



#1 - What the teacher knows:

I'm Mrs. Harris. I have taught at this school for the past 30 years. Being in a smaller school, I have known Joshua Jr (JJ) since kindergarten and I knew his parents when they were students at the school. I remember JJ's mother and father when they were his age. JJ's father was athletic and so was JJ's mother. Both parents were successful students and very popular with their peers. JJ had always been a respectful, caring and responsible student until he returned to school this year. I noticed that JJ had changed. He was very quiet and withdrawn. It was almost as if he was in his own world. I asked JJ on several occasions how he was feeling and asked questions about his weekend. His typical response "everything is good." I have been telling myself that he's 9 years old. It's probably hormonal.

#4 - What the officer knows:

I'm Officer Daniels and I received a call about a disruptive student at the elementary school. When I arrived, Joshua, Jr. (JJ), was exhibiting aggressive behaviors. JJ was throwing chairs, books and flipping tables. I approached JJ and said, "Hey buddy, what's going on"? JJ yelled, "I'm not your f**king buddy" and charged at me. I handcuffed JJ. I was surprised by JJ's strength for only being 9 years old. JJ began to cry and said, "It's all your fault!" While I was gathering witness statements and information, I recognized JJ's name. About 1 1/2 weeks earlier, I had arrested a Joshua A. Stevens Sr. for OWI with a controlled substance, resisting arrest, and assaulting an officer. Joshua Sr. became enraged because he argued that I could not arrest someone for an OWI when I only pulled them over for a burnt-out headlight.

#7 - What the father (Joshua Sr.) knows:

Adult life has been great for me. I had a great job, wife, son and home. Our family enjoyed being together and we lived an active lifestyle. I felt lucky having a wife like Sadie. I never had this growing up. My father was an unemployed, alcoholic and my mother had to work overtime to support the family. Late night fights were the norm in my home. Usually the fights were about money. One evening there was a loud crash in the living room and I stayed in my room too afraid to come out. The next morning, I discovered that my father had left after my mother threatened to call the police. I was 10 years old. I remember having mixed emotions when my father left. Happy that the fights had ended, yet, fearful that my father would not be able to care for himself. I loved my father but did not respect him. My father died when I was 12. Some say my father died from a broken heart from losing his family. My father was found dead in January, in an abandoned car with an empty bottle of whiskey by his side. I never told anyone about the pain I felt from the loss of my father. I often thought that if my mother would have been more supportive of my father, instead of nagging about the bills, my father would still be alive today.

5 - What the mother (Sadie) knows:

I'm Sadie, Joshua Sr.'s wife and JJ's mom. I grew up with my husband Josh, Sr. We met in 3rd grade. Josh, Sr. was always very competitive. I had grown up with 2 brothers and I am quite competitive too. I always felt that Josh, Sr. was my driving force. Having Josh, Sr. as my husband, made me feel invincible. Together, the two of us could conquer anything. Josh, Sr. was always a positive thinker and found the positive in all situations. We were married at age 20 and had our son within 1 year. We had a very happy family. We did everything together. Josh, Sr., was the football and baseball coach; and I was the statistician for our son's teams. "Always working together in partnership" was our motto. Josh, Sr. had a great future with his company. He was moving quickly up the ladder of leadership. People were drawn to Josh, Sr. because of his problem-solving abilities and bright outlook on life. One day while driving to work, Josh, Sr. got in an accident which altered his life. He was in constant pain and unable to work. He lost his job and his ability to care for the family. I was working part time and was offered a full-time position with overtime. I accepted all the extra hours I could work to pay for our monthly bills. I noticed that the more I worked, the angrier Josh, Sr. became. One day, I came home early with Josh, Jr. (JJ) because he had gotten suspended from school. I had never seen my husband become so angry. He yelled at JJ and told him that he would not tolerate his son being disrespectful to teachers and that if it happened again he would beat the hell out of his son. Josh, Sr. had never spoken this way to JJ before. Josh, Sr. was taking more medication every day and I asked him if he thought he was becoming addicted to the meds. Josh, Sr. blew up "You're such a bitch. You don't know how bad the pain is and how much I'm suffering, so why don't you shut your f**king mouth!" Josh, Sr. clinched his fist and I thought he was going to hit me. JJ tried to protect me. I couldn't believe that my husband hurt JJ. I felt relieved when Josh, Sr. quickly got into our van and drove away. Later I received a call from the police department stating that my husband had been arrested for an OWI. This was the last straw - I knew that my husband had to leave and get help. That night I packed his bags and have not seen him since.

I found comfort at school from my teachers, coaches, and peers. I excelled in academics and in sports. My mother rarely came to my games because she was working to support the family. I made a promise to myself that when I got married and had children, my wife would not have to work to support the family because that would be my responsibility.

About a year ago, I was involved in a single vehicle crash. I avoided a head on collision and hit a tree. I had suffered significant injuries to my legs. X-rays showed no broken bones and doctors could not find anything physically wrong with me. I received physical therapy for several months and was told by a neurologist that I had sustained nerve damage. Pain meds were prescribed for management of my pain. I became addicted to the pain pills. I lost my job and became very angry. I found myself arguing with Sadie and unleashing my anger upon her and our son JJ. I knew that I was verbally aggressive when we fought. Sadie came home from work early one day with JJ because JJ had been suspended from school. I was outraged by the fact that my son had been disrespectful to his teacher. The argument got out of control and I became so angry that I almost hit Sadie. JJ came to the rescue of his mother and I threw JJ into the wall, injuring him. I couldn't believe what I had done. I never wanted to hurt my son. I ran out of the house; upset with myself. I was pulled over by a policeman for a missing headlight. I don't remember much about that evening because I popped several more pills after leaving the house because of my pain. After my arrest and because of my behavior, Sadie felt that it would be best for me to move out of our home.

#3 - What Joshua Jr. knows:

I'm Joshua, Jr. My family and friends call me JJ. My family life was great until the past year. My dad was injured in an auto crash and can no longer coach my football and baseball teams. My dad has shown little interest in me and appears to be angry all the time. My dad has been critical of everything I do. I try to help my mom and dad, but my dad never feels that it's "good enough". My dad and mom never used to argue, but over the past few months all they do is fight. The other night I heard my dad become extremely angry and I was afraid that mom was going to get hurt. I ran into the room to protect her and my dad threw me against the wall. I remember feeling the pain in my head and my back. I remember hearing the door slam. I went to the window and saw my dad driving away in the van. Later that night the phone rang, and my mom came into my room and told me that we needed to go to the police station. My dad had been arrested by the police. My dad was angry with the policeman for arresting him because the policeman only pulled him over for a headlight violation. I've never heard my dad speak this way about anyone, especially the police. I couldn't understand why the policeman would do such a terrible thing to my dad. When I woke up the next morning, my mom told me that my dad was no longer going to live with us. I asked "is it was because dad got arrested?" My mom said, "Yes, I can't have a man like that living with us"! I made a promise to myself to never like police officers again because they ruined my family.

#2 - What the Principal knows:

I'm the school principal. JJ is a bright boy. I'm aware that the family has been under stress since JJ's father was in a car accident. JJ's mother appears tired and preoccupied when she is at school. Up until last year, Sadie was a wonderful parent volunteer at the school. She was very active in the parents' group. I heard rumors that the father was not doing well since the accident and that he was on some heavy pain medication. I feared that something was happening at home that was affecting JJ's behavior at school.

#6 - What Social Services knows:

I'm a social worker. A call was received regarding child abuse. The report was filed by Sadie Stevens. Sadie reported that her husband had become physically aggressive with their son, throwing their son into the wall approximately 1 1/2 weeks ago. Sadie said that friends and family encouraged her to report this to social services. She didn't want her husband getting into trouble, she only wanted to get him help. Her husband is not living in the home and does not have any contact with her or their son. Social services referred this complaint to the local police department for investigation.