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HOUSE

"Occam's Razor"

EPISODE #5501

Written by

David Shore

Directed by

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Production Draft
Full Blue Revisions

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HOUSE

Character List
Episode 5501 - Blue Revisions

Dr. Gregory House
Dr. James Wilson
Dr. Lisa Cuddy
Dr. Allison Cameron
Dr. Robert Chase
Dr. Eric Foreman

Brandon Merrick
Mindy Liebman
Robert Merrick
Becky Merrick
Shelly Lever
Lori Matthews
Peter Brown
Jerry Morris
Pharmacist
Suburban Pharmacist

HOUSE

Location List
Episode 5501 - Blue Revisions

INTERIORS

Hospital
 Hallway
 Patient Waiting Area
House's Office
 Outer Office
 Inner Office
Lab
Clinic
 Reception Area
 Exam Room #1
 Exam Room #2
Cuddy's Office
Brandon's Hospital Room
 Hallway, Outside of
Brandon's "Clean" Hospital Room
 Vestibule
Graduate Student Apartment
Suburban Pharmacy

EXTERIORS

Princeton University
Suburban Pharmacy

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY -- MORNING - ESTABLISHING (DAY 1) 1

Students coming, students going, students running, students playing. Generally, students going about their lives having absolutely no idea just how damn good they have it.

BRANDON (V.O.)

I don't feel so good.

2 INT. GRADUATE STUDENT APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 2

Typical ivy league student housing, small but somehow very cool, reeks of history. REVEAL BRANDON MERRICK, 22, dressed just in underwear, a graduate student, nice guy, if anything a little too over-conscientious. But right now, he's on the phone, lying.

BRANDON

...A cough.

He looks across the room at his girlfriend, MINDY LIEBMAN, cute, funny, tough and cynical, 20, lying on the bed, wearing one of Brandon's shirts (which she slept in). She's just waking up, but she's alert enough to give him a look: "a cough? You're going to have to do better than that."

BRANDON (CONT'D)

My stomach's a little upset too and I think I'm running a fever. I'm just worried I might be contagious.

Mindy nods, much better.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Inventory tomorrow, I know, I'm sure I'll be feeling better by then. Thanks Mr. Innabe.

He hangs up and plops down in the bed beside an amused Mindy.

MINDY

(coy, teasing)
Why'd you call in sick?

BRANDON

(feels guilty)
I have a cough.

(CONTINUED)

MINDY

Oh, so you weren't lying?
 (nibbling his neck,
 moving down)
 You'd be curled up in bed with a
 bowl of chicken soup even if you
 didn't have a horny girlfriend in
 that bed?

He did call in because he wants to be with her. He's also
 finding himself feeling guilty.

BRANDON

(resistance weakening)
 I really do have a cough.

MINDY

(kissing his hip,
 teasing)
 You also have a little rash.

He pushes her away - but not hard enough to actually push
 her away.

BRANDON

I'm not sure we should be kissing--

MINDY

Because of the cough. Right.

She is now sitting up, straddling him.

MINDY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. I have almost no
 interest in kissing you.

She tosses his underpants on the floor and they begin to
 make love.

Not to put too fine a point on it, but it starts out as
 "making love" but as Brandon becomes more and more comfortable
 with his lie and how it led to this current situation, things
 transform from "making love" into "God I wish I was back in
 college monkey sex."

And after some JUMP CUTS and some very tasteful, yet erotic,
 FCC approved footage, they reach an amazing crescendo,
 climaxing together...

Brandon holds his place for a moment, above her, looking
 down on her. Is something wrong; or was it just that good?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

3.

2

MINDY (CONT'D)

Wow.

Brandon doesn't respond. After a beat, he collapses beside her.

She exhales, spent, takes his hand. But it's lifeless. Mindy looks at him - she's had men fall asleep after sex, but not this quickly.

MINDY (CONT'D)

Brandon?...
(nudges him)
Brandon?

Still nothing.

3 EXT. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY -- MORNING

3

And as we return to the zest of youth going about their carefree lives...

MINDY (V.O.)

(more concerned)
Brandon??

And we...

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY 4

House walks with Wilson, who carries a file that he doesn't actually need to look at.

WILSON

Twenty-two year old male, extremely unstable, presents with a cough, rash, severe abdominal pain, fever, low blood pressure--

HOUSE

--Another cousin?

WILSON

(considers, then:)

You won't believe me without blood tests, will you?

HOUSE

I wouldn't believe you with them. You're a doctor; you can fake blood tests. Why do you want me to treat this guy?

WILSON

The blood pressure's not responding to fluid--

HOUSE

No. I didn't ask how you were planning on conning me into treating him, I asked you why you want me to treat him.

Wilson looks at him like he's asked the most pathetic question in the world, which he has.

WILSON

He's sick; I care; I'm pathetic.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

HOUSE

There are about a billion sick people on the planet; why this one?

WILSON

Because this one is in our Emergency Room.

HOUSE

So it's a proximity issue. If somebody was sick on the third floor stairwell, that's who we'd be talking about.

WILSON

Yes. I also checked the roof. All clear.

HOUSE

Okay. Then the emergency room guy it is.

Wilson shoots him a look. House is reaching out for the file. That was easy.

WILSON

...Why so easy?

HOUSE

You know why.

Wilson realizes it's the reason he always knew it would be.

WILSON

...Blood pressure's not responding to fluid.

HOUSE

(means it)

Yeah. That's just weird.

Wilson hands House the file.

5 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

5

Brandon lies in bed, hooked up to an IV. He's weak, feverish, sweaty, a rash covers part of his face and he's in severe abdominal distress. Mindy holds his hand, trying to hide her worries.

6 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

6 *

ON A WHITE BOARD as Cameron writes "Abdominal Pain". It's the last of a list of symptoms: cough, fever, rash, low blood pressure. They're not in any order, simply scattered across the board haphazardly.

House has assembled his team: Foreman, Cameron and Chase. As Cameron finishes writing:

HOUSE

Abdominal CT scan didn't show anything. Okay, people, differential diagnosis. What's wrong with her?

CAMERON

...Him.

HOUSE

Does it matter? Does someone think it's a testicular problem?

(no answer)

No. Then...?

CHASE

...Yersinia infection.

FOREMAN

Wouldn't cause a rash or headache. What about arthritis? Accompanying vasculitis causes nerve damage that--

As they talk, House wanders over to his shelves and takes a large book down.

CAMERON

--Wouldn't cause the blood pressure problems. Allergy?

CHASE

No. The kid's got abdominal pain. Maybe carcinoid.

FOREMAN

But you wouldn't get the--

House drops the book in Foreman's lap. It's Harrison's, open to the first page.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

HOUSE

(to all of them)

If you're going to list all the conditions it's not, it might be quicker to do it alphabetically. Absidia. Excellent; that doesn't account for any of the symptoms.

(to Foreman)

You go next.

Foreman simply closes the book.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(to all)

What say we turn our focus to the things this could be? Hmmm.

And that is met by a resounding silence. After a very long beat.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Okay, I was wrong. Your way works better.

(re: book)

Amblyopia. Patient isn't seeing double so--

CAMERON

--No condition accounts for all these symptoms.

HOUSE

Good, because I thought maybe he was sick, but apparently he's not. Who wants to do up the discharge papers?

Still nothing because they're right. And unfortunately, House knows it.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Okay, unless we get the blood pressure under control, he's gonna start circling the drain before we figure out what's wrong with him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Treat him for sepsis, broad spectrum antibiotics; and I want a Cort-stim test and an echocardiogram.

As Foreman gets up to leave he hands the massive book back to House. But House doesn't take it.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(read it)

It's a fun read.

Foreman looks at House - is he serious, the thing's like 2000 pages long.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Volume two's in my office.

