

MIC CLICK ON

JON

No cases today. I can finally look over some past case files. And maybe set up my office, finally.

KEYS JINGLE, DOOR UNLOCKS.

RAY (MURMURING)

Maybe I could've used the fire extinguisher to smash the glass...

JON

Oh - hello. Who are you?

RAY

No... It was too thick. If we had only left earlier and didn't work as late...

JON

Hellooo? You - guy standing by my desk. What are you doing in here?

RAY

Oh- hey kid. Are you a ghost too? Welcome.

JON

Me? No. You're a ghost?

JON KEEPS TRYING TO INTERRUPT AS RAY IS SPEAKING. (NO - I - YOU SEE - UM)

RAY

Yes, of course. You must not know yet - it's not usual that I get visitors in here. That's kind of why I tuck myself away - so I'm not interrupted. But yes, anyway - welcome to the afterlife. You have died recently, even if you don't remember it. You're now a ghost, as am I, and some other people haunting this hospital. Although there are even more outside of here, which is, again, why I'm hiding.

JON

No, you don't understand. I-

RAY

I know it's probably overwhelming, but you can just walk right through the door, or walls if you like. There are a few others who might be a bit more helpful with this stuff than me. Right that way.

JON  
Stop. Seriously, I'm not dead and I'm not a ghost.

RAY  
Preposterous.

JON  
It's true. I can just... Well, I can see ghosts, but I'm very much alive.

RAY  
Are you sure of that? This isn't a whole existential crisis, or Schrodinger's cat situation, is it?

JON  
No. It's not. And yes, I'm sure. And I was really planning on going over some files alone today...

RAY  
You and me both.

JON  
Well, you're the one in my office.

RAY  
Ah, so YOU'RE the new pathologist, huh? Kind of young...

JON  
You look only a few years older.

RAY  
Yes, but I've been dead for over 30 years years.

JON  
Geez... And you're \*still\* here?

RAY  
I've been pouring over a case of my own - well, sort of. I can't interact with the physical plane, obviously, so I haven't looked at the actual file, but I've thought about it enough to remember every detail in my mind.

JON  
Let me guess. You want me to help you, or pass on some sort of message to a loved on? Or what? Lie on your case file so you can feel better about how you died?

RAY  
What are you on about? I don't want anything from you. You're the one who came in here, haha.

JON  
That's perfect then. How about we agree to just let each other work in peace, and we can share the office for today?

RAY  
Sounds like a plan, man.

JON  
Ah. I can see the generation gap coming out.

RAY  
What did you say, guy?

JON  
Nothing. Do you mind if I take the desk? Since, you know - you'd phase through it.

RAY  
Be my guest. My file is somewhere in these cabinets anyway, and I always feel like I can think better if I'm near it.

JON  
Do your thing.

JON LAYS DOWN A BIG STACK OF PAPERS. CHAIR SCOOTS OUT AND BACK IN. JON OPENS A PAPER.

JON (cont'd)  
Let's see. Case number 0477 - Wendy Mullen. It says she had water in her lungs, but it wasn't water from her pool or any known body of water around here.

RAY  
Where was I...?

JON  
Victim was 34 years old. First responders noted that her skin was slightly yellow. Obviously jaundiced... There's no M.E. signature on this chart. I'm not sure who examined her or determined the cause of death.

RAY  
When was that case from?

JON  
Huh? Umm. 2013, May.

RAY  
I don't think we had a medical guy down here from just about 2012 to 2015.

JON  
Three years? That's insane.

RAY  
Yeah... I was living the good life, with the office to myself.

JON  
Funny. Without an examiner, I wonder if they even tested how much of the fluid was actual water... Interesting. According to the photos, she was found in bed.

RAY  
Maybe she drowned while drinking a glass of water?

JON  
Did you just say drowned while drinking water?

RAY  
No. I was talking about my files. I can't talk to myself too?

JON  
That's it. This is clearly some sort of pulmonary edema - and no one even seemed to check on it. But if the fluid was classified as "water" that means that someone forced her to drink water, even after she was having some sort of build up.

RAY  
Seriously?

JON  
Yeah. This is highly unusual. If she had a fatal organ problem, she might have died anyway, but the fact that whoever was taking care of her forced her to drink instead of taking her to the hospital...

RAY  
She was murdered?

JON  
More like manslaughter, but it was definitely not natural causes - or even a mystery really.

RAY  
Wow, kid! Do another.

JON  
What?

RAY  
Another case. I want to help.

JON  
I don't even know who you are. You can't look at patient files.

RAY  
Well, I'm Ray Melba, amateur inventor. You know, before the

NECK CUTTING SOUND EFFECT

JON  
You still can't-

RAY  
Oh, come on. I've been here 30 years - I've heard my share of confidential information. And who am I gonna tell?

JON  
Fine. But no backseat diagnosing. I heard that whole "drown while drinking thing."

RAY  
Yeah, well turns out I was right!

JON  
Your awful idea help me put the details together.

RAY  
See? Doctoring isn't that hard. You can admit that I was helpful. Let's do another case.

JON  
\*I\* will be looking at another case. Whatever you do...well... I can't really stop you seeing as you're ethereal, now can I?

RAY  
That's the spirit!

JON  
Let's see... Man's stomach lining ruptured and he bled internally...

RAY  
BORING!

JON  
You can't just say boring to a person's death.

RAY  
Oh, you have a lot to learn about this town.

JON  
So I've noticed. Was this place always weird?

RAY  
Nah, I don't think so. It was cool in the 80s. Place was really thriving. We could've been the next big city.

JON  
What happened

RAY  
The accident...

JON  
The accident... How mysterious.

RAY  
Heh. I worked for a big corporation - called Springfield Corp, easily enough.

JON  
Clever.

RAY  
Well, worked is a loose term - I was a contractor on a small project and -

JON  
Is this... Pertinent?

RAY  
Yes... I was getting to it. Anyway, there was an explosion and it caused a power outage in the whole county - lasted a few days.

JON  
A power outage caused this?

RAY  
I don't really know. There were a bunch of environmentalists protesting the big corporation that used to fund the town. I died, and then it seemed like things around here got progressively more weird... I must have been the catalyst, ha!

JON  
Is that so?

RAY  
You should've seen some of the cases down here. I'd seen some crazy stuff before I started hiding out.

JON  
A 2012 file... Young boy died mysteriously in his bed. 4 years old, Josh... Crowley?

RAY  
Oh yeah, the Crowley kid. Super sad.

JON  
Sheriff Fran Crowley?

RAY  
Ah, yeah. You must work with her a bunch. Let's figure out how her son died.

JON  
What the hell? No. We can't - er... I can't.

RAY  
Sure you can. He's long gone.

JON  
You saw him?

RAY  
Of course. I've been down here long enough. You sort of get tired of explaining it to everyone who dies, so I kind of hid in the office for a bit... But yeah, I talked to him back then. Such a shame.

JON  
Did he say anything about what happened?

RAY  
Probing for info, huh? I thought you didn't want to know.

JON  
I don't. Let's look at another file. From the 2014 file: Case number 1017 - Jake Drazzer, 25 years old... Jesus christ. Look at this photo.

RAY  
Wow... His whole body is purple.

JON  
And bloated. His skin looks stretched to extreme lengths.

RAY  
That is disgusting.

JON  
There are tons of photos on this case... What did they determine cause of death to be? Internal hemorrhage...

RAY  
That is a LOT of internal bleeding.

JON  
Drazzer originally presented with minor internal bleeding, causing ecchymosis on his arm.

RAY  
I know a lot of big words, doc, but not... That one.

JON  
Bruising caused by blood under the skin. Patient was sent home with a blood clotting agent, only to be found in his car a few miles away.

RAY  
Car accident?

JON  
No. Look, the car is fine. Just parked on the side of the road. And in this photo, you can see where they laid him on a medical table.

RAY  
What am I looking at here?

JON  
That's a close up picture of his... torso, I believe. Wow...

RAY  
What? It just looks like a fat thing to me.

JON  
No. Look at that... When someone dies, their blood can pool in their extremities, causing a purple hue called Livor Mortis or lividity.

RAY  
Right. It's blood - you said that.

JON  
No. Well. Yes. It is blood. But usually, you only get a small amount of blood pooling when people are stuck in a position for a long time. Like if a person dies in bed, you can see bruising on their back.

RAY

Like a bed sore.

JON

Yeah, sort of. Anyway, this victim's body is almost completely purple.

RAY

So what?

JON

So, that means blood was under every area of his skin, even though he was sitting up when he died. Gravity should've pooled the blood in his legs or feet.

RAY

Why is that significant?

JON

It means that there was so much blood under his skin that it filled up his entire body.

RAY

Gross. And what exactly does that mean?

JON

I have no idea.

RAY

So all that and no conclusion?

CHAIR SLIDES OUT.

RAY (cont'd)

Wait, where are you going?

JON

I need to examine the body.

RAY

Well, I'm coming with you.

DOOR OPENS. JON WALKS OUT.

JON

Let's see... Case 1017 is... Drawer... 23. Here.

DRAWER SLIDES OUT.

JON (cont'd)

What the?

RAY  
What happened?

JON  
His body isn't here...

AMELIA  
Whose body?

JON  
Whoa - shit. You scared me.

AMELIA  
Haha, you are jumpy!

RAY  
Ah, an uninvited guest. At least she's attractive, eh, doc?

JON  
How long have you been here?

AMELIA  
I'm doctor Amelia Pence - Nice to officially meet you, too.

JON  
Please don't sneak up on me.

AMELIA  
Calm it down. I was going to apologize for being a little blunt with you in the ER during that crisis the other week, but maybe it's not worth my time.

JON  
Sorry... I'm just... I was distracted by a case.

RAY  
And talking to me.

AMELIA  
Something interesting?

JON  
Just an unsolved one from a few years ago. A guy named Jake Deazzer.

AMELIA (NERVOUS)  
Oh. Um... Why did you pick that case?

RAY  
Cause I asked him to.

JON

It just stuck out to me. The guy presented with subdermal bleeding, and a few hours later he's found with all his blood below his skin?

AMELIA

Ha. Yeah. I actually remember that case.

JON

You do?

AMELIA

Yeah, I treated him during the first visit. He came in talking crazy - seemed like he was doing some drugs or something.

JON

Talking crazy? No one noted any drugs in his system.

AMELIA

Yeah. It was a busy day, and we just treated him for the bleeding and sent him out. This place can be kind of intense.

JON

You're not kidding. This is more deaths than Baltimore.

RAY

Man, now I remember why I hate being around living people.

JON (WHISPERING)

Shut up.

AMELIA

From what I heard, you're doing a pretty damn good job. Glad to have you here.

JON

Do you know what's going on around here? People keep saying "Springfield is weird," and I'm starting to believe it - but why?

AMELIA

Oh. Uh... It's a long story, and I don't really have time right now. Maybe we can talk sometime and I can fill you in.

JON

Ah, no worries. I won't keep you.

RAY

Doc, I think she was flirting with you. You dumbass.

AMELIA

Aaaanyways - you have another guest who'd like to speak with you, if you have a minute.

RAY

She can see me?

JON

You can see him?

AMELIA

What? He's... Outside in the hall. He asked to see you.

RAY

Bummer.

JON

Oh. Oh. Yeah. Who is it?

AMELIA WALKING AWAY AND OPENING THE DOOR.

AMELIA

I'll go get him. He's been in my hair for days, bugging me with tons of questions. Yes, I get it. I saved you - I'm awesome. Get over your hero complex, right? He's your problem now. (Pause) Go on it. Don't touch anything!

CURTIS

Hi doctor Spacer. Remember me?