

COUNTY

Pilot Episode

By Jason Katims

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

Elevator doors open REVEALING JACK MALLOY (29), smart, compassionate, unexpectedly relentless. FOLLOW HIM handheld as he walks up the hallway. Right away we see this hospital is old school: industrial green, no art, a sense of mass. Jack reaches the Nurses' Station, where two NURSES are having a shouting match. *

HISPANIC NURSE
Don't you ever go around me again,-- watch yourself--
Lying bitch--

AFRICAN AMERICAN NURSE
I'm not going to take the blame for that patient coding when you give me the order-- *

HISPANIC NURSE
(to Jack)
What do you want? *

Chyron Reads: DAY ONE *

DR. MERCER (30s), brilliant, crazy, he's a yeller -- approaches-- *

DR. MERCER
Ladies. Please. Take five minutes and get your shit together. Go. Dammit. *

The Nurses both walk off in different directions. *

DR. MERCER (CONT'D)
You'd think we were on the psych ward. Who are you? *

JACK
I'm Jack Malloy. Your new intern. I just want to say I'm so excited to-- *

Mercer just starts walking away. Jack follows, though he's not sure he's supposed to... *

DR. MERCER
--Where'd you train, Malloy? *

JACK
Harvard. *

DR. MERCER

Great. A helluva lot of good that'll do me. Ivy Leaguers usually don't last a week here. Entitled, weak, the first ones to run home to their mommies. Start an I.V. on Mrs. Kyung in room 611...

JACK

Start an I.V.? Isn't that the nurse's job?

DR. MERCER

Maybe you didn't notice the nurses are in a pissing match right now. This is County, Jack. We wear many hats.

(sees the look on Jack's face)

You don't know how to do an I.V.?

JACK

We practiced in medical school. On a mannequin.

DR. MERCER

Well, now you're going to practice on an actual person.

INT. E.R. - DAY

BANG! Sliding doors blow open for A TRAUMA PATIENT on a gurney, THEN A SECOND, both moving fast, surrounded by paramedics, cops, firemen. The place is instantly teeming with activity! The parade passes TRAVIS (26), African-American, from the neighborhood, he has put himself through eight years of school with zero help but rarely lets that show. His face shows he wants to follow, but he's stuck...

...trying to calm OFFICER WADE -- a cop hooked up to heart monitors, on a gurney in the hallway.

WADE

What the hell is going on? I've been here for an hour. I'm going to die on this table.

TRAVIS

Your troponin just came back. It's positive. The senior is calling the cardiology team. You need to stay.

WADE

Get me the hell out of County.
Sign me out of here.

*

TRAVIS

Sir, if you're having a heart
attack--

WADE

Get me out of friggin' County.
Now!

*

*

*

OFF Travis...

INT. ROOM 611 - DAY

Jack gets an I.V. set up, trying not to look intimidated, as he smiles to the patient MRS. KYUNG (50s), Vietnamese, very ill. Jack stops to read the instructions, which produces an eyeroll from Mrs. Kyung's daughter, ANGELINA (15), Vietnamese/American, cute and sassy with tons of attitude.

ANGELINA

Are you kidding? Do you know how
to do this?

JACK

Yup, just-- It's a new type of kit.

ANGELINA

Isn't this the nurse's job anyway?

JACK

I wear many hats.

*

And Jack puts the needle into Kyung. It's a miss. Didn't get the vein.

ANGELINA

Seriously?

JACK

No problem. That happens. I'll
get it on the next try. I feel
lucky.

*

Jack tries again no luck. Again. Again. Cue brow sweat. He is about try again when Angelina reaches out and grabs Jack's hand, fixing her gaze on him.

ANGELINA

That is my Mother. Do not miss
again.

INT. MEDICINE WARD - DAY

Rounds. Mercer walks down the hallway with a group of about six young RESIDENTS and INTERNS including Jack, who clocks-- ERICA KINSEY (26), too pretty for this place, she tends to let her emotions guide her, for better or worse.

MERCER

The patient went from a reasonably functional middle-aged man to nearly dying in the ER, altered and unable to breathe, in cardiac failure and extremis. Rather than run additional expensive tests that won't change management, our first step should be to--

Erica chimes in, super eager to impress...

ERICA

What about a BNP...?

MERCER

A useless test. Expensive and non-specific.

ERICA

Doesn't elevated BNP correlate with cardiac stress?

MERCER

(growing more annoyed)
Wrong.

Jack tries not to cringe for her.

MERCER (CONT'D)

(squinting to read her I.D.)

Kinsey. Tests cost taxpayers dollars. Unnecessary testing puts patients AND our safety-net hospitals at risk, and therefore your NEW job.

This is going really bad. Mercer hands Erica the patient's chart, flipping over one particular page.

MERCER (CONT'D)

On the reverse of the order sheet is the cost of every test here. Nothing is under 200 dollars. Perhaps you'd like to add a few? A D-Dimer? An SPL? Doctor Kinsey?

Erica looks unsure.

MERCER (CONT'D)

There is no such thing as an SPL.

This produces a chuckle from the group. Jack exchanges a look with Erica. Another intern, GRANGER (26), wire-rimmed glasses, bursting with unfounded confidence, chimes in...

GRANGER

Doctor Mercer, since transfer of care -- from ER to ICU to us now in step down is statistically the most dangerous time for patients, wouldn't an old fashioned head to toe physical exam be most prudent?

MERCER

Precisely. Right call.

GRANGER

Thank you, doctor. That's huge coming from you. I saw your lecture on risk management and Bayesian decision making at AMA Chicago last spring. Life changing.

Mercer just rolls his eyes at the obvious suck up and starts moving to the next patient. Granger looks at Erica.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

Next time, Rookie.

ERICA

Keep sucking.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL WARD - DAY

The heavy metal door clicks open, revealing our next intern TALAIKHA, Indian, 95 pounds, stoic, and maddeningly unemotional under any circumstance. She is led by GYPSY, a tattooed, armed guard, past cells with Inmate-Patients.

GUARD GYPSY

Don't ask them what they're in for. Don't talk to them about anything other than their medical condition. If you need me for any reason, I'll be right outside.

Gypsy opens up the cell to Talaikha's patient, a 250-POUND MURDERER, PRISONER WILSON. Talaikha enters, appearing undaunted, picks up his chart, starts reading.

TALAIKHA
Hello, Mr. Wilson, I'm Dr.
Channarayapatra.

PRISONER WILSON
Channa...

TALAIKHA
...rayapatra.

PRISONER WILSON
You wanna go out with me?

TALAIKHA
I only date men that have a life
expectancy greater than six months.

Puts down the chart, reaches for gloves.

TALAIKHA (CONT'D)
Looks like we'll be starting with a
rectal exam today.

OFF Talaikha going about this like it were any other day...

INT. ORTHO WARD - DAY

Our next Intern, BILLY (40), large and gregarious, is in a room with the patient MR. OLANREWAJU (60s), West African, whose WIFE, CHILDREN, and GRANDCHILDREN crowd in.

BILLY
Mr. Olanrewaju, I'm Doctor
Krakower. How are you today?

MR. OLANREWAJU
Not good.

ONE OF HIS KIDS
He's upset because you're chopping
off his leg.

BILLY
I get it. Granted that sucks. But
I think the positive side here is
that we are very optimistic about a
full recovery.

MR. OLANREWAJU

I'm not going to grow my leg back.

BILLY

Yes, that's true.

MRS. OLANREWAJU

We would like the leg.

BILLY

Oh, what did you...?

MRS. OLANREWAJU

After they amputate. May we have it?

ONE OF HIS KIDS

It belongs to him, anyway.

MRS. OLANREWAJU

We need to bury it. This is very important to us, Doctor.

There's something they don't teach you in med school.

CUT TO:

INT. ONCOLOGY WARD - DAY

Our last intern, ROSA (26), Hispanic, ball of fire, sharp-witted and shut down from her emotions, is examining MRS. RODRIGUEZ (50s), whose three adult children EMILIA, PHILIPPE, and CARLA surround her, eyeing Rosa doubtfully.

PHILIPPE

Another X-ray?

EMILIA

Nurse, they did one in the clinic.

ROSA

I'm actually not a nurse--

PHILIPPE

My mother needs an operation now!
(holding up an iPad)
She needs a medianoscopy to assess for clearance and than a salvage partial pneumonectomy.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ

(doubtful)

Philippe, don't yell at her, she's just a nurse.

ROSA

Once again, I'm a doctor. See the stethoscope?

A NURSE comes in. Wearing a stethoscope, as many do. Rosa makes the point:

ROSA (CONT'D)

Nurse, I want to get her set up for a bone scan and an MRI of the brain.

NURSE

(not going along)

Maybe in six months, but today, let's see what Doctor Ganz thinks.

The Nurse walks out. Rosa thinks for a minute and goes after her...

ROSA

Excuse me, Nurse?

The Nurse turns. Rosa starts talking to her in Spanish. This following passage is subtitled. Rosa's true kick ass, street comes out in her.

