

HOUSE
UNTITLED DAVID SHORE PROJECT

Pilot

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. BOSTON - WORKING CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A bus disengages its passengers, some going to work, some coming home from the night shift. Among them we find--

RACHEL ADLER, 29, attractive. She's sweet, but that doesn't mean she doesn't get it - she's insightful. But most significantly, she's late. She's dressed nicely, for work. Except her shoes - they're nice too, but they're runners. And she's running.

Down one street, past kids hanging out, around a corner. She doesn't live here, but she's at home here. She's also very fit. Around another corner and into:

INT. SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Rachel emerges from an office and is joined by MELANIE LANDON, also 29, also attractive, as they walk.

ADLER

McNeil calls me in to tell me I'm late.

LANDON

(sympathetic)
Making you later.

ADLER

I know. I almost said something.

LANDON

Good for you.
(knowing smile)
Why were you late?

ADLER

You're not going to like the answer.

LANDON

I already know the answer.

ADLER

I missed the bus.

LANDON

I don't doubt it. It's an extra transfer from Brad's.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LANDON (cont'd)
You spent the night, his alarm
didn't work -
(bigger smile)
Or maybe it did.

ADLER
I didn't sleep with him. I just
missed the bus.

LANDON
Girl, either there's something very
wrong with you or there's something
very wrong with him.

ADLER
There's nothing wrong with him.

Adler stops and is about to open a door but Landon grabs the
handle.

LANDON
Please tell me you know that for a
fact.

ADLER
I gotta go, Melanie.

LANDON
Life's too short to be throwing
away chances like this.

ADLER
Life's too short to be doing stupid
stuff. I gotta go.

And Adler opens the door and enters into:

INT. KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where she's met by 20 five-year-olds.

ADLER
Good morning guys.

KIDS
Good morning, Miss Rachel.

ADLER
Okay, everybody in your seats.
Sydney, tell us what you did this
weekend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sydney doesn't say anything. Adler takes a seat in front of the kids who take their seats on the carpet.

ADLER (cont'd)

Come on, Sydney, we know you're not shy.

SYDNEY

...How come we always tell you what we did, but you never tell us what you did?

ADLER

(this is awkward)

...Okay. But you can't tell Ms. Melanie, okay. I had a really great weekend.

KID #2

What did you do?

ADLER

I made a new friend. It's so much fun to make new friends, isn't it?

SYDNEY

Doesn't Miss Melanie know about friends? Why can't we tell her?

KID #2

My mom says Miss Melanie likes to talk. What does that mean? I like to talk.

ADLER

It means that there are some things that are private, just for you.

SYDNEY

I thought we're s'posed to tell our mom and dad everything.

KID #2

Did you tell your mom and dad about your new friend?

ADLER

(it's all too much)

Yes, absolutely, you don't need to have any secrets from your parents and I told mine claus bah fr--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She stops herself. The kids laugh - Miss Rachel is talking like a baby. But Miss Rachel isn't laughing. Confused, no idea what just happened. After a beat, she tries to speak again...

ADLER (CONT'D)

Moa.

What the hell does that mean? The kids laugh again. But Adler looks panic stricken. She starts to stand up, but one of her legs collapses under her.

ADLER (cont'd)

Harra-- Bah, craw--

Some of the kids are now starting to show some concerns. Adler pulls herself part way up - enough to reach the white board. And she starts to scrawl...

C-A-L-L

SYDNEY

L-L-A-C

T-H-E

SYDNEY (cont'd)

"The" We know that word; that's
"the".

N-U-R-S-E

SYDNEY (cont'd)

We haven't learned all those
letters, Miss Rachel.

And as some of the more advanced kids try to sound out the word, Adler's eyes roll back and she collapses.

CUT TO BLACK

SYDNEY (V.O.) (cont'd)

Are you alright, Miss Rachel?

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. BOSTON - DAY

We fly through that working class Boston neighborhood. ACROSS the river into a different world - CAMBRIDGE. PAST the rowers and the college students playing touch football, all with perfect skin. And right through one of the ivy framed windows of an ivory tower into:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

A typical, busy hallway in a teaching hospital affiliated with one of the great Cambridge Universities. Lots of sick people, lots of visitors, nurses and orderlies, lots of doctors and lots of medical students.

SUPER - 2 MONTHS LATER

And through this mess comes a 38 year old man, JAMES WILSON. He carries himself with the confidence of one blessed with the power to heal (he also carries a file). His usual purposeful stride has been slowed somewhat so that the man beside him can keep pace. GREG HOUSE, also 38, brilliant but scarred, wields the truth like a sword - and isn't afraid to cut you. He walks with a cane and pain (the latter he hides, the former he wishes he could). He speaks and thinks quickly - and doesn't wait for others to catch up. Wilson is his best friend, his only friend - though you'd be hard pressed to describe even this relationship as friendly. As House pops a pill in his mouth (something he does frequently)...

WILSON

Twenty-nine-year old female, lost the ability to speak, seizure, lost consciousness--

HOUSE

(re everybody)
--They all assume I'm a patient because of this cane.

WILSON

So put on a white coat like the rest of us.

HOUSE

I don't want them to think I'm a doctor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

You see where the administration might have a problem with that attitude?

HOUSE

People don't want a sick doctor.

WILSON

Which is fair enough - I don't like healthy patients.

(back to business)

The twenty-nine-year old female's my cousin--

HOUSE

--And your cousin doesn't like the diagnosis; I wouldn't either. Brain tumor, she's going to die, boring.

WILSON

No wonder you're such a renowned diagnostician. You don't need to actually know anything to figure out what's wrong.

HOUSE

You're the oncologist. I'm just a lowly infectious diseases guy.

WILSON

With a nephrology subspecialty and a rheumatology fellowship. Just a simple country doctor.

(back to what matters)

Brain tumors at her age are highly unlikely.

HOUSE

She's 29; whatever she's got is highly unlikely.

WILSON

(shows House a document)

The protein markers for the three most prevalent brain cancers didn't show up in her blood tests.

HOUSE

(barely glances)

That's an HMO lab.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOUSE (cont'd)

They might as well have sent it to a high school kid with a chemistry set.

WILSON

There's no family history.

HOUSE

I thought your uncle died of cancer.

WILSON

Other side. No environmental factors.

HOUSE

That you know of.

WILSON

She's not responding to radiation treatment.

HOUSE

None of which is even close to dispositive. All it does is raise one question: your cousin goes to an HMO?

WILSON

Come on, why leave all the fun for the pathologist?

(then:)

Your staff is getting bored.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - AT THAT MOMENT

Two men and a woman sit in the office. The older guy, ROBERT CHASE, 35, blond, old-money, sits on a couch, doing a medical journal crossword puzzle. TAYLOR FOREMAN, 26, black, polished, good-looking, leans against the door frame. ALLISON CAMERON, 27, beautiful, sits at the desk, reviewing mail and typing, acting very much like a secretary. Cameron and Foreman wear the smocks indicating they're hospital employees. Chase, emulating his employer, wears a t-shirt and jeans.

FOREMAN

Three days and I haven't seen an actual patient. This all we do?

CHASE

Until the checks start bouncing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

So glad I passed up that neurology job at Sloan. So glad I was able to parlay a chief residency position into this--

CHASE

--So glad you filled us in on your vaunted past.

FOREMAN

That wasn't my point.

CHASE

You completely discounted the possibility that I'm here because it's boring.

(then:)

Nine letters, iodine deficiency in children.

FOREMAN

Cretinism.

That seems to work. Chase writes it down.

FOREMAN (cont'd)

(to Cameron)

How long have you been here?

CAMERON

Six months.

FOREMAN

What's your specialty?

CAMERON

Immunology.

FOREMAN

He abusive, misogynist or just can't afford a secretary?

CHASE

He doesn't need a secretary.

FOREMAN

He's got her answering his mail.

CHASE

No, he doesn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FOREMAN
(to Cameron)
What are you doing?

CAMERON
Answering his mail.

FOREMAN
(to Chase)
She's answering his mail.

CHASE
But he didn't ask her to.

Foreman turns back to Cameron. She responds almost sheepishly - like she should be ashamed that she cares.

CAMERON
...He throws all the requests for
consults into the trash.
(then:)
I get them out... And apologize
that he's too busy.

And she resumes typing a response...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - ELEVATOR BANK - AT THAT MOMENT
House and Wilson have stopped, waiting for the elevator.

HOUSE
You're thinking this'll be as
interesting as cat man?

WILSON
(that was interesting)
His doctor was treating a heart
attack. You diagnosed a cat
allergy. Over the phone.

HOUSE
My point is - that was your cousin
too.

The elevator door opens. House moves to get on. But Wilson grabs House's cane, stopping him. As House blocks the door from closing:

HOUSE (cont'd)
Would you grab somebody's leg?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

This is important to me.

HOUSE

Everything's important to you.
It's your pathology. Let go of my
cane.

As the elevator starts beeping from waiting so long.

WILSON

We're not done.

Finally, House accepts the inevitable.

HOUSE

...Intraventricular lesion, right?

WILSON

Right.

Wilson lets go of the cane and hands over the file. As House gets on the elevator, Wilson realizes--

WILSON (cont'd)

I never said it was
intraventricular.

HOUSE

If it was anywhere else, you'd
biopsy and you wouldn't need me to
figure out what it is.

And the doors close.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Adler is alone. It's stark, empty except for the high tech medical equipment monitoring her, medicating her, feeding her. It's antiseptic, lonely. It's the last place on earth a sick person would want to be. She stares out at this world, unblinking, weak, barely conscious. Her hair is patchy, her skin dry and wan, a few lesions. She's aged ten years in two months.

We SLOWLY CLOSE IN on her head. CLOSER, CLOSER, then we PASS RIGHT THROUGH her skull and into:

HER BRAIN - Grooves and eddys like a giant walnut, signals coming in over neural pathways, synapses fire like lightning, blood courses through vessels - the superhighway of this supercomputer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And we are traveling through one of these rivers of blood, the walls translucent. We branch left, then right, then right again, into ever smaller vessels, narrowing down eventually into capillaries to bring blood to every corner of the brain. And just as we reach the point where our path seems to be only a few molecules wide, it suddenly expands, like a creek flowing into a lake - a milky lake of... something; who knows what; but it doesn't seem right.

FOREMAN (V.O.)

It's a lesion.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Foreman is looking at the lit up film from an MRI. House, Cameron, Foreman and Chase review Wilson's cousin's file.

HOUSE

And the big green thing in the middle of the bigger blue thing on a map is an island. I was looking for something a bit more creative.

FOREMAN

Shouldn't we be speaking to the patient before we make a diagnosis?

HOUSE

Is she a doctor?

FOREMAN

No, but she may--

HOUSE

--Everybody lies.

CAMERON

Dr. House doesn't like dealing with patients.

FOREMAN

Isn't treating patients why we became doctors?

HOUSE

No. Treating illnesses is why we became doctors. Treating patients is actually what makes most doctors miserable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

So you're trying to eliminate the humanity from the practice of medicine?

HOUSE

If we don't talk to them, they can't lie to us. And we can't lie to them. Humanity's overrated.

(to all)

I don't think it's a tumor.

FOREMAN

(disagrees)

First year medical school - if you hear hoofbeats, you think horses, not zebras.

HOUSE

Are you in first year medical school?

(off Foreman's glare)

If this is a horse, the kindly old family doctor makes the obvious diagnosis and it never gets near this office. And if this is a horse, she's dead in no time. More significantly, we spend that time shoveling horse manure. Differential diagnosis, people.

And thus begins a very fast, very smart exchange of ideas.

CHASE

Aneurysm, stroke or some other ischemic syndrome.

CAMERON

Wyburn-Mason syndrome.

HOUSE

Get her a contrast MRI.

CAMERON

Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease.

HOUSE

Mad cow?

CHASE

Mad zebra.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOUSE

Draw cerebrospinal fluid; check for the 14-3-3 protein and, while you're there, check for lymphocytic and eosinophilic pleocytosis.

CHASE

Progressive Multifocal Leukoencephalopathy.

HOUSE

Contrast MRI again.

FOREMAN

Wernicke's Encephalopathy.

HOUSE

No. Blood tests were normal for thiamine.

CHASE

Brain abscess.

HOUSE

The contrast MRI will help--

FOREMAN

(still on his own idea)
--Attending could have screwed up the blood tests.

Stop. House turns back from Chase to Foreman.

FOREMAN (cont'd)

I assume it's a corollary of 'people lie' that 'people screw up'.

House smiles - well done, Grasshopper.

HOUSE

...Double check all the blood and sample tests.

(then, to all)

And get her scheduled for a contrast MRI asap. Let's find out what kind of zebra we're treating here.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDORS - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Briefcase in hand, House is once again waiting for the elevator. He's approached by LISA CUDDY, 39, smart, cute, but not sweet. You don't get to be hospital administrator and dean of medicine by being sweet.

CUDDY

I was expecting you in my office twenty minutes ago.

HOUSE

Really? That's odd because I had no intention of being in your office twenty minutes ago.

CUDDY

You think we have nothing to talk about?

HOUSE

No. I just can't think of anything that I'd be interested in.

CUDDY

I sign your paychecks.

HOUSE

I have tenure.

The elevator doors open.

HOUSE (cont'd)

You going to grab my cane, stop me from leaving?

CUDDY

That would be juvenile.

House gets on the elevator. Cuddy simply steps on with him.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

CUDDY

I can still fire you if you're not doing your job.

HOUSE

I'm here from nine to five.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY

Your billings are virtually non-existent--

HOUSE

Rough year.

CUDDY

You ignore requests for consults--

HOUSE

--I call back, sometimes I mis-dial.

CUDDY

You're six years behind in your obligations to the clinic.

HOUSE

You see, I was right, this doesn't interest me.

CUDDY

Six years times 3 weeks; you owe me better than four months.

HOUSE

It's five o'clock. I'm going home.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - OUTSIDE FREE CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open. He exits; she follows.

CUDDY

The only reason I don't fire you is your reputation is still worth something to this hospital.

HOUSE

Excellent; we have a point of agreement - you won't fire me.

CUDDY

Your reputation won't last if you don't do your job.

(he keeps going)

I just want you to do your job.

HOUSE

But as the philosopher Jagger once said: "you can't always get what you want."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stops in front of the entrance to the FREE CLINIC in the lobby and watches as House exits the building...

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Foreman stands beside her bed, finishes drawing several vials of blood from her arm. Then:

FOREMAN

Open wide.

Foreman approaches her mouth with a cotton swab as she opens.

EXTREME CLOSE-UP, AND SLO-MO - the swab brushes against the inside of Adler's cheek. Flakes of skin break off, moisture clings to the swab. GO CLOSER, FREAKISHLY CLOSER on the moisture - to the molecular level - we see the familiar double-helix, then we hear... a COUGH.

CHASE (V.O.)

Gag reflex.

QUICKLY OUT FROM FREAKISH CLOSE UP TO REGULAR OLD EXTREME CLOSE UP - the throat convulses, once, twice, and then another COUGH ensues.

STAY WITH GERM - shooting out of the mouth at 60 mph (in SLO-MO) past Foreman leaning back to avoid it and landing on Chase's white smock (he wears one when he sees patients).

REGULAR SHOT TO REVEAL - Chase and Cameron are now at the foot of the bed.

CHASE (cont'd)

(repeating)

Gag reflex. You don't need to take the sample from so far back.

ADLER

(to Chase, with some difficulty)

Are you my doctor? Dr. House?

