SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER:

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ALLAN KASSENOFF,
                                    Plaintiff, Index No.
    - against - 58217/2019
CATHERINE KASSENOFF,
                Defendant.
            Westchester County Supreme Court
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                    White Plains, New York 10601
                    Wednesday, October 20, 2021
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B E F OR E:
HON. LEWIS LUBELL
Justice of the Supreme Court
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Mary T. Slavik, RPR
Senior Court Reporter

THE COURT: All right. This is the matter of Kassenoff versus Kassenoff, Index Number 58217 of 2019.

Plaintiff's appearance, please.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: Dimopoulos Bruggemann, by Gus Dimopoulos, on behalf of the plaintiff, Allan Kassenoff, who is in court this morning.

Good afternoon, your Honor.

THE COURT: Defendant?

MR. FRISCH: For Ms. Kassenoff, Andrew Frisch, with Schlam, Stone \& Dolan.

Your Honor, good afternoon.

THE COURT: Good afternoon, Mr. Frisch. The children?

MS. MOST: Good afternoon, your Honor. Carol Most, attorney for the children.

THE COURT: Have a seat. The Court is in possession of the following application. Those I understood would be dealt with, at least in some manner today, is motion sequence 34 and motion sequence 39 .

Motion sequence 34 is an application by the plaintiff seeking contempt. Certain interim relief was granted, which interim relief number two, which was an amendment of an order of
protection which included a one-mile stayaway, which framed the basis for your motion, Mr. Frisch, which is motion sequence number 39.

I also have motion sequence number 35, which is an application by the plaintiff seeking to consolidate the Family Court matter. I have motion sequence number 36 , which is an application by the plaintiff -- by the defendant -sanctioning the plaintiff for forum shopping. Motion sequence 37 , which is an application by the defendant lifting supervised visitation, or, in the alternative, directing that the plaintiff be responsible for 80 percent. Motion sequence 38 , which is an application for contempt against the plaintiff by the defendant for violation of orders, which seems to me to be similar to motion sequence number 36 or 37 . I will have to review same.

I just want to be clear on a few things. Number one, Ms. Kassenoff, I did receive an e-mail from you, which was e-filed, which was relative to Dr. Mark Abrams and whether or not you have to make a motion with regard to his report. I believe that you were mistaken in interpreting my comment originally when this case came to me with

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regard to the Court with what this case with Dr. Abrams was.

What the Court meant, and $I$ want to be patently clear, is that Dr. Abrams was purportedly going to do a follow-up or an amended, or an updated report that has not happened. As far as anything that has happened in the past, relative to Dr. Abrams, including, but not limited to a prior report, which $I$ understand was the subject of a trial, and a hearing, and proceeding, relative thereto, I do not know what it was that has caused Dr. Abrams to be in the circumstance; whether it was relative to a report that he may have written, I really do not care or have concern. In this case, as to any other complaint or application that may have been made as to Dr. Abrams, but absent any showing or proof that the report may be tainted or may be the subject of some type of application, if it's your intention, Ms. Kassenoff, through counsel to vacate that report, that will have to be the subject of an application.

MS. KASSENOFF: Thank you, your Honor. THE COURT: I apologize that because of the return dates of these motions that due to the
absence since of the court, $I$ was unable to address them, and $I$ apologize for any inconvenience that it may have caused, but it was totally out of my control. To that extent, and with that in mind, Mr. Frisch, I understand that your appearance in this matter is limited to contempt; is that accurate, sir?

MR. FRISCH: It is essentially accurate. There may be some --

THE COURT: Well, "essentially" kind of doesn't satisfy my inquiry, Mr. Frisch. You know I have -- let me give you an example. I have one, an application in Family Court, which $I$ understand was recently determined, that was, $I$ believe, the defendant's application in Family Court, and yet I have a motion by the defendant seeking to sanction the plaintiff for forum shopping, which $I$ find really an irony. I got a case from 2019, and I am up to motion sequence 39. I'm not insensitive to the nature and the allegations and everything going on here, but this has to stop. And quite frankly, the only way that these cases stop is with a trial.

To that extent and with that in mind, I will tell you that $I$ can state, with a reasonable
degree of experience and judicial certainty, that Mr. and Mrs. Kassenoff will be present in this courthouse long after this particular action is resolved, whether $I$ try it by stipulation or something else. And these people are attorneys, and I'm not blaming either one of them. I've been through this process. I get it. I truly get it. I don't understand why they don't get it, and I say this to every pair of litigants that come in, especially both of them with a heightened level of education and degrees and who are familiar with the law, and who are familiar with the process. I have two people that come from respectable areas of the law; whether it's through a law firm or the Department of Justice or through the Governor's office, you don't get there being foolish, and you don't get there being stupid.

But it seems that all common sense and rationalization leaves these people's heads -- and it's not just the Kassenoffs -- it leaves their minds when they come into this building and this part. And believe it or not, this is not the worst case I have.

But at some given point, and $I$ don't know what it's going to take, short of a trial, to
bring this to a head and a conclusion, but with equal emphasis, $I$ am completely persuaded and convinced that a trial will not end the war of the Kassenoffs, I'm sorry to say, because I can tell you, based upon my review and my experience in this case from the day the Kassenoffs came into this building, two years ago, when Judge Everett presided over this case, it has gone downhill from there. And I have no ill will towards either side. You make motions, you make motions. I mean, you're not scaring me.

