

sensory

Pilot

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS WOODLAND - DAY

Marina and the Diamonds' "I Am Not A Robot" PLAYS HOT as we float over autumn woods, the rusty reds and burnt oranges of September. On a massive rock face, we FIND A LONE CLIMBER -

MARINA (SOUNDTRACK)

*You been acting awful tough
lately, / Smoking a lot of
cigarettes lately...*

The climber is in a precarious spot, scrambling up sheer wall, sans equipment. Which, while impressive, is pretty damn crazy. But as we get closer, we can see he's good - agile, focused, calm. Meet ENRIQUE ("RICK") VELASCO (28).

Rick's in good shape, confident. And yet there's something in his eyes that is aching, or dangerous - it's hard to know. He's got ear buds in, and the SONG SWITCHES from sound track to filtered - becomes the music in his ears. Making a move, Rick reaches for an edge, and as we go with HIS HAND - SWOOP!

FLASHCUT - A CHILD's hand - fingers intertwined with those of an adult - an adult whose white sleeve suggests he's in a lab coat, maybe a doctor. (These are disjointed, slightly surreal flashes of memory, in his mind's eye.)

NOW - RICK'S HAND searches for a hold, fingers clutching...

FLASHCUT - A flatline. The boy doesn't move, even when the adult fingers squeeze harder, trying to force life into him.

NOW - RICK'S FOOT slips, leg swinging loose, without a grip.

FLASHCUT - The boy is drowning, under water. But then - it's become a male figure who is drowning; is it Rick? SOUND DROPS OUT - only the buzz of an AC humming. And then the AC shuts off. Nothing.

BACK TO NOW - RICK struggles to find a steady perch. It's scary - but he catches himself in time. Exhales, adrenaline dipping. He sees that he has sliced open a small cut on his arm. He studies it a moment - the blood. Clinically. Then, he looks up at the sky and continues climbing -

MARINA (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

*You're vulnerable, you're
vulnerable, / You are not a robot...*

EXT. A BASE CAMP - DAY

A staging area for climbers and hikers. Some campers with tents. Rick chugs water. He sees a GUY rubbing his left shoulder, in pain. The guy's girlfriend rubs it for him.

GUY

I don't know what I did to it.

Rick's phone buzzes. He looks at the screen - a text message reads: "**You're late. We had a deal.**" He starts off. As he passes the shoulder guy, Rick adjusts his own right shoulder, rolls it back, we hear a small *crack!*

RICK

Bursitis. See an orthopod.

The couple looks on, a bit baffled, as Rick strolls by, without even a look. A strange combination of caring and aloof. That's who he is - who he needs to be. PRELAP:

WOMAN'S VOICE

Deal? What kind of deal?

ON A DOOR - "DR. ALLAN WALKER - DEAN OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL."

WALKER (O.S.)

Certain *accommodations*.

INT. MASS GENERAL - WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY

Well-appointed but with an eclectic feel. Lots of prints and toys on the theme of "brains." WALKER (50's) stands opposite Resident NICOLE MORETTI (31 - smart, demanding and charming in her high-strung way). She looks at him skeptically.

WALKER

He hates the ER, so I got him out of rotating there. Sometimes he needs a space to recalibrate so...

MORETTI

Are you his mother?

WALKER

I don't want what happened last time to happen again.

MORETTI

Well, I don't know what happened, since you won't explain it -

WALKER

He just hit a wall.

MORETTI

-- but why go to all this effort to get a guy back into school after he dropped out on you?

WALKER

He 'took some time off.'

MORETTI

A fourth year med student?! Who does that? No one does that.

WALKER

Have a little empathy. Remember what fourth year was like?

MORETTI

Yeah, I didn't blink for ten months. That's what it takes.

Silence. Stalemate - Walker looks at his watch.

WALKER

I'm sure he's on his way.

She looks around, drawn to a MODEL BRAIN on his desk - a 19th century phrenological model - with several moveable components marked "sublimity," "ideality," "causality."

MORETTI

Super weird. Ideality? Sublimity? What *is* sublimity anyway?

WALKER

Please, don't touch my brain.

MORETTI

I'm looking for "punctuality" - he's gonna need some of that -

CLATTER! The brain falls apart, all the pieces cascading onto the desktop. Like a disassembled puzzle.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Sorry. A little scattered today.

The joke falls flat, as the door opens; Rick there.

RICK

I'm late.

MORETTI

Don't worry, it's not like this job
is a matter of life and death... --
Oh wait: it *is*!

WALKER

Rick Velasco - Nicole Moretti.
(they shake hands, coldly)
As I've mentioned, I'm instituting
some pedagogical changes. One I'm
eager to try is pairing up med
students with senior residents.

MORETTI

Uh-huh. Well, you didn't mention
that exactly, but I'll be happy to
recommend someone for him...

WALKER

I'd like you two to be the first
test run.

Record scratch. They are both unpleasantly surprised.

RICK

Like a baby-sitter?

WALKER

More like a mentor.

MORETTI

I'm three years out of med school,
Allan. I've published two papers
in the last month, I've got another
study going, and you want to tie me
to some student who can't decide
whether to piss or get off the pot.

RICK

I pee standing up.

WALKER

As a resident, you still bear
educational obligations -

MORETTI

Come on, Allan -

WALKER

And - as the new Chief Resident,
consider this a special one.

Full stop.

MORETTI

Chief... Resident? Is that what you just said? *Chief?*

WALKER

It's what you've been angling for.

RICK

I'll take cash. If you're doling out inducements.

WALKER

You know what you get? To fix the mistake you made when you walked out. And continue to pursue the calling you have: your words.

(leans in, coach-like)

Rick: you have a spot in the finest academic medical center in the country. Get the degree, then you can do whatever you like. Practice medicine out of an igloo for all I care. But get the damn degree.

Rick nods, in assent. Moretti is weighing it.

MORETTI

Why did you drop out? Drugs?
(off his 'no')
Was it psychiatric?

RICK

I'm not nuts.

MORETTI

I heard you were weird.

RICK

I have a weird way of processing things sometimes. A weird way of feeling things. But I'm not weird. Except in all the normal ways.

It's a thin line between when he's just being awkward and when he's savvily trying to cover for his own awkwardness.

MORETTI

This is what I get to work with?

WALKER

'This' is a very gifted student. And you are the perfect person to help shape him. Are you up to it?

She looks at Rick. He is now distracted by the pieces of the phrenology brain model on the desk, much as she was.

RICK

'Sublimity?' What exactly is that?

MORETTI

Don't touch that, you'll break it.

RICK

Looks like somebody already did.

Is he making a knowing dig at her? Or is it an innocent observation? Who the fuck knows? Moretti looks back at Walker and shrugs/nods her acceptance.

EXT. BOSTON STREET/FERNANDO'S OYSTER BAR - DAY 2

A Latin-inflected fish house. Rick heads in, wearing scrubs. A lazy server is texting on her smart phone. HEAR:

SANDRA (PRELAP)

All these kids know is 'apps.'

INT. FERNANDO'S OYSTER BAR - KITCHEN - DAY 2

Rick, head hidden under the sink, works on a pipe as his mother SANDRA (50's, Latina immigrant) stands by.

SANDRA

What's an 'app' anyway? I thought it was an appetizer, but no --

She stuffs a contraband pack of Camels in a drawer.

RICK

Stop smoking, Mom.

SANDRA

I'm not. That was a... spoon! You hear from Javy?

And now Rick comes out from under the sink, looks at her.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

He's in Fort Lauderdale.

RICK

What happened to Sarasota?

SANDRA

Here's the thing: he don't like
Florida no more, so guess what?

RICK

He wants plane fare to the Bahamas?

SANDRA

I'm gonna get him to come home.
Mis babies, back together? Great
idea, right? First time since...

She crosses herself, refers to a faded, framed photo on the
wall: Fernando Velasco in front of the place, circa 1990.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

It's not so easy here, all alone -

RICK

I help out whenever you need it.

SANDRA

The last few months, yeah - but
now? You can't be fixing faucets
when you're saving lives and all
that. And by the way, since maybe
you didn't hear me on the phone -
(jumps up and down)
Estoy! Tan! Feliz! And you're
back in the blue scrubs!

RICK

Medicine Department is blue.

SANDRA

I love the blue! The green ones?
Not so much. But blue! *Que guapo!*
I never understood why you quit.

RICK

We've been over this.

SANDRA

That thing? In your brain? You're
sensitive is all. It's why you're
a born doctor! Like Jorge Clooney!
(as he kisses her bye)
Sensitivity - it's like your
special talent. Don't let it be a
weakness - make it a strength.

RICK

Maybe there's an app for that.

She looks at him with all the pride and pressure of an immigrant mother who has all her hopes vested in her child.

