After Midnight

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INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

An energetic DEPUTY munching on pork ribs from a carry-out container opens a jail cell door and enters the enclosure.

DEPUTY
Morning, Sunshine. Let's go, get up.

He kicks the metal bed where the sleeping TC Callahan(upper 30's, unshaven, scruffy yet fit, Dave Grohl type) turns over.

DEPUTY (CONT'D)
It's after five. You've been out all day.

TC sits up slowly, looking a little worse for wear, and feels the bruise on his face.

DEPUTY (CONT'D)
And you got your ass kicked again. I told you before, you got to keep your hands up if you're gonna fight in that Biker bar.

The Deputy shadow boxes around TC.

TC
Any coffee?

DEPUTY
Yeah, right next to that mint on your pillow.

EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - DAY

TC, with iPod earbuds into his helmet, rides his Harley fast down the uncrowded highway. As the sun sets, he passes a sign that says "San Antonio, 18 miles." He listen to his voice mail as he rides.

BOOKIE (O.S.)
You lost all three games last night. I'll come by in the morning. (Next Message) Where were you? I said I was coming by. You owe me 1200 bucks. Call me. (Next Message) TC. Not cool. End of the week. You know the deal.

As TC comes over a hill, he sees ambulance lights flashing about a 100 yards off the highway in a patch of trees.

EXT. TREE AREA - DAY

EMTs work frantically on an injured county Utility TREE TRIMMER. A sharp branch has punctured his diaphragm. His CO-WORKERS are freaking out.

EMT#1
We're losing him. BP crashing.

CO-WORKER
Do something.

EMT#2
I can't stop the bleeding.

TC (O.S.)
You have to take the branch out or he's going to die right here.

Reveal TC walking up from behind the EMTs and kneeling next to them and the injured man.

EMT#2
You need to get back, give us--

TC
I'm a doctor. We're going take it out and do a DPL.

EMT#1
We don't have enough blood to transfuse--

TC
Don't worry. Get me all your bags, a saline pack, a couple tubes, a needle and a scalpel--

The EMTs reach into the supplies to get the items.

EMT#1
We don't have a scalpel.

TC
In your newborn kit. You use it to cut the umbilical. Let's go, on three. 1-2-3.

TC removes the branch and the belly start filling up with blood. As the EMT packs the wound, TC injects the needle into the saline, fills it up, then injects it into the stomach of the patient. The needle immediately starts filling up with blood.

TC (CONT'D)
His renal artery is cut. I'm going to clamp it.

EMT#2
He's going to bleed out.

TC
No, he's not. We're going to use his blood. Start a line.

TC takes the tube, sticks it in the belly, then uses his mouth to suction the other side of the tube to get the blood flowing. He sticks that side of the tube into the empty I.V. Bag and the blood starts to pour into it. He takes the line the EMT set up in the patient and puts it into the bag.

TC (CONT'D)
When that fills up, take it off and pump it into him, then you step up with a new bag. Kind of like a bucket brigade at a fire. Hope your in shape, your arms are going to get tired.

EMT#1's bag fills and he starts pumping the blood back into the patient. EMT#2 takes the tube from the belly and puts it in his empty bag... And so forth, like a fire brigade.

EMT#1
Holy crap. This is insane, it's working. Where'd you learn this?

TC
Afghanistan. And hey, can one of you tree guys get my bike to San Antonio Memorial? It probably needs some gas, so if you could also take care of that, thanks. Alright, let's move.

INT. SAN ANTONIO MEMORIAL EMERGENCY CENTER LOBBY - NIGHT

The patient is wheeled in on a gurney through the crowded lobby while regular blood transfusion bags are put in place by NURSES. TC and the EMTs follow with a SURGEON.

SURGEON
You got real lucky taking that branch out.

TC
Yeah, yeah, yeah stop your whining. Just sew him up now Hank, the heavy lifting's done.

The surgeon exits with the patient towards the O.R., as a female doctor, JORDAN SANTOS,(Hispanic, 30's) approaches TC and the EMTs.

JORDAN
Just tell me you have your paper work for the drug company study. You're a month behind.

TC
And good evening to you, too. Have you met Victor and Carlos--

JORDAN
(to the EMTs)
Dejanos en paz porfavor, necesitamos hablar en privado.

TC
(to the EMTs)
Nos vemos al rato para echarnos unas chelas.

The EMTs exit.

JORDAN
Jesus, you look like crap.

TC
I'm sorry, I had to cancel my facial, I was busy pulling a tree out of a guy's stomach.

JORDAN
Look, I'm trying to fund an extra position for the Day Shift and I can't do it because instead of taking a day to codify your treatment results, you continually get drunk, arrested and in fights.

TC
Well, technically not in that order.

JORDAN
I'm tired of being nice about this.

TC
This is nice?

JORDAN
For now on, I'm going to ride you every day until you--

TC
Uh, you're engaged now young lady, so sex with me is out of the question. But nice try.

JORDAN
You know, TC--

TC
I mean, what would the midget say?

JORDAN
He's not a midget.

TC
Excuse me, Little Person.

TOPHER,(African-American, 30's) wearing shorts, tee and flip-flops weaving through the people on his long board stops short right in front of them.

TOPHER
Evening, ladies.

JORDAN
I've told you Topher, no skateboarding in here.

TOPHER
You know, your fancy rules would be so much more effective if I hadn't seen you sucking on a bong like you were giving it CPR.

TC
Well--

JORDAN
Shut up, TC. And Topher, that was college and some of us grow up.

TOPHER
(mimicking)
That was college and some of us grow up.

JORDAN
(ignoring Topher)
TC, just finish the paperwork.
Don't mess this up for me.

Jordan exits. Just then, EMTs rush through the front door with an INFANT on a gurney. TC rushes over to check her out.

EMT#3
We got a two-weeker, BP dropping,
pulse down to 83 from 94.

As he listens to her breathing with a stethoscope.

TC
Call pediatrics. She's swelling.
I need a bedside Ultra Sound, stat.
She's close to renal failure.

INT. ADMITTING DESK - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The busy Admitting Desk buzzes with NURSES, DOCTORS and PATIENTS. PAUL (26, nebbish), juggles a tennis ball, a World's Best Dad trophy and a hair brush as KRISTA (26, Mixed Ethnicity, stylish, beautiful) texts on her iPhone.

PAUL
You know, they say juggling helps
you with your surgical dexterity.

KRISTA
I'm sorry, what?

PAUL
You're Krista, right? We met at
the resident interviews last
Spring. I'm Paul.

KRISTA
(no idea)
Oh yeah, right. Hi, Paul.

KENNY, a MALE NURSE (30's, Asian) comes up.

KENNY
Yo, Rainman. Where'd you get that
stuff?

PAUL
The Lost & Found Box on the desk.

KENNY
Yeah, uh, that's not Lost & Found. Those are things the docs have taken out of people's rectums this month.

Paul stops juggling and drops everything to the floor.

KENNY (CONT'D)
Whoever pulls out the weirdest thing for the month gets dinner at the Taco truck.

KRISTA
No way anybody beats the World's Best Dad trophy. And really? World's Best Dad? I don't think so.

Topher walks up.

KENNY
Yo Topher, the newbies need to tag along with you until Dr. Knox is available. Exam 5, 42 year-old man with lacerations on his testicles.

TOPHER
Oh come on, man. I just ate.

KENNY
Wait until you see it. The guy was cleaning his bathtub naked, which is weird if you ask me. Anyway, his cat got transfixed by his swinging scrotum and pounced on it. EMTs had to drug the cat to get him to let go.