But one would think that the level of emotional, mental involvement, versus moving on with life, has got to permeate somewhere. So absent -- $I$ can state for sure that $I$ will see a motion from the defense with regard to Dr. Abrams' report, and to whether or not it is to be utilized by the Court in considering the custodian circumstances of the parent, and whatever, has nothing to do with the finances, but $I$ can't end the divorce, $I$ cannot end the matrimonial proceeding, until $I$ end custody. I can't end it with just the findings. I'm well aware of the allegations. I've seen them against Ms. Most. I've seen -- I have

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been -- I have seen through the -- through the production by counsel of Facebook posts. It just keeps promulgating and propagating and getting worse, and $I$ don't know what everyone intends to prove through all of this. This is not about the rest of the world. It's about Allan and Cathy. Period. Paragraph. And what is in the best interest of their children. And I can state, with all of the experience and tenure that $I$ have had in this courthouse and this system, and more specifically in this part, that when $I$ write a decision, or whatever judge presides over this case, because it will, more likely than not, not be me -- I'm not running from it. But it's just the reality of how this part runs, is that someone is going to be in the Appellate Division. I guarantee it. I'm willing to wager, because I have seen through 39 motions, if someone is not happy with what $I$ do, they either run to Family Court or they go somewhere else, and it's a shame, to forum shop and then accuse of forum shopping, if somebody makes that determination. It boggles my mind. And these are lawyers. These are lawyers that are completely desecrating this system and this part, that their

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dirty laundry goes out on the Internet. What do we attempt to prove? Do you think that will affect a trial judge? Absolutely not. Absolutely not. But what $I$ will say and what both of these people are on notice of are clear mandates of the Court. And I will hold an attorney to a higher standard, and a clear violation, which I will deem willful on its face, $I$ think, and $I$ have said this to the defendant, is a referable consequence to the grievances committee for knowing and willfully violating a clear mandate of the Court. That is referable. I'm under an obligation, and, quite frankly, so are counsel. You have ethical obligations as well. Do we want to go down that road, folks? Look where we are now. 39 motions in less than two years, and what have we accomplished? The denigration of two people's lives and the hurting of children. That's what we have accomplished. And these motions are going to do nothing but create a pathway to 45 Monroe Place.

Now, Mr. Frisch, how deep is your involvement going to be in this case, because, quite frankly, $I$ cannot and will not condone, and pardon my laxity in my description, but lawyers
parading in, depending on the motion. It's inappropriate. It's not how this part operates.

I know that $I$ have recently received a letter from a firm that $I$ gather Ms. Kassenoffs has consulted with, and they have declined to represent her on the avenues that Mr. Wiederkehr is not representing her, to wit, the custody and other issues that are nonfinancial.

So it's very, very difficult for the Court to have counsel coming in and coming out, depending upon the weather, so to speak, or what is the nature of the application. It's just not how we work. So I welcome your appearance, Mr. Frisch, quite frankly, especially on serious matters of contempt.

How far do you go beyond those applications? Because you said, essentially -and that kind of didn't close the door completely on my inquiry.

MR. FRISCH: Well, here is what $I$ meant by using that word. I'm here to address the contempt issues. To be sure there are issues of orders of protection, which are ancillary to the contempt issues. To that extent, I'm essentially here for the contempt, but there are some related.

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 concern, I hear what you're saying. My understanding is that Ms. Kassenoff is in the process and expects to have a lawyer to deal with the custody issues within the next week or ten days or two weeks.THE COURT: Let me stop you there for a moment, sir. If that is the case, are you no longer involved?

MR. FRISCH: I currently -- if that is the case, $I$ currently do not expect to be involved, apart from what is before the court.

THE COURT: Okay. So I will give people a choice here, because I want to be fair. And quite frankly, I would like Ms. Kassenoff to be represented. I would like her to have competent counsel. And that is no disrespect to you, sir. You come from a very experienced background, as well. I do my own work, but $I$ don't want to start briefing schedules and taking argument when you are going to vacate this particular case, in the event Ms. Kassenoff has the good fortune of retaining counsel.
I'm willing to adjourn these, all of them, because $I$ know I'm advised that one of them

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is returnable Friday. But that's not happening. And, quite frankly, all of these, 34 through 39 , notwithstanding what $I$ anticipate will be 40 , at some given point, which we will deal with -- I assume the Dr. Abrams' issues, to the extent that's going to be an issue, because, quite frankly, one could say that if the Abrams report stays, hypothetically, if $I$ rule that way, two things will happen. One, we're going to trial. In the alternative, there's an appeal on that decision.

And what's frustrating to the Court is there were decisions that were made that $I$ do not know what frames the basis for those decisions, and, is the decisions that were made mutually exclusive from the report and the findings of Dr. Abrams? I don't know that.

So all $I$ can say is if Ms. Kassenoff --
and I'm not denying her right or her opportunity to bring that application -- if that application is made, Mr. Dimopoulos will have something to say, Ms. Most will have something to say, and I will ultimately render a decision, which now, we're looking at maybe three to four months down the line, by the time we're done. And at that
point in time $I$ can tell you, that if $I$ decide that the report stays, and maybe nothing is really changed custodial-wise, in the Court's mind, this case will get referred to trial.

