

Sawbones 435: Pirate Medicine Chapter Two

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Clint McElroy: *Sawbones* is a show about medical history. And nothing the hosts say should be taken as medical advice or opinion.

It's for fun.

Can't you just have fun for an hour and not try to diagnose your mystery boil?

[audience cheers]

We think you've earned it.

Audience Member: Whoo!

Clint McElroy: Just sit back, relax, and enjoy a moment of distraction from that... weird... growth. You're worth it!

[audience cheers]

[theme song plays]

Justin: Hello everybody and welcome to *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine! I am your cohost, Justin Tyler McElroy.

[audience cheers]

Sydney: And I'm Sydney McElroy.

[audience cheers, but louder than for Justin]

Justin: It's fine.

[audience continues cheering for Sydney]

Justin: It's fine. Sydney is on her first tour since March of 2020. This is the first tour with live *Sawbones* again.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: [laughs] It's so great—

Justin: I don't want—

Sydnee: ... to be doing this again. I... I just can't tell you. Thank you all.

Justin: I don't know why it's been since March of 2020, but there's something- I forget, but...

Sydnee: Something happened. [laughs]

Justin: So welcome to our show. I know what you're wondering: Why are they dressed like that?

Audience Member: Whoo!

Justin: Sydnee?

Sydnee: Uh, why not?

Justin: [snorts] Yeah, that's true.

No, uh we're going... We're in the midst of a- This is two of a three-part live series which we've never done before. This is the second part. It's not a narrative thing, you're not gonna be like *Lost*, it's not going to be like—

Sydnee: No.

Justin: "Why're- What's with the smoke monster? I don't get it."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: It's like an in- It's the next- It's an anthology. This is the next instalment.

Justin: The next instalment.

[audience cheers]

I like that.

Sydnee: Can I call attention to your calves again or is just the first night?

Justin: Okay, I keep forgetting my socks and I'm tired of getting bullied for it by Sydnee, but this is the second show in a row that I've forgotten my long, white socks.

[audience cheers]

So you're just getting the pure business. Just the pure business.

Sydnee: I believe—

Justin: You're welcome, all these people over here.

[cheering intensifies]

Sydnee: I believe it was an accident last night. I- [laughs] It was a choice tonight.

[audience laughs]

And I don't disagree with it.

We're doing a three-part series on pirate medicine.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: And also these may have been our Halloween costumes and we didn't get to wear 'em very much [laughs] 'cause we were too busy.

Justin: So here we are.

Sydnee: So here we are again.

Justin: Oh, thank you... actually mine was made by our friends Alex and Juli Abene so thank you to them.

[audience cheers]

Sydnee: And mine was made by my sibling Teylor Smirl, so...

[audience cheers]

Justin: [approving noise.] Okay, Sydnee, take me back to the world of high adventure and even higher seas: the pirate life.

Sydnee: So, as you may imagine, on a ship access to medical care, to medicines, to whatever sort of treatments you might need, was limited.

Because you were out there for months and months at a time, whatever you had with you is what you had to use.

And whoever was aboard that was the surgeon or close enough is who was in charge of taking care of you.

And there were a lot of different, you know, maladies that you could encounter, things that you know are that are common, like scurvy and such.

But I want to focus this instalment on burns.

Now I know that seems weird at first. Like, "Burn? Was that a big part of sailing? Burns? You're on the water." [laughs]

I can understand confusion. But—

Justin: You didn't let me say- Like usually confusion is my job.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Justin: I wish you wouldn't like, anticipate my confusion.

Sydnee: Did it confuse you?

Justin: Yes, because it's the water and why burns?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Well, so... ships are made of wood. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

They were.

Justin: Woah, we're really going back to brass tacks here. Okay.

Sydnee: Yeah. They were made of wood and they had like canvas sails and like the lines would often be tarred and they're just very flammable.

[audience laughs]

Justin: Just super flammable.

Sydnee: The ships were very flammable. And also you had things on ships, especially for pirates, like gunpowder.

And you just sort of, especially in the midst of a fight, it would be kind of tossed about. Like you're trying to reload and do all the things that—

Justin: They shouldn't toss the gunpowder. That's not the intended use.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: You gotta put it in a gun. I keep telling people.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Well, but they would spill it, I think. [laughs]

Justin: Oops!

Sydnee: Oops!

Justin: You're fired.

Sydnee: And then once it was spilled like all that you needed was a spark, and then—

Justin: Oops.

Sydnee: You know, oops. [laughs]

Justin: Oops.

