

By Gwen Acton

JQ

JQ was my brother-in-law, the husband of my sister Jennifer. She is my only sibling, so JQ was a big part of my family, and a major aspect of my experience with my sister, for the last 30 plus years.

I first met JQ when I was in high school, a teenager visiting my 'Big Sister' Jenny out in California. She had dated JQ, but she was very careful to explain to me when I arrived that they were "just friends" now.

Even though they were "just friends", somehow JQ always seemed to be there during my trips there. He would pick us up in his old car, we went on picnics together, and we hung out at his house. He was living in a big group house on a hill at the time, and they had big pillows on the floor – that was the late 70's when people had big pillows instead of furniture in their living rooms. It was all so cool. JQ himself was also cool to me because we shared the same birthday – May 25th, although in different years of course.

From the beginning, I noticed that Jennifer seemed so comfortable with her "friend" JQ. And they seemed to have so much fun together: talking about wine and food, going on adventures, taking walks together, and going on lots and lots of picnics. I was so happy when Jennifer chose to stay with JQ. He was clearly so devoted to her, and loved her deeply. He was always there for her, supporting her through some very hard times, but also always bringing adventure and fun to their lives. JQ also had *awesome* taste in jewelry! If you've ever seen what Jennifer wears, you'll know what I mean.

JQ was a great father. Whenever I was there, he was happily playing games with the kids, and giving them so much attention. At the nightly family dinner, if anyone needed something – a glass of milk, a new fork, another napkin – it was always JQ who was up to get it for them. Family conversations with JQ were usually quite interesting too, with many of them having to do with math. On trips in their giant van (it was so huge you could basically play Frisbee in it), there would be lots of math conversations in the back with JQ. When the kids were little, I could understand what they were saying. As they got older, the math talk got *way* above my head.

One day I was taking a walk with Philip when he was quite young. Just the two of us, holding hands on the street. He said something about how I seemed like his dad in some ways. I was very touched since I took that as the highest compliment he could possibly have given me.

JQ was also passionate about his work. I'm so glad this is at the library, because I wanted to let you know how much he cared about his work here. When he visited

us, rather than heart-to-heart conversations, we would more often talk about the projects he was working on. They seemed to make him so happy and excited.

JQ was there for so many of us. Last summer in New York, I went out on a small boat when a thunderstorm came on quickly – I had no idea storms could come so fast. We were hurrying back to shore, and I was terrified we would be hit by lightning. There was JQ on shore – even though he wasn't feeling great at the time – there to help bring us in. When I saw him, I remember thinking that this was just like JQ, to be there helping others. I don't know if he saved our life that day, but it's quite possible since a few minutes later lightning did indeed strike close by.

JQ was fun.

He was smart – really smart.

He was supportive.

He was good.

Like many of you, I will miss him deeply.