The guys all moan in sympathy.

As Topher and the residents exit, they pass a LARGE MAN , wearing a "Don't Mess with Texas" tee shirt, complaining to a NURSE about his waiting time.

LARGE MAN
How much longer do I have to wait? I've been here for an hour.

NURSE#2
And you're behind the people who have been here for two hours.
(MORE)

NURSE#2 (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, we're undermanned and we're right in the middle of a shift change. We'll be with you as soon as we can.

LARGE MAN
I want to be looked at now.

NURSE#2
Sir--

LARGE MAN
I said now, Bitch!

The Large Man knocks off several items from the desk. The Nurse backs away as he advance towards her. A fat SECURITY GUARD tries to intervene...

SECURITY GUARD
Sir, you need to--

But he is immediately thrown to the floor. An ORDERLY jumps in, but he's decked by the Large Man. DREW, (30, Hispanic, tough) in button down shirt and tie, approaches with his hands up peacefully in the air.

DREW
Come on, buddy, I don't want any trouble. Just calm--

The Large Man takes a swing at Drew, who easily sidesteps the punch, executes a perfect arm drag and puts him into a Rear Naked Choke hold...

DREW (CONT'D)
Don't fight it, Big Man, you're going to go sleepy time in about 5 seconds.

The Large Man slumps down, completely out. Everyone watching applauds. Drew lays him on the floor as more SECURITY arrives.

DREW (CONT'D)
Put his feet in the air, he'll wake up soon, but I'd cuff him first.

NURSE#2
Thank you, Doctor. Do you want the GSW in 3 or do you need a break?

DREW
Gun shot wound. I'm not missing that.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Jordan is at her locker getting ready to leave for the day with a couple of other preppy DAY SHIFT DOCTORS.

DAY SHIFT DOCTOR
You know you're just going to have to get his data and finish the report for him.

JORDAN
I'm not doing that because that's exactly what TC wants me to do.

DAY SHIFT DOCTOR #2
How did you ever live with that guy?

JORDAN
It was a long time ago.

ALTHEA MARIN (40's, seemingly Country Club type) walks in absentmindedly reading a text on her Blackberry "*Headed to airport. Will be home B4 anniversary is over :) Luv ya.*"

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Hi, Althea. How are you?

ALTHEA
Oh, hi, Jordan. (not) I'm good, good. How are--

DAY SHIFT DOCTOR#1
That douchebag. *

Day Shift Doctor#1 is spinning around like a dog chasing his tail as he tries to get his hand through one of his sport coat sleeves.

DAY SHIFT DOCTOR#1 (CONT'D)
TC stapled my jacket sleeve *
together again. I know it was him. *

DAY SHIFT DOCTOR#2
They're all the same. How you can *
stand working with those Night
Shift idiots, Althea.

JORDAN
You know, you can come back to the Day Shift whenever you want.

P.A. ANNOUNCEMENT (O.S.)
Dr. Santos. Please report to Mr. Ragosa immediately. Dr. Santos, report to Mr. Ragosa immediately.

INT. MICHAEL RAGOSA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jordan sits as MICHAEL RAGOSA (40's, Hispanic) continues typing on his keyboard, seemingly uninterested in her presence. After a few beats...

RAGOSA
First off, I wanted to let you know, per the corporate office, that I've been promoted as the new Comptroller for the Night Shift.

JORDAN
Oh, congratulations.

RAGOSA
I'm going to make some changes. I've already fired Dr. Knox--

JORDAN
What? Why was he--

RAGOSA
That's not really your concern. In any event, I'd like you to be the new Chief of the Night Shift. I want you to run it the way you do the Day Shift. Now, if you make me look good, you will have the opportunity to be named the Chief of the entire ER & Trauma Department. Does that interest you?

JORDAN
Yes. Very much.

RAGOSA
Great. Now, let's talk about how we pull this place out of the red.

INT. EXAM ROOM 5 - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Topher's face peaks over a naked butt as he stitches up "the area." The residents observe. Paul looks a little squeamish.

TOPHER
I swear to god, no matter how long I do this, it always freaks me out to be this close to a guy's shredded business.

PAUL
(trying hard)
Hey, he's lucky he still got both twins in the hammock.

Paul laughs, the other's don't.

TOPHER
Yeah, okay. Anyway, you guys are going to put in the last couple of stitches.

PAUL
Oh, I don't feel ready for that.

KRISTA
I'll do it. I've seen way worse testicles then these.

Topher laughs.

INT. EXAM AREA 3 - NIGHT

TC has stabilized the infant. He's pulling off his gloves as he talks to the nurses. Another Nurse is on the phone.

TC
What's the deal with pediatrics? We need to get her on dialysis.

The Nurse hangs up.

NURSE DIAZ
They said Ragosa told them we can't admit her.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

TC is in Ragosa's face as they walk thru the crowded hall.

RAGOSA
She has a pre-existing condition that is not covered by insurance.

TC
She's 12 days old. How does she have a pre-existing condition?

RAGOSA
She has a congenital birth defect. Nephrotic syndrome. She was in pre-natal care at Corpus Christi General. That's where she was born. They should have identified it. They need to take care of it.

TC
They can't take care of it. That's why she's here.

RAGOSA
They'll figure something out. An ambulance is on its way.

TC
You're Day Shift, Ragosa, you need Knox's approval--

RAGOSA
Knox doesn't work here anymore. And I don't need anyone's approval.

TC
What?

RAGOSA
There's a staff meeting in five minutes explaining everything. In the meantime, keep her stabilized. The ambulance will be here shortly.

INT. ADMITTING DESK - NIGHT

The entire staff is gathered as Ragosa is giving his speech. A Nurse drops a Buzz Lightyear toy into the "box."

RAGOSA
Some of the changes you will like, others you won't. But they are coming, so deal with it. We need to cut costs, become more efficient, improve customer satisfaction and yes, increase profits. Also, effective immediately, Dr. Santos is the new Chief of the Night Shift.

There are scattered, anonymous boos.

JORDAN
I just want to quickly say that while my ways will be different from Dr. Knox's--

A paper airplane flies by her head.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
I'm interested in getting everybody's input--

TC meanders up to the group.

RAGOSA
Dr. Callahan. When I call a staff meeting, I expect everyone to attend.

TC
Yes, Sir. I'm sorry, I would have been here earlier but I was busy hooking up a baby for dialysis.

Everyone turns and looks at TC.

RAGOSA
You what?

TC
Really hard to do by yourself.

RAGOSA
I gave you specific orders--

TC
Yeah, I'm not so good with those. Anyway, we've got some sick and bleeding people waiting so if you could just wrap up your riveting little speech, everybody needs to get back to work. Thanks...

TC starts to walk away, then turns back.

TC (CONT'D)
Oh and Jordan, welcome to the Night Shift.

TC heads off... As Jordan and Ragosa share a look...

SMASH CUT TO OPENING CREDITS.

ACT TWO

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

TC, Topher and Drew walk and talk with Krista and Paul. TC checks his cell and sees a text from Jordan: “Where R U? Need to talk.” He puts it back in his pocket.

TOPHER
Administrators blow. They can’t do what we do but they love telling us how to do it.

TC
Nothing’s going to change, okay?

DREW
But Ragosa fired Dr. Knox.

TC
Nah, he didn’t. Richie Knox gave his four weeks notice because he’s moving to Dallas to be near his parents. So Ragosa tells him to leave now. He just wanted it to seem like he canned him to scare everybody.

TOPHER
Then he puts in Jordan, the Trauma Queen, so he has his own person in there.

