

Tagged

Written by

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. RESTAURANT -- DAY

WALLY PERCY, 28, is seated at lunch with his mother, Lois. There is a graduation cap on the table. His father, who was to have joined them, is a "no-show" and there is an empty seat at the table.

WALLY

(covering)
You know what? It's not a big deal. So dad missed the graduation, it's just a ceremony. I mean this is the real celebration - the lunch.

LOIS

Mm-hmm.

WALLY

Because the lunch is where we actually connect. That was just a hall filled with hundreds of people. Very impersonal actually.

LOIS

Mmmm.

WALLY

You know what else, my residency starts in a week, I'm flying out on Wednesday. I mean, this is basically my goodbye lunch. Even Dad wouldn't miss that.

(checks phone)

It's 2:15, he is running late.

LOIS

Actually it's 2:30, that's a little slow.

A busboy approaches.

BUSBOY

(re: empty seat)

Should I clear this setting for you?

WALLY

(smiling)

No, no my dad's on his way, he probably just got caught at work.

LOIS

(sighs)

Take the setting.

WALLY

Mom.

LOIS

(to Wally)

It's been a half hour.

(to the busboy)

His dad's not coming. He never comes.

WALLY

(to Lois)

He'll be here. He knows this is important to me.

LOIS

No, he doesn't. Not because he doesn't care, it's that he just doesn't get it.

A waiter approaches, joining the busboy.

WAITER

How are we doing?

WALLY

(covering for time)

We'd like to see a wine list.

LOIS

He's not emotional, he's not hardwired like the rest of us.

BUSBOY

(to waiter, pointed)

We're "waiting" on his father.

WAITER

Ah.

(then)

You know we do have a beautiful two-top by the window?

WALLY

(growing impatient)

My dad will be here any moment.

LOIS

You know I had to teach him how to hug. For years he only used one arm because he felt using two "was redundant."

Now the maitre d approaches, making it a small crowd.

MAITRE D

How is everyone?

WALLY
(losing patience)
We're fine.

MAITRE D
Great. I just wanted to let you
know that a lovely two-top opened up
by the window.

WALLY
We need the space.

LOIS
He thinks his father is going to
show up.

WALLY
I'll just text him now.
(begins texting)
See where he's at.

LOIS
(rubbing temples)
Why must you always see the positive?
I'm not that way, your dad's
definitely not that way - who was
it, who taught you this?

WALLY
(sincere)
You know what, I think deep down you
both are.
(light bulb)
Uhp, he probably stopped to pick up
a present. That's why he's running
late.
(laughing)
He's so last minute with the gifts.

Wally's cell phone vibrates.

WALLY (CONT'D)
(phone vibrates)
Wait - he's texting back...
(reading)
"Working. What have you been up
to?"

Wally bites his lip in frustration, the waiter immediately
grabs the bread, and the busboy grabs the setting.

MAITRE D
(selling)
You're going to love the window.
There's a regatta in the harbor.

The maitre d walks off.

LOIS

You're not a kid anymore, Wally.
The rest of your life is about to
begin. It's time you start accepting
him for who he is.

WALLY

I know.
(then)
Do you think maybe he'll come for
dessert?

INT. BALTIMORE COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE AUTOPSY ROOM -- LATER

JAMES PERCY, mid 50's stiff, serious, professorial type and the most respected man in the building, is performing an autopsy with SUSAN CROMWELL, early 30's, an attractive pathologist. At another table is WAYNE WILLIAMS, a pathologist and a churchgoing type in his mid 40's, who is working with TOM REICH, a geeky forensic tech, age unknown.

JAMES

Wayne, I read your report on our
John Doe. In section 4, you wrote,
"decendent found in dirt, and leaves".

WAYNE

That's how he was.

JAMES

Yes, but you added a comma after the
word "dirt", and so are suggesting
that after being found, the body
rose from the dead and then left the
crime scene.

WAYNE

That didn't happen.

JAMES

Stop using commas.
(then, to room)
Also, it seems someone left a brain
in the break room refrigerator.
Does anyone want to say why they did
that...Tom?

TOM

I'm sorry.

JAMES

I know we're often short on storage
space, but most people are
uncomfortable seeing cadaver organs
so close to their food. So, please,
in the future, let's leave all body
parts in the autopsy room.

TOM
(clarifying)
Sure thing Dr. Percy. Just to be clear though, that wasn't from the autopsy room. I brought that brain from home.

Tom turns to weigh an organ. HENDRICKS, a mustachioed Marlboro man type and the resident medical examiner (but not a doctor), and Susan's ex-husband, enters.