In the alternative, there will be an appeal, if $I$ decide that way. And it begs the question as to whether or not a stay is sought, with regard to the trial, based on the appeal and the underlying decision.

I don't write to the appellate division, I write what $I$ think is fair and appropriate under the circumstances, and whatever the appellate division, in their infinite wisdom decides to do, they do. I live with it. It's the beauty of the job.

But to that extent, and with that in mind, do you -- is it your position, Mr. Frisch, that it is more likely than not, new counsel will be appearing on behalf of the defendant? And this is not casting stones. I'm not seeking your testimony, I'm asking for your opinion, based upon your relationship with the defendant.

MR. FRISCH: I understand the question. No offense to be taken, to be sure. I know that -- I don't know that $I$ can say -- I believe it's

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more likely than not, that new counsel will come in to address custody, but it's a process, and, you know, there have been discussions whether $I$ should come in and do it.

What $I$ can tell the court is that that's going to be resolved, one way or the other, within the next week or two. But she is currently speaking to other people, and currently the expectation is someone will come in, other than me, to address custody.

THE COURT: Will you participate?
MR. FRISCH: To the extent that --

THE COURT: If this is something that's out of the scope of -- I'm just trying to avoid a myriad of attorneys coming in on various levels. I have no problem, Mr. Frisch, if you are co-counsel with whoever comes in. I can deduce that the, you know, the background between you and Ms. Kassenoff from years ago, okay, and, you know, and working together and whatever.

MR. FRISCH: Got it.

THE COURT: And obviously she has confidence in you, and $I$ welcome your expertise. But with equal emphasis, you can't cherry-pick the portions of the case that you come in. And I

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would be compelled, at some given point in time, somebody is either representing Ms. Kassenoff or she's pro se, and you either second-seat her on the contempt and the relative issues thereto, or somebody comes in and says, "Mr. Frisch, thank you for at least handholding, for the time being, but we got this."

That's all I would like to know, in
fairness to the parties, and in my ability to navigate the gauntlet of Kassenoff versus Kassenoff, because you are with me until such time as I make the determination who is going to try this case.

So, Mr. Dimopoulos, how are you, sir?
MR. DIMOPOULOS: I'm well, thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Are you adverse to a two-week adjournment to allow for this process to maybe come to some modem of control?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, this case will never come to control, if you would just allow.

THE COURT: So you heard me, I guess, at the very beginning?
MR. DIMOPOULOS: I heard you loud and
clear, your Honor, and $I$ will preface my comments by saying, with all due respect, you keep referring to both parties, who have done $X, Y$, and Z, to torture and over-litigate, and I'm going to say, with all due respect, that's inaccurate.

THE COURT: I'm well aware of your position, Mr. Dimopoulos, and I'm not making findings of fact as to anybody. I have thoughts, believe me, Mr. Dimopoulos, I have thoughts but it would be inappropriate for me to make certain findings, absent another trial or another hearing or testimony which would frame or solidify the basis of those thoughts.

I will say, for example, one of the reliefs sought within the applications currently extant before the Court is to transfer this case to IDV. So somebody is harboring the opinion that there may be some contribution to this debacle other than just me -- and $I$ know you are referring to the defendant.

I am not -- I am not harboring any
opinion at the immediate moment as to Mr.
Kassenoff or Mrs. Kassenoff, because I have got to be very clear when $I$ render a decision on finding of fact. Do $I$ think that maybe somebody may be
more culpable than the other? Well, that's going to be in my mind for the time being and will reflect my findings in a decision on motion or hearing, should this Court be called to task to do that.

With that in mind, I accept your -- I take no issue with your exception. I take no issue with your thought process as to who is really driving the negativity of this bus. It's not my first rodeo.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Thank you.
THE COURT: So what I would like to
know, and $I$ agree with you that this will never end, unless Mr. and Mrs. Kassenoff, for some reason, just stop.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: And your Honor, on that front, and $I$ thank you for that, but let me just say a couple of things, constructive things. I'm not arguing the motions before the court. I understand what your Honor is saying. I understand the colloquy with Mr. Frisch. I understand. Herein lies the problem, that when we say "this will never end," there are two ways that I know to end -- or three ways. You can discontinue the case, you can try a case, and you
can settle.

THE COURT: They can reconcile.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: That's true, too.

Here's the problem. Settlement is never going to happen, because one of the parties believes that therapeutic supervision is necessary. One of the parties --

THE COURT: Let me stop you a second. I'm not talking about settlement.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Okay. So let's move on, then.

THE COURT: That's even a thought. I have been of the opinion that the only way this ends is through a trial.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Right. And on that you are --

THE COURT: And that has been voiced to me, by you, Mr. Dimopoulos, on previous appearances, "Judge, we need a trial." This will not end without a trial. And quite frankly, I agree with you.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: The problem is --

THE COURT: It's unfortunate, but I agree with you.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: And that's unfortunate
that we agree. But here's the problem. Okay? And I have done quite a bit of research on this topic. The problem is that when one party attacks a forensic, which happens all the time -- it's not your first rodeo, it's not mine. Okay? I have seen it time and time again, and I've seen changing of lawyers, we've all seen it before. But here's the problem.

