# Casey’s Pop Life

Mariah Carey’s mother and HIV positive sister in custody battle

May 12, 1995 By Casey Davidson

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Until yesterday, I never told anybody that I had AIDS. I never told my best friend, a girlfriend or a relative.” So says the then-17-year-old Henry Nicols, the subject of the acclaimed documentary, *Eagle Scout*.

Henry has hemophilia, and his family, fearing that their Cooperstown, New York community might react dishonorably, kept his HIV status a secret. Then Henry turned 17 and announced that he wanted to be an Eagle Scout, and that he would go public to educate other kids about AIDS.

The documentary is a touching tribute to a brave young man who refuses to hide. Some of the segments run like AIDS 101. Henry dismisses the idea that he is an innocent victim because that would imply guilty victims, and he says, “no one deserves AIDS.”

The film won a Heartland Film Festival Award in October.

Have you ever heard your fax machine screeching and thought it might be Mariah Carey on the line? Well, we got a genuine fax form Mariah just the other day.

Mariah’s older sister, Alison, is HIV positive and she is in the midst of a custody battle with their mother, Patricia, over her seven-year-old son. With most of the parties unwilling to talk about what is really going on, the situation raises questions about AIDS-related discrimination based on the fact that Alison is HIV positive.

While both sides claim they are primarily interested in the welfare of the child, Mariah’s mother took the child away from his Long Island, New York home where he lived with Alison, in December.

According to Alison’s lawyer, Desmond Jordan, Jr., “We had a court date on January 25 to try to get the boy back to her. The judge ordered Alison’s mother to produce the boy in court, and she didn’t.” Two days later, the child was in court and the judge ruled that the grandmother should keep the child until March when a decision about permanent custody would be made. The judge gave Alison weekend visitation rights.

The case is being heard in Suffolk Country family court. A Long Island district attorney’s office

spokesperson, Drew Bondi, said only, “We don’t know what happened. In family court, proceedings are not spoken about.”

Meanwhile, Mariah, 25, married to Sony Music honcho Tommy Mottola and one of the most successful pop stars ever, has just one faxed comment in response to our inquiries about the case: “This is a horrible and extremely upsetting situation that will hopefully be resolved as soon as possible for the sake of the child.”

Alison’s lawyer says his client has passed her mandated drug tests and is drug-free. As for the custody battle, he says, “We hope it’s not because Alison is HIV positive and there’s no discrimination. We hope that’s not the reason the DA’s office is dragging their feet.”

While February’s *Boy’s On the Side* proved that an AIDS movie can also be a rollicking good time, the same can’t be said for the Peter Horton-directed saga *The Cure*. The film is about the friendship that develops between two boys, an angry misfit (The Client’s Brad Renfro) and his saintly, HIV positive neighbor (*Jurassic Park*’s Joseph Mazzello). During one summer, the boys search for an AIDS cure by eating large quantities of Butterfinger candy bars, drinking tea brewed from mysterious plants and leaves, travel to New Orleans by raft and otherwise make anyone with any AIDS awareness just plain nervous. You keep thinking, “Get that child to a hospital.” When he finally does get to a doctor, it’s a relief to know him: *Longtime Companion*’s Bruce Davison. Still, you’re better off reading *Boys*.

Kudos to Amy Madigan, who one a Cable Ace Award for best actress in a movie or miniseries for her tear-jerking Lifetime film *And Then There Was One*. Madigan portrayed the late Roxy Ventola, the HIV positive television writer who was featured in *POZ* No. 3.

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