

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

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?

RAY

Who is that?

JON

I'm sorry - do I know you?

CURTIS

I should hope so! My name is Curtis. I'm the guy from the ER a few weeks ago. I was legally dead... and then I came back.

JON

Ah. I do remember hearing about that. Can I help you with something?

CURTIS

I - I was trying to get your number from the hospital directory, but they wouldn't give it to me.

JON

I should really be getting back to work.

CURTIS

I was hoping we could talk some time.

JON (YELLING)

Doctor Gatz! Are you still here?

RAY

What's going on?

CURTIS

See, I've been asking around about you. You just moved here recently, but when I woke up in that ER the other day... I felt like I'd seen you before.

JON

We haven't met before.

CURTIS

I thought that too. But I definitely remember you. If you could just spare some time to talk, I would really  
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JON

I don't know you, and you don't know me. And you really shouldn't be down here. This area is restricted.

CURTIS

Do you believe in an afterlife, doctor Spacer?

JON

Please leave.

CURTIS

Cause I think I had some sort of vision, and -

JON

That sounds like something you'd want to bring up with a therapist, or a neurologist. I am neither, so if you could just-

CURTIS

Okay. Okay. I'm going. But I really think it's in your best interest if you'd talk to me.

JON

Get out.

DOOR SLAMS

JON (cont'd)

Jesus christ.

JON SLUMPS DOWN.

RAY  
What was that about? ... Jon? What's going on?

JON  
Go away.

RAY  
What?

JON  
I said go away! Go back to your case file and leave me alone.

RAY  
Screw you.

JON  
Seriously?

RAY  
Yeah, seriously! You don't get to take whatever weird frustrations you're having out on me just because I'm here.

JON  
You're the one who stuck around. You could've moved on a long time ago.

RAY  
I'm not ready yet, and I didn't ask you to get in my business.

JON  
Then why get in mine?

RAY  
Because you were slumped on the floor looking like you were about to start hyperventilating. Pardon me for not being as self-serving as you, but I actually care about people.

JON  
And I don't?

RAY  
I don't think you do. You were the one saying ghosts always want something from you, but I think it's you who wants something from everyone else.

JON  
I'm trying to solve these cases FOR the victims. FOR people like you. You don't know anything.

RAY

You were a judgemental prick to me an hour ago. You were barely talking to that other doctor when she was just trying to be nice, and now this guy? What? He wasn't useful to you, so you don't care about him?

JON

That guy had a near death experience in the ER. He was DEAD for over a minute! I saw him as a ghost, and spoke to him. And then he miraculously gets revived. Now he thinks he saw me.

RAY

Shit.

JON

Yeah, shit. He remembers talking to me AS A GHOST. What do you think happens if he keeps remembering? Or figures out what happened?

RAY

Nothing good...

JON

Nothing good. I'd have to move again... And I swore I wouldn't let anyone find out this time. Damn it!

RAY

Relax. You don't know that he'll put any of it together. People hallucinate near death, right?

JON

Right. Right. Which is why I have to keep denying, and pretend that none of \*this\* exists.

RAY

So just keep your head down, no friends, no talking to ghosts.

JON

I shouldn't even be talking to you now.

RAY

Just do your job in silence, leaving the victims to sit by and watch as you poke and prod their body?

JON

Exactly.

RAY

That was sarcasm. Do you know how awful it would be for those people?

JON  
I can't interact with them any more. I was lied to, tricked and used for the first few cases here. They are not my problem anymore.

RAY  
Of course they are! You can talk to the dead. That's your superpower.

JON  
It's a weakness. I can't rely on ghosts to help me solve cases.

RAY  
Why not?

JON  
Because. If I can't solve it without them, then it means...

RAY  
Means what?

JON  
It means I'm not a good enough doctor to do this on my own.

RAY  
Jesus christ. And you said that guy needs a therapist?

JON  
Not funny.

RAY  
I'm serious. You don't get to act like a victim here. You've got some weird baggage you need to get over.

JON  
That's the pot calling the kettle black.

RAY  
My point is, even though I don't know you all that well, I just watched you figure out that a woman was murdered by looking at a photo.

JON  
So what?

RAY  
So, I'm saying you may be an asshole kid, but you're smart. And you're lucky.

JON

Gee, thanks.

RAY

No - You're lucky that you have this ability. It can make you even better at solving cases. So if you're really solving them for the victims, and not just to inflate your ego, I suggest you stop fighting against this weird gift of yours, and help the people who actually need it.

JON

And how will I know which people need it?

RAY

You've gotta figure that out on your own. From my experience, ghosts are just like regular people - some will lie, some will be awful, but some will just be scared and wondering what happened.

JON

Scared and wondering what happened...

RAY

Right.

JON

Fine.

JON STANDS UP AND WALKS INTO THE OFFICE.

RAY

That's it? Where are you going?

JON IS LOOKING THROUGH FILES AND DRAWERS.

RAY (cont'd)

What are you looking for?

JON

Back during my residency, I got pretty good at pretending that ghosts didn't exist. I mean, there weren't a ton of them because we were using mostly cadavers who had been dead for a while - but every so often, I saw someone wandering the halls, just looking scared or confused. But I pushed them away. I tried to learn as much as I could so that I could eventually help, but with so many other people around... I had to just ignore them and keep going.

RAY

Okay...

JON

It was rough. I heard their screams and cries. Ghosts panicking in the upper parts of the hospital. It wasn't a great system, but it was working, until someone I cared about died, and their ghost roamed the halls.

RAY

I'm so sorry.

JON

I spoke to her, and it was miserable. And once I realized she was dead, I became obsessed with the case. I spent all of my time at the hospital, pouring over files, and her body... Until she got sick of it. Eventually, she didn't care about how she died. She just wanted me to stop obsessing about it, but I couldn't. So she left. She moved on after months, and left me alone with my boss and classmates thinking I was crazy. So I left.

RAY

And that's why you came here.

JON

Correct.

RAY

Why are you telling me this?

JON

Because, you made me realize that I've been blind. And someone who needs real help has been in front of me the whole time.

RAY

What?

JON

Here! Ray Melba - died March 10, 1989.

RAY

Me? Put my file away.

JON

I can't do that, Ray. You're in the same spot I was, obsessing about your case - so I'm going to help you solve it.

RAY

You don't understand -

JON  
Ray Melba, found barely breathing in his home after a gun shot wound to the head... Emergency responders brought him here, but he was pronounced dead only a few minutes later. Case ruled as a...

RAY  
As a suicide. Yes.

JON  
You shot yourself?

RAY  
I did.

JON  
I don't understand - why were you obsessing about your case file if you'd killed yourself.

RAY  
Because it wasn't my file I was thinking about. It was my brother, Mike. Same year.

PAPERS SHUFFLING

JON  
Mike Melba... Found it.

RAY  
Wait. I changed my mind.

JON  
What? Haven't you wanted to look at it for years now?

RAY  
I have, but... I don't know if I can take it.

JON  
Why not?

RAY  
Because I know how he died... And I can't bare to see him again.

JON  
You don't need to look...

RAY  
It's not that... It's... I'm the reason he's dead.

JON  
You are?



RAY  
Please, just put the file away. I changed my mind.

JON  
What happened?

RAY  
There was an accident at the Springfield Corp. Lab...

JON  
And You killed yourself out of guilt...

RAY  
I did. I made him go back into a dangerous area and he got killed for it.

JON  
You two were working on something unsafe?

RAY  
We were... Contractors... working on a material that was supposed to dissipate geomagnetic energy from a blast.

JON  
A blast? Like... A bolt of lightning?

RAY  
No. Geomagnetic is a solar flare, not lightning.

JON  
So... You were building an environmental shield for the government. What, did they expect the world to end in Y2K?

RAY  
We called it the Bubble. Heh. but I wasn't kept in the loop for a lot of details. There were murmurings of trying to use the shield for military defense purposes, but we weren't government funded.

JON  
I think that makes it worse.

RAY  
It probably does, but it was exciting work. Mike and I, were so close to finalizing a way to absorb the subatomic particles from the solar flares and then release them out slowly. You see - the problem was that these kind of flares happened before and caused mass damage all over the globe. The thought was that if we could dissipate the flare, it could prevent or even save the world should the sun continue to overheat.

JON  
Impressive work. But what went wrong?

RAY  
And unexpected solar flare happened while Mike and I were working... The material wasn't fully functional yet...

JON  
I'm so sorry, Ray.

RAY  
So yeah... I killed my own brother. It should have been me in there.

JON  
It was just an accident.

RAY  
You don't understand. I asked him to lock up because I just wanted to get home. We were always supposed to have two people in the lab... I left him there.

JON  
Have you talked to him? I'm sure he would forgive you.

RAY  
I can't talk to him.

JON  
Why not?

RAY  
His body was here, but I think his spirit is trapped in the lab - if it even appeared at all.

JON  
So why didn't you go there to check?

RAY  
I can't. I can't face him. So I sit here and think and replay everything in my head as punishment.

PAPERS SHUFFLING

JON  
I have to look at his file, Ray.

RAY  
Why? I just told you everything.

JON  
He's patient zero... If anything, the weird shit in this town might have started with that explosion.

RAY  
Fine. Just make it quick... And... Can you turn off the recorder? I don't want this stuff on the record.

JON  
Sure thing. It would probably just sound like me talking to myself anyway.

MIC CLICKS OFF. FOLDER OPENING. PAPERS FLIPPING

JON (cont'd)  
Mike Melba... Whoa... He's got an extensive medical record.

RAY  
Really?

JON  
Yeah, look at this. Page after page dating back to 1982 and then stopping in 1988. Then nothing until his death record in 1989.

RAY  
He never told me about any medical issue...

JON  
The notes from 82 say he was admitted for headaches and run through a CT scan. Back then, I guess the technology wasn't as accurate, but from here, they noted a blood clot in his brain.

RAY  
A blood clot...?

JON  
It sounds like a brain aneurysm to me. Whatever it was, they deemed it too risky to remove. Here "patient given access to a drug trial to reduce brain swelling." It seems like there was no change. You didn't know any of this?

RAY  
No. I had no idea...

JON  
I don't want to jump the gun here, Ray, but... To me, it sounds like the doctors tried what they could and then stopped. Mike must have known he was going to die.

RAY  
A brain aneurysm.

JON  
He could've died at any time.

RAY  
Well I was still the reason it happened that day.

JON  
It might have happened early, or it could've burst the next day. I can't know for sure.

RAY  
None of this makes what happened any easier.

JON  
It doesn't, I'm sure. But you can be sure that Mike was ready to die at any moment. I don't think he would've wanted you to.

RAY  
Why didn't he tell me? I could've-

JON  
There was nothing you could've done.

RAY  
I would have pulled him off the project. He should've been resting, not working.

JON  
If he was anything like you, I can almost guarantee he would've hated that more.

RAY SIGHS HEAVILY.

RAY  
Hey kid...

JON  
Yeah?

RAY  
I know... This is literally why you hate ghosts, but... I have a favor to ask you.

JON  
Anything.

RAY  
I'm going to go now. To move on, or whatever it is that happens. On the off chance that Mike isn't there with me, and you run into him... Can you...

JON

I'll tell him you feel incredibly guilty, and that you're the most stubborn ghost I know.

RAY

Heh. Yeah yeah. Seems like we've both learned a thing or two about blaming ourselves to for things outside our control.

JON

What do you mean? (Pause) Ray? (Sigh)

MIC CUT.