

PRICELESS
"Pilot"

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Made in Highland

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. MACON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL- DAWN

A stately RED BRICK BUILDING on a busy city street. Massive, several stories. Could be a school, a library...or a HOSPITAL.

SUPERIMPOSE: MACON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

At the entrance, PEDESTRIANS stream in and out through automatic sliding doors.

INT. MACON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

HALLWAY

Sunlight filters through DUST-STREAKED WINDOWS, illuminating FADED YELLOW WALLS adorned with flower and animal STICKERS.

LOBBY

PORTRAITS of people in suits and white lab coats clutter the wall.

WAITING ROOM

CHILDREN play with TOYS, each other. Their bored PARENTS watch and wait.

A WOMAN and her 10-YEAR-OLD SON approach the reception desk. The RECEPTIONIST flashes them a broad smile.

JIMMY (V.O.)

The days at Macon felt like years.
The years felt like lifetimes.

EMERGENCY ROOM

A BLOOD-SOAKED GURNEY. Amid the gore, a TEDDY BEAR.

JIMMY (V.O.)

I spent many lifetimes wandering
these halls. I saw countless
children born here. I watched some
of them die.

A MEDICAL ASSISTANT pushes a CHILD in a wheelchair. Hurrying somewhere. TWO ANXIOUS PARENTS trail behind.

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JIMMY (V.O.)
But most lived. They now thrive
beyond these walls.

FRAMED PICTURES of SMILING CHILDREN line the wall.

JIMMY
The work is hard.

A FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of a beaming CHILD and her ecstatic
parents.

JIMMY (V.O.)
But the reward? Priceless.

INT. MIRANDA ASHTON'S OFFICE - DAY

An office in transition. Functional desk, leather chair,
several PACKED MOVING BOXES against a wall.

On the desk, a laptop, potted plant, and a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH.

At the desk, MIRANDA ASHTON, late 40s, business attire,
slumped shoulders, weary face. She stares at the photograph.

ON THE PHOTOGRAPH

Miranda and her late husband, JIMMY ASHTON, late 40s. The
couple beams, happy, enjoying life together.

MIRANDA
Oh, Jimmy.

Miranda's eyes water. She brushes a tear but the dam breaks
and tears flood her face. She breaks down sobbing.

The sobs subside. She wipes her face, collects herself.
Rising, she fixes her hair, smooths her dress.

Composed enough to face the day, she kisses her fingers,
touches the photograph, and marches out of the office.

INT. MACON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM

Another surgery completed. Monitors off. Room dimly lit.
Dirty linens on the table. Surgical tools covering a bedside
tray.

No one there, save for...

A HOUSEKEEPER mopping the floor.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Miranda, my love, you can do this.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

The same operating room, now scrubbed squeaky clean. Bright lights. Beeping monitors. The rhythmic hiss of a respirator.

On the table, JOEY DONOVAN, age 8, unconscious, freshly stitched abdominal incision.

Bunched around him, a SURGICAL TEAM, blue scrubs, masks, gloves. Everyone deathly quiet.

DOCTOR TAYLOR CARLYLE, 33, SWEAT beaded on his handsome face, eyes focused like lasers, puts in the final stitch.

He ties off the stitch. ANNA, a scrub nurse, snips the line.

ANNA

Beautiful job, Doctor Carlyle.

CARLYLE

Thank you.

The tension in the room dissolves. Scrub Nurses spring into action, cleaning, counting sponges, putting things away.

DOCTOR SEBASTIAN EVANS, 40, rolls his eyes, rips off his gloves, slams them on the surgical tray.

EXT. OPERATING ROOM HALLWAY

EMILY MCDOWELL, 28, blue scrubs, coffee cup in hand, peers past the scrub sink through a window into the O.R.

Sebastian punches through the door.

EMILY

Sir, your coffee.

SEBASTIAN

(speaks with a British accent)
That son of a bitch.

He snatches the coffee, downs half of it in one gulp.

Doctor Carlyle eases into the hall.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Listen, Carlyle, the next time a nurse compliments you on your beautiful work, you might remind her who actually performed the operation.