One of the parties in this case is attempting to benefit from attacking a forensic, in colluding to attack a forensic. There are multiple people.

THE COURT: I'm well aware of it.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: And I'm not going to go any further than that, your Honor. Herein lies the problem. The motion you are going to get, you may think, your Honor, is, I don't believe this Court should consider the first forensic evaluation or any of the testimony of Dr. Abrams. I can almost accept that. It's a motion your Honor is going to decide. I'll oppose it. A decision will be rendered, and ultimately that will mean we are going to trial, when your Honor makes a decision.

That's not the motion you are going to
get. The motion you are going to get is, Dr. Abrams must be disqualified, and now you must appoint a new forensic to begin the evaluation from the beginning, which will inevitably delay this six months. And if -- you misspoke, your Honor, when you said 39 motions; there are three separate motions to the Appellate Division, one of which asked for nine different stays. Nine. It was at least a week and a half that $I$ worked on this motion, because it was just the sheer amount of requests. All three motions were denied by the Appellate Division. There will be another one here.

I don't need to explain --
THE COURT: Let me say something to you,
Mr. Dimopoulos, and $I$ think that $I$ made this patently clear. Judge Koba presided over a hearing. There was testimony and determinations were rendered. All right? And so I don't know what has changed, other than Dr. Abrams' circumstance as participant on the forensic list prospectively in his report. And so if you're asking me to render a decision, it's sub judice, or to tell you what $I$ think. Am I denying Mrs. Kassenoff's motion? I don't know.

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MR. DIMOPOULOS: You will have to see the law and --

THE COURT: And I'm sure, with certainty, Mr. Dimopoulos, that $I$ will get vigorous, vigorous opposition from you, which will be given due and deliberate consideration as I give to every application or opposition or briefing that comes across my desk or my computer.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: May I just take a different approach to this, your Honor, and then $I$ will make my request?

THE COURT: What $I$ want to know, Mr. Dimopoulos, is whether or not you will consent to a two-week adjournment of these applications, which, quite frankly, some of them favor your client. The TRO favors your client, which was vigorously challenged, not vigorously yet, but by motion sequence number 39 by Mr. Frisch.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: I can tell you, without having consulted with my client, he's gonna say, "What's the difference? We're not getting a trial date for a year, so what's two weeks"?

THE COURT: You don't know that, Mr. Dimopoulos.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: I will consent to the
two weeks, your Honor, but $I$ would ask that we can -- I'm sure you will want to solidify that and finish it, but there are other issues that $I$ would like to address following that, which have nothing to do with the pending motions.

THE COURT: Are they relative to any e-mails that $I$ received of recent date?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Yes, but they also -they are in regards to that. You received the e-mails, you read them. I assume your Honor will not address them on today's date. But here's -you ordered on the 15 th of September, your Honor, it's unequivocal, it's in my letter. You are to cease being on NYSCEF. You told Ms. Kassenoff and Mr. Kassenoff, who has never been on NYSCEF -- but you didn't know that at the time -- remove yourself from NYSCEF. That was an order. September 15 th. I attached the transcript. I sent it into the court. I can read it to you again. It says: From all of the e-mails -that's not it. "Let me make it easy, Mr. Kornfeld, both the plaintiff and the defendant are precluded from NYSCEF, period, paragraph, end of story."

THE COURT: Do you know what the
criteria of that comment was? I had Mr. Kornfeld at that time. Now, I do not have Mr. Kornfeld.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: And I wasn't going to ask you to enforce that order today, your Honor, just for one second. Please -- and your Honor has the discretion to do this. No more motions by either party without the authority of the court, unless it is a clear and unequivocal emergency, pursuant to Rule $E$, that your Honor deems as an emergency, my client cannot -- there are motions upon motions -- I'm not going to argue this, because $I$ can tell, from knowing your Honor as long as $I$ do, this isn't the time. These motions are patently frivolous.

If you read my opposition to the motion for sanctions --

THE COURT: You mean when?
MR. DIMOPOULOS: When? When you read it.

THE COURT: If? When.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: They're patently
frivolous. So what's going to happen is --
THE COURT: Are you asking me for cost in your opposition?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Cost and sanctions,
yes, your Honor.
THE COURT: Okay.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: But beyond that, I think your Honor can and should, today, issue an order: Neither party can file any motions, absent a clear emergency rising to the level of that definition under Rule E, without the authority of this Court. Your Honor checks his e-mail within 10 minutes. If there's something --

THE COURT: Even on Sunday night?
MR. DIMOPOULOS: Even on Sunday. If there's something that must be addressed by either party, that's not an emergency, your Honor can hear it and --

THE COURT: I'm not offended by the application, Mr. Dimopoulos. Like I said, 39 motions plus appeals. These kids will be in college by the time, and there will be no money left.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: No money left.
THE COURT: You're preaching to the Choir, Mr. Dimopoulos. I got it.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: All right. So on that
note --

THE COURT: So what's good for the goose
is good for the gander. If there is an emergency which requires the Court's attention, which you believe should frame the basis for a motion, no motion will be filed without a letter application to the Court.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: May I submit a proposed order to Mr. Frisch and the Court on that topic?