ROSA (CONT'D)

I want an MRI and a bone scan and it wasn't a suggestion it was an order. I know I look like your daughter or some chick from the neighborhood you could kick around, but I know what I want for my patient, I know what that patient needs and if I need to grab your hand put a pen in it and write it myself I will do so.

(big bright smile)

Thanks!

Rosa takes her leave. The nurse recovers for a second then shouts out in Spanish--

NURSE

You picked on the wrong nurse. Crazy bitch.

INT. 6TH FLOOR MEDICINE WARD - DAY

*

A NURSE talks to Jack as they head toward the room.

NURSE

She's profoundly anemic. Her crit is 18. She's pale as a ghost. Her blood pressure is low, she's short of breath and tachycardic.

JACK

What does Doctor Mercer say?

NURSE

That she's your patient.

JACK

Oh. Right.

Jack tries not to look intimidated as he walks into Mrs. Kyung's room. He takes a look at her, and smiles, even though she looks much worse.

JACK (CONT'D)

Mrs. Kyung, we've given four liters of I.V. fluid but you are very anemic. If we don't get your blood counts up you could pass out or even have a heart attack, so I'm going to get you a couple units of packed RBCs right away.

MRS. KYUNG

"Packed RBCs" is blood? No blood.

JACK

I'm sorry?

MRS. KYUNG

I can't have any blood transfusions. I'm a Jehovah's Witness.

JACK

Mrs. Kyung, this is very serious. You need this.

MRS. KYUNG

I can't be saved by any blood but the blood of Jesus Christ.

As Jack tries to process this his PAGER buzzes.

INT. HOSPITAL - STAIRCASE - DAY

Jack sprints down stairs.

INT. E.R. - DAY

Jack enters, takes it all in, standing in the middle of a stream of activity. A Patient is coding. Another is being sutured. Travis turns around and sees Jack standing there. *

JACK

I got a page? Medicine C team?
For an admission? Pancreatitis and
alcohol withdrawal?

Before Travis can answer, the DOORS BLOW OPEN and PARAMEDICS MOVING FAST roll in with a patient, covered in blood -- they "J-turn" into the trauma bed. Clearly this guy is dying. Jack is drawn to look.

IN THE TRAUMA BAY

One, two, three, the team transfer-lifts the patient from gurney to bed, scissors flashing as they cut off bloody clothes -- nurses stick I.V.s as ER docs and surgeons move quickly in a coordinated team. Orange liquid pours onto the chest spread by a gloved hand as a scalpel lifts over the chest.

An N.D. INTERN, looking GREEN, steps back from the table, looking like he's going to hurl. He heads OUT THE DOOR, past Jack. The E.R. Surgeon sees Jack standing there.

E.R. SURGEON

(to Jack)

You. Get some gloves on.

Travis runs up.

E.R. SURGEON (CONT'D)

Go help out with the dog bite in 4.

(to Jack)

Get in here. Now.

Jack enters. Travis looks at Jack, annoyed. ALARMS BLARE, a cacophony of commands.

E.R. DOC

Rib spreader ready.

TRAVIS

He's the intern on medicine,
down here admitting!

E.R. DOC

Well, he's in the E.R. now.
Gimme your hand.

Jack, who has fumbled on a pair of gloves, tries not to look shocked at the OPEN CHEST before his eyes. It's a bloody mess. THE E.R. SURGEON looks at Jack.

JACK
He's right, I'm medicine...

E.R. DOC
Shut up and hold your hand...

The E.R. Doc has Jack's hand deep in the bloody chest, positioning it just precisely... Jack is in up to his elbow, almost cheek to cheek with the ER Doc.

E.R. DOC (CONT'D)
There. Now press. Hard.

Jack presses down. The E.R. Doc takes his hand out.

NURSE
(re: monitor)
Pressure coming up. 70 systolic.

E.R. DOC
Heart is filling. There it goes.

A PULSE. The monitor BEEPING FAST. Jack looks down at the face of the young officer. Another Doctor, part of the SURGERY team, is in Jack's face now.

SURGEON
Lets go! Pack him up, we're travelling. Right now. Let O.R. Two know we've got a hot red blanket.

As the team starts to move the bed...

SURGEON (CONT'D)
You don't let go until I give you the word. You let go, he dies. Do you understand that, son?

*
*

JACK
Yes.

Stay with JACK as he literally sits on top of the Gurney with this bloodied patient. They go through locked doors into...

INT. O.R. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The patient is wheeled down a long, thin, white hallway. It's surreal and insane and we are seeing all of this through Jack's eyes. They go into the...

INT. O.R. - CONTINUOUS

The patient is immediately prepped, and the surgical team immediately begins to contain the flow of blood in the patient. Jack stands there with his hand on the patient, until...

SURGEON

Take your hand off!

*

Jack takes his hand off. As the Surgeon begins to focus on his patient, Jack backs off.

*

*

ASSISTING DOCTOR

You need to get out of O.R. Now.

*

*

Jack walks out to...

INT. O.R. HALLWAY - SAME

Jack emerges. Make a bee line for the...

*

INT. MEN'S ROOM - SAME

*

Jack bolts for a stall. Throws the fuck up.

*

SMASH TO:

*

MAIN TITLE CARD reads: COUNTY.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Run-down apartment building meets college dorm. Jack, looking like he's lived a lifetime over the last fourteen hours, makes his way toward his door. Opens it...

INT. JACK AND BILLY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A bedraggled Jack walks in to find Billy, in his boxers and nothing else, sipping a martini.

BILLY
(re: Jack's shirt)
Ech. Is that blood?

JACK
Hi, I'm Jack Malloy. I guess we're roommates. I never saw you last night.

BILLY
Admittedly, I was partying pretty late.

Jack notices now that Billy is chopping a pill. He then proceeds to lean over and snort it. Jack feels like he's just walked into bizarro land.

BILLY (CONT'D)
So let me get into your mind.
Right now, you're thinking this guy's too old to be an intern.

JACK
Not at all.

BILLY
Well, I am. I'm forty. Four-o.
Which sucks. Forty sucks. Sucks.

JACK
I actually came to this late too.

BILLY
Yeah? What are you, six?

JACK
Twenty-nine. I was in New York for a while--

BILLY

(I'm more exciting, so let
me talk)

I was a CPA. Came home early from
work one night. There's my wife in
bed with her Gyno. Her Gyno. Sick
perv. So I said frick it all,
Jack. Decided to grant myself a do
over. Did a post-postbaccalaureate
degree. Didn't know what hit me.
I suck at science. Went to med
school, which sucked. Can't stand
the sight of blood -- and here I
am.

JACK

That sounds like a really brave
choice.

BILLY

Okay, you definitely need to loosen
up.

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

ON Jack, sleeping, when suddenly we hear a DEATHLY LOUD BUZZ.
Jack's eyes open. What the hell is that? The sound doesn't
stop -- it's unrelenting. Jack looks at his alarm: 3:34AM.
Shit.

INT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING - STAIRWAY - NIGHT

The ALARM continues as weary Residents and Interns in their
P.J.s, robes, boxers make their way down the stairs. Billy
and Jack make their way down. Jack looks groggy. Billy
never skips a beat.

BILLY

You know what I really want, Jack?
Nurses. Tell me that wasn't a big
motivator for the doctor thing.

JACK

(looking around, I'm not
with this guy)
Yeah, um....

BILLY

The uniforms, Jack. The sponge
baths. The providers of narcotics
through a drip. Tell me something
more alluring.

ROSA

Like my day didn't already suck.

They turn around and see Rosa.

ROSA (CONT'D)

Fire drill on day one. Are these people trying to kill us?

ANOTHER VOICE

It's not a fire drill.

They all turn to see Talaikha.

TALAIKHA

If it were a fire drill, the P.A. system would tell us that it was a fire drill, and the alarm would sound in a beeping pattern rather than one continuous tone.

ROSA

What did you, like, read the arriving intern booklet cover to cover?

TALAIKHA

(unapologetic)

Yeah, like a month ago.

The others exchange a look. Jack notices Travis on the other side of him.

JACK

Hey.

TRAVIS

(cool)

I was supposed to get on that trauma case.

JACK

I'm sorry. It's my first day, I did what he said.

TRAVIS

You could have told him I was the E.R. before you put on gloves.

JACK

How was I...?

TRAVIS

Hey, fine, you got in. Nice job.

JACK
Are you really holding a grudge?

TRAVIS
Nope. Not me.

Jack looks a few steps down, sees Erica.

JACK
Hi.

ERICA
Hi.

JACK
Man, sorry about that before.

ERICA
No big deal.

JACK
It wasn't?

ERICA
One quick cry in the bathroom and I
was good to go.

He smiles.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL HOUSING - LATER THAT NIGHT

A couple hundred Interns and Residents wait outside. A group has formed with Billy, Erica, Rosa, and Talaikha. Jack and Erica are continuing their conversation.

JACK
So, why County?

ERICA
Rebelling against my Dad. He hates
that I'm here.

JACK
I got into a really bad car
accident a few years ago.

ERICA
Oh, wow. I'm sorry.

JACK
Two months in the hospital. And
when I went back to work I started
to feel like I didn't belong there.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Like I was outside of life looking in. Then one day I just found myself online Googling "how does an English major get into med school...?"

ERICA

And how did he?

JACK

He went back to undergrad and started all over.

ERICA

Wow. Good for you, Jack.

Her cellphone rings.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry. I have to... It's my fiancé.

JACK

Oh. Yeah. Well, you should definitely get that.

Erica answers her cell and steps away to talk to her fiancé. Jack watches, dying a little bit. Billy comes up from behind.

BILLY

Did you get her digits?

JACK

Shut up.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Erica is talking to MANUEL SANTOS (70s), sweet and fragile.

Chyron Reads: DAY TWO

Erica has a gentle way with him, and you can see how she's able to bring people out -- it's her gift.

ERICA

Mr. Santos. It's so good to see your eyes open. You have really nice eyes.

Manuel manages a smile.

MANUEL

Yours aren't bad, either.

*
*

Erica laughs.

ERICA

Wow, this is great. The nurse told me you haven't been talking that much.

MANUEL

I'll never get of here, will I?

Erica looks at him -- this is such an intense moment.

ERICA

I honestly don't know, Mr. Santos.

He pauses for a second, then smiles wistfully, remembering.

*

MANUEL

I used to take my family to the pier every weekend. We'd go fishing. We'd get the kids salt water taffy. I was hoping to get there one more time...

He takes a breath, taking in the calm.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

I'm a lucky man. I've had a good life. Beautiful wife and children. I'm ready.

ERICA

That's really brave.

Manuel then takes a moment, and...

MANUEL

My family, they don't want to let go. But this is just putting them through hell. I don't want that. I don't want anything like that. I want them to stop.

ERICA

Mr. Santos, if you are certain that that's how you feel, I can get an advanced directive for you to sign. This way, we can make sure that your wishes are carried out.

MANUEL

Bring it to me.

An intense intimate moment -- a breakthrough -- Manuel motions her closer.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

You're my doctor. You want to know a secret?

(she leans in close)

I hate salt water taffy. I ate it because I loved them so much.

*
*

INT. MRI ADMITTING - DAY

Jack and MR. FOSTER, a homeless gentleman who appears way older than his fifty-odd years, stand across from a DISPIRITED INTAKE NURSE.

DISPIRITED NURSE

Well, this is an expensive set of tests, Doctor. And usually the neurologist or E.R. doc orders these and Mr...

FOSTER

Foster...

DISPIRITED NURSE

...thank you, dear. Mr. Foster here looks pretty good to me.

JACK

Nurse, I wrote an order for an MRI. I mean, I appreciate your input, but I'm the doctor here.

Wrong thing to say.

DISPIRITED NURSE

Well, I will definitely put him on the queue. As soon as we have a spot for him, I will let you know.

Which means never. Foster looks at Jack, "Nice job, Bozo."

JACK

Look I didn't mean to... I'm just saying that I think this guy has some transient ischemia or cerebral edema.

DISPIRITED NURSE
Sorry, I don't understand what
you're saying. I'm just a nurse.

INT. ONCOLOGY WARD - DAY

Rosa walks in and meets LUCY (26), pretty but emaciated.

ROSA
Hi, I'm Doctor Cruz, and I...

Rosa sees that Lucy is emotional, crying.

ROSA (CONT'D)
Oh, listen, Lucy, don't be upset.
We don't know anything yet. I know
there was something weird on your X-
ray, but we're going to get a CT
scan and--

LUCY
I'm not upset over the X-ray.

Lucy shows Rosa an email on her iPhone.

LUCY (CONT'D)
My idiot boyfriend just broke up
with me. Jackass.

ROSA
By email.

Rosa reads the email, trying to contain her building ire.

LUCY
He stuck with me the first time. But
as soon as he got the sense that the
cancer might have come back, I could
feel him pulling away.

ROSA
Lucy, let me tell you something.
This guy is a dirtbag.

LUCY
He's just been through so much.

ROSA
Do not apologize for him. He is a
coward. He is a loser. Listen to
me, Lucy. I am gonna get you better.
(MORE)

ROSA (CONT'D)

And then you and I are going to go out and get you some killer clothes for your killer body, and we're going to go out and find you a man who deserves you. Is that a deal?

LUCY

(smiling)

That's a deal.

*
*

INT. STAFF ROOM - DAY

*

Several interns are there. Dr. Mercer enters..

*

DR. MERCER

Which idiot called OB?

*

JACK

This one.

*
*

Mercer just looks at him...

*

JACK (CONT'D)

*
*

Mrs. Kyung's anemia is from severe uterine fibroids. I think she needs a hysterectomy.

DR. MERCER

Malloy, I don't care if her uterus looks like a sack of potatoes. The woman isn't getting a hysterectomy. She's a Jehovah's Witness.

JACK

I know, but I'm hoping I can convince her to change her mind.

*
*

A NURSE comes in...

*

DR. MERCER

You haven't even been in to see your last two hits yet.

*
*

JACK

I'm getting there right after I finish putting in the order for Mr. Foster--

DR. MERCER

Foster? Why is he still--?

JACK

He needs a--

DR. MERCER

--We are Code Black in this hospital. Do you know what Code Black means?

JACK

That there aren't--

DR. MERCER

--There are no beds. Discharge Foster. Do not waste time and resources on frequent flyers who should be discharged or patients who refuse treatment because of their religious beliefs. You need to get through your list. If I have to turn over some of your patients to other interns or residents, they will not like you, Malloy. Do you understand?

JACK

Yes. But Mr. Foster needs another day of Ox and Vanc and I still haven't gotten him the scan of his--

DR. MERCER

This isn't a shelter. Give him Bactrim, Kelfex, and two weeks of Percocet. Follow up in clinic. Send him.

Mercer leaves. OFF Jack...

INT. ORTHO - DAY

Billy talks to a Nurse.

BILLY

They want the leg.

NURSE

What?

BILLY

They want to bury it. Religious thing. Family thing. I don't know. They want to bury the leg. After we cut it off. They want it back.

NURSE

They can't have it back. It's
against the rules.

BILLY

Who makes the rules?

The Nurse just sighs...

BILLY (CONT'D)

Hey, listen, a few of us are
hanging out after shift tonight if
you're into partying.

Nurse just gives him a look of disdain and lifts up her
finger to display her wedding ring.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Oh, right, loyalty. Awesome.
Congrats.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - LATER

*

Rosa and Jack walk and talk.

ROSA

Did you give her lupron?

JACK

She's had all that, not helping.

*

ROSA

Well, if she won't take blood, what
can you do?

JACK

And Mr. Foster's got terrible
cellulitis, skin breakdown,
probably MRSA. If we put him out
on the street it will never heal.

ROSA

You're not going to make it, Jack.

JACK

What?

ROSA

You're here two days and you're
already a mess. You're gonna
explode or something, dude. You,
like, feel too much. You need to
be more like me.

(MORE)

ROSA (CONT'D)

I grew up in this neighborhood.
GED'd my way into college --
scratched and clawed into med
school. You can't worry about
everyone. If that lady doesn't
want blood transfusions, good-bye.
That homeless guy? Bam, good-bye.
Discharge. Sayonara.

JACK

Are you made of stone?

They're now in the--

EMERGENCY WAITING ROOM

--over a hundred people waiting to be seen. Daunting.

ROSA

Look at this, Jack. This is
County. Every person you keep in a
bed because you're too much of a
pussy to move on, there's someone
else who's sitting here waiting for
help. If you're looking to
practice perfect medicine, you're
not going to do it here. You can't
save everyone, Jack.

Suddenly, a fight breaks out between the DADs of two CHILD
PATIENTS waiting to be seen. They are yelling over their
order in line. It's messy and crazy and Jack ends up in the
fray trying to help break it up. He exchanges a look with
Rosa just as BAM -- one of the Dads lands a punch on Jack's
face. As Jack hits the floor!

*
*
*
*
*
*

BLACK OUT:

*

END OF ACT ONE

*

ACT TWO

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Jack, holding an ice pack to his face, is talking to Mr. Foster.

FOSTER

You're telling me I'm cured? This is cured?

Foster indicates his legs -- his foot still red and swollen.

JACK

(as honest as he can be)
You can take pills for that. We need to discharge you, Mr. Foster. Here, take these with you.

Jack takes a few cafeteria sandwiches and puts them in one of Foster's many bags, scattered around the room. His worldly possessions.

Suddenly, a very upset Angelina runs up to the door.

ANGELINA

Doctor! It's my Mom.

Seeing her expression, Jack heads out of the room and fast walks, then runs, into...

INT. KYUNG'S ROOM - DAY

A NURSE rolls in a crash cart, nearly knocking Jack over as she squeezes through the door, fast.

JACK

(shaking her)
Mrs. Kyung. Mrs. Kyung!

Mrs. Kyung doesn't move.

