

After dinner, a lakeside walk

22 March 2021

Vocabulary

Drug: a medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body.

Fentanyl: A synthetic pharmaceutical drug, fentanyl is an opioid pain reliever more than 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine. It is used to relieve severe pain, such as after surgery or during cancer treatment.

Those ingesting fentanyl at unprescribed levels experience an intense euphoria and sense of relaxation similar to a heroin "high." Abuse of fentanyl can depress the respiratory system to the point of failure, leading to fatal overdose.

Actiq: A fentanyl brand name. Comes as a lozenge on a plastic stick administered under the tongue like a lollipop.

Abstral: A quick-dissolve tablet version of fentanyl and is placed under the tongue for immediate relief.

Check (US): Restaurant bill (UK: bill)

Oncology: Branch of medicine that deals with the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.

Emaciated: Very thin and feeble especially from lack of nutrition or illness

Glistening: Shining with a sparkling light.

After a pregnant pause Halle continued. "Terry, I don't want to sugarcoat this, but....."

She continued: "I tell you what, why don't we have a nice walk on the beach next to Lake Michigan?"

Terry was surprised when she suddenly got up from the table, turned and started walking purposefully towards the exit.

Terry got the check, paid by credit card and tried to catch up with Halle.

Aside from Halle's emotional outburst and potential medical issues, Terry also noticed that Halle's slender body had become thinner, even emaciated. She was wearing more makeup than he was used to. He told himself that it was probably because she was looking forward to their special dinner together.

The couple left the John Hancock tower and took a short walk to the beach by Lake Michigan. There was a mild breeze and it was a lovely evening. They could see several small boat lights glistening in the distance.

"So, Halle, what were you going to tell me?" Terry asked in a concerned tone of voice.

"Well I had been so worried and scared about what might be wrong with me. I have been working with the Oncology department and have seen so many sad cases. I guess I, sort of, mentally transferred their symptoms on to myself, if that makes sense. That with my exhaustion and the pressure of the job. Plus I missed you of course!"

Terry smiled. "So what did the specialist tell you?"

"He said that there is absolutely nothing wrong with me at all! I couldn't believe it. I cried for joy. He said that the pain would soon subside with a few paracetamols."

Terry held Halle tightly in his arms and they both smiled. While they were hugging Terry accidentally caught a glimpse of the inside of Halle's handbag. He saw two boxes, one with *Actiq* and the other with *Abstral* printed on the sides. The names didn't mean anything to him and he didn't give it another thought.

"One of the good things about being a doctor is that I can access some really good pain medicines! I feel euphoric. I like you so much, Terry, let's run away together!"

Terry and Halle laughed and then held hands as they continued their walk.

See <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/medical-professionals/substance-abuse-among-doctors-key-statistics>

Questions for discussion

1. What might be going on with Halle?
2. Do you think that the changes in her behaviour, as described, would be enough to cause Terry to be suspicious?
3. How could hospital doctors obtain opioid type drugs for their own use?
4. What could the negative consequences be for a doctor addicted to medicines such as fentanyl? What could the negative consequences be for the doctor's patients?
5. If you had a good friend who was a doctor and admitted to abusing prescription medicines, what would you do?

The pronunciation challenge

I take it you already know
of tough and bough and cough and dough.
Others may stumble, but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, lough and through.
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps.

Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.
And dead – it's said like bed, not bead.
For goodness sake, don't call it deed!
Watch out for meat and great and threat.
They rhyme with suite and straight and debt.

A moth is not a moth in mother,
Nor both in bother, broth in brother,
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for pear and bear.
And then there's dose and rose and lose
Just look them up – and goose and choose.

And cork and work and card and ward.
And font and front and word and sword.
And do and go, then thwart and cart.
Come, come I've hardly made a start.

A dreadful language? Man alive,
I'd mastered it when I was five!

Attributed to T S Watt, 1954

	janvier	fevrier	mars
Intermédiaire / avancé lundi	11, 18, 25	1, 8	1, 8, 15, 22, 29