

House season 4, episode 10

excerpts

[' them but with my genes... I knew this woman, a drug addict. She got pregnant, didn't want to have an abortion. But she also didn't want her daughter to ever know who her real mother was. What she was. I promis']

transcript

[Pan over the Christmas-theme decorated ceiling of a rock climbing center. Zoom in on a girl who's climbing, belayed by her mother on the ground.]

MAGGIE: You ok?

JANE: I'm thinking.

MAGGIE: Thinking's not going to get you to the top.

JANE: [out of breath] Mom, you're supposed to be encouraging me.

MAGGIE: No, I'm supposed to be coaching you. The slower you go, the more tired you're going to get.

[Jane cringes and then reaches for another rock, successfully grabbing on and continuing upwards. Maggie smiles proudly.]

MAGGIE: There's a hold about a foot above you on the left.

JANE: I know. [pauses and then leaps for it]

MAGGIE: Nice grab! Keep going! You're almost there, babe.

JANE: [struggling to find a foothold] I can't. My calf's cramping.

MAGGIE: You need to get off your toes. Get on the ball of your foot.

JANE: I can't...

MAGGIE: [nods] Yes, you can. You can get all the way to the top.

[Jane cringes, her leg still obviously cramping. She tries to reach for another rock and slips

altogether, only suspended by the belay rope now.]

MAGGIE: It's ok, I got you. You alright?

JANE: Looks like you were wrong.

MAGGIE: [laughs lightly] Yeah, but you did awesome. That's the highest you've gotten, I'm proud of you.

JANE: I don't feel so good...

MAGGIE: Ok, come on down.

[The rope starts sliding and Jane starts coming down. But we see that Maggie is staring at her hand and the rope, worried expression on her face.]

JANE: [looks down] Mom, you ok?

[Inside Maggie's hand and arm, electrical impulses zap their way up and down the tendons.]

MAGGIE: Oh god... [losing control of her hands]

[The rope is unleashed completely and Jane falls from the top of the rock, screaming until she hits the padded ground. Another climbing coach rushes over to see her wincing and clutching at her arm.]

JANE: My arm... I think I broke it.

COACH: Don't move.

MAGGIE: [kneels next to her] Oh Jane, I'm so sorry...

JANE: What happened? Did the rope break?

MAGGIE: [almost panicking] No... My hands... [stares at her own hands] I can't move them...

[Diagnostic's office. There is a snowglobe and a few candy canes on the table, sparkly festive streamers are also hanging on the walls.]

TAUB: [making a cup of tea] She's been to an ortho, two neuro's, and an immunologist. None of the treatments have had any effect.

KUTNER: [licking at a candy cane] You think it's over?

THIRTEEN: [studying the patient's chart] It's getting worse. Last neurologist found intermittent numbness in both arms as well as the hand paralysis.

KUTNER: I meant the game. You think he's gonna keep all four of us?

FOREMAN: Said he would. No sign of upper motor neuron involvement.

[We see House entering quietly behind Kutner.]

KUTNER: He lies.

HOUSE: [slightly amused tone] My ears are burning.

[Kutner freezes, eyes widening over his drink before he turns around to stare at House.]

FOREMAN: Tell him you're done firing people.

HOUSE: Well if I lie, that would be little reassurance. [glances up and starts tearing down the streamers with his cane.] Dr. Kutner, who told you that it would be a good idea to put up superficial representations of a hypocritical season celebrating a mythical figure?

KUTNER: [frowning] Wasn't me.

HOUSE: He lied. [tosses a Santa plushie into the trashcan] Homie knows better, Hymie doesn't care, and Huntington's would have done a better job.

THIRTEEN: [looks up at House] I don't have Huntington's.

HOUSE: That you know of.

FOREMAN: Why would you...

HOUSE: [cuts Foreman off and trashes more streamers] Because I got sued when I called you "honeybuns".

KUTNER: [frustratedly] Am I fired if I put up-

THIRTEEN: [cuts Kutner off] The point of the game was to scare us. Telling us it's over isn't scary, therefore he has no reason to say that unless it's true. [leveling House with a challenging

gaze, House smiles at her and nods]

KUTNER: [perks up] Good. Then can we do a Secret Santa? [Foreman looks at him likes he's an idiot]

HOUSE: I liked you fifteen seconds ago when you were afraid for your job. [more tearing down of streamers by the coffee bar] So who's sick?

TAUB: Forty-five year old single mom. It's an odd presentation of paralysis. Any history of drug use?

THIRTEEN: No.

HOUSE: She says there's no history.

THIRTEEN: She's not a liar.

HOUSE: Ok, this is gonna be a tough case. I have almost no knowledge of alien physiology.

THIRTEEN: Everyone lies but there's an exception to every rule.

HOUSE: Actually there isn't. That's kinda what makes it a rule.

THIRTEEN: The patient's mother died of breast cancer when she was seven and she never even knew her mom was sick. She promised herself she would never hide anything from her own daughter.

HOUSE: [patronizingly] Oh... I didn't know she'd promised. [Thirteen isn't amused]

TAUB: And we're not her daughter. Patient inherited the BRCA1 mutation from her mom, she got a prophylactic double mastectomy ten years ago.

HOUSE: She lied about it.

THIRTEEN: She told her co-worker, she told her kid.

HOUSE: She lied to the world. Reconstructive surgery is designed to convince people that-

TAUB: She didn't get reconstructive surgery.

[House looks at him, suddenly intrigued.]

KUTNER: Ok, we can rule out breast cancer.

TAUB: Actually, I was going to rule it in. Paralysis could be paraneoplastic. Even the best surgeon can't remove every cell of breast tissue.

[Foreman seems convinced and looks to House, who's drinking from his usual red cup and thinking.]

HOUSE: MRI what's left of her chest. Set the machine to scan for irony. [sets his cup down, pausing] I'm going to go redo the patient history.

[Kutner looks confused, Thirteen doesn't act surprised but she's still annoyed.]

[Maggie's room. House and Jane are sitting side by side on some chairs, both sucking on a lollipop.]

HOUSE: You mom tell you about all the dr*gs she does?

JANE: [shrugs] She smokes pot once in a while, but not in a long time.

HOUSE: What about you?

JANE: How would that make her sick?

HOUSE: [sarcastically] Are you a doctor?

JANE: I'm eleven...

HOUSE: That's not an answer. It's an evasion. [looks at his lollipop for a second] Are you drinking? You ever sneak a drink?

JANE: I don't do any of that stuff. It's bad for you.

HOUSE: I understand why you don't want your mom to know, but I'm her doctor so-

JANE: And I would tell my mom. And I would tell you.

HOUSE: Why?

JANE: Because she would never lie to me.

HOUSE: [won't give up yet] What's her favorite way to have sex?

JANE: [frowns] I don't get what sex has to do with breast cancer.