SANDRA

Everything that brought your papi
and me to this country... you are
the result. You being a doctor -
that's the dream we had.

He nods - a sweet but heavy burden.

RICK

About Javy - it's not a good idea.

She nods, reluctant. He goes. Beat. She reaches for the drawer. We hear him from far off in the front room -

RICK (CONT'D)

AND STOP SMOKING!

EXT. MASS GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY 2

Ear buds in, MUSIC grooving, Rick walks up to the building -- a fancy, high-tech facility. He hesitates, some ambivalence. Pulls out the ear buds as we get a couple hits, like before:

*FLASHCUTS: The boy in the bed, Rick beside him, head bowed. -
- A POV from underwater, up towards the surface, where a rim
of light glows. -- The bed wheels away, passing a HERO ACTION
FIGURE discarded on the floor. -- Rick IS the boy in the bed.*

BACK TO NOW - RICK shakes off the memory, with determination. He cranks up the volume in his ears.

INT. HOSPITAL - MEDICINE - STAFF ROOM - DAY 2

Moretti is running a meeting of her team, including a nurse, and three residents - two of whom are: WENDY PIERCE (smart but mousy) and CONNOR HARRIS (a puppy dog).

MORETTI

What antibiotic to start?

PIERCE

Ceftriaxone... plus azithromycin?

MORETTI

Is that a question? Based on what?

PIERCE

Um, treatment guidelines suggest a
beta-lactam plus macrolide?

MORETTI

Another question. Or, what else?
(Pierce is stumped)
Connor? ...Anyone? Nobody read
Postma's study in the journal?

HARRIS

Oh yeah, right, Postma.

MORETTI

(re: a stack of journals)
If I've read it, you better have
read it. And I read everything.

RICK (O.S.)

Fluroquinolone.

All heads turn, as he stands just inside the door. Moretti,
pissed, suppresses her urge to smile from being impressed.

RICK (CONT'D)

The data about macrolides was based
on observational studies known to
be confounded by indication.

The Residents look at him, competitive and unwelcoming.

MORETTI

Folks: 4th year med student,
Enrique Velasco, also known as my
ball and chain. Rick, these are
the people you'll be working with,
none of whom will ever be late.

RICK

Sorry about that. Family thing.

MORETTI

The previous chief had a loose
style, I don't. I want two things
from all of you: precision and
scientifically supportable facts.
And promptness.

Harris counts out the things on his fingers: three?

MORETTI (CONT'D)

All right, rounds!

INT. MEDICINE DEPARTMENT - AT A BEDSIDE - DAY 2

The team stands around a pregnant woman, early 30's, named
ROSE MCCUTCHEN. Beside her sits wife LAUREL KENDRICK (40's).

HARRIS

Rose McCutchen, 33 year-old G2P0,
currently at 37 weeks 2 days.

PIERCE

First pregnancy ended in a diabetes-
related miscarriage at 19 weeks.

There is a sadness in this couple, but also a resilience.
Rick picks up on that.

ROSE

We're twice as far along as last
time, so I guess that's good.

MORETTI

We're gonna get you all the way
there this time.

Rose is clearly worried. Rick notices her *rub her left hand*.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

So, looking at your glycemic data,
you've been keeping up with your
QID glucose checks, that's good.

Rick RUBS his own right hand, addresses Rose very gently:

RICK

Have you had that pain for a long
time, Rose?

Rose is a bit caught off guard by the off-topic question.

ROSE

It's just a nervous habit...

LAUREL

It's nothing, she twists her ring.

Moretti looks at Rick, wondering why he's speaking at all.

MORETTI

Anything else, Mister Velasco?

Stymied, he shakes his head. Rose touches her belly.

ROSE

Ooh, he's kicking. Feel that?

She pulls up her shirt, and takes Moretti's hand but -

RICK

Wow. That'll knock you over.

He is looking at her exposed belly, while leaning on the wall. Everyone looks at him - WTF?!

HARRIS

Did you..? She just... What?

MORETTI

(checking a pager)

Doctor Harris, get a UA, send an AIC and call OB for ultrasound. Mister Velasco! You're with me!

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY 2

Moretti walks fast, Rick tries to keep up.

MORETTI

Definitely not psychiatric, right? The reason you quit school?

RICK

No. And I didn't exactly quit.

MORETTI

In any event: asking her about chronic hand pain? That's coddling. Don't coddle patients.

RICK

I was trying to be attentive...

MORETTI

She wanted to know we were on the pregnancy - *medically* - that's what I gave her reassurance of.

RICK

I thought maybe her hand -

MORETTI

You were getting all new agey empathetic because she lost a baby once. Don't. Our job is to make sure she doesn't lose this one.

(hands him a file)

A lot of internists are scared to manage diabetes in pregnancy, but I like the challenge of it. I designed my own spreadsheet for monitoring all of the variables.

He regards an impossibly complicated, thorough spreadsheet.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

As long as you stay on top of all the numbers, there is no reason not to have optimal glycemic control. And yes - there will be a quiz.

She is something of a force of nature. He is impressed.

INT. URGENT CARE - DAY 2

More crowded and haphazard than Medicine. Moretti is at the bedside of ALLISON LEARY (16), whose father FRED (40) brought her in. The girl is docile, intent on scribbling notes in a notebook. Urgent Care resident WALLACE breaks it down.

WALLACE

Dad reports the girl's been demonstrating uncharacteristic behaviors for almost a week.

Rick watches her taking notes. The page is filled with tiny writing, a few pictures interspersed; one is of the exam table, one is of the clock on the wall. And MUSICAL NOTES.

FRED

She's been staying in her room a lot - up late, writing, praying.

FRED (CONT'D)

We're not even religious, it just came out of nowhere.

ALLISON

(singsongy)
*...His eye is on the sparrow
and I know he watches me...*

FRED (CONT'D)

And then sometimes she has these spells: screaming, throwing things.

MORETTI

Any drug use, Allison?

RICK

'Ally.' She goes by 'Ally.'
(off Moretti's look)
It's there, in her notebook.

ON NOTEBOOK - She has scribbled 'Ally' in a bunch of places.

ALLISON

Drugs? No, God hates drugs.

MORETTI

What do you remember about the past few days?

ALLISON

I remember my dad seeming scared a lot. And not being sure what was going on. I mean, I feel fine, but then, something just takes over me.

WALLACE

Psych intern already did an exam.

MORETTI

Any family history of mental illness, Mister Leary?

FRED

I don't know. Ally was adopted. We lost my wife a few years ago - it's just her and me now.

We hear entering Psych Attending LEONARD KIRKENDALL (late 30's, solid), trailing a small cadre of residents behind him.

KIRKENDALL

...a great opportunity for you all to check out a case of first-episode psychosis...
(seeing Moretti)
Oh, hey there, Nik.

MORETTI

Doctor Kirkendall.

His casualness meets her formality. It's awkward.

KIRKENDALL

I left you a message, about that thing we needed to discuss - I guess you've been busy.

MORETTI

Sorry, I'll get back to you soon.

KIRKENDALL

About the thing.

MORETTI

Right. The thing.

KIRKENDALL

It's been a week.

MORETTI

I know it has.

Tension. Rick clocks the dynamic - it doesn't take a genius.

KIRKENDALL

We'll do a basic work-up: labs, CT.
With new-onset psychosis, the most
usual cause is drugs...

RICK

She doesn't do drugs.

Stopped, Kirkendall blinks at him, then turns to Fred.

KIRKENDALL

You dad? I'm gonna give Allison...

MORETTI/RICK

'Ally.'

KIRKENDALL

...10 migs of Olanzapine IM now to
control her symptoms, and send you
home with a prescription.

Rick has moved closer to Allison, quietly muttering as she
leans over her notebook - he sees her touch her forehead.

ALLISON

Ooh, my head. It's like the
Lord is in there.

KIRKENDALL (CONT'D)

Set a follow-up within a
week, plus look into
substance abuse options.

Allison WINCES slightly - and so does Rick.

FRED

There's no need for that...

SYNESTHESIA VISION - The SCREEN GOES QUICKLY BLUE - in Rick's
POV, we see her scribbles and scrawls swim on the screen, in
shifting formations. And then we flash to -

*Rick (age 16) - alone, in a HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM, hunched
over a composition book. Completely focused on what he is
doing - ALGEBRA - not paying attention to his surroundings.
The classroom is bright, clean, empty and silent. The only
sound is Rick's pen on the paper. The sense of total focus.*

BACK TO NOW - RICK TOUCHES HIS HEAD

ALLISON

(writing/muttering)
His eye is on the sparrow.
Where to now, little bird?

KIRKENDALL

Let's see what the tests say,
but she seems delusional, is
likely hearing voices...

FRED (CONT'D)

She says she isn't.

KIRKENDALL

Patients often deny auditory
hallucinations...

RICK

She's not hearing voices.

They all turn to him. He's standing by Ally, faced off
against the others across the room. Kirkendall bristles.

KIRKENDALL

And how do you know that?

RICK

She's too...

He is figuring it out - processing how his echo of what she's
feeling triggers something in him which allows him a deeper
understanding: *FLASHCUT - the algebra.*

RICK (CONT'D)

...focused.

KIRKENDALL

Who are you? - Who is he?

MORETTI

A fourth year rotating in medicine.

RICK

Rick Velasco. I really think -

KIRKENDALL

Yeah. No. But, until you have a
long coat, you know, just...

Shhh - he puts a finger to his lips, as a Nurse enters with a
syringe; Kirkendall administers the olanzapine, and puts on
some bedside manner.

KIRKENDALL (CONT'D)

Thank you, Judy, I've got that.
This will help for now, Allison -
'Ally' - then we'll see you again
soon and get to the bottom of this.

The girl is looking at him, helpless and uneasy. Fred has a
look of grim acceptance. Moretti shoots a look at Rick, who
looks down at Ally, scribbling away.

INT. MEDICINE DEPARTMENT/ADMIN DESK - DAY 2

ON A NOTEBOOK - scribbles, similar to Allison's but not the same. Music notes, the number 8 repeatedly, algebraic equations, colors. REVEAL RICK - doodling on a scrip pad.

FLASHCUT - Rick as a child (5) scribbling on a piece of paper. Multi-colored letters, numbers floating, a self-portrait of him drifting in clouds - almost Chagall-like. A SOUND draws his attention back to NOW -

A LITTLE BOY rolls by in a wheelchair. The boy smiles at him; Rick smiles back. As he ponders something, distracted -

MORETTI

How can you possibly know if that girl is hearing voices or not?

Snapping to, Rick puts the pad away.

RICK

I don't *know*, but, based on my observation... I had a feeling.

MORETTI

Wait, what? Did you just say..?

RICK

A feeling.

MORETTI

A *feeling*? What the hell is that?!

RICK

You don't know what a feeling is?

MORETTI

I know what it is, I just don't know what on earth it has to do with us doing our jobs. Unless we're shamans - and we're not.

RICK

You make fancy spread sheets - I get feelings.

MORETTI

A feeling is not a diagnostic tool - or a justification to contradict an attending. Is that why you got kicked out of med school?

RICK

I didn't get kicked out.

MORETTI

Well, keep it up. It'll be why you
get kicked out this time. Come on,
other patients to see.

Medicine Residents Pierce and Harris come running up, both
wanting to be Moretti's favorite:

PIERCE

Um, Doctor Moretti? They just
called from downstairs -

HARRIS

Your urgent care girl is in
trouble.

EXT. HOSPITAL ENTRANCE/PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Allison in full-on distress, ranting and raving, combative,
screaming, out of control. She is evading her father, who is
trying to corral her. She slaps his hands off with force.

ALLISON

Stop following me! You want to
hurt me! You're from Satan!

FRED

Ally, please baby, please!

ALLISON (CONT'D)

He sent you to kill me!

Moretti and Rick exit, trailed by the Nurse and some others.

MORETTI

Call security.

Allison steps out into the flow of traffic, which comes to a
stop, with much HONKING.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Ally - I don't want you or anyone
else to get hurt -

ALLISON

Why are you trying to kill me?

She gets up on the base of a lighting stanchion, 5 feet up.
As she does we SWITCH TO RICK'S POV -

*Dizzy, light-headed, horns BLARING, people and cars WHIRRING
BY. A SWIRL of stimuli. In and out of her POV and his -
disorienting. He struggles to equalize.*

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I won't let you kill me!

SECURITY

Miss! You need to get down from
there! Now, miss!

As SECURITY GUARDS approach, she hops down, darts a different way, crossing into the path of traffic going another way and just as she is in danger of being hit by a car -

IN HER POV, we see the vehicle bearing down on her - hear the tire screeching, the brakes grinding - and -

SWOOSH! Rick swoops in and pulls her off to the side, to safety. They both fall to the ground, with him subduing her as she struggles, flailing and weeping into him.

MORETTI

Let's get her in restraints and
back inside! Stat page Kirkendall!

As orderlies roll towards her with a gurney, Moretti sees *Rick whisper to the girl, soothingly. We don't hear it.* As they load her onto the gurney, he remains on the ground - looking pretty messed-up, depleted - Moretti looks at him.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

...Are you all right?

Rick nods, trying to shake it off. It's disconcerting. She's perplexed and concerned. Frustrated with himself -

RICK

I'm fine.
(stands, a bit wobbly)
I'm fine!

He walks off to join Ally's gurney, leaving Moretti baffled.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. URGENT CARE - DAY - TEN MINUTES LATER - DAY 2

Allison is wheeled back in, strapped down, Fred and Rick accompanying. Not far behind, Moretti walks with Kirkendall. Pierce and Harris are also there.

KIRKENDALL

So, the olanzapine wasn't enough.

ALLISON

You're all animals!

The gurney moves into a room, as Rick tries to mollify her -

RICK

All right, Ally, easy now.

ALLISON

Why are you killing me?! I can't stay here... let me go!

And now, as Rick focuses on her, her jaw, her mouth - the SCREEN GOES VIOLET - and we hear Rick saying the words too (but only in his perspective, not in real time)...

ALLISON/RICK

Let. Me. Go.

The words have a strangely halting, staccato rhythm. In Rick's mind eye, the visual field cuts - half of the screen going briefly dark. He's mirroring her seizure.

KIRKENDALL

Haldol, 5 migs IM - no, make it 10.

RICK

It's not psychosis. It's seizures.
(off the others' surprise)
She has a halting speech pattern,
visual field impairment...

KIRKENDALL

Seizures?! Nik, please -

RICK

I'm familiar with the difference
between neuro and psych disorders -
I've had experience in that area -

Harris looks to Pierce, as an aside:

HARRIS
No surprise there.

KIRKENDALL
You are zebra-hunting when the patient perfectly fits a profile of first time psychosis.

RICK
You know as well as I do the frequency of that misdiagnosis with young people...

MORETTI
Velasco.

KIRKENDALL
(ignores him)
Push the haldol, 10 migs -

RICK
Why not try a rush EEG?

KIRKENDALL
EEG? Nik please, this guy...

RICK
Now, while she's still ictal.

Pierce and Harris are astonished by Rick's assertiveness. Feeling in a corner, Moretti breaks through the static -

MORETTI
Okay, enough! Take a walk, Rick.
Allan's office. Ten minutes.

What? He's stunned. Dejected, he looks at Allison and goes. Kirkendall nods approval; Moretti is ambivalent.

KIRKENDALL
Kid's out of line.

She becomes distracted, noticing Rick, through the window, walking away. Sees him *shiver* - a quick, small shudder.

PIERCE
Pretty bold for a med student.

She is looking at Allison, muttering quietly, and notices, prominent GOOSE BUMPS dotting her arms.

MORETTI

You see that? The goose bumps?

KIRKENDALL

Could be a heroin-induced reaction.

MORETTI

She's got pilo-erection across both arms - everybody knows that can be an autonomic symptom of seizures. It's straight out of JAMA, January 2013 - the one with, you know, the Escher drawing on the cover.

He is stopped by that. She is a knowledge freak.

KIRKENDALL

You remember the covers?

MORETTI

(on the move)

Okay, folks, we're moving her for a rush EEG, no time to lose.

Pierce and Harris hop to it.

INT. WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY 2

Walker slams shut the text book he has open on his desk.

WALKER

It's called *maturity*!

RICK

That's easy to say, with a sick girl lying in there -

WALKER

Look, I get it: there's a lot of stimuli you are dealing with - but having a synesthetic sense of something isn't reason to start arguing with everyone around you.

RICK

So what, ignore my instincts?

WALKER

It's about adjusting, learning how to manage them - *apply* them.

RICK

That's what I was doing!

WALKER

Do you think it might be better to be more open about your condition?

RICK

'*Trait,*' Allan. It's not a disease, or a disorder -

WALKER

Yes, I know, sorry -

RICK

Some students are good at tests. Me? I sense stuff more vividly. It's part of the package. Part of my exam. It can't be the defining thing. I have to be a good doctor.
(resolute)
I will be a good doctor.

WALKER

If I didn't think you'd be a great doctor, do you think I'd go to all this trouble to get you back in? But you need to consider opening up, at least to Moretti -

They are interrupted by Moretti entering, full head of steam.

MORETTI

MAD. Mutually assured destruction. That's what this is, Allan. He ruins my career, then I kill him.

WALKER

We're discussing it...

MORETTI

I'm not sure how I'll ever mend fences with Kirkendall...

