UNTITLED IAN BIEDERMAN PROJECT

Pilot

Written By

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Gradually... the demons receded, and
the fog lifted. I got up off the floor,
cleaned myself up, and one more time
I went back out into the world
and started all over again.

Elyn R. Saks
from *The Center Cannot Hold*
ACT ONE

FADE IN:

ON-SCREEN

An “O.R. Live” WEBCAST from the cardiac O.R. of Manhattan Medical Center. DR. VIRGINIA LERNER, 50’s, Texas accent, in scrubs, faces the camera as a surgery proceeds in BG.

LERNER
I’m Virginia Lerner -- chief of C-T surgery at Manhattan Medical Center. I’d like to welcome the international cardiac community as well as viewers of the Discovery Channel. Got a real treat for you today. Dr. Margaret Hill performs the first aortic bypass using a valve fashioned from the patient’s own pericardium. In addition to being completely unprecedented -- Dr. Hill’s innovation has the potential to bring valve replacement to the developing world -- saving millions of lives. Trust me, folks -- you’ve never seen anything like this before --

INT. MANHATTAN MEDICAL CENTER (MMC) - CARDIAC O.R. - DAY 1

Live inside the O.R. now, Dr. MAGGIE HILL is mid-surgery, her crack surgical team headed by PA EDDIE MOORE, Jamaican, salt of the earth, Maggie’s right hand. The Observation Area is full of VIPS. CAMERAS record every angle of the surgery.

MAGGIE
I’ve harvested a sweet little pericardial patch from which to build the valve --

EDDIE
-- the Hill Aortic Valve --

MAGGIE
In addition to being my PA, Mr. Moore is also my publicist -- (beat)
Using the patient’s own tissue, we eliminate the need for an expensive pig valve -- (she SNORTS like a pig) -- and suddenly this is no longer a rich man’s cure.
INT. UNIVERSITAET MAINZ - MEDICAL SCHOOL - LECTURE HALL - DAY

A Webcast of the operation on big screen. 50 German surgical residents laugh at Maggie’s pig impression, scribble notes.

MAGGIE (ON-SCREEN)
I’m now inserting the conduit that will lead from the apex of the heart to the descending aorta --

INT. HEART INSTITUTE OF JAPAN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

10 Japanese heart surgeons watch a sleek plasma screen --

MAGGIE (ON-SCREEN)
Knock out an aortic anastomosis --

INT. MMC - CARDIAC O.R. - CONTINUOUS

As Maggie does the anastomosis, to Eddie:

MAGGIE
Why would I need gluteraldehyde?

EDDIE
(beat, confused)
Who said anything about gluteraldehyde?

MAGGIE
(thrown, but proceeding)
So... after the anastomosis, we test the integrity of the valve --
(irritated)
Can someone turn down that radio?

Everyone looks confused. The O.R. is dead silent. Lerner, concerned, approaches the table. In Maggie’s ear:

LERNER
You okay?

MAGGIE
Peachy -- if you like operating in Times Square --
(beat)
We unclamp the aorta -- and voila -- the new valve holds like a champ. And no pigs were killed in the making of this film --

Maggie suddenly stares toward the door. Angry:
MAGGIE (CONT’D)
How’d they get in here?

Heads turn. There’s no one there. It’s now clear to everyone that Maggie’s losing her shit. To Cameramen:

LERNER
Let’s wind this up, fellas --

MAGGIE
They’re here for the microchips --

EDDIE
Microchips?

MAGGIE
They’re implanted in my breasts --

EDDIE
O-kay...

MAGGIE
(re: breasts)
Fine -- you want ‘em? Take ‘em!

Maggie starts ripping off her clothes while everyone stares.

INT. UNIVERSITÃœT MAINZ - MEDICAL SCHOOL - LECTURE HALL

The shocked German students stare at the screen --

INT. HEART INSTITUTE OF JAPAN - SAME TIME

The Japanese surgeons watch a naked Maggie jut out her chest:

MAGGIE
Okay, you bastards! Come to Mama!

INT. MMC - O.R. - DAY

Maggie loudly overturns a tray of instruments, sprints bare-ass from the O.R. Loaded beat, then Lerner turns to camera:

LERNER
Like I said -- you’ve never seen anything like that before...

EXT. LEHMAN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY 2

SUPER ON SCREEN: “3 MONTHS LATER”

Maggie, in jeans and sweatshirt, exits, carrying a small suitcase. Her younger sister, CAROLINE HILL, grounded, sardonic, leans against a waiting cab. The sisters hug.
CAROLINE
Ready?

MAGGIE
Define ‘ready’ --

INT. CAROLINE’S (AND NOW MAGGIE’S) APARTMENT - DAY

Stylish but not extravagant NYC apartment. The sisters move Maggie’s stuff into Caroline’s former office.

MAGGIE
I really appreciate this, Caroline.

CAROLINE
What are sisters for? And besides, it's not forever, right?
(off Maggie’s look)
I mean -- you’re welcome to stay as long as you need to --

MAGGIE
It’s just a transitional thing. The shrinks are big on support systems. Forget I’m even here --
(looking around)
Does that window open? I can’t sleep without fresh air --

CAROLINE
Uh -- I’m not really sure --

MAGGIE
Anyway, I’ll be at the hospital most of the time --

CAROLINE
You took the teaching position?

MAGGIE
The circus rejected my application.

CAROLINE
I think that’s great, Mags. Really. Are you...

MAGGIE
Nervous about going back to a place where everyone’s seen me naked?

CAROLINE
... not to mention crazy.
MAGGIE
They already knew I was crazy. I just took it to the next level --

Caroline smiles, exits. Maggie unpacks several bottles of medication, stares at them. They represent her new reality -- and she resents the hell out of them. A beat, then Maggie opens the top drawer, shoves the bottles in, slams it shut --

EXT. MANHATTAN MEDICAL CENTER (MMC) - DAY 3

Maggie walks with DR. MILO MARCUS, top schizophrenia doc in NYC, brilliant but unpretentious.

MAGGIE
You owe me ten bucks.

MILO
What kind of New Yorker bets against the Knicks?

MAGGIE
What kind of psychiatrist lives in denial that his team sucks?

MILO
Hope springs eternal. Been taking the Zyprexa?

MAGGIE
Let’s see. My head’s throbbing -- I drink a liter of water every 15 minutes -- and I really need a nap. So yeah, I’m right on schedule.

MILO
The side effects will lessen over time. Are you hearing voices?

MAGGIE
(looks around, mock fear)
Wait -- who said that?

MILO
Clever.

They arrive at the main entrance of the hospital.

MILO (CONT’D)
Want me to come in with you?
MAGGIE
Oh sure. ‘I’m back -- everything’s fine -- and I brought my shrink just in case I freak out again.’
(beat)
I can do this.

MILO
Say no more.

As he starts to go, Maggie grabs his sleeve --

MAGGIE
Though I guess you could hang around the O.R. -- I mean, if it makes you feel better...

MILO
Will do.

Maggie takes a beat, exhales, then heads inside --

INT. MMC - ICU - DAY

Maggie enters the bustling ICU. Lerner, Eddie are there. All non-life-sustaining activity stops, all eyes on Maggie.

MAGGIE
Well -- so much for slipping back in under the radar.
(beat)
So -- obviously last time I was here things got a little...

EDDIE
Wack?

MAGGIE
Yeah. On the upside I’m now the most downloaded babe on You-Tube and Dirty Docs.com --
(beat)
As you all learned in school -- schizophrenia is a physical illness -- just like diabetes, cancer or VD. You treat it -- then go on with your life. That’s my game plan. To those of you who intend to treat me with heightened sensitivity and understanding -- don’t even think about it. And the first person who starts a ‘slow clap’ right now -- dies.
As Maggie strides toward the O.R., a handsome doc falls in step. This is DR. BEN EMERSON, JFK Jr. with a stethoscope, Maggie’s boyfriend.

BEN
Nice entrance. You okay?

MAGGIE
Now I know how Frankenstein’s monster felt --

BEN
What’s your first case?

MAGGIE
Esophageal EKG -- with Elliot.

BEN
Well -- you wanted to avoid heightened sensitivity --

MAGGIE
Coming by tonight?

BEN
I don’t know -- kinda got used to our conjugal visits when you were locked up. I’m not sure regular sex can measure up --

MAGGIE
I’ll wear my straightjacket --

BEN
I’m there.

INT. MMC - C-T O.R. - SCRUB ROOM - DAY

Back to the scene of the crime. Hugely arrogant C-T surgeon DR. ELLIOT SPRINGER is mid triple bypass as Maggie, now in scrubs, supervises a Resident’s esophageal EKG.

ELLIONT
Just so we’re clear -- I don’t tolerate colorful behavior in my O.R. Meaning your instability isn’t my responsibility --

MAGGIE
You should really write bumper stickers, Elliot. God knows your patients would be better off -- (to Resident) You’re in too deep --
ELLIO T
I’m quite capable of supervising my own residents. You’re here... why?

