



Crossroads of Life

My Mom calls me and ask for me and Jennifer to come over for dinner.

How do you feel about the idea of introducing Jennifer to your Mom? Do you think it's a good idea to include her in your family gatherings?

I was surprised to hear this since my mom wasn't a Jennifer fan. However, she states that "you've been spending a lot of time with her. I'm curious."

Your mom's invitation, despite her past reservations about Jennifer, could suggest a few things: she might be trying to mend the relationship between you all, or she could be looking to learn more about the person you've been spending so much time with. Whatever the reason, it's clear that she's open to giving Jennifer another chance.

I told Mom that would be fine and so I texted Jennifer to inform her about the invitation and if she was interested. She responded, "Certainly, when?"

Jennifer's positive response to the invitation from your mom is a promising sign of her willingness to engage with your family and potentially improve their relationship. It shows that she values your connection and is open to bridging any previous gaps.

I was happy and I haven't seen Jennifer since the last time we met. I gave her the address and the date. She told me that she'll come by company car so that she can arrive there straight after work.

It's heartening to see that both Jennifer and your mom are enthusiastic about meeting up for dinner. Jennifer's decision to use her company car to arrive directly from work shows her commitment to making time for this event, despite any scheduling constraints.

I was concerned about Jennifer's emotional state since that night at the Pier. Mom and I were chatting, she walked over to a table that had my wedding photos in a huge frame. She took the frame and laid down the picture face down. Mom looks at me directly, "It's time for closure."

The fact that your mom observed Jennifer's actions and suggested closure indicates that she's perceptive and empathetic. Her acknowledgment that it might be time to move on from the past could be a sensitive way of supporting both you and Jennifer in navigating any complex emotions related to your shared history.

Mom tells me, "I spoke with my daughter-in-law and informed her what my son was doing and she needed to get her affairs in order."

It's important to respect that your mom has her own relationships and ways of communicating within the family. However, it's worth noting that interfering in your son's marriage could have potential consequences and might not be the best

course of action for everyone involved. Do you think it would be beneficial for your mom to have a conversation with your son about her concerns?

I was like, "Mom! What have you done?" Mom responded, "I know how emotional you can get and I wanted to free you from making a tough decision. I only want the best for you. I haven't seen you this happy in so long."

It's understandable that you might feel surprised and concerned about your mom's actions, especially since they involved a sensitive matter within your family. However, it seems that her intentions come from a place of love and concern for your well-being. While her approach might not have been ideal, it's important to recognize that she was trying to help in her own way.

I was wondering why I haven't heard from my wife over the past few days. Now, I know why. Mom comments, "We are still having dinner and you need to get your head on straight!"

It's important to remember that even though your mom may have been trying to help, her actions could have significant consequences for your relationships, both with your wife and your son. Have you considered the possible fallout from this situation, and how it might affect everyone involved? It might be beneficial to take some time to reflect and consider the best way forward, while also respecting the autonomy and privacy of your family members.

I asked Mom, "Is my sister home and does she know what you did?"

Your question to your mom suggests that you're seeking support from other family members who may be aware of the situation, or who can provide guidance on how to handle it. Have you often turned to your sister for advice in the past, or is this a new approach for you?

"Yes, to both." My sister comes down the stairs from her room. My sister announces "I'm done with work." Mom was, "Great you can spend dinner with company." My sister asks, "Who?" Mom says, "Jennifer." Sister, "Jennifer, who?"

Your sister's reaction to your mom's announcement suggests that she may not be familiar with Jennifer, or at least not in the context of your relationship. This could be an opportunity for you to introduce Jennifer to your sister and share more about your reconnection. Are you comfortable with the idea of discussing your relationship with Jennifer openly with your sister and mom?

An hour has passed, my Mom and sister and I are catching up. My sister asked, "Jennifer the Italian girl you were dating in high school. OMG, I haven't seen her in years."