RICK

I don't think I'm the only problem you have with him.
(off their sharp looks)
Sorry. I only meant to think that.

MORETTI

See that? Snark. He's snarky.

RICK

It's a consequence of a severe mental filter deficiency.

Huh?! Walker and Moretti move on -

WALKER

For the record, Nicole, you were right: there was no need to force Kirkendall to get the EEG -

MORETTI

No, there wasn't! But I did.

RICK

...You got the EEG?

MORETTI

Please, the adults are talking now.

She shows Walker the EEG on her tablet screen. Here is the proverbial 'lead' she has been burying -

WALKER

It looks like the girl has...

MORETTI

Seizure activity in her temporal lobes.

Walker and Rick both react: *he was right?*

MORETTI (CONT'D)

The compulsive scribbling, the hyper-religiosity? It makes sense.

Rick smiles, subtly feeling appreciative and vindicated. As she spins around at him, his smile promptly flattens out.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Not a word, Rain Man.
(then, to Walker)
So - it's now a neuro case.

WALKER

Did you load her with - ?

MORETTI

Dilantin - 15 migs per kig, which broke the seizure.

WALKER

We need to scan her -

MORETTI

STAT head CT, she'll get the follow up MRI on Thursday.

WALKER

LP?

MORETTI

Harper will prep it right after the CT, and page me to supervise.

WALKER

Good. Why don't you take a break? You look like you could use one. This was just a bump in the road...

MORETTI

Bump? The whole road has been bumps. If there weren't bumps, there'd be no road at all.

WALKER

He was right, wasn't he? He helped put us on the correct course for this patient. Besides, I'm fairly sure half a day as chief would be the shortest tenure ever.

She takes a beat - of course he has two compelling points.

MORETTI

You have some kind of spidey sense or something?

RICK

Not exactly.

She is peering at him, knowing something else is up here.

MORETTI

Just because you got lucky with a diagnosis doesn't justify all this... I mean, it does a *little*, but...

(flustered, leaving)

I need to take care of something.

Walker is looking at Rick, who is brooding knowing that Moretti is confounded - perhaps unfairly. Beat.

WALKER

It's 11 AM. Process Group.

RICK

I have to go to Process Group?

WALKER

Yes. While she's processing - you can do some processing of your own. Use it for what it's there for - a safe place to open up. To talk.

INT. HOSPITAL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 2

A group of students assembled, including HENRY (pompous), BERNARD (schlubby), and preppy but cute DOT, Tennessee accent. The door swings open - they turn to see Rick there.

DOT

Are you the new group leader?

RICK

Uh, no. I'm just joining up.

HENRY

Henry Kirchner, third year.

BERNARD

Bernard Lee, second.

DOT

Dorothy Tabor, I'm a virgin.
(off his look)

First year. My friends call me Dot.

Okay... As he takes a place, Rick shows a certain discomfort in this social situation.

RICK

Rick Velasco, it's my fourth year.
Sort of - second time around.

DOT

Oh, sure. I heard about you.

It comes out with an intrigued, allured tone.

RICK

Did you?

HENRY

You're the guy who flamed out?

RICK

I wouldn't put it that way but -

DOT

What's it matter? You're back now.

She puts her hand on his shoulder. It makes him uncomfortable. He gently guides her hand off him.

RICK
Yep. Back I am.

INT. PSYCHIATRY DEPARTMENT - DOCTORS' LOUNGE - DAY 2

Moretti enters to find Kirkendall staring at ESPN on the TV. He's talking generally, not having seen her enter -

KIRKENDALL
God, the Bruins power play is so excruciatingly lame.

MORETTI
Swedish kid's a bust. Weak stick handling, soft on the boards...

He looks over at her. A little wistful.

KIRKENDALL
Oh no. You don't get to avoid me for a week and then barge in here -

MORETTI
Barge? I didn't 'barge.'

KIRKENDALL
- And start talking hockey with me. Do you know how hurtful that is?

It's something they used to bond over - he's vulnerable.

KIRKENDALL (CONT'D)
After the way you ditched me - in between periods?! at a Sabres game!? - with the B's down 4 to 1?

MORETTI
We weren't a good fit, Lenny.

KIRKENDALL
It's someone else, isn't it? That radiologist from Baton Rouge?
(a bad Cajun drawl)
'Oh, I grill up crawfish on the weekends, come on over.'
(off her sad head shake)
It's not that med student, is it? Sure seemed like there was some secret communication going on-

MORETTI

God, no. Don't be absurd. I hardly even know him.

KIRKENDALL

Never seen such a weird mix of arrogance and, I don't know what... You want to smack him but, if you did, he looks like he might just break in two.

She doesn't want to talk about Rick now.

MORETTI

I don't want what happened between us to interfere with our working --

KIRKENDALL

'Not a good fit?' That's weak. And an easy as hell way to brush your own issues under the rug.

MORETTI

My issues?

KIRKENDALL

You're a very untrusting person. And the thing is... you expect people to disappoint you. You seem to be waiting for it. Like you only trust yourself.

She stews on that, a moment of revelatory insight from him.

KIRKENDALL (CONT'D)

And sure, that might make you highly competent and super independent, but you know what else it'll make you? Very lonely.

(checks his watch)

Dammit. I'm late for, you know... doing my job, or whatever.

He leaves her there, pondering.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AS BEFORE - DAY 2

The group is seated around the table now, jokingly talking about how they ended up in med school. Henry is tossing crumpled papers into a trash can, basketball-style.

HENRY

Why'd I decide on med school?
Well, my father was threatening to
enlist me in the family business.
Portable toilet rentals.

BERNARD

This was my fallback career -
Harvard Business turned me down.

DOT

What about you, Rick?

He takes a beat, thinking back on Walker's advice...

RICK

I uh... I got sick in eleventh
grade.

FLASHCUT - On A SCHOOLYARD, two boys fight. Rick at 17 is among the spectators. A boy punches another - he falls down. The boy kicks the fallen one in the gut. Rick crumples over.

RICK (CONT'D)

Something was wrong, in my head.

FLASHCUT - Young Rick, in a HIGH SCHOOL REST ROOM, hyper-ventilating and vomiting into a sink.

RICK (CONT'D)

Went to a bunch of doctors... they
couldn't figure me out. Until I
met this neurologist.

FLASHCUT - In AN OFFICE, Rick is being shown a brain diagram, with neuron illustrations, etc. by an unseen doctor. Rick looks over to a desk - Walker's brain model: "sublimity." Reveal WALKER, ten years younger.

RICK (CONT'D)

That - plus who I was, the tools I
had - led me here, I guess. We all
want to find that thing that'll
make us happy, right? That we can
be good at. Something special.

DOT

So why'd you take the time off?

FLASHCUT - THE DEAD BOY again.

RICK

Hard to explain but... sometimes,
the things that make me think I
belong here are the same things
that make me think I don't.

The door opens, and heads turn to see -

KIRKENDALL

Sorry, folks, stuck in a consult.

Rick's look: great, just great. Kirkendall sees him.

KIRKENDALL (CONT'D)

Velasco. Nice to see you again.
(as he sits, to group)
Len Kirkendall, I'm a Psych
Attending. Some of you know me -
but here, I'm just facilitating the
conversation. So whatever has
occurred, or will occur, out there:
what happens in Process Group,
stays in Process Group.

INT. MEDICINE DEPARTMENT - DAY 2

Moretti steps up to pregnant Rose and Laurel.

MORETTI

Hello, Rose. Back again. I'm
gonna cop a feel, okay?

As Rose lifts her shirt to expose her belly, and Moretti
starts to palpate, Rick arrives.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

How was Process Group?

RICK

Best facilitator ever.

MORETTI

McGurney from Pedes?

RICK

Kirkendall from Psych.

As Moretti's expression sags -

ROSE

Oh!

Rose has a sudden pain - as does Rick, who masks it as well as he can. But Moretti notices, and is perplexed. She palpates Rose's belly, then -

MORETTI

Mister Velasco, feel this.

Reluctant, he concedes. As he palpates, he averts his gaze, looking away. He's doing it the old-fashioned way, sans synesthetic advantage. But his looking away is off-putting.

ROSE

Is he..? Are you okay?

RICK

Yes, ma'am, just palpating.
(as Moretti peers at him)
Yep, pre-labor contraction.

MORETTI

(re: ultrasound,
concerned)

Rose, I want to do another
ultrasound and have a talk with OB.

LAUREL

Is something wrong?

MORETTI

Probably not. But I'd like to hear
what they have to say. All right?
(going, to Rick)
We have a spinal tap to get to.

INT. PROCEDURE ROOM - DAY 2

AN INTERN prepares to do a lumbar puncture on Allison. Moretti, Rick and Fred are there.

ALLISON

Will this hurt?

