



SIR RAH ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

# MR. WENDELL

**SERIES BIBLE**

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Half-Hour Single-Camera Ensemble Dramedy  
Created and Written by Wendell Harris

*A second-chance factory, and a man trying to keep the doors open.*

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*A note on this draft. Sections 01 through 07 are drawn directly from the series treatment and the completed reading drafts. Sections 08 and 12 are deliberately incomplete: they mark where the creator's decisions are still required, and identify the threads already planted that could carry them. Nothing in those sections invents plot.*





01

# The Show

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*“In a high-end Los Angeles sober-living house, a recovering alcoholic turned mentor tries to keep a fragile community together as privilege, street wisdom, ego and relapse temptations collide. One chore chart at a time.”*

| Element          | Detail                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Format           | Half-hour, single-camera, character-driven comedy with grounded emotional stakes.                                                                                                   |
| Structure        | Ensemble cast with interwoven A, B and C stories.                                                                                                                                   |
| Primary location | An upscale sober-living house, Hancock Park and Westside-adjacent Los Angeles.                                                                                                      |
| Tone             | Warm, sharp and human. Prestige-comedy heart with a street-smart edge. Big laughs from personality clashes, plus honest moments where sobriety is not a punchline. It is the fight. |
| Season order     | Ten episodes.                                                                                                                                                                       |

**The pitch in one breath.** Recovery television without the after-school special. A show that earns Ted Lasso level warmth from a subject most series are afraid to make funny, and then refuses to let the joke be the whole answer.





## 02

# The World of the House

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The house runs like a small society: meetings, tests, chores, check-ins and rules. Everyone is here because the outside world got too loud. Inside the house, the personalities are louder.

It does not look like recovery. Marble, a jacuzzi tub, an open multi-head shower, designer closets, a super king bed in the master suite. And a chore chart on the wall. That contrast is the engine of the comedy and the promise of the show at the same time: this is not an institution, it is a home with rules, and the rules are what everyone resents and needs.

## THE RHYTHMS

- **Morning.** Breakfast at eight, chores at nine. The chore board in the front hall is where authority is made visible and contested.
- **Group.** The Group Room, chairs in a circle, one chair at the head. Who sits where matters. In Episode 105 Mr. Wendell deliberately does not take the head chair, and the whole house registers it.
- **Coffee and Thoughts.** The older residents hold their own informal circle in the living room. No clipboard, no agenda. It is the house's unofficial second government.
- **Intake and testing.** Mei Lin runs it. Calm, procedural, and the moment where the outside world gets measured.
- **The staff office.** Where the owners call, where the difficult conversations happen, and where Mr. Wendell is least able to perform.

*Ten distinct sets live inside this one house: master suite, balcony, kitchen, front hall, staff office, garage, upstairs hallway, living room, dining room, group room. The show almost never leaves.*





03

# Mr. Wendell

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**Mr. Wendell is not a saint.** He is a man in recovery leading other men in recovery. His leadership style is old school: direct, funny, sometimes blunt. He believes responsibility builds community, and community keeps you sober.

Fifties. Recovering alcoholic. Divorced father of four adult sons. He rebuilt a life that now depends on other people believing he has it together, which is exactly the pressure the series applies to him.

## HIS CENTRAL CONTRADICTION

He tells the house that secrecy feeds relapse, and then keeps his own. He tells them to stay in the room, and then leaves. Episode 105 puts that contradiction on the table explicitly: Arthur tells him *you cannot teach people to stay in the room and then leave yours*, and it lands because it is true.

## HOW HE TALKS

Deflection through humor, then sudden directness. He answers a sincere question with a joke, and answers a joke with something devastating. When Shannon asks if he is alright, his answer is *I'm standing*, which is both true and an evasion, and the room knows it.

## WHAT HE WANTS AND WHAT HE FEARS

- **Wants:** for the people in his house to make it, and for his sons to believe the man they know now is the real one.
- **Fears:** not the past itself, but losing the authority he built after it. Arthur names this in Episode 105 and it is arguably the thesis of the character.





## 04

# The Season Engine

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**Every episode forces the house to choose: comfort or growth.** That is the engine, and it scales indefinitely because the house keeps taking in new people and every resident has further to fall or climb.

