

Kingdom Hospital, Episode 2: THE EMPEROR OF ICE CREAM

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Final Draft

TEASER/REPRISE

We'll start with the AERIAL SHOT of the hospital, then show scenes of PETER RICKMAN'S ACCIDENT. DAVE HOOMAN, leaving the accident. A scene of HOOK, operating, followed by OTTO, FREAKED OUT at his CONTROL BOARD in the SECURITY CUBICLE. A scene of MRS. DRUSE, in the MRI SCANNER ("The world is full of mysteries") followed by DRUSE in the elevator, looking up ("Who are you? What are you?"). A scene of STEG TRIPPING in the parking lot; we see how FURIOUS he is. Then STEG doing his Charles De Gaulle in the Neuro Conference Room ("The meeting begins when I arrive and ends when I leave.") Scenes of the EARTHQUAKE.

NARRATOR

Here is a modern scientific facility built on the site of an old atrocity, where a hundred children lost their lives in a mill fire. Here the past has begun to impinge on the present, and the dead have begun to walk. Welcome to Kingdom Hospital. (Beat) Enjoy your stay.

250 Now we go to PETER RICKMAN'S room. He's asleep. NATALIE 250 sits by his bed, reading a book (with a RICKMAN cover) and holding his hand.

The last scene of this little synopsis is DAVE HOOMAN, sitting in his cluttered living room, looking around distrustfully, eaten up with guilt and swallowing more PINK PILLS to dull the pain of guilt...and help him ignore the sensation of being watched.

ACT 1

251 EXT. KINGDOM HOSPITAL PARKING LOT DAY 251

A man on a yellow MINI-PAYLOADER (this week's Guest Maintenance Man, BRADY JUNKINS) is repairing one of the cracks caused by the earthquake. He stops, gets off, and goes to STEG'S JAG, which is BLARING CONSTANTLY: WAA-WAA-WAA-WAAA.

BRADY (dressed in brown khakis, as all Guest Maintenance Men and Women will be) studies the car for a moment, then:

BRADY

Heee-YAH!

He administers a KARATE KICK to the side of the Jag, leaving a deep dent in the door. But the MOTION ALARM stops BLARING. Satisfied, BRADY goes back to his MINI-PAYLOADER and gets back to work.

Across the street, in front of the CHRIST ONLY CHRIST MISSION, some IDLERS are watching. BRADY gives them a cheerful wave, and the IDLERS wave cheerily back. They're not such bad guys, it seems (if you're not STEG).

252 INT. HOSPITAL CLEAN-UP MONTAGE DAY 252

A.) ABEL and CHRISTA up on step-ladders, ABEL replacing a light and CHRISTA putting a ceiling panel back in place.

253 B.) TWO WORKMEN in the Sunshine Ward corridor, 253
plastering up a crack in the wall.

254 C.) LONA and ELMER, picking stuff up off the floor in the 254
SLEEP LAB OFFICE.

A255 D.) In one of the ORs, NURSES are picking up 255
instruments that clattered to the floor and putting them in a
STERILIZER.

255 E.) Outside, a CHERRY-PICKER TRUCK is lifting a LARGE 255
SHEET OF GLASS in a sling to replace one of the big
256 (street-facing) front windows. THE CAMERA MOVES IN on the 256
window below the one being replaced, and we peek into DR.
JAMES'S office. JAMES is on his hands and knees, picking up
stuff that scattered during the SHAKER, mostly Operation
Morning Air pamphlets and stickers. STEG stands over him,
GESTURING ANGRILY.

257

INT. DR. JAMES'S OFFICE DAY

257

STEG makes no offer to help DR. JAMES, and JAMES doesn't seem to mind that a bit. In fact, JAMES is HUMMING. This is one happy camper, and STEG doesn't know what to make of him.

JAMES

Sorry about that, Steg. It turns out there's a fault-line under the hospital. Continental drift... something of that nature. Sure wish we'd known four years ago; we would've built on the other side of the river!

(laughs cheerily)

STEG

Does it happen often?

JAMES

Depends on how you define often. We've had two or three tremors...

STEG

Since the hospital was built four years ago?

JAMES

(might as well admit it)

Just this year, I'm afraid. But the geologist the Keepers of the Kingdom brought up from Boston assures us they'll stop soon. But you know geologists! To them, "soon" could mean five centuries!

(laughs cheerily)

How can I help you? As I told you when you interviewed, I'm here to help.

STEG

There's a serious problem. With Hook. He ordered an MRI/MRA scan without my permission. On a Mrs. Druse. The scan was carried out this morning. I was presented with a fait accompli!

JAMES has finished his housekeeping. He resumes his seat and begins stacking his PAMPHLETS and STICKERS before him.

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

Do you know what my son would say?

STEG

(doesn't give a shit)

No.

JAMES

Illness sucks!

He laughs MERRILY. STEG looks at him as he might look at a bug under a microscope.

JAMES (cont'd)

Unfortunately, they come here, don't they? The problem with a hospital is that we're surrounded by patients. More coming every day!

He holds out his arms as if to encompass the whole hospital. STEG stares at him, completely bewildered. JAMES smiles back.

Parked in the driveway is the VAN with which DAVE hit PETER RICKMAN. It's a little worse for wear--grille banged up, passenger side of the windshield CRAZED WITH CRACKS--but there's a hose coiled close and the VAN GLEAMS WETLY in the morning sunlight. DAVE has washed it, thereby displaying at least the rudiments of slyness.

Sitting at the base of the ladder propped against the side of the house and looking up is CHARLIE THE ROTTWEILLER. A few of the packages of shingles we noticed the night before are now missing, having been hoisted onto the roof (which we can't see in this shot). If a dog's face can express anxiety, CHARLIE'S does.

DAVE is singing in a STONER DRONE. We also hear the SOUND OF HAMMERING.

DAVE

"Red Dragon tattoo...is just about on me...I did it for you...and now that I'm brawny..."

He's kneeling just below the roofpeak, a cigarette tucked in the corner of his mouth, hammering on a shingle (CROOKED). It's the worst shingling job we've ever seen, and one look at DAVE should explain why. He's STONED, DRUNK, or BOTH.

(CONTINUED)

259

CONTINUED:

259

He's wearing a pair of shorts, a pair of flip-flop sandals, and nothing else. Stuck all over his body--neck, chest, arms, legs--are TRANS-DERMAL PATCHES. No wonder he's stoned.

Packages of shingles have been placed at intervals along the sharply sloping roof.

DAVE finishes with the shingle he's currently murdering and shoots to his feet. He wavers on the edge of losing his balance, then finds it and begins marching the length of the roof, not paying any attention to where he's going. He STEPS OVER one package of shingles, then TRIPS OVER another. Once again he wavers on the edge of losing his balance.

260

EXT. CHARLIE THE ROTTWEILLER DAY

260

He's looking up ANXIOUSLY. Perhaps WHINING.

CHARLIE

Come down from there, you horse's ass, before you hurt yourself.

(NOTE: When the animals talk, their mouths actually move, making them look like Mr. Ed on the old horse-com.)

261

INT. RESUME ROOF, WITH DAVE DAY

261

He regains his footing and makes it to the far end of the roof, a minor miracle. Here three packages of shingles are stacked. He picks one up, settles it on his shoulder, once more sways on the edge of a nasty tumble, and then recovers.

DAVE

"Red Dragon Tattoo...why don't you sit on me...I waited all day...and now that I'm horny..."

262

EXT. HOOMAN HOUSE/DRIVE & ROOF, THE DOORYARD OF DAVE'S HOUSE DAY

262

A MAINE STATE POLICE CRUISER swings into the driveway. It's TROOPER FRANK DOWNES. He parks and gets out. He looks at DAVE, lurching around up there on the roof, noting the PATCHES flapping on DAVE'S RAIL-THIN BODY.

Then he sees the van. He goes to it, noting that it's been freshly washed (nothing else around here gets that kind of treatment, including DAVE'S shoulder-length hair). DOWNES goes around front. He looks at the CRACKED WINDSHIELD and the BASHED-IN GRILLE. He notes something below the passenger-side headlight (which is also cracked) and scrapes his thumb below the chrome. Holds his fingernail up to his face. On it is a MAROON SUBSTANCE. Probably blood. He looks up at DAVE again.

(CONTINUED)

DOWNES

Hey, Dave--want to come down off there?

EXT. DAVE AND DOWNES (ALTERNATING ROOF AND YARD) DAY

DAVE looks down suddenly. Too suddenly. His feet slip on the half-shingled roof and once more he wavers on the edge of losing his balance. DOWNES winces.

DOWNES (cont' d)

Sorry, didn't mean to startle you.

CHARLIE

Be careful, the man's a congenital idiot.

Neither of them hear this.

DAVE

Hey, there, Ossifer Downes! You didn't spartle me. I'm just...you know...

He gestures vaguely. What exactly is he? For the moment, DAVE can't remember.

DOWNES

Little home improvement?

DAVE

That's it! Little home approvement!

He starts staggering along the steep roof-pitch again, the shingles on his shoulder not doing a thing for his balance.

DOWNES

Want to talk to you about an accident that happened out on Route 7 yesterday afternoon, Dave. Would you like to come down here?

DAVE

I don't know nothing about any accident. I'm shinnelin my roof!

DOWNES

I see that. I also see that you appear to be wearing a pretty good variety of trans-dermal patches.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

Trans-urmal patchezz? These ain patchezz! These...tattoooz!

He slips. DOWNES tenses. So does CHARLIE.

DOWNES

Watch it, Dave, watch it!

DAVE

No prollum! Had it alla way!

DOWNES

Yeah, but I think you better come down here. Tell me about how the front end of your van got bunged up.

DAVE

I never saw that artiss all day!

Then, even in his stoned state, he realizes what he's said and claps both hands to his mouth like a child.

DAVE (cont'd)

I never meant to! Charlie was eating my dinner!

CHARLIE

That's right, blame the dog.

DAVE starts to WALK DOWN THE PITCH OF THE ROOF. Only it's STEEP (not to mention SHORT), and pretty soon he's RUNNING.

DOWNES

Ahh, sugar!

EXT. THE FALL OF DAVE HOOMAN, SLOW MOTION DAY

Down he comes...and LANDS ON HIS HEAD. We see it twist sideways and hear a BITTER, ICY CRUNCH as his NECK BREAKS. We begin each episode with an accident, and part of that signature should be showing the audience exactly how nasty accidents can be. Think of it as a public service.

EXT. DAVE'S YARD, WIDER ANGLE DAY

As CHARLIE reaches out his muzzle to sniff his downed master:

CHARLIE

Way to go, Slick. Who's gonna feed me now?

DOWNES kneels by DAVE. DAVE'S eyes are open. The right pupil is fixed and dilated. The left one beats in time with his pulse. DOWNES doesn't dare touch him. He runs for his cruiser and grabs the mike.

UNIT 19 is parked on the tarmac. DANNY is inside, eating a donut.

DOWNES (V.O.)

...ah, I got a seriously injured fella here on the Barker Road, about a quarter-mile off Route 7.

DANNY BEEPS his horn and starts his engine. OLLIE comes on the run, carrying the DEFIBRILLATOR.

DANNY

We're on it, Frank.

OLLIE

(getting in)

What have we got?

DANNY

Deja vu all over again. Sounds like another scoop and run.

They pull out, SIREN WAILING.

STEG is sitting down now. He's cooled a little, but he's still very angry.

STEG

All right; you can't discharge him. I accept that. But there must be consequences. I insist that there be consequences!

JAMES

Calm down, Dr. Stegman! If I were to put a cuff on your arm right now, I'll bet your blood-pressure would be through the roof!

(MORE)

JAMES (cont' d)

As for Hook, he may not be Louis Pasteur, but he has his assets. Believe me.

STEG

This is absurd.

JAMES

Take some advice, Steg. Instigating disciplinary proceedings against a colleague during your second month on-staff is not the way to win friends and influence people. Besides, we're fond of Hook. In time, you will be, too.

STEG'S face says snowstorms in hell are more likely.

JAMES (cont' d)

Let me show you something.

He hands STEG an OPERATION MORNING AIR sticker, but this one is a bit different. In addition to the winking CARTOON DOCTOR, there's a rising sun. Looks like something a child might have done. But JESSE JAMES is sort of childish.

JAMES (cont' d)

I've added a rising sun, do you see? To indicate a new day at Kingdom Hospital! A new attitude!

STEG

What if your potential contributors think it's a setting sun?

JAMES laughs as if it's the funniest thing he's ever heard.

JAMES

So what do you think? Do you like it?

STEG

(after a pause to consider)

No.

JAMES

Good, good! Now let me show you--

STEG looks at his watch and gets up.

STEG

You must excuse me. I have an appointment to examine this Mrs. Druse's scan. Do you know how many times she's been admitted? Fourteen, in the last two years! In this hospital alone!

JAMES

Terrible to be so ill.

STEG is stunned. The man is hopeless.

DR. LOUIS TRAFF is talking with JULIE, DR. JAMES'S receptionist, as STEG charges out. JAMES follows him

LOUIS

Dr. Stegman! I wonder if I could show you around the Sleep Lab when you have a--

STEG

No doubt, no doubt.

And he's gone. The ELDER TRAFF gives him a puzzled look and a little shrug, as if to say "If you can't appreciate my effort to be friendly, it's your loss."

He turns his attention to JAMES. LOUIS blows on his thumb, inflating his little finger. JAMES returns the gesture, which is the secret sign of The Keepers of the Kingdom

LOUIS

Stegman still in a foul mood, I see.

JAMES

Oh, he's not such a bad fella.

LOUIS

Our young Dr. Hook wouldn't agree, I fear. By the way, have you informed Stegman that the Klingermans have retained a med-mal lawyer?

JAMES

Not yet. I thought his mood was foul enough as it was.

267

CONTINUED:

267

They look at each other for a moment and then BURST OUT LAUGHING. JULIE smiles, a little puzzled, but goes on CLICKING HER KEYBOARD. We should be wondering by now just what sort of crazy place this is.

268

INT. A 7TH FLOOR CORRIDOR (PEDIATRICS) DAY

268

SOUND (FAINT): A few CRYING BABIES.

A CHILD with her arm in a sling and a BANDAGE ON HER HEAD runs past us, bouncing a ball.

There are a few signs of the SHAKER, and BRADY JUNKINS is sweeping up some fallen debris.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON ROOM 719. The card on the door reads MONA KLINGERMAN. In the space provided for ATTENDING PHYSICIAN, STEGMAN has been CROSSED OUT and the name CLOONEY has been added (a small ER joke).

THE CAMERA PASSES THROUGH THE DOOR.

269

INT. MONA'S ROOM DAY

269

The TV is tuned to a kiddy show, but MONA is paying no attention. She sits on her bed, rocking back and forth, her doll held against her chest. We see a HEALING SCAR just below her hairline, where STEG has operated on her "nut."

LIZ HINTON is trying to feed her and having a hard time. Food dribbles down MONA'S chin. Her eyes are blank.

LIZ

Come on, honey, just a little more.

270

EXT. UNIT 19 DAY

270

It's speeding through an industrial area we've seen before: deja vu all over again.

DANNY (V. O.)

Clear!

271

INT. THE AMBULANCE DAY

271

OLLIE'S driving. DANNY hits DAVE HOOMAN with the paddles. DAVE is tubed (just like Rickman was) and jumps on the board.

OLLIE

Are we in business or not?

(CONTINUED)

271

CONTINUED:

271

DANNY

Not yet. I'm gonna try 300 epi.

He injects it through the line, then goes back to the paddles.

DANNY (cont' d)

Clear!

DANNY hits him. This time the HEART MONITOR starts to BEEP REGULARLY.

DANNY (cont' d)

Ladies and gentlemen, we're back.

OLLIE

This is so much like yesterday it's spooky.

DAVE opens his eyes and sees:

272

INT. BACK OF THE AMBULANCE, DAVE'S POV

272

272E1

ANTUBIS is sitting there, wearing a WHITE COAT and a STETHOSCOPE. He wrinkles back his muzzle and SNARLS. This is not a friendly SNARL. The doctor is out...way out. ANTUBIS raises a PAW and PATS HIS HEART AREA.

272E1

273

INT. BACK OF THE AMBULANCE, WITH DANNY AND DAVE DAY

273

DAVE closes his eyes. At the same time the HEART MONITOR FLATLINES again: Beeeeeeeeee---

DANNY

(grabs the paddles)

Oh boy, here we go again.

274

EXT. THE EMT UNIT DAY

274

Racing through more blighted urban landscape. Approaching Kingdom Hospital now.

275

INT. THE FIRST FLOOR STAFF ROOM DAY

275

We're CU on the front-page newspaper headline of the Lewiston Daily Sun. It reads ACCUSED KILLER OF 6 HELD IN ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY JAIL. Below it is a photo of a handsome man with STUBBLY CHEEKS and SPOOKY SVENGALI EYES. This, according to the caption, is ROLF PEDERSEN. He's HOOK'S age, 35.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see OTTO reading it. BLONDI's at his feet. OTTO has coffee-and-Danish.

(CONTINUED)

At the other (unoccupied) seat is another coffee-and. A few other people are sitting around, drinking coffee and eating SNACKS from the machine. We get a feeling of end-of-the-workday relaxation here (although we will never see any of these people go home).

At the rear of the room are several ROLLING FLATS filled with FOLDING CHAIRS. The sign over them reads: CHAIRS MUST BE SIGNED OUT!

BOBBY DRUSE comes in, goes to the FLATS, and begins rolling one toward the door. He doesn't look happy about it.

OTTO

Sit down, Bobby--I got you a coffee.

BOBBY

I can't. Mama wants these chairs up in the Sunshine Solarium--

BLONDI

And a prune Danish, big boy.

OTTO

Also a prune Danish, big boy.

BOBBY

Well...okay. Just for a minute.

He sits down. BOBBY is a big boy, and here we see why. He SLURPS COFFEE and GOBBLES half the Danish at a bite.

OTTO

(a mite sly)

Did you sign those chairs out, Orderly Druse?

BOBBY

No.

(a moment to consider,
then:)

It's another of her damned seances!
With those terminals!

OTTO

Ah, leave her alone--they're all circling the drain, maybe the seances help them get used to the idea.

BOBBY

Yeah, but...

(leans forward)

I heard that Stegman is after her!

After my...

(reads the headline)

Pedersen still in the local
hoosegow, I see!

He takes OTTO'S paper.

OTTO

Hey, no problem, help yourself!

BOBBY

(takes no notice)

Why'd he kill them? Does it say?

OTTO

Now he claims it was the insurance.
What he said when they first
brought him in was that he wanted
to smell them cooking. His wife and
kiddies.

BOBBY

That's horrible!

OTTO takes back the newspaper.

OTTO

Finish your Danish and then take
your mother her chairs. I want to
read Beetle Bailey. Catch up on
Sluggo and Nancy.

DANNY and OLLIE are watching their patient (DAVE HOOMAN)
being raced away to the OR. Once again the waiting area is
weirdly empty. As DANNY studies the plastic Walmart chairs:

DANNY

This place gives me the creeps.

OLLIE

What do you mean?

DANNY

Whenever we bring in a gork or a
crump, there's never anyone here!

(MORE)

DANNY (cont'd)

Doesn't anyone in this town ever
get the flu, or an infected
hangnail?

OLLIE

Guess not. I'm gonna get a soda.
You want one?

DANNY

Yeah, bring me a Nozzy.

There's a Nozz-A-La soft drink machine right outside the
STAFF ROOM. A CHROME STRIP running up the side is so highly
polished OLLIE'S able to check his hair in it before dropping
coins into the slot.

This has got to be like a good magic trick. We're WIDE ENOUGH
to see no one in this corridor but OLLIE, and there's no
other reflection in that CHROME STRIP. We CLOSE IN as he
checks his reflection, then puts in the coins. And when he
does, A HAND reaches into the frame and taps his shoulder.

OLLIE, who knew perfectly well (if subliminally) that he was
alone, WHIRLS AROUND. THE CAMERA WIDENS OUT AGAIN, and we see
a MAN (60-68 age-range) in a rather old-fashioned tweed
suit. White hair is neatly combed. He holds an OLD-FASHIONED
DOCTOR'S BAG. We should immediately know there's something
wrong with him, but not necessarily that he's a GHOST.

DR. GOTTREICH

Can you tell me where they took the
children?

OLLIE

Uh...I don't work here, but Pedes
is on 7.

GOTTREICH

Peeds?

OLLIE

Pediatrics.
(nods to the bag)
That's a real antique, huh?

DR. GOTTREICH looks at his bag. Doesn't understand.

DR. GOTTREICH

7th floor. Thank you.

He starts to turn away, then turns back.

DR. GOTTREICH (cont'd)

That's very high, isn't it?

OLLIE

You should see the guy we just brought in. Now that's high.

GOTTREICH gives him a cold smile and starts away. His FOOTSTEPS ECHO.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON OLLIE. He goes to push the Nozz-A-La button, and those FOOTFALLS SIMPLY FADE AWAY.

OLLIE looks around. THE CAMERA WIDENS OUT. Although there's nowhere the DOCTOR can have gone so quickly, WEST-1 IS EMPTY.

OLLIE looks around, uneasy, and suddenly there's a LOUD CRASHING SOUND from the machine. He jumps. Hopefully we will, too. He's hit the jackpot. The soda machine has dispensed at least a dozen cans of Nozz-A-La. They roll every whichway.

INT. TRAUMA ROOM (FULL SHAKY-CAM) DAY

DAVE HOOMAN is on the table. LOUIS TRAFF is cutting off HOOMAN'S clothes, while LONA MASSINGALE struggles to keep HOOMAN'S antecubital IV in. The FAINTING NURSE stares with her mouth open, looking sick. DAVE is hooked up to a PORTABLE MONITOR, which now begins to SOUND AN ALARM

LONA

Arrest number three, Doctor, and I've lost the line.

LOUIS

Hell and gone. Let's get a subclavian in. Gimme an 18-gauge needle, 10-millimeter syringe and a wire with a J-hook.

It's all happening too fast for the FAINTING NURSE. She gets the needle on the syringe, but her hands are shaking; she damned near sticks herself when she uncaps the needle. She also damned near dumps a tray of instruments on the floor. What we can see of her face is very white. LONA has to hand LOUIS the rest of the gear.

LOUIS squirts orange Betadine below HOOMAN'S neck and swabs it, then stabs the needle in just below the clavicle.

LOUIS thinks he's in the vein, but when he pulls off the syringe, it's a gusher because (whoops, easy mistake to make) he's in the carotid artery instead.

(CONTINUED)

BRIGHT RED ARTERIAL BLOOD SPURTS directly into the FAINTING NURSE'S FACE. She immediately SWOONS TO THE FLOOR.

LOUIS applies pressure to HOOMAN'S carotid, never hesitates.

LOUIS (cont' d)

I have flesh swooning underfoot and
it needs repositioning. STAT.

LONA drags the F.N. to the wall, where there's an unrepaired crack--EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE. Peering out of this CRACK, seen by us but no one else, is a GHOSTLY FACE. MARY'S FACE.

We close in on this and then

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT 2

279

INT. THE SUNSHINE WARD DAY

279

This is where the TERMINAL PATIENTS go to die. We MOVE SLOWLY DOWN THE CORRIDOR while a BELL RINGS SOFTLY and NURSES RACE IN SLOW MOTION, two of them pushing a CRASH CART. Also with them is HENRY HAVENS (actually a pathologist, but currently on call) and a HEAVY-SET NURSE, "BRICK" BANNERMAN. They're all racing into Room 26.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE

(low and pleasant)

Sunshine Room 26, Sunshine Room 26.

This is a full code, repeat, full code. Code blue team to Room 26.

THE CAMERA, meanwhile, tours the Sunshine Ward with a morbidly comic eye, DUTCHING SLOWLY FROM SIDE TO SIDE in a way that almost makes us seasick (or whatever the director likes that's equivalent). We peek into a room where OLD LADY #1 is taking a pill cocktail--she's wearing a turban on her hairless head. In another room, OLD LADY #2, also wearing a turban, is looking out the window at nothing. In yet another room, OLD MAN #1 and OLD MAN #2 are watching TV together. Both are thin and have the haggard look that comes in the Final Days...or Final Weeks and Months. Later, some of these folks will have names, but for now they're just ELDERLY GOMERS.

There are YELLOW SMILE STICKERS everywhere. Lots of OPERATION MORNING AIR STICKERS, too (both the old ones and the new ones). There are posters of cute kittens that say HANG IN THERE BABY and WHEN LIFE HANDS YOU LEMONS, MAKE LEMONADE.

We peer into ROOM 26 on our way by but don't really pause; we get just a glimpse of the CRASH CART and a bunch of KH PERSONNEL working to code some old gork whose insurance hasn't run out yet.

HAVENS

Clear!

SOUND of a DEFIBRILLATOR ZAPPING. SMOKE RISES; NOSES WRINKLE at the smell of COOKING GOMER.

BRICK

Nothing, doctor--want to go again?

HAVENS

To what end, Nurse Bannerman?(Beat)
Call the code.

(CONTINUED)

THE CAMERA MOVES ON to the SUNSHINE SOLARIUM, where the shades are now drawn and it's dim. On the wall we see a picture of DOROTHY AND FRIENDS skipping down the Yellow Brick Road. To GomerLand, presumably.

BOBBY DRUSE is just finishing setting up chairs in a circle. There are seven in all. Behind one chair is a STANDING LAMP. MRS. DRUSE is putting a RED SCARF over it, which changes the light to something suitably spiritual. LENNY sits in one of the chairs, looking blankly into the distance.

BOBBY

Mama, this isn't a good idea, not with that Dr. Stegman mad at you--

DRUSE

Look. There goes Mrs. Kinney. She was the best gin rummy player I ever met.

BOBBY pauses. He and his mother go to the door of the SOLARIUM and watch as:

A ROLLING BED emerges from Room 26. On it is a SHEETED FORM. Sticking out from the bottom are a couple of BLUE CALLUSED FEMALE FEET. Let the lamp affix its beam. The only Emperor is the Emperor of Ice Cream.

LOUDSPEAKER VOICE

The Code...has been called. The Code...is cancelled.

The PERSONNEL form a kind of cortege, walking slowly. Coming the other way, passing them, is BRICK BANNERMAN. Now she's got a SMALL TRAY covered with a towel.

BRICK enters, removing the towel, revealing a HYP0. She goes to LENNY and rolls up his sleeve.

BRICK

Hi, Bobby. Hi, Sally. Having a little get-together? I'd watch out for Stegman, if I were you.

BOBBY

That's what I told her. But she won't listen.

DRUSE

There's someone here who's not at rest. A little girl, I think.

BRICK injects LENNY and swabs his arm

DRUSE (cont'd)

All my life I've been trying to contact the dead. I feel this spirit very strongly.

BOBBY

(to BRICK)

What's that? Some kind of chemo?

BRICK

Something Dr. Traff prescribed. The father, not the son. Part of his sleep-lab experiments, I think.

BOBBY

Mr. Stillmach's asleep most of the time, anyway. I mean, his eyes are open, but--

BRICK

This is wonderful stuff. Wait til you see.

DRUSE

What is it, exactly?

BRICK

I don't know. It just says 19.

DRUSE

Is it safe?

BRICK

(with a cynical look)

Does it matter? Lenny probably won't be around for Trick or Treat. And that's next week.

She starts out, then turns back.

(CONTINUED)

BRICK (cont' d)

A word to the wise, you two--don't let Stegman catch you talking to the spirits.

She leaves.

BOBBY

You heard her, Ma--let me take these chairs back.

DRUSE

You will not! The dead want one thing, Bobby--

BOBBY

I know. To go into the light.

DRUSE

But in order to help them, we have to find out why they're caught in between...why they won't leave the larum of the living. And this is the best place to do that. (Beat) The dying are very powerful. (Beat) Will you get the others?

BOBBY

Ma--

DRUSE

Or do I have to do it myself?

BOBBY

All right.

He starts to leave, but before he can, LENNY STILLMACH raises his head and looks around BRIGHTLY.

LENNY

Sally! And Bobby! How are you?

DRUSE

(warmly)
We're fine, Lenny!

She takes his hand and pats it with great affection.

LENNY

I must have dozed off. I keep expecting to do that and wake up dead!

(CONTINUED)

DRUSE

You're a long way from dead, Lenny!

LENNY

No, Mrs D. He used to leave--had other business, I guess--but now he's always right behind me.

BOBBY

Who is, Mr. Stillmach?

LENNY

The Emperor. The Emperor of Ice Cream

BOBBY

(creeped out)

I'll get the others, Mama.

They watch him go.

DRUSE

He's a good boy, my Bobby. I still have to tell him to wash behind his ears, but--

LENNY

Are we going to make the circle, Mrs. Druse?

DRUSE

(excited)

Yes, Lenny! Someone needs us!

The surgery on DAVE HOOMAN has finished up, and although he is still alive as he's wheeled out, LOUIS is slump-shouldered and depressed.

LOUIS

I don't want to put him in with Hook's painter, but right now it's the only space in ICU we've got.

LONA

Maybe he won't make it out of the recovery room

LOUIS pulls off his gloves, snaps up the lid of the trash can with one bootie-covered foot, and tosses the gloves. He's as bitter a man as we've ever seen.

LOUIS
Recovery! What a joke!

LONA
Doctor--

LOUIS
What a joke.

She'd comfort him if he'd let her, but he won't. He brushes past her. Out and gone. LONA looks after him helplessly.

INT. ICU MAIN DESK, ESTABLISHING DAY

Behind the big round desk, NURSES work and occasionally look at the BANKS OF MONITORS. DOCTORS check paperwork or scribble day-orders.

A NURSE gets up with a fresh door-admission card. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS HER to the closed door of the PRESIDENTIAL SUITE. She takes out PETER RICKMAN'S CARD and puts in a new one. The new one says PETER RICKMAN/DAVID HOOMAN. We should linger just long enough to savor the irony: PETER and DAVE meet again.

Behind her we see HOOK arrive at the ICU DESK.

NAT (V. O.)
Peter? Peter? Wake up, dammit!

THE CAMERA PASSES THROUGH THE DOOR.

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY

NAT is sitting by PETER'S bed. She's shaking his shoulder gently--but with increasing DESPERATION. PETER'S eyes are closed. The machines BEEP SOFTLY.

If we haven't noticed before, we should note now that one wall of PETER'S room is OLD-FASHIONED BRICK, PAINTED WHITE to look like the rest of the place.

NAT
Peter! You were awake before, where the hell are you now?

PETER (V. O.)
Right here, Nat--stop shaking me.

NAT
Peter, please--

There's COURTESY KNOCK at the door and then HOOK comes in, looking more TIRED AND SCRUFFY than ever. The white tee-shirt beneath his white coat is partially untucked...and his FLY IS UNZIPPED. We see a peek of RED BVDs. He's got a SHEAF OF PAPERWORK, also a CLIPBOARD.

NAT (cont'd)

What's happened to him? He was awake! He was responsive!

HOOK

He said your name, Mrs. Rickman. That may not be the same thing.

NAT

What...I don't understand what you mean!

PETER (V.O.)

Frankly, neither do I.

HOOK

Your husband may be semi conscious. (begins to examine PETER) He could be hearing every word we say and unable to respond.

NAT

Why won't he open his eyes?

285E1

PETER (V.O.)

Oh, for--! They are open!

285E1

INT. PETER CU

His eyes both open and stay closed at the same time--this has got to be a really good special effect that will convey the idea that PETER is seeing via some sixth sense that has been given him as a result of his accident, his current place of residence, and his strange new acquaintances, ANTUBIS and MARY. He sees, but others don't see him seeing.

INT. HOOK AND NATALIE, PETER'S POV DAY

HOOK

Mrs. Rickman--

NAT

Natalie. Nat.

HOOK

Nat, your husband has suffered frontal lobe trauma. How much permanent damage that entails remains to be seen. When he woke up so soon...well, I've never seen anything like it. Heard of it, but never seen it. And the spinal swelling is going down at a rate I find amazing. Look at this.

From his lab coat pocket, HOOK takes a small REFLEX HAMMER. This would be a good place for NAT to notice that his fly's unzipped, but this is one of those situations...what do you say? Especially to a handsome guy you just met? A handsome guy who's had his hands in your husband's living brain?

HOOK takes the point of the steel handle and rakes it in a curve up the sole of RICKMAN'S right foot, from heel to toes; then does the same on his left foot. Rickman's feet arch and his toes curl downward.

HOOK (cont'd)

Babinsky signs are absent. This shows us two things: first, he may not be paralyzed. Second, there appears to be no damage to the corticospinal tract. A miracle to my way of thinking, but it gets even better. The EEG shows that your husband is producing more organized brain wave activity. He's still having complex partial seizures, but we're controlling those with Dilantin.

NAT

(frightened)

Do the seizures mean that he's slipping again?

HOOK

(rather reluctantly)

He still exhibits some disorganized rhythms. More than we'd like.

PETER (V.O.)

This is nonsense. I'm wide-awake and understanding everything you say. My sense of rhythm is impeccable.

(CONTINUED)

HOOK gets up and goes to the EEG MONITOR. He looks at it, worried.

NAT

Can he hear us? What's your guess?

HOOK

Hear? Probably. Process?
Probably not. But the sound of
your voice means much more to him
than any words you say.

PETER (V. O.)

Your fly's unzipped.

HOOK comes to the foot of the bed to examine PETER'S chart. This move puts his unzipped fly pretty much right in NAT'S face. She looks away, EMBARRASSED and TONGUE-TIED.

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

So, who gave you a licence to sell
hot-dogs, Sunny Jim?

HOOK

He's also got some bacterial hot
spots.

NAT

(eyeing the unzipped fly)
Hot spots?

HOOK

Gall-bladder...but that's quieting
down now. There's still some
haziness in the right lung, but
it's diminishing. Dr. Montrovi
doesn't think he's going to develop
pneumonia, after all.

NAT

Pneumonia!

HOOK

It happens, Mrs. Rickman...Nat. But
the major bugs we're fighting are
down here.

He pats PETER'S raised leg.

PETER (V. O.)

Watch the hand, Dr. Kildare.

(CONTINUED)

HOOK

We cultured bacteria from the compound fracture sites, and we've identified the antibiotics the bugs are most sensitive to.

(off her puzzled look)

Which allows us to send in guided missiles, instead of broad spectrum antibiotics.

Once more, that UNZIPPED FLY is very close to NAT'S face.

PETER (GLEEFUL V. O.)

Red underwear! Look, Nat, a shaving-ah!

286

The door opens and STEGMAN appears. He's got CHRISTINE 286 in tow. He's also carrying a patient chart and a folder. He's wearing that expression of VULPINE TRIUMPH.

STEG

Ah, it's the famous Dr. Hook! The world-famous Dr. Hook! I wonder if I could beg a moment of your time?

PETER (V. O.)

Who's this bozo?

HOOK

Dr. Stegman, Natalie Rickman... and her husband, Peter. (Pointedly) My patient. (More pointedly) We're having a bit of a consult.

STEG

Very well, I'll simply discharge the malingerer without you. Good day, Mrs. Rickman; sorry to intrude.

CHRIS DRAPER'S eyes beg HOOK.

HOOK

Mrs. Rickman--Natalie--would you excuse me?

NAT

(bewildered)
Of course.

(CONTINUED)

HOOK

Keep using that wonderful voice of
yours on him

286E1 He follows STEG and CHRIS out of the room; the door closes. NAT turns to PETER and takes his hand. To her, he looks unconscious. We can see part of him is still awake. 286E1

PETER (V.O.)

I think Dr. Hook's in trouble.

NAT

(stroking PETER'S hand)

I think Dr. Hook's in trouble.

287 INT. THE SUNSHINE SOLARIUM DAY

287

No sunshine now, however; the room is VERY DIM, the only light filtering through the SCARF OVER THE LAMP. The atmosphere is spooky. Six TERMINAL PATIENTS and MRS. DRUSE sit in the chairs BOBBY set up. THE CAMERA MOVES DREAMILY around the circle, catching their WASTED FACES in the dimness. We see OLD LADIES #1 AND #2, still in their turbans. We see OLD MEN #1, #2, AND #3. Sitting next to MRS. DRUSE is LENNY STILLMACH. The door of the room is closed; the glass is covered with cardboard, closing out the mundane world.

MRS. DRUSE holds out her hands. LENNY takes one, OLD LADY #1 (JUDY) takes the other. They all join hands.

DRUSE

Now we voyage. Close your eyes.

(they do)

First we'll purify this room--and
all of us here--from the larum of
the living.

We see the TERMINALS AND MRS. DRUSE CONCENTRATING HARD. There should be a feeling that something is going to happen here, perhaps something awful.

A LIGHT, VERY FAINT, may begin to glimmer around MRS. DRUSE'S head at this point.

DRUSE (cont'd)

Are there spirits here? (Beat)
Would you speak?

CAMERA MOVING IN ON DRUSE. She's in a deep trance.

(CONTINUED)

DRUSE (cont' d)

Is there a child here? Or a guide?

Would you come to us and speak?

Come to us, if there is. Come to us
and speak.

SLOW FADE TO
BLACK.

ACT 3

288

INT. ICU MAIN DESK, WITH HOOK, CHRIS, AND STEG DAY

288

STEG opens the folder and shows the contents--several shots of DRUSE'S BRAIN, courtesy of the MRI scan--to HOOK (whose FLY is still UNZIPPED).

STEG

I'm sorry to drag you away from your consultation, Hook, but I thought you'd like to see the \$4000 pictures of your Mrs. Druse's nut. She's indigent, so most of the expense will be footed by the taxpayers; unless Medicaid refuses to pay, in which case THIS Department will foot the bill for the scans of your Mrs. Druse.

HOOK

I wish you'd stop calling her my Mrs. Druse.

STEG

Oh, but she is! She is! If not for you and Dr. Draper, she'd be out on the street right now, where she belongs! So look! Point out for me the meningiomas, the gliomas, the aneurysms, the astrocytomas!

HOOK looks at the photocopies carefully, one after another. CHRIS is looking at him with DESPERATE CONCENTRATION, willing him to see what she has seen.

STEG (cont'd)

Do you see any of those things? No! Because they are not there!

HOOK

What's this?

He's pointing to something on one of the pictures. STEG is annoyed and immediately dismissive, but CHRIS looks relieved. He has seen it--good old HOOK.

STEG

Nothing. Artifact at best. A flawed image. Perhaps even a chip in the lens of the photocopier.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STEG (cont' d)

It wouldn't be the first piece of substandard equipment around here!

HOOK

Or possibly it's a UB0.

STEG reaction is one of ACIDIC SKEPTICISM

STEG

Unidentified Bright Objects! That old wives' tale! What next? Giant alligators in the sewers? Great hoards of expensive equipment squirreled away in secret rooms?

HOOK'S eyes flicker at that; it's quite close to home. STEG, meanwhile, takes CHRIS by one arm and HOOK by the other.

STEG (cont' d)

Come with me. I'll show you how we deal with the Mrs. Druses of the world in Boston.

HOOK

I'm gonna take a raincheck, if you don't mind. I've been on duty for the last fourteen hours...

(CHRIS shakes her head)

...or maybe it's sixteen...

(CHRIS nods)

...and I'm whipped.

STEG leads them toward the elevators. He has taken on a kind of PONDEROUS JOVIALITY.

STEG

Nonsense. If your boots are big enough to order a four-thousand-dollar MRI scan without my approval, then they're big enough to pick one elderly leech off the skin of this hospital.

HOOK

You know, Unidentified Bright Objects are sometimes actual lesions, confirmed by autopsies in several reported cases--

289 The elevator doors open. The FAINTING NURSE, looking a 289
little the worse for wear, pushes DAVE HOOMAN (deeply
unconscious) out of the car and past them. Following her is
FRANK DOWNES.

STEG, still holding HOOK and CHRIS captive, steps into the
elevator with them, and the doors close.

DOWNES

(to the F.N.)

No chance he'll wake up soon?

FAINTING NURSE

It'll be a miracle if he wakes up
at all.

DOWNES

Shame. Those two'd have a lot to
talk about.

He stops at the ICU desk and watches the F.N. wheel DAVE
HOOMAN down to the Presidential Suite. Then he directs his
attention to the CHARGE NURSE (CARRIE VON TRIER), and gives
her his card.

DOWNES (cont' d)

I know the chances are slim, but if
my buddy Dave wakes up, would you
call me at this number?

CARRIE

Don't hold your breath...
(checks the card)
...Trooper Downes.

DOWNES

I won't.

He starts for the elevators, and then something else occurs
to him and he turns back to the ICU personnel. He addresses
them all, not just the CHARGE NURSE.

DOWNES (cont' d)

Any of you interested in baby-
sitting a Rottweiler? I'd take him
myself, but my wife's got Pokes.
That guy's dog would eat them for
lunch.

No takers.

290

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY

290

The FAINTING NURSE wheels DAVE in and places him across from PETER, near the wall that's painted brick.

NAT

I thought my husband was going to have a private room.

FAINTING NURSE

Dr. James asked me to tell you this is only temporary--all the other pods are full.

The F. N. goes about the job of hooking up the various MONITORS and DRIPS. Another NURSE (or ORDERLY) may come in and help her.

PETER'S eyes--his real eyes--open. He sees DAVE.

PETER (V. O.)

Oh man, I don't believe this. Nat!

But NAT's watching DAVE being installed.

NAT

What's the matter with him?

FAINTING NURSE

Fractured skull, severe brain swelling, C-4 fracture of the spine...and that's just for starters.

NAT

My God!

FAINTING NURSE

I understand he fell off his roof.

NAT

Oh, the poor man!

INT. PETER, CU

PETER (V. O.)

That's the idiot who--

Then his eyes shift to his wife, and SHOCK FILLS HIS FACE.

291 INT. NATALIE, PETER'S POV 291

Only it's not NAT. It's ANTUBIS, wearing NAT'S dress.
He looks down at him and GRINS, showing all those teeth.

292 INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY 292

NAT feels PETER squeezing her hand and looks at him. Her concern for DAVE changes to DELIGHT as she sees that PETER'S eyes are open.

NAT
Peter! You're awake!
(then fresh concern)
Poor thing, you look terrified.
Nurse, can you come here?

The F.N. comes over for a look. She checks both PETER and PETER'S monitors.

FAINTING NURSE
His heart-rate's a little high, but everything else looks okay, Mrs. Rickman. He may have been dreaming.

PETER (V.O.)
Man, I hope I was dreaming.

He closes his eyes again.

FAINTING NURSE
You should talk to him. Keep him connected.

NAT
That's what Dr. Hook said.

FAINTING NURSE
(she's in love)
Hook? He's the best!

NAT
Honey, do you hear me? Open your eyes again if you hear me.

PETER does, but it's that weird double-exposure thing. The eyes NAT sees remain closed.

292E1 PETER (V.O.) 292E1
I'm here.

NAT

Can't you open your eyes for me,
hon? Everything's all right. You
had a bad dream, that's all.

PETER (V.O.)

I wish it was a dream. I only wish
it was.

PETER'S INNER FACE--which we can see vaguely--looks
DESPAIRING AND FRIGHTENED. What NATALIE sees is more serene;
to her it looks like he's slipped back into unconsciousness.

The seance continues. MRS. DRUSE begins to shiver slightly,
but that FAINT LIGHT we saw around her is gone. They have all
achieved a kind of TRANCE STATE, though, and the feeling is
one of awe...of unseen things about to be seen. THE CAMERA
DIPS AND TURNS, catching the rapt faces of the TERMINALS.

DRUSE

Someone is coming...he seeks one in
this circle...

STEGMAN's striding down the corridor, passing the SHEETED
FORM OF MRS. KINNEY, who hasn't yet been transported to the
MORGUE, far below. He doesn't even give her a glance. HOOK
and CHRIS trail in STEG'S wake. Along with the folder of
BRAIN SCAN images, STEG's got a LARGE BOOK and DRUSE'S chart.

Not breaking stride, STEG shows MRS. DRUSE'S chart to BRICK
BANNERMAN.

STEG

Where is she? I was told she was on
this floor.

BRICK

In the Solarium, but she's busy
right n--

STEG

Busy? One so ill? Dear, dear!

STEG spots BRENDA at the SUNSHINE WARD DESK. He gives her a
rather crude pat on the fanny and a BIG SMACKOLA on the
cheek. A "liberated" woman might slap him, but BRENDA is a
career woman, she's in awe of STEG'S mighty brain, and gives
him a starry-eyed smile.

BRENDA

Steg! What are you doing here?

STEG

Come along and see.

(gestures w/ his head at
HOOK)

School is in session.

STEG sweeps BRENDA into his entourage.

[NOTE: MRS. D's lines can be adjusted to fit the actor playing STEG. This is pretty much the Von Trier version.]

DRUSE

He's getting closer... he's
small... hairy... one who explores
his inner darkness...

STEG is stalking along. In his hurry he's even left BRENDA behind. She struggles not to be left with HOOK and CHRIS. (People might think she's like them)

STEG digs a finger into his ear, exploring his inner darkness.

He reaches the closed SOLARIUM DOOR with its piece of cardboard blocking the window. Written on it in block letters: PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB! WE ARE VOYAGING THE OTHER WORLD. ELEANOR DRUSE.

STEG'S reaction to this is ANGRY IMPATIENCE.

MRS. DRUSE is deep in her trance, SHAKING WITH FEAR.

DRUSE

A terrible man! *He means me harm-*

The DOOR OPENS. STEG rolls in, followed by BRENDA ABLESON and (reluctantly) HOOK and CHRIS DRAPER. STEG flips switches, FLOODING THE ROOM WITH FLUORESCENT LIGHT.

DRUSE gives a LITTLE SCREAM as she's torn out of her trance.

Now BRICK also joins the group--this is her ward, after all.

STEG

Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen.

DRUSE

This was entirely my idea, Doctor.

STEG

I'm sure it was.

He looks around and spots BRICK. He has to read her tag to identify her.

STEG (cont'd)

Is this one Druse, Nurse...
Bannerman?

BRICK

(reluctantly)

Yes...

STEG

The healthy-looking one.

BRICK

Yes.

STEG

Mrs. Druse, come with me.

NATALIE is talking to PETER, who has corked off again... or should we say gorked off?

THE CAMERA MOVES PAST HIM to DAVE HOOMAN, who's out like a light--much deeper than PETER.

As we move in on DAVE TO CU, we hear the SOUND OF ECHOING, RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

As THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON DAVE and PASSES THROUGH INTO 298E1 HIS BRAIN:

HOOK (V.O.)

Inside this skull is another universe: the biggest, scariest haunted house of them all.

We ENTER DARKNESS, full of FLASHING SYNAPTIC LIGHTS, THEN:

299 INT. A CORRIDOR OF THE OLD KINGDOM, WITH DAVE 299
DAY? NIGHT?

We've seen it before: signs of DECAY everywhere, tiles fallen off the walls, PUDDLES on the floor. An OVERTURNED GURNEY has grown BEARDS OF MOSS AND MOLD. Also, there are CRACKS in the walls, signs of a SEVERE EARTHQUAKE.

A sign on the wall says BEWARE OF THE WALKING DEAD.

The light is very bad. DAVE, dressed as he was when he fell off the roof, looks behind him and sees:

INT. DARKENED CORRIDOR, DAVE'S POV

RED LIGHTS are coming, and fast. Eyes? And A SOUND OF SOMETHING SNARLING.

INT. RESUME DAVE

He turns and runs around the corner. Trips over something and GOES SPRAWLING. He finds himself FACE TO FACE with a SKELETON. Mold has grown on its bones. The SKULL is just kissing distance from DAVE'S FRIGHTENED FACE. A SPIDER crawls out of one eye-socket and jumps onto him.

DAVE SCREAMS and paws it off, REVOLTED. The thing chasing him is closer. He scrambles to his feet.

300 INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY 300

DAVE is now making MOANING NOISES on his bed, and the MONITORS are BEEPING FASTER, recording his fear. All this attracts NAT'S attention, and she goes to him, worried. DAVE'S EYES are moving rapidly back and forth under his closed lids, as if in REM sleep.

301 INT. A CORRIDOR OF THE OLD KINGDOM, WITH DAVE 301
DAY? NIGHT?

We follow him as he RUNS past the ELEVATOR LOBBY. All the cars stand open, their interiors FESTOONED WITH MOSS. Car #3 also looks SCORCHED, as if there had been a fire in there.

The FOLLOWER IS CLOSER.

DAVE turns a corner BLINDLY and here's a CORPSE hanging from the ceiling. It's PETER RICKMAN. He opens his eyes.

PETER
You did this.

(CONTINUED)

301

CONTINUED:

301

DAVE SCREAMS and runs past him. The thing behind him is CLOSER. DAVE pelts down a DECAYING CORRIDOR and THE CAMERA WATCHES HIM GO.

302

INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY

302

NATALIE, now very alarmed, presses DAVE'S call-button. It doesn't work. She hesitates, then crosses the room and opens the door.

NAT
Nurse? Nurse?

303

INT. NATALIE, FROM THE ICU CORRIDOR DAY

303

She comes out.

NAT
Nurse...?

INT. THE ICU DESK, NAT'S POV

No one is there. Someone should always be there, but this is Kingdom Hospital.

INT. RESUME NATALIE, IN THE ICU CORRIDOR

She walks up to the desk.

NAT (cont'd)
Nurse? (Beat) Where is everybody?

304

INT. DAVE, CU

304

His eyes are moving FASTER THAN EVER beneath his closed lids.

305

INT. A CORRIDOR OF THE OLD KINGDOM, WITH DAVE
DAY? NIGHT?

305

He turns another corner and almost runs into LENNY STILLMACH, sitting in his wheelchair. (Hopefully this will scare us.)

LENNY
(misquotes Wallace
Stevens)
Let the lamp affix its beam. The
only emperor is the Emperor of Ice
Cream

LENNY tries to grab him with his ancient fingers. DAVE shakes him off and runs on.

306 INT. THE ICU DESK, WITH NAT DAY 306

She's having a Twilight Zone moment of her own. She looks around...and then grabs the INTERCOM MIKE.

NAT
(amplified)
Hey! Hey, where is everyb--

A HAND reaches into the frame and grabs her shoulder, scaring us again. NAT WHIRLS and sees the FAINTING NURSE.

FAINTING NURSE
Mrs. Rickman? What's the matter?

NAT
It's the man you just put in with my husband. I think he's having some kind of seizure.

307 INT. A CORRIDOR OF THE OLD KINGDOM, WITH DAVE DAY? NIGHT? 307

He's running full-out, looking behind him for the RED EYES. Then he turns, and PAUL is right there, pale and grinning with a mouthful of HUGE TEETH. He's dressed in a WHITE UNIFORM AND CAP--the attire of an ice cream man. He holds a treat-on-a-stick in each hand.

PAUL
Popsicle or Fudgsicle?

He tosses them both aside--Indian giver!--and LUNGES AT DAVE'S FACE, presumably to bite it off.

308 INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE, CU DAVE DAY 308

His eyes come open and he sees:

309 INT. ANTUBIS, ECU (DAVE'S POV) 309

His muzzle wrinkles back, exposing all those TEETH. This is not the kinder, gentler ANTUBIS.

310 INT. PETER 310

He opens his own eyes, looks around, and sees ANTUBIS with his rear paws on the floor and his front paws up on DAVE'S bed, peering into DAVE'S face.

SOUND: A SMALL SILVER BELL BEGINS TO RING. MARY'S death-bell.

311 INT. DAVE AND ANTUBIS, VERY CLOSE 311

ANTUBIS buries his fangs in DAVE'S NECK.

SOUND: MONITOR ALARMS. A BEEEEEEEE SOUND as DAVE FLATLINES.

312 INT. THE ICU DESK, WITH NAT AND THE F.N. DAY 312

FAINTING NURSE

Just calm down, Mrs. --

The ALARMS cut her off. The F.N. runs for the Presidential Suite, and of course now the CHARGE NURSE (CARRIE) and others join her. They've all been ministering to other patients. Very convenient, but it's how things work in KH.

313 INT. THE PRESIDENTIAL SUITE DAY 313

The FAINTING NURSE comes bursting in, but she's only the first in a parade. NAT is shunted aside to where PETER lies in his bed with his eyes open and a desperate look on his face: you'd look desperate, too, if you just saw the Anteater Hell Forgot tear your roommate's throat out. Not that there's blood; DAVE'S throat is entirely intact.

The F.N. is first to the bed, but she is shunted aside by CARRIE VON TRIER, who takes one look at the FLATLINE MONITORS and DAVE'S UNMOVING CHEST before saying:

CARRIE

Full code! Call Dr. Traff!

She unhooks the vent and gives HOOMAN four big blasts of O2 from an ambu bag. Another NURSE begins chest compressions. In comes the CRASH CART flanked by more help. THE CAMERA MOVES TO NATALIE AND PETER, forgotten in the GENERAL HUBBUB.

NAT

What happened?

Not really expecting an answer (and the answer seems obvious), but she gets one, anyway.

PETER

(w/ immense effort)

I heard...the bell.

NAT

What?

PETER

Her name is Mary.

(CONTINUED)

PETER closes his eyes again and drifts away. It's time for us to do the same.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT 4

314 EXT. KINGDOM HOSPITAL, ESTABLISHING DAY 314

315 INT. MRS. DRUSE'S ROOM DAY 315

She's sitting on her bed and looking rather frightened of STEG (as she should be). STEG still has her chart, the folder of scans, and the book. STEG has dragged along HOOK, CHRIS, and BRENDA so they can watch him ..operate, so to speak.

STEG

So! You're a kind of spiritual goo-roo for the terminal patients?

DRUSE nods hopefully. STEG turns to his captive audience.

STEG (cont'd)

All sham, of course. Like the illnesses she dreams up to get in here.

(back to DRUSE)

Six admissions just this year!
Fourteen over the last two! You're a malingerer!

DRUSE

This time I'm really ill.

STEG opens her chart and reads from it.

STEG

You're ill, all right. (reading)
"Patient presents with numbness and tingling in the left hand, and--"
Mark me, ladies and gentlemen, mark me very well! "--and a feeling of lightness, as if the hand would like to rise on its own."

(holds up the book)

This is Neurologic Complaints: An Overview, by Stein and Vogel, a standard diagnostic text. Now a bit out of date, but still very useful.

DRUSE

You had no right to go through my things!

(CONTINUED)

STEG

Oh, but we do. This is not a hotel, no matter how often you may treat it like one!

HOOK

Steg, that's enough.

STEG

No, my good Doctor Hook, it is not enough. Not quite.

(opens the book to a marked place)

Here, I quote from Stein and Vogel. "We reported in the Journal of Clinical Neurology on an elderly female patient who presented for EMG at our clinic complaining of numbness and tingling in her left hand. She also reported a feeling of lightness, as though the hand might rise on its own!" We ruled out peripheral neuropathies, craniocervical junction abnormalities, transient ischemic attacks, various paresthesias and peripheral neuropathies--"

He SLAMS THE BOOK TRIUMPHANTLY SHUT. STEG has been building up to a full-fledged scolding, and here it is. He bends forward, SHOUTING AND SPRAYING SPIT.

STEG (cont' d)

Even underlined the passage, didn't you! You will be here again, of course you will, your kind are like cockroaches, like lice--

CHRIS

That is totally inappropriate--

BRENDA

Be quiet.

STEG

(takes no notice, anyway)
You are a parasite on the body of this hospital! It is you and all your type that hold it back from greatness!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STEG (cont' d)

But the next time you come in, madam, do me the favor of NOT quoting directly from Stein and Vogel's Neurologic Complaints!

During this, we see HOOK and CHRIS'S discomfiture and embarrassment for the way the old lady is being scolded. We also see that HOOK'S fly is still unzipped.

STEG opens the book to the back and displays a LIBRARY POCKET. He shows the thickness of the book where there is a STAMP reading PROPERTY OF LEWISTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

STEG (cont' d)

And if you must quote from Stein and Vogel, do yourself a favor and renew it. It's two weeks overdue. (Beat) A book like this shouldn't circulate, anyway. It gives ideas to people like you. And now. Now.

STEG takes out the pictures of MRS. DRUSE'S BRAIN and shows them, first to DRUSE, then to the others. He all but scrubs HOOK'S FACE with them. Then he taps various quadrants of poor MRS. DRUSE'S BRAIN as he speaks.

STEG (cont' d)

Look! Mark them well! No-tah Ben-ay! Here is the medulla of the malingerer! Here, the hippocampus of the hypochondriac! Here, the midbrain of a Munchausen!

With each whiplash of STEG'S tongue, DRUSE shrinks a little more until she sits SLUMPED AND ABJECT on her bed. (Ah, but fear not, LA DRUSE is tougher than that; it's mostly an act.)

STEG (cont' d)

(turns to her)

Perhaps, my dear Mrs. Druse, these pictures will be in the next edition of Stein and Vogel. Then you will be immortal. (Beat) Discharge this patient at once.

(to BRENDA)

And if he won't, you do it.

BRENDA

Yes, Dr. Stegman.

STEG tosses the book onto DRUSE'S bed. He closes the folder and thrusts it into HOOK'S hands. Then he thrusts his face pugnaciously up to HOOK'S until they are nose to nose.

(CONTINUED)

STEG

Idiot.

He storms out, mission accomplished.

CHRIS

(to HOOK)

I'm sorry. This is my fault.

BRENDA

Will you take care of discharging this patient, Dr. Hook?

CHRIS

This is my--

BRENDA

Dr. Hook?

HOOK

I'll take good care of this lady.

BRENDA is a little unsure--it isn't the answer she wanted--but she decides to let it stand.

BRENDA

Good.

She leaves. And as soon as she does, MRS. DRUSE'S smile resurfaces. She's bloody but unbowed.

HOOK

I'm sorry you were subjected to that, Mrs. Druse.

DRUSE

Oh, you know what they say--sticks and stones.

Nonetheless, we see that she is hurt.

DRUSE (cont' d)

(cheerfully)

Young man, your fly is unzipped.

HOOK looks down, uncharacteristically flustered, and zips up his fly, hiding the red underwear, while DRUSE and CHRIS exchange an amused look.

316 INT. BASEMENT CORRIDOR, DAVE HOOMAN'S TOE, CU DAY 316

There's a NAME-TAG on it. And a field marked DATE OF DEATH/
TIME OF DEATH. Both of them have been filled out.

SOUND: ELEVATOR DOORS OPENING.

The TOE BEGINS TO ROLL. THE CAMERA TRACKS WITH IT.

LONA (V.O.)
Elmer, what is this?

ELMER (V.O.)
A surprise--that's what it is.

THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK and we see a BASEMENT CORRIDOR. ELMER is rolling DAVE'S CORPSE along it. LONA MASSINGALE is accompanying him, wary but curious. The lighting here is DIM and rather GOTHIC, thrown by overhead hanging lamps. (Let the lamp affix its beam.) We've been here before; it's the reality-based version of one of the corridors in the OLD HOSPITAL. There's no mold, but we see EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE. At the far end of this corridor are double doors marked MORGUE.

Closer to hand, BRADY JUNKINS is sweeping up plaster. As LONA passes, he has a good gander at her backfield in motion. And makes A SOUND OF MALE APPRECIATION. LONA stops.

LONA
Who are you?

BRADY
Brady Junkins, ma'am. Maintenance.

LONA
Where is Mr. Goode?

BRADY
He's off today. Wisdom teeth.
They're the worst.

LONA and ELMER move on.

317 INT. THE MORGUE DAY 317

But we see only the doors. They open, LONA holding them so ELMER can get the gurney with DAVE'S BODY on it through.

LONA
What are we doing here, E--

(CONTINUED)

Then she sees what they're doing here and stops dead, an expression of **WONDER AND AMUSEMENT** on her face.

INT. THE MORGUE, LONA AND ELMER'S POV DAY

It's a gloomy room, lit by more of those **HANGING LAMPS**. There are many lockers and the **HUM OF REFRIGERATION**. Near one wall of lockers, also on a gurney, also with the feet sticking out, is the body of **MRS. KINNEY**.

In the middle of the room is a **TABLE SET FOR TWO**. There's a snowy white tablecloth, fine place settings, many glasses...and candles.

INT. LONA AND ELMER

ELMER

Dinner for two in Chez Morte! And the cuisine, I promise you, is excellent! No cafeteria chow; this is from Hook's private stock. Help me with this guy, would you?

ELMER rolls **DAVE** to one of the lockers. LONA, still **AMUSED** and rather **TITILLATED**, opens the door for him and rolls out the **STEEL SLAB**. They lift **DAVE'S** body onto it and roll it inside. ELMER latches the door shut with great **SATISFACTION**. Then he goes to one of the chair and holds it for her.

ELMER (cont'd)

Madam?

LONA

What about the other one?

ELMER

Someone else's responsibility. And as long as she doesn't want any of our champagne, who cares?

LONA

I care.

ELMER

Oh, all right.

They load **MRS. KINNEY** into another refrigerated cabinet and store her away. Then LONA turns to survey the beautifully set table. She debates, and we see a "Well, why not?" expression surface on her face. She sits, catches ELMER eyeing her legs, and pulls her skirt down. ELMER helps her with her chair.

(CONTINUED)

LONA

This is insane.

ELMER

I'm insane. Especially when it comes to you.

LONA

Elmer, don't think I'm not flattered--I am--but you really can't go on with this--

The difference in their ages is at least 20 years. LONA's about to address this when ABEL shows up, dressed in a snowy WAITER'S JACKET. He's got a bottle of champagne on ice. Grinning, he puts it by their table, removes the bottle, and eases out the cork with professional skill. SOUND OF A MUTED POP. He reaches for ELMER'S glass.

ELMER

No, let the lady taste. Please.

ABEL pours LONA a bit of champagne. Once more AMUSED AND CAPTIVATED--who would not be?--she takes it and TASTES.

LONA

Excellent. But--

ELMER

We can discuss our age difference later, if you want. For now, let's just enjoy our dinner. Fresh asparagus and noisettes of veal, new potatoes, with creme brulee to follow.

(rather plaintively)
Please?

LONA

All right, Elmer.

ELMER

(grandly)
If you please, waiter!

GRINNING HAPPILY, ABEL fills their glasses with bubbly. ELMER raises his glass. LONA, still AMUSED, raises hers.

ELMER (cont'd)

To the Traffs, who never give up.

(CONTINUED)

LONA

To the Massingales, who never give in.

They CLINK GLASSES like duellists crossing swords.

HOOK and DRUSE and waiting for the elevator. DRUSE is dressed in her street clothes and has her purse.

HOOK

I'll call you a taxi.

DRUSE

Thank you, but that won't be necessary, Dr. Hook. The bus stops right across the street. And that is not the point.

HOOK

What is, Mrs. Druse?

DRUSE

There is something very wrong here.

HOOK

There are many things wrong here.

DRUSE

There is a child, not at rest. We may hear her going down.

HOOK

Pediatrics--

DRUSE

This is not a child from pediatrics. This is not a child that's even alive.

(off HOOK'S skepticism)

I think you'll find out. You're not closed off. Like some.

The elevator doors open and they get on. It's CAR #3.

DRUSE (cont'd)

It's not just the child. Something in Kingdom Hospital has changed since the last time I was here. (Beat) Something has awakened. Something evil.

318

CONTINUED:

318

The doors close.

319

INT. THE ELEVATOR, WITH HOOK AND DRUSE DAY

319

DRUSE

That child needs help. And if I'm
to help, I must be here!

HOOK

I don't think that's--

SOUND: THE ECHOING CRIES OF A CHILD. MRS. DRUSE reaches out
and snaps down the EMERGENCY STOP button.

320

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

320

The car stops. CRYING CHILD UP TO LOUD. GHOSTLY and WEIRD.

321

INT. RESUME HOOK AND DRUSE, IN THE ELEVATOR

321

DRUSE

There! Do you hear it?

HOOK

Yes... and we're nowhere near Pedes.
I think this is just below 4. ICU.

OTTO (V.O.)

Who's in there? Are you all right?

HOOK

(thumbs intercom)

We're fine, Otto--hit the wrong
button by mistake.

OTTO (O.S.)

Is that Hook?

HOOK

Yeah.

OTTO (V.O.)

Push the STOP switch up. Give it
about fifteen seconds--the car will
re-start.

HOOK

Right.

He looks up, not touching the RED SWITCH. One of the ceiling
panels is ajar again. THE CRYING CHILD is louder than ever.

(CONTINUED)

HOOK (cont'd)

She sounds like she's right on top of the car!

DRUSE

(eyes alight)

Yes! But is it the cry of a living child? Listen to the echo! That's the sound of a voice coming from Swedenborgian space!

HOOK

From what?

DRUSE

Never mind! Can you tell me that there is a living child on top of this elevator car?

HOOK

If so, I'm going to get her down.

There's a CHROME HANDRAIL halfway up the sides of the elevator car. HOOK starts to use it to climb up, then turns back to DRUSE.

HOOK (cont'd)

Whatever you do, don't re-start this car while I'm up there. I've had enough excitement for one day.

DRUSE

Of course not. Be careful, Dr. Hook!

HOOK climbs up, using the rail for a footrest.

We hear a DIM WHOOSHING SOUND, and the HUM of the other two elevator cars. The ceiling panel that's ajar moves further aside, and HOOK climbs up, getting his uniform whites good and greasy in the process.

SOUND OF THE CRYING CHILD is LOUDER.

HOOK crouches on top of the car, starts to get up, then WINCES BACK as CAR #2 passes in the next shaft, close enough to blow his hair back.

322

CONTINUED:

322

He STANDS UP and sees the RAG DOLL. He picks it up, and we register for the first time how old it is: an antique. He LOOKS UP, perhaps thinking it was dropped from above, and we

SHOCK CUT TO:

323

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT, WITH MARY (HOOK'S POV)

323

She's clinging to the cables. This isn't a GHOST but a PALLID CORPSE-CHILD, clinging to the cables like a lemur and staring down at HOOK with her deeply socketed eyes. Her BELL hangs around her neck.

She reaches out, uttering an UNEARTHLY CRY.

324

RESUME HOOK, ON TOP OF THE ELEVATOR CAR

324

He drops the doll.

325

ELEVATOR SHAFT, LOOKING DOWN

325

The doll tumbles...down and down...turning over and over...

326

RESUME HOOK, ON TOP OF THE ELEVATOR CAR

326

He TOTTERS ON THE EDGE OF THE DROP, waving his arms for balance.

327

INT. RESUME MARY

327

Reaching out for HOOK with her white hands, and we

FADE TO BLACK.