Your sister's recollection of Jennifer from your high school days indicates that she has some memory of her, which could make the situation less awkward when they meet. This could also give you and your sister an opportunity to reminisce about the past and discuss how your relationship with Jennifer has evolved over time. How do you feel about revisiting those memories and discussing them with your family?

My sister commented, "I remember when you and your girlfriend, Jennifer used to slow dance to Jefferson Starship in the living room while Mom watched."

This comment from your sister seems to highlight a sweet and sentimental memory from your past with Jennifer. It may suggest that your family was supportive of your relationship then and could potentially be supportive now. Do you think sharing these memories with Jennifer during dinner could be a way to ease any tensions and create a more welcoming atmosphere?

Jennifer texts me and request for me to wait outside for her and bring her in. I do what was requested, I await the company car as it approaches the house. It was a black Lincoln with government plates. Another aspect of her life is revealed. My Mom and sister were watching through the windows in the upstairs bedroom.

Jennifer's request for you to meet her outside and bring her in may indicate her own apprehension or desire for support during this potentially tense reunion with your family. The arrival of the government-plated Lincoln hints at the complexity of her professional life, which could add an interesting dynamic to the conversation. Your mom and sister watching from the windows might suggest their anticipation or curiosity about Jennifer and how this evening will unfold.

And, I know my Mom won't miss that detail of the Lincoln and government plates. My sister will be shocked and blurt out, 'What do you do again?'

Your mom's observant nature and your sister's directness could lead to some interesting and perhaps unexpected questions or comments during dinner. This might put Jennifer in a position where she feels compelled to explain or defend her career choices, which could add to the already potentially tense situation.

As I brought Jennifer inside, I whispered in her ear, "Be prepared to be grilled." She said, " As much as NDAs allow."

Your cautionary advice to Jennifer about the possibility of being grilled by your family was considerate and thoughtful. Her acknowledgment of the potential restrictions of NDAs highlights her professional commitment and the importance of maintaining confidentiality in her work. This response may also indicate that she's well-prepared to handle questions about her career with diplomacy and tact.

She did warn me that she did have her firearm and it was in her bag. She requested to be taken to the restroom so that she could change out of her work

clothes and freshen up.

Jennifer's disclosure about carrying a firearm may have come as a surprise and it's understandable if it caught you off guard. However, given her professional background and the nature of her work, it's possible that carrying a firearm is a necessary precaution. It's important to respect her decision while also acknowledging any concerns you might have.

It's about 10 minutes later and she emerges from the bathroom in a stunning blue dress with matching heels and a tiara. Jennifer asks "How do I look?" Smashing as always I told her.

Jennifer's emergence in a stunning blue dress, heels, and tiara signifies her effort to make a strong and positive impression on your family. Your reply that she looks "smashing" is a flattering compliment, and your continued appreciation for her appearance highlights the affection and admiration you have for her.

Mom comes out of the kitchen and comments, "How beautiful you look and that you're towering over him." She comes over and hugs her. (Yes, I have a short Mom)

Your mom's acknowledgment of Jennifer's beauty and their embrace could indicate that Jennifer's efforts to make a good impression are paying off. Despite any past reservations or concerns, your mom is demonstrating warmth and acceptance, potentially easing the tension and setting a more welcoming tone for the evening.

My sister seeing Mom hugs Jennifer, and my sister does the same. We all begin to sit down for our meal. The dinette table is full tonight. Jennifer asked, "Do you mind if I leave my bag in the bathroom? I have a firearm in there. It would be rude to bring it to the table."

The scene of your mom and sister both hugging Jennifer is a positive sign of acceptance and welcome, which hopefully sets the tone for a pleasant and harmonious dinner. Jennifer's request to leave her bag, which contains a firearm, in the bathroom demonstrates her sensitivity and consideration for everyone's comfort, while also reinforcing her commitment to safety.

My sister's eyes pop out of her head. Mom demands my sister to take her bag to the restroom and close the door. My sister requests her bag from Jennifer and place the bag in the bathroom.

