

# Foot doctor sicced private eye on me, NYU Langone worker claims

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By Michael Gartland

A prominent Manhattan doctor's prescription for love has expired.

NYU Langone foot and ankle surgeon Dr. John Kennedy faces a lawsuit from his office manager and ex-lover over what she claims is a harrowing pattern of harassment — including a claim by Kennedy that she embezzled money from his private medical practice.

Susanne Schafmeister says that after she broke off her romance with Kennedy, he hired a private detective to follow her, secretly recorded her conversations and falsely accused her of writing unauthorized checks from his practice.

Schafmeister, 43, a German national, hooked up with Kennedy shortly after arriving in the U.S. in 2005, according to her lawsuit filed Friday in Manhattan Federal Court.

For years, their affair went swimmingly, she claims.

About a year into their romance, Kennedy offered her a job as his office manager. In 2015, he helped her buy an apartment on Mercer Street.

When Kennedy moved his practice to NYU Langone earlier this year, Schafmeister went with him — securing for herself an annual salary of \$144,000.

But their relationship began to fray around the same time. Schafmeister blames it on Kennedy cheating on her — and even marrying another woman behind her back. He claimed it was that woman's "dying wish" to wed him, the lawsuit claims.

So Schafmeister broke it off and began seeing someone else. That's when she claims her professional life really went on life support. Kennedy allegedly threatened to fire her, sicced a private eye on her and accused her of the embezzlement.

That embezzlement claim had real-life consequences.

Schafmeister was arraigned on second degree grand larceny charges last month. According to the criminal complaint, while she was authorized to cut payroll checks up to \$12,000, she exceeded that amount.

Her attorney Michael Willemin said Kennedy authorized her to write the checks and his charges against her are just one more way he terrorized her after their break-up.

“Every single one of those checks that Dr. Kennedy is claiming Susanne wrote herself without authorization were all written with authorization,” he said.

NYU Langone spokeswoman Allison Clair said the hospital takes “all internal allegations of inappropriate behavior” seriously.

“We will defend the federal complaint in court at the appropriate time,” she added.