Willem Dafoe, what’s so funny?

Willem Dafoe, Willem Dafoe, what’s so funny about the actor Willem Dafoe? What’s so funny…my wife is. Does she know Mr. Dafoe? No. Do I know him? No. What connection does he have to our family? Apparently, it is I.

Mr. Dafoe has had a long career in films often playing quirky, evil characters. Never a superstar, but he does work regularly in Hollywood films. When he and I were young, we looked nothing alike. He was gaunt, thin and wiry, while I was always full faced and a bit chunky. As he aged, the actor remained thin and gaunt and now has short gray hair. As I aged, I became thin and gaunt with a full head of short gray hair. People who know me for many years think we look nothing alike, probably because they “see” me as the old Bill. But people who meet me now for the first time, have no problem seeing the resemblance. What does all this have to do with funny? Please read on.

Recently I had a colonoscopy. This procedure is not so funny for the patient, but it usually generates a lot of jokes and humor from friends and acquaintances. My supportive wife drove me to the clinic and was in attendance before and after the procedure. As required, I had not eaten solid food for two days prior and I was in a weakened condition as I was rolled into the procedure room.

The room contained the usual complement of medical support personnel and the doctor performing the operation. Coincidently, they were all women. In comes this old, gaunt, thin, starving gray haired man on a gurney. I was not quite under from the drugs they had administered and could still converse as all seven looked down at me. One young nurse said to me,” Hey. You look like Willem Dafoe”. Of course, idle chit chat is the furthest thing from my mind as I anticipate what is about to happen to my little body. But I answer, “Oh. I see”. Of course the nurse passes this on to all those in attendance and they have to bat it around a bit as each one adds her own opinion about me and Dafoe. Fortunately, I dropped off to Never Never Land as the drugs kicked in.

Everything went well and I found myself coming to in a bed in the recovery area. There was my dear wife holding my hand along with the recovery nurse doing her post-op duties. The doctor who had just performed the procedure came by to give me the results (which were all good) and to complete some follow up details. During her visit, she turned to my wife and said, “Did you know that your husband looks like Willem Dafoe”? And my wife looked directly at the Doctor and responded,” Oh, really. Which end”? Every other patient leaves the recovery room in a somber, vulnerable state. We left them laughing. Boy is my wife funny!