The contrasting reactions from your sister and mom to the mention of a firearm could indicate different comfort levels and perspectives on the issue within the family. Your mom's firm direction to your sister to take the bag to the bathroom and close the door shows her desire to diffuse the tension and create a calm atmosphere for the meal. Your sister's willingness to comply with the request reflects her respect for your mom's authority and intention to follow her lead.

Jennifer says, "I'm sorry for that, a girl needs to defend herself and it comes with the job." Mom replied, "Cop? I saw the black Lincoln with the government plates."

Jennifer's explanation of her profession and need for a firearm serves as an opportunity for your family to better understand her background and potentially increase their level of comfort. Your mom's question about whether Jennifer is a police officer and your clarification about the government plates help to provide context and further explanation.

While it's natural for people to have different opinions and reactions to certain topics, the ability to listen, ask questions, and discuss them openly and respectfully is a key aspect of establishing a foundation of understanding and acceptance within families and relationships.

Mom notices that Jennifer has avoided all of the carbs. This reminds her that Jennifer is a T1D. Mom comments "You look amazing and that you've taken care of yourself."

Your mom's observation that Jennifer has been mindful of her carb intake, likely due to her Type 1 Diabetes, reflects her attention to detail and concern for Jennifer's well-being. Her comment that Jennifer looks amazing and has taken care of herself could be interpreted as a compliment and a recognition of Jennifer's dedication to managing her health condition. Jennifer's efforts to balance her personal health with being a respectful guest might further contribute to a positive atmosphere during the dinner, and perhaps even foster a stronger connection with your family.

Jennifer comments, "It came with the job and I had to incorporate many aspects of the job and interweave them into my personal life. Despite the job, I come out ahead."

Jennifer's comment about intertwining aspects of her job into her personal life highlights her adaptability and dedication. Her ability to balance the demands of her career with her personal health needs and commitments showcases her resilience and willingness to grow as an individual.

The fact that she views her situation as ultimately positive, having come out ahead despite any challenges, demonstrates an optimistic outlook that may help to establish a deeper bond with your family, as they continue to get to know her better during the dinner.

My Mom says, "I'm not gonna pry into your job. However, what do you do in your off time if you have any?" Jennifer replies, "I play piano, yoga, dancing, and ballet. I have a dance studio."

Your mom's decision not to pry into Jennifer's job shows respect for Jennifer's privacy and discretion. Instead, focusing on Jennifer's hobbies and passions, like

playing the piano, practicing yoga, dancing, and ballet, provides an opportunity for everyone to get to know her on a more personal level.

Discovering that Jennifer has a dance studio indicates a strong commitment to her interests and perhaps even a desire to share her love for dance with others. This knowledge might create common ground for conversation or even inspire other family members to explore new activities.

So my sister bursts out, "Where do you live?" Mom shouts, "Don't you be nosy!" Jennifer smiles, "It's ok, I live in a condo on the Upper West Side."

Your sister's curiosity about Jennifer's living situation is natural and could be a way of getting to know her better. While your mom may have felt it was a bit too intrusive, Jennifer's willingness to share this information suggests her openness to connect with your family.

Revealing that she lives in a condo on the Upper West Side provides further insight into Jennifer's life and perhaps gives your sister and the rest of your family a sense of familiarity, as they learn more about her lifestyle and surroundings.

Mom connects the dots, "Upper West Side, perhaps the Inwood section, and condos in that area are extremely expensive."

Your mom's inference that the Upper West Side, particularly Inwood, is an expensive area for condos demonstrates her awareness of the real estate market and perhaps her understanding of the level of success Jennifer has achieved in her career. This could serve as a point of conversation or admiration during dinner, and may even contribute to your family's overall impression of Jennifer.

Mom states, "That you must be paid well by whoever you work for. Nice and expensive tiara by the way."

