



Diocese of Gaylord -Tribunal

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Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.*

PETITION FOR DECLARATION OF NULLITY

**MEGAN COONEY
5/29/2013**

1. Basic Details About How Patrick and I Met

Patrick and I met at a bar downtown in February of 2010. I had seen him there with friends a few times before I approached him one night. We had a good conversation, and he got my number. He called the following weekend and we went out on our first date.

2. Basic Details Surrounding the Courtship, Our Decision to Marry, and the Wedding Day

We continued to see each other on the weekends, usually going out to bars. I was lonely at my job with few friends in the city, having moved from northern Wisconsin for the job, and so was happy for the attention. After about two months, we finally slept together after his repeated requests to do so. I didn't feel a strong emotional attachment to him, though, so I broke up with him soon thereafter. We didn't see each other for several months.

In the fall of 2010, we ran into each other at a mutual friend's house party. We both had too much to drink and hooked up that night. We started seeing each other again after that, and in December of 2010, I found out that I was pregnant. The following month Patrick's mother died after a long battle with breast cancer. Patrick took it hard. I knew he had been seeing a therapist for depression for some years and had been on medication. He had once told me that depression ran in his family and that his uncle was hospitalized for it a few times. Patrick was often moody, and after she died, he seemed to hit a new low. I didn't hear from him in over a week and had to get in touch with his sisters to make sure he was okay. After some sessions with his therapist, though, and a new drug she had prescribed, he seemed to improve. And in February 2011, he surprised me by proposing, and I soon moved in with him.

My parents were not pleased with any of this, my father especially. My mother drove down once to see me and to meet Patrick, but my dad refused to come. The three months before our wedding were very difficult. I didn't see Patrick much because he had started working long hours at the office. When we were together, it never felt right. I felt so sick from the pregnancy, and the more I needed Patrick, the more I felt him pull away. He seemed to grow increasingly moody and would sometimes go days without talking to me. He continued to see his therapist and take his medicine, so I was hopeful that he would get better in time.

In May of 2011, we married at Our Lady of Sorrows church, which was down the street from our apartment. Patrick and I had been baptized Catholic, but neither of our families had really practiced their faith. We had a very small wedding because Patrick didn't want the fuss, and I felt so sick that I didn't care. Only Patrick's father and his two sisters came, along with my mother. My father was too upset about my pregnancy and relationship with Patrick to come.

3. Basic Details About Why Our Marriage Failed

After our wedding, I slowly began to feel better with the pregnancy, but Patrick's moodiness and depression grew worse. He often worked nights and weekends, and when he was home he would spend long hours in front of the computer. Our relationship was seriously strained when our daughter was born in September. Patrick maintained his long work hours and often kept to himself when he was home. I felt overwhelmed by caring for our daughter by myself, and Patrick had become completely emotionally and physically withdrawn from our marriage. One night after coming home from work late, I asked him what had gone wrong in our relationship. He said he didn't know and tried to walk away, but I pressed him on it, as I already knew we were going to get divorced. He reluctantly told me how scared and sad he was when his mom died, how his depression seemed overwhelming, and how he had hoped that getting married and starting a family would help him get better. When it didn't work out that way, he grew even more depressed. He didn't want to talk any more about it, and so we separated before our daughter's first birthday in August of 2012.

4. The Ground of Nullity

Grave Defect of Discretion of Judgment Concerning the Essential Matrimonial Obligations on the part of the Respondent: After our courtship and marriage, I am certain that Patrick's clinical depression severely impaired his ability to evaluate the commitment he was making.

5. List of Facts and Proofs

Witnesses

- Patrick Schmidt, Respondent: Can testify to history of depression and the negative effect on his mental health caused by the death of his mother
- Vanessa Schmidt, sister of Respondent: Can testify to Patrick's history of depression
- Marie Holden, sister of Respondent: Can testify to Patrick's long history of depression
- Claire Patoski, mutual friend: Can testify to Patrick's extreme moodiness and tendency to withdraw

6. Additional Information

I don't have any additional information to offer at this time.