7 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

7

SFX - A heart beats. We morph from the beating heart to a 2D black and white image of same. PULL BACK TO REVEAL the image is on a monitor as Chase performs an echocardiogram. Brandon's condition hasn't changed - still weak and in discomfort. Mindy sits nervously nearby. Foreman is drawing blood.

FOREMAN

The Cort-stim test will tell us if your pituitary and adrenal glands are working properly.

MINDY

His glands? What does that mean?

CHASE

We have a few theories we're working on.

MINDY

(scared)

You don't know?

BRANDON

(weak...)

Mindy--

MINDY

I'm just saying if they knew, they wouldn't be testing you, they'd be treating you.

Brandon, scared, looks to Foreman. As Foreman packs up the blood, he's reassuring:

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 7

FOREMAN

Yeah, that's the way it works. First we find out what it is; and then we get you better.

Foreman leaves while Chase finishes up.

8 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY 8

The place is full of the sick, the not-so-sick and their families. Cuddy is standing at the desk checking supplies against paperwork as House enters, carrying a Gameboy, and approaches.

CUDDY

You're half an hour late.

HOUSE

Good morning, Dr. Cuddy. How are we doing on cotton swabs today? If there's a critical shortage, I could run home...

CUDDY

(re: his leg)

No you couldn't.

HOUSE

Nice.

CUDDY

(still on his tardiness)

I assume you're much too busy with your caseload--

HOUSE

I've got a case.

CUDDY

A case is not a load.

HOUSE

Are we really going to keep doing this dance? You don't need me here--

CUDDY

--This "treating patients" dance? Yeah, I'm way out of line.

HOUSE

You know I don't like people; why should I start caring about them just because they're sick?

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

CUDDY

Because it's the job description. -

She goes back to her work. Beat, then House turns to the room.

HOUSE

Hello sick people and their loved ones. In the interests of doing my job as quickly and efficiently as possible, I want to introduce myself now so we don't have to waste valuable time later with idle chit chat. I'm Dr. Gregory House. You can call me Greg. I'm one of three doctors staffing this clinic this morning.

CUDDY

(to House, sotto)

I'm sure they're all fooled. Grab a file and--

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

HOUSE

(still to the room)

I am a board certified diagnostician with a double specialty of infectious disease and nephrology.

(good so far)

I am also the only doctor currently employed at this clinic who is forced to be here against his will.

(to Cuddy)

That is true, isn't it?

She doesn't respond; just picks up a file.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(to room)

But, you don't need to worry because for most of you, this job could be done by a monkey with a bottle of Motrin. Speaking of which, if you're particularly annoying, you may see me reach for this.

(pulls pill bottle from pocket)

This is Vicodin. It's mine. You can't have any. Not to worry, I do not have a pain management problem. I have a pain problem. But who knows, maybe I'm wrong.

(with a smile, friendly)

Maybe I'm too stoned to tell. Okay, who wants me?

No hands go up.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

And who would rather wait for one of the other two guys?

All hands go up.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(to receptionist)

I'll be in Exam Room 1 if anyone changes their mind.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (3)

8

CUDDY
 (file in hand, calling)
 Lori Matthews?

A healthy looking 30 year old, LORI, raises her hand.

CUDDY (CONT'D)
 Please accompany Dr. House to Exam
 Room 1.

Cuddy hands House the file as the patient reluctantly follows him.

9 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

9

Chase emerges from Brandon's room, armed with his test results. A moment later, Mindy emerges and hurries after him.

MINDY
 Dr. Chase.

He slows down, then walks with her toward the lab.

CHASE
 I'm not sure scaring your boyfriend
 is the best medicine for him right
 now.

MINDY
 I know. I get stupid when I'm scared.

CHASE
 Don't go rock climbing.

She doesn't react; she's preoccupied.

MINDY
 I was wondering... Before this
 happened, we were... having sex...

CHASE
 You're wondering if whatever he has,
 you might have gotten it? It's unlikely
 and we ran a complete STD panel--

MINDY
 --No.
 (emotional, guilt-
 ridden)
 I'm wondering if maybe I did this to
 him.
 (off Chase's look)
 I was kinda rough.

10 INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #1 -- DAY

House sits, serving time. On the examination table sits Lori, pushing her glasses back up the ridge of her nose.

LORI

It was yellow.

HOUSE

It was?

LORI

It's not anymore.

HOUSE

That's a shame.

LORI

I thought that'd be a problem. So I brought you this.

She smiles awkwardly (awkward but pretty), reaches into her pocket and hands House a yellow "paint chip" sample. He looks at it...

HOUSE

Your mucus was...
(turns it over, reads)
'Pale Goldenrod'?

LORI

Last week, yes. Should I be worried?

HOUSE

Oh, yes. Very.

LORI

(worried)

Really? I thought I was okay now.

HOUSE

And yet here you are.

(off her look)

What happened? It took a week for the paramedics to respond to your 9-1-1 call?

There's a stunned beat, then:

LORI

You're not a very nice doctor, are you?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

HOUSE

And you're very bad at whatever it
is that you do.

LORI

(gets up to go)
You don't even know me.

HOUSE

I know you're gonna get fired.

She stops, looks to him - why would he say that?

HOUSE (CONT'D)

That's why you got the new glasses;
it's why your teeth are so sparkly
white. You're getting the most of
your health insurance while you still
can.

LORI

(beat, then:)
...I might be quitting.

House smiles - he won.

HOUSE

If you were quitting you'd have known
it last week while your snot was
still 'Pale Goldenrod'. You're
getting fired.

She looks at him, busted.

LORI

...I just don't like being told what
to do.

House nods, gets it.

HOUSE

...I could get you in for a full
body scan later this week.

LORI

...Thanks.

11 INT. LAB -- DAY

1:

Cameron runs blood samples through an integrated modular
analyzer (IMA); Foreman prepares a blood smear on a slide
and looks at it under the microscope.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

CHASE

Echocardiogram shows cardiomyopathy with global hypokinesis. Not good news but doesn't explain anything.

FOREMAN

It's got to be viral; we should start running gels and titers.

CHASE

Maybe we should look into the girlfriend's theory.

(off their looks)

She thinks she rode him to death.

Foreman laughs. Cameron doesn't - she's not put off, just more fascinated than amused. She's also busy looking at the LCD screen on the IMA.

FOREMAN

What did you tell her?

CHASE

I told her 22 year old men don't die of sex.

CAMERON

(to Chase)

What did you ask her?

CHASE

What do you mean?

CAMERON

I mean, I hope you got some specifics about exactly what they were doing. If this girl thinks it can kill you, it's worth knowing about.

Foreman once again is amused (doesn't laugh this time though - he's working, now looking at the printout of lab results from the IMA). Now it's Chase's turn to be more fascinated than amused.

CHASE

...Have you ever... "taken a life"?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

But before she can answer.

FOREMAN

We should stop the antibiotics.

CAMERON

It's too soon to say they're not having an effect.

FOREMAN

They're having an effect.

12 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

12

VFX: Our POV goes from Brandon, to his IV line, where fluid drips down into the line, we go down into the blood stream; surfing through arteries. Ahead of us, a clear, thin membrane - the entrance to the kidney. We punch through and into a pool of yellow liquid.

FOREMAN (V.O.)

His kidneys are shutting down. Our treatment isn't making him better.

We hear Foreman's voice as the VFX continues. We see a maze of many small tubules ahead. We go into one tubule, and the walls slam shut; we back out to another, again the walls slam shut. Over and over. The kidney is shutting down.

FOREMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It's killing him.

ON BRANDON - in pain, dying...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY 13'

His team with him, House adds the words 'kidney failure' to the list of symptoms on the white board.

HOUSE

So we had five symptoms that didn't add up to anything; now we've got six. Who's excited?

FOREMAN

I don't think it complicates things. The kidney failure was caused by the antibiotics.

HOUSE

Maybe.

FOREMAN

(been thinking)
Typically, low blood pressure and abdominal pain means an infection. Abdominal infection causes sepsis, causes low blood pressure.

