

THE RESIDENT

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COLD OPEN

EXT. KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A monolithic high-rise hospital with many wings and floors. The enormous complex stands on the shore of the Charles River, pulsing with life and death, like a city unto itself.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

A sharp knife slices through flesh as DR. SOLOMON BELL (60's), gowned and gloved, operates on a patient. The mood is laid back, the surgery routine. YO-YO MA plays in the background.

Anesthesiologist, PETER CHU, glances at the clock. It's after midnight. He YAWNS. CLAUDIA, the circulating nurse, shifts on her feet. Her eyelids drooping, too.

PETER CHU

Yank that sucker, Bell, so we can
all go home.

Bell focuses on the task at hand, pokes his gloved fingers around in the gut of the patient.

BELL

Appendix hasn't burst. Good news.

He reaches for the pencil-shaped organ buried between loops of bowel. Fumbles it, mutters.

BELL (CONT'D)

Slippery little fellow.

A SCRUB NURSE holds out forceps for Bell, glances at a bulge in the drapes below the abdomen. She lifts them.

SCRUB NURSE

Oh my God. Check out that giant
meat popsicle.

Everyone but Bell stops to look. The anesthesiologist stands up to peer over the curtain.

CLAUDIA

We gotta get a picture.

Claudia fiddles with her iPhone. Bell remains focused.

BELL

That's totally inappropriate.

PETER CHU

We're just having a little fun.
He's out cold, he'll never know.
(to Claudia)
You have to put something there for
scale.

CLAUDIA

Like what?

Bell, still working in the surgical field, doesn't notice as Claudia grabs a DEBAKEY. She positions the tool next to the penis, frames the shot.

CLOSE ON BELL'S HAND - We now see that it shakes slightly. This is not what you want in a surgeon.

He looks up to see if the others have noticed. They haven't. He steadies his hand, then lowers the scalpel into the surgical field.

Suddenly the patient MOANS. Everyone reacts.

PETER CHU

He's waking up!

Chu jumps back to his post.

Bell tries to abort but the blade is inside the man's body, and in trying to retrieve it, Bell's hand shakes AGAIN - and he fumbles the scalpel, digs into a vessel!

A GEYSER OF BLOOD shoots up from inside the patient's abdomen.

Everyone looks up, reacts.

SCRUB NURSE

Oh my God! Did you hit the aorta?

CLAUDIA

(in disbelief)
On an appendectomy?

Bell is frozen in horror. Unthinkable disaster. Everyone else jumps into action.

PETER CHU

Losing blood fast. Hang two liters
of normal saline wide open, call
for FFP stat, Trendelenberg.

BELL
(refocusing)
Aortic clamp. 5-0 vascular prolene.
Suction.

The scrub nurse passes him tools. The blood is still fountaining, spilling over onto the table and floor. Bell dives his hands into the pool, searching for the bleeder.

BELL (CONT'D)
Come on, come on--

CLAUDIA
(panicked)
You have to clamp something! He's
exsanguinated at least four liters
already--

Bell's hands continue to poke around furiously, but the blood keeps coming. All of them are fully on deck now, doing anything possible to save the patient.

PETER CHU
We just lost a pulse!

The monitors begin to FLATLINE.

BELL
PEA arrest! Starting compressions!

Bell pushes forward, sweating through his scrubs, begins compressions. There is nothing now for the others to do but watch in horror.

SCRUB NURSE
(whispers, stunned)
CPR isn't going to put all that
blood back into his body.

BELL
Do not die on me.

He shoves a few times, his arms bloody up to his elbows. The anesthesiologist intercedes gently.

PETER CHU
Bell. She's right. No use.

Bell, breathing hard, finally backs off the patient. They all stand there dazed, in utter horror. Except for Yo-Yo Ma, who continues, cheery.

Bell gets VERY QUIET. Silence. Stillness. Then...

SCRUB NURSE

Is he...

CLAUDIA

He is so dead.

Bell removes his mask. We get our first clear look at him. He's distinguished, dapper, with a fine head of grey hair. Every inch the image of an ideal surgeon, apart from the fact he's covered in blood and he just killed his patient.

Now everyone pulls off their sterile gowns and masks. Peter Chu (30s) is Chinese, chubby and short. Claudia (40s) is Latino, an experienced hand with no illusions. The scrub nurse (20s) is young, terrified.

They are, in effect, at the scene of a murder and they know it. Bell suddenly leans over, hands on knees, as if feeling faint. But then he straightens, controlling himself, turns to the anesthesiologist.

BELL

I think we can all agree it was the
misdosed sevo that led to this
unfortunate situation.

PETER CHU

You're kidding, right?

BELL

The patient woke up, his arm hit my
hand.

PETER CHU

Did not! You nicked the aorta!
(to the others)
You're both witnesses.

The nurses look anywhere but at the two doctors. Bell focuses on the Anesthesiologist, now insistent. His defense crystallizing in his head.

BELL

You never should have cleared him
for surgery, his INR was abnormal.

PETER CHU

(panicking)
Bullshit! It was upper range of
normal! That's never going to fly.

BELL

I'm flashing back to the time you
tore through that old woman's
oropharynx on a routine intubation.
Did that fly? I covered for you.

Peter backs off, silenced.

BELL (CONT'D)

(to nurses)

I'm chief of surgery. He's a 2nd
year resident at the end of a 30
hour shift. What did you two see?

They stare at each other, unsure what to say. Claudia clears
her throat.

CLAUDIA

We're all on the same team here,
right?

A beat. A change in the atmosphere. Everyone nods in
agreement.

SCRUB NURSE

(weak)

Maybe he had a heart attack?

Chu grabs the patient's chart.

PETER CHU

Some family history of heart
disease.

CLAUDIA

Yes. His left main clogged. Sudden
cardiac event.

PETER CHU

We tried CPR. It didn't work.

Bell looks back at the patient and a change takes place. He
seems to increasingly believe their fictionalized story.
Because he has to.

BELL

That's right. Exactly right. There
was no way to prevent this.

He looks at the others for confirmation. They all shake their
heads in unison. No way.

Bell takes a breath, turns and walks out. The others remain, exchange looks. Claudia pulls off her blood-stained gloves, takes out her phone again. Chu spins on her.

CHU

Who the hell are you calling?

CLAUDIA

(cold)

I'm erasing the dick photo, Doctor.

INT. DEVON'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

PAN OVER a stack of medical textbooks, framed diploma from Harvard Medical School, pictures of an Indian family at graduation, smiling, proud beyond words.

DEVON PRAVESH (26) is in bed, naked, next to PRIYA NAIR (25), his beautiful fiancée. Devon is on his phone looking at an orientation schedule.

She stirs, snuggles closer to him.

PRIYA

What time is it?

DEVON

Early.

PRIYA

Did you sleep at all last night?

DEVON

20 milligrams of Ambien. 50 of Benadryl. So, yeah.

She looks at his phone.

PRIYA

What's that?

DEVON

My schedule for the day.

She takes his phone away. He grabs it back, gets out of bed.

PRIYA

It says you don't have to be at the hospital till 7:30.

DEVON

The subway could break down. I'd rather be early.

INT. DEVON'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Devon, in dark pants and a button down shirt, irons his tie.

Priya, in a beautiful Indian silk robe, appears in the doorway. Everything about her says she has money. Everything about Devon's shitty apartment says he doesn't. She watches him, amused.

PRIYA

You're ironing your tie.

He picks it up, wraps it around his neck. She moves closer, starts to help but he pulls away. Expertly knots the tie. He's a perfectionist.

PRIYA (CONT'D)

You've always been the best at everything you've done.

(soft)

You've got this.

DEVON

I know.

He looks at her now, pulls the sash of her robe to draw her even closer, kisses her. Then he grabs his jacket, heads into the next room. She follows.