THE COURT: Who?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: For Mr. Frisch to review the proposed order.

THE COURT: If you would like, I'm sure I will see it by five o'clock.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Yes, your Honor.
THE COURT: With a reasonable degree of judicial certainty.

Mr. Frisch?

MS. MOST: Wait.
THE COURT: Hang on.
MR. FRISCH: I have two things I wanted to say Ms. Most and I will be brief.

THE COURT: You pay taxes in New York, Mr. Frisch?

MR. FRISCH: I live in New Jersey, but when $I$ work in New York, $I$ pay taxes.

THE COURT: So these are your tax

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dollars hard at work. Take whatever time you want.

MR. FRISCH: I appreciate it, Judge. Let me say two things. There's an emergency right now, and that's the one-mile stayaway, which has the effect of displacing Ms. Kassenoff from her home and causes hardship. We briefed it, and I would like to be heard on that and argue why that should be vacated, or at least lifted, pending a two-week hearing date, whatever your Honor has in mind.

It's a combination of the hardship, and it's a combination of what -- as we argue, it's not a proper basis for it, and $I$ will come back to that in a second.

I also want to just answer expressly and specifically the question you asked about my role going forward, and it is, as long as there is contempt on the table, and as long as there may be related orders of protection related to the contempt, $I$ will be co-counsel, but that's the cabin role that $I$ would play.

But I feel that the Court really should, today, take a look at the one-mile stayaway and vacate it. And the reason is, based on something

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Justice Koba found on July 6th, and she got it right, which is, that knowing that Ms. Kassenoff was going to move to Larchmont, she said, just, if there's an encounter, acknowledge and carry on. Acknowledge and carry on. That directive has not been violated.

The basis for the contempt and thus the basis for the one-mile stayaway, pending a hearing, are these sightings of Ms. Kassenoff being present in Larchmont where she lives. There's no contact, no discussion, nothing of the sort, according, as $I$ understand the plaintiff's allegation, the nanny saw Ms. Kassenoff in Larchmont, where she lives.

Now, one of the things they say -- and I think this is important to have on the record, as I learn the case and become educated about it -they say, well, there's some chicanery here, because Ms. Kassenoff had first said she was going to live at this location within the one square mile of the Village of Larchmont and now she's moved a half mile closer. There's no chicanery, and $I$ don't know why this didn't happen before, but there's e-mail exchanges establishing that she did in fact lease that apartment, she did in fact

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pay a one-month rent, which she ultimately had to refund, and ultimately gave it up and moved, when the address was unexpectedly provided to plaintiff's counsel, and plaintiff, for better or worse, with whom she's had a traumatic prior relationship, so there's no merit to their argument that she's moving out of some act of deception to the order of Judge Koba.

My point, your Honor, is that Justice Koba got this right. If there's an encounter, acknowledge and carry on. And meanwhile, based on these allegations, which are just sightings, sightings of Ms. Kassenoff in Larchmont, her presence where she lives, has the effect -- wasn't intended, but it has the effect of separating her from where she lives, it causes harm to her, all the inconvenience, and the facts don't warrant it.

She had a legitimate purpose to be
there. To the extent that the -- it's one thing to impose that temporarily pending a hearing, but to allow it to continue, and now we're on, I think, week five, and to allow it to continue, even the two weeks that your Honor envisions, violates the Constitution and violates due process, because it effectively displaces her from
her residence and causes hardship.
So the extent Mr. Dimopoulos wants to narrow our discussions to what's an emergency, this is one of them.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your honor, can $I$ be heard briefly on this?

THE COURT: Mr. Frisch, I'm not asking for an admission or denial, because that's really going to be my finding. There was a temporary order of protection issued on July 6th, which in and of itself, absent supervised visitation, directed the defendant to stay away from the home of, school of, place of business of, et cetera, et cetera, relative to that case.

I give very, very serious thought when I'm contemplating interim relief, and as to whether or not the relief would be appropriate, the hardship is irrelevant to me. And if I find that there was a violation of the TOP, meaning, I don't know where the nanny saw Ms. Kassenoff or where allegedly, as Ms. Most has represented, the children, or one of them was extremely frightened. That rises to the level of the Court's specter of inquiry.

$$
\text { And if } I \text { determine }-- \text { if } I \text { make a }
$$

determination that $I$ find that $a$ violation of an OP, whether or not $I$ give it rise to contempt, that will be your argument, but if $I$ find that there's a violation of a currently existing order, and then $I$ make a determination or issue a ruling Or a finding that $I$ deem to be appropriate under the circumstance -- now, whether or not Ms. Kassenoff's residence was within a hundred yards or a hundred miles, is irrelevant.

It was my understanding that her residence was not in Larchmont, until such time as it was brought to my attention. There was questions of whether or not she was really living in New Rochelle or in Larchmont, or wherever it was. But based upon the application made before me, I made a ruling.

Because of the utmost concern is I stand in loco parentis. And if this is something that the attorney for the children has made a representation to the court, I assume everybody that carries a law license will use deference, candor, and honesty to the Court.