CHASE

Except we checked for abdominal infections.

FOREMAN

I know. But what if it's the other way around. What if the low blood pressure is causing the abdominal pain.

CAMERON

(catching on)
Viral heart infection. Intestines aren't getting enough blood, so the result is belly pain.

As the ~~conversation~~ continues, Foreman heads for the board and grabs a marker.

FOREMAN

I know it's not the standard presentation.

CHASE

It's a ten million to one shot.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

FOREMAN

Thought that's what we dealt with here.

(checking them off)

It explains the cardiomyopathy, the pain, the low b.p., the fever.

HOUSE

(smiles)

You read the book.

Did House just praise one of his people?

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Impressive. It's a ridiculously long shot that explains every one of the symptoms.

(except it doesn't)

Except rash and cough. Should we just erase those?

FOREMAN

(shrugs, not worried)

Anything can cause a rash.

House picks up a marker.

HOUSE

Okay. Cardiac infection.

He draws a convoluted perimeter around the symptoms Foreman has checked off; leaving cough and rash on the outside.

He then picks up another color and looks to Cameron:

HOUSE (CONT'D)

You thought allergy.

He then circles rash, low blood pressure and fever, but not abdominal pain. Then picks up another color and glances to Chase.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Carcinoid.

He circles abdominal pain and rash. Now he's on a roll, picking up one color after another, circling differing symptoms.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(in orange)

Hypothyroidism...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(in red)

Parasite...

(in green)

Sinus infection...

(CONTINUED)

FOREMAN

If you're going to list all the things it can't be, you're going to need more colors.

HOUSE

Cameron was right. No condition explains all these symptoms. But... orange and green covers everything.

The team exchange looks - the concept of one sick patient with two unrelated illnesses is like fingers on a chalkboard to doctors.

CHASE

Orange and green?

FOREMAN

Occam's Razor. The simplest explanation is always the best.

HOUSE

And one is simpler than two?

CAMERON

Pretty sure it is, yeah.

HOUSE

Baby shows up - Cameron tells you two people exchanged fluids to create this being; I tell you one stork dropped the tyke off in a diaper - you gonna go with the two or the one?

FOREMAN

I think your argument is specious.

HOUSE

I think your tie is ugly. Why is one more complicated than two? It's lower; it's lonelier; is it simpler? Each of these conditions are about a one in a thousand shot; that means any two of them happening at the same time is a one in a million shot.

(to Foreman)

Chase says the cardiac infection is a one in ten million shot. Which makes my idea ten times better than yours.

Off their looks -- too shocked to respond.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (4)

13

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Fine, get a calculator, run the numbers. Then start the kid on Unasyn for the sinus infection and...

(thinks, thinks, looks at board, then:)

What was orange?

CUT TO:

14 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

14

CAMERON

Hypothyroidism.

She's giving Brandon an injection. Brandon is still weak, still in pain, still feverish. Mindy, as always, sits nearby.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Synthroid is an artificial thyroid medication that should take care of that. Also the nurses are going to start giving you Unasyn; it's a more targeted antibiotic.

MINDY

For the sinus infection?

CAMERON

Yes.

MINDY

And the other stuff is for something else entirely?

CAMERON

(doesn't believe it herself)

Bad luck, huh? Don't worry. He should be back to ditching work in no time.

She's interrupted as ROBERT and BECKY MERRICK enter. Mid 50s, they're Brandon's concerned parents.

MRS. MERRICK

Brandon?

She comes over and hugs him delicately. Mr. Merrick steps in, looks to Cameron:

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

MR. MERRICK
 (understandably not
 into small talk)
 We're his parents. How's he doing?

But before she can answer, Brandon speaks with difficulty...

BRANDON
 Mom, Dad.
 (coughs)
 This is Mindy... I was going to
 bring her for Christmas... We're
 engaged.

Well this is certainly an awkward way to meet your son's
 future wife. They look to her, then...

MRS. MERRICK
 ...Happy to meet you.

Mindy reacts - this is insane.

15 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRANDON'S ROOM -- LATER 15

Cameron emerges from the room. Foreman and Chase are waiting
 at a nearby Nurses' Station. She approaches.

CHASE
 Those the folks?

FOREMAN
 (off her nod)
 You tell them House's theory?

CAMERON
 Told 'em and sold 'em. They're
 wondering why they bothered to fly
 in over something so trivial.

CHASE
 You think he's right?

CAMERON
 ...He's a brilliant diagnostician
 and this could--

FOREMAN
 --Neither do we. Let's go.

And so they head off down the hall on a mission.

CUT TO:

16 INT. LAB -- LATER

16

SCENE OPENS on a gel box -- a shoe box sized black box, open at the top, wires attached to each end. There's a clear jello-like square at the bottom. WE SEE a pipette release it's contents - a blue drop of liquid - into a well on the top of the gel. The electrical current goes on and the blue liquid quickly lines up with the current and runs through the gel.

A timer bell goes off and we REVEAL Foreman. He removes the gel, looks annoyed.

FOREMAN

Negative for Coxsachie B virus.

Chase stands beside him, waiting by the PCR cycler. But he's looking across the room at Cameron, running tests of her own (out of earshot).

CHASE

Seven down, about five thousand to go. You really think we're going to come up with your mystery virus just by running gels 'til we guess right?

FOREMAN

No. I think we're going to do it by standing around watching other people work.

CHASE

(indicates)

I'm waiting for the Epstein-Barr virus.

Foreman accepts this and goes back to work. Chase just continues to stare across the room. After a beat.

CHASE (CONT'D)

She's weird, isn't she?

Foreman knows what Chase is referring to without looking up.

FOREMAN

Bad idea.

CHASE

What?

FOREMAN

Bad idea. You work with her.

(CONTINUED)

CHASE

What did I say? Is 'weird' some new ghetto euphemism for 'sexy'; like 'bad' is 'good' and 'fat' is 'good'; then what the hell does 'good' mean?

FOREMAN

(not nasty, wouldn't stoop to that)
'Ghetto euphemism'?
(beat, then:)
That's right. I thought Richie Rich was talking street. You don't think she's hot?

CHASE

No.

FOREMAN

Well, then you're brilliant. And I am using 'brilliant' as a euphemism.

CHASE

Obviously she's hot; you weren't asking about her aesthetics; you were asking if I wanted to jump her? I don't.

FOREMAN

Brilliant.

Chase looks at him - what the hell does that mean?

BING - Chase's machine is finished doing whatever it was doing. After a beat.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Your Epstein-Barr is ready.

With one last look, Chase gets his stuff out and gets to work. Foreman then finally looks across the room at Cameron...

17 INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #2 -- DAY (DAY 2)

17

House sits quietly in a corner, intensely playing his Gameboy. After a beat, PULL BACK TO REVEAL he's not alone. A patient, PETER BROWN, 38, sits on the exam table, wondering what's going on.

BROWN

What are you doing?

HOUSE

Level 4.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

BROWN

No, I mean--

And he clears his painful throat.

HOUSE

I know what you meant. We're waiting.

BROWN

My throat hurts.

HOUSE

So you said.

Another moment of silence. Then:

BROWN

How long are we going to be waiting?

HOUSE

Two minutes less than when you asked me two minutes ago.

Cuddy enters, she's busy, but she's a pro.

CUDDY

(to Brown, pleasant)

Hi, I'm Dr. Cuddy. Pleased to meet you.

HOUSE

Thanks for the consult. His throat seems to have some condition.

Cuddy takes out a tongue depressor and uses it for its intended purpose.

CUDDY

Say ah.

BROWN

Ahhhh.

Cuddy looks and quickly diagnoses. And she equally quickly diagnoses the situation. She looks to House.

CUDDY

He has a sore throat.

HOUSE

(feigns realization)

Of course! He said it hurt. I should have realized that meant it was sore!

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

She turns to House. (The patient listens but doesn't fully comprehend.)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(shrugs)

I needed a consult.

