

CAROL'S SECOND ACT

"Pilot"

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**COLD OPEN**

FADE IN:

SCENE A

INT. HOSPITAL - CENTRAL BAY/NURSES' STATION -DAY  
(CAROL, DANIEL, MANDY, CALEB, MAYA)

A BUSY WARD. NURSES WORK BEHIND A CENTRAL DESK. FAMILY MEMBERS SIT IN A SMALL WAITING AREA. DOCTORS, ETC, CROSS THROUGH.

MANDY REYES (LATE 20'S, A SARDONIC EYORE) WAITS NERVOUSLY. DANIEL KUTCHER (LATE 20'S, SMART, ARROGANT), LEANING ON THE DESK LIKE HE OWNS THE PLACE, SPOTS HER NAME TAG.

DANIEL

First year resident? Internal  
medicine? Me too. I'm Daniel. I'm  
pumped. Are you pumped?

MANDY

Yes. I mean, pumped is not a word I  
usually use, but I am as close to  
pumped as I get. Which is jazz hands.

AS MANDY DOES SMALL JAZZ HANDS FOR A CONFUSED DANIEL, CALEB SOMMERS (LATE 20'S, WOKE, EARNEST) WEARING A BIKE HELMET ENTERS. HE SPOTS MANDY AND DANIEL.

CALEB

Internal medicine? What's up! I'm  
Caleb. Stoked to meet you. Hope I'm  
not late. Is the Chief Resident here  
yet?

DANIEL

Not yet. You still have time to put on  
deodorant.

CALEB

I actually use a mix of baking soda  
and cornstarch as a natural  
alternative.

MANDY

Oooh, you smell like bread.

DANIEL

I hope the Chief Resident likes it.

Rumor has it she's a real ball buster.

THE ELEVATOR DINGS. CAROL CHAMBERS, OUR HERO, STEPS OUT. (50'S,  
SMART, ENTHUSIASTIC, SPEAKS HER MIND EVEN WHEN SHE SHOULDN'T).  
SHE'S GOT A CLIPBOARD, A SMILE AND A NATURAL AIR OF AUTHORITY.

DANIEL

(STRAIGHTENS TIE) And there she is.

CAROL WALKS RIGHT OVER TO THE SMALL GROUP. THEY STRAIGHTEN UP.

CAROL

Hi all, you must be the internal  
medicine residents.

DANIEL IMMEDIATELY CONVERTS TO KISS-ASS MODE.

DANIEL

Yes, Ma'm. Here and ready.

CAROL

What a pleasure to meet you... should  
we go around and introduce ourselves?

DANIEL

Excellent idea. I'm Daniel Kutcher.  
Harvard class of '14, Harvard Medical  
School class of '18.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I've published in the New England Journal of Medicine. (HOLDING UP FINGERS) Two times.

MANDY

Oh-kay. I'm Mandy Reyes. I grew up here in Southern California. Daughter of immigrants. I went to UCLA and I have also published. Some recipes. On pinterest.

CALEB

I'm Caleb Sommers. He/Him. My goal is to provide equitable and inclusive medical care for all.

CAROL

Wow. What an exceptional group of people. Your parents must be thrilled. I'm Carol Chambers, also from around here. I have two kids, I'm very into bacteriophage therapy, and I am so excited to be here.

THEY STARE, WAITING FOR HER TO LEAD THEM.

DANIEL

Will we be starting rounds right away?

CAROL

I hope so. I've been waiting a long time for this day.

MANDY, CALEB AND DANIEL EXCHANGE A LOOK - WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

DANIEL

A long time to be... Chief Resident?

CAROL

(LAUGHS) ME? You think I'm Chief Resident? No, no, today's my first day. I'm an intern, just like you.

CALEB

But you have a clipboard.

CAROL

I love clipboards. I taught high school before I went to med school. But I'm not Chief Resident.

MANDY

But you're...

CAROL

Older? Yes, I'm aware. I always wanted to be a doctor, but life got in the way. You know.

THEY DON'T.

CALEB

(CONFUSED) Were you in a coma?

CAROL

Uh, no. I mean things happened. I got married young, had kids, worked. Life.

THEY NOD, NOW THEY GET IT.

CAROL

But when my husband left me to go find himself, I started thinking, hey - if he can go chase his stupid dreams, I can chase mine.

MANDY

It's like Eat, Pray, Love.

CAROL

Yes, but instead of "eat" I had medical school and instead of "love" I had medical school.

MAYA (O.S.)

(APPROACHING) Internal medicine?

THEY TURN TO SEE DR. MAYA JACOBS, THE ACTUAL CHIEF RESIDENT APPROACHING THEM. (30'S, STUNNING, PERFECT, ICE QUEEN).

MAYA

I am Dr. Maya Jacobs, your Chief Resident.

ALL THE OTHER INTERNS GET VISIBLY NERVOUS. CAROL STAYS RELAXED.

CAROL

(FRIENDLY) Hi, Dr. Jacobs. So nice to meet you. Funny story. They thought I was you. Can you believe it?

MAYA

....No.

CAROL

We were just doing introductions - maybe you'd like to tell us where you're from, and a fun fact about yourself?

MAYA

The fact you need to know is that I am your Chief Resident.

CAROL

(SOTTO) Not very fun...

MAYA ASSUMES A STRICT AIR OF AUTHORITY AND ADDRESSES THE GROUP.

MAYA

Welcome to Loyola Memorial Hospital. Today, you are doctors. And this year will be the hardest of your life. This program is demanding: long hours, a steep learning curve. Many discover they are not as strong as they thought. Many don't survive.

CAROL

Boy.

MAYA PAUSES AND TURNS TO CAROL.

MAYA

Excuse me?

CAROL

Oh I'm sorry, didn't mean to interrupt your speech.

