

COMMUNITY

"SEMINAR IN BURIAL ARTS: PART I"

Episode # 501

Written by

Tyler Hilt

COLD OPEN

INT. STUDY ROOM - DAY

Jeff, Annie, Britta, Shirley, and Troy walk in to the study room.

As soon as they enter they see that a lit candle and wreath are on the table by Pierce's seat at other end of the table.

JEFF
What the hell --

Jeff's voice cracks.

JEFF (CONT'D)
...is that?

BRITTA
Just hit puberty much?

JEFF
No, actually, I'm getting over the flu.

Troy leans over to inspect the wreath and candle.

TROY
It looks like some sort of wreath and candle.

Jeff closes his eyes.

JEFF
Why is it there?

ABED
Maybe Pierce is trying to tell us something?

ANNIE
Do you think something happened to him?

ABED
Probably. Seeing as how he's been absent on and off for weeks I'm betting it doesn't end well.

SHIRLEY

Oh ho, I hope he's OK, otherwise he won't get to try my new cookies.

Britta eagerly leans forward.

BRITTA

If something did happen, I'll have to help you all through the trying times ahead.

Shirely pulls out a mini tray of cookies.

JEFF

This is ridiculous, we have no idea if anything happened.

A volley of horns sounds from outside the study room, and the group turns towards the doors.

ABED

Here we go.

JEFF

Here we go.

Six men in tuxedos and white gloves come in holding thick black envelopes. A seventh man stands by the door and unfurls a scroll as the others walk up to each member of the group and hand them an envelope.

ORATOR

Here ye members of the Pierce Hawthorne study group.

JEFF

Oh my god.

ORATOR (CONT'D)

I come bearing tidings of great sorrow. Piercinald Anastasia Hawthorne has passed from this realm after attending an awesome rave filled with young people in his post-graduation journeys. I present your golden tickets to his viewing and funeral, to commence on the morrow at 10:00 a.m.

JEFF

Please tell me nobody believes this?

The others pull out their tickets, which are in fact golden colored.

TROY
I can't believe he's gone.

JEFF
Neither can I Troy.

BRITTA
Jeff, don't displace your feelings.
This is a traumatic event, and I
understand that.

Britta leans over and pats Jeff's arm. He gives her a look.

ANNIE
Jeff, try to be more sensitive.
Pierce is...dead.

SHIRLEY
Oh Jesus, help me to not be
thankful that man is out of my life
forever.

ORATOR
Mr. Hawthorne has asked in his will
that you each prepare a statement
on your memories of him, after
which the division of his estate
will be announced at the reading of
his will.

JEFF
He wants us all to write a eulogy?
Nobody finds this suspicious...at
all...not even after last
Halloween?

The orator wraps up his scroll and leaves with the invitation
bearers as the group sits down.

ABED
So I guess we all know what we need
to do now.

BRITTA
Process this loss and express our
feelings?

ABED
No Britta, we need to work on
replacing Pierce so as to maintain
the status quo of our study group.

ANNIE
Abed, Pierce just died.

ABED

Exactly Annie, but without Pierce's archetype - even if he only does show up from time to time - we lose the delicate equilibrium of personalities. This isn't supposed to be a tragedy. I'll start setting up interviews right away. Troy, do you still have your Inspector Spacetime voice disguiser?

Troy tilts his head and chuckles, then pulls it out of his pocket and speaks through it.

TROY

Of course, how else would I order pizza and trick the pizza guy who always wants to talk about if anyone else is in the apartment with me?

ABED

Excellent, I'll be back as fast as I can. Now off the top of my head a select few candidates come to mind. Let's see what I can dig up.

Abed gets up to go.

JEFF

Abed, let me spell it out for you. Pierce is not dead. We are not going to this sham funeral, and you're not going to get a new member of the study group.

BRITTA

Denial can be such an ugly thing.

Annie nods her head.

SHIRLEY

Don't forget you can always turn to Christ in this time of need.

BRITTA

Retreating to your archaic worship practices won't solve your inner trauma.

SHIRLEY

I'll show you trauma girl.

ABED

It's happening already.

He leaves the room as Chang walks in.

CHANG

Whoa, what's with the candle and black envelopes. Are you all trying out some new Eyes Wide Shut study session?

They all look at him.

CHANG (CONT'D)

No? I was told that was a very popular reference.

Beat.

TROY

Does anybody know where the morrow is?

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE**INT. STUDY ROOM - DAY**

Dean Pelton walks into the room and stands by Chang.

DEAN PELTON
Hello study group.

He sees them standing with their envelopes.

DEAN PELTON (CONT'D)
I see you've heard the shocking news that Greendale Alum Pierce Hawthorne is recently deceased.

CHANG
What, Pierce is dead? Why didn't I get an envelope.

JEFF
Don't worry, it's not real.

CHANG
What's not real?

He steps over to Jeff and puts his hand on Jeff's chest.

DEAN PELTON
It's hard to deal with I know, but we have to stay close now more than ever.

JEFF
Nope.

Jeff pushes his chair back and stands up.

JEFF (CONT'D)
You're all going to see that this is just some stunt Pierce is pulling for attention because he's a sick, lonely old man.

He starts to walk off.

ANNIE
Jeff, where are you going?

BRITTA
He's in denial Annie, it's called
cognitive resonance.

JEFF (ANGRY)
That's not--

Jeff's voice cracks again - he tries to speak.

JEFF (CONT'D)
That's--

His voice goes out and he can't speak. He slams his fist on
the table.

BRITTA
And now the angry train pulls in to
town.

DEAN PELTON
Toot toot!

He makes a whistle pulling motion - but nobody responds.

DEAN PELTON (CONT'D)
OK well I'll just leave you all to
grieve.

Dean Pelton walks out.

SHIRLEY
Jeffrey, have you ever considered
that Pierce might actually
have...passed on? I didn't always
like him, but I won't spit on a
man's memory, even if he is likely
roasting forever in eternal
damnation.

Jeff takes his time and speaks quietly.

JEFF
Shirley, that's impossible. I'll
bet my life on it.

BRITTA (KNOWING)
You can't bargain your way out of
this.

JEFF
You're all going to feel really
stupid when you realize this is a
hoax.

Jeff walks out.

TROY

I wonder what Pierce wants us to say - I mean that is a lot of eulogies for a dead guy. He won't be able to hear it.

ANNIE

(squeamish)

Troy, we have to respect the wishes of those who are...gone. I for one don't want to show up unprepared, so I'm going back to the apartment to start outlining what I'm going to say.

TROY

Good idea - I'd come but I feel like Abed is going to want me to stick around and help.

SHIRLEY

That boy sure resorts to crazy in a time of stress.

Britta stands up.

BRITTA

We are all stressed - we just have to stick together and be there for each other.

Nobody says anything.

ABED (O.S.)

That's Britta, she's the comic relief who is always coming to sudden realizations.

Everybody looks over to the other entrance of the study room, where Abed is standing flanked by 4 older men and one older and butch woman, including Leonard.

BRITTA

Hey!

Abed then points to Annie, Shirley, and Troy in clockwise rotation.

ABED

Control freak --

ANNIE

Uh!

ABED

Voice of reason with rage issues --

SHIRLEY

Boy don't test me--

ABED

Awesome room mate sidekick.

TROY

You said it.

GERALD, one of the old men, speaks up.

GERALD

And that Asian guy?

ABED

Oh that's Chang. He used to be an arch enemy but then he went insane and got amnesia.

CHANG

He's right. I just want to be invited. I swear I'll remember the password for the orgy.

Annie and Britta's eyes both go wide. One of the other old men, WALTER, chimes in.

WALTER

And what does that make you?

ABED

Commentator.

GERALD

And you want us to do what exactly?