CUDDY

It's not going to work.

HOUSE

You once asked me why I think I'm always right. And I realized you're right. At least I think you're right. I don't really know now, do I?

CUDDY

You're not getting out of clinic duty.

(to patient)

Go buy a lozenge.

And she leaves.

18 OMITTED

18

19 INT. LAB -- DAY

19

Foreman, Chase and Cameron continue to PCR, run gels, and other tests. Only this time Foreman and Cameron are on one side of the room, near the door, out of earshot of Chase.

CAMERON

Negative on Parvovirus B19.

FOREMAN

I'm impressed.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

CAMERON

Thank you. I was born to run gels.

FOREMAN

I meant about Chase.

CAMERON

What about Chase?

FOREMAN

The man has no physical interest in you, has a completely professional relationship with you, respects you as a colleague and a doctor and he can't look at you without thinking of sex.

Cameron glances to Chase, who glances away.

CAMERON

...Because I asked about what kind of sex could kill you?

FOREMAN

You now have total control over your relationship with him.

CAMERON

(not flattered, annoyed)

So a woman can't express interest in sex without it being some professional power play?

HOUSE (O.S.)

No.

They turn to see House in the doorway.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Either that or you're an idiot. Are you an idiot?

CAMERON

Apparently.

HOUSE

If you look like you do and you say what you said, you have to be aware of the effect it's going to have on men.

CAMERON

Men should grow up.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

HOUSE

Yeah, and dogs should stop licking themselves. It's not going to happen.

Chase wanders over.

CHASE

What's going on?

House looks to Cameron - care to explain?

CAMERON

(to House)

What are you doing here?

HOUSE

Looking for you guys.

FOREMAN

Why didn't you page us?

HOUSE

Because I knew you were here.

CHASE

Who told him--

HOUSE

--No one. I assume you're trying to prove my crazy two illness theory wrong. Obviously you're going to be in the lab.

(to Foreman)

You spin the urine?

FOREMAN

Not yet.

HOUSE

Talk to me when you have.

Foreman grabs the urine sample as a rather pleased House exits. Foreman gives the others a look - what is House up to?

Then he puts the sample in the centrifuge, it begins to spin.

20 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

2

Foreman enters. House and Wilson are waiting, House is smug, already knows all the answers.

HOUSE

What did you find out?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

FOREMAN

His kidney failure; it's Acute
Interstitial Nephritis.

HOUSE

I wonder if that's significant...

Foreman hates being made to play the chastised little boy -
but that's where he is.

FOREMAN

It means that the antibiotics did
not cause the kidney failure. How
did you know?

HOUSE

If you guys hadn't been so busy trying
to prove me wrong you might have
checked in on the poor kid.

FOREMAN

You visited a patient?

HOUSE

I was sitting by his bed all morning,
just so he'd know someone was there
for him.

WILSON

(the real reason)

I looked in on him; he's much better.

HOUSE

(to Foreman)

Ergo, the treatment's working; ergo,
me right, you wrong.

FOREMAN

...I'm glad for the kid.

Just because he means that, doesn't mean he's not annoyed.
Foreman exits.

WILSON

That smugness of yours is really an
attractive quality.

HOUSE

Thank you. It was either that or
get my hair hi-lited. Smugness is
easier to maintain.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

WILSON

I get that you're not a big believer in the catching flies with honey approach. But do you honestly think you can collect a jar-full by cleverly taunting them?

HOUSE

Flies, no; doctors, sure. If I told Foreman 'nice try, it was a great guess, but sorry, not this time' what do you think he'd be doing right now?

WILSON

I think he'd be going home not feeling like a piece of crap.

HOUSE

Exactly.

WILSON

You want him to feel like a piece of crap?

HOUSE

No. I don't want him going home.

21 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

21

Brandon is still on the IV but is in considerably less pain - he seems to be on the road to recovery. Foreman enters; indeed, he's not going home.

BRANDON

Dr. Foreman, thank you.

He coughs. Foreman looks less than thrilled as he checks the chart at the foot of the bed.

FOREMAN

You still have the cough?

BRANDON

I feel a lot better.

MRS. MERRICK

His fever is gone; his rash is going away.

FOREMAN

(re: chart)

I see.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

He writes some stuff down on the chart.

MINDY

Is everything okay?

FOREMAN

Just ordering some tests. Absolutely nothing to worry about.

And he exits, and in spite of his words, the Merricks and Mindy suddenly feel just a little less secure about the prognosis.

22 INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #1 -- DAY

22

GAMEBOY SCREEN - game in progress - PULL OUT TO REVEAL House is the player. He is waiting patiently for Cuddy. A patient, SHELLEY LEVER, 44, waits on the table.

LEVER

How much longer?

House quickly checks his watch, not wanting to take his eyes off the game.

HOUSE

Nine-thirty; she was probably on the eighth hole when I paged her--

Then he suddenly can't talk, pressing buttons frantically, trying to save his game... But no -- the game makes that horrible 'you lose' music. Damn. House offers the game to Lever.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

We've probably got another half an hour.

Beat. What else is she going to do? She takes the game and begins playing.

Then Foreman enters and without any introduction, addresses House.

FOREMAN

With viral infections one of two things always happen: the patient dies or the patient's immune system fights off the invader. What we're seeing here is the second option.

(glances to patient
in room)

Not you.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

But Lever keeps playing.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

What's with her?

HOUSE

Her leg hurts after running six miles.
Who knows? Could be anything.

FOREMAN

(back to Brandon)

It's not two illnesses; it can't be
two illnesses.

HOUSE

(genuinely amused)

I am so glad you work here.

That causes Foreman to stop for a beat - is House serious?
In fact, he is.

FOREMAN

If the patient does have a viral
infection, the antibiotics you
prescribed could box his kidneys and
liver impeding his ability to fight
it off.

HOUSE

Well that certainly would be a
concern.

(beat)

Fifty dollars?

That makes Lever look up from her game.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(warning her)

Don't look away; the space monkeys
will be all over you.

She returns to the game.

FOREMAN

You want to bet on the patient's
health?

HOUSE

You think that's bad luck? You think
God will smite her because of our
inseñsitivity?

(considers this)

If God does, you make a quick fifty.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

Surprised, Lever looks up again. This time for too long, the monkeys get her and we hear the sound of the game ending. House reaches out with an "I told you" look - it's his turn. As he begins to play:

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(to Foreman)

You don't have to wait for the kid to get sicker - check his white blood count; if he's fighting off a virus like you think, it'll be way up.

Foreman thinks about that, turns to go as Wilson enters.

WILSON

Hey. Cuddy said you needed a consult. What's up? I'm busy.

House looks up - crap. Beat and then we hear the now familiar sad sound of the game ending.

23 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE -- DAY

23

While House listens to incredibly uncool pop music on headphones in his inner office, Chase and Cameron are in the outer office. Chase is making some coffee, but keeps glancing up at Cameron. Which is not a smart thing to do while pouring a hot liquid. Damn. Cameron, self-conscious, notices.

CAMERON

...I was just being glib.

CHASE

(cleaning up)

You haven't said anything.

CAMERON

Before. When I was talking about Brandon's girlfriend thinking sex might have killed him. I was just making a joke because I was uncomfortable.

CHASE

I don't even remember what you said.

Right. He pours milk in his coffee. But she knows he's lying.

CAMERON

I'm uncomfortable about sex.

CHASE

We don't have to talk about this.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

CAMERON

Sex could kill you. You know what the human body goes through during sex?

We CLOSE IN on Chase as she begins to describe this:

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Pupils dilate.

His in fact are just that.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Arteries constrict. Core temperature rises; the heart races. Blood pressure skyrockets. Respiration becomes rapid and shallow.

His breathing does seem a little rapid.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

The brain fires bursts of electrical impulses from nowhere to nowhere.

Is he starting to sweat?

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Secretions spit out of every gland. Muscles tense and spasm like you're lifting three times your body weight.

His leg is starting to shake ever so subtly. We STAY ON Chase, closing in again on his eye, as...

CAMERON (CONT'D)

It's violent, it's ugly and it's messy and if God hadn't made it unbelievably fun, the human race would've died off eons ago. Men are lucky; they can only have one orgasm. You know that women can have an hour long orgasm. Hey Foreman, what's up?

Rather abruptly, his pupils return to their regular size--

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

REVEAL Foreman is in the doorway, carrying lab results. Chase is a little flushed, looking at Cameron. Cameron notices.

CHASE

...Hey, Foreman.

Seeing Foreman's arrival, House enters and immediately determines that Foreman does not look smug. House knows what that means - he smiles.

HOUSE

White cell count isn't up, is it?

FOREMAN

No.

House reaches out for his \$50. But Foreman doesn't offer it. He's not angry; he's aggravated, but not at House.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

(screw the money)

We were both wrong. The white cell count is down.

House pulls his hand back, suddenly concerned - this doesn't make any sense.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Way down. And dropping.

We can tell from their expressions, this is very bad news.

24 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM - VESTIBULE -- DAY

24

There's a double door system of entry. The first door enters into a vestibule room with sink, gowns, gloves. That's where we are now. Brandon looks worse than when we last saw him - his rash and other symptoms are returning. He's scared, but trying to be strong. He sits in a wheel chair as Chase scrubs up.

CHASE

Can you walk?

BRANDON

A little.

CHASE

We have to leave the chair out here.

Brandon awkwardly gets up.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

34.

24

CHASE (CONT'D)

And the robe.

Brandon takes his gown off - he's naked underneath; the rash is coming back. Chase puts on a sterile gown and mask and helps lead Brandon into...

25 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 21

The patient room is anti-septic, no personal items at all, nothing but medical equipment. A bed with white sheets, an IV pole, a nightstand but there's nothing on it, tile floor.

Chase hands Brandon a sterile robe, helps him onto the bed and then checks equipment, makes sure everything is as it should be.

BRANDON

(putting on the robe)

You worried you're going to get whatever I have?

CHASE

No.

(the even scarier truth)

We're worried you'll get something I have.

Chase pulls open the blinds, revealing the family behind a thick glass window...

26 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS 21

Cameron and Foreman are with the family.

FOREMAN

Something's made him immuno-compromised.

CAMERON

His white blood cell count is down; which means his body can't fight off infections.

FOREMAN

(more blunt)

If he gets sick, he'll die.

27 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 21

Brandon has obviously just gotten the same news from Chase.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

BRANDON

Sick? How sick?

CHASE

...If you get a cold, you'll die.

Off Brandon, looking to his parents on the other side of the glass barrier, having just learned the same news. They're just feet away but they can't do what needs to be done; they can't reach out and take his hand.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

27A INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY 27

On the white board. Cameron's hand writes yet another symptom: "low white blood count". This one is not enclosed within any of the existing colored circles - it doesn't fit any of their theories.

28 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY 28

The drapes are closed. Foreman prepares to do a bone marrow biopsy. Brandon lies on the bed on his stomach. He's covered only by a sheet over his legs and trunk. In between, his hips are exposed. Foreman works from a small metal tray with needed instruments at the bedside. He drapes Brandon with blue, sterile towels around a small square of skin on the illiace crest (upper part of butt). He injects the area with a small needle containing local anesthetic.

FOREMAN

I'm going to push a needle into your hip bone and take some of the marrow.

BRANDON

Doesn't feel too bad.

FOREMAN

That was just the anesthetic. The core biopsy needle is a bit bigger.

Foreman pulls out a large needle.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Take a deep breath. It's going to hurt. A lot.

Foreman grinds the needle into his bone. We hear a distinctive 'pop'.

BRANDON

Ahh. That kills.

FOREMAN

The marrow makes the blood cells. We take a peak at it under a microscope, maybe we see a viral infection, maybe we see some fibrosis, something to explain why your blood counts are so low.

Foreman twists the needle to gather the last needed cells.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

BRANDON

Ahhh.

Foreman pulls out the needle.

FOREMAN

One step closer to an answer.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

BRANDON

What if you don't find one? I can't stay here forever.

FOREMAN

(knows he can't answer that question)

What? You don't like the food?

Brandon allows himself a smile.

HOUSE (V.O.)

(wrap dialogue)

The patient could have died.

29 INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE -- DAY

29

House is arguing with Cuddy.

CUDDY

The one with the pulled muscle?

HOUSE

Those symptoms are consistent with a dozen other conditions; I'm entitled to consult--

CUDDY

You're not getting out of clinic duty.

HOUSE

There are a hundred idiot doctors in this building who get all warm and fuzzy every time they hold a hand or pull a toy car out of a nose. You don't need me here.

CUDDY

No, I don't. But working with people makes you a better doctor.

HOUSE

When did I sign up for that course?

CUDDY

When did I give you the impression I care what you want?

HOUSE

Well, working this clinic obviously instills a deep sense of compassion.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

HOUSE (CONT'D)
 (this conversation is
 over)

I've got your home number, right?

He heads for the door.

CUDDY

It's not going to work. You know why? Because this is fun. You think of something to make me miserable; I think of something to make you miserable. It's a game; and I'm going to win.

(smiles)

Because I've got a head start.

That stops him. She may be right.

30 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

30

Wilson follows House, annoyed, over to the pharmacy desk:

WILSON

What's with you and her?

HOUSE

(don't go there)

No.

WILSON

You got a thing for her? Because the only person who can rile you--

HOUSE

--No!. There is not a thin line between love and hate; there is in fact a Great Wall of China with armed sentries posted every twenty feet between love and hate.

(to pharmacist)

36 Vicodin.

PHARMACIST

Who's the patient?

HOUSE

I am.

PHARMACIST

You can't--

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

HOUSE
Dr. Wilson is the prescribing
physician.

Been here before, Wilson nods and the pharmacist walks off:

WILSON
You will lie, cheat and steal to get
what you want but you're incapable
of kissing a little ass.

HOUSE
We all have our limitations.

He grabs a bottle from the counter and walks away.

WILSON (O.S.)
...House.

He turns back. Wilson's standing there, holding up a
different bottle.

WILSON (CONT'D)
Wrong bottle.

House thinks about this for a long beat, as:

WILSON (CONT'D)
Take a pill, wait five minutes for
it to kick in, then go back in there
and kiss some ass.

HOUSE
(but:)
What was the kid's first symptom?

Wilson is thrown by the question for a beat.

HOUSE (CONT'D)
You did the history. Of his eight
hundred symptoms, which one hit him
first?

WILSON
...The cough.

And House leaves (after taking the correct bottle).

31 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY INTO NIGHT 31

A montage of House:

- looking at the white board with the list of symptoms - it
now sits on a chair in his office.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

- leafing through the Physician's Desk Reference.
- looking through the patient's file.
- researching on the computer, running search programs.
- standing, a foot away from the wall, facing the wall, leaning his head against the wall with his eyes closed, just thinking.
- members of the team watching him from the outer office - what's going on? (But they know better than to bother him when he's in one of these states.)

Finally...

32 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- NIGHT

32

Finally, House emerges...

HOUSE

Gout.

He then turns and returns to his inner office, expecting the others to follow him. A little confused, they do.

33 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

CHASE

Are we talking about Brandon?

House nods, opening the PDR.

FOREMAN

Gout? Uric acid crystals in the joints? Symptoms include pain, swelling, redness, and stiffness. Not one of which do I see on that board.

HOUSE

Because he doesn't have gout.

The others look at each other - these damn riddles - House enjoys the moment.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(to Foreman)

You were right. I was crazy to think two conditions would hit someone at the exact same time. One hit first.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

(opens the file)

Two weeks ago, Brandon developed a cough. Being an idiot, he went to a doctor. In order to justify charging 200 dollars, that doctor felt he should actually do something. He wrote a prescription. Seven thousand people die each year from pharmacy screw ups. Not nearly as many as die from doctor screw ups but still not something they use in their promotional materials. The pharmacist gave him colchicine, a gout medicine instead of cough medicine.

FOREMAN

This is a guess?

HOUSE

It's a very good guess. Every day, cells die.

SFX. We are at a microscopic level. As House speaks, we ZOOM IN ON a single cell among many as it swells to twice normal size. CLOSER. Inside the cell, we see small tubes, anchored at opposite ends of the cell, align, grab onto each other and onto the contents of the cell -- chromosomes, mitochondria, vacuoles -- and pull them to one end or the other. PULL BACK TO REVEAL we now have two cells.

HOUSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We survive because the remaining cells divide to replace the losses. But gout medicine blocks mitosis; which stops cell division.

We see another cell swell to twice normal size. Inside the cells, we see small tubes but they are not able to grab onto each other or the contents of the cell. Stagnation. Not able to divide. Some swollen cells cluster in a group, with some dying off.

BACK IN THE ROOM

He's now at the white board, the PDR open beside him; he's crossing out symptoms.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Abdominal pain, the rash, the fever, the blood pressure, kidneys, and bone marrow.

Only one symptom remains un-crossed.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

HOUSE (CONT'D)

The only thing it wouldn't do...
 (crosses out cough)
 It would do absolutely nothing to
 relieve his cough.

He sits down, almost like he's expecting applause. Instead...

FOREMAN

So based on you picking up the wrong
 pills, you've deduced that the
 pharmacy also gave him the wrong
 medicine. And you've even figured
 out what wrong medicine. Imagine
 what you could do if you actually
 had some facts to work with.

HOUSE

(glib)
 Give me another 24 hours, I'll figure
 out the manufacturer, the dosage and
 what he washed it down with.

CAMERON

No.

HOUSE

It fits. It explains everything.

CAMERON

Once he checked into this hospital,
 he was completely under our control.
 Our food, our pills, our everything.
 So, even if you're right, no more
 gout medicine. He'd either continue
 to deteriorate, or he'd have gotten
 better. But he got better, and then
 he got worse. It doesn't fit; it
 doesn't make sense.

...House thinks about this for a beat - it's a very good
 point. He then rises and exits...

34 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

34

Brandon is getting worse. Even sedated, we can tell he's in
discomfort, sweaty, the rash covers most of his face.

35 INT. PATIENT WAITING AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

35

The parents and Mindy wait nervously. House arrives with
 his team.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

MINDY

(to Chase)

He's sedated; he's--

HOUSE

(abrupt)

--Hi, I'm Dr. House. I'm your son's doctor.

MRS. MERRICK

You're the one we haven't met; we're--

MR. MERRICK

You're the one he hasn't met. How can you treat someone without meeting him?!

HOUSE

(simple)

It's easy if you don't give a crap about him.

Well, they weren't expecting that.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

It's a good thing. I'm sure your boy's a uniquely special young man who calls his mom on Mother's Day and her birthday and a couple other times every year and buys his girlfriend roses even when he hasn't been unfaithful. And if I got to know him I couldn't help but love him. But then I'd get stupid. Think about it: if emotions made you act rationally, they wouldn't be called emotions, right? So that's why we have this nice division of labor: you're the family, I'm the doctor. You hold his hand, I get him better. If I start tucking him in at night, well that's not fair to you guys. And if you start prescribing medicine, that's not fair to me. So what I want to know is: who stepped on my side of the net? Who cared enough to get stupid enough to give him his cough medicine?

MINDY

When we checked in, Dr. Foreman told us no--

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

43A. 3

HOUSE

--Tuesday, he was getting better.-
Wednesday he's getting sick again.
Somebody gave him his cough medicine
Wednesday.

Beat.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Come on, nobody's going to be mad.
I just want to know who tried to
kill the kid.

FOREMAN

...Dr. House, maybe we should
reconsider other diagnoses...

Beat. House looks to Foreman; maybe he's right...

MRS. MERRICK

(a little ashamed)
...His throat was so sore. The poor
boy just wanted--

HOUSE

--Aren't you a dear. Where are the
pills?

MRS. MERRICK

...He took the last of them the day
before he was switched to this room.

CAMERON

They're gone?

MRS. MERRICK

It's just cough medicine.

HOUSE

No it's not. Where's the bottle?

She reaches into her purse and we:

CUT TO:

36 EXT. SUBURBAN PHARMACY -- NIGHT 36

Chase strides purposefully into the 24 hour pharmacy. Mindy and Mrs. Merrick are with him.

37 INT. SUBURBAN PHARMACY -- MOMENTS LATER 37

Chase walks along behind the pharmacy counter with the annoyed SUBURBAN PHARMACIST (obviously, not the same pharmacist as in the clinic).

CHASE

We need to know exactly what you put in this bottle. We think it was colchicine; a gout medication--

SUBURBAN PHARMACIST

--If the prescription says cough medicine, that's what I prescribed.

CHASE

The family is prepared to waive liability. We just need to know what it was, what the dosage was--

SUBURBAN PHARMACIST

--It was cough medicine.

Losing his patience, Chase hands him the prescription.

CHASE

Refill it.

38 INT. SUBURBAN PHARMACY -- DAY 38

On the other side of the counter, Mindy waits quietly beside Mrs. Merrick. Two women who barely know each other, but share something very huge in common.

MRS. MERRICK

He's going to be okay.

MINDY

(without looking up)
You don't know that.

Mrs. Merrick looks to Mindy, thinks, then:

MRS. MERRICK

Does Brandon like that quality in you?

Mindy looks up...

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

MRS. MERRICK (CONT'D)
 (tactful)
 You're a little negative.

MINDY
 Things don't always work out for the best.

MRS. MERRICK
 It doesn't hurt to hope they do.

MINDY
 No. Not unless that makes you figure
 you can do whatever you want.
 (looks back down)
 Like give people cough medicine...

Mrs. Merrick felt guilty enough already. Chase and the Pharmacist emerge from behind the counter. Chase is opening a pill bottle as he walks, addressing Mrs. Merrick.

CHASE
 These are Tessalon Pearls, a type of
 cough medication; it's what Brandon
 was supposed to get.

He takes out a pill to show them.

CHASE (CONT'D)
 They're small round and yellow. Can
 you tell this man what the pills in
 your son's medicine bottle actually
 looked like?

MRS. MERRICK
 (confused)
 They were... small, round and yellow.

Chase is surprised - he hands her the pill. Mindy also takes a look.

MRS. MERRICK (CONT'D)
 Exactly like this.

MINDY
 ...These are the pills Brandon was
 taking.

SUBURBAN PHARMACIST
 (parting shot to Chase)
 Hey, I'm just a pharmacist. But I know
 what cough medicine looks like, doctor.

And he walks away, leaving an even more distraught family in
 his wake...

39 INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- NIGHT

39

House is with Wilson. House isn't himself. He's not used to being wrong. It throws off his world-view. He's quiet and unabrasive. House places the new bottle of pills on the table.

HOUSE

It was so perfect. It was beautiful.

WILSON

Beauty seduces us on the road to truth.

House looks to Wilson. Did you just say that?

HOUSE

And triteness kicks us in the nuts.

WILSON

So true.

HOUSE

...I was wrong.

WILSON

Yeah, but we all must find a way to carry on.

HOUSE

You could try shutting up.

WILSON

You go first.

A long beat. Wilson has achieved his aim; House is once again thinking about the case.

HOUSE

The cough medicine must have done something; it must have aggravated the condition.

(looks to board)

Or conditions. It's all over the place. It must be in his blood.

Wilson looks at the board, thinks about this:

WILSON

What if it is his blood?

HOUSE

...Lymphoma?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

WILSON

(shrugs)

Unless you got something better?

HOUSE

(facetious)

We foolishly ruled lymphoma out because his CT scan showed no adenopathy. His CBC showed a normal diff and smear. His bone marrow showed no--

WILSON

--So screw the tests - cut him open; find out what's really in there.

HOUSE

He has no blood pressure, no immune system, and no kidneys. Biopsy surgery will kill him.

WILSON

Yeah. Let's stick with the wrong pill theory.

And House knows he's right - he's got nothing else.

HOUSE

Schedule him for surgery.

And on that daunting thought, we:

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

40 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY (DAY 4) 40

Gowned and masked, Foreman, Chase and Cameron are PREPPING Brandon for his upcoming surgery. His family watches from outside the window.

Foreman threads a Swan-Ganz catheter through a large IV under Brandon's clavicle (collar bone). Cameron is at his side. The catheter connects to a bedside monitor.

FOREMAN

Brandon, we're running this tube through your heart and into your lungs.

CAMERON

It has sensors that give us information we'll need during your biopsy surgery this afternoon.

Brandon nervously clenches and unclenches his fingers.

FOREMAN

Try not to move, okay?

BRANDON

(nervous, but aware)
My fingers are a little numb, sorry.

Cameron makes a mental note of this fact.

FOREMAN

(to Cameron)

I really don't need any help on this end.

He indicates across the room where Chase has plenty to do. This is Chase's world - he's the intensivist. He's working at a rolling, metal table on far side of room, gathering and assembling materials needed to place an arterial line in Brandon's wrist [for after Foreman is done - prep includes unfolding blue sterile towel and covering portion of table, opening packages of 4X4's and pouring out, connecting tubing.]

CAMERON

I know.

It's clear she's on this side of the room because she doesn't want to be on the other side of the room (dealing with Chase).

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

FOREMAN

We're in the right atrium... trying to catch the flow through the tricuspid valve.

(then to Cameron,
sotto)

You can't even talk to him?

CAMERON

I talk to him.

FOREMAN

Grow up.

Off Cameron, ~~considering~~. Chase looks up at the monitor.

CHASE

I think the catheter is curling in the atrium.

FOREMAN

Got it. We're in the RV now.

As Cameron wanders over and starts to help, Chase opens suture, grabs needle with kelly clamp, and pulls out of packing and into air.

CHASE

I don't want to jump you, you know.

CAMERON

Yes you do.

They keep their voices quiet enough so that Brandon can't hear, while they continue to work.

CHASE

No, really--

CAMERON

House is right. We're animals. We want to procreate, we want healthy offspring, so we want to jump beautiful people. You want to jump me. I want to jump you.

CHASE

You do?

CAMERON

(House is an idiot)
House is wrong. We're not animals.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Just because we want something doesn't make it okay. I want to scratch your eyes out when you look at me like that, but I keep it to myself. We're capable of rising above our nature; capable of not spending all day jumping every beautiful thing we see.

CHASE

...You want to jump me?

CAMERON

It's not going to happen. So stop looking at me like that.

Suddenly an alarm sounds. Chase abruptly looks up to the monitor.

CHASE

Ectopy. You must have irritated the heart wall.

FOREMAN

It'll calm down.

Foreman stops working, but doesn't pull back. Chase rushes a crash cart to the bed side, anticipating the worst.

CHASE

He can't tolerate any cardiac arrhythmia. Pull back.

FOREMAN

We can't; he needs the surgery.

CHASE

He's gonna crash; pull out.

The alarm stops. Foreman looks to Chase - 'see?' Foreman starts threading the catheter through again.

BRANDON

I don't feel so...

The alarm starts again.

CAMERON

Pressure dropped.

CHASE

You still with us Brandon?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (3)

51.

4

No answer. Brandon is out. Chase pulls defibrillator paddles off code cart.

CHASE (CONT'D)
Charging. Clear.

Chase places paddles on Brandon's chest. Shocks him back to life. Outside the window, the family watches in horror.

CHASE (CONT'D)
Sinus rhythm.

CAMERON
Got a pulse.

FOREMAN
...But he's not getting any surgery.

As they realize the significance of that fact...

41 INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #2 -- DAY

4

A patient, JERRY MORRIS, 18, rocker, tattoos, stands uncomfortably in the middle of the room as House enters.

HOUSE
How ya' doing?

MORRIS
Okay.

HOUSE
(beat, that's it?)
Great. I'm doing good too.

No he's not. And Morris still doesn't say anything.

HOUSE (CONT'D)
Get to knock off an hour early today.
Know why? I kissed my boss's ass.
You ever do that?

It's true - but House isn't proud of it - actually, he's annoyed. He's also waiting for Morris to jump in and say something. But since he's not...

HOUSE (CONT'D)
I think she only said yes because she wants to reinforce that behavior. She wants me to kiss other people's ass + like she wants me to kiss yours.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

What would you want: a doctor who holds your hand while you die or a doctor who ignores you while you get better? I suppose it would particularly suck to have a doctor ignore you while you die.

MORRIS

(finally)
I should go.

He starts to walk painfully for the door.

HOUSE

You think it's going to come out on its own?

Morris turns back. Huh?

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Are we talking bigger than a bread basket?

(still not much of a response)

Because actually, it will come out on its own. Which for small stuff's no problem; gets wrapped up in a nice soft package and plop. Big stuff, you're gonna rip something. And speaking medically, that's when the fun stops.

MORRIS

...How do you--?

HOUSE

You've been here half an hour; you haven't sat down; that tells me the location. You haven't told me what it is, that tells me it's humiliating. You've got a little birdy carved into your arm, that tells me you have a high tolerance for humiliation. So I figure it's not just hemorrhoids.

Still no response.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

I've been a doctor for 20 years, you're not going to surprise me.

And as if to rise to the challenge:

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

53.

4:

MORRIS

...It's an MP3 player.

Ow - House stands corrected. A contemplative beat.

HOUSE

...Is it because of the size, the shape... or is it the pounding bass line?

No answer. House just sits there. After a beat:

MORRIS

What are we going to do?

HOUSE

I'm going to wait.

MORRIS

(a little nervous
about that idea)

...For what?

House looks at his watch and we:

CUT TO:

42 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

House is at the reception desk, speaking to a NURSE.

HOUSE

: It's three o'clock. I'm off. Can you tell Dr. Cuddy there's a patient in Exam Room 1 that needs her attention. And the RIAA wants her to check for illegal downloads.

The nurse reacts, confused. House turns to go and sees Cameron approaching.

CAMERON

Brandon's not ready for surgery.

HOUSE

Okay. We'll wait a couple weeks. He should be feeling better by then. Oh wait, which way does time go?

CAMERON

He crashed during prep.

Damn.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

54,

42

CAMERON (CONT'D)

He's also experiencing pain in his fingers. I think some bug may have gotten into the clean room; we should double his GCSF dosage to temporarily bump his white blood--

But House hasn't heard anything since "pain in his fingers".

HOUSE

--Right.

And he hurries out. Confused, Cameron follows.

43 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRANDON'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER 43

The Merricks sit nervously. Mindy paces. Through the glass window, we can see Chase and Foreman, gowned and masked, are doing an echocardiogram on Brandon, to see what damage has been done to his heart. He's conscious again, but obviously weak.

House, followed by Wilson and Cameron, hurries by.

HOUSE

How you all doing?

He blows by them and through the double doors, clearly marked:

44 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 44

And there he is - walking across the clean room, but not clean. No gown, no mask, he hasn't even washed his hands. Cameron and Wilson stop in the doorway to prevent the family from entering.

HOUSE

Interesting fact. Every seven years it's a whole new you - inspiring metaphor, huh?

CHASE

Dr. House, this is a clean room--

HOUSE

(not stopping)

Yeah, I read the sign. But cells of different organs reproduce at different rates.

House grabs Brandon's toes. Brandon screams in pain.

MR. MERRICK

(in doorway, behind Wilson)

Are you trying to kill him?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

55,

44

HOUSE

So you've got a new kidney every -
three years; a new stomach lining
every week.

House then yanks at the poor kid's hair. Another scream.
(House is definitely back to his old abrasive self.)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

This is why *colchicine* poisoning
causes all these symptoms; but not
all at once.

MRS. MERRICK

But the cough medicine was cough
medicine; it wasn't--

House ignores the interruption, taps on each body part as he
goes...

HOUSE

--Colchicine does it's damage in a
very specific order. First pain in
the abdomen, rash, fever. Isn't
that what you got first?

Brandon nods weekly.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Then the kidneys go; just like what
happened to...

CAMERON

(answering)

...Brandon.

HOUSE

Right. Next, it screws up the bone
marrow. And then...

He grabs the kid's toes again. Another little yelp.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

...Neuropathy. Painful tingling in
the fingers and toes. Now what do
you suppose comes after that?

They look to him, expectantly. House opens his hand, showing
a handful of hair.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

...Hair loss.

They're duly impressed.

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

The bad news is: your special boy's
doing drugs.

The parents react.

MINDY

No, he's--

HOUSE

Ecstasy?

MINDY

No.

BRANDON

Once.

(off her look)

Or twice. With the boys.

HOUSE

You know what they cut that stuff
with?

(off their looks)

Apparently, colchicine.

(or:)

Or maybe you ingested the colchicine
through your contact lens solution;
or skin cream or some other drug
you're lying about. I don't know
how it happened; I don't care how it
happened. But it happened. Start...

CAMERON

...Brandon.

HOUSE

Lovely name. Start Brandon on the
FAB fragments.

(opens the door wide)

And let's get some air in here.

And he leaves with Wilson.

45 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRANDON'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 41

As House and Wilson walk away:

WILSON

If you'd been wrong, you'd have just
killed him.

HOUSE

If I'd been wrong, he was dead anyway.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

Wilson nods; valid point.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Make a note. I should never doubt myself.

WILSON

I think you'll remember.
(another couple of
steps)

You know, it wouldn't hurt for you to be wrong every now and again.

HOUSE

What? You don't care about these people?

And they walk away.

46 EXT. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY -- DAY

46

47 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

47

Cameron and Foreman, gowned and masked, are setting up an IV for Brandon. A number of monitors are monitoring his vital signs.

FOREMAN

FAB fragments. They're antibodies that target colchicine.

48 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRANDON'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

48

Chase is with the family and Mindy.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

MRS. MERRICK

Can't we go in?

CHASE

We're going to keep up the precautions
until we know we're right.

MRS. MERRICK

But if you're wrong, Dr. House went
in there; that could--

CHASE

--In my experience, that means we're right.

Reassured, Mindy takes Mrs. Merrick's hand.

49 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

49

Cameron is looking to the monitors. The BP monitor reads
80/50.

SFX. See heart weakly beating.

FOREMAN (V.O.)

The colchicine interferes with the
ability of the heart muscle to
contract, pumping blood, lowering
your blood pressure.

As he speaks, FAST ZOOM IN to the microscopic level, to one
cell, then inside the cell, swollen in size like we saw in
the previous SFX - tubules inside the cell aren't able to
align and grab onto each other.

FOREMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The antibodies we're giving you should
neutralize the colchicine.

SFX: The tubules able to align. Grab onto each other. Anchor
at opposite ends of muscle cell. They pull ends of cell
together, shortening length of cell... Zoom out of cell,
see heart beating stronger. BACK TO SCENE.

BRANDON

When will you know?

The BP monitor from the arterial line in his wrist reads
82/52. Then 85/52. Then 90/55. Heart rate slows down.

Cameron takes off her mask, smiles.

CAMERON

We know now.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

She gestures to the window for them to come in.

50 INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE BRANDON'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mr. Merrick hurries away from his wife and through the door. Mrs. Merrick follows, but is stopped by Mindy.

MINDY

...You were right.

Mrs. Merrick smiles, knows this is an apology, hugs Mindy.

MRS. MERRICK

So were you.

Mindy gratefully reciprocates.

51 INT. BRANDON'S 'CLEAN' HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

51

Tears flow freely as Brandon and his father hug.

BP monitor now reads 120/76.

Then it's Mindy's turn to hug her fiance as Mrs. Merrick holds her husband.

Chase watches from outside as Foreman and Cameron head for the exit.

52 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

52

OPEN CLOSE ON HOUSE, sitting on the floor, in a close space looking at bottle after bottle, box after box on a shelf - one shelf of many.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL he's on the floor of the little clinic pharmacy. Wilson walks up to the counter and watches for a beat.

WILSON

Big weekend?

House shoots him a droll look.

HOUSE

It's not for me. I'm fully stocked.

WILSON

Cuddy's got you doing inventory?

HOUSE

No. I'm solving that kid's case.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

The gout medicine OD?

HOUSE

Yeah.

WILSON

The fact that I know it's a gout medicine OD would seem to indicate that the case is already solved.

HOUSE

(keeps exploring)

You'd be wrong.

WILSON

What about the fact that the kid is now, I believe the technical term is, 'not sick'?

HOUSE

You know how many forms of colchicine are on the market?

Wilson shakes his head - not in answer to the question but in response to the obsessiveness of his friend.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Neither do I. But there's a lot. Pills, powders, liquids, IV fluids. Somehow, at a party, in his coffee, up his nose, in his ear, this kid had some.

WILSON

You're not happy with your ecstasy theory?

HOUSE

He said he'd only used it twice.

WILSON

People lie.

HOUSE

But if you're gonna lie, why not--

WILSON

--Not interested.

HOUSE

Not curious?

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (2)

59A.

52

WILSON

Nope.
(turning to go)
Because I'm well adjusted.

HOUSE

Right.

And as Wilson walks away, and House continues his quest, we hear Brandon COUGH.

53 INT. BRANDON'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

51

He's back in his old (non-sterile) room.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

His family is around him. He's sitting up. He's still on the IV but his BP now reads 110/70. Cameron is checking him out. She pulls a ~~thermometer~~ out of his mouth.

CAMERON

Temperature's back down.

BRANDON

I want cousin Sharon there.

As they talk, Cameron and Chase check the patient out, BP, kidney function, pain in ~~extremities~~, etc.

MRS. MERRICK

If we invite Sharon, we have to invite all the cousins.

MINDY

So what? So less chicken for everybody.

MRS. MERRICK

Good point.

Brandon laughs - and coughs.

BRANDON

I don't suppose I could have my cough pills? They're okay, right?

CAMERON

Sure; everything looks fine; you're doing great.

She pulls the new bottle out of her jacket pocket, gets a pill out and gives it to Brandon.

CHASE

(making a final notation on the chart)
Invite Dr. House.

MR. MERRICK

Will he come?

CHASE

No, but he'll send a gift.

CAMERON

I'll make sure it's a good one.

During this ~~conversation~~, Brandon has dropped the pill, picked it back up, was about to put it in his mouth when he noticed...

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

53

BRANDON

There are letters on the back of
these pills.

Everybody looks to him. What?

CAMERON

Your old pills didn't have any letters
on them?

BRANDON

No. Round and yellow, but no letters.

Cameron realizes the significance of this. She looks to
Chase, smiles. He smiles back.

CHASE

That pharmacist did say he knew what
the cough medicine looked like.

CAMERON

(to Brandon)

These are different. These will
help your cough.

And as Chase and Cameron head for the door...

CHASE

You want to go get some--

CAMERON

--No.

Brandon takes the pill.

54 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

54

House pops one of his own pills.

He continues searching for an answer he may never find. But
then he opens a pill bottle. Colchicine. Small, round,
yellow but no letters on them. He takes one of the cough
pills from the pharmacy out of his pocket - looks at it,
looks at the other pill - they're identical - except for the
letters.

He smiles. All is right in the world. Or as right as it
can be.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW