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MAY 25, 2022

I can barely keep count of the people I know who have had a falling out with family members or friends over Donald Trump, his corrosive racism, COVID denialism or his undying, narcissistic insistence that he won the 2020 presidential election.

Some have simply stopped talking to each other, some have resolved to avoid politics when they find themselves together.

And then there are families like the Reffitts of Texas, who have become unwitting symbols of the country's extreme polarization in the aftermath of the Trump presidency.

A new podcast about the lead-up to Jan. 6 and its aftermath, "Will Be Wild," by investigative reporters Ilya Marritz and Andrea Bernstein, examines in depth the Reffitt family dynamics: an arrogant father who gives himself fully to conspiracy theories about the 2020 election, a teenage

son who is clear-eyed about the election and the dangers posed by his father's descent into lawlessness, and a wife and mother torn between her husband and son — and devastated by both.

You could look at the Reffitts' story as a tale of extreme family dysfunction.

Or you could see it as a tale of heroism on the part of a teenager, Jackson Reffitt, who did the right thing by turning his insurrectionist father in to the FBI, despite the trauma it inflicted on the people he loves.

It's a shame that the many Republicans invested in Trump's "Big Lie," either sincerely or cynically, aren't inspired by Jackson's courage to do the right thing themselves and disavow this deeply misguided anti-democratic movement.

You've probably heard the broad outlines of the Reffitts' story: In March, Jackson's father, Guy Reffitt, became the first accused Jan. 6 rioter to go on trial and be convicted by a jury in connection with the deadly attack on the Capitol. A member of a far-right militia group, the Texas Three Percenters, Guy had fallen deep down the Big Lie rabbit hole and had traveled to the Capitol to try to stop Congress' certification of the election.

He had been taken with Trump, his wife said, the moment the reality star came down the escalator in 2015 to announce his presidential campaign. Her husband and Trump "were very similar," said Nicole Reffitt. "Boisterous. Arrogant ... an alpha male."

Like many of the nearly 850 people who have been charged so far, Guy Reffitt documented his own misdeeds. Footage from his helmet-mounted camera was a boon to prosecutors, who were able to introduce some of it as evidence.

"I didn't come here to play games," Reffitt says in one of the videos. "I just want to see Pelosi's head hit every f— stair on the way out."

During the months leading up to the 2020 presidential election and the violence of Jan. 6, Jackson Reffitt had become alarmed by his father's crazy talk. The teenager's anxiety grew to the point that the only way he thought he could relieve it was to tip off the FBI in December 2020 that his father had boasted about planning "a big thing," he says in "Will Be Wild."

Still, he said, he was stunned when his mother told him his father was among the violent crowd as they watched TV news coverage of the assault on Jan. 6.

After Guy returned home from the Capitol, his son secretly recorded his boastful statements about the riot and turned over voice files and family texts to authorities. “I had every right to carry a weapon and try to take over the Congress,” Guy says in one recording.

At trial, Jackson Reffitt was a key prosecution witness against his father, who wept when his son took the stand.

On March 8, a jury found Guy Reffitt guilty of five felonies — obstruction of an official proceeding, interfering with police, transporting a gun for that purpose, armed trespassing and witness tampering (for warning two of his three children that if they turned him in, they were traitors, and “traitors get shot.”).

Reffitt is currently incarcerated in Washington, D.C., with other Jan. 6 rioters in what they have dubbed the “Patriots Pod.” He is scheduled to be sentenced June 8 and if convicted on all counts, faces decades in prison.

I can’t imagine what a nightmare this has been for Guy Reffitt’s family.

Nicole Reffitt is in the wrenching position of supporting her husband and loving her son while trying to minimize her husband’s acts of violence, even those directed at her.

“He’s not going to hurt me,” she told Marritz after admitting that Guy had held a gun to her head twice and discharged it once.

Nicole Reffitt said she fell apart emotionally in September and was hospitalized involuntarily for a week. She’d been detained by airport authorities, she said, after a passenger complained about a “Three Percenter” emblem on a bag of her husband’s she was using.

Therapy and medication, she said, helped her see her situation more clearly, and understand the enormous emotional weight she bore. With her husband in jail, she said her marital dynamic has changed. Before, if she got angry, her husband would get angrier, she said. Now when he gets angry, she hangs up on him.

“I have a little bit of power over that now,” she said.

Jackson, meanwhile, moved out of the family home and, for the moment at least, is barely communicating with his family, though he has given several lengthy interviews over the last 14 months.

“Did you have to decide if you loved your country more than your father?” asked a reporter for the British TV network ITV.

“Yeah,” replied the son. “I wish I didn’t have to go through the process of thinking about my father killing me or threatening me.”

And then, seemingly without prompting, Jackson added, “I love you Dad, and I want you to know that I didn’t just do it for my country, my family or myself. I did it for you.”

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