

SCENE 7 SIDES

Lights come up on the interior of Dr. Maise's office.
AURORA and GARRETT sit opposite him.

DR. MAISE

I've already had this discussion with your daughter's husband, Mr. Horton. So I really don't know why...

AURORA

Well, now you're having this discussion with me, Doctor.

DR. MAISE

(Uncomfortably)

Yes. As I told Mr. Horton we need to make a decision as to whether or not to discharge your daughter in a few days.

AURORA

Discharge her because she's getting better...?

DR. MAISE

Because she might be more comfortable in her own surroundings.

AURORA

Does my daughter have a chance of getting well?

DR. MAISE

Well, of course there's always a chance.

AURORA

Doctor, you are not telling me anything.

DR. MAISE

I think I am, Mrs. Greenway. What are you confused about?

AURORA

Is my daughter going to die?! Is it going to be soon?! Is it days? Is it weeks? Is it months?
Is there another facility that might be able to...

DR. MAISE

You know, Mrs. Greenway, there are no hard answers. I always tell people to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

AURORA

And they let you get away with that? What about her pain?

DR. MAISE

What about it?

AURORA

My daughter cannot stand a great deal of pain.

DR. MAISE

Mrs. Greenway, I like to think that pain is just an indicator.

(AURORA just stares at him for a beat.

He may be the biggest asshole she has ever met in her life. She picks up a letter opener from the doctor's desk.)

AURORA

I see. And so if I were to jam this letter opener through your hand, that would just be an indicator of my displeasure with what I can only call a cavalier attitude toward what my daughter is going through.

DR. MAISE

I think this conversation is over. I'll show you to the door.

AURORA

You're wrong about that. Trust me. You told me there was a second protocol that we could put my daughter on.

DR. MAISE

What protocol?

AURORA

It was an experimental protocol. You sat in this office and told me there was an experimental protocol that was getting some very meaningful results and that after Emma finished her chemotherapy you could try that.

DR. MAISE

Well, if you wanted your daughter to be on that protocol she should have signed up for it weeks ago. That protocol is all filled up now.

AURORA

That is not what you told me. You said we had six weeks to decide.

DR. MAISE

You're a very emotional woman, Mrs. Greenway. People who are overwrought are apt to misunderstand. I'm sure that's not what I told you. And if it is, I must have misspoken.

GARRETT

Well, no harm no foul, Doctor. All you have to do is put the young lady on the protocol now and everything will be fine.

DR. MAISE

I'm sorry. I'm unclear on the relationship here. You are, Mrs. Greenway's husband?

AURORA

Colonel Breedlove is my trusted...friend.

DR. MAISE

Oh yes, the one with the connections at the National Academy of Science. Well, I'm sorry, Colonel. As I said the protocol is all filled up. It is no longer a topic of discussion.

AURORA

I am going to find out who the head of this hospital is, Doctor. I'm going to find out who is in charge of funding your hospital in Washington. And when I do...

DR. MAISE

Are you threatening me, Mrs. Greenway? Because you know if you are you might want to consider that your daughter's life is in my hands. I would say I'm the last person you would want to antagonize. Am I not?

AURORA

Why you miserable little...

(At this point GARRETT takes over like the seasoned military man he is.)

GARRETT

Aurora, maybe you should go out into the waiting room and collect your thoughts for a moment.

AURORA

Now look here, Garrett. This is none of your...

GARRETT

Aurora, go into the waiting room, please. I care for you and I care for Emma, and I'm asking you to go into the waiting room before you make this situation worse. Please trust me on this.

(AURORA gets up)

AURORA

Absolutely unconscionable!

(She storms off)

DR. MAISE

Thank you, I thought I was going to have to call security.

GARRETT

Well, as you said, Doctor, she is emotionally overwrought...but I'm not.

DR. MAISE

And what's that supposed to mean?

GARRETT

What do you know about me, Doctor?

DR. MAISE

Just that you're some kind of astronaut. What does that have to do with...

GARRETT

That's right. I'm some kind of astronaut. I've walked on the moon. I've had presidents of the United States ask for *my* autograph. I have friends in many places.

DR. MAISE

Let me save you the trouble of threatening me. I don't care who you know at the National Academy. I'm a tenured professor at this teaching hospital, as well as head of oncology, so...

(GARRETT continues as if he hasn't heard a word DR. MAISE has said.)

GARRETT

I have a couple of very dear friends who are ex-CIA boys. Cubans. Rough customers. So here's the deal, Doctor. Unless you agree to put that girl on the protocol, right now, sometime within the next month, I'm going to have my friends kill you. They'll make it look like a couple junkies rolled you and killed you for your money in the park. And I guarantee you, it will never be tied to me, because I'm an American fucking hero. Now the only thing I want to know is, do you believe me? Because if I see the slightest doubt whatsoever in your eyes, I'll have your legs broken by tomorrow morning, just to show you I'm serious.

(There is a long pause. There is absolutely no question at all that GARRETT is not bluffing. He means every word and he knows he has the ability to do exactly what he has just said. DR. MAISE gulps.)

DR. MAISE

I think we could possibly find room on the protocol for one more.

GARRETT

Ah, Jeez, Doctor. Thank you. I appreciate that.