KRISTA
What do you know about her?

TOPHER
More than she’d like. *

TC opens a door to the outside.

EXT. THE TAILGATE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

They all emerge onto the roof top hang out, aptly named “the Tailgate” because it resembles one. There’s a Smokey Joe Barbecue, Heavy Bag for punching, some Lazy Boy chairs, mini hard plastic pool, Satellite dish jury-rigged on a pole, Xbox, small TV and many more essential items. A few ORDERLIES and ASSISTANTS (the entire Night Shift is welcome here) on break play some Xbox, relax in the chairs, shoot hoops. Drew joins an Xbox game and Topher goes to shoot some hoops.

KRISTA
This is awesome.

PAUL
It looks like my frat.

TC
It's Night Shift only. You see any Day Shifters up here, kill them. Anyway, here are my words of advice. Watch, learn, and forget all the crap you learned in Med School because they don't teach you the stuff we're going to show you.

Everybody's pager goes off.

TC (CONT'D)
We're back. Just follow Topher and Drew around tonight and we'll see if you can handle it. No pressure.

INT. WAITING AREA - NIGHT

The waiting area is starting to get busy again as Jordan is showing a new iPad program to Kenny.

JORDAN
So just enter the patient's name, their issue and time of arrival. Then enter when they were seen, the doctor's diagnosis and treatment. It all goes to a central tracking program. This way we can more efficiently manage patient flow and get them better treatment. How cool is that? *

KENNY
Oh my god, more work, it's like Christmas in July!

Kenny exits. Jordan looks over and sees Althea doing triage on the new arriving patients.

JORDAN
Althea, I can get a nurse to do that.

ALTHEA
Dr. Knox let me do it. I'm still slowly easing back in.

JORDAN
Right. Of course. Okay, well then... I guess it's fine for now.

Althea lets out a little laugh.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
What?

ALTHEA
I'm sorry, it's just weird... I was your supervisor when you first got here and now you're my boss.

An awkward beat...

ALTHEA (CONT'D)
But I'm glad for you. I clearly trained you well.

Jordan sees TC headed into Trauma 2.

JORDAN
You were seriously the best. I'll see you in a bit.

Jordan exits. Althea takes a seat.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 2 - NIGHT

TC is working on the lacerated leg of a CONSTRUCTION WORKER with the help of a Nurse, WENDY. Jordan enters.

JORDAN
Did you get my text?

TC
I haven't been checking. And I'm kind of busy right now. *

JORDAN
Wendy, why don't you take a break? I'll assist Dr. Callahan.

Wendy gives TC a look, then exits. As soon as she's gone...

JORDAN (CONT'D)
We have to figure this out.

TC
What do we have to figure out? You do your thing, I do mine.

JORDAN
No, you can't just do whatever you want. That's why they brought me in. This entire shift has become a reflection of you.

TC
You mean one of the highest rated ERs in the country?

JORDAN
It's a mess TC, and if it goes on like this, it's headed for a crash. Look, all I'm asking is for you to not sabotage my changes and to show me some respect. Because if you don't, nobody else will.

TC
Respect is earned, Jordan. And you already lost half the staff by sucking up to Ragosa and backing him on that baby.

JORDAN
I didn't suck up. I agree with him.

TC
You would throw out that little--

JORDAN
She was not being thrown out. She got the dialysis. She's fine. But she should have received it from Corpus. And now because of you, we have her. And the $100,000 bill that it's going to cost us.

TC
They would have had the same bill.

JORDAN
Which is not my problem. Hospitals are closing. There are financial limitations. What do we tell the next fifty cases that we can't afford to treat now?

TC
I'll treat them.

JORDAN
God, Did you learn nothing from being kicked out of the Army?
(MORE)

JORDAN (CONT'D)
You're an amazing doctor, yet they thought they were better off without you. During a war. What does that tell you?

TC
That they care more about politics then lives.

JORDAN
It's never you, is it?

TC
Oh, it's almost always me. But unlike you, I know it.

Kenny pops in.

KENNY
TC. There's a big, mean looking dude out here to see you.

JORDAN
Your Bookie comes to collect at work and you don't think you have a problem?

TC
I'm sorry, how much did you spend on shoes last year? Bandage that up, Chief, you're the one who sent Wendy away.

TC exits.

INT. EXAM 3 - NIGHT

A twentysomething woman, KARA, with chest pain is being examined by Topher and the residents.

KRISTA
And how long have you had this pain in your chest?

KARA
Ever since I can remember. Like from when I was three.

TOPHER
What have other doctors told you?

KARA
Not much. I've only been twice. *

PAUL
Your entire life?

KARA
My parents were farm hands. I work at Burger King. I can't afford to be sick.

TOPHER
Okay. Let's start with some blood work and urine samples. Get them down to the lab, then take her for an MRI. See what we see.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT *

Topher exits into the hall and is immediately grabbed by TC. * There is a mean looking BOOKIE in the background watching * them. *

TC
Hey, I need your ATM card. I'm a * few hundred short.

TOPHER
Again? Dude, you got to stop betting on baseball. You really * suck at it. *

TC
Thanks, but I gotta pay now or he's * not going to let me bet tonight. *

INT. EXAM 4 - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Drew is frantically operating on a GSW victim.

NURSE
BP dropping. He's flat lining.

Jordan enters.

JORDAN
What do we got?

DREW
GSW thru in thru in his upper thigh. I got the bullet, but he's still bleeding.

JORDAN
What about fragments?

DREW
I got the whole bullet.

JORDAN
Bone fragments. Give me the Ultra Sound, stat.

She starts checking the belly with the Ultra Sound.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Bullet hits a bone, it can fragment and the pieces travel up the muscle into the belly. There they are. We're going to have to open him up. I got this.

Drew steps back.

INT. RAGOSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Althea sits across from Ragosa as he reads her file.

RAGOSA
You've been back a little less than a month, 24 days to be exact, after taking a four month leave of absence because of... where is it...

He scrolls on his screen while Althea fidgets uncomfortably.

ALTHEA
My husband...

RAGOSA
Your husband?

ALTHEA
Yes... he was killed by a drunk driver.

RAGOSA
Yes, there it is. I remember hearing about that now. There are so many people who work here. Anyway, you're back now.

ALTHEA
Yes.

RAGOSA
And so you transferred from the Day Shift to the Night Shift. Why did you do that?

ALTHEA
I don't like being home alone at night, and I figured I'm up anyway, why not work.

RAGOSA
Yes, but you're not really working, are you? I don't mean to be unsympathetic to your situation, but part of my job is to be blunt. You're being paid as a doctor but you're working like a nurse.

ALTHEA
I'm getting my feet back under me. But I'm still consulting, advising, teaching--

RAGOSA
But not working on any patients by yourself. Look, I know you were Jordan's mentor, so I'm going to take the lead on this one. We need you to get it together and do the job you're being paid for.

ALTHEA
I will.

RAGOSA
Good. And to be clear, that needs to start tonight. Everybody needs to pull their weight.

ALTHEA
Absolutely.

INT. THE TAILGATE - NIGHT

The area is empty, save for the rhythmic sounds of Drew's punching and kicking the Heavy Bag into submission. TC enters and watches for a few beats.

TC
Anything you want to talk about?

DREW
Nothing to talk about.

Drew stops hitting the bag.

DREW (CONT'D)
That guy could have died because of me.

TC
No, he could have died because he was shot.

DREW
And I couldn't do anything about it. And then Jordan steps right in and makes me look like a punk.

