

Character Breakdowns:

Victoria Polidori: (Stepy Kamei)

- An upcoming psychiatrist who has already built a reputation for being strong, centered and career-focused
- Some whisper (out of her hearing) that she is a little *too* controlling, a little too rigid and unbending. But no one denies that what she wants, she gets.
- And she is *exceptionally* good at figuring out how a person thinks. Her teachers commended her repeatedly for how great she was at both diagnosing and alleviating patient problems. Her patients show a remarkable rate of improvement.
- She is currently, however, at a moment of crisis. Her husband was killed in a car crash three days ago. We are about to see the story of his wake.
- Publicly, they were a perfect power couple. Privately, she has been worried that he was hiding *something*, but hadn't yet confronted him to find out what it was. Now, she thinks it's too late.
- She loves him with a fierce passion. Couple that with the already internal worry and she is likely to lash out at anyone telling her anything bad about him.
- Conversely, she may cling to any positive story with an equal fervor.
- Deep down, Victoria has a plan. Unknown to most others at the wake, Grant's ashes are not in the urn. His ashes aren't *anywhere*. She has his body on ice. Because she intends to find a way to bring him back.
- This obsession may lead her to slip and speak of Grant in present as opposed to past terms. Should that happen, she's going to catch herself and then attempt to cover it up with the evasion of his being recently dead. But it's likely to happen more than once.

Grant Polidori: (Austin Schumacher)

- The recently dead husband of Victoria
- He was a cardiac surgeon whose career was rising as quickly as hers. No one expected anything less than him becoming the chief surgeon at General Hospital.
- His death was from a car accident. He was driving to meet his AA sponsor and was hit *by* that sponsor as he was arriving at the parking lot. The crash knocked Grant's vehicle into a second one and the crumple of the vehicles decapitated Grant in one clean cut. No one other than the sponsor is aware of *why* Grant was at the place of the accident.
- Grant kept many things about his life from his wife. He did so because Victoria expected them to be a strong, powerful couple. He began to be overwhelmed by the pressure and began making bad choices. But because he never wanted Victoria to worry, he hid those choices.
- As suggested above, he was an alcoholic. He kept it secret from Victoria, never drinking around her. But he often drank on the long nights of his residency and the drinking became a problem three months ago when he was drinking before a surgery...and killed a patient.
- The hospital's lawyer covered the matter up and told Grant not to talk to anyone about it, even his wife. He did, however, have one meeting with the spouse of the dead patient. After that, he began to have nightmares about burning to death because of what he'd done.
- Between the death and how the spouse responded, this was rock bottom for Grant. He went to the hospital chapel, nearly broken and suicidal...only to run into his front office clerk equally torn up over the fact that her daughter needed surgery quickly and she couldn't afford it. Grant realized he had gotten his answer and he began to take care of this daughter and her mother's needs, making sure that everything was handled including the financials.
- He also began going to AA. He was turning the corner of his life, even going so far as to begin setting things up for divorcing his wife. He loved her but knew that they truly weren't a good match for each other. She deserved someone able to stick with her drive and that was no longer he.
- But before he could tell her his realization, his sponsor called. The man had fallen off the wagon and couldn't find his own sponsor. So Grant agreed to meet him at the hotel where their meetings were normally held. And now he's dead.

Mike Stone: (Glenn David)

- A Lyft driver who was once a reporter who's now more of a conspiracy nut than anything else.
- He has recently begun to track the story of Victoria, Ely and Justine. He's certain that Ely has been abducting women who look similar to the current "Justine" and somehow making them think they're all the same person. He also knows that Victoria is somehow involved, because more than one of these women has shown up at Victoria's home—so she has to know.
- After the events of Midsummer's, he's now convinced that Ely is looking for him and that his life is in danger.
- So he's gone underground, trying to dig into various pieces of their lives thanks to the help of some folk at Midsummer's and his hacker friend Emma.
- At the top of the show, he's going to give people a reminder/intro of what he's learned so far.
- Then he's going to tell people that he's found a video and some files that relate to Victoria's husband, Grant. He knows he won't be able to spot everything relevant himself, so he's going to ask the audience to help him. This is the premise for the start of the wake (in the past).
- He'll then turn the scenario over to Emma.
- At the end of the video, we're going to go back to Mike's place—only to find that Henry has captured him and left a message: "Drop This and Walk Away—or Mike dies." Mike's now a hostage.

Emma G. Nation: (Katie Conrad)

- Hacker and rebel
- Mike's friend, Emma is smart and ironic. Dry humor, no nonsense, unable to understand why everyone doesn't get computers the way she does.
- She's the source of Mike's ability to dig into the past and into Victoria's life.
- She is the person people meet at the beginning of the event, with her laptop that will link to Mike. She will be terse with introductions and want to wait for everyone to get there.
- Once Mike turns things back over to her, she'll be the one to introduce the 'rules' of looking into the past.
- At the end of the event, she'll be frantically trying to re-connect with Mike after the signal goes dead. When it finally turns back on and there's the message from Henry, Emma will let the audience read the message and then frantically grab the laptop, trying to cut the source feed before it can be tracked back to them.
- She won't be certain that her location wasn't tapped, so she'll tell everyone that it's time to go. She'll promise to reach out to people soon and work on finding Mike's location. Then she bolts, leaving the audience to do whatever it chooses to do.

Charles Nixon: (Zachary Johnson-Dunlop)

- Publicly, he's the grieving husband of Martha Nixon, who died 3 months ago on Grant Polidori's operating table of complications from heart surgery.
- He's a mid-level office drone. He works for a multinational company that handles lots of different fields, but all he does is shift paper around. He will even say that he's never *really* been sure what the fuck he does.
- He attempted to file a malpractice suit against the hospital and Grant. The suits have been combined into arbitration between Charles and General Hospital. Neither Grant nor the hospital has admitted any wrongdoing—in fact, they've declared exactly the opposite. However, the arbitration continues, Charles says, because he's bound and determined to make sure that his wife's death equates into "changes at that hospital. Even if Dr. Polidori wasn't directly responsible, the staff is overworked and corners are being cut. One way or another, I'm going to make damn sure that my wife's death means that *no one else* has to put up with it."
- Privately, he and his wife didn't get along at all. They were only still married because of the kids. They slept in separate beds. They barely spoke to each other. They were massively in debt. And he hates Los Angeles, which had been her demand because of her job as a County employee with great benefits.
- So he doesn't actually care about his wife's death at all—he's quite happy she's gone as it frees him from the life he hated. The *only* thing he cares about is how much *money* he can squeeze from the arbitration before he accepts their side of things. He's so far gotten it as high as \$500,000—but because there are kids, he thinks he can get it to at least \$750,000.
- He doesn't actually know or care whether Grant was responsible for his wife's death. After all, he's been known to drink a little before work—who doesn't? And shit happens, as it often has in his life.
- The only thing that matters is that publicly, he remains devoted to her. And because of the arbitration, he hasn't been able to speak to the press or anyone else about it (the arbitrator demanded a gag order from both sides). Now that Grant's dead, however, Charles thinks he might just be able to get the hospital to decide faster if he lets the suit slip to the grieving wife. In the right moment and time, of course—and only from his 'sad, lost husband' face.

Leah Davidson: (Katherine Flannery)

- Grant's front desk clerk, Leah is in general an upbeat, bright and very caring woman. A single mom who seemed to manage her life very well.
- But the last 6 months brought a terrible darkness to her life. Her daughter, Lisa (4 now) was diagnosed with a serious heart defect that doctors told her was absolutely going to kill her within the next year.
- Unfortunately, the only surgery available that could potentially fix this particular defect was one that was still considered experimental—and her insurance refused to pay for it. The bill was going to be hundreds of thousands of dollars. No way could she pay it.
- She continued to fight, using everything she'd learned as an employee at a surgeon's office. But things grew ever more dim.
- And one night, about 2 months ago, she got the final denial from her insurance. Despondent, she found herself stepping into the hospital chapel to do something...pray? Cry? Demand justice? She wasn't even sure. It seemed like her last hope.
- She sat down in a pew and curled up, sobbing quietly. Then to her surprise, she heard someone else crying as well and sat up to look around. Over in the darkest corner of the chapel, Grant Polidori sat. Arms wrapped around his head. Sobs racking his body nearly silently.
- Generous as ever, she carefully reached out to see if he was okay. Shocked, he immediately tried to reassemble himself. But seeing the tears on her face, he switched gears and asked quietly why *she* was so upset.
- Surprised at the question, she poured out the entire story of her daughter. Every step. Every attempt to save her. And the complete certainty that her daughter was going to die. "Worst of all?" she said. "Lisa still believes that angels are going to save her. She tells *me* not to worry. Barely able to breathe any more and she's lifting *my* spirits up. When she dies, my universe will lose its only light."
- Grant looked at her for a long moment and then wiped his face. "Not if I have anything to say about it." As he stood, she thinks he said, "This is why I came here," but she's never quite understood what he meant by that—or why he was in that chapel at all.
- But Grant turned out to be the angel that Lisa had said would come. He reached out to the pediatric surgeons, persuaded them to donate their time. Same for the nurses and anesthesiologist. And then, to her even greater surprise, what cost still remained he simply paid for himself.
- It was almost too much. She confronted him about what he might demand in exchange for the help. When he had no good answer, she offered her greatest gift—silence. Whatever brought him to that chapel, she was never going to tell anyone that he was there or that he had helped her. That was their secret, no matter what.
- But now he's dead—and she is contemplating telling his wife what a good man he truly was.