ABED

You're replacing Pierce - the curmudgeonly old man who says inappropriate things, both alienating yourself from the group while also providing black humor. You're the nexus of hate that the group needs to vent properly, preventing an implosion of the group.

The old men nod their heads.

LEONARD

Too lame for me.

Leonard totters away.

ABED

As Jeff would say - our absent
defacto leader - Screw you Leonard!

Abed looks to the old men and woman.

ABED (CONT'D)

Alright, let's begin the interview
process.

Abed leads them over to the couches and sits them down.

ANNIE

I'll see you guys tomorrow.

Annie walks out.

SHIRLEY (TO BRITTA)

If you find yourself wondering what
to say -- just realize those with
Christ on our side aren't.

Shirley gathers her things and leaves as well. Britta and
Troy share a look, before Troy points towards Abed and walks
over to them.

BRITTA

I'll show you - I'm going to help
you all with my very worthwhile
degree.

Britta grabs her bag and storms out of the room.

CHANG

So no Eyes Wide Shut?

Abed and Troy just look at Chang, who turns and leaves.

ABED

Now to remain impartial - I want
you all to give me your thoughts on
women and gender roles, gay people,
and minorities through this voice
disguiser.

Abed hands it to the first man, KEN, and then puts on a fake
pair of glasses and pulls out a yellow legal pad before
turning his back.

ABED (CONT'D)

Troy - please keep an eye on how they act during their statements.

TROY

Aye aye.

Troy also pulls out a fake pair of glasses too and puts them on before staring intently at Ken who's holding the voice disguiser.

KEN

Well I suppose I think women can do whatever they want --

Troy gives a low whistle while Abed writes frantically. The man stops.

TROY

No no, please continue.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNIE/TROY/ABED'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Annie is sitting at her desk writing. She has a series of pens laid out in different colors and bullet points that read: "Why I'll miss Pierce," and "What I liked about Pierce." Neither has anything written after them.

She frowns and writes: "Good memories of Pierce." Beat. Nothing comes to her. She pulls out her phone and texts Jeff.

ANNIE (VIA TEXT)

So, how's your eulogy coming?

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT - CONT.

He picks up his phone and reads the message.

JEFF (VIA TEXT)

Please tell me you're not wasting time on that?

ANNIE (VIA TEXT)

Jeff you're going to feel foolish when you have nothing to say.

JEFF (VIA TEXT)

What good is there to say? He was a terrible person and I don't miss him.

INT. ANNIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Annie stands away from the desk and narrates her text.

ANNIE

Well it's our job to find the best
in people. Wouldn't you want people
to be at your funeral to say
something nice about you?

Jeff doesn't respond - Annie stomps her foot in expectation.

JEFF (VIA TEXT)

We die alone Annie - it doesn't
matter what someone says.

Annie blows up and throws her phone out the window - somebody
yells after being hit.

ANNIE

Sorry!

She goes back over to her desk and starts writing.

ANNIE (CONT'D)

I'll show you who dies alone Jeff.

INT. BRITTA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Britta also sits writing something down - but we see it's not
last words for Pierce's funeral.

BRITTA (TO HERSELF)

So Jeff is clearly going through
the five stages of grief. Shirley
is coping through the delusion of
religion. Annie is exerting control
over what she can to deal with the
fear of her own mortality. Troy and
Abed -- are being Troy and Abed.
And I...

Britta stops writing, dwelling on this.

BRITTA (CONT'D)

I am dealing with this very
rationally, we all have to deal
with death in our lives. It's just
a part of life. And I --

Britta stops, shaken.

BRITTA (CONT'D)
 I need to think about everyone
 else, they need me more than I
 need..me.

Britta smiles and gets up from her desk.

INT. SHIRLEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Shirley sits at her kitchen table with a Bible, praying.

SHIRLEY
 Oh Lord, help me find the virtue of
 this
 (angry)
 heathen...
 (saccharine)
 I mean wayward lamb.

She picks up her notepad.

SHIRLEY (TO HERSELF) (CONT'D)
 Pierce was...a man. He inherited a
 business. He said terrible things
 and was inconsiderate of others.
 But he was my--
 (with difficulty)
 friend, and I will mourn his loss.

Shirley sits back, almost sweating.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
 Forgive me this small lie Lord. And
 if you see fit, welcome him,
 unclean though he is, into your
 arms.

Shirley leans forward to keep at it.

INT. STUDY ROOM - DAY

Troy and Abed are sitting with the WALTER, GERALD, and
 DOLORES. Behind the couch a sheet has been erected hiding the
 other half of the study room.

ABED
 Dolores, glad to see you've made it
 this far. Your comments on woman
 being weak and cooking being for
 pansies were very insightful.

Dolores merely grunts and scowls.

ABED (CONT'D)

But now we're going to through you
a bit of a curve ball. Troy, if you
would.

Troy walks over and pulls down the curtain, revealing an
obstacle courses set up with plastic cups and circles on the
floor.

DOLORES

What are we supposed to do?

ABED

Very good question. You hold an egg
in a spoon with a cup of water on
your head and make a lap past the
far end while hopping on one leg,
then come back walking backwards
rubbing your stomach. Lady and
gentleman, take your marks.

The three walk over and pick up a spoon with an egg and place
a cup of water on their heads.

TROY

Go!!

They race forward holding an egg on a teaspoon and a cup of
water on their head before rounding a corner hopping in the
circles on one leg.

WALTER

Why are we doing this again?

ABED

That's for us to know and you to
question.

Troy stands on the sideline coaching them on.

GERALD

And if I pass I'll get to be a part
of the group?

Troy and Abed share a smile. Walter starts to fumble his egg,
but Dolores steadies him before they get to the hopping.

ABED

Disqualified for showing kindness
to another human being without
gain!

Dolores stops, confused, then crushes her egg in her hand and walks out.

Walter and Gerald round the corner and start walking backwards, but Walter wobbles again and his egg drops to the floor and splatters. The cup of water on his head spills to his shirt. Gerald gets to the finish line.

WALTER

Whatever - you're all crazy.

Walter storms out while Troy and Abed walk up to Gerald.

TROY

You showed great heart out there kid.

GERALD

I'm 68 years old.

Troy leans his head back and laughs.

TROY

Exactly Ger.

Abed takes off his faux-glasses and steps up.

ABED

Congratulations on making it past this first phase. Tomorrow we'll give you a test run with the other members of the study group.

GERALD

What time is that? I always walk at the mall in the morning.

Troy and Abed look at each other.

ABED

No problem, it's in the afternoon.

Gerald smiles and walks out of the study room.

TROY (TO ABED)

So, you think he has what it takes?

ABED

Time will tell Troy. We can only hope so - for all our sakes.

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

He's watching TV, trying to focus. A commercial comes on - it's an ad for a local funeral home hosted by a greasy guy in a toupee and cheap suit.

JEFF (CRACKED VOICE)

Come on.

SPOKESPERSON

Have you recently lost a friend or loved one? Don't know what to do now that they're gone?

Jeff raises the remote to change the channel.

SPOKESPERSON (CONT'D)

We can help you through this time of need.

Something stops Jeff from switching channels.

SPOKESPERSON (CONT'D)

We handle all the proceedings, from caskets, viewings, funerals, and gravestones. Nothing is too big or too small.

Jeff becomes transfixed with the TV.

SPOKESPERSON (CONT'D)

Not sure what to put on the grave? We have a collection of pre-made epitaphs to suit every need. Because you want to honor their memory - not worry about the fine print.

Jeff turns off the TV. The silence pushes in on him. He pulls out a pen and piece of paper.

JEFF (HOARSE)

Just in case.

He starts writing.

JEFF (V.O. AND IN WRITING) (CONT'D)

Pierce Hawthorne was...

Beat. Jeff thinks on his next word.