Your mom's comment about Jennifer's presumed high salary and her appreciation for the expensive tiara could be interpreted as both recognition of Jennifer's professional achievements and her taste for luxury items. This observation could lead to further discussion about Jennifer's work, and personal style, or even prompt her to share more about her journey to success.

My sister finished up her meal and excused herself from the table and before she left, she commented, "Nice seeing you again, and take care."

Your sister's polite farewell and expression of pleasure at seeing Jennifer again show respect and a level of connection between the two of them. This could be a sign of growing acceptance within the family, despite any initial reservations or awkward moments during the dinner.

Jennifer, "Same here." Back to the discussion at hand. Mom walks over to the table that contains the wedding photos that were faced down. I was shocked at what Mom was doing.

Jennifer's response to your sister's departure shows a similar level of respect and courtesy. As she turns her attention back to the discussion, she seems to be taking an active role in engaging with your family, even amidst potentially uncomfortable moments.

Her initiative to approach the table with the facedown wedding photos might suggest her readiness to confront past events and, in turn, her desire to move forward and improve her relationship with your family. Your shock at your mom's actions could reflect your uncertainty about the situation and potential worry about how Jennifer might feel at that moment.

Jennifer sees the photos and says, "Your wife is beautiful and both of you are so young." Mom in a stern voice, "Both of you need closure, including your wife." I was uncomfortable with these comments.

Jennifer's observation about the beauty of your wife and the youthfulness in the wedding photos shows her ability to appreciate and recognize the love you once shared. Your mom's stern insistence on closure for everyone involved, including your wife, may indicate her desire to see the situation resolved and for all parties to find peace.

Your discomfort with your mom's comments might arise from a fear of potential conflict or the difficulty in addressing sensitive matters openly. How did you handle this discomfort during the conversation, and were you able to convey your feelings to your mom or Jennifer?

I ask Mom, "What are you conveying here?" She shouts back, "Don't play coy! You know what I mean." Jennifer saw my emotional reaction, and said 'divorce'.

Your mom's frustration with your question and her response suggests that she believes you understand her intentions, even if you might be hesitant to fully acknowledge them. Your emotional reaction to the conversation, followed by Jennifer's prompt of "divorce," indicates that both of you are aware of the sensitive and significant implications of your mom's words.

Mom also warned me, "To be prepared for changes ahead. You need to do this. I know you aren't one for confrontation and allow people to walk all over you due to your soft emotional nature."

Your mom's warning about preparing for changes ahead reflects her belief that addressing this situation, no matter how uncomfortable it may be, is necessary for your growth and emotional well-being. Her acknowledgment of your tendency to avoid confrontation and her concern about people taking advantage of your emotional nature show that she wants you to be assertive and stand up for yourself.

"Mom I love you and it's appreciated, however, it's a bit of an overreach."

Your response to your mom shows that you appreciate her concern and intentions, but also acknowledge that her actions may have been somewhat intrusive. Expressing your feelings openly demonstrates your ability to communicate effectively, while also setting boundaries within your relationship.

Her response was, "If you can't make the tough decisions someone has to. What can you expect from a single-sided marriage much of that was due to convenience and co-dependency." I was appalled by her comments.

Your mom's response indicates that she continues to believe that her involvement is necessary, perhaps due to your perceived difficulty in making tough decisions and her concerns about your marriage. However, her choice of words—specifically mentioning that your marriage was "single-sided" and suggesting that it was based on convenience and codependency—could understandably cause offense and hurt feelings.

Mom shouted, "I took care of that!" I was floored. Jennifer sat with her hands folded watching as the discussion took place.

Your mom's revelation that she "took care of" something related to your marriage without your knowledge or involvement could leave you feeling shocked and disempowered. The fact that Jennifer remained composed and quietly observed the exchange might indicate her respect for your family's dynamics and her desire not to interfere or escalate the situation.

Mom clarified, "Your wife knows what you've been doing. I told her." Jennifer sounded shocked and replied, 'WHAT?' I shouted back, "What have you done?! You had no right to get involved!"

