

*Goal: To get a lawyer who botched a divorce to return a chunk of his fee.*

Dear Y:

I will try to be brief, knowing however long this letter takes, it's more time than you put in the matter of my divorce, which you were paid \$3,000 to take care of. Your performance was marked by the highest form of unprepared, unpunctual, and unprofessional behavior that I've witnessed, and I'd be remiss not to put it on the record with you for openers and, I hope, for closers.

Not only did you miss the final court date while the three of us waited, but you were never aware enough to even call us about this gross inconvenience and mismanagement of time. Frankly, you put me in an embarrassing position, keeping another lawyer and my then-wife waiting. What a laughter! Plus, you never even told me that I needed to take the stand. You simply did not perform the job I hired you for: An absolute calamity made more absurd by your offer of \$200 off the bill.

Fact: In an attempt to postpone the date, you called me last (calling my soon-to-be-ex's lawyer first on a Friday, and me on Monday night after working hours!); Fact: Then, after you missed the date, only that night at 10 pm did you finally fax me legal documents, which as it turned out, weren't even ready by next morning; Fact: On said morning, you were filling out legal documents in pencil and further kept us all waiting while you made xeroxes at the courthouse!

So, Y, this letter comes from the mind-boggling thought that you actually believe that based on your performance - you're entitled to \$2,800! (Because of your irresponsibility and inconsideration, I lost a minimum of \$2,400 for work I could've performed while waiting for you to make me the priority I paid to be.)

You stand in violation of a professional trust as well as a personal one. All I'm left with is the question of why would you want to keep money you were paid in advance for a service that you did not provide in any manner that was timely, professional, prepared, precise, punctual, proper, or polite? That you completely bungled an uncontested divorce whose only point of contestation is your fee. Have you no honor, conscience, or sense of decency of right and wrong, of fairness, of accountability?

Please send me a check for \$2,500, knowing that \$500 for the service of your efforts is extremely high and generous, more tip than fee. Otherwise to uphold this fundamental principle, I will be forced to pursue legal options that, perhaps, even you might have greater understanding of and appreciation for.

Only then will this embarrassing chapter be closed, and only then we can look back and say: Yeah, Y screwed up and owned up, he's a stand-up guy. I hope you see the necessity of getting this check to me by Tues., Dec. 17th.

*Upon receipt, the lawyer picked up the phone, called the aggrieved client, offered to immediately send a check for \$1,500, and then called his shrink for a therapy session.*