

Celia, I hope that this helps us get more done on Wednesday by getting a lot of my side of the history out of the way in advance... Obviously, this is not everything that happened in 6 years, just some of what I see as having been our main problems.

When I first met Jon, I was very impressed by how intelligent he was. And even though he didn't always succeed in the things he tried to do to impress me, I appreciated how hard he tried. And I enjoyed his spontaneity. Our first dates were amazing. We talked and connected in a way I had never really ever connected with anybody before. We made love on our second date, which was a little fast for me but it felt right at the time.

I want to comment here that our lovemaking on the second date was, from my perspective, instigated by Barb and didn't feel right for me although at the same time, I was obviously not disappointed or turning her down (having come from a situation where I hadn't had sex in almost two years at that point, not to mention the limited sexual contact I had with my first spouse for many years before that). Barb had invited me in to her apartment the previous night on our first date after we had kissed pretty passionately at her door and I declined, saying that I thought it would be better if I left.

I called her the next morning and she seemed surprised (and pleased) that I actually called her back (by that time I was already pretty head over heels for her) and I invited her to go see Sweeney Todd. It had to be a road trip (there were no places it was playing and we chose Santa Maria). While we were driving up, she totally surprised me by stating that she had herpes, was taking medication (I later learned it to be Valtrex) and that she didn't like using condoms so she had to tell me because there was some "small" risk (although herpes is not deadly or terribly dangerous in any real sense). I was very much surprised by this disclosure because I hadn't even contemplated the idea of having sex that quickly and I have never quite understood WHY we did that so quickly except that it seemed very much that she wanted to do so and given my situation, I wasn't really thinking about saying no. It certainly, to the best of my clarity and recollection, wasn't because I forced the issue or pushed at all. In fact, I quite clearly remembering offering to take two rooms at the motel where we stayed in Santa Maria, and Barb refusing that offer ("that's silly!") and also offering to get two double beds, which indeed we did get although one of the beds ended up empty that night.

After that first weekend together, he flew home to Northern Ca and I wasn't sure he would call again. But he did, and I was glad.

Me too which is why I called. I was already feeling very strongly towards her, probably already "in love" in some sense. Certainly I had enjoyed our time together, not just the sexual part, but also the fact that she truly seemed to want to be with me and enjoyed the specialness of much of what we did. And that is indeed what she always told me until much later when I learned that some of that had been insincere.

I quickly ended my casual dating relationships I was in so I could be monogamous with Jon.

Barb never mentioned that she had any casual dating relationships when I met her. She always told me that she wasn't seeing anyone at the time. She told me about her previous boyfriend, the surfer who infected her with herpes, and how that had been awful (her trip to Hawaii was a disaster). She did mention a few other boyfriends (Steve and Billy and an older guy whose name eludes me now) however these boyfriends were always mentioned, even at the outset, as being much in the past. Much later on, when we had therapy in Raleigh, she acknowledged that she and Steve (a previous Japanese boyfriend) had still been dating when we met, but at the time, I didn't know anything about it. I have never asked the obvious question – did Barb have sex with anyone else between the time we first slept together and when she ended these "casual" dating relationships. I didn't ask then (and I don't ask now) because I didn't think (and don't think) it was relevant or important.

I was crushed when I found out later that Jon had not done the same. He was even communicating with women on dating sites and he went to at least one bisexual party where he participated in sex acts.

This is, to say the least, a somewhat confused discussion of what happened as I recall disclosing it and what I have acknowledged. I did not have any contact with any people on dating sites after I met Barb. I had contact with one woman (the emails referred to below) who I had contacted BEFORE Barb and I had even met and had set up a date for when I was going to be in Arkansas on business (the woman lived in Tulsa, OK, which is relatively close to Bentonville and where I was flying home from after my business trip). I had completely forgotten about the date arrangement until a few days before my trip when she emailed me and asked me if we were still going to meet for dinner.

This happened just after another (one of many) rocky phone calls Barb and I had during our early relationship where she questioned me about where I was and what I was doing as if she didn't trust me, or if I didn't call her precisely when she expected it, or if I didn't pick up my phone because I was busy doing something else. I honestly recall being a little resentful about her control issues (which is funny because she has always accused me of being the controlling one in our relationship, yet I have always seen it quite the other way). I figured "what the hell, its only dinner" and so I agreed to go.

Despite Barb's continued fears about this, there is nothing else that happened, as I have always told her since she found out. She found out about it when we were cleaning my apartment before our move to Scotts Valley and well after we had been married (almost a year). When she found the email which contained the directions I used to meet the woman for dinner and which I had apparently left in a box after the trip, I acknowledged honestly what had happened. However, she got very very angry with me, refused to believe my explanation and spent many days being furious about it. I finally told her that she had to make a decision. If she needed to leave me over this incident, I knew I would be very sad, but it was up to her, and she should leave soon because I had pretty much had enough of the hostility over the incident which had, at that point, happened almost 2 years before that. I knew I had breached a trust and was resigned to accept her decision to leave but she finally said she forgave me and wanted to try to put it behind us. However, as with many of the issues talked about in this history, Barb never really forgave anything.

The bisexual party thing was revealed during our therapy in Raleigh. It was a single event, and there was a single act, not acts (one "experimental" blow-job from a man who was part of a couple that I had been talking to at the party), and it lasted all of maybe 5 minutes. I went to the party with a gay friend of mine from work, and we had gone before several times but I hadn't engaged in any sexual activity, it was more just a voyeuristic thing for me, kind of like live porn.

I remember deciding to go to that party with my friend because, again, something had happened that week between us. This was about the fourth or fifth week of our dating, and we had been together three weekends, two in Los Angeles, one in San Francisco, plus one day that we met at Hearst Castle to take her kids to see it (and they met me for the first time. I don't recall precisely what happened, but I know we had a pretty big verbal fight

on the phone and then when Jerry called me up to see if I wanted to go to the party, I said sure, why not. And again, I felt somewhat guilty for not telling Barb, but at that time, I wasn't thinking of us as strictly monogamous, although later Barb said she felt that we had made a commitment to each other very quickly. So there was obviously miscommunication about that. I had even told Barb about that party when we had talked about swinging, and ultimately, later on, Barb asked me to take her to that party and she appeared to enjoy it. When we went, we met up with a friend, Joanne and her boyfriend at the time, who we had met at another party and that night I thought we had a pretty good time. In fact it was good enough that Barb actually, on her own, planned a later get-together on my birthday with Joanne, but it fell through for some reason (or so she told me at that time). I was very hurt when I found copies of the emails that Jon had exchanged with a woman in Texas (or somewhere) where he had arranged to meet her while on a business trip. This was after I thought we had agreed we were exclusive. He claims that nothing happened. Even if it didn't, the night he met up with her he called me and told me that he was going to bed early and that he loved me. Then he went out to try and hook up. I don't think I have ever really gotten over that.

I have always acknowledged this as a terrible mistake I made and one I regretted. But again, I had told Barb at that time that we all make mistakes (I had already forgiven her for many she had made), and that we both needed to show forgiveness when these things happen. Barb's own words above are one of the things that have clearly rung out over all these years: she rarely gets over much of anything that she feels is done "to" her. I believe, on the other hand, that I have always shown an incredible capacity for forgiveness and a willingness to accept mistakes as something human and not generally intended to be mean or hurtful to another. And even when something hurtful is done intentionally or at least willfully, I still think we need to be able to work through it, understand it and then move on, something that has rarely happened in our marriage.

So in a way, he cheated on me long before I cheated on him. His defense was that we weren't married yet - true - but my feelings of betrayal were (are) pretty deep. <but no excuse for my actions>

This comment, which Barb made to me in Raleigh and then told "everyone", is one that I have always had real trouble with. (I am sorry, that was a slightly sarcastic comment, and I apologize, but it was intended to point out that where Barb has accused me repeatedly of talking about what

she has done, she has pointedly refused to acknowledge that even before I ever did any of that, she had already spread her own stories about me to others, including Rick and his children.) In any case, I see this as so different from what Barb did (as did our therapist in Raleigh) that it needs to be addressed.

At the time of my “cheating”, we were at week five (or so) of a budding relationship. We had been together probably 7 total days (at most, maybe one or two more). We had slept together many hours because we both had great enthusiasm for sex when we were together, especially early in our relationship (I recall a number of mornings when we would fall asleep for an hour or so and then wake up and do it again, repeatedly). We had gone out to some shows, had a number of nice dinners (and one where she got food poisoning), and yes, I was in love with her I think at that point, but I was also fairly leery of some of the communication issues that kept coming up. I (maybe incorrectly, but certainly sincerely) didn’t see us as strictly monogamous at that point, although in retrospect I see that as a mistake in my understanding. But to say that one dinner with another woman and one experimental blow-job from a man at a sex party constitutes “cheating” in any real sense seems totally out of proportion.

I contrast that to the actual “cheating” that went on for almost four months before I found out in 2008. Rick and Barbara carried on an ongoing affair that started in January and continued through April before I found out. The affair was carried on after Barb and I had been married for more than 4 years. It was carried on straight through our 4<sup>th</sup> public anniversary. It was carried on between my spouse (not girlfriend) and one of my best friends. It was carried on in secret for an extended period of time and when I came to realize that something wrong was going on, I was repeatedly lied to, called a stalker for trying to find out, and told that I was crazy for suspecting this. Yet, despite all of the above, I was (and repeatedly have) forgiven Barb, and would put this incident behind us in a second if it would permit us to resume our life (admittedly with a lot of changes). Because despite all of it, I still feel that things like this will happen to imperfect people and need to be forgiven. It amazes me that two isolated incidents that happened over six years ago are still being contrasted with something that happened repeatedly less than a year ago. If Barb feels betrayed that deeply by what I did that long ago and at that time in our relationship, I don’t understand how she can’t understand my feelings and reactions to her betrayal?

I think it was difficult to really get to know each other while dating long distance. For example, I never realized just how bad Jon's clutter/hoarding problem was before we were married, because he was always able to clean up before I came to visit. I like to keep things neat, and it has been stressful for me trying to live with all the mess everywhere. And when Jon would promise to clean up and then find an excuse not to, I felt that he didn't care how his mess affected me.

This is an area that I don't strongly disagree with Barb's assessment. It has always been a problem for me, and I may need to do more to adjust for it. However, to be fair to myself, Barb always apparently seemed to be okay with this. She even used to say I was "cute". She didn't ever bring this issue up during our initial therapy as a major problem and at the time, I don't think she felt it was. I do think she understood it better than she says before we got married. We spent many weekends at the Scotts Valley house before we moved in together, and my garage and room was, even then, filled with my clutter and she knew that. In fact, it was one of Nancy's major complaints about me, too. At the time, because she never mentioned it except as a passing jest, I thought she was okay with it. But if this issue is as big as she makes it, it is something I have always been willing to work on.

I also didn't understand the extent of Jon's need/desire for porn was until I lived with him. I have had a difficult time dealing with the jealousy issues I had with that. I understood why a single man would need porn, but I felt that his use of it so much when I was there meant that he was choosing it over me.

I have slightly different feelings here. At least at the beginning, Barb used to say she thought it was cool that I enjoyed porn. We used to incorporate into our lovemaking, reading things to each other, and we liked to browse the shops looking at some of the books (at least I used to THINK we "liked to browse" because whenever we did it, she always appeared to be enthusiastic.) Also, until we moved in together, I was still alone for more than 70% of the week, as she continued to live in LA M-F with her kids and we were only together on weekends. That lasted for two full years (we met in August 2002 and we moved in to Scotts Valley in August 2004.) During that time, she knew I looked at porn when she was gone, and never said anything against it. She never said I had to give it up when we moved in together. I honestly have no idea how I would have taken such a demand.

It certainly didn't mean I was choosing it over Barb. That just wasn't ever true, at least not for me.

The first time I can remember Jon hurting me (not physically - just hurt feelings) was a little while after we started dating. He had given me a couple of very nice gifts (like a DVD player for my TV) that I had not asked for. I was visiting his office at Walmart.com and he pointed out a mini portable DVD player like you could take onto an airplane to watch movies. I had never seen one and I thought it was really cute and told him so. Jon's response was "I'm not going to buy you one". I was not asking for one, I just thought it was cute. That really bothered me.

I remember this incident somewhat and it is likely pretty accurate. I do remember coming at a time when things were particularly financially sensitive and I never felt Barb had a lot of control over what she wanted vs. what she (or we) could afford. But it is a fair criticism that I should have been more diplomatic. But I did apologize when she got upset at my reaction, and again, I am surprised that incidents like this come up as things that can't be moved past.

On the other side of the coin, I started, at about this time, getting very sensitive to the fact that I couldn't say no to her about almost anything without engendering a major argument. This would become an even more common theme with respect to the kids after we moved in together. So much so that I would simply say yes to almost anything just to "buy" peace in the household. Except that would put us into greater debt and in the end, you have to "pay the piper somehow".

Jon & I had a "secret" wedding so he could put me on his health insurance. I appreciated that, but it was difficult being married and not being able to tell anyone. It was fun, though, having the "official" wedding and having it be our secret that it wasn't the real one.

The health insurance issue was something that came up because Barb always had a resistance to being willing to do things that she considered "beneath her station" such as dealing with people in low-cost health clinics. She had been getting her Valtrex from a clinic for a very low cost (or maybe free) and then the program stopped and the cost shot way up unless she was willing to suffer some small indignities in trying to get back on the program. She went in once and then called me saying she hated all of the people in the clinic and she wasn't going back. I felt that since our financial situation (we were paying for THREE houses, the SF apartment I rented, her apartment in Canyon Country and the house in Scotts Valley) wasn't



great, and she wasn't working, this would be a small sacrifice to make for us.

But she refused. So I suggested that maybe we should get married right away so that she could get on the health insurance at Walmart.com. Also, getting married before the end of the 2003 tax year would give us a big tax break. I didn't propose a secret wedding, but she didn't want to tell anyone unless we could do a "real" wedding and we weren't financially or logistically able to work it out before the end of 2003, so we decided on the "two wedding" scenario, the first in October which was a private "elopement" and the second in February in Santa Barbara where we would invite the families.

As for the difficulties, yes, it was difficult, but I didn't know what else to do. We needed to be married, yet we couldn't afford the "big family wedding" before February. So I figured that was the sacrifice we both would make so that we could remain solvent and still get her the medical coverage she so desperately needed. I don't see why this is a bad thing... I considered it one of the really nice things I did for her (and us) in our relationship. Sigh. Besides, I really DID want to get married to her.

I have always been bothered by the way Jon asked me to marry him though. He can be so romantic and thoughtful sometimes, and I had hoped/expected that if/when he did propose it would be special. Instead, on Christmas day he asked me if I wanted to get married while we were lying in bed after having sex most of the day.

Sigh again. This isn't precisely the way I remember it. We made love most of the day, at least that is how I saw it. We were cooped up in an apartment I shared with a roommate who was a worse housekeeper than me (right? ☺) if that is even possible. She let her cats poop and pee all over the house and it was disgusting. So we stayed in my bedroom the entire time except to go to the kitchen for dinner, and finally we got the hell out of there and spent the rest of the vacation travelling (to LA and back).

I had given him a very personal, thought-out gift that morning, and he had given me a coffee maker. To this day, I wonder if he asked me then because he felt bad about not getting me a nicer gift. He had no ring, we stopped the next day and bought a small ring at a store that was going out of business so it was on sale. I have always suspected that he had not really meant to ask me then.

Sigh again. Barb had given me a wonderful gift and I loved it. It was a jacket for our production of Tomfoolery. I was floored. She is right, I hadn't



given her anything nearly as nice. But that isn't why I asked her to marry me. I had been planning that all week. It is surprising to me that she brings up the disparity in gifts. I am not always that creative and I thought that the coffee maker (which she said she loved) was special, but now I see she didn't feel that way. I explained to her why I hadn't bought a ring in advance. We didn't have a lot of money (most of it was going to maintain three houses and she wasn't working much, and it was on that trip that she lost her only remaining job with her friend Billy in Las Vegas), and I didn't want to make a guess at what would make her happy. Maybe that is wrong, but it is the way I sincerely felt. And she knew that we had to keep things economical. When she says we bought a "small ring" it is one of the wordings that always rings through to me... her best friend had a huge rock and I know that Barb and Toni used to make fun of people with puny rings because after all, if the guy gives you a big ring, it means he is "hooked" more. But she told me that day that she was fine, what was important to her was that we were engaged and we were going to be together "for the next 50 years". And that was what was important to me. Not the size of the ring, or the quality of the presents.

Even before we were married, Jon was pushing the idea of swinging...

I consider this statement to be patently false. Barb and I met on the Nudist Matchmaker site and from the beginning I told her that I had some experiences that were more "out there" than nudism... swinging experiences with my first spouse way back in the late 70s and early 80s. She was interested in hearing about it, so I told her about it. I hadn't done it in almost 20 years, and I didn't ever expect to do it again. She said she didn't think she could ever do it, and I completely dropped the subject and never brought it up again until she suggested that maybe she would be interested in going to a party to see what it was like (she said this after we got engaged and approached me, saying now that she felt more secure, she thought it might be fun and/or interesting to try it out).

We did experiment with fantasies in our lovemaking, including bringing other people in, such as threesomes and foursomes and orgies, but I never suggested that this had to go beyond fantasies, ever. I respected her original statement that she couldn't ever do that and even when she suggested going, I grilled her a lot about whether she really thought she could handle it. I took her to the gentlest club I knew (Barry and Shell's in Oakland) and we agreed to NOT do anything that evening. And yet, she initiated her participation in a group scene while I wasn't even present. I

can't say I didn't enjoy that (I did), but to say that I pushed this idea, or that somehow I put pressure on her is just plain incorrect.

I told him no, until after we were engaged.

Again, I never asked her to do it before we were engaged. She had said she wouldn't and I accepted that. Again, I point out that I had stayed with my first spouse for almost 20 years after we stopped swinging and even for a number of years after we had almost completely stopped having sex and I never cheated on her or went out to prostitutes or anything like that.

Then I agreed to try it.

Again, Barb didn't agree to try it, she suggested that we try it. She brought it up and I agreed with her that we would try it.

I enjoyed the first few times we went. It was exciting and I enjoyed the attention I got.

I am glad that she now admits this. At the point in time where she had left me for Rick, she had told him and others that I had forced her into this and that she NEVER liked it ever and that she only did it because she would have lost me if she hadn't gone along. It was only after I brought up obvious discrepancies in this story that Barb started to accept some responsibility for her decisions in this regard. I still believe that the reason she originally said she hated it to Rick is because she knew that he found it reprehensible and I think she felt (feels?) that if she says she actually liked it, he wouldn't want anything to do with her. (When she broke up with Rick in September for a week when we were going to reconcile, Rick called me and "asked" me one "favor"... he told me "never ever let another man put his hands on your wife." I found this pretty remarkable coming from the man who hadn't had enough self-respect for himself and respect for me to keep his own hands off my wife and who had continued to do so for many months after he had told me that what he needed to do was go far away and let us work out our problems together.)

But it soon became clear to me that Jon wanted to go more often than I did. I would have been happy with every couple of months where Jon wanted to go every other week or so. This bothered me. At times, it seemed the only way that Jon could get aroused was by thinking of other women besides me.

Again, I just see this as a distortion of the truth. I almost never asked Barb to go to parties. On a couple of special occasions, I did (like when we went to the party in Paris which was, unfortunately a total bomb, and when we went to the club in Florida). But for the most part, I would wait until she

suggested that maybe we go out and “play” this coming weekend. In fact we BOTH talked about the fact that we didn’t want/need to do it as a regular thing, and in fact we didn’t. Indeed, we played about once every couple of months and I never thought we had any real disagreement about it. And if I suggested that we play one weekend (again I rarely did that) and she said “not this week” for whatever reason, I never complained or argued or sulked. I was pretty okay with this. After all, I was making love with Barbara more every month than I had in the previous 20 years, so why would I complain?

And as for needing the parties and other women besides her, the fact is that at parties I rarely played with any women and she knows that. Most of the time, I encouraged her to enjoy herself and I watched or participated with her. I rarely “got off” at a party except with Barb herself, and when we got home (and she always acknowledged this) we had the BEST sex together alone, because it was just us in our special place and I loved that the most. I don’t deny the voyeuristic aspects of party sex, and I enjoyed that (I would be lying to say any different) but it certainly didn’t have anything to do with my feelings, sexual or otherwise, for Barb.

As I write about things that bothered me, I want to point out that I was not always silent. I did try (at least sometimes) to talk to Jon about things. From my perspective, this was not very often. Much more typically, this would start in the form of an attack or argument that she would initiate about something else (she even acknowledges this later on), and THEN, in the middle of a fight, Barb would bring up some other issue that had been bothering her.

But his reaction was often either angry (defensive?) or cold (silent treatment) so it was easier to avoid the unpleasantness and just go along with whatever he wanted.

I am not sure about the defensive/angry reaction, I am sure there were times I reacted that way but I certainly don’t think it was always. And most times, it was because Barb started out on the offensive and I had no place to go or hide. I started getting colder because I needed to avoid the “heat” of the battle, especially after the incident in which I pushed her down. That doesn’t justify being cold at all, and if we had done some effective counseling in those years, I hope that we could have gotten better at communicating with each other. I recall always asking Barb if she could just approach me in a soft tone, “Sweetie, this is bothering me. Can we talk about it?” that we would do much better. But almost invariably, the

arguments would start with an attack against something I had done, or something my son had done or something my mother had done. And once the volume went up, there was almost no way of bringing it down unless I just went “cold and lifeless”. Although that really didn’t work either, because she would keep at me until I had no place to go, and that would often generate the “anger response” that she has said is part of my character (which I now dispute pretty vigorously – I think most of that anger was a natural reaction to the way I was attacked).

I feel that most of our really bad fights were at their core more about my taking a stand and not giving in to what Jon wanted than whatever we were fighting about at the moment.

I obviously see this differently. I see most of our bad fights being about Barb taking a very one-sided view of what she wanted and not being able or willing to listen to any kind of reason. In the end, I may have then gotten intransigent because I couldn’t see any other way to a conclusion, but often in the end I would give up (but not without a fight).

It got to the point after a few years (at least I felt) that Jon would not consider my side of an argument at all: He seemed to have a “my way or the highway” mentality where I could do what he wanted or I could get out. I remember telling him several times that he should be careful, because one day he was going to tell me to get out and I would. I don’t think he believed me until I did.

The funny thing is I can scarcely recall a time when Barb didn’t ultimately get what she wanted. Because, in the end, I was the “squish”. And I her own words above are kind of an indictment. She threatened me on many occasions, saying precisely what she herself above said she did: “Watch out because one day I am going to leave”. And I always gave in to that threat. Because I didn’t want to lose her. It is funny that she sees me as threatening her with the “my way or the highway” which I do not completely agree with, but fails to recognize her own threat that she admits she said to me herself.

And to be fair, she didn’t “leave”. If she had done the right thing and walk in and tell me that she was leaving, I might have more respect for her statement here. But she didn’t leave. What she did was blow up our marriage without leaving, by betraying everything she had promised to do (stay monogamous except for the occasions when we played TOGETHER, respect our vows, etc.)

I could write volumes about the problems we had with each other's kids...

Ah yes ☺ The kids. We could BOTH write volumes here LOL.

And the problems I had with Jon's mother.

We could literally fill whole landfills with this one ☺

Kids first: I know that my two are not easy to live with.

Agreed. But I love them and always tried to do good things for them.

Will is very weird and his ADD is frustrating. Ashley is a very dramatic teenager who is very snarky and stubborn and unforgiving.

Agreed. But I love them and always tried to do good things for them.

But I feel like we never had a chance. Jon's son Garin was against us from the very beginning and he did everything he could to make things difficult for us.

As I have always said, this is just not true. Never was. If anything, I never felt like Barbara gave Garin a chance. She was on him (or more appropriately, she was on ME about him) from the start and most of the time she could say nothing good about him.

Like:

\* He made Will and Ashley sleep on the floor for 2 weeks when we were trying to move in to Jon's house after the wedding. Garin already had a bedroom, but after I had cleaned out and painted the other 2 bedrooms, he had to decide whether he wanted to keep his own room or take one of the newly cleaned and painted ones. After keeping us hanging for two weeks, he finally decided he didn't want to bother moving all his stuff so at last I got to get my kids moved in.

Just a point of notice that Barb has poor recollection. We didn't move in after the wedding. We didn't move in until seven months after the wedding. It took Barb two weeks to clean and paint the rooms, and for us to get furniture for the kids, which is why they slept on the floors and couches. And they LIKED sleeping there (at least they said they did). The only real dispute was where Ashley would be.

One thing we had talked about before moving is was that I had to give Garin his choice of rooms. He had been living in the house for many years, and had been relegated to the smallest room because he was the youngest when Nancy and I and Corey and Garin lived there. Now, he was going to be the oldest child in the house. He had expressed interest in the lower bedroom which had its own bathroom. And I felt I needed to honor that request, both from his mother (Nancy) and from him. I thought that Barb agreed that was okay. But I was wrong.

Garin initially decided that he wanted the lower bedroom and Barb went ballistic. She said that Ashley would have to share the bathroom with Will and that wouldn't be good. Now, Ashley had been sharing a bathroom with Will for years in their Canyon Country apartment, and she had been living in half of the living room that they had carved out, so I thought that the fact that she would get her own bedroom was a GOOD thing, but Barb was on the warpath. And I never heard the end of it.

Finally, she realized I wasn't going to give in on this one (squish that I am, I realized that I had to stand my ground here) and she talked to Ashley, and I guess tried to convince her that this would be okay. And Garin figured out that there was a problem (he later told me he could always hear us arguing about this kind of stuff), and he wanted things to be okay for us, so he decided to change his mind and go ahead and give Ashley the downstairs room. And then Barb went ballistic on me again because "after all this time, now we have to change our plans again!"

I was flabbergasted. I couldn't win for trying. I tried to do the right thing and she was mad at me, and then when Garin tried to help out by agreeing to what Ashley wanted, she decided that Garin had taken too long to make up his mind. Jeesh!!!

\* Garin often came into the bedroom that Jon & I shared when we weren't home. He ate in our bed and left messes in the sheets, he used our shower, shampoo, soap etc. He took my toiletries back to his own bathroom for his own use, and more than once I didn't realize until I was soaking wet and naked in the shower. He once left a huge disgusting mess in the toilet for me to find. Jon said he "forgot" to flush. I don't think anyone can fill a toilet like that and not remember to flush. I felt it was a message, that he was marking territory.

I think this is way overstated. I know that he did this on a few occasions and I always took him to task for it. I admit that he had gotten in the habit of being the only person in the house and it took him a while to get used to the new arrangement. But again, I felt that Barb could have been more understanding, just as she contends I could have been more understanding of her kids. And she is probably right, but if she is, then so am I. It can't work different ways for the different kids. That just isn't fair.

The toilet incident was gross, but it only happened one time and I told him to never use our bathroom again and to the best of my knowledge, he didn't. And anyway, very quickly Barb insisted that I put a lock on our door that he couldn't open. And I did.

\* Garin ruined a lot of my clothing. I would leave a load in the wash and leave to run errands, and come home to find it thrown in the dryer on high to shrink or find bleach dumped with my colors in the wash. And he loved to take my clothes out of the dryer damp and dump them in a wrinkled pile on the dirty sofa for the cats to sleep on.

Again, I think this is somewhat overinflated. Barb was looking for things to attack Garin on and she would come up with the smallest almost ridiculous things. But I always tried to hear her side of it even if I thought she was being unreasonable. I always asked her to reduce the level of the attack so we could think about things reasonably. That approach almost always landed on deaf ears. But even so, when she demanded a LOCK on the washer and dryer, I put one on for her. Garin almost never forgave me for that. But he is a good kid and he finally did.

And the very way she writes this shows how angry she is, not at what he did, but at him as a person which I find very sad. I have said some things that were angry about Ashley, no question, but always in the heat of "battle" over the past years. When I write reflectively or talk reflectively about her, you won't find anything that has this level of vitriol in it, despite some of what she has done to us and to me.

It is funny because I have always agreed with Barb that we were the adults and needed to act like it with respect to the kids. I have accepted that we did many things wrong and I would never attack Ashley today for almost any of the "slights" I felt she leveled at me repeatedly, but if I am expected to do that, then Barb should too.

\* Garin's band was allowed to practice in our garage. They often stole my wine and cooking liquors. They even went into locked cabinets to get into the pantry storage stuff. No other parents were ever willing to host them (Gee, I wonder why?) but we always had to.

This one is a big time misrepresentation of what transpired and needs to be noted. Barb made many accusations, but except for one incident where the band admitted having taken some food that she had "locked up" in the cabinets (which I still thought was dumb, why weren't we willing to let these kids eat our food? I mean that is what adults are supposed to do for kids, help them out, no? We never begrudged any of her kids' friends eating our food or our drinks. I can't even remember the number of times I would come down and find Ashley and her friends taking drinks out, opening them up, drinking a few sips and then leaving them to get warm and then not finishing them, and not even cleaning them up! But for the most part, I let it



go. It was a small pittance and no big deal. But Barb would get hysterical about anything thing she didn't like.

And as for the liquor, that is the biggest misrepresentation of all. There were TWO incidents involving liquor. The first time, Barb came home and found that a bottle of wine she had opened the previous day was completely empty. She accused Garin's band members and I asked Garin. They denied it. It was always my feeling that Garin's band members didn't do much drinking, and certainly not wine (more like beer and maybe whiskey if they did anything). We got in a big fight about it. When I said maybe we should consider other possibilities, she freaked out, saying how dare I accuse Ashley and/or Will, the only other possibilities, of being drinkers. IMPOSSIBLE!

About six months later, she came home again and we had a repeat of the wine incident. A bottle that had been opened the day before was gone. She called me at work and before I had gotten two words in, she was cutting my head off about the wine, saying that the band had done it again. I stopped her in mid-sentence and said "Barb, please think for a minute. Are you sure you opened the bottle yesterday?" She stopped and then said "Yes. Why?" I then pointed out that the band had gone on tour the week before and was obviously incapable of having finished the wine. Realizing that she had been "caught" in a false accusation, she started trying out other theories such as maybe one of Garin's friends had come over and snuck into the house. But it was all pretty ludicrous. Finally she herself realized that she had to do this and she went into Ashley's room and found a wine glass with some of the remains of the wine still in the glass. And then, all of a sudden, it didn't seem to be such a big deal anymore. Because, after all, this was HER daughter doing the drinking, not my son.

To this day, although I can't prove it, I am convinced that Ashley had been drinking our wine (and other booze) for a long long time and was probably responsible for the first incident too. However, unlike Barb, I am NOT angry about that. Sad, yes, but certainly not angry. Lots of kids do that, and if anyone is to blame, it is us for having the booze around to begin with. I almost never drank at home (or anywhere else for that matter) so this was principally a problem because Barb needed to have her wine to drink. That is fine, but I would have preferred that she not attack my son without any proof that he or his friends were the villain.

I'm sure that Jon has his own lengthy list of things he hates about my kids, too.

It is funny how Barb uses words here. I don't hate ANYTHING about Barb's kids. Nothing. I loved them and tried to do good things for them and still do and would. It is sad that Ashley doesn't appreciate it, and I realize that it was probably wrong of me to expect that much from her. She is, after all, just a kid. And there are things I don't like that they have done. But hate them? Not a chance, no matter what Barb OR Ashley might think about me. But that is for him to type out.

It got to the point where I felt that every time I wanted protection from Garin it was going to be a huge fight. And Jon would yell and be angry when my kids did anything he didn't like. It was as though his kid could do anything but my kids had to be perfect.

I did yell at them (and I will say this, I mean ALL of them, because Barb KNOWS that I yelled at Garin a lot too) when they did things that I thought were really disrespectful. And I realize that we probably needed to do a lot more negotiating about how to handle all of the kids better. And we didn't. But should that be the cause of breaking up a marriage? I guess I never thought so. The other thing is that most of the things I would get upset with them about were NOT directed at me. Most of the time, I was upset when they would treat their mother badly. That was because I was very protective of Barb and didn't like it when her kids disrespected her.

That was probably not my place and I realize it now. But Barb didn't do a great parenting job through most of those years either, and I felt someone had to protect her and I was the only obvious candidate.

My problems with Jon's mother have 2 parts: 1) the fact that she is a miserable, hateful old bitch that I hate having to talk to because she is so awful to everyone. 2) the way Jon acts when she is around. She hates her life, and wants everyone else to be miserable along with her. I could deal with that, but Jon expects me to take whatever abuse she heaps on me without ever defending myself or my kids. And not only does he not defend us against her, he even joins her in the attack because he is so afraid of her himself.

I could just cry because Barb would say such words about ANYONE let alone my mother. Even if my mother deserves those words which I don't feel she really does.

My mother is not a wonderful person, that is not in doubt. She has many many problems and she is 82 years old and will probably never solve many of them. She doesn't have that capacity. But in that sense, she is like a kid,

but much older and deserving of at least begrudging acceptance if not actual respect. She is, after all, my mother.

Now Barb has never had much of a relationship with her mother. I always felt that she would have been happy to never interact with her at all, which I thought was kind of sad. But it was her decision to make, and I hoped she would be willing to let me have the same rights with respect to my mother. But from the get-go, she decided that she needed to fight my battles with my mother, even though I didn't want her to.

As for the kids and my mother, the only real incident that ever happened was the incident on the boat. The horrible way my mother treated Barb's kids was to pay for a cruise for them (something they had never had before and very possibly may never get to go to again), give them nice presents, and ask them to pose with her and my dad at their 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary for a picture. To which Ashley became a total and unrelenting refusenik, despite all the pleas from everyone to be nice and just let them take a picture. The situation escalated because Barb refused to try to reason with Ashley and I got very angry that she (Ashley) was ruining my parents anniversary party. We never quite recovered on that vacation from that awful incident.

And I was wrong, but it was too late. Still, Ashley was wrong too. But how my mother became the villain in this picture is beyond me. If Barb wants to say I was out of line, that is fine, but until that point, all my mother ever tried to do was do nice things for Barb's kids. And remember, my mother isn't even related to them. For all intents and purposes, she is a step-grandmother. And I believe that she treated them nicer than Barb's own mother ever did.

Yes, my mother is a handful. Yes, she can be bitchy at times, and unforgiving. Believe me, I have experienced that big time just because I have tried so hard to keep my marriage together – it would have been way easier to just say “screw it, let the divorce go through and at least my mother will stop being angry with me”. But I didn't do that, because in the end, what my mother thinks isn't as important to me as doing the right thing for myself and hopefully for my life.

Another issue we had involved my working. When I first met Jon, from our very first emails onward I was very clear (I thought) that I was committed to being a stay-at-home mom until my kids were in high school. I worked a variety of part-time and freelance jobs so I could be home when the kids were not in school.

This was true. I expected that Barb would continue to do this throughout our relationship but she didn't. She lost all of her part-time jobs shortly after we started seeing each other. I even bought her a laptop computer so she could visit me (she said she wouldn't be able to come up after the second trip she made to San Francisco unless she had one because she needed to keep working while out of town.) And then, shortly after that, she screwed something up for Billy (which she blamed on me for distracting her while we were together) and lost that job. And she never really did much (at least I felt) to replace that income.

Instead, I got her some costuming jobs which I thought she would do well at, and we also tried to make a go of our theater company so that we could have the theater pay her, but that never made enough money to make it worthwhile. I assumed she knew that she wasn't holding her share of the load (this was not about a full-time job then, it was about her making enough income to replace what she had lost). Fortunately for a while, while I was at Walmart and had some stock money coming in, we held our own. But gradually, things got worse and we were heading towards a financial disaster.

Yet almost as soon as we were married, Jon started acting put-out that I wasn't working full time.

I disagree that this happened immediately after we got married. As I noted above, all I wanted was for her to be making as much as she had been making before we got together, however she wanted to do that. But she was then making almost NO money at all. And she didn't seem to care, and what was worse, she started assuming that it was okay to INCREASE our expenses since she now had a big check coming in from me. So lots of credit card bills started mounting up. She bought a lot of things that she didn't need to buy like scrapbooking materials (I was fine with buying some of the things, but when she left the marriage, I found a set of stuff in our closet that must have cost hundreds if not a thousand or more dollars that was simply never used – even if she bought all of it at dollar stores, which she didn't).

I am sorry, but Barb does have a “shopping” problem and I doubt she will admit it which is sad. She is almost a compulsive shopper, especially when she has a credit card without limits (which she pretty much did throughout our marriage). She didn't work almost at all through most of our marriage, and much of her spare time she was out shopping. Not because she needed to be, but because she wanted to be. She used to giggle about it

with Ashley and it drove me nuts, but I swallowed my feelings and figured it was a modest price to pay for peace in the household. Sometimes I got visibly upset about it but I was probably even MORE upset about it inside than she ever knew.

I asked repeatedly for a budget so we could work together to make money decisions, but never in almost 6 years could I get him to sit down with me & discuss money. I think he knew that if we did, I would then know how much money he was spending on his kids and gambling and porn.

I will admit that I didn't do this right, but honestly I resented the fact that Barb felt that she was entitled to know something about the budget when she didn't seem inclined to (a) contribute much if anything to it and (b) didn't seem capable of managing her own financial affairs very well. Be that as it may (and I was definitely wrong here), Barb always had it within her own power to do this on her own if she wanted to. She had all the passwords to all the credit card accounts, and the bank account, she could, if she had taken some time away from her other activities, have created her own budget and figured it all out herself. But she didn't ever take the initiative. She always wanted me to do it for her, and I had plenty of other things I was busy with most of the time. I didn't understand why, if she was going to be a "stay-at-home" mom, she didn't use at least some of the time when the kids were away at school taking care of the budget herself. There was NEVER ANYTHING she didn't have access to if she wanted to do it. She even put all the financial files together for us, so to say that I kept her from the information is just really incorrect.

As for spending money on "my kids" and gambling and porn, here are the facts. I did in fact give both of my kids some money during those years. But we gave Will and Ashley allowances of over \$100 a month each. I never gave Garin or Corey anything like that total amount of money (except for Garin's last year in high school, when he got the same allowance because he was in school). I would slip Garin \$20 for gas every once in a while, but I honestly believe that if you add up what I gave Garin and Will and Ashley over the time we were together, at the best it would be equal (and equal in terms of Garin getting the same as EACH of Will and Ashley, not as much as both of them put together, not even close to that) or it would favor Barb's kids somewhat. I can just point to Ashley's abusive use of iTunes (literally hundreds of dollars spent downloading music) as one example, not to mention the kids constant abuse of the cell phones (again, many months we would go over our minutes limits by hundreds of minutes because one

or both of the kids was running up bills during the day). And again, I looked to Barb to monitor this stuff, which was very costly, because she was the “stay-at-home” mom, but she never really did. Oh occasionally she would take a look, but by and large it was “out of sight, out of mind”.

I am surprised Barb brings up gambling. I almost NEVER gambled when I was with Barb. In fact, I realized when I was with Nancy that I had a bit of a gambling problem and although Barb and I had started out talking about gambling and Vegas, I was always a little leery of doing much vacationing there because I was afraid I’d lose control. Which is why I never really gambled while with her. A few times I did at the Garden City poker club, but she was always there with me. A couple of times before we got married I did play poker when she wasn’t in town, but after we got married, I never did that (or I certainly don’t remember it and if I did, it might have been an isolated incident). And I never gambled any great amounts, either. So to accuse me of covering up the budget to cover gambling debts is silly. Barb spent much more on the lottery while we were married than I spent on poker or any other form of gambling.

As for porn, I pretty much bought one magazine a month, Penthouse Letters, because I always like the sexy stories (I was never much into the pictures, I much preferred seeing Barb nude to the pictures – ditto for the Internet, I only occasionally looked at pics, most of the time I spent doing any porn on the Internet it was reading [www.asstr.org](http://www.asstr.org), the story archives). Add an occasional other mag, and I probably spent \$20 a month or less on porn over the course of our marriage. Not nothing, I admit, but compared to what Barb was spending on Ebay and on thrift stores and scrapbooking, it was pretty small potatoes, at least from where I sit.

At the same time, he was throwing buckets of money into his theater hobby. And then he would have a fit if I spent \$8 at a thrift store. He also minimized contributions that I felt I made to the household (cleaning, laundry, cooking, gardening, etc) and would make comments like "If you brought home a regular paycheck, then you could <fill in the blank with whatever I had suggested we do>. I did what I could to help, I worked hard on all his shows to try and get them to turn a profit, but they never did. Buyt that never stopped him from doing more shows. He once told me that he could live without me, but he could never live without doing theater. Here I plead guilty. This was my addiction (not gambling) but again, as even Barb points out, I didn’t lie about this. I never made any bones about

the fact that this was something I really needed (or at least thought I really needed).

And in fact, we did stop for a while. From late 2004 until late 2006 we didn't do any of our own shows. Two full years. It was Barb who encouraged me to consider doing another show (we produced Tomfoolery again in 2006) because she said she felt I needed to do it. Before that, I confined myself for those years to helping others with their shows, including the company that Ashley was acting in before Barb pulled her out because Ashley was out of control there and lost her virginity after a rehearsal because she ran loose (the company wasn't so good about supervising, that is true but it was still Ashley's responsibility to do the right things.)

And after we broke up and tried to reconcile, I told her I understood this and if she would just give me the chance to prove to her that I could make this better, I wouldn't ever do it again. But she has not given me that chance. At one point she got upset with me for taking on a show in Raleigh, but I pointed out to her that she had walked out on me, left me alone with nothing left in my life and she was in no position at that point to say I shouldn't do with my money or time what I chose to do. I still promise that if we were to reconcile, theater (at least where I or we produce it) would be completely in the past. My relationship with Barb always meant more to me than theater. If she had ever taken a strong stand, I like to believe that I would have listened. But she didn't. As I said, she proposed us restarting, and when I proposed doing HAIr, she actually was very excited about it. Believe me, after what we went through on HAIr, not to mention that it is quite possibly one of the causes of my break-up (as she later notes herself) I regret ever having done that show.

The day he hit me we were (I think) arguing about the kids. I'm not even really sure anymore.

No we weren't. We were arguing about the trip to Las Vegas. In fact, it happened on the day we got back from Las Vegas. It was all about whether I had spent too much time chasing other women.

For the record, this was a bad trip. I made many mistakes. I regret all of them. It was Christmas and we took our little Apartment Christmas Tree with us and had Christmas in the hotel on the strip (Harrah's). Barb had suggested a "what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas" trip and I took her too much at her word (I always believed she was telling me the truth, until the end when she told me that most of the time, she had been lying to me just so she wouldn't lose me.)



Did I go overboard? Maybe, no probably. Was I right to do that? No, certainly not. We went to a play party and met two people who I then stupidly and ignorantly and insensitively invited to join us at the Penn and Teller show which was going to be a special Christmas gift for the two of us. What an idiot I was. And the two people turned out to be Neanderthals and ruined the show (and the rest of the vacation) for us.

No, I take that back. I ruined the vacation for us. Not them. They were just two people out for a good time. And I have regretted that every day since. But is it fair to have to regret such a thing forever? Compared to all the wonderful things we did in our marriage, I consider this to be a blip, admittedly a BIG blip, but still a blip. We survived the snows of Reno, we should have been able too survive this. With a little more understanding, we might have.

He got very angry (whatever it was about, I didn't back down) and he shook me hard, then hit me in the chest/shoulder and shoved me backwards into a point where 2 walls came out and met. My back and neck have never been quite right ever since.

There is no way I am going to try to minimize what I did. Barb has described it to others as me beating her up and that hurts me a lot, because I know (and so does she from personal experience watching her parents) what people look like who get beat up and there is no way I beat her up. But I did shove her into the wall and knocked her down. I would question the long-lasting pain comment, but I am not in her body, and while I find it hard to believe, I don't know. She had many treatments (chiropractic) for various other ills and I am not sure what can be attributed to what. But to be totally fair, I defer to her view of this. If she really feels I permanently injured her, than I am even more sorry than I have ever been. Jon told me to go ahead and call the police, that he would gladly take his punishment and go to jail, but then he would lose his job and we'd all be homeless.

Here I take exception. I NEVER argued anything about not reporting this. It was BARBARA who stated that she couldn't/wouldn't do that because I would lose my job and then we would all be homeless. I PLEADED with her to call the cops. I was in a state of total despair. At that moment I couldn't even imagine that I had done what I did. I was crying, telling her that she needed to leave me to protect herself, all sorts of stuff. She refused to take any action despite my insistence. I am sorry for what I did to her, but this is the truth about the incident. I have never shrunk from what I did, which was

awful and inexcusable and possibly unforgiveable. And if she had left me over it, I would have understood. I would have probably killed myself out of guilt, but I would have understood. But she refused to leave and told me if she stayed I could never lay a hand on her again, a pledge that I took and have adhered to to this very day.

However, once the decision to stay is made, things have to change. Because if the punishment for what I did goes on forever, then the relationship just gets even sicker. Even people who commit manslaughter are released from prison having paid their debt. I didn't commit manslaughter, maybe not even felonious battery, and yet for four full years, I have been punished over and over again for this incident. That just isn't fair.

And to compound it, we never talked about this with a therapist. It was the biggest mistake I ever made, listening to Barb's view that we couldn't because if we did, the therapist would have to report it and I would go to jail. There was one moment when I almost told Bela Crow, our therapist in Santa Cruz, about what happened. Because I felt it needed to be disclosed, but I remembered Barb's words that we couldn't say anything and I decided to honor her request. If there was anything I would do differently, besides not hurting her in the first place, it was not telling the therapist. We needed to discuss it, and we needed to work it through. And we never did.

So I didn't call. He never hit me again, but he did continue to get very angry. And every time he got angry, I felt fear that he was going to hit me again.

Well, my version is above. She didn't call because she refused to, not because I told her not to. And I never hit her again. And yes, there were times I did get angry, but I would then try to stay icy calm, or walk away, and then she blamed me for being cold and isolated. So there wasn't anyway to win.

And to add one thing, slightly in my defense, even though I don't feel my conduct justifies a defense, both the big argument and fight after Vegas and many others later on, usually involved what I always felt was Barb escalating and escalating to see if she could get me to react. I would always ask her to take the volume and her anger down a notch so that we could talk calmly, but she would keep picking on me (she even admitted during our September reconciliation that she had verbally abused me at times) until I would be afraid of snapping and I would have to run away.

With all of this as a backdrop, enter Rick... I had known him casually as one of Jon's theater friends for several years, but didn't really get to know him until he worked with me on Hair. I was attracted to him physically as well as emotionally. Jon saw this, and fantasized about the 3 of us having sex together. This was not unusual, we seldom had a friend that he didn't fantasize about. He had hoped that we would seduce Rick at Burningman, but I had surgery and didn't go.

The only thing I would correct here is that the fantasy about a threesome with Rick started with Barb saying, one night after learning that his former girlfriend Lilly hated oral sex and only made love with the lights out, "what Rick needs is a good blowjob". I didn't start the fantasy. And then she said "when we go to Burning Man, maybe we will pounce him together." That is a fact.

I don't deny becoming a participant in the fantasy (yes, fantasies do arouse me and I enjoy them) and on top of that, Rick was my friend and I agreed with Barb, it would have been fun to play with him together. At that time, we didn't know one way or the other whether he would have gone for it, and who knows, if we had actually approached him TOGETHER, maybe he would have and maybe he would have even grown a bit in his own ability to be in touch with himself, but that is another issue completely.

When Jon first took the job in Raleigh, I didn't mind moving there myself, but Ashley was horrified. She hates Jon, and she also has her "first boyfriend" that lives in Santa Cruz that she didn't want to leave.

Ashley started seeing Andrew AFTER we had made the decision to move to Raleigh and I have some belief (unprovable of course) that Ashley decided to really do this because she felt it would put pressure on her mom to stay in California. However, the solution to this problem would have been for Barb to come to talk to me about it and say lets reverse our decision. That was always possible. It is, in my opinion, no justification for anything she did that resulted in our marriage breaking up.

Rick, with Jon's knowledge, took me to dinner a couple of times while Jon was gone. We talked a lot about my problems with Ashley, and he gave me his insights as a father who has a great relationship with all 3 of his kids.

This is a little funny because Rick had a horrible relationship with all of his kids at various times. Cristi was totally out of control during her teenage years and Rick couldn't handle her at all, and when his daughter Dani was the same age as Ashley she was just about the same level of attitude as Ashley and Rick couldn't handle that either. Not to mention how badly he

reacted to finding out his son was gay. Whatever he NOW has with his kids, he is certainly no model of how to deal with them when they are going through their problems.

One night, Rick and I went dancing after dinner and I seduced him. (I had told Rick about the swinging, and that Jon had hopes of both of us having sex with him.) We met a couple of nights later and had sex again.

We both realized that we weren't "sportfucking" anymore, that we were making love. We decided to back off and not see each other, and that I was going to try and fix things with Jon.

This is a slightly short version of the truth. The first incident happened in January just after Rick's Presentation show opened. Barb told me about it in the guise that it was "okay because I had said so." She also told me that she wasn't sure he would go for a threesome, something that we had agreed in advance was a prerequisite if she was to start this up. So I told her that she had to agree to not do that anymore unless he was willing to open this up to all of us. She agreed. And that was the last I heard of it until I found out the truth. Because I trusted her to adhere to our agreement about fidelity, I never doubted her. They continued to see each other for February through the middle of March, just before we left for our trip to Europe. In the middle of this deception, Barbara continued to act like we were still the best lovers and partners in the world. We had a terrific anniversary at the Barry Manilow concert. My job, after a rocky start in January, was looking pretty solid, and I figured things could only get better once we were all together in a beautiful house in Raleigh (which we could actually afford).

Then Jon pushed Ashley in London.

Yes I did. I appreciate that at least Barb has used the proper language here. On a previous occasion describing this incident, Barb used the term "beat up Ashley" and also "threw her to the ground" which was even close to the truth. But I did push her (albeit not really too hard). However, it was wrong and I regret it also.

She was hysterical, and I was afraid that his anger was no longer in control. I don't care how bratty a kid is, you don't touch!!!

I was very angry. I was even more angry that Barb had done nothing to prevent this. If anything, I felt that she in some sense provoked the behavior. In retrospect, I am even more certain of it. I feel now that Ashley was well aware of Barb's affair with Rick (she is a smart young lady and nothing gets past her). If everyone in the HAIr cast knew that Rick and

Barb had a “thing” for each other, then I am sure Ashley (who hung around the show quite a bit) probably had some idea, and I am sure she must have known that Barb wasn’t just staying out late on her own while I was in Raleigh.

And Ashley had to know that she could capitalize on that. Again, she is a smart young girl and didn’t want us to move, and by Barb’s own admission “hates” me (sad but probably true, sad because of all the things I tried to do for her which she has never shown the slightest appreciation for, things that she never ever got from her own father). I believe that Ashley knew she could manipulate us on the European trip and I believe she did. She made it impossible from the start, even when we got on the airplane, and never once backed off. Whether it was money or where we went, or the food we ate, everything was a hassle, an argument or a battle.

I am NOT justifying what I did. I am merely pointing out that if a young smart woman wants to manipulate two adults, and one of those adults, her mother, is engaging in a secret affair, it makes it that much easier for her to do so. Because what is the mother going to do if her hands aren’t “clean” (and Barb’s clearly weren’t).

After that happened, I felt that I had to get Ashley away from Jon. I had no clear plan to leave Jon for Rick, I had hoped for some sort of separation to give us all time to cool off. Maybe Jon work in Raleigh and I would stay with Ashley until she was on her own (maybe her senior year of HS) and then rejoin Jon.

But when Jon realized the extent of my feelings for Rick, and when he realized that there was no way Rick was going to participate in some sort of 3-way or sharing arrangement, he became awful.

Barb is missing the 800-pound elephant here. We came back from Europe and I was still in the dark. Barb didn’t sit me down and explain to me the “extent of her feelings for Rick”. At that point, I didn’t even know she HAD any feelings for Rick (except as a friend). Rick picked us up at the airport because I asked him to. Barb told me later he was torn apart by that because he didn’t know what to say to me. I am not surprised.

And Barb kept me in the dark for another three weeks, and I imagine if she could have kept me in the dark until she had managed to extricate herself from the marriage without having to own up to what she did, she would have been feeling much better about herself. At that point, she was able to blame me for everything. For all the problems we had. For all the troubles

with Ashley. And she didn't have to take any responsibility for anything that she had done.

In fact, there has always been a part of me that has felt that Barb, inwardly (whether consciously or subconsciously) was also part of the manipulation on the Europe trip. Because she knew that if I exploded at Ashley, she could use that as the justification to end the marriage and never have to own up to what she had done. It would all have been my fault.

But she didn't reckon with a timing error on her part (calling Rick to set up a date for the theater BEFORE calling me) and a phone bill (which showed her to be lying to me). And that is how I found out about the affair.

She also has the timing of my becoming "awful" somewhat mixed up. If she is honest with herself and us, I didn't become awful at all when I found out about the extent of this at that time. In fact, I didn't become really awful until the following happened:

- I caught Barb in a lie and started to suspect something was wrong
- I confronted Barb on the phone and she called me crazy and denied everything
- I came back home and confronted Barb and she denied it again and called me a stalker
- I confronted Rick and he admitted the entire sordid mess
- I got hurt and had to spend five days at home nursing my foot
- Barb left with Ashley but came back and took care of me
- I spent time with Barb and asked her about her feelings
- I tried to understand and see if there wasn't a way we could all work together to resolve the mess and be friends (and maybe partners) without losing my marriage
- I tried to help Barb rent her own place so she could be independent and we could try to work our marriage out but Barb's credit wouldn't let her qualify for a place
- Barb took me to the airport and said she didn't want me to leave her
- I went to New York and Barb then cut off communication with me for a whole weekend even though she had promised never to do that again
- I then cut off communication from her and told her that if she wanted to continue the affair, she would have to do so on her own terms and her own nickel, not mine
- She lasted a week and then said she wanted to come to Raleigh to work things out

- She came out and we did some nice things together and a week of intense therapy
- She left Raleigh with our ring on her finger once more, saying we would work things out “without outside entanglements”
- Within hours of getting back to California, she was once again involved with her outside entanglement, and was never able to let him go
- Only after all of this deception and repeated betrayal and refusal to take any responsibility for her actions, did I finally go over the edge of anger

Jon emptied our bank account, cancelled all our credit cards, and told me that he was going to make sure I was homeless and that he was going to have my cats killed...

Yikes! I didn't empty the bank account. I had no way to do that. The account was joint and there was always enough money in there to pay the bills. Barb always had her bank card, until she gave it to me after she agreed to give up the account in our marital settlement agreement.

I cancelled the credit cards. I felt Barb had a credit problem and she certainly had no way herself to pay for the bills. And credit isn't a right, it is a privilege given to people who make enough money to pay for it. And the minute we talked reconciliation, I got new cards issued to her. She went BACK to California from Raleigh after our therapy with credit cards in the process of being reissued to her and she knew it.

One thing Barb fails to mention is one of the reasons she was so upset about losing her credit cards. She told me that she felt humiliated because when she went to buy gas, she had to go in and pay cash with the “riff-raff” (her words), the other people who didn't have credit cards of their own. I think that is a very telling thing.

At some point, I did make some very ill-tempered comments about wanting to see her homeless. It was in my anger of being betrayed and deceived about our reconciliation all over again that I said those words. And I certainly didn't mean them. But I also felt that if she had any dignity (and if HE had any decency given what he had done) she would get out of the house and learn to take care of herself. I felt it was totally outrageous that she should have an affair, be able to force a divorce from me, get support, be able to stay in the house that I was paying for, and keep on seeing the boyfriend who was instrumental in the break-up in the first place. That just seemed like insanity. I told Rick that if he had any sense of shame, he



would take over the costs of Barb's maintenance so that I wouldn't have to bear that burden. Well, surprise, he took me up on it and that is what happened.

As for the cats, that really hurts me. I never ever said I would kill the cats. What I said quite clearly was that I COULD NEVER HURT HER AS MUCH AS SHE HURT ME. IF I WANTED TO DO THAT, IT WOULD BE EASY. I COULD TAKE HER CATS TO THE POUND AND HAVE THEM PUT TO SLEEP. SHE WOULD NEVER RECOVER FROM THAT (AND I CERTAINLY WOULD NEVER BE FORGIVEN, NOR SHOULD I). BUT THERE WAS NO WAY I WOULD OR COULD EVER DO SUCH A THING, BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY I WOULD OR COULD ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO HURT HER THAT MUCH. EVEN AFTER WHAT SHE HAD DONE TO ME. Barb apparently took this as a threat which I think says as much about her as it does about me. This is, looking at it and knowing who I am, clearly not a threat. It is a plea for understanding. To realize that despite all the pain she had put me through, I could never do anything remotely that awful to her. Yet, today she turns that into "he was going to kill my cats".

I also would point out that they weren't "her" cats. They were "our" cats. I watched three of them (and three others) be born whiel holding Barb and their mom in our bed. I bear a scar from one of them (which I hold no grudge against the cat, she is a sweet skittish cat who I loved). Even in the middle of the devastation of our break-up, I paid for the vet bills for PG when she got sick the day before Barb ran back to Rick after leaving Raleigh. I even got Garin and his girlfriend Noel to take care of the cats until Rick could finish the cat house. All of this is so stunning to me, that she actually feels I could have taken the life of any living creature. And she knows, she absolutely knows that I loved those cats almost as much as she did. How she could think that just truly amazes me.

With nowhere else to turn, Rick took me in. He made space for us in his small rented house, and built a cat house so I could get my kitties away from Jon. Jon did everything he could to make it clear to me that he wanted me gone forever. He cut up my wedding rings, shredded the stuffed animals that we had given each other as gifts, spray painted obscenities on the walls of our house, and called or emailed everyone I know to tell them that I had an affair and that I had a "horrible disease".

When Barb finally walked out on me making it clear to ME that SHE wanted to be gone forever, I was distraught. I had been devoted to her, however

imperfectly, for almost six years. I had given so much to her, to her kids, and I had given up so much of myself, and I could not believe that this was happening, especially the way it happened. But even then, I still was trying to maintain. I negotiated with her to reach a settlement. She was so ashamed of her own behavior that she agreed to walk away without any support payments and I felt that was a just result. She hadn't worked throughout the marriage and she was fully capable of it and I didn't think she should be able to "profit" from her bad deed. Still, I accepted all of the marital debt. and in fact, I may have taken the shorter end of the stick myself. I kept a house that is right now worthless, stock that is worthless and a 401k plan that has a loan balance that makes it almost worthless too. Throughout all of that I was more or less stable. Sad, hurt, but stable. I tried to get her to go to therapy with her therapist but she refused saying she needed to not have her therapist hear my point of view. She was willing to go to MY therapist, but not the other way around. My gut instinct is that she didn't want her therapist to hear any of the truth about what happened. It was only after she signed the final papers and I realized my life was going down the drain did I go pretty crazy. I have told her I wish I hadn't. I wish I could take back every thing I did that afternoon. But I can't. Just like 4 years ago. To get through this if it possible, it take courage, commitment and forgiveness. Without that, all is lost.

She claims I called "everybody" but in fact I talked to five people. I probably shouldn't have but I was lost and in need of someone to talk to. Barb had taken away TWO of my best friends: herself and Rick. Who was I left with? She doesn't seem to understand that by doing that, by taking that action, she is more or less no longer in a position to argue about who I talk with.

Jon then hooked up with Rick's estranged wife (they have been separated about 7 years) and together they kept the gossip mill humming. My therapist at the time called that "incestuous" and I agree. A couple of times, Jon calmed down enough that I had tried to communicate with him. Then I realized that he was passing on everything I said to Rick's wife who was then telling everyone.

Of course I disagree. I disagree strongly with the use of the work "hookup". I have never had any personal relationship with Laurel and I never would. I talked to her and told her some of what happened, but Rick himself told her a lot.

During the time I talked to Laurel, I didn't talk to Barb, so there was no way I could pass on "anything Barb said. I talked to her about the situation and I

asked for her advice. And how is it any worse for me to be TALKING to Laurel then it is for Barb to be sleeping and living with Rick?

As for the "horrible" disease, I have never used that word, that is Barbara's word. I have always used the word herpes (which is what it is).

What I have said to only a few people is that Barb failed to disclose to Rick even the existence of any STD before before they had sex (or lovemaking) without any protection. It astounded me then and it does the same today, that she was able to be totally honest with me 6 years ago, but was unable to be totally honest with Rick. I will always wonder why. When I asked Barb that question in therapy in Raleigh, she essentially told me it was non of my business.

I tried a couple of times to reconcile with Jon, but he still frightens me. And after every failed attempt, he sends Rick all sorts of emails to try and get him to throw me out. It still feels that Jon doesn't want me but he doesn't want anyone else to have me either. I had never planned on moving in with Rick, especially not so soon. But I feel trapped. If I try to work things out with Jon, I can't stay with Rick. But if I leave Rick and things don't work out with Jon, I'm sure he'll go back to his "I'll see you homeless" plan again. And Rick has tried very hard to make me happy, I don't want to cause him unnecessary pain.

Jon can be wonderful. We shared so many special things together-kittens in our bed, theater good times (and unfortunately bad), the trips we took, the nights singing at the piano. I never wanted all that to end. But it got to the point where a lot of that was gone and all we had was the anger and fear. It hurts me that I could never get Jon to take me dancing, but now he goes all the time. Same thing with going to the movies and out to dinner. When I was there, he only wanted to go to a nice restaurant if there was swinging or theater involved...never just to be with me. Now he takes women to dinner all the time. I don't know if he is doing it just to rub it in my face or what. I feel like I tried so hard to please him and keep his attention and never really succeeded. Maybe he will never truly be happy with just one woman and he can't do without that constant rush of new conquests.