

## **Guardian ad litem notes: Excerpts**

Father: Earl Hunterson  
Mother: Jenna Hunterson  
Child: Lizzie Hunterson, age 5 1/2 yrs of age; kindergarten

### **Relationship problems**

- Jenna says she has always feared Earl's mean temper. He took all the money she earned, and demanded that she agree with his every thought and sentiment
- She secretly socked away negligible amounts of money in order eventually to leave Earl
- Earl hit and slapped Jenna regularly during their marriage, but she found that less painful than the constant questioning and his total paranoia
- He refused to allow her use to the family's one car or to give her money to take the bus

### **Separation**

- Jenna arranged for some friends to pick up Lizzie and her and they snuck out of the house in the middle of the night. Earl heard them and pursued them in his car.
- Jenna and Lizzie kept moving around to keep safe, but Earl kept finding them.
- Earl cancelled the credit cards Jenna had with her and withdrew most of the money from their joint checking account. Jenna had trouble making ends meet and she had to borrow money from friends to buy food.
- Jenna stayed in touch with Earl's mother and repeatedly begged her to ask Earl to deposit money in the checking account because Lizzie needed things.
- Jenna finally returned to Plainville to get legal help and pursue full custody of Lizzie.

### **Parenting:**

- Lizzie has always spent more time with Jenna because Earl was focused on his work.
- Jenna has always made decisions for Lizzie, including finding a pediatrician, a pediatric dentist, and scheduling social activities with friends.
- Jenna says Earl has always been highly critical of her parenting and has told her that she is too coddling and spoils Lizzie; When Jenna tries to comfort Lizzie when she's upset, Earl pulls her away from Lizzie – telling her she needs to pay attention to him, not Lizzie.
- Earl says that Jenna won't cooperate with him on parenting, that Jenna kept Lizzie away from him for several weeks while they were on the run, and she is telling Lizzie lies about him and trying to get Lizzie to feel sorry for her.

### **Child:**

- Lizzie presents as very withdrawn and appears to be very tense and anxious. Jenna reports that she seems always to be on guard - waiting for something bad to happen. For the past few months, Lizzie has been clinging more to Jenna and gets fretful when she is out of sight.
- Jenna seeks sole legal and physical custody of Lizzie and proposes that she spend a weekday evening and every other Saturday with Earl.