TC
Don't be fooled thinking she's some house cat. She pisses me off about pretty much everything, but if I ever get shot, take me to her. So you can't compare yourself to her.

DREW
Tee, if the war continues, I'll be shipping out in a couple of years. And I want to go. I want to help. It's why I joined. But it freaks me out that I won't be good enough. I feel like there's this giant clock ticking and I'll have all these soldiers and their families depending on me to save them. I have to know what I'm doing when I get there. I have to get better. This can't happen over there.

TC
Drew, it will happen. It's a war, people die. And nobody will be there to step in for you. The key is to learn something every time that will help you save the next guy. That way, when you lose someone, it's not in vain. *

DREW
I guess that helps, but I don't know how I'm going to get over losing so many people. *

TC
You don't ever get over it. But, you have to find a way to deal with it. Life is short. Like Zevon said, "Enjoy every sandwich." *

A NURSE enters the Tailgate.

NURSE
You didn't hear it from me, but we got a situation in Exam 2.

INT. EXAM 2 - NIGHT

AN OLDER WOMAN is convulsing, literally going from lying flat on her bed to bolting upright like in the Exorcist every few seconds. She yelps every time it happens. Althea is talking to her HUSBAND.

HUSBAND
I don't understand.

ALTHEA
Your wife has a pacemaker with a micro defibrillator attached. The defib is malfunctioning and--

She bolts up again.

ALTHEA (CONT'D)
Causing her to be internally electrocuted by it. That's what causes the convulsion.

HUSBAND
Well, make it stop.

She bolts up again.

ALTHEA
I can't. I mean, I'm not allowed to. *

HUSBAND
What?

ALTHEA
We have to call the 800 number for the pacemaker company, which I did from the card that was in your wife's purse. We give them the model number, then they send a technician over to reset it.

She bolts up again.

HUSBAND
So she's in pain until the guy gets here? That's insane.

ALTHEA
I'm sorry. It's hospital policy. The contract with the pacemaker company requires one of their Techs reset it and we would be liable if anything went--

She bolts up again as TC enters holding a LARGE MAGNET and places it on the woman's chest. The convulsions stop.

TC
Is that better?

OLDER WOMAN
Yes.

TC
I just de-activated the defib in your pacemaker. It just takes a strong magnet. We'll keep you here until the Tech arrives to reset it.

HUSBAND
Thank you, doctor.

TC pulls Althea aside.

TC
When you see that going on? Just do something about it. I know you're used to lots of rules, but we don't really work that way. You're a great doctor, Althea. Trust yourself.

Topher pokes his head in.

TOPHER
Tee. My girl is still waiting for her X-Rays. The Tech says I can't get them now until they're approved by Jordan or Ragosa. *

TC
I'll take care of it.

INT. MEDICAL RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT *

Ragosa is perusing files as TC lectures him. *

TC
This may be news to you, but we need to diagnose and treat people and not have our hands tied behind our backs.

RAGOSA
You tied your own hands with your complete disregard for any accountability. Now it's time to * pay the piper.

TC
Hey, I can save you a ton of money, why don't you just shut the hospital down and then you wouldn't have to treat anybody.

RAGOSA
Do you really not get it or do you just not listen? If we keep hemorrhaging money, we will shut the doors.

TC
Oh come on, we're the only Trauma * One unit for 22 counties. Where would people go? *

RAGOSA
Someplace else. We are in the * business of making a profit, the hospitals that do, stay open, the ones that don't, are closed. If * this one shutters, I'll just go * work at the next one.

As Ragosa starts to leave, TC blocks his path. *

TC
Don't screw with this place.

RAGOSA
I'm not screwing with it. I'm actually saving it, but you're too egocentric to see that. This isn't some CASH unit in Afghanistan where you're the god. You're back in the real world where you're a lawsuit waiting to happen.
(MORE)

RAGOSA (CONT'D)
You're on your last chance and you know it. So get out of my way, because I don't get intimidated.

TC takes a beat, then steps aside. Ragosa smiles.

RAGOSA (CONT'D)
See? You're not as tough as people said you--

Bam! TC delivers a right cross to Ragosa's face and down goes Ragosa. A beat later, Kenny enters and pauses at the situation, then...

TC
He fell. On the desk.

KENNY
Yeah, okay. Anyway, there's a multi-car accident out in Kerr County. Topher needs you to go with him. Chopper's on the roof.

TC
Okay, thanks. Oh and uh, get him some smelling salts. He'll be okay.

EXT. MED EVAC ROOF LANDING PAD - NIGHT

TC climbs into the CHOPPER next to Topher and slaps his leg.

TC
Just like old times, huh? Kind of makes me miss Kandahar.

TOPHER
Only you would miss that place. Come on, let's go save some people.

They both shout out the Army Ranger "Hoo Hah" as the chopper takes off.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. RAGOSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ragosa is sitting on his desk as Jordan examines his cheek.

RAGOSA
I am firing his ass the second he gets back.

JORDAN
I know you're mad. But just think this through for a moment.

RAGOSA
And I'm pressing charges. I'm going to sue. When I'm done with him, he's going to be on some godforsaken reservation treating whopping cough for the rest of his life.

JORDAN
That's one way to go. And I get it. But if you want to raise the profile of this hospital, we need him to stay. Medically speaking, he's irreplaceable.

RAGOSA
Everybody can be replaced.

JORDAN
Not TC. I've seen him save people that had no chance of living. None. And he did it. We were in Baltimore together, we were over there together. I know him. I can turn him. I can get him in line. You just have to let me.

RAGOSA
Don't tie yourself to a guy that's committing career suicide, Jordan. He's a screw up and you know it. And what has he done to help you? Move on. He's out of here.

EXT. REMOTE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The chopper has landed. Emergency vehicle lights flash on the road and illuminate a terrible accident.

We see a car that was smashed in the side by a pick-up truck. EMT HERNANDEZ escorts TC and Topher to the car. A distraught TEENAGE BOY being treated for head cuts and arm lacerations screams out to them.

TEENAGE BOY
Help my brother. You have to help him, please.

As FIREMEN begin to saw the doors off the car.

TC
Stop sawing. Stop now!

TOPHER
Everybody stop and be quiet!

The sawing stops.

TC
What the hell are you doing?

FIREMAN
We're trying to get him out.

TC
You're going to kill him.

TOPHER
Tee, chill. What do we got?

EMT HERNANDEZ
The teenager has severe lacerations, the pick-up driver internal bleeding and the kid in the car-- I've never seen anything like this before. That's why we called you.

TC and Topher look in the back window. They see a 12 year-old boy, MATTHEW, with his head lying to the side, as if he's a broken bobble head doll.

TOPHER
I think this one's yours, buddy. I'll take the pick-up driver.

Topher heads to the PICK-UP DRIVER by the ambulance as TC climbs onto the roof of the car and drops in head first through the sunroof. The EMTs hold his feet as he is hanging upside down, Spiderman style, into the cramped, crushed backseat as he tries try to examine the boy. He gently touches around his neck, head and shoulders.

TC
It's going to be okay. I know you're scared, but I need you to be brave, okay? I'm going to take care of you. I'll be right back. Don't go anywhere.

The boy doesn't react.

TC (CONT'D)
Okay, pull me back up.

The EMTs pull TC back up through the sunroof. Topher, treating the Pick-Up Driver nearby, calls out.

TOPHER
How bad?

TC
His skull is literally separated from his spinal column. I can see them moving separately with each breath.

EMT HERNANDEZ
Jesus. He's still alive?

TC
Yep. By some miracle, the skull is being held in place by his neck muscles. Like a broken bobble head. I need to sedate him. Toph, can you step away and fashion a mini body board to fit in there to stabilize his head and shoulders? If this kid slips a millimeter, he'll be paralyzed or die.

TOPHER
Great. No pressure.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A massive, old school HEARSE is parked in the lot. Drew, Krista and Paul stand next to the back door. Drew opens it.

KRISTA
Ugh. It smells like my Grandma's house. I can't believe we have to do this. First year sucks ass.

DREW
Hey, I had to do it all last year. It's state law. An old fogey croaks at the Nursing Home, only an MD can declare them dead. So they bring them here. Climb in, check their pulse, takes two minutes. Let's go, I have to cover for Topher.

Krista starts to climb in--

PAUL
Wait. I get to go first, you got to do the stitches.

KRISTA
Because you were afraid--

DREW
Can we do this? There's going to be a hundred of these all year. Paul you do this one, Krista's got next. God, you give me a headache.

Paul climbs in.

INT. HEARSE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Paul crawls on his hands and knees into the cramped, dark, creepy interior of the hearse. Paul turns on his penlight, but he drops it and it rolls underneath the gurney. It's very dark in there now. He looks up and can now make out the body, covered by a blanket from head to toe.

Paul, swallows, then starts to pull the blanket down from the head when suddenly the BODY JUMPS at him and SCREAMS. It's Kenny, the Male Nurse. Paul screams back terrified and almost craps his pants. He hits his head on the ceiling and before he can get out of there, Drew slams the back of the door shut and laughs hysterically, as do several ORDERLIES filming with their iPhones as Paul pounds on the door. Krista opens it and let's out the shaken Paul.

EXT. REMOTE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A steady rain is beginning to fall and the winds are picking up. TC is hanging upside down through the sunroof again securing boy's head with straps to the body board that has been cut down to one-third of its regular size. EMT Hernandez reaches in through the broken back window to hold the board steady from the side.

TC
Steady. Let's get him secured.

Topher stands a few feet away, talking to Jordan on his iPhone using the Face Time feature. We INTERCUT between locations.

JORDAN
(on iPhone)
We just got confirmation the Neurosurgeon from Houston will be here in an hour.

TOPHER
(on iPhone)
Good. Now let's hope he can get him there. The other two are stable enough to go by ambulance--

Suddenly, the boy has trouble breathing. He's making a heaving sound.

TC
Crap. Topher--

TOPHER
Gotta go.

Topher hangs up his iPhone and runs over to TC.

TC
His lung collapsed. I need a needle and a syringe to reinflate.

The CHOPPER PILOT runs up.

CHOPPER PILOT
We got to get out of here in the next ten minutes. A storm is blowing in.

An EMT hands it to Topher who hands it to TC.

TOPHER
You were right, just like old times.

TC inserts the syringe into the boy's chest.

TC
Okay, let's do this.

A Fireman leans in holding a large fire coat.

FIREMAN
Doc, before you get out, put this coat over him as best you can. I don't want any sparks landing on him when we cut this thing open.

TC
I've got to hold him still and keep his lung inflated. Put the coat over him and I'll get my head under.

FIREMAN
There's going to be embers hitting your back and legs.

TOPHER
Then you better do it quick, because he's not leaving the kid.

The Fireman reaches through the window and covers the boy with the coat as TC sticks his head underneath it. A beat later, the saws start up again. Sparks fly everywhere, many on TC's back and legs.

INT. WAITING AREA - NIGHT

Kara, the young woman who needed X-Rays for her chest pain, reads a magazine as Kenny quickly sits down next to her.

KENNY
Okay, here's the deal. Topher had to go out in the field. But he told me before he left to tell you no matter what, do not leave, okay?

KARA
I don't mind waiting.

KENNY
It's not you, it's them. A clerk is going to try to discharge you because you don't have insurance. They 86'd your MRI, but don't worry about that now. If anybody comes up to you, you just tell them you have to puke, start gagging like you're going to Ralph all over them, then run to the head and hang out for awhile. Can you do that?

KARA
I think I can.

KENNY
Good. Okay. Well, nice chatting with you.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 3 - NIGHT

A patient lies on the table as Althea stands above him. The surgical team watches and waits. Jordan enters with a Nurse.

ALTHEA
I'm sorry, Jordan. I'm just not ready.

Jordan pulls Althea aside.

JORDAN
No, I'm sorry. I didn't realize how hard this would be for you to come back. I'll cover for you.

ALTHEA
You don't have to--

JORDAN
I want to. Besides, it's fun to get my hands dirty again. We'll figure this out together, okay?

INT. MED EVAC CHOPPER - NIGHT

The chopper is flying in the rough wind and rain. Topher monitors the boy's vitals as TC regulates his breathing through the lung with the syringe.

CHOPPER PILOT
I've only seen a few cases like this in thirty years. Everyone of them died at the scene. You ever work on one of these before?

TC
Once.

CHOPPER PILOT
Did he make it?

TC
Nope.

TC turns away and checks the boy's vitals.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. ADMITTING DESK - NIGHT

It's 3am. Kara, covering her mouth like she's going to puke, races past to the bathroom as an annoyed Jordan is addressing the staff.

JORDAN
I can not believe how childish you people are. I log on to check the number of patients entered on the iPad program and I find the names Dick Hurtz, Mike Hunt and Some Young Guy. Really? Are you people 12? You have to stop using this antiquated dry erase board and start using the iPad the right--

An angry Kenny walks up.

KENNY
Is is true that Ragosa fired TC? It's all over the fourth floor.

Everybody starts talking at once, "What?," "When?"

JORDAN
Yes. It's true.

Everybody starts yelling at once.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
Everybody calm down or you will be following him out the door. At 8am, when the shift is over, I will be glad to discuss it with anyone and everyone. But right now, we have jobs to do. And I've been on for 20 hours so I don't feel like taking any crap. So get back to work, treat your patients and stop complaining about a system you haven't even tried yet.

People disperse to their posts, Paul walks up to Jordan.

PAUL
Dr. Santos, I was wondering if I could talk to you about the hazing--

JORDAN
I don't know who you are and I don't have time, so talk to me later.

NURSE
Dr. Santos, the Med Evac is landing now.

JORDAN
Make sure the path is clear to the ICU--

Drew walks up to her.

DREW
How could he fire TC--

JORDAN
You're in the Army, Drew, you know crap happens, deal with it.

EXT. MED EVAC ROOF LANDING PAD - NIGHT

The rain falls as the chopper doors slide open and TC and Topher jump out. As the nurses and orderlies help get the boy onto a stretcher, Ragosa and two SECURITY GUARDS approach TC.

RAGOSA
Callahan. You're fired. Get your things and get your ass out of here in ten minutes.

TC
I have a dying kid here and I'm the only one who can keep him alive. So stick your orders up your ass.

TC follows the gurney and the nurses upside. Ragosa steams. The Security Guards secretly fist bump behind his back.

TOPHER
(to Ragosa)
That didn't go as planned, now did it?

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 2 - NIGHT

Drew, Krista and Paul enter a trauma room that has a body on the table that is covered with a sheet.

DREW
Totally uncool, Paul. You don't complain to the boss. It's not personal, that joke gets played on everybody. Hell, I almost crapped myself last year when they did it to me.

KRISTA
Yeah, and you can do it to somebody next year.

PAUL
No way. It's too mean spirited.

DREW
No, it's not. Work hard, play hard. You have to find a way to deal with the stress. Life's too short. So the next time you talk to her, you don't say boo, got it?

PAUL
(not really)
Got it.

