

A moment of awkwardness -- everyone here knows they haven't spoken in years.

Sandra hands Will a squat can of Ensure from the case on the counter.

SANDRA

Get him to drink one of these. He won't, but tell him he has to.

29 INT. FOYER - DAY

29

Coming out from the kitchen, Will slowly climbs the stairs. They CREAK with every step.

The wall is filled with family photos, happier times. Most of the pictures are of Will, starting when he was an infant and ending at his wedding. As he climbs the stairs, we can see him growing up with every step.

30 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

30

A crack of sunlight spills around the half-open door at the end of the hallway. Will walks towards it, running a hand along the wallpaper.

Almost at the door, he stops for a beat. Gets his breath. Then goes inside.

31 INT. GUEST ROOM - DAY

31

Edward Bloom, 61, lies asleep on the bed. Although he's not the vibrant man we've seen before, it's not as bad we feared. The illness has been quick, and left him largely intact.

There are no I.V.'s, no monitors, nothing.

Coming up to the bed --

WILL

Dad?

Edward cracks open an eye, a beat before he focuses. He tries to say something, but no words come out.

He looks over at a pitcher on the nightstand. Will pours him a glass of water, helping him hold it to his parched lips.

Finished, Edward sets down the glass by himself. A very long, tense beat. Will almost speaks again to fill the silence.

Finally...

EDWARD

You --
 (he points)
 -- are in for a surprise.

WILL

Am I?

EDWARD

Having a kid changes everything. I mean, there's the diapers and the burping and the midnight feedings...

WILL

Did you do any of that?

EDWARD

No, but I hear it's terrible. Then you spend years trying to corrupt and mislead this child, fill its head with nonsense and still it turns out perfectly fine.

WILL

You think I'm up for it?

EDWARD

You learned from the best.

Will doesn't rise to the challenge. A beat, then he remembers the can of Ensure. Holds it up. Edward recoils.

WILL

Just drink half the can. I'll tell her you drank the whole thing. Everyone wins.

A beat, then Edward rolls his eyes. Fine. Will cracks open the can, finding a straw on the nightstand.

EDWARD

People needn't worry so much. It's not my time yet. This isn't how I go.

WILL

Really.

EDWARD

Truly. I saw it in The Eye.

WILL

The Old Lady by the swamp.

EDWARD
She was a witch.

WILL
No, she was old and probably senile.
Maybe schizophrenic.

EDWARD
I saw my death in that eye. And this
is not how it happens.

WILL
So how does it happen?

EDWARD
Surprise ending. Wouldn't want to
ruin it for you.

Edward slurps down as much of the Ensure as he can stand,
then pushes the can away. He swallows with difficulty.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
There was this panhandler who used
to stop me every morning when I came
out of this coffee shop near the
office.

WILL
Okay.

EDWARD
And every day I gave him a quarter.
Every day. Then I got sick and was
out for a couple of weeks. And when
I went back there, you know what he
said?

WILL
What did he say?

EDWARD
You owe me three-fifty.

WILL
Really.

EDWARD
True story.

A beat.

WILL

When did you ever work in an office?

EDWARD

There's a lot you don't know about me.

WILL

You're right.

Edward gives a wry smile. He walked into that.

EDWARD

Your mother was worried we wouldn't talk again. And look at us. We're talking fine. We're storytellers, both of us. I speak mine out, you write yours down. Same thing.

Will won't commit to Edward's assessment.

WILL

Dad, I'm hoping we can talk about some things while I'm here.

EDWARD

You mean, while I'm here.

WILL

I'd just like to know the true versions of things. Events. Stories. You.

Edward LAUGHS a little, which becomes a COUGH. The HACKING escalates until another drink of water gets it under control. It's not clear whether any of this was an act to keep from talking.

EDWARD

Your mother hasn't been keeping up the pool. If you wanted to you could...

WILL

I will.

EDWARD

You know where the chemicals are?

WILL

I used to do it when you were gone, remember? I used to do it a lot.

He didn't mean for that to sound so pointed. Taking the half-empty Ensure, Will gets up to go. He's at the door when...

EDWARD

I was never much for being at home, Will. It's too confining. And this, here. Being stuck in bed. Dying is the worst thing that ever happened to me.

He smiles at his joke.

WILL

I thought you weren't dying.

EDWARD

I said this isn't how I go. The last part is much more unusual. Trust me on that.

32 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

32

Shutting the door behind himself, Will drinks the rest of the Ensure himself. Edward was right. It tastes horrible.

Heading for the stairs, Will walks past an open door. As he leaves frame, we STAY BEHIND to look inside...

33 INT. WILL'S BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

33

...where an eight-year old Will is propped up in bed, his face covered with chicken pox and pink calamine lotion. He's showing Edward how many bumps there are on his arm.

YOUNG WILL

Dr. Bennett says I'm going to have to be home for a week.

EDWARD

That's nothing. I once had to stay in bed for three years.

YOUNG WILL

Did you have chicken pox?

EDWARD

I wish.

CUT TO:

34 INT. TINY CHURCH - DAY

34

Wearing a white shirt and tie, YOUNG EDWARD -- still about 10 -- sings "Down to the River My Lord" along with the