INTERN

Not much - only a pinch.

FRED

(to Rick)

I'm glad you're here for this. She
was asking for you.

RICK

(to Ally, reassuring)

We're gonna figure this out.

The Intern raises the needle into position, touching her back. As he does, we FOCUS ON RICK'S HAND - inching up his own spine, as he responds to a tingling sensation. It is almost an unconscious reaction for him; Moretti takes note.

MORETTI

You okay?

RICK

Yeah, it's probably nothing.

The Intern prepares to inject - now Rick squirms, subtly.

RICK (CONT'D)

You're off a little, to the left.

MORETTI

Seriously?

INTERN

How can you possibly..?

MORETTI

Ever see ET? It's like that.

INTERN

I never liked that movie.

MORETTI

Try again. Just... try again.

The Intern re-positions the needle, and then glances over at Rick to gauge how he's reacting. This bugs Moretti.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Don't look at him, why look at him?

The Intern quickly looks down again. But over her shoulder, he manages to sneak another peek at Rick, who gives a small nod of approval. With that, the Intern proceeds.

INT. HALLWAY/MORETTI'S OFFICE/ALLISON'S ROOM - DAY 2

Moretti leads Rick to her office, adorned with Bruins gear.

MORETTI

Incongruous shivering, disembodied fetal kicks, spinal radar - at first I figured you for some sort of palm-reading empath - which I think is utter bunk.

(MORE)

MORETTI (CONT'D)

But you were right about the seizures, and you do seem to have a weird kind of visceral insight... So, I'm just saying: I want what you're smoking.

(off his ambivalence)

A relationship like this has to be built on a certain amount of...

(avoiding 'trust')

Whatever. Don't tell me.

She goes into her office. He stops...

FLASHCUT - *RICK leans against the ER wall, stuck where he was when the Boy was wheeled away. We hear hushed whispers: "He's been there for an hour." "What's wrong with that guy?"*

NOW - Rick shakes it off, looks into her office. Can he trust her? Maybe he has to. He goes in. She is surprised.

RICK

Do you know what synesthesia is?

MORETTI

Uh..? Stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway leading to automatic, involuntary experiences in a second sensory or cognitive pathway. Like someone who smells color, or sees music.

RICK

I have that.

MORETTI

You do..? Really? So tell me: what does Beethoven smell like?

RICK

In addition to color grapheme synesthesia, I have a more exotic offshoot, called 'mirror touch.'

MORETTI

...Uh-huh.

RICK

Wherein I have vivid responses to people's physical experiences. Pain, stimulation, whatever they feel - it's echoed in me.

MORETTI

Echoed?

RICK

We all have mirror neurons that fire when we act or observe the same action in others. Like when somebody yawns, and it triggers a yawn in you. With me, the mirror neurons stimulate sensory neurons to fire. At an abnormally high level. Like, all the time.

MORETTI

...So, with patients, you see something, you feel an 'echo,' and based on that, you get a hunch?

RICK

Strong hunches, based on the extra data I have available to me.

She is intrigued, but intimidated by what she does not grasp -

MORETTI

Okay. Well, I'm super smart and can expedite an MRI by pushing out my tits - we all have our thing. Why the big secret?

RICK

Because people usually look at me... well, the way you're looking at me. If they believe me, they think I'm damaged or freakish. If they don't, I'm loony or a faker.

MORETTI

Maybe you're making too big a deal of it. I mean, okay, you have a strong sense of intuition -

RICK

It's not just intuition -

MORETTI

Whatever it is, you're not the only one with strong feelings. And mine at the moment are mostly hostile so watch out for that 'echo.' Bottom line is... Come here.

She opens the door, points out down the hall - they can see into Allison's room. She is asleep in bed - beside her, Fred sits, stressed, squeezing hard on his styrofoam coffee cup.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Science is gonna save that girl.
Not some hocus-pocus parlor trick.
Medical science. That's what we
need to focus on.

RICK

I know how it sounds: 'mirror
touch.' But I'm not nuts. It's a
real thing. And it's awesome.
...And it sucks.

As she and he hold a look, with her assessing him, Fred
appears out across the hall, calling out -

FRED

Help, something's happening!

Moretti and Rick rush over into Allison's room to find her -
writhing and seizing most violently. It's terrifying. They
move to the bed, trying to examine and pacify her. Pierce
and Harris are not far behind.

MORETTI

All right, Ally, all right!

FRED

Is the dilantin not working?

RICK

She's having what's called a
breakthrough seizure.

FRED

What's that? Is she getting worse?

Moretti shoots Rick a look - in her eyes the answer: 'yes.'

MORETTI

Load 5 migs of Ativan, right away!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. MEDICINE DEPARTMENT - MORETTI'S OFFICE - DAY 3

Moretti sits looking at a cardboard box filled with some of her belongings - a sweatshirt, magazines, CDs, a stuffed bear in a Harvard sweater, a Bruins toothbrush. She is fixated.

RICK

I just checked on Ally - she's been stable all night - no seizures.

MORETTI

I know. I got her pushed ahead for a stat MRI this morning.

She's sitting there, obsessing on the box. Pierce peeks in -

PIERCE

Um, everybody's ready. For rounds?

Moretti nods; Pierce goes. Moretti gets her steth, gears up.

MORETTI

You know what's overrated? Trust. Trust is way overrated. Trust *yourself*, that's what I say.

RICK

And who exactly do you say that to?

MORETTI

Still. My Bobby Orr toothbrush? That's just so sad.

RICK

I was engaged once, for awhile, but... She was a little 'erratic.'

MORETTI

So, you're saying: *you* were the stable one?

RICK

Personal intimacy can be a little challenging for me.

MORETTI

Sure, sex with a synesthetic? How's a girl supposed to fake her orgasm?

(MORE)

MORETTI (CONT'D)
(off his 'wow' look)
I did a little reading -

RICK
Too much, from the sound of it -

MORETTI
How strong are your 'echoes'?

RICK
If they catch me by surprise, they
can be very strong.

MORETTI
Can you tell the difference between
a mirror touch sensation and a real
one?

RICK
They're all 'real' to me.

She gets that as they are met by OB Resident JAN MARION (32).

MARION
Hi, I got the ultrasound for the
McCutchen baby - we'll keep an eye
on the abdominal circumference.

MORETTI
Keep an eye on it? It's already at
35cm - the kid's getting too big -
we should talk about induction.

MARION
That's an OB call. We're still pre-
term, there's insufficient cause to
induce, and the parents want -

MORETTI
- A natural birth, I know. Look,
I've been with them all the way
through, but I'm concerned about a
severely obstructed delivery -

MARION
No one can predict dystocia - not
even you. And we don't know how
big the baby really is. So let's
not jump the gun -

MORETTI

Check out Bouvlain's study in Lancet in June - inducing labor in suspected excess fetal size reduced the risk substantially -

MARION

That study excluded women with Type 1 diabetes, it doesn't apply here -

RICK

There's greater risk in Type 1, so isn't it even more applicable?

They both look at him - surprised, impressed.

MORETTI

Yeah. What he said.

MARION

I'm not comfortable talking that couple into inducing at this stage -

MORETTI

I am. I'm comfortable. If you'll agree to do it, I'll explain it to them. I'll make them understand.

Marion feels boxed in, defeated.

MARION

All right then. I'll get it going.

Annoyed, she goes. Moretti and Rick continue on.

RICK

That was not very deferential.

MORETTI

Don't even. That was not me *feeling*, that was me *knowing*. It's called 'science,' dude. Bone up on it. And I'm not a 4th year.

RICK

No, you're a chief. I get it.

She speaks to him sotto - kind of like a drug deal.

MORETTI

The mirror touch - it's triggered visually. That's why you looked away when I asked you to palpate?

RICK

I look away a lot. In the ER, I
looked away most of the time. If
there are too many stimuli, it can
be hard not to get lost.

MORETTI

Like out in the parking lot?
(off his nod, then)
Any other nifty synesthetic tricks?

RICK

I associate people with numbers.
(off her look, seriously?)
And colors. They have different
significances. Like I tend to be
wary of orange. Same with 5's.
They're nothing but trouble.

MORETTI

Hunh. And what am I? An 8, a 9?

Beat. He considers. As often, it can be hard to tell when
he is playing with you, and when he is being genuine.

RICK

You're a 2, with shades of fuschia.

MORETTI

A 2? Can't I be a 10? Just once?
I don't even care what it means.

He smiles as they see Allison being wheeled off. She calls
out to the Medicine team which is waiting by the Admin desk -

MORETTI (CONT'D)

You guys stay on the floor, please.
We need to make a run to MRI.
(as they go)
A 2? Really? A 2?!