DREW
Good. Now this poor homeless guy was brought in DOA a couple hours ago. So I thought you could get some practice working the paddles. Krista, cut off his jacket and shirt. Paul, hand me the defib.

Krista grabs the scissors, Paul gets the paddles.

DREW (CONT'D)
Trust me, you don't want your first time to be on someone who's dying like I had--

KRISTA
Uh, Drew...

Drew looks down at the Homeless Guy's cut open jacket. Stacks of 20, 50 and 100 dollar bills tumble from the lining just as Topher enters.

DREW
Holy...

TOPHER
Whoa. Did not expect to see that. Have you guys seen Kara?
(MORE)

TOPHER (CONT'D)
I have to get her the MRI while Jordan's busy.

DREW
Kenny has her stashed in the head.

INT. MRI ROOM - NIGHT

A goofy, chunky MRI TECH, DWAYNE, is playing Angry Birds on his iPad as Topher enters with Kara.

TOPHER
Hey Dwayne.

DWAYNE
What do you want from me?

TOPHER
I need a favor.

DWAYNE
No kidding. You're talking to me.

TOPHER
I need a scan for that girl over there. She doesn't have insurance.

DWAYNE
Really? How can a girl that hot not have insurance?

TOPHER
Will you do it?

DWAYNE
No. If I get caught I'm canned.

TOPHER
Come on, she might have a tumor. She really needs this.

A beat...

DWAYNE
Hate to see a hot girl die. (beat) Okay, but if I do this, you owe me.

TOPHER
Whatever you want.

DWAYNE
I want liposuction. Here, here and here.

TOPHER
Dude, I'm not a plastic surgeon.

DWAYNE
But you know some. Get me the lipo, I'll get you the MRI.

INT. CAFETERIA - NIGHT *

Topher sits in a near empty cafeteria with the very nerdy, skinny, Plastic Surgeon, BRADFORD.

TOPHER
$2500?

BRADFORD
That's a good deal. It's my professional courtesy rate.

TOPHER
I'm not paying you 2500 bucks. Come on, she could die. Show some * heart. What else can I do for you? Spurs tickets?

BRADFORD
I already have courtside seats. And I make way more then you, you can't bribe me. But here's what you can do for me. You know that hot new resident? Set me up with her.

TOPHER
Krista? No way. She's way out of your league. How about I get you a blow up doll?

BRADFORD
The resident or no lipo.

TOPHER
For 2500 you could get super hot call girl twins. Just do that.

BRADFORD
2500 is not what it costs me, 2500 is what I charge. What, are you new? Get me the date, I'll get you the lipo.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

TC is monitoring the boy's vitals as Jordan enters.

JORDAN
How is he?

TC
Still holding on somehow. (beat)
Do you remember Pete Razonka?

JORDAN
The red-headed soldier from Iowa whose nearly decapitated head almost fell into my lap? No, not at all.

TC
God, I really thought he was going to make it. I thought I did it. He'd be what, about 32 now?

JORDAN
Yeah, about that. (beat) Tee, I only have a few minutes, but I need to know what you are going to do about being fired.

TC
Not really concerned about it right now.

JORDAN
You should be. There's nothing I can do to stop it. I tried, but, you hit him. How stupid can you be? You need to apologize--

TC
No way.

JORDAN
That's the only way.

TC
Can't do it.

JORDAN
What, are you Fonzie? Say you're sorry, kiss some ass and maybe you'll get to stay.

TC
Wow, you actually sound concerned.

JORDAN
I don't know why you think I hate you, but I don't. I want you to be happy--

TC
I am.

JORDAN
No, you're not. Not the way you used to be. I want you to be like you used to be. Before you went over there.

TC
That would be impossible.

JORDAN
Because you make it impossible.

A Nurse interrupts.

NURSE
We have a drunk driver multi car accident ten minutes out. *

INT. BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Topher is with Krista.

TOPHER
Okay, so this is kind of weird so I'm just going to spit it out. I need you to go out on a date with a plastic surgeon so he will perform lipo on an MRI Tech so that girl, Kara, who doesn't have insurance can get an MRI to see if she has a tumor. And I need to know pretty much right now but if you're freaked out I totally get it.

KRISTA
Please. People have been hitting on me since kindergarten. Let me ask you this. What's the guy like? Just nerdy or Silence of the Lambs creepy?

TOPHER
Nerdy.

KRISTA
Just a date, right? Drinks and dinner. Nothing physical.

TOPHER
Exactly. Drinks, dinner then ditch him.

KRISTA
And a nice restaurant. Not some Taco Truck.

TOPHER
Absolutely. Wherever you want--

KRISTA
Why are you doing this? Are you trying to sleep with her?

TOPHER
No way Dude, I'm married.

KRISTA
Right, because married guys never cheat. You have to tell me why or there's no way I'm doing it.

A beat.

TOPHER
Two years ago I wouldn't have lifted a finger. I was just back from the war and I think I got too used to seeing people die that I couldn't help. I was shut down to any suffering. I'd just diagnose, treat and move on. That's how you survive. Then about 18 months ago, the day before Thanksgiving to be exact, I got diagnosed with Stage 3 Hodgkin's.

KRISTA
Oh my god.

TOPHER
It's okay. I'm clear right now. But when you go from being the guy with all the answers to the guy with all the questions... let's just say I'm not shut down anymore. So, are you in or do I have to get in drag and take this loser out myself?

KRISTA
I'm in. I'll go out with him, *once*.
But after that, I'm all about Drew.

Topher's beeper goes off.

INT. ADMITTING DESK - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The car crash victims are brought in the controlled chaos of surgical staffs prepping for their arrival.

TC
Start two large bores IV's, wide open. Type and cross for ten units, get four units of O Neg, Stat. This one's in bad shape.

JORDAN
Tee, you take him, I'll take the other. Drew, you assist me, Topher go with Tee--

A Nurse approaches...

NURSE DIAZ
TC. The boy is coding. He can't breathe.

TC
Damn it. Jordan, you have to come with me. We're going to have to intubate and we can't move his head, it's going to be a bitch to get that tube in. Althea, take this guy, Topher take the other.

TC heads to the Trauma Room, Althea follows him in a panic.

ALTHEA
I can't. Drew can do it.

TC
Drew isn't ready for that.

ALTHEA
Then Jordan--

TC
Althea, if you don't do this, then my kid is not going to make it and that poor guy who got hit by that drunk driver is going to die because of you.

JORDAN
Tee!

TC
There is nobody else. I'm sorry, Althea, the hand holding is over. So step up and do your job.

As they walk, they pass the WIFE crying in the background.

CAR CRASH WIFE *
Save him, somebody please save him.

TC exits into Trauma Room 2.

JORDAN
Just get started. I'll be in when I can.

Jordan disappears into the room as Althea's eyes fill with tears.

NURSE#2
We're waiting in Trauma 3, Doctor.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 2 - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

TC, Jordan and the nurses are trying to intubate the boy (put in a breathing tube) in controlled chaos. Drew and the residents observe. * *

NURSE
BP falling.

JORDAN
He hasn't been breathing for 36 seconds.

TC
I'm almost in.

JORDAN
37-38-39--

TC
Got it!

Everyone breathes a sigh of relief as the boy's lungs fill with air. Drew and Krista exchange a relieved look. *

TC (CONT'D)
He's a tough one.

A Nurse enters.

NURSE
Doctors. The boy's parents want to talk to you.

INT. WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

TC and Jordan are with the boy's parents. The Teenage Brother, sits on the bench, his face stitched and bandaged.

FATHER OF BOY
We want to try prayer.

