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### Brinkley comes out swinging in divorce trial testimony

#### Second day of her custody dispute with Peter Cook

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8:46 PM EDT, July 3, 2008

She cried. She giggled. She shook her fists in the air. She hunched her shoulders and cringed. She scolded.

Uptown Girl Christie Brinkley came out swinging in her divorce trial Thursday, taking the witness stand to tell how her "perfect" life fell to tatters amid her estranged husband's sex-obsessed ways, and confronting accusations that she was bitter and out for revenge.

"It's been two years, a nightmare of pure torture. It hasn't stopped," Brinkley, 54, snapped at defense attorney Norman Sheresky as he probed into her reasons to go to trial. "I believe that the truth, in the long term, will lead to a better life for my children, for myself and for society in general."

Earlier, in the Central Islip courtroom where Brinkley is divorcing Peter Cook, 49, the former supermodel broke down in tears describing how she first learned of his affair, then of his \$3,000-a-month Internet pornography habit and how her son with Cook, Jack, 12, stumbled upon the images.

But there were light moments, too.

"I'm no Meryl Streep," she quipped in response to Sheresky's suggestion that her acting skills were in play, prompting courtroom laughs.

"Shrek was more believable," Cook joked to reporters.

Outside the courtroom, Brinkley seemed to be taking the high road, telling reporters she wanted to forgive Diana Bianchi, whose affair with Cook when she was 18 set off the 2006 divorce. She said the young woman, who is now 21, was "manipulated."

It was a blistering second day of trial for both Brinkley and Cook, whose every move in the courthouse was watched by

a mob of both journalists and curious onlookers.

Acting State Supreme Court Justice Mark D. Cohen yesterday closed the first phase of the proceeding, in which the adultery grounds must be proved.

Cook concedes that he cheated with Bianchi, and had viewed pornography, so legally the two days of testimony were not necessary to establish those grounds. But Brinkley is legally entitled to air the facts behind her divorce.

The trial, which the judge has scheduled to last four weeks, will also hash out custody rights. The couple currently share custody of their daughter Sailor Lee, 10, and Jack, who was legally adopted by Cook and was fathered by Brinkley's third husband, Richard Taubman. Brinkley also is the mother of Alexa Ray Joel, 21, whose father is Billy Joel.

Cook is seeking more visitation rights to Sailor and Jack, which Brinkley opposes.

"The names are famous here, but I got to tell you, the story is not unique," said divorce attorney Sari M. Friedman, of Garden City, who has worked on divorces for celebrities and everyday people.

The last phase of the trial will focus on property. Both are making six-figure demands on the other, and dispute the rights to three boats and several pieces of East End real estate. Brinkley's \$30 million estate in Bridgehampton is not in contention.

Though it may have scored public outrage, Friedman and other legal observers noted that Cook's admissions that he viewed pornography will probably not convince any New York judge that he is a bad father, since case law mostly establishes that only child pornography endangers children.

Brinkley's attorneys have taken pains to establish that Cook accessed the illicit sites on Jack's computer, but Cook testified he only did so in his and Brinkley's offices, and that she accessed the sites on the child's computer while doing her own investigating.

Defending his treatment of Alexa Ray Joel on Thursday, Cook began throwing his own mud, accusing Brinkley of being mean to her, and denying Joel's testimony that he shoved her head in a bucket.

Hearing Cook's words, Brinkley's lawyer, Robert S. Cohen of Manhattan, objected to the testimony, saying it was "so unnecessary, so gratuitous."

The judge allowed Cook's lawyer, James R. Winkler of Port Jefferson Station, to continue the line of questioning, telling Cohen: "The question was asked because of your case."

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