

GOOD DOCTOR

Written by

David Shore

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\* 10202 West Washington Boulevard \* Culver City, CA 90232 \*

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. HOME -- MORNING (DAY 1)

1

Very basic. A few personal touches but not many: several Rubik's cubes, a few photographs and lots and lots of books.

And as we are seeing various SHOTS of this home, we will also see SHOTS of SHAUN MURPHY, 25, awkward at the best of times, brushing his teeth and brushing his teeth and brushing his teeth and then--

Brushing his hair; then--

Buttoning his shirt; then--

Brushing his hair again; then--

Packing a bag of clothes; everything perfectly folded and arranged; then--

Brushing his hair yet again. It's absolutely perfect; then--

Finally, and incongruously, mussing his hair.

2 EXT. CASPER, WYOMING -- MORNING

2

A small city of about 50,000 with a rich cowboy, mining history; a beautiful setting but it's seen better days (a few abandoned or condemned buildings are evident). And we aren't even in the heart of Casper. In the suburbs, if you can call them that, where the flats of the city start climbing into the mountains that make this place so scenic, we find some working class homes.

And then a door opens. And out emerges Shaun with the rolling suitcase and a smaller bag over his shoulder. He doesn't lock up behind him; either he's very trusting or he's not planning on coming back.

And he begins to walk down into town, pulling his case behind him.

We have no idea what he's up to, where he's going or why. But there is something odd about his gait. Like the motion of his arms aren't completely connected to the motion of his legs; he doesn't look up all that much either.

And he passes a field, at the edge of which sits a school bus. He stops and looks at it. It apparently has some significance to him. But he's quickly snapped out of his reverie when--

A soccer ball rolls in front of him and some 12 year old kids yell for him to return it. He looks at it for a long time, like he's trying to figure out how it works or how to address it. And we FLASH TO--

3 EXT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - FLASHBACK -- DAY

3

*YOUNG SHAUN, 14, is on the ground being kicked and beaten by other 14 year olds. Young Shaun is scared and in pain but he has a weird grin on his face and he doesn't say anything. He just stares off at something off camera.*

*Before we witness too much of this, we pan off Shaun to what he has been looking at, a lone soccer ball sitting in the field. We get the feeling this ball is somehow to blame for what's happening.*

*And then, beyond the ball, we see a twelve year old boy sprinting toward us. This is STEVE, Shaun's younger brother.*

*He runs right past the ball and into the melee. He doesn't care that he's smaller than any of the other boys. He starts pushing them and scratching them and yelling at them. Maybe they could fight him off but he's so crazed and relentless that the other boys back off.*

*Steve turns to his brother to see if he's okay. Shaun is bleeding above his right eye.*

4 EXT. FIELD - FLASHBACK -- DAY

4

*Steve has gotten some ointment and bandages from home and is tenderly taking care of Shaun's wounds as Shaun rocks, holding onto his beloved pet rabbit.*

STEVE

*Hold still.*

SHAUN

*Okay.*

*But he keeps rocking.*

STEVE

*Those boys... They're not really that bad.*

*The rocking stops. Shaun is surprised by the comment, isn't sure how to react.*

STEVE (CONT'D)

*They could be your friends.*

SHAUN

*Why do I want them to be my friend?*

*STEVE*  
*...Everybody needs friends, Shaun.*

*Shaun goes back to rocking.*

5 EXT. CASPER, WYOMING -- DAY 5

Back to the present.

Shaun awkwardly kicks the ball back to the boys and walks on.

AND THEN A MONTAGE of this odd man's travels.

6 EXT. WYOMING -- DAY 6

A bus out of town, through the mountains...

Shaun staring out the window (and away from human contact)...

The bus pulls into Cheyenne regional airport...

And finally...

7 INT. SAN JOSE AIRPORT -- DAY 7

Shaun, having just disembarked, stands there in the busy airport. It's a far cry from where he came from. People hurry past him. People working, people lining up, people eating, sleeping, reading. Among them--

WORKERS install a hanging glass-covered commercial sign--

An eight year old boy (ADAM) watches them, fascinated--

His mother (BONNIE) has one eye on him as she buys candy at a pharmacy--

Dad (CARL) is reading a magazine in a bookstore; not buying it, just reading it.

People, people, people. And noise. The noise of the people, the noise of the announcements, multiple simultaneous announcements. So much sensory overload.

Shaun takes something from his pocket, unwraps it, and we see a child's toy scalpel, dirty and worn. We don't know what it means or why but it clearly means something.

After a beat, he wraps it up again and begins walking out...

SHAUN  
 (quietly to himself)  
 Twenty feet past the second Cinnabon,  
 turn right, twenty feet past the  
 second Cinnabon, turn right...

He has a system and he has things under control.

But of course the universe doesn't give a shit about his system. SUDDENLY, one of the cables holding the sign SNAPS. The glass SHATTERS and RAINS DOWN--

On Adam, the little boy. He falls to the ground, unconscious and bleeding--

The world reacts. Mother screams and hurries to her son; father also rushes to his side. The workers are horrified by what they've done. Passers by are scared, unsure what to do; someone calls 911--

Adam lies on the ground, blood flowing copiously from his neck.

Shaun watches, apparently impassive.

A DOCTOR hurries to the unconscious child.

DOCTOR  
 I'm a doctor, let me take a look.

The mother lets him in and he quickly assesses the damage to the neck--

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
 His jugular artery has been cut.  
 Does anyone have a clean cloth?

The thing about crowds is everyone assumes the questions and the obligations are always for someone else. No one is quite sure how to react. And not sure if they even want to.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
 Please. Someone.

BONNIE  
 What do you mean? How clean? I have  
 a fresh change of clothes in my bag.

DOCTOR  
 Great. Perfect.

Bonnie quickly opens her carry on bag, removes one of her son's t-shirts and hands it to the doctor who immediately places it on the wound, almost instantly stanching the blood flow. Bonnie and Carl are momentarily relieved, until--

SHAUN (O.S.)  
You're killing him.

The doctor and others look up. What did he just say? Shaun just stares back.

DOCTOR  
I'm saving his life. He was bleeding out.

SHAUN  
You have it in the wrong place.

DOCTOR  
(annoyed)  
I think I remember enough of anatomy 101 to know where the jugular vein is and--

SHAUN  
You'd be in the right place if he was an adult. He's not an adult. Which means you're also putting pressure on his trachea. Which means he's not currently breathing.

The Doctor is momentarily stunned, looks down at Adam's chest. Indeed, it's not rising and falling. Shit.

SHAUN (CONT'D)  
You have to put the pressure higher up.

And Shaun kneels down and does just that. And everyone looks to the boy's chest, expectantly. After a beat, it starts to rise and fall. The Doctor is embarrassed but also surprised and grateful.

DOCTOR  
Who are you?

SHAUN  
I'm Shaun Murphy, I'm a surgeon at San Jose St. Bonaventure Hospital.

Well that wasn't what the doctor (or our audience) expected.

And with his free hand, Shaun begins to check the body for other damage; he notices something and lifts up the boy's shirt, revealing a large piece of glass embedded in the boy's stomach. Oh shit--

FADE OUT:

END TEASER

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 EXT. SAN JOSE ST. BONAVENTURE HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING -- DAY 8

9 INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY 9

An amphitheater type lecture hall. But today it's being used for a board meeting. The entire Board of Directors (20 of them) is present. The four you need to know are: ALLEGRA ALEXIS, 48, Vice President of the Foundation that controls this hospital, perpetually calm and clever, it's clear from the deference she receives in this room that she's a person of power; JESSICA PRESTON, 35, Board Member, not a doctor, carries some resentment because people usually dismiss her as a rich kid, she's smarter than most of them give her credit for and definitely way more astute; and HORACE ANDREWS, 42, Head of Surgery, capable surgeon, defensive, doesn't always think before he talks. And at the front is DR. IRA GLASSMAN, 60, President of the Hospital, a good man who wasn't always a good man and is trying to make up for it. Right now, Dr. Glassman is a little annoyed and defensive that this session is taking place at all.

ANDREWS

Autism: A mental condition characterized by difficulty in communicating and using language and abstract concepts. That's the definition; does it sound like I'm describing a surgeon?

GLASSMAN

He's not Rain Man. He's high functioning; he's capable of living on his own and managing his own affairs.

ANDREWS

That's our new hiring standard? "High functioning?"

GLASSMAN

The issue isn't 'our standards'; it's my standard. Is it seriously necessary to hold a special meeting of the Board of Directors just to question one of my hiring decisions? Did you bother to look up the definition of "President" while you were skimming the dictionary?

