

# Serinda Swan on How *Coroner* Goes Deeper With Jenny's Struggles in Season 2

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Learning that you were responsible for the death of your sister is not an easy thing to bounce back from. That's exactly what Dr. Jenny Cooper (Serinda Swan) will be trying to do as CBC's drama *Coroner* returns for Season 2 on Monday, January 6 at

9 p.m. ET. On top of that trauma, in the premiere episode, "Fire," written by showrunner Morwyn Brebner and directed by Adrienne Mitchell, in the aftermath of a devastating apartment fire, Jenny tries to control a dangerous new outlet for her anxiety.

During a visit to the *Coroner* set back in October, *The TV Junkies* sat down with Swan to discuss the struggles that Jenny will face in Season 2. The *Coroner* star shared that Jenny would have a full house, as both her father Gordon (Nicholas Campbell) and boyfriend Liam (Éric Bruneau) move in with her, just as son Ross (Ehren Kassam) turns 18 years old. Swan also previewed how the show would dive deeper into serious topics such as trauma, PTSD, and dealing with dementia.

**The TV Junkies: It's Season 2 and you, along with the audience, really got to know Jenny in Season 1. What's it like to now come back and play her again?**

Serinda Swan: It's easier and harder. It's easier because you know her complexities, but it's harder because you have to live in them further and deeper. It's a really interesting experience. I loved playing Jenny in the first season. She's tons of fun, and the way she's written allows for a lot of character work, but when I got back into it I was like 'oh she's deep in it!'

At the end of the first season, we find out that she's the reason

her sister died, and this hallucination of the black dog is what's bringing her back to it. It doesn't cure her. It's just something else that she has to deal with. It's the process and the progress of her trauma that we get to see in the second season, along with more explanations on why she is in this state. But it will show up in new and intriguing ways.

**TTVJ: Jenny's battle with anxiety was such a focus in Season 1. What does it look like here in Season 2, especially now that she's also got this added knowledge of everything that happened with her sister?**

SS: It's not as focused on this season. They move a little bit more into the storytelling of the cases a bit more, instead of the storytelling of Jenny. You do see the evolution of it physically through her. It's not necessarily panic attacks, but in other mysterious, odd Jenny ways. You see a woman who is struggling to integrate that truth into her life. How does she live with herself every day after learning that she killed her sister? How does one live with themselves? So you watch her suppress it, and go to Dr. Sharma (Saad Siddiqui) and try to figure out the pills. When we find Jenny in the beginning of the second season, she doesn't have the capacity to deal with what she's now learned. She's in a state where she's numbing herself across the board.



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**TTVJ: Jenny not only has to worry about herself, but she is also now taking care of her father and his ailing health. Can you share what complications Gordon's health may cause for Jenny?**

SS: He moves into the house. Everybody moves into the house. It's a very full house! [laughs] All my boys are under one roof. It's packed. Everything that Jenny needs to face is in her face — dealing with the dementia, and dealing with the anger she has towards him for not telling her. I think one of the interesting things that I have created for Jenny this season, is the frustration you have towards a parent when they have dementia, and we don't talk about that. You have such compassion for them and what they are going through, but it also feels like you're losing a piece of yourself. It's also incredibly difficult to be around that person. It's very difficult to watch them slip away.

That's compounded for Jenny because he just told Jenny the truth and now he doesn't have to remember it. He doesn't have to live with it. He's transferred this weight at a point in her life where he can't help hold it. There's a lot of anger and frustration there for her to have to hold on to everything, and then on top of it, hold onto him now.

That's something I've been working on layering in this season, her unwillingness to burden him with her anger, but then also just feeling her anger towards him. What do you do? You can't yell at a man with dementia. Anything that I tell him at this point, he's probably going to forget. Any accountability I try to hold him to, he's going to drop. It's like trying to fight thin air. That's something that, throughout the season, is woven in.

**TTVJ: I think dementia is one of those topics we don't see explored enough but that is really important. I think it's great the show is going to have that discussion.**

SS: Just being open about it and being able to have that anger, and then vocalize it. You can feel sorry for them and for yourself. Dementia doesn't just happen to the person who gets it, but it happens to everyone around them. There's a huge piece in her life that it's not fair.

**TTVJ: Then you feel guilty for feeling that way.**

SS: 100 percent! Exactly!

**TTVJ: Elsewhere, Ross is turning 18 this year. What does that mean for Jenny?**

SS: That means so much! So much happens with Ross this year, including things she did not expect. He moves out, sort of, but he's also planning on going to college this year. That's exciting, heartbreaking, and triumphant for her that she actually got him there. But things don't always go as planned so there's a lot of twists and turns between her and Ross.

**TTVJ: As much as I love Jenny and her boys, I really loved her with Alison (Tamara Podemski). Will we see more of Jenny's relationship with her this year?**

SS: Yes, we will! We start bringing Alison out of the office and it's hilarious. We were shooting a scene the other day where Alison makes it onto a crime scene, and she has to wear one of our bunny suits. Tamara was like 'what do I do?' I said 'you just wear it.' She said 'do I zip the hood up? I feel like Alison would wear the whole hood.' About 20 minutes in, I see her and she's so hot. She said 'this is horrible. How do you do this?' I forgot that we are a season and a half into the show and she's never experienced that.

We have a lot of great scenes between the two of us. She gets out of the office, which I love, and we find out more about her personally. We see them together professionally as well. Everything seems to be evolving, but we dive in a little more.



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**TTVJ: And it seems like maybe everything isn't perfect between Jenny and Liam this year?**

SS: We deal a lot more with his PTSD. I think Jenny is not the most capable human to deal with other people's trauma. She isn't for her own, and she isn't for others. We've dubbed her "the truth hunter," and loves hunting for the truth in other people, but is just so blind to her own. This season she starts to turn that truth hunter on Liam, and I don't think he's ready to dive into his own trauma at this point. That's difficult for their relationship.

**TTVJ: How is Jenny doing on the job this year? Last year she was kind of getting her feet wet, figuring out what the job was, and how she wanted to do it. How's it going this year and especially with her partner Mac (Roger**

**Cross)?**

SS: She's super capable and she and Mac are on great terms. They still butt heads when he tries to mansplain things to her, but she doesn't have any of those challenging employees this year. She's really in her element, and I think that's the only time she's in her element. Everywhere else in her life seems to be crashing down around her, and work is the one place she can still dive into that Jenny "Truth Hunter" drive. There are things this season though that could potentially end her career, so she's walking a very tight line because there's a couple opportunities that she might be dismissed or fired. There's drama everywhere in her life.

Ready for more *Coroner*? Sound off below!

*Coroner* Season 2 premieres Monday, January 6 at 9 p.m. ET on CBC.



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