HOUSE: [rolls his eyes] Are you a doctor? Did you go to med school since the last time I asked?

JANE: You just think we gotta be lying–

HOUSE: [cuts her off] White lies?

JANE: What are those?

HOUSE: Those are lies we tell to make other people feel better.

JANE: I don't lie.

HOUSE: Rationalizations?

JANE: What are those?

HOUSE: Those are lies we tell to make ourselves feel better.

JANE: No, we don't–

HOUSE: [cuts her off again] Lies of omission? [Jane looks unsure] Saddlebronc or doggie? That's sex talk.

JANE: [a moment's contemplation] She used to like being on top, but now she likes to be on her stomach. That way she doesn't have to see them looking at her scars.

[House stares at her for a while, seemingly understanding and drops the topic.]

[Hospital cafeteria. Wilson is standing next to House as they wait in line, looking at an MRI scan.]

HOUSE: It's child abuse.

WILSON: Honesty?

HOUSE: There's a reason that everybody lies. It works. It what allows society to function, it's what separates man from beast.

WILSON: Oh, I thought that was our thumbs.

HOUSE: You wanna know every place your mom's thumb has been?

WILSON: I'm sorry I missed rehearsal. Am I taking the "truth is good" side? Don't you usually take that side?

HOUSE: Lies are a tool, they can be used either for good... No wait, I got a better one. Lies are like children. Hard work, but they're worth it. Because the future depends on them.

WILSON: You are so full of love... or something. [gestures for House to pay up] When you care about someone—

HOUSE: [interrupts] You lie to them! You pretend that their constant ponderous musing are interesting. You tell them they're not losing their boyish good looks or becoming worn out.

WILSON: I stand corrected and may I say, it's been a real pleasure chatting with you. [directs House's attention back to the scan] Sila's clean, surgical margins looks clear. No lymphadenopathy, no masses, no nothing. It's not cancer.

[Hospital hallway. Thirteen and Kutner are walking behind him.]

HOUSE: We need a new theory.

THIRTEEN: Did you catch her lying?

HOUSE: Not yet.

THIRTEEN: "Wouldn't know" would have been a shorter answer.

HOUSE: Wouldn't you not talking have made this a shorter conversation? Kid says mom's a slut.

KUTNER: [incredulous] She called her mom a slut?

HOUSE: No, I called her mom a slut. Jumps anything will a pole and a pulse. Not that I'm judging here. Given her medical history, I'm actually impressed.

THIRTEEN: Maggie already admitted to having multiple sexual partners. Which is why we already tested for, and ruled out, syphilis and any other STDs that could have caused her symptoms.

[They arrive just outside the door to House's office and he turns around to appraise them.]

HOUSE: STDs aren't the only risk in risky sex. Problem in sleeping with strangers is... they're strange.

KUTNER: We'll follow up with any recent partners.

HOUSE: Send Foreman and Taub. They're better liars, more likely to get to the truth.

[House enters his office. Thirteen and Kutner sigh, then exit to presumably find the others.]

[Foreman and Taub are in an unknown man's flat, sitting on low linen-covered chairs, shoeless feet resting on wood floors. Foreman stares at the man, someone Maggie has slept with, while Taub sips his coffee.]

ROGER: You think I drugged her? [glances at Taub, who is about to set his coffee onto the arm of his chair] Use a coaster.

[Taub picks his drink back up, obviously thinking that the guy has an issue with interior cleanliness that borders on neuroticism.]

FOREMAN: We're not cops. Legally, we don't care one way or another.

TAUB: But we need to know the truth so we can help her.

ROGER: I'd known her for less than an hour and she offered to take me home. There was no need to drug her.

[Foreman and Taub look at each other.]

ROGER: [chuckles nervously] Not that I would.

[Foreman and Taub stand up, presumably to leave.]

ROGER: But she's gonna be ok, right?

TAUB: As long as she doesn't have to pick up or hold anything. [nodding]

ROGER: [sighs then points to their shoeless feet] Uh, sorry. I just had the floors done. Reclaimed pine.

[They watch as Roger takes a long gulp out of a giant water bottle. Foreman looks at Taub knowingly.]

TAUB: You always this thirsty?

ROGER: I don't know... Water's supposed to be good for you, right?

TAUB: [looks at Foreman] Dehydration, anxiety, aggression...

ROGER: I'm not aggressive.

FOREMAN: Spastic chorea in his right hand.

ROGER: [glances at his hand and shakes it uncertainly] What about my hand?

FOREMAN: How much do you weight? About 180, 190?

ROGER: [starting to panic now] 180. What is-

FOREMAN: [interrupts] You took what she did, it could take longer to hit you. Might affect you differently.

TAUB: But you didn't give her anything. Right?

ROGER: [hesitates for a moment, smiling nervously] She was really drunk... I just gave her some E, to help enhance things.

[Taub and Foreman look at each other, smiling lightly in victory.]

FOREMAN: Have any of it left?

ROGER: [goes to retrieve the pills from a drawer] Is my hand gonna be ok?

TAUB: There's nothing wrong with it. [smug] We lied.

[Cline room. House is diagnosing an attractive blonde woman in a low cut shirt.]

MELANIE: I've had a sore throat for a few days now. My stomach's also been bothering me. I think my glands are swollen.

HOUSE: [feels her glands under her throat but then is distracted by the necklace she's wearing] Saint Nicholas?

MELANIE: [smiles] Patron saint of children.

HOUSE: Also seamen, merchants, archers, prostitutes, and prisoners.

MELANIE: Hmm... Must have been pretty hardworking.

HOUSE: [shrugs] Or just a credit hog.

[Melanie laughs lightly]

HOUSE: Open wide. [shines a flashlight into her mouth] Say "aah".

[Melanie says "aah" and House clicks the flashlight off, turning to his paperwork.] You have strep.

MELANIE: Is it contagious?

HOUSE: Only for the next 24 hours as long as you take the antibiotics.

MELANIE: [worriedly] How contagious?

HOUSE: Take a personal day.

MELANIE: I can't!

HOUSE: [looks at her with a mock serious expression] I'll write your pimp a note.

MELANIE: My pimp?

HOUSE: You're tested for AIDS every three months and... your necklace.

MELANIE: [amused] Prostitutes wear religious symbols?

HOUSE: I think they just like kneeling. [smiles] You don't have the skin of a seaman, the fingers of an archer, the clothes of a merchant, or the attitude of an ex-con. So, just leaves one left.

MELANIE: Mmm... Two actually. [gives him a flirtatious smile] But I'm not a child, am I?

[House gives her a conceding smile and hands her the prescription, then grabs his cane and exits. Cuddy meets up with him at the nurse's station.]

CUDDY: You owe me 50 bucks.

HOUSE: Then you owe me half a lapdance.

CUDDY: It's for the nurses' holiday bonus. I know you got the memo.

HOUSE: Got the memo last year. I want to hire forty more fellows.

CUDDY: You already fired the ones you hired?

HOUSE: They work better when they're scared.

[Cuddy looks half confused until Taub walks in.]

TAUB: You were right. Guy slipped her Ecstasy.

[Cuddy looks up, obviously surprised.]

HOUSE: He have any symptoms?

TAUB: No. Kutner's starting the patient on hemodialysis and Thirteen's in the lab trying to figure out what the guy put in the dr*gs. [leaves the clinic]

[Cuddy blinks, still confused. House gestures to Taub to make his point.]

HOUSE: See? Clear, simple statement of facts describing their cooperation, with absolutely no attitude or fear. [reaches to grab another patient's file]

CUDDY: Something's gotta be done.

HOUSE: Oh yeah.

[Maggie's room. Kutner has just finished setting her up on hemodialysis and checking her over.]

KUTNER: How are you feeling?

MAGGIE: I still can't move my hands.

KUTNER: It will take a few more hours to cycle all your blood through the machine.

[Maggie looks up from her hands, blinking and looking confused.]

MAGGIE: What just happened?

KUTNER: [turns and looks around] Nothing. What's wrong?

MAGGIE: What do you mean? The lights just went out. Didn't they?

[Kutner sets down the file, unsure. Jane moves to her mom's bedside.]

JANE: What did you do?

MAGGIE: Is this from the dr*gs?

KUTNER: [shines a flashlight over her eyes, no response] Most of the dr*gs should be out of your system by now and our dr*gs–

MAGGIE: I can't see...

JANE: [scared] Do something!

MAGGIE: I can't see! I can't see!

[Diagnostic's office. House is writing things down on little slips of yellow paper when the duckies enter.]

THIRTEEN: Nothing in the Ecstasy except Ecstasy.

HOUSE: Well that never hurt anybody.

FOREMAN: Can't make them blind days later.

HOUSE: [looks at one of the slips of paper in his hands, frowning] Do you spell "homie" with a Y?

[Kutner glances up, intrigued, but House folds the paper up without letting them see what's written.]

HOUSE: I want to be respectful.

KUTNER: You're actually going to let us do Secret Santa?

HOUSE: Not just you guys. [turns around to grab a Christmas stocking and puts the slips of paper inside, shaking it up to mix them] I like presents too. [offers the stocking up to Taub] Pick a name.

TAUB: [looks suspicious] Why are you doing this?

HOUSE: See, this is why no one likes your people.

[Taub almost looks offended.]

HOUSE: The notion of picking one time of the year to be decent to other people is obscene, because it's actually validating the notion of being miserable wretches the rest of the year.

FOREMAN: So you think this is the part of the year they screwed up?

HOUSE: On the other hand, you are now a team. Gotta work together and the simple fact is, giving people crap makes people like people so spend 25 bucks. Learn to love...

[Taub seems unimpressed but indulges him anyways and goes to pick a name out of the stocking.]

THIRTEEN: Blindness could be a complication from the hemodialysis.

[House offers the stocking to Kutner next.]

KUTNER: No, the dialysate composition was within range. [looks at the name on his slip of paper, giving a nod and smiling to himself] Sweet.

HOUSE: Interesting.

THIRTEEN: The dialysate composition just indicates–

HOUSE: [cuts her off] Indicates nothing. I was referring to his reaction to the name he got.

KUTNER: I was pleased. I thought it'd be fun to buy for–

HOUSE: Means... there's someone here who wouldn't be fun to buy for. [purposeful pause as he stares at Kutner] I wonder who. [offers up the stocking to Thirteen next] Pick a name, then go check out the patient's house.

[Thirteen looks at her name and doesn't seem to be pleased with it. She shoves it into the pocket of her labcoat instead.]

HOUSE: [smiles slowly] Interesting...

[Thirteen looks at him and they lock eyes for a moment as House seems to be calculating something in his mind.]

FOREMAN: We're wasting time going to the home. Kearns-Sayer syndrome fits the symptoms.
[takes a name from the stocking and tucks it into his jacket's inner pocket without even looking.]

HOUSE: No family history of Kearns. Go to their house—

THIRTEEN: [interrupts] They would have told us if there were any other dr*gs. You met her, she couldn't have been more candid.

HOUSE: You're absolutely right. Go to their house—

TAUB: [cuts him off again] MS or a vascular problem fits better. They could affect hands and eyes.

HOUSE: Fine. Do an MRI, check for MS. And a fluorescein angiogram of her eyes to see if we missed a bleed somewhere.

[The group gets up, ready to leave.]

HOUSE: Oh! And whoever goes to their house... get me their computers.

[The duckies are obviously frustrated that he won't drop the subject.]

HOUSE: You talk to your kid about sex so she'll think you're being open about everything. Keeps her from asking questions about the things you don't want to talk about. [goes to grab the last name from the stocking for himself]

THIRTEEN: That's right. Her honesty proves just how dishonest she is.

HOUSE: [looks at the slip of paper] Yes! Exactly who I wanted. This is going to be fun.

[The duckies leave and House simply smiles, turning to throw the stocking to the side.]

[Lab room. Taub and Foreman are about to perform the fluorescein angiogram on Maggie.]

TAUB: The dye may sting when it enters your bloodstream,

JANE: Are you scared, mom?

MAGGIE: [turns in the direction of her daughter's voice] Yeah. Are you?

JANE: [nods] Yeah.

MAGGIE: Are they?

JANE: [looks at Foreman and Taub] They don't look scared.

MAGGIE: Either they're confident or they just don't care. [laughs hesitantly]

FOREMAN: We're confident.

TAUB: Okay if I shift you a bit? Get you into position.

[Taub settles her head on the chinrest of the machine and then moves to sit on the other side, pressing a few buttons to get it up and running.]

JANE: Your boss is weird.

TAUB: Yeah, he is. He thought he'd get information you may not have been telling us by...

MAGGIE: Being a jerk?

TAUB: You'd be surprised how often it works.

FOREMAN: Choroidal flush looks good.

JANE: Why would people lie to a doctor?

FOREMAN: Dozens of reasons to lie, only one reason to tell the truth.

TAUB: You're never even tempted? [glancing to Maggie] I mean, lies do sometimes smooth things out, make life easier.

MAGGIE: Yeah? Your life easy?

FOREMAN: Not even close. Dye's reached the retinal capillary bed. No leakage.

[There's a moment of silence as Taub and Foreman glance at each other, unsure.]

JANE: That's... good, right?

TAUB: Means it's not a vascular problem.

MAGGIE: But?

FOREMAN: Vascular problem, we could fix.

[Jane watches as Foreman and Taub look at each other again, both afraid to say anything else.]

JANE: They look worried now, mom.

[Employee's lounge. House is playing foosball by himself when Wilson enters.]

WILSON: What's with the Secret Santa? You trying to bring them together?

HOUSE: I want to drive them apart.

WILSON: With gift giving?

HOUSE: Conflict's built right into the name. Santa's about sharing, secret's about withholding.

[scores a goal and continues on playing by himself]

WILSON: Aside from the Trojan horse, gifts don't usually–

HOUSE: [interrupts] What did you get your wife for your final anniversary?

WILSON: [thinks about it for a second] Uh... a sweater.

HOUSE: She hated it.

WILSON: She loved it.

HOUSE: Then you didn't buy it. [scores another goal, for the other team]

WILSON: I... gave her some cash and...

HOUSE: [stops and turns to look at Wilson, obviously not impressed] Gifts allow us to demonstrate exactly how little we know about a person and nothing pisses off a person more than being shoved in the wrong pigeon hole.

[House scores another goal on himself and Wilson is pretty much speechless.]

[Hospital main entrance. Kutner and Thirteen are returning from presumably searching Maggie's home, as Thirteen is holding two laptops under her arm.]

KUTNER: I'm thinking of spending a few extra bucks on my Secret Santa.

THIRTEEN: Bad idea. You mind if I tell House you asked them for the key instead of breaking in?

[They walk further into the hospital, amusingly carrying two conversation at the same time.]

KUTNER: Yes, I do. Just another five bucks.

THIRTEEN: Five will be ten. The key's proof she doesn't have anything to hide.

KUTNER: The key is proof I didn't do exactly what House told me to do. And what do you care if it's another fifteen?

THIRTEEN: I'm gonna tell him. And who are you so anxious to please?

KUTNER: [scoffs and presses the elevator button as they arrive] Not you. You really think you're going to prove people are capable of honesty using a mother and daughter you've known for one day?

THIRTEEN: I'm not the one who's based his entire world view on the proposition. If I'm wrong, so what? If he's wrong...

[Elevator arrives and they step in, Kutner taking the hood of his hoodie to look at her.]

KUTNER: So you really have Huntington's?

THIRTEEN: Nope.

KUTNER: But House said that—

THIRTEEN: [cuts him off defensively] If I wanted to talk about it, why didn't I bring it up?

[Elevator door closes.]

[House's office. House is trying passwords to hack into Maggie's computer as the duckies look on. He's slowly getting more impatient.]

TAUB: Fluorescein angiogram was clear. No leaks, no lesions, definitely not a vascular problem.

HOUSE: [frowns at the computer, still having no luck] Someone get their birthdays out of the file.

THIRTEEN: Have you tried leaving it blank?

[She steps up and enters in a blank password for him, logging them in immediately to show a desktop wallpaper of Maggie and Jane, lovingly smiling together and posing for the camera. House looks majorly disappointed.]

THIRTEEN: Tough to get into the head of someone who actually trusts people, huh? Found both computers in an office, on a desk they share.

TAUB: No sign of macular degeneration or optic neuritis. Her eyes are completely normal.

FOREMAN: Except she can't see out of them.

HOUSE: [rifling through files on the computer] So she says. Find anything on the MRI?

FOREMAN: No sign of plaques. It's not MS.

TAUB: We haven't found anything abnormal on any test.

KUTNER: Except she can't see or move her hands.

HOUSE: [with more emphasis this time] So she says.

THIRTEEN: You can't lie about flaccid paralysis.

FOREMAN: Maybe she's not lying.

[House looks up, intrigued.]

FOREMAN: Her brain is. What if it's a conversion disorder?

HOUSE: [musingly] Lacks personal boundaries... Promiscuous... Inappropriate obsession with truth-telling... Certainly sounds like a psych case.

KUTNER: Cool. I'll set up a psych consult and start her on anti-depressants. [starts to leave]

HOUSE: Nope.

[Kutner turns back around, confused.]

HOUSE: Her mind is tricking her body. We need to trick her mind. Or even better.

[House grabs his cane and exits, Thirteen seems to understand something, looks slightly worried, and proceeds to follow him out.]

[Hospital hallway. Thirteen follows House as he heads for Maggie's room.]

THIRTEEN: You don't need her.

HOUSE: I know.

THIRTEEN: Then this serves no medical purpose.

HOUSE: You have a genetic defect, you choose to ignore it. This woman has a genetic defect, chooses to butcher herself to be safe. Yet what you claim to be fascinated by, is her honesty. Interesting.

THIRTEEN: You claim to want the truth, and then you screw with people who actually live by it. Pathetic.

[They stop outside Maggie's room and House turns to face her.]

HOUSE: Hey, I gave you credit for interesting.

[Thirteen sighs, knowing she's lost the argument.]

HOUSE: You're protecting her because you're jealous she did what you couldn't.

[Thirteen decides she can't take this anymore and starts to walk off. House rolls his eyes.]

HOUSE: I need you.

THIRTEEN: [turns back around and shakes her head] I'm not lying to her.

HOUSE: Fine, keep your mouth shut. I still need you. If it doesn't work, you gotta hold the kid down until someone else finishes lying to mom.

[Thirteen gives him a skeptical look but he merely nods.]

HOUSE: That does actually serve a medical purpose.

[Thirteen seems to consent and House slides the door to the room open to catch the daughter's attention.]

HOUSE: Jane.

[Hospital hallway, couches across from nurse's station. Thirteen is pretending to read a file

while House talks to Jane.]

JANE: I have to lie because she trusts me?

HOUSE: If you show doubt, the placebo treatment won't work.

JANE: If it's just depression, that's good news right?

HOUSE: [nods] A lot of great medications.

JANE: So why can't we just give her those? Why do we have to lie to her?

HOUSE: Because we might be wrong. And those medications take a long time to work and since your mom's condition is declining, there's a chance the dr*gs won't tell us anything until it's too late.

JANE: [still doesn't seem convinced] My mom's not depressed.

HOUSE: Maybe she's hiding it from you.

JANE: [shakes her head] No. She wouldn't-

HOUSE: Just doing what every good mom does. Protecting her child from bad news that she can't do anything about.

JANE: My mom's never lied to me.

HOUSE: You don't know how to lie. You don't know how to tell when you're being lied to.

JANE: [stares at him for a moment and then drops her eyes, seemingly less unconvinced now]
Maybe you're right...

HOUSE: I know...

JANE: I was lying. [satisfied with her little show] I know how to lie. I just won't do it to my mother.

[House licks his lips and glances subtly up at Thirteen. She shuts the file she's been pretending to read and moves over to look at Jane.]

THIRTEEN: You like foosball?

[Maggie's room. Taub is preparing her for the placebo treatment.]

TAUB: Until the treatment of your infectious parapheresis takes effect, Jane can't come back into the room. I've already been inoculated.

MAGGIE: Can she have it already?

TAUB: Don't worry. [hangs up the IV bag] It's a very effective treatment, you should be feeling better in a matter of minutes.

[Maggie swallows hard, making a noise of discomfort as he sticks the IV needle in.]

TAUB: Don't you think Jane deserves a few secrets? Some personal space? Room to uh... make her own mistakes? [taking her wrist to take her pulse for a moment]

MAGGIE: She makes plenty of mistakes. Only difference is, I'm there to help her through them.

TAUB: [shakes his head and drops her hand] But she's gotta know you're looking over her shoulder. It's gotta stifle–

MAGGIE: You think the world would be a better place if everybody always acted like their mom was looking over their shoulder?

[Maggie lies back down and closes her eyes, obviously still in pain. Taub takes a seat nearby, glancing at his watch and then moving to pick up a magazine to read.]

[Employee's lounge. Kutner, Foreman, and Thirteen are keeping Jane busy by playing foosball with her.]

JANE: I wanna go see my mom.

KUTNER: She's sleeping. Why don't we just double the amount we can spend?

FOREMAN: Nope.

KUTNER: Can't afford another twenty-five?

FOREMAN: We allow people fifty, people will spend sixty.

KUTNER: Ah, so you can't afford another thirty-five.

THIRTEEN: You must really like who you got...

JANE: Or really dislike.

[Thirteen and Foreman stop playing and look up at her, intrigued.]

JANE: My mom always gives the best presents to the teachers I get along with the worst.

THIRTEEN/FOREMAN: [both look skeptical] No.

[Kutner looks confused too and Jane takes advantage of the opportunity to score a goal on them.]

KUTNER: [at Foreman and Thirteen] How do you know “no”?

THIRTEEN: I know you didn’t get House.

FOREMAN: I know he didn’t get House.

[They look at each other, unsure for the moment.]

[Hospital hallway. House and Wilson are sitting down and eating pizza together.]

WILSON: You gave them all your name?

HOUSE: Mm–hmm. Figured I could sow some dissension and get a few ties and sweaters.

WILSON: What happens when they find out?

HOUSE: It’s Secret Santa.

WILSON: [nods] What happens when they find out?

HOUSE: [shrugs] They’ll argue about with that information. Ties are less important than the dissension.

[Back in the employee’s lounge and the duckies are doing exactly what House predicted.]

KUTNER: Well we still have to buy him something.

FOREMAN: [arms crossed, obviously displeased] Not a chance!

KUTNER: We weren’t supposed to discuss this. We’re not supposed to know.

FOREMAN: He’s not supposed to put his name in there five times!

JANE: He wants presents. It's sad...

THIRTEEN: It's pathetic.

[Jane looks lost, but Kutner shrugs.]

KUTNER: [smiling lightly] I'm still buying him a present.

THIRTEEN: [firmly] No. You're not.

KUTNER: [glares at her] Fine.

[Maggie's room. She seems half conscious but it making sounds in her throat as if trying to speak. Taub, who has been napping, glances up.]

TAUB: What's wrong?

MAGGIE: I think it's getting worse. Can't breathe... [struggles to catch her breath just as the monitors start beeping]

TAUB: [calls outside] I need a nurse in here!

[Taub shines a flashlight into her throat to look and we see her throat being slowly constricted with inflamed nodes or something like that.]

TAUB: Her lymph nodes are cutting off her airway. We gotta intubate!

[The nurses rush in with a cart and Taub proceeds to intubate Maggie.]

[We see Foreman and Cameron adjusting Maggie's breathing apparatus as Jane looks on worriedly, outside the room. The scene then jumps over the House's office where he is still reading files on the computers as the duckies look on.]

FOREMAN: Swollen lymph nodes were cutting off Maggie's airway. We shrunk them with alcohol, she's breathing on her own now.

HOUSE: [head in his hand, looking disappointed] Well, that sucks.

[Taub raises his eyebrows at that answer.]

HOUSE: 4300 saved emails and not a single mention of "lesbionic", "sanchez" or "man-gina".

[Kutner perks up as he sees a small wrapped gift on House desk. Foreman isn't amused by House's answer.]

HOUSE: Swollen lymph nodes means it wasn't psychological.

KUTNER: Who's that from?

HOUSE: [glances to the present] Santa, obviously. 'Cause you know I worship him. [pauses and frowns] No wait, I mean Satan. I always get them confused. [continues to read through emails] What is... an alpine butterfly? And why is she learning how to do one?

[Taub moves over to peer over House's shoulder.]

FOREMAN: House, we already have a full history. You don't need to waste time—

HOUSE: [interrupts] It's just a climbing knot.

TAUB: But what does she use it for? Try "bondage".

[Thirteen glares at Taub indulging House's antics.]

HOUSE: I did once. [sarcastically] And she just tied me down and whined about how hard it is to be Dean of Medicine.

[Thirteen is losing patience and Foreman drops his head, attempting to hide his amusement at that.]

KUTNER: Gyms aren't exactly pristine, could be a fungal infection. Seriously, who's it from?
[nodding to the present again]

FOREMAN: No fever, no elevated white count.

HOUSE: [still staring at the screen, then laughs in a mocking way] That's funny... Friend sent her a Garfield cartoon. That cat sure does love lasagna.

THIRTEEN: House. [finally had enough and slams the laptop lid on top of his hand] Stop obsessing.

HOUSE: [pausing for a moment] If it weren't for my obsessions, you wouldn't know that she

has sarcoidosis.

[The duckies all stare at him as he turns the laptop around to show them.]

HOUSE: Eighteen months ago, she sold her Stairmaster. It was only two months old. Now either she needed the cash or climbing stairs was getting more difficult. [takes a sip out of his cup and continues to scroll through the emails to show them] Twelve months ago, she cancelled a hiking trip. Now she either just wanted to sit home and watch TV or walking was getting more difficult. She's been suffering joint pain for the last two years.

[House takes the present box and offers it up to Thirteen. She gives him a cautious look.]

HOUSE: Pull my ribbon. [mockingly seductive] If you know what I mean.

THIRTEEN: ACE levels are too low for sarcoidosis. [stares at him for a moment and then pulls the ribbon]

HOUSE: That's not what I meant. [proceeds to open the present] Could just be an inactive phase.

KUTNER: It's not Christmas yet.

HOUSE: I remembered. I'm not a Satanist, I'm a druid.

FOREMAN: No lung involvement.

HOUSE: Yet.

TAUB: We'll need a bronchoalveolar lavage to confirm it.

HOUSE: [makes a sad face] That's a shame. I'm not gonna surprise her with one for Christmas.

[The duckies get up to leave and House finally unwraps his present to reveal an iPhone.]

HOUSE: Wow!

[The duckies stop and turn back to look at him.]

HOUSE: [grins] Now either that cost more than 25 bucks or I'm seriously starting to doubt Steve Jobs' business strategies.

[Thirteen rolls her eyes and Kutner looks speechless. They all leave.]

HOUSE: Thanks!

[Maggie is undergoing the bronchoalveolar lavage in a lab. Kutner is holding the tube down her throat while Thirteen assists.]

THIRTEEN: Last round of saline, Maggie. One more big breath. We've gotta get the liquid to go all the way into your lungs, okay? [attaches a syringe to the scope and pushes the saline solution into the tube] Here we go.

KUTNER: Gift could be from a patient.

TAUB: [skeptical] Who sent it to the wrong doctor?

THIRTEEN: House obviously gave the present to himself.

[Hospital cafeteria. Wilson is eating and reading over a file until House walks over and hands the iPhone back to him, taking a seat himself. Wilson tries to control his anger.]

HOUSE: [pleased] They're arguing right now.

WILSON: I've been looking for this all morning.

HOUSE: Did you look in the box on my desk? Oh by the way, your mom called. Your dad's dead.

WILSON: [puts the iPhone back into his pocket and raises an eyebrow] You left the present sitting on your desk?

HOUSE: Wouldn't have been as effective sitting in my closet in my home.

WILSON: They're gonna know it's from you.

HOUSE: No, they're gonna guess that it was from me. Might even be 90% sure that it was from me but all that means is, they're 10% sure that one of the other guys is screwing them over.

WILSON: [blinks at that overwhelming explanation and gets up to dump his plate] Have you ever considered channeling your powers to, I don't know... bring peace to the mid-east?

HOUSE: [gets up to follow him] I couldn't do that.

WILSON: But if they ever got it, you could screw it up.

HOUSE: Yeah. That's more where my powers lie.

[Back in the lab where the duckies are performing the bronchoalveolar lavage.]

TAUB: Gift could be from Wilson.

THIRTEEN: [firmly] It's House.

KUTNER: Why do you have a problem with him speculating?

THIRTEEN: Because. That's what House wants us to do.

TAUB: [moves away from the monitor] Lungs are pristine, no infiltrates or alveolar hemorrhage.

KUTNER: Maggie, I'm gonna remove the scope. I need you to cough for me, okay?

[Maggie nods and coughs as Kutner starts pulling the tube back out of her throat.]

KUTNER: Littler harder.

[She does as told, nearly choking as Kutner removes the whole tube.]

KUTNER: Great.

[But Maggie keeps coughing and we see that there's blood trickling out of her right eye now.]

TAUB: [cautiously] Maggie... Open your eyes.

[Kutner and Thirteen turn back to look at her, both aware that something is wrong. Maggie opens her eyes and we see that the sclera has been stained with blood.]

MAGGIE: Why aren't you saying anything?

[A pause as the duckies look at each other, more worried now.]

MAGGIE: What's wrong?

[The clinic. Thirteen, Taub, and Kutner walk in to find House, who's looking over charts at the nurse's station.]

TAUB: Maggie tested negative for sarcoidosis.

KUTNER: But she's bleeding into her eyes now.

HOUSE: [looks genuinely concerned] Have her platelets dropped?

KUTNER: Plummeted. New labs show they're under 40. She'll bleed out of every orifice if we don't find the cause.

TAUB: Could be spleen sequestration, tuberculosis–

THIRTEEN: [interrupts] Brochet disease, TTP–

KUTNER: [continues to contribute] Hemolytic uremic syndrome, sepsis, lupus–

HOUSE: [frowns at them mockingly] Listing all the possible causes is only impressive if you can do it reverse alphabetically. We need to know why her platelet machine is broken. Go to the factory. Do a bone marrow aspiration.

[Thirteen and Taub exit but Kutner visibly lingers, first seeming unsure until he approaches House and House looks back at him cautiously.]

KUTNER: I'm your Secret Santa.

[Thirteen and Taub are out of hearing range but glance back to see why Kutner isn't coming.]

HOUSE: [lowers his voice] Well you're not supposed to tell.

KUTNER: But you got a present already. Which means you have more than one Secret Santa.

HOUSE: Or... somebody else wants to make me happy.

KUTNER: [looks unconvinced and a little hurt but reaches into his pocket and hands House a present with a smile] Merry Christmas.

[Thirteen and Taub look at each other. House accepts the present with a hint of a smile and Kutner turns to leave, mouth dropping as he sees the other two and Thirteen gives him a death glare. House grins devilishly and exits.]

[Clinic examination room. The blonde woman, Melanie is back and she gives House a small

wave as he enters, looking somewhat confused.]

HOUSE: On one hand, you should be in bed. [shuts the door] On the other hand, I told you to rest so... I see your dilemma.

MELANIE: I don't think resting is the problem. Can strep cause this? [pulls away her scarf to reveal red bulbous little growths all along her neck. They're on the backs of her hands too.]

HOUSE: [in a singsong-y voice] Clap on.

MELANIE: Trust me, first place I went. No rash on my labia. Do you need to take a look?

HOUSE: [wants to say yes but then shuts his mouth] I'm saving my money for a Red Ryder BB-g*n.

[She gives him an amused look. He sits down in front of her and uses his cane to pull the equipment table closer.]

HOUSE: Darker shade of lipstick?

MELANIE: I'm not very any.

HOUSE: [leans closer to inspect her lips presumably] You tell your mother what you do?

[She gives him one of those looks that says "is this really relevant?".]

HOUSE: Doesn't matter. I'm curious.

MELANIE: I don't need to break her heart just do I can feel righteous.

HOUSE: [touches a finger to her lips and feels them] You do a donkey show? [a purposeful pause] I'm not curious. It matters.

MELANIE: It's a donkey or a mule... [gives him a knowing look] I can never remember.

HOUSE: Wow... That is a creepy smile. [cringes lightly] I bet the donkey's is even creepier.

MELANIE: [laughs lightly] Do I have to explain?

HOUSE: Nope. It's my job. Contagious ecthyma. Any contact can cause rashes, flu symptoms, sore throat. Has there been... contact? [cringing again]

[She gives him a cute little nod.]

HOUSE: [starts writing her prescription] Okay. Antibiotic cream for you and a love glove for Francis. You'll both be fine.

MELANIE: [turns to grab an ad from her purse, which she hands to him] You should come see the show. I think you'd like it. [another insinuating smile]

HOUSE: Sorry, I hate Westerns.

[She smiles and leaves the ad with him anyways then exits with a smile. House reads the ad and smiles, understanding coming to him.]

[Operation room. Chase is performing the bone marrow aspiration on a ventilated Maggie as Foreman watches.]

CHASE: So they really never lie?

FOREMAN: Doesn't seem like it. Admirable. You tell Cameron everything?

CHASE: Hah! No.

[Chase pries open the skin with forceps and Foreman nods.]

FOREMAN: You think she keeps secrets?

CHASE: If I knew, they would be secrets. I hope she does. People have a right to a little privacy, even from the people they love.

[Foreman hands him the drill and he starts drilling into Maggie's bone.]

FOREMAN: You buy House a present?

CHASE: Why would I?

FOREMAN: To screw with me.

CHASE: Then I'm gonna say yes.

[Foreman stares at the monitor and shakes his head. We see that there's smoke coming up from the hole in which Chase is drilling into.]

FOREMAN: No no, wait. Stop, stop. What's that smell?

[Chase stops drilling. He and Foreman both look into the hole.]

FOREMAN: Her bone is smoking.

CHASE: Her bones are harder than the drill?

[Xray room. House and the duckies are looking over xray's of the bones in Maggie's body.]

KUTNER: We ran a full body bone scan to find the cause of hardening in the hip. No hotspots anywhere.

THIRTEEN: Tracer could have been inactive.

KUTNER: So I screwed up the test?

[Thirteen shrugs.]

TAUB: There's so many ways that could have happened. Maybe it was inactive, maybe it didn't fully circulate.

KUTNER: It circulated, the camera picked up-

HOUSE: [interrupts them] Hey, hey. It's Christmas! Why are you guys fighting?

FOREMAN: Why do you think there are no hotspots?

KUTNER: I did not screw up! The density's consistent.

FOREMAN: Just means the density was consistent, doesn't mean it was cold. It's possible... all she has are hotspots. It's consistent because her entire skeleton is turning to stone.

[The duckies, stunned, look to House for his opinions.]

HOUSE: Good for an aspiring superhero. Fatal for a human hoping to make it to Kwanzaa.

KUTNER: Well it's gotta be from a carbonic anhydrase type 2 deficiency.

HOUSE: It has free will. It doesn't have to be anything doesn't want to be.

KUTNER: I meant, if it's not CAII... well, none of the other causes of osteopetrosis are treatable.

[House and all the duckeis ponder that depressing thought for a moment.]

HOUSE: [to Kutner] You're right, it's gotta be. Go run her blood and hope that your sunny optimism isn't misplaced.

[The duckies exit.]

[Nurse's station in a hallway. House walks up to Wilson, who is reviewing a few files.]

HOUSE: They accused Kutner of screwing up a test. Because they hate him.

WILSON: You're surprised? That's the sort of crap that happens when you mess with people's heads.

[Wilson turns to leave and House follows.]

HOUSE: Well one day he will screw up a test. If they don't accuse him of that because they like him, someone could die. [a pause] Where are we going?

WILSON: Nowhere, I just know it hurts you.

[Wilson walks away and House stops, glaring at him but seemingly amused.]

[Maggie's room. Taub is talking with Maggie and Jane is in the room as well.]

TAUB: CAlI deficiency is a genetic disorder that scrambles proteins. [draws some blood from her] If the blood test is positive, you'll need a bone marrow transplant.

MAGGIE: "Transplant" sounds like a euphemism for "slim odds".

TAUB: Uh... Slim, but not none.

[Maggie sighs.]

TAUB: We're gonna need to test Jane for a match.

MAGGIE: Don't you have donor banks?

TAUB: Jane is your best bet. Procedure's perfectly safe, there's no risk.

MAGGIE: No risk. [scoffs]

TAUB: Any surgery has–

MAGGIE: [cuts him off] Then don't tell me there's no risk. You going to tell me there's no pain either?

TAUB: The testing will hurt a little...

JANE: I'll be fine.

TAUB: If she doesn't do this and you don't make it... she's going to spend the rest of her life blaming herself.

[Maggie stares at the ceiling, silent for a moment. Jane looks like she's about to cry.]

JANE: Mom... Please.

MAGGIE: Find someone else. Let someone else take the risk.

[Taub sighs silently and Maggie turns away from him and towards Jane.]

[House's office. House is playing with a watch when Taub enters.]

TAUB: Donor bank turned up a 49 year old man in Cleveland who's a five out of six HLA match. First flight out of Cleveland leaves-

HOUSE: [interrupts] Why is a 49 year old Cleveland man a closer match than her daughter?

TAUB: He may not be. Maggie didn't let us test her.

HOUSE: [frowns and stop playing with his watch] Why not?

TAUB: Pain, danger, risk of-

HOUSE: [interrupts again] Only reason to give multiple reasons is you're searching for what the person wants to hear. [stares at nothing in particular as the wheels in his mind turn]

TAUB: [looks around] House.

[House glances up and Taub hands him a wrapped gift. House takes the gift just as Thirteen enters.]

HOUSE: You're wrong about sainted mommy.

THIRTEEN: Don't care. You can forget the donor bank, there's no CAI deficiency. Best we can

do is make her comfortable.

[House drops his gaze, pondering for a moment until Thirteen sees the present in his hands.]

THIRTEEN: Is that from Taub?

HOUSE: [purposefully articulate] Yes. Yes, it is.

THIRTEEN: [pulls out a gift as well and sighs, dropping it onto his desk] Merry Christmas.

Who's going to tell the patient she's dying?

HOUSE: [gaze lingers on her for a moment and then drops Taub's present back onto his desk as well] I will. And nobody leaves here until we find out what k*lled her.

[House exits, Taub and Thirteen follow.]

[In the lab. The duckies are all running a panel of tests.]

KUTNER: Whatever she has is fatal. Makes no difference if it's disease number 58 or 907.

[Foreman and Taub just look at him. Silence.]

KUTNER: You guys mad at me?

THIRTEEN: Nope. You had no choice.

KUTNER: Of course I had a choice. You had no choice once I made my choice.

THIRTEEN: And now I'm choosing not to be mad at you.

KUTNER: Why?

THIRTEEN: 'Cause it will drive House nuts.

[Kutner and Taub grin for a moment.]

FOREMAN: [frowns] And you think that'll make your lives better or worse?

[Thirteen is speechless for a moment but then Jane walks in and they turn to look at her.]

JANE: I told my mom I don't care what she thinks. I want you to test my marrow.

[Maggie's room. House is sitting by her bedside.]

MAGGIE: I can't be dying.

HOUSE: Sure you can.

MAGGIE: You're wrong. [pushing down tears] You don't even know what I have.

HOUSE: What you have, is one last Christmas with your daughter. One last chance to give her a present. [a purposeful pause] The truth. Inexpensive, highly valued, never have to stand in line to return it the day after Christmas.

MAGGIE: What are you talking about?

HOUSE: A mother who's going to die doesn't refuse a donor test because it might hurt. She refuses when she knows it won't match. Which tends to happen when mother and daughter aren't mother and daughter.

[Maggie seems to have no response to that.]

HOUSE: I could do DNA tests, if you'd rather keep lying to me.

MAGGIE: [shakes her head, obviously conflicted] I never wanted kids. I love them but with my genes... I knew this woman, a drug addict. She got pregnant, didn't want to have an abortion. But she also didn't want her daughter to ever know who her real mother was. What she was. I promised never to tell.

HOUSE: A promise to an addict is worth more than a promise to your daughter?

MAGGIE: It'd be cruel to tell her.

HOUSE: Right. [shrugs] She lives a lie, you get to die a hypocrite.

[Jane enters with Thirteen behind her.]

JANE: Mom... The doctors told me what's happening.

MAGGIE: It's gonna be okay, sweetheart. [nods] I promise you. Doctors can be wrong. There's still a chance I can be—

JANE: [cuts her off] You really believe that?

[House and Thirteen both watch their conversation intently.]

MAGGIE: [trying to be strong] I do.

JANE: [shakes her head] No, mom. You're dying. Nobody can help you. It's not going to be okay.

[Jane swallows hard and Maggie exhales deeply as the truth sinks into her. House watches them for a moment longer and then gets up, leaving with Thirteen.]

THIRTEEN: [in disbelief, softly] That was cold.

HOUSE: Yeah.

[The Intensive Care Unit labeled door closes behind them.]

[House gets off the elevator and steps out into the hospital's main lobby. Festive music is playing and the place is all decorated. Nurses and doctors are chatting together as if there is not work to be done. Everyone is happy but he merely frowns and walks up to the receptionist's desk. Wilson approaches him, wearing a reindeer hat.]

WILSON: What did you get for Christmas?

HOUSE: I got a watch, a vintage LP, and a second edition Conan Doyle. If that wasn't bad enough, my patient's dying.

[House continues heading outside and Wilson follows him.]

WILSON: [sighs] Christmas deaths in a hospital, nothing more depressing. No one ever wants to go in the patient's room, even the Candy Stripers leave them alone. [shivers from the cold]

HOUSE: I saw something amazing.

[Wilson looks at him, intrigued.]

HOUSE: Pure truth. She told her mother that she was dying. Stripped her of all hope.

WILSON: That sounds... horrible.

HOUSE: It's like watching some... bizarre astronomical event that you know you're never going to see again.

WILSON: [unconvinced] You tell people the cold hard truth all the time. You get off on it.

HOUSE: Because I don't care. She cared. She did it anyway. [frowns for a second] She did it because she cared.

WILSON: [nods sarcastically] The angels of Christmas have finally given House a present he can appreciate.

HOUSE: Oh, don't ruin it. Don't pin this on Christ, he's got enough nails in him. [scowls at Wilson's reindeer hat]

WILSON: Patient had to die but–

HOUSE: [cuts him off] Why don't you take off that hat?

WILSON: It's Christmas! It's a reindeer.

HOUSE: It's a moose, on a Jew.

WILSON: Who cares?

[He tugs on an invisible string and one of the reindeer's horns waves at House.]

HOUSE: [sighs] Things have their place. You wouldn't hang dreidels on a Christmas tree.

WILSON: You could. Things don't care.

[House thinks about that for a moment and then seems to realize something.]

HOUSE: No. They don't. [turns and goes back into the hospital]

WILSON: Happy Solstice, House.

[In the lab. The duckies are still working on tests when they heard House singing "God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman" and turn to stare at him.]

HOUSE: [enters] To save us all from Satan's power, when we were gone astray. Have you people no holiday spirit? Bring me the eggnog of good cheer!

FOREMAN: House, if you have something to say, say it. If you don't, give us a chance to get home before Santa.

HOUSE: [stares at him] Scrooge. Give the patient rispiradone.

TAUB: That's an anti-psychotic. She's dying, she's not crazy.

HOUSE: I am going to perform a Christmas miracle.

[He turns to leave, singing again. The duckies immediately get up to follow him.]

[Maggie's room. House is feeling under her neck as the duckies look on.]

MAGGIE: You said all the causes of osteopetrosis are fatal.

HOUSE: Except for the one we discounted early, because it was impossible. When fetus forms, it's just a mass of cells. [continues feeling her body, working down her shoulders] Breast tissue covers extensive portions of the body. As the fetus develops, most of this tissue recedes, remaining only in the fun places. [feeling down at her hip now] But sometimes, extra breast tissue is left behind in places where it doesn't belong. [down to her legs now] Rispiradone does a lot of things. One is, makes breast tissue swell so we can find it more easily.

MAGGIE: You're telling me I could have breast cancer? Somewhere not in my breast? That doesn't make sense.

HOUSE: Taub's parents have a winter condo in Florida. They're still New Yorkers.

TAUB: Actually, my parents—

HOUSE: [interrupts] Don't care. I told a parable. And now, I'm going to raise the dead...

[House turns Maggie's leg to the side and we see that there is a swollen lump behind her knee.]

HOUSE: [to Thirteen] Give me that syringe.

THIRTEEN: That's gotta be a fat deposit.

HOUSE: Yes, I could be wrong. If I am, she's dead so shut up.

[House inserts the needle into the lump and extracts a white substance. Maggie and Jane both visibly cringe.]

TAUB: What's that?

HOUSE: Risperidone also causes galacteria. [pulls the needle out]

JANE: What's that? Galactic...?

HOUSE: Open your mouth.

[Jane stares at him, hesitant.]

HOUSE: Relax, you've had it before.

JANE: I am not—

[House squirts some of the white substance into her mouth. Kutner and Taub both flinch.]

JANE: Milk? Eww! [wipes her mouth and chin, obviously disgusted]

HOUSE: We'll cut out your mom's tumor and start her on chemo. All the rest of your symptoms should go away.

[Maggie nods, relieved. Jane smiles and brushes her hand against her mother's cheek.]

MAGGIE: I love you.

JANE: I know.

[Thirteen smiles and watches House, who's observing the two like he still amazed by it all.]

HOUSE: Have a wonderful life. [exits]

[Hospital main lobby. Slow motion, no sound, only music is playing. We see Chase, Cameron, and Foreman talking and laughing with each other. Foreman turns and sees Kutner, Taub, and Thirteen. He beckons them over and Chase raises his drink as a toast. House steps out of the elevator and crosses the lobby, seeing his four employees and two ex-employees all chatting together. They see him as well but he merely gives them a curt nod and continues on his way out in true Scrooge fashion. Outside, he is struck by a thought and he smiles.]

[Regular camera speeds now but still no sound, just the holiday music. House walks down the aisle of a church and takes a seat next to a family with a little girl. The church is showing a

Christmas play. From the side of the stage, a few people enter. One of which is Melanie, dressed up like the virgin Mary and sitting on top of a donkey. She spots House in the audience and gives him a coy smile as she is helped down from the donkey. He returns her smile with a devilish, knowing smile of his own.]