Abigail Simmons: (Sarah Morris)

- A funeral director at Simmons Funeral Home (her father is the founder and head director of the home)
- She is up and coming (within her field) and her father praises her with words like “dependable”, “on-time” and “properly decorous”.
- Privately, however, Abby is a woman with a spending problem. Namely, she spends a lot of money at the poker game that is run out of her parlor late in the evenings on weekends. Much more money than she has.
- Vegas and other casinos around the city are also a big threat to her. So much so that at least a few of them already have pictures of her in the “toss them out immediately” folder.
- So she is always at a loss for money. Which makes her more than a little susceptible to bribes from those whose recently dead paid for an expensive coffin and now the family wants most of that money back (minus a finder’s fee, of course) to bury the body in a simple pine box.
- Or for those who might want to buy bodies designated for cremation for medical cadavers or other...pursuits.
- In the case of the Grant Polidori, Abby has actually managed to make money off him *twice*. The first time was when Grant came to her and paid her extra to make sure that he was *never* cremated (he had nightmares about burning to death) and that his plot would be separated from his wife’s without her yet knowing about it (he wanted to get all the pieces in place before starting divorce procedures). She offered to gladly move his burial space away from hers—in fact, for an extra \$5,000 she offered to move him to be buried in a mausoleum that she just happened to know was never going to be filled with anyone else because the family who built it had no living members, just a fund that paid for the spot every month.
- Once Grant was dead, however, Abby received another visit—this time from Victoria. She seemed quite aware of Abby’s evening games and monetary needs and offered her a substantial amount of money to take Grant’s body off her hands and create an urn full of Grant’s “ashes” (they’re really just a couple of tables taken from a nearby dumpster).
- Why Victoria wanted the body is really none of Abby’s concern. As a funeral director, you know the worst about humanity and you’re quite happy with it—provided you make some money in the process.

Livia West: (TBA)

- West is the go-to lawyer for General Hospital whenever there is a real problem that could cost them millions through any medical issue.
- West has a very polite public demeanor. Comes across as sincere, honest, trying to find a solution that will be acceptable to everyone. In fact, most people who've ever sat across from him say that he was the nicest lawyer who ever beat them.
- That's because in reality, West's a fucking shark of a lawyer. West has crafted that public demeanor because it puts everyone on the opposing side (lawyers, clients, judges, police—West considers EVERYONE who isn't his client the opposing side) off-balance. And that makes it easier to go for the jugular, because not only do people not realize West's going to do so—they also practically apologize for West HAVING done so.
- That's why West's win ratio is so high. Because West will do anything (legal or otherwise) to win—and make it seem like the nicest, least-awful and gosh-shucks-sorry-I-have-to-do-this way possible.
- In the case of Grant, West was dragged in the moment it happened. The head surgeon took one look at what the nurses said and what was on recordings and contacted the head of the surgery department who contacted the director who contacted West.
- Less than two hours after the surgery happened, West was already replacing bad evidence with other surgeries that weren't tainted by slurred speech, paying off nurses and other staff with raises and free vacations and interviewing a (still-drunk) Grant.
- West specifically told Grant not to talk to *anyone*, not even his wife. He told Grant to continue acting as though nothing was wrong in any fashion—the best course of action being to respond as though he had nothing to feel bad about.
- Privately, however, West also told Grant that he had better get his shit together, because if there was ANY other problem, the hospital would throw Grant to the wolves. In fact, it was West who told Grant where the nearest AA meeting was when Grant asked (after Grant's hospital moment).
- West is at the wake today for several reasons. One, it's important that West treat Grant as though he was a perfect employee—and that means coming to a situation like this. Second, West wants to find out whether or not Victoria knows anything or is going to be any sort of problem. And three, West is worried that Danny might show and make a scene (Danny's clearly willing to do such to get 'justice', from West's POV.) Should Danny show, West is going to have to try and keep Victoria calm AND stop Danny from getting a chance to cause problems.
- It's not something you're looking forward to doing. At all. But saving the hospital is your job. And you will do *whatever it takes* to do so.

Danny Harris (Erik Blair)

- Danny is a casino card watcher. He works for a company who covers all of the extra bank bets at the Commercial and Hustling Casinos.
- He is also an alcoholic with (until recently) nearly 5 years sobriety. Unfortunately, his hours were cut significantly a few months ago and he's been having a hard time covering his bills.
- He's also been Grant's sponsor. Grant came to AA about 2 months ago and started working the problem rigorously. He found time for meetings nearly every evening after work and he and Danny hit it off immediately.
- So in the past weeks, Danny's learned almost everything about Grant. He knows that Grant was drunk as can be when he operated. He knows about the lawyer covering the matter up. He knows that Grant intends to leave Victoria.
- He even knows that Grant has been helping a woman out with a daughter because he saw them all together—but he honestly believes that the woman is someone Grant had an affair with because of his drinking and that the child is his. He's wrong about this but hadn't confronted Grant with it because that's not a sponsor's job.
- Unfortunately, like any alcoholic, all it takes is one slip—and in the early morning hours three nights ago, Danny lost control. He had quite a bit to drink and tried reaching out to his sponsor before he even started—but his sponsor was not responding. So he drank and then, eventually, realized he was in trouble and called Grant.
- Grant covered for leaving that late with an emergency at the hospital and set off to meet Danny at the Hotel 6 just around the corner from the hospital. That was where the AA meetings normally happened (super convenient for Grant).
- Then Danny climbed into his pickup and set off for the meeting. But he'd had way more to drink than he realized and he fell asleep at the wheel. Through dumb luck, his pickup smashed into Grant's car as he was just pulling a left turn into the lot. The car was pressed hard into another car and Grant was decapitated.
- Danny was hammered into the window and door of his pick-up and suffered bad cuts to his face and a hip that was dislocated. That means for the time being, he's got bandages all over his face and is walking with a limp.
- The airbag also went off, damaging his chest. So Danny currently only speaks at a whisper.
- But in the end, he's going to be okay. The same can't be said for Grant. Danny has come to pay his respects, even though he's quite aware that Victoria might well throw him out. He needs to apologize, to Grant and to Victoria if she'll have him.
- If not, he figures he'll have plenty of time to apologize from jail.

Side Scenes and Secrets (Audience Always Playing Grant)

#1 – Livia Side Scene:

Grant's V/O: (This first paragraph plays for all side scenes. The second is unique to each.)

In memory of me, Grant Polidori. What do these people think of me? Do they call me a good husband? A great surgeon? Do they label me a hero or a villain? The stories told today are nothing but legends of the recently dead. They can never speak reality for it died with me. Only I know all of my secrets. Only I can share them...

A woman died on my operating table. Life drained away on my watch. At my hands. I heard the last sound she ever made as the darkest red I've ever seen flowed from her chest, pressing through my fingers as I tried to stem the tide.

She should not have died there. I should not have been there. With the amount of alcohol in my system, I should not have even been standing. But an alcoholic never quits. Even when the hospital's lawyer drags him into a room...

- Scene begins by telling 'Grant' to get his ass into the room.
- "Sit down. I'd ask if you know who I am, but until this fucking night you'd have no reason to even have seen me—which *was* a good fucking thing for you. I'm Livia West, the lawyer General Hospital calls when one of its staff unleashes a shit-storm of epic proportions and they need someone to come in and *handle it*. You get me? I'm here to *Handle. Your. Damn. Problem*. So rule number one—if I ask you a question, you answer it."
- "So, there's a dead patient named Martha Dixon on your operating table. Did you kill her because you were—let's say over the legal limit?" Give Grant a second to answer, then say harsher, "Were you *so goddamn drunk* that you killed a woman who expected a doctor who only saw one of her at a time?"
- This time, wait for an answer. If Grant says no, say, "Damn right. And you answer that way every time." If Grant says yes, say, "Rule #1A – you never say that answer to me or anyone else ever again. You got me, you pathetic Neanderthal? Because that answer was never said and it's never *going to be said*."
- Then move on to explain exactly what you've already done to help the situation. There's been a catastrophic accident that erased the hard drive of Grant's digital recorder in the room. The security footage has already been replaced with a similar surgery Grant did when he wasn't a complete loser. The nurses and staff already have raises coming in their next paycheck, bonuses already being direct deposited and three of them are already onboard a 2-week trip to a country that happens to have no extradition issues.

- “You see what I’ve done for you? I’ve taken care of all the problems external to you except for one—the husband of the woman you killed. But don’t worry, that’ll be taken care of easily, thanks to the magic of binding arbitration clauses in all of our surgery forms. He’ll get a nice settlement and this. Whole. Thing. Will. Go. Away.”
- Make it clear that the only real wild card is Grant himself. If Grant starts blabbing to anyone—his friends, his priest, fuck even his *wife*, then the entire situation could blow wide open. So there’s really only one thing that West needs Grant to do: shut his damn mouth from now until the end of time about anything that happened that day. As long as he does that, the firm will protect him and continue to have a shining path to tons of money and a happy surgery practice.
- “So, we have a deal, yes?” Wait until there is an answer from Grant. In fact, just sit there and stare until Grant answers. If the pause goes on too long, “I’m waiting to hear you say ‘Yes.’ Same phrase if Grant says no.
- Once Grant says yes, then smile, suddenly nice as can be. “Fantastic. I’m glad that we were able to settle this so easily. Honestly, it wasn’t even a hard one. You should have seen what your Chief of Surgery once did!”
- He’ll hand Grant a business card. “In case you need me for anything.” As soon as Grant takes the card, snap fingers. “By the way, you had better get your ass sober. You ever make a mistake like this again and we will drop you faster than gravity and leave you to burn up as you fall. You got me, *doctor?*” (super sarcasm). Then tell him to get out of your office.

#2 – Leah Side Scene:

Grant V/O:

Why was I crying in the hospital chapel the day Leah found me? Because my life as I knew it was over. I could not continue on the same path, for it would destroy me as certainly as I'd destroyed another. I needed to change everything.

Leah offered me that other choice, a relationship that could be mine alone. The chance to love someone new, with no demand in return, was a temptation too strong to resist. So I demanded silence about our connection and allowed myself to give in...

- 'Grant' will hear Leah calling him excitedly. When he enters the room, she's practically bouncing with energy.
- She'll sit him down and say that she's really glad he came by her place. He's never seen it and she wanted him to see where she and Lisa live.
- Oh, that's right! She's got pictures to show him. Does he want food? A drink? She hopes he can stay, because Lisa is going to be home soon and she really wants 'Grant' to meet her.
- She'll then get close to Grant and get serious. He's so amazing. So wonderful. She doesn't know what she would have done without him. It will seem like he's having an affair with her—and then she will start talking about the truth.
- But now the doctors are moving forward with the operation. They've done all the necessary tests and they think the odds of success on Lisa's heart surgery are very strong.
- If they hadn't met at the chapel that one day, her daughter would most likely be dying with no hope. Leah will go into the fact that they were both crying (and then immediately gloss over his sobbing).
- She'll even tell the story of her daughter comforting *her*, even as she got sicker, by saying that an angel would come. "And she was right." She'll take 'Grant's hand if they let her. "You came. You got the doctors to donate time and you offered to pay for anything left over." Speaking of which—she'll pull out another hospital bill. "You asked for all of the bills, so here's what they tell me is the last one." Grant can keep that bill.
- "Okay. Go into living room while I get you a drink and you can meet Lisa." She start to shoo 'Grant' back out and then say, "I don't know why you were in that chapel, but you asked me not to mention any of this to anyone. I haven't. And I *won't*. You have my word on that." And then quietly out the door.

#3 – Abigail Side Scene:

Grant V/O:

Guilt is a monstrous, hungry beast. It devours every inch of peace within you and leaves you lost. Every night, I was dragged into hell for what I had done. Every night, I burned for the rest of time. Waking up should have been a release, but it only meant a respite before the fire returned once more. The phobia had taken hold.

So I reacted out of fear--the same fear that was preparing me to flee my wife. And I contacted the one woman who could guarantee that at least my body would avoid the flames...

- She calls 'Grant' into the room with "Mr. Polidori? Sorry, Dr. Polidori. Can I call you Grant?" Has him sit down at the table.
- She has a stack of papers in front of her. "Now I understand that you wanted to talk to me about altering your contract with us here at the Simmons Funeral Home. You were aware that once signed, all contracts are final and no alterations are allowed, yes?" She waits for an answer.
- "I see." She looks at 'Grant' for a long moment. "Well, you seem like a nice gentleman. And a doctor, I understand. Perhaps there's something we can do." She starts going through the papers in front of her.
- "I see you and your wife have side-by-side spaces in our cremation garden. A nice spot in the Classical Gardens. But your message to me said something about not wanting to be burned for any reason and instead wanted to *guarantee* that you were buried in a mausoleum." She smiles a little. "I'm curious if there's a specific reason for that—I mean, at the moment you're cremated, it's not like you'll feel it. Am I right?"
- Given the opening audio for this scene, 'Grant' may or may not answer why. If he does, Abby can pry a little deeper and try to get the audience member to build the story. If 'Grant' doesn't relay the info, Abby can simply move on with an "I'm so sorry—where *are* my manners? It's not my concern *why* you don't want to be incinerated so completely, is it?" (Obviously being callous as she says this).
- "I understand your concern. But as I said, the contract is final and cannot be altered unless there is a medical condition that requires it. *IS* there a medical condition?" She clearly wants 'Grant' to say yes. If Grant does not, she'll push and ask again until he does. She'll say that she's happy to make the change—for a service fee of \$5,000. Get Grant to say yes.
- Then say, "Oh, there was something else that you said you wanted changed, too. What was it?" She will play the voice message that Grant gave her (use Austin's actual voice here). He'll talk about not being cremated and then say

that he wants to separate his plot from his wife's without having her notified of any changes because of impending divorce proceedings.

- Abby will point out that given that the contracts are supposed to be final, any changes *have* to be informed to all contract signatories. But then she'll "take pity" on Grant and say she doesn't want to make things harder. So she'd be happy to keep Victoria from being notified for another \$5,000. That makes \$10K. She'll gladly take a check within the next week.
- She'll simply wait, smiling, until Grant agrees. Then she'll nod happily and escort 'Grant' back out of the room.

#4 – Charles Side Scene:

Grant V/O:

My marching orders had been simple. Keep my mouth shut about everything and to everyone. I had obeyed without question, too afraid to even admit that it was my fault. I had swallowed the words I wanted to say. To the lawyers. To the staff. To my wife.

But I could not stay away from her husband. Not forever. Every day I had driven by his work until this one. This day, I was standing at his company's door before I even realized I'd moved. If I left, I was certain I'd sleepwalk right back again. So I took a deep breath and knocked on his office door...

- Conversation with Grant at Charles' office. Call Grant in from the outer room.
- "Don't have much time to chat with you. Super busy and all that." Charles makes it clear that he's anything but.
- "I assume you're here to apologize for killing my wife on your operating table, huh?" He waits for a moment to see if 'Grant' answers then cuts him off.
- "No, don't tell me whether you actually killed her or not. Remember, we ain't even supposed to be *talking* to each other." Charles goes into the entire gag order between all parties doing arbitration over the death of his wife.
- Explains the entire situation—wife dead on the table, Charles' demands for 'better conditions' to 'make his wife's death mean something'.
- Then he laughs and makes it clear that it's fucking bullshit. He doesn't really care about her at all. Goes into how they didn't love each other. Didn't sleep in the same room. Only there for the kids.
- Hell, he didn't even want to live in LA any more. That was cause of her damn job. Now all he wants to do is get as much money as possible from the arbitration so he can move the fuck out of here.
- Then Charles will pause and smile darkly at 'Grant'. "So are you gonna tell your lawyers about this conversation?" Waits for an answer. Then points out (either way) that GRANT broke the rules by coming to visit Charles at all—and if Grant *does* attempt to say anything, Charles will deny everything and claim that Grant stormed in, demanding all sorts of crazy shit.
- "Are we clear? Great. Then get out of here."

#5 – Danny Side Scene:

Grant V/O:

People speak of redemption like it's a single act. You do one thing and it erases the darker, other thing you want gone. That's nothing but another lie. Redemption is a process of a million small steps, a journey that never ends and never gets easier. It cannot erase the mistake—it only buries it behind a brittle façade that never hardens and can shatter from a hard breath.

I know this because I was climbing from my bottomless bottom. I had learned of 12 steps and gathered my new ally for when the pain demanded release. Danny told me he could handle any secret and heard many, usually at the same hotel where we held meetings. He heard all of mine, which is probably why I missed the clue in his words that would lead to him breaking his own façade. If I had heard it, maybe he wouldn't have been unable to find his own listener one month later. Maybe my redemption would not have been cut short...

- Danny will step out of the door and smile at 'Grant'. Soft, knowing smile. "Shit, Grant, you look terrible. Come on into the hotel room and we'll chat about it, okay? That's what a sponsor's for, after all, right buddy?"
- Sit 'Grant' down and take a really good look at 'him'. "You staying sober? Tell me the truth, now, because your eyes look pretty bloodshot right now." Let the audience member make whatever answer they want and then respond accordingly. Something positive and affirming.
- "How are the nightmares? You still being burned alive because you killed that patient?" Not cold, but serious. Direct. Trying to evoke responses from 'Grant'.
- "Okay. You and I both know that you should never have walked into that surgery room shit-faced. But you did. Nothing you can do can—or will—ever change that. So you have to forgive yourself. And you have to work hard to make sure it never happens again. You think you're ready to do that? You better be, 'cause it's the only thing that's going to keep you going and let you sleep at night. Eventually, anyway."
- Another long look. "You haven't told your wife anything yet, have you? Not even the drinking." It's not a question, really. Danny knows. "I didn't say anything either. Not when I was drinking. Not when I hit bottom. I kept it from Gene the whole time. Too long, in fact. When he finally tracked me to an AA meeting, he was so mad at me. Not that I was a drunk getting sober—but that I didn't trust him enough to tell him. So I get your impulse. But you might want to think..." he sighs. "Never mind. I know I can't tell you how to live your life. You'll have to decide what you think is best."
- Danny will then talk about the lawyer a bit. Offering some ideas on 'Grant' maybe getting a lawyer of his own. "Especially if you're still thinking about changing up the home situation. You're going to want to make sure that

you've got a good lawyer on your side—and only your side—before you even contemplate walking out on your wife. Especially with all the secrets you've been keeping. Trust me on that—no matter what the reason, the one that gets left behind is going to be mad. So mad they might just kill you. Or in my case, drink myself silly. First time I ever fell off the wagon, in fact. Gene always could get me that way.” He chuckles. “Damn, that’s right. I’m gonna see him again in a month at a friend’s wedding. Better make sure that I’m watching myself that night.”

- Then he pulls out a 30-day AA chip and hands it to ‘Grant’, saying good job. Then leads Grant back out saying that he can always call if he needs help.

#6 – Victoria Side Scene

Grant V/O:

My wife never knew my secrets. There was no way I could tell her. She expected—demanded—that our life be perfect, that it rise to its natural place as the greatest power couple around town. Her understanding of the mind was flawless, but without emotion. She left that to me.

When it became too stressful and I began to fear failure, how could I tell her anything? When my choices placed me in ever-greater despair, I knew she would only attempt to fix it. To rebuild it. To make me better. I knew that I could not continue that way. I was going to walk away—for her sake as well as mine.

But then the end came suddenly. And my choices were taken from me—all except one last secret. One so dangerous it can only be seen from lying on the ground in the room ahead of you. So step forward, lie down and prepare yourself for this last story...

- Victoria talks to dead Grant. Makes it very clear audience member is dead.
- Talks about how much she still loves 'you', so much that she made a deal with the funeral director to switch your body with a wooden table or two from a dumpster to put in the urn for today's memorial service
- Not a problem, of course, because she knew from other psychiatrists that Abigail had a gambling problem and an illegal poker game going here. She offered money with one had, police with the other. Easy. And she's not worried about that woman trying to out her because it's M.A.D. (mutually assured destruction). Besides, when she's finished with all of her plans, she'll find a way to take care of that loose end.
- As for Danny, that asshole who killed 'you', she has plans. Her grandfather's notes were clear on how to handle a body so that it could be used for appropriate work. And she sees lots of work ahead of her. But if he shows up to today's service, she promises not to get *too* angry with him. Just enough to show 'you,' love, proper respect. Can't let fingers get pointed too easily.
- Then she leaves. Abigail comes in a moment later, helping the person 'up' once again in the 'present' so they leave.

Main Area Story:

A: The Hacker

A1: Audience arrives and is checked in with waivers.

A2: Emma swings by and drags people with her to the back.

A3: Once people are at the back, she tells the following tale:

A31: Your name is Emma G. Nation and she's Mike Stone's number one hacker extraordinaire. Big deal kind of stuff. Ask them if they know about a hack that doesn't exist so they won't—then use the fact that they don't know it as proof of how good you are.

A32: Explain who Mike is—he's an ex-reporter who was thrown out of his old job and blacklisted by the media world because he ran a story on Russian gangsters without sorting it well enough. That not only got him fired but also blew up a DEA investigation when the one source he had was also outed. That made him persona-non-grata both in news and government circles. So no one was around to tell him that the Russians had a hit out on him that nearly worked. Now he's a Lyft driver but he still digs into stories to try and save people. He's found a story like that now.

A33: Then you introduce Mike on the laptop. We'll play a video of him telling the story of Victoria, Ely and Justine (including pictures of the three of us.) He'll fill people in quickly who didn't see Act One.

A34: Because of MSS, Mike is convinced Ely is after him. So now he's gone underground and is using the hacker to reach out to people. Between the two of them, they've found lots of files to search through, including stuff from Victoria's personal computer thanks to socially hacking Thea at MSS.

A35: The goal of tonight is for the people who have gathered to go through the files that Mike & Emma have found. One of which is a long video from what appears to be 2013. There are also files connected to that time frame. Mike will then get skittish and say he's been on too long already and he'll turn the details of the video over to Emma.

A36: Explain to people the following rules:

- Whatever they find they can choose to share or not—depending on whether they think it's important.
- If it IS important, you can share it with anyone you wish that you could talk to directly. If you think the info could lead to more information, feel free to share the information with the person you think you can get more info from by doing so.
- If you don't want to share the info, you do not have to do so.
- Make sure that you look at the people in the video closely. If they look like anyone else you know, see if they ARE that person. If not, take notice—there's a reason this video was encrypted on Victoria's computer. Nothing is unintentional here.

A37: Once the rules are clear, Emma is going to start playing the video, which will show the beginning of the wake, Abigail facing the doors, Victoria seated facing away, and a few of the other actors crossing through the frame. The back door will open and that same video will be playing UP the stairs, encouraging people to 'walk into' the video.

A38: When they reach the top of the stairs, they will see that the very same thing happening in the video is happening in real life in front of them. They will enter the wake and our main story will begin.

B: The Wake Part One

B1: As the audience enters the wake, they will see Victoria sitting quietly at the front, facing away from the door. There is a table with food and drinks. Other seats. Music quietly playing 2013 songs from speakers. Some items from Grant's life on another table that surrounds the big, black inscribed wooden urn that is placed prominently. And there is a podium for people to stand behind to talk.

B2: Two of the other characters from the past are already here: Livia West and Leah Davidson. They are the ones who crossed the frame and are now heading for the table.

B2: Abigail meets each person as they enter, offering them a "memorial wake" program that gives the 2013 date and info about Grant. The program includes an epitaph, a few poems that he supposedly favors and a "in lieu of flowers, Grant's wife has asked for donations to the American Heart Association." She lets them know they can go get drinks and food, as Mrs. Polidori wants this to be a celebration of her husband's life and not a sad occasion.

B3: As people move into the room, Victoria will pull out a handkerchief and dab her eyes. She will then stand and say a quiet hello to anyone who speaks to her. She doesn't leave the area near her husband's "urn" for the time being.

B4: As soon as everyone has been given their program, Abigail will move over to Victoria and have a conversation about how Victoria wants to run any person's comments about Grant.

- Victoria wants it to be informal—whomever wants to come up and talk can, in whatever order they want to go.
- She also wants to be clear that she will speak last. She will say that she's worried that West might try to have the final word as the voice of the hospital here today. In reality, she wants to make sure that her words about Grant (and the lie that his ashes are in the urn) are the final piece of today's 'theatre'.
- Abigail will ask about the memorial guest-book, and Victoria will tell Abigail to handle it, a little sternly. Abigail will accede to this request (and the others), but will quietly remind Victoria that the final 'payment' for the services the funeral home has done for Grant (i.e., the bribe to fake the cremation and give the body to Victoria) is due. Victoria will go cold and assure Abby that the payment will be made within the next 24 hours.
- Abby will recognize that she's said all she needs to say and she will depart and go to speak to any audience member that seems unengaged.

B5: If Abby ends up speaking to someone here alone, she'll play the question game to try and draw the person out of the shell.

- Start by quietly mentioning how shocking an accident it was. This is a great way to get the details of the accident out into the audience's knowledge. Obviously only the main details (car accident, decapitated, other person was drunk and severely cut up but survived because drunk.)

- Then start asking questions to get the audience member to play along. How long have they known Grant? Were they friends or co-workers or patients? That kind of thing. Get simple conversation going.
- If they seem to be the type of person who might like it, see if you can quietly suggest a late-night poker game. But only if the person seems somewhat like they could afford it's high stakes. And if they get remotely squirrely, pull away quick.

B6: Meanwhile, West and Leah will get a drink/food from the table and stand close enough to be overheard by the audience and hopefully dragged into the conversation they're having.

- Since both work for the hospital, their conversation will start innocently enough, with them talking about how hard Grant's death is for the hospital and staff.
- West will mention that Grant's death leaves a big hole in the cardiac surgery department and that finding someone of his skill on the operating table will not be an easy task.
- Leah will agree and say that the office staff for the Cardiology department is devastated by the accident. How she's seen nurses crying and office staff looking dazed. She'll follow up with how even she has found herself just staring into space, wondering what's going to happen now. (She's really referring to the possibility that her bills are now not going to get paid by Grant, but won't mention that exactly out loud.)
- Instead, she'll ask whether West happens to have looked at Grant's computer or recordkeeping books. West will immediately be on-guard, because she's worried that Leah might be about to become an issue with the malpractice suit. So West will answer somewhat evasively and try to parse out what Leah is actually attempting to find out.
- Leah, in turn, will become evasive and try to explain that she knows that Grant had some expenditures that she's not certain were actually paid before his death. That's all she can say at the moment without spilling the secret.
- West will respond that she'll look into it and thank Leah. Then West will immediately separate from her to go chat with Victoria.

B7: Victoria and West are another good conversation for audience members to overhear and/or get involved in directly.

- West will tell Victoria how sorry she is about Grant. Victoria will respond *exactly* as a grieving widow should—sad but not out of control. West wants to remain praising of Grant publicly and Victoria wants there to be no suspicions at all.
- What that actually will equate into is a conversation that sounds formal, somehow, and almost rehearsed. It should make any audience member wonder what the hell is happening here.
- West will mention that there is a potential movement afoot for a memorial for Grant. Victoria will respond that such a thing would be something that he

would have liked. Both of them will sound as though they're not quite invested in whether this happens or not.

- Then the conversation will move to whether or not the driver responsible has been arrested. West will ask and Victoria will say the driver is out on bail. West will suggest that such a person ought to be locked away forever.
- And finally, Victoria will respond with a little bit of real emotion. "Could you help make that happen? As a lawyer?"
- This will surprise West briefly, then she'll respond that she's not a criminal lawyer and that the state will prosecute the case anyway. But she'll at least promise to keep tabs on the case.
- She'll start to walk away again to speak to other audience—but then turn back for a moment and say, with a little passion of her own, that if Victoria wishes to *sue* that asshole, they might have something to talk about later. Victoria will nod and, very small, smile. Perhaps there's a beginning of a plan there.

B8: At this point, small talk between the various characters and audience can happen as West makes her way to the guestbook nook (and readies herself for the side-scene with a quick costume change.) Abigail will inform everyone that if they wish to speak about Grant, they can simply step up to the podium and do so. She will also let the audience know that there is a guestbook to sign, but as that has been placed in an area that is also for reflection, she's been asked to make sure that only one person goes in at a time.

B9: When she's ready, Abigail will bring the first audience guest to the nook so they can experience the West side scene. At the same time, Leah will step up to the podium and start talking about Grant to distract the audience in her direction.

C: The Strange Man

C1: Leah will step up to the podium and begins to speak about Grant in a way that begins complimentary and then slowly slips into much more personally heartfelt (obviously because of all that he's done for her child, which no one here knows about, remember.)

- She will start by saying that she's incredibly sorry about Grant's death to Victoria.
- She'll then go into how Grant was a fantastic boss, always working incredibly hard, dedicated to his patients and making sure that they had everything they needed both before the surgery and after.
- Painting him as a fantastic surgeon, boss and person. It should almost sound like she's describing someone *she* is in love with—and she is, but only to the extent that he helped save her daughter's life.
- And it's that love of what he did for her daughter that will eventually make Leah get more emotional. Tears well in her eyes and she tries to hold them back.
- She starts talking about how generous he is as a person—how she knows that he was always willing to go out of his way to help people. Even people who weren't his patients. His staff. His employees. He literally changed people's lives and she'll never forget him.
- It should become clear that she means something more than general.
- As it does, Victoria will get sharper in posture and become riveted to the speech. She will begin to consider the *possibility* that this woman is in love with Grant (but never that he would have loved her back.)
- In the end, Leah will almost say too much—and then realize how Victoria is looking at her. She stammers to a stop and dashes away from the podium to the food table.
- Victoria will follow her in a beeline to have a 'chat'.

C2: Charles enters the room in the early-to-mid part of Leah's speech. He enters quietly, taking a look around to see if West is there and to take a good look at Victoria (remember, he may spill the beans to Victoria to put extra pressure on West. Even being here is pressure to West.)

- If anyone speaks to him during the speech, he'll be a little brusque to them and say that he wants to hear how many lies about Grant this one woman can tell.
- Throughout the speech he hears, he will laugh quietly and make snide remarks to himself that may be *just* loud enough for someone standing next to him to hear (so make sure you're standing next to people.)
- He'll also go get some food and drink and then take a sprawling seat at the back of the chairs, because he's not really here to be polite or use proper manners.
- Once the speech is done, he'll go looking for audience to ask them whether they believe any of the shit that woman just said.

- Use this as a chance to suggest that you're here for a bigger purpose. Hint at the idea that you might have a different opinion of Grant Polidori and that if/when your info comes out, the whole *world* might have a different opinion. For damn sure the *hospital* will have to deal with it. That kind of thing. Vague and getting closer to spilling the beans...
- But never quite do so. Walk to the edge and then say, "Sorry, there's a *legal discussion* underway that forces me to avoid disclosure." Make it clear that you're just a man who wants to see justice done. Keep coming back to *justice*.

C3: When Victoria gets to Leah, she's going to try to have a 'quiet' conversation. If people let you two do that, okay—but hopefully they'll intercede or attempt to be part of it.

- Victoria thanks Leah for everything she just said.
- Leah tries to pretend that it was all business, nothing personal, as she says "You're welcome."
- Victoria prods a little, asking Leah if there's any specific stories that she wants to share because "Grant was always so modest about all of his work. I'd love to hear some details."
- Leah has finally had too much. She says she'll gladly talk later, after she uses the ladies' room.
- And she bails (actually to get ready for her scene. Costume change.)
- Once she's ready, Abigail sends in guest for Side Scene #2.

C4: As soon as her scene is over, West changes back and returns to the main room. As soon as she enters, she spots Charles and makes a beeline for him. She pulls him to a corner of the room (hopefully drawing people in the process) and converses.

- West remains cordial the entire conversation. Any threats are made without losing her 'nice' demeanor.
- Charles, conversely, maintains his "I'm doing this for my wife's name" approach.
- The conflict comes from the collision of these two attitudes here.
- West asks Charles what he's doing here. She points out that it's quite possible that his being here could be a breach of the gag order.
- Charles responds by finally speaking (a little) about the reason there *is* a gag order. Just because the hospital persuaded a judge to force Charles into arbitration and gag orders doesn't mean his wife isn't still dead due to Dr. Polidori's mistakes.
- West shuts that train down quickly by reminding Charles that this is a wake, a remembrance of a life, and not the appropriate place for such accusations and antagonism.
- Charles looks at Victoria for a moment and then turns back to West. He says that this seems like *exactly* the right moment, because it *should be* a remembrance of life. His wife's.
- And with that, he storms to the podium.
- West moves quickly to be near Victoria in case things go badly.

C5: Charles reaches the podium and begins his speech regarding Grant.

- He starts by saying he's truly sorry that Grant is dead.
- Because Grant's death was an accident—like the death of his own wife.
- Then start telling them about Martha. She was a loving wife, great mother, his best friend. How every day with her was a treasure and how much he's going to miss her.
- How every time something good happens, he turns to share it with her—and she's gone. Every time something bad happens, he turns to her for solace—and he's alone. How her children cry themselves to sleep every night.
- Then he turns to Victoria and gives an 'honest' sadness that she won't get to experience the joys he had before his wife died. For just a moment, it should seem like he's just being sympathetic to her situation.
- Then Charles' speech makes a turn, as he finally breaches the subject completely: Of course, the reason his wife is dead is *because* of Grant. Victoria responds with legitimate confusion (she knew nothing about it).
- West will attempt to interrupt here with a warning, which only turns Victoria around—because clearly there *is* something happening.
- Charles begins his true purpose being here—to demand that his wife's death should *mean something*. Because somewhere, somehow, the hospital screwed up. His wife was brought into Grant's operating room—and she never came out again on the other side.
- West will again attempt to stop Charles (still being polite but getting strained because Victoria is asking him what Charles means).
- Charles tells West that he'll only stop talking when the hospital makes appropriate changes so that an accident like his wife's death can never happen again. That's what is important—nothing else (so he says). Then he storms away from the podium and grabs a drink (specifically to pretend he's mad and sulking but actually watching Victoria/West.)
- If people come speak to him, feel free to continue talking about the accident at this point, but quietly and making it clear that you're really not *supposed* to.

D The Lawyer Responds:

D1: Victoria moves over to West as Charles' speech is nearing its end. As soon as the speech concludes, she starts a hushed and heated conversation.

- She first asks West what the hell Charles is talking about. An accident? She didn't know about anything like that (sincerely).
- West will attempt to remain calm and deflect, saying that it's a matter between Mr. Nixon and the hospital and Victoria doesn't need to worry about it.
- Victoria won't let that answer stand at all—if Grant was involved in something and she didn't know about it, that's a problem. So she continues to press.
- West will finally decide to give her just the bare bones, all calm and all designed to continue the story that West tells publicly.
- West explains that Mr. Nixon's wife was brought in for heart surgery in what should have been as 'simple' an operation as one can have with heart surgery.
- Unfortunately, there were unexpected complications and Mrs. Nixon died. Grant did everything he could to salvage the situation, as did the rest of the staff. There is absolutely no reason for Victoria to be concerned. West has examined the recordings and spoken to the staff and they did everything correctly. Sometimes people just die.
- Victoria, legitimately worried, takes some comfort in these words. But why is Charles so adamant about 'changes'?
- West tells her that she can't speak to details because of a court order—that she really shouldn't even have told Victoria that much. She makes Victoria (and anyone else who's heard) promise to keep 100% silent about anything they've heard here.
- West will explain that Charles and the hospital are in arbitration to determine whether an acceptable outcome can be found that answers Charles' worries about 'justice' and maybe gives his family some financial easement.
- Victoria nods, understanding, but demands that West continue to keep her in the loop from now on. West will promise to speak to the judge about it.

D2: Leah returns at some point and spots Charles. She immediately spots Charles and once his speech is over (or immediately if it is), she heads over to speak to him. She's of course recognized him as the husband of the dead woman. This conversation can be largely improvised, but is a great place for the following information to come out, because Charles will press Leah about info that he might be able to use in the arbitrations:

- More details about the surgery. CABG (Coronary Artery Bypass Graft) surgery should have been 'routine' as far as such things go.
- Leah only knows the official version of what happened (with one exception). There was an unexpected drop in blood pressure. All efforts were made to reverse it, including stopping any further invasive actions. No obvious reason for the BP drop was spotted. She eventually went into cardiac arrest and all attempts to stabilize her failed.

- Charles will then ask whether Leah knows of other patients who had similar accidents, so that Charles can try to track down the families. Leah refuses to give him that information because, of course, it's protected info.
- They can also talk about Martha directly, allowing Charles to continue to push his public agenda of her being a fantastic mom/wife/etc. Leah will be very sympathetic to such a story.
- But when Charles begins to press harder on Grant, Leah will become very defensive of him (for obvious reasons). She will not listen to him attempting any sort of antagonism over Grant.
- She will even point out how much *everyone* loved Grant, so much that most of the nurses that were part of that operation had to take a leave of absence afterwards to recuperate. This is news for Charles.
- Otherwise, feel free to use this scene to include any other recent info.

D3: As soon as Leah returns, Abigail chooses the next audience member and informs them that she needs to check on the guest room—so wait three minutes (no less) and then enter the room. It'll be clean by then. She then heads into the guest room (and changes for her side-scene). (Note: Whoever is available at the moment should help the guest member wait the 3 minutes and head inside. That may change from performance to performance.)

D4: Side-Scene #3.

D5: West heads to the podium when she is done with Victoria (or other conversations if theirs prompts audiences to do so.) She gives her speech.

- Her speech is completely corporate-appropriate. Grant was a spectacular cardiac surgeon. Beloved by everyone. At the top of his game. Inspired in surgery and already making a name for himself in research. His staff adored him. His patients, contrary to anecdotal commentary (quietly aimed at Charles), consistently rated him as being one of the best surgeons at General Hospital. In essence, West is using the opening to counter-act anything that Charles' speech (or public scenes) has done so far. Setting the opposing side that the Hospital has NO problems with Grant's actions at all. Period.
- Then the speech moves into personal interactions (which are completely made-up by West but again, appropriate to this sort of scenario). Feel free to generalize some stories with Grant, but always within the appropriate type of scenario that might actually occur. How you met Grant at a fundraiser when he was finishing up his residency. How you watched him talk to a patient whose life he saved in his front office one day. How learning of his death was a shock and the pallor it put over everyone you met that morning. Etc.
- Finally, West turns the speech towards Victoria. She promises that General Hospital will be there to help Victoria through this time in any way she needs. Because General Hospital is more than simply a business—it's a family and family helps each other through good times and bad.
- If Charles (or anyone else) attempts to interrupt West's speech, West maintains a cordial tone no matter what. If she can answer/deflect with a few words and move on, she does.

- If the interruption gets worse or is sustained, she will take a breath, remain calm and then say that it's clear that her being up here at this moment is causing an unnecessary distraction in what is supposed to be a celebratory moment. And she will depart from the podium.

D6: As soon as there is a moment, probably after West's speech, Victoria moves over to meet with Charles.

- This is a tense conversation for Victoria. She really has no idea what Charles' story was about Martha, so part of her wants to find out more info about something Grant didn't tell her.
- At the same time, she is defensive about anything that could harm her memory of Grant (remember, his body is waiting for her planned resurrection). So she's very prickly about anything that could come across as even remotely anti-Grant.
- This makes for a strained conversation, because Charles wants to upset Victoria to add pressure, but not to the point where it actually hurts his negotiations or breaches the gag order in a way that cannot be argued past.
- So Charles actually attempts to side *with* Victoria in saying that he's sure that Grant was not really the cause of anything—that it was the hospital using overworked staff and cutting corners. Creating a place where an accident was bound to happen.
- This is an appealing answer for the grieving Victoria, so she may latch onto it, especially depending on whatever other conversations have happened. In fact, the two may even start to gang up together.
- West, however, will be watching this scene from afar and as soon as Abigail returns to the room she will quickly ask Abigail to 'get that man away from he grieving widow.'
- Fortunately for West, this is when Danny arrives.

E: The Killer Arrives

E1: Danny enters the room, limping and in bandages. Victoria spots him immediately and strides towards him to interpose herself in the way.

E2: As soon as Charles is free from Victoria, Abigail quietly asks him to take a break from the proceedings and take a walk about the block. Charles agrees and heads out (and around to the side-scene room to change.)

E3: Danny and Victoria converse.

- Victoria immediately labels Danny by both his name and his actions. “What in the hell do you think you’re doing here, Danny Harris? Killing my husband while you’re drunk wasn’t enough? Are you here to dance on his ashes?”
- Danny will take her attack meekly, making it clear that he has no intention of being aggressive with her. When she finally gives him a chance to answer, he says that he is there to pay his respects to Grant and to apologize for what happened.
- Victoria will snort. Apologize? Her husband in dead!
- As she’s getting angrier, West will move over to intervene, as will Abigail. Victoria will wave them both off.
- She is not mad but maintaining her cool because she has a plan for Danny. If she is too mad now and he disappears, it makes her too obvious a target.
- Danny says that he’s certain that nothing he can do will ever make up for her husband’s death—but that he’s willing to do whatever he can to decrease her grief.
- Those words help Victoria remain calm, for in her head it’s as though he just offered to become her experiment. It’s as though the universe just told her it’s okay to do what she plans to do.
- So she remains cool as she grants him a moment to ‘pay the respects’ before he departs.
- Danny says that he’d also like to say a few words. Victoria almost loses it at this moment but when Danny says that he knew Grant before the accident, it stops her dead. Another thing she didn’t know. So she just nods, confused.
- As Danny moves towards the urn, West grabs him arm and says that she hopes he will get it done quickly. Danny just nods.

E4: When Charles is ready and she can get someone there, Abigail brings the next guest to the guestroom. Side Scene #4 happens.

E5: Leah moves over to Victoria to make sure that she’s all right as West watches Danny like a hawk. This conversation can be entirely improvised but should center on how Victoria is doing and whether she can do anything to help her. In other words, Leah kicks into mother mode.

E6: Danny takes a long time at the urn, breaking down as he stands there looking at what he’s done. Finally, he turns and moves to the podium to give a whispered, damaged speech.

- He first says that his name is Danny Harris and that he’s the man who killed Grant with his pickup truck while driving drunk.

- He is very clear that he is the one who was at fault and that Grant was a victim of his (Danny's) mistakes. Grant didn't deserve anything that happened to him.
- Danny then says that he recognizes that he has to pay for what he did. That's why he announces here that he plans to plead guilty to the charges that are facing him when he goes to court. He wants to say that here, publicly, so that people know that he acknowledges his guilt.
- Then he looks at Victoria. And I also hope that this will give you at least a moment of respite, knowing that the man who killed your husband knows he did so and accepts the blame and whatever punishment the courts levy against him. I'm not trying to dodge any responsibility here.
- Victoria will nod, once and turn away, not listening to any more of the speech.
- Meanwhile, Danny continues by saying that this death is even worse because he had just recently been getting to know Grant. And what he knew was that Grant was a good man. Someone who cared about his job, the people he knew and his wife. Someone who was trying, every day, to make his life and the lives of those around him better.
- As he says that, Danny will look at Leah—with knowledge of who she is in his eyes. Leah looks back, confused as to why he seems to know her.
- Danny finishes by saying that of all the mistakes he has ever made, this is the one that he is most sorry for. And then he begins to break into tears again, right there on the podium
- Abigail will then quietly pull Danny away from the podium and over to the food tables to get him a drink to calm him for a moment (and to stall until Charles comes back if necessary)

F: Forgiveness?

F1: When Charles returns, he spots Danny and heads over to have a chat with Leah.

- This is again a largely improvised scene, starting with Charles asking who Danny is. When Leah explains, he gets surprised and partly amused/partly horrified by the idea that the guy who killed Grant had the balls to actually show up at the wake.
- This is a good place to fill in any other information that hasn't yet come out Charles can ask Leah if she *really* thought Grant was that good a guy and she can gush about him and let slip just a hair of truth about him paying for something that he didn't have to pay for. Told correctly, it might even sound like she means rent or something else a person having an affair might pay for.
- On the other side, Charles can continue to pry into whether there are other things that Leah knows that might help him in his lawsuit.
- West will spot the conversation and be ready to intercept at any moment.
- Meanwhile, Victoria will *also* be watching the conversation and will even try to get someone to listen into it for her and bring back intel on what they heard.

F2: Abigail and Danny will stay by the food, having a quiet conversation where Abigail suggests that Danny may wish to depart the wake at this point. Had he said what he wanted to say?

- Danny acknowledges that he has but that he wants to make sure that Victoria doesn't want to speak to him any more first.
- Abigail heads over to check with Victoria, who will glance at Danny and then say loud enough for everyone to hear: I've changed my mind. Let him stay and see exactly how much pain he's caused to all of those who interacted with Grant.
- Danny hears the words as well and nods quietly.
- Abigail quickly moves back to Danny and suggests that perhaps he at least ought to take a walk for bit—let the waters calm a little.
- He agrees with Abby and quietly departs the room (immediately heading to the side-room area and changing clothes for his Side-Scene.)

F3: As soon as he's ready, Abigail leads the next audience member into the guest room. Side-Scene #5 begins.

F4: Victoria and West converse again, this time specifically about Danny.

- West first checks to see if Victoria is okay. She claims to be.
- She then expresses legitimate surprise that Danny chose to appear at the wake. Victoria will ask whether his being willing to do so in any way impacts whether he'll be convicted.
- West snorts and says that Danny actually accomplished exactly what he planned to by making such a public statement. There are a dozen witnesses to his confession. He's going away.

- Victoria will be contemplative. After all, a Danny in prison will be much harder to experiment on. She'll also ask about whether it could change anything for a civil suit.
- For that, however, West says his being so open might make a difference. Juries and judges tend to be much more lenient for those who claim *mea culpa* and admit their guilt.
- This makes Victoria even more contemplative, because she really needs Danny to be accessible if she's going to use him.
- Outwardly, she asks once more whether West might be willing to help her with such a lawsuit. West is 100% on-board with that idea, as it also will make her a client—and she thinks she can persuade the judge to let her client (who is also Grant's wife) be within the gag order and therefore able to hear about the entire lawsuit.
- Victoria thanks West and suggests that perhaps she ought to check on Charles over there. West agrees and heads that way.

F5: As soon as West walks away, Victoria moves to speak to Abigail—even pulling her aside if she needs to do so.

- She tells Abigail that if she wants to get the payment for this wake (she really means the rest of the bribe), then she needs to make sure that Danny remains in the funeral home until everyone else is gone from the wake.
- Abigail, confused, will suggest that Danny ought to be told to leave immediately.
- Victoria will demand otherwise. This actually slightly upsets Abigail, because Victoria seems to be planning something—and Abby doesn't necessarily want to be part of it.
- So she makes a demand of her own—that whatever Victoria wants Danny to stick around for, it better be nothing more serious than talking.
- Victoria will smile (the only really cold, really manipulative smile she levies the entire public wake) and promise that Danny will survive what she has planned just fine.
- Abigail says fine, she'll do it. But this is the last 'extra' for this wake.

F6: West joins Charles and Leah.

- She asks Leah whether Charles is bothering her. Leah says, 'not really'.
- West says that's not a solid no and turns to Charles. 'Why are you still here?' she asks.
- Charles smiles. "Because you and your hospital haven't yet admitted that there are flaws in your system. Because you haven't recognized that you're as much to blame—if not more—than anything Grant Polidori did."
- Then he smiles. And because I'm beginning to think, after chatting with the office clerk here, that things smell even fishier at General Hospital than I thought they did.
- West finally shows how harsh she can be—while still remaining relatively calm. It's ice behind the warmth of her eyes. She excuses Leah from the conversation and then informs Charles that if he pushes even one inch farther

today, he's going to end up buried under so many motions that he'll be bankrupt before the arbitration even starts again.

- West points out that everything Charles has done today could be considered breaking the gag order—and it *will be considered such* if he doesn't back off and stop prying for info and disrupting this wake immediately.
- Charles retorts by pointing out that West has a much more immediate person to remove—Danny Harris—and the fact that she hasn't done so could easily be considered yet another example of negligence on the part of the hospital.
- West takes a deep breath and smiles. Fine. You finish up and get out of here and neither of us will mention the wake ever during the arbitration. We'll just consider today to have never existed.
- Charles will agree to that just fine—because he's already accomplishing his goals.

F7: As soon as Danny returns from 'outside' (the Side-Scene), Abigail moves to meet him.

G: The Final Secret

G1: Abigail intercepts Danny as he enters to ask him to please stick around until everyone else has left, as Victoria wishes to speak to him.

G2: Danny says, “Very well—but I’m happy to speak to her right now.” Abigail says no, just stay out of the way and quiet until it’s all over.

G3: Danny agrees again and moves to the table, grabbing a drink before heading to a seat. If anyone wishes to speak to him, he’ll express confusion about being asked to stay but will gladly answer any other questions asked of him.

- There is one exception—unless someone shows up and directly asks the question, Danny will not openly admit to being part of AA or Grant’s sponsor.
- If the question is asked of him directly, Danny will point out that the entire purpose of AA is for it to be ANONYMOUS. If that’s enough to stop people, so be it.
- If not, Danny will finally acknowledge that he and Grant met during a meeting and that he was Grant’s sponsor. As for what happened that night, all he’ll easily say is that alcoholism is a disease and one can never cure it. It can resurface any time.
- If pressed harder still, Danny will finally admit to what happened. But he will try, very hard, not to let Victoria hear any of this conversation—because he doesn’t want to traumatize her further.
- If someone tries to persuade him that telling her might be the better choice, he’ll consider it.
- No matter what, if someone speaks to him he’ll make sure they get the info that he’s supposed to stay until the rest of the guests are gone to meet Victoria alone.

G4: Charles finds Victoria after Danny returns and talks to her.

- He says, sincerely, that he’s sorry that the asshole that killed your husband has shown up. That’s pretty awful. Victoria agrees.
- Then he asks her if she’s had any thoughts about suing the hospital for all of the negligent stuff they do to their doctors and staff and patients. He’ll even bring up any particular info he gleaned from Leah and/or anyone else.
- His pushing will actually upset Victoria who will finally succumb to tears for the first time since the beginning of the show and she will flee to the guestroom (and change for her scene)
- Abigail will watch her go and then find the last person to get a scene and ask them to check on Victoria in a few minutes. She’ll then wait with them until it’s time to send them into the room. Side-Scene #6 starts.

G5: While that scene happens, Charlie and Danny move into a scene together.

- Charles tells Danny that he has a lot of guts coming to this place.
- Danny, conversely, suggests that he is there for positive reasons and he can see nothing positive about what Charles is doing.
- It becomes a competition as each tries to point out how much worse the other person being at the wake is.

- Eventually, Leah interferes by saying enough is enough.
- She tells them that they are both terrible people. One has done something terrible but at least acknowledges it.
- The other is acting like his wife is a goddamn saint and that he has to ‘find justice’ like it’s something that you get by being the loudest.
- But what neither of them has realized is that today isn’t about *them*. It’s about someone who’s dead and never coming back. And it’s about the woman who ran out of here sobbing, who will spend the rest of her life without the one man that she loved completely.
- Her outburst will finally shut both Charles and Dan down (and perhaps out her a little yet again, if people haven’t yet figured her story out).
- Leah will then suggest that both of them either behave themselves once and for all or she will grab Abigail and West and between the three of them, they’ll throw you two out on your fucking asses. (This is the only scene where Leah gets made enough to curse, btw.)
- Danny and Charles will both accede to her suggestion and go their separate ways in the room.

G6: Abigail and West will have a quiet scene that’s actually far darker than they should have here. So they’re going to try and get the conversation hushed in a corner. But they should also from an acting perspective try and draw audience over to hear what they shouldn’t.

- Abigail asks West whether she’s going to be at the next late-night event. (She’s talking about her poker games here.)
- West says it depends on whether or not she can get away from the arbitration workload for a few hours. Besides, the last time she played she lost almost her entire bankroll from that flush Judge Harper pulled off.
- Abigail snorts quietly. Harper just got lucky. You know it and I know it. But you, West, you’re a damn shark at the table. Cutthroat, brutal, sharp as hell and always hungry.
- West chuckles, pleased. You’re no slouch yourself, Abigail—when you’re paying attention. When you don’t let luck overwhelm your good sense. That’s what keeps you from being in the black.
- Well, I’ve had a recent infusion of capital, Abigail responds. Now’s the time for me to get a big game together.
- West agrees to think about it. Then she says she needs to speak with Leah and moves that way.

G7: Leah and West speak.

- West asks Leah why she was talking to Charles so much here. Leah says she was only trying to keep Charles away from Victoria.
- West asks whether Leah cares about the success of the hospital. Whether she thinks the staff and doctors are good. She’s clearly fishing so see if Leah is loyal or not.

- Leah both *is loyal* and *doesn't appreciate being checked* on it. So while she responds with the appropriate answers, she also gets more frustrated as the conversation goes on.
- Finally, she stops West and tells her that she's never going to say anything against Grant because of what he did for her. West asks what that is. Leah says that if she really needs to know, just look for the name Lisa in those computers. That should tell her all she needs.
- And with that, Leah walks away.

G8: Other conversations may need to be improvised if Victoria and her guest are not back yet. If they are, however, we move to the finale.

H: Return to the Present

H1: Victoria and her guest return to the room. She finally moves to the podium and asks for everyone's attention.

H2: She begins to speak about Grant.

- She talks about how they met nearly a decade earlier and how she knew he was the one after their first date.
- How she was the one to propose to him because she didn't want to wait any longer for their lives to begin—and she didn't want anyone else to snag such a great man.
- She'll talk about how he's always been her best friend and how they had a plan for everything they were going to do. How they were following it perfectly.
- She then says that now it's all gone. And she starts crying exactly as much as she should for this moment. She makes sure that she looks at everyone in the room as she tries to talk through her tears. She wants this moment to work.

H3: And then, just in the deepest moment of her tears, she begins to stutter. The other characters in the room do the same. They all begin to twitch and repeat and then suddenly lock up as the music cuts off abruptly.

H4: The lights flicker and the door to the stairway slams open. Emma is standing there. She calls for people to stop looking at the file immediately. To come back to the present!

H5: And she keeps calling as people leave the room and return down the stairs, which now has a blue screen of death projected along it.

H6: As they get back outside, Emma slams the door shut and continues to frantically type on her laptop. She explains that something has happened to Mike's remote feed. She's trying to get it back up.

H6: Then she says, "Got it!" and starts playing the last video file. She turns the computer to show it to everyone.

H7: The blue screen breaks apart and briefly you see shots of Mike being captured by Henry, but it's all distorted—frames out of order, unclear.

H8: Then the video stabilizes and it's Mike's room—but there is no Mike. Instead, there is only a message: You Will Let This Go. Or Mike dies.

H9: Then the video freezes on that message. Emma says that the feed's out for good. She then checks some more 'computer stuff' and realizes that whoever did this to Mike has also started a tracking sniffer that will lead to this IP if people don't get moving.

H10: So she says she's out and that everyone else had better split, too. She promises to use the contact data Mike gave her to reach out to people when she finds Mike. Because she's damn sure gonna try to rescue him and shut down these fuckers once and for all. And then she runs off, leaving the audience to scramble off as well.

THE END

Reactions to Secrets Coming Out:

In general, these are the secrets that can be found in the side-scenes:

Secret #1: Grant killed Martha Nixon because he was drunk.

Secret #2: Grant has paid for Leah's daughter's Lisa surgery and helped her get much of it donated.

Secret #3: Charles doesn't care about Martha at all—it's all and only about money for him. Everything else is a lie.

Secret #4: Charles never wanted to be cremated at all—and paid Abigail a bribe so that he could get into an unused mausoleum with Victoria knowing about it.

Secret #5: Danny was Grant's AA sponsor AND was drunk the night he hit Grant because he couldn't reach his sponsor and was upset about his ex-husband.

Secret #6: Grant isn't cremated at all. Victoria has his body—and she intends to do something to both Danny and Abigail (Ely and Justine...)

There are several options that the audience may take with these secrets—depending entirely on their own choices in the moment.

- The audience may tell them to each other and keep them from the cast.
 - This option is easy, because if we as characters never hear the secrets, we simply go through the story as written with no changes.
- They may ask the characters about their secret immediately, as soon as possible.
 - If that happens, it depends on the character as to how exactly they respond. Those whose secrets are not inherently evil (Leah, Danny) can respond by letting that information get some context for the audience, because they are likely not to understand it completely.
 - For West, the secret is one that he will attempt to shut down immediately. If the audience member seems to be leaking it or pushing it or whatever, West can take them to the side and tell them that if they continue spreading such rumors, West will make certain that the entirety of General Hospital's legal team will come down on the person's head. If they continue to spread it, just demand their name (we actually want them to spread it).
 - For Charles, the original reaction will be one of denial—that's a lie, I love my wife and the like. But Charles isn't really that good at keeping a straight face, so even the starting position will probably look a little false if asked directly. If so, the Charles can finally acknowledge the truth (but try and get whomever is asking him to shut up about it in exchange for a monetary reward once the arbitration is complete.)

- Abigail is unique in that she has a *few* secrets that can pop up. She can't acknowledge that Grant bribed her without the entire body thing coming out, too. And she can't really talk about Victoria bribing her without the entire thing coming out. So if she gets confronted with bribe, she will default to it being about him not wanting to be placed in the same area of the cemetery as his wife. That's the easiest piece of the secret to give away. Worse case scenario, add in the poker games at night. But she'll fight tooth and nail to pretend that the bribes and the body switching didn't happen.
- Victoria's secret is the last one given and she immediately goes to her speech afterwards. That *may* shut down any questioning—but the speech is a counter to what was just revealed, so audience members may want to interrupt her. In this case, Victoria will completely refute the lie forever and start begging Abigail and West to help quiet people down. If they won't shut up, they can start to talk to West and Abby and the stutter and shut down will happen there, instead. The one character who cannot be faced with telling the truth is Victoria.
- They may leak the secret to whomever they feel is the appropriate source.
 - In many ways, this may be the most likely thing to happen. Audiences are going to be very tempted to tattle on the person with whomever they think is most likely to want that info.
 - West's secret would help Charles. Leah's secret would help Victoria. Abigail's secret is something Victoria would hate to know. Charles' secret is valuable to West. Danny's secret is valuable to anyone but especially Charles, West and Victoria.
 - If the secrets are leaked to other people, the cast will have to respond on the fly to what is being told to them. We will continue to have the same conversation order as much as we possibly can, with the secrets being out changing the entire framework of conversations as necessary.
 - In other words—keep doing the order of the show the same. Let the secrets impact *how* you play those scenes.
 - The only alteration to this is if someone levies a secret right in the middle of something and makes it very big. If that's the case, the relevant characters will end up speaking to each other immediately. But this can only be determined during the show.
- Finally, they may do nothing at all—and just keep the secrets to themselves.
 - This is actually the 2nd most likely option. When people are given this much latitude as an audience and are then given secrets, they often decide to hold onto them as effectively 'special' presents that they have only for themselves.
 - They may (and likely will) tell the rest of the audience what they learned afterwards. But strangely, they often take the fact that they

have something special and hold it tight, considering it precious information.

- If this happens, it may play out exactly as if we just never get told the secrets. We simply play out the show as written.
- Or sometimes, people will hold onto the secrets until someone unleashes one and then the entire batch comes out.
- If that happens, we will have to respond by listening and reacting exactly as if it were happening for real. Because it is impossible to gauge exactly how this set of secrets could come out order-wise.
- Ultimately, the truly important thing to understand is that this performance will be different every single time we perform it.
 - Some audience will be excited and push to tell everything. Some will be reserved.
 - Our job for this production is to listen to the audience—really listen. Recognize that they are as much a part of the production as we are.
 - And then we will respond to their choices with the knowledge that the order of side-scenes will always remain the same (and is designed to lay out secrets in a specific way).
 - And we will have the knowledge that the end goal is always the same—to get to Victoria’s meltdown and then collapse of the video back to the present.
 - We will spend much of our rehearsal time getting to really understand these characters. And once we do, this becomes very, very doable.