HENDRICKS
We get a B-A-C on that driver?

SUSAN
Yeah point one-four. The same as it was an hour ago when you asked.

Hendricks then turns to Wayne.

HENDRICKS
You see that? Right after me.

WAYNE
She's a woman scorned, my friend. It's gonna be this way for a while.

HENDRICKS
It's just I forget stuff, you know?

WAYNE
Well, I've got a roast slow cookin' at home, so all you need to focus on is how much you're gonna eat tonight.

HENDRICKS
Thanks Wayne.

Just then, MARLEEZA DINKINS, 40, the head of BCCO, breezes in with NELSON BANKS, a new staffer who's clearly overweight and in his mid 80's.

MARLEEZA
Hello all, please, continue working.

No one has moved.

MARLEEZA (CONT'D)
I just wanted to stop by and introduce you to Nelson Banks, our new pathologist. This is James, he heads the department.

Nelson waves a shaky hand.

JAMES

(re: age)

I gather you have a great deal of experience.

MARLEEZA

Not just experience, but perspective. It's part of my exciting new senior hiring initiative. You see Nelson, like many senior citizens, is very close to death. And since we deal with death on a daily basis, I thought he could provide some unique insights.

NELSON

I've also been a doctor. For over five decades.

MARLEEZA

(as if to a child)

Of course you have!

(then, playful)

If I were sixty years older...

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Marleeza and James are walking down the hallway.

JAMES

Marleeza, I'm concerned that Nelson's not a long term solution.

MARLEEZA

James, do you know why I left the office of tourism? Why I left what most people consider the Xanadu of county departments?

JAMES

I believe there was a law suit.

MARLEEZA

It's because I wanted to shake things up and make a difference. And I can't do that by making the "safe" choice, the "smart" decision.

James stops in front of his office. But before he goes in, he takes a stab at clarifying things with Marleeza.

JAMES

Marleeza, our job at the Coroner's office is really very simple. We determine cause of death and we identify the dead. That's all we do here.

MARLEEZA
(smiling coyly,
cryptically)
We'll see.

Marleeza marches onward, as James opens the door to his office.

INT. JAMES' OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

James' office is sparsely decorated with one photo on the wall, of James feeding a baby panda. He enters and is surprised to see Wally standing there.

WALLY
Do you know that the only photo you
have is of you and an animal?

JAMES
Wallace, what are you doing here?

WALLY
I thought I'd stop by. After
graduation.

JAMES
Isn't that next week?
(then)
It appears I've gotten some dates
messed up.

Wally puts the plate down and gets up from James' chair.

WALLY
I can't believe you missed my
graduation.

JAMES
I'm sorry.

WALLY
That's it? That's all you have to
say?

JAMES
I'm very sorry?

James go around to his seat.

WALLY
Do you have any idea how important
today was for me?

JAMES
Look, I've said I'm sorry and I am.
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

But could I just suggest, that possibly, just maybe, you could be overreacting.

WALLY

I'm overreacting? You missed my graduation.

JAMES

Let's look at this rationally shall we. Yes, you worked extremely hard getting through medical school. And that's a huge accomplishment. But today, all you did, was walk from your seat to the stage and back again.

WALLY

But --

JAMES

And wear a robe.

WALLY

You're unbelievable. I could land on the moon and you wouldn't be impressed.

JAMES

Well, it's a forty year old achievement, so I don't think I'd be alone on that one.

WALLY

Whatever, Jupiter.

JAMES

You can't land on a surface with no solid matter.

WALLY

You know what I mean. Would you stop being so unreasonable?

JAMES

I'm unreasonable? You're the one talking about landing on a gaseous planet.

WALLY

(deep sigh, then)
Dad, I'm moving across the country. And I'm afraid once I go, we'll never have a relationship.

JAMES

Don't be silly, I'm your father.

WALLY

Dad as it is right now, I live 20 minutes away and we're barely connected.

JAMES

That's not true.

WALLY

When's the last time we went to lunch, or got a beer? We speak, but do we really talk? I mean, honestly, how well do we really know each other?

JAMES

Alright. So talk.

WALLY

What?

JAMES

Well, you want to "talk", so I'm offering you the opportunity. Please.

James stares at Wally intently. Wally finally has all of James' focus, but he's not sure what to do with it. After all these years, where to begin? What to say?

WALLY

Alright...well... you know, I just have so many big things.. To share.. And to ask... um...

(lamey)

How've you been?

Just then, Susan enters.

SUSAN

Sorry to interrupt, but there's a problem with Nelson.

JAMES

Which is?