Sydnee: Oops, burns.

And also, how would you light your cabin at night?

Justin: Candles.

Sydnee: Candles or a lantern, something flammable. And pirates sometimes liked to drink alcohol and would fall asleep without putting them out.

There also- There actually were rules on ships that at 8 o'clock everybody put the candles out and go drink in the dark.

Justin: [laughs hard]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughing] Because fires were so frequent in that sort of scenario.

Another reason that burns happened so much, I thought- This isn't really medical, but as I was researching this, I found the mention of a weapon that could be used in a battle called a fireship...

Justin: Woah, cool!

Sydnee: Which is exactly what it sounds like.

[audience laughs]

It's just a ship that is specifically for setting on fire [laughs]...

[audience laughs]

... and directing at the other team. [laughs]

Justin: So basically a... So you might say it's a burner ship? Phew...

[audience laughter starts to build from tepid beginning]

No, no, no, no, no. Don't build. Don't build. Don't build. You were right. Don't build.

[audience builds a little anyway]

Your tepid response was exactly right.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: I knew what I was doing, alright?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: As you can imagine that was like high risk, high reward.

Justin: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: And so tough to find crew for, honestly.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. And they would be like specifically loaded up with things that would explode and then just like, "Go!" [laughs]

Justin: "Just go, guys! Get 'em!"

Sydnee: [laughing] "That way!" Um—

Justin: "Who wants—" And they had to re-brand it a few times, I bet, 'cause they might have tricked people with fire ship once—

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: ... but after that I bet it was like, "Who wants- Who's brave enough to be on the danger ship? The ship of thrills!"

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: There were also accounts... Like, another way you could get burns, this was—

There were accounts of pirates, sometimes, like when somebody was passed out drunk, using some of the plasters from the medicine chest, specifically the ones that were blistering...

A lot of things we would put on wounds back then were pretty caustic, because we thought that the pus that would come out was part of the process. [laughs uncomfortably]

And was like a desirable step along the way to healing.

So there were a lot of substances that you would apply to wounds specifically to make them red and irritated and bloody and... Yeah. Well, you know.

And so they would put those on people who had passed out [laughing] to try to wake 'em up.

[audience laughs, horrified]

Justin: [laughs uncomfortably]

Sydnee: So then someone had to take care of all these burns.

And at the time the way that we approached burn care was based on the humoral system of medicine.

It was based on the idea that we have four humors in our bodies that we have to keep in balance at all times in order to maintain health.

And you can keep them in balance in a variety of ways, by like getting some humors out if you have too much through bleeding or peeing or pooping or vomiting. All the ways you get things out.

Or putting things back in through certain diets that you would eat, certain foods and stuff.

So the idea behind a burn, if somebody was burned, is that what has happened, whatever hot thing caused the burn, has drawn all the hot humors.

Justin: [painfully] Mm.

Sydnee: So mainly like blood.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: But like, the hot elements in the humors have come to that area and made it like, hard and waxy. [laughs uncomfortably] And all of the other humors have been driven out of it.

And so that was sort of the pathology that they believed was happening at the site of the burn.

So what you needed to do then, is draw those hot humors away from the site of the burn and then replace it with good humors. Um—

Justin: Uh, so like a strawberry shortcake bar or...?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: You know, it must have been a hard sell to be like, look at burn on a pirate and then the doctor's like, "Ooh, I know what this is. You gotta humoral problem."

And then the pirate said, "I'm pretty sure it's from the burn."

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: "I just got a hot thing on me and it messed me up really bad. I'm not sure humors figure into it really, at all. Like..."

Sydnee: No, that was- 'Cause like the treatments would really... So, you have too much humors in that area and so what we need to do, then, is cut you on the other side of your body so they'll sort of flow away from there.

Justin: Yep, yep, yep. Out the back. Makes sense.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. So that was a common treatment.

You could also do cupping, where you create like a little vacuum in a cup and stick it to the body and it's like a giant hickey sort of forms.

You could- But you wanted, again, you had to do it somewhere else 'cause you were pulling the heat away from the burn.

Justin: [sarcastic] That must've worked though, because we still do it some places, right?

Sydnee: [pause] No.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] And so, you know, these are ways that you might get rid of the hot humors.

You could also do it through giving, you know, an enema. Those were common and very popular. We have found, we have recovered—

Justin: Now wait. Hold on. Common? Yes. Popular...

[audience laughs]

Justin: ... is interesting. Speak on that, because like, popular, I don't know. Hm.

Sydnee: We have recovered quite a few enema syringes from the remains of, like, Blackbeard's ship.

Justin: Common, again, Syd—

Sydnee: We've found clisters, enema syringes.

Justin: Common, I'll grant you. But popular? Like do you think there was a lot of people who were like, "Oh yeah! Sign me up!"

[audience laughs]

Justin: "We're all... On this ship we're all wild for enemas."

[audience laughs]

Justin: I mean, I guess there's not a lot to do.

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: It's pretty dull.

Sydnee: And because of this- By the way, this really informs how they approached the burn and why they thought patients got better or worse or what was happening.

Your humoral personality, so like every person would be assigned kind of like a personality type based on what humors they thought you had too much of.

And so if your burn was really bad, it was just because you were a really plethoric or sanguine person. You had too much blood.

So like, well... it's not, you know, my fault as the doctor that I can't make you better. Your burn is bad because you're such a bloody person already and that's not really on me. And you should have done a lot of like, personal work—

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: ... before you got this burn.

[audience laughs]

Justin: You have to figure this stuff out early. You have to go see Colonel... [laughs] Admiral Cornelius BuzzFeed, and he'll help you figure out your exact type of humor.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: You just have to answer this quiz.

[audience laughs]

Justin: He can tell you what kind of Disney character you are... Um...

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: What sort of... What sort of IHOP order you might have.

Sydnee: Um, and their—

Justin: International House of Pirates.

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs hard, applauds and cheers]

Justin: Nope. No. No. No. No. This year I'm earning 'em folks! And don't give me more than I deserve! You gotta keep me hungry!

[audience laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: You enticed 'em with your calves right at the beginning.

Justin: Right at the beginning, [southern accent] fire and ice, that's me. Fire and ice.

Sydnee: Just won over.

And this really- It's interesting, because all of this understanding of why people got better or weren't getting better, it also is based on-

So, they would blame it on the pain. So, burns are painful. We know this.

And what they would say is like, "The pain you're experiencing is really because you're in so much pain it's making you sicker.

"The pain is causing the fever and further imbalance, so could you try to stop being in so much pain?"

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: "Because it's making you sick. And if you would stop that [laughs]... I don't have anything for it, really."

Justin: No.

Sydnee: "I am gonna cut you on the other side of your body real quick." [laughs]

And they would—

Justin: "Is that less pain? No? You're saying more pain? Okay. Oh my gosh, I'm kinda outta options here."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: The nicer treatments were really just dietary things. Like specifically they would give you gruel with currants and spices. [laughs]

Justin: Nice.

Sydnee: Which sounds lovely.

Justin: I'd murder that right now.

Sydnee: Like, "Here's some barley water. And then an enema. And then..."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: I mean, which is better, I think, than the bleeding or the cupping.

Audience Member: Yeah!

Justin: [snorts]

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: Yeah, I guess. Yeah.

Sydnee: So—

Justin: Someone in the crowd has a very concrete opinion on whether they prefer bleeding and cupping versus gruel and enemas. Someone didn't... needed no time to think about that one.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: You keep knocking enemas, but like have you ever been really constipated? [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: Maybe? No. I'm- No? What?

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: I don't wanna talk about... it. Hm. That's a first for me, 12 years of podcasting. I don't want to talk about that.

Sydnee: [laughs]

[audience laughs hard, claps]

Sydnee: They did have like a concept of different degrees of burn. It wouldn't be exactly what we would call a first or second or third-degree burn now.

But like there was a staging that was similar to the way we look at burns.

With a first-degree burn the thought was that there's a lot of heat in it, it was red. It looked red. And so it's very hot. So—

Justin: Is first degree... Can you remind me is first-degree the... Does it get worse?

Sydnee: That's like the- It gets worse.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Yeah. So like they would look at a first-degree burn and say like, "Well this is really red. It's really hot. We all know that like cures like, so the most important thing we can do is make it hotter." So—

Justin: [sarcastic] Yes! Yes! Yes! This is what I love!

Sydnee: "If we could apply [laughs]... If we could apply heat to the heat, you'll get better."

Justin: And they...?

Sydnee: I mean... [laughs] A lot of them probably were going to get better so maybe they did get- See, this is what would happen, right?

Like you put some heat on it, they got better anyway 'cause maybe it wasn't that severe of a burn and then you go, "It worked." [laughs]

Justin: It's the hiccups thing. It's the hiccups thing.

Sydnee: It worked.

Justin: Whatever you did right before you got hiccups cures hiccups.

Sydnee: With second-degree they knew that blisters could form. And blisters, again, they were... They thought that was just humors in there.

Like, "Look at that! It's just a big bubble of humours and we gotta let 'em out."

So first you had to pop the blisters.

[audience groans]

Sydnee: I know.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: And then [laughs] you would cover `em in things like vinegar—

[audience groans louder]

Sydnee: ... and then like oily things to try to coat everything. And then there was—

Justin: A little lemon—

Sydnee: ... a whole variety—

Justin: ... a little basil on there [chef's kiss] delicious.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Well, honestly, milk, honey, egg whites. [laughs]

Justin: "Doug, I'm sorry you're in so much pain, man, but I am getting hungry. Is that weird? I'm tired of gruel. I want some Greg."

Sydnee: [laughs] Onions were a really common treatment for burns. And they would take onions and like mash them into a paste and then just like coat you with onions.

[audience groans and laughs]

Which just seems mean because you're already suffering. You're burned. And then like, nobody wants to hang around you 'cause you're just... You smell like onions. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: And maybe egg whites. Egg whites were a common- I feel like they were trying to make fancy cocktails and then they just dumped `em on [laughing] people.

[audience laughs]

Justin: They were... No, they just made a lot of lemon curd, and they were like, "Oh. We got so many egg whites left over. This is embarrassing.

Sydnee: [laughs] They... There was a specific treatment if you got a burn in your eye.

Justin: Ugh!

Sydnee: There were two options you had. I guess you'll all have opinions on which one's worse.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: I feel like we're playing "Which is Worse" right now. So you could use breast milk...

[audience laughs/cheers confusedly]

Sydnee: Now...

Justin: Was that...?

Sydnee: I have a lot of questions about where they were getting that.
[laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: Yeah... Huh.

Sydnee: On a pirate ship.

Or pigeon's blood.

[audience gasps in disgust]

Sydnee: [laughs] Are you debating?

Justin: No, I'm still thinking about the breast milk. Did they bring it on board? 'Cause TV and movies tell me that a lot of times breast milk wouldn't be super available on a pirate ship.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Yeah, yeah. There was also... It's interesting, there is a little note, sometimes for a treatment for burn scars- Which, my initial thought was like, did they care about that? Like, about the...?

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: Like as a cosmetic thing. Like, "If you don't like the look of that scar on your arm, here's an ointment you can put on it to make it go away."

And I thought, "Well, that seems unlikely."

And then there was a note at the bottom that was like, "You would want to use this if it was like, a porridge burn. Not like a gunpowder burn."

Like, it's for the burns you're embarrassed of. [laughs]

Justin: [laughs hard]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: It's for like, "I spilled my hot porridge on me and I don't want anybody to know" burns. Not like, cool burns. [laughs]

Justin: So like... so like the scar on my knee that's from when we were coming home that one time and I fell on the steps of my own home and dropped my Xbox on the ground.

[audience laughs in horror]

Justin: I would probably get that one lasered or porridged off or whatever. Get that enemaed out, I guess.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: It's such a bad scar. And you threw your Xbox right into the bushes while you fell. [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Justin: I wish y'all had been there, 'cause it was funnier than anything I'll ever say.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: It was also so sad. I think the Xbox was okay, though, if I remember—

Audience Member: Whoo!

Justin: No. It was an Xbox 360; it was already not long for this world.

[audience laughs]

Justin: I'd wrapped that bad boy in a towel enough times, he was ready for Valhalla. Not *Assassin's Creed Valhalla*, that would've melted it from the inside out.

[audience laughs]

Justin: I'm saying it was ready for greener pastures.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: I don't know the video game jokes, I'm sorry.

[audience laughs]

Justin: [sighs] That's fine. It's fine.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: They liked it.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] I want to tell you about one famous burned pirate.

[laughs]

Justin: But first we have to go to the billing department.

Sydnee: No—

[audience cheers]

[theme music plays]

[ad break]

Justin: Wouldn't that have been wild if somebody had come up and been like, "Eat Wheaties", [laughs] and then they left?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Man, if we could get that Wheaties sponsorship, though.

Justin: I would do anything, man. Any cereal sponsorship.

Sydnee: No, I just think it's funny because as I was researching like, treating burns on pirate ships, there comes up a story of like, "You know one pirate that got burned so much that there's... That's how he's known in history as like, that pirate that got burned that time."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: His name was Lionel Wafer.