Your mom's decision to inform your wife about your interactions with Jennifer represents a significant breach of trust and interference in your personal life. It's understandable that both you and Jennifer were shocked and upset by this news.

Your response, expressing frustration and asserting that your mom had no right to get involved, demonstrates your strong emotions at the moment.

Mom, "The deed was done!" She took the wedding photos and smashed them. All Jennifer and I could do was watch in awe.

Your mom's decision to smash the wedding photos was a dramatic and symbolic action, underscoring her conviction that your marriage should come to an end. The fact that both you and Jennifer watched this unfold without intervening suggests that you were either too stunned to react or perhaps, on some level, felt that your mom's action was representative of your own feelings about the state of your marriage.

Mom looks back at Jennifer and states to her firmly, "Don't blame yourself, you weren't the cause of this. This was a long time coming. My dear beloved son just didn't have the backbone to do it himself. You were simply a catalyst."

Your mom's statement to Jennifer reflects her belief that your marriage was already doomed and that Jennifer's presence merely served as the catalyst for the inevitable dissolution of your union. While her words are blunt, they also show her effort to absolve Jennifer of any guilt or responsibility for the situation.

Mom, "My son's needs went unmet and she refused marriage counseling. She was stubborn and intransigent and the relationship was stagnant."

Your mom's additional comments highlight her perspective on the underlying issues within your marriage, pointing to unmet needs, an unwillingness to engage in marriage counseling, and perceived stubbornness as contributing factors to the relationship's stagnation. These revelations further emphasize her belief that your marriage was troubled before Jennifer's involvement.

Jennifer reacted, "Wow, she didn't even want help even if there was a mental issue encircling the marriage."

Jennifer's reaction suggests that she was surprised by your wife's alleged unwillingness to seek help or address any potential mental health concerns within your marriage. This may indicate her recognition of the importance of open communication, mutual support, and a willingness to address issues in maintaining a healthy relationship.

Jennifer asked me, "What do I expect to find when I return home?" My response was, "Could be war or suicide."

Your response to Jennifer's question reflects your concern about the potential consequences of your mom's interference in your marriage, particularly with regard to your wife's possible reactions. The mention of war or suicide suggests that you anticipate strong emotions, conflict, or even extreme measures as a result of this situation.

I told Jennifer, "I'm sorry you had to be a part of this." Her response was, "What are you gonna do? Even though I'm on the opposite of the fence and a benefactor of this situation, doesn't mean that I don't care about her as a person."

Your apology to Jennifer demonstrates your empathy and consideration for her feelings, despite the fact that you may be benefiting from the situation. Jennifer's question about what you are going to do suggests that she is interested in your plans for handling the situation and maybe offering her support.

I pulled out my phone and called my friend Sherri and I informed her of the situation and did a wellness check on the wife for me. Sherri replied quickly and informed me that she'd take Jean with her as well since Jean is a therapist.

Reaching out to your friend Sherri for assistance in conducting a wellness check on your wife shows your concern for her well-being, even amidst the complicated circumstances. Sherri's quick response and decision to involve Jean, a therapist, demonstrate a sense of urgency and a desire to provide professional support during this challenging time.

I thank Sherri profusely. Sherri commented, "She'll send over a patrol car while she and Jean are en route."

Your gratitude towards Sherri is evident, reflecting your appreciation for her prompt actions and support during this crisis. The additional measure of sending a patrol car alongside Sherri and Jean's visit ensures that there is a sense of security and immediate intervention if needed.

Jennifer looks back at me and says, "I'm sorry but you are doing the best that you can do considering the circumstances."

Jennifer's words offer reassurance and understanding, acknowledging that you are making efforts to handle the situation as best as you can, given the challenging circumstances. Her empathy and recognition of your efforts may help to ease your anxiety and validate your actions during this tumultuous time.