CARLYLE
Excuse me?

SEBASTIAN
I cut that kid's tumor out. All you did was sew up the damn incision.

CARLYLE
Of course, sir. I know that.

SEBASTIAN
Good. Don't forget it.

He storms down the hall. Emily hustles after him.

EMILY
What happened this time?

SEBASTIAN
That smarmy little bastard. Always taking credit for my work.

EMILY
What did he do?

SEBASTIAN
Would he have the first idea how to remove a hepatic tumor without me to show him how?

EMILY
Of course not. He's a resident.

SEBASTIAN
Damn right. He should show some gratitude.

EMILY
Sir, if you hurry, you can still make the budget meeting.

SEBASTIAN
Great. A meeting with the grieving widow, who doesn't know jackshit about running a hospital.

EMILY

She was on the board when her husband died.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah? So? The only reason Jimmy stuck her there was so they could bang each other in the admin break room. Now that he's gone, she's CEO. What a joke.

EMILY

I heard they were just kissing.

SEBASTIAN

Kissing, banging, what's the difference? I don't need this. Jesus Christ, I passed up St. Jude's for this.

EMILY

(whispering to herself)
I'm glad you did.

SEBASTIAN

What?

EMILY

Nothing.

SEBASTIAN

A damn heart attack. He was only forty-nine. What the hell was he thinking? Why couldn't she have the damn heart attack? I'd be department chairman by now. Jimmy promised.

Sebastian rests his hand on the wall.

EMILY

Sir, the budget meeting?

SEBASTIAN

If she's so smart, why can't she figure things out on her own?

In motion again.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I'll see you later.

EMILY
(to herself)
I certainly hope so.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Sebastian waits for the elevator.

DING!

The doors slide open. AMANDA ASHTON, 22, orange hair, ear spacers, arm tattoos, AIRPODS, bolts out.

AMANDA
I told you I can't come. I'm going
to see my auntie today.

Eyes glued to the floor, Amanda bumps into Sebastian. One of her AirPods drops.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Watch it!

SEBASTIAN
You ran into me.

AMANDA
Whatever.

Sebastian disappears into the elevator. The doors close.

Amanda retrieves her Airpod.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Nobody. Just some dickhead. Look, I
gotta go.

INT. BOARDROOM- DAY

A sterile conference room. Long table, lots of chairs.

Miranda fidgets with a stack of papers at the head of the table.

Around the table, ADMINISTRATORS in business attire and PHYSICIANS in white coats. All buzz with conversation.

Sebastian storms into the room, dives into a seat just ahead of...

DR. SOPHIA SANTOS, 38, allergy specialist. With a shake of her head, she finds another seat.

Miranda clears her throat. No response.

MIRANDA

Excuse me. Can we get started?

The room quiets. Except for Doctor Sebastian.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Doctor Sebastian?

Sebastian shuts up.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Thank you. This won't take long.
There are rumors going around about
hospital finances being tight. I
asked Chuck, our CFO, to give us a
report. Chuck?

CHUCK HARRISON, 60, business suit, straightens in his chair.

CHUCK

The rumors are true. Significant
cuts are coming. After conferring
with Miranda, I'll release
specifics next week.

Gasps fill the room.

AIDEN HENDERSON, 27, white coat, raises a hand.

AIDEN

Will there still be ice cream in
the cafeteria?

CHUCK

Excuse me. Who are you?

AIDEN

Aiden Henderson. I'm an endocrine
resident.

CHUCK

This meeting is for administrators
and staff physicians only.

AIDEN

Oh. Sorry.

MIRANDA

It's okay, Chuck. Yes, Doctor Henderson, there will still be ice cream in the cafeteria. It might be generic, but we'll still have it.

CHUCK

That's his main concern? Jeez.

SEBASTIAN

What about the surgery department? We're already understaffed.

MIRANDA

We won't do anything to compromise patient safety.

SEBASTIAN

Right. But without a department chairman, we're flying by the seat of our pants. If I was chairman--

MIRANDA

You are not without a chairman. Doctor McLean will return as soon as he recovers from his chemotherapy.

SEBASTIAN

Isn't that reassuring?

MIRANDA

Will there be anything else?

Sebastian rises.

SEBASTIAN

Nope. You seem to have it all under control.

INT. RESIDENT BREAK ROOM - DAY

Study carrels line the walls, surrounding a couch and two lounge chairs.

RESIDENTS at their carrels. On the couch, Aiden. In a chair, book in her lap, pediatrics resident BETH FONDA, late 20s.

BETH

How did you get in there?

AIDEN

The trick is to walk in like you belong. Nobody said anything.

BETH

You are such a goofball.

AIDEN

The good news is there will still be ice cream in the cafeteria.

BETH

You asked the hospital CEO about ice cream? I'm surprised she didn't bite your head off.

AIDEN

Naw, she's a pussy cat. Kind of hot too.

BETH

Gross. She could be your mother.

AIDEN

I bet she's a tiger in bed.

BETH

Would you shut up?

AIDEN

Probably a screamer. Rowwrr!

Beth hurls the book at him.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - DAY

Amanda marches up to the receptionist, LINDA RILEY, 40s, headset, mouthpiece.

LINDA

Can you spell that one more time?

AMANDA

Do you know where I can find--

LINDA

One moment, Miss.

AMANDA

I'm kind of in a hurry.

LINDA

And I'm kind of on a call.

AMANDA
I'm looking for Mir-

Linda raises a finger for quiet.

LINDA
Thank you, ma'am. I'm sorry. Can
you hold on for just a sec?

She fixes Amanda with a glare.

AMANDA
I'm looking for Miranda Ashton.

LINDA
Fourth floor. Is she expecting you?

AMANDA
No, but it's okay. I'm her niece.

LINDA
Let me check.

Linda punches a number on her desktop phone.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Hi, Diane. I have Mrs. Ashton's
niece here. Okay, I'll tell her.
(to Amanda)
I'm sorry, she's in a meeting.

AMANDA
That bitch.

Amanda storms past the desk toward a stairwell.

LINDA
She's busy. You should come back
later.

BANG! The stairwell door slams closed. Amanda is gone.

LINDA (CONT'D)
Talk about rude.

INT. NURSE'S LOCKER ROOM - DAY

JENNA, 25, recent nursing school graduate, mid-conversation
with ANNA, the scrub nurse seen earlier in the surgery suite.

Emily loiters nearby.

ANNA
So what do you think of Doctor
Carlyle?

JENNA
He seems like a good surgeon.

ANNA
He seems like a hunk.

JENNA
I guess.

ANNA
Are you kidding? He could slip me
the sausage any time.

EMILY
Seriously? You two sound like
children.

Startled, Anna and Jenna jump up and scurry out the door.

Emily pulls a BOBBY PIN, studies the lockers. She picks the
lock on one. Finding nothing of interest, she moves to the
next one.

At the third locker...

EMILY (CONT'D)
What do we have here?

She pulls out a jacket, checks the pockets. Nothing. She
tosses it.

She flips through a stack of books.

Halfway through the pile, she pulls out a DAY PLANNER, opens
it.

EMILY (CONT'D)
Bingo.

She whips out her PHONE, snaps a picture.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Amanda strides down a hallway, opens a door labeled
"Administration."

INT. ADMINISTRATION LOBBY - DAY

A quiet lobby. Sofa, a few chairs, reception desk.

At the desk, DIANE, 50s.

Amanda marches in.

AMANDA

Hi, Diane. Is she in her office?

DIANE

Yes...who are you?

AMANDA

I'm her niece. She's expecting me.

Diane picks up a phone.

DIANE

One moment.

Amanda strides past her toward the office door.

AMANDA

That's okay.

INT. MIRANDA'S OFFICE- DAY

Miranda at her desk sipping tea.

The door pops open, Amanda bursts into the room...

With Diane right behind.

DIANE

I'm sorry Mrs. Ashton.

Miranda rises.

MIRANDA

It's okay.

Diane slips out, shutting the door behind her.

Amanda rushes her aunt, wraps her in a hug, which Miranda is too startled to return.

AMANDA

Hello, Auntie.

MIRANDA

What do you want, Amanda? Money?

AMANDA

I just wanted to see you.

MIRANDA

You could have seen me at the funeral.

AMANDA

I had class.

MIRANDA

I thought you flunked out.

AMANDA

No, I withdrew.

MIRANDA

I'm still paying off that credit card you took.

AMANDA

I'm sorry. I want to pay you back.

MIRANDA

Okay, pay me back.

AMANDA

I can't...yet. I need a job first.

MIRANDA

Where are you applying?

Amanda gives her a sweet look.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Oh, please.

AMANDA

I need help. Dad won't talk to me.

MIRANDA

Can you blame him?

AMANDA

That fire wasn't my fault. I told Stan to use an ashtray.

MIRANDA

Ah, yes. Stan. What a fine example of manhood.

AMANDA

I'm not seeing him anymore.

MIRANDA
Only because he's in prison.

AMANDA
Auntie, I'll do anything. I'll work
with the kids.

MIRANDA
You hate kids.

AMANDA
Just the bratty ones.

They engage in a staring contest. Amanda blinks first.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
All I'm asking for is a chance. If
I blow it, I'm gone. No hard
feelings.

MIRANDA
Okay.

She points to a mountain of files on a shelf.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
See those? They need to be
digitalized. Diane has a scanner.
She'll show you what to do.

AMANDA
Right now?

MIRANDA
What, you need time off before you
start your new job?

AMANDA
No. Thank you.

MIRANDA
You better not make me regret this.

AMANDA
Do you think you could spot me--

MIRANDA
Out!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Joey groggy in bed. Overhead, an IV bag of clear fluid, from which an IV line snakes down to his hand.

LORI, Joey's mother, strokes his face.

Joey moans.

LORI
I'm here, baby. I'm here.

Joey emits a sharp cry. His body stiffens, his arms jerk in rhythm, shaking the bed.

LORI (CONT'D)
Joey! Joey!

She pounds the call button.

Two NURSES, DAWN and SHEILA, rush in. Dawn turns Joey on his side, Sheila whips out a phone, presses it to her ear.

SHEILA
Doctor Sebastian. He's seizing.

Sheila rushes from the room, returns moments later, syringe and medicine vial in hand. She draws up a dose.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Clutching an armload of files, Amanda waits for the elevator.

DING! The doors open.

Doctor Sebastian rushes out, crashes into Amanda, spraying files everywhere.

AMANDA
Wow. Deja vu all over again.

INT. JOEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Panting, Doctor Sebastian runs into the room, ready to save another life...

But all is quiet and calm.

Joey lies still in bed, Lori stroking his hair.

Sheila and Dawn fuss with the IV.

Standing at the bedside, Doctor Carlyle.

SEBASTIAN

What's going on here?

CARLYLE

He was seizing. I gave him two milligrams of lorazepam.

SEBASTIAN

Two? I would have given four.

CARLYLE

Two seems to have done the trick.

DAWN

His temperature is forty degrees, Doctor Carlyle.

CARLYLE

He could be septic. Let's get blood cultures and a CBC.

SEBASTIAN

Hold it. I'll give the orders here.

CARLYLE

Sorry. Of course.

SEBASTIAN

Let's get blood cultures and a CBC.

DAWN

Yes, sir.

SEBASTIAN

And make it stat.

INT. SURGERY FLOOR - OUTSIDE JOEY'S ROOM - DAY

Doctor Carlyle types at a portable laptop stand.

Sebastian pops out of the room.

SEBASTIAN

What the hell was that all about?

CARLYLE

He was seizing. I gave him meds to stop it.

SEBASTIAN

Next time you wait for me.

CARLYLE

There wasn't time.

SEBASTIAN

Now you listen to me. I am the attending. You are the resident. You follow my orders, got it?

CARLYLE

Yes, sir.

SEBASTIAN

Good.

Doctor Sebastian pushes past Doctor Carlyle and storms away.