MAGGIE
To find the man with the largest ego-to-penis disparity on the planet. Your plaque’s in the mail.

ELLIO T
Don’t you have dinner plans with some little green men?

MAGGIE
(to Resident)
Check both sides of the arch --
(to Elliot)
Does it bother you I had to have a psychotic meltdown for you to become #1 on the surgical service?

ELLIO T
Nope. Must kill you, though.

MAGGIE
You have no idea.

INT. MMC - CT O.R. - OBSERVATION AREA - SAME TIME

Milo observes with Lerner.

LERNER
Knew she was crazy the day I hired her. Gifted ones always are. Used to hum during staff meetings. Stones, mostly. That ain’t normal.

MILO
Symptoms of schizophrenia can build for years before a psychotic break.

LERNER
Well -- she sure as hell got her money’s worth.

As they exit into --
INT. MMC - ICU - CONTINUOUS

MILO
Despite what Maggie may think, adapting to this illness is tough -- especially for a life-long overachiever. Being back here will make a big difference --

LERNER
Glad to help. She was the top C-T in the country -- a damn miracle worker. I just need to know she’s not gonna mistake someone’s heart for a corned beef sandwich --

NURSE approaches Lerner, hands her a chart.

NURSE
The Ransom girl’s here --

Lerner crosses to an anxious man, PATRICK RANSOM. His 13-year-old daughter EMILY is on a gurney -- IV and oxygen mask.

LERNER
Mr. Ransom? Virginia Lerner -- run the CT service. How was the trip?

PATRICK
I always said I’d never ride in a helicopter. Now I know why. But we made it in one piece --

LERNER
I reviewed the file. Your daughter’s heart is very badly damaged --

PATRICK
I researched every heart program in the country. Dr. Hill has saved patients in Emily’s condition.

LERNER
Dr. Hill’s... on teaching leave. But I’ve got a great staff here. We’ll do everything we can --

INT. MMC - CARDIO-THORACIC O.R. - LATER

Elliot finishes off the bypass.
ELLIOIT
And... scene. Good for another 10 years of scotch and porterhouse.
(to PERFUSIONIST)
Let the clotting begin --

As Elliot prepares to close, Maggie spots something.

MAGGIE
Right ventricle’s swelling.

ELLIOIT
You need to up your meds.

Suddenly the BLOOD ALARM sounds.

NURSE
He’s crashing --

MAGGIE
Lungs are down.

ELLIOIT
Right ostium must be blocked --

MAGGIE
Good wall motion on echo. Do a crash embolectomy --

ELLIOIT
Guy’s in bad enough shape without slashing open his pulmonary artery.
(to Nurse)
100mg of t-PA through the Swan.

MAGGIE
Cancel that --

Nurse freezes. The surgical team exchanges nervous looks.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Thrombolytics won’t save this guy, Elliot. Do the embolectomy --

ELLIOIT
If you’re so hot for an embolectomy -- be my guest. We all know what happened last time you operated -- but if you think you’re up to it...

Maggie stares at Elliot. She’d love to shove him out of the way and take over. But she doesn’t move. Elliot smiles.
ELLIOT (CONT’D)

Didn’t think so.
(to Nurse)
Thrombolytics, stat. I’m gonna run
the ostium --

After several beats, an ALARM sounds.

ANESTHESIOLOGIST
We’re losing him --

ELLIOT
This’ll just take a second --

He works furiously as Maggie looks on, helpless. Several
beats. The patient FLATLINES.

ELLIOT (CONT’D)
Paddles. Charge 200. Clear --

Elliot shocks him once. Twice. Nothing. Elliot takes a
beat, pulls off his gloves, throws them across the O.R.

ELLIOT (CONT’D)
Time of death -- 3:41pm.

Elliot exits. As Maggie stares at the dead man --

INT. MAGGIE & CAROLINE’S APARTMENT - MAGGIE’S ROOM - NIGHT 3

Maggie’s on top of an unseen guy, going at it. As she rolls,
sweating, breathless, off Dr. Ben Emerson from MMC:

MAGGIE
Elliot’s such an incredible tool --

BEN
It was great for me, too --

MAGGIE
I should’ve jumped in --

BEN
A -- your privileges are suspended.
B -- he was Elliot’s patient. And
C -- it’s over now.

MAGGIE
But it isn’t over, Ben. Tomorrow I
walk into another O.R. and
supervise another resident for
another surgeon who isn’t... me.
(MORE)
And if things go south -- I’m stuck on the sidelines in my short skirt shaking my stupid pom poms --

BEN
I gotta say -- the cheerleader thing’s kinda hot --

MAGGIE
I’m serious. It’ll drive me nuts -- okay, more nuts --

BEN
So maybe teaching’s not for you.

MAGGIE
What else am I gonna do? I’m a surgeon -- at least I was --

BEN
(changing gears)
Closed on the apartment today.

MAGGIE
66th and York?

BEN
68th and 1st. With the deck.

MAGGIE
The lung doc’s moo-hoo-vin’ on up.

BEN
Big time. And there’s room for 2 --

MAGGIE
I’ve been thinking about it...

BEN
I’ll handle everything --

MAGGIE
(beat)
Look -- I just need some time to get back on my feet, okay?

BEN
I get it. Open invitation.

Maggie smiles, rolls back on top of Ben.

BEN (CONT’D)
More rage-against-Elliot sex?
MAGGIE
Is that a problem?

BEN
(smiles)
I’ll take one for the team --

EXT. COLUMBUS CIRCLE - MORNING - DAY 4

Morning bustle. Maggie and Milo sit under the Columbus statue. Maggie sips coffee, feeds pretzel to the pigeons.

MILO
I’d prefer to meet in my office.

MAGGIE
And I’d prefer not to be schizophrenic. Roll with it --
(beat)
Ben asked me to move in. Again.

MILO
And?

MAGGIE
We’ve only been dating 11 months. People don’t shack up till they’re together at least... a year.
(to eavesdropping Woman)
I pay this guy 300 bucks an hour. Either chip in or take off --
(as the woman goes)
Ben’s done so much for me. And we’re great together. Ask anyone.

MILO
I’m asking you.

MAGGIE
(beat, switches gears)
So teaching’s not gonna cut it.

MILO
It’s only been one day.

MAGGIE
You’re the top schiz doc on the east coast. If I said: ‘Tomorrow you start an exciting new career as a life coach,’ you’d blow your brains out.
(beat)
I need to operate. And I know what you’re gonna say --
MILO
I think it’s a good idea.

MAGGIE
Okay, so I don’t know what you’re gonna say --

MILO
Work’s healthy. But the stress of surgery could spike your symptoms.

MAGGIE
Watching people die for no reason stresses me out a lot more.
(beat)
I’ll need stamina for long procedures. I’d like to cut down on the Zyprexa --

MILO
No way. Schizophrenia’s a severe brain disorder. We can most likely find a drug regimen that controls your hallucinations and allows you to operate. But you’ll need to commit to it -- unconditionally.

MAGGIE
Okay, okay --

MILO
Even with total compliance, we can’t completely eliminate your symptoms. But you’ll be able to do your job. Without meds --

MAGGIE
It’s back to Club Dread. I got it.

Maggie pops a Zyprexa. Milo checks his watch, stands.

MILO
I’m excited for you, Maggie. It’s a big step. See you tomorrow.

MAGGIE
Same bat time, same bat channel --

As he goes, Maggie spits the pill into her cup, drops it in a garbage can. As she walks away --

FADE OUT:

END ACT ONE
ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. MMC - LERNER’S OFFICE - DAY 4

Lerner stares hard at Maggie.

LERNER
You’re messing with me, right?

MAGGIE
I’m dead serious.

LERNER
Look, Maggie Mae -- I knew a Chinese doc with Tourette’s who cursed the nurses between lung resections. An S&M freak who operated in assless leather chaps --

(beat)

Never met a schizophrenic surgeon.

MAGGIE
Actually -- you’ve had one on your service for the past 6 years.

LERNER
I’m your #1 fan, kiddo. And I know it’s been tough as hell on you --

MAGGIE
I’m the reason you’ve got the top-rated C-T service in the country, Virginia. You need me --

LERNER
The hospital won’t go for it.

MAGGIE
They will if you tell them to.

Lerner absorbs Maggie’s desperation.

LERNER
Okay -- for giggles -- say the Board signs off. You gonna tell your patients that occasionally you run nude through the ICU screaming your pretty little head off?

MAGGIE
I’m on meds now. But yeah -- I’ll disclose my illness to my patients.
LERNER
Look -- I put up with your mad genius routine for a long time -- the tent in your office, that damn poncho you used to wear --

MAGGIE
It was a solar vest --

LERNER
Whatever. I dealt with it 'cause -- no matter how flaky you got -- in the O.R., you were a damn poet.