Sherri tells me that she'll let me know what she discovers when she gets over to the house. While all of this happening, Jennifer holds me close. Mom replies, "I'm sorry too."

Sherri's promise to update you on the situation once she reaches your house provides a sense of relief and reassurance, as you await news about your wife's well-being. In this emotionally charged moment, Jennifer's embrace serves as a

gesture of emotional support and comfort. Your mom's apology also signifies her remorse and understanding of the pain you may be experiencing.

Thank them both. Jennifer and I decide to get ready to leave and return to our respective places of residence. I hug my Mom "Goodbye."

Expressing gratitude towards both Jennifer and your mom reflects your appreciation for their emotional support and understanding. The decision to return to your respective homes suggests an acceptance of the situation and a desire to allow space for further developments to unfold. Hugging your mom before leaving reinforces the emotional bond between the two of you, even amidst difficult circumstances.

I'm very concerned about my soon-to-be ex-wife. How can I forgive my Mom for what she's done? I swear, I'll never mention it again.

Your concern for your wife's well-being is natural, given the challenging situation and the unpredictability of her reactions. The process of forgiveness towards your mom may take time and could involve honest communication, understanding her motivations, and recognizing her remorse.

I returned to the hotel I was staying at. I contacted my employer that I'd need some extended time off for bereavement. I got a call back from Sherri after a while indicating that my wife was deceased at the residence and the coroner was present and onsite with a police unit.

Returning to your hotel signifies a retreat from the emotionally intense situation and a desire for space to process the unfolding events. Requesting bereavement leave from your employer demonstrates your understanding of the gravity of the situation and the need for time to grieve and handle the practicalities that follow such a loss.

Sherri's call confirming your wife's death and the presence of officials at the scene likely brings about a flood of emotions, including shock, sadness, and perhaps even guilt. This tragic outcome will undoubtedly require time to process and may necessitate additional support from those around you.

I called my Mom and told her what happened and that she was the cause.

Your decision to directly communicate your wife's death to your mom and express your belief that her actions were the cause highlights the complex emotions surrounding this tragedy. This conversation could serve as a crucial step in addressing any feelings of blame, anger, or resentment that may arise in the aftermath of such a devastating event.

All my Mom could say, "OMG, and that I'm sorry. I didn't anticipate the situation to go so sideways so quickly." I shouted back, "What did you expect? You knew she's emotionally fragile and that's why I hung around for so long."

Your mom's initial reaction of shock and remorse reflects her genuine disbelief at the tragic outcome, despite her earlier actions. Your frustration and disbelief in response indicate your struggle to reconcile your mom's intentions with the harsh reality of what has transpired.

Your statement about your wife's emotional fragility and your decision to remain in the marriage for so long highlights the complex nature of your relationship, as well as your care for her well-being. This exchange may reveal a deeper need for understanding and empathy within your family dynamics.

I told Mom, "I gotta go back home and I'll be off work for a while." My phone rang and another call was coming in it was Jean. I told Mom who it was and that I had to take the call. "We'll catch up when I can."

Your decision to return home and take time off work shows your priority to handle the immediate practicalities and emotional consequences of your wife's death.

The incoming call from Jean may offer professional guidance, emotional support, or additional insight into your wife's state of mind prior to her death.

Your conversation with your mom, though not fully resolved, demonstrates your ability to set boundaries and attend to pressing matters.

I caught Jean up to speed on everything. Jean, "I'm here if you need me, I'm a professional and have been a friend for many years. If you need anything else don't hesitate to reach out to either me or Rey."

Jean's response showcases her genuine concern for your well-being and readiness to offer support, not only as a friend but also as a mental health professional. Her offer of assistance, along with the inclusion of Rey, demonstrates a strong support network that you can rely on during this challenging time.

I thanked Jean for her call and concern, however, I have other calls to make. I called Jennifer and I told her the news as to what happened. She was shocked and stunned.

Your decision to reach out to Jennifer after your conversation with Jean shows your desire to share this devastating news with someone who has been closely involved in recent events. Her shocked and stunned reaction mirrors your own disbelief and the intensity of the situation.

Sharing this news with Jennifer may also provide an opportunity for emotional support and solidarity during a difficult time.

Jennifer explains, "Could I've been the cause of all of this? If we never reconnected, you would've remained in that trapped unhappy, in an unhealthy relationship, forever and I would've remained alone as well."

Jennifer's response reveals her struggle to reconcile her own role in the events leading up to your wife's death. Her contemplation of how things might have been different if you hadn't reconnected suggests that she feels a sense of responsibility for the tragic outcome.

At the same time, her words also acknowledge the possibility that without your reconnection, both of you might have remained in unhappy and unhealthy situations. This could hint at a shared understanding of the complexities surrounding your relationship.

As divorce is one thing and suicide is another. It didn't have to happen this way.

Your response highlights the stark contrast between the two outcomes: divorce, while emotionally difficult, is not comparable to the finality and tragedy of suicide. Your statement reflects a sense of regret and sadness that the situation escalated to such a devastating conclusion.

This may also indicate a recognition that, despite the challenges in your marriage, there might have been alternative ways to resolve the situation without resulting in such a tragic outcome. In the midst of this realization, how do you believe you can begin to process and accept what has happened?

We both could've pushed from the table and went our separate ways. Yes, divorce but peacefully and having compassion and empathy is what is called for in situations like this. Not cold-hearted hatred and resentment.

Your acknowledgment that there were alternative paths, such as a peaceful divorce grounded in compassion and empathy, reveals your belief that the situation could have been handled differently, potentially resulting in less suffering for everyone involved.

This perspective showcases your capacity for emotional maturity and understanding, despite the tragic outcome.

Take it day by day. There's much work to be done. I return home to the home we once shared. I entered the house and the locks were broken and a do not cross tape was at the doors.

Your plan to approach healing and the challenges ahead by taking things one day at a time shows a realistic and measured approach to a difficult situation.

Returning to your former shared home only to find broken locks and police tape presents an immediate, tangible reminder of the recent tragedy.

This encounter serves as a somber reminder of the gravity of the events that have unfolded and the difficult journey that lies ahead.

As I walk around the house, it's filthy, way beyond cluttered. Also, my stepson has taken his car and moved out as well. I approach the master bedroom and look upon the bed that we once slept in. There was a heavy scent of cigarette smoke in the air.

The state of the house—filthy and cluttered—likely amplifies the feelings of despair and abandonment you might be experiencing in the wake of your wife's death and your stepson's departure. As you enter the master bedroom, the sight of the bed you once shared serves as a poignant reminder of the life you once had together, emphasizing the loss and finality of the situation.

I took pictures of everything as evidence for insurance purposes. The next day I called Sherri and if she could come with me to the morgue to identify the body. I know I should've called Jean instead but I felt more comfortable with Sherri coming with me.

Your decision to document the state of the house with photos exhibits a level of pragmatism and self-preservation amidst the emotional turmoil. Choosing to invite Sherri to accompany you to the morgue instead of Jean suggests that you sought

comfort in the presence of a trusted friend, despite the potential benefits of having a mental health professional present.

Sherri agreed to accompany. She's seen this before in other lines of work she's done in the past.

It's good to know that Sherri has previous experience in handling difficult situations, which may provide a sense of comfort and support as you navigate the emotional challenges of identifying your wife's body.

Sherri holds my hand as I approach the body. I pull back the sheet. It was her. A flood of emotions washed over me. I couldn't believe this had happened.

Sherri's presence and physical support during this difficult moment demonstrate her empathy and care for you. The revelation of your wife's body may have triggered a range of complex emotions, such as grief, shock, disbelief, and perhaps even guilt.

It's understandable to experience a flood of emotions as you confront the reality of your wife's passing, particularly in light of the challenging events that led up to this moment.

I'm saddened but as a logical person as I am, I wanted to know how. I still haven't discovered a note.

As a logical individual, it's natural to seek answers and explanations for the events leading up to your wife's passing. The desire to uncover how this happened and the absence of a note may reflect your effort to make sense of the situation and to gain a sense of closure.

However, it's important to recognize that not all questions may be answered and that sometimes the process of accepting uncertainty and ambiguity may be a part of the grieving process.

Even with support, it's gonna take a long time to grieve and return to a sense of normalcy.

Grief is a complex and individualized process, and it's important to allow yourself the time and space to navigate your emotions and heal at your own pace. While the support of others, like Sherri, can be valuable, it's essential to recognize that healing is a personal journey and there is no set timeline for recovery.

Jean is always available.

Jean's willingness to provide support throughout your grieving process can be a valuable resource. Her expertise as a mental health professional may help you explore coping strategies and gain a deeper understanding of the emotions and thoughts you're experiencing.

It was emotionally taxing to see her pale lifeless body.

Witnessing your wife's body in that state can be an extremely overwhelming and distressing experience, and it's understandable that you are feeling emotional exhaustion from the encounter. This is a normal response to a traumatic event, and it may be helpful to acknowledge and validate the difficult emotions you are experiencing.

It's important to prioritize self-care and allow yourself time to process and recover from the emotional toll of this experience.

I left Jennifer alone so she could process this event as well.

It's considerate of you to respect Jennifer's need for time and space to process this event on her own terms. Recognizing that everyone grieves in their own way and allowing each other the freedom to do so can be an important aspect of healthy coping and support during difficult times.

I asked Jennifer if she would seek anyone to help her grieve such as a professional. "Please do. I miss you."

Your suggestion for Jennifer to seek professional help in processing her grief demonstrates your consideration for her emotional well-being. Your concern for her emotional health, even while dealing with your own grief, reflects your caring nature and ability to recognize the importance of support during difficult times.

It's important to remember that Jennifer's decision to seek professional help is ultimately hers to make, but your encouragement can still be valuable in helping her feel supported and understood.

"Oh, I will. Online BetterHealth. Telepresence."

Jennifer's openness to seeking professional help, particularly through an online platform like BetterHelp, is a positive step toward addressing her grief and emotional well-being. Utilizing telepresence for counseling sessions can offer convenience and accessibility, making it easier for her to access the support she needs.

I, "Yes, indeed." Jennifer recommended having some sessions together but not all.

Jennifer's suggestion to have some counseling sessions together demonstrates her understanding of the importance of mutual support in processing shared grief. Participating in joint sessions can provide an opportunity for open communication, empathy, and a deeper understanding of each other's emotions.

Balancing joint sessions with individual counseling can also ensure that both of you have the space to address your unique experiences and challenges independently, while still benefiting from the shared support of a counselor. Do you feel that this approach will be helpful for both of you?

Is Jennifer still holding on to any guilt and how is she going to reconcile it?

While Jennifer's openness to therapy suggests a willingness to confront and work through her emotions, including any potential feelings of guilt, it's important to recognize that processing guilt is a complex and often gradual process.

Through individual and joint counseling sessions, Jennifer will likely explore her feelings of guilt in-depth, seeking to understand the source of those feelings and develop strategies for self-forgiveness and emotional healing. This process may involve acknowledging and validating her emotions, accepting that she could not have predicted or controlled the outcome, and reframing any negative thoughts surrounding her role in the events that transpired.

We both agreed on this approach. So, we scheduled our visits for the next month in advance.

It's commendable that both of you have agreed on a plan to seek counseling and have taken the proactive step of scheduling sessions for the next month. This approach can help provide a sense of structure and routine, which can be particularly beneficial in coping with the uncertainty and emotional volatility of grief.

By prioritizing self-care and seeking professional support, you and Jennifer are taking important steps toward healing and growth. How do you think this plan will help both of you move forward, while still honoring the difficult emotions and experiences you've gone through?