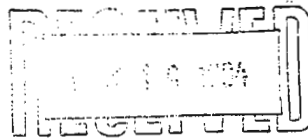


WILLIAM THOMAS ROSS



SWORN BEFORE ME THIS 20th **DAY**
OF Laura Harris JUNE 1994.

(613) 348-3068

I, Laura Lynn Harris, of Maitland, Ontario am the sister of Catherine Lois Eleanor Ross. I worked on this statement, and it accurately reflected what I have seen throughout the years. A Commissioner, etc.

This statement is only to be used in a situation where it appears that Catherine may otherwise be granted sole legal custody of Khierstyn and Hilary Ross, Catherine and Bill's children. It has been very difficult for me to take this action and I deeply resent being put in this situation. Catherine will probably perceive it to be a sign of betrayal. My only motive for making this statement is for the children's best interest.

Initially, I want to say that there is a history of severe sibling rivalry between Catherine and I. Catherine could (and can do) no wrong in my mother's eyes or so it appeared and was treated noticeably different from her siblings. I am aware of this bias towards Catherine and have strived to keep this statement unbiased.

I live a distance from Catherine and Bill and have seen them and their children for weekends approximately four times a year on average. When we are together, I have always noticed the tension between Catherine and Bill. Any arguments that I witnessed between the Ross's were usually initiated by Catherine, but Bill never shied away from the confrontation. Bill often appeared to rally for it and goad Catherine on once the argument was started. It made me feel very uncomfortable. As I was Catherine's "sparring partner" as a child and young adult, it appears that Catherine has replaced me with Bill. I.e.; Catherine is very territorial and always insists on having things her way. For instance, I have seen Catherine demand that Bill exit a chair he was sitting in because it is "her chair" at her house as well as at my house. As a child, I was expected to relinquish my chair under the same venomously-uttered demand. The difference then was that our mother never intervened on my part resulting in Catherine never learning how to compromise.

In terms of parenting, both Bill and Catherine were initially disasters, arguing about who changed diapers and generally treating the children as inconveniences and possessions. At this point, whenever they visit, they appear negligent and expect us to provide supervision and structure. Recently, when we visited them, Bill has demonstrated that he realizes his parenting flaws and is trying to correct them through a more positive approach to dealing with the kids through story telling, bike rides and trips to the park. We heard about the tree house he built them last summer. Catherine exhausts herself with cooking and cleaning such that she has little or no

Statement, Bill + Catherine

energy for "quality" interaction with Khierstyn or Hilary. She has indicated to many, including me, her unwillingness or inability to change her household priorities, which are to the detriment of the two girls. Catherine has always demanded a great deal of time to be by herself with no one else in her space. She becomes very annoyed when people (including the kids) infringe on her space.

I do not remember the last time I saw Catherine welcome the kids up onto her lap, but I have seen the cats there many times. Catherine and Bill appear to have adopted the parenting roles that I witnessed growing up where the mother administers to a child's basic needs (ie; food, cleanliness and discipline) and the father is the playmate.

On the subject of finances, if Catherine really owes what Bill claims (\$18,500 + \$6,500 to Mom), I cannot comprehend how she can appear so irresponsible. She has always demanded the best things for herself and her children regardless of where the bottom of her financial pot is.

Catherine appears that she has never learned how to deal with responsibility because having had someone to pick up the pieces when her life predictably fell apart due to her mismanagement in the past. For instance, our mother allowed Catherine to come back to our family home endless times when her relationships fell apart without having to address her personal problems and make Catherine both financially and emotionally accountable for her apparent poor decisions. When she would eventually return to live at our family home, she disrupted everyone's lives by assuming that her opinions and desires were more valid than ours, her siblings. Unfortunately, our mother, to my knowledge, never challenged these assumptions and/or expectations on Catherine's part.

As far as alcohol being abused, I have no opinion. I cannot understand why Catherine exhibits so many "text book" vices since I or my other sister do not. I found it bothersome with all the literature opposing smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy that Catherine maintained these vices throughout both her pregnancies.

Catherine and Bill seem to be going through the same struggles my parents went through leading to their legal separation in 1968. Catherine appears to be doing exactly what she witnessed as a child.

Statement, Bill + Catherine

Should Catherine get sole custody and decide to live with our mother and the children, I would recommend a psychological evaluation of the situation since Catherine and our mother are identical in their approach to life, child raising and finances. The children may be unintentionally misdirected and not develop recognizable life survival skills for the present day environment.

Given Catherine's exhibited inability to compromise and Bill's apparent need to exercise firm control, they should come to a well defined agreement as to how to equally participate in separately raising their children. All things considered both these parents are important in their children's lives and complement/offset each other. From previously mentioned observations, I do not believe Catherine should be granted SOLE custody.

I have read and initialled Bill's "Postmortem of my Marriage" and believe it does not contradict anything I have seen. The behaviour attributed to Catherine is consistent with all I know of her. Regarding the "Postmortem", calling Catherine a negative influence on the children's lives, I feel that statement to be too strong.

On another matter, in June 1993, when the Ross's visited us for a weekend, I saw a letter sitting on my kitchen table. Unaware of what it was, I read it. After, I placed it with Catherine's belongings. In the letter, Bill was trying to indicate to Catherine much the same issues discussed in his Postmortem statement. This letter indicated to me that Bill was trying to deal with Catherine on these very important issues for at least a year. Bill provided me with another copy of the letter, which I have signed to indicate that it is indeed the same letter that I saw last year. Bill told me that Catherine paid little attention or respect to the letter and ignored or rejected any attempts at resolving his concerns.

Laura Harris
Laura Lynn Harris

May 17/94

Statement, Bill + Catherine