SUSAN

He's dead.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Nelson is lying on a gurney looking peaceful but dead. James, Susan and Wally are joined by Marleeza, who is pacing anxiously.

MARLEEZA

Well this is definitely a setback for the hiring initiative.

JAMES

What happened?

SUSAN

He said he was going to lie down and take a nap, and...

TOM

God, Nelson. I can't believe he's gone.

(fondly, as if it
were years ago)

Do you remember that time that Marleeza brought him in to meet us?

SUSAN

I haven't taken a close look yet, but my guess is, considering his age and size, it's probably a heart attack.

WALLY

Or... a cerebral aneurysm.

WAYNE

And why is that?

WALLY

Well, it just seems more likely considering the swelling in the orbital region.

JAMES

Hmmm.

(takes a closer look
at Nelson, then)

I think you're right.

James smiles proudly.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Nice work, Wallace.

Wally beams at the praise. Susan is shaken by having publicly been wrong.

WALLY

Thanks, Dad.

SUSAN

(covering shame)

Yeah, it's probably an aneurysm... I mean I said at the beginning that I didn't take a close look... it actually could be both... but yours is probably right... I'll be in my car.

Susan exits.

JAMES

Marleeza, perhaps our next pathologist could be a bit younger. I feel that 38 minutes is really not enough time for anyone to make an impact.

MARLEEZA

Sounds a little like Monday morning quarterbacking, but point made.

People start to mill about and go about their business. James approaches Wally.

JAMES

Listen, Wallace, I know we were about to have a very important emotional conversation, but given the circumstances it'll have to wait.

WALLY

I understand.

JAMES

And you may want to look at this as an opportunity to gather your thoughts - you seemed to be having some difficulty figuring out what you wanted to say.

WALLY

Got it.

JAMES

Which may indicate that there really is not a lot to say. Just consider the possibility.

James nods Vulcan-like. Wally smiles slyly.

WALLY

I think I have it figured out.

James heads over to check on Nelson. Wally approaches Marleeza.

WALLY (CONT'D)

Could I talk to you for a second?

MARLEEZA

(long beat, then)
Yyyess. You can talk to me.

INT. MARLEEZA'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Marleeza is sitting at her desk. In front of her is a microphone which is connected to the loudspeaker system. Much like a high school principal would use. As she addresses her employees, she will get up from her desk and walk about her office. And throughout the scene we will **INTERCUT** with **EMPLOYEES WORKING AND LISTENING** throughout the building. Before she begins speaking, she hits a few notes on a xylophone to introduce herself.

MARLEEZA

Hello all. This is Marleeza, many of you may be wondering where my voice is coming from.

INT. CADAVER ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tom searches through a freezer drawer. He keeps moving stuff aside in search of something.

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

Well this PA system is one of the many advancements that I've set in motion for this department.

Tom finds what he's been looking for: ice cream. And he grabs a spoon and begins to dig in.

INT. MARLEEZA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Marleeza begins to stroll around her office while holding her microphone.

MARLEEZA

But not every change will be as outwardly successful as others. Sadly my senior hiring initiative suffered a setback.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Wayne and Susan are working/examining Nelson's body.

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

And no one, not even Nelson himself, was more devastated by his death than me.

Susan grabs an organ from inside Nelson and puts it in a bucket.

INT. MARLEEZA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Marleeza is standing in front of her full length office mirror, and inspecting herself as she holds the microphone.

MARLEEZA

But what did I do? I dusted myself off, and came back even stronger. Which is why I'm pleased to introduce, my "junior" hiring initiative.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Wally, with a spring in his step, walks along the corridor.

MARLEEZA

Young people are hip, they're now, they remind us that life goes on.

INT. MARLEEZA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Marleeza is now plucking a few stray eyebrows out as she speaks into the microphone on a nearby table.

MARLEEZA

And so, in what I hope to be the first of many new hires, I am pleased to tell you that we have a new pathologist...

INT. JAMES' OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

James is at his desk doing some paperwork. Wally knocks and enters just as Marleeza announces his name:

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

Wallace Percy...

WALLY

(upbeat)

Hey.

(then)

So, should I refer to you as Dr. Percy...?

James stares at Wally in disbelief.

WALLY (CONT'D)

(relishing)

Or just daddy?

As Wally smiles broadly, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. JAMES' OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

James is still seated behind his desk. Wally is so excited he cannot stand still.

WALLY

This all makes so much sense, I can't believe I didn't think of it sooner. The two of us, working side by side, getting to be with each other, getting to know each other.

JAMES

What happened to being a heart surgeon? What about your residency?

WALLY

I've deferred for a year. Besides, I'll still be working on hearts, two of them...yours and mine.

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

There are many more exciting ideas that are being implemented at the BCCO --

James stands and turns off the speaker mount on the wall.

JAMES

Wallace, these choices you're making, they affect your actual life. Not the movie you think you're living in.

WALLY

Cue music, I'm coming in for a hug. I can go high, I can go low, but either way it's gonna be tight.

Wally hugs James, who stands stiffly, arms at his side.

JAMES

(pointed)
You know, there is a reason I missed some birthdays.

WALLY

(still hugging)
Our hearts are beating in the same rhythm. That has to mean something.

Wally lets go.

JAMES

Wallace, could this be one of many in a long line of impulsive acts that you might regret later? Not unlike your two engagements.

WALLY

Two engagement dinners that you missed by the way. Let's not miss the third.

JAMES

And the fourth.

WALLY

Think of Spock and Kirk, two people who could not seem more different. But by working together, day in and day out, steering the Enterprise through the galaxy, Kirk was able to tap into Spock's half-human side - and a profound bond was born.

Beat. James sighs deeply then:

JAMES

(tired of this argument)
Spock is not half human.

WALLY

Yes he is.

JAMES

It's not an even split.

WALLY

His mother is from Earth.

JAMES

But the Vulcan gene is dominant.

WALLY

(calmly)
Dad, I'm working here.

James sizes his son up for a beat. He sees his son's determination. There's no talking him out of this.

JAMES

Okay, Wallace, I can see there's no changing your mind. But let's try and keep in mind, that while Spock and Kirk had a relationship, the business of the Enterprise and of Starfleet always came first.

WALLY

Sure thing. We'll save the personal stuff for carpools and vacations. There's a 10 day bike trip across the Czech Republic that has me and you written all over it.

Wally gives James the "vulcan salute" and walks out.

INT. CADAVER ROOM -- LATER

Tom is showing Wally around.

TOM

...And, my favorite, the cadaver room -- I just wanna say that your father is a very great man. You know the formula for re-hydrating burned skin? He developed that all on his own -- it's now used all across the country.

WALLY

What's that for?

TOM

(laughs, then)
Oh, you're serious. Ident. Finger prints. Take the charred skin of a hand, apply father's formula, put said skin over one's own hand --

Tom points to his own hand which is in fact covered in a glove that looks alto like loose skin.

TOM (CONT'D)

And presto, you've got a fingerprint. Even fire can't take away god's I.D.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Tom and Wally enter the hallway.

WALLY

You supposed to be wearing that now?

Tom looks at his hand and realizes his mistake.

TOM

(realizing, concerned)
Probably not.

Susan enters the hallway from the break room across the hall. She has an open bag of microwave popcorn with her.

TOM (CONT'D)

Susan, you've met Wally...

SUSAN

Sure, welcome aboard.

WALLY

Thanks.

SUSAN

I just want to say the other day when we were looking at Nelson... I could not see the orbital region from my angle.

WALLY

What?

SUSAN

(quickly)

I just didn't want you to think that I made a mis-diagnosis. Because I just don't do that -- not that it'd be a problem if I did, people are allowed to make mistakes -- it's just, I don't.

(offering)

Popcorn?

TOM

Don't mind if I do.

Tom reaches in with his gloved hand and digs around for a long beat. Susan offers the bag to Wally, who declines. James approaches.

JAMES

Wallace, come with me, we have a field assignment.

WALLY

(pleasantly surprised)

Alright.

Wally starts off, but Susan pulls Wally back.

SUSAN

Would you mention to him about my angle vis-a-vis Nelson's orbital region?

INT. APARTMENT -- LATER

Roosevelt and Rodriguez, mid twenties, total schemers, are setting up the gurney. They are the BCCO drivers. As James talks to Wally by the body, an on scene photographer snaps photos of the body from many angles.

WALLY

Thanks for picking me, dad.

JAMES

I did not "pick" you. It's protocol.
(then, into dictaphone)
Yellow coloring in fingernail
pigmentation. Be sure to do a full
toxicology screen.

WALLY

(into dictaphone)
Contusion left ankle, possible break,
presumably from a fall
(then, to photographer)
Hold on -- can you just get a quick
photo of us?

JAMES

Wallace --

WALLY

It's our first time working together.

Wally smiles big over the body with his arm around his
perturbed dad.

SFX: SNAP AND FLASH

JAMES

(re: dead person)
Part of me envies this man.

WALLY

(to photographer)
Two copies please. And maybe one
with that frayed border?

