

Sawbones 500: Willy Wonka

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Intro (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? We think you've earned it. Just sit back, relax, and enjoy a moment of distraction from that weird growth. You're worth it!

[theme music plays]

Justin: Hello everybody, and welcome to *Sawbones*, a marital tour of misguided medicine. I'm your co-host, Justin McElroy.

Sydnee: And I'm Sydnee McElroy.

Justin: And uh, [laughs] how are you all doin'?

Sydnee: Uh we... we've already mentioned it, but we're... we're struggling over here at *Sawbones*.

Justin: Yes, we're on the uh... the struggle bus, as Cooper's teacher used to say.

Sydnee: That's a popular phrase.

Justin: I know, but that's—

Sydnee: That's not just—

Justin: ... the first time I heard it.

Sydnee: Yeah, I don't... I have not used it myself, but I have heard it used around me.

Justin: That's how hip I am. I learn lingo from my kid's kindergarten teacher.

Sydnee: Charlie uses it too.

Justin: I believe it's a thing.

Sydnee: Now, I don't know if she learned it from her teacher, but Charlie also will say, "Mommy, I'm on the struggle bus today."

Justin: Anyway. We're directing a show with my dad. It's called *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. It's a musical. And if you're listening to this and you can get to Huntington this weekend or next, it's going to be a heck of a thing.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm.

Justin: You should come on out. Go to H-A-R-T-of-W-V.org, and you can get some tickets and it's going to be great.

Sydnee: Nobody tells you when you think like, "We should do *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* or *Willy Wonka* or any version of this story, in an outdoor theater venue" how difficult that's going to be to execute. Nobody warns you about that.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: I don't know who's supposed to. I don't know whose job it is to come warn you.

Justin: To make a whole factory, you know there's a whole factory made of chocolate.

Sydnee: There should really... when you get rights, when you like, request the rights, they should say like, "Wait, wait. Now hold on. Is this outside? Are you sure? Are you sure? Think about it."

Justin: "Think about it." Uh, but anyway, that's what—

Sydnee: It's incredible what we have accomplished, but...

Justin: Yes. And if you're listening... And listen, by the time you come this weekend or next, it's going to be a heck of a thing. But right now it's taking a lot of work open, opening a lot of veins over here at *Sawbones*.

Sydnee: Well, can I just say that the cast is incredible. The performances are—

Justin: Oh, it's incredible.

Sydnee: ... outstanding.

Justin: It's wonderful. Everyone's having such a great time.

Sydnee: We just want to give them the magic, the technical magic surrounding them.

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: To [laughs]... to really showcase their theater prowess.

Justin: So what are we doing this week? Well, we have talked in the past, trying to use Sydnee's medical acumen to talk about popular culture. And we thought, what better way than for us to go through the incredible *Chocolate Factory* experience and talk about the logistics of it from a biological perspective.

Sydnee: Because let me tell you something about... So there are lots of different versions of the story, right? There's the original book, which I've never read, which I guess is probably different. And then there's the movie, which I think most of us grew up with, with Gene Wilder as Willy Wonka. I think that's the one most of us are most familiar with. There's multiple staged versions—

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: ... that are slightly different. And then there's of course two more movies that have been made in that same, you know, genre.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: I don't know that everyone would be familiar with how each character meets their end... which—

Justin: I mean which probably differs—

Sydnee: ... I mean, end, question mark?

Justin: I know it differs telling to telling so...

Sydnee: Yes. And what we realized as we were staging this version of the story is that- So in a lot of the staged versions of *Willy Wonka* or *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, whatever... what have you... They make a point of bringing back the Golden Ticket winners and the family members who didn't get it.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: The losers, I guess.

Justin: Yes, if you will.

Sydnee: If you will.

Sydnee: At the end, for some little like, trudging away sadly moment.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: To... And I think the main purpose is, even in the movie, it's not a hundred percent clear what happens to those kids, right?

Justin: Yes. Right.

Sydnee: Like you hope they are fine. You are led to believe by Willy Wonka that there will be a fix to their problems.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: But you're not guaranteed that they're fine.

And so I think showing them at the end is just a way of saying like, "Don't worry. Don't worry. No [laughs]... no kids were killed in this show that you just brought your children to see at the park outside."

Justin: Yes, they're fine.

Sydnee: "On a wonderful Saturday evening."

Justin: They're fine. The kids are fine.