JEFF (CONT'D)

...someone who often said the wrong thing.

(MORE)

JEFF (CONT'D)

But sometimes he also said the perfect thing. And for when he showed that side, I was glad to know him.

Jeff keeps writing.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY**

The group walks into a funeral home filled with people, many of them students from Greendale. Also we see the Dean, Pierce's half brother Gilbert, and his bevy of former wives.

BRITTA

Quite the turnout - I didn't think
Pierce had so many friends.

Jeff quickly scrawls something on a pad of paper. We see "For the \$".

ABED

And now Jeff has lost his voice -
its spreading.

Jeff shoots Abed a look as Annie reads his note. Annie reads it.

ANNIE

Jeff, they're here because they
cared about him.

LEONARD (O.S.)

Let's get going so we can read the
will - death money is the best
kind. They can't tell you what to
do with it.

Annie frowns at Leonard as Dean Pelton walks up to them.

DEAN PELTON

Hello everyone, somber day I know.

BRITTA

Shouldn't you be planning some
crude fund raising stunt to profit
off of Pierce's death?

DEAN PELTON

Britta I am shocked and
appalled...that I hadn't thought of
that. Do you think there's still
time to plan a sort of Greendale
dance and get donations for a
Pierce memorial that
(trailing off)
never materializes?

They all shoot daggers at the Dean, who awkwardly laughs before slinking off. The group sees Gilbert and they all walk up.

ANNIE

Gilbert, I'm surprised to see you after last Halloween.

GUS

As am I. But he was family after all. I've come to pay my respects.

Jeff looks like he's going pop a blood vessel.

GILBERT

Is he all right?

ANNIE

Oh don't worry about him.
(Under her breath).
He just thinks Pierce is faking and has come to expose this as a sham.

Gilbert doesn't answer. Beat.

GILBERT

Right, well it was nice to see you again.

The group reaches the chairs leading to the coffin at the other end of the room. A couple step away and they all head towards it.

SHIRLEY

(worried)
Ohhh - open casket!?

BRITTA

Is that a problem? I thought God would have prepared you.

SHIRLEY

The Good Lord intends for the deceased to be put in the ground - not paraded around like a sussed up ghoul of the damned.

They reach the casket and we see Pierce - laying with his arms over his waist - in his casket. Apparently quite dead. Troy steps up and puts in what looks like a grenade.

TROY (OFF THEIR LOOKS)
 He always told me he wanted to
 scare away any grave robbers - now
 he can.

ANNIE
 Wow, he really is---

SHIRLEY
 Dead.

Annie puts her hand on Jeff's shoulder, followed by Britta and Shirley.

BRITTA
 Jeff I--

Beat.

BRITTA (CONT'D)
 How are you feeling? Do you need
 something

Jeff turns to look at Britta and nods.

BRITTA (CONT'D)
 What is it?

Jeff turns back to Pierce and slaps him hard across the face. Troy's eyes go wide and everyone recoils in horror.

DEAN PELTON
 (under his breath)
 Oh no, Jeffrey's lost his mind. And
 he does it so sexily.

JEFF (HOARSE)
 Faker...

SHIRLEY
 Jeffrey!

Jeff slaps Pierce again - harder.

ANNIE
 Jeff stop it!

Jeff picks up Pierce by the lapels and starts shaking him violently. Pierce's jaw falls open and his eyes half-open.

SHIRLEY
 Ahh!

BRITTA

Jeff you're acting crazy!

The group grabs on to Jeff and starts to pull him back.

JEFF

No!!

They all crash to the ground away from the casket. The room has gone silent. Jeff tries to speak but can't. He sees everyone staring at him, stands up, and storms out. Shirley starts to go after him.

ANNIE

No Shirley, wait. We need to let him sort this out.

Troy steps up to the coffin and repositions Pierce. He then grabs Pierce's hand and goes through an intricate handshake ending in the signature chest-pat hand-slap he usually does with Abed. Annie has started to slowly weep and Britta consoles her.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jeff stands pacing outside of the funeral home. He can't talk, but settles for picking up one of the fake plants and beating it against the wall. When he can't lift it any more he crumples to the ground.