ANDREWS

--You're hiring him for surgery; my department; over my objections.

It's growing heated. But--

ALEXIS

Gentlemen.

One word from her can shut down any argument. They turn to her, deferential. She's polite and respectful in style but her words can cut. She addresses Andrews first:

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Horace, stop trying to make everything personal. You don't like Dr. Glassman--

ANDREWS

I never said--

ALEXIS

Shhh. You've wanted his job from day one. Everyone in this room knows that.

(turning to Glassman)

And you, Ira... Yes, it's your hospital. But the money to run it comes from the Foundation I control. So... let's play nice shall we? Stop acting like you're stunned that you're standing here. You tried to slip one past us.

GLASSMAN

He finished medical school with virtually straight A's. I personally spoke to two of his professors; he's more than qualified--

ALEXIS

And you genuinely thought this Board wouldn't reasonably have a few doubts about hiring a surgeon who has been diagnosed with autism?

Glassman doesn't respond. He knows she's right.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

So justify your decision.

She sits back. A beat, Dr. Glassman looks around the room, they're all waiting, curious. Enough with the academic justification; it's time to get a little personal...



GLASSMAN

I met Shaun Murphy when I was back home in Wyoming a number of years ago for Thanksgiving. He was fourteen years old. He was, and still is, an extraordinary young man. Yes, he suffers from autism but there are, at least in his case, blessings that go with that as well. He has savant syndrome; genius level skills in several areas. He has almost perfect recall and spatial intelligence.

(to Andrews, making his case)

That is an undeniable benefit for any doctor, particularly a surgeon, wouldn't you agree?

And all eyes turn to Andrews:

ANDREWS

...You've known him since he was fourteen?

Preston shakes her head, knows where this is going. Glassman doesn't.

GLASSMAN

I mentored him, watched him grow; I've seen first hand what he's capable of. By the age of sixteen, Shaun had memorized every part of the human body and at least one complete medical textbook.

ANDREWS

(making a point, gently)

You "mentored" him. You care about him. He's like a son to you.

Glassman doesn't disagree. But...

PRESTON

Dr. Andrews, your wife isn't going to be happy with you.

(off Andrews confusion)

If you're trying to turn this into a nepotism case, we'll have to fire her loser nephew from bookkeeping.

Some chuckles in the room. Not from Andrews; he shoots Preston a nasty look.

10 INT. RESIDENTS' REST AREA -- DAY

10

A dark quiet room. After a moment, DR. ELLE MCLEAN, 30, smart, confident, loyal, enters, flipping on the light--

JARED

Hey!

Apparently the room isn't empty. This is DR. JARED UNGER, 28, handsome, smart, a bit of a romantic, and basically blinded by the sudden light. He's been sleeping on a top bunk (there are several bunks in the room for hard working residents and interns to take breaks in).

ELLE

Sorry. You seen Claire?

JARED

Turn out the damn light.

ELLE

(doesn't)

You seen Claire?

JARED

Why? Would you turn out the light?

ELLE

Melendez wants to operate on 104 but Claire hasn't gotten informed consent. And she's ignoring her page. You seen her?

JARED

No. Go away and turn off the light.

Elle leaves, leaving the light on. Jared can't believe it.

JARED (CONT'D)

...She's such a bitch.

And we assume he was just muttering that to himself until:

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Nah. She just doesn't like you.

And we realize that CLAIRE BROWNE, 27, strong-willed, deeply caring, and defiant to cover her insecurities, has been in bed with Jared the whole time; between him and the wall. She gets up and climbs over him, jumping down to get dressed. And as she dresses:

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Aren't we supposed to be getting a new resident? Someone to get consents while we sleep.

JARED

This is kind of silly, isn't it?

CLAIRE

Maybe. To say for sure, I'd need to know what you're talking about.

JARED

Us.

CLAIRE

Not silly at all. Quite a bit of fun actually.

JARED

I meant that we're hiding it. Our relationship.

Claire looks at him. In her mind, they've had this discussion, in one form or another, many times. In his mind, it's clearly a little less clear. She gives him, unemotionally, the simple truth.

CLAIRE

...We don't have a relationship, Jared. We have sex. If you want to tell people you're screwing me, go for it.

She gives him a quick kiss and then exits. He tries to cover just how not happy he is with the way that just went.

11 INT. AIRPORT -- DAY

11

The EMTs have not yet arrived and Shaun and the Doctor continue to attend to the boy. Carefully bandaging wounds and stabilizing shards of glass. In the midst of this, concerned about something, Shaun glances at his watch.

But then Shaun stops, staring at the boy's right arm. Then to the boy's left arm; then to the boy's chest. Then cycling back and around again. Obsessively. The Mother notices.

MOTHER

Is everything okay?

SHAUN

The veins in the boy's right arm are popping.

The Doctor takes a look. It's subtle. He's not sure he sees anything.

DOCTOR

I don't know; I--

SHAUN

It's a symptom of increased intrathoracic pressure.

*And then we will get our first glimpse of a device we shall frequently be using: Pop-Up Medicine. A card will appear on the screen that will be an image from Shaun's memory. Typically, but not always, it will be an image from a medical textbook. It will always provide us with information about his current medical thought processes.*

POP-UP

*Venous distension is caused by increased intrathoracic pressure inside the chest cavity.*

*[Where helpful, the Pop-Up will be accompanied by diagrams or pictures - but scripts, by their nature, tend to be all about words - for the highly motivated, feel free to scroll around <https://www.netterimages.com>.]*

The doctor looks to the boy's chest; sees no reason for concern.

DOCTOR

His chest is rising; he's breathing.

SHAUN

Chest is moving paradoxically. The right lung is in distress.

POP-UP

*It is a rare sign of a **life threatening condition** known as traumatic pneumothorax.*

SHAUN

This is a medical emergency.

POP-UP

*Treatment is focused on correcting the underlying cause of the finding.*

SHAUN

(to anyone)

Who here has a sharp knife, blade six inches or longer?

Their reactions are what you'd expect - this is an airport after all... Shaun takes that in, then:

SHAUN (CONT'D)

(to Doctor)

You should start artificial respiration. He's going to stop breathing very soon.

And then Shaun gets up and quickly walks away. Huh?

12 INT. PATIENT ROOM 104 -- DAY

12

Claire patiently meets with 104 whom she, because she's a decent person, calls by his name, CALLUM REILLY, 46. He's a bit old fashioned, considers himself a man's man. His wife and two teenage children are bedside.

CALLUM

I feel fine.

CLAIRE

That's great, Mr. Reilly. That's what we want to hear but the angiogram confirmed what the stress echo hinted at: you need bypass surgery. Quite urgently.

CALLUM

So you people keep telling me.

CLAIRE

Dr. Melendez is an excellent surgeon. And bypass surgery has become almost routine in the last ten years--

As she talks, Callum looks to his family, scoffs--

SON

You're telling us there's no risk?

CLAIRE

There's always a risk but--

DAUGHTER

We want a second opinion.

CLAIRE

There was no mistake made--

WIFE

Then you should have no issue with getting a second opinion.

CLAIRE

Time is the issue. Dr. Melendez would like to do the surgery today.

(to Callum, firm)

That doesn't give us time to get another doctor in here to confirm what you already know is true: you need this surgery or you will die.

She hands him a clipboard.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Now please sign this consent.

Callum considers, then looks to his family.

CALLUM

No.

Claire takes a second, then turns to the wife and children.

CLAIRE

Would it be okay if I spoke to Callum alone?

They look to him; he nods, they kiss him and leave. Then:

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

They're following your lead. They're scared because you're scared.

CALLUM

I'm not scared.

CLAIRE

Then you're crazy.

(off his look)

We are going to cut your chest open; we are going to stop your heart, repair it and then restart it. Are you seriously telling me that doesn't scare you?

CALLUM

I just want a second opinion.

CLAIRE

Yesterday, your life was perfect; playing tennis, having sex with your wife; today you're lying in a hospital bed trying to figure out the best way to say goodbye to your teenage children.

CALLUM  
 (fighting back tears)  
 Why are you doing this?

CLAIRE  
 (compassionate but  
 firm)  
 Because I can't deal with lies. If  
 you lie to me, my answers won't help  
 you.

Callum doesn't answer; won't make eye contact.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
 But if you're scared, I can help  
 you.

A long beat before...

CALLUM  
 I'm scared.

Claire nods.