PRIYA

We have to do something tonight to celebrate your first day as a doctor.

INT. DEVON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As they enter...

DEVON

My first day as a doctor ends tomorrow at noon. Then I'm going to sleep.

She picks up his new white coat, still in plastic. Hands it to him.

PRIYA

Dinner tomorrow at the Taj? We could stay the night.

DEVON

Yeah, let's do that. In four years.
Meantime, I'll make 50 grand a year
in residency. With a 110 hour week -
- that's 8.7 dollars an hour.
Starbucks pays better.

She shakes her head in wonder.

PRIYA

Why does anyone want to be a
doctor?

He stops, speaks the simple truth that's driven him his
entire life.

DEVON

It's all I ever wanted.

EXT. KINGS COUNTY - PARKING LOT - MORNING

A parking lot labelled "DOCTORS ONLY." A custom-built,
elaborately tricked-out RACING BIKE rolls down the row past
BMW's, AUDI's, PORSCHE's. The contrast couldn't be greater.

The bike circles back and stops by an ASTON MARTIN parked
illegally in a handicapped spot.

The cyclist pulls off his helmet and we get our first look at
CONRAD HAWKINS. He's fit, with tats, long hair, unshaven,
wears Oakleys, a trendy Japanese T-shirt, un-tucked, a
backpack slung over one shoulder.

He pulls a can of Red Bull from the backpack, pops it, takes
a long hit and then pours the contents on the hood of the
offending Aston Martin.

INT. KING'S COUNTY - HALLWAYS

Conrad enters, crosses to a SECURITY OFFICER, JAKE.

CONRAD

My man, Jake. There's a Bond car
parked illegally in handicapped.
Get it towed.

JAKE

But that's Dr. Barrett's, the
plastic surgeon. He's very
particular about--

CONRAD

Tow it. How's your mom?

JAKE

Great now, thanks to you. Five different docs said it was her heart, an ulcer, MS, maybe ALS, and you find it's a salt imbalance.

CONRAD

Next time, come straight to me.

We follow Conrad to...

INT. NURSE'S STATION - DAY

NICOLETTE (31) aka NIC, a pretty, petite blond nurse, is bent over struggling to open a file cabinet. Conrad appears behind her, easily opens it for her. She spins around and they're inches apart. He smiles disarmingly.

NIC

Don't look at me like that. It's not working.

CONRAD

You'll cave. You always do.

She averts her eyes to avoid his charm, pushes pasts him.

NIC

(firm)
Not this time.

Conrad's face shows a flicker of disappointment, our first clue he cares about Nic. Then, casual...

CONRAD

Are the 007s here yet?

NIC

On their way. Poor bastards.

INT. SUBWAY - SAME TIME

Dev is on the subway. He's amped up, excited, takes a deep breath. Checks the clock on his phone for the tenth time. He hangs onto the strap, the white coat still in its wrapper tucked carefully under his arm, like a treasure.

After a moment he pulls something from his pocket. Anatomy FLASH CARDS, obscure names, complex. He starts running through them as we pan up to see:

A string of ads for KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL with pictures of Dr. Solomon Bell. The distinguished surgeon from the Cold Open is the face of the hospital. He has a reassuring smile, with just the right amount of paternal concern, as he cradles a patient's hand.

The ad says: "KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL - COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE."

EXT. KINGS COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

Gleaming in the morning light. Devon approaches, awestruck at the gravity of this moment. Other young new first years are headed in, as well. Chattering. Excited.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PATIENT ROOM - MORNING

Conrad is on his phone, reclining on an empty patient bed. TASSO (31), a bearded, neurotic, harried fellow resident, pokes his head in.

TASSO

Four heart failure disasters. Two went straight to the unit. One is cold and dry. Haven't even started my notes. Now a new admission shows up with a bewildering array of symptoms. You'll probably diagnose her from the type of dirt on her shoe. Help.

CONRAD

I'm slammed.

We see that he's on TINDER, consoling himself for Nic's rejection. The app suddenly DINGS as he matches with a BEAUTIFUL BLONDE (24) who looks like Nic. At the bottom of the screen, it reads: "Location: Less than 100 feet from you."

He looks up to see the same BEAUTIFUL BLONDE in a patient room.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Is that the new admission?

TASSO

Yeah.

CONRAD
I'll take it.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - MORNING

Devon emerges from an elevator examining his new hospital ID. Below the photo, in huge letters, is the word "DOCTOR."

He looks up, sees Bell, the surgeon from the cold open, who is down the hall with a group of senior doctors. They exude expertise and power. Bell is a standout among them, tall and handsome, at ease.

CALEB JORDAN (27), African-American goofball and fellow first year resident, arrives beside Dev.

DEVON
Isn't that the guy from the subway ads?

CALEB
Dr. Bell. Chief of surgery. I sat in on one of his lectures in medical school.

DEVON
(in awe)
The surgeon who operated on Reagan after he was shot.

CALEB
Yeah. He's a legend. I heard one of the nurses call him HODAD.

DEVON
What does that mean?

CALEB
Who knows, maybe it stands for Handsome Operator... DAD?

Suddenly Caleb's phone dings. He looks at it.

CALEB (CONT'D)
My supervising resident just texted me. This is the person who has my future career in his hands.

DING! CHYRON: "Can't wait to meet you! :) ;)"

CALEB (CONT'D)
A smiley and winky face. That's got to be good, right?

He looks at Devon, whose phone dings next. He checks it.

CHYRON: "MEET ME IN PHYSICAL THERAPY. TRY NOT TO BE A DICK."

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PHYSICAL THERAPY - MORNING

Devon approaches, smooths his coat again, sees his supervising resident's back ahead of him. That long hair. No scrubs, no white coat. The Japanese T-shirt. Devon stops, confused. Conrad is looking through a window at women in Spandex, bending and stretching as they work with patients. Devon looks around. This can't be him.

DEVON

Excuse me. I'm looking for Dr.
Conrad Hawkins.

Conrad turns, looks Devon up and down.

CONRAD

Namaste. You found him. Take off
that tie.

Devon takes a beat, stunned. Slowly removes the tie, folds it carefully into his coat pocket.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Untuck your shirt. You're not at
Harvard anymore.

Devon does it with growing unease. Conrad turns his attention back to the physical therapists. One bends over to pick up a foam roller. Squeezes it between her legs.

Devon pulls out a PATIENT ROSTER.

DEVON

Do we have a patient here?

CONRAD

What we have here are the hottest
women in the hospital. Number two
are nutritionists. Forget hitting
on nurses. They make a lot of money
and they hate doctors. PT and
nutrition always put out on the
long-shot one of us will marry
them. What are you into? White?
Black? Brown?

Devon refuses to answer, offended now. Conrad looks at him, not judgemental, just curious.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Men?

DEVON

I'm sorry. I don't understand
what's happening.

Conrad abruptly walks out of the physical therapy room. Devon
follows.

CONRAD

You don't understand? Were you
Affirmative Action at Harvard?

DEVON

I'm Indian. We actually get reverse
affirmative action. There are
quotas.

CONRAD

Got perfect grades. Top of your
class. Followed all the rules?

DEVON

(defensive)
Something like that.

CONRAD

And you think that puts you at an
advantage. It doesn't. You just
have more to unlearn than the ones
who weren't paying attention.

A SECOND YEAR RESIDENT passes, this one Asian, hip, in a
white coat. EDMUND. He TOSSES Conrad a SANDWICH.

EDMUND

Over easy with bacon, no cheese, no
mayo, onion bagel.

CONRAD

Good man.

(to Devon)

Second year. I broke him. Now he's
a doctor. You're not. You've never
touched a real patient. What you
are is a 007. License to kill.