[audience laughs]

Justin: Nice.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. He grew up in the Scottish Highlands. He initially... He wanted to be a barber-surgeon, so he started like a practice after he went through his apprenticeship.

Which would have been like, you start at like 12 or 13 and you just hang out with a barber-surgeon for like six or seven years and then you're a barber-surgeon.

Justin: Wow.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: That's cool.

Sydnee: Yeah, I mean it's a long... It's a long training process.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: But it starts... Like you start out as Doogie and then...

Justin: [laughs softly]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: But so he started his own place, like a surgery, on land. And he, I don't know, got bored or didn't want to do it.

So he decided to go to sea.

And at the time, we're in the golden age of piracy, and there were a lot of ships that needed surgeons on board. That was a rule, you had to have one.

And then pirates would try to steal them, so they had to get a new one when the pirates took your surgeon. [laughs]

So there was a lot of work to... You could get a lot of work out there, if you wanted to.

And he was. He joined up with pirates eventually and kind of like rolled with it. Liked that life.

And was sort of passed on with different crews and went pirating on raids along with pirates, and then also was their surgeon and took care of them.

At one point he was on land with a band of pirates, they were travelling across Panama. This was like, pre-canal. [laughs]

So he's walking and the story... And there's an account from him and an account from somebody else who was there.

One way or another, he is sitting there drying out gunpowder.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And while he's in the midst of doing this, someone nearby like lit up a pipe or something? [laughs] Somebody had fire nearby.

He- The way that he tells the story, he doesn't blame this other dude. He's like, "It was nobody's fault, man. I don't know. You know, stuff happens. Like, it's rough out here."

And then there's an account from another person, like a third party, who's like, "No, it was totally this dude's fault. He just like—"

Justin: Yeah!

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: "He was like, he stood right over his gunpowder and was like, 'Whatcha doin'?' And lit a pipe and..." [laughs]

Justin: [laughs hard]

[audience laughs]

Justin: He should have answered the question more quickly, to be fair.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: "[speaking quickly] Oh, me, me, me, me, me? Uh, extremely flammable work. Please, go away Doug."

Sydnee: [laughs] So because of that... So there was fire immediately and he was burned really badly. Like it burned his knee all the way down to the bone.

[audience groans in horror]

Sydnee: It burned up his thigh- Yes. So it was a very bad burn. Which was bad for a couple of reasons.

One, like how are we going treat this?

And two, they're travelling. They're on the move. And obviously at that point it became very difficult for him to keep moving.

So he tried... He had some medical supplies with him, and he had some ointments and some bandages and he tried to cover it up as best he could and keep on moving along across the land.

But he wasn't being able to keep up very well.

They really did... And this kind of speaks to how important, if you had a barber-surgeon or a sea surgeon who was working with you, you tried to keep them alive because they, you know, they served a purpose.

Justin: Good rule of thumb, I would think, for most of your crew probably.

Sydnee: So they tried for a while- Well, no, that wasn't always true, though. He was—

Justin: Oh, yeah. Some guy... Some people were pretty useless, I'm sure you were happy to get rid of `em.

Sydnee: He would have been— [laughs]

Justin: They snored weird, maybe?

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: He would have been less expendable.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: So anyway, so they tried to take him along for a while and he just couldn't keep up and the wound was getting worse.

And then like one of the crew made off with the medical supplies he had with him and took off with them.

And so he was really in a bad way, and he said, "You know what? I'm just going to stay behind."

At that point they had met up with people who were indigenous to the area, the Guna people.

And he was there with them, and he was like, "I'm just gonna hang here."

Justin: [laughs]

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: "Bye. I don't know... I did my best."

Justin: [laughs] This guy gets bored easily, I like that.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So the people that he...The people indigenous to the area had their own treatments that they applied. They had some herbal preparations, and he describes it in his writings, because he wrote about all this.

Like they would choose certain herbs and apply these in poultices and cover it with plantain leaves. And whatever it all was, according to Wafer, 20 days later, it was healed.

Justin: Woah.

Sydnee: And he said other than like it was forever numb, he couldn't feel his knee ever again. [laughs ruefully]

But he kept his knee.

Justin: That's nice.

Sydnee: Yeah, so like a great story. So he decided—

Justin: I mean, there are some days it would be pretty choice not to feel my knees. I'm 42 years old.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [chuckles]

[pause]

[audience laughs]

Justin: Just sayin'. Have to buy a lot less Advil.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] So he's hanging out... So he's like, "This is great. My knee is better. You all are my new friends. I just want to stay with you guys."