EXT. NURSE'S BREAK ROOM - DAY

Two tables, decrepit. Wobbly chairs. A large couch with threadbare fabric. A bathroom door in the corner.

A full-size fridge, cabinets, coffee pot, overhead television, and a fish tank. No water or fish.

Jenna draped on the couch watching the news.

Emily saunters in.

EMILY

Well, Jenna. Look who's goofing off again.

JENNA

Emily. I'm on lunch break.

EMILY

Break time is over. There's work to do.

JENNA

But I haven't eaten yet.

EMILY

Honey, if you're going to make it as a nurse, you better get used to that. Now move.

JENNA
Sorry. It won't happen again.

EMILY
I'll have to write you up for this.

JENNA
For what?

EMILY
Laziness? Patient abandonment?

JENNA
Dawn is covering for me.

EMILY
I sent Dawn to the lab. Keep
arguing and I'll add
insubordination to the list.

Jenna slinks out of the room.

Dawn opens the refrigerator, pulls out a paper sack labeled "Jenna." She peers inside, likes what she sees.

She drops onto the couch, extracts a sandwich from the sack, settles in to watch TV.

INT. JOEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM- DAY

Joey sleeps. A monitor beeps. Lori hovers over him.

LORI
This little light of mine. I'm
gonna let it shine.

Doctor Carlyle steps into the room.

CARLYLE
Mrs. Donovan?

LORI
Yes?

CARLYLE
The blood cultures came back. I'm
afraid Joey is septic.

LORI
What does that mean?

CARLYLE

It means there are E. Coli bacteria
in his bloodstream.

Doctor Sebastian marches in.

SEBASTIAN

Mrs. Donovan, Joey has a blood
infection. E. Coli.

LORI

I know. Doctor Carlyle just told
me.

SEBASTIAN

I see. We'll start him on IV
antibiotics.

CARLYLE

Which ones? I can write the orders.

SEBASTIAN

Uh, I've asked infectious disease
to come by. They'll let us know.

LORI

I don't understand. He seemed fine
after surgery.

SEBASTIAN

These things happen. Well, I must
be going.

Sebastian disappears through the doorway.

LORI

I'm really scared.

Doctor Carlyle pulls up a chair next to her.

CARLYLE

We'll do everything we can for him.

INT. SURGERY FLOOR - DAY

Emily at the nursing station.

Doctor Sebastian rushes past. Emily rises to intercept him.

EMILY

Doctor Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN

What is it? I'm in a hurry.

EMILY

I found something you might be interested in.

SEBASTIAN

Stop playing games and tell me what it is.

Emily leans in to whisper in his ear.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Really? Interesting.

EMILY

Good stuff, huh?

SEBASTIAN

As good as it gets.

END OF ACT 2

ACT THREE

INT. MIRANDA'S OFFICE- NIGHT

Only a feeble desk lamp shines in the darkness.

A KNOCK at the door. The door opens, Amanda steps inside.

AMANDA
Auntie?

SNIFFLES from behind the desk.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Auntie?

MIRANDA
Please go away.

Amanda peers behind the desk, spots Miranda beneath it.

AMANDA
What's wrong?

She joins Miranda on the floor.

MIRANDA
Nothing. I'm fine.

AMANDA
You're crying.

Miranda extricates herself from the desk, stands.

MIRANDA
I'll be all right.

Beat.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
I miss your Uncle Jimmy.

AMANDA
I'm sorry.

MIRANDA
I know you are. Thank you.

AMANDA

So, I saw this really cute doctor today.

MIRANDA

Amanda, I have one hard and fast rule while you're here. No dating the staff.

AMANDA

What? Why not?

MIRANDA

Because I said so. And if you want to continue working here, you'll listen to me.

AMANDA

All right.

MIRANDA

Another thing. Don't call me "Auntie" here at the office. It's "Miranda" or "Mrs. Ashton." Got it?

AMANDA

Got it.

Beat.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Do the doctors know about that no dating rule?

INT. JOEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Joey in sedated sleep. Back on a respirator. Lori in tears.

Doctor Carlyle mid-explanation.

DR. CARLYLE

We're checking his vitals every hour. They seem to be stable.

LORI

Is that good?

DR. CARLYLE

It is.

LORI

So he'll be okay?

DR. CARLYLE
I wish I could promise that. We're
doing everything we can.

LORI
I hope that's enough.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Bleary-eyed, hair in tangles, Jenna drags herself into the room.

She unlocks her locker. A jumble of clothing and books tumble out.

She picks up a book. Her eyes snap open at a sudden realization.

She drops the book, flips through the others, finds the planner.

She opens it, stares, slams it shut, throws it into the locker.

INT. BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Emily, Sheila, and Dawn share a laugh.

EMILY
And then I told him to grab the
syringe and he brings me a scalpel.
Like, are you serious?

SHEILA
Freaking interns.

DAWN
Hey, you know what they call the
guy who graduated last in his med
school class?

EMILY
What?

DAWN
Doctor.

More laughter.

The door flies open. Jenna rushes in and charges Emily.

EMILY

Whoa. Geez. Who put the laxative in your tampon?

JENNA

You went through my stuff.

EMILY

I don't know what the hell you're talking about.

JENNA

You broke into my locker. Don't deny it.

EMILY

I do deny it. Settle down.

DAWN

Yeah, Jenna. Good grief.

SHEILA

You should go home and get some sleep.

EMILY

That's a good idea.

JENNA

I'm on to you, Emily. From now on, just leave me alone.

EMILY

Or what?

JENNA

Or I will rip your lungs out.

EMILY

You heard her, ladies. She threatened me with physical harm.

Jenna's eyes spit fire. She storms out of the room.

EXT. STAFF PARKING LOT- LATER

Only a few cars in the lot.

Jenna behind the wheel of one of them, a 2020 FORD ESCAPE. Her head rests on the wheel. Her shoulders shake as she cries.

Bike helmet in hand, Emily bangs through an exit door into the lot.

Jenna reacts to the noise, sits up.

Emily catches the movement and spots Jenna.

Red faced, cheeks shiny with tears, Jenna wipes herself dry.

A smile from Emily. It's called schadenfreude.

Sebastian jogs out of the building. Emily hustles to intercept.

EMILY

Hey, great work today, Doctor Sebastian. Very impressive.

SEBASTIAN

Why, thank you, Emily.

With a wave he jogs to his car, a cardinal red 2021 MERCEDES C-CLASS SEDAN. She blows a kiss at his back.

She skips to the bike rack and unlocks her HEARTS BIO CARBON ROAD BIKE. After strapping on the helmet and climbing onto the seat, she locks eyes with Jenna, blows her a kiss.

INT. LOBBY - MORNING

Linda, headset and mouthpiece in place, at her reception desk. Amanda strides past.

LINDA

Excuse me. Excuse me! I need to have a word with you, young lady.

AMANDA

I work here now, Grandma, so back off.

LINDA

Who are you calling "Grandma?" I'm young enough to be your sister.

AMANDA

Yeah, my really old sister.

LINDA

How old do you think I am?

AMANDA

I don't know. A hundred?

Linda punches a number on her phone.

LINDA

Hey, Carl. Can you come down here?
There's a very pushy young woman at
my desk making a scene. Yeah, real
snotty.

AMANDA

Oh, nice.

LINDA

Well, can't you send someone? What
about Larry? Kevin?

Beat.

LINDA (CONT'D)

Some help you are.

(to herself)

Stupid security. I hope they choke
on their donuts.

(to Amanda)

Do you really work here?

AMANDA

I do. Upstairs. In administration.

Triumphant, Amanda struts away, waving over her shoulder.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Bye, bye. It's been real.

LINDA

You better lose that attitude if
you expect Mrs. Ashton to keep you
around.

AMANDA

You mean Aunt Miranda?

LINDA

Oh. So that's how you got hired.

AMANDA

Whatever.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. JOEYS HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Joey flat on his back, eyes closed. The ventilator is gone.

Lori in a chair, dozing.

Joey's FINGERS wiggle.

JOEY

Mom?

He squirms and tries to sit up.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Mom?

Lori's eyes snap open. She pops out of the chair and rushes to her son.

LORI

Hi, sweetie.

JOEY

My throat hurts.

LORI

You had a breathing tube in your throat last night. It will get better today.

JOEY

I'm thirsty.

Lori finds a CUP OF WATER on a bedside table. A STRAW protrudes through the top. She holds it to his mouth.

LORI

Here you go.

Joey sips.

JOEY

When can I go home?

LORI

Soon, baby. Soon.

Joey moans. Tears trickle down his face.

JOEY
My tummy hurts.

Lori snuffles, tries to hold it in.

JOEY (CONT'D)
What is it, mom?

LORI
We'll get you something to make you
feel better.

Doctor Sebastian explodes into the room. Doctor Carlyle
follows.

SEBASTIAN
Hello, sport.

DR. CARLYLE
(to Lori)
How's he doing today?

SEBASTIAN
I'll ask the questions, Doctor
Carlyle.
(to Lori)
How's he doing today?

LORI
He says his stomach hurts.

SEBASTIAN
That's to be expected after
surgery.

LORI
Can't you do something to help him?

SEBASTIAN
Doctor Carlyle, did you not write
for some pain meds?

CARLYLE
No, sir. You told me you would do
it.

SEBASTIAN
And I shall. Just as soon as I
examine the little tyke.

Doctor Sebastian steps forward, palpates Joey's abdomen. Joey
yelps in pain.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Maybe I'll go write those orders
now.

Doctor Sebastian hustles out of the room.

LORI
How is his infection?

CARLYLE
His white count is down, which is a
sign that the antibiotics are
working.

LORI
Thank God.

CARLYLE
And we got him off the ventilator
sooner than I expected. All things
considered, he's doing great.

Doctor Carlyle produces a small gorilla figurine from his
pocket, holds it up for Joey to see.

CARLYLE (CONT'D)
See this guy, Joey? People say the
lion is the king of the jungle, but
a gorilla could knock a lion out
with one punch.

JOEY
Really?

CARLYLE
Absolutely. Gorillas are amazingly
strong. Just like someone else I
know.

JOEY
Who?

CARLYLE
You.

Doctor Carlyle places the gorilla on the bedside table.

CARLYLE (CONT'D)
I want you to have this. When the
pain gets bad, you look at this
fella and remember that I think
you're even stronger than him.

Doctor Carlyle musses Joey's hair.

LORI

Do you have children, Doctor
Carlyle?

CARLYLE

I hope to some day, but I haven't
yet been so blessed.

LORI

You're going to be a great father.

INT. SURGERY FLOOR - NURSES' STATION - DAY

Doctors Sebastian and Carlyle huddle with TWO SURGERY
INTERNS, one male and one female.

SEBASTIAN

So, thanks to quick action on my
part, the boy is now on antibiotics
that are controlling the infection.
He'll be running around the halls
terrorizing nurses in no time.

FEMALE INTERN

How long will he need the IV?

SEBASTIAN

I should be asking you that. What
do you think?

FEMALE INTERN

At least two weeks. Right?

SEBASTIAN

(to the Male Intern)
Is she right?

MALE INTERN

I think so.

SEBASTIAN

Don't think, man. You've got to
know. Now, is she right?

MALE INTERN

Yes, sir.

SEBASTIAN

That's the spirit.

DR. CARLYLE

As well as he's doing, he's not
completely out of the woods yet.

(MORE)

DR. CARLYLE (CONT'D)
We've got to watch kidney function,
blood count--

SEBASTIAN
Yeah, yeah, they know all that.
(to the Interns)
Right, guys?

The Interns nod.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
See? Now, who's next?

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM- DAY

A small, neat bedroom.

Jenna, bed hair, streaked mascara, snuggles under the covers.
In one hand, a cup of coffee. In the other, a PHOTOGRAPH.

ON THE PHOTOGRAPH

A page of hospital nurse head shots. One is circled with
devil horns drawn in. Emily.

BACK TO JENNA

JENNA
For God's sake, don't let this
bitch upset you. Now get your ass
out of bed.

Jenna pops up, climbs out of bed. She glances at a WALL
CLOCK.

JENNA (CONT'D)
Shit, I'm late. Get a grip, Jenna.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Sebastian, PHONE pressed to his ear, pacing.

SEBASTIAN
(on the phone)
I don't know how much more I can
take, babe. He thinks he owns the
place.

Amanda ambles in unseen, searches for the coffee pot.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
No, he's not my boss. He's a
goddamn resident.

Amanda pours a cup of coffee.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
Yeah, it's bullshit.

He spots Amanda.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
I gotta go. See you tonight? Good.
Wear that thing I got you.

Sebastian ends the call, pockets the phone.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
Young lady, this is the doctors'
lounge. Coffee is for doctors and
qualified staff only.

AMANDA
I'm staff.

SEBASTIAN
Qualified staff?

AMANDA
I'd say so. My aunt is CEO.

SEBASTIAN
That figures. The nut doesn't fall
far from the tree.

AMANDA
What does that mean?

SEBASTIAN
It means have all the coffee you
want.

AMANDA
Thanks, Doc.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BREAK ROOM - DAY

Emily at the door. She reaches for the handle, stops when she
hears Doctor Sebastian laughing.

INT. BREAK ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Amanda's eyes roam Sebastian's chiseled physique.

AMANDA

I remember you. You're the guy on
the elevator.

SEBASTIAN

And your the young woman who
doesn't watch where she's going.

AMANDA

I know where I'm going. I could
take you there with me.

SEBASTIAN

And where would that be?

Amanda sidles up close to him. Licks her lips.

AMANDA

Somewhere you'd like.

SEBASTIAN

How old are you?

AMANDA

Old enough. How old are you?

SEBASTIAN

That's irrelevant.

Amanda fingers the lapel of his jacket.

AMANDA

Are you talking dirty to me?

SEBASTIAN

What? No.

Amanda steps back, pats his crotch.

AMANDA

Too bad.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BREAK ROOM - DAY

Emily with an ear to the door.

Jenna appears behind her.

JENNA
Spying again?

Emily jumps.

EMILY
Don't sneak up on me.

Jenna pushes past her to open the door.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Sebastian grinning like a sixth-grade boy with porn.

Coffee cup in hand, Amanda struts past him.

Jenna pops into the room, Emily close behind.

AMANDA
I guess I'll see you around.

SEBASTIAN
I guess I'll see you around.

Amanda disappears through the door.

EMILY
Who was that?

Sebastian snaps out of his spell.

SEBASTIAN
Her? No one.

INT. JOEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Lori and Joey asleep.

Joey stirs, coughs. An ALARM sounds, jerking Lori awake.

INT. MIRANDA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bleary-eyed, Miranda stares at her LAPTOP SCREEN.

ON THE SCREEN

Her email account page, jam-packed with unanswered messages.

BACK TO MIRANDA

Who squeezes her eyes and massages her temples. Fighting back tears.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Miranda, my dear, it's all worth
it. Children are priceless.

INT. JOEYS HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Carlyle performs CHEST COMPRESSIONS on Joey. Sheila stands by, ready to jump at his command.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Sometimes we smile.

Lori, eyes wide, mouth agape, watches.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Sometimes we cry. But that we keep
to ourselves.

Lori breaks down sobbing.

INT. MIRANDA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Back in control, Miranda blinks, pulls a PILL BOTTLE from a drawer. She twists off the cap, drops two pills into her hand, and pops them into her mouth.

JIMMY (V.O.)
And we never, ever give up.

Miranda sighs, directs her attention back to her laptop screen.

INT. JOEY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Chest compressions continue.

SHEILA
Twenty minutes.

Doctor Carlyle pushes a couple more times, stops. He glances at the CARDIAC MONITOR to see a flat line. Panting, shoulders slumped, arms slack, he lifts tired eyes to Lori...

Whose face explodes in anguish.

END