- Mr. Wendell and Reggie balance structure with compassion while managing sponsors, owners, liability and personalities.
- Residents compete for status, space and attention, and also become each other's safety net. Both at once, usually in the same scene.
- Relapse pressure lives in the background. The house can laugh today and fall apart tomorrow.
- The outside world arrives as an intrusion rather than a destination: a visit, a phone call, a video, an offer, a parent. The show stays in the house and lets the world come to it.

**The reliable episode shape.** A small domestic trigger (a chore, a roommate, a visitor, a notification) escalates into a status fight, which exposes something nobody wanted exposed, which forces one person to tell the truth in front of the group. The comedy runs wide and the truth lands close.





05

# The Ensemble

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Twelve series regulars. Ages twenty to late seventies, Beverly Hills to South Central. The range is deliberate and it is the show's most distinctive asset.

## MR. WENDELL 50S

Recovering alcoholic, divorced father of four, tough-love mentor with a disarming sense of humor.

*Carries: The cost of being the one who holds it together.*

## REGGIE 40S

House manager. OC country-club surfer vibe, ex pro golf coach, gambler, new dad, black sheep of a well-to-do family.

*Carries: Structure versus compassion, and a gambler's relationship with risk inside a house built on abstinence.*

## SHANE EARLY 20S

Brilliant, reckless Beverly Hills kid who identifies with street culture. Desperate for structure behind the swagger.

*Carries: Class performance, and what a young man does when someone finally is not scared of him.*

## SHANNON MID 20S

Nigerian-American, former USC pre-med prodigy. Surfer and skater, sharp opinions, searching for identity.

*Carries: The gap between potential and self-knowledge. Often the person who says the wise thing without meaning to.*

## RAY EARLY 50S

South Central hustler turned real estate and nightclub entrepreneur. Humble, old school, second time in the house.

*Carries: Relapse as a lived fact rather than a threat. He has already failed once here.*

## ELI EARLY 30S

Mixed-race tech-artist inventor, adopted into wealth. Socially awkward, identity confusion.

*Carries: Literalism as comedy and as armor. He states facts the room is avoiding.*

## ARTHUR LATE 70S

Insurance company founder. Uses the sober house to avoid home and the modern world. Inappropriate old-school mouth.

*Carries: Age as licence. He says the true thing because he has run out of reasons not to.*





**WILLIAM** SURGEON

Bougie Beverly Hills plastic surgeon. Rich narcissist, oblivious, name-drops and steamrolls conversations.

*Carries: The comedy of total self-absorption, and occasional accidental honesty.*

**MIGUEL** MID 40S

Landscaper with Beverly Hills clients. First generation, family man, sober but still learning humility.

*Carries: Work, dignity and the quiet version of recovery.*

**GOMER** MID 30S

Security guard. Big flashy jewelry, always snacking. Food addiction revealed over time. Family man.

*Carries: Addiction that the house does not recognize as addiction. A deliberate slow burn.*

**MEI LIN** HOUSE NURSE

Runs intake and testing. Calm authority. Sees everything.

*Carries: The conscience of the house, and the one person Mr. Wendell cannot deflect.*

**LUIS** HANDYMAN

Ex-client turned staff. Grief-driven addiction, nervous organized energy. A Kramer-esque oddball who acts like he owns the place.

*Carries: Recovery as a job. Four years sober and he has earned the right to be annoying about it.*





06

# The Outside World

The show does not travel. The world arrives.

| Who               | What They Bring                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. Yoakum | Sober-house owners. Their child died of an overdose fifteen years ago and they now run multiple homes as philanthropists. They are the show's authority and its most sympathetic pressure: they are never the villain, which makes them harder to argue with. |
| Mr. & Mrs. Gold   | Affluent, connected Westside parents of Shane. Terrified of losing him. They love him and they fear him, and the house is where those two things collide.                                                                                                     |
| Laura             | Mr. Wendell's ex-wife. She appears by text in Episode 105 and functions as his conscience at a distance. She has been through worse with him and says so plainly.                                                                                             |
| The four sons     | Grown men in different cities. They arrive by video call, which keeps them outside the house physically while landing inside it emotionally.                                                                                                                  |

*Sponsors, prospective residents, and family members rotate through as episodic pressure. The rule holds: the intrusion is the story, not the errand.*





07

# Season One: Episodes 101 to 105

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Reading drafts complete. Episode 103 is final locked. Summaries below are drawn from the treatment and the drafts themselves.

