**Script Role-Play**  
**Title: The Therac-25 Tragedy: A Role-Play**  
**Characters:**  
• Judge Foster (Narrator, now older) – Recounts the Therac-25 case to a fellow judge and a junior.  
• Judge Daniel Harris – A fellow judge listening to the story.  
• Junior Judge Anna Collins – A younger judge dealing with a similar case.  
• Technician (Lisa Carter) – Operates the Therac-25 machine.  
• Hospital Physicist (Dr. Michael Reynolds) – Investigates radiation levels.  
• Patient 1 (John Davis) – First known victim of overdose.  
• Patient 2 (Emily Carter) – Another victim.  
• AECL Representative (Mr. James Bennett) – Represents the manufacturer.  
• FDA Investigator (Dr. Susan Miller) – Investigates the malfunctions.  
• Lawyer (Mr. Robert Hayes) – Represents the victims' families.  
• Court Bailiff – Assists during the courtroom scene.

**Scene 1: The Judges’ Chamber**  
*(A warm, wood-paneled judicial office, with framed degrees and law books lining the shelves. The air is quiet except for the soft clink of a coffee cup. Judge Eleanor Foster, now retired, sips her coffee as she leans back in her leather chair. Across from her sit Judge Daniel Harris and Junior Judge Anna Collins.)*

**Judge Foster** *(Nakasandal sa kanyang upuan, humihigop ng kape)*  
"Y'know, Anna, the case you're handling reminds me of one of the worst tech disasters I've ever presided over... the Therac-25 tragedy. Damn thing still haunts me."

**Judge Harris** *(Bahagyang yumuko pasulong, naintriga)*  
"Therac-25? That was the radiation overdose case, right?"

**Judge Foster** *(Tumango nang mabigat ang loob)*  
"Yeah. Back in '85. A medical device turned into a death trap all because of a software bug."

**Judge Collins** *(Napakunot-noo)*  
"Wait, a software bug? Not a mechanical failure?"

**Judge Foster:**  
"Nope. The hardware was fine—the problem was in the code. A tiny programming flaw that led to massive radiation overdoses."

**Judge Collins** *(Umiling nang hindi makapaniwala)*  
"That’s terrifying. How does something like that even get past testing?"

**Judge Foster** *(Bumuntong-hininga)*  
"Overconfidence. The manufacturers thought they’d ironed out the issues. No proper fail-safes, no real-world testing. And when reports of accidents started coming in, they dismissed them as operator error."

**Judge Harris** *(Natatawa nang bahagya, sarcastic tone)*  
"Classic. Blame the user instead of the system."

**Judge Collins:**  
"And people paid the price for it, didn’t they?"

**Judge Foster** *(Mahinang tinig)*  
"Oh, they did. Some of them never walked out of those treatment rooms."

**Judge Collins** *(Nakilabutan)*  
"That’s horrifying. It’s like a nightmare version of automation gone wrong."

**Judge Foster** *(Tumango)*  
"And the worst part? It could have been prevented."

**Judge Foster** *(Ibinaba niya ang kanyang kape, tumingin sa malayo, habang bumalot ang katahimikan sa opisina)*  
"Let me tell you how it all went down…"

**Scene 2: The First Incident**  
*(Inside a clinical, sterile hospital treatment room at Kennestone Regional Oncology Center. The faint hum of machines fills the air. A green digital monitor glows on the control panel. Technician Lisa Carter is in scrubs, focused on the terminal.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "June 1985. Kennestone Regional Oncology Center. Lisa Carter, an experienced technician, is setting up the Therac-25 machine for a routine treatment."

**Lisa Carter:** "Alright, Mr. Davis, we’re gonna get you set up here." *(Typing quickly, accidentally selects ‘X’ instead of ‘E’ and corrects it.)* "Oops, my bad—there we go. Alright, hold still. Starting treatment now."

**John Davis:** *(Suddenly jerks, wincing in pain)* "Ahh! What the hell?! It feels like I’m on fire!"

**Lisa Carter:** *(Frowning at the screen)* "Uh… ‘Malfunction 54’? Damn thing glitches all the time. Probably nothing serious. Just a treatment pause." *(Continues treatment.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "John received a massive overdose of radiation. Within days, severe burns appeared on his body. Doctors assumed it was just an unexpected complication… until it happened again."

**Scene 2.5: Silent Consequences**  
*(Dimly lit hospital recovery room. John Davis lies in bed, his body bandaged and his face pale. A heart monitor beeps slowly. Lisa Carter stands at the door, frozen, watching him from afar. Her hands are trembling. In the hallway, a nurse whispers to a doctor. The mood is heavy with guilt and confusion.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):**  
*"The machine didn’t just burn flesh—it scorched through trust, through duty, through the lives of people who thought they were safe. John Davis would never be the same again."*

**Lisa Carter:** *(Whispering to herself)*  
"I followed the protocol. I followed everything. This can’t be my fault… can it?"

\**(Lisa slowly backs away, tears forming, as the heart monitor’s beeps echo louder for a moment before fading.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):**  
*"But as more patients lined up for treatment, that doubt—the one that should have stopped everything—was swallowed by silence."*

**Scene 3: Patterns Emerge**  
*(Inside the hospital physics lab. The walls are lined with charts and radiation test equipment. Dr. Reynolds pores over radiation logs, illuminated by a desk lamp.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** *(Softly, with tension)* "But one patient wasn’t an isolated event. No... this machine had more blood on its hands."

**Dr. Reynolds:** *(Looking at radiation logs, frustrated)* "Something’s not right… The numbers are way off. This machine is dosing people way too high."

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "Then came Emily Carter’s turn…"

**Emily Carter:** *(Screams in agony from the treatment room)* "Jesus Christ! It’s burning me! Stop, stop!"

**Lisa Carter:** *(Panicked, staring at the screen from the control booth)* "Shit, it’s ‘Malfunction 54’ again…"

**Dr. Reynolds:** *(Determined, muttering to himself)* "Alright, enough of this. I’m testing it myself." *(Inputs commands rapidly, trying to recreate the error.)* "Wait… If you type too fast, it skips a critical step. Holy hell… The machine is firing max radiation without the safety magnets in place!"

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "Dr. Reynolds confirmed the deadly bug—a race condition in the software causing lethal overdoses."

**Scene 3.5: Ripples of Silence**  
*(Emily Carter’s mother sobs in a hospital waiting room. A priest walks by. Dr. Reynolds stares at his hands, as if wondering if he’s too late. Lisa Carter sits slumped against a vending machine, numb.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):**  
*"And while administrators debated protocols and manufacturers defended code, families grieved in silence. One tragedy turned into a pattern—and patterns demand answers."*

**Scene 4: AECL’s Response**  
*(Inside a corporate boardroom at AECL headquarters. Modern, minimalist design, but cold and sterile. James Bennett speaks into a speakerphone. Charts and graphs on a projector display behind him.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "The hospital contacted AECL, the manufacturer of Therac-25, demanding answers."

**Dr. Reynolds:** *(On the phone, pissed off)* "Your machine is straight-up killing people! The spreading magnets aren’t engaging because of a software bug!"

**Mr. Bennett (AECL Representative):** *(Calm, dismissive tone)* "We’ve looked into it, and we believe this is operator error, not a software problem. Our machine is safe."

**Dr. Reynolds:** *(Snaps)* "Bullshit! I’ve reproduced the error myself! It’s a goddamn ticking time bomb!"

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** "AECL refused to recall the machine. More patients suffered—some didn’t survive."

**Narrator (Judge Foster):** *(Bitterly)* "If denial was a strategy, it was one paved with graves."

**Scene 4.5: Echoes of Denial**  
*(TV screens play news reports in the background. Victims’ families hold framed photos at a vigil outside the hospital. The crowd is silent except for one chant: “Accountability! Accountability!”)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):**  
*"Grief turned into outrage. Outrage into questions. But AECL stood silent. Denial, after all, is louder than any scream."*

**Scene 5: Courtroom Proceedings**  
*(A packed courtroom filled with reporters, grieving families, and legal teams. The heavy sound of a gavel echoes through the wood-paneled hall as the bailiff steps forward.)*

**Court Bailiff:** "All rise. The Court of Medical Safety and Ethics is now in session, the Honorable Judge Foster presiding."

**Judge Foster (in flashback):** *(Gravely, measured tone from the bench)* "This court convenes today to determine the liability of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited in the fatal incidents involving the Therac-25 radiation therapy device."

**Mr. Hayes (Lawyer):** "Your Honor, AECL knew their machine was faulty and let it keep running. They ignored warnings, and people DIED because of it."

**Mr. Bennett (AECL Representative):** *(Shifting uncomfortably at the witness stand)* "We conducted internal reviews… We didn’t see a systemic failure."

**Mr. Hayes:** "Is it not true that AECL refused to recall the device even after multiple patient deaths?"

**Mr. Bennett:** *(Avoids eye contact)* "We believed the incidents were isolated."

**Dr. Susan Miller (FDA Investigator):** "Your Honor, our investigation shows AECL had ZERO formal software testing. No independent reviews. They cut corners, and people paid the price."

**Judge Foster (in flashback):** *(Firmly)* "This court finds AECL grossly negligent. It is ordered to compensate all victims and to cease Therac-25 operations immediately."

**Scene 5.5: The Verdict's Weight**  
*(Outside the courthouse. Reporters swarm. Some families weep. Others look hollow. Lisa Carter hugs Emily Carter’s mother silently. Dr. Reynolds walks away alone.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster):**  
*"Justice was served—but too late for some. A verdict can’t undo radiation. Or grief. Or guilt."*

**Scene 6: Aftermath and Lessons Learned**  
*(Back in the judges’ chamber. The mood is quiet and reflective. The shadows are longer now, as the late afternoon light spills through the window blinds.)*

**Narrator (Judge Foster, back in present day):** "That case changed everything. After the lawsuits, Therac-25 was recalled, and the disaster forced changes in software safety regulations."

**Dr. Reynolds (in flashback, exhausted, shaking his head in the lab):** "A damn race condition… That’s all it took to kill people. Unbelievable."

**Lisa Carter:** *(Tearful, guilty in a hospital hallway)* "I trusted the system. I—I didn’t know… God, I wish I’d questioned it sooner."

**Mr. Hayes:** *(During a press conference)* "This case sets a new precedent. No more untested software in life-critical systems. No more companies cutting corners when lives are at stake."

**Narrator (Judge Foster, present day, sighs deeply):** "Anna, this is why you need to push for accountability in your case. I don't care if it's a hospital, a tech firm, or the damn government—when lives are on the line, negligence isn't an option."

**Judge Harris:** *(Nods, impressed)* "Damn. That was one hell of a case."

**Junior Judge Collins:** *(Determined)* "I won’t let my case end up like that. Thanks, Judge Foster. I’ll fight for the right verdict."

**Narrator (Judge Foster, with a sad smile):** "Good. Because people deserve better than what those victims got."

**(Lights dim slowly as the characters fall into thoughtful silence.)**

**(End of Role-Play)**