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

(THEN) I mean I get it, you want to keep us on our toes, first day, etc. But actually fear is a counterproductive way to motivate people. I taught high school science forever and, really, students are motivated by their strengths. Neuroscience is completely behind this. I could send you an article?

MAYA GLARES AS IF AN ALIEN HAS FULLY LANDED IN FRONT OF HER.

CAROL

(NEVER MIND) You've probably read it.

MAYA TURNS BACK TO THE GROUP.

MAYA

Your survival this year depends on your intelligence, self-discipline ---

CAROL STARTS WRITING ON HER CLIPBOARD.

MAYA

-- your ability to function without sleep... (TO CAROL) You do not have to write this down.

CAROL

I write everything down. And I'm great on the no-sleep thing. Believe me, have two kids and you'll forget you ever slept.

MAYA TAKES A DEEP BREATH, ICY - ADDRESSES THE GROUP.



MAYA

You might think that as your mentor  
it's my job to nurture and grow your  
budding medical careers. It isn't. My  
job is to determine which of you can  
cut it (LOOKS AT CAROL) and which of  
you can't.

CAROL

Funny, it felt like you were looking  
at me when you said that last part.

MAYA

Follow me.

MAYA TAKES OFF DOWN THE HALLWAY.

CAROL

(TO MANDY) I don't think she read the  
article.

THEY HURRY AFTER HER, AS WE --

FADE OUT.

**END COLD OPEN**

**ACT ONE****SCENE B****INT. PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

(CAROL, MAYA, DANIEL, CALEB, MANDY, DOUG, SHARON)

MAYA WALKS THEM THROUGH A CASE, MID-ROUND. THE PATIENT AND HIS WIFE (DOUG AND SHARON, 30'S) LISTEN. DOUG IS MOSTLY QUIET, AND SHARON SEEMS DISCOMBOBULATED, STRESSED.

MAYA

Patient is a twenty-eight-year-old male admitted four days after a minor car accident complaining of nausea, fatigue and headaches. Dr. Sommers, what are his related health factors?

CALEB IS SURPRISED. HE FLIPS THROUGH THE PATIENT CHART. DANIEL RAISES HIS HAND "OOOH OOOH ME."

CALEB

Looks like a history of migraines?

MAYA IS CLEARLY NOT IMPRESSED.

MAYA

Correct. Next time be prepared.

MANDY

(SOTTO) Okay, hiding for now, hiding for now.

SHE SCOOTs BEHIND DANIEL AND CAROL.

SHARON

(MAKING NOTE) They mainly come on when he's stressed. You think his migraines have something to do with this?

DOUG

Sharon, they've got it.

SHARON SHAKES HER PEN, TRYING TO GET INK. CAROL HANDS HER A PEN FROM HER CLIPBOARD.

CAROL

Here you go. I'm a note taker too.

That's why I always carry a spare.

(THEN) I actually carry two spares, in case anyone else needs one?

MAYA LOOKS AT CAROL, THEN CONTINUES.

MAYA

(TO DOUG) And how do your migraines typically present?

DOUG

Dizziness, mostly.

MAYA OPENS HER MOUTH TO ASK A QUESTION WHEN:

MAYA

Did the migraines intensify after the accident?

CAROL

Did the migraines intensify after the accident?

MAYA PAUSES, IRKED AT CAROL'S INTERJECTION BUT HIDING IT IN FRONT OF THE PATIENT.

CAROL

Great minds think alike.

MAYA

(TO PATIENT) Please, continue.

DOUG

Maybe. I get those flashy lights. What are they called?

CAROL

Aura. (THEN) My uncle had migraines  
like that. Commonly stress related and-  
NOW MAYA GLARES AT CAROL. SHE NOTICES.

CAROL

Long story short, yoga helped with his  
migraines but not his alcoholism and  
he died.

MAYA

(MOVING ON) Next steps. Dr....

MANDY HIDES BEHIND CALEB.

MAYA

Kutcher.

DANIEL

Probable causes include concussion,  
subdural hematoma, undiagnosed chiari  
malformation. Start with a Head CT and  
blood work.

MAYA

Excellent, Dr. Kutcher. (TO THE  
OTHERS) That is how and when to speak  
on rounds.

CAROL WINCES. THAT WAS FOR HER. THE WIFE IS MAKING NOTES,  
OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED.

SHARON

What did you say - Head CT, is that a  
cat scan? How long do those take?

DOUG

Sharon, it's ok.

MAYA

Your husband's right. You're in good hands. We'll keep you updated.

MAYA LEADS THE INTERNS OUT. CAROL IS LAST, AND DELIBERATELY DAWDLES, CAN'T HELP HERSELF, AS THE OTHERS EXIT.

CAROL

(WHISPERS, TO WIFE) A head CT is a cat scan. You'll have the results this afternoon.

SHARON

(SMILES, APPRECIATIVE) Thanks. Sorry, I'm a mess, this has been stressful.

SHARON TUCKS HER HAIR BACK AS SHE DIGS IN HER PURSE.

CAROL

Of course it has. (HANDS HER A HAIR TIE) Are you looking for one of these?

SHARON

Yes! Thank you. I always lose them.

CAROL

Well we're a good pair, because I always have extras.

SHARON

What are you, Dr. Mary Poppins?

CAROL

Ha, no. I'm not British and my vocal range is only three octaves.

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

But if you need a tissue, I have  
kleenex hidden all over my body.

SHARON

(LAUGHS) I'm good.

MAYA (O.S.)

Dr. Chambers!

CAROL

Coming! (TO SHARON) Bye Sharon, bye  
Doug. Nice meeting you!

CAROL HURRIES OUT.

CUT TO:

SCENE C

INT. HALLWAY - LATER  
(CAROL, JENNY)

CAROL HURRIES DOWN A HALL WHEN SHE SPOTS A PHARMA REP WITH A WHEELIE SUITCASE (JENNY, 20'S, PRETTY, BUBBLY, BIG-HEARTED) AT THE VENDING MACHINE.