And then $I$ make a decision. Is it a hardship to a litigant? Possibly. TOPs are not final, but TOPs exist. And without justifying or
making any comment as to the determination of the Court, the Court was satisfied to issue the relief sought. That is the nature of this particular beast, Mr. Frisch, is that there are no winners, one. Number two, one side is not going to be happy with the decision of the court on any specific issue. I'm not in the happy business.

What make me happy is resolving cases and having litigants move forward. Because if you drive a car, looking in the rearview mirror all the time, you're going to crash. And the ability to look forward is of the utmost, paramount, and that's what is stopping these people from doing that, and it is what is causing an excessive -exorbitant amount of motion practice.

I know you wanted to say something. Let me hear from you.

MS. MOST: I have to say something, and it's about your loco parentis, Judge. So I think you are aware that at the very beginning Judge Everett made an order -- I think you're aware that Judge Everett made an order, probably the first week he was on this case, or the first month. THE COURT: I was here. MS. MOST: Okay. That the mom --

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THE COURT: I heard the evidence with regard to that, which presented -- which caused at the very beginning, in the onset of the case, Ms. Kassenoff to be removed from the marital residence.

MS. MOST: No. I'm talking about the mom contacting the therapist. And this -- I received a call today from Dr. McGuffog, because she sent me a copy of the e-mail, the threatening e-mail, which $I$ did not have before, or was able to give to the Court before, which I would like to give to the Court now; the threatening e-mail from Ms. Kassenoff.

THE COURT: Show it to counsel.
MS. MOST: I have one for everybody -to Dr. McGuffog. And the issue is that all three girls really need their therapist, their therapists -- they have two different therapists.

THE COURT: Did I not see this?
MS. MOST: Not this one. No. You saw the one to Dr. Susan Adler. This is a different one. So knowing that she doesn't have the right to contact the therapist, this gets sent. Both of them have hired lawyers. They're trying to protect themselves.

And the other issue is, as you are aware, because you ordered it on september $15 t h$, that Ms. Kassenoff signed the E-TRADE account so the doctors can be paid, because they're owed about $\$ 50,000$ together, or more now. What we were not aware of at that time, and $I$ think you also might be aware that there is an order by Judge Koba that the mother is to put the doctors' bills in for her insurance, and whatever reimbursement she gets, goes back to the father so that he can pay them. And apparently that has not happened. So we are in a situation now where I'm asking you to make an order today, that the money from the E-TRADE account that Mr. Kassenoff has, he needs to be ordered to pay that to the doctors. But Ms. Kassenoff has received many tens of thousands of dollars of reimbursement; we knew that when the order was first signed, because Ms. Kuzner said she's not given that money back, we will deal with it later, so that was about $10-$ or $\$ 20,000$ that she received, and now we have another $10-$ or $\$ 20,000$ that she received. There are EOBS out there. I have not seen them. I have been told about them.

MS. MOST: Yes. I have been told about them by Dr. Adler that the mother has been getting paid. Now, this is insurance fraud. I get that. Mr. Kassenoff has made a complaint about the insurance fraud; however, he doesn't want to pay because once the doctors are paid now, the insurance fraud goes away. But $I$ have these two doctors who are really doing wonderful things with their clients and they're not getting paid. I need them paid so they will continue to work, and they can't be threatened.

So I'm asking you to take some action. There's already orders.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: If I can just add to the specifics?

THE COURT: Hold it.

MS. MOST: I don't want to make a motion
to hold the mother in contempt, but she --
THE COURT: It's too late. There is already a motion seeking to hold everybody in contempt.

MS. MOST: I know, but she has to turn over the money and pay the doctors. It's a lot of money, and it's got to be done.

THE COURT: You want to go talk to your
client about this?
MS. KASSENOFF: Your Honor, can $I$ speak?
THE COURT: I don't know, Ms. Kassenoff, because, one, I'm hearing an attorney is coming in. I have an attorney who's sitting here that goes, "If it's contempt, or collateral to contempt, I'm your gentleman," and right now I'm smelling something that can be tantamount to a collateral contempt and/or a possible referral, which $I$ cautioned you about previously, Ms. Kassenoff.

I'm not making a finding today. I don't have enough in front of me, though this e-mail is quite disturbing. Quite disturbing. But this is an e-mail. Is it evidentiary? Okay. I can sit and start taking testimony. Is this your e-mail address? Did you send this e-mail? Did you use this language? And quite frankly, on its face, I could make a finding that you are interfering with the children's therapy.

And whatever business it is that you feel compelled to spread the word of Dr. Abrams to everybody involved in this case and outside of this case, $I$ don't know what you think you are accomplishing, but it surely doesn't bode well in
your favor, or potentially has the ability to backfire on whatever your underlying thought process or plan may be.

And as long as you are involved, Mr.
Frisch, I suggest you communicate with Ms. Kassenoff about the seriousness of these alleged violations of which $I$ have not made any finding yet. There has been no hearing, but $I$ will tell you, this Court has the wherewithal, the discretion, and the ability to go past willful, collect two hundred dollars, pass go, and go straight to punishment.

And what your client needs to realize is that willful violations of Court mandates as an attorney, not in her capacity as an attorney, but she is an attorney, is very, very concerning to this Court, and raises the specter of this Court's duty to the ethical obligations of members of the Bar, regardless of the capacity in which you appear in this Court.