13 INT. AIRPORT - TSA -- DAY

13

Shaun has not made a run for it. He's actually at the airport security checkpoint. He walks behind the barrier to where the SECURITY PERSONNEL work, heads for a large bin--

TSA OFFICER  
 (stern)  
 Excuse me. You can't be back here.

He grabs Shaun.

SHAUN  
 Where do you keep the knives that  
 people forget they're traveling with?  
 I need a knife.

TSA OFFICER  
 (sarcasm)  
 Oh sure. A knife; no problem. Anything  
 else? Fuse wire? Plastic explosives?

SHAUN  
 I also need a narrow six foot tube  
 and alcohol and baggage handling  
 tape but I'm going to get the alcohol  
 from the duty free store and the  
 tube from the back of a soda machine.

TSA OFFICER  
 (bit stunned but)  
 Well good luck with that. But you're  
 not getting a knife.

SHAUN  
 I need a sharp knife. It's quite  
 urgent. It's a medical emergency.

TSA OFFICER  
 You're not a doctor.

SHAUN  
 Yes I am.

Shaun sees a bin filled with contraband and starts to move  
 toward it, but the TSA Officer again stops him.

SHAUN (CONT'D)  
 That one. That's a good one right  
 near the top. It looks very sharp.

TSA OFFICER  
 Can I see some identification?

SHAUN  
 No. I don't--

TSA OFFICER  
 Then you're not getting a knife;  
 call 911 and get out of--

SHAUN  
 There's no time.

Shaun runs to the bin, grabs the knife and makes a run for  
 it.

But he's not a good runner and he doesn't get far. He's  
 tackled hard to the ground by three very large and adept TSA  
 Officers.

One of them grabs the knife, another pulls out handcuffs.

TSA OFFICER  
 You idiot; you're lucky we didn't  
 just shoot--

BONNIE (O.S.)  
 Please. No.

They look up and see the young boy's mother nearby.

BONNIE (CONT'D)  
 He's trying to save my son's life.



The TSA personnel look to each other - this isn't the type of situation they're taught.

14 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAYS -- DAY

14

Claire tracks down a busy DR. NEIL MELENDEZ, 35, incredibly skilled surgeon and equally harsh boss (anything less than perfection is unacceptable in surgery), and he happens to be Claire's boss.

MELENDEZ

You get the consent on 104?

CLAIRE

I made him a deal. He's meeting with Dr. Max from psychiatry at six, we'll have the consent by eight, we can operate first thing in the morning.

If Claire was expecting a "good job"; that's not what she gets.

MELENDEZ

Psychiatry? His problem's in his heart, not his head. You did pass anatomy, right Dr. Browne?

CLAIRE

He's not psychologically ready for surgery. He will be. Soon.

MELENDEZ

He's *physically* ready. Get the consent. They're prepping O.R. six right now.

And Melendez starts to walk away. Claire follows.

CLAIRE

Do I need to cite you the seventeen studies that show a correlation between attitude and outcome for surgical patients?

MELENDEZ

(strong, but calm)

You do know I'm your superior, right? You do know what the opposite of superior is?

CLAIRE

Subordinate; doesn't--

MELENDEZ

Sure. Subordinate. Or... inferior.  
Either way.

CLAIRE

Doesn't mean I'm wrong.

MELENDEZ

I suppose not. Just means you have  
to act like you're wrong.

He finally stops and looks at her; awaiting her answer to the implicit question. Claire considers her options and...

CLAIRE

(one final plea)

He's panic stricken. Yesterday he  
thought he was young and healthy;  
today he's suddenly mortal. Just  
give him a day to wrap his head around  
that.

Melendez considers Claire for a beat. Then he looks beyond her to Jared who stands nearby, trying to be unnoticed as he listens in to the awkward conversation.

MELENDEZ

Dr. Unger? You think you can get me  
a signed informed consent from 104?

Jared had no intention of throwing himself into the middle of this but that's where he is. He looks from Melendez to Claire, then back again and...

JARED

Of course.

Melendez takes the clipboard from Claire, hands it to Jared and Melendez continues on... leaving Claire with Jared.

CLAIRE

...You think he's right?

JARED

I think he's my boss. And if I have  
to choose between my boss and...  
'the woman I'm screwing', not much  
of a choice, am I right?

A look between them. And then he heads off to do his job, leaving her alone--

15 INT. AIRPORT - ACCIDENT SCENE -- DAY

15

Shaun is once more with the boy. The crowd is still watching. But among them now, right near the front, are two TSA Officers, hovering close by, keeping an eye on Shaun, curious and uncertain.

The Doctor continues to do A.R. on Adam whose skin is now an unhealthy shade of blue, as Shaun finishes his own preparations--

He sterilizes the knife and one end of a 1/4 inch diameter tube using alcohol from a bottle of Jack Daniels--

He refills the empty whiskey bottle with water--

Places one end of the tube into the whiskey bottle--

Very neatly and methodically tapes the tube in place--

Then he picks up the knife and uses his fingers to find his target on the child--

*POP-UP*

*Tension pneumothorax is usually due to a lung laceration which allows air to escape into the pleural space surrounding the lung but not to return into the lung.*

*This information is accompanied by an image from an anatomy textbook which includes among other things, the lungs and the surrounding rib cage. We jump in closer and closer and...*

SHAUN

Incision should take place two ribs down.

And he cuts. And cuts. It's slightly crude but very targeted. There's blood but not an inordinate amount.

*POP-UP*

*Care must be taken not to harm the vein, artery, and nerve which run under the rib bone.*

We hear a slight hiss.

Shaun feeds the tube in through the incision. And we see air bubbles coming out and into the tube. They flow along the tube and into the bottle where they are released into the water...

DOCTOR

Why the bottle?

SHAUN

The air will continue to leak and accumulate until the damage can be properly repaired. The tube allows the air to get out. The water in the bottle stops the air from coming back in.

The Doctor shakes his head, impressed.

DOCTOR

Hunh. A home made one way valve.

(then, excited)

His right chest is rising.

(takes a moment to

confirm)

He's breathing!

(even the doctor is

amazed)

You saved his life.

The crowd cheers. The relieved and grateful parents hug a rather awkward Shaun - he doesn't like being hugged but is even less comfortable saying no. Shaun is almost confused by the outpouring of love.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

16 INT. OUTSIDE LECTURE HALL -- DAY 16

The Board meeting has taken a recess. People mill about in small groups.

Glassman is on his phone, waiting for an answer...

17 INT. AIRPORT - TSA -- AT THAT MOMENT 17

A ringing sound comes from the discarded items bin.

We find Shaun's bag there. Obviously, at an airport it wouldn't just be sitting where he left it.

The phone continues to ring. Our TSA Officer glances over, but goes about his business.

18 INT. OUTSIDE LECTURE HALL -- AT THAT MOMENT 18

Glassman leaves a message.

DR. GLASSMAN

Shaun, I hope you're okay. It's not like you to be late... I really need you here. Call me as soon as you can.

Preston approaches Glassman; they're old friends and they interact with the resultant comfort and casualness.

PRESTON

You're a political genius.

Glassman reacts, uncertain--

GLASSMAN

You're being sarcastic.

PRESTON

Very. This isn't about the new doctor; it's about you. They're baiting you. And you're letting them.

DR. GLASSMAN

They? So far it's just been Andrews, that pompous ass.

PRESTON

And you think that "pompous ass" would have the nerve to go after you

(MORE)

PRESTON (CONT'D)  
 if he didn't have other people backing  
 him up?

Glassman thinks about that - she's probably right.

PRESTON (CONT'D)  
 Here's how you win this. You do not  
 make it personal. You do not make it  
 about you. That's what they want and  
 soon as you give it to them, you  
 lose.

Glassman considers--

PRESTON (CONT'D)  
 You win this if you just don't  
 overplay your hand.

ELSEWHERE IN THE HALLWAY

And sure enough we find Andrews with Alexis.

ALEXIS  
 Just don't overplay your hand.

ANDREWS  
 (annoyed)  
 He's always been an arrogant jerk;  
 does whatever he wants, doesn't care  
 who gets hurt. Suddenly he's playing  
 the messiah; selling us that he's  
 all about humanity?!

ALEXIS  
 He might be on this one.

Andrews shoots her a look, a bit surprised.

ANDREWS  
 You should be angrier than I am;  
 he's destroying this hospital; we've  
 been bleeding money the last seven  
 quarters.

She doesn't disagree. But she's also calmer and more astute  
 than he is.

ALEXIS  
 And... there are people here who  
 love him; you don't become President  
 by crapping on someone they love.

