

DIARY OF...

a Divorce Lawyer



We speak to **Juliette Peters** of **Peters May**

Monday
My first client of the day is a lady whose divorce I am finalising now that our forensic accountant has provided his report. Her soon to be ex-husband runs a string of successful nightclubs in Soho but claims that they are barely making a profit; a story I have heard countless times before. I had the business valued by a forensic accountant and, unsurprisingly, the accountant has proved that my client was right in believing that the shared business was a goldmine! The husband's lawyer has already made a good offer to settle where my lady keeps the house in Hampstead and the holiday home in Nice. Just what she wanted.

Tuesday
I am preparing for court today. A children case where I am representing Dad. His teenage daughter has decided she wants to live with him. Her Mum isn't happy and is opposing the decision. Given the child's age, the daughter's views are going to prevail. Mediation may help both parents to communicate better as they must still co-parent this young lady.

Wednesday
I have a run of children cases at the moment. I find them rewarding because I am making a difference to someone's life. I take a call from a Mum that I represent. She is hoping to relocate to New York with her young son as she has been offered a fantastic new job over in the States. She is divorcing her husband, a case I am dealing with. Her estranged husband understandably does not want his son across the pond. We need to make a court application for permission to relocate the child, otherwise it will be deemed as child abduction.

Thursday
I love my job because there is never a dull moment. I walk into the office and receive a call from the Metropolitan police. My client who is dissolving his Civil Partnership has spent the night in the cells

following an argument with his partner. They had both consumed too much alcohol and argued over who was keeping what and it came to blows. The police kept my client in overnight to sober up. There is a lot of money at stake here and their Civil Partnership is long standing as it took place in the US long before we had same sex marriages or Civil Partnerships in the UK. I advised that one of them should move out whilst we sort everything out for their sanity. It is very difficult to live in the same house if you are going through a split as emotions can run very high. My client plans to rent himself a flat in Shad Thames for 6 months and things should begin to run more smoothly.

Friday
In the morning I see a bride to be who is getting married in 5 months. She has chosen her dress, booked the church and the honeymoon is sorted. Her wealthy parents want her to have a prenup as she is an only child and even though they are very fond of their soon to be son-in-law, they know the statistics and want her to be prudent. We run through the law on prenups and I will draft the document for her next week.

In the afternoon, I see a very glamorous lady in her late 40s. She has been living with her 'boyfriend' for 15 years. He is in his 60s, very wealthy and they have no children together. She wants to discuss her rights in the house they share which is in his name. They own nothing jointly I discover. I break it to her that there is no such thing as a 'common law wife' and she has no rights whatsoever despite living together for so long. She is devastated. She hopes they will marry!

A busy week. I am looking forward to spending the weekend in the country with my husband, young daughter, step sons and dog until it starts again next week.

Juliette Peters is a longstanding Home House member and founding partner of Peters May, a boutique divorce and family law practice based in Mayfair.

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**The above should not be taken as legal advice and each case is dependant on its own facts.*