

Ex Goldman Sachs lawyer breaks silence since filing suit against bank

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EXCLUSIVE: How ex Goldman Sachs lawyer channeled Linda Tripp and became a casualty of a disastrous affair between the bank's Global Head of Litigation and junior colleague who confided in her every step of the way - much like Monica Lewinsky

- **Marla Crawford, 57, sued Goldman Sachs in New York's Supreme Court Monday, accusing the bank of covering up sexual harassment and retaliating against her**
- **She said: 'I did nothing wrong except ask an organization to help me... at every turn they shut me down and it's not right'**
- **Crawford told how her career became a casualty of an affair between the bank's Global Head of Litigation and a junior colleague who confided in Crawford**
- **According to the claim Crawford's friend, known only as Jane Doe was 'dealing with things in her personal life' and a married Darrell Cafasso pursued her**
- **He allegedly told Doe, 'I have feelings for you I have never had for anyone else but my wife,' and went as far as telling her, 'I think I'm falling in love with you'**
- **When Cafasso's wife discovered the affair and called Doe, Cafasso told Doe that she was a 'temptress' and 'the Devil's pawn'**
- **Doe told Crawford that she believed Cafasso had realized he had 'gone too far' when he promised her job benefits in exchange for 'favors'**
- **Then he broke it off with Doe via telephone call and dialed his wife**
- **Crawford learned that Doe then had retained the services of Gloria Allred and in all likelihood reached an agreement with Goldman Sachs**
- **When Crawford went to HR to complain, she says she was retaliated against by having her career sidelined and offered a paycut and relocation to Dallas**

By [Laura Collins, Chief Investigative Reporter In New York For Dailymail.com](#)

The woman at the center of a lawsuit accusing Goldman Sachs of covering up sexual harassment then retaliating against her for speaking up, has told how she was demeaned, side-lined and forced out by the bank that tried to 'muzzle her.'

Speaking for the first time since the lawsuit was filed in New York's Supreme Court on Monday, Marla Crawford, 57, told DailyMail.com how her career became a casualty of a disastrous affair between the bank's Global Head of Litigation and a far more junior colleague who confided in Crawford every step of the way.

In an exclusive interview with DailyMail.com Crawford recalled her 'upset and anger' at what she viewed as a predatory abuse of power by Darrell Cafasso - one of the bank's most senior lawyers. And she accused him of preying on the woman because he knew she was, 'vulnerable...fragile and younger.'

Crawford said, 'I never intended to become a crusader or role model for anybody other than my own family. But I have not one regret for my actions.

'I have a daughter who's about to start her own legal career. What kind of mother, what kind of role model, would I be if I let this happen to me?

'I did nothing wrong except ask an organization to help me. I asked them at every turn to do the right thing. And at every turn they shut me down and it's not right.

'I know right from wrong and this is black and white. This is wrong.'

Crawford's dismissal could be likened to sex scandal whistleblower Linda Tripp, who was close with White House intern Monica Lewinsky and turned over secretly recorded conversations of Lewinsky discussing her affair with President Bill Clinton.

Tripp was later fired from her position at the Pentagon on the last full day of Clinton's administration in 2001. She claimed the dismissal was in retaliation for her part in the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal.

Crawford joined Goldman Sachs in 2010 as Vice President Associate General Counsel.

She was already a well-respected attorney with more than two decades experience and during her decade at Sachs she had built on that reputation earning praise in internal reviews.

She was described as 'invaluable,' with an 'incredible work ethic, thoroughness, creative problem-solving abilities and strong leadership and execution capabilities.'

And perhaps unfortunately for Crawford it was also noted that she was, 'not scared to highlight issues....to ensure the firm makes the right decisions.'

It was her misfortune to find herself privy to a host of uncomfortable truths when her friend fell 'victim' to Cafasso's attentions, sexual harassment and ultimately favoritism.

Crawford's lawsuit, filed by attorneys Douglas Wigdor and David Gottlieb, sets out a damning timeline of the sexual coercion and professional misconduct to which Crawford was an unwilling witness.

According to the claim Crawford's friend, known only as Jane Doe, is an 'extremely smart and competent lawyer,' but was underperforming and 'vulnerable' because she was, 'dealing with things in her personal life that would create sensitivity for anyone.'

Crawford claims that Cafasso chose his moment carefully when he first invited Jane Doe for drinks and a private out of office meeting, deliberately doing so during the last week of August 2019 when nearly everybody was out of the office meaning few staff members were there to witness it.

She says that her friend later told her that she 'did not feel she had a choice given that he was her boss's boss' and that he drank heavily and told her about 'extremely personal matters,' including dissatisfaction with his marriage.

Cafasso's 'infatuation' quickly escalated. Her friend told her that these out of office meetings became increasingly frequent and always involved drinking heavily with no food.

Cafasso told Doe, 'I have feelings for you I have never had for anyone else but my wife,' and went as far as telling her, 'I think I'm falling in love with you.'

