

Sam,
episode 2,
"Emergency!"

by
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Sam is *sitting under a tree, reading*. *Nearby*, some students are kicking a soccer ball around. A kick goes wild and soars through the air towards Sam.

STUDENT (O.S.)

Hey, look out!

SAM

Look out for what?

WHAM! The ball hits Sam square on the forehead, knocking him down. He gets back up, dizzy and disoriented and with a soccer ball patterned dent in his forehead.

SAM (CONT'D)

But I am *not* a giraffe, Doctor Wobbly.

The kids rush over, concerned.

MEAN KID

Nice reflexes, stupid.

STUDENT #1

Are you okay?

SAM

By what critereon?

STUDENT #2

You should go to the school nurse!

SAM

Yes, I should.

Sam just stands there, swaying a little from dizziness. After a few long seconds :

SAM (CONT'D)

Where....

Student #1 gently turns Sam towards the nearest door into the school and gives him a little push.

STUDENT #1

Go inside and keep going until you find the room with the big red cross on the door!

Sam nods, but does not move. The students look at each other for a moment.

STUDENT #3

Then go inside!

SAM

Program accepted. Running.

2 INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY

2

Sam enters, no longer dizzy. In the office is NURSE MAY, a homely but matronly woman who radiates compassion.

NURSE MAY

Oh dear, that soccer ball must have hit you pretty hard.

SAM

How did you know I was hit by a soccer ball?

Closeup on Sam's soccer ball patterned head. Clearly, he has not seen himself.

NURSE MAY

Years of experience. Now you sit right here and let me see what that mean ol ball did to you.

Sam awkwardly climbs up onto a doctor style examining table, and Nurse May examines him with practiced ease.

NURSE MAY (CONT'D)

Tell me where it hurts, dear.

SAM

Well, the pain is mainly radiating from a complex contusion located approximately two inches above the suture between my frontal and ethmoid bones.

NURSE MAY

So right here?

Nurse May touches a spot high on Sam's forehead.

SAM

No, right here, like I said.

Sam touches a spot just above the bridge of his nose.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ow. Where was I? Spathate! Right! The wound is spathate, with ragged edges...

While Sam is talking, Nurse May continues to examine Sam, expertly taking his pulse, seeing if his pupils react to light, checking his reflexes, etc. At the same time, she is saying "Uh huh" and "I see" and such to reassure Sam that she is listening.

SAM (CONT'D)

...and impact abrasion. I am not experiencing any nausea or photostobic effects, but I did experience...

Nurse May puts a thermometer in Sam's mouth.

SAM (CONT'D)

(around the thermometer)

...thignivigant divviness and dithoriedation shordly avter the inzident, indigating possible zubdermal hemadoma-

NURSE MAY

I don't understand what you're saying, dear.

SAM

Wug?

Sam takes the thermometer out of his mouth.

SAM (CONT'D)

I mean... what? Oh, because of the thermometer...

NURSE MAY

No dear, it's because of all the big words you're using.

SAM

I beg your pardon?

NURSE MAY

I'm a school nurse, honey, not a doctor.

Sam pauses a moment, then looks around the room swiftly for her credentials. She has none.

SAM

You mean you're not even a REAL NURSE?

NURSE MAY

Not like you'd find at a hospital, no, but-

SAM

Then what qualifies you to treat children??

NURSE MAY

Well I've been doing it for over twenty five years...

SAM

A successful fraud, Madam, is still a fraud! Tell me, do you have any medical training at all?

NURSE MAY

Just a six week course, but... listen, I know how to look after kids... I can take their pulse and their temperature, give out aspirin, patch up cuts and bruises...

SAM

Patch.... up? Madam, human beings don't get "patched up!" TIRES get "patched up!" Human beings need the attention of qualified medical professionals.

NURSE MAY

Well I'm all you're gonna get, dear...

SAM

And what can YOU possibly do for me?

A few moments of pregnant pause.

NURSE MAY

You want a lollipop?

Sam stands, full of righteous outrage.

SAM

A... LOLLIPOP!?!

Too outraged to speak, Sam sputters a little then storms out of the room.

A few moments later, he comes back, takes the lollipop, and storms out again. *

3 INT. OCEAN HEIGHTS SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

3

Sam is at the head of the line like in Episode One. He looks at the lunch lady thoughtfully.

LUNCH LADY

Don't tell me. You want to know more about chicken nuggets.

SAM

No, I've learned to live with those. Tell me... what qualifies you for your current position?

LUNCH LADY

What, you mean like school and stuff?

SAM

Yes. School. And such.

LUNCH LADY

Well I had to take a three week course on food safety.

SAM

Three weeks. I see. And did this course include lessons on microbiology, organic chemistry, and pediatric nutritional needs?

LUNCH LADY

I don't think so. But they did teach us how to tell when food is too rotten to serve.

SAM

I see, I see. Just as I suspected. Thank you for your time. I think I will be skipping lunch today.

LUNCH LADY

Whatever you say, kid, as long as you stop holding up the line.

Sam turns as if to leave, but then turns back with a look of horror on his face.

SAM

I'm sorry, did you say "when food is TOO rotten?"

LUNCH LADY
 (looking past Sam to the
 next person in line)

Next!

SAM
 Because that implies there is an
 acceptable level of rot in our food,
 and I must object...

LUNCH LADY
 (still not looking at Sam)

NEXT!

4 EXT. CROSSWALK OUTSIDE OCEAN HEIGHTS - DAY

4

Sam is standing in the middle of the crosswalk, talking to the
 CROSSING GUARD, who is a portly, grey haired man in his early
 60s.

SAM
 So what you're saying is that got
 this job by being the only one who
 wanted it when the previous crossing
 guard quote "kicked the bucket"
 unquote.

CROSSING GUARD
 Pretty much, yeah. Plus I lived
 nearby, and I already had the vest.

The cars waiting are beginning to honk. A backlog of kids is
 building up behind Sam.

SAM
 I see. And you think that qualifies
 you to take the lives of children in
 your hands on a daily basis?

CROSSING GUARD
 (mildly sarcastic)
 Well, that and the fact that I've
 been doing it for ten years and I
 ain't lost a kid yet.

The honking is getting louder.

SAM
 Amazing. So what you are telling me
 is that you don't know the first
 thing about traffic patterns,
 vehicular physics, or child
 psychology?

The honking is at a fever pitch and some angry parent who just picked their kid up from school yells "Get that kid off the road!".

CROSSING GUARD

Listen kid, what I *do* know is that if you don't move on right now, there's going to be an accident. Or an incident.

SAM

Fine. I'll go. Thank you for your time.

Sam crosses, and a whole flock of kids follow him like baby ducks following their mother.

5 INT. SAM'S HOUSE, UPPER WEST LIBRARY - DAY

5

Sam bursts into the room as Ann and Leon are quietly reading together at a small table. He turns to slam the door dramatically, realizes there isn't one (there's just an arch), and cries out in frustration.

SAM

Pretend I just slammed a door!
Mother, Father, you will not believe what I learned today! Every adult at school is a FRAUD!

ANN

What do you mean, dear?

SAM

Just what I said! The lunch lady doesn't know anything about organic chemistry, the crossing guard hasn't studied the physics of collision, and the school nurse isn't even a real nurse! She wouldn't be able to tell a subdural hematoma from... from the Isles of Lagerhans?

Sam stands back slightly, awaiting parental validation of his outrage. Ann and Leon share a look.

LEON

Sam... are these people good at their jobs?

SAM

I don't see how they could be. They have no idea what they are doing!

*

ANN

Sam dear, there is a big difference between knowing how to do something and knowing how it's done.

SAM

I don't understand.

LEON

What your mother is trying to say, dear Sam, is that these people know how to do their jobs without having to know how it all works.

SAM

I don't believe you. That's impossible. How can you know how to do something when you don't know the science behind it?

LEON

By knowing how it works, Sam.

ANN

Humans used fire for hundreds of thousands of years before they had the slightest idea what oxidation was.

LEON

Archimedes was able to discover the secrets of water displacement without having to read a book about fluid physics.

ANN

And plenty of people drive their cars just fine without knowing a single thing about how they work.

LEON

(nudging Ann with elbow,
teasing)

That's not what you say when we're stuck in traffic, dear.

Anne blushes and laughs.

SAM

(unconvinced)

I don't know...

ANN

Sam dear... do you remember learning to walk?

SAM

Kinda, yeah.

LEON

And you walked for a long time before you understood the physics of locomotion, didn't you?

SAM

I guess so. Yeah.

ANN

How was that possible?

SAM

I don't know. I guess I just kept trying till I figured it out.

LEON

And that's what the adults at school did too, dear Sam.

ANN

When they started out, they probably weren't that great at their jobs.

LEON

But they kept trying, and listened to what other people who had done the job told it, and by now they are really good at it.

ANN

And all without cracking a single textbook.

SAM

(dawning understanding)

So what you are saying is...you only have to understand how something works to be good at your job. You don't need to know why it works like it does.

ANN AND LEON

Exactly!

SAM

What you are saying seems to make sense. I will have to think about this. Thank you, Mother, Father.

Sam leaves. Ann and Leon share a concerned look.

6 EXT. OCEAN HEIGHTS SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

*

6

Sam and Edgar are waiting in line for their "lunch". Sam has a bag of yellowish gumdrops and absentmindedly eats one now and then.

*

SAM

...and then they said you didn't have to understand why something does what it does, you only have to understand how it works

EDGAR

That makes sense to me. There is more than one way to understand something. After all, nobody ever taught me to draw, and now my art gets mentioned in the local paper.

SAM

I think that's mostly because of the skulls and blood.

>

EDGAR

Nonsense! Clearly, they are in awe of my deep and sensitive grasp of the... of the... my word, Sam, those candies smell marvelous. May I have one?

*

*

*

*

*

SAM

Sure! They are fairly pleasant.

*

*

Edgar holds out his hand and Sam tips a gumdrop out of the package into it. Edgar pops it in his mouth. He is delighted by it.

*

*

EDGAR

HEAVEN! Absolute heaven! I've never tastes anything like it. What is this divine flavour?

*

*

*

*

Sam looks at the package. Edgar goes pale and starts to tremble. Sam does not notice. They reach the head of the line where the Lunch Lady awaits.

*

SAM *
It says peach. *

EDGAR *
(slurring a little) *
And is it, perchance, made with real *
peaches? *

Sam looks at the package again. *

SAM *
Yes it is. Says it's made from fruit *
juice and pectin. Why? *

EDGAR *
(fading) *
Can't... peach... 'llergic... *

Sam watches in horror as a much paler than usual Edgar faints,
sliding to the floor, still trembling. *

SAM *
EDGAR! Oh no, oh no... I didn't *
know... and now he's *

LUNCH LADY *
CLEAR THE WAY. And somebody get Nurse *
May in here. *

All the kids pull back to give the Lunch Lady room as she rounds
the counter and goes to Edgar. She elevates his head by putting
a stack of lunch trays under it and cools his head with a . Sam
is panicking, frozen to the spot and babbling. *

LUNCH LADY (CONT'D) *
(to Sam) *
Okay, honey, I am going to need to *
you take three long deep breaths for *
me, okay? *

Sam looks confused by this request for a moment, then complies.
This calms him down. The Lunch Lady smiles kindly at him. *

LUNCH LADY (CONT'D) *
Good boy! Now can you tell me what *
your friend was eating right before *
this happened? *

Sam nodnods and hands the Lunch Lady his bag of candy. *

LUNCH LADY (CONT'D) *
Well done! Do you know what it is he *
is that he's allergic to? *

Sam tries to talk but all that comes out is a croak. He clears his throat and tries again. *

SAM *
Peaches... he said it was peaches... *

Nurse May enters and makes a beeline for Edgar at full speed. She has a large bag with her. *

LUNCH LADY *
Peaches... okay! You're doing great, *
kid. HEY MAY! Do you have an Epipen *
for peaches? *

Nurse May opens the bag and searches through it. *

NURSE MAY *
I've got ones for peanuts, tree nuts, *
gluten, dairy, strawberry, kiwi... *
nope. No peaches. *

LUNCH LADY *
That's okay, May. *

Lunch Lady stands and addresses all the kids. *

LUNCH LADY (CONT'D) *
Hey kids! Do any of you have an *
Epipen for peach allergy? *

A murmur goes through the crowd, with a lot of kids shaking their heads no. Then a skinny blonde girl starts hopping up and down. *

BLONDE GIRL *
Miss! Oh Miss! Over here! MISS! *

LUNCH LADY *
Yes dear, what is it? *

BLONDE GIRL *
My uncle is the crossing guard and *
he's allergic to peaces! *

LUNCH LADY *
Then run and get him, dear. *

The Blonde Girl dashes off at lightning speed, then a few moments later returns with the Crossing Guard. *

NURSE MAY *
Hey Phil! Do you have your Epipen on *
you? *

CROSSING GUARD

Sure, I got it right here.