So to that extent --
MS. MOST: So your Honor, I think that the father does have copies of some of those EOBs. I don't know if he has them with him, but $I$ don't know how you want to handle this, but the doctors
have to get paid.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, it's a standing order of the Court that Ms. Kassenoff, who we already established months ago, collected $\$ 20,000$ from the insurance company, submitted all the claims from the therapist, didn't pay a nickel. Okay? Submitted all of the claims. Received $\$ 22,000$. Pocketed the money. Didn't tell the Court.

We negotiated and made a motion to pay the therapist from this E-TRADE account. Did in fact pay the therapist from the E-TRADE account. The issue was brought to Judge Koba's attention. Judge Koba issued a directive -- it's in my letter to the Court four days ago -- which said, "I want all of the money received for reimbursements given to Mr. Kassenoff, to be put into the segregated account for the payment of therapy."

Not only did she not do that, your Honor, she continued to file claims and continued to receive money, all the while pushing -- in front of your Honor -- to say, okay, fine, I will finally sign the E-Trade thing so we can pay them. At that particular time, she was standing in this Court, knowing she was about to receive insurance

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reimbursements for claims she never paid. My advice to my client was very clear. If you pay those therapists, you are complicit in the crime of insurance fraud. Because when you submit a claim for reimbursement for a bill that you are not paying, and receive the money, and then do not pay, it is a textbook definition. So what I would respectfully request is that Ms. Kassenoff is directed to immediately comply with Judge Koba's order, that's been in place for months, any and all dollars she's received from the insurance company, must be paid over to the therapist, and any balance, then, thereafter, can then be paid by the E-Trade. MS. MOST: Do you have that dollar amount currently?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Only she has it. It's her insurance. She can provide it.

THE COURT: What is the date of Judge Koba's order?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: I will give you my letter.

THE COURT: Is it in your letter?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: It is in my letter.

THE COURT: What's the date of your
letter?
MR. DIMOPOULOS: October 7th. Judge Koba's order.

THE COURT: If it's attached to your letter, let me just look at your letter. That was Ms. Most's letter. I have your letter to the Court. Okay. So where is the order of Judge Koba with regard to Ms. Kassenoff and the insurance claims?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: I will get that for your Honor in one minute.

MR. FRISCH: Your Honor, can $I$ be heard on this very briefly?

THE COURT: Hang on.
MR. DIMOPOULOS: So the order of Judge Koba is July --

THE COURT: 6th?
MS. KASSENOFF: It's the 12th, your Honor.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: The order originally came from Judge Koba almost a year ago. That was the way the protocol was to be done. The problem is when we found out that she was submitting the claims, we had to have her memorialize it and signed an order of July --

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THE COURT: July 12th, 2021, referring to motion sequence 23 and 25?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Correct.

THE COURT: Okay. I got it. It's on page four of the decision and order with Judge Koba, which is dated July 12th, 2021.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: The directive was originally given --

THE COURT: It says, "The Court further directs the defendant to continue submitting requests for reimbursement from defendant's insurance carrier for the therapeutic services and to provide all reimbursement checks to plaintiff within one week of receipt for deposit into the separate account established to hold the funds withdrawn to pay the children's therapy expense."

So I'm going to say that that is a clear mandate of the Court. Sit down, Ms. Kassenoff.

MS. KASSENOFF: We have not been heard, your Honor.

THE COURT: Ms. Kassenoff, there's an attorney here for you, so you're making choices. I will allow you to make choices, but be guided, Ms. Kassenoff, the choices come with benefits and consequences. I don't represent you, I don't
advocate for you, nor do $I$ take a position of the plaintiff, but in my Court, Ms. Kassenoff, I make the rules.

MS. KASSENOFF: Judge, I'm homeless. I'm homeless, and I've been homeless for five weeks. I can't do my job effectively. I can't get my medication for cancer. I can't house my dog. This is not a sustainable situation, Judge. The hardships are relevant in this situation. This order was entered ex parte on evidence that is self-serving, that we have plenty to say about, Judge, but the hardship has to be considered, because the order is too broad, it bars me from my home. It is unconstitutional, Judge.

The Court was aware, and as my counsel said, Judge Koba got it right. When she said, "Look, if you're in Larchmont and you run into your children, this is what you got to do." She contemplated the idea that $I$ would be there.

THE COURT: Well, so let me ask you this, and Mr. Frisch, feel free to respond. One could argue, without making an assertion or an allegation, that there is a deference between running into and taking opportunities to be somewhere and making a decision to do that. I
have not made that decision. I have made a decision, based upon ex parte orders, folks, are given -- well, even Judge Walker said the DA couldn't indict a ham sandwich if they wanted to. Ex parte orders are giving in consideration in this part because, most importantly, of what $I$ heard about the children. Whether it's self-serving or not. There is so much finger pointing in this case, back and forth, that you folks just don't see the damage you are doing to yourselves. The best medication in this case is to exit this courthouse for the last time.

MS. MOST: Judge, if you can address the therapists?

THE COURT: Hang on. Hang on. I'm getting caught in crossfire here. There are a couple of things. Do you want to address the insurance issue, Mr. Frisch? Is that what you were going to address?

MR. FRISCH: I would like an opportunity to address it on -- I would like an opportunity to address it; not at this moment.

THE COURT: All right. Well, that's fine. Well, here's the deal. I find Judge Koba's January 12 th order to be a clear mandate of the

Court, which is binding on all sides. And, therefore, there was no decision, ruling, or any determination which is being made today on anything.

I am adjourning this matter -- today is October 20th -- to Thursday -- I'm adjourning this, and hopefully Ms. Kassenoff will have counsel.

MS. KASSENOFF: Or a place to live.
THE COURT: Ms. Kassenoff. Check your calendars, folks. You can have either Wednesday, November 3rd, at 2 p.m., or Thursday, November 4th, at 2 p.m.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, is it at all possible to do the day before? I am going to be away those days.

MS. MOST: It's election day.
THE COURT: Or Friday, the 5th, at 2. It's your choice.

MR. FRISCH: Your Honor, any one of those three days --

THE COURT: If there is a compelling reason that $I$ modify the TOP, I will give it due and deliberate consideration. I know she has a lease now in Larchmont, but with equal emphasis, I
don't create in my own mind the circumstances that are presented to me.

MR. FRISCH: I appreciate that, your Honor.

THE COURT: As everyone knows, when a jury sits in the box, people could be telling the truth, and the issue of credibility may go the other way. With equal emphasis, people may be disingenuous and could be found credible.

Most important is how the Court reviews and views the existence of these children.

MR. FRISCH: With that in mind --

THE COURT: And mom and dad will somehow get past all of this.

MR. FRISCH: With that in mind, $I$ have two applications. Number one, that the plaintiff be required to bear the cost of Ms. Kassenoff's alternate lodging until this matter is resolved with regard to her residence. That's number one.

And number two, with regard to the issues raised by Ms. Most and Mr. Dimopoulos, about the insurance, that we have an opportunity to respond to that in writing.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, on that second point, we can concede to that. The only
thing is my client, who is the sole custodial parent, should be given administrative rights in the insurance app, so that he can download all the claims made and the EOBs, so that this Court has all of the evidence before it.

THE COURT: I'm not ruling by ambush, Mr. Dimopoulos. Here's the deal. There is a clear mandate of Judge Koba dated July 12th. I read it into the record.

MS. MOST: There's an earlier one, as well, your Honor. I'll send it to you tomorrow. THE COURT: I don't need it. I have e-file.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: How do we know that we have all of the evidence that your Honor needs to make a determination?

THE COURT: Here is the deal. You want to respond, Mr. Frisch, in writing, please do so. But with equal emphasis, I'm telling you that as of right now, whether you agree with it or not, Mr. Frisch, there is a clear mandate of Judge Koba, that Ms. Kassenoff is to continue to seek reimbursement through insurance for the children's therapists, and upon -- I don't want to hear from you, because your attorney is going to respond in

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writing. You have waived your right to speak on that. And that within one week of receipt, those checks are to be surrendered. If they have not been done, all $I$ can say to you is that they better -- that order better be current by the return date, notwithstanding whatever you provide to me, Mr. Frisch, but there will be consequences on violations of orders, running to Family Court.

I will tell you that if anybody goes to Family Court, from here on in, I will consolidate it, and $I$ will deem it forum shopping. This is the Judge that is steering, guiding, and driving this litigation until trial. Period. Paragraph. End of story.

MR. FRISCH: We will get a writing in to your Honor by next Friday, by the latest.

THE COURT: I will see everyone --

MR. FRISCH: Can your Honor entertain my application to have Mr. Kassenoff bear the cost of lodging until that issue is resolved?

THE COURT: I will entertain it, but not today. Not today.

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, can Mr. Frisch be directed to or Ms. Kassenoff be directed to provide all claims made and EOBs provided, all

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information in there written response, because we have no access whatsoever?

MR. FRISCH: Your Honor, with all due respect, I would like to respond and get a grasp of the issue --

THE COURT: Be prepared to discuss this issue in detail at the adjourn date.

MR. FRISCH: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: And to provide whatever proof, either in defense or in pursuing your particular claim. I am not going to deal with this case by ambush. I do not operate that way. Let me make this patently clear.

The litigants' inability to accept control and responsibility of their actions will have a negative impact. This is not a runaway train.

Mr. Dimopoulos, your schedule for the week of November, election day?

MR. DIMOPOULOS: Your Honor, I just texted my wife. We're good for the 5th, is okay, at 2:00 p.m.

THE COURT: Okay. I will see everyone on November 5 th at 2:00 p.m. Motions 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, and 39 are deemed adjourned to that date.

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All rulings and directives placed on the record this date constitute the decision and order of the Court and are hereby deemed so ordered, without the necessity for signature, notwithstanding the submission of any documents in which counsel or the parties are seeking as sole order by the Court.

By representation of plaintiff's
counsel, cost of today's transcript will be borne by the plaintiff, subject to any reallocation determined by the court or by stipulation of the party, with a copy to be electronically transmitted to the Court. So ordered.
(Whereupon, the proceedings were
adjourned.)

*     *         *             *                 * 

This is hereby certified to be a true and accurate record of the above proceedings.

Mary T. Slavik, RPR Senior Court Reporter


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