According to Crawford her friend never reciprocated that statement and confided that she wanted out of the relationship but was 'scared and did not know what to do.'

In October, just two months after those initial drinks, she told Crawford she 'could no longer handle the situation,' after Cafasso's wife had discovered the affair and called her to tell her she knew about it and was, 'praying for her.'

Cafasso told Doe that she was a 'temptress' and, bizarrely, 'the Devil's pawn,' and according to Crawford her friend told her she felt 'trapped given the power dynamic' and 'had no ability to cut it off without harming her career.'

Things finally reached a tipping point at the beginning of November when Doe told Crawford that she believed Cafasso had realized he had 'gone too far' when he promised her job benefits in exchange for 'favors.' She believed that he wanted to 'get out in front of it' before she filed a complaint.

He self-reported the relationship to the bank's General Counsel, Karen Seymour and told his wife that he was ending it.

He did so, without warning, via a telephone call to Doe while she was at work. He dialed his wife in so that she could be part of the excruciating exchange.

Crawford well remembers her friend's upset following that call which left her shaking and so distraught that Crawford counselled her to go home.

That call was made on Friday, November 1st. Doe came into work the following Monday looking 'unkempt and unwell.' Again, Crawford advised her to go home. That was the last time any of her colleagues saw her in the office.

Cafasso was put on administrative leave while his confession to the affair was apparently investigated. Crawford later learned that Doe had retained the services of Gloria Allred and in all likelihood reached an agreement that saw her career with Goldman Sachs terminated while she was paid a sum of money on condition of keeping quiet.

Crawford expected to be interviewed in the internal investigation given that she was a key witness to all that had gone on between the two. But she was never asked.

Instead, she claims that when she went to Human Resources to offer her information she was 'shut down.'

She said, 'I actually spoke to them twice. The first time they told me that people were entitled to their personal lives and then they told me I was not to discuss the matter with anybody. So that was extremely disappointing.'

'He was the boss. He was two levels above this young woman. What he did was unlawful [according to civil law and company policies].'

Crawford later learned that Sachs's General Counsel, Karen Seymour had described the whole thing as 'a sticky' situation and told a colleague, 'Let's try to put this genie back in the bottle.'

Two weeks after he had been put on leave Cafasso returned to his position without a word.

'I was stunned,' Crawford recalled. 'I could not believe what was happening.'

According to Crawford the return, 'sent a clear message to everyone aware of the situation that Goldman would fully protect senior men who engage in misconduct towards women and that victims would be forced out and muzzled.'

Crawford said, 'One day I came back into the office and there he was.' She decided to address the elephant in the room that was her knowledge of the affair.

She said, 'I had a conversation with him, and he was very aware that I was close to this woman.'

'I went to him and I told him that I knew what had happened and all I wanted was for him to treat me professionally and fairly. And you know, as I was leaving the office, after he had said that he couldn't talk about it he sort of whispered, this loud stage whisper, "It's not true." Which I found just shocking.'

From then on Crawford's situation at the bank deteriorated drastically as Cafasso 'never treated her the same,' and saw her, she believes, as an obstacle to be removed in a bid to sweep the affair under the rug once and for all.

She claims that he re-opened her work review to write in negative comments.

She also learned that, before he was placed on leave, he had lowered her quartile score (an internal metric used by Sachs) and at the same time raised the score for the woman 'for whom he had sexual desires,' again 'hoping for her to 'return the favor,' as a quid pro quo.'

Crawford complained this conduct was retaliation, but her complaint was rejected and the day after it was made - Crawford learned that her bonus was to be reduced for the first time in her entire tenure.

I never intended to become a crusader, but I find that I'm being pushed into this because of just a fundamental unfairness. And I have not one regret.

Bit by bit her working life was made unbearable and when she complained of retaliation, she was told that there was 'no evidence' of it. She later learned that 'investigators' had simply asked Cafasso if he had retaliated and he had denied it.

Then, in September, Crawford was informed that she was being 'let go.' She was told her role was being moved to Dallas as a cost-cutting measure and offered a role there at a reduced salary.

Crawford believes that Cafasso 'knew very well' that they had made her an offer she could not accept, as her whole family is in New York.

Today, Crawford is out of work and describes herself as 'dismayed' at how her 'stellar' career ended so bitterly and so unfairly.

But, she said, she has been buoyed by messages of support since filing her lawsuit and refusing to go quietly.

She said, 'Women I don't even know are sending me messages on LinkedIn telling me I'm brave and I'm a hero. I've had people in Goldman Sachs compliance department sending me messages saying, "We believe you".'

She said, 'I just wanted to be treated fairly and I wasn't treated fairly, and I have a voice. I had a position of some authority in the firm, but it strikes me that there are many others who can be treated unfairly, and who have been, and don't have a voice. They're powerless.

'I never intended to become a crusader, but I find that I'm being pushed into this because of just a fundamental unfairness. And I have not one regret.'