Andrews is aggravated and frustrated.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

Glassman cares about this place every bit as much as you do. And he cares about this young doctor.

(off Andrews)

And that's his weakness.

Andrews isn't sure he understands, but he trusts her.

19 INT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) -- DAY

19

It's crowded. Adam lies unconscious, still hooked up to the tubes from the makeshift operation. Bonnie holds her son's hand; Carl holds Bonnie's. An EMT monitors the boy's vital signs. And Shaun sits awkwardly as far away as he can get, looking at his hands in his lap.

SHAUN

I need to get to San Jose St.  
Bonaventure Hospital.

EMT

That's where we're going.

Shaun takes a beat to process, then looks up and sees the Mother as she tenderly holds her vulnerable child's hand and the Father looking on with worried love.

Outwardly he doesn't react, but it triggers a memory.

20 INT. SHAUN'S CHILDHOOD HOME - FLASHBACK -- DAY

20

*Close on Young Shaun, once again holding his pet rabbit, seemingly unaffected by anything. We are in Shaun's world - it's almost silent (except we continue to hear the beeping of the heart monitor in the ambulance), then gradually sounds start to permeate it; at first it's vague, then gradually clearer; a voice, a loud voice, an angry yelling voice.*

*PULL OUT TO REVEAL that Shaun's mother, MARCIE, is at his side. She loves him, wants to protect him, but has no idea how. She also loves Shaun's father, but has even less idea how to deal with him. She's not a strong woman, either physically or emotionally. In front of them is Shaun's father, ETHAN, the source of the yelling, and growing more and more out of control by the moment. He's a man who wants to be a man - but is simply out of his depth in so many areas of his life.*

ETHAN

How hard is it to just act like a normal human being?!

MARCIE

He doesn't know how--

*ETHAN*

*Bull! He knows how when he wants to know how! And then he gets beat up every day--*

*STEVE*

*That's not his fault.*

*And we notice Steve is there to, watching from a doorway.*

*ETHAN*

*Stay out of this, Steve. You're not his parent. Aren't you tired of getting beaten up with him?*

*STEVE*

*It's not his fault.*

*ETHAN*

*Go to bed.*

*Steve stares back, not moving--*

*ETHAN (CONT'D)*

*Go to bed!*

*Steve reluctantly leaves.*

*ETHAN (CONT'D)*

*(to Marcie)*

*What the hell are we supposed to do?! This is the third school he's been thrown out of.*

*MARCIE*

*We'll find another.*

*ETHAN*

*Nothing will change. They can't handle him and I don't blame them; we obviously can't handle him either.*

*(to Shaun)*

*What the hell happened this time?*

*Shaun doesn't respond, just keeps petting his rabbit--*

*ETHAN (CONT'D)*

*What happened?!*

*Still nothing. Ethan grabs Shaun by the chin, forcing him to look his father in the eyes.*

*MARCIE*

*Don't do that.*



*ETHAN*

*What did you do?!*

*Still nothing. And out of frustration, Ethan slaps the boy.*

*MARCIE*

*No!*

*But she doesn't try to intervene. And Shawn still doesn't react. He actually lets out a slight laugh--*

*ETHAN*

*You think that's funny? You want funny?*

*And he hits his son, sending him flying. And then--*

*Steve comes charging into the room, tackling his father. This time it's the father's turn to laugh. Steve is no match for his father, he tosses the boy off.*

*Then he looks to the room: his scared wife, his defiant son, and the son he has no idea how to deal with who has simply gone back to petting his rabbit.*

*That damn rabbit.*

*Ethan picks up the rabbit and violently throws it across the room. We don't see the result but we have little doubt.*

*Shaun looks on. There's no obvious reaction. But we know he's heart broken. His brother comes to his side and holds him as Shaun starts to rock.*

*And we hear the sound of the heart monitor as it becomes slightly softer, not slower, just a little softer. [If we don't notice, that's okay, Shaun will notice.]*

21 INT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) -- DAY

21

*Back with Shaun and the family and the EMT.*

*SHAUN*

*It changed.*

*The EMT looks to Shaun.*

*SHAUN (CONT'D)*

*The boy's heart rate changed.*

*The EMT looks to the monitor.*

*EMT*

*It's the same. 86 bpm.*

Shaun studies the monitor. Closely. Stands in the cramped area and gets right up to it.

SHAUN  
It used to be higher.

EMT  
No. It used to be 86; it's still 86.

SHAUN  
It used to come up to here.

He points to the monitor where we see the familiar graph of a heart rate. He indicates a slightly higher amplitude.

SHAUN (CONT'D)  
Lower amplitude means lower voltage--

EMT  
It looks exactly the same to me.

When people disagree with Shaun, he doesn't quite know how to respond; he grows frustrated and anxious.

SHAUN  
Lower amplitude means lower voltage.

His concern makes the parents concerned.

BONNIE  
(to EMT)  
What's going on? What does it mean?

EMT  
(reassuring)  
It means he's trying to read twenty year old equipment while traveling in a vehicle going forty miles an hour. All your son's vitals are stable. He's fine.

But Shaun continues to rack his brain and observe the patient, trying to figure this mystery out.

SHAUN  
His heart--

EMT  
(suddenly)  
Boo!

Shaun doesn't react, the parents do.

EMT (CONT'D)  
 Your heart rate changed.  
 (off Shaun's stoicism)  
 Or it would have--  
 (re parents)  
 Their's changed. Heart rates change;  
 it doesn't always mean anything.

But Shaun isn't assuaged.

22 INT. OPERATING ROOM #1 -- DAY

22

Melendez and his team (including Claire, Jared and Elle) are operating on 104's heart which is open before us, beating. It's going smoothly but Claire nervously watches the patient's vital signs. Melendez takes note and--

MELLENDEZ  
 He's unconscious; he's not going to  
 have a panic attack.

Claire remains vigilant.

CLAIRE  
 (quietly to Jared)  
 How did you get him to sign? Did you  
 threaten him?

JARED  
 Of course not.  
 (off her look)  
 I simply told him he was either  
 consenting or going home; then I  
 gave him the two forms and told him  
 to pick one.

MELLENDEZ  
 (without looking up,  
 anticipating)  
 And you highlighted the section of  
 the Release Against Medical Advice  
 form that mentioned "possible  
 likelihood of death or permanent  
 disability".

Jared shrugs.

MELLENDEZ (CONT'D)  
 Nicely done.  
 (then)  
 Give me forceps and a pick-up. I'm  
 isolating the descending aorta.

Instruments slap into Melendez's hand from efficient Nurses.  
 Elle anticipates his next move.

ELLE  
Vascular clamp.

And a Nurse hands her what she needs. And--

CLAIRE  
What's that?

Melendez gives her a look. She indicates something just away from the surgical site--

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
Under the left atrium... something...  
white... Is that part of the lung?

Melendez looks and sure enough there's a little something white just peaking out from under the heart. That is odd.

Melendez uses his gloved hands to delicately lift and turn the heart and is stunned to see--

MELENDEZ  
(confused)  
It's pus.

He racks his brain, trying to figure this out, then something scary occurs to him--

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)  
Did he have TB?

ELLE  
No, he doesn't have any--

MELENDEZ  
(urgent)  
Not currently! Does he have a history--

JARED  
When he was a teenager, he was exposed  
to--

MELENDEZ  
He's got an abscess and it's about  
to--

And the abscess literally bursts open before our eyes - blood and pus sprays. ALARMS SOUND as the patient's blood pressure crashes. And our team goes into emergency mode.

JARED  
Suction and a lap sponge. His BP's  
crashing.

ELLE

Two liters saline wide open.

MELENDEZ

Two units of packed red cells on a bear hugger. Get levophed on board. Titrate to systolic of 100. Get in there with the suction. I can't see a damn thing.

They all spring into action.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

(to Claire)

I hope it isn't too upsetting to him when he hears he would have died in his room if we'd waited another hour to operate.

And Claire knows he's right. And the crisis continues.

NURSE

(entering)

Dr. Melendez, we've got an incoming eight year old male, pneumothorax stabilized but undetermined internal injuries. Who would you like to catch?

MELENDEZ

Claire, don't think we need you in here.

Claire is a bit surprised; the crisis does seem to be ongoing.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

This patient will be fine. ...Now.

And so she exits--

23 INT. E.R. -- DAY

23

The EMTs burst through the entry doors with the unconscious boy and his parents and are met by Claire. Shaun struggles to keep up as they move--

EMT

Eight year old healthy boy status post encounter with shattered glass sign. Numerous lacerations--

SHAUN

(agitated, excited)

Echo--

EMT

--Also status post tension pneumo secondary to trauma treated at scene by bystander.