TC
What?

FATHER OF BOY
We're Christian Scientists and we believe in the power of prayer.

TC
Well, unfortunately, prayer is not going to work here. What is going to work is fusing his skull to his neck bones.

JORDAN
He needs the operation. He won't survive without it.

TEENAGER
Dad. Let them do it. This is the guy who was--

FATHER OF BOY
Nathaniel. Enough. Doctors, we respect your passion, but you need to respect our wishes.

TC
Is that what you think?

MOTHER OF THE BOY
Whatever my husband says.

FATHER OF BOY
It's whatever the Lord says. We believe He is going to cure our son.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 3 - NIGHT

Althea is slowly but efficiently working on the patient. Jordan sticks her head in.

JORDAN
How's it going?

ALTHEA
Slowly, but surely.

NURSE
She's doing amazing, Dr. Santos.

JORDAN
Okay, then. Call me if you need me.

INT. RAGOSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

TC and Jordan are pressing Ragosa.

RAGOSA
There's nothing I can do. It's within their rights.

TC
That's insane.

RAGOSA
You shouldn't even be here. And do you think I enjoy this, Jordan? They could own this hospital if we went around them. It's the law.

JORDAN
I thought the law was we can do this operation without the parents' consent if the child's life is in danger, which it clearly is.

RAGOSA
Only if the operation doesn't put him at a greater risk.

TC
How is he at greater risk if he's going to die if he doesn't have the operation?

RAGOSA
Because we don't have anyone qualified to do it. The Neuro in Houston is still in surgery. He won't be here for at least another four hours.

JORDAN
What? We don't have four hours.

RAGOSA
Well what am I supposed to do? I can't pull a Neurosurgeon out of my ass.

JORDAN
Let TC do it.

RAGOSA
No way. I've got calls into every Trauma Center in Texas and Louisiana.

TC
You don't have a choice. Nobody else can get here in time.

JORDAN
Michael. He's going to die if we don't do this. I know you have to watch the bottom line, but we're talking about a child's life. I was with you on the baby this morning, he could have been treated elsewhere. But this is this kid's only shot. You can save him.

A long beat...

RAGOSA
Have you ever done this procedure before?

TC
Once. In Afghanistan.

RAGOSA
Were you successful?

Before TC can answer---

JORDAN
Yes. I was there. He saved him. He can do this.

TC gives Jordan a look.

RAGOSA
You're going to need get the parents to sign a waiver of liability and indemnify the hospital.

JORDAN
But they already said--

RAGOSA
It's the best I can do. I have to protect the hospital. *

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jordan walks with the parents of the boy.

JORDAN
I thought you might be more comfortable praying in our chapel.

FATHER OF BOY
That's very kind of you.

Jordan opens the door and lets them in.

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

They enter into the morgue. TC pulls back the sheet to reveal the body of a DEAD MAN. The Mother starts to cry. *

FATHER OF BOY
What is this? What are you--

TC
This is what your son will look like if you don't sign the waiver.

FATHER OF BOY
This is unbelievable. How dare you.

JORDAN
Please, Mrs. Carter. Maybe your prayers have already been answered in bringing him to us. Give your son a chance.

The father exits.

TC
I give you my word, Mrs. Carter, I will operate on him like he's my own child. But you need to let me.

A beat, as she considers...

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 4 - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Car Crash Patient. The room is silent, save for the flat line of the heart monitor. Krista and Paul experience their first case of seeing someone die. Topher just stares at the PATIENT on the table as he takes off is gloves.

NURSE
He had multiple ruptured organs, Doctor. There was nothing anyone could have done.

A beat. Topher just stands there. A Nurse shuts the heart monitor off as she leaves. Drew pops in and grabs Krista and Paul leaving Topher all alone. As they exit...

DREW
(whispering)
Come on, TC's going to operate on the boy.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

TC is prepping the boy for surgery by placing sandbags on either side of his skull while a Nurse tapes his head down. Another Nurse checks a Skype connection on a nearby laptop.

NURSE
TC. Captain Ropekee is on Skype now.

TC sees CAPTAIN ROPEKEE's face on the laptop screen.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
Gotta tell you Tee, didn't expect a call at sunrise to talk your sorry ass through a little neurosurgery. Are you ready for this?

A beat.

TC
No, but let's do it anyway.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

TC, with Jordan assisting, operates on the boy. The room is filled with tension as Ragosa observes. TC follows the instructions from Captain Ropekee on Skype. *

TC
Okay, I've peeled back the muscle and we have the skull in place.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
You have to attach the skull to the neck bone. You're going to need at least five screws--

TC
Son of a bitch.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
What?

JORDAN
The neck bone has a fracture on the left side. There's nothing for the screws to hold onto.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
What about the back of his neck?

TC
It's got a hairline fracture too. There's no place for the screws.

JORDAN
Damn it.

TC
Let's just think.

A beat. Ragosa moves in to take a closer look.

RAGOSA
You're going to have to fuse the skull directly to the spine.

TC
Yeah? And what keeps it in place?

RAGOSA
A titanium loop attached to the spine.
(MORE)

RAGOSA (CONT'D)
Use the wires to secure it to the base of the skull and remove a piece of his rib to fortify it.

They all stare at Ragosa. Nobody expected that.

RAGOSA (CONT'D)
They've had success with the procedure at Barrow in Phoenix. I observed it a seminar there last Spring. It will work.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
He's right Tee, that's a great idea.

TC
Yeah, well, I've never even seen it done before.

RAGOSA
That's why you should have waited for the Neurosurgeon. You'll find the details in the May Journal.

Ragosa exits.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM 3 - NIGHT

Althea is taking off her surgical gloves and mask. She has a huge smile on her face. The orderlies are about to take the patient out of the room.

NURSE DIAZ
You did it, Al. You saved him.

ALTHEA
I don't think I've breathed in an hour. Wait a couple of minutes before you take him to Recovery. I want to tell his wife myself.

As Althea starts to exit, a burly COP walks in and handcuffs the patient to the bed.

ALTHEA (CONT'D)
Hey, what the hell are you doing?

COP
Making sure this bastard isn't going anywhere. This is his third DUI.

ALTHEA
No, no. This is the victim.

COP
No, this is the driver. I haven't let him out of my sight. The victim died about thirty minutes ago.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

TC is sweating bullets as he proceeds.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
Pulse is starting to slow a bit. Not sure how much more he can take.

TC
Noted. Okay, I've attached the loops to the spine and the wires to the skull. Whoa, you can see the skull and spine moving separately.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
Okay, now very easy, Jordan, we're going to need that piece of rib to fortify the spinal cord. Careful, if you move it a millimeter, he's paralyzed.

JORDAN
I got it.

CAPTAIN ROPEKEE
Look at you two, just like old times.

They give each other a look.

TC
Okay, keep reading, what's next?

INT. MRI ROOM - NIGHT

Kara lies on the MRI table and slowly glides into the machine.

KARA
I'm a little claustrophobic.

TOPHER
It's going to be okay, Kara. Just take a nap. You need to be still, we only have one shot at this.

DWAYNE
You better keep Ragosa out of here.

TOPHER
I'm not in the mood, Dwayne, so don't mess with me. Just do it.

INT. RAGOSA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The room is pitch black. After a beat, we see a small pen light moving back and forth. Then, the lights of the office are turned on. We see an OPTHAMOLOGIST with a Opthalmoscope examining Ragosa's eye.

OPTHAMOLOGIST
When was the last time you had corrective surgery?

RAGOSA
It's been awhile. Back in Med School.

