

Episode 2 – The Future

Scene 1

It was just after dark when Andrew pulled his car into the parking lot behind the firehouse. He had a few minutes before he had to head inside and start his shift. He had a long twenty-four hours shift ahead of him. As he sat in the driver's side of his car, Andrew reached into his coat pocket for his phone. He searched through the contacts until the name David Kurt appeared and he hit the send button. The sound of a ring tone echoed as he put the phone up to his ear. It rang only twice before it went to voice mail and the sound of David's voice took over.

Voice Message: Hey this is David. Just leave me a message and I'll get back to you soon.

Andrew waited for the message to end and then a beep sound queue him in.

Andrew: Hey Fucker. What gives? This is the third time I've called you in the last few days. It's not really like you not to answer the phone or at least call me back.

Andrew rubbed the side of his face with his free hand as he paused between words.

Andrew: So anyways dude I'm sitting outside the firehouse right now and I've got a pretty long night ahead of me, so you seriously need to return my call and help me pass some of the time alright?

Andrew paused again. Then he let out a heavy sigh before saying one last thing.

Andrew: And look um, I'm not normally the one to say this shit and you know it, but I'm worried about you so stop this bullshit, pick up your phone, and call me the fuck back.

Andrew turned off his phone and shoved it back into his jacket pocket. Then he pulled his keys from the ignition, grabbed his knapsack from the passenger's seat, and climbed out of his car. He used the automatic door lock on his key chain. The car made a chirp sound that let him know it was secure. He was stuffing his keys into the same pocket with his phone as he marched with conceit into the firehouse where he worked...

Scene 2

It was dark when David saw the sign that read "Mercy 10 Miles North". He was relieved to be so close to his destination. He had been on the road for over two days now and had only stopped for the bare minimal necessities.

Just after he passed the Mercy city sign, David grabbed his phone from the cup holder that sat between the two front seats. As he glanced at the screen he could see that the phone was dead.

He wasn't surprised; he hadn't been able to charge the phone since he'd left Texas nearly two days ago. In frustration at his lack of phone service he tossed his cell into the passenger's seat. He decided to focus on the fact that his long drive was nearly over, rather than his inability to call the one person he was traveling to see...

Scene 3

Avery's scrub shirt was blood stained when he opened up the door to his locker. He was tired and he could feel it in his body. He sighed in relief that his shift was at an end, but savored the feeling that his exhaustion had come from hours spent in the operating room. As Avery was digging fresh clothes out of his locker he heard someone enter the room.

Noah: That was kinda crazy in there today yeah?

Noah Chase asked as he came around the stack of lockers and saw Avery at his.

Avery: Yeah, it was pretty fast paced today and I loved every minute of it.

Avery validated as he turned his head and nodded to Noah.

Noah: No kidding, that's the busiest I've seen the place since I got here. After all that, I can't wait to get home.

Noah put his back against one of the lockers behind him and breathed exhaustion. He looked tired even though he wasn't as much of a mess as Avery was.

Noah: I've been on for thirty-six hours straight and I've only got ten hours before I've gotta be back here for the next round.

Avery: I'm sort of ready to head out myself. I haven't been home in a while.

Avery spoke with understanding as he pulled off his dingy scrub shirt and tossed it aside. Noah gave Avery an interrogating look.

Noah: How long is a while?

Avery: (Shrugging) I don't know, a week or so.

Noah: You mean you haven't left the hospital in over a week?

Avery: I've been crashing in one of the on call rooms to save on commute time. It's been paying off too. I've been here for all the incoming cardio patients, which puts me first in line for all the best cases and then some.

Noah: Do you really think that's a good idea though? I mean yeah you get the best surgeries but man you're gonna wear yourself down like that.

Noah tried to reason. Avery had predicted this question. It was a common reaction.

Avery: It's no big deal. It's not like I've been living here or something. It's just that staying here gives me an edge in the OR and it gives me a bit of a break.

Noah: A break from what?

Avery: From my brother mostly. Ever since he moved back into our dad's place I've been looking for just about any excuse to be elsewhere.

Noah: I don't know the two of you very well, but I thought you guys got along pretty good.

Avery: We do most of the time, but we are siblings after all.

Noah: I gotcha. It's gotta be a real pain to be living at home still.

Avery: It's not always so bad.

Avery tried to defend the order of things.

Avery: I mean other than being a total slut my brother isn't a bad guy, a little messy at times and disorganized, but when the shit really hits the fan he's usually around to even it out.

Noah: I can't really say that I blame the guy for wanting to have fun though. I'd be following in his footsteps and doing the same thing if I had a body like his. Your brother's hot, almost as hot as you. He snaps his fingers and the guys all fall around him. It would be nice to be worshiped like that.

Avery: I hear that a lot from guys you know. They all think he's so hot. They all want him. I wouldn't want to be with anyone that had been with as many guys as he has.

Noah: Oh come on, you're just as hot as your brother is, even more so, but then I guess that means you're more of the one at a time type of guy yeah?

Noah complimented before he pressed an assumption as he finally turned around and opened up the locker he had been leaning on. Avery didn't seem at all impressed with the flattery. He hadn't read it as a sign of Noah flirting with him, but rather as a way for the nurse to mock him. He brushed it off with a retort and then answered his friend's question. All the while he was rolling his eyes.

Avery: Oh please, I am so far from hot, and trust me guys know it too. I haven't been asked on a date in over ten years. And no, I'm not a one at a time type of guy. I'm the type of guy that just doesn't bother with any of it at all.

Noah paused again to look at the blonde who had just rolled his eyes at the question. Avery's reaction was only further proof of the fact that he was naïve in the ritual of flirting.

Noah: Are you saying that you don't even date?

Avery: I'm not even gonna bother answering that question.

Avery rolled his eyes yet again while pulling a towel out from his locker.

Noah: Really? You're not even gonna tell me to mind my own business?

Avery: If I had time for game playing yes, but right now all I wanna do is take a shower and get myself ready to head home.

Avery closed his locker and turned around to head towards the shower room. Noah grinned with attraction as he watched Avery walk out of the room. While many would be discouraged by the way Avery had just responded Noah was actually all the more turned on...

Scene 4

David walked through the door of a brightly lit hotel lobby and made his way up to the check in counter. He reached over and rang the counter bell when he saw that no one was around. The bell chimed, catching the attention of a husky gray haired man.

Ben: Can I help you?

David: Yeah, the sign outside said you have vacancies. Is that right?

David asked respectfully. The old man nodded back and his voice came out in a grunt.

Ben: Yeah I got a couple of rooms open if you have cash. My card machine is broken.

The man pointed over to an out of order credit card machine.

David: Damn, I don't know if I have enough cash on me. What do you charge?

Ben: Single rooms start at \$60 and doubles go anywhere from \$80 to \$100.

David: Yeah let me check to see if I've got that on me.

David reached into his back pocket and fished out his wallet. He opened up the billfold, and counted the cash he had available. He sighed in relief as he realized that had just enough for a single room.

David: Looks like I'm in luck. I've got just enough for a single room.

David dug the cash out of his wallet and handed it over to the clerk. Ben took the money and began to count it as he tried to make small talk.

Ben: You look like you've been on the road for days. You must have been traveling from quite a distance.

David fed into the clerk's attempt to make conversation. After three days of being on the road alone, he needed a little conversation as well.

David: I've been on the road for a couple of days. I drove all the way up here from Texas.

David put his wallet away.

Ben: Wow that is quite a distance ain't it?

David: It's a little over 2,000 miles, but I'm done traveling, for now at least. I'm gonna spend some time here in Mercy.

Ben: Is this your first time in town?

David: Yeah actually it is.

Ben: What brings you all the way up here to Oregon then?

The man questioned. He had finished counting the money that David had given him.

David: I've got a buddy that lives here in town. I'm hoping to reconnect with him.

Ben: Ahh I see, well in that case, welcome to Mercy. It's a nice place this city. Most people who visit tend to like the place so much that they end up staying.

Ben turned around to grab a key that was hanging from the wall behind him. Then he slid the key across the counter when he turned back to the customer.

Ben: The name's Ben by the way. If you need anything while you're here just let me know and I'll see if I can help you out.

David: Thanks.

David took the key as it were given to him.

Ben: No problem. This hotel isn't all that up to date. We don't have our guest logs set up on computers and we don't have those fancy key card thingy's either.

David: I'm sure it's fine. All I really need is a hot shower and a good night's rest.

Ben: Those are two things you can get here for sure.

David: Thanks again. Have a good evening.

David bid before he turned around and headed back out of the hotel lobby to go get his things from his car...

Scene 5

Albert Pryce was sitting behind the desk in his study when one of his sons entered the room. Avery lingered in the doorway of the dimly lit room as he peeked in on his father who was bustling through a mountain of paperwork. The older man was so involved in his work that he hadn't noticed that he was no longer alone in the room.

Avery: Father?

Avery called out after clearing his throat to make his company known. Albert's attention immediately shifted from his work to his son. A smile beamed across his face as he saw the younger blonde standing in the doorway.

Albert: Avery, good evening.

The old man greeted, tossing aside the pen that was in his hand while he had been filling out paperwork moments ago.

Avery: Good evening.

Avery smiled back, folding his arms across his chest as he leaned sideways up against the door frame.

Albert: You don't have to stand in the doorway. Come in and have a seat.

Avery's father pointed to an empty chair that was sitting on the opposite side of the desk. Short of words Avery moved through the room until he had reached the chair and taken a seat. His father's authorizing voice began to speak again.

Albert: I was wondering when you were going to make an appearance. I haven't seen you outside of the hospital in a while.

Avery: I've been doing all that I can to get OR time. I'm sure you understand the importance of being the first in line when the cases come in.

Albert: Yes son, I do understand that all too well. I had the same attitude about surgery when I was first starting out. I took every chance that I could to be in the action.

Albert leaned back in his chair; a whimsical look covered his face as he was mentally reliving the memories of his youth.

Albert: But never the less, I do hope that you know what your limits are. You must learn to take time for yourself as well, even the best surgeons must be just a tad bit selfish with their time; you'll burn out otherwise.

Avery: Stop worrying please?

Avery begged, then retorted with reasoning and practicality.

Avery: I know what my limits are and I do not plan to push them.

Albert: I guess I'll just have to take your word for that. However, the worrying is something that you'll have to live with. It's my job as you father to worry and with your mother being gone I have twice as much worrying to make up for.

Avery sighed, deciding not to debate on this particular topic as it was a moot point. Instead he was tired and he could feel the need for a good night's rest coming on.

Avery: Speaking of limits, I should go ahead and get myself to bed.

Avery yawned as his body was finally catching up to reality that he needed sleep.

Albert: Goodnight son.

Albert said as he watched his son rise up from the chair he had been sitting in. Avery smiled and nodded in acknowledgment before he left the room to make his way to bed.

Avery: Good night father...

Scene 6

Andrew was leaning up against one of the fire trucks in the garage as he was trying to get some privacy to make a phone call. David hadn't called him back yet, but Andrew didn't have the attention span for being patient. Just as he had mentioned in the voice mail that he had left earlier, he was worried about his friend. It was extremely unlike David to leave him hanging with worry.

Andrew dialed the number that came up from his contact list and then put the cell to his ear to listen to it ring. It repeated the message from before. Andrew pondered briefly over leaving one last message, but decided against it. He hung up and sighed with frustration...

Scene 7

David was drained of physical energy by the time he plopped down across the queen sized bed that sat in the center of the hotel room. His cell phone was plugged in and charging on the table beside the bed.

David rolled over onto his back. He stared blankly up at the ceiling above him. He didn't stare for long. His mind was already drifting to sleep. He had barely been able to keep his eyes open as it was and now that he was laying down there was no stopping him from escaping into slumber...

Scene 8

At seven in the morning David parked his car in front of a small red bricked building. After a full night's sleep at the hotel and a hot shower he was energized and ready to take on his new surroundings.

David had always heard that the northwest was a lovely place, but until coming to Mercy he had never experienced it with his own comprehension. Upon the first look the land gave a false impression of dreariness. Gray clouds in the sky gave overcast and the ground was damp with precipitation. However, the earth was green here and covered with pine and fir trees. The same forecast that gave the atmospheres a dreary appearance promised most of the natural color.

To David, Mercy seemed like a quiet place. He was used to a much larger setting, but Mercy wasn't small nor was it the largest place he had ever seen. There were many parts of the town that were humble but so many more that were full of beauty. It was landscaped in a way that promised it was cared for, and the dwellings and businesses that scattered the space were full of life and color as well.

David had come to town in search of Andrew. He hadn't seen his friend for about six months, but he had no question in his mind as to whether or not Andrew would want to see him. The two men had met when they were serving in the army and stationed in Iraq. The incident in which they had met was a story that neither of them shared out loud with others, but one that forced a strength between them as well. After returning home from war they became friends, good ones. For a little over a year the two of them had even shared living arrangements; that was until David had taken the job at Madison West. Then the two of them parted ways to return to their childhood homes. There was a bit of irony in that. They had each stepped backwards into their pasts in order to take on whatever their future would be. Six month later, David had come to Mercy in search of the friend he missed.

After finally listening to all the voice mail he had missed over the past couple of days due to his dead cell phone battery, David knew exactly where he could find Andrew. However, before he could head over to Mercy City Fire Station, he needed a decent breakfast and some good coffee. He glanced up to the sign above the building he had parked in front of. "Brightside's Café", that was what the sign above the door announced. This should be as good a place as any to grab something to eat he thought.

David turned off his car and proceeded to vacate it. He locked the door and then shoved his keys into the front pocket of the black leather jacket he was wearing. He could feel the cold morning

air as it hit his face when he rose up out of the car. He inhaled to catch the scent of evergreen. It filled into his nostrils and gave him a calming relief. Then with no further drawback he walked through the door of the café.

The Brightside Café was one of the local coffee shops in downtown Mercy. Avery was a regular customer. It was a part of his morning routine. Each day he would stop in and order himself a large cup of green tea before heading off to the hospital for work.

Megan: Good morning Dr. Pryce.

A young girl greeted as Avery entered the café and came up to the cashiers counter. The girl was young enough to be in her late teens. She had a big bright girlish smile. Her hair was a medium brown color but the strands that hung around her face were bright pink.

Avery: Hey Megan.

After all the times Avery had come into the café, he was pretty familiar with the employees.

Megan: You want your usual right?

Megan had Avery's drink order memorized.

Avery: Yes please.

Avery handed the girl his credit card. Moments later she was handing it back to him with a receipt that showed proof of his purchase. Soon she was making his drink while he waited patiently.

Avery: Thanks Megan.

Avery smiled with appreciation when his drink was finally handed to him.

Megan: You're welcome Dr. Pryce.

Megan smiled back. Avery turned around with a large green tea in hand. He had been moving on autopilot all morning, and hadn't noticed that someone was behind him.

David had just entered the doors of the café when he heard the sound of his phone go off. Curious to see if it was Andrew, he paused, reaching into the pocket of his jacket to grab his phone. His full attention was on the device, so much so that he hadn't paid any mind to anything that was going on around him.

Before David even had the chance to see the message, he felt someone knock into him. It was no small sensation either. The collision pushed him back, forcing the phone out of his hands. As the phone flew forward and hit the man that crashed into him, the contents of a hot beverage cup splashed across the front of David's clothes.

David: SHIT!

David cursed as he felt the burn of scolding liquid through his clothing. He tried to shake some of the dripping heat off, but it wasn't much use. Too much of it had already soaked into his shirt and pants. Luckily it was already starting to cool as the air was pulling against it. While David was trying to collect himself, he hadn't even looked up to see the face of the man he had collided with. Once he did his jaw dropped open in astonishment. Though he had never been formally introduced to Andrew's twin brother, there was no doubt in David's mind of who he was staring at now.

Avery: Ouch that's hot.

Avery gasped in discomfort. He shook his arms out to free himself of scorching tea that had been thrown upon him from the weight of the impact. Moving fast, Avery stepped over to one of the tables in the café. He reached out to a napkin holder that was sitting on top of it. He pulled a couple of them out and patted softly at the flesh that was already reddening from the burning. Unlike David, Avery was wearing most of the tea across patches of his skin rather than his clothing.

David was stunned to silence for a moment with the reality of who he was looking at. He watched Avery reacting fast to the situation. A couple of seconds had snuck by before his senses came back to him.

David: Here, let me help.

David offered as he reached for more napkins from the dispenser. He turned back to Avery with assistance, dabbing at the areas that Avery hadn't yet had a chance to remedy. Avery paused, standing still as the dark haired stranger was touching him. Awkwardness fell over him at the fact of being touched by a man he didn't know. He wondered if he should push the man away and deny his help, but the thought of being rude prevented him. Instead he ignored the uncomfortable situation and waited for the stranger to be done.

David: I think we got most of it.

David drew back, holding wet napkins as he felt he had done what he could to help.

Avery: Thank you.

Avery sighed both in relief that the burns were now cooling as well in relief that he was no longer being touched by a person unfamiliar to him.

David: Yeah, no problem.

Avery: I'm sorry about the tea. I hadn't paid attention to anyone standing behind me.

Avery apologized, truthfully though he knew that he wasn't at fault for the entirety of this event. David was receptive to this fact.

David: It's not your fault. I wasn't really paying much attention myself, so you can't take credit for all the blame.

David smiled, trying to pull some charm into his tone. He was still dumbfounded in knowing that he recognized the blonde that he was gazing at, or at least his face. It was a face he had seen many times in the past, but on someone else entirely.

David: I just really hope that you're able to get something on those burns. They look pretty ugly.

David commented on the red marks that Avery was now wearing.

Avery: Don't worry about it. I'll grab some aloe or something and it'll be fine.

David: Right.

David approved. He was unaware of the fact that he was leering at Avery like some fanatic who was meeting a celebrity. Avery however was fully aware of the fact that he was being ogled. As if he hadn't felt tense enough when the man was touching him, now there was gawking involved as well. It was giving him the creeps.

Avery: I should go. You're staring is kind of creeping me out.

Avery was blatant. He tried to step aside, ready to maneuver towards the door.

David: I'm so sorry Avery. I don't mean to stare or make you uncomfortable.

David breathed apologetically. He was instantly embarrassed by Avery's barefaced comment. He stepped in front of Avery, trying to keep him from walking away.

Avery: Am I supposed to know you or something?

Avery stopped, glaring at the man who had just addressed him by name.

David: (Shaking his head) No, not officially, (pausing to sigh) but I do know you.

Avery: Excuse me?

Confusion reared up in Avery's eyes.

David: I feel like I'm looking at a ghost.

David spoke poetically. He couldn't help but show the smile that was now creeping up on his lips. Andrew had mentioned many times to David over the course of their friendship that he was a twin, but he couldn't believe just how much the two brothers' looked alike. Despite so many

noticeable differences the brother's had a face that was damn near identical to the other. Avery was slimmer, wore his hair longer, and even held himself differently than Andrew did. David had even noticed Avery's effeminate voice; something that was impossible to miss when the blonde was speaking.

David: You look so much like your brother. I'm a little bit star struck.

Avery: I see.

Avery was hit with overwhelming knowledge that this man, who still didn't have a name, was acquainted with his brother. Avery grumbled and rolled his eyes at the mention of his twin.

Avery: Let me guess, you're one of his little flings right?

David: Flings?

David slanted his eye brows at the question.

David: I'm not a fling.

Avery: Right.

Avery was sardonic with disbelief.

Avery: You've gotta be delusional. You probably had some onetime thing with him and don't realize you're not the only one.

Avery presumed. David wanted to correct the mistake, but couldn't help but find the assumption humorous.

David: I'm guessing that you've been through this before haven't you?

Avery: Unfortunately yes I have. My brother's not exactly discrete with his trysts. He doesn't really have friends that he hasn't had relations with; which is exactly how I know that you're just another one of the creeps he's been with.

David: Is that so?

David was grinning, his laughter glowing in the shimmer of his emerald eyes.

David: Are you not even gonna bother to ask me what my name is?

Avery could see that David was mocking him. His patience was growing thin.

Avery: This is ridiculous. I don't need to know your name nor do I care to. I've spent enough of my morning standing here with you and now I'll be going.

Avery stepped forward again to leave. David reached out. He grabbed hold of Avery by the upper arm. His large hand wrapped around the entirety of the blonde's petite forearm. Avery winced in soreness.

David: I'm sorry.

David saw Avery's reaction of pain and realized that he had grabbed hold of one of the places that Avery had been burnt. He released his grip immediately.

Avery: Look pal.

Avery snapped, no longer allowing any sort of politeness.

Avery: I don't know who you are and I don't want to. Just please, leave me alone.

Avery stepped away at a quick pace. He stopped at the café door. He was still holding the wadded ball of wet napkins that he had used earlier to wipe up some of the hot tea.

David respected Avery's request to be left alone and he let the blonde exit without saying a further word. He sighed in aggravation at how badly that scene had ended. He had thought about chasing Avery down to try and explain one last time, but he knew that wasn't a good idea. His only hope now was that he would have a chance to apologize the next time the two of them came face to face again.

After Avery had walked out the doors of the café, David remembered that he had had his phone when he first came in. He remembered watching it fly forward and hit Avery when they bumped into one another. Now he skimmed the floor hoping to find it intact. He had no such luck. Instead he found it in pieces on the floor. He bent down to pick up his phone that was now broken and groaned in frustration at the mess that had once been a working phone...

Scene 9

Andrew and Marcum were sitting across from one another at table in the mess hall of the firehouse. They were each holding a handful of cards and there was a stack of bills in the center of the table. It was Andrew's turn and he was still deciding on what move to play next. Before he could fully commit to an action a large balding man entered the room. He stood in the doorway of the large room and shouted out to Andrew.

Larry: PRYCE!

Andrew and Marcum both turned to see their boss in the doorway.

Andrew: Yes Chief?

Larry: You've got a visitor. There's some guy waiting for you outside.

Andrew: Did he say who he is Chief?

Larry: What do I look like, your god damned secretary? Get your ass out there and find out for yourself.

Andrew: Yes Sir.

Larry left the room after barking his orders. Andrew sighed at Marcum as he tossed his cards face down onto the table and stood up.

Andrew: I'll be back as soon as I figure out who this guy is...

Scene 10

Avery and Nancy Henderson were standing in the hallway outside Molly's hospital room. The doctor had just requested that the two of them step out so that he could speak with her. He was holding Molly's chart as he addressed the girl's mother.

Avery: How are you doing Nancy?

He asked as a formality. Nancy beamed with a gracious glow of true happiness.

Nancy: I'm wonderful. Ever since Molly's transplant the three of us have all been doing much better. We've been getting actual sleep and breathing steadier. It's all a big relief.

Avery: I'm very happy to hear that.

Avery spoke truthfully. Nancy did look better then she had two weeks earlier. He could see fewer signs of aging in her face. Over the past couple of days he had noticed this in her husband's appearance as well. It felt good to see that the Henderson family was doing so well.

Avery: I'm also happy that I could be a part of all of this. However, I think we should really move on to the reason why I pulled you out here.

Nancy: Is there something wrong Dr. Pryce?

Nancy obsessed with worry when Avery tried to move on to business.

Avery: No, not at all. Actually, I have good news, really good news.

Avery reassured her. He opened up Molly's patient file. He really didn't need to look through it again. He had it memorized. From experience though, it gave his patients and their families a better sense of security when he was reading from information that he actually had in front of him.

Avery: Molly's been doing great since her surgery. Her oxygen levels and heart rate have been normal. Even her labs are great.

Nancy: Ok, so what does that all mean Dr. Pryce?

Avery: It means that with all of this stuff coming back in her favor, she'll be going home soon, tomorrow in fact.

Nancy: Oh my god, that's great. Molly will be so excited.

Avery: I know she'll be happy to hear the good news, but it's probably not a good idea to tell her about it just yet. We'll have to wait and see how her labs come back today before we will know for sure if we can release her.

Nancy: I understand. We shouldn't get her hopes up just in case. In the mean time I'll try to keep my own excitement quiet.

Avery: Just be patient Mrs. Henderson. You'll be able to tell her the good news soon. I'll have the nurse draw blood for the lab when she comes in to bring Molly her meds and I'll put a rush on the orders so that you won't have to wait longer than need be.

Nancy: Thank you so very much Dr. Pryce.

Avery: There's no reason to thank me Nancy. I'm honestly overjoyed by the fact that I've been able to help your family.

Avery spoke with nothing but the truth. He was certain that there would be many more of these moments throughout his career, but there was something about this one that would always stick out to him as something special.

Scene 11

After having green tea spilt upon him, David had stopped off at the hotel to grab a change of clothes before he headed over to the firehouse. He was leaning with his back up against the side of the building and had his hands shoved into the pockets of his pants. When Andrew finally stepped out to see David, the two of them were both instantly struck with happy grins.

Andrew: Hey Fucker, what are you doing here?

Andrew tried to play his excitement off like it was nothing.

David: Don't act like you ain't happy to see me.

Andrew: Shit man, of course I'm happy to see you. Get over here.

Andrew held his arms open invitingly. David returned the gesture by stepping forward. Briefly the two men hugged, patting one another firmly. When their embrace ended, Andrew was the first to speak. His voice turned to a false state of annoyance.

Andrew: You know I've been trying to get you on the phone all week. Why didn't you call first?

David: I kind of wanted it to be a surprise and my phone isn't exactly working. It had a little bit of a mishap this morning involving your brother.

Andrew: Excuse me?

Andrew looked perplexed.

David: It's a funny story. I'll tell you about it later, but for now we've got so much catching up to do.

Andrew: Some of that might have to wait until I'm off the clock. I can't really break away until then, but if you'd like you can come meet some of the guys I work with.

David: That wouldn't be too bad I guess, as long as it's alright with your chief.

Andrew: Larry? Oh that guys a prick, he'd never approve. That's exactly why it's a perfect idea.

Andrew grinned deviously. David laughed back, not surprised by his friend's malicious wit.

David: You're not afraid that I'll get you into trouble?

Andrew: (Shook his head) No way. It'll sure as hell make shit more interesting around here.

David contemplated the invitation and was just about to accept when he heard the sound of a siren go off. Andrew sighed with disappointment as the sound of the automated system started in.

David: I guess I'll have to take a rain check huh?

Andrew: Well you could always ride along on the call if you'd like.

David: Let me guess, this one isn't a good idea either right?

Andrew: It's no big deal. Marcum owes me a couple of favors. He won't say a word about it to Larry.

David: Alright then, I'd love to ride along.

David's better sense of judgment was overpowered by Andrew's sense of adventure.

Andrew: Cool. Come on man.

David followed Andrew's lead and the two of them headed into the firehouse to meet up with Marcum and get going...

Scene 12

Avery only had a few moments to stop and have lunch in between patients. He already had a lunch tray in hand when he took a seat at one of the tables in the hospital cafeteria. He had no sooner sat down when Noah made his way over. He glanced up to see the nurse.

Noah: You should take a look at these.

Noah slid a sheet of paper across the table to the surgeon.

Avery: Are these the results from Molly Henderson's lab work?

Noah: (Nodding) Yes.

Avery picked up the paper. He glanced at it for only a second.

Avery: This can't be right. The lab must have made a mistake. When did these come back?

Noah: A few minutes ago. I rushed down here to find you before anyone else had a chance to see them.

Avery stressed a loud sigh. Then he handed the lab results back to Noah.

Avery: All of Molly's tests have been coming back with great results for the past two weeks. There is no way that these results can be accurate. Ask the lab tech to run it again, twice in fact. Tell him not to rush it this time. We might have to wait a little bit longer for the results, but if this isn't a lab error than I've got an even bigger problem to deal with.

Noah: Alright and until they come back I'll try to keep the family distracted.

Avery: Thank you Noah.

Noah: Don't thank me. I'm happy to do it.

Hastily Noah turned around and headed out of the cafeteria, taking the lab results with him. As soon as the nurse was gone, Avery pushed his lunch tray aside. His stomach was wrenching with worry, stealing his appetite away.

Scene 13

Marcum was in the back of the rig as Andrew was driving and David was in the passenger's seat. They were on their way to answer a call to a residential address. As he drove cars were pulling to the side of the road to let Andrew through. The giant vehicle rattled as it moved and the sirens blared to let others know they were on their way.

Marcum: So, you're a friend of Andrew's yeah?

Marcum called out from the back to make small talk with the newcomer.

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