Sydnee: So, this is not included in our version of this show.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: We added it. [laughs]

Justin: Yes, yeah, it's bonus. Bonus material.

Sydnee: Bonus. We didn't... we didn't change anything. We didn't change anything. They just... wander onto stage and then wander off.

Justin: Yes. Just to show they were not, in fact, murdered.

Sydnee: Yes. Nothing was added to the script or deleted, they're just... they wander on and wander off and they're fine and no children will cry. But what we wanted to talk about was the legitimacy of each of these characters surviving and thriving following their grizzly factory fates.

Justin: Okay. Now, Augustus Gloop is the first.... the first little boy to perish. I'm going to say die. We all know they don't die, but it's... it's... I don't know a better way of saying it.

Sydnee: Gene Wilder's Willy Wonka has a line that makes it very clear that they're fine.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: "They return to their terrible, awful selves." Something to that effect.

Justin: So, the first kid to get offed [laughs] Augustus Gloop, is drinking from Mr. Wonka's incredible chocolate river, which is churning, churning and churning.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. With a waterfall.

Justin: With a waterfall.

Sydnee: I've created one for our stage.

Justin: Yes, incredible. And while consuming said chocolate, which he's told not to eat the chocolate, which I think is rude, honestly.

Sydnee: Well, he'll contaminate it with his human hands.

Justin: Yes, but this has always bothered me. You set the people loose in the chocolate room and you say, "Just go ham, right? Go ham." Goes to the teacup, "Oh, a teacup. I'm just gonna eat this teacup. Incredible!" You know what I mean?

Sydnee: Yep.

Justin: It's a flower that's a teacup that you can also eat? That's two different— People don't talk about that enough. It's a flower that's also a teacup. That would be so impressive, right? If you found a flower that can also hold your tea, but then you eat it? Oh my gosh, it's three things! That's incredible.

Sydnee: It is incredible.

Justin: But you're telling everybody to eat all this stuff and then the kid sees, like, incredible chocolate flowing down an incredible river and you're like, "Well, I see the grand prize right here in terms of eating. This is a once in a lifetime eating experience. I'm taking it straight from the source."

Why... Why have the frigging catfish? You know what I mean? Why the honey pot?

Sydnee: Well—

Justin: Why let the— Why say every— Why are they contaminating the other things in this room, which is presumably for chocolate and candy production?

Sydnee: Well, no. The other things are not for chocolate and candy production.

Justin: That's wild! It's wild that you have a private space for your own delights, and yet you have a commercial chocolate pipeline exposed through. That's wild.

Sydnee: Well, the- Now listen, Willy Wonka never planned on letting anybody in the factory until he realized, "Wait, I am mortal."

Justin: [laughs] Right.

Sydnee: [As Willy Wonka] "And so I must bring in a young mortal."

Justin: I want—

Sydnee: Unless you believe he's not mortal. Which can I tell you? Our cast has lots of theories about what [laughing] Willy Wonka is and isn't.

Justin: Yeah. Alien gets bandied about a lot. Oh.

Sydnee: Mm-hmm. Vampire gets thrown in there. Time Lord has been entertained in my presence.

Justin: Time Lord has been kicked around.

Sydnee: Not by me. But other people. So Augustus falls into the Chocolate River, which like... okay. But the whole thing is this kid's supposed to be greedy. And he is told, "You can eat anything in this room but that." But that's not good enough for him. That's the point.

Justin: That's the kid I want.

Sydnee: What's what the—

Justin: That's the kid I want at the top of my organization. Augustus Gloop has a grindset that Willy Wonka should respect. Respect the hustle. Great entrepreneurs don't follow rules. Sydnee, we watched six episodes of *WeCrashed*. You know this.

Sydnee: No, this is more of a *Succession* thing.

Justin: I guess, but like, he loves the chocolate so much that he'll break the rules to get it.

Sydnee: You see Augustus Gloop as your Tom Wambsgans then. [laughs]

Justin: No, I'm not- [laughs]

Sydnee: That's who... that's who you want [crosstalk].

Justin: That's who I want. That's my— Yeah, Augusta— [dissolves into laughter] Augustus is the... I keep saying "Augusta" because "Augusta" is "Augusta" in our show.

Sydnee: In our show, Augustus is Augusta.

Justin: She's just very strong. Like, I don't know, I don't want to make a whole...

Sydnee: Well, the whole song's about it.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: How strong she is.