OPTHAMOLOGIST
Oh, you're an MD, too?

RAGOSA
No. I had to quit. You can't really perform surgery when you can't see that well.

OPTHAMOLOGIST
Right. Sorry. Anyway, there have been a lot of breakthroughs since then. We could operate and probably make it a good 20-25 percent better. You want me to put it on the schedule?

The SECRETARY buzzes in via intercom. *

SECRETARY (O.S.)
Mr. Ragosa. They're taking the boy to Recovery now. And you wanted me to remind you about checking the MRI logs.

RAGOSA
Right. Thank you.

OPTHAMOLOGIST
So, should I schedule--

RAGOSA
I'll let you know. And Doctor, please keep this between us.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Ragosa steps on the elevator and pushes the button. Just as it starts to descend, it abruptly stops.

INT. SECURITY GUARD STATION - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

A SECURITY GUARD who is monitoring multiple video screens of the hospital. We see Ragosa on a screen pick up the phone.

SECURITY GUARD
Yes, Mr. Ragosa. I can see you're stuck. We're working on it.

Reveal Topher next to the Security Guard. Topher hands him fifty bucks. The Guard covers the receiver.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Man, is he pissed. I'm going to need a hundo.

As Topher hands him fifty more dollars, his cell rings.

TOPHER
Yeah? What?

EXT. THE TAILGATE - DAY

TC and Drew drink coffee as the sun rises over the city.

DREW
You think your boy will make it?

TC
Don't know. We have to wait for the swelling to go down first. So anyway, Topher tells me that the new resident, Krista, is pretty into you.

DREW
Yeah. We really hit off. She's super cool.
(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)
I mean, I know she wants to be more than friends, but I told her about my “girlfriend” in Boston.

TC
Yeah, well, I got to be honest with you, Drew. I think people are getting suspicious.

DREW
They are? Who?

TC
Nobody’s said anything to me directly, but you know how gossipy this place gets.

DREW
You really think people know?

TC
I think they may think. I mean, you’ve been here over a year and nobody’s met your girl. You’ve turned down several other women and fix-ups from the nurses. You may be the only guy in Texas not cheating on his girlfriend. And now this hot new resident is after you and you don’t do anything? It makes people talk.

DREW
Well they should shut up.

TC
They should. But they won’t. Look, it’s not my life, but maybe you should think about coming out.

DREW
No way! Are you crazy? I can’t come out. I’d lose everything.

TC
Not anymore. It’s 2012, people don’t care.

DREW
They may say they don’t, but they do. The second I’m out, I’m the gay guy. And that’s all I am to everybody.
(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)
How do you think that's going to go over with the other fighters? Maybe nobody says anything to my face, but the whispers, the looks, it'll be death by a 1000 cuts. And come on, Tee, how many gay guys in your Ranger unit? Exactly. I love the Army, I can't risk losing it. So coming out is not an option.

TC
Well, then we better come up with a new story to get people talking about something else.

TC's pager goes off. He takes off running.

TC (CONT'D)
He's waking up. I gotta go. We'll talk later.

INT. RECOVERY AREA - DAY

TC, Jordan and the mother and brother stand next to the boy who lies in a bed, eyes closed, his upper torso encased in a "halo."

TC
Matthew. Can you hear me?

JORDAN
Move your hand if you can hear me. Can you try that?

MOTHER OF BOY
Can you move your hand?

Matthew's hand moves. They all freeze. He opens his eyes.

MATTHEW
Mom?

The mother bursts into tears. She hugs TC and Jordan.

MOTHER OF BOY
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Jordan wells up a bit, TC tries to hide the moistness in his own eyes. The mother returns to her son and TC and Jordan high-five. The father watches from the door, eyes filled with tears, then rushes to his family.

TC
How amazing was that?

Just as TC and Jordan are having a moment, they turn and see an ORDERLY, followed by Althea, pushing in the Drunk Driver patient on a gurney. Althea storms up to TC.

JORDAN
Althea. Congrat--

ALTHEA
You bastard. You knew. You knew I was operating on that murderer, didn't you?

JORDAN
What?

ALTHEA
Tell her.

TC
That's right, I did.

JORDAN
Why would you--

TC
Because I could see the other guy wasn't going to make it. He had no chance. And if that guy dies on your table, what happens then, Althea? You're done. Your life is over. You wouldn't have come back from that. You needed this. You needed to go through the worst thing you could imagine--

Althea slaps him in the face as hard as she can.

ALTHEA
Don't you ever tell me what I need ever again.

Jordan looks at TC, unsure what to think, then exits after Althea. TC looks over at the Drunk Driver and goes to his bedside. He shakes him awake. The Drunk Driver opens his eyes.

TC
Hey, I wanted you to know that this button controls your morphine from this machine next to your bed.

The Drunk Driver nods. Then TC unplugs the line and pushes the machine away where the guy can't reach it. TC exits.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Drew is with Krista getting a bagel.

DREW
Hey, so I got Foo Fighter tickets for next week. You want to go?

KRISTA
Yeah, I'd love to.

Bradford, the plastic surgeon, waves to her from a table and winks awkwardly. Krista uncomfortably waves back.

KRISTA (CONT'D)
Can we eat outside?

As they clear frame, we rack focus on Topher sitting with Kara at a table, showing her the MRI results.

KARA
Those are teeth? Am I pregnant?

TOPHER
No, it's a... you have a condition called Fetus in Fetu-- It's going to sound freaky, but you had a twin-

KARA
A twin?

TOPHER
At your conception or early on, your twin didn't develop, it's from the same egg, but it stayed alive in a very small, tumor sized form attached inside your body. It fed off your blood... you can google it.

KARA
So I'm not dying.

TOPHER
No. And in fact, it's so rare that the med school will do the operation for free.

KARA
That's great, but I can't take off work. I wouldn't be able to pay my rent.

Topher takes out a thick envelope and slides it to her.

TOPHER
That should last you until you can work again.

She opens it and sees it is full of cash. *

INT. RAGOSA'S OFFICE - DAY

Ragosa opens the envelope and counts the money. *

RAGOSA
$500? I was told they found $5000 on the homeless man. *

SECRETARY
They said that was a typo. It was really just 500. *

RAGOSA
That's a crock. I want to talk to every person who-- *

There's a knock at his door. TC is standing in the doorway.

TC
The boy came through. So... good call. *

A beat. *

RAGOSA *
Mrs. Siegel, could you give us a moment? * *

INT. ADMITTING DESK - DAY

Jordan is speaking to the Night Shift, minus TC, before they go home for the day.

JORDAN
I just want to say that everybody really pulled together and I know that there may be some bumps and I don't know the situation with...

Jordan stops and everybody turns when they see TC. They stare for a beat in anticipation.

TOPHER
Just say it, Drama Queen. *

TC
Two weeks without pay, lost one * week of vacation, probation for six * months. *

DREW
So you're staying?

TC
I'm staying.

Everybody cheers, save Jordan who gives TC a small smile.

TC (CONT'D)
So, breakfast is on me. All the bacon you can eat.

Everybody cheers again as the entire staff starts to exit. TC stops, and turns, and heads back to Jordan. He pulls a thick file out of his backpack and hands it to Jordan.

JORDAN
What's this?

TC
The data for your drug study.

JORDAN
Really? You did all that work for me after the night you had?

TC
Actually, I did it about a month ago. I just didn't feel like giving it to you then.

Jordan shakes her head.

JORDAN
Jerk.

TC
See ya tonight.

TC hustles to catch up with the gang as they all exit through the Double Doors into the bright light of the day... as we...

Fade to Black...