## EP 101 PILOT READING DRAFT

We meet the sober house ecosystem and Mr. Wendell's leadership style. The routine, meetings, chores and rules, gets tested as resident personalities collide and old habits fight for control. The foundation is set: this is a family that did not choose each other, but needs each other.

## EP 102 THE VISIT READING DRAFT

Outside relationships invade the house. A visit stirs ego, shame and temptation, forcing residents to confront how they present sobriety versus how they actually live it. Mr. Wendell tries to keep the house steady while Reggie navigates the politics of rules, liability and compassion.

## EP 103 ROOMMATES FINAL LOCKED

Chore time and a new roommate arrival ignite a chain reaction. Mr. Wendell assigns the new guy to share Shane's room, triggering territory issues, class tension and the comedy of forced intimacy. The house learns the hard way that recovery does not respect personal space.

## EP 104 THE OFFER STANDS READING DRAFT

Opportunity knocks, and so does chaos. A tempting offer threatens to split loyalties and expose who is truly committed to the house. As egos flare, Mr. Wendell must decide how much he can bend for someone's future without breaking the community's rules.

## EP 105 WHO IS MR. WENDELL READING DRAFT

Old footage of a much younger Wendell surfaces online and goes viral. The young residents laugh, the elders stage a loving intervention, the owners ask on a video call whether he is alright, and he smokes on the balcony where the handyman can see him. In group he finally sits in an ordinary chair instead of the one at the head, tells the truth about the drinking years, and afterward calls his four sons. The episode ends with pizza rather than absolution.

**What the first five establish.** The house and its rules (101), the outside world as intrusion (102), forced intimacy and class friction (103), loyalty under temptation (104), and the leader's own unexamined past (105). By the end of 105 the show has proved it can put its own protagonist in the chair.





08

## Season One: Episodes 106 to 110

**These five episodes are not yet written. This section does not invent them.**

What follows is an inventory of threads the existing material has already planted, any of which could carry an episode. Choosing among them, and deciding the season's back-half shape, is the creator's call.

| Planted Thread                  | Where It Comes From                                                                                                                    | What It Could Carry                                                                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Where was Reggie?</b>        | In 105 Mr. Wendell says his judgment held the house together <i>while Reggie was gone</i> . The absence is stated and never explained. | A Reggie-centred episode. He is a gambler and a new father, and the house runs on his structure. |
| <b>Gomer's food addiction</b>   | The treatment states it is <i>revealed over time</i> . It is a designed slow burn, not a reveal waiting for a slot.                    | The episode where the house has to recognise an addiction it has been laughing at.               |
| <b>Ray's second time here</b>   | He is explicitly in the house for the second time. The first failure is referenced and unexamined.                                     | Relapse from the inside rather than as background threat.                                        |
| <b>The Golds</b>                | Terrified of losing Shane. They love him and fear him. Established, unused.                                                            | Parent pressure arriving in person rather than by phone.                                         |
| <b>The Yoakums' own grief</b>   | Their child died of an overdose fifteen years ago. They run the homes because of it. Never explored from their side.                   | The owners as people rather than authority.                                                      |
| <b>Arthur's actual home</b>     | He uses the house to avoid home and the modern world. What he is avoiding is never shown.                                              | The oldest resident's private reason.                                                            |
| <b>Mr. Wendell and his sons</b> | 105 opens the reconnection and does not resolve it. He asks them to believe the man they know is real.                                 | A visit, or the first time one of them sees the house.                                           |
| <b>Mei Lin's POV</b>            | She <i>sees everything</i> and is the one person he cannot deflect. She has no storyline of her own yet.                               | The episode from the staff's side of the desk.                                                   |

***Structural note, not a plot suggestion.** The first five episodes escalate outward from house mechanics to the leader's own past. A back half that turns toward the residents' unexamined histories, and toward whether the house survives a real relapse, would follow the logic already established. That is a shape, not a story.*