CAROL

Jenny?

JENNY

(STRAIGHTENS) Mom! I thought I might see you! (THEY HUG)

JENNY

Were you running? You look winded.

CAROL

(DEEP BREATHS) I have a four minute break and I want coffee. I think being a doctor involves a lot of running.  
(THEN) What are you doing here?

JENNY

I'm buying a candy bar, don't judge. I know it's not healthy but I'm super hungry and about to get my period.

CAROL

No, I mean, here. I didn't think you worked at Loyola on Tuesdays.

JENNY

I don't... but I switched so I could see you on your first day.

CAROL

Oh, hon, you didn't have to -

JENNY

And miss the first day of you living your dream? Nope. Honestly, it was no biggie. When I come to Loyola I cover urology which means I'm basically just selling boner drugs so it's an easy day.

CAROL

Good to know.

JENNY

Look at you in your doctor coat. Oh, Mom, I'm so proud of you. Those all-nighters you pulled in med school were worth it. You really dug in.

CAROL

At my age you don't decide to go to medical school and not dig in.

JENNY

Says you. All your friends are probably at book club, or bingeing shows or getting drunk.

CAROL

Well, I'm drunk on being a doctor!  
(THEN) That's a figure of speech, I would never drink at work.



JENNY

I got you mom. So, how are the other doctors? Any cute dudes?

CAROL

I'm thirty years older than they are!

JENNY

No, for me. I told you it's why I became a pharma rep.

CAROL

Jennifer. That is the worst stereotype about your profession.

JENNY

The worst and the truest. So can you set me up?

CAROL

First let's get you a healthy breakfast.

CAROL HANDS HER A PROTEIN BAR.

JENNY

Where did that even come from?

CAROL

If you're going to eat a bar, at least get a little protein. I gotta go. Love you sweetie!

CAROL TAKES OFF RUNNING DOWN THE HALL.

JENNY BITES INTO THE PROTEIN BAR, MAKES A FACE.

CUT TO:

SCENE DINT. DOCTORS' LOUNGE - DAY

(CAROL, DANIEL, MANDY, CALEB)

SOME COUCHES. A TABLE. MINI-FRIDGE. A FEW LOCKERS. A WELL WORN BUT COMFORTABLE RESPITE FROM THE HOSPITAL. CALEB OPENS HIS LOCKER AND GRABS A BUNCH OF BANANAS.

CALEB

Anyone want an energy boost?

MANDY

Banana me. (HE TOSSES HER ONE)

CALEB

These are super fresh - I got them this morning from the Whole Foods dumpster.

MANDY SPITS OUT HER BANANA.

CALEB

They're fine. We waste so much food as a country -

CAROL RUNS IN WITH A COFFEE.

CAROL

I'm back! I'm not sure if I paid for this, but I'm back. I ran into my --

SECONDS LATER MAYA BLOWS IN. THEY SNAP TO ATTENTION.

MAYA

I have your assignments. Dr. Sommers and Dr. Reyes - you'll be assisting a senior attending with a patient workup.

CALEB

Sweet.

DANIEL

Wow. (OFF HIS LOOK) It's rare for an intern to interact with senior staff on the first day. A Senior Attending is the top of the medical food chain.

MANDY

Thank you, Siri.

MAYA

I think Dr. Kutcher's point was that you might want to make a good impression.

DANIEL

(SMIRKS) Yes it was.

MAYA

Dr. Kutcher. Excellent work on rounds. You'll do follow-up on Car Crash.

DANIEL

My own patient? Yesss Dannnyyyy.

MANDY

Did you just congratulate yourself?

CALEB

He did, I heard it.

CAROL

This is exciting. Our first assignments as real doctors.

(MORE)

CAROL (CONT'D)

(TO MAYA) I glanced at the board outside and noticed a patient with pneumonia brought on by a fungal microbe. Not trying to influence you, but I've always wanted to observe a --

MAYA

Dr. Chambers. You'll be collecting stool samples.

CAROL

(BEAT) Stool samples? Um. Do you think maybe I could assist Dr. Kutcher? I had a good rapport with his patient --

DANIEL

I've got it --

MAYA PUTS DOWN HER TABLET, READY TO LECTURE CAROL.

MAYA

Dr. Chambers. I realize you're excited to be here, at this late stage of your life. (CAROL FROWNS) But this is a hospital, not a make-a-wish foundation.

CAROL

I'm not dying. I'm just old.

MAYA

When I give an order, you follow it.  
End of story. Understood?

CAROL

(BEAT) Understood.

MAYA

Great. Let's try this again. Dr.  
Chambers, you'll be collecting stool  
samples.

CAROL

Stool Samples. (THEN) Yayyyy.

MAYA

From every patient on this list.

MAYA HANDS HER A LIST AND PROMPTLY EXITS.

CAROL LOOKS DOWN AT HER PAPER.

CAROL

This is a long list.

CUT TO:

SCENE E

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY  
(MANDY, CALEB, DR. FROST)

CLOSE ON MANDY AND CALEB, WHO STARE INTENTLY.

MANDY

Pancreatitis is supposed to be painful  
but Mr. Bans looks pretty happy.

REVEAL THE PATIENT: AN OVERWEIGHT MAN IN HIS 50'S, BLISSSED OUT  
WITH A DOPEY GRIN ON HIS FACE.

CALEB

(CHECKS IV) He should be. He's on rock  
star levels of morphine.

MANDY

I'd like some morphine.

CALEB

No kidding. This day is way stressful.  
We're the doctors now. We screw up and  
someone could die.

PATIENT

(GROGGY, STILL ASLEEP) Whazzat?

CALEB

Nothing, Mr. Bans.

MANDY

Yeah. The pressure is real intense.

CALEB

It's because they make us feel like  
we're competitors, not peers. It's  
like the Hunger Games.

MANDY

Yeah, but harder and there's no  
Jennifer Lawrence.

CALEB

We should team up. Have each other's  
backs. Have an ally. What do you  
think?

MANDY

Really? I think that's great. (SMILES)  
I'm honestly relieved. I thought I was  
going to have to go it alone before my  
eventual nervous breakdown.

CALEB

You that afraid of killing someone?

PATIENT

(GROGGY) Whoozzzaa?

MANDY

Go to sleep, Mr. Bans.

CALEB

Go to sleep, Mr. Bans.

MANDY

No... (THEN) I was the first person in  
my family to go to college. They  
sacrificed everything for me. So I  
feel all this pressure to succeed. But  
can I tell you a secret?

CALEB

Of course. Safe space.

MANDY

Most of the time I feel like I don't  
even belong here.

CALEB TAKES THIS IN.

MANDY

Ugh I shouldn't have said all that.

CALEB

No, I'm glad you did. I know exactly  
how you feel. I feel like everyone is  
looking at me thinking "that dummy  
can't be a real doctor!"

MANDY

You do too?

HE NODS. MANDY SMILES - IT'S A NICE MOMENT BETWEEN THEM.

JUST THEN DR. FROST (50'S, HANDSOME, AFFABLE, ACCOMPLISHED,  
THINKS HE'S FUNNIER THAN HE IS) WALKS INTO THE ROOM.

DR. FROST

(TO MANDY) Hello, I'm Dr. Stephen  
Frost, Senior Attending, Department  
Chair, please no applause.

MANDY

Dr. Frost, it's an honor. My name is --

DR. FROST

And look who's here! Caleb! How are  
you kiddo?

CALEB

Stephen! Uh, Dr. Frost. I didn't  
realize you were the Senior Attending.



MANDY

(SHOCKED) You two know each other?

DR. FROST

Know each other? I've been friends with the Sommers' forever, we share a house in Sun Valley. I taught this little guy how to ski!

HE GIVES CALEB A NOOGIE. MANDY'S JAW DROPS.

DR. FROST

(CHECKS PAGER) Shoot. An appendix blew. Tell you what: Do a full workup on Mr. Bans before his paracentesis. (TO CALEB) Good to see you, "Dr. Sommers". (TO MANDY) Nice meeting you, what was it?

MANDY

Dr. Reyes.

DR. FROST EXITS. MANDY STARES DAGGERS AT CALEB.

CALEB

What? (BEAT) What?

MANDY

I take it back. I do want to kill someone today.

THE PATIENT GROANS.

MANDY

Not you, Mr. Bans.

CUT TO:

SCENE F

INT. CENTRAL BAY/NURSES' STATION- DAY  
(CAROL, NURSE DENISE)

CAROL WALKS UP TO THE NURSES' STATION CARRYING A BIOHAZARD BAG.  
A NURSE IS THERE, OVERWORKED AND FRAZZLED. THE PHONE BEEPS.

NURSE DENISE

(INTO PHONE) I'm prepping your dose  
now, be right in Mr. Clark. (HANGS UP)  
Third time he's asked. What do you got  
for me?

CAROL DEPOSITS HER BAGS AND STARTS FILLING OUT THE LAB REPORT.

CAROL

Stool samples. Get 'em while they're  
hot. (OFF NURSE'S LOOK) Sorry.

NURSE DENISE

So you're the one this year. (OFF HER  
LOOK) The one Dr. Jacobs hates. The  
stool samples are a dead giveaway.

CAROL

Well then yes, I'm the one she hates.

NURSE DENISE

I'm Denise. I'll learn your name if  
you last.

HER CALL BUTTON BEEPS AGAIN. SHE SIGHS.

NURSE DENISE

Room 24. Again. Is that you? Car  
crash? Nervous wife?

CAROL

Oh, Doug and Sharon. No, that's Dr.  
Kutcher.

THE NURSE SHRUGS, BLANKLY.

CAROL

He may have mentioned he went to  
Harvard?

NURSE DENISE

Oh, him. Well, he's in the lab, so I  
guess Mr. Clark is gonna have to wait -

SHE GOES TO ANSWER, BUT CAROL STOPS HER.

CAROL

Tell you what, I'll take care of them.  
You go get Mr. Clark his meds.

NURSE DENISE

Really? He's not your patient. (THEN)  
Ohh, I see why Dr. Jacobs hates you.  
You're a maverick type. (THEN) But  
thanks for helping. Sorry you won't  
make it.

THE NURSE EXITS.

CAROL

I mean, I might make it. (CALLS AFTER)  
I'm great at stool samples!

BUT THE NURSE IS GONE. CAROL HEADS INTO --

CUT TO:

SCENE GINT. PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

(CAROL, DOUG, SHARON)

DOUG IS SLEEPING. SHARON LOOKS GRATEFUL AS CAROL STEPS IN.

SHARON

Oh, it's you. Dr. Poppins!

CAROL

Dr. Chambers, actually. But you can call me Carol.

SHARON

I hate to bother you --

CAROL

Nothing is a bother. What can I do for you? A pen? A hair tie? Nail scissors? I'm a walking pharmacy.

SHARON

(SMILES) Don't suppose you have any lotion?

CAROL REACHES INTO HER POCKET AND PULLS OUT A TUBE OF LOTION.

SHARON

You're amazing - but for him, actually. When he wakes up. He's been so itchy lately.

CAROL

Itchy?

SHARON

Yeah. So weird. I think I switched  
detergents or something?

CAROL'S INTEREST IS PIQUED.

CAROL

Has he always had sensitive skin?

SHARON

No. But now he has sensitive  
everything. Skin, feelings. He's also  
been really cranky. I'm sorry. I'm  
venting.

CAROL

It's ok. I had a cranky husband once.

SHARON

What did you do?

CAROL

We got divorced. But not because of  
crankiness. He went to "find himself"  
and now he lives in a yurt.

SHARON

So... sounds like you dodged a bullet?

CAROL

Yes. A slow-moving bullet that came at  
me for twenty-seven years.

SHARON LAUGHS.

CAROL

Tell me about Doug. When did you first notice these changes?

SHARON

A month or so ago. He started --

THEY ARE INTERRUPTED BY THE SOUND OF DANIEL TALKING OS.

DANIEL (O.S.)

Thanks nurse, I'll get right in --

CAROL

Hold that thought - I was never here.

CAROL SCOUTS THE ROOM QUICKLY. SHE RUNS INTO THE BATHROOM JUST AS DANIEL ENTERS.

DANIEL

Hi. Got your page. Everything okay?

HE NOTICES HER LOOKING AT THE BATHROOM DOOR, CREAKING AJAR...

SHARON

Um, sure. All good.

CURIOUS, DANIEL WALKS TOWARDS THE DOOR AND PUSHES IT OPEN, REVEALING CAROL HOLDING HER CLIPBOARD AND PRETENDING TO INSPECT THE PAPER TOWEL MACHINE.

CAROL

Oh, hi Dr. Kutcher. Just inspecting the towel dispenser. (TAPS IT WITH HER PEN) Seems good.

WE'RE OFF CAROL, BUSTED.

CUT TO:

SCENE H

INT. CENTRAL BAY/NURSES' STATION - MOMENTS LATER  
(CAROL, MAYA, DANIEL)

CAROL AND DANIEL HAVE STEPPED OUT TO ARGUE.

DANIEL

And you know it was wrong because you hid from me!

CAROL

Sharon had a question! I was just trying to help. Speaking of, has Doug's blood work come back? I think it's worth checking --

DANIEL

I will check his blood work, because he's my patient.

CAROL

Sure, I get it, he's your territory. But Sharon told me he's been itchy, and moody - I'm telling you there's more going on here.

DANIEL

Oh really - what do you have, some superpower?

CAROL

Yes - I talk to people and when they talk, I listen. It's amazing. They're going to make a Marvel movie about me.

MAYA (O.S.)

What are you two thinking? Your voices  
are echoing down the hall!

THEY TURN TO SEE MAYA, WHO DOES NOT LOOK HAPPY. AS THEIR  
ARGUMENT PROGRESSES, A SMALL CROWD OF ONLOOKERS GATHER.

DANIEL

I'm sorry Dr. Jacobs, but she snuck  
into the room and spoke to my patient.

MAYA

You did WHAT?

CAROL

This is not a big deal. I was only  
trying to help.

MAYA

You could help by following orders.  
The chain of command exists for a  
reason. What if Dr. Kutcher had  
information that was not in the chart?

CAROL

I'm sorry. It was a mistake to go in  
there. But I think there's --

MAYA

Dr. Chambers! This isn't about one  
mistake. This is about you. Being a  
doctor is not something to check off  
on your bucket list while you wait for  
grandkids.

THE CROWD REACTS - OOH.



CAROL

That is not fair -

MAYA

Medicine is a discipline. And it takes  
discipline. You want to succeed in  
this program? Obey my instructions.

WITH THAT, MAYA WALKS OFF. BEAT. CAROL FEELS DEFLATED AND  
HUMILIATED IN FRONT OF EVERYONE.

CAROL

(TO ONLOOKERS) I don't even have a  
bucket list!

THE CROWD STARTS TO DRIFT AWAY.

CAROL

I have a vision board.

FADE OUT.

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**SCENE I

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - LATER  
(CAROL, DANIEL, NURSE)

CAROL STEPS APPREHENSIVELY INTO THE CAFETERIA WITH HER LUNCH TRAY AND SELF-CONSCIOUSLY SCANS THE ROOM FOR A PLACE TO SIT.

INTIMIDATING CLIQUES PACK EVERY TABLE -- IT'S LIKE HIGH SCHOOL. ONE TABLE FULL OF SURGEONS. NOPE. ANOTHER FULL OF NURSES. NURSE DENISE LOOKS UP AND SHAKES HER HEAD AT CAROL.

FINALLY CAROL SPOTS DANIEL. ONE EMPTY SEAT IS LEFT NEXT TO HIM. HE LOOKS UP, MAKES EYE CONTACT WITH CAROL - AND THEN HE DELIBERATELY PUTS A STACK OF FILES ON THE EMPTY CHAIR.

WITH THAT, CAROL EXITS THE CAFETERIA.

CUT TO:

SCENE J

INT. DOCTOR'S LOUNGE- DAY - MOMENTS LATER  
(CAROL, MANDY, CALEB)

MANDY STORMS IN. CALEB FOLLOWS.

MANDY

I'm sorry. I don't understand. I don't  
speak the language of betrayal.

CALEB

Betrayal? That's a little much.

MANDY

"I know exactly how you feel." Really,  
Warren Buffet, do you?

CAROL (O.S.)

Excuse me.

WE REVEAL CAROL AT THE COFFEE TABLE, PICKING AT HER SALAD.

CAROL

Someone is trying to eat lunch in  
lonely exile here.

MANDY

I'm sorry, Carol, but it turns out  
Caleb is not who he says he is. He is  
not a woke bae.

CALEB

I never said I was a woke bae.

MANDY

It's practically tattooed on your  
face!

(MORE)

MANDY (CONT'D)

You bike to work, you eat out of the  
dumpster, you act all "man of the  
people" but --

THEY BOTH START TALKING AT ONCE:

CALEB

I didn't know the attending  
would be Dr. Frost! I can't know  
a doctor here?

MANDY

I never would've opened up to  
you if I knew who you were! A  
connected rich boy!

CAROL WHISTLES AND RAISES HER HAND.

CAROL

Hand goes up, mouths go shut.

THEY ARE INSTANTLY SILENT.

MANDY

(WOWED) Dang, you were a teacher.

CAROL

So, you are having a disagreement.

(THEY NOD, YES) Is it about patient  
care?

CALEB

Not exactly. We have a pancreatitis  
case. It's patient-care adjacent.

MANDY

We need to do an ab-jab. Sadly, I no  
longer trust Caleb, who tricked me  
into confiding in him by hiding the  
fact that he's a privileged skier.

CALEB

Ok, you're making a lot of  
assumptions.

MANDY

Excuse me?

THE ARGUMENT HEATS UP AGAIN. CAROL SHOOTS HER HAND UP.

CAROL

Look at the hand! (THEY FALL SILENT)  
This sounds like a big, painful  
discussion. You know what else is  
painful? Pancreatitis. So maybe you  
can continue this after you assist the  
patient who needs your help? Or is  
that not why you're both here?

MANDY AND CALEB NOD, CHASTENED, RECOGNIZING THIS FACT.

CAROL

Now if you'll excuse me, I have some  
stool sample jars that aren't going to  
fill themselves.

SHE STANDS, TAKES HER TRAY, AND EXITS.

CUT TO:

SCENE K

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - VENDING MACHINES  
(CAROL, JENNY)

CAROL FEEDS A DOLLAR INTO THE MACHINE AND MAKES A SELECTION. A  
CANDY BAR STARTS ROLLING OUT OF ITS HOLDER - AND GETS STUCK.

CAROL

(LEANS HEAD ON GLASS) Noooooo.

JENNY (O.S.)

(TEASING, FROM EARLIER) Oh, does  
someone want a candy bar now?

CAROL TURNS TO SEE JENNY.

CAROL

Don't judge me. I need chocolate.

JENNY

I bet. The grandkids thing was pretty  
harsh.

CAROL

So you heard.

JENNY

Hospitals are pretty gossipy places.  
Also shouting really travels through  
these vents.

CAROL

Maybe medicine was a mistake. I  
should've had a normal retirement like  
my friends. Join book clubs. Drink  
wine. Garden.

JENNY

Mom, you can't.

CAROL

Oh, how hard can flowers be?

JENNY

Not garden, you can't quit. You worked so hard to get here. You're finally Dr. Chambers.

CAROL

I have nothing in common with these guys. Scientists say that adolescence ends at 25 but I'm starting to think 40, minimum.

JENNY

You've dealt with immaturity, you taught high school. You were Teacher of the Year!

CAROL

Only eight times. (THEN) My chief resident and I are butting heads. I don't think she appreciates my approach.

JENNY

Like that's a shock. (OFF HER LOOK)  
Mom, you're not great with authority.

CAROL

Me? I love authority!

JENNY

Only when you are the authority! You protested outside the school board when they changed the grading system.

CAROL

Well you can't do that to students in the middle of the year. It's unfair.

JENNY

You went on a hunger strike when the Principal tried to cut Chemistry club.

CAROL

Okay, fine. I advocate for what I think is right. And I'm usually right. (BEAT) Once I was wrong. The year we got a fake Christmas tree. So ugly.

JENNY

Your passion is what's amazing about you. But it's not like it hasn't gotten you into trouble before.

CAROL

This may be true.

JENNY

So then what's the problem? Is this different?



CAROL

It feels different. I was a wife, and a mom, and a teacher, and part of me felt like I spent my whole life doing things for other people. This is the first thing I really did just for me.

JENNY

The first thing you did just for you... was to become a doctor and help other people.

CAROL

Yes. And I just wanted it to go well.

JENNY

It will, mom. You're gonna be great.

JENNY BANGS THE TOP OF THE MACHINE. THE CANDY BAR DROPS DOWN.

JENNY

You just gotta get the hang of it.

JENNY EXITS. CAROL SHAKES HER HEAD, SMILES, AS SHE RETRIEVES HER CANDY BAR.

CUT TO:

SCENE 1

INT. CENTRAL BAY/NURSES' STATION - NIGHT  
(CAROL, DANIEL)

CAROL, REJUVENATED BY HER TALK WITH JENNY AND HER CANDY BAR,  
SEES DANIEL SITTING BY THE NURSES' STATION.

CAROL

Don't mind me. Just checking lab  
results from my samples.

DANIEL

(DISTRACTED) Sure. Whatever you want.

HIS MOROSE ATTITUDE CATCHES CAROL'S ATTENTION.

CAROL

What's wrong?

DANIEL

Nothing.

CAROL

(SITS) I've been here two minutes and  
you haven't bragged about Harvard or  
told me to mind my own business. Tell  
me what's wrong.

DANIEL TURNS TO HER.

DANIEL

Know my patient, Car Crash guy? His  
blood work came back.

CAROL

(BEAT) It's cancer, isn't it?

DANIEL

(NODS) Liver. How did you know? (THEN,  
CHASTENED) I know. You used your  
powers of listening.

CAROL

Well, when Sharon told me about the  
itchiness and the moodiness I started  
thinking his symptoms might not be a  
result of the car accident. (BEAT) I  
wish I'd been wrong.

DANIEL

Me too.

CAROL

Does he know?

DANIEL

Dr. Jacobs told me to tell him, but I  
have no idea how. I became a doctor to  
find the diagnosis, solve the problem.  
This isn't how I wanted my first day  
to work out.

CAROL

That's the bummer. Even doctors don't  
get to decide how things work out.

DANIEL

So what, I just go in there and say  
"bad news dude, it's the big C."

CAROL

Not like that, no. Be honest. Be kind.  
People beat this - give them hope.

DANIEL

Good. Good advice. (BEAT) So...will  
you help me?

CAROL

Oh no. I've been given very strict  
orders to stay in my lane.

DANIEL

Please? I don't know what to say.

CAROL

You've got this. Just draw from your  
own experience. Here: think of a bad  
time in your own life.

DANIEL

(THINKS) When I was seven, my pet  
hamster died.

CAROL

Something worse than that.

DANIEL

(THINKS) I got wait-listed at  
Princeton.

CAROL

Ok I'll help you. Let's go.

THEY STAND AND EXIT.

CUT TO:

SCENE M

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY  
(MANDY, CALEB, DR. FROST)

MANDY AND CALEB FINISH THE PARACENTESIS PROCEDURE ON MR. BANS.  
A TUBE RUNS FROM HIS GOWN INTO A TWO-LITER SIZED GLASS BOTTLE.

MANDY

Okay, I'm removing the catheter -

CALEB

Sterilizing and dressing the wound.

How are you feeling Mr. Bans?

MR. BANS GIVES A THUMBS UP. DR. FROST ENTERS AND SURVEYS THE  
SITUATION. HE LIFTS THE BOTTLE WHICH IS FULL OF FLUID.

DR. FROST

Wow. That's a lot of fluid. (TO CALEB)

Your dad will be so proud. I'm gonna  
send him a picture of this.

CALEB

It was really Dr. Reyes, sir, who led  
the procedure.

DR. FROST

Well then, good work, Dr. Reyes. I'll  
also send a picture to your parents.

MANDY

Um, no thank you, they would vomit.

DR. FROST

I get that. This is disgusting.

(GETTING UP) Nice work again, you two.

HE EXITS, TAKING THE FLUID WITH HIM. MANDY LOOKS AT CALEB.

MANDY

Thanks for the compliment. (DRY) Nice of you to throw me a bone.

CALEB

Look, I'm sorry you felt misled. But I do feel pressure.

MANDY LOOKS AT HIM SKEPTICALLY.

CALEB

Ok, want to know something? I got into this program off the wait list. My dad pulled some strings to get me in.

(THEN) So yeah, our lives aren't the same. But I also know what it's like to feel like I don't belong here.

MANDY TAKES THIS IN.

MANDY

I'm sorry I assumed you were just a privileged little rich boy.

CALEB

Well, I am. (THEN) But I also have to earn my spot here, just like you.

MANDY NODS. A TRUCE. THEN:

MANDY

Wait list, huh? Whoo. That's embarrassing.

OFF CALEB, SHAKING HIS HEAD, WE --

CUT TO:

SCENE N

INT. PATIENT ROOM/EXT. HALLWAY - NIGHT  
(CAROL, DANIEL, DOUG, SHARON, MAYA)

CAROL AND DANIEL ENTER. CAROL SHUTS THE DOOR BEHIND THEM. SHE THEN NODS, ENCOURAGING DANIEL TO BEGIN.

DANIEL

I - uh. Doug, we got your test results back. I - I don't exactly know how to say this, but...

HE FUMFERS, LOOKS TO CAROL FOR HELP. SEEING THAT HE'S CHOKING, CAROL JUMPS IN: SHE CALMLY TAKES A SEAT NEXT TO THE BED AND BEGINS.

CAROL

Doug, Sharon. (TO DOUG) Unfortunately, the results aren't what we hoped. Doug, you have hepatocellular carcinoma. It's a cancer of the liver.

SHARON

Oh God. Oh god.

DOUG

Shhh, it's okay baby.

CAROL

This is hard to hear, I know. But the good news is that we caught it early, which means you have a lot of options. Dr. Kutcher and I are going to bring in an oncologist to talk you through them, and we'll stay here with you as long as you need. Ok?

THEY NOD - THEY'RE SOMBER, BUT THEY FEEL LISTENED TO AND SECURE. CAROL NODS TO DANIEL, WHO TAKES A SEAT AS WELL.

AS CAROL CONTINUES SPEAKING, WE PULL BACK TO SEE MAYA, STANDING OUTSIDE THE ROOM, WATCHING THIS ALL TRANSPIRE.

CUT TO:



SCENE 0

INT. HALLWAY - DAY  
(CAROL, MAYA)

CAROL HEADS DOWN THE HALLWAY, EMOTIONALLY WIPED OUT FROM HER TIME WITH DANIEL'S PATIENTS.

MAYA (O.S.)

Dr. Chambers -- (CAROL TURNS) You spoke to Daniel's patient.

CAROL

Yes, I did. And I can explain --

MAYA

I thought I made it clear I wanted Daniel to deliver the diagnosis.

BEAT. CAROL'S HAD ENOUGH.

CAROL

Ok, you know what? I'm getting tired of being treated like a meddling old fart. Yes, I've made mistakes today. I speak up when I should stay quiet, and I think I broke the paper towel dispenser in that bathroom --

MAYA

The paper --

CAROL

But sometimes you have to break the rules. Daniel's patient needed me today, and I'm not going to apologize for helping! I was good at it!

MAYA

Dr. Chambers, you really --

CAROL

And I'm good at it because I'm older!  
You think a woman my age should just  
disappear into the woods and knit! But  
I've lived longer than all of you, and  
I don't see the world the way I did  
when I was twenty-eight - I'm not  
trying to get to the top or check  
boxes on a resume. I understand that  
life doesn't always work out the way  
you want, and sometimes the best thing  
you can do is just be there for  
someone. You and I have different  
styles -- I'm kind like Oprah, and  
you're scary like Darth Vader. It  
doesn't mean we're not both great  
doctors.

MAYA

Are you done?

CAROL

AM I DONE? I'm just getting started!!  
(THEN, THINKS) Said that. Said that.  
No, actually, I guess I am done.

MAYA

Good. Because I was going to say thank you. Giving bad news is difficult for most interns; you handled it well.

CAROL

(THROWN) Really? Oh. Sorry that's not how this day has been going. You're big on the scare tactics.

MAYA

I enforce discipline. It doesn't mean I'm heartless.

CAROL

You wouldn't even do an introduction, but ok. Tomato Tom-ah-to.

MAYA

(BEAT) Fine. I'm from Richmond, Virginia and my fun fact is that I won two NCAA soccer titles at Stanford.

CAROL SMILES, TOUCHED. MAYBE THE ICE BETWEEN THEM IS THAWING.

CAROL

Thanks Dr. Jacobs. (THEN) Stanford's very pretty. My brother lives up in Berkeley. What year did --

MAYA

Nope. That's all.

MAYA BRUSHES PAST HER. CAROL SHAKES HER HEAD.

CUT TO:

SCENE PINT. CAFETERIA - DAY

(CAROL, DR. FROST)

CAROL LOOKS OVER A SMALL FRIDGE OF FOOD WHEN FROM BEHIND HER:

DR. FROST (O.S.)

May I recommend the strawberry granola  
low-fat parfait? It's one of the best  
in town.

CAROL TURNS TO SEE DR. FROST.

DR. FROST

I'm Stephen Frost, Senior Attending.

CAROL

Pleasure to meet you. I'm Dr.  
Chambers, Intern.

DR. FROST

(CONFUSED) Intern...*ist*?

CAROL

Intern and aspiring internist.

DR. FROST

Oh, it's YOU. You're that intern.

CAROL

(OVER IT) Yes, I'm the old intern.  
Your local circus freak. Put me on a  
train and show me to America.

DR. FROST

No - I mean yes, your age is unusual.  
But you're also the intern who Dr.  
Jacobs --

CAROL

-- who Dr. Jacobs hates. Yes. I am  
also that one.

DR. FROST

She's tough. Glad you stuck it out.

CAROL

Thank you.

DR. FROST

Can I buy you that parfait? (OFF HER  
LOOK) Purely out of respect. Anyone  
who went head-to-head with Dr. Jacobs  
and lived to tell the tale has earned  
it.

HE SMILES. IS IT A MOMENT...? WELL, NOT EXACTLY.

CAROL

Ok, Dr. Frost, you can buy me yogurt.  
Also have you seen an intern's salary?  
It's a disgrace. You good if I get  
four? They're small.

SHE STARTS PUTTING PARFAITS ON HER TRAY. DR. FROST WATCHES HER  
AND SMILES. HE'S AMUSED... AND INTERESTED.

CUT TO:

SCENE QINT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA

(CAROL, DANIEL, CALEB, MANDY)

CAROL WALKS OUT AND LOOKS FOR A PLACE TO SIT. SHE SPOTS AN EMPTY TABLE AND HEADS TO IT. SHE SITS AND STARTS EATING BY HERSELF.

DANIEL, CALEB AND MANDY WALK UP.

DANIEL

Can we join you?

CAROL TAKES A BEAT - THEN SMILES AT THE GESTURE.

CAROL

Sure. Of course. (THEY SIT) I mean, I'm not the one putting things on empty seats like we're in middle-school.

DANIEL

I'm sorry. (THEN) They didn't teach "maturity" at Harvard.

CAROL

Look at you, making Harvard jokes about yourself! That's progress!

DANIEL

They only taught awesome-ness.

CAROL

Well, baby steps.

CALEB SITS NEXT TO CAROL.

MANDY

Thank you. For getting us back on track with your teacher mind games.

CALEB

(TOO SINCERE) What we learned about teamwork is a valuable reminder of the power of --

MANDY

Caleb, no one cares. (TO CAROL) So... we heard you chewed out Dr. Jacobs.

BEAT. THEY ALL LOOK AT HER EAGERLY, WANTING INFO.

CAROL

(GRINS) I wouldn't say chewed out, exactly...

AS CAROL CHATS WITH HER NEW COLLEAGUES, BEGINNING FINALLY TO FEEL LIKE SHE BELONGS, WE --

FADE OUT.

**END ACT TWO**

**TAG**SCENE RINT. CAFETERIA - DAY

(CAROL, DANIEL, MANDY, CALEB, JENNY)

OUR GANG IS QUIZZING EACH OTHER AT THE TABLE.

MANDY

Heart attack treatment steps go-

CAROL

O Batman! (OFF THEIR LOOKS) It's the mnemonic. Oxygen, beta-blocker, ASA--

CALEB

Thrombolytics. Morphine. (SUDDENLY DISTRACTED) Oh my God. She's gorgeous.

MANDY

That is not part of "O Batman."

DANIEL

(TURNS) Wow. Definitely a ten.

MANDY

A ten? What are you, from 1972?

REVEAL THEY'RE LOOKING AT JENNY, WHO WALKS PAST THE TABLE. SHE SEES CAROL AND GIVES A LITTLE WAVE. CAROL WAVES BACK.

CALEB

(TO CAROL) You know her?

CAROL

Sort of. I gave birth to her.

DANIEL

That's your daughter?

CAROL NODS. THE OTHER INTERNS ARE ASTONISHED. DANIEL KEEPS STARING AT JENNY AND THEN LOOKING BACK AT CAROL.



DANIEL

Well, Carol, she's a smoke show.

CAROL

That sounds like a compliment so I'll say thank you.

DANIEL

Dibs.

CALEB

You cannot call dibs on a woman! We are not cavemen! (BEAT, QUIET) Dibs.

MANDY

You guys are disgusting. (BEAT) Third dibs. (OFF THEIR LOOKS) Don't pretend you're surprised I'm gay.

CALEB

I called dibs first! I --

THEY START ARGUING BACK AND FORTH, AND CAROL INTERRUPTS:

CAROL

Stop! None of you are going to date my daughter. I was in labor with Jenny for nineteen hours with no epidural. I didn't go through all that pain to have her wind up with one of you animals. Hands off - understand?

THEY NOD - BUT DANIEL SHOOTS THE OTHERS A SLY GRIN - LET THE GAMES BEGIN. AS CAROL HAPPILY RESUMES HER MEAL, WE --

FADE OUT.

**END OF SHOW**