Shirley slowly walks outside.

SHIRLEY

Jeffrey, are you all right?

Jeff makes eye contact with Shirley before welling up and turning away. He takes out his notepad and scribbles a message.

JEFF (VIA PAD)

Come to talk about how God can help me?

Shirley smiles and takes her head.

SHIRLEY

No Jeffrey, I'm not here to talk about God. I don't think there's anything I could say right now, and I don't want to.

Jeff writes again.

JEFF (VIA PAD)
Mad at what I did?

SHIRLEY
Jeff what you did was pretty awful -
that old bag of bones is going to
haunt my dreams.

Shirley closes her eyes then turns back to Jeff.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
But I think people do all sorts of
things when their upset. I know
Pierce meant something to you, even
if it's hard to admit. So I'm just
going to sit here and let you know
that it's going to be tough, but
we'll get through this.

Shirley grabs Jeff's hand and smiles. Jeff returns her grasp
and smiles back. Over their shoulders we see Abed watching
from the doorway, who heads back inside.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - CONT.

Abed walks back up to Troy.

TROY
Hey Abed. How's Jeff doing?

ABED
Shirley is talking to him. Troy -
have you noticed anything different
about everyone?

TROY
How do you mean?

ABED
I'm not sure, it's just that now
that Pierce is gone - everyone
seems to be --

The lights go up and down

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (O.S.)
If everyone will please take their
seats.

They look towards him.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
We're going to start the service.

TROY
I'll get Shirley and Jeff.

Troy walks off.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - CONT.

Jeff lifts his head from Shirley's shoulder. He writes her a message.

JEFF (VIA PAD)
Thanks.

SHIRLEY
You're welcome Jeffrey.

Troy walks up.

TROY
(serious)
They're starting in there.

They all head inside.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - CONTINUOUS

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
We are here today to mourn the loss of one Pierce Hawthorne. He left us deliberate instructions on how events should proceed so will--

He pulls out a piece of paper.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Shirley Bennett please come up with her prepared statement?

Shirley gets up and walks towards the Director. She sees the casket, where Pierce has been repositioned, and--

FUNERAL GUEST (O.S.)
Whaaaaaa!!!

A guest lets loose what sounds like a demonic curse and wheeze - causing Shirley to startle and close her eyes and clutch her fists. Everyone looks over to the guest who "coughed."

FUNERAL GUEST (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
(under his breath)
What a freak show.

Shirley gets her bearings and turns to the crowd.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Actually if you could stand here
and try not to move.

He moves Shirley a little farther over.

SHIRLEY
What for?

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
(incredulous)
He asked that this be recorded and
the tape be placed with his body.

The Funeral Director steps away. Shirley wrings her hands and looks to the crowd.

SHIRLEY
Hello everyone - my name is
Shirley. I knew Pierce from school -
- Greendale. We were business
partners, in a nice little sandwich
shop.

She looks over to the Funeral Director who makes a circular motion in front of his chest - intimating to keep going.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
So I suppose I'll read what I have
prepared, like Pierce wanted.

Shirley takes out a piece of paper and puts on her reading glasses. She reads over what she has and puts the paper back down.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Pierce was a pretty terrible
person.

The crowd gasps.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
But he was also my friend. Yes, he
got on my nerves, but he was always
honest about who he was. And that's
something we could all take after.

She looks back to his body.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
I think I'll actually miss him. I
hope you're in a better place.

Shirley folds up her paper and heads back to the others.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Ok. Well this really is...weird.
Troy Barnes?

In slow motion we see the following montage of people reading snippets of their Eulogies:

- A.) Britta
 - B.) Leonard
 - C.) Dean Pelton
 - D.) Starburns
 - E.) Magnitude - who makes a pop pop motion with his hands and mouth
 - F.) Abed
 - F.) Troy
- End Montage

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
Alright, that covers just about
everyone. It looks like we have one
more name on the list. Jeff Winger?

Jeff looks at the Funeral Director and then Shirley, who nods. He gets up and heads towards the coffin.

Abed looks over his shoulder to see Gerald walk in. Gerald smiles and waves at Abed - who gets out of his seat and goes back to him.

GERALD
So, I'm here. When do you want me
to meet the group?

ABED
Change of plans. I'm not sure
replacing Pierce is what's best for
the group.

GERALD
What do you mean - you told me--

ABED

I know what I told you. But I don't think this group needs a new Pierce. I was so worried about maintaining the status quo and how we might be hurt from losing Pierce - that I never thought about how we might actually be better off.

GERALD

Well aren't you just hot for the group. Don't think I can't see what's going on - you're threatened by me.

ABED

Wow, you could have been great. But all I can offer you is the free food after the service.

GERALD

Sign me up.

Gerald sits in an empty seat towards the back. Abed sits back down as Jeff starts to speak.

JEFF

(quietly, with difficulty)
 You'll have to excuse my voice - I'm just starting to get it back. I'm usually given to long speeches - but for once I've had to sit back and hear what everyone else has had to say. It's made me realize how I always pretend like I don't care - when the truth is, I'm so emotionally stunted that I act disinterested so I don't get hurt.

Jeff looks over to the study group.

JEFF (CONT'D)

So this time I'm not going to give a big speech. I'm going to say goodbye. Pierce, wherever you are, I hope you're in a better place. In a very small way, you were like a father to me.

Jeff looks back to Pierce.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You were always a--

The ceiling above Jeff gives a loud moan and a crack appears. Everyone looks up before backing away from it. The ceiling cracks again and--

Pierce comes crashing out of the ceiling and lands on top of his cadaver doppelgänger.

PIERCE

Ahhh!

Everyone stares at Pierce, who slowly gets off of the casket and dusts himself off.

JEFF

I knew it!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY**

Pierce stands at the foot of his coffin, and slowly looks around the room.

ANNIE

Pierce?! You're alive? I can't believe you.

SHIRLEY (SINISTER)

Lord forgive what I might do to this man.

ABED

That's interesting. I guess I should have seen that coming.

TROY

Pierce - if you're you - why didn't you tell us you had a twin?

Troy points to the coffin.

PIERCE

That's not my twin.

Pierce looks back at his doppelganger.

PIERCE (CONT'D)

What? A guy can't fake his own death with an elaborate mannequin to see who would show up to his own funeral?!

BRITTA

Pierce even for you this is pretty low.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

That's it for me.

The funeral director walks out of the room and Gilbert stands up as well.

GILBERT

I'm disappointed in you Pierce. I thought you had out grown this.

Gilbert leaves.

JEFF

I've been saving my strength for this moment. And oh my God does it feel good - sorry Shirley - but damn you Pierce.

SHIRLEY

The Lord is with you right now Jeffrey - don't stop.

JEFF

I tried to tell them that you were faking it. Because I knew deep down that you couldn't be dead. You're too much of a blood sucking parasite to let us off this easy. You just can't get over the fact that people are happy without you. Deep down you know that nobody likes you.

PIERCE

Sure Jeff - so what are all these people doing here?

ANNIE

We came to show our respect Pierce. And then you go and do something like this. I had this eulogy printed on special card stock just for this.

JEFF

Special card stock. You *monster*.

Jeff leers at Pierce.

JEFF (CONT'D)

This is it Pierce - you've finally done it. You've alienated everyone who even remotely cared about you.

PIERCE

Come on Jeff - you always say that.

JEFF

Not this time. This time you're on your own, for good.

ANNIE

Pierce, why would you do this? Why didn't you just come back and say hello?

PIERCE

Why not? You think I didn't know
how happy you were without me now
that I was gone?

BRITTA

What are you talking about?

PIERCE

I had someone watching you.

INT. - STUDY ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

A man in his 40s wearing all black with black streaks on his face, known as AGENT, holds a telephoto lensed camera and takes pictures of the study group. It looks like he's focusing through a plate of glass as he hones in on each of their smiling faces and gets a picture.

The study group slowly stops talking as they hear the persistent noise of a shutter closing. They look back towards the doors and see the Agent is standing a few feet from them.

JEFF

What are you doing?

AGENT

Just taking some pictures. School newspaper.

JEFF

We have a school newspaper?

AGENT

Just started up. I wanted to get some lifestyle pictures of students on campus.

JEFF

And why are you dressed like you're on a covert op?

AGENT

That's what I'm all about. You know, don't disturb the natural habitat and all that.

JEFF

The wildlife?

AGENT

I got my start in wildlife photography.

The group stares at the Agent. Beat.

AGENT (CONT'D)

Well, look forward to seeing these.

He walks off.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

PIERCE

After I saw the pictures and heard what Dennis had to say, I knew I couldn't come to you. So I thought of a way to make you come to me.

TROY

So you hid in the rafters and had us all bare our hearts? I cried up there man.

Troy turns his head in shame.

PIERCE

To be honest that was pretty gay. But also - I got quite the turnout didn't I?

LEONARD

So are you going to be dividing up a will or not?

PIERCE

Get lost freeloader!

Pretty much everyone immediately filters out.

PIERCE (CONT'D)

Hey, where are you all going? You're just going to come and eat my food with your hand out for my money and then leave?

Annie rushes towards Pierce but Jeff stops her with one hand.

JEFF

No Annie, it's not worth it.

Jeff pulls Annie away, and they head down the aisle with the rest of the study group.

PIERCE

You guys, come on. You were all blasting the water works just a minute ago!

BRITTA

You need serious help Pierce. And if that's coming from me - you know it's bad.

SHIRLEY

I hope I have it in me to pray for you Pierce.

TROY

Hold on.

Troy steps back towards Pierce.

TROY (CONT'D)

We lived together. You were my friend Pierce. Were.

Beat.

PIERCE

Troy, you did the special handshake with me - I saw it.

Troy reaches his hand out as though to offer it up. Pierce extends his hand as well but Troy raises his hand up, leaving Pierce hanging.

TROY

Unshake.

Troy and the others start to walk out of the room, and the Dean pulls out his cell phone.

DEAN PELTON

(aside)

I better tell the printers to hold off on any specific message on the banners.

PIERCE

You guys, please. Come on.

Jeff turns back for one last word. Pierce looks like he could be crying.

JEFF

You've really out done yourself Pierce. Now face it like a man.

The ceiling above Pierce gives out another moan, and Pierce looks up. Another piece of ceiling falls down on the foot of the coffin and stands it up, sending Pierce's double flying. Faux Pierce knocks Pierce to the ground just as the Funeral Guest from before let's out his wheeze again.

FUNERAL GUEST

Whaaaaaaaaaa!!

PIERCE

Ahhhhh!

The Pierces land with a thud and stop moving. Everyone waits for the real Pierce to get up.

JEFF

Nobody believes you - how many times have you pulled the old man is dying from a heart attack?

Abed looks from Pierce to the cadaver.

BRITTA

Holy crap Pierce. Just get up.

The Funeral Director rushes back out.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Oh come on I--

He sees the bodies on the ground.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

What the?

He steps up to the bodies and rolls the mannequin over. He puts his fingers to Pierce's neck.

ABED

He killed...himself. So things really can get tragic. But if the group was better off without him, then would it be better off without me, or all of us for that matter?

JEFF

Now's not the time to go Meta Abed. Trust me.

The funeral director leans over the real Pierce's motionless body.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

He's dead! But really dead...this
time.

A gasp runs through the crowd. The group all share looks, and
Jeff stares at the body. Emotions threaten to overwhelm.

END OF SHOW