Annoyed, James crosses off. Roosevelt sidles up to Wally.

ROOSEVELT

Nice place, huh?

WALLY

(takes in the apartment)
Yeah.

ROOSEVELT

You want it?

WALLY

What?

ROOSEVELT

Two bedrooms, view of the harbor -
guy like you? You'd kill in this
place.

WALLY

Uh-huh. How are you giving this to me?

ROOSEVELT

Rodriguez and I are the first to know when an apartment opens up. And as such we've developed a little side business. Finder's fee is two g's. For you? Fifteen hundo.

WALLY

You're serious.

ROOSEVELT

It's all kosher, yo.

WALLY

Thanks, but I have a place.

Just then, Rodriguez casually walks up to them.

RODRIGUEZ

(clearly selling)

Have you seen that bathroom? If I were a single guy, I would love that new tiling.

ROOSEVELT

He's not interested.

RODRIGUEZ

(moving on)

I'll get a body bag.

Rodriguez walks off as Roosevelt hands Wally a business card.

ROOSEVELT

Change your mind, here's our card.

WALLY

(reading)

Apartments, jewelry, fine china...

ROOSEVELT

A lot of stuff comes our way.

ERIN, thirty something, attractive enters the apartment.

ERIN

(knocking lightly)

Are you from the Coroner's office?

JAMES

Yes, I'm Dr. James Percy.

ERIN

I'm Erin Morse. I'm the one who called you guys.

JAMES

Did you know the decedent?

ERIN

(slightly tearing up)
Yes. This is my father.

James get his pen out.

JAMES

I'm sorry for your loss.
(clicking pen)
His name please?

ERIN

Harold. Harold Morse.

James writes the name into the paperwork.

ERIN (CONT'D)

I just can't believe he's gone.

JAMES

Is that Morris, with an "i-s"? Or "s-e" as in morse code?

ERIN

Oh, um morse code.

JAMES

Okay, if you could sign
(indicating)
here, here and initial here...

He hands her a pen and holds the clipboard for her to sign.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(ripping off sheet)
Okay. There's a number for social services at the bottom of the yellow form.

James walks off, Wally hurries up to him.

WALLY

Whoa, whoa, whoa. That's it?

JAMES

He'll be bagged but the rest of the process takes place at the office.

WALLY

I'm talking about her. Her father just died.

JAMES

Our job is to determine cause of death when no medical personnel are present. It's not our job to take care of next of kin. Hence, the number at the bottom of the form.

WALLY

Great, you know what this is? This is a teachable moment, Mr. Spock.

Wally approaches Erin.

WALLY (CONT'D)

(perfect bedside manner)
Hey, I'm Wally. How are you?

ERIN

(still shaken)
I saw him just this morning.

Wally hands her a tissue from his pocket.

WALLY

You want to sit down for a sec?

ERIN

Thank you.

As Wally leads her to the couch:

JAMES

Dr. Percy, we really should be going.
(pointed)
The Enterprise is on a very tight schedule.

WALLY

I'll call when I wanna beam up.

James leaves, clearly annoyed. Wally sits quietly with Erin. Rodriguez enters.

RODRIGUEZ

(gently, to Erin)
Excuse me, was the Ducati in the garage your father's?

INT. CORONER'S OFFICE/FRONT DESK -- LATER

The receptionist, GWEN, sits behind the desk. Wayne and Susan go over paperwork. Rodriguez talks to Hendricks who flips through Polaroids of the recently deceased Mr. Morse.

HENDRICKS
(looking at photo)
This place is pretty sweet, Rodriguez.

RODRIGUEZ
(indicating)
Look there by the body bag, that's mahogany flooring.

HENDRICKS
What's the finder's fee?

RODRIGUEZ
It's usually 3 g's, but for you \$2500.

HENDRICKS
Well, I'm interested.

Wayne immediately stands, concerned.

RODRIGUEZ
Take the day, let me know.

Rodriguez exits, Wayne pulls Hendricks aside.

WAYNE
Do you really think it's a good time to be looking for your own place?

HENDRICKS
Wayne, I've been at your place for three months.

WAYNE
General rule of thumb: you should stay at your buddy's place for half the length of your actual marriage.

HENDRICKS
That would put me at your place for two years. I can't do that.

WAYNE
You can. And you should. We're talking about your emotional health.

HENDRICKS
(considers, then)
I'll be fine, buddy. Thanks though.

James enters.

JAMES
(to Wayne)
Do we have the tox screen back on Mr. Morse yet?

WAYNE

Still waiting.