CHASE

Thankfully, no.

CAMERON

We're just taking you for your MRI, Rachel.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Chase wheels the gurney carrying Adler through the halls. Adler is a little overwhelmed by all that's happened, and all that's happening.

ADLER
I've already had an MRI.

CHASE
Not like this one. Any allergies
to any heavy metals?

ADLER
Not that I know of.

CHASE
Any pacemakers, metal rods,
surgical implants?

ADLER
No.

INT. RADIOLOGY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A TECHNICIAN is on the phone behind a glass wall. Chase, Cameron and Foreman continue to prep Adler - she's been transferred to the MRI table, ready to be backed into the confining machine. Only thing left to do is the most fundamental thing of all - she's signing a release.

CHASE
(preparing the needle)
We inject gadolinium into an
artery. It distributes itself
throughout your brain and acts as a
contrast material for the magnetic
resonance imager.

CAMERON
(in short)
Whatever's in your head lights up
like a Christmas tree.

Adler smiles up, grateful, hopeful. The Technician has hung up and approaches:

TECHNICIAN
Sorry, no Christmas lights today.
(explains)
Dr. House's authorization has been
pulled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Off Adler, what the hell is going on?

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

House strides through the automatic doors, stops and yells:

HOUSE
Where the hell is Cuddy?!

INT. CLINIC - CUDDY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

House pops a pill as he confronts Cuddy. As angry as he is, she's equally calm.

HOUSE
You pulled my authorization!

CUDDY
Yes. Why are you yelling?

HOUSE
No radiology, no tests--

CUDDY
--You also can't make long distance phone calls.

HOUSE
If you're going to fire me, have the guts to face me!

CUDDY
(shaking her head)
Or photocopies. You're still yelling.

HOUSE
I'm angry! You're risking a patients life--

CUDDY
I assume those were two separate points.

HOUSE
(still yelling)
You're showing me disrespect. You embarrassed me. And as long as I work here, you have no legal right--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY

--Is the yelling designed to scare me? Because I don't know what I'm supposed to be scared of. More yelling? That's not scary. That you're going to hurt me? That's scary. But I'm pretty sure I can outrun you.

House sits down, oddly calmer - he can respect the fact that she talks straight to him, even while he hates her for it.

CUDDY (cont'd)

I looked up that philosopher you quoted. Jagger. And you're right, you can't always get what you want. But as it turns out, if you try sometimes, you get what you need.

HOUSE

So, because you want me to treat patients, you're not letting me treat patients?

CUDDY

I need you to do your job. And I'll tell you what the yelling did accomplish - it told me you care about something here. Presumably not the health of the patient, but something and I don't really care what that something is because whatever it is, it gives me all the leverage in this relationship right now.

Off House, knowing she's right.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - OUTSIDE FREE CLINIC - MOMENTS LATER

Wilson, Chase, Cameron and Foreman wait among the patients, doctors and nurses going about their business. House emerges, still looking angry - or is it annoyed?

HOUSE

(to Chase)

Go do the MRI. She folded.

And he limps away. Wilson follows; knows something is up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE (cont'd)

I'm doing four hours a week in that clinic. Until I make up the time I've missed.

Wilson thinks about that - how long will that take.

HOUSE (cont'd)

2054. I'll be caught up in 2054.

(then:)

You'd better love this cousin a whole lot.

INT. RADIOLOGY ROOM - DAY

Chase injects the contrast material and the motorized bed slowly backs Adler head-first into the MRI machine as Cameron explains to Adler what is going to happen within her body.

CAMERON

Right now, the gadolinium is flowing with your blood, through your neck, toward your brain.

INSIDE HER BLOODSTREAM

AT THE MOLECULAR LEVEL, we see the greenish gadolinium flowing with the blue (oxygenated) blood through the relatively large arteries.

CAMERON (V.O.) (cont'd)

But you won't feel a thing for the entire process.

The gadolinium is joined midstream by a couple of tiny white things - we're not sure what they are or if they're good or bad.

CAMERON (V.O.) (cont'd)

An electromagnetic field will cause the nuclei of every atom in your body to line up parallel to each other.

And as the machine is turned on, we see atoms rotating.

OUTSIDE HER BODY - INSIDE THE MACHINE - Adler is starting to look a little clammy.

ADLER

(almost mumbling)

I don't feel very good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OUTSIDE THE MACHINE

CHASE

It's common to feel a little claustrophobic. Please try not to move, okay?

CAMERON

Next you'll be hit with a pulse of radio waves. This throws everything out of alignment.

MOLECULAR LEVEL VIEW

And so we see the nuclei vibrate out of alignment. We also now see hundreds of white cells bombarding the gadolinium.

CAMERON (V.O.) (cont'd)

When the nuclei go back into alignment, they send off signals. Which the machine reads.

OUTSIDE HER BODY - INSIDE THE MACHINE

As the lights of the e-m fields flash off her, Adler looks even worse. She struggles to speak. But nothing comes out. We RE-ENTER HER BODY, but this time through her open mouth, down the smaller than usual throat where we see muscles rapidly contracting and relaxing, each time the throat gets a little smaller.

OUTSIDE THE MACHINE

CHASE

The machine now slowly scans your body. Relax, and it'll be done before you know it, Rachel.

Again, no response. Cameron senses something isn't right.

CAMERON

Rachel...?

IN ADLER'S THROAT - She can't answer because it's virtually closed.

OUTSIDE THE MACHINE

CAMERON (cont'd)

Get her out of there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHASE

She probably fell asleep; she's exhausted.

CAMERON

Two minutes ago she was claustrophobic. She's not sleeping. Get her out of there.

CHASE

It'll just be another minute or two.

Cameron reaches over and hits the button to eject the motorized bed.

CAMERON

If she's having an allergic reaction, she'll be dead in two minutes.

As the bed slowly brings Adler out, Cameron hurries from the observation area. Cameron grabs Adler by the ankles and starts to pull her the rest of the way out.

CAMERON (cont'd)

She's cold.

The Technician helps Cameron almost yank Adler out and onto a nearby gurney. She checks for respiration.

FOREMAN

She's not breathing. Do we have surgical equipment in here?

As if to answer that question, Chase takes a scalpel and cuts into Adler's throat. Blood flies, but it's as under control as it can be when somebody is suffocating before your eyes.

Chase inserts a tube, quickly and efficiently performing a tracheotomy. He then turns to Cameron...

CHASE

...Good call.

And as the wheezing sound of air getting through the makeshift opening to Adler's throat fills the air, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - DAY

House pops a pill as he leans against a wall, waiting, watching people.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

Once again, Adler can't speak. But this time it's on account of the tube in her throat, allowing her to breathe instead. She's in some pain, but she's awake. Chase, Cameron and Foreman are with her.

FOREMAN

Really bad luck: you know how rare it is to be allergic to gadolinium? And then really good luck: there was an immunologist in the room.

Adler turns to Cameron - her eyes show her gratitude.

CAMERON

White blood cells attacked what it thought was an alien invader. You then had an anaphylactic reaction and your throat closed up. We'll monitor your blood for a few days but the good news is...

CHASE

...this isn't what's going to kill you.

Adler nods, she gets it.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - DAY

House is still waiting. Finally, Chase and Cameron emerge.

HOUSE

Told you. You can't trust people.

CAMERON

She probably knew she was allergic to gadolinium but figured this was an easy way to get someone to cut a hole in her throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

Her motives aren't really relevant to us mortals, are they? Any chance we can make this work with some other contrast material?

CAMERON

High likelihood of allergies to similar materials.

CHASE

And low likelihood of getting another release signed.

HOUSE

(turns to Foreman)

Can't get a picture; we're going to have to get a thousand words.

FOREMAN

You want me to take a patient history?

HOUSE

We need to know if there's a possibility of a genetic cause or an environmental factor setting off an inflammation reaction, check pets, allergic sources, also check for recent travel--

FOREMAN

(teasing)

I thought everybody lied.

HOUSE

Truth begins in lies.

(beat)

Think about it.

And House walks away. Foreman turns to Cameron and Chase.

FOREMAN

That doesn't mean anything, does it?

The other two just shrug.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

House enters, magazines under his arm, and speaks to the receptionist as he passes:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

2:52 p.m. Dr. House checks in.
Please write that down. Do you
have cable here somewhere? General
Hospital starts in eight minutes.

CUDDY

No TV; but we've got patients.

House turns and sees her approaching.

HOUSE

Come on, can't you give out the
Tylenol yourself? I'll do
paperwork.

CUDDY

I made sure your first case was an
interesting one.

HOUSE

Cough just won't go away? Runny
nose looks a funny color?

CUDDY

Patient admitted complaining of
back spasms.

HOUSE

I read about something like that in
the New England Journal of
Medicine. Thank goodness this is a
teaching hospital; I'll page all
the interns.

CUDDY

Patient is orange.

HOUSE

(that is interesting)
...The color?

CUDDY

No, the fruit.

HOUSE

Nothing turns you orange.

CUDDY

(dry)
That's why it's interesting. Exam
room 1.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Off Cuddy, pleased, as House starts walking away.

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM 1 - DAY

ON THE patient, ROB PRITCHARD. He's 32, very good looking, very vain, looks rich even wearing just his underpants, sitting on the examining table. And he is, in fact, orange. He nervously plays with his wedding band as...

PRITCHARD

I was golfing. My cleats got stuck. It hurt a little but I kept playing. The next morning, I could barely stand up.

REVEAL HOUSE; he doesn't even try not to smile - this guy's orange and he's bitching about his back?

PRITCHARD (cont'd)

You're smiling. I take it that means this isn't serious.

House takes out a pill as he shakes his head.

PRITCHARD (cont'd)

What's that?

HOUSE

(pops it in his own mouth)
Pain killer.

PRITCHARD

(realizes:)
Oh, for you. For your leg.

HOUSE

No, because they're yummy.
(offering)
You want one?
(Pritchard is thrown)
It'll make your back feel better.

Pritchard takes one as:

HOUSE (cont'd)

Unfortunately, you have a deeper problem. ...Your wife is having an affair.

PRITCHARD

What?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

You're orange, you moron. And it's one thing for you not to notice, but if your wife hasn't picked up on the fact that her husband has changed colors, she's just not paying attention.

(then)

By the way, do you eat just a ridiculous amount of carrots and tomatoes?

Pritchard is too stunned to do much more than nod.

HOUSE (cont'd)

One turns you yellow, the other turns you red. Find some finger paints and do the math. And get a good lawyer.

And House leaves.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Foreman interviews Adler. She speaks with difficulty. Cameron is also present, watching over Foreman.

ADLER

Just a poodle.

FOREMAN

Poodles are hypoallergenic; is that why you got one?

She shakes her head.

FOREMAN (cont'd)

What about at school? Any animals? Any birds?

CAMERON

Parrots are often a source of psittacosis; it can lead to nerve problems--

FOREMAN

(sotto)

This will go much faster if we don't walk her through medical school.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

If she knows the significance of
what we're asking--

FOREMAN

(do we need to do this in
front of the patient?)
--I don't want her thinking some
questions are more significant than
others.

CAMERON

Some are.

ADLER

(puts an end to this)
No parrots. Pet gerbil. But Carly
Diamond dropped a book on it. Next
question.

FOREMAN

...Do you work anywhere else?

ADLER

No. All I've ever wanted to be was
a kindergarten teacher.

FOREMAN

Ever been sick?

ADLER

...Yeah.

CAMERON

(to Foreman)

You think you could be more
specific?

FOREMAN

No. I want to know everything.

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM 2 - DAY

A ten-year-old boy sits on the examination table, wheezing
slightly. His mother stands nervously nearby. House is
reviewing the patient's chart.

HOUSE

Has he been using his inhaler?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOTHER

Not in a few days. He's only ten.
I worry about children taking such
strong medicine so frequently.

YOUNG PATIENT

(to House)
What happened to your leg?

HOUSE

(ignoring child)
Your doctor probably was concerned
about the strength of the medicine
too. She probably weighed that
danger against the danger of not
breathing. Oxygen is so important
during those pre-pubescent years,
don't you think?

Mom and son are too stunned to respond.

HOUSE (cont'd)

I'm going to assume nobody has ever
told you what asthma is, or if they
have, you had other things on your
mind. Some stimulant triggers
cells in your child's airways to
become inflamed,

(stops, thinks, continues)

...the muscles in the walls of the
airways contract, mucus production
increases, the cell lining starts
to shed.

(more thinking)

But the steroids stop the
inflammation. The more often this
happens--

He turns and walks out.

MOTHER

What? The more often this happens,
what?

HOUSE

(calling back)

Forget it. If you don't trust
steroids, you shouldn't trust
doctors.

And he's gone--

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Foreman continues his patient history. Cameron's beeper goes off. She checks it as Adler speaks.

ADLER

Mom's mom, heart attack, I think in her eighties. Mom's dad, lives in Boca Raton--

CAMERON

--It's House. It's urgent.

They get up and exit to--

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - DAY

Cameron and Foreman emerge on the run, heading for House's office. But he's right there. They stop abruptly.

CAMERON

You couldn't have knocked?

HOUSE

Steroids. We're gonna give Adler steroids. High doses of prednisone.

FOREMAN

Why? What does she have?

HOUSE

(to Foreman)

Any history of leg ulcers?

FOREMAN

(not really...)

She has a varicose vein.

HOUSE

Any lesions related to rheumatic diseases? There's gotta be some evidence of--

CAMERON

(picking up)

--You're looking for support for a diagnosis of temporal vasculitis? Inflammation of blood vessels in the brain is awfully rare. Especially for someone her age.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

So is a tumor. Blood tests show any evidence of anemia?

FOREMAN

Mild.

CAMERON

That could indicate anything. Or nothing.

HOUSE

You're right. Apparently, I've got no reason to think it is vasculitis. But it could be. If the blood vessels are inflamed, that's gonna look like a lesion on the regular MRI. And the pressure is going to cause neurological symptoms.

CAMERON

But we can't test for it without a biopsy.

HOUSE

Yes we can. We treat it. If she gets better, we know we were right.

CAMERON

And if we're wrong?

HOUSE

Then we learn something else. Information is in short supply here.

CAMERON

She gets worse. Maybe a lot worse. Maybe she--

HOUSE

--How much worse can she get?! What are we gonna do; rob her of the best weeks of her life?

(to Cameron)

Find Chase. Start Adler on prednisone.

(then:)

Foreman, you had lunch?

Off Cameron, accepting the inevitable.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cameron is making a note in Adler's chart as Chase prepares her medication. The ventilator is out and she can talk, though with considerable difficulty. She's still quite weak.

ADLER
Why steroids?

CHASE
Just part of your treatment.
(avoiding the issue)
You haven't had too many visitors;
no boyfriend?

ADLER
Three dates. I wouldn't have stood
by him if he was vomiting all day
long.

CAMERON
What about work? You must have
friends from work.

ADLER
Everybody I like is five-years old.
(back to what's worries
her)
The Nurse said you stopped my
radiation.

Chase is ready to give her the injection.

CHASE
Just trying some alternative
medication.

Adler heard enough - she covers her arm so he can't make the injection.

ADLER
Cut the crap. Steroids aren't an
alternative to radiation.

CHASE
(avoiding the issue)
The tests weren't really--

CAMERON
We're treating you for vasculitis.
It's an inflammation of blood
vessels in your brain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADLER
(realizes, thrilled)
...It's not a tumor? I don't have
a tumor?

CHASE
We don't know for sure.

ADLER
But that's what you're treating,
right? You wouldn't do this unless
you think I don't have a tumor.

CAMERON
If it's vasculitis, the steroids
should quickly reduce the swelling.

ADLER
(grateful, hopeful)
Thank you so much.

CHASE
We didn't do anything. We just
made the diagnosis.

INT. HOSPITAL - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cameron and Chase emerge.

CHASE
You should have told her the truth -
it's a long shot guess.

CAMERON
If House is right, no harm. If
House is wrong, I've given a dying
woman a couple days of hope--

CHASE
--False hope.

CAMERON
If any other type was available,
I'd give her that.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Foreman eats. House sits opposite him - no food.

HOUSE
What's she lying about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

She's a kindergarten teacher.

HOUSE

And if I were a kindergarten student, I would trust her implicitly.

FOREMAN

I'll double check with her GP.

HOUSE

I don't trust him.

FOREMAN

You don't know him. Or her.

HOUSE

I don't need to.

Off Foreman's look.

HOUSE (cont'd)

I'll give you a 'for instance'. The lady making the egg salad back there; her eyes look glassy, did you notice that?

EGG SALAD LADY - in the cafeteria, quickly wiping her nose with her sleeve.

HOUSE (cont'd)

Hospital policy is to stay home if you're sick, but if you're making eight dollars an hour, you kind of need that eight dollars an hour, don't you? And the sign in the bathroom says employees must wash after using the facilities, but I figure somebody who wipes a snuffle with a sleeve isn't hyper-concerned with sanitary conditions. So what do you think: should I trust her?

(then:)

I want you to check the patient's home for contaminants, pets, parrots, garbage, medication...

FOREMAN

Her sister flies in tonight, I'll have her ask--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOUSE

Would the police call for permission before dropping by to check out a crime scene?

FOREMAN

It's not a crime scene.

HOUSE

We don't know that. We don't know she wasn't poisoned; we don't know what she doesn't want us to know. First principles: we don't know anything and we don't trust anyone.

FOREMAN

...So what do I do? I can't just break in.

HOUSE

Isn't that how you got into the Felkers' home?

Foreman is stunned by the mention of this name.

HOUSE (cont'd)

Yeah I know, the court records are sealed, you were sixteen, it was a stupid mistake. But your old gym teacher has a big mouth. You should send a thank you note.

FOREMAN

(fighting anger)

...I should thank him?

HOUSE

I needed somebody around here with street smarts, who knows when he's being conned, and knows how to con.

FOREMAN

I should sue you.

HOUSE

I'm pretty sure you can't sue somebody for wrongful hiring.

House just looks to Foreman - whatcha gonna do? Foreman can't believe he's in this position. Finally...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FOREMAN

...But I'm pretty sure I can sue if you fire me for not committing a B&E.

Foreman picks up his sandwich and takes a message-laden bite.

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM 1 - DAY

Alone in the room, House pops a pill and reads People Magazine. After a beat, Cuddy enters, angry.

HOUSE

I'm doing research - people are fascinating, aren't they?

CUDDY

Why are you giving Adler steroids?

HOUSE

Because she's my patient. That's what you do with patients; you give them medicine.

CUDDY

You don't prescribe medicine based on guesses. At least we don't since Tuskegee and Mengele.

HOUSE

You're comparing me to a Nazi? Nice.

CUDDY

I'm stopping the treatment.

And she exits. He follows as quickly as he can.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

HOUSE

She's my patient.

CUDDY

It's my hospital.

HOUSE

I did not get her sick. She is not an experiment. I have a legitimate theory of what's wrong with her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY

With no proof.

HOUSE

There's never any proof. Five different doctors give five different diagnoses based on the same evidence--

CUDDY

--You don't have any evidence.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - OUTSIDE FREE CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

She pulls away from him as she strides across the lobby. She arrives at the elevators first, presses the up button - nothing. Frustrated, she quickly presses it two more times as House catches up. She spins on him:

CUDDY

Nobody knows anything, huh? So why do you think you're always right?

HOUSE

I don't. I just find it difficult to operate on the opposite assumption.

Cuddy steps away and opens the door to the stairwell.

HOUSE (cont'd)

Why are you so afraid to make a mistake?

CUDDY

Because I'm a doctor. Because if we make a mistake, people die.

And she takes the stairs two at a time, leaving House no way to keep up.

HOUSE

(calling after)

People used to have more respect for cripples, you know.

As he returns to the elevator and pushes the button, he notices somebody in a wheelchair looking at him, having overheard his last comment.

HOUSE (cont'd)

They didn't really.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - DAY

House approaches from the elevator, stops outside the room and looks in to see:

HOUSE'S POV - inside Adler's room. Cuddy stands at the foot of the bed, reviewing the chart. Adler sits up in bed, eating dinner - the change in her is dramatic. This is the first time we've seen her eating and, when she talks, it's effortless.

ADLER

Much better, thank you. Are you Dr. House? I thought he was a he but--

CUDDY

...No.
(closes chart)
Don't eat too much, too fast.

ADLER

Thank him for me.

CUDDY

Right.

And she leaves, passing House in the hallway.

HOUSE

Shall I discontinue the treatment, boss?

CUDDY

You got lucky.

HOUSE

(pointedly not something she would do:)
I took a chance.

And she's gone...

EXT. CAMBRIDGE - NIGHT - TO ESTABLISH

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Wilson sits opposite Adler. She's still doing much better.

ADLER

Am I ever going to meet Dr. House?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

You may run into him at a movie or
on the subway.

ADLER

Is he a good man?

WILSON

...He's a good doctor.

ADLER

Can you be one without the other?
Don't you have to care about
people?

WILSON

Caring is a good motivator.
(beat)
He's found something else.

She nods, accepts this. Then...

ADLER

He's your friend, huh?
(off Wilson's nod)
Does he care about you?

WILSON

I think so.

ADLER

You don't know?

WILSON

(smiles)
Everybody lies.

ADLER

It's not what people say; it's what
they do.

Wilson thinks about that insight for a beat:

WILSON

Yeah. He cares about me.

Silence ensues for a moment. Then...

ADLER

(too scared to yell)
...I can't see.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Wilson hurries forward.

ADLER (cont'd)
(now she's truly panicked)
I can't see!

And she begins to have a seizure.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

We hear the code announcement as a team of medical professionals hurry toward Adler's room.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They roll in to assist Wilson. An Orderly is already there attempting to hold Adler down as she has convulsions. Wilson examines her eyes.

WILSON
(urgent)
She's non-responsive. She's
conscious but eyes are fixed and--

Suddenly we hear the sound all television viewers are familiar with - the buzz of a patient flat-lining. The doctors spring into action, now desperately trying to save her life.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CAMBRIDGE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

FOREMAN (V.O.)

You're stable. You were in a coma
for nearly twelve hours. Please
count by sevens.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

START ON a pad of paper - somebody writes on it... First
'7', then hesitantly, '14', then a '21', except the '2' is
backwards.

REVEAL it's Adler writing. She's writing because she's on a
ventilator. Foreman sits beside her. He hands her four
cardboard pictures.

FOREMAN

Can you arrange these to tell a
story?

Adler examines the cards. HER POV: all black and white,
rather basic, sketches. A mom in a store buying something
(#1); a girl opening a present with mom at her side (#2); the
girl putting together a kite (#3); a girl and her mom flying
the kite. Adler picks up the sketch of the store (#1)...

MORPH TO ANIMATION. We're in Adler's mind (not her brain
this time), creating the story. The black and white sketch
of a mom purchases the kite kit, already wrapped, and turns
to a LITTLE GIRL who is suddenly beside her. The store
background dissolves as the little girl opens her present -
transporting us into in sketch #2. But now the little girl
stops. She looks at her present, looks at her mom, she's
confused. What's next, what's she going to do?

CHASE (V.O.)

She couldn't put them in order?

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Foreman reports back to House, Chase and Cameron.

CHASE

Could the damage have been caused
by a lack of oxygen during her
seizure?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

I don't think so. I gave her the same test five minutes later. She did fine. The disorientation comes and goes, just like the verbal skills.

CAMERON

So what's going to happen?

FOREMAN

The aphasia will come and go, with increasing frequency and duration. Same thing with the apraxia; disorientation--

CHASE

(how can you be sure?)
We don't even know what she has.

FOREMAN

I don't need to know what it is. I just need to know where it is. And given the latest symptoms, it's clearly growing deeper into the temporal lobe. Soon, she's won't be able to walk with any consistency. Blindness after that; then the more fundamental organs will start to fail.

They all know what that means.

HOUSE

How long do we have?

FOREMAN

Depends. If it's a grade 4 tumor, it'll be moving fast - she could be dead in two weeks. If it's ischemic, it's more likely chronic. If it's an infectious agent, that'll probably be fastest of all. Maybe a week.

HOUSE

...We're going to stop all treatment.

FOREMAN

I still think it's a tumor; we should go back to the radiation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHASE

She didn't respond to the radiation.

FOREMAN

Maybe she did; maybe we just didn't see the effects until after the steroid treatment began.

HOUSE

No, it's not a tumor. The steroids did something.

CAMERON

Placebo effect. I told her she'd feel better, so she did.

HOUSE

(firm)

No, the steroids did something.

(then:)

I just don't know what.

FOREMAN

So we're gonna do nothing? We're just going to watch her die?

HOUSE

No. We're going to watch how fast she's dying. You outlined the various time-frames that the various diagnoses will follow.

(then:)

When we see how fast it's killing her, we'll know what it is.

CAMERON

And by then, maybe it's too late to do anything about it.

FOREMAN

(desperate)

There's got to be something else we can do. Something better than watching her die.

They're all desperate, but only Foreman wears it on his sleeve...

HOUSE

I'm open to alternatives.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Off Foreman, wishing he had one--

INT. HOSPITAL - OUTSIDE HOUSE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Cameron, Foreman and Chase emerge. Foreman is pre-occupied.

CHASE

I'll take the first shift patient-sitting.

And he walks away. Foreman turns to Cameron - he's made a decision.

FOREMAN

I need you for an hour or two.

CAMERON

What's up?

FOREMAN

When you break into someone's house, it's always better to have a white chick with you.

Off Cameron's understandable confusion--

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM 2 - DAY

A patient, MOLNAR, 40ish, sits on the table, fully dressed. He's not feeling well and has spent a considerable amount of time online, self-diagnosing.

MOLNAR

I'm tired a lot.

Reveal House, sitting at the opposite side of the room.

HOUSE

Any other reason you think you have Chronic Fatigue Syndrome?

MOLNAR

It's kind of the definition, isn't it?

HOUSE

It's kind of the definition of growing up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOLNAR

I had a couple headaches last month, a mild fever, sometimes I can't sleep and I have trouble concentrating.

HOUSE

Apparently not during internet searches.

MOLNAR

I was thinking it also might be fibromyalgia.

House just stares for a beat, then pops a pill, rises and leaves the patient sitting there.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

House walks to the reception desk.

HOUSE

I need 36 doses of Vicodin; and 75 cents.

The nurse gives him a look, then slaps the change on the counter. He picks it up, goes to the nearby vending machine, drops the change in and gets some Skittles. He then returns to the reception desk, where the bottle of pills he requested is waiting. House pockets the pills and refills the bottle with the Skittles. Cuddy approaches as he finishes.

CUDDY

We need to talk.

HOUSE

(hands bottle to
Receptionist)
Exam room 2.
(then, to Cuddy:)
What's up?

INT. CLINIC - CUDDY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

House and Cuddy enter from the hallway. Not a word is spoken, until the moment Cuddy shuts the door - then she yells:

CUDDY

What the hell did you tell Pritchard?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE
Why are you yelling?

CUDDY
Don't get cute! Orange guy. Did you tell him his wife was having an affair?

HOUSE
No. I said she doesn't care about him.

CUDDY
That man gives half a million dollars to this hospital every year!

HOUSE
I'm sorry. Next time, give me their financial statements, so I know who's naughty and who's nice.

CUDDY
That is not how you speak to patients!

HOUSE
Actually, it is. If you don't want me to talk that way to patients, don't make me talk to patients.

And he leaves.

INT. ADLER APARTMENT - DAY

A MONTAGE of sorts.

BLACK - then the small door opens revealing that our POV is from under the sink, looking out at Cameron -- gloves on, she digs through the garbage, sniffing where necessary.

CAMERON
(calling)
Nothing interesting in the garbage.
(then)
House just doesn't believe in pretense; figures life's too short and too painful, so he says what he thinks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She shuts the door and it's BLACK AGAIN - then another door opens - and this time we're looking out from inside a medicine cabinet; Foreman checks things out:

FOREMAN

Toothpaste, skin cream...

(calls back)

"I say what I think" is just another way of saying "I'm an asshole."

He closes the door. BLACK UNTIL - the door to a ceiling crawl space opens and Cameron pops her head into frame, small meter in hand.

CAMERON

If you want to be judged for your medical prowess only, maybe you shouldn't have broken into somebody's home.

(then)

No asbestos, trace amounts of lead in the paint.

She shuts the door, then a door opens under the BATHROOM SINK. Foreman sniffs and examines for moisture.

FOREMAN

I was sixteen years old. Plumbing leaks, but no evidence of fecal matter backing up from any other units.

One door shuts and another opens. Cameron enters a CLOSET, new gloves on, she closely examines the dog's bed.

CAMERON

I managed to make it to seventeen without a criminal record. Don't know about ticks but dog's got fleas.

Closet closes; FRIDGE opens.

FOREMAN

You didn't grow up in my neighborhood.

He inspects the fridge. Then he removes some sliced meat and bread. REVEAL Cameron entering the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CAMERON

That's right, you stole a loaf of bread, right? To feed your starving family.

(notices)

You always eat during break-ins?

FOREMAN

Am I supposed to respect their food more than I respect their DVD players? You want some?

CAMERON

(obviously not)

No.

FOREMAN

What; you're gonna go hungry until she dies?

CAMERON

I just want to get out of here.

FOREMAN

You figure Adler's on her way home to catch us right now.

(grabbing some more meat from the fridge)

After centuries of slavery, decades of civil rights marches, and, personally, eight years of medical study with never less than a 4.0 GPA, you don't think it's kind of disgusting that I get one of the top jobs in the country because I'm a delinquent?

(then)

We'll eat, then we'll tear up the carpeting.

CAMERON

(beat, then:)

...You went to Hopkins, right?

FOREMAN

(eating)

Yeah.

CAMERON

...You went to a better school than I did and you had better grades than I did.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Foreman can't help but laugh.

FOREMAN

So how did you get the job? You stab a guy in a bar fight?

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Foreman reports back to House and Wilson. Cameron sits quietly by - too angry to contribute much.

FOREMAN

She's getting worse fast; vision comes and goes; losing muscle control. I'm convinced it's infectious.

WILSON

(growing desperation)
No chemicals, no medication?

FOREMAN

Nothing that would explain these symptoms.

WILSON

No fertilizers, nearby chemical plants?

CAMERON

Nothing.

WILSON

No family history of neurological problems?

FOREMAN

Not that I could tell from the Christmas cards.

Wilson gives up. After a beat, House turns to Foreman:

HOUSE

You said "nothing that would explain these symptoms." What did you find that doesn't explain these symptoms.

Beat. Should he tell what he thinks he's found out?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOREMAN

...Dr. Wilson convinced you to treat this patient under false pretenses. Adler's not his cousin.

WILSON

That's ridiculous. You can ask her yourself. Can we get back to--

FOREMAN

--She's not Jewish.

WILSON

'Rebeccah Adler' isn't Jewish?

FOREMAN

I had ham at her home.

Wilson leans back and laughs; Cameron is also amused. But House leans forward and thinks...

WILSON

Dr. Foreman, are you aware of the intermarriage rates in this country? A lot of Jews have non-Jewish relatives. And pretty much all Jews are bad Jews - we eat traife.

(then)

I can see you getting through high school without learning a bit about Jews, but medical school?

FOREMAN

...Her name isn't Rebeccah; it's Rachel. Jews do know their cousins' names, don't they?

House has finished thinking. Time to yell.

HOUSE

You idiot!

WILSON

I didn't--

HOUSE

Not you!

(re Foreman)

Him! You said you didn't find anything!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FOREMAN

Everything I found was in my--

HOUSE

--You found ham!

FOREMAN

So?

HOUSE

Where there's ham, there's pork.
Where there's pork, there's
neurocysticercosis.

WILSON

Tapeworm? You think she's got a
worm in her brain.

HOUSE

It fits. Could have been living
there for years. It didn't even
occur to me because she's--

CAMERON

--She eats ham, millions of people
eat ham - bit of a jump to
tapeworm, isn't it?

HOUSE

(turns to Foreman)

Okay, Mr. Neurologist; what happens
when you give steroids to a person
suffering from tapeworms?

FOREMAN

(realizes:)

They get a little better. And then
they get a lot worse.

WILSON

...Just like Adler did.

And as they soak that in, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - DAY

House meets with his team (Chase, Cameron and Foreman).

HOUSE

In a typical case, you don't cook
it well enough, you digest the pork
and free the tapeworm larvae.

INSIDE THE STOMACH - We see what he describes: the stomach
squeezing, the digestive juices attacking and a small larval
tapeworm shaking free from a half-digested piece of meat
and...

HOUSE (V.O.) (cont'd)

They've got these little hooks to
grab onto your bowel, live there,
grow up, to a few feet or so, and
reproduce.

Then BACK IN THE OFFICE:

CHASE

Reproduce? There's one lesion.
And it's nowhere near her bowel.

HOUSE

That's because this isn't a typical
case. Tapeworm fertilizes twenty
to thirty thousand of its own eggs
every day. Guess where they go?

FOREMAN

Out.

HOUSE

Exactly. From fecal material to
toilet paper. And if you don't
wash your hands well enough...

BACK INSIDE THE STOMACH - we see the disgusting, yet amazing,
action as House describes it:

HOUSE (V.O.) (cont'd)

The egg shell gets digested but the
egg doesn't. Unlike the larvae,
the egg can pass right through the
walls of the intestines;

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE (V.O.) (cont'd)
into the blood stream. And where
does the blood stream go?

CAMERON (V.O.)
Everywhere.

As House continues, we travel into the brain - that great milky mass we saw earlier melts away to reveal a small worm, its eight hooks latching on rather coarsely to the delicate meat of the human brain.

HOUSE (V.O.)
As long as it's healthy, the immune
system doesn't even know it's
there. The worm builds a wall,
uses secretions to shut down the
inflammatory reaction and control
fluid flow.

BACK TO THE ROOM. As Foreman speaks, Wilson enters.

FOREMAN
As long as it's healthy. So what
do we do? Call a vet, nurse the
little guy back to health?

HOUSE
Too late for that. It's dying.

BACK TO THE BRAIN. Again, we graphically see what happens:

HOUSE (V.O.) (cont'd)
The immune system wakes up and
tries to devour the invader. The
wall around the worm stops
regulating fluid flow and
everything starts to swell. And
that's very bad for the brain.

The expanding invader pushes brain matter out of its way, cutting off blood vessels, shutting down neural pathways, until it abruptly stops as:

WILSON (V.O.)
It could still be a hundred other
things?

And we're BACK IN THE ROOM.

WILSON (cont'd)
The lab results show normal levels
of eosinophilia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHASE

They're only abnormal in 30% of cases.

WILSON

Proving nothing.

HOUSE

(excited by the elegance)
It fits; it's perfect; it explains everything.

WILSON

But it proves nothing.

HOUSE

I can prove it by treating it.

WILSON

No, you can't.
(explains)
I just spoke to her. She doesn't want any more treatment; she doesn't want any more experiments. She wants to go home to die.

This extremely disturbing news sinks in. Finally:

HOUSE

...I'll talk to her.

That may be even more shocking...

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Adler lies in bed, propped up by a couple of pillows. She's dressed; ready to go; a packed suitcase sits on a chair. House stands awkwardly at the foot of the bed. He holds onto her file like it's a security blanket.

HOUSE

...Hi. I'm Dr. House.

ADLER

It's good to meet you.

This is understandably awkward; the small talk incongruous - the stakes couldn't be higher.

HOUSE

...You're being an idiot.
(well that broke the ice)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE (cont'd)

You've got a tapeworm in your brain. It's not pleasant, but if we don't do anything, you'll be dead by the weekend.

ADLER

Have you seen the worm?

HOUSE

(I don't need to)

When you're all better, I'll show you my diplomas.

ADLER

You were sure I had vasculitis too.

HOUSE

I'm not talking about a treatment; I'm not talking about remission. I'm talking about a cure. But I might be wrong, so you wanna die.

ADLER

...What made you a cripple?

He hesitates. While this is a question that he's refused to answer many times, from her it somehow seems earned.

HOUSE

...I had an infarction.

ADLER

A heart attack?

HOUSE

It's an obstruction of blood vessels. When it's in the heart, it's a heart attack. In the lungs, it's a pulmonary embolism. In the brain, it's a stroke. I had it in my thigh muscles.

ADLER

Wasn't there anything they could do?

HOUSE

There was plenty they could do - if they knew what it was. But the only symptom was pain. Not many people get to experience muscle death.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ADLER

Did you think you were dying?

HOUSE

I hoped I was dying.

She nods, understands - like maybe nobody else can. But...

ADLER

And now you hide in your office.
Refuse to see patients. And hobble
around with a cane. Because you
don't like the way people look at
you. A cripple. Because you feel
cheated by life and now you're
going to get even with the world.
But you want me to keep fighting.
Even though I might never be able
to work again. Even though I might
never be able to see again. Why?
Why do you think I'm so much better
than you?

There's a lot of truth to that - but he'd never admit it.

HOUSE

...You're scared you'll turn into
me?

ADLER

(yes)

I just want to die with a little
dignity.

HOUSE

...There's no such thing.

He's opening up - he doesn't like opening up.

HOUSE (cont'd)

Our bodies break down. Sometimes
when we're ninety, sometimes before
we're even born. But it always
happens. And there's never any
dignity in it. Doesn't matter if
you can walk, see or wipe your own
ass, it's always ugly. We can live
with dignity. We can't die with
it.

Off Adler...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - OUTSIDE ADLER'S ROOM - DAY

House emerges from the room. His team (including Wilson) is waiting anxiously.

HOUSE
...No treatment.

And he starts to walk away - not at all happy, but accepting.

CAMERON
We could apply to a court to
override her wishes; claim she
doesn't have capacity to make this
decision.

HOUSE
But she does.

CAMERON
But we could claim that the brain
injury has affected her
personality, right Foreman?

FOREMAN
It's a pretty common side effect.

HOUSE
But it didn't happen here.

CAMERON
You're always preaching the only
thing that matters is effective vs.
ineffective - more important than
right vs. wrong--

WILSON
--He's not going to do it.
(turns to House)
He's met her; she's no longer just
a file - she's a person. He
respects her.

House shoots him a look--

CAMERON
(not assuaged)
So because you respect her you're
going to let her die?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

...I solved the case; my work is done.

(off their looks, angry)

Patients always want proof! We're not making cars; we don't give guarantees!

House starts to walk away again. But Chase, who has been quietly thinking this whole time, speaks up.

CHASE

I think we can prove it's a worm.

(off their looks)

It's non-invasive; it's safe. It's not conclusive but--

HOUSE

What's the damn idea?

CHASE

We've never taken an X-Ray of her, have we?

FOREMAN

It's her brain. Why would we take an X-Ray?

CHASE

Have you ever seen a worm under an X-Ray? A regular old no-contrast, hundred-year-old technology, X-Ray? They light up. Just like on a contrast MRI.

Off House - that's brilliant.

INT. RADIOLOGY ROOM - DAY

Adler is propped up so that her head can be X-Rayed. Chase carefully positions the machine which, compared to what we've seen, does look like something from the dark ages. The Technician covers the rest of her with lead blankets.

TECHNICIAN

You're X-Raying her head? Isn't that dangerous.

CHASE

It could kill her. In about thirty years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chase heads for the protective wall where Foreman is waiting. And as Chase inputs the appropriate settings.

FOREMAN

How did you think of this.

CHASE

I read a textbook from the 60s.

FOREMAN

Just for fun?

CHASE

My father wrote it.

(then, to Adler)

Gonna need you to stay still for about 20 seconds.

ADLER

I'll try not to have a seizure.

Chase pushes the button to start the X-Ray.

X-RAYS POV: X-Rays are light. Just not visible light. But right now, for our audience, they're visible. We see as if we have "X-Ray vision" - through the tissue, blocked by bone, through cartilage, then we see it, the worm in its death throes, wiggling just like the real worm it is.

FREEZE FRAME - then the colors morph to black and white, the outlines of the image become less distinct, but brighter, much brighter. To us, it's no longer recognizable as a worm - but to a doctor, there is no mistaking it.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL, we are now:

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The image we're seeing is the X-Ray film itself, lit up on a light board. Chase is explaining it to Adler.

ADLER

...There's a worm in my brain?

CHASE

Probably been there six to ten years.

Chase misinterprets her look of disbelief as one of disgust.

CHASE (cont'd)

It's good news.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADLER

What do we do now?

CHASE

Now we get you better.

He hands her two pills. She looks at them - two pills are going to make me better? As he fills a cup with water:

CHASE (cont'd)

Albendazole. Possible side effects include abdominal pain, nausea, headaches, dizziness and fever. We'll probably keep you on the pills even if you get every one of those.

She smiles as he hands her the water.

ADLER

Do you keep kosher?

CHASE

I'm not Jewish. But I'm considering it.

And with another smile, she gulps down her pills.

INT. CLINIC - CUDDY'S OFFICE - DAY

Cuddy sits at her desk. Across from her is Pritchard. He looks significantly less orange. On the other hand, he also looks significantly more haggard.

CUDDY

You look... better. And worse.

PRITCHARD

I followed her.

CUDDY

Oh no.

PRITCHARD

I couldn't stop thinking about what that doctor said.

CUDDY

I told you to forget about it - he's an idiot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRITCHARD

I was orange!

His anger stops things for a beat.

CUDDY

...I don't want to know what you
found out.

PRITCHARD

You don't care?

CUDDY

(we're not friends)

I'm your doctor; you've been good
to me and good to this hospital and
so I care about you.

(but...)

But I don't see how this
conversation can end well. For me.
Either your wife is having an
affair, in which case I have to
apologize to the biggest son-of-a-
bitch in this hospital.

(a truly scary thought)

Or she's not having an affair and
you're here because you rightly
think I should fire him. But I
can't. Even if it costs me your
money. The son-of-a-bitch is the
best doctor we have.Pritchard sits there, thinking - once again, nervously
fiddling with his wedding band...

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Cameron is at the desk, but she's not answering mail, she's
just waiting. House enters and...

CAMERON

Why did you hire me?

HOUSE

Does it matter?

CAMERON

Tough to work for a guy who doesn't
respect you.

HOUSE

Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERON

Is that rhetorical?

HOUSE

No. It just seems that way because you can't think of an answer. Does it make a difference what I think? I'm a jerk - only thing that should matter is what you think - can you do the job?

CAMERON

(bullshit)

You hired a black guy because he had a criminal record.

HOUSE

It wasn't a racial thing. I didn't see a black guy; I just saw a doctor. ...With a criminal record.

(off her look)

I hired Chase because his dad made a phone call.

(she's still looking)

...And I hired you because you're extremely pretty.

CAMERON

(shocked)

You hired me to get into my pants?

HOUSE

I can't believe that would shock you.

She turns to leave.

HOUSE (cont'd)

It's also not what I said. I hired you because you look good - it's like having a nice piece of art in the lobby.

CAMERON

I was in the top of my class--

HOUSE

--Not the top.

CAMERON

I did an internship at the Mayo Clinic--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOUSE

You were a very good applicant.

CAMERON

But not the best?

HOUSE

Would that upset you? To know that you were hired because of some genetic gift of beauty instead of some genetic gift of intelligence?

CAMERON

I worked hard to get where I am.

HOUSE

But you didn't have to.

CAMERON

Go to hell.

HOUSE

(plowing on)

People choose paths that gain them the greatest rewards with the least amount of effort. It's a law of nature. And you defied it. That's why I hired you. You could have married rich, you could have been a model, you could have just shown up and people would give you stuff. Lots of stuff. But you didn't. You worked your stunning little ass off.

CAMERON

Am I supposed to be flattered?

HOUSE

You saw your classmates in medical school; men and women; how many of them were even average looking? Gorgeous women do not go to medical school. Unless they're as damaged as they are beautiful. Were you abused by a family member?

CAMERON

No.

HOUSE

Sexually assaulted?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CAMERON

No!

HOUSE

But you are damaged, aren't you?

How did this get turned on her? She pauses just long enough to let us know he may not be off-base. Then her beeper goes off. Grateful, she glances down...

CAMERON

I have to go.

INT. ADLER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Cameron enters to find Adler lying in bed.

CAMERON

You feeling any better?

ADLER

(I'm alive and I can see)
I'm not going to complain.

CAMERON

As you know, the hospital has certain rules. And as you also know, we tend to ignore them. But I think this one's going to be a little obvious unless we get your help. There are age requirements for visitors who aren't immediate family.

She opens the door and the kids from the class hurry in, some a little tentative about the environment, but all thrilled to see their teacher. Adler's face lights up - this is truly the best therapy (actually, if she had to choose only one therapy, she should stick with the albendazole).

CAMERON (cont'd)

If anybody asks: you have twelve daughters and eight sons.

Sydney steps forward and presents Rachel with a giant, obviously made by five-year-olds, card.

SYDNEY

It was my idea. Miss Landon told us how to spell the words.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She opens it and printed awkwardly inside is: "we're happy you're not dead, Miss Rachel".

ADLER

That's beautiful. I love you guys.

As a very grateful Adler gives and accepts hugs, she turns to Cameron to express one disappointment:

ADLER (cont'd)

I wanted to thank Dr. House but he hasn't visited. I thought things might be different after...

CAMERON

He cured you. You didn't cure him.

Adler accepts that and continues to accept hugs. Off Cameron, thinking about her job - the good and the bad--

INT. CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM 1 - DAY

House has set up a TV on the counter and, antenna up, is watching a medical soap opera. Wilson watches with him.

HOUSE

Why would you lie?

WILSON

To get you to do the case.

HOUSE

You lied to a friend to save a stranger; you don't think that's kind of screwed up?

WILSON

You've never lie to me? For a greater good?

HOUSE

(beat, then flat:)

...I never lie.

Everybody lies. They both know it - and they both accept it. The Receptionist opens the door and speaks to House.

RECEPTIONIST

You have a patient.

And right behind her is Molnar, the kid who's sure he has chronic fatigue syndrome.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOLNAR
I need a refill.

HOUSE
(to Receptionist)
I need 36 Vicodin and 75 cents.

And as he takes the change from her and heads for the vending machine, we:

FADE OUT:

THE END