CLAIRE

Get him set up in trauma three with an EKG, full blood work, and a pan-scan.

As the Nurse and Orderlies take the boy away [through a door marked "Medical Personnel Only", Shaun becomes more agitated.

SHAUN

We need an echo-- echocardiogram.

CLAIRE

(to EMT)

Who is this?

EMT

He helped with first-aid at the airport--

BONNIE

(no)

He saved his life.

SHAUN

I'm a doctor. He needs an echocardiogram. Where are you taking him?

CLAIRE

To surgery--

(checks chart)

All cardiac vital signs are within normal range.

Shaun moves to follow the boy's gurney. SECURITY stops him.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Do you have any ID?

SHAUN

No.

Shaun looks toward where the boy went, frustrated.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

His heart.

CLAIRE

--Is fine.

She moves to go after the boy. Shaun tries to follow and is again intercepted by Security. He resists.

SHAUN  
(to Security)  
Adam needs an echocardiogram.

CLAIRE  
Behave yourself, or they'll have you  
removed from the building.

And she leaves Shaun there. Shaun looks around to the waiting room. People are looking back at him. Then, once again, he moves quickly toward the restricted door and--

24 EXT. SAN JOSE ST. BONAVENTURE HOSPITAL -- MOMENTS LATER 24

Not overly surprisingly, the hospital doors open and Shaun is forcibly removed by Security.

He stands there, looking back toward a Security Guard who is now posted outside the door. Shaun feels his failure and his impotence and starts to rock slightly.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

25 INT. OPERATING ROOM #1 -- DAY 25

Melendez finishes his work on Callum who is now stable.

MELENDEZ

Dr. McLean, close him up. Nice work  
everybody.

And as Elle (pleased for the opportunity) begins to stitch up the gaping hole in the chest, Melendez heads for the door, followed by Jared.

26 INT. PREP ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 26

Claire and a NURSE are waiting. The Nurse holds up an IPAD displaying the CT scan for Melendez to review. As he does so, he and Jared take off their bloody scrubs and begin scrubbing for the next surgery.

MELENDEZ

Lacerations on the liver and spleen.  
Hematoma around the internal jugular.  
Otherwise stable. We'll put in a few  
sutures, a few drains.

(then)

Have two units typed and crossed.

Unworried, Melendez heads into--

27 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- CONTINUOUS 27

And he sees Adam, already sedated, on the table. But he's surprised to also see that the boy's still hooked up to the ad hoc one way valve. He stops.

MELENDEZ

What's that?

CLAIRE

A one way valve.

(off Melendez)

EMT reports that the boy suffered a  
pneumothorax.

Claire watches as Melendez studies it; he's suitably impressed.

MELENDEZ

Cool.

(MORE)



MELENDEZ (CONT'D)  
 (back to business)  
 We'll put in a chest tube when we  
 pull that contraption.

Claire considers, then...

CLAIRE  
 ...Do you think we should do an  
 echocardiogram?

MELENDEZ  
 Based on the presenting symptoms and  
 vital signs and the results of the  
 CT scan, I'd say...  
 (looks at her,  
 challenging)  
 No. Am I missing something?

CLAIRE  
 No, sir.

MELENDEZ  
 (pointed; you want to  
 delay another surgery?)  
 Do you think we have time to--?

CLAIRE  
 No, sir.

MELENDEZ  
 (to Nurse)  
 Scalpel.

And as they cut into the boy--

28 EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

28

Meanwhile, Shaun is walking from door to door around the  
 exterior of the hospital.

- locked

- locked

- security stationed outside; he walks on

- locked

And he's back where he started. At the ER entrance and the  
 now familiar Security Guard.

He begins to rock, nervously muttering to himself,  
 unintelligibly.

Security and onlookers watch him cautiously.

And it begins to rain. And he stops rocking and goes very still--

29 INT. CASPER MEDICAL CLINIC - FLASHBACK -- DAY

29

OPEN ON rain against a window--

Young Shaun is looking out at the rain, seemingly mesmerized.

Behind him, his brother speaks to a doctor; the rabbit is on the examination table. Like Shaun, we're aware of them and we hear all they're saying but we don't really see them.

CLINIC DOCTOR

We don't normally--

STEVE

I know. I'm sorry. This is the closest doctor place and it was an emergency.

CLINIC DOCTOR

I can see that. Unfortunately... even if I was a vet, the rabbit's dead.

Steve, worried, looks over to Shaun and as if sensing that:

SHAUN

...Everything smells different when it rains.

He of course betrays no emotion. The Clinic Doctor approaches Shaun at the window, sympathetic, and it's only now that we realize he is a slightly younger Dr. Glassman.

DR. GLASSMAN

I'm sorry.

SHAUN

What do we do now?

DR. GLASSMAN

You should bury him. You should give him a nice funeral.

SHAUN

No.

(then)

What do we do now to help him?

Dr. Glassman is slightly confused by the question.

DR. GLASSMAN  
*I'm afraid it's too late to do anything.*

SHAUN  
*Has he gone to heaven?*

DR. GLASSMAN  
*I hope so. I'm sure he deserved to.*

SHAUN  
*I don't want him to go to heaven. I want him to be here.*

*Steve steps over and takes his brother's hand.*

STEVE  
*This won't happen again.*

SHAUN  
*It can't happen again. He's dead.*

STEVE  
*No. I mean... Nothing like this is ever going to happen to us, ever again.*

SHAUN  
*You don't know the future.*

STEVE  
*I do.*

*Finally Young Shaun turns to face his brother.*

STEVE (CONT'D)  
*Nothing like this is ever going to happen to us ever again... Because we're not going home. We're never going home again. We've got each other. That's all we need.*

*Dr. Glassman watches, concerned and yet moved--*

30 INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY

30

*And we return to Dr. Glassman, equally thoughtful. We stay on Glassman as Andrews makes his argument.*

ANDREWS  
*Where is he? If we can't trust this man to show up for a job interview, how can we trust him with life and death judgments?*

(MORE)

ANDREWS (CONT'D)

Are you going to tell us that there were no equally qualified surgeons; surgeons without this one's... issues?

GLASSMAN

...No.

The others are surprised by this admission.

GLASSMAN (CONT'D)

Which is exactly why we should hire this one.

(explains, passionate)

We are judged as people based on how we treat people. Most importantly, how we treat people who do not have the advantages we have. We will be a better hospital for hiring him. And we will be better people for hiring him. And we will give hope to many people that their limits aren't what they think they are.

Most of the room is touched. Preston is proud of Glassman - this is exactly what she wanted from him. Even Alexis is sympathetic. So she hates to be the one to point out that...

ALEXIS

Implicit in what you're saying is... Shaun has limits. You spoke of his strengths, what of his weaknesses?

Glassman takes a beat; would rather not have to discuss this--

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

A surgeon, as you know better than any of us, isn't just a mechanic fixing parts. A surgeon manages a team. A team that has to trust him; a team he has to inspire. And patients; he needs to inspire them too. He needs to communicate; not just information but sympathy, empathy. Can Dr. Murphy do that? Can he do that under stress? Can he do that knowing that a human life literally hangs in the balance?

And we know Glassman is going to do his best to defend Shaun. But what we will see is--

31 EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

31

Shaun continues to rock, alone, in the rain--

32 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- DAY

32

Melendez and his team (now including Elle) are operating on the boy. Both the neck and stomach are open. Melendez works the abdomen and keeps a close eye on the neck where Jared and Claire are operating.

MELLENDEZ

Careful to inspect the recurrent laryngeal. It's often damaged in cervical trauma.

(then)

Sponge on a stick.

The instrument slaps Melendez's hand as he glances up at the monitors, then continues his work. Then he stops. Looks back up.

MELLENDEZ (CONT'D)

What was his heart rate five minutes ago?

JARED

Eighty-six.

Melendez looks back to the monitor; it says 86, but something bothers him.

MELLENDEZ

You sure?

JARED

Certain. He's been a rock; it's barely changed.

MELLENDEZ

Something changed. Something is different.

He stares at the monitor but can't quite place it. He shrugs and goes back to work.

MELLENDEZ (CONT'D)

Irrigation... right over the splenic artery... Suction.

Then he stops again.

MELLENDEZ (CONT'D)

(to Claire)

Why did you ask about an echo?

(off her uncertainty)

You had no medical reason, but you asked anyway. Why?

CLAIRE

There was this weird guy, he's the one who did the one way valve, he kept insisting that the boy needed an echocardiogram.