MAGGIE
I still am. This is just a speed bump. I’m asking you to trust me --

LERNER
It’s not just me. Your little peep show made this an international incident. You got committed -- there’s an official diagnosis --
(long beat)
Sorry, Maggie. I can’t risk it.

INT. MMC - MAGGIE’S OFFICE - DAY

Quirky decor. Maggie storms in, grabs a cheesy snow globe from a collection on her desk, hurls it --

MAGGIE
Risk this!

The globe barely misses the head of a no-nonsense woman, ANNA PECK, 40, suit. As it explodes against the wall:

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Whoa -- I’m really sorry --

ANNA PECK
No problem. I hate those things. (offers her hand) My name’s Anna Peck. I was hoping for a moment of your time --

MAGGIE
If you’re looking for a surgeon -- you’re in the wrong office --

ANNA PECK
Actually -- I was thinking you might be in the wrong office.
MAGGIE
(with an edge)
Normally I’d be thrilled to engage
in pointless word-play with a total
stranger -- but my career just
imploded -- so if you don’t mind --

ANNA PECK
Caught your Aortic Valve demo at
the National Institutes of Health.
Brilliant work --

MAGGIE
Till my psychotic strip-tease --
(off snow globe)
Damn it. Jerry Lewis gave that to
me after I did his bypass.

ANNA PECK
I run a pilot program through NIH --
using the human genome to solve the
major health crises of our time.

MAGGIE
Any chance you guys can fix my snow
globe?

ANNA PECK
I need a top surgeon to head my C-T
unit. Someone bold -- innovative.

MAGGIE
I already have a job.

ANNA PECK
Judging from your entrance it’s not
going very well.
(beat)
Join my team, your illness will be
a virtue -- not a liability.

MAGGIE
Thanks. But I belong here.

ANNA PECK
I hope your bosses agree.
(beat)
As a geneticist I know two things
about anomalies like schizophrenia.
First -- the world isn’t ready to
accept them. And second -- they
may just save the world.
(beat)
Think about it.
Anna Peck walks out. On Maggie, absorbing this --

EXT. NEW YORK STATE SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE - DAY

Maggie walks with sister Caroline, who is dressed for court.

   MAGGIE
   I’m not asking you to defend O.J.
   I just want my career back.

   CAROLINE
   The hospital has a strong argument.

   MAGGIE
   I had one bad day --

   CAROLINE
   I know. I was there, remember?

EXT. MMC - AMBULANCE BAY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Maggie, naked under a blanket, strapped to a gurney, is loaded into an ambulance. A shaken Caroline holds her hand.

   MAGGIE
   They’re trying to kill me!

   CAROLINE
   I’m here, Maggie. I’m right here --

BACK TO SCENE:

   CAROLINE (CONT’D)
   I’m just not sure it’s a good idea.

   MAGGIE
   Do you really think I’d put patients at risk?

   CAROLINE
   Look, you’ve always gotten everything you ever wanted --

   MAGGIE
   Is this the Barbie Dream House thing again? I asked mom first --

   CAROLINE
   No one wants to see you back on your feet more than I do. But I need to know if this is for your patients -- or your ego.
MAGGIE
I use my ego to bring the dead back to life --
(beat)
The Board granted me a hearing in the morning. I need you there.

CAROLINE
(beat)
If I say 'no' -- you’ll just hire another lawyer, right?

INT. MMC - HEARING ROOM - NEXT MORNING - DAY 5

Maggie and Caroline listen as HOSPITAL COUNSEL finishes her opening statement before the MMC Medical Board.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
Dr. Hill was a valued member of the surgical faculty. But her illness impairs her ability to perform basic job functions and endangers patients. Reinstatement would be a serious mistake.

Hospital Counsel sits. Caroline stands.

CAROLINE
Margaret Hill is the finest heart surgeon of her generation. She’s also schizophrenic. Contrary to counsel’s assertion -- the two are not mutually exclusive.
(beat)
My client receives top psychiatric care. She’s never harmed a patient due to her illness -- or for any other reason. The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against individuals with mental illness. If this hospital wants to avoid a federal lawsuit -- I suggest you reinstate my client immediately.

Caroline sits. Maggie leans forward, whispers:

MAGGIE
You’re kinda scary.

CAROLINE
Runs in the family.

TIME CUT: Milo answers questions from Hospital Counsel.
HOSPITAL COUNSEL
As Dr. Hill’s psychiatrist, you’re convinced she can safely return to surgical practice?

MILO
With proper medication -- yes.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
In a report filed shortly before Dr. Hill’s release, you wrote: ‘patient is occasionally non-compliant with medication.’

MILO
(beat; damage control)
For individuals confronting chronic mental illness, drug compliance is often a process --

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
Well, in light of Dr. Hill’s desire to cut people open for a living -- let’s hope her ‘process’ improves --

TIME CUT: Elliot’s on the stand.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL (CONT’D)
Is it true you expressed doubts about Dr. Hill’s mental health prior to her breakdown?

ELLIOIT
Yes.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
And if Dr. Hill returned to work, could you -- in good conscience -- refer patients to her care?

ELLIOIT
Dr. Hill was a gifted surgeon. But given her... condition -- I couldn’t recommend her to my patients -- not in good conscience.

MAGGIE
(whispers to Caroline)
That’s a trick question. He doesn’t have a conscience --

TIME CUT: Maggie’s turn under Hospital Counsel’s knife.
HOSPITAL COUNSEL
You’re asking this hospital and its patients to take an enormous risk.

MAGGIE
When patients come to me, I’m their final option. They choose me because I’m the best at what I do. It’s a huge responsibility. So if I couldn’t continue to work at the highest level, I wouldn’t be here.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
Your self-confidence is admirable. But if you screw up -- it’s your patients who will suffer.

MAGGIE
And if I’m not reinstated -- most of those patients will die.

This lands on the room. While the Hospital Counsel regroups, Maggie spots Anna Peck in the back row, watching.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
Schizophrenia is essentially an inability to distinguish what’s real from what isn’t, correct?

MAGGIE
Yes.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
So you’re in the O.R -- you open a patient’s chest -- look inside --

(beat)
How do you know what’s real?

MAGGIE
(beat; unconvincing)
I just know.

HOSPITAL COUNSEL
(withering sarcasm)
Well -- that’s good enough for me.

INT. MMC - HALLWAY OUTSIDE HEARING ROOM - DAY
An unhappy Maggie rounds the corner. Anna Peck is waiting.

ANNA PECK
Why stay where you’re not wanted?
MAGGIE
I’m a masochist.

ANNA PECK
Just let me show you our facility.
I promise you’ll be impressed --

MAGGIE
I’m sorry -- I have an appointment.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - CAROUSEL - DAY

Maggie paces, checks her watch, clearly waiting on someone as excited kids ride the carousel and softball games proceed behind her. Annoyed, Maggie heads off toward a stone tunnel.

As she enters the dark tunnel, a MAN appears behind her. Maggie walks faster. Before she reaches daylight, the Man grabs her from behind, pushes her against the wall.

MAN
Now where’re you rushing off to?

MAGGIE
(breathless)
Please. Don’t hurt me --

MAN
This from the gal who left a hand print on my ass that lasted 3 days?

MAGGIE
(smiles)
Cry baby --

She kisses him. Hard. As Maggie unbuttons his shirt --

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - SHEEP’S MEADOW - DAY

Under a tree, Maggie runs her hands through the hair of TERRENCE JAMES -- ruggedly handsome, edgy charm -- but there’s something unpredictable in his eyes. Dangerous.

TERRENCE
I say we do it on the carousel next time. Show the kids a few things --

MAGGIE
You’re sick.

TERRENCE
This is well documented.
MAGGIE
We agreed we wouldn’t do this anymore once we got out of the loony bin. It’s not fair to Ben.

TERRENCE
Recovery Rule #1: life’s not fair.

MAGGIE
Speaking of which, they’re trying to keep me from going back to work.

TERRENCE
What’d you expect? People don’t get it --

MAGGIE
Then I’ll make them get it. I need to get back into the O.R.

TERRENCE
And if you don’t? Would that really be so bad? (off her look)
That first day we met on the ward -- you said you were always so focused on becoming a genius doctor -- you never took time to just live --

MAGGIE
I was heavily sedated at the time --

TERRENCE
They drill it into our heads: ‘Despite your illness, you can live a normal life.’ Well guess what? Normal is way overrated --

MAGGIE
That’s ‘cause you never needed normal, Terrence. Your family’s got more money than God --

TERRENCE
Recovery doesn’t have to be about trying to re-construct the pieces of your shattered life --

MAGGIE
(knows where he’s heading)
Next stop -- Costa Rica.
TERRENCE
We rent a place on the Caribbean, make love on the volcano, buy a couple of Harleys --

MAGGIE
We call ‘em donor cycles in the ICU.
(beat)
Look, it sounds amazing. But I’ve got a whole life here --

TERRENCE
(fire in his eyes)
When I first got sick, I thought I’d have to live the rest of my life inside a prison made out of shrinks and pills and hospitals. It doesn’t have to be that way --
(beat)
Insanity isn’t a life sentence, Maggie -- it’s a get-out-of-jail-free card. A chance to start over. No rules. Just you and me.
(beat)
Trust me. Losing your mind is the best thing that ever happened to you.

On Maggie, tempted --

INT. MMC - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU) - HALLWAY - LATE DAY

A bored Maggie on rounds with 3 CT Surgical Residents.

MAGGIE
And if your patient doesn’t respond to adrenaline?

RESIDENT
Open heart massage?

MAGGIE
On a penetrating wound? How do you feel about a heart omelette?

Lerner appears. Maggie approaches as the Residents move on.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Tell me I was never that clueless.

LERNER
Worse. You knew everything -- ‘cept your limits.
(MORE)
LERNER (CONT'D)
(beat)
Just heard from the Board --

MAGGIE
(beat; future at stake)
And?

LERNER
You may wanna grab a lottery ticket
-- 'cause this is your lucky day.
(beat)
You’re reinstated for a period of 6
months. Hack it, you’re back for
good. So much as drop a stitch --
you’re gone.

Maggie is overwhelmed, as close to tears as she’d ever allow
herself to be in public. Lerner hands Maggie a chart.

LERNER (CONT'D)
Emily Ransom, 13, end-stage heart
failure. Everyone’s thrown up
their hands. Hell -- she oughta be
dead by now.
(beat, hands her chart)
As I recall, that’s your
department.

Maggie takes the chart like it’s made of gold.

MAGGIE
I know they wouldn’t have signed
off without your okay.

LERNER
The Board doesn’t give a damn how
many high risk patients we lose --
long as they don’t get sued.
(beat)
But I do give a damn. And that’s
why you’re back.

MAGGIE
Thank you.

LERNER
Don’t thank me. Just make this
work.

As Lerner goes, on Maggie, betraying a shadow of doubt --

FADE OUT:

END ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MMC - ICU - HALLWAY OUTSIDE EMILY’S ROOM - DAY 6

Maggie approaches a patient room, stops. She fought for this moment -- but she’s definitely got some butterflies.

She exhales, paints a confident look on her face, enters --

INT. MMC - ICU - EMILY’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emily Ransom lies in bed. Her father Patrick sits nearby. Emily is pale and thin, but full of attitude. Off chart:

MAGGIE
Good morning. I’m Dr. Hill --

PATRICK
Dr. Margaret Hill?

MAGGIE
Maggie. I see Emily’s been hospitalized before -- in Indiana --

EMILY
We saw you on CNN. You saved those Siamese twins --

MAGGIE
Got to meet Anderson Cooper.
(beat)
I’ll start your pre-op workup --

PATRICK
I requested you when we got here -- they said you were on leave --

MAGGIE
Leave of my senses, actually.
(beat; a bit awkward)
3 months ago -- I was diagnosed with schizophrenia. I’m just getting back to work --
(off their shock)
On the upside, I’m very well rested.

EMILY
Whoa. Totally freaky.

PATRICK
Emily --
MAGGIE
It’s okay. It is kinda freaky.
But it’s under control.

EMILY
So you have, like, 12 personalities?

MAGGIE
That’s multiple personality disorder. My brain messes with me sometimes -- I see and hear things that aren’t really there. You have any questions -- feel free to ask --

Maggie exits --

INT. MMC - ICU - HALLWAY OUTSIDE EMILY’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A concerned Patrick Ransom catches up with Maggie.

PATRICK
Dr. Hill?
(she turns back)
I was wondering -- how many patients have you seen since...
you’ve been back?

MAGGIE
Actually, Emily’s my first.

PATRICK
Uh-huh. Look, the thing is -- you’re a great doctor -- but this other situation --

MAGGIE
I know it’s a lot to digest --

PATRICK
That’s an understatement. I just don’t think this is a good idea --

Maggie levels him with her best imperious-surgeon stare.

MAGGIE
Your daughter’s dying. There’s a handful of surgeons on the planet who can save her. I’m one of them. (beat)
Do you want me to save your daughter, Mr. Ransom?
PATRICK
(beat)
Yes.

MAGGIE
Then let’s get started.

INT. MMC - ICU - LIGHT BOXES - DAY
Maggie, Emily’s file under her arm, passes Elliot --

ELLIOT
Heard you’re putting a BiVAD in the Ransom girl --

MAGGIE
You’re welcome to take notes.

ELLIOT
She’s got advanced Kawasaki’s Disease -- her coronary arteries are shot -- had 2 MI’s --

MAGGIE
And a BiVAD pump will keep her going till we locate a new heart -- (off his look)
I take it you disagree?

ELLIOT
I’d go ventricular plication -- chop out the dead tissue, pull the walls back together --

MAGGIE
Plication’s a stall to see if she improves on her own. She won’t.

ELLIOT
So you’d rather blow holes in her heart for a BiVAD? That buys you a short window to find a new organ. Provided that happens before she dies -- there’s a good chance she won’t survive the transplant. (beat)
You’re acting like a surgeon with something to prove. And you’re taking a big fat risk --

MAGGIE
(smiles)
Which is why I’m #1 on the service.
Point Maggie. Ben approaches.

ELLIOT
Fine. Let’s ask a third party.

Elliot takes Emily’s file from Maggie, hands it to Ben.

ELLIOT (CONT’D)
Your girlfriend says BiVAD. I say plication. Break the tie.

BEN
I’m sorry -- do I have ‘Moron’ stamped on my forehead?

MAGGIE
Go ahead. Let him down easy.

Ben takes a beat, reviews the file. He looks up.

BEN
(beat)
BiVAD.

Maggie smiles. Elliot shakes his head, as he walks away:

ELLIOT
Pussy.

MAGGIE
The truth hurts.

BEN
Yeah. Actually -- her Swan numbers don’t look that bad --

MAGGIE
(beat)
Wait -- you agree with Elliot? Why didn’t you say so?

BEN
Look -- it’s your first case back --

MAGGIE
And I might fall apart if you disagree with my course of treatment?

BEN
No -- I just thought --
MAGGIE
-- that I'm some fragile mental
patient you need to protect?
(beat)
I'm not.

As Maggie stalks off, on Ben, stung --

EXT. SARABETH'S CAFE - CENTRAL PARK SOUTH - DAY

Caroline stares at Maggie, fork frozen over her salad:

MAGGIE
It just kinda... happened...

CAROLINE
A torrid sexual relationship with a
fellow mental patient doesn't 'just
kinda happen,' Mags --

MAGGIE
It was a mistake --

CAROLINE
Oh you've transcended the realm of
simple mistake. You're deep in
abject betrayal territory here --

MAGGIE
And I feel like a total bitch.

CAROLINE
So why are you telling me this?

MAGGIE
Because I thought it was over. And
now... I'm not so sure --

CAROLINE
(beat, shakes her head)
Ben's the last guy on the planet
who deserves this --

MAGGIE
I know --

CAROLINE
He did your laundry. You were in
an asylum and this guy washed your
underwear -- in Woolite -- and the
whole time you're in there getting
busy with some rich pretty boy --
MAGGIE
I get it, Caroline. If I needed a lecture, I’d call mom --

CAROLINE
Considering Dad couldn’t keep it in his pants for 5 minutes -- she’d probably have some useful insight.
(beat)
First the schizophrenia -- now infidelity. Never thought you and dad would have so much in common.

This is clearly a sore spot. Maggie is stung.

CAROLINE (CONT’D)
Cheap shot.
(beat)
Are you gonna tell Ben?

MAGGIE
I don’t know.

Caroline takes a bite of salad, can’t help herself.

CAROLINE
So is it -- y’know -- great?

MAGGIE
Beyond.

CAROLINE
Better than Tommy Devlin?

MAGGIE
The best. Ever.

CAROLINE
(beat)
If you do decide to tell Ben? You may want to leave that part out.

INT. MMC - CT O.R. - SCRUB ROOM - DAY

Maggie scrubs for Emily’s surgery, fights her anxiety. Eddie pops his head in from the O.R.

EDDIE
Ready to go?

PRE-LAP the sounds of a BEATING HEART --
INT. MMC - CT O.R. - DAY

CLOSE ON: a heart pumping in an open chest. The heart SLOWS DOWN until it finally STOPS -- dead.

NURSE (O.C.)
Full arrest. Pump flow’s strong.

PULL BACK to find Eddie and team in place. Maggie stares at Emily’s inert heart -- as her own pounds hard enough for both of them. Deep breath:

MAGGIE
Showtime...
(beat, off heart)
Little girl with the heart of a fat, 60-year-old chain smoker.

EDDIE
Welcome back.

We see the drive console of the BiVAD -- a computer that will control the mechanical pump in Emily’s heart from OUTSIDE her body. In the surgical theater above, Lerner observes Maggie.

MAGGIE
So let’s pop this puppy in. I’ll do the anastomosis first --
(beat)
Man, her vessels are a trainwreck --

ON SCREEN, Maggie deftly sews an outflow valve into the aorta. Eddie smiles.

EDDIE
You still got it, sugar.

MAGGIE
I never lost it, sugar.

EMILY (O.C.)
Do you guys always talk so much?

Maggie looks over at Emily, who is awake on the table.

EMILY (CONT’D)
I mean, it’s just my aorta -- why not check your e-mail?

Maggie stares at her, frozen for a beat, groping for reality. Lerner catches the moment, concerned --

EDDIE (O.C.)
Everything okay?
Maggie looks at Eddie, then back to Emily, who is once again unconscious. Covering:

MAGGIE
Yeah -- let’s do this.

As a thrown Maggie gets back to work, on Lerner, worried --

INT. MMC - ICU - EMILY’S ROOM - NIGHT 6

Maggie enters. Emily is conscious but a bit groggy.

MAGGIE
How’re you feeling?

Emily smiles weakly, re: the BiVAD drive console that controls the pumps in her heart:

EMILY
Kinda cool having a computerized heart -- unless it crashes.

MAGGIE
It’ll hold out till we find you a donor organ --

Maggie picks up a wallet-size photo of a 13-year-old boy.

EMILY
Alex Crawford.

MAGGIE
Cute.

EMILY
I haven’t seen him in 2 months --
(beat)
We haven’t really done anything...

MAGGIE
There’s plenty of time for that --

EMILY
Maybe. Maybe not.

Maggie absorbs Emily’s fatalism for a beat.

MAGGIE
You and I have something in common. We’ll both be fighting a disease for the rest of our lives. And the only way we can lose -- is to stop fighting. Got it?
Emily smiles, nods. As Maggie turns to go:

**EMILY**
You ever been in love, Dr. Hill?

**MAGGIE**
That’s kinda complicated --
(beat)
Life gets kinda confusing when you
get older -- feelings aren’t always
clear --
(beat)
I guess the truth is -- I’m not
really sure what love is --

Maggie looks up. Ben stands there. He’s clearly overheard.

**BEN**
Dr. Land needs a consult in O.R. 2.

**MAGGIE**
Ben --

But he turns on his heel and goes. On Maggie -- shit --

INT. MMC - ICU - HALLWAY OUTSIDE EMILY’S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maggie follows Ben out --

**MAGGIE**
Ben -- hold on --

But he’s gone. Elliot approaches, hands Maggie a document.

**ELLIOT**
Latest UNOS list. Emily Ransom
dropped from #4 to #7. Helluva
wait with a BiVAD in your chest --
(beat)
Hate to say I told you so --

On Maggie, fuck -- her night going from bad to worse --

**EXT. MMC - NIGHT**

Maggie, still in scrubs, crosses the street in front of the
hospital, passes an alley, hears a familiar voice --

**TERRENCE (O.C.)**
Hey, doc, it hurts when I do this.

Maggie turns to see Terrence, leaning against a motorcycle,
looking like a ruined movie star, smiling at her.
MAGGIE
What are you doing here?

TERRENCE
(re: motorcycle)
I was thinking we get yours in
robin's egg blue --

MAGGIE
Terrence --

TERRENCE
We’ve been through something no one
in that place can understand --
seen things they’ll never see --

MAGGIE
I can’t just run off to Costa Rica.

TERRENCE
Fine. We’ll stay here. It’s a big
city. Plenty of room to get lost --

She stares at him, absorbs his passion.

MAGGIE
Look, I care about you. But this
can’t happen. ‘We’ can’t happen.
I’m sorry. The answer is ‘no’

As they stare at each other, the heat rising:

MAGGIE (PRE-LAP) (CONT’D)
Yes! Yes!

INT. MAGGIE AND CAROLINE’S APARTMENT -- MAGGIE’S ROOM - NIGHT

MAGGIE
(passionate)
Yes! Oh God...

Maggie and Terrence go at it fast and furious.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
This is absolutely the last time --

TERRENCE
Definitely --

As the passion rises, the DOOR FLIES OPEN, Caroline enters:

CAROLINE
Hey, Mags, are you here?
REVERSE from Caroline’s POV: Maggie sits on her bed, staring straight ahead, trance-like. She’s very much alone.

CAROLINE (CONT’D)
Maggie? What’re you doing?

Maggie slowly comes back to reality. It’s like being jolted awake from an incredibly realistic dream. She looks around, realizes Terrence isn’t there. Disoriented:

MAGGIE
Can you... give me a minute?

CAROLINE
(off-balance)
Sure.

Caroline exits. SLOWLY PUSH IN as Maggie, mind racing, trying to define reality. She’s frightened, confused, realizing Terrence doesn’t exist --

FADE OUT:

END ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK – WOLLMAN ICE RINK – DAY 7

Milo and an emotionally drained Maggie watch the skaters.

MAGGIE
It felt so real...
(beat)
He felt so real.

MILO
Why didn’t you tell me about Terrence earlier? We could’ve dealt with it right away --

MAGGIE
I guess I was embarrassed. An affair in the nut house? Not exactly Romeo and Juliet --

MILO
I became a psychiatrist to hear all the sordid dirt -- not to mention that full disclosure is the only way to make meaningful progress --

MAGGIE
I feel like a complete lunatic.

MILO
You were disoriented. Vulnerable.

MAGGIE
So my brain cooks up Terrence the stud muffin to save the day?

MILO
Actually -- yes. Hallucinations aren’t always random. Your mind creates them for a reason --

MAGGIE
But I connected with this guy from the first time I met him -- it was like he knew me --

MILO
That’s because he is you.

Maggie absorbs this for a beat.
MAGGIE
So what about...?

MILO
The sex? Unusual. Not unprecedented --

MAGGIE
Trust me -- it’s unprecedented.

MILO
You need to be on your full dosage of Zyprexa, Maggie --

MAGGIE
I also need to perform a high-risk transplant. I’ve got things under control --

MILO
Clearly.

Maggie takes a beat, changes direction --

MAGGIE
I had a heart to heart talk with a patient the other night. First time ever --

MILO
You understand what it’s like to be a patient now. You can empathize --

MAGGIE
I’m a surgeon -- not a shrink. I don’t do empathy -- it’s a distraction. And God knows I’ve got enough of those right now --

Milo knows Maggie is feeling out of control. Beat.

MILO
Now that you know Terrence isn’t real -- if you stay on your meds -- he should disappear over time.

Maggie watches a loving young couple skating together.

MAGGIE
What if I don’t want him to disappear?
MILO
Engaging hallucinations threatens your ability to function at a basic level -- let alone be a surgeon.
(beat)
Terrence isn’t real. Our goal is to keep you in the real world.

MAGGIE
I know. There’s just one problem --
(beat)
I think I’m in love.

INT. MMC - ICU - HALLWAY - DAY

Patrick Ransom approaches Maggie.

PATRICK
Any word on a donor heart?

MAGGIE
Should be soon.

PATRICK
You said the BiVAD could only keep Emily alive for a short time --

MAGGIE
We have to be patient --

PATRICK
(pissed/scared)
Don’t talk down to me -- I know the stats on people who die before an organ becomes available --

MAGGIE
I realize this is difficult --

PATRICK
When we met -- you promised you could save my daughter --
(starting to lose it)
You promised --

Patrick walks away. A beat, then Maggie spots Eddie at the Nurses Station. She pulls him into a private area:

MAGGIE
Where’s Emily Ransom on the transplant list?

EDDIE
Up to #6 -- few days, tops.
MAGGIE
She won’t last that long.
(beat, loaded)
I have a feeling her stats are
about to go south -- rising
creatinine level, decreasing
ejection fraction --

EDDIE
(disapproving)
Why not throw in a little v-fib for
flavor? That’ll push her up to #1.

MAGGIE
Do we have a problem?

EDDIE
Docs cook the books to get organs
every day. We never did.

MAGGIE
Installing the BiVAD was my call.
There were other options -- I
rolled the dice --

EDDIE
You did what you thought was right.
Since when do you look in the
rearview mirror?

Maggie knows he’s right -- but she digs in.

MAGGIE
UNOS is supposed to make the system
fair. You see anything fair in
letting a little girl die?
(off his silence)
Get me a damn heart --

INT. MMC - HALLWAY OUTSIDE O.R. - DAY

Maggie runs into a blood-spattered Ben. Awkward.

MAGGIE
Double lung transplant?

BEN
The fun never stops.

MAGGIE
(beat)
Look -- what I said earlier --
BEN
I don’t have a problem with what you said, Maggie. Might’ve been nice if you’d said it to me --
(beat)
I was thinking about our first date. You sent the halibut back -- twice -- the pinot was too fruity --

MAGGIE
Well it was --

BEN
And I remember thinking -- she’s the most amazing woman I’ve ever met, but God help the guy who tries to live up to her expectations --

MAGGIE
Ben --

BEN
I’ve cut you a ton of slack because you’ve been through hell. And also because I happen to be in love with you. But I’m not some crutch for you to lean on while you get back on your feet --

MAGGIE
I know that --

BEN
A lot of guys take off when their girlfriends get committed. But I stayed. And while that doesn’t mean you’re obligated to love me back -- I do think you owe me the truth about how you feel.

Maggie takes a beat. This is painful --

MAGGIE
I care about you, Ben. Without you I wouldn’t be back here now. But the fact is -- I’m just trying to keep my head above water. And you’re asking me a question I can’t answer --
(beat)
The truth is... I don’t know how I feel.

Ben stares at her for a long beat. Half-plea, half-demand:
BEN
Well you need to figure it out.

As he heads back into surgery, Maggie’s BEEPER goes off. As it does, over the hospital P.A.:

P.A.
Code Blue, 5 East ICU --

As Maggie breaks into a SPRINT --

INT. MMC - ICU - EMILY’S ROOM - DAY

Maggie flies in. Eddie and 2 ICU Nurses work as a panicked Patrick looks on. As large equipment carts fly in --

MAGGIE
Talk to me.

EDDIE
Zero blood pressure -- ton of blood in the chest drains --

MAGGIE
She’s got a hole in her ventricle. I need a chest tray, stat --

The tray appears instantly. Eddie upends a bottle of IODINE on Emily’s chest as Maggie GLOVES. She grabs a SCALPEL in one hand and a pair of WIRE CUTTERS in the other.

In a single deft SLICE, Maggie cuts Emily open. With the wire cutters Maggie SNIPS the wires holding Emily’s rib cage together. Emily’s heart isn’t beating, and it’s bleeding into her chest through the blown ventricle --

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Keep pumping fluids -- I need to block that hole --

Maggie plunges her hand into the sea of blood in Emily’s chest, searches for the ventricle --

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Okay, I got it --

Emily pops her head up:

EMILY
You should’ve listened to Elliot.

Maggie ignores this hallucination. INSIDE EMILY’S CHEST we see Maggie stick her finger in the hole in Emily’s ventricle, stopping the blood flow.
EDDIE
Should I book an O.R. so we can
close the ventricle?

MAGGIE
Too late for that --
(mind racing)
I need bovine pericardium and GRF.

EDDIE
You gonna patch her?

MAGGIE
It’s her best shot.

The materials fly in. Eddie fashions the patch, places it in Maggie’s free hand. Maggie digs into Emily’s chest. INSIDE EMILY’S CHEST: Maggie pulls her finger from Emily’s ventricle, patches the hole -- but it keeps bleeding.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
The patch won’t hold --

EDDIE
You gotta hurry --

Maggie struggles to patch the ventricle --

EMILY
There goes the junior prom --

Maggie ignores this -- till another voice chimes in.

TERRENCE (O.C.)
Jeez -- you said your job got
messy but, man. No wonder you
freaked out --

Maggie reacts -- sees Terrence standing behind Eddie.

EMILY
Who’s the hottie?

TERRENCE
Seriously -- you’re choosing this
over Costa Rica?

Maggie struggles to focus, manipulates the patch. Finally:

MAGGIE
Got it.
NURSE
Pressure’s coming back. I’m getting a pulse --

Maggie’s exhales. She looks back to Terrence -- but he’s gone. A beat, then Maggie abruptly exits.

EDDIE
And that -- people -- is why she gets the big money.

INT. MMC - ICU - SURGEON’S LOUNGE - MINUTES LATER
A blood-spattered Maggie collapses in a chair, spent.

TERRENCE (O.C.)
Whatever they’re paying you -- it’s not enough --

Maggie turns. Terrence sits at the table, messing with a stethoscope. She takes a beat. Struggling.

MAGGIE
You’re not real.

He crosses to her, places the stethoscope on her heart, slides his free hand onto her ass. Listens.

TERRENCE
Funny. Your heart says I’m real.
(offers the ear pieces)
Take a listen --

Maggie starts to melt, then stands, moves away.

MAGGIE
I’m trying to put my life back together. And you’re a major distraction.

TERRENCE
Ever think you may be focusing on the wrong thing?
(beat)
You save lives. That’s cool. Unless you use it as an excuse to avoid living your own --

MAGGIE
You’ve had too much therapy.
TERRENCE
You deserve to be happy, Maggie. No one will ever understand you like I do.

MAGGIE
Don’t remind me. I’ve been waiting to feel this way my whole life --

TERRENCE
(smiles)
That’s why I’m here.

MAGGIE
Thank you.
(beat)
Now I need you to go.

As Maggie turns away, FIND a troubled Lerner, watching the drama through the glass door --

INT. MMC - LERNER’S OFFICE - LATE DAY

Lerner sips scotch, reviews a file, as Maggie enters.

MAGGIE
You rang?

LERNER
Taking a stroll down memory lane.
(reading from file)
‘I intend to become the top cardiothoracic surgeon in the country. If not on your service -- then on someone else’s.’
(beat)
Ten seconds past your internship and already a cocky little snot.

MAGGIE
That’s what you loved about me.

LERNER
It wasn’t just your resume. You had the edge. No altruistic crap about saving lives -- just naked obsession -- total focus. Still got it?

MAGGIE
Of course.
LERNER
You ask me -- arguing with yourself in the coffee room shows a serious lack of focus.

MAGGIE
(thrown, then defiant)
Maybe you didn’t hear -- I just patched a ventricle with cow heart and some Elmer’s Glue --

LERNER
Outstanding.
(beat)
But you were seeing stuff during that BiVAD implant the other day --

MAGGIE
I can do this, Virginia.

LERNER
(pours another scotch)
UNOS found a heart for Emily Ransom -- ’cause she crumped, not ’cause you and Eddie screwed with her chart --

MAGGIE
That wasn’t Eddie -- it was me.

LERNER
Surgeons make calls and live with the consequences. Life and death. Takes a helluva lot of confidence. You used to have that.
(takes a drink)
I can’t stop you from walking into that O.R. tomorrow morning. But a little girl’s life depends on your total focus. You can’t bring it? You need to walk away.

On Maggie, torn --

FADE OUT:

END ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. MMC - ICU - EMILY’S ROOM - NIGHT 7

Emily look likes death barely warmed over as Maggie enters.

EMILY
It’s weird to think someone had to
die for me to keep on living --

MAGGIE
People die every day. The cool
ones do some good on their way out.
Be grateful -- not guilty.
(beat, dreading this)
Emily -- Dr. Springer will be
performing your transplant.

EMILY
(off-balance)
You’re kidding, right?

MAGGIE
He’ll do a great job --

EMILY
I didn’t come here for Dr.
Springer. I came here for you.
Why are you doing this?

MAGGIE
I’m doing it for you. My illness
is unpredictable --

EMILY
Is the hospital messing with you?
My dad’ll sign whatever they want --

MAGGIE
It’s my decision. I want you to be
safe --

EMILY
(pissed)
You said the only way we can lose
is to stop fighting -- and now
you’re quitting on me?

MAGGIE
I’m sorry. But I promise --
EMILY
(cuts her off)
Don’t. Just get out --

Maggie absorbs the rebuke for a beat, exits --

INT. MMC - ICU - HALLWAY CONTINUOUS

A troubled Maggie exits with Emily’s chart. As she starts to walk, Terrence appears at her side.

TERRENCE
I knew you’d come to your senses --

MAGGIE
Leave me alone --

TERRENCE
There’s nothing keeping you here now. We can disappear --

Maggie keeps walking. Terrence calls after: 

TERRENCE (CONT’D)
Maggie --
(now Terrence/Elliot)
Maggie!

Pissed, Maggie finally turns back, yells:

MAGGIE
Damn it -- just leave me alone!

Maggie’s mortified to find Elliot standing there. Beat.

ELLiot
Sure. I just need Emily’s chart.

An embarrassed Maggie hands it to him. As she goes --

EXT. MMC - NIGHT

An agitated Maggie exits the hospital, probably for the last time. The window of a taxi lowers. It’s Anna Peck.

ANNa PEck
Going my way, Dr. Hill?

INT. NIH LABORATORIES - NIGHT

Peck leads Maggie down an antiseptic hallway. They stop in front of a large door marked GENOME RESEARCH UNIT.
ANNA PECK
Allowing you inside this door is a serious breach of our security protocol. Everything you see must be held in strictest confidence.

MAGGIE
If you don’t trust me -- why am I here?

Peck takes a beat, then enters a code into the sophisticated computerized lock, pushes the door open --

INT. NIH LABORATORIES - GENOME RESEARCH UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Peck leads Maggie into a working lab the likes of which we’ve never seen. Gleaming glass and steel, crystal clear blue light. Doctors and techs at sleek work stations. Awesome.

MAGGIE
Your tax dollars at work --

ANNA PECK
Actually the bulk of our funding comes from private sources.

Peck points to a towering 30-foot liquid-crystal depiction of the HUMAN GENOME. Each gene is shown in a rotating 3D image along with complex chemical information.

MAGGIE
Okay -- that’s pretty sweet.

ANNA PECK
We call it the road map. It’ll lead us into a disease-free future.

MAGGIE
Don’t tell the drug companies.

ANNA PECK
Let me show you something.

Peck leads Maggie to a huge, high-tech glass display case.

ANNA PECK (CONT’D)
Take a look.

Maggie walks up to the glass, peers in. Off her shock:

MAGGIE’S POV
MAGGIE
My God...

ANNA PECK
God had nothing to do with it. We made these ourselves.

MAGGIE
Synthetic?

ANNA PECK
100% human tissue. We’ve genetically altered human fetuses to create redundant organs. Once harvested -- we can maintain them for up to 2 years.

MAGGIE
Are they viable for transplant?

ANNA PECK
That’s where you come in. I need a surgeon of your caliber to oversee the transplant unit. One day soon we’ll replace a faulty human brain as easily as changing a tire --

(beat)
No more mental illness. What do you think?

MAGGIE
Honestly? It sounds like you’re starting the 4th Reich in the middle of Manhattan. It’s incredible science -- but the potential for abuse --

ANNA PECK
If the patient you abandoned tonight was in our program -- she’d be at the mall instead of the ICU --

MAGGIE
Maybe -- but there are limits.

As they walk toward the door, Maggie’s symptoms kick back in. Colors begin to flare. Dimensions being to bend. Maggie’s face betrays her distress.

ANNA PECK
Are you okay?

MAGGIE
I’m fine --
ANNA PECK
That’s a lie. You’re having symptoms right now.

MAGGIE
I have to go --

Peck opens the door, faces Maggie.

ANNA PECK
This is the future. The perfection of human anatomy. The power to change lives -- including your own. The power to cure yourself --

This lands hard on Maggie, sensing potential liberation from her illness. As she looks back over Peck’s shoulder, watches the Genome Wall MELT, Maggie goes --

INT. MMC - ICU - NURSES STATION - NIGHT

Elliot stares at some scans as Ben approaches.

ELLiot
Fluid build-up around the lungs. You’re the resident vascular genius -- can I pull off a transplant?

BEN
(off scans)
Should be okay. I thought the Ransom girl was Maggie’s patient.

ELLiot
Little Miss Sunshine took off. You didn’t know?

(off Ben’s look)
Sounds promising.

BEN
Don’t start, Elliot --

ELLiot
You could have any woman in this place, pretty boy -- in this city.

BEN
Relationship advice from the guy whose idea of commitment is breakfast the next morning --

ELLiot
Unlike Maggie, who’s an expert on commitment --

(MORE)
ELLiot (CONT'D)
(off Ben's glare)
It was the same thing all through med school, boy-o. Premium Chicago talent everywhere, and I'm stuck rooming with a serial monogamist -- and a psycho-magnet to boot --

Ben
Look, Maggie's having a real tough time -- and you're not helping.

Elliot
Maggie's sick. And that sucks.
But you're not.
(beat)
It's time you got back in the game.

Ext. Manhattan Street - Night (Virtual Reality Effect)

As the Stones' "Shattered" plays, Maggie wanders the city, mind reeling, symptoms flaring. Tourists stare at her, whisper. Traffic lights alternate wildly; neon lights sear her eyes. Some of the world moves faster -- some is slowed down. Sound is distorted -- circular, carnival-like.

Maggie tries to dial her cell phone, but it falls to the ground, smashes apart. She spots a vacant phone booth, heads for it. But when she arrives, a man is now on the phone.

Maggie
Please -- I need to use the phone -- it's an emergency --

The man turns. It's Terrence, who smiles broadly:

Terrence
I'm on with the travel agent. 2 one-way tickets to paradise. Grab your sun-block, baby --

As Maggie backs away, runs off into the night --

Int. Lehman Psychiatric Hospital - Day Room - Day 8

Early morning. Milo enters with Nurse, spots a calm Maggie across the room sitting on the couch watching NY 1.

Nurse
Came in last night. She wasn't psychotic, but she was on her way --

Milo nods, crosses to Maggie.
MILO
Fancy meeting you here.

MAGGIE
Who says you can’t go home again? Guess I missed this place.

MILO
You all right?

MAGGIE
A few syringes of sanity and I’m back on planet earth.

MILO
You cut your Zyprexa.

MAGGIE
I needed to operate.

MILO
And how’s that going for you?

MAGGIE
If the hospital doesn’t work out -- there are other places I can work. Places where I’ll be appreciated --

MILO
Such as?

Maggie wants to tell him about Anna Peck, but she gave her word. Milo takes her silence as evidence she was bluffing.

MILO (CONT’D)
We had an agreement. You stay on your meds.

MAGGIE
Sue me.

MILO
Actually, I’m referring you to another psychiatrist.

MAGGIE
(thrown)
You’re breaking up with me?

MILO
When you treat schizophrenia, there aren’t many success stories. And you could be a great one, Maggie. You could give people hope --

(MORE)
MILO (CONT'D)
(beat)
But it’s clear I can’t get through to you. Maybe someone else can --

Milo turns, starts to go. Maggie starts to panic --

MAGGIE
I’m sorry, okay? I’m a stubborn, sarcastic, egomaniacal jerk --

MILO
You forgot ‘manipulative’ and ‘self-destructive’ --

MAGGIE
Fine. But I need you --

Milo stares at her for a long beat.

MILO
Why’d you really go off your meds?

MAGGIE
Because I’m a doctor. And every time I take one of those damn pills I feel weak -- and dependent -- and vulnerable. I save lives. I can’t be sick. I can’t be a patient. That’s not who I am --

MILO
It’s who you are now.
(beat)
And unless you accept that -- you’ll end up spending the rest of your life in a place like this.

On Maggie -- knowing he’s right --

FADE OUT:

END ACT FIVE
FADE IN:

EXT. LEHMAN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - MORNING

Maggie exits. Caroline’s there with 2 designer coffees.

MAGGIE
We have to stop meeting like this.

CAROLINE
You okay?

Maggie smiles. Caroline returns it.

MAGGIE
Define ‘okay’ --

CAROLINE
Define ‘okay’ --

Caroline hands Maggie one of the coffees. As they walk --

CAROLINE (CONT’D)
I hear you walked out on a patient.

MAGGIE
Trust me. She’s better off.

They turn onto 5th Avenue, pass the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Excited kids pile out of a line of school busses.

CAROLINE
Seen Terrence lately?

MAGGIE
Milo told you?

CAROLINE
You said we could talk if it’s urgent. He thinks this qualifies.

MAGGIE
Turns out the man of my dreams really is the man of my dreams.
(beat)
Ever feel like life is mocking you?

CAROLINE
Well -- maybe you should start feeling really sorry for yourself. ‘Cause that’ll help --

MAGGIE
(stung)
What’s that supposed to mean?
CAROLINE
It means you get the first bad
break of your life -- and yes, it’s
really bad -- but instead of
dealing -- you throw in the towel.
Refusing to take your meds is
patently idiotic, Maggie --

MAGGIE
Don’t feel like you need to tap
dance around my feelings --

CAROLINE
I changed my whole life around for
you. Did it ever occur to you that
having escaped your all-consuming
shadow -- I might not be psyched to
re-claim the role of baby sister
who never measured up?

MAGGIE
But I’m nuts now. By comparison,
your stock’s gone way up --

They sit on the steps. As the kids run past them:

CAROLINE
The only way you’re ever gonna be
happy is if you get your life back.

MAGGIE
I know. I’m just not sure how --

CAROLINE
(beat)
Remember the time Glenn Bernard
stuck your face in his cat’s litter
box? And you hung him from the
swingset by his underwear?

MAGGIE
He got off easy.

CAROLINE
You didn’t need a savior then. And
you don’t need one now. The only
person who was ever strong enough
to save you -- was you.

MAGGIE
But my job is to save my patients.
CAROLINE
Dr. Marcus thinks being a surgeon
is your best shot at having a real
life. Now if I was dying -- and
you asked me which doctor I wanted --
I’d choose the one whose life
depended on keeping me alive.
(beat)
You save them. They save you.
Sounds like a pretty good deal --

On Maggie, considering this --

INT. MMC - ICU - DAY

Patrick catches up with Elliot.

PATRICK
Dr. Springer -- I have a few
questions about Emily’s transplant.

ELLiot
(brusquely dismissive)
Why don’t you bounce ‘em off our
transplant coordinator?

Elliot crosses to Lerner, hands her an x-ray. Off x-ray:

LERNER
Aorta’s pretty fragile --

ELLiot
Once I rip out the BiVAD -- I’ll
have a sense of where I stand --

MAGGIE (O.C.)
You’ll be standing outside the O.R.

They turn, see Maggie approaching, in scrubs --

ELLiot
Dr. Demento, I presume?

MAGGIE
Thanks for babysitting my patient,
Elliot. I’ll take it from here.

LERNER
Let’s talk about this --

MAGGIE
(a line in the sand)
There’s nothing to talk about.
INT. MMC - O.R. - DAY

Maggie, Eddie and team with Emily open on the table.

MAGGIE
I’m pulling the BiVAD --

As Maggie removes the device --

EDDIE
Heard you had a wild night.

MAGGIE
Damn paparazzi --
(beat)
Grab that tube --

Maggie sees the team is uneasy. To the room:

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
I had a moment. The moment passed.
(off their looks)
And I promise to keep my clothes on.

EDDIE
Works for me --

MAGGIE
Damn. The Kawasaki’s weakened the aortic tissue -- totally friable.

EDDIE
Can we still do the transplant?

MAGGIE
We don’t have a choice --

Emily goes on bypass. On a BIG SCREEN we watch Maggie cut Emily’s scarred heart out of her chest, hand it to Eddie. Scrub Nurse opens a COOLER, reveals the donor heart.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
No matter how many times I do this, it still feels like a magic trick.

Eddie places the new heart in Emily’s chest.

EDDIE
Abracadabra.

INT. MMC - O.R. OBSERVATION AREA - LATER

Lerner and Elliot watch Maggie work.
ELLIO
She shouldn’t be down there.

LERNER
It’s my call, Elliot. She’s worth the risk.

ELLIO
And if it was me falling apart instead of her -- would it still be worth it?

A loaded beat. Lerner’s silence is his answer.

ELLIO (CONT’D)
Well -- you may be willing to gamble with the lives of our patients -- but I’m not. So when Maggie screws up -- I will take her down. And when your ass is on the line for endorsing this little fiasco -- don’t expect my support. It won’t be worth the risk.

As Elliot walks out --

INT. MMC - O.R. - SAME TIME

Maggie finishes up the transplant.

EDDIE
Pretty good fit.

MAGGIE
Let’s take her off bypass. How she’s doing?

EDDIE
Kid’s a trooper --

MAGGIE
I love a happy ending --

Suddenly, a PLUME OF BLOOD gushes to the ceiling.

EDDIE
Aortic blow-out!

MAGGIE
Get pressure on it --

Maggie and Eddie work desperately to stop the bleeding. After several tense moments, the red gusher subsides.
EMILY
(covered with blood)
I'm not a doctor -- but this is bad, right?

MAGGIE
Massive dissection of the ascending aorta. Get her back on pump --

EDDIE
Pump only buys us a few minutes. Aortic reconstruction will take a lot longer --

MAGGIE
(beat, runs the options)
Put her into circulatory arrest --

The team reacts. As does Lerner from above. Big long shot.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
I want every ice cube in this hospital in here. Now --

As the nurses sprint out, Emily turns to Maggie --

EMILY
I should've gone with Dr. Springer.

INT. MMC - O.R. - DAY (TIME CUT)

BUCKETS OF ICE are poured around Emily’s head and legs.

MAGGIE
What’s her body temp?

EDDIE
15 degrees Celsius. Brain waves are flat.

MAGGIE
Turn off the pumps.

The machines keeping Emily alive draw to a halt. Eerie. Emily is technically dead. Nurse sets a CLOCK on a tray.

EDDIE
You’ve got 29 minutes to build this kid a new aorta --
INT. MMC - O.R. - DAY (TIME CUT)

Images blend as Maggie furiously fashions a new aorta. Lerner watches from above, Nurse wipes sweat from Maggie’s brow, the team moves with intent precision. As precious time ticks away, CLOSE ON CLOCK. PULL BACK on Maggie. To Eddie:

MAGGIE
Trim back the tissue --

EDDIE
3 minutes --

MAGGIE
We’re almost there --

EMILY
You’re never gonna make it --

MAGGIE
Rotate the tube -- I’m gonna attach it to the ventricle --

As Maggie struggles to concentrate, Emily chimes in:

EMILY
And by the way -- I’m freezing my ass off over here --

MAGGIE
(to Emily)
Be quiet --

Eddie shoots Maggie a confused look.

EMILY
Pardon me -- but this is my life we’re talking about --

MAGGIE
Shut your mouth --

EMILY
Screw you --

MAGGIE
(fed up, exploding)
I said shut the hell up!

The room freezes. Lerner stares down, concerned. Maggie takes a beat, then finishes the graft. Quietly:

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Hit the pumps. Warm her up.
INT. MMC - HALLWAY OUTSIDE O.R. - MINUTES LATER

Exhausted, Maggie sits against the wall. Lerner approaches.

MAGGIE
Those were medical exigencies. I played it by the book --

LERNER
I particularly liked the exigency where you screamed at your unconscious patient --

MAGGIE
You want to come after me? You’ll get a hell of a fight --

LERNER
Actually, I came to say -- win or lose -- that was some of the best cutting I’ve ever seen.

Maggie smiles, grateful. After a beat:

MAGGIE
So what’d you really say to the Board to get me reinstated?

LERNER
Told ‘em you had their home addresses --
(off Maggie’s look)
-- and that while God decides when it’s your time to die -- around here -- he’s gotta go through you.

INT. MMC - O.R. - DAY

Maggie walks to the table. Eddie points to the EEG.

EDDIE
We got brain waves.

MAGGIE
That’s only half the battle. Take her off bypass --

Everyone stares at Emily’s chest. As the pumps stop, her beating heart slows down. Then stops.

EDDIE
Wanna shock her?
MAGGIE
Give it a sec. C’mon, Emily --

Several long, excruciating beats -- then slowly, inexorably, the heart comes back to life. Eddie and Maggie bump fists.

EDDIE
Kid just got a second chance.

MAGGIE
I know the feeling --

INT. MMC - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU) - HALLWAY

Maggie, in civies, heads out. Elliot approaches.

ELLiot
The conquering hero returns.

MAGGIE
This whole rivalry thing is so unnecessary. And we can move past it as soon as you embrace the fact that I’m better than you. I have.

ELLiot
Your patient went down in flames -- and you put out the fire. Problem is -- you lit the match.

(beat)
You’re reckless. And today you got lucky. It’s just a matter of time till your luck runs out --

Elliot walks away. Maggie absorbs this indictment for a beat, knows there’s truth in it. Patrick Ransom approaches.

PATRICK
Dr. Hill?

(beat)
I don’t know what to say...

He embraces Maggie. She’s uncomfortable at first. But as he holds on, weeping, she puts her arms around him. On Maggie -- allowing her professional distance to fall away --

EXT. MMC - LATE DAY - MINUTES LATER

Maggie exits, runs into Ben on his way in.

BEN
Heard you saved the Ransom girl.
MAGGIE
Caught a few breaks --

BEN
Nice work --

MAGGIE
(as he goes)
Ben?
(he turns back)
Don’t give up on me.

BEN
(beat, smiles)
Couldn’t if I wanted to.

As Ben heads inside, Maggie spots Anna Peck seated at a sidewalk cafe, staring right at her. Maggie approaches:

MAGGIE
Shouldn’t you be hard at work reinventing the human race?

ANNA PECK
I can’t do it alone.

Maggie takes a long beat -- a moment of decision.

MAGGIE
I keep my day job. And no one finds out I’m working with you.

ANNA PECK
Done. One caveat. When you create a new paradigm -- the old rules don’t apply. Radical challenges require radical solutions. I need to know you can live with that.

Peck puts out her hand. Beat. A conflicted Maggie takes it.

ANNA PECK (CONT’D)
Welcome aboard.

INT. MAGGIE AND CAROLINE’S APARTMENT – NIGHT 8

Maggie and Caroline watch “A Beautiful Mind.”

CAROLINE
Even in old-guy make-up -- Russell Crowe’s totally do-able.

MAGGIE
You need a boyfriend.
CAROLINE
Tell me about it.
(beat)
How’d you know it was starting?

MAGGIE
What?
(off her look, gets it)
Oh. Well... it was subtle at first. Random sounds. Why?

CAROLINE
Dad. Then you. I could be next.

MAGGIE
No way.

CAROLINE
Why not?

MAGGIE
Because I’m your big sister and I said so.

CAROLINE
You used to be my hero because you could save lives with your bare hands. I was in awe --
(beat)
Then I saw you on your bed that night, lost in your own world --

MAGGIE
Sorry I let you down.

CAROLINE
(smiles)
Now you’re my hero for just getting up in the morning --

As Maggie hugs her sister --

INT. MAGGIE AND CAROLINE’S APARTMENT - MAGGIE’S ROOM - NIGHT

Maggie, ready for bed, stares into the mirror. A tablet of Zyprexa sits on the night table. As she reaches for it, she feels a hand on her shoulder. She turns:

It’s Terrence. A long beat. This is dangerous. But love always is. She goes to him. On their passionate embrace --

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW