

From *The Retreat* by Dawson Moore (dawsonguy@juno.com)

Jason, male, 34.

JASON

You don't know... no, I suppose you wouldn't.

When you lose a child, it feels like everybody knows, everybody looks at you and either feels sorry for you or judges you.

But right, I haven't told you, how would you know.

My son died.

Accident.

Not really anyone's fault.

He was... challenging.

Kind of a little jerk.

Lots of problems as soon as he entered school, starting fights.

He threatened another kid with scissors.

No sense of remorse, just annoyed at being in trouble.

We were working through it with him when it happened, so it's our last memory of him, punishing him and wondering if we'd created a psychopath.

I was bullied as a kid, and I used to joke that my biggest fear of having a son was that he would be a bully.

That was the worst thing I could imagine.

Yeah.

Now you know.

We never had to talk about this again.