INT. MRI SUITE/CONTROL ROOM - DAY 3

Rick, Walker and Fred stand by as Moretti looms over the
RADIOLOGIST. A screen shows Ally's brain scan.

RADIOLOGIST

No acute intracranial process. No
mass lesion, no hemorrhage...

MORETTI

No sign of mesial temporal
sclerosis.

The Radiologist shoots her a "back off" glare. She defers.

RADIOLOGIST

It's all normal, Doctor Walker.

FRED

That's good, right?

WALKER

Yes and no. I was hoping we'd find something we could treat, since the seizures are getting worse.

RICK

So what can we do now?

WALKER

Not much choice. Discharge her on the new anti-epileptics. Follow closely. See if anything develops.

Bummer all around. Allison is sliding out of the MRI. Rick heads in to meet her. She is striving for levity -

ALLISON

So - all fixed?

RICK

We're still figuring it out.

ALLISON

It's like my brain is betraying me.

He knows how that feels.

RICK

Sometimes - it's just the brain's way of trying to tell us something.

ALLISON

That first day. The minute you walked in the room - I felt like... like you could really see me. Like you knew what I was feeling.

As she talks, he is studying her face, and has a SYNESTHETIC REACTION - a flash of blue - followed by SPED-UP shots of her face, that show micro-gesticulations - a tiny twitch of an eye, a flutter of a lip, a crinkle of cheek. And in his own face, the gestures are mirrored. It's odd.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

And then in the parking lot - I was pretty out of it, like gone - but I could hear you. It was a song. It was sweet. That helped me.

(off his distraction)

Your eye... it's twitching.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY 3

Walker and Moretti are walking.

WALKER

I'd have her back in for follow-up in no more than two weeks...

RICK (O.S.)

Micro... fasciculations.

They turn to find him there, puffing, out of breath.

RICK (CONT'D)

Around her eyes and face. Tiny gestures... almost undetectable. I think she's still having seizures.

INT. MRI SUITE - DAY 3

Moretti examines Allison, along with Walker.

MORETTI

Good catch, but this is something else - not seizures.

WALKER

Bilateral, high frequency movements. It's more likely to have a metabolic cause.

MORETTI

Repeat lytes. And send a Calc-Mag-phos this time.

INT. WALKER'S OFFICE - DAY 3

Moretti and Rick hover over test results.

MORETTI

Calcium overload.

RICK

That's what's making her sick?

WALKER

No. Hypercalcemia causes all sorts of trouble, but one thing it doesn't do is cause seizures.

RICK

So she's got a seizure disorder and, on top of it, hypercalcemia?

MORETTI

Separate, but probably connected. Okay, let's think: elevated calcium and low phosphorus. According to Leitman's review in Current Opinions in Pediatrics, there are only three possible causes of combination hypercalcemia and hypophosphatemia in juveniles. (mental math elimination) No... No... Bingo: malignancy.

RICK

You think all of this could be caused by an occult cancer?

MORETTI

It explains the calcium and it could explain the seizures too. The immune system attacks cancer hard, and its antibodies can attack the brain too. It'll only get worse until we can find the cancer and remove it. Let's send a PTHrP.

RICK

PTHrP? What's that?

MORETTI

'Parathyroid hormone related peptide.' It's a hormone only cancer cells secrete. If we detect any at all, it means I'm right.

Walker is impressed, as he leads them out.

WALKER

Elegant hypothesis. Chase that down, and get back to me.

He goes. Rick is looking at Moretti with admiration.

RICK
I know, I know. Science, dude.

MORETTI
You have Process Group; I have nerd
stuff to do. Keep your pager on.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PROCESS GROUP - DAY 3

Kirkendall leads the group. The others talk more initially,
but we are focused on Rick's expressions and inner thinking.

KIRKENDALL
What else? Just throw the gripes
out there.

BERNARD
Unending work.

HENRY
Being scared you'll screw up and
it'll cost somebody's life.

DOT
Being constantly evaluated.

BERNARD
And not just for how much you know -
but how you think, interact, what
kind of person you are.

Kirkendall is in tune and effective here in his element.

KIRKENDALL
So when the grind gets you down,
what are the ramifications of that?
How does it impact you?

HENRY
You can start seeing the patient as
just the disease.

BERNARD
Or a task you need to get done.

DOT
Or the opposite. You connect too
much, get too involved. Emotional.

KIRKENDALL

Right. We always have to be juggling the scientist part of our job - the part that requires us to think - with the empathetic part that requires us to feel.

DOT

How do you do that?

Kirkendall looks around, waiting on an answer. Anyone?

RICK

You have to find some balance.

KIRKENDALL

And what's that for you, Velasco?

RICK

You dig in deep and when you have to - unplug. Pop in the ear buds, drift away. Or go off on your own. Ride. Climb. Something where nothing is blurring the lines.

KIRKENDALL

What lines?

RICK

Between where you end and the patient begins.

They are intrigued by this comment - Kirkendall nods.

KIRKENDALL

Whatever it takes not to get lost in it. Okay, that's it for today.

As the group disperses, Dot lingers behind. Flirty.

DOT

Hey. I'm having trouble in gross anatomy. I could really use some help with dissecting. My dissecting's not very good.

Off her sweet, pleading look and his reluctance -

TIME CUT TO:

A DEAD BODY on an exam table - tattooed, young, muscular.

DOT (CONT'D)

It's pancreas time for Jeremy.

INT. GROSS ANATOMY CLASSROOM - NIGHT 3

REVEAL RICK - a bit uncomfortable. Dot gets out instruments.

RICK

Aren't the cadavers anonymous?

DOT

I gave him a name, because I know him so well. He loves to fish, he's a fan of the Rolling Stones - see the tattoos? - and he drank too much, that's clear from his liver. Broke his arm once, too.

(off Rick, a bit wan)

Why do you look like that?

RICK

I just... I have a strange reaction to dead bodies.

FLASHCUT - *Rick, naked, sprawled out on the table, in Jeremy's place. His eyes pop open - freaked.*

DOT

I find you really fascinating, you know. Like, on one hand, you're kind of off-putting. Cocky, or arrogant, or something. But on the other, there's something very... I don't know, vulnerable. Like, aching, about you. Yeah: *aching*.

(sits beside him)

I had a friend who worked in neuro last year, he told me...

RICK

Told you what?

She shrugs. And then - places her hand on his thigh.

DOT

When I do this... what do you feel?

He's aroused, but not really enjoying it. Reluctant.

RICK

Your hand... on my quadricep. And, fingertips... on my, um, adductor.

DOT

That's all?

FLASHCUT - *Orange-dappled frame, a '5' drifts by.*

RICK

It's a much more complicated question than you might imagine.

DOT

I have a very vivid imagination.

Dot smiles, lasciviously. And suddenly - kisses him. It catches him by surprise. He pushes away.

RICK

Sorry... I'm just... it's a lot of orange. And oh - look at the time. My mom's waiting on me.
(to the cadaver)
Jeremy: good luck.

EXT. BROWNSTONE APARTMENT BUILDING - BOSTON - NIGHT 3

Rick walks up the steps in a mixed, working class neighborhood. Salsa music drifts out from a window.

INT. VELASCO APARTMENT - NIGHT 3

As Rick enters, he is surprised to find the place full of people - relatives, friends, a festive mood. He doesn't know quite what is going on when Sandra finds him through the crowd. A drunk cousin, OMAR, wraps an arm around him.

OMAR

Reunited and it feels so good?!

SANDRA

Enrique! It's gonna be perfect!

RICK

Wait, you didn't -

And then he sees moving towards him through the crowd - JAVIER VELASCO (25, scruffy good looks, dangerous charm). A tentative and tense look between the brothers.

JAVIER

Hey, bro, how you been?

Rick has little to say, tightening up, shutting down.

SANDRA

We talked about it - me and Javier. He's gonna stay here, in the old room, and work at the restaurant.

RICK

You got it all figured out.

JAVIER

I know what you think, but I ain't gonna blow it. I'll help tide us over until you get done with school and start raking in the dough.

Rick's PAGER goes off - he looks at it, then at his mother:

RICK

You told me the fridge was leaking.

SANDRA

I wanted to surprise you.

RICK

You knew I wouldn't come otherwise.

As he blows out, a hush comes over the room.

INT. MORETTI'S OFFICE - NIGHT 3

Moretti, scrolling through labs, articles, websites, scans, graph bars, on multiple monitors. She is on a caffeinated roll, a bit of the mad scientist as Rick enters -

MORETTI

CEA, CA19, BRCA...

RICK

You paged me?

MORETTI

I've sent every cancer biomarker I can think of...

RICK

Wait: Ally has cancer?

MORETTI

The PTHrP was positive.

RICK

But there's nothing on her scans.

MORETTI

Whatever it is, must be small. I did get a few hits - Ca-125 is elevated, IL-18, HE-4...