Justin: How strong she is.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: It's—

Sydnee: Anyway—

Justin: This is a newer version from- That was recently on Broadway and the West End so it's... a little more updated.

Sydnee: So, okay, the kid falls into the river.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Now, obviously in order to survive initially you cannot drown in the chocolate.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Which like... I... The idea... I mean, it's churning. And so I'd like to allow for the possibility that there are air pockets. Because it is churning the chocolate, so it's adding air to the chocolate, it's aerating the chocolate. So I think if we combine maybe some major lung capacity in young Augustus.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: With possible air pockets in this aerated chocolate.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Then we survive to the pipe. And like they make the point, like, then they clearly say, "He's blocking the chocolate in the pipe." So he's not drowning in the pipe, because he's blocking the chocolate.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: So he's got air to breathe.

Justin: Okay. What about—

Sydnee: So we can eliminate drowning as a concern.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: I think.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: I'm just doing it. I did it. There it is.

Justin: I have a problem with it from a cooking perspective. To keep that chocolate liquid, to a point where it is going to keep flowing, I mean, I think it— You've got... I mean, when you're making candy or making fudge like you're getting up into the two hundreds Fahrenheit. And maybe you don't need to maintain that, but it's gonna have to be pretty warm to keep from clogging the works.

Because it's getting cooled by the air above it, right? So it's gotta be heated enough to compensate for that. It's not— It doesn't have to be that hot because, think about a chocolate fountain.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Which we have operated before.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: The chocolate in a chocolate fountain, you add oil to it...

Justin: Yes...

Sydnee: ... it has a low melting point. It's specifically formulated melting chocolate. I'm assuming it's got a really high fat content.

Justin: Yes!

Sydnee: You add oil to it and then it melts very easily.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: And when you... you can dip... I mean, don't, but if you see a chocolate fountain out in the wild, you could stick your finger in and not get burned.

Justin: Yes Dr. McElroy, but, what you're ignoring is this chocolate is not going to be used and extruded as a liquid product. Once you introduce that amount of oil into it, it's not going to resolidify into a chocolate bar. We're talking about tempered chocolate that has to retain the shape once it's poured into the molds, so it's going to have to be pretty friggin' hot.

Sydnee: So you think if you actually fell in a— Well, okay. Then you would just be instantly burned, and we don't really need to worry about drowning because you're already dead?

Justin: Well, I don't know if two fif— I don't know. Can we hang out at like... I don't know, if it's like a buck fifty, 200, can we hang with that? [laughs]

Sydnee: No. We don't do that well with that. [laughs]

Justin: We can't hang with that?

Sydnee: Nope, we don't do well with that.

Justin: Alright, here's what I think. Here's what I think. I'm going to call Roald Dahl to the mat for this and not just for being America's most beloved anti—Semite.

Sydnee: Yeah, there's a... there's a lot of things you could really call him to the mat for.

Justin: Roald Dahl is, and maybe we should have said this up top, absolutely, absolutely horrid person.

Sydnee: Yes.

Justin: Who created things that have brought people a lot of joy and still, you know, I think he can go pound sand. I think he's a horrid guy.

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: But I think it's nice to reclaim things that bring us joy if we can, from, from horrid people and take it from them and make it our own and ground their names into the dust.

Sydnee: It's a... It's a struggle for a lot of Harry Potter fans, isn't it?

Justin: Uh, yeah, yeah...

Sydnee: Yeah.

Justin: That's... Yeah, it's... it's...

Sydnee: I know.

Justin: It's tough. It's tough, right? But—

Sydnee: So, okay, we need to move on past Augustus—

Justin: So, Roald Dahl stinks on ice.

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: Just wanted to say that, again.

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: Roald Dahl stinks. Anyway, go ahead.

Sydnee: So, okay, Augustus is—

Justin: I don't... I think he would've scalded his— No, this is what I was gonna say. He woulda scalded his hand. He puts it into the river, instantly—

Sydnee: And so he never would have—

Justin: [As Augustus Gloop] "Ahh!"

Sydnee: ... fallen in? He never would have fallen in 'cause he never would have tried to.

Justin: [As Augustus Gloop] "Mr. Wonka! Ah! My burns! I'm suing you for... millions!"

Sydnee: But either way, if we assume that it is chocolate fountain chocolate, and he did fall in and he didn't burn and he doesn't...

Justin: Yep.

Sydnee: ... suffocate.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: I think... I think this is true about Willy Wonka in general, that Willy Wonka has more control over his factory than he lets on. And when he calls and he's like, "He's going to the fudge room, we don't want him to get turned into fudge. We don't get it burned." He can get that stuff turned off right away.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: He's got it shut down.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: He's not worried. That kid's not turned into fudge.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: There's no chance the kid's turning into fudge.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: The other kids are supposed to listen to the story from the Oompa Loompas. This is for the benefit of the other children. You know?

Justin: So... he's trying to use scare tactics.

Sydnee: Yes.

Justin: But you're saying he's fine. Now—

Sydnee: I'm saying... I'm saying that I think it is believable that Augustus survives his ordeal. Let's move on to the next child.

Justin: Okay, next child is... who?

Sydnee: Violet Beauregard.

Justin: Violet Beauregard. She loves gum.

Sydnee: She loves gum.

Justin: If you don't know this about her.

Sydnee: She's kind of a YouTube star in this version.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. She... she's been chewing the same amount of gum for a very long time, and that has somehow made her TikTok or Instagram famous. Which I say somehow, but I... a lot of people have probably done well there on those platforms with a lot less.

Sydnee: See, that's... Listen, if you don't do theater, let me tell you this, you're not supposed to change things when you get, like, a script and you're performing it.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Like, they tell you. Like, it's a legal thing. You're not supposed to change anything. And we have struggled a lot with the fact that they reference what a big Twitter star she is. [laughs]

Justin: Yeah. I was thinkin', "Well..."

Sydnee: Because there is no Twitter. It would be X, and she is a child. She would not be on.

Justin: Yeah, I don't—

Sydnee: The kids use that social media.

Justin: The kids don't like Twitter. They're not into that.

Sydnee: They didn't use Twitter. They don't use... They certainly don't use X. Instagram, TikTok, YouTube. Probably one of those.

Justin: But that's not the important thing. The important thing is that Violet chews a piece of experimental gum that's supposed to simulate a meal, basically.

Sydnee: Let's leave aside whether or not that could exist. I mean, it could taste like a bunch of different stuff, but could it also contain the amount of juice that causes her to expand into blueberry?

Justin: It's not an amount of jui— It's a chemical reagent. It's... that's somewhere in her brain. This is what I'm thinking, right?

Sydnee: That does not make sense.

Justin: It does make sense. Okay, so the gum—

Sydnee: No, this is a piece of TARDIS gum...

Justin: The gum can't change flavor, in its substance, right? The only thing that it could do is trigger a like, hormonal reaction, in your brain—

Sydnee: Okay.

Justin: ... to trigger those sensory receptors.

Sydnee: That makes sense to me.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: That... And that is... I mean, maybe not currently feasible, but like you could understand how something like that could exist.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: And it could be sort of like coated pills. We could have layers on each level so that it changes, so that it sends different chemical signals.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Okay. Yeah.

Justin: So what it does—

Sydnee: Like, that is possible.

Justin: What it does is, accidentally, when it gets to blueberry pie, the hormonal thing that is in the gum, it messes— And I'm saying hormonal as like a stand in for like, brain juice. You know what I mean?

And the hormonal thing, it triggers like the fluid glands in the body, like fluid production, that... Yeah, yeah, yeah. Fluid production. And that makes her expand out.

Sydnee: Okay, that doesn't make sense.

Justin: I think it—

Sydnee: Because you can't create...

Justin: Can't create...

Sydnee: You're not creating fluid in the body.

Justin: Okay, this is the problem—

Sydnee: You can't create matter. You could...

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: You could move fluid into the third space. So that... I mean, that's a question I would have.

Like functionally, where are we imagining that all this juice—

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: ... that she is now full with...?

Justin: You're saying it's dimensional.

Sydnee: Where is it? Is it—

Justin: You're saying it's a dimensional shift.

Sydnee: Well, because if it's in... is it inside her physical stomach? Like, did the... The gum went into her stomach.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: The organ, her stomach. I'm not talking about that part of your body that people sometimes refer to broadly as the stomach. I'm talking about the organ.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: If the juice is all inside the stomach and that is her stomach expanding, that doesn't make sense based on how she appears.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Because she turns into a perfectly round blueberry.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Your stomach expanding would not do that. It would just cause your abdomen to expand and eventually your stomach would rupture, by the way.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: So that's... That doesn't make sense. So is she somehow third spacing all of her fluid, meaning all of the fluid that's contained within her vasculature, her veins and arteries, is it leaking out?

Which does happen, right? That's... That's how you get, like, swelling in your legs. If you've seen, like, your legs get puffy sometimes, or if you have a condition that causes you to get swelling, you third space it.

Meaning it moves from where it's supposed to, to the third space inside the tissues.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Inside your interstitial tissues and everything, where it's not really supposed to be.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Okay. And we have methods for removing fluid from that third space already, because it's something that physiologically and pathologically happens in the human body already.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: It's not juice. It's cellular fluid.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Which is very different.

But the ways that we can remove it if it is in the third space is either through diuretics at times. I don't know that this would necessarily work on juice though, because we're talking about a different osmotic balance.

Justin: I will say, though, she says in this version of the script that she feels like she has to use the bathroom.

Sydnee: She does.

Justin: Which makes me feel like that one, maybe that shouldn't be in the script. It's a really wild line.

Second, that she... maybe that would help. Maybe that would alleviate the situation with diuretics.

Sydnee: Now, the other question is, is it expanding inside her colon...

Justin: Okay. [laughs uncomfortably]

Sydnee: ... somehow. Which I don't know how it would... Like, it could not transit that quickly. At that point, again, the swelling... picture, the visible picture, doesn't make sense.

But then like, laxatives... But that... I don't think that... I don't think that answers our question. I think what you're probably looking at—

Justin: I'm getting... I was getting deja vu and do you know why? We've had an almost identical conversation about the Incredible Hulk. [laughs]

Sydnee: Yes, we have. What is expanding?

Justin: We settled on interdimensional... Isn't that right? Like it's being sucked from a...

Sydnee: Well, isn't that what it is, canon?

Justin: It was this like—

Sydnee: It's an interdimensional thing.

Justin: ... interdimensional matter being sucked in.

Sydnee: That's such a cheat. That's such a—

Justin: I know! The whole thing is.

Sydnee: ... deus ex machina.

But then, other than diuretics, the other thing— and I think that this is what he's sort of referencing when he talks about sending her to the Juicing Room— compression. Another way, if you have swelling in your legs that we might advise you to alleviate it, is with compression stockings.

Or sometimes with things like lymphedema, where you accumulate lymphatic fluid in different parts of your body, we can do special compression wrapping. That's not something you should try on your own. There are specialists who are trained in compression wraps so that you don't make things worse. You make things better.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: But like, if you had people who like work at a lymphedema clinic and know how to do compressive dressings, you could probably alleviate a lot of the swelling in her limbs. Central compression is a bigger problem, so I think you would need the use of diuretics. I don't think elevation is going to work 'cause her whole body's swollen.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: But I can see a reality where you could alleviate some of that swelling using traditional medical...

Justin: What about the damage to the epidermis?

Sydnee: ... methods. What about the damage?

Justin: Well, wouldn't the swelling out—

Sydnee: She's blue. She might still be. She would probably still be blue.

Justin: Well, she might still be blue, but didn't... didn't she get all stretched out and her skin get all stretched out?

Sydnee: Well, she might. And I mean... If the swelling was that severe, she may have excess skin afterwards, but I'm talking about survival—

Justin: Yeah, that's true.

Sydnee: And that's not a huge deal.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: If she survives but then she's got some ex— I mean, there're surgeries for that too. You know, that happens with a lot of weight loss as well. So... you could... you could have that down the road. I don't have any fix for the blue.

Justin: No.

Sydnee: The blue seems very quick onset and unless it's sort of like a jaundice picture, in which case, like something is not being cleared by the liver or the kidneys and so it's backing up and accumulating in the skin.

And then after those, after that pressure is alleviated in the kidneys or liver whatever could function properly, then it is gone. But I would bet she's going to be blue permanently.

Justin: My, my, my. Two naughty little children gone. Two...

Sydnee: Three.

Justin: Well, yeah, but Charlie doesn't...

Sydnee: Yeah, Charlie makes. Spoilers.

Justin: Three good little children left.

Sydnee: Alright, I'm going to tell you about Veruca, which is different from the movie. But before we do that. We've got to go to the billing department.

Justin: Let's go.

[ad break]

Justin: Veruca Salt wants the world, she wants the whole world.

Sydnee: Veruca Salt, in the movie, of course, falls down the bad... nut... shoot. Bad egg.

Justin: Egg.

Sydnee: It's a... it's an egg, in the movie.

Justin: It's a egg. It's a egg. It's a little confusing because it is... She is judged as a bad egg by the nut-testing squirrels. So I think the nut testing scrolls are using bad egg metaphorically? [laughs] I don't know.

Sydnee: No, they're saying— No, they call her a bad nut.

Justin: I'm saying in the original book—

Sydnee: Ohhh!

Justin: By noted bad person Roald Dahl.

Sydnee: Oh, I didn't know that. See and I thought she was... I mean, 'cause there's golden geese that decide she's a bad egg.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: And in our version there are giant squirrels that decide she's a bad nut.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: Yes.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: And then when they decide she's a bad nut, she doesn't just fall down the bad nut shoot.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Not in this version.

Justin: Nope.

Sydnee: And is... Is this true to the book?

Justin: [laughs] I don't think so.

Sydnee: In this version the Oompa Loompas and giant squirrels, which all of the Oompa Loompas become giant squirrels in this scene, for us.

Justin: Why not?

Sydnee: Whatever. They get tails and ears and these cute little aprons with nuts in them. Anyway.

They rip her limb from limb.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: On stage.

Justin: Pretty intense.

Sydnee: Yeah, we do not... No actors are harmed in the making of this show. [laughs]

Justin: [snorts] Yeah.

Sydnee: We have a doll. But that is how Veruca meets her end. She literally has her arms and legs ripped off by giant squirrels on stage. And then arms, legs, torso— with head still connected, the head is not removed.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: Boy, this was a point in rehearsal last night. [laughs]

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: As the head was attempted to be removed and I was in the audience yelling, "Stop! Not the head!" [laughing] "It's on there!" The head stays, but all of these pieces are then thrown down the bad nut shoot.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: And there's a reference that she'll be reassembled with a glue stick.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: This one's the easiest, I think.

Justin: [skeptically] Oh yeah?

Sydnee: Well, okay...

Justin: [laughs] Depending, I guess right?

Sydnee: Well, we can reattach limbs.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: We do that.

Justin: We do that.

Sydnee: We already do that.

Justin: Can we reattach a head? We already... We ever done that?

Sydnee: No— Okay. Internal decapitation can happen where the... like, the spine is broken, in the right place, where we would call it "an internal decapitation." And when you hear the word "decapitation," you imagine, like, head in one part of the room, body in another.

An internal decapitation—

Justin: I... Can I say, honey? Stop.

Sydnee: [laughs]

Justin: Stop right there. [quoting Sydnee] “When I imagine decapitation, I imagine head in one room, body in another”?

Sydnee: Well, I'm just saying like distance in physical space between—

Justin: What is wrong with you?

Sydnee: Well, nobody thinks “decapitation” and you would still look at—

Justin: Why are you imagining it anyway?! But when you do, why have you imagined this *Saw*-style puzzle? Doctor?

Sydnee: I'm just saying that once the head...

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: Once we've severed— [laughs] Once we've severed like, you know, the... all those major vessels and all of the spinal cord and all of, I mean like your trachea and your esophagus. And I mean there's a lot of— Listen, listen.

Justin: Listen.

Sydnee: For all of you future medical students or current medical students, there's a lot of stuff in the neck. There's so many things in the neck and you gotta memorize `em all.

Justin: It's a lot.

Sydnee: You got to know what they're all called and where they are and what they connect to.

Justin: It's a lot.

Sydnee: And when they go wrong, you got to know about what that means There's so much stuff in the neck.

Justin: Pipes and bones.

Sydnee: So much. So, anyway... So once, like, the neck is completely severed, like obviously, no, that's not fixable. But this doesn't happen. So we don't have to—

What I'm talking about is when the bones break in a certain way in the neck, we call that an internal decapitation. But like, your head is still— Like, if I'm looking at you, you look fine. It's just the bones are broken in a certain way. That can happen.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Okay. Anyway, no, she is not decapitated. Her arms and legs are torn off. Those can be reattached. So this is like... Now, obviously we don't use a glue stick. We use, like surgery. We use... you know...

Justin: You guys, you all use surgical glue.

Sydnee: ... sutures and...

Justin: Sometimes glue?

Sydnee: Not for this.

Justin: Mm-hmm.

Sydnee: If you have like a minor skin laceration, we might use surgical glue.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: But no, we do not use it for reattaching an arm.

Justin: So if you reattach an arm, you're using like needle and thread still?

Sydnee: Well, inside—

Justin: Y'all aren't onto glue?

Sydnee: Inside you're going to need to use some sort of hardware to do that, to attach the bones, right?

Justin: Cool.

Sydnee: Because joints have been torn, and so all of the... all of the other structures that support a joint. 'Cause the bones are up against each other. But then you've got all of the musculature and the ligaments and the tendons and everything that connects everything together.

All of that has been ripped asunder. And so you're going to have to reattach all of that and then probably put some hardware in place, too.

Justin: Are those considered bionics, or does there have to be some more functionality before it's considered that?

Sydnee: Yeah, I think... I do not believe we consider just replacing— 'Cause we already replace joints, right?

Justin: Sure. Of course.

Sydnee: We already have fake knees and fake shoulders and all this stuff. I— Fake hips. These are not bionics. This is just a, usually like some metal, doing what the joint normally does.

Justin: Fascinating. Hm.

Sydnee: Anyway, I'm guaranteeing you're gonna need some of that. An orthopedic surgeon could do all this. The only thing you gotta consider is the blood loss.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: That's a... that's a major amount of blood loss that can occur all at once.

And so you would need to immediately staunch the bleeding from all four open wounds and—

Justin: I gotta solve for it.

Sydnee: And those four limbs need to be placed on ice like ASAP for them to be viable to be reattached. So I don't know— Like, the bad nut shoot, in the movie, they say it ends in the incinerator. That's a problem.

Justin: Yeah, but we're—

Sydnee: Where does the bad nut shoot end in our show?

Justin: We don't know.

Sydnee: It's kind of vague.

Justin: We still have to build it. So I don't know yet. We'll see what we have time to do.

Sydnee: But assuming that the Oompa Loompas could arrive with ice fast enough, you'd be okay.

Justin: And if she needs a transfusion, I know somewhere where we can get a bunch of glucose-rich blood that was just ported in from another dimension that's just sitting there that they juiced out of Violet. So they could give Veruca a transfusion of that incredible nutrient-rich blood.

Sydnee: [exhausted] That was not blood, but okay.

Justin: We don't know if it was.

Sydnee: She was not filled with blood.

Justin: I'm just saying...

Sydnee: You think of all the options, that's what Viola Beauregard is filling up...? That is the grossest possible...

Justin: It's—

Sydnee: The most disturbing option you could have picked.

Justin: Honey, the idea that anybody would think it's anything else is so wild to me. I've of course always assumed it's blood.

Sydnee: Juice! It's juice!

Justin: How's she making juice? We don't make juice. We make blood.

Sydnee: Well, it's pretend.

Justin: We're people, Doctor McElroy.

Sydnee: It's pretend. Interdimensional.

Justin: Okay.

Sydnee: Finally, Mike Teevee.

Justin: Ah, Mike, Teevee. Now this is interesting, because he gets shrunk down through TV rays. Well, he doesn't yet, but...

Sydnee: I can't... I can't answer this one.

Justin: ... we're still working on it.

Sydnee: It's all pretend.

Justin: It's not all pretend, 'cause—

Sydnee: It is pretend! We can't shrink people. We don't have the ability to shrink people.

Justin: Here she goes again...

Sydnee: So I don't... Listen, the way that they— Okay, so he gets shrunk—

Justin: Imagine I'm tiny, okay?

Sydnee: Uh-huh.

Justin: Okay. Let me ask you this, to— Okay, we do have an analog for this. Astronauts.

Sydnee: They don't get shrunk.

Justin: They get smaller in space and when they come back to Earth, they're smaller. How do we fix that?

Sydnee: What do you mean they get smaller?

Justin: They're shorter, astronauts are shorter, when they get back to Earth.

Sydnee: Well, no, you're talking about— What you're talking about, is they don't have gravity, and that has an effect on the human skeleton to like function without gravity for a while.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: And it can cause muscular atrophy. That's why I have to do all those special exercises.

Justin: Right.

Sydnee: Because it can cause your muscles to atrophy and you can have trouble walking when you return if you don't... Even if you do all that stuff, I'm assuming there's still problems.

Justin: You're taller when you get back, not shorter. Taller because of the lack of gravity's pull. Right?

Sydnee: Everything—

Justin: You're a little bit taller.

Sydnee: Everything's stretched out?

Justin: Yeah, astronauts get taller in space.

Sydnee: Uh-huh?

Justin: This is true.

Sydnee: [skeptically] Okay?

Justin: But it can add up—

Sydnee: They should level out.

Justin: Listen. It can add up to two inches to a six-foot-tall astronaut.

Sydnee: Wow, that's wild. So—

Justin: So—

Sydnee: Are we imagining—

Justin: ... here's what I'm saying—

Sydnee: Are we imagining that the WonkaVision is just actually an incredible gravitational field that pulls Mike TeeVee down into a tiny version of himself?

Justin: Yes. And there's only one solve for it. [singing in the style of David Bowie] "This is ground control to Major Mike!" We got to send him up.

Sydnee: Do you think that's what happens? I know that in the sequel book to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, like, *The Amazing Glass Wonkavater*, whatever it is, I've never read it, but our—

Justin: [laughs]

Sydnee: Well, our Willy Wonka, in our show has read it. And our Charlie Bucket has now read it.

Justin: Yes.

Sydnee: And they have both discussed it near me, so I have heard about it.

Justin: [laughs hard]

Sydnee: I know so much... Everyone is discussing *Willy Wonka* and *Charlie and the Chocolate*— All versions of this and theories all the time.

Justin: Yeah.

Sydnee: Everyone is very into this and so I hear all of this, even if I'm not consuming it. But I guess they go to outer space in the sequel.

Justin: Oh, yeah. Okay.

Sydnee: So maybe that's why they go to take Mike Teevee...

Justin: To stretch him out.

Sydnee: Because clearly what they talk about, like they're going to take him to the Taffy Room and stretch him out...

Justin: We don't do that.

Sydnee: Well, and I don't even think we say that. Actually in this version...

Justin: Ms. Teevee.

Sydnee: ... Ms. Teevee is fine with it.

Justin: Yeah, she's thrilled 'cause she's got her little boy back. So she puts him in her purse and leaves.

Sydnee: And is happy.

Justin: And is happy.

Sydnee: And has no interest and wants to be reassured that it will not be undone. So there is no fix in our show.

Justin: I will say that in—

Sydnee: But I mean, he's alive.

Justin: In the case of the astronauts, it regulates after a couple of months. So maybe Mike will just gradually go back.

Sydnee: Gradually go back.

Justin: Gradually.

Sydnee: I mean, that's... So what we're saying is, remove gravity. Our fix for Mike is—

Justin: No, because we're assuming—

Sydnee: ... send him to space and remove gravity.

Justin: ... that he was exposed through WonkaVision to a super field of gravity, as they say.

And so returning to Earth's gravity will gradually return him to his normal height, just like the astronauts.

Sydnee: But if we want to do it faster so that by the end of the show, we can have him walk across the stage and reassure the children that he's fine—

Justin: It's gotta be space.

Sydnee: ... we got to send him to outer space and then bring him back.

Justin: Gotta be space. Gotta be space.

Sydnee: Alright. Let's let Gill know.

Justin: All right.

Sydnee: That's... That's our actor who's playing...

Justin: Yeah. Hey, folks. Thank you so much for hanging in there with us. We hope you enjoyed yourself for this half hour. I know I have. This has actually been the most fun... [laughs] I shouldn't say that.

Sydnee: We—

Justin: It's a joy. It's a joy. Theater is a joy and it's a gift. And we hope that you can make it if you can come this weekend or next, it'd be cool.

Sydnee: It's in a park venue.

Justin: Yeah, you can sit outside, bring a cooler.

Sydnee: If you're not familiar, because we had some people come from outside Huntington.

Justin: We did!

Sydnee: It's an outside park amphitheater so it's like, bring your own lawn chairs or blankets or whatever. We don't have seating. You just find your spot.

You can bring a cooler or a picnic basket or whatever. Food and drink. And make a whole evening of it. There's like a kids' preshow that our kids are in where they do like Broadway songs.

Justin: We'll be there. My dad's Grandpa Joe. So he'll be there. It's gonna be fun. Come on out.

Sydnee: We'll be— You'll see us running around backstage and in the wings trying to fix things at the last minute, probably.

Justin: Yes, please feel free to say hi. That is going to do it for us for this week. Thanks to The Taxpayers for the use of their song "Medicines" as the intro and outro of our program.

And thanks to you for listening! That's going to do it. 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.

[theme music plays]

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