Devon chuckles cautiously, as if this is a joke.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Oh no, it's not like that. We're
not laughing together.

Devon's smile evaporates. Conrad gets uncomfortably close, and in his face.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Everything you thought you knew
about medicine is wrong. Every rule
you followed, we'll break.

Devon looks away.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Don't do that.
(gesturing with two
fingers)
Eyes on me. I have only one rule
and it covers everything. I am
never wrong. Do whatever the hell I
tell you. No questions asked.
Understood?

DEVON
(stiffening)
Do you want me to talk now?

CONRAD
That's a question.

Devon stares at him, unbending, holding his dignity. Then turns and walks away. Conrad grabs him, pulls him back.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
My last intern had an attitude too.
You know where he is now? Teaching
8th grade biology. I cut him. Do
you know what that means? It means
I can end your career. Just like
that. Remove you from this
residency at any time, for any
reason. And if I do that, no other
residency will take you. You will
have nothing to show for that fancy
Harvard medical school degree
except a mountain of debt.

Devon stares. Is this true? Conrad smiles, his whole affect changing. He laughs, slaps Devon on the back.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Look at the bright side. If you end
up teaching kids to dissect frogs,
at least you'll have your summers
free. You can take up gardening.
Now let's meet your first patient.

He starts off. Devon stands there, stunned. Then, reluctantly, Devon follows.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PATIENT ROOM - MORNING

Devon and Conrad enter the room of a man lying on his side, DOBROSLAV CHARMAIN.

CONRAD

This is Dobroslav. He's Croatian. Speaks no English. He has severe meningitis. What are we worried about?

Devon is relieved to finally be doing something medical. He looks at Dobroslav. Notices the position of his legs.

DEVON

Early paralysis.

CONRAD

What is the first sign of paralysis?

DEVON

Rectal tone.

CONRAD

Harvard boy gets an A. Now stick your finger up his ass.

Devon stares. WTF?

DEVON

My understanding is the normal procedure is to get an MRI.

CONRAD

Textbook answer. Wrong. Did you not hear me? You know NOTHING. An MRI would take hours and delay steroid treatment and surgery, both of which might save Dobroslav from spending his life in a wheelchair.

Devon pulls on gloves. Conrad tosses him a packet of lube. Devon squeezes it onto his finger.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

A loose rectum means his legs may give out soon. Tight means there is no paralysis. So we need to know exactly how tight it is in there.

Conrad pulls out his phone, types. A modulated voice speaks in Croatian, subtitles in italics.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

*Good afternoon, Sir. I'm your
doctor. You may have meningitis. To
find out, we... must... explore...
your rectum.*

Dobroslav shrugs, unexpectedly nonchalant, closes his eyes and nods. Ready. Conrad looks to Devon who slides in a gloved finger gently. We don't see the finger, but we know what happened. Dobroslav seems indifferent.

CONRAD

How tight would you say it is?

Devon stares at him, aghast.

DEVON

On a scale of one to ten, I'd say
eight.

Conrad types into his phone. Subtitles in italics.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

*Good news, Dobroslav. You're going
to be fine.*

Conrad walks out. Dobroslav looks to Devon, speaks in Croatian Devon doesn't understand.

DOBROSLAV

(in subtitles)

He's my favorite doctor.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Devon come out of the men's room, agitated, heads for the nurse's station.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - NURSES STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Nic is on a computer.

DEVON

I need a new resident. Mine is a
psychopath.

NIC
(continues typing, small
smile)
You got Conrad.

DEVON
Yes. He said he could cut me, end
my career, for no reason. There has
to be some way to get a different
supervising resident.

She looks up, now.

NIC
Let's say your car has a rattle.
You take it to a mechanic. The
mechanic is a rude, dismissive
bastard but he tightens a bolt,
fixes the car, and charges five
bucks. Problem solved. Or you could
take the same car with the same
rattle to a different mechanic.
This one is nice, polite, eager to
help. He runs tests for two days,
then tells you the repair will set
you back a thousand bucks. You sell
your comic book collection to pay
the guy, and on the way home you
hear the same rattle.

DEVON
This isn't like that--

NIC
No. Because your car can't end up
dead.
(beat, then firm)
Watch and learn. Conrad is the guy
who tightens the bolt.

HOLD ON DEVON as we END COLD OPEN.

ACT ONE

INT. KINGS COUNTY - BATHROOM - DAY

Devon steps up to the urinal, starts to pull down his scrubs... when he hears a DING. A text from Conrad.

CHYRON: *Are you seriously going to the bathroom?*

Dev ignores it. Another DING.

CHYRON: *There's no time for that.*

DING.

CHYRON: *Meet me at the elevator, STAT.*

Dev reluctantly pulls up his pants. Mission aborted.

EXT. KINGS COUNTY - ER ENTRANCE - NIGHT

An ambulance arrives. Paramedics jump out and start unloading LILY EVANS (24), pale, vulnerable, wears a scarf to hide her bald head, beautiful in an ethereal way. Shivering under a pile of blankets.

Her fiance ROSS (31) emerges with her, walks alongside the gurney. He's tall, strong, athletic -- the kind of guy who could get any girl.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ER - NIGHT

The doors BANG OPEN as the paramedics guide the gurney, one hands Lily's chart to a MALE NURSE.

PARAMEDIC

Acute leukemic, on chemo, fiance
called because she was shaking
uncontrollably.

ROSS

She spiked a fever this morning.
100.8. Also some vomiting. No blood
in it. Last chemo was a week ago.

The male nurse moves to put in an IV, as the paramedics guide her into a bay.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Best place is her right forearm.
And she has an allergy to
tetracyclines.

Conrad and Devon emerge from the elevator, thread their way through patients waiting on gurneys, find Lily's bed. She looks up, relieved to see a familiar face.

LILY

Dr. Hawkins. I'm sorry to be back
so soon.

CONRAD

Not as sorry as we are, Lily.

Conrad takes both her hands in his, locks eyes with her, almost tender. Devon watches, surprised.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

It's another infection.
(diagnosing from the touch
of her hands)
You're running a fever.

ROSS

The chemo is still crushing her
immune system.

DEVON

Febrile neutropenia.

Conrad nods, takes over the IV flushing from the nurse.

CONRAD

We'll start you on broad-spectrum
antibiotics again. Tylenol to get
your fever down.
(to Devon)
Get cultures from both arms. Urine.
Include a fungal plate. She'll need
a head CT.

DEVON

On it.

CONRAD

(to Ross)
Don't worry, we'll get this under
control and you'll both be home
soon.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Devon and Conrad walk and talk.

CONRAD

Lily is the best. But her diagnosis is a tough one. I'm giving you a gift. From now on, she's your patient.

(he pauses, looks hard at Devon)

If you screw up this one, I will wreck you.

Devon absorbs this as Nic approaches.

NIC

Conrad, a word?

She looks upset. Conrad goes. As they walk and talk, she speaks low.

NIC (CONT'D)

Your appendectomy patient-

CONRAD

I was just going to see him.

NIC

(grim)

No need. He's dead.

Conrad stops, shocked.

CONRAD

From an appendectomy? What the hell happened?

NIC

HODAD happened.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Bell arrives at the palatial office of the hospital CEO. He's nervous. Pulls out a handkerchief, wipes his brow.

As he does, his hand TREMBLES slightly. He stares at it and we realize, this is part of his problem. He makes a fist, steadies. His demeanor changes entirely as he put on his game face, his usual confident and charismatic demeanor, walks in.

INT. RENATA'S OFFICE - DAY

Top floor of the hospital. Sweeping view of the Charles River. The hospital CEO, RENATA LOPEZ (40s), think Ana Navarro, stands next to her desk. She appears anxious, as if this is a conversation she doesn't want to have.

RENATA

Thanks for coming up, Solomon.

BELL

My pleasure, Renata. I was looking forward to sharing the good news. The VP from General Electric will be attending our donor presentation. With his checkbook.

RENATA

(warm)

You really do have the Midas touch. There'd be no new cancer wing without you. We're all so grateful.

Bell basks in the glow of praise, flashes his unnaturally white smile, sits casually across from her.

BELL

You wanted to see me?

RENATA

(carefully)

Yes. I understand there was an incident this morning.

Bell doesn't display a flicker of distress, just shakes his head as if filled with compassion.

BELL

Most unfortunate. Patient had an undisclosed heart condition. There was a breakdown in the chain of command. I was never informed.

RENATA

An undisclosed heart condition. And you weren't told? How could that happen?

BELL

Ask Conrad Hawkins. It was his patient.

Renata frowns.

RENATA

That's surprising. Conrad is our best resident.

BELL

Even the best sometimes make mistakes. He's young, after all, just needs a bit more mileage. No substitute for experience.

RENATA

(nods slowly, then)

What did you tell the family?

BELL

Initially they requested an autopsy, but I talked them out of it. There really was no need. The cause of death was clear.

RENATA

So you're not concerned about a lawsuit.

BELL

No, no. The man was living on borrowed time. He had a ticking time bomb in his chest.

They hold each other's gaze for a moment. Renata smiles, deeply relieved and more than willing to believe Bell.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR

Bell exits Renata's office, closes the door, visibly relieved. Turns to find Conrad waiting for him, a mixture of contempt and pity on his face.

CONRAD

(soft)

What was it this time, Bell?
Pulmonary embolism?

Bell avoids Conrad's gaze, starts to walk away.

BELL

Undisclosed heart condition. Tragic situation.

(without missing a beat)

Naturally, I covered for you.

Conrad steps in front of Bell, blocks his path.

CONRAD

I get it, Bell. You were once the lion of the hospital, a great surgeon. When I was a kid, I read about you. You inspired me to be a doctor. But we're not there anymore and you know it. You need to consider a change before you kill any more patients.

Bell reddens, angry and embarrassed.

BELL

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

CONRAD

Go be one of those celebrity TV doctors. You look the part. Make a lot of money, wear nice suits. You'd be great at it.

BELL

How dare you talk to me like this. I'm Chief of Surgery. The most requested surgeon here.

CONRAD

I don't want to do this, but I will.

Conrad starts for Renata's door. Now it's Bell's turn to step in his way.

BELL

It's your word against mine. I have witnesses. Who will the hospital believe? A third year resident or the doctor who bills 20 million annually?

Conrad hesitates. Bell sees that arrow hit home.

BELL (CONT'D)

I'm just remembering that young gung ho resident who reported a fatal chemo overdose last year. That "good deed" led to a lawsuit which cost the hospital millions.
(beat)
Think hard before you walk through that door.

Bell walks off and we hold on Conrad. Round one to Bell and Conrad is PISSED.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Devon talks to a MORBIDLY OBESE DIABETIC PATIENT eating a HAMBURGER. Crumbs fall into the folds of his fat.

DEVON

Looks like you've been having some trouble following your diet. According to your chart, your weight has been steadily rising.

The man shrugs. Pops a few fries.

DIABETIC PATIENT

Diets don't work.

DEVON

Where did you get all this anyway?

DIABETIC PATIENT

Delivery APP.

DEVON

Have you been taking your insulin, Mr. Dalton?

DIABETIC PATIENT

When I remember.

DEVON

Okay. What brought you to the hospital today?

DIABETIC PATIENT

My big toe has been hurting for weeks.

Devon looks down at the socks on his swollen legs. They're plastered to his skin by sweat and pus.

DEVON

When was the last time you took off your socks?

He shrugs. Devon carefully pulls off the sock. The foot is red, festering with huge ulcers. One of the toes is ENTIRELY BLACK.

Devon reaches out to touch the toe. It FALLS OFF, bounces on the floor. He and the patient stare at it in shock.

DIABETIC PATIENT

What did you just do? Is that my
toe?

DEVON

Severe gangrene... the toe was
already dead. I just touched it.

Conrad pops in. Takes in the scene.

DEVON (CONT'D)

His toe fell off.

DIABETIC PATIENT

He broke off my toe!

*

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ER - MOMENTS LATER

Conrad and Devon push through a crowded, bustling ER.

CONRAD

New admission. Twenty-one year old
girl. History of IV drug use.
Likely endo.

They approach CHLOE GODDARD (21) struggling against several
nurses, trying to rip out her IV. Hair cobalt blue, frail
body swimming in a patient gown, gaunt face twisted with
anger.

Chloe's distressed lower-middle class MOTHER (30s) and sweet-
looking SISTER (15) look on, powerless.

NURSE

She was trying to steal Dilaudid.
And now she wants to leave AMA.

MOTHER

She's been spiking fevers,
vomiting. Something is wrong with
her.

SISTER

(weary)

She's using again. Assuming she
ever quit.

(to Conrad)

She stole everything I made last
summer and spent it on OXY.

CHLOE

You can't keep me here! Let me go!

Conrad is calm and professional. His voice firm, but surprisingly reassuring. He takes Chloe's hands, points to the tiny red bumps at the tips of her fingers.

CONRAD

See these? Osler's nodes caused by bacteria swarming in your blood and moving through your body. Classic for Endocarditis.

MOTHER

What's Endocarditis?

CONRAD

An infection of the heart valve. It happens to drug users all the time. Bacteria enters the bloodstream through a dirty needle and goes everywhere.

(to Chloe)

If you walk out of here without antibiotics, this will kill you. But first you'll suffer unbearable pain. You'll become delirious with fever. If you give us a chance, we can save your life.

CHLOE

I'll stay if you give me 3mg of Dilaudid. And 25 of Benadryl.

CONRAD

Deal.

MOTHER

No, please don't give her more drugs. She'll get addicted again.

SISTER

Mom, wake up. She's already addicted.

CHLOE

4mg of Dilaudid.

CONRAD

Two. If you get back in bed now.

Conrad takes her arm. She pulls away, then staggers. Fear flashes on her face. She turns to her mother, suddenly a child again.

CHLOE

Mommy.

Chloe COLLAPSES onto the floor. Her mother rushes to her.

MOTHER

Chloe, baby!

The sister looks on, suddenly scared. Conrad pushes her aside, feels Chloe's neck.

CONRAD

I'm not getting a pulse.

The mother starts to scream. A Nurse reaches for a phone.

NURSE

Code Blue in ED alpha.

The voice rings out overhead. The mother keeps screaming. The more things escalate, the calmer Conrad becomes. He turns to Devon, quiet.

CONRAD

Get them out of here.

Devon leads the Mother and sister out as Conrad rips the girl's gown off. They leave her on the ground. No time to move her.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

(to Male Nurse)

Start compressions.

(to Devon as he returns)

You're running the code.

DEVON

Me? I've never run a code.

DOCTORS and NURSES are arriving. Someone wheels a CODE CART. Another nurse brings a BACK BOARD, which they maneuver under Chloe's body as the male nurse continues compressions. The mother can be heard wailing in the next room.

MALE NURSE

(to Conrad)

Do you want an amp of bicarb--

CONRAD

(motions to Devon)

He's in charge.

All of them look expectantly at Devon. Panicked, he fumbles in his pocket for his INTERN HANDBOOK. Conrad SWATS it out of his hands, it crashes to the floor.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

What is the first question you ask
in a code?

DEVON

Rhythm.... what's her rhythm?

One of the nurses checks the monitor.

NURSE

PEA.

CONRAD

Should we shock?

Devon steadies. A life is at stake.

DEVON

No. We can't. Her rhythm is not
shockable. One of epi. Let's get
bicarb, amio ready. Have we drawn
labs?

OTHER DOCTOR

On it.

DEVON

Make those compressions harder and
faster.

The team steadies under Devon's command. His answers are all
correct.

CONRAD

Why did her heart stop beating?

DEVON

She flashed. One of her valves
blew. Is anesthesia on their way?

An ANESTHESIA TEAM arrives.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Intubate.

They move to do it. Conrad looks on, approving, as we hold on
Devon, now confidently in charge.

LATER

The floor is covered with empty wrappers and syringes. A line
of people stand behind the beleaguered male nurse still
performing compressions. He's sweating through his scrubs.
Clearly some time has passed.

The ribs CRACK with every compression. Blood begins to spill out of Chloe's mouth.

DEVON (CONT'D)
Switch compressions.

Exhausted, the nurse hands over compressions to the next in line, a MEDICAL STUDENT. The nurse then shuffles to the back of the line.

Conrad looks grim. He speaks quietly, directly to Devon.

CONRAD
It's been 34 minutes.

Devon ignores Conrad, turns to another DOCTOR.

DEVON
Give another bolus of epi. We'll do a rhythm check in one minute.

CONRAD
It's time to call the code.

DEVON
Not yet. She's 21 years old.
(to the student doing compressions)
Harder. You need to feel the ribs crack.

CONRAD
(pissed now)
That's enough.

The whole team notices the exchange, watches. They clearly want to stop, too.

DEVON
NO! I am NOT giving up.

Conrad reasserts control, walks over to the student doing compressions. He stops. Devon jerks the student aside, takes over. He pushes hard and fast on Chloe's chest.

DEVON (CONT'D)
Is someone going to help with the pulse and rhythm check?

One of the other doctors reluctantly turns on the cardiac monitor. To everyone's shock, they see SINUS RHYTHM. Her heart is beating again. Devon stops compressions, feels her neck.

DEVON (CONT'D)

We have a pulse.

(rising)

Let's get her on a gurney. Keep the monitor on. And alert the ICU they have a new admission.

MEDICAL STUDENT

(awestruck)

You saved her life.

As the team moves Chloe onto the gurney, Devon looks right at Conrad, triumphant. Waits for some acknowledgement, some admission he was right. Conrad takes a beat, then quietly--

CONRAD

Her end tidal CO2 was less than 15 for the entire code.

Devon absorbs this, pales.

DEVON

That doesn't necessarily--

CONRAD

Oh yes, it does. She's been without oxygen to her brain for 36 minutes. Congratulations, you got her heart beating again, but she's brain dead.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ICU - NIGHT

Conrad and Devon look at Chloe. Unconscious. Now hooked up to a ventilator, covered in IV lines and tubes. Devon is devastated. Conrad is grim.

CONRAD

You came here all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to save lives. But today you didn't save a life, you saved a brain stem, because you didn't listen to me. The repercussions for her family will be catastrophic. There is no way they will accept this. Chloe looks alive. They'll think she can wake up. They won't understand there is no coming back from this. They'll hover over her, tend to her for days, weeks, maybe years. Waiting for a miracle that is utterly impossible. What was rule one, Devon?

DEVON

(soft, horrified)

Do whatever you tell me to do. No questions asked.

CONRAD

All we want to do is help our patients. But what they don't teach you in medical school is there are many ways we can do harm.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Devon walks down the hallway, shaken. Nic passes him, gives him a chart.

NIC

PANUTI combo in 405. Running a fever.

He takes the chart, keeps going, still reeling, passes a CUTE LITTLE GIRL, no more than five, lying on a gurney. Her clothes disheveled, her arm in a sling. She is searching for something in her blanket.

LITTLE GIRL

Bunny...

She looks scared, is all alone, touches Devon's white coat as he passes. He looks down, barely focusing. There's a stuffed animal on the floor. He picks it up.

She reaches for it but Devon pulls back. The animal has a wind up function. He winds it and a lullaby plays. Lovely. Soothing.

The little girl's face lights with relief. She reaches for the toy and whispers.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

Thank you, Doctor.

Devon gently tucks in her blanket, squares his shoulders and rises. Refocusing, trying to find his feet again, he moves on down the hall to his next patient.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Close on a DA VINCI ROBOTIC SURGERY DEVICE carefully suturing up the skin of a grape with tiny precise motions.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

A crowd of DONORS, DEVICE REPS, DOCTORS and MEMBERS OF THE PRESS are looking at a closed circuit feed from the OR showing the enormous, multi-armed intimidating device. Renata stands next to Bell as he speaks.

Bell is in his element, is surrounded by donors who adore him.

BELL

As you can all see, the Titian is an amazing piece of medical technology. It translates the surgeon's gestures into far smaller movements. Each of these infinitesimally, almost supernaturally precise motions are more than any pair of human hands could accomplish.

RENATA

(gushing)

Even yours?

BELL

Even mine. And I expect to get even better--

RENATA

As if that were possible.

BELL

With this amazing machine, anything is possible.

He turns and looks at the Titian and we get it. Bell sees the Titian as the Hail Mary of his career.

RENATA

I'd like to take this moment to thank all of you, and Dr. Bell, for ushering us into the 21st century.

The donors applaud and Bell acknowledges the kudos with false humility.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ADJACENT ROOM - SAME TIME

CONRAD stands behind glass beside a console where MINA OKAFOR (30s), a badass Nigerian rising surgical star operates the device remotely as it's being filmed. She expertly slices the newly sutured grape into eight perfectly symmetrical pieces.

Conrad, who reads out loud from a slick pamphlet as Devon slips into the room.

CONRAD

'Serious complications may occur up to and including death. Individual surgical results may vary.'

MINA

I've trained for months to do this. Results will not vary.

CONRAD

Until HODAD gets his hands on it.

Devon clears his throat, tentative, remembering the rule about no questions.

DEVON

Why do they call Dr. Bell that?

Conrad and Mina exchange a look.

CONRAD

Go on, shatter his illusions.

Mina is notoriously blunt, even more than Conrad. No problem.

MINA

HODAD stands for Hands of Death and
Destruction.

Devon takes a moment, thrown.

CONRAD

You heard right. The acclaimed Dr.
Solomon Bell--

(air quotes)

'the man who saved Reagan,' has a
terrifying complication rate.

DEVON

You're kidding.

CONRAD

There's a HODAD in almost every
hospital. I went to a conference on
patient safety once. They asked us
if anyone know a surgeon who
shouldn't be operating. Every hand
in the room went up.

DEVON

How is that possible?

CONRAD

The code of silence runs deep.
Doctors protect each other. And
there's always a cover story for
what happens in the OR.

MINA

The hospital brass should be able
to figure it out, but in Bell's
case, they can't afford to lose
their rainmaker, so they look the
other way.

CONRAD

And the truth is, proving medical
error isn't easy. We're like cops.
No one's looking over our shoulder.
Plant the gun on the body. Lose the
x-ray. Same thing.

MINA

Who signs the death certificate with the cause of death? The doctor. How likely is that doctor will write, 'I screwed up. Blame me.'

CONRAD

What's particularly sad is, the patients are clueless. They think you can find a great surgeon on internet.

Mina finishes suturing the tiny grape so that it looks like it was never cut at all. An amazing feat. She rises, takes a small bow.

MINA

Poetry.

CONRAD

Meet Dr. Okafor, third year resident. The best hands in the hospital. Her complication rate is close to zero.

(reads from his phone)

And she has 1 star on YELP. Top review: 'Steer clear of Dr. Okafor. She told me, and I quote, *Your uterus sucks.*'

MINA

It did suck.

CONRAD

Dr. Bell has five stars. Top patient comment. 'McDreamy is real.'

MINA

All I know is he's not coming anywhere near this machine. That would be Armageddon.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ELEVATOR - EVENING

Bell types on his phone. Over his shoulder, we see he's on the HEALTH GRADES app, writing his own review under a pseudonym.

CHYRON: "I just had hernia surgery with Dr. Bell. The man has magic hands."

The elevator door opens on the PAVILION FLOOR. Bell quickly pockets the phone.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PAVILION FLOOR - CORRIDOR - EVENING

We're in the VIP section of the hospital. Looks like an entirely different place. The linoleum is gone, so is the fluorescent lighting. In its place, mahogany-panelled walls, marble floors, aquascaping.

Bell checks his reflection in a Jasper Johns framed print. Adjusts his tie.

INT. PAVILION FLOOR - PATIENT ROOM - EVENING

A beautiful view of the Charles River at magic hour. LYLE HANCOCK (60s) sits in bed wearing silk pajamas. A tray of gourmet food on his lap.

A movie plays on the large flat-screen. Lyle looks up as Bell enters, smiles with relief.

LYLE

Solomon. So glad you're here.

With a warm, caring smile, Bell sits at the edge of the bed, slipping effortlessly into his irresistible bedside manner.

BELL

Where else would I be? Better finish up your smoked oysters. No food after midnight.

LYLE

They're truly delicious. This VIP floor is spectacular.

BELL

Thanks to you, my friend. After all, without your generous gift there would be no new cancer wing.

Bell smiles warmly and takes Lyle's hand, all concern and compassion. He is so smooth, there's no way Lyle could know he's about to be played.

BELL (CONT'D)

Have you met your surgeon?

LYLE

No, actually.

BELL

Dr. Okafor.
(beat)
She's Nigerian.

Bell lets that information settle. Lyle does not look pleased.

BELL (CONT'D)

Here on a Visa. A very promising young resident. Although, I have to admit, I'm a little surprised she hasn't been in to see you yet.

LYLE

What do you mean a "young" resident?

BELL

Second year, I believe.

LYLE

Not an attending?

BELL

I'm afraid not.

LYLE

(annoyed)

I spoke directly to the CEO. She told me Dr. Okafor was the best possible surgeon to remove my prostate with the Titian.

BELL

I'm sure she'll do fine.
(beat)
Fairly certain.

LYLE

Hold on. Let's slow this train down, Solomon. You're the doctor I trust. You did my biopsy. And you handled those unexpected complications so brilliantly.

BELL

Just tell me what you want, Lyle.
(takes his hand, leaning in)
I'm here for you.

LYLE

(huffy)

I want you to do my surgery. You're the Chief of Surgery, right? I forked over two million dollars. For that kind of money, don't I deserve the Chief?

BELL

You deserve whatever you want, Lyle.

LYLE

Exactly.

Bell smiles. Perfect.

INT. CT ROOM - KINGS COUNTY - EVENING

Devon looks through a window at Lily in the CT. She glances back at him, appears frightened, but manages a smile. He smiles back. Ross approaches with Lily's OVERNIGHT BAG. Devon goes to meet him.

DEVON

Lily will go to the 11th floor after her CT, Ross. You can meet her up there.

Ross hesitates, passes the overnight bag to Devon.

ROSS

Her favorite wig is in there. She's going to want to put it on as soon as she's feeling better. Her phone is in the side pocket. She should call her mom.

DEVON

You're not coming up?

ROSS

This has been my life for the last six months. I can't sleep. When I do, I have nightmares. Do you know what it's like to spend every waking hour trying to fix something you can't fix?

Ross looks away. This big guy is about to cry. The pain in his face is overwhelming.

ROSS (CONT'D)

This is our fourth trip to the hospital in the last three weeks. I wake up next to her at night and listen, just to make sure she's still breathing.

Ross looks at him, tortured.

DEVON

You need to take care of yourself, too, Ross. I know, I helped take care of my grandmother when she had breast cancer. It was a long haul, but in the end, she got better. Hang in there.

Devon has a natural compassion you can't fake. It's part of who he is, and part of what has brought him this far. But Ross shakes his head.

ROSS

It's no use. I can't do it anymore.

He walks off, leaving Devon holding Lily's overnight bag.

INT. HALLWAYS - KINGS COUNTY - EVENING

Nic walks by passing Conrad, who is exiting the room of the Tinder Patient.

NIC

You know, some women actually make up symptoms and head to the nearest ER just to meet eligible doctors?

CONRAD

Her symptoms are real. She has a mild case of neuromyelitis optica with a positive IgG aquaporin 4.

Nic looks over at the blonde.

NIC

(evenly)

You could do better.

He takes one beat and pulls Nic into...

INT. CALL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kisses her hard against door. Nic's eyes grow wide. Conrad turns, realizes they're not alone. Sitting on the bottom bunk is Tasso, pants around his knees. He looks up at them, humiliated.

CONRAD

Get out.

He pulls up his pants, scurries out. Conrad and Nic instantly go back at it. Hot and hungry.

EXT. KINGS COUNTY - ROOF - EVENING

Devon is eating a sandwich, his dinner, watching the sun go down in a blaze of glory. He's scrolling images on his phone:

Most are of PRIYA. In bed, smiling at him, at the beach, at the wheel of her Tesla. But we also see DEVON with his BROTHER who wears a military uniform and DEVON'S FATHER, standing by his YELLOW CAB.

He lands on one LAST IMAGE. HIS MOTHER IN A SARI with his FATHER -- the two of them flanking him at his medical school graduation. They look proud. He looks happy.

His phone dings with a text from Priya.

CHYRON: *Hey baby. How's it going?*

Devon can't begin to express what's happened over the past few hours. Writes back... CHYRON: *I miss you.*

PRIYA'S CHYRON: *You're going to be an amazing doctor.*

He smiles, is about to write back when his pager BEEPS. He jumps up, runs.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CALL ROOM - DAY

Conrad and Nic are still going at it.

OVERHEAD (O.S.)

Code Blue on 9 west.

NIC

(pulling back)

That's surgery. HODAD'S ward.

Conrad BREAKS AWAY, pulls himself together and exits.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - DAY

Devon emerges from the elevator, running to the code when he passes Conrad, standing at a kitchen station marked "FOR PATIENTS ONLY. NO STAFF."

Devon stops, watches Conrad whistling as he fills a plastic bucket with ice.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Bell is surrounded by a crowd of nurses. His patient, a 40 YEAR OLD WOMAN, is the one coding. Nic enters.

NIC

Status!

NURSE #1

We pushed adenosine 6 mg, then 12.
She flatlined, then came back! But
she's still tach'ing away at 180.

BELL

(with authority)
Try Posicor!

NIC

(low)
Uh, we can't. That drug was
recalled in 2007.

The door bursts open and we see Conrad holding the ICE BUCKET. Devon is right behind him.

CONRAD

I think her heart has had enough AV
blockade.

Conrad THROWS THE ICE WATER OVER THE PATIENT'S FACE. Devon reacts. HOLY SHIT. Bell spins on Conrad.

BELL

Are you INSANE?!

NIC

(at the monitor)
Normal rhythm.

They all look. Incredibly, the patient's heartbeat is back.

CONRAD

(to Devon, matter-of-fact)
Ice water stimulus.
(MORE)

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Prompts a vagal tone, restores
normal rhythm in adenosine-
refractory SVT. Called the Diver's
Reflex.

The woman sputters awake. Conrad looks right at Bell.

CONRAD (CONT'D)
Two in one day would be excessive.

He walks off. Bell doesn't miss a beat. Leaps to his
patient's side.

BELL
There, there, Mrs. Foster.
Everything's going to be all right.

MRS. FOSTER
Dr. Bell... you saved my life.

Devon looks from Bell, the famous surgeon, to his retreating
supervising resident.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Mina, removing her scrub cap and mask, passes Nic.

MINA

I don't have time to give updates
on how the surgeries went one by
one. Are the families all
assembled?

NIC

Dr. Okafor... I think they might
find that jarring.

MINA

Best to rip off the band-aid.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Three families are huddled in different parts of the waiting
room. One is large, Latino. Another upper-class -- a middle-
aged white woman in Chanel and pearls with her adult daughter
and son. The last is two Indian women in saris.

Dr. Okafor enters. The families all look up expectantly.

MINA

(to the Latino family)
Luis is doing fine. He's in
recovery.
(to the Indian family)
Raj is in the ICU. It's touch and
go.
(to Chanel)
Prescott's dead.

She turns, walks out. Off the families, reeling.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Bell finds Mina, now out of scrubs, reaching for her backpack
in her locker. She's in her full badass after-hours gear --
high-heeled boots, Commes Des Garcons pants and a leather
bomber jacket.

BELL

Dr. Okafor -- a word?

MINA

Sorry, on my way out. I need rest for the robot prostatectomy tomorrow morning.

BELL

That's actually why I'm here. The patient has requested a last minute change in the lineup.

MINA

The lineup?

BELL

As you know, Lyle's an important donor and keeping our VIPs happy is our top priority. He's always been my patient. He asked for me.

MINA

Does he have a death wish?

Now Bell's eyes go cold, but his voice remains smooth.

BELL

I hear you're applying for an O1 visa. You'll need a letter of recommendation from your supervisor. I believe that would be me.

MINA

(recalculating)

Dr. Bell, you've never touched the Titian. I trained on it for 80 hours. That's how long it takes to become proficient. You cannot do that surgery. As in, it's literally impossible.

BELL

You have no idea what's possible.

MINA

This isn't a miracle machine. It won't fix your problems. It will magnify them. Eighty hours, Dr. Bell. The surgery is first thing tomorrow morning.

BELL
(unshakable)
It's going to be a flawless
presentation. We'll be streaming
live--

MINA
(aghast)
You want witnesses? I have to draw
a line here. This can't happen.
It's too risky. For you. And for
the patient.

Bell hesitates a moment. He looks down at his own hands,
trembling slightly.

He clenches them into a tight fist and we see a trace of fear
in his face. But then it banishes as quickly as it came. He
looks up again.

BELL
Then I suppose you'll be heading
back to Abuja. Given the political
unrest in Nigeria, and the quality
of healthcare available there, you
might want to reconsider.

Off Mina, fucked.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - LILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Devon watches as Lily puts on a convincing blonde wig which
transforms her. She's pale, fragile, but beautiful. Her
overnight bag lies open on the floor.

LILY
He's gone, right?

DEVON
I'm sure tomorrow he'll--

LILY
No. He won't. It's okay. It's been
coming for a while. Ross didn't
sign up for cancer. I was diagnosed
a month after we got engaged. I
should've let him go... but I
didn't want to die alone.

She says it simply, but the words cut like a knife.

DEVON

(gently)

He said you should call your mother.

LILY

She lost her brother to cancer. Can't handle this. Besides, she's in Phoenix. What are my numbers?

DEVON

Your ANC was 750.

LILY

Lower than usual.

DEVON

Yes. Urine dipstick showed bacteria.

LILY

Another bladder infection.

DEVON

We've got you on antibiotics. It'll get better quickly.

LILY

Until next time.

She climbs into bed and pulls the sheets up like a child. Devon's pager goes off. She looks up at him, pale and vulnerable.

LILY (CONT'D)

Do you have to leave right away?

Devon considers a moment, silences the pager.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

Bell sits at the surgical console for the Titian machine. Mina watches, eating from a bag of CHERRIES.

MINA

Start with a simple maneuver. Four millimeter incision on the ventral surface.

The robot's eight arms hover over a CHERRY positioned in the center of the surgical bed.

MINA (CONT'D)
Slow and steady.

BELL
(irritated)
I got it.

One of the arms, wielding a very sharp scalpel, suddenly whips around clattering into the overhead light, then knocks instruments off a nearby tray, landing on the floor with a crash.

The arm veers back to the operating bed, slams down, missing the cherry by nearly a foot. Flies back up, then down again, pulverizing the cherry. Red juice splatters Bell's white coat.

BELL (CONT'D)
What the hell's wrong with this machine?

Mina looks at him, as close to pity as she can muster.

MINA
(softer)
It will be better... for everyone... if I do this.

Bell looks at this young, tough, foreign, black woman. How dare she pity him. His vulnerability instantly disappears.

BELL
No. The patient wants me. I am always there for my patients.

She calmly puts down another cherry.

MINA
Round eleven.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - LILY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Devon and Lily are in mid-conversation. Now he's sitting on her bed, showing her pictures of Priya and himself at an Indian wedding on his phone.

LILY
She's pretty.

DEVON
And smart. She could spend her life island hopping if she wanted to.
(MORE)

DEVON (CONT'D)

Her father owns resorts all over the world. But she devotes herself to charity work. My dad's a cab driver. I'm the first in my family to go to college, let alone medical school.

LILY

She's lucky. You both are.

(sadness in her eyes)

Ross and I met in law school. He was dating my best friend. She was in love with him and I stole him away. They'd probably be married if it weren't for me. Sometimes I think the cancer is payback.

Lily's monitor blinks. A new blood pressure flashes. Devon notices immediately.

DEVON

Lily, how are you feeling?

LILY

A bit weak all of a sudden.

DEVON

Your blood pressure is low. 80 over 40. It was 120 over 90 a minute ago.

Devon's eyes are fixed on the monitor. He goes to the door, grabs NIC as she passes by.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Page Lily's oncologist, Dr. Hunter.

NIC

She's at a formal dinner getting some kind of award.

He looks back at the monitor as it BEEPS a warning.

DEVON

Where's Conrad?

NIC

An emergency in the ER.

He looks back at the monitor as it BEEPS a warning.

DEVON

Lily's BP is 70 over 38. And dropping.

Lily's head suddenly slumps on her pillow. She's unconscious.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Call a rapid response. Now!

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. LILY'S PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

Lily is now surrounded by Nic and other nurses. The scene is controlled chaos, the highest urgency. Devon is at the center of the whirlwind.

DEVON

Get a CBC, CMP, LFTs, lactate. Have we got both IVs running wide open?

Nic finishes hanging an IV bag.

NIC

Yes. Systolic is fluctuating, but it's not good.

DEVON

We're three liters in already. Sepsis.

NIC

Do you want to give levo peripherally?

DEVON

No. Lily needs the big guns. Central line kit.

NIC

You've never done one.

DEVON

We can't wait. We'll lose her.

Nic reluctantly hands him the central line kit and he grabs an iodine swab, swabs the area around Lily's neck vein. Holds out his hand. Nic passes him the scalpel.

He pauses and they both look at the blade. So sharp. He puts the knife to Lily's delicate neck and...

The door BURSTS OPEN and an elegant woman in formal dress enters. This is DR. LANE HUNTER.

LANE

What in the name of God is going on here?

NIC

(huge relief)
Dr. Hunter.

(MORE)

NIC (CONT'D)
Lily needs a central line. This is
Dr. Pravesh, Conrad's new intern.
He's never done one.

Devon steps back. Lane looks to Devon as she pulls on her
white coat.

LANE
(firm, calm)
Proceed Dr. Pravesh.

NIC
No, seriously-

LANE
I said proceed. You can do it.

Devon hesitates, then returns to Lily. Goes to cut again...
but the pressure is worse with Lane and everyone else
watching.

He puts the blade to Lily's neck and now his hand trembles.
Lane sees and without judgement simply puts her hand over his
to steady him. He looks up. Their eyes meet. In hers he sees
total reassurance. She removes her hand, nods.

Devon looks down, his hand no longer shakes. He cuts in one
swift, clean move. Now he exchanges the central line over the
guide-wire. Lane watches, approving.

LANE (CONT'D)
Excellent. Nice and clean. You're a
natural. What now?

DEVON
(to Nic)
Start at five mg. Slowly titrate up
as necessary.

Nic looks to Lane for confirmation, gets it. She does it.
They wait, watching the monitor together as Lily's blood
pressure begins to stabilize.

DEVON (CONT'D)
When her pressure levels out, wean
her off the levo and drown her in
fluids.

Nic nods. Lane touches Devon's shoulder lightly.

LANE
Well done, Doctor.

EXT. KINGS COUNTY - DAWN

The sun is rising behind the vast complex. The long night is over.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - DAWN

Devon stands looking out at the rising sun. The light bathes his face and in it we see hope. A new day. He made it.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - LILY'S ROOM - DAWN

Devon enters to check on Lily, finds Lane by her side, checking her monitors. He takes in this vision of the devoted doctor. The kind he wants to be. A real role model.

DEVON

You've been here all night.

Lane stays focused on Lily, doesn't answer. She touches her tenderly. Lily stirs, smiles.

LANE

Lily. You gave us quite a scare.
But you're going to be fine. The
bleeding was from a blast crisis.
It doesn't mean you're getting
sicker. It means you're getting
better. How do you feel?

LILY

Hungry, Dr. Hunter.

LANE

That we can fix. I have rounds now
so I'm going to leave you in the
capable hands of Dr. Pravesh.

LILY

Good, I like him.

LANE

Me too.

Lane smiles at Devon, gestures for him to follow her out of the room.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - MORNING

They come out together. Stop and stand in the warm sunlight.

DEVON

I'm sorry we had to call you out of the award ceremony.

LANE

I wouldn't have it any other way. The last thing I need is more crystal.

(beat, looks right at him)

I read your file, Devon. I'm impressed. I want you to consider me a mentor. If you have any problems, come to me. Who's your supervising resident?

DEVON

Doctor Conrad Hawkins.

LANE

You're lucky. Conrad's one of the best doctors in the hospital.

DEVON

So they tell me.

She reads between the lines as he looks away.

LANE

I know. He can be rough. There are reasons for that.

(beat)

Believe it or not, he used to be you.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - MORNING

Mina walks down the hallway. Conrad sees her, catches up.

CONRAD

Tell me this isn't really happening.

MINA

It's happening.

CONRAD

Dr. Bell is going to eviscerate one of the hospital's biggest donors, and no one is stepping in to stop him?

MINA

I did everything I could.

CONRAD
I can't believe that.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - PHARMACY - MORNING

Bell rubs his eyes as he addresses the pharmacist.

BELL
Provigil 20 mg. And I'll take a
couple Adderall. I've got a big
surgery and I've been up all night.
I have to focus.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - SCRUB ROOM - MORNING

Bell, now very up, talking fast, is being filmed as he scrubs
in. He looks into the camera:

BELL
We're five minutes away from the
maiden voyage of our new Titian
robot. After spending considerable
time working with it, I can
definitively say this is a
miraculous machine.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A crowd has gathered to watch the live stream of the surgery.
Conrad pushes into the room to join them. He is agitated,
anxious.

ON SCREEN BELL CONTINUES

BELL (CONT'D)
We expect it to be particularly
useful for prostatectomies, which
is what we're doing today.

They see Bell sit at the robot console as the machine lights
up. The donor, Lyle, is already stretched out on the table,
his abdomen exposed. Nic stands next to Conrad, pale with
horror.

NIC
I can't watch.

She buries her face in his coat.

The ROBOT ARMS slowly position themselves over the open
abdomen.

BELL

We access the prostate through the abdomen. It's buried under the bowels, at the base of the bladder. A small, sensitive organ.

Now the ARMS move organs aside, exposing a walnut-shaped structure.

BELL (CONT'D)

The prostate has to be carefully peeled off the urethra and the bladder. The risk of rupture and bleeding is high in unskilled hands.

As we watch, the robot tools move with surprising precision. It's incredible. The surgery proceeds flawlessly. Nic peeks and sees it's going well.

NIC

How is this possible?

He looks at her, raises his eyebrows like he has a secret. The cat who swallowed the canary.

BELL

You can see the robotic instruments are smaller than your fingernails. But that blade is sharper than number 11. There are rat tooth and plier modules as well.

Back now to a CU of BELL. His hands, off screen, appear to move in tiny and precise motions as he concentrates hard.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - OPERATING ROOM - SAME TIME

We now see that Bell's hands are not touching anything. His console has no controls. Mina sits behind him at the actual console, just off-camera for the live feed. She is the one performing the surgery.

Bell's arms wave in space.

BELL

This represents the union of human ingenuity and cutting edge technology. Man and machine are melded, working as one.

Mina rolls her eyes.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - CORRIDOR - LATER

Conrad meets Mina, they exchange an elaborate handshake.

CONRAD

Poetry.

MINA

Can't believe you talked him into it.

CONRAD

He was terrified. He was looking for an out. I almost feel sorry for him -

They watch as Bell appears from the OR with the hospital CEO, Renata. She embraces Bell, beaming.

RENATA

Amazing. I have to admit I'm a bit stunned at how fast you mastered such advanced technology.

BELL

It was a breeze. The machine practically operates itself.

They walk off. Back to Conrad and Mina.

CONRAD

I see this as a template for the future. From now on, convince Bell to let you assist in every surgery. To absorb his vast experience. Train with one of the greats.

MINA

Over my dead body.

CONRAD

I'm sure he could manage that.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ICU - DAY

Chloe lies quietly, on the vent, her chest rising with each mechanical breath of the vent. Her mother is at her side. She's brought blankets from home, a stuffed animal. She's talking softly to Chloe, who of course will never hear her. Devon stands in the doorway, watching.

CHLOE'S MOTHER

I'll be right back, sweetheart.

She heads out, passing Devon.

MOTHER

I'll be in the cafeteria if she
wakes up.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - HALLWAYS - DAY

Devon comes out of the ICU, downcast. Conrad approaches and
stands beside him.

DEVON

I wish there were something I could
do.

CONRAD

There is. You fight every day to do
better.

Devon nods. Conrad pulls out his wallet, removes a photo of a
little girl. Hands it to him.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Annabeth. Five. She had cancer.
When I was a first year, I gave her
too much potassium. She died. From
me, not the cancer.

Devon looks at him, questioning, but Conrad's face is
impassive. He learned long ago to hide the pain. He takes
back the photo, returns it to his wallet.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

If it were easy, everyone would be
a doctor because this is the best
job in the world. Despite
everything. Because of everything.
I'll see you tomorrow.

Devon looks up at him, deeply grateful. Then he walks off
leaving Conrad alone.

Conrad turns and looks in the window at Chloe.

INT. KINGS COUNTY - ICU - DAY

Chloe's body is being artificially inflated by the
ventilator. Her chest rises and falls. Her eyes are empty.

CLOSE ON the ventilator. A hand shuts the machine off.

Chloe's chest ceases rising and falling. In a few moments, it stops.

ON CONRAD WATCHING CHLOE.

He glances at the clock. The second hand sweeps.

Conrad now approaches and gently takes her pulse.

Her face is far more peaceful now. Conrad reaches in, closes her eyes. Then he turns the machine back on.

Chloe's chest rises and falls as the breath is mechanically forced into her lungs. Her eyes stay closed. She's gone. Conrad exits. The halls are empty. No one sees him. He walks off. Slowly.

FADE OUT.

*