminist

On Wednesday, I called Elaine at her mother's house and told her that I wanted to get Catherine on Friday after work and then return her on Sunday. Elaine said no. She said that she wasn't ready to give me visitation rights.⁵ I told her that a custody decision hadn't been made yet and that I had as much right as she did to have Catherine. She hung up on me. After all of those years of treating her with the respect of an equal, at divorce time she still acted like an arrogant bitch. She took the kid and ran to her mother. A man who did that would be accused of abduction. I guess that was the first big crack in my feminist beliefs. Believe it or not, I used to support feminism. I suppose that I have Elaine to thank for starting my process of enlightenment with regard to the kind of arrogant, malicious, and intolerant behavior that is to be expected from a feminist.

On Thursday, Elaine called me and said that she wanted to get some of her things from the house. Naturally, I said yes. I asked her about Catherine and she wouldn't tell me anything. She wouldn't let me talk to Catherine on the telephone. She said that she was planning to get some advice from a child psychiatrist and that I couldn't talk to Catherine until after that. I told her that the way that she'd handled the divorce announcement had been despicable and insulting. She agreed but she didn't apologize. To this day she has never apologized. To this day I haven't forgiven her. I'm even more angry about it now than I was then. Especially at Christmas, I'm angry at her. I'd intended to spend my entire life with Elaine and to spend the Christmas seasons of our later years sitting with a grandchild on my knee and admiring the Christmas tree. Elaine took all of that away from me. No matter what happened later in my life, I'll never be able to spend my entire life with one woman, and our family. That's gone forever. I haven't forgiven her, nor will I ever. Think of it as a lifelong commitment.

On Friday, I called Small World Almaden, where Catherine had been attending preschool, and asked if Catherine was doing all right. I was told that Catherine hadn't been there since Monday and that they didn't know anything about her whereabouts. Later that day, Elaine called and let Catherine talk to me. Catherine was distressed and asked a lot of questions like "Why don't you and Mommy like each other any more?" and "Why can't I come home?" Apparently, Elaine hadn't even bothered to explain anything to her. I tried to give her honest answers.

After all of that, Elaine's car broke down during the first week after she moved out. She called me on the telephone and asked me to come over to her apartment and fix it for her. Naturally, I did so without a complaint. She didn't offer to pay me. She didn't offer me a meal. She didn't offer me a free lay. She didn't offer me anything at all and I didn't ask her for anything. I just fixed the car and left.

I eventually received a copy of a Temporary Restraining Order in which Elaine had asked the court to order me to:

⁵ She called them visitation rights but they're visiting privileges. When a neighbor drops by, that's a visit. When an angel appears, that's a visitation. Thus, its visiting, not visitation. Finally, courts don't give rights. They give privileges. Thus it isn't visitation rights. It's visiting privileges.

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- not contact, molest, attack, strike, threaten, sexually assault, batter, telephone or otherwise disturb the peace of either her or Catherine,
- move out of my home,
- stay at least 500 yards from my home, Elaine's place of work, and Catherine's school,
- not dispose of any of my property, and notify the court if I wanted to do so,
- give exclusive use, possession, and control of my home to her, and
- make the payments on the mortgage, the house insurance, the auto insurance, our truck, and my motorcycle.

The document was prepared and submitted to the court before I even knew that she was planning a divorce. For reasons known only to God, the judge denied the expulsion order, the stay away order, and the order that would have required me to pay the bills. He did, however, grant the order that I not molest (etc) her. I regarded it as an insult that she would even ask for such an order. I'd never even remotely engaged in any such behavior with either Elaine or Catherine. The document proved what kind of woman Elaine really was. Somehow, during 14 years of living with her, I just hadn't noticed it. Since then, I've never forgotten it.

Elaine had requested the divorce based on irreconcilable differences. Since I wasn't even aware that anything was wrong with our marriage, except that she wouldn't tell me the name of her boyfriend, the irreconcilable differences couldn't have been very serious. I'll admit that, for several previous years, I'd had a girlfriend with whom I'd been excessively in love. That was a violation of our agreement but that relationship had ended more than a year before the divorce announcement. As past history, it was already resolved and it shouldn't have been an issue any longer. The fact is that Elaine never did give me a credible reason for the divorce.

Elaine also submitted to the court a *Declaration in Support of Order to show Cause Hearing*. In response, I wrote a *Declaration of Respondent in Response to Petitioner's Declaration*. When Elaine and her lawyer saw my declaration, they offered to withdraw their declaration if I'd promise not to show my response to the judge. Elaine's declaration was pure bullshit. It's worth noting that she didn't sign it under penalty of perjury but only "respectfully". I signed mine under penalty of perjury. Just to keep the record straight and to show the kind of bullshit with which I was dealing, I've included the text of my document next, verbatim, with the exception of minimal changes necessary to conceal the identity of third parties. Those changes are shown in brackets. I didn't promise not to use my declaration. I only promised to refrain from showing it to the judge. Therefore, here it is.

In this declaration, I have shown exactly each of Petitioner's statements, followed by my response. Finally, I have made an additional statement of my own.

Petitioner's declaration, in its various parts and in its entirety, is malicious and filled with inaccurate statements, half-truths, and inapplicable accusations.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

My husband has had sexual intercourse with a family member who was related by marriage (he committed adultery with [exact relationship withheld to protect her privacy]).

MY RESPONSE:

Petitioner has neglected to mention some important aspects of this incident. First Petitioner was in bed with us at the time. The incident involved three consenting adults, behav-

ing voluntarily. Petitioner's acceptance of the incident when it happened makes ridiculous her objection to it at this late date. Second, the incident occurred over eight years ago. At the time, we did not have a child and, in fact, we were not even considering the possibility of having a child. These circumstances render the incident totally irrelevant to the current issue. Incidentally, the [relative by marriage] and I first met as adults and at the time of this incident, she had, from kindness, been helping to take care of Petitioner's dying father. Furthermore, my [relative by marriage], who has remarried, would probably prefer that the incident remain forgotten.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

He has openly had extramarital affairs for the last eight years of the marriage, which he discussed in front of the child.

MY RESPONSE:

Since we adopted Catherine, I have had two affairs. In the same period of time Petitioner has had five affairs of which I am aware and possibly others. Related discussions which took place in front of Catherine have been appropriately circumspect. Since ours was an open marriage by voluntary mutual agreement, there is no possible justification for Petitioner's complaints on this issue.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

My spouse has no friends or family in the State of California to turn to in time of financial or emotional distress, therefore, my spouse will probably return to Texas where his family resides. The child in question is a mixed race female child (3/4 Mexican, 1/4 Negro) and as such would be subjected to a psychological (sic) and possible physical conflict. It is also known that the spouse's father has sexually molested [identity withheld], physically abused his former wife, and is an alcoholic. It is therefore believed that this proposed environment would greatly endanger the child.

MY RESPONSE:

I do not now intend, nor have I ever intended to return to Texas as a place of residence. I have resided in California for over twelve years. My job is here. My home is here. My friends are here. I have consistently expressed my satisfaction with living here, and have never implied a desire to return to Texas. The fact that Elaine would, without any basis at all, assume that I would return to Texas is at best wishful thinking. Approximately one month before the announcement by Elaine of the divorce, Elaine's mother offered to pay for a vacation for me in Texas. I declined the offer.

References to my father's alleged misconduct relate to incidents which happened, if they occurred, as much as 24 years ago. Elaine claims [identity withheld] told her my father molested her on one occasion, when she was a young adult--this would have been about 15 to 18 years ago, if it occurred at all. So far as I can tell this alleged incident does not appear to be reflected in the current relationship between my father and [identity withheld]. I have never heard anyone except Elaine mention the alleged incident.

Abuse of my mother by my father is 'ancient history', since they have been divorced for over 18 years. To mention it now is absurd, particularly since I have no intention of returning to Texas as a place of residence, either with or without Catherine.

The statement that my father is an alcoholic is to the best of my knowledge unsupported by professional diagnosis.

This entire statement by Elaine is an effort to contaminate my reputation by making unfounded assumptions and resurrecting selected portions of my background. The unpleasant portions of my early life have served me as lessons learned and bad examples to be avoided. As evidence of my response to the unfortunate characteristics of my parents, who, incidentally, were good parents in many ways, I must point out that I do not drink, smoke, misuse drugs, abuse my wife or molest my child. Elaine's fanatic preoccupation with my past is a recent development which disturbs me. I hope that she has fabricated this concern merely as an excuse to escape from a marriage that no longer pleases her. Otherwise, some more serious reason must exist.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

My spouse has questionable morality and uses improper sexual oriented language in front of the child. In regards to subject matter viewed or otherwise available to the child, he provides poor parental decisions with regard to the child's welfare.

MY RESPONSE:

I cannot credit this statement to Petitioner. She has never questioned my morality, but rather, has accused me of excessive honesty. I have a life-long reputation for avoiding strong language and have always tried to speak appropriately and with restraint in the use of “four letter words.” The inappropriate subject matter to which reference is made is the normal content of broadcast television, and Playboy magazine. Elaine and I have always conferred on what Catherine should be permitted to watch on television, and more often than not, Catherine voluntarily avoided programming that bothered her. The Playboy magazine was originally a gift subscription from Elaine. The entire statement is nonsense and, in fact, does not sound like something that Elaine would say.

PETITIONER’S STATEMENT:

When disciplining the child, he “baits” the child by allowing feedback but upon the child using feedback, the child is physically punished for “talking back.” He disciplines the child inconsistently with unpredictable severity and such is not determined by the child’s actions. Spouse also creates authority conflicts by countermanding or exceeding instructions given by the mother of the child.

MY RESPONSE:

Nothing in this statement is true. ‘Baiting’ implies malicious intent, which is absent. Also, I do not bait the child. My disciplining of Catherine is as consistent as I can make it. When I have overreacted, which occasionally happens after a bad day, I have been quick to apologize as appropriate, and Catherine has responded with understanding. Catherine has also learned to recognize when I am fussing out of turn, and remind me not to do it. I see this as a sign of maturity on Catherine’s part. I have never knowingly countermanded Elaine’s instructions without first discussing the situation with her. I do not believe Elaine was the source of this statement.

PETITIONER’S STATEMENT:

He will not allow the child to have religious instruction nor will he allow the child to attend religious services of any denomination.

MY RESPONSE:

For all the years that I have known Elaine, she has professed to be an atheist. I consider religion to be a good example of Man’s inhumanity to Man. Nevertheless, my stated position with respect to Catherine having religious instruction is that Catherine should make that decision herself. Elaine is well aware of my position, because we discussed it as recently as three months before our separation. I do not believe that Elaine is the source of this statement.

PETITIONER’S STATEMENT:

He is uncooperative when it comes to personal/public information and medical histories required by the child’s school and the lack of cooperation is not based on religious principles but on personal neurosis.

MY RESPONSE:

Catherine’s medical care has been, and in my opinion, should be directed by her pediatrician.

Elaine’s complaint is based on my opposition to government mandated immunization programs for children. I espouse political/philosophical views against excessive government interference in the personal lives of citizens. The school district furnished a “release from immunizations” which I signed. Catherine’s pediatrician also signed a statement confirming the undesirability of further immunizations at the time in question, and told me she opposed the prescribing of medicine by state and county governments.

Catherine has had the immunizations which her pediatrician recommended for her, at the times her pediatrician considered best for her.

PETITIONER’S STATEMENT:

Petitioner’s family is able to provide back-up support for financial and/or physical care of the child in the event of incapacity of the mother. They have provided such back-up support when necessary since the adoption of the child.

MY RESPONSE:

I appreciate their help.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

Petitioner is the major provider for family support. Insurance is provided by the mother's employment and the insurance covers medical, dental, and psychiatric care for employees of their dependants (sic).

MY RESPONSE:

For 11 months out of the past 6 years I was unemployed. For 18 months out of the past 6 years Elaine was unemployed. So what? At present, my income is greater than hers, and my benefits are better.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

The Petitioner has a stable work record with the company General Electric. The spouse has been unemployed in spite of an engineering degree for 10 out of the last 11 months is (sic) currently employed as a service clerk at a recreational vehicle sales company. The spouse is currently involved in a legal conflict with a former employer General Electric which involves the Nuclear Regulatory (sic) Commission (NRC), GE and himself.

MY RESPONSE:

My period of unemployment was unavoidable. I can show proof of my conscientious effort to gain employment. My primary difficulty was that my 10 years of continuous employment in the nuclear industry, and my degree in Nuclear Engineering made me an unfavorable candidate for employment in the electronic industry in competition with people from within the electronic industry. I refused to lie about my degree, as suggested by Elaine. My employment as a service clerk was to my credit; at least I had a job. My legal conflict with GE has no bearing whatsoever on my suitability as a parent and arises out of my obligation under my conscience and the Code of Federal Regulation, Title 10, part 21, to report potential safety violations within the nuclear industry.

PETITIONER'S STATEMENT:

I do not want Respondent at our residence located at 439 White Road, due to the fact that we are constantly fighting and arguing in front of my child. It would be in the best of interest of my child and I that Respondent leave our family residence.

MY RESPONSE:

We never fight and seldom argue. Elaine seldom says anything at all. In fact, I suspect we should have argued more, if only for the sake of communication.

Elaine's insistence on referring to the child as 'her' child is typical of her attitude since she left me. She has taken unilateral control of Catherine, disclaimed my right to any access to Catherine other than by her permission, and seems to feel that she has a special privilege to 'take the child and run' simply by virtue of her sex. Her attitude is an offense to the equality I have observed and the respect I have given for all these years.

Elaine voluntarily left our family residence, taking our child with her.

CLOSING STATEMENT:

On February 27, before Petitioner and I physically separated, Elaine's mother asked me if she could visit us on the evening of Elaine's birthday. I consented and we arranged a surprise birthday party for Elaine. The next day, Elaine's birthday, I hung birthday balloons and placed presents on the table. Elaine's mother, Elaine's stepfather and Elaine's sister-in-law arrived for the party. They brought a birthday cake and her stepfather and I went out and bought ice cream. When Elaine arrived, I saw that Catherine was not with her and asked her whereabouts. Elaine said she had left Catherine 'with a friend.' We then sat down at the table and Elaine opened her presents, and then announced that for her birthday she had 'bought a divorce.' Everyone present had been aware of it except me. The entire arrangement of the party had been a sham to get that group of people together for the divorce announcement. Elaine then moved out of our home and has since kept our child Catherine with her, except for visitation as she allows.

I consider Elaine's use of my surprise birthday party for her divorce announcement to have been an insult.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed this 3 day of April, 1984 at Sunnyvale, California.

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The Feminist Bitch and the Arrogant Witch

The only good thing that I can say about Elaine is that I believe that her mother actually wrote the *Declaration in Support of Order to show Cause Hearing*. Indeed, I'm convinced that Elaine's mother was primarily responsible for motivating Elaine to get the divorce. Many years earlier, in Houston, Texas, Elaine's mother promised us that it was our marriage and that she would never interfere in it. She made the promise on three separate occasions. Nevertheless, I believe that the divorce was largely motivated by her interference. That's the main reason for my eventual perception of her as the witch. I'd have called her the bitch but that name's already taken. I can say one other thing for sure. If the witch's first husband, Fletcher Cole, had still been alive, then none of the bullshit would ever have happened. He wouldn't have tolerated the scheming for an instant. In either case, I don't believe that Elaine actually instigated the divorce.

Our marriage, although not perfect, certainly didn't have anything wrong with it that was sufficiently bad to warrant a divorce. However, Elaine signed the declaration so she's responsible. Her behavior was calculated, malicious, and insulting. That behavior followed 14 years of marriage during which I'd always treated her with courtesy and respect. I never beat her. I never threatened her. I never intentionally intimidated her, never intentionally belittled her, and never intentionally abused her in any way. If I did any of those things inadvertently, then I apologized. I didn't drink. I didn't smoke. I didn't use foul language in her presence. I didn't abuse drugs. I signed my pay checks and gave them to her. I tolerated, with a closed mouth, all of her stupid diets, refusing only to go on them myself. I tolerated her lies to herself about her weight. That is, she'd go on a diet, claim to have lost 40 pounds, and then buy an entire closet full of new clothes because her old ones didn't fit any more. Then, she'd gain back all of the weight that she'd allegedly lost and buy an entire closet full of new clothes because her old ones were out-of-style. She never admitted that the clothes didn't fit her. They were out of style. Such self-deception was typical of her. During all of those years, I never once told her that she was fat. Indeed, I found ways to compliment her on how good she looked after a diet without implying that she'd been fat before the diet. I'd known from early in the relationship that she wasn't considered to be attractive by conventional standards. I knew that because I'd heard on at least three different occasions remarks that criticized her lack of beauty. Through all of the years that we spent together, I never mentioned any of those comments to her. I never even hinted at them. There's more to beauty than appearance. I loved her in spite of her fat.

I tolerated with as much good grace as I could her abominable housekeeping, her lame excuses for it, and the lie that she'd originally told me about it. That is, when we were first getting acquainted, in college, I'd observed that her apartment was in a disgusting condition. I asked her if it was always that bad. It was important to me. I wanted a wife who would keep a clean house. I hadn't yet made a commitment to her and I was in the decision process. In answer to my question, she claimed that she normally did a lot better than that and that the place was a mess only because exams were approaching and she was spending all of her time studying. I believed her and moved on toward my lifelong commitment. I didn't learn until I'd already married her that she'd told me an outright lie.

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I respected her damned feminist equality and she proved herself to be a fair-weather feminist who forgot all about equality at divorce time. She even achieved one final twist of the knife in my back by arranging for the first child support payment to be due on our wedding anniversary, June 2, 1984.

The child support payments were irrelevant so far as Catherine's well-being was concerned. The only thing that I accomplished by making them was to allow Elaine to waste that much more per month. Either way, Catherine had the same standard of living and the same quality of life that she would have had otherwise. The only reason that I kept struggling with the payments for all of those years was because I'd promised to make them and I do what I say that I'll do.

The child support payments were a chain around my neck. Elaine had arranged the timing of her divorce so that I was working at a good-paying professional job when the amount of the child support payments was determined. During the entire term of the payments, she was professionally employed in a full time job with benefits. However, after 1986, I became permanently unemployed. After that, I was trying to live on \$8000 per year or less in the free market, with no benefits at all. Under such circumstances, a normal non-custodial parent might have been able to go back into the court system and achieve a reduction in the required amount of the payments. However, my political situation was such that the courts weren't available to me any longer. Elaine was well aware of that. A conscientious woman, a woman with integrity, might possibly have volunteered to accept a reduction in the amount of the payments, off-the-record. I suppose that there aren't many such women around. Elaine certainly didn't volunteer to accept any such reduction. Consequently, I believe that I paid considerably more than I should have been required to pay, based on my lack of income after 1986. Nevertheless, I continued to struggle with the payments until they were done. I wasn't able to pay the full amount each month but I always made a payment and I kept a conscientious record of the amount that I owed. I was several years late in completing the payments, but I completed them. When I was forced, against my will, to voluntarily sell my house in San Jose, I made sure that everybody involved knew how much I owed to Elaine. I made certain that the escrow company sent to her a check for the amount owed. The payments are completed now and my conscience is clear. Of course, my conscience was clear anyway.

One of my big mistakes with Elaine, although I didn't know it at the time, was to let her manage our finances. Since then, I've never again allowed a woman to manage my finances. At that time, however, I was happy to trust Elaine with the management of our finances. Every payday, I signed my paycheck and gave it to her. She did whatever she wanted to do with the funds and gave me a weekly allowance for my own personal use. We had our family finances divided into house funds (which she managed), my allowance, her allowance, and (eventually) Catherine's allowance. The agreement was that each individual could spend that individual's own allowance without any restriction and wasn't answerable for it. The way that it worked in practice was that the house fund was usually broke. I kept loaning funds back to that account because my allowance fund was always solvent. While we were married, we both had professional jobs. I don't know the exact numbers but, between us, we must have been making about \$70,000 per year. After the divorce and before I left San Jose, I lived on about \$8000 per year or less. Even so, I still had more funds available

to spend on myself, managing my own \$8000 per year, than I'd had while Elaine was managing our \$70,000 per year.

Elaine had a lot of jewelry. I never paid any attention to it but I now speculate that she might have paid quite a lot for it. One of her favorite bits of "old folk wisdom" was that Islamic women carry all of their worldly wealth around with them on their bodies, in the form of jewelry. Maybe she thought that was a good idea. She also liked to get fancy paint jobs on her fingernails, spend money on pedicures, get her hair fixed, buy a lot of new clothes, and eat out a lot. No wonder we never had any money.

It's also interesting to ponder the timing of her divorce. For a year prior to the announcement, I was either unemployed or employed in a low paying job. With all of the bullshit about sexual equality, if she'd filed for her divorce during that period of time then she might have had to pay alimony to me. Instead, she waited until I had a job offer for a job in a high tech industry. Then she filed so quickly that I hadn't even reported to work yet when she sprang the divorce on me. Of course, with a good paying job I couldn't get alimony from her and I had to pay child support based on my income.

Elaine was the one who always went to the post office for our mail. After the surprise birthday party, I checked the post office box and found an expiration notice for our house insurance, two notices from the bank for insufficient funds for checks, a 24 hour notice from the water company for unpaid bills, and a bounced check notification from Looking Good Unisex.

Several months after the divorce, I had a conversation with my mother. She said that Elaine had called on the telephone, prior to the divorce, and had asked a lot of questions about the relationship between my parents. My mother said that Elaine was clearly fishing for information that would be useful in a divorce. My mother said that she'd cried after the conversation but that she'd decided not to mention it to me. A little warning would have been a nice thing to have. To my credit, I never criticized my mother for not warning me. Also to my credit, I didn't ask her why she didn't do so. To this day, I still don't know why she didn't give me some warning.

In April, I received an envelope without a return address, postmarked from San Francisco, containing a clipping from a newspaper. The article was titled *Key word in definition of sexual harassment is 'unwelcome'*. I don't know who sent it, or why, but it certainly didn't come from a friend. Without any particular reason, I've always believed that the witch sent it.

Shortly after the divorce, I got into a relationship with a Negro woman at work. That's a completely different story and enters into this memoir only because of yet another act of arrogance by the witch. The Negro girlfriend became pregnant and, about a year after the divorce, the child was born. By then, Elaine's mother no longer had any excuse whatsoever to communicate with my mother. Nevertheless, Elaine's mother sent to my mother a birth announcement card notifying my mother of the birth of her "beautiful new peach colored granddaughter". I believe that Elaine's mother expected me to try to hide the child from my family. She wanted to make sure that I didn't get away with it so she took it upon herself to send the announcement.

I suppose that the divorce has a bright side if I just look at it the right way. After all, I didn't lose a wife. I lost **both** a fair-weather feminist bitch **and** a deceitful, arrogant witch. During the years following the divorce, I tried to have nothing whatsoever to do with either of them. With the witch, I was completely successful. I've never seen her again or spoken to her again. However, there were a few occasions on which I had to interact with Elaine. After all, we did have a daughter between us. On those occasions, I tried to be courteous. Her interpretation of my behavior was typically false. She once commented that we were better friends after the divorce than before it. She doesn't have a clue, unless maybe she's read this memoir. Short of that, she isn't ever going to learn to be honest with herself, not ever. She'll probably die with a lie on her lips.

At this point, I have several regrets.

- As soon as she announced her divorce, at the surprise birthday party, I should have kicked the relatives out the door. After that, a little constructive domestic violence might well have been in order. I tried way too hard to be patient and courteous.
- I should have insisted that the judge see my declaration. I'd like to have seen Elaine try to explain it.
- I should have refused to make any child support payments whatsoever. When Elaine and I got married, we promised each other a lifetime together. When we adopted Catherine, we made promises to give her a home and a family until she was an adult. We made those promises to Catherine, to each other, and to Louise Gwen at the adoption agency. Elaine broke every promise, unilaterally, without cause, and without either my foreknowledge or my consent. She was completely in breach of contract and I therefore didn't have any further obligation whatsoever in the matter. If she couldn't afford the consequences of the divorce then she shouldn't have "bought" it. After her violations, supporting the family wasn't my problem any more. If I had it to do again, then they wouldn't get a penny out of me.
- I wish that I'd destroyed her car instead of fixing it.

Rarely in recent years has Elaine tried to communicate with me. In June of 2003, she sent to me an email message. I've presented it in the Appendix. At first glance, it seems like a nice message. However, it doesn't include an apology for the Unholy Inquisition. It doesn't include an offer to refund the amount of child support payments beyond what I ought to have been required to pay, based on my substantially reduced income after 1986. Lacking any such overtures, I'm not interested in communicating with her. There's nothing between us but burned bridges. I made my reply to her message as brief as courtesy would allow. One associate who saw it characterized it as being "cold". It wasn't anywhere near as cold as the Unholy Inquisition. I've presented a copy in the Appendix.

Lacking some such offer as I mentioned in the previous paragraph, I can't think of any reason at all why I should ever have to see either the bitch or the witch again. Lacking some such offer, I plan to get my revenge by out-living them. I intend to still be alive after they're both dead. It's an excellent motivation for staying healthy. I sure as Hell won't lose any sleep over it if I succeed and eventually learn that they're dead. Actually, I'll probably celebrate their deaths with a pizza, if I still have teeth.

Appendix: Selected Correspondence

Ann Landers Column



Making love to a woman takes more than sex

DEAR ANN — Two years ago I found out that my wife of 27 years was having an affair with another man. She was driving 40 miles twice a week to a motel to meet him for "lunch."

When I learned what was going on, I asked why. It seemed to me she was getting more than enough sex at home.

Her reply was, "What I am getting at home is just that — sex. And sex is no substitute for love."

Her answer made me stop and think. I had to admit she was right.

I am writing this letter to all you husbands out there who are making the same mistake. Ask yourselves this question: "Am I making love to my wife, or am I just having sex with her?"

I now realize that women need to be gotten into the mood. It is different with men. All they have to do is think about sex for two minutes, and they are ready to go. Their minds are not on pleasing their partners. They are too involved in getting their own satisfaction. And I'm sure this is exactly what happens between most couples. Men get what they want and roll over and go to sleep. Women who experience no satisfaction have a right to feel resentful and used.

This is what happened to my wife, and it caused her to seek satisfaction elsewhere. After we talked it over, I

changed my ways. It has made a big difference in our marriage. So quit having sex with your wife, Mister. Start to make love to her. You'll get the surprise of your life.

— *Glad I Got Smart in Avon, Ill.*

DEAR SMART — What a letter! Millions of women will bless you for writing it. And so will their husbands — if they take your advice. Thanks for writing.