MELENDEZ

Did he say why?

CLAIRE

(no)

He was really... weird.

Melendez thinks about that. But not for too long because a monitor starts to buzz--

ELLE

His hematocrit is dropping.

(then)

That makes no sense. He's not bleeding anymore. Everything's under control.

Everyone is stumped. Finally--

MELENDEZ

Do an echo.

The others are surprised--

JARED

Sir, the boy is open, we'd have to sterilize the equipment; it's gonna take awhile.

MELENDEZ

Good. That'll give me time to find out why the hell we're doing an echo.

(then)

Dr. Browne, come with me. We're going to find your weird guy.

And he hurries out. Claire's thrown for a beat, but she follows--

33 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAYS/E.R. -- MOMENTS LATER

33

Still in their bloody scrubs, Claire and Melendez hurry through the halls; their dialogue is as fast paced as their actual pace--

MELENDEZ

So about that psych consult--

CLAIRE

Seriously?

MELENDEZ

I want to hear it.

CLAIRE

Your ego needs confirmation that I was wrong?

MELENDEZ

Obviously you were wrong; I want to hear you say you were wrong.

CLAIRE

When was the last time you said I was right?

MELENDEZ

No one learns squat from being right.

CLAIRE

You're unbelievable. How can somebody who must have spent their whole life listening to people tell them how smart he is, how good looking is, be so damn insecure?

MELENDEZ

(same tone)

You think I'm good looking?

CLAIRE

No.

MELENDEZ

And I suppose you weren't wrong about the psych consult either?

CLAIRE

A patient's state of mind matters.

MELENDEZ

My job is to teach you. If you're not learning, I'm not doing my job. And as far as I can tell right now, I'm not doing my job. You drinking again?

CLAIRE

As often as I can. When I'm not on call. You know, whenever I get a chance to not have you ruin my day.

There is clearly antagonism between these two. And just as clearly, there is chemistry.

They arrive at the crowded E.R. where Claire met Shaun, filled with medical personnel and the detritus of society awaiting help. They look around.

MELENDEZ

Which one is he? They all look weird.

CLAIRE

I don't see him.

But then she sees the Security Guard--

34 EXT. HOSPITAL -- MOMENTS LATER

34

Shaun still stands in the plaza, alone in the rain.

And then REVEAL Claire and Melendez approaching--

MELENDEZ

Why the echo?

Shaun is confused; who is this man?

CLAIRE

This is Dr. Melendez. The boy you brought in, the boy you said needed an echocardiogram.

SHAUN

For his heart.

MELENDEZ

(curt)

Obviously for his heart; that's what echocardiograms are for. Why?

As we are starting to learn, Shaun doesn't react well to pressure focused on him (or questions of any sort for that matter). He struggles to figure out how to respond. Claire steps in.

CLAIRE

(calm)

I understand you think he needs an echocardiogram. I don't know why.

SHAUN

I noticed there was a slight reduction in the intensity of the electrocardiogram.

MELENDEZ

(to Claire, annoyed)

Why would he answer you, but not--



CLAIRE

I didn't ask him anything; I didn't expect--

MELENDEZ

How did you know that would make a--  
 (doesn't matter, back  
 to business)  
 The electrical flow; that's what I noticed too; the heart rate was the same but the amplitude dropped.

SHAUN

Yes. Pericardial effusion.

MELENDEZ

Yes. Reduced cardiac output would stress other organs, they'd start to shut down--

His phone rings. He quickly answers it.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

We'll be right back up.

A beat as he listens, then hangs up. His mood has changed.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

They did the echo. It's normal. No pericardial effusion.

He turns to go. Shaun gets agitated.

SHAUN

There has to be. What other explanation is there? Which means the echo can't be normal.

Melendez turns on him--

MELENDEZ

You're smart kid. But you're not smarter than a lab result. Which means the echo is normal which means we just wasted our time.

And he hurries back in. Leaving Claire and Shaun behind. Claire is about to follow but then looks to Shaun, considers and--

CLAIRE

Come with me.

41.

And she heads back toward the building; Shaun following--

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

35 INT. SCRUB ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

35

Melendez is scrubbing back in (O.R.#2 is visible through windows in the doors and wall) when Claire enters with Shaun. Melendez isn't overly surprised that she's taken in another stray.

MELENDEZ  
(calling to Jared)  
Show them.

Jared brings up the results of the echocardiogram on a monitor. It runs through. And sure enough it looks normal.

SHAUN  
Again.

Jared looks to Melendez who just shrugs. Jared plays it again. Shaun watches even more intently.

SHAUN (CONT'D)  
Again.

*POP-UP - VARIOUS SHOTS of other ECHOS that Shaun has seen quickly cycle through his memory; he's apparently comparing them to what he's being presented with.*

And again it's played. Shaun moves closer still. Suddenly--

SHAUN (CONT'D)  
There.

The image is frozen and Jared and Claire look to where Shaun indicates.

JARED  
It looks normal to me.

SHAUN  
There's a concave deformity in the right atrium.

JARED  
No there isn't.

SHAUN  
Yes there is. It's very subtle. Blood must be pushing--

JARED

How many right atriums have you seen?  
How many echos have you reviewed?

SHAUN

Six.

MELLENDEZ

Oh. I've seen approximately a thousand more than that. And even if you're right, that's not where a pericardial effusion manifests.

CLAIRE

Not usually.

(off Melendez)

But it could. This kid was sprayed with glass shards; cut his jugular; what if a piece of glass entered his blood stream?

Melendez doesn't stop her.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

It could have traveled down from the jugular vein, into the brachiocephalic vein and on to the superior vena cava. If it punctured the SVC, blood could be leaking behind the heart, restricting the heart's ability to expand and fill during diastole. Reducing the heart's efficiency.

JARED

Lot of ifs there.

But Claire doesn't care about Jared's view. She just keeps looking at Melendez. Melendez considers for a long beat, then heads into--

36 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- CONTINUOUS

36

Elle is at the boy's side, keeping him stable as Melendez enters; the other doctors behind him--

MELLENDEZ

Dr. McLean, please insert a ten gauge needle into the retro-cardiac space and draw out whatever you find there.

JARED

If Claire's wrong, we could set off an arrhythmia; could kill the boy.

MELLENDEZ

And if she's right, we're going to pull blood out and then hopefully save this kid.

Elle swallows her nerves and--

ELLE

Ten gauge on a syringe.

She is handed a scary looking long needle.

ELLE (CONT'D)

Betadyne over the mid clavicular line.

The Nurse swabs the target area which appears to be almost right over the boy's heart (but is just fractionally under it).

Elle then carefully inserts the needle. It seems to go in forever.

Finally, she stops. And pulls back on the plunger. And we see... red. Blood. Claire and Shaun were right. A moment of relief.

MELLENDEZ

Excellent. We know what's wrong. Question is, can we fix it?

And they get to work--

37 INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY

37

The Board has reconvened.

ANDREWS

We've waited long enough; we've talked long enough, it's time for a vote.

Glassman looks to Alexis.

ALEXIS

I'm sorry. He's right.

(then)

Show of hands: all in favor of ratifying Dr. Glassman's decision to hire Dr. Shaun Murphy?

Glassman's hand goes up. So does Preston's. And perhaps surprisingly, so does Alexis'. A smattering of others but things don't look good.

ALEXIS (CONT'D)

All against.

Many more hands go up; Andrews allows himself a smile of relief. Glassman is quietly devastated. But then, an assistant enters the room--

ASSISTANT

Excuse me.

GLASSMAN

(suddenly concerned)

Is there a medical emergency? Who's needed?

ASSISTANT

No. No medical emergency--

ANDREWS

--Then you weren't supposed to--

ASSISTANT

I know but... You should go online.

PRESTON

What? To what site?

ASSISTANT

Pretty much any of them. YouTube, Twitter, any of the local news sites.

And they of course all have phones or iPads with them. Everyone goes on line and we SEE GLIMPSES of news reports or simply uploaded videos of...

38 INT. AIRPORT - ACCIDENT SCENE - VIDEO SNIPETS -- DAY

38

*Sean cutting into the boy.*

SHAUN

*Incision should take place two ribs down.*

*Shaun feeds the tube in through the incision.*

DOCTOR

*(then, excited)*

*His right chest is rising.*

*(takes a moment to confirm)*

*He's breathing!*

*(even the doctor is amazed)*

*You saved his life.*

*The crowd cheers.*

*The parents are relieved and grateful and hug a rather awkward Shaun.*

*Shaun, almost confused by the outpouring of love.*

39 INT. LECTURE HALL -- CONTINUOUS 39

ASSISTANT

The YouTube clip already has over two hundred thousand views. It's apparently one of our doctors.

