

Britney Spears' former manager sues pop star and parents

Osama 'Sam' Lutfi's libel, defamation and battery case against Jamie and Lynne Spears paints the singer's parents as bad guys bent on controlling the singer's fortune.

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In the Britney Spears melodrama, Osama "Sam" Lutfi has long been cast as the villain. The 34-year-old Los Angeles native met Spears in a nightclub and was soon her constant companion, living in her mansion, riding in her cars and being introduced as her manager.

In a court affidavit filed after Spears was hospitalized for psychiatric problems, her mother painted Lutfi as a cruel Svengali who kept Spears a prisoner in her own home, lacing her food with drugs, letting paparazzi have the run of her property and torturing her with lies about her children.

But on Tuesday, a little more than a year after a court gave Spears' father control over her personal and business affairs, Lutfi fired back. In a lawsuit filed in L.A. County Superior Court, Lutfi accused the singer's mother, Lynne, of libel and defamation; her father, Jamie, of battery; both parents of intentional infliction of emotional distress; and Spears herself of breaching a contract.

The specific grounds outlined in the 15-page suit, however, seemed beside Lutfi's main point -- that Spears' parents are the real bad guys.

"Seeing Lutfi's involvement with Britney as a threat to their lifestyle, Jamie and Lynne launched a campaign of lies and intimidation designed to destroy Lutfi and drive him out of Britney's life," Lutfi's attorney, Bryan Freedman, wrote.

The suit also contends that Spears' parents did not seek help for her earlier because they saw humiliating tabloid reports about her erratic behavior "as a means by which they could force their way back into Britney's life and regain control of her fortune under the guise of concern for Britney's well-being."

Told of the allegations, an attorney for the family, Blair Berk, said, "I prefer not to even dignify it with a comment."

The suit was the latest development in a long-simmering feud between the Speares, Louisiana natives who divorced in 2002, and Lutfi, who according to his lawyer has worked as a producer in the music and movie industry and also as a counselor to troubled youths.

One of Jamie Spears' first acts as co-conservator for the pop star and her finances was obtaining a restraining order against Lutfi. The order expired in July and was not renewed after Lutfi agreed not to contact the performer or her parents. Two months later, Lynne Spears published an autobiography, "Through the Storm: A Real Story of Fame and Family in a Tabloid World," in which she wrote unsparingly about Lutfi.

He "told me that if he weren't in the house to give Britney her medicine, she would kill herself," she wrote. "If you try to get rid of me, she'll be dead, and I'll piss on her grave," she quotes Lutfi as saying. The book is the basis for Lutfi's libel and defamation allegations.

Lawyers for Spears and her father got a second restraining order against Lutfi on Friday. In court papers, they accused him of attempting to "disrupt the conservatorship with an utter disregard for Ms. Spears' health and well-being." Her father wrote that phone bills indicate his daughter has exchanged text messages and phone calls with Lutfi during the last month. Lutfi also attempted to contact her through her hairdresser, Jamie Spears wrote.

Freedman said that however Lutfi had been portrayed in the media and in court papers, a trial would prove that he was a dedicated and constant friend to the singer.

"This case will show that Sam was a great supporter of her when no one else was there," he said.