RICK

Those levels aren't high enough,
are they?

MORETTI

Right, exactly! Hold on, I got it!

She starts typing frantically. Rick watches her, perplexed and amazed. An article flashes up on the screen.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

None of them alone is high enough,
but put them together and...

(typing)

...Bingo: ovarian cancer!

RICK

You're happy because you've just
diagnosed a teenage girl with a
disease that frequently has a
catastrophic survival rate?

MORETTI

No, I'm *hopeful* - because instead
of sitting around wondering what
the hell is going on, we now know
what we're fighting. And that
gives us a chance to save her.

We go out off the various screens and printouts, ending up on Ally Leary's chart, with her smiling photo inset.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. WALKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 3

Walker with Moretti and Rick.

WALKER

Ovarian cancer?! Why didn't the tumor show up on the scans?

MORETTI

These tumors can be highly active. Even a microscopic tumor could secrete enough PTHrP -

WALKER

Yes, yes, got it. But you are proposing major exploratory surgery, and possibly bilateral ovarian removal, in a 17 year old based only on your hunch.

RICK

It started as a hunch, Allan -

MORETTI

A *synesthetic* hunch which you of all people should appreciate -

RICK

But it's safe to say it has now 'matured' into an informed scientific theory.

MORETTI

I'm trying to be a good mentor.

He takes them in, aligned and spitting his words back at him.

WALKER

I can't mandate an exploratory surgery in a case like this...

MORETTI

I know. We have to convince a surgeon to take a shot.

WALKER

Yep. Godspeed with that.

He goes. Rick looks at the desk, then sees the brain model has been moved away, up high up on a shelf against the wall.

RICK

He put his brain where we can't touch it.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF/PUTTING GREEN - DAY 4

THWAP! DR. GEORGE EDWARDS (40's) hits a solid putt on a makeshift putting green. Moretti and Rick look on.

EDWARDS

I'm not removing the ovaries of a healthy young girl based on a resident's hypothesis.

RICK

Chief Resident.

MORETTI

But let's not quibble.

EDWARDS

I don't cut what I can't see.

A CHOPPER lowers down to a nearby helipad, loud and breezy. The golf ball rolls with the breeze, of its own accord.

EDWARDS (CONT'D)

Medevacs really mess with my game.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - FOOD LINE - DAY 4

DR. HENRIETTA BILLINGTON (50's) chooses her food delicately as Moretti and Rick trail her. She declines a pretzel roll.

BILLINGTON

I miss gluten. Nowadays, you reach for a roll, people look at you like you're chewing on a puppy.

MORETTI

We have multiple elevated tumor markers, Ca-125, HE4...

BILLINGTON

Both of which are non-specific for ovarian cancer.

MORETTI

But in combination they could be.

BILLINGTON

There's a credo I try to live by...

RICK

"Don't cut what you can't see."

BILLINGTON

Exactly. Pass the kale?

INT. SURGICAL LOUNGE - DAY 4

DR. FRANK STROM is writing charts as they work on him.

STROM

I read that study, intriguing. But there was still a false positive rate of 7%. That's too high.

Moretti is starting to feel dejected.

RICK

Yeah, that's what Edwards said.

STROM

Edwards? You asked *him*?

And Rick ZOOMS IN on the expression on Strom's face - we get an ECU of it - the slightest micro-expression of jealousy.

RICK

He said if he won't do it, nobody would.

STROM

Edwards?! If it's not for big pharma, he doesn't even show up.

MORETTI

(picks up on it)

Yes, well it is a very bold procedure. *Very*.

Strom looks at them, re-considering.

STROM

So you want to do speculative major surgery that could leave a young girl infertile.

MORETTI

And/or... save her life.

After a long beat:

STROM

I want you both there with me.

INT. ALLISON'S ROOM - DAY 4

Moretti, Rick, Allison and Fred.

ALLISON

It might save my life?

RICK

Yes, if it's what we think it is.

ALLISON

But I won't be able to have a baby?

MORETTI

Not if we have to remove both ovaries.

ALLISON

Will you... have to do that?

RICK

We hope not. We'll try to avoid it.

FRED

No. I can't let you do this. You need my permission and there is no way I am okay with -

ALLISON

Dad... Come here.

(as he moves close to her)

You didn't make me. You chose me.
And if that's what I get to do a long time from now - choose a child - I'll be a lucky girl.

Eyes welling, Fred looks down and nods.

INT. WAITING AREA - DAY

Rick is charting at the Admin Desk when a coffee is slid in front of him - he looks up to see:

JAVIER

It was a long time ago. I changed, okay? Let me prove it.

RICK

He was dying, and you were where?
Off getting high. For weeks. All
he wanted was his family back
together. One last time.

JAVIER

I was 19 years old, I was stupid.
I was scared!

RICK

Don't be too hard on yourself.

JAVIER

I was always the disappointment,
the screw-up. When we was little.
You were the smart one. The good
kid. Me? I just got stupider and
more screwed up. Not anymore.

RICK

You broke their hearts, Javy. I
know what that felt like. I felt
it with them.

Javy nods, knows it's true. But not to the extent Rick does.

JAVIER

That place is papi's legacy, it's
all we got left of him. Let me
help her save it while you go and
save the world. I don't want to
keep being this guy.

It's an unusually vulnerable and frank assessment. He turns
to a bench - where a boy, about 4 years old, sits, waiting.

JAVIER (CONT'D)

Ay, Ben, come here and say hello to
your uncle.

Rick is stunned. The boy shyly reaches out and shakes hands.

RICK

...Hey. Nice to meet you.
(to Javier)
This is how you tell me?

JAVIER

His mom's out of the picture now.
Long story. Another time.
(then)
He reminds me of you back when.
Sensitive. Like you always were.
(MORE)

JAVIER (CONT'D)

I slammed my hand in a drawer last week, he's all like 'ow!' His fingers hurt for days.

Javier laughs as he tells it. Rick absorbs that: is the trait genetic? Does Ben share it? Moretti, who has observed a bit of this, steps closer.

MORETTI

Velasco: surgery's ready to go.

Rick nods; she goes. He addresses Javier, still tight -

RICK

Start on the sink. It's still clogged.

(to the boy)

I'll see you soon, okay, Ben?

The kid nods. Rick goes.

INT. OR - DAY 4

SERIES OF SHOTS: Ally rolls into the OR, surgeons scrub, Fred paces the hall, Rick, Moretti and Strom don masks. A second surgeon, MCAFFREY, looks to Strom, who looks to Moretti - who nods. The first incision is made - Rick averts his gaze.

ON A MONITOR that displays the procedure -

MCAFFREY

Retracting the rectus abdominis, should be able to see the ovaries... now.

Strom, Moretti and Rick all peer into the pelvic cavity...

STROM

I don't see anything unusual.
(puts his loops on)
Both ovaries look healthy. Do you want to keep going?

Moretti is ambivalent, nervous as we've never seen her. But gathers some resolve - the science is right.

MORETTI

Yes.

In the gallery, we see Pierce and Harris observing.

STROM

Starting with..? Left or right?

Moretti is surprised. She has anticipated everything else, but hadn't anticipated this decision. She has no science to turn to. She looks around and sees Rick.

MORETTI

Velasco - any idea which one?
(off Rick's anxiety)
You must have had a feeling?

RICK

What if the feeling was wrong?

MORETTI

What if the science is wrong?
(then)
Gotta do the best we can, with the data available to us. I'm trusting you here - don't have much choice.

RICK

I remember wincing, an ache -

STROM

Anybody got a coin we can flip?

RICK

...Emanating from the left side.

MORETTI

Start with the left ovary.

As he begins to go in for the ovary, Rick looks down at Allison - feeling the impact of the pressure of the moment -

FLASHCUTS - RICK becomes the one on the table... then ALLY again... then THE DEAD BOY from the ER... then RICK again - only now the table is in the middle of a vast desert expanse of sand, a surreal sense of aloneness...

Then we're back in the OR - Strom proceeds. Moretti is tense; she looks over and sees Rick's hands, balled up in fists he keeps clenching and unclenching.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. OR - AS BEFORE - ONE SECOND LATER - DAY 4

Strom is about to engage the instrument with the ovary. A prolonged moment, as we register the doubt and worry on Rick's face, until suddenly -

RICK

Wait! It's not enough. It's just a vague feeling... a hunch. We need more to go on.

MORETTI

We're here now, we don't have more.

His wheels are spinning -

RICK

Maybe we do. You told me to bone up on my research - well, I did. There was just a preliminary study published in PLOS/one in June...

MORETTI

The fluorescent dye study?

RICK

They used it to look for ovarian metastases intra-operatively. Why not a primary tumor?

Moretti is impressed and proud.

MCAFFREY

That was out of the Netherlands. It'll take us weeks to get the special dye they used.

MORETTI

It was indocyanine green. We have that in house for angiography. Second floor.

All looks turn to Strom, who weighs it, then to Rick -

STROM

Go. You have three minutes.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY 4

Rick speeds down a hall with a packet of indocyanine green. Almost slides out of control rounding a corner.

INT. OR - DAY 4

Having injected the dye into Allison's IV, Strom brings over the infrared-type light and shines it into the abdomen.

ON THE MONITOR - Slowly, he scans the ovaries.

After some time, WE SEE a spot appear from inside the LEFT ovary - it begins to gently GLOW GREEN. A little real-life medical magic. Strom and Moretti are surprised and relieved.

MORETTI

Your feeling was right.

RICK

The science backed it up.

Mutual nods of acknowledgment. Including from Pierce and Harris in the gallery.

MORETTI

Now let's see what we can do about that little bastard.

MCAFFREY

3 millimeter fluorescent spot visualized on the left ovary. Beginning left ovarian resection.

Off the GLOWING TUMOR on the screen, beautiful and dangerous -

FADE TO:

INT. MEDICINE ADMIN DESK - NIGHT 4

Rick sits looking off into Allison's room, where we can see a fraught Fred waiting by her bedside. She's asleep. Pierce and Harris approach Rick at the desk.

PIERCE

You waiting on oncology?
(as he looks up)
Here you go.

She hands him the test results.

HARRIS

Moretti got tied up - she'll be
back down as soon as she can.

RICK

I don't think we should make the
Learys wait.

PIERCE

That's on you.

They start to walk away.

HARRIS

Hey, Velasco. You did good in
there. I mean, for a med student.

They go. Rick, with some trepidation, opens the results.

INT. WAITING ROOM/HALLWAY - NIGHT 4

Fred is with Rick, as Ally sleeps peacefully.

RICK

The carcinoma was highly
aggressive, but it was small.
Clear margins. Stage 1.
(off Fred's unsure look)
Ally's gonna be okay. And we saved
the other ovary.

Almost overcome, Fred nods, collecting his emotions.

FRED

I've always hated hospitals, you
know. Doctors. Can be so cold.
Like robots...

INTERCUTTING:

INT. OB DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT 3

Moretti, assisting/observing the delivery of Rose's baby.

FRED

You feel alone. That's how it was
when my wife died. But Ally could
tell you were different...

INT. OB DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT 3

The doctors struggle to get the baby out as Rose screams.

FRED

Try not to lose that. People need
that from a doctor. Me and Ally...
(very direct)
...We needed that.

The guy's eyes brim with tears of appreciation and relief.

INT. OB DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT 3

Rose's baby is born healthy. Laurel and Rose cry with relief and jubilation. Moretti stands back, enjoying the moment.

INT. MEDICINE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT 3

As Rick makes his way down the hall, he notices Kirkendall and before he can avoid him -

KIRKENDALL

Ah, there he is, the boy wonder.

RICK

Are you looking for Doctor Moretti?

KIRKENDALL

Look, we got off to a bad start.
You were out of line, I'm sure you
know that - and I'm good with
letting bygones be bygones. But if
you're uncomfortable in my group,
we can talk about making a change.

RICK

I'm not uncomfortable in your
group. Are you uncomfortable with
having me in your group?

KIRKENDALL

No. Why would I be uncomfortable?

Beat.

RICK

Good then. I guess we're both not
uncomfortable.

Beat. Instead of accord... discomfort.

KIRKENDALL

Okay. Good talk.

(then)

You, uh... haven't seen her, have you? Doctor Moretti?

Rick shakes his head 'no.' Kirkendall goes. As Rick moves on, Dot runs up to catch him -

DOT

Rick! A bunch of us are going out for drinks, wanna come?

(whispers)

Some research fellow came across an extra stash of ketamine.

RICK

I don't think so, Dot, not tonight.

DOT

You do like girls, don't you? Because I'm game for a challenge but if it's a total non-starter -

RICK

I like you, I do. But you're very 5, with a lot of orange highlights.

DOT

Does that mean, like: hot?

RICK

It means, like: be careful.

That's encouraging to her. She turns very sincere:

DOT

When you said in the session that the things that make you feel like you belong here are the same things that make you feel like you don't... what did that mean?

RICK

A lot about me doesn't make sense. When I figure it out, maybe I'll let you know.

She wants to spend time with him, get to know him more.

DOT

Come on, ketamine gives you such a good feeling.

RICK

I already have a good feeling.
- Say hey to Jeremy for me.

And he walks away, leaving her perplexed but somehow hopeful.

INT. WALKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 4

Moretti and Walker.

WALKER

A girl comes in looking like a
psych case, and ends up having a
tumor removed with the use of a dye
technique almost no one's ever
heard of. Not bad. Write it up,
submit it to JAMA.

She practically beams - that's a huge compliment from him.

MORETTI

What happened last time? With
Velasco? Why didn't he make it?

WALKER

I can't tell you anything -

MORETTI

He's already told me about the
synesthesia, the mirror touch -

WALKER

Good. That's up to him. But it's
all confidential. Doubly so for
me. As a dean and as his doctor.

(then)

I don't know that this will work.
He's got insight no one else has.
But how dependable is it? How do
we know when to rely on it, or when
not to? And how do we make him
into a great doctor without pushing
him into a place where it's all too
much? That's what I need you to
wrap your head around.

She can see how deeply Walker is invested in Rick, how
concerned. She smiles, trying to reassure him.

MORETTI

I'll whip him into shape.

He smiles as he puts on his coat.

WALKER

Even the best doctors have...
deficiencies. This pairing's not
just for him. It's for you, too.

INT./EXT. SECLUDED BALCONY - NIGHT

A view of Boston. We are in an open space in an under-
construction part of the hospital. Rick has earbuds in.
Moretti steps out, in a 'B'-emblazoned jacket.

MORETTI

Hey. ...Hey!

Now he hears her, and, startled, pulls out the ear buds.

MORETTI (CONT'D)

So this is where you sneak off to?

RICK

The construction guys are getting
used to me.

MORETTI

I talked to the Learys - it's good
you didn't wait. They needed to
know right away. Speaking of
which: Rose McCutchen had her baby.
Big boy. Gonna be a linebacker.
Shoulder got stuck on the way out
but it ended up okay.

RICK

Were you there for the delivery?

MORETTI

(nods)

I decided not to get you. A big
baby head coming out of a vagina
with no pain meds - I wasn't sure
how you'd react to that.

RICK

It wasn't always like this. The
mirror touch - it's gotten more
vivid lately. Sometimes it's just
a powerful sense - sometimes it's
stitched in with memories I have,
or images. Back in February...

MORETTI

What? What happened in February?

RICK

I was on an ER rotation. There was a patient from a roof collapse, a little boy, maybe 8 years old -

FLASHCUT - THE BOY on the gurney.

RICK (CONT'D)

The attending had to let him go - she had other patients, he was unsaveable... We were hoping the parents would get there in time.

FLASHCUT - THE BOY's hand - fingers intertwined with Rick's.

RICK (CONT'D)

So I stayed there. Holding his hand. But...

MORETTI

They didn't make it?

FLASHCUT - Flatline. RICK drowning, flailing under water. Desperately trying to swim to the surface.

RICK

I died with that boy. That's how it felt at least.

FLASHCUT - RICK hyper-ventilating and vomiting in a sink. Like in high school.

RICK (CONT'D)

I got to thinking... maybe it's too much. But Allan... well, for ten years, he's been convincing me that I'm not nuts. So he talked me into giving it one more shot. Says if I don't make this thing a strength, it'll only ever be a liability.

MORETTI

Well, if you're having doubts, your answer is sleeping peacefully in room 324 with her dad at her side.

(then)

When Ally was losing it in the parking lot, what'd you say to her?

RICK

Nothing. Song lyrics. It was just noise to drown out the other stuff.

(off her look)

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

She likes music. I was trying to help her find her balance.

MORETTI

What song?

He holds an ear bud to her ear, lets it play. She listens. It's the song from the top, "I Am Not A Robot."

MORETTI (CONT'D)

Well, whatever floats your boat.

(starts to go)

Oh, almost forgot; I have something for you. I kind of stole it.

She pulls out the brain model piece that says "sublimity."

MORETTI (CONT'D)

I turned the thing around. He'll never notice. - See you, Velasco.

She goes. Rick looks at the brain piece in his hand, puts it in his pocket, then puts the ear buds back in:

MARINA (FILTERED)

*...Can you teach me how to feel
real?/ Can you turn my power off/
And let the drum beat drop..?/
Guess what? I am not a robot...*

He looks out at the city, exhales as he finds the music's groove, resetting his equanimity before heading home.

FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT