

## Sanctuary owner testifies she threatened to report 'Ikea monkey' owner to law society

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Allison Jones, The Canadian Press



A monkey was seen walking around the parking lot at an Ikea store in North York on Dec. 9, 2012.  
Courtesy of @broniewyn via Twitter

The owner of a primate sanctuary where the Ikea monkey is living says she threatened to report the woman who calls herself the monkey's "mom" to the law society.

Yasmin Nakhuda, a Toronto real estate lawyer, is suing Story Book Farm Primate Sanctuary in Sunderland, Ont., in an attempt to get Darwin the monkey back.

Tensions have run high in the case since December when Toronto animal services found the Japanese macaque outside an Ikea store, where he had escaped from Nakhuda's car.

Sanctuary owner Sherri Delaney has testified that supporters of Nakhuda have threatened to kill her and burn the sanctuary down.

Under cross-examination today by Nakhuda's lawyer, Delaney admitted that she threatened to report Nakhuda to the Law Society of Upper Canada because she believes she didn't tell the truth under oath.

When Nakhuda first launched her lawsuit shortly after the Ikea incident, the sanctuary alleged that Nakhuda, her husband and her two children had abused Darwin — allegations that were withdrawn on the first day of the trial last month.

Nakhuda's lawyer, Ted Charney, suggested in court Tuesday that the allegations were only made in the first place to discredit his client in the media.

"Are you aware that within 24 hours of delivering your defence those allegations of abuse...were headlines across the country?" Charney asked Delaney.

"I think your law office leaked them," she replied.

"You think my office leaked your allegations of abuse to the media?" Charney said, incredulously. Delaney replied that's what she recalled.

Charney suggested that one incendiary allegation, that Darwin was hit with a wooden spoon, was based on a letter Nakhuda had written in which she said she sometimes "brandished" a wooden spoon to get the monkey's attention when he was misbehaving.

"Because someone brandished a spoon they must be...beating an animal with it?" Charney said.

"I'm simply saying that a wooden spoon is only a spoon unless someone has been meant to fear it," Delaney replied.

The exchange came at the end of a tense cross-examination, which began with a drawn out exchange between Delaney and Charney in which they argued over whether she "adopted" Darwin or if he was "signed over" to her.

Delaney has testified that legally she is Darwin's owner now as Nakhuda signed a form surrendering her ownership.

Nakhuda alleges animal services officers misled her about the form's true purpose, suggesting it was only a temporary surrender.

Lawyers for both sides will make their closing submissions next and the judge will likely reserve her decision for a later date.