09

# Themes

| Theme                                   | How It Plays                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accountability versus enabling</b>   | The line every character keeps crossing, usually while believing they are on the right side of it.                     |
| <b>Identity and belonging</b>           | Culture, class, masculinity and ego under one roof. The house forces people who would never meet into daily proximity. |
| <b>Second chances and chosen family</b> | Nobody picked this family. They need it anyway.                                                                        |
| <b>Service as recovery</b>              | Giving back as the thing that keeps you sober. It is also how Mr. Wendell avoids himself.                              |
| <b>Grief, shame and avoidance</b>       | What it costs to keep avoiding the truth, and how long a person can hold it before the house notices.                  |

*“Your past may explain you. It does not have to define you. But it will keep visiting until you stop pretending nobody's home.”*

*Mr. Wendell, Episode 105. The closest the series comes to stating its own thesis out loud.*





10

# Visual Language

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- **Clean, upscale interiors contrasted with raw emotional moments.** The room is always nicer than what is happening in it.
- **Naturalistic lighting with subtle warmth.** Not glossy, not grim.
- **Handheld intimacy in tense moments.** The camera gets closer as people get less composed.
- **Comedy plays in wide ensemble frames.** The joke is usually the group, not the line.
- **Emotion plays in close-ups.** The show earns them by withholding them.

**A worked example.** Episode 105's group scene is a wide circle with an empty chair at the head. The blocking carries the meaning before a word is spoken: he does not sit in it. Then the memory flashes are deliberately impressionistic, soft focus and grain, because a half-remembered past should not look as sharp as the present.





## 11

# Comparables and Positioning

| Title     | What We Take From It                                                             |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ted Lasso | Heart and community accountability. Warmth that is not softness.                 |
| Atlanta   | Observational Los Angeles culture and a sharp, specific character point of view. |
| Shameless | Messy family energy, relocated into a recovery framework.                        |
| The Bear  | Pressure and care inside a tight ecosystem where everyone is trapped together.   |

**The position.** Streaming has proven sustained appetite for half-hour comedies with real emotional stakes. MR. WENDELL sits at an underserved intersection: recovery and redemption as the engine of the comedy rather than an issue-of-the-week detour. The subject is usually handled as tragedy or as inspiration. This show treats it as daily life, which is both funnier and truer.





12

# Where It Goes After Season One

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**Direction, not plot. These are the creator's decisions.**

The premise is renewable by construction. The house takes in new people, which resets the chemistry without resetting the show, and every existing resident has somewhere further to go in either direction.

- **The house itself is the long arc.** Does it survive? The Yoakums run multiple homes and answer to parents. Episode 105 already establishes that money gets nervous.
- **Graduation and return.** Residents leaving is the natural season break, and Ray already proves that leaving is not the same as finishing.
- **Mr. Wendell's own next thing.** He is a house manager who has just told the truth in front of everyone. What that costs him, or opens for him, is unwritten.
- **The staff.** Mei Lin, Luis and Reggie are all under-explored and all have their own recoveries running quietly alongside the residents'.





## 13

# What This Bible Still Needs

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Named honestly, so this document is not mistaken for finished.

[ ] **Episodes 106 to 110.** Section 08 lists the planted threads. The stories themselves need Wendell Harris.

[ ] **Episode 101, 102 and 104 detail.** The summaries here come from the treatment. Once the reading drafts are read through, each should get the depth Episode 105 has in this document.

[ ] **A separate character bible.** Backstory, season arc and a relationship map per character. Casting directors and actors ask for this specifically and it is a different document from this one.

[ ] **Reggie's absence in 105.** Whether that is a planted thread or a continuity artifact is a question only the creator can answer, and the answer changes the back half.

[ ] **Who plays Mr. Wendell.** Still an open internal decision. It affects how the character is written forward.

[ ] **Series title card and episode naming convention.** Four of five have titles; a pattern is emerging and worth deciding deliberately.

*Everything in sections 01 through 07 and 09 through 11 is grounded in the treatment, the completed drafts, and the production documents. Sections 08, 12 and 13 mark the edges of what is known rather than filling them in.*





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