*
*

He hands it to May, who expertly administers it to Edgar.

*

A few tense moments, and then Edgar's eyes open and he regards his hushed audience, then smiles.

*

EDGAR

Thank you all for coming. Now for my next poem..

*
*
*

And whatever he says next is drowned out by the sound of everyone cheering for Edgar's recovery.

*
*

NURSE MAY

Now who wants to help me carry Edgar back to my office?

*
*
*

A forest of hands go up all through the crowd.

*

7 INT. O.H.E.S. HALLWAY OUTSIDE NURSE'S OFFICE

7

A very worried Sam paces outside the Nurse's Office like an expectant father.

SAM

(babbling to himself)

I mean, he's got to be okay, right?
The EpiPen worked, and there were no signs of brain damage from the...
uh...

*
*
*

Nurse May opens the door, and shepherds a sheepish looking Edgar out in front of her. Edgar is bandaged on his upper left arm and right knee.

EDGAR

See? Even the middle of calamity, I retain my flair for the dramatic.

SAM

(overjoyed)

Edgar! You're okay!

NURSE MAY

He's fine, just a little shaken up, that's all. Don't worry, he will be back on his feet and back to school in no time.

SAM

Is there anything I can do to help?

NURSE MAY

Tell you what. His parents are coming to pick him up and I have to get back to work. Do you think you can look after him till then?

SAM

(rapidly, eagerly)

Of course! I'll watch him for signs of anaphylaxis, and possible low grade nerve damage... *

Nurse May patiently waits for Sam to calm down.

SAM (CONT'D)

I mean.... yes. Yes I can.

NURSE MAY

Good!

Nurse May goes back into her office.

Time passes, then Edgar's very worried and equally goth parents, Morbidia and Hannibal, show up. Morbidia rushes to Edgar and takes his wrist in her hands, and peers at him like any worried mother would do. *

MORBIDIA *

Oh, my sweet, precious child! Have they taken good care of you? *

SAM *

Oh, don't worry, Mrs. Lovecraft! Nurse May looked after him, and she was... amazing. *

The Lovecrafts take Edgar away. *

Sam sits there, alone and thoughtful, for a few long moments.

SAM (CONT'D) *

(to himself) *

They were ALL amazing. *

A few more moments of thoughtful silence. *

SAM (CONT'D) *

Looks like I've got some apologizing to do. *

Once more, Sam is talking to the Crossing Guard in the middle

of the road while cars honk impatiently. We don't hear what they say, but we see Sam handing the Crossing Guard a safety orange thermos to match his vest. The Crossing Guard is touched, and pats Sam on the shoulder as if to say "it's okay". Sam smiles.

9 INT. OCEAN HEIGHTS SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

9

Once more, Sam is holding up the line at the school cafeteria by talking with the Lunch Lady. We don't hear what they say, but we see Sam hand her one of those little battery operated fans so she can cool herself off after working over a hot stove for the kids. The Lunch Lady is touched, and smiles at Sam. He smiles back.

10 INT. SCHOOL NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY

10

Once more, Sam is in the Nurse's Office.

NURSE MAY

Hello again! How is your head, dear?

Sam touches his forehead absently.

SAM

Oh, it's fine. There was no secondary swelling and the abrasions and the abrasions were purely cosmetic so... um. I mean, it's okay, Nurse May.

NURSE MAY

Glad to hear it, dear.

SAM

(after an awkward pause)

Look, I'm sorry I called you a fraud and stormed out of here like a brat. I just... there was something I didn't understand. Anyhow, please accept this gift as a token of my sincere apology.

Sam hands Nurse May a box of candy thermometers.

SAM (CONT'D)

I thought the kids would like these more than the lollipops.

NURSE MAY

Well thank you dear! That's a very thoughtful gift.

SAM

It turns out that you don't need to understand the science of a job in order to do that job well.

NURSE MAY

Glad you figured that out.

A short pause.

SAM

You're a very nice lady, Nurse May.

NURSE MAY

Thanks kid. Now go back to class.

>

THE END