ALEXIS

(amazed)

Shaun Murphy saved this boy?

ASSISTANT

The boy is in surgery. Dr. Melendez isn't sure if he's going to make it.

And with that Glassman heads for the exit--

40 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- DAY 40

The patient lies on the table. His chest open. His little heart no longer beating as the bypass machine does the work for his heart and lungs.

Our team quietly and intensely do their work. Any mistake could mean death.

MELENDEZ

Retractor.

A Retractor hits his hand.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

Pesky right lobe keeps trying to sneak into my operating field.

(then)

Brow.

A Nurse dabs his brow. Melendez looks up to the gallery and sees--

Glassman and Preston are watching.

41 INT. GALLERY -- CONTINUOUS 41

Overlooking the surgery. Glassman watches like a classical music buff would watch Beethoven composing. Preston is a step back, her eyes usually averted, surgery makes her queasy.

GLASSMAN  
Your fiancée is a pleasure to watch  
work.

PRESTON  
(not really watching)  
Yeah.

GLASSMAN  
The best surgeon I've seen in thirty  
years.

He watches a beat longer before...

GLASSMAN (CONT'D)  
You're the youngest member of the  
Board.

PRESTON  
I'm well aware.

GLASSMAN  
And everyone else is well aware of  
why you're there.

PRESTON  
(bit defensive)  
My grandfather founded this hospital  
But I more than earn my keep in there.

GLASSMAN  
I agree. But not everyone else does.  
And the protection of your legacy  
will only last so long.  
(off her look)  
You were sarcastic to Andrews earlier,  
mocked him. He's not going to forget  
that.

PRESTON  
I was helping you.

GLASSMAN  
If I'm going to lose, I'd rather not  
drag you down with me.

PRESTON  
...You think you're going to lose?

GLASSMAN  
Eventually. Everybody loses  
eventually.

She takes that in, considers...



PRESTON

Is that your guy?

And only then does Glassman (or we) notice:

42 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- CONTINUOUS 42

Shaun is the O.R.; gowned, but no mask or cap because he's in the back, almost in a corner. He's not taking part but he is finally here. He's watching attentively, taking every single thing in:

43 EXT. BUS - FLASHBACK -- DAY 43

*The bus Shaun stopped in front of in the opening. It's a few years earlier and, as we will soon see, it has recently begun being used as a home.*

YOUNG SHAUN

*Did you steal this?*

44 INT. BUS - FLASHBACK -- DAY 44

*Two cots, an old microwave, mismatched plates and a lot of books make this bus a home. Young Steve present Young Shaun with dinner: microwaved mac and cheese.*

STEVE

*No. Jeff from the grocery store gave it to me.*

YOUNG SHAUN

*Can we get a TV?*

STEVE

*No.*

YOUNG SHAUN

*Why not?*

STEVE

*Because we're poor.*

*Young Shaun begins to eat.*

YOUNG SHAUN

*Do you think mom is looking for us?*

STEVE

*No.*

*Shaun doesn't look up, but he does pause his eating for a moment. Steve senses Shaun needs more of an answer.*

YOUNG SHAUN

*If she was looking for us, she would have told the cops or someone and they'd have come to our school and gotten us.*

*(then)*

*She loves us but she knows it's better this way.*

*Shaun goes back to eating.*

STEVE

*I got you a present.*

*Shaun keeps eating.*

SHAUN

*It's not my birthday.*

STEVE

*I got you a present anyway.*

*Shaun stops eating. Steve hands Shaun a hand-wrapped present.*

*Shaun opens it. It's a box containing a number of small items; some new, some found: a calculator, a fireman's hat, a hard hat, a hammer and... that toy scalpel we saw Shaun cherish, now clean and new. He takes the scalpel, holds it...*

STEVE (CONT'D)

*Never forget... You're the smart one. You can do anything.*

*Then Steve affectionately musses his brother's hair.*

45 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- DAY

45

*We notice that the toy scalpel is now in Shaun's hand. He reaches up and almost unconsciously musses his own hair.*

*Then he looks to the surgery, closes his eyes, holds up his hands... And as the CAMERA spins around him we see him and the room transformed.*

46 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 - SHAUN'S IMAGINATION -- DAY

46

*The room is actually the same except for the fact that the only doctor there is Shaun. He's the surgeon. And he performs the procedure in this imaginary world. And we--*

INTERCUT:

*Between Shaun and Melendez, both performing the same delicate surgery, one in the real world, one in his imagination, almost in unison.*

The other doctors certainly notice Shaun and what seems almost like a dance. But nobody stops him, they remain focused on their own tasks.

WE SPIN ABOUT both Melendez and Shaun. Melendez is like a concert pianist at work; his hands moving quickly and gracefully; we take in the blood, the sutures, the exposed human heart, so vulnerable. The miraculousness of what is happening is not lost on anyone in the room.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FOUR

## ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

47 INT. OPERATING ROOM #2 -- DAY 47

The surgery continues.

MELENDEZ

Dr. Browne...

She moves in closer.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

Nurse, pick-ups.

She hands what are basically medical tweezers to him and he reaches into the heart and pulls out...

A TINY PIECE OF GLASS. This little thing is the source of all this damage.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

(to Claire)

You were right.

A big moment between the two of them. (As Preston watches.)

But it lasts but a moment and they go back to the work of saving this boy's life...

48 INT. WAITING AREA -- DAY 48

The parents wait nervously. And wait. Until finally...

Dr. Melendez enters the room, looking exhausted and bloody, and he tells the mother and father... the good news.

We experience this M.O.S. No words are needed to communicate their joy and relief and gratitude...

49 INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA -- DAY 49

Glassman, a tray of food in front of him, is at the cashier, paying. Shaun stands at his side. Glassman has spoken eloquently about Shaun's abilities, but he treats him a little like a child, a little over-protective - perhaps much the same as a parent would.

GLASSMAN

(proud)

You saved that boy.

SHAUN  
 (more fact)  
 I know. His name is Adam. I'm hungry.

GLASSMAN  
 (used to the non-  
 sequiturs)  
 Yes. That's why I'm getting you a sandwich.

SHAUN  
 I don't like pickles.

GLASSMAN  
 I know. I told them.

SHAUN  
 I don't--

GLASSMAN  
 And I checked.

That's enough for Shaun. They head for a table.

GLASSMAN (CONT'D)  
 The Board will be reconvening in 45 minutes. I have some business to take care of. Can you stay here until then?

SHAUN  
 Yes. I think so. I'll try.

Shaun sits down. Melendez places the tray in front of him, then places an assuring hand on Shaun's shoulder and for once Shaun does not draw back from human contact.

GLASSMAN  
 That's all I can ask.

Then Glassman heads off--

50 INT. MELENDEZ'S OFFICE -- DAY

50

Well organized, if a bit austere. Only one or two personal touches: a photo of him with his fiancée, another of a much younger version of him with his parents and sister, and a Rubik's Cube.

Glassman is slightly anxiously waiting. After a beat, Melendez enters and anticipates the issue--

MELENDEZ  
 He's autistic, isn't he?

GLASSMAN

Yes.

MELENDEZ

(reacts)

All the more impressive.

GLASSMAN

The Board's about to reconvene. I'd like you to vouch for him.

(then)

Given your reputation and seeing as you're the one he'll be working for, I think it'll make a big difference.

MELENDEZ

...No.

(off Glassman's  
surprise)

There's a difference between knowledge and judgment; and you can't be a good surgeon without both. Dr. Murphy has the character of a child; how can he possibly be trusted with life and death decisions?

GLASSMAN

Shaun made one today and a child is alive because of it.

MELENDEZ

True. But the next one may be dead because of it.

GLASSMAN

I remember when I first hired you. You weren't exactly making the most adult decisions yourself.

MELENDEZ

Also true. But there's a cure for youth and stupidity: time and experience. There are treatments for autism, but there is no cure.

GLASSMAN

(this is personal)

Please. ...I need your help on this one.

MELENDEZ

Why? What's the story with this kid? Why is this so personal to you?

GLASSMAN  
 (beat, then)  
 I let him down once.

And that's all he's willing to share.

MELLENDEZ  
 (concerned for a friend)  
 In this job, letting things get  
 personal is a sure formula for  
 screwing things up.

GLASSMAN  
 (considers, then)  
 ...No. Letting things get personal  
 is how we make things matter. How we  
 give things meaning.

Melendez considers that. But...

MELLENDEZ  
 I'm sorry. I can't tell them something  
 I don't believe.

Glassman nods, accepting that decision and exits, passing  
 Preston who has been waiting just outside, clearly she has  
 heard the end of the conversation.

MELLENDEZ (CONT'D)  
 So are you proud of me? Or are you  
 disappointed?

PRESTON  
 Do I have to pick just one?

Melendez approaches her and gives her a kiss.

MELLENDEZ  
 (curious)  
 Tell me... watching me operate, do  
 you get turned on?

PRESTON  
 (amused by and used  
 to his arrogance)  
 A little. Not as much as Glassman  
 does.

He laughs, knows it's kind of true. He's pleased and  
 comfortable with her. And as they walk away--

PRESTON (CONT'D)  
 You got time for dinner tonight or  
 you got more lives to save?

MELLENDEZ

I've sent the scrubs and the cape in  
for dry cleaning. I'm all yours.

51 INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA -- DAY

51

Shaun eats alone, waiting for Glassman to come get him.

Claire approaches and sits across from him. He doesn't make  
much eye contact.

CLAIRE

You're new to town, right?

SHAUN

I'm from Casper, Wyoming. I live in  
a bus. But if I stay here, the  
hospital will give me an apartment.

CLAIRE

...Great. I'm sure you have a lot of  
questions.

SHAUN

No.

CLAIRE

You must be curious about the place,  
about the people. I can give you the  
lowdown.

SHAUN

Dr. Glassman gave me a map of the  
hospital. And I got a map of San  
Jose online.

And, to Claire's surprise, that's the end of that.

CLAIRE

Okay. Great.

And she gets up to walk away. But before she gets too far:

SHAUN

(same tone, as if  
she's still right  
there)

I do have one question.

She turns back but doesn't sit back down. And for the first  
time with her, he actually makes and maintains eye contact.



SHAUN (CONT'D)

Why were you rude to me when we first met, then nicer to me the second time we met and now you want to help me? Which time were you pretending?

It's not an accusation. He seems genuinely curious. She doesn't have an answer, feels her own hypocrisy.

And then she's saved from having to answer by the arrival of Glassman--

GLASSMAN

Shaun; it's time.

Shaun quickly gets up and leaves with Glassman--

Claire turns and walks the other way. She notices Jared standing near the cafeteria entrance, watching her, and she heads toward him.

CLAIRE

(without stopping)

What are you doing tonight?

JARED

I don't know.

CLAIRE

Good. I'll see you.

And her message is quite clear, as is the answer ("yes, you will"), even as she walks past him and out.

52 INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY

52

The hearing has reconvened. Shaun sits quietly in the front row and barely reacts to anything said about him, neither the good nor the bad.

ANDREWS

The vote was clear; why are we re-opening this? Is it really because of a piece of publicity?

PRESTON

It's because the man saved someone's life.

ANDREWS

And thank God for that. But it doesn't change a single thing we discussed.

PRESTON

It proves he's more than a capable doctor!

ANDREWS

He has a serious deficit!

GLASSMAN

Give him six months.

ANDREWS

No. The reason we voted against him is because we think the risks of having him here, for a day nevermind six months, are--

GLASSMAN

--If he screws up, Shaun will be immediately dismissed. And... I will resign my position as President of the hospital.

Everyone reacts. Jessica is disappointed; he's definitely overplayed his hand.

PRESTON

I don't know that it's necessary for--

Alexis cuts her off - the offer is on the table; Alexis is going to make sure it stays there.

ALEXIS

We haven't heard from Dr. Murphy. Perhaps we should hear from him before we decide his fate.

GLASSMAN

Shaun...

Glassman gestures for Shaun to step forward. Shaun does so.

ALEXIS

Dr. Murphy... Shaun... I'd like you to tell us why you want to become a surgeon.

All eyes are on him. His entire future rides on the next few moments. He takes it all in and considers the question. He doesn't answer for a long time. And--

53 INT. BUS - FLASHBACK -- DAY

53

The place is a little more lived in than we last saw. But we OPEN CLOSE ON Young Shaun, quietly reading at a salvaged desk.

*Suddenly the book is closed by his brother--*

*STEVE*  
*Time to go play.*

*YOUNG SHAUN*  
*I'm reading.*

*STEVE*  
*Time to make friends.*

*YOUNG SHAUN*  
*You're my friend.*

*STEVE*  
*Yes. I know you. And I like you.*  
*It's time you let other kids know*  
*you too. So they'll like you too.*

*Young Shaun considers, then gets up--*

54 *EXT./INT. OLD BUILDING - FLASHBACK -- DAY*

54

*A fence surrounds an abandoned building. [It's not the only one in the neighborhood; it's not exactly an economically booming town.]*

*WE FIND Shaun and Steve crawling through an opening in the fence with a group of neighborhood kids (some of them the very same kids we saw beating Shaun up).*

*We see them playing games. Tag. Hide and Seek. And yes, they are having fun. Even Shaun. He's not laughing or even really smiling. But his eyes show the joy. Which thrills his brother.*

*And now Shaun and Steve are alone, hiding from the other boys in the basement of the building.*

*STEVE*  
*Told ya. Fun, right--*

*YOUNG SHAUN*  
*(you'll give us away)*  
*Shhh.*

*And then there's a rumble. Something is wrong. Shaun and Steve make eye contact. And then a support beam falls. And then...*

*CLOSE ON Shaun's face--*

55 *INT. LECTURE HALL -- DAY*

55

*CLOSE ON that same face--*

And just when the Board is starting to think he is just not capable of delivering an answer, Shaun speaks.

SHAUN

...The day that the rain smelled like ice cream, my bunny went to heaven in front of my eyes. The day the copper pipes in the old building smelled like burnt food... my brother went to heaven in front of my eyes.

(slight beat)

Neither one had a chance to become an adult. I wanted to let them become adults. I wanted them to have kids of their own, and love those kids. I wanted that for them more than anything.

(slight beat)

And I want to make a lot of money. So I can have a TV. And so I can help kids like me.

There is silence in the room. Everyone is moved (though it's unclear if they are swayed). Glassman nods to Shaun that he's done well.

And then Alexis, the Chairman of the Hospital Board, stands, walks up to Shaun, shakes his hand and...

ALEXIS

Dr. Murphy, I want to be the first to welcome you to the staff of San Jose St. Bonaventure Hospital. We're proud to have you.

And then there's an enthusiastic round of applause.

Andrews is actually quite pleased with this outcome (though perhaps he doesn't clap as enthusiastically as the others).

Preston is happy for Glassman but very worried where this will lead.

Glassman is simply thrilled and hugs Shaun.

Shaun betrays no emotion.

GLASSMAN

By the way, I just got a text. Melendez's team is going into surgery.  
(holds him at arm's length)

I mean if you're interested.

Shaun shows no excitement, but turns and leaves.

56 INT. OPERATING ROOM #1 -- DAY

56

Melendez and his team are mid-surgery. Shaun, scrubbed and gowned, stands nearby.

MELENDEZ

Got a messy field here.

Jared moves to assist--

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

No.

(then)

Murphy.

Shaun hesitates for only a moment. He steps forward, puts out his hand and--

SHAUN

Suction.

A NURSE slaps the necessary equipment into his hand. And he does his job. He is now a surgeon. And as Shaun does his work:

MELENDEZ

I'm sure you've watched many of these. And judging from your "dance" I'm sure you've imagined even more. But now it's actually happening. I remember my first. I thought it doesn't get any better than this. And for you, I'm afraid, that's literally true.

Claire reacts - what's going on? Melendez continues - calm and rational.

MELENDEZ (CONT'D)

You're a nice kid and you're obviously very smart, but you shouldn't be here. So for as long as you're part of my team, this is all you're going to be doing: suction. I'm not going to let you and Glassman screw this up.

Shaun finishes. He watches Melendez work, seemingly unaffected by what has just been said.

SHAUN

I saw a lot of surgeons in medical school. You're much better than them. I have a lot to learn from you.

This is not kissing ass. This is simply true.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

You're very arrogant. Do you think  
that helps you be a good surgeon?  
Does it hurt you as a person? Is it  
worth it?

Claire and the other doctors and nurses react - can't believe the nerve of this guy. But of course, Shaun is genuinely asking, genuinely curious.

Melendez pauses. But doesn't look up. Then he resumes his work.

And we PULL UP AND AWAY from the surgery and the promise and unknown of the future, and we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT FIVE