

Drama Files: Bye-Bye Jamal. You Can't Have it All.

Paris sought counseling with me while going through a divorce. The problem: she always had concerns about her husband working around women, and not setting boundaries with his students.



Paris and Jamal had been married for only two years. She was a high school teacher and Jamal was a college professor. They loved each other very much.

Tell-Tale Texts

Jamal had been receiving text messages on his phone consistently. Paris noticed he would turn his phone over, or just ignore the text. One afternoon, she received a text that her husband was involved with one of his former graduate students and that she needed to go immediately to his office. Paris was off work on that day so she went right over to Jamal's office. She opened the door and there he was kissing another woman, and she was pregnant. Jamal was in shock and all Paris could do was stand there and cry. She calmly walked out of his office and waited for him to come home.

She never saw any signs of the unfaithfulness in their marriage. She tried to play it over and over in her head, but she would become more frustrated. Finally, Jamal came home and told her everything. He also stated that the child was his and that the affair had been going on from day one of their marriage. On the day of their marriage, he had sex with her, yet and he claimed he loved them both. Jamal had tried to keep it a secret, but he knew it would eventually come out. He was to afraid of loosing Paris and being away from his girlfriend and his new baby.

"You lost me the moment I walked through that door today" Paris told him.

Too Late to Apologize

Jamal's pleadings of "Please don't do this to us, and I love you Paris," made no headway with Paris. He was selfish and only cared about himself. Paris had been trying to conceive and Jamal kept making excuses why they should not have a child. That evening Jamal packed his bags and moved out. Paris filed for divorce and never had any further contact with Jamal until three years later.

Paris was the keynote speaker at an educational conference, and after she finished greeting people, Jamal stepped up. She was taken a little off-guard, but not totally surprised that he would possibly attend. After they exchanged greetings Jamal plunged right in with an apology. His relationship with the other woman broke off shortly after his divorce, and she had a miscarriage. He lost everything over his own pride and selfishness, he admitted.

For Paris, Jamal's admissions and apologies now brought closure to their dramatic and painful divorce. It was still over, however, and Paris made that very clear. She forgave him, but would not reconcile with him.

Choice At the Heart of the Matter

"But, you never gave me an opportunity to choose you," Jamal countered. "You chose the day you brought another woman into our marriage," Paris wisely observed. Their conversation ended, and Paris walked away never looking back. She continues to flourish and is focusing on her life with Christ and family.

I shared with Paris something my father told me. "If someone you have trusted can't make a decision for the betterment of your life, then you need to make it for yourself." Paris will continue her counseling with me, is looking forward to a wonderful future and trusting God for her outcomes.