Justin: "I love it here. Please let me stay."

Sydnee: I mean, who knows if they were like, open to that. Like, "Well, I mean, we did you a favor. Do you want to go find your friends or...?"

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: "Are you just gonna chill here?"

Justin: "We actually had a whole thing planned and it's like... It would be cool if you left."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs] But, he found a way to like, garner their favor. Because at the same time one of the chief's wives had fallen ill.

And the way... Bleeding was common across different times and places throughout history. All different cultures would engage in like, bloodletting, as a way of treating somebody.

And it was common to have different ways, like methods, that people preferred of bloodletting. Different areas of the body that were thought to be the best.

His description of the way bloodletting was done in this region was very different than what he did.

Justin: Oh no.

Sydnee: What he wrote is that, basically, when someone needed to be bled, you would have them sit on a rock in the river. Because then the blood just goes right there.

Justin: Less mess. I'm into it so far.

Sydnee: And then shoot teeny arrows at them.

[audience laughs]

Justin: [incredulous] What?!

Sydnee: Which of course is a very painful way [laughs] of doing this. Now—

Justin: But a very fun way, in a time where again, let's establish, there wasn't a lot to do. That's an afternoon right there.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: So he—

Justin: "Let's go shoot arrows at Kyle."

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: "And help him!"

Sydnee: "And you're helping him!"

Justin: "You're helping him!"

Sydnee: "You're helping him!"

But the thing is—

Justin: "Hey, Kyle, I left my wallet on the blood rock. Will you please get it when you go out. Thank you."

Sydnee: So he witnesses this and he's like, "I have a better way. Let me show you how we do it."

Justin: "Impossible. Impossible. We've refined this system."

Sydnee: "We just sort of like strap your arm to a piece of tree bark, something to keep it in place, and then we cut you with a lancet, is how we do it."

Now the problem with that is that the little arrow method, while more painful, it doesn't result in a lot of bleeding. We're talking like very shallow little cuts.

And so just drops of blood is all you would really see from that.

Now, when you cut somebody, of course, there's a lot more bleeding.

So, when the chief witnessed this, he was like, "Okay, um, we're all freaked out. That's terrible. This does not look like it's gonna work."

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: "So if she's not better tomorrow, you're dead."

Justin: "We're gonna take you out to the bleeding rock and use the big arrows."

[audience laughs hard]

Sydnee: And this is one of those weird moments where there is no reason... So the documented medical conditions were fits and fevers, so probably fevers and a seizure is probably what had happened.

There is no reason that bleeding somebody would do anything for that. But she got better.

And so he was allowed to like, hang out and chill. [laughs]

Justin: [sarcastic] Sorry Dr. Sydnee McElroy, it seems like maybe miracles sometimes do happen.

[audience laughs]

Justin: [sarcastic] Maybe you need to open your eyes and your heart a little bit to the incredible power of cutting someone and waiting.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: Well, you don't just wait. You catch it in a little cup.

Justin: Ah, yes.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: That's key.

Justin: It's true.

Sydnee: Like a little- And a fancy cup. [chuckles]

Justin: Yeah, but he may have had to make do.

Sydnee: Well, who knows?

Justin: Who knows.

Sydnee: So, because of this whole adventure he lived, and he eventually wrote a book about it. This became like his whole thing. This is also why he's famous.

He got burned and then he wrote a book about his adventures and really made a living off of telling people about all of these adventures that he had.

Until of course eventually he decided he wanted to go to Jamestown, Virginia, check out what was happening there.

And as soon as he got there, he was arrested because the pirate stuff.

Justin: [explodes into laughter]

[audience laughs hard]

Sydnee: So...

But what an adventure until then.

Justin: Got 'im! [laughs] Got 'im!

Sydnee: 'Cause he did do the pirating before all of his adventures. He forgot about that. [laughs]

Justin: Hey, finally a *Sawbones* that doesn't end in a death. He went to prison. That's not bad, right? That's alright.

And he's still there today.

[audience laughs]

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: Thank you so much [laughing] for listening to our podcast, *Sawbones*.

Thank you to The Taxpayers for the use of our song, "Medicines" as the intro and outro of our program.

Thanks to Paul Sabourin and Clint McElroy and Amanda and Rachel and everybody who helps makes this show possible.

Thanks to you, for being here!

[audience cheers]

Justin: Uh, that is gonna do it for us for this week.

[theme music starts]

So until next time, my name is Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: And as always, don't drill a hole in your head.

[audience cheers]

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