(then, to Hendricks)

Let's go home, hit the weights, and talk about it after.

SFX: THREE CHIMES INDICATING PA ANNOUNCEMENT

MARLEEZA

(over PA)

Just a reminder, next Monday is bring your child to work day. So, please, move all potentially toxic chemicals to our highest shelves - out of reach of little hands and little fingers.

SFX: THREE CHIMES - ANNOUNCEMENT OVER

Wally walks in holding a starbucks cup of coffee.

HENDRICKS

Hey, new guy. Protocol is when you go to Starbucks you get for everyone.

WALLY

Sorry, I would've but I was with that woman Erin and it didn't seem appropriate.

James quickly perks up at what he heard. Tom saunters in.

JAMES

I'm sorry, did you say you were just having coffee with Erin?

WALLY

She had tea. If she has coffee after four, she's up all night.

JAMES

(firm)

Wallace, you cannot do that.

WALLY

She was upset. And needed some support. The number on the yellow form was not going to cover it.

TOM

Are we allowed to date next of kin? I don't meet very many women. This would really widen the pool for me.

WALLY

Tom, I'm not dating Erin.

HENDRICKS

Well do you mind if I do? Because she is a looker.

SUSAN

You son of a bitch. We had an agreement. We would not date anyone at work.

HENDRICKS

She's not at work! She's next of kin.

WAYNE

I gotta side with Susan on this one.

TOM

Gwen, could you pull Mrs. Sandrowski's phone number from our files.

GWEN

Tom, she's seventy years old.

TOM

(confused)
Yes...?

JAMES

(snapping)
No one is dating anyone. Wallace, this is the Coroner's office. We do not deal with the emotional well being of people. We investigate and identify causes of death. If you are so interested in talking to people, perhaps you should have done your residency in psychiatry. But I should warn you that even there, you need to have personal boundaries. In the meantime, while you are here, gracing us with your presence, try and concentrate on figuring out how to do your job before you start re-inventing it.

A tense beat for everyone. Wally, clearly stung, walks off.

TOM

(into phone)
I'm looking for Edna... Oh, I didn't realize. I'm so sorry for your loss.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- LATER

Susan and James are weighing Nelson's body organs. James is jotting down their findings.

JAMES

Heart?

SUSAN

(reading scale)

11.5 ounces.

(then)

You know, had Nelson not died of an aneurysm, judging from these arteries, he would have died of a heart attack. Not that it matters. It's just interesting.

JAMES

Can I ask you a personal question?

Susan's eyes go wide with surprise and excitement. Dr. James Percy wants her opinion!

JAMES (CONT'D)

Was I too hard on Wallace?

SUSAN

First off, I want you to know, that the fact that you feel comfortable enough with me, that you trust me enough --

JAMES

Susan.

SUSAN

Um, okay, yes, too hard. For sure.

JAMES

Really?

SUSAN

I'm sorry. I'll be in my car.

JAMES

Wait, please, I want to hear what you have to say.

SUSAN

Okay, it's just there's so much pressure. I've imagined this moment thousands of times.

JAMES

Susan, I'd really encourage you to start drinking more after work.

Wayne enters.

WAYNE

Your tox screen came in. You should see this.

JAMES

Thank you, I'll be over in a minute.

Wayne leaves.

SUSAN

Okay, it wasn't that you were wrong, or that what you said was too far, you just wouldn't have done that with the rest of us. So maybe because he's your son, you went a little further.

James takes this in for a long beat and looks off.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

Please still like me.

INT. WALLY'S HALLWAY/APARTMENT -- NIGHT

James approaches with a jug of homemade mead and a dvd. He knocks on the door and after a moment, Wally answers.

WALLY

(surprised)

Dad? What are you doing here?

JAMES

Well, I thought I'd drop in to say hello. I brought *Robinhood* - Errol Flynn - and some of my homemade mead.

Wally takes the jug. His dad enters.

WALLY

Wow, dad, I don't know what to say.

JAMES

And also, today at the office...things were said... in a heated moment... and well... I'm sorry.

WALLY

Well, I accept your apology. And I know it's not your style, but I'm glad that you can come around to seeing that talking to Erin, giving her the extra time -- there's value in that.

JAMES

What? No, no. I'm just apologizing for being too hard on you. I'm still quite sure that you went way too far with Erin, particularly given what's come to light.

WALLY

What do you mean?

JAMES

Her father's tox screen came back positive for arsenic. The police have deemed her a person of interest.

A look of concern comes across Wally's face, James does not notice and continues with his apology.

JAMES (CONT'D)

At any rate, I treated you unfairly. And for that I was wrong, not just as your superior but as your father --

Just then, Erin pops out from the kitchen.

ERIN

Where do you keep your serving dishes?
(then, upbeat James)
Hey, Dr. Percy.

A beat. Wally and James are not sure what to do.

JAMES

Hello.

ERIN

I hope you're staying for dinner,
I'm making lasagna.

Erin giggles and ducks back into the kitchen. James and Wally are frozen.

WALLY

We probably shouldn't eat that.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. WALLY'S APARTMENT -- MOMENTS LATER

Wally and James are there. Erin is back in the kitchen. There's obviously a sudden urgency to the situation.

JAMES

What is she doing here?

WALLY

Well, I invited her.

JAMES

What?!

WALLY

She was upset, okay? You know, she also lost her mother a month ago.

(then)

We might want to have someone look into that.

JAMES

You are unbelievable.

ERIN (O.S.)

You guys like garlic?

WALLY

(calls off)

Not really.

JAMES

You're going to argue with her right now?

WALLY

(calls off)

Actually, yes! I'm in the mood for garlic!

(then, hushed again)

So I guess the next step is to call the police, huh?

James begins texting.

JAMES

I'm texting Hendricks. I don't want her to come in while I'm on the phone.

WALLY

Look, dad, I'm sorry about this. I totally screwed up.

JAMES

Wallace, we'll deal with this later.

WALLY

But can I just point out something?
You're here, we're talking. The
plan is working.

Erin pops her head out, holding a bottle of wine.

ERIN

If you don't mind, I'm going to open
this up. My father always drank
wine with dinner, I thought it'd be
nice.

WALLY

That is nice.

Erin pops back in.

JAMES

(re: Erin)

The plan is not working Wallace.

WALLY

Come on, you came over to apologize,
you brought mead. We're connecting.
After two days. Honestly, I didn't
expect this for months.

JAMES

I think you need to call UCLA. I
think this little experiment is over.

WALLY

Is this because Erin might have killed
her father? Because, if it is, I
don't think we're looking at the big
picture.

JAMES

It's more than that.

WALLY

Because mom always said you get very
fixated --

JAMES

Stop it. Wallace, you've been
insubordinate as an employee and
disrespectful as a son. You've shown
extremely poor judgment as a doctor
and your lack of professionalism has
been a cancer amongst your co-workers.

Beat.

WALLY

There are kinks to work out.

There's something in James' tone, not anger, but vulnerability that gets Wally's attention.

JAMES

(deep breath)

I'm sorry to disappoint you Wallace,
I know how much you wanted this, but
I'm done. I just can't do it.

James looks at his son for a moment. Wally realizes it is done. A long beat.

WALLY

Having to wait for the police makes
this kinda awkward, huh?

JAMES

Extremely.

INT. KITCHEN -- MORNING

Hendricks and Wayne are having coffee.

SFX: THREE CHIMES

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

There's a foot missing from cadaver
drawer 105. It's left and size 12.
Please keep an eye out. Also,
there'll be a scavenger hunt for the
kids on Monday. Still looking for
volunteers to help out. Please see
Tom for details.

SFX: THREE CHIMES

Roosevelt enters.

ROOSEVELT

Hey, bad news on the Morse pad, yo.
Big bidder came in at the last minute.

HENDRICKS

What?! Why didn't you come tell me?
Maybe I'd a matched it.

ROOSEVELT

He offered 4 g's. Dude wanted it
bad. But I'll keep an eye out.

HENDRICKS

Thanks, man.

Hendricks leaves. Roosevelt walks over to the sink.

WAYNE

You said thirty five hundred.

ROOSEVELT

I could go back to him...?

Wayne immediately starts scribbling on a check.

WAYNE

Slow down, 4 g's it is. I was just asking.

Wayne hands him the check.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

I'm just doing this for him.

ROOSEVELT

You really want to talk about it?

WAYNE

(quickly)
I'm fine to move on.

INT. WALLY'S OFFICE -- LATER

Wally is packing his things into boxes. Susan happens by.

SUSAN

Morning. Did your dad tell you about Nelson's clogged arteries? 80% blockage. That aneurysm really saved him. From a heart attack.

(then)
What are you doing?

WALLY

I'm packing. Headin' out to UCLA. Marleeza can now begin her middle aged hiring initiative.

A look of panic comes across Susan's face. Did she screw up with her advice to James?

SUSAN

(nervous laugh, then)
Would you excuse me?

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Susan bolts out of the office. She walks briskly.

SUSAN

Ohmygod, ohmygod, ohmygod
(then, casually to passerby)

Morning!
(then)
Ohmygod, ohmygod, ohmygod...

INT. JAMES' OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

James is sitting at his desk, looking at the photo of him and the baby panda. Susan flies in, but then immediately tries to settle herself.

SUSAN

James, listen, I heard Wally is leaving and I just want to say...if there's any advice I gave...that may have lead to this...

JAMES

No, I told him he should go. He's finally listening to me.

SUSAN

(sensing his regret)

Oh.

JAMES

(pointing to photo)

See this picture? This was taken at the County zoo. It was father's day, two years ago. Wallace had asked me to get together, but this had already been arranged...and I didn't want to miss the opportunity... I mean how often do you get to hold a panda?

SUSAN

(beat, then)

Is this a rhetorical question or do you want an actual number? I just don't want to blow this.

JAMES

I shouldn't have missed graduation.

Susan sits down across from him.

SUSAN

You know, working here, you get to meet all kinds of people, from all different backgrounds. The one thing I believe that they all have in common - other than being dead - is that they all wish they had one more day. One more day to be with the people they love, to say what they wish they had said, to fix something they left undone. To me, the best part of working here, is the fact that we're reminded of our second chances everyday.

James get up and walks around the desk. He goes to Susan.

JAMES

You know what the other great part
of working here is?

James puts a paternal hand on Susan's shoulder.

JAMES (CONT'D)

The people.

Susan, beyond touched, covers his hand with her hand. And
keeps it there, and keeps it there, and keeps it there...

JAMES (CONT'D)

Susan, let go.

After on more beat, she does.

INT. WALLY'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

As Wally continues to pack, James stops in the doorway.

JAMES

The heavy stuff goes on the bottom.

WALLY

It really doesn't matter, does it?

SFX: MUG BREAKING

JAMES

Wallace, I'm sorry.

WALLY

You know what? Don't apologize.
For some reason I refuse to accept
your limitations. This is all my
fault. It came to me yesterday after
I finished making love to Erin.

James gives Wally a look, "please, no".

WALLY (CONT'D)

That's right, I did. After we had
coffee but before I found out she
was being charged with murder. I
say charged because I'm holding out
hope.

Wally walks around the desk to James.

WALLY (CONT'D)

The thing is you're the one who's
actually normal. I'm the one who's
crazy.

(MORE)

WALLY (CONT'D)

Because crazy is knowing reality is one thing, but insisting with the other half of your brain, that it's actually something else.

JAMES

You're not crazy.

WALLY

No, but I do need to grow up.

Wally turns to continue packing his things.

JAMES

I have to agree this is not the look of a mature doctor.

James hands Wally a framed photo. It's the photo that was taken that day at Erin's father's house. For everything that's different about it, it a father/son moment, captured on film...forever. Wally smiles.

WALLY

You got this framed for me?

JAMES

And for me. It's on my desk. Now where you decide to put it is up to you. I don't know how big your office is in Los Angeles. But I'm hoping you put it right there on that shelf.

WALLY

Are you asking me to stay?

JAMES

Wallace, I know my limitations. Emotions, intimacy, I have a hard time with these things. And it may appear like I don't care, but I do. These limitations have cost me. Friends, opportunities... they've cost me a marriage. I don't want to let them rob me of my relationship with you.

Wally takes his father's words in for a beat. In his whole life, his father has never spoken with as much openness and sensitivity. Wally takes the framed photo and puts it on the shelf that James had indicated.

WALLY

That seems right.

James smiles at him and opens his arms to Wally.

JAMES

This is something your mother taught me.

Wally comes in for one of James' hugs. And even though James manages to use two arms, it is easily the most awkward hug anyone has ever received. And Wally couldn't be happier.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- ANOTHER DAY

Roosevelt and Rodriguez are rolling a body into the room. Hendricks is with the body. James, Susan and Wally begin looking it over.

ROOSEVELT

Incoming.

JAMES

So what do we have?

HENDRICKS

Seventeen stab wounds to the gut.

SUSAN

Poor guy must have bled out.

WALLY

(noticing)

After he was strangled. Judging from the bruising around the neck.

Susan, without missing a beat, turns and leaves the room.

JAMES

Let's get to work people.

The team kicks into gear, like they have a thousand times before. As they work on the body, we hear...

SFX: THREE CHIMES

MARLEEZA (O.S.)

There'll be an office wide staff meeting tomorrow at 9am to discuss the fallout from bring your child to work day. Due to the pending legal investigation, attendance is mandatory.

SFX: THREE CHIMES

As father and son work side by side, we...

END OF SHOW