



## CASE STUDY

### Carolyn & Michael

Carolyn and Michael are residents of a rural town of around 800 people in a rural county of around 3,000 people.

They attend a local church where Michael is a deacon and Carolyn plays the piano.

Additionally, they are well known in the town since Carolyn volunteers for police department fundraisers and Michael is part of the volunteer fire department.

Their oldest and closest friends are Chris, the local police chief, and Linette, a town council member.

Michael's family is all in the area, but Carolyn's immediate family has passed away and remaining cousin left the area.

Carolyn and Michael live 15 miles from town on a farm Carolyn inherited. The farm is their primary source of income, but both will do odd jobs throughout the year to make ends meet.

Finances were tight before COVID, but Michael caught COVID early in the pandemic and has long COVID side effects, especially around fatigue and breathing. He is unable to work the farm as he used to and is inside their home most of time or at the police station seeing his best friend.

The farm's income has dropped exponentially, and Carolyn is unable to manage it physically on her own. They sold their second truck and most of the farm equipment to pay for medical bills, additional medical treatments, and regular bills. Thus, further reducing the farm's income generation.



Michael always had a temper and would yell at Carolyn when frustrated or angry but would apologize and promise to never yell again. The promises lasted for weeks to months, but since his health issues with COVID, his outburst have grown more frequent and more harmful.

Last week he began throwing things around the house and at Carolyn and even waved around a pistol. It really scared her and when she communicated that his actions were scaring her, he said, "Good, you should be scared of me. I'm the head of this household and you should damn well fear me."

Carolyn tried to talk to Linette, but she said she could not believe Michael would do anything like that and Carolyn should try to not aggravate him since he was ill, not working, and should try to give him space.

Carolyn also spoke with her pastor, but he said that it was her duty to work on her marriage and submit to her husband since she made a commitment in front of God, him, and their family and friends to make their marriage work in health and in sickness.

Carolyn remembered seeing a poster in a coffee shop in the nearest large town, about an hour and a half away, about calling anytime of the day or night if you felt unsafe in your home. She looked up the organization on her phone and called. They asked her to come in for an intake, but the distance and cost of gas led her to hang up without getting any resources or help.

You meet Carolyn and she shares what she has been experiencing.

How would you handle this situation?