

NEWS

'DEAR PRUDENCE'

SYNOPSIS

JR Lawson is home alone when he hears someone breaking in. He grabs his laptop and tries to escape but runs into his intruder, someone he possibly knows.

Prudence McCoy is on the set of her weekly syndicated television program, "PruPower." She can't stop yawning, so Jeffrey Symcox, her boss, implores her to get some rest. They get into a discussion about Pru's mother and her dedication to her work, to the exclusion of everything else. Upon hearing the comparison to her mother, Pru decides to take a vacation immediately.

In Wyoming, Ruth, a local, helps Prudence with her luggage at the airport, and Prudence takes care of the squeaky wheels on the porter's luggage cart with one of her patented PruPointer™ home remedy tips. Ruth shows Prudence the Tesajaro, a piece of land sacred to the local Native Americans. Prudence then meets two men: Doug Craig, a prominent lawyer, and Jean Phillippe Andrews, a handsome American raised in France, who has recently inherited Tesajaro. The property has been in Andrews' family for more than 100 years. Prudence begins to ask Ruth about Doug. Ruth takes Prudence to the Mesa Bar and Grill for a drink. There, Prudence meets Eddie Duncan, a local detective with a rugged handsomeness. Sparks fly.

The Gray Wolf Lodge, owned by Ruth, is massive and beautiful. Prudence is shown to the room where her mother stayed when she came to visit. A paint set and easel from Jeffrey wait for her there. Prudence calls Jeffrey to thank him and, while on the phone, she receives a bouquet of flowers from Doug, and she starts picking Jeffrey's brain about him.

Prudence overhears Ruth playing a voicemail from JR, who is her son, and then hears her call him back, sounding concerned. Ruth explains that she worries something has happened to him. Prudence suggests that they drive out to his cabin to check on him.

Once there, they knock, but get no response. They discover the door partially open. Prudence can't help but start tidying up the kitchen while Ruth goes through the house. Prudence notices what she thinks is a wine stain on the carpet and then something red and sticky on the leg of the table. Definitely not wine. JR's computer is also gone and the file cabinet is empty. Prudence notices a candlestick that also seems to have some sort of substance on it and tries to discreetly examine it.

Later, Prudence is getting to know Doug Craig at a local restaurant. Jean Phillippe Andrews stops at their table and Doug introduces them. Prudence is charmed by Andrews, who asks for an autograph for his fiancée, a big fan.

Doug tells Prudence a little about Andrews' past, then Prudence mentions JR. Doug implies that there was some trouble with JR in the past.

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Prudence pays Eddie a visit at the police station to tell him what she found at JR's house. He is skeptical and can't really do anything since JR lived outside the city limits. Prudence returns to the Lodge to find the police there with Ruth. They found JR's body at the base of Diablo Canyon with a typed suicide note.

Ruth does not believe that JR committed suicide and especially not in this manner since he was terrified of heights. The next day, Prudence convinces Eddie to take her to the spot where JR's body was discovered. Along the way, the pair stops at the airport to pick up Nigel Forsythe III, Prudence's right-hand man, who has flown in to help with the investigation. Prudence fills Eddie in – he's brilliant and they need him, though Eddie is not convinced.

The three of them examine the area and Nigel starts disproving Eddie's theories. If JR had jumped, his body would not have landed where they found it. While Eddie goes off to speak to some possible witnesses, Nigel makes his big discovery. Footprints show a discrepancy in depth, implying that someone who walked with a limp carried something heavy down the hillside to the landing, but did not have it when they came back up.

Prudence sits down with Detective Jillson to try to convince him that this was murder, not suicide. He is not swayed by any of the "evidence," but Prudence gets his attention when she asks about his wife, Corky, and that pesky snoring problem Corky wrote in about. Seems Jillson's wife is a pretty big fan, and he agrees to have Forensics check out the candlestick.

In JR's apartment, Nigel discovers a French document and a photograph. The focus of the photo is a map, and the few clues around the map convince Prudence that Nigel will be able to find the room where the photo of the map was taken: JR's secret room.

Back at the lodge, Eddie stops in and chastises Nigel and Prudence for speaking to Jillson without him. While defending their actions and agreeing to back off, Nigel seems to discover something on his laptop. They rush off to see if Nigel really has discovered the secretive room. A few PruPointers™ later and they find themselves inside a motel room with the map they saw in the photo hanging on the wall. As they try to make sense of what they are looking at there is a knock on the door. They freeze, until bullets ring out. The intruder (is he limping?) gets in and they throw the bedspread over him. He fires wildly, and they knock him out with a lamp. Without stopping to see who is underneath, they run out of the room.

Prudence is on the phone with Jeffrey, clearly not happy to hear how she is spending her vacation. She hangs up, telling him they are being pulled over by the police. Jillson comes over to the car and asks if they know anything about a motel room that just got shot up. Seems the motel clerk described a car just like theirs leaving the scene. Prudence denies it but Jillson has more on his mind. Forensics came back on the candlestick, and he now agrees that JR's death was a murder. The problem is the only fingerprints they found belong to Prudence.

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Back at the Lodge, Ruth brings Prudence a box filled with letters and photos belonging to her mother. Prudence is shocked and finds herself sobbing as she reads love letters addressed to her mother. Prudence is reminded again how little she knew her mother.

Meanwhile, Nigel is trying to hack into JR's computer and has already discovered that all of the land on the map has been bought up by a company called JDT Enterprises. All but one large area where the hot springs and ancient burial grounds are located, owned by the Andrews family. Prudence leaves for a date with Eddie, where she finds him playing piano. Prudence finds herself entranced by the music and Eddie.

Prudence and Nigel track down the offices of JDT, the company that is about to buy all of the Andrews' land. Nigel goes in and tries to snap some photos of the meeting. He sees Jack Flagg and Jean Phillippe Andrews, and two other men in a conference room. A receptionist sits in front of a similar map. Nigel snaps some photos where the receptionist sits, and the conversation in the conference room becomes heated. Flagg appears to be upsetting them but Nigel can't hear what they are saying.

Prudence shows Eddie the French document they found in JR's room – a death certificate he brought back from his recent trip to Paris, for one Jean Phillippe Andrews! It seems the real Jean Phillippe died in a car crash, and Doug Craig went to Paris after the accident and brought home a stranger to play the role. They created this other Phillippe and sold all the surrounding land to be drilled for oil and profit from it. The fake Phillippe could sell his "father's" property, for hundreds of millions to investors who realized the potential. They had to stop JR from exposing the death certificate, and the story, however they could. Jean Phillippe makes a public announcement that the land has been sold to JDT, and Prudence uses this public forum to confront Doug and expose the scandal.

Jeffrey calls to make sure Prudence is okay and shocks her with the news that he was the author of those love letters to her mother. He shares more details of their relationship than Prudence is comfortable hearing, but his point is clear – it is not too late for her to find that kind of love herself. Prudence thinks he may have a point as she rides off on the back of Eddie's motorcycle, arms wrapped tightly around his waist.

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