DEAR ANN LANDERS — Everyone considers me a very "together" person. I'm the one they always seek out to lean on and ask for advice. Now I need to do some leaning.

A year ago my husband died after struggling for a long time to beat cancer. I loved him from the moment we met. Our life together was wonderful. I still find it hard to speak about him without pain. But I realize I must make a new life for myself, and this is where you come in.

While visiting a friend recently I met an attractive man who had lost his wife about the same time I was widowed. I feel guilty somehow writing this letter, but I confess I wish he would ask me out. It has been 20 years since I "dated," and I don't know how it's done anymore.

Would I be considered bold if I made the first move? For example, if I had a few people in for dinner, would it be proper to invite him to fill out the table? You know what I am trying to say, Ann. Please advise me.

— *Starting Again In Corn County*

DEAR STARTING — Make the move. You have nothing to lose. Most widowers who have had good marriages are self-conscious about asking a woman out and need a little encouragement. And please let me know how it goes. I enjoy playing Cupid.

DEAR READERS — The best line of the week: A good definition of a conservative is a liberal who was mugged last night.

Glenna Elaine Cole

My Letter to Ann Landers

November 9, 1983

Ann Landers

San Jose Mercury News
750 Ridder Park Drive
San Jose, California 95190

Dear Ann

This is in response to "Mr. Glad I Got Smart", in Avon Illinois (San Jose Mercury News, Sunday, November 6, 1983).

I am proud of the civilized reaction of "Mr. Smart" to his wife's affair. Most men, I suspect, would have immediately opted for an idiotic divorce. However, he may still have some surprises ahead.

Changing his attitude toward sex with his wife is commendable and will no doubt make them happier, yet no amount of change will give a spouse the sparkle and magic of a lover. His wife has experienced the enchantment of a forbidden fantasy, and may be unable to resist the lure and beauty of temptation when it next appears, which it will. Married couples who stay together after many years do so for reasons other than sex.

My wife and I have been married for 14 years, and have made a virtue of what will happen anyway. About 10 years ago, we decided that marital fidelity has little to do with sex. We now have a satisfying relationship based on love, trust and honesty, and sex when we're in the mood. For the excitement of the chase and the 'thrill of victory', we have lovers.

Incidentally, we rather enjoy comparing notes.

Sincerely

Open Marriages Are Alive And Well In The 80's
Box 21633
San Jose, California 95151

408 272-2817

Email Message from Elaine

X-From_: e_cole@emailaccount.com Tue Jun 03 21:34:56 2003
Delivered-To: milam@ida.net
Date: Tue, 3 Jun 2003 14:34:55 -0700 (PDT)
From: Elaine Cole <e_cole@emailaccount.com>
To: milam@ida.net
Subject: Some life comments
Reply-To: e_cole@emailaccount.com
X-Originating-Ip: [192.55.52.4]

I am long overdue in telling you that I am sorry that your Dad died and I appologize for that. I also am overdue in telling you that the years we had together were not in vain... I did learn a great deal from you and I, to this day, ask why people need personal information and try to look for infringements on personal freedoms which are frequently hidden between the lines.... I learned that from you and it was a valuable lesson.

I hope your family is doing well.

I also do appreciate the efforts that you take to try and preserve the freedoms of people in our country. As I have gotten older, I have become more and more aware of the sheep mentality that exists in this country and I become more appreciative of those who stand up and resist being a part of that mentality. I know that yours is not an easy life path to follow and that you have remained true to your beliefs.

I don't want to interfere in you life. I don't want anything at all from you or your family but I did feel the need to thank you.

Elaine

Get an email address your friends will never forget... FREE!
Become YOU@EmailAccount.com at <http://www.emailaccount.com/>

Glenna Elaine Cole

My Reply to Elaine's Email Message

To: e_cole@emailaccount.com
From: Sam Aurelius Milam III <milam@ida.net>
Subject: Re: Some life comments
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

To Elaine, Greetings

I received your message. Thank you for the comments.

Sincerely,
Sam