ANGELINA

Oh no...

JACK

We need a doctor.

That just came out. ALARM from the monitor.

NURSE

She's bradying down.

JACK

What?

NURSE

(re: monitor, genius...)

Her pulse is 38.

Jack is a deer in the headlights. The Nurse is breaking out drugs from brightly color-coded boxes onto the bed.

ANGELINA

Do something!

NURSE

("duh")

You need to call a code.

JACK

Call a code. Now.

A "what the fuck?" moment -- the Nurse and Angelina look at each other. Another thing Jack's never done before.

JACK (CONT'D)

How?

NURSE

Jesus Christ. Pull the cord.

She cocks her head toward the bright RED CODE "TASSEL" hanging out of the wall under a "CODE BLUE" label.

Eureka! Jack reaches for it but Angelina is faster and pulls the ripcord for him. ALARMS SOUND. Jack takes a look at Angelina.

JACK

Thank you. Wait outside.

Angelina can't move--

JACK (CONT'D)

Nurse?

NURSE

(to Angelina, steely and direct)

Honey, go on, like the Doctor said.
Don't make me leave him here alone.

Angelina exits, wide-eyed, as the Nurse gives Jack a look. *

JACK

Need some help in here! *

Jack starts CPR. He's nervous, this is scary shit. The door *
blows open. It's Erica. She sees Jack doing compressions on
Mrs. Kyung.

ERICA
Jesus, what are you doing?

JACK
I don't know. She bradyed down and
now she's not responsive.

ERICA
Okay, okay. A for airway. We've
got to intubate her. *

ALARM. Erica looks up at the monitor.

JACK
Is that V fib?

ERICA
Yeah, I think so.

JACK
Okay, then we need to shock her.
Right?

ERICA
We need to shock her.

They're still babes in the woods here. The Nurse isn't.

NURSE
Two votes wins.

JACK
Three hundred sixty joules.

NURSE
Go big. Charging.

JACK
Help me with this, Erica.

Erica takes over CPR as Jack takes the paddles from the
nurse.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm clear. You're clear.
Everybody's clear.

They both look at him.

NURSE
Very complete.

JACK
Clear.

Bam! He shocks Mrs. Kyung.

INT. STAFF ROOM - DAY

*

Rosa, on a computer terminal, opens a file of a CT scan. She looks at it. Her face drops. We hold on her a long time...

ROSA
Dammit.

INT. LUCY'S ROOM - DAY

*

Rosa is with Lucy.

ROSA
Your CT scan does show that there's something there. But we don't know if it's cancer.

Lucy takes this in. She tries not to look down.

LUCY
What do you think it is?

Rosa is thoughtful.

ROSA
We don't know yet. We need to do a bronchoscopy. We go in through your airway with a tube with a camera on it that will give us more information.

Lucy is silent, clocking Rosa's tone, which is much more serious than the last visit.

ROSA (CONT'D)
Stay strong. Try not to worry. We still don't know.

LUCY
Okay.

OFF this, we...

*

INT. MEDICINE WARD - DAY

Jack, on his way, sees Angelina staring out the window, looking sad. He approaches her.

JACK
You okay?

ANGELINA
How close did she come to dying?

JACK
Maybe kinda close.

Angelina is silent.

ANGELINA
I can't believe this is happening.

JACK
Are you a Jehovah's Witness too?

ANGELINA
Are you kidding? No. I love my mom, but we're completely different. She met my dad in Vietnam when she was fifteen. She was giving blow jobs to soldiers for five bucks. Sorry, no polite way to say that. She met my Dad... got pregnant. He took her back here. One day a Jehovah's Witness knocked on her door and it sort of made her life make sense.

JACK
And your dad...?

ANGELINA
He died two years ago.

JACK
I'm sorry. Any other siblings?

ANGELINA
My brother. But he only shows up every few years when he needs money. It's just the two of us.

This lands on Jack -- how much this girl needs her mom to be around. OFF this...

*

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Travis is seated alone, wolfing down a sandwich, when he stops cold seeing a SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRL whom he recognizes.

TRAVIS
Sheila?

SHEILA
Hi, Travis.

TRAVIS
What are you doing here, girl?

And even as he asks the question, he knows the answer. His heart sinks.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
It's your Mom.

SHEILA
Yeah.

At this moment Jack passes.

TRAVIS
Malloy, you have five minutes?

JACK
I have three pages to return and I have get to Admin...
(re: his half of sandwich)
...Are you gonna eat that?

TRAVIS
Take it. Jack, this is Sheila.
Sheila, this is Jack. I need you to watch her for five minutes.

JACK
What are you talking about? Who is this?

TRAVIS
Thanks. I'll be back as soon as I can.

JACK
Hey, hold on!

But Travis just goes. Jack hides all of his confusion, and smiles.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey, how are you?
(re: her stuffy)
That's awesome. Is that a platypus?

INT. E.R. - DAY

Travis walks through the E.R., angry and scared, looking from bed to bed. Then he stops -- seeing what he's looking for. What he was afraid of. A YOUNG WOMAN (20s), writhing and fighting an E.R. DOCTOR as a NURSE attempts to STICK her for an I.V. *

E.R. DOC
(to Travis)
Get in here! *

Travis looks like a deer in a headlights. *

TRAVIS
I-- Now! We need to restrain her. *

Travis has to go in. He starts fighting to bring the woman down. He is getting emotional doing this. *

E.R. DOC (CONT'D)
Steady now. Stay down.
(an aside)
Goddamn junkies. Too stupid to know we're trying to help them. *

The E.R. Doc pushes her down a little more roughly than Travis thinks is appropriate and instinctively Travis grabs the doctor's arm! *

E.R. DOC (CONT'D)
What the hell is wrong with you? *

TRAVIS
(letting go of him, out of breath)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. She's my sister. *

OFF this shock, we... *

INT. I.C.U. - DAY *

Erica heads toward Mr. Santos's room and stops short. Inside, Santos is in an unconscious state.

Manuel's CHILDREN (40s) and GRANDCHILDREN (20s) are very angry and emotional as Mercer attempts to calm them down.

MARCELINO

My father never said a word to us about any of this.

MERCER

Look, I understand.

One of the Granddaughters, VICKY, sees Erica.

VICKY

Is that her?

MARCELINO

That's her.

They yell at Erica. Marcelino waves the Advanced Directive. *

MARCELINO (CONT'D)

When did this happen?

ERICA

I talked to Mr. Santos yesterday--

VICKY

Oh, you talked to him--

ANOTHER ONE

My father hasn't had a conversation in months--

ERICA

He talked to me.

MARCELINO

We will not stand for this. I know you just want to get people out of here. Empty beds. Dead or alive.

ERICA

That is not at all what happened.

VICKY

I am having a baby, and my grandfather is going to be alive to hold my baby. Do you understand that?

ERICA

I know this is hard.

MARCELINO

He needs dialysis. He is going to get it.

MERCER

Guys, hold on. We understand your feelings. Your father was not in a lucid state when he signed this. You will maintain stewardship over his medical decisions.

Mercer rips up the advance directive.

MERCER (CONT'D)

I'll put in the order to start dialysis.

Mercer exits, Erica follows him out to--

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Erica stops Mercer...

MERCER

(impatient)

What.

ERICA

Yesterday he was completely cognizant.

*

Mercer, pulls Erica into an empty room, closes the door. They are very close.

*

*

ERICA (CONT'D)

He was lucid, and completely clear about what he wanted.

*

*

*

MERCER

ERICA

Kinsey, this isn't some second-year medical school ethics class.

Isn't our job to represent the patient's--

*

He's in her face now. It's weirdly sexual, at least from where he's standing.

*

*

MERCER

--the family has durable power of attorney. You are an intern for two days? I am not going to risk a lawsuit over this. They want dialysis. It's done.

*

*

*

*

*

*

And then Mercer just kisses Erica on the lips. Holy shit! *

ERICA *
What are you doing? *

MERCER *
I thought I sensed a thing. *
(then) *
Alright, fine, collect yourself. *

ERICA *
I'm going to file a complaint to *
Admin. *

Mercer just laughs as he leaves. OFF Erica... *

INT. MEDICINE WARD - DAY *

Talaikha stands outside of a room with MRS. PEARSE. Her husband lays in the room, out of earshot.

TALAIKHA
Mrs. Pearse, your husband is ready to go home.

MRS. PEARSE
Oh my God. Thank you -- you cured him.

TALAIKHA
Cured? No. Your husband has a congestive heart condition. There is no cure for that.

MRS. PEARSE
I don't understand. Doctor Bell told me he was going to be better.

TALAIKHA
Doctor Bell is correct -- better, but not cured. It is simple pathophysiology -- the heart becomes enlarged. It works harder and harder to pump blood through the system. The harder it works, the more stress it puts on the heart muscle and the weaker it gets. Our treatment helps, but the cycle continues until the heart fails and the patient dies due to arrest or pulmonary edema and hypoxia.

MRS. PEARSE

Speak English.

TALAIKHA

There is no cure for a congestive heart condition. He will get sicker each time through the hospital, and will eventually be unable for us to recover.

MRS. PEARSE

Are you saying he's going to die?

TALAIKHA

Not today. But yes. Eventually. The ten-year mortality rate for CHF is fifty percent -- the evidence shows...

Mrs. Pearse grows deeply thoughtful, then turns all of her pent-up rage directly on Talaikha.

MRS. PEARSE

What is wrong with you?! How can you just tell me that my husband is going to die, without a care in the world?

TALAIKHA

I do care.

MRS. PEARSE

We have been married for forty-three years! This is how you tell me I'm going to lose him?

TALAIKHA

I was just trying to explain the facts--

MRS. PEARSE

The facts. Yeah. I am going to contact hospital administration--

TALAIKHA

They will agree with my assessment, Mrs. Pearse--

MRS. PEARSE

I am going to tell them that I never want to talk to you again.

Mrs. Pearse goes into her husband's room, then turns back and looks right at Talaikha...

MRS. PEARSE

Heartless.

She slams the door.

INT. KYUNG'S ROOM - DAY

Jack is sitting across from Kyung.

JACK

I need you to tell me that you will
accept a blood transfusion.

KYUNG

I can't accept--

JACK

OB won't even set a meeting with you
if you won't take blood. So... Say
that you'll do it. Let's get OB in
here. Get you ready for pre-op, and
then if you decide not to, that's
your decision. This way, at least
you're giving yourself a fighting
chance.

KYUNG

But I won't change my mind.

JACK

Mrs. Kyung, you almost died today.
Do you understand that?

*

KYUNG

Only the blood of Jesus shall--

JACK

(losing it a little,
passionate)

Yeah, you told me that the other
day. But we can't get any of
Jesus's blood. Okay? Mrs. Kyung,
you have to do this for your
daughter. She needs you. She's
too young to be alone.

Kyung hears this. It's painful. Tears well.

KYUNG

I can't take blood.

OFF Jack...

INT. PROCEDURE ROOM - DAY

*

Lucy waits for a test. A few other people wait too, but Lucy is all alone. It's dark and sucky. Lucy looks up to find Rosa's there.

LUCY
You found me.

ROSA
I found you.

LUCY
I'm scared.

ROSA
Yeah. Me too.

Rosa sits down next to Lucy. Just to wait with her.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - NIGHT

The place is packed. A lot of second-year Residents and Interns, some still in their scrubs. Old songs play on the jukebox. These guys party hard. We catch snippets of conversations...

*

N.D. INTERN

Dude, this patient was so tripping from the ketamine that he freaked and asked me for a hug while I was "I&D"ing his butt pus. Reeked big time.

ANOTHER INTERN

So the hospital in Mexico literally hands the guy Mapquest instructions to County hospital. He shows up, no green card, doesn't speak a word of English, and hands me his MRI.

Find our six interns all raising a glass of beer to Jack.

BILLY

First one of us to have a patient code!

They all toast and drink up.

BILLY (CONT'D)

May it never happen to me!

They all toast again.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Congrats, dude. You saved a life today.

Jack raises his glass to Erica, they share a secret look and he mouths, "Thank you." Granger walks up.

*

GRANGER

Hey, Kinsey.

*

*

ERICA

Seriously, we're friends now?

*

*

GRANGER

What? Before? Really? This is the way it works. It's dog eat dog.

*

*

*

(MORE)

GRANGER (CONT'D)
(the others are looking at
him, so...)
Peter Granger. Here's the thing.
We're all here because County gets
the most patients and the sickest
patients. We're here because we
want to be in the shit. So I am
going to suck up to as many Seniors
as I have to, to get to be first on
everyone's list when it comes to
cutting people open and playing
around in their insides. Cheers.

Granger starts to walk away.

BILLY
(a bit under)
Cheers, asshole.

Granger turns back.

GRANGER
What?

BILLY
Nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - LATER

The crowd has thinned out a bit. Jack and Talaikha are at
the bar. The others have gone.

TALAIKHA
Do I look heartless to you, Jack?

JACK
Who said you were heartless?

TALAIKHA
Patients.

JACK
More than one?

TALAIKHA
A couple.

JACK
What did you say to them?

TALAIKHA

The truth. They were both dying.
What am I supposed to do, lie?
Jeez. Kill the messenger.

JACK

Maybe you need to just work a
little bit on your delivery.

TALAIKHA

If I were dying I wouldn't want a
song and dance. I'd want a doctor
who could man up and tell me. And
that's the doctor that I'm going to
be. Like for instance with you.
You keep whining about your
Jehovah's Witness. Why don't you
do a bloodless surgery? It's
ballsy. It's today. It'll save
her life.

(off Jack's blank look)

You have heard of bloodless
surgery, haven't you? You, like,
went to med school?

JACK

Yeah, I've heard of it, it just
never occurred to me... So you
think anyone here could do that?

TALAIKHA

Doctor Andrews in OB did his
fellowship at Johns Hopkins, under
Doctor Pratt who's, like, written a
thousand articles on it.

JACK

You're kidding.

TALAIKHA

Not actually a thousand.

JACK

No, I get that. Talaikha, you're a
genius.

TALAIKHA

Jack, don't look, and I don't want
to shock you but there's a guy on
the other side of the bar that I'm
going to sleep with tonight.

(Jack immediately looks)

Did I just say don't look?

JACK
What are you talking about? Are you serious?

TALAIKHA
Yes.

JACK
How do you know?

TALAIKHA
Because I'm going to go up to him and offer him sex. And in my experience that usually results in sex.

Jack looks at her, shocked.

TALAIKHA (CONT'D)
I know. Shocking. My parents are forcing me into an arranged marriage with a guy that I despise. I have a first right of refusal but they're jamming this thing down my throat -- and this I just control. Anyway, can I trust you not to share this with anyone?...
(Jack nods, like a shocked idiot)
Do I have chicken fingers in my teeth?

JACK
No.

TALAIKHA
See you tomorrow, Jack.

Talaikha makes her way over to the other side of the bar. As she says something and the guy smiles, surprised, we hold on a shocked Jack...

INT. STAFF ROOM - DAY

Jack is walking with Doctor Mercer.

Chyron Reads: DAY THREE

DOCTOR MERCER
This is County, Jack. We're meat and potatoes. We don't do bloodless surgery.

JACK

There was a very similar case that I just Googled. I can send you the link--

DOCTOR MERCER

Please don't tell me you just asked your Senior Resident to Google something.

JACK

She's going to die.

DOCTOR MERCER

People don't die of fibroids.

JACK

We'll be the first.

DOCTOR MERCER

Get another set of cultures on Mrs. Archer, set up for your paracentesis on the liver bomb in 615, and for God's sake, get in to see the rest of your patients.

JACK

What about Mrs. Kyung?

DOCTOR MERCER

Call University. See if they'll take her.

INT. 6TH FLOOR MEDICINE - DAY

Travis walks the room where ANGELA, the woman Travis saw yesterday, is now in a room on the regular ward. She is conscious now, and sees him -- so much history here. Travis is a mix of emotions. Sad. Angry...

ANGELA

I need more Demerol. Methadone. Anything.

TRAVIS

Those are your first words to me. Really?

ANGELA

What do you want me to say?

*
*
*

*
*
*

*
*

TRAVIS

Maybe you're wondering how your daughter is who you took with you to score whatever bad shit you bought.

ANGELA

Listen, little brother, I know you're a big doctor now--

TRAVIS

Angela, you need to want to change. I can't want it for you.

ANGELA

You don't know what it's like.

TRAVIS

What are you going to do. Who are you blaming now? Your boyfriend? Your old boss? Mom? Who are you going to blame now, Angela? You're going to lose that girl. You're going to lose her. She's the one thing you got and you're going to lose her!

ANGELA

(crying now)

Damnit, Travis, what do you think? Don't you think I know that? I love her. I'm weak. I'm weaker than you. Okay? Is that what you want me to say? I just need to get fixed. Get me fixed.

Travis looks up and sees Jack standing at the door. How much has he witnessed? Still not sure what's going on here, Jack chooses to stay on the side of professionalism.

JACK

She needs her Ativan or she could seize.

TRAVIS

I'll give it to her.

Jack hands Travis the syringe. OFF Jack...

INT. ONCOLOGY - DAY

Rosa walks into Lucy's room.

LUCY

Hi...!

ROSA

Hi.

LUCY

Everything okay?

Rosa looks at Lucy. This is the hardest thing she's ever had to do in her life.

ROSA

We got the results from the bronch.

Lucy notices just how dire Rosa looks. Rosa's hands are shaking. Rosa can't look her in the eye. Rosa doesn't know what to do, how to say this.

ROSA (CONT'D)

Your cancer is back.

Lucy takes this in.

LUCY

Okay. Well, how bad is it? Is it bad?

ROSA

Well, it is not what we were hoping for.

LUCY

What are you saying? What is it?

ROSA

It's...

Rosa finds herself reading the printout from pathology.

*

ROSA (CONT'D)

You had limited stage small-cell lung cancer. It has metastasized and now it is in your other lung, and in the fluid we collected. There is a chemotherapy, but it's not likely to be very effective. I'll have to discuss with the attending whether that's something we would recommend.

Rosa has delivered this stoically. It's horrible. Lucy looks at Rosa, feeling somehow betrayed, weirdly angry.

LUCY

So I guess we're not going to be able to get that drink.

ROSA

I'm so sorry.

Rosa leaves. We walk with her to...

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Rosa walks out and keeps walking, trying not to be seen as the tears well up in her. She goes into an empty room. Cries.

INT. PRIVATE MEDICAL CENTER - ATRIUM - DAY

As we hear piano music... Jack walks in through the atrium of a fancy medical center. Huge ceilings, modern glass structure. Jack's eyes linger on an elderly volunteer playing a grand piano. We are no longer in County.

INT. DOCTOR SPENCE OFFICE - DAY

Big, impressive office. Jack sits across from DR. SPENCE (50s), African American, quietly intimidating.

DOCTOR SPENCE

You drove all the way here from County for this?

JACK

Actually, I took the bus. I got tired of leaving messages for you, Doctor.

DOCTOR SPENCE

I'm sorry, but we don't have any room right now to transfer this case in. Our slate is full.

JACK

But you have to take her.

DOCTOR SPENCE

Why on earth would we have to take her?

JACK

The law. This is a "higher level of care" situation.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

If a procedure can't be done at one hospital, a hospital that does the procedure is obligated to--

DOCTOR SPENCE

--Oh, come on. That's horseshit.

JACK

Why?

DOCTOR SPENCE

You know why.

JACK

Because she doesn't have insurance?

DOCTOR SPENCE

You've been around long enough to know the drill, Malloy.

OFF Jack's look...

DOCTOR SPENCE (CONT'D)

How long have you been around?

JACK

(unapologetic)

Four days.

DOCTOR SPENCE

You're an intern. I'm surprised my office even let you in here.

JACK

They didn't. I waited for your secretary to leave her desk and I snuck in.

Spence looks at Jack, can't help but crack a smile. He likes this kid's pluck.

JACK (CONT'D)

She coded yesterday. She won't take a blood transfusion. She's going to die.

SPENCE

Look, Malloy. We don't take dumps from County. We dump to County. That's the way it is. You're not going to change the entire system because you got on a bus to the Westside. But let me tell you something, son. I trained at County.

(MORE)

SPENCE (CONT'D)

I know what you're up against.
Things can get done there -- you just
have to keep fighting for every
patient. Just like you're doing.

Jack nods. He rises, and starts to leave.

SPENCE (CONT'D)

If you ever want to come to a place
where you won't have to fight so
hard to get your patients the care
they need, give me a call.

Jack considers a beat. What a different world this would be.

INT. ADMINISTRATION OFFICES - DAY

Billy talks to a hospital administrator.

ADMINISTRATOR

Is this really what you want to
waste my time with, Doctor?

BILLY

It seemed like a pretty big deal to
them.

ADMINISTRATOR

What are we supposed to do, wrap
the leg in a doggy bag? This is
human tissue we're talking about.
There are disposal laws. Federal
laws.

BILLY

The poor guy's losing his damn leg.
What's the harm in letting him bury
the stupid thing if he wants to
bury it?

ADMINISTRATOR

What kind of religion is this?

BILLY

How the hell would I know?

ADMINISTRATOR

Talk to pathology.

BILLY

Pathology sent me to you.

ADMINISTRATOR

Then go to Ethics.

BILLY

Ethics? What does this have to do with Ethics? They just want to bury a damn leg.

ADMINISTRATOR

Intern -- get the hell out of here.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Jack, Travis, Talaikha, Billy, and Rosa stand among a crowd of Interns and Residents. Someone from ADMIN stands at a shut door, trying to talk to someone inside. Erica arrives.

ERICA

What's going on?

TRAVIS

An intern locked himself in there and won't come out.

ERICA

No way.

JACK

He's been in there for hours.

BILLY

One down. Couple hundred to go. Okay, time to hit the bar.

(to Erica)

Oh right -- you're on call tonight.

ERICA

You're mean. Okay, give me your signouts -- and they better be tucked.

JACK

You'll be fine.

(hands her his sheet)

Just keep an eye on Mrs. Kyung, and 614 is going to ask for pain meds every ten minutes.

Rosa hands over her sheet.

ROSA

If Mrs. Ortega has problems breathing, give her the usual 5 of albuterol 'que' 30 mins times 2, and then an Ambien to take the edge off.

Erica is handed another list. Ugh.

TALAIKHA

This urosepsis needs his antibiotics at twenty hundred hours. And this rhabdo just came in this afternoon -- he seems stable but I'm worried about CK and creatinine bumping. Keep him hydrated, okay?

BILLY

(and one more list)

This guy is constipated. This one's a pain in the ass. This lady is constipated and a pain in the ass. Good luck. I hear the place is haunted.

Erica stands there holding the papers of about sixty patients, most of whom she doesn't even know.

JACK

Okay. Well, we'll see you tomorrow.

ERICA

See you guys.

They all walk off leaving Erica on her own. OFF ERICA...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Erica writes an order at a chart rack.

ERICA

Here's Johansann's order for ten of Ambien. At least he's going to get some sleep tonight.

The Nurse comes up with news...

NURSE

Your transfer's here.

ERICA

What transfer?

NURSE

You didn't hear about a transfer? You're going to love this.

ERICA

Where are the transfer papers from the other hospital?

The nurse just shrugs. Erica follows her and sees in a room a large, bear-like snoring Native American figure on the bed.

ERICA (CONT'D)

What's that smell?

NURSE

That's Wild Turkey, honey. Meet Running Bear.

ERICA

Okay, that's racist.

NURSE

No. His name is Running Bear.

She hands Erica the chart. It is.

*

INT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Billy, Talaikha, Rosa, Travis, and Jack sit at a table.

BILLY

It's not just a leg anymore. It's more than that. It's me against the machine. I'm fighting the man.

Another INTERN walks by.

INTERN

It was Granger.

ROSA

What?

INTERN

The intern in the bathroom. It was Granger.

JACK

No way. "Dog eat dog," Granger?

ROSA

Good for him. Conceited ass. What happened to him?

INTERN

Someone said they saw him crying in the stairwell a couple of hours ago, and then he just locked himself in.

The Intern walks away.

TALAIKHA

The truth is, it could be any of us? Sleep deprivation. Enormous stress. Poor diet. We're all walking time bombs.

ROSA

And this place. No mentorship. No guidance. And the patients are animals.

BILLY

Drug seeking, leg burying, crazy-ass animals.

They all crack up. Travis, irked by this, gets up.

TRAVIS

If you didn't want to be here, maybe you should have gone to some big private medical center.

BILLY

I tried. They didn't accept me.

Everyone cracks up. Travis just walks out. Everyone looks at each other -- what's his problem?

CUT TO:

EXT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jack comes out and finds Travis standing there.

JACK

Everything alright?

There's a pregnant pause, then...

TRAVIS

She's my sister. The O.D.

Jack nods, taking this in.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

She's my sister and she's a lost cause. That little girl you were watching is my niece. So those animals you guys were talking about? I guess I'm one of them.

*
*

OFF Jack...

CUT TO:

INT. RUNNING BEAR'S ROOM - NIGHT

Erica is struggling to examine the still fully-clothed patient. He is incoherent, writhing around the bed, pushing her away.

ERICA

We're going to have to restrain him.

The Nurse starts putting the restraints on his wrists.

NURSE

I don't feel a good pulse here. I'm going to put him on the monitor.

ERICA

I don't understand it. He's just a drunk. This doesn't make any sense. He should be perking up by now.

NURSE

Doctor?

Erica looks at his leg. She starts to roll up his pantleg -- the limb is purple, blue, swollen, and looks horrible.

ERICA

I need to get him undressed. This could be necrotizing fasciitis or meningitis. This isn't just a drunk guy.

An alarm sounds.

NURSE

He's hypotensive. 70 systolic.

Shit. That's even worse.

ERICA

This guy's really sick.

CUT TO:

INT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - NIGHT

Billy is practicing with Talaikha.

TALAIKHA

Mr. Krakower, you're going to die.

BILLY

Okay, I feel nothing from you right now. Give it a little more feeling. Dredge up a tear. Something.

TALAIKHA

Patients don't want fake tears.

BILLY

Well, they certainly don't want Spock.

TALAIKHA

I hate you.

ANGLE ON: Jack and Rosa.

JACK
So how'd it go? Did you drop the
bomb?

ROSA
It was fine.

JACK
Yeah?

ROSA
Yeah. What are you gonna do? Drop
the bomb, grab a coffee, go to a
lecture. This is our life now,
right?

JACK
Yup.

Jack doesn't quite believe her, but his cellphone rings. He
picks up.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hello?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOSPITAL - SAME

It's Erica, on her cellphone in the corner of the room.
Running Bear is now totally restrained, completely out of it.
The Nurse is hanging a bag of I.V. fluid on a pump. The
alarm is screaming. The Nurse shakes her head.

ERICA
Jack, I've got a patient dying.

JACK
Okay, hold on--

ERICA
He came in drunk, it looked like
DTs but now he's hypotensive. He's
got a huge swollen leg, and he's
altered.

JACK
He needs a CT.

ERICA

Did it. It's negative. So is the ultrasound of the leg.

JACK

Did you call the attending?

ERICA

Last time I talked to him, he thought it was just a drunk, and now he's not calling me back. I'm so fucked. I don't know what to do. I'm out of ideas.

JACK

Just go back to the basics. ABCs. Repeat the exam. Review the labs. Make a differential diagnosis.

ERICA

Okay. Got it.

But she's not so convinced. She hangs up and just says, to no one in particular...

ERICA (CONT'D)

Help.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

The alarm's still beeping. Erica is over Running Bear's head with a pen light, checking his pupils -- doing the exam, like Jack told her. The Nurse is at the pump.

NURSE

What do you want to start the levophed at.

ERICA

Um...

JACK

Ten "mikes" per minute.

Erica looks over -- it's Jack! She smiles a little through her fear.

JACK (CONT'D)

What's that smell?

ERICA/NURSE

Wild Turkey.

Erica struggles, listening to his chest.

JACK

(to the Nurse)

Why does he still have clothes on?

(to Erica)

We've gotta get this guy completely undressed. We can't miss anything.

ERICA

(to the Nurse)

Can you hand me trauma shears?

They start cutting off Running Bear's clothes as Erica completes the exam.

ERICA (CONT'D)

Bilateral breath sounds. Doesn't sound like pneumonia -- he's not in failure...

JACK

This could be meningitis. Look for a rash. It's supposed to start distally.

ERICA

Maybe that's what's up with the foot.

JACK

What foot?

Jack cuts up the pant leg. The foot, knee, leg -- it all looks horrible.

JACK (CONT'D)

This is too big for petechiae. This has to be nec fash.

ERICA

His belly's soft. We'll need to roll him.

JACK

And do a rectal.

ERICA

Lovely.

They finish cutting the clothes.

JACK
(to the Nurse)
Help us with this.

The Nurse unties the restraints on one side and holds the head.

ERICA
On my count. One, two, three...

And they roll Running Bear up on his side. Erica runs her hands down his spinal column.

ERICA (CONT'D)
No signs of trauma, no step offs.
Give me some lube.

Jack hands her the lube. As he reaches down to pull the clothing away from Running Bear's butt, a RATTLESNAKE falls ONTO THE BED.

JACK
Jesus!

ERICA
(jumping back)
Fuck!

NURSE
Shit! That's a snake.

They let go. Running Bear rolls back onto the snake and they step back. Looking at each other in disbelief.

ERICA
I think he have a diagnosis. We're going to need ten vials of anti-venom--

JACK
And a hatchet.

TIME CUT:

INT. SAME ROOM - LATER

Monitor beeping. The chaos has been replaced by a calm, orderly feeling. They've got it under control. Jack's rolling the anti-venom vials between his hands like a pencil. The snake is now contained within some medical container appropriated for this unusual purpose.

JACK
Vial 7, mixed.

Erica looks at the monitor.

ERICA
Blood pressure's coming up. Heart
rate's going down. We're looking
good.

RUNNING BEAR
But not feeling good.

ERICA
Welcome back, Running Bear.

RUNNING BEAR
My friends call me Steve.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Erica and Jack stand outside the front entrance of the
behemoth hospital. Jack is on his way back.

JACK
Well, you've got some story for
your first night on call.

ERICA
Oh my God...

JACK
Well, good-night.

ERICA
Good-night.

Erica feels herself getting extremely emotional. The shock
of what just happened hits her.

JACK
Are you okay?

ERICA
Yeah, I'm sorry, I get so...
(re: her emotions)
I'm going to be a terrible doctor.

JACK
It's okay.

Erica gets it together and looks at Jack, so appreciative for what he did. Feeling close to him.

ERICA
So I lied to you before.

JACK
I knew it. You're not engaged.

ERICA
When you asked why I became a doctor. My little sister got diagnosed with leukemia when I was fourteen. The only way I could deal with it was to learn everything about that disease. Every single thing. Every time a doctor or a nurse came around I would ask a million questions. I went home and read about it on line. I read all these medical books. I stopped thinking about it as whether they were going to save her. It was whether I was going to save her.

JACK
That's a lot to take on at fourteen.

ERICA
Anyway, I didn't. Save her.

JACK
But you're here.

There's a look between them. Things are getting ever more dangerous. Erica stops the closeness a bit.

ERICA
Thanks, Jack. Thanks for being here tonight. I don't know what I would have...

Erica's emotions get the better of her again and Jack reaches out to comfort her. Overwhelmed and suddenly so drawn to Jack, she kisses him. And then immediately pulls back.

ERICA (CONT'D)
Oh, I'm sorry.

JACK
No. That's--

ERICA

A mistake. I don't know, why I...
I'm just sleep deprived and I am
so, so sorry...

JACK

It's really okay.

Erica's beeper goes off. She looks at the page. Her face falls. She's exhausted.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'll take it.

ERICA

What?

JACK

Go rest for an hour.

Jack looks at her pager and then heads inside. OFF Erica, watching her knight in shining armor disappear...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. CHIEF OF STAFF OFFICE - DAY

Jack sits across from HENDRICKS (40s), chief of staff.

Chyron Reads: DAY FOUR

HENDRICKS *
Bloodless surgery? *

JACK *
Yes. *

HENDRICKS *
Call University-- *

JACK *
They won't take her. *

HENDRICKS *
We have a hundred people sitting in *
the ED. Have you seen the waiting *
room? Another hundred. *

JACK *
I have. *

HENDRICKS *
Does she have private insurance? *

JACK *
No. *

Hendricks takes a sigh, then looks at Jack. *

HENDRICKS *
This isn't a little boutique shop. *
This is a big-ass Walmart, Malloy. *
We get 'em, we glue 'em back *
together, and we send them on their *
way. This is County. *

JACK *
Yes, sir. *

Jack gets up and starts to leave, but stops. *

JACK (CONT'D) *
I know it's County. I know that. *
But doesn't the patient deserve the *
best we can do for her? *

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Shouldn't we be pushing ourselves.
Striving for that, sir?

Hendricks is half annoyed by Jack's naivete. But he's also half intrigued.

HENDRICKS

What's with the Joan of Arc thing?
Who is this patient? You
schtupping the daughter or
something?

Jack thinks for a moment and then he's incredibly candid.

JACK

I don't think I can handle losing a
patient in my first week here.
That's the truth. That's the
selfish truth.

Hendricks looks at Jack, finally meeting his eye. Moved by Jack's passion here.

HENDRICKS

You get one favor from me in your
internship here. Are you sure you
want to use it up your first week?

JACK

Yes, sir.

HENDRICKS

Who would do it?

JACK

Andrews in OB trained at Johns
Hopkins under Dr. Pratt, who
basically wrote the book on
bloodless surgery.

Hendricks considers for a beat, then...

HENDRICKS

Talk to Andrews. If he's
comfortable, we'll do it.

JACK

Yes, sir.

OFF Jack, a victory...

INT. EMPTY ROOM - DAY

Erica stands across from Marcelino, Vicky, and the others.

ERICA

I would never want to do anything but the best for your father. Your grandfather.

MARCELINO

You don't even know my father.

ERICA

He told me very clearly that he didn't want this.

VICKY

My grandfather hasn't talked to anyone in weeks.

ERICA

He talked to me. He told me about how much he loved you all. About going fishing on the pier together. The salt water taffy you used to get for the kids. He didn't even like that taffy. He ate it because of how much he loves you all.

The family looks at her -- this is different. They get that she really spoke to him, and also they can feel that she actually cares about their father/grandfather.

ERICA (CONT'D)

I understand wanting to keep him alive. He's your father. Your grandfather. But I am telling you, I spoke to him. He looked right at me with his stunning eyes, and that great smile. He was lucid. He was right there. There was no doubt in his mind what he wanted.

There's a long pause. The family all look at each other, quiet now...

MARCELINO

How come he never said this to us?

ERICA

Maybe it was easier to tell someone he didn't know. I know how hard it is to lose someone that you can't lose.

We can see the family turning around, and in this moment actually starting to mourn this man's loss right in the room.

ERICA (CONT'D)

You need to do what you feel is right. It's my job to tell you what he wanted.

MERCELINO

We need to speak alone, as a family.

ERICA

Of course.

MARCELINO

He's my father.

ERICA

I know.

MARCELINO

What will happen? If we don't...

ERICA

We'll make sure he's comfortable.
We'll make sure he's not in pain.
I'll give you some time.

Erica leaves. But she turns back to see the family members embracing. Mourning.

INT. NURSES' STATION - DAY

Jack is on the phone.

JACK

That's great, Doctor. I will let Mrs. Kyung know we have a time for the surgery. Thank you.

Jack hangs up, feeling good, when he notices a small pharmacy bag sitting on her desk with a post-it that reads "FOSTER." NURSE RIVERA, the same nurse he saw when he first walked into the hospital, is there.

JACK (CONT'D)

What is that?

NURSE RIVERA

It's Mr. Foster's antibiotic.

JACK

What's it doing here?

NURSE RIVERA

It must have fallen out of his things when he was discharged.

JACK

He hasn't gotten his meds since he left?

(off the Nurse's shrug)

Great.

Rosa walks by.

ROSA

Hey, ready to sign out?

JACK

Yeah.

(holding up meds)

So my homeless guy that I discharged to the street? I just found out he hasn't had his medicine in five days. But I guess I need to get more like you -- just move on, right?

Rosa reaches out and grabs the bag of medicine.

ROSA

Let's go.

INT. ROSA'S BEAT-UP CAR - NIGHT

Rosa drives and Jack rides shotgun, holding a bucket of take-out chicken and the meds. They spot a few HOMELESS.

JACK

Not here. We'll never find him.

ROSA

Yeah, we will. I know all the spots.

INT. ROSA'S BEAT-UP CAR - LATER

Jack and Rosa have pulled over. They're talking now, and eating the take-out chicken they bought for Mr. Foster.

ROSA

I just started reading her diagnosis off the paper. It was awful. I just froze up.

JACK

I'm sure it wasn't that bad.

ROSA

I just pictured it different.

JACK

What?

ROSA

This. Being a doctor. I pictured heroic mentors guiding me through it. And patients that I could fix. This sucks. I'm gonna totally go Granger on you guys.

(suddenly turning really vulnerable)
I blew it, Jack.

JACK

Listen. You did the hardest thing any of us had to do this week. It was the hardest. She'll be there tomorrow, right? And the day after that? Go back to her. Just keep going back.

Rosa looks at him, touched. Jack notices a MAN turning a corner. It's Foster.

JACK (CONT'D)

That's him!

ROSA

Oh my God!

Jack quickly wipes his chicken hands on some napkins, grabs the chicken bucket and the medicine, and opens the door.

JACK

Mr. Foster! Mr. Foster!

STAY IN THE CAR -- we watch from Rosa's POV as Jack goes outside. Foster, seeing a young white guy running after him, instinctively starts walking in the other direction. Jack catches up with him. Rosa watches, smiling.

JACK (CONT'D)

Mr. Foster, it's me. It's Doctor Malloy, from King County.

FOSTER

What the hell are you doing?

JACK

I came here for you. You left your medicine. And I brought you some chicken.

FOSTER

Chicken.

JACK

Yeah. Fried chicken.

FOSTER

This is crap.

JACK

It's good. I ate some.

FOSTER

You ate some of my chicken?

JACK

No, I just... Mr. Foster, how are you doing? How's your leg?

FOSTER

It's crap. You never should have thrown me out, doc.

JACK

Can I clean that up for you, Mr. Foster.

FOSTER

Here?

JACK

Yeah, here.

Jack takes out some stuff from his day pack and starts to clean Foster's wound. OFF ROSA, charmed, falling for Jack a bit...

INT. O.R. - PRE-OP - DAY

Jack walks with Angelina as they wheel Mrs. Kyung on a gurney into pre-op.

Chyron Reads: DAY FIVE

*

JACK
Doctor Andrews is the best surgeon
we have. They're going to take
great care of you.

As Jack passes, he sees Billy there. Billy is wheeling
something covered on a rack. About the size of a leg.

JACK (CONT'D)
No.

BILLY
Yes.

JACK
Are you serious.

BILLY
Yes, sir. Screw the man.

INT. ANGELA'S ROOM - DAY

*

Angela turns her head and sees Travis standing there, looking
at her. He walks in. He hands her a vial of pills.

*
*

TRAVIS
This is it. Make it last.

*
*

ANGELA
Thank you Travis. You're a good
brother.

*
*
*

TRAVIS
No, I'm not.

*
*

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

*

Mercer comes up to Erica.

*

MERCER
Get in here.

*
*

He indicates an empty room. Erica doesn't.

*

ERICA
So you can yell at me then try to
kiss me again?

*
*
*

Mercer takes her aside, and angrily whispers--

*

MERCER

Kinsey, I told you to let it go.
This is a lawsuit waiting to
happen.

*

ERICA

We are responsible first and
foremost to respect the wishes of
the patient.

*

*

MERCER

I can make every day of your next
four years a living hell. Do not
undermine me again, Kinsey. You
know nothing yet. Nothing.

ERICA

You know so much more about
medicine than me, Doctor Mercer.
But only I know what that patient
said to me. I know what he wanted
and I had to speak up.

Mercer just walks away.

INT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Travis walks up to a very humble dwelling on a poverty
stricken street. He knocks on a door. Sheila answers.

TRAVIS

You want to get some ice cream,
grab a movie?

SHEILA

Yeah!

TRAVIS

Come on then.

Sheila comes out and they start walking down the block.

SHEILA

Is my mom coming home today?

TRAVIS

Not today. Soon.

Travis takes her hand. They walk along hand in hand. OFF
Travis, beginning to take on parental duties...

INT. LUCY'S ROOM - DAY

Rosa walks in. Lucy looks at her.

ROSA
Can I take you for a walk?

EXT. HOSPITAL - COURTYARD - LATER THAT DAY

Rosa sits on the steps next to Lucy, seated in a wheelchair.

ROSA
Yesterday when I told you your
diagnosis, it came out wrong.

LUCY
(joking)
You mean, I'm totally healthy?

ROSA
I never had to say anything like
that before. I'm new and I'm
learning. I'm sorry. But if I had
to say it over again, this is what
I would add. I would add that we
are going to fight this.
(fighting emotion)
That we are going to do everything
there is to do to make you healthy.
That I'm not giving up on you. And
that I'm by your side. No matter
what comes, I'm by your side.

OFF Lucy, tears welling... She reaches her hand out
silently. Rosa takes her hand. They sit there in silence.

INT. OPERATING ROOM/OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Kyung is being operated on by the team assembled to do
bloodless surgery. In the observation room, among numerous
med students and residents, is Jack, watching from the back.
The surgeon turns to the observation room and looks right at
Jack. Gives him a thumbs up. Jack smiles a little,
relieved. He steps out to...

INT. O.R. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Jack comes out and sees Angelina waiting, looking vulnerable.

JACK

It's going great. They'll be done soon. She's going to be fine.

Angelina, hearing this, cannot fight her emotions. She starts to cry and falls into Jack's arms. ON Jack, feeling like he just saved a life...

INT. CHESTNUT LOUNGE - NIGHT

*

Jack, Rosa, Billy, Talaikha, and Travis celebrate the end of the week.

JACK

We made it. One week!

Everyone toasts! Jack sees Erica enter, incongruously dressed in a gown -- she looks drop dead gorgeous. As she makes her way across the crowded bar, they all make comments. All but Jack, who is totally taken by her, and just watches her...

ROSA

(re: her dress, under to Talaikha)

Okay, I so hate her right now.

TALAIKHA

God, what I wouldn't give for a rack like that.

BILLY

Strap a bib on me.

ROSA

Shut up.

Erica arrives.

ERICA

Hi!

ROSA

Hi!

ERICA

I have this fundraiser I have to go to. But I had to come here and have one toast with you guys.

ROSA

Too bad you look like such hell.

BILLY
Somebody get this lady a drink!

Everyone keeps talking as Erica and Jack split off a little.
Rosa can't help but notice this.

JACK
You look amazing.

ERICA
Thanks. So how's your Jehovah's
Witness?

JACK
She's great.

ERICA
That's great, Jack. Listen, about
the other night.

JACK
Yeah. It was a mistake.

ERICA
Yeah.

There's a beat then...

ERICA (CONT'D)
Some week huh?

JACK
Some week.

Out of this intimate moment we hear...

JIM
Hi.

They turn, and there's JIM, Erica's fiancé, wearing a tuxedo.
This guy is gorgeous.

ERICA
Everyone, this is Jim. My fiancé.

All improvise hellos.

JIM
It's great to meet you all. Sorry
I have to steal her tonight.

All improvise: "No problem," etc.

ERICA

So, see you all on Monday. Have a great weekend.

And Erica and Jim walk off, arm in arm. Jack watches, somehow devastated.

ROSA

That guy is a stud.

Everyone cracks up. Including Jack -- you can only stay depressed so long.

JACK

Okay. Come on. More toasts.

TRAVIS

Hey, we all made it through the week without locking ourselves in the bathroom.

ROSA

Nobody Grangered.

BILLY

All week and no Grangering!

They all toast. And continue to toast: to their enormous student loans; to their indentured servitude; to other random complaints... Jack turns away from the celebration and steals a look outside through the window, toward Erica and her fiance walking up the street. Around him, the celebration continues...

FADE OUT:

END OF PILOT