

GERSON

Written by
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Based on the biography
'Dr. Max Gerson - Healing the Hopeless'
By Howard Straus with Barbara Marinacci

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INT. SCHMIDT HOME - AFTERNOON

MRS. SCHMIDT, 40's, a gaunt, but wealthy, German housewife, spins in her flowing skirt to lively music playing on a gramophone in the elegant front room.

SUPER: Bielefeld, Germany - 1933

MRS. SCHMIDT
Celebrate with me, Dr. Gerson, I'm
cured!

DR. MAX GERSON, 51, dignified and handsome with intense, blue eyes and wire-rim glasses, stands rigidly between the foyer and living room; he's clutching X-rays with both hands.

MAX
Mrs. Schmidt, I don't know why you
were healed. I don't know enough
about it to prove that I cured it.
But, that's what I must do.

Mrs. Schmidt grabs the X-rays and holds them up.

MRS. SCHMIDT
But, you have. The tumors are gone.

MAX
But, I don't know why. Besides, you
must be in remission for five years
to claim that it's been cured.

She throws the X-rays into the air like confetti and grabs Max's hands.

MRS. SCHMIDT
Dance with me, Max! You should be
happy. You're a genius!

Max awkwardly follows Mrs. Schmidt's lead. He's not comfortable. Neither of them hear the front door or notice HANS SCHMIDT, 40's, staring angrily at them from the foyer.

HANS SCHMIDT
How dare you let a Jew touch you!
Why are you dancing with him?

They stop dancing as if caught in some horrific sin. Mrs. Schmidt crosses the room to her husband.

MRS. SCHMIDT
He's my doctor. He cured my cancer.

Hans violently shoves her aside; her head hits a table.

HANS SCHMIDT
Get out of my house, Judenschwein!

He grabs Max's tie and drags him toward the foyer.

MRS. SCHMIDT (O.S.)
But Hans, he saved my life.

Max looks down and sees an AHNENERBE SIGNET RING on Hans' right index finger as he's dragged toward the door.

Mrs. Schmidt follows them through the front door, helplessly.

EXT. SCHMIDT HOME - CONTINUOUS

Hans throws Max down the front steps into shrubs.

HANS SCHMIDT
Untermensch!

Max tumbles into the shrubs. He leaps to his feet to face Schmidt, his face is scratched and he's visibly shaking.

MAX
I was a Captain during the Great War! I served Germany honorably.

Max adjusts his glasses.

HANS SCHMIDT
Leave at once, before someone sees you.

Mrs. Schmidt stands behind her husband, clearly upset, while Hans looks around, worried someone is watching. He sees...

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN, a balding man with a brash swagger in his mid 30's, approaches the house.

MRS. SCHMIDT
I'm sorry, Dr. Gerson, I suppose you won't be able to prove that you've cured me.

MAX
Good day, Mrs. Schmidt.

Mrs. Smith goes inside after Hans spits at Max.

Fishbein moves out of Max's way as he brushes past him at the front gate. He has a thick St. Louis accent.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
What's the matter with him?

Fishbein extends his hand as he approaches.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
You must be Hans Schmidt. Morris
Fishbein.

As they shake, Hans grips Fishbein's hand and turns it around to see his AHNENERBE SIGNET RING. He's surprised.

HANS SCHMIDT
Ahnenerbe? We should go inside.

INT. SCHMIDT HOME - EVENING

Mrs. Schmidt sets a tray of appetizers on the coffee table. A bruise has formed on her head. She stares coldly at Hans, but leaves without a word.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
What happened to her?

HANS SCHMIDT
Tripped and hit her head.

Fishbein doesn't buy it. He holds up his cocktail.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
This isn't bad. What'd you call it?

HANS SCHMIDT
Schnapps.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
So, tell me about this investment
opportunity.

HANS SCHMIDT
My company has been experimenting
with Dichlorodiethyl Sulfide in
conjunction with X-ray radiation to
treat cancer.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Isn't that mustard gas?

HANS SCHMIDT
It's a nitrogen mustard that causes
the radiation to concentrate at the
tumors. It kills cancer cells.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
But, radiation kills healthy cells
too.

HANS SCHMIDT
Significantly less with the sulfide
injections.

Fishbein raises his glass to toast.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
If the results are as good as you
say, I know a number of influential
organizations that would be
interested in this opportunity.

Hans raises his glass and grins with a devilish grin.

HANS SCHMIDT
There is a lot of money to be made
in treating diseases.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BIELEFELD, GERMANY - AFTERNOON

Max hurries along a busy sidewalk. German boys with BROWN SHIRTS hurry past him on the opposite side of the street carrying buckets of paste and propaganda posters.

A HENSCHEL TRUCK adorned with SWASTIKA BANNERS pulls into the intersection at the corner. Three NAZI SOLDIERS jump out of the back. NAZI SOLDIER 1 has a bull horn.

NAZI SOLDIER 1
Christians, defend yourselves!
Don't buy from Jewish shops.

Max picks up his pace, trying not to be noticed.

Across the street, the German boys with BROWN SHIRTS slop paste on a shop window displaying a Star of David and hang a PROPAGANDA POSTER that reads, 'Youth Serves the Führer!' As they work, they sing *Horst Wessel Lied*...

GERMAN BOYS
The street free for the brown
battalion; the street free for the
Storm Troopers; millions full of
hope look up at the swastika; the
day breaks for freedom and bread.

Max ducks his head and hurries down the street.

INT. GERSON'S HOME - EVENING

Max bursts into the foyer of his lovely home and slams the door behind him. He leans back against the door to catch his breath. He's sweating.

CHARLOTTE, 11, Max's adorable, blond daughter, hugs his waist excitedly as he tries to compose himself.

CHARLOTTE
Papa, you're home!

MAX
Hello, sweetheart.

CHARLOTTE
Do you want to hear my new song on
the piano?

Max relaxes as he looks down at her crystal-clear, blue eyes.

MAX
Of course. I want to hear
everything you can play.

GRETCHEN, 48, his wife, approaches wearing a stylish hat as Charlotte returns to the front room. LADY GREVILLE, 50s, dressed in the latest New York fashions, follows Gretchen.

GRETCHEN
Max, look at the bonnet that Lady
Greville brought for me!
(Beat)
Is something wrong?

Max takes a deep breath, knowing she senses his concern.

MAX
No. No, everything's fine.
(to Lady Greville)
Lady Greville!

Max is shocked to see Lady Greville. Lady Greville grabs his hand, just as Charlotte begins playing the piano.

LADY GREVILLE
Doctor Gerson, I wanted to stop by
and say thank you, before heading
back to New York. I owe you a great
debt of gratitude for healing me.

MAX
It was my pleasure. It's what I do.
Would you care to stay for dinner?

LADY GREVILLE

No, thank you. I really must be going. I'm running late as it is. It was so good of you to see me.

The PHONE RINGS.

Gretchen looks toward the study, slightly anxious. Lady Greville takes both of her hands in hers.

LADY GREVILLE (CONT'D)

And Gretchen, you're a dear. Call on me anytime if there's ever anything I can do. Promise me!

Max goes to answer the phone when the PHONE RINGS again.

GRETCHEN

Okay, thank you so much.

MAX (O.S.)

Hello, this is Dr. Gerson.

(Beat)

Hi Hermann.

Lady Greville hugs Gretchen and waves to Max, then leaves.

INT. GERSON'S HOME, STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Max waves to Lady Greville from his study next to the foyer.

MAX

Yes, that's right. I leave in the morning. Gretchen has the X-rays and paperwork all prepared.

Gretchen points to his briefcase when he glances toward her. He nods and smiles, but it quickly fades.

MAX (CONT'D)

What difference does it make when I leave?

(Beat)

I think you're over-reacting. Things will eventually settle down.

Max doesn't get it; he shoots Gretchen a questioning glance as he listens, but then suddenly reacts to the conversation.

MAX (CONT'D)

Oh, my God, what happened to them?
(fear builds)

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

I see. Yes, I think there's another train headed to Vienna tonight.

Gretchen nods. She shuffles through his desk.

MAX (CONT'D)

What about Gretchen and the children?

Gretchen shoots Max a concerned look. She controls her panic.

MAX (CONT'D)

Thank you, Hermann. Gretchen will keep you informed.

He hangs up. Their eyes lock.

MAX (CONT'D)

I don't like leaving you and the girls behind at a time like this. Besides, I've just healed my third cancer patient. If I leave, I'll have no way to document it.

Gretchen's eyes well up with tears. She grabs his hands.

GRETCHEN

There will always be more patients. The girls and I will be fine. Hermann has connections who can help us get our visas.

Gretchen struggles to control her emotions as they embrace.

MAX

(whispers)

Be very careful, my love.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Max hands a NAZI GUARD his ticket at the entrance to the train platforms. He looks around nervously at all the activity. BROWN SHIRTS and Nazi Guards intimidate passengers, while everyone tries to ignore what is happening.

Right next to them are two workmen on ladders hanging a large, steel THIRD REICH NATIONAL EAGLE EMBLEM under an arch.

MAX

They don't usually check tickets until we're on the trains.

(Beat)

Increased security?

The Nazi Guard hands Max his ticket and nods toward the platform, without making eye contact.

Max hurries down the platform to the second-class car on the only train in the station. The WHISTLE BLOWS. He hops on as the train starts to move. He turns back for one last look.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Max stumbles down the aisle looking for a seat as the train embarks. The cabins are full. One seat remains in the last second-class compartment, right next to the door.

MAX

Is this seat available?

Everyone exchanges nervous glances, avoiding eye contact. JEWISH PASSENGER 1, a well-dressed, middle-aged man, makes eye contact and nods.

Max stows his briefcase in the overhead bin and sits down. He relaxes, leans back and shuts his eyes.

INT. TRAIN - LATER

Max's eyes pop open when he realizes the train isn't moving. He glances at his watch as the others in the cabin begin to wake up.

From Max's POV, steam and fog veil the commotion on the BORDER CROSSING platform.

Max leans across the next passenger to get a better look.

EXT. BORDER CROSSING - NIGHT

ARMED NAZI SOLDIERS stand in formation along the back of the platform. Behind them, a row of NAZI HENSCHEL TRUCKS waits for their new passengers.

Dozens of Nazi Soldiers pour onto the train at every entrance.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Max falls back into his seat, then cautiously leans his head out of the compartment to look down the aisle and see what the COMMOTION is all about.

NAZI SOLDIER 2
Leave the bag! Get off the train!

NAZI SOLDIER 2 shoves an ELDERLY MAN toward the exit as armed Nazi Soldiers fan out to each of the compartments.

Max ducks back inside and slides the compartment door shut.

Almost immediately, NAZI SOLDIER 3 brusquely opens the door and looks directly at Max.

NAZI SOLDIER 3
You! What are you doing?

MAX
Travelling to Vienna.

NAZI SOLDIER 3
Purpose of your trip?

MAX
I'm a physician. I'm taking X-rays
to Vienna for certification.

Nazi Soldier 3 eyes him suspiciously.

NAZI SOLDIER 3
Show me the X-rays.

Max stands up and retrieves several X-rays from his briefcase. He holds one up in the light to show him.

MAX
This is a tuberculosis patient. You
see the holes in the lungs?

Now animated, Max grabs another X-ray and holds it up.

MAX (CONT'D)
This is the same patient six months
later. The tuberculosis is cured!
(Beat)
Other physicians accuse me of
fraud. That is why I need to take
these to Dr. Fleischner in Vienna.
He can verify that these X-rays are
taken of the same patient.

Nazi Soldier 3 waves Max off.

NAZI SOLDIER 3
Be quiet! Sit down.
(to Jewish Passenger 1)
Are you a Jew?

JEWISH PASSENGER 1

Yes, I am.

NAZI SOLDIER 3

Get off the train!

JEWISH PASSENGER 1

You cant do this. I'm a lawyer. I
insist upon your name!

Nazi Soldier 3 smashes the butt of his rifle into Jewish
Passenger 1's forehead.

NAZI SOLDIER 3

I'm a Nazi soldier. That's all you
need to know. Get off!

Nazi Soldier 3 shoves Jewish Passenger 1 into the aisle and
looks at JEWISH PASSENGER 2, an elderly man sitting across
from Max in the compartment.

NAZI SOLDIER 3 (CONT'D)

Passport.

Jewish Passenger 2's PASSPORT has a stamp that says, 'JUDEN.'

NAZI SOLDIER 3 (CONT'D)

You're a Jew. Get off the train.

Nazi Soldier 3 throws the passport back at him.

JEWISH PASSENGER 2

Why!? I have done nothing. I need
to be in Vienna tomorrow.

NAZI SOLDIER 3

You heard me. Off the train, NOW!

Nervous, Jewish Passenger 2 stands to retrieve his suitcase.

NAZI SOLDIER 3 (CONT'D)

Leave it! You will need nothing.

Nazi Soldier 3 points at JEWISH PASSENGER 3.

NAZI SOLDIER 3 (CONT'D)

Juden?

Terrified, Jewish Passenger 3 can only nod.

NAZI SOLDIER 3 (CONT'D)

Go.

After everybody is gone, Max peers out the window still clutching his X-rays...

EXT. BORDER CROSSING - NIGHT

From Max's POV, Nazi Soldiers usher Jews from the train onto the TRUCKS. Most are fearful, but submissive. Few argue.

ONE JEWISH MAN yells inaudibly at a Nazi Soldier; he points at the train. The Nazi Soldier slams the butt of his rifle into the man's forehead, knocking him to the ground.

People nearby move away as they're herded toward the TRUCKS.

ANOTHER JEW sees this happen and runs. ANOTHER NAZI SOLDIER aims and guns him down. People panic. It's complete chaos.

From the platform, Max watches in horror, his face visible through the train window.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Max falls back into his seat, still clutching his X-rays as the train lunges forward.

An Austrian border sign slowly passes his window.

Max breaks the hypnotizing SOUND OF THE TRAIN when he gasps for air. The WHISTLE BLOWS. A teardrop rolls down his face.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BIELEFELD, GERMANY - DAY

Gretchen hurries along a sidewalk in business attire passing businessmen, banks and shops. She tries to appear casual, but not really succeeding. She looks down and away from a few students proudly sporting uniformed BROWN SHIRTS.

GRETCHEN

Come on, girls. Stay close.

Charlotte clings to her mother's hand nervously. JOHANNA, 16, and GERTRUDE, 17, follow closely behind them.

They duck into a sterile office building. The sign above the door reveals it's the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports office.

INT. BIELEFELD IMMIGRATION AND PASSPORTS OFFICE - DAY

Gretchen steps up to a counter with Charlotte and waits for a CLERK, a woman in her 40's with a cold steely attitude.

CLERK
May I help you?

GRETCHEN
I'm here to obtain visas for
Austria.

Gretchen hands the Clerk four passports. The Clerk opens the first passport and sees the 'JUDEN' stamp inside. She continues looking through the passports.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
My cousin, Hermann Adler, said I
could speak with his friend,
Dieter...

Gretchen tries to read a crumpled and sweaty note.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
He's the director of this office. I
can't read his surname.

CLERK
He's not available at the moment.
Who are these girls?

The older girls slide behind Gretchen.

GRETCHEN
They're my daughters.

CLERK
And why do you desire to leave
Germany?
(to Charlotte)
Isn't it lovely here?

Gretchen steps in front of Charlotte.

GRETCHEN
Well, yes, it is. But, my husband
is a doctor and is working in
Vienna. We need to be with him.

CLERK
Why?

GRETCHEN
We're family.

Emotionless, the clerk hands the passports back to Gretchen.

CLERK

We process Jewish emigration visas
on Tuesday afternoons between two
and four.

Gretchen stares at the clerk with an expression of disbelief.

INT. DR. FLEISCHNER'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. FLEISCHNER, 40, an Austrian university medical professor scans the X-rays hanging on the light box in his office.

DR. FLEISCHNER

It's clearly the same patient. You
can see the identical scarring on
the left lung.

(faces Max)

And, you're telling me that the
bacillus tests were negative? They
were completely healed by a
dietetic regimen?

Max nods.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)

The tests always come back positive
once they've had tuberculosis. It
never completely heals.

MAX

Not anymore.

DR. FLEISCHNER

This is extraordinary.

Max presents another set of X-rays.

MAX

And this is the cancer patient I
mentioned. I placed Mrs. Schmidt on
the same regimen and her malignant
tumors completely disappeared.

Astounded, Dr. Fleischner shifts closer to Dr. Gerson.

DR. FLEISCHNER

You think you've cured cancer?

Max blushes; he's embarrassed.

MAX

To make that claim would require clinical tests. But her tumor disappeared, and I believe it's related to the tuberculosis diet.

Fleischner takes the X-rays and sits behind his desk.

DR. FLEISCHNER

The cancer could have been cured by any number of things. Surgery?

MAX

It was inoperable. The results are honest and unarguable. You can check it for yourself, with her doctors in Berlin. They could do nothing more for her.

Max sits down across the desk from Fleischner.

Fleischner holds the X-rays up to a light to examine them.

DR. FLEISCHNER

X-rays don't lie. There's certainly something to this.

(Beat)

You can't go back to Germany.

(Beat)

Would you be open to staying here and performing clinical trials?

MAX

Of course!

DR. FLEISCHNER

I may be able to arrange for the use of a facility and personal accommodations at the Westend Sanatorium in Purkersdorf.

(dials phone)

It would at least be something while you wait for your family to arrive.

Max leans back and breathes a heavy sigh of relief.

INT. GERSON'S HOME, STUDY - NIGHT

Gretchen hunches over Dr. Gerson's desk with a pile of emigration paperwork. She speaks into the phone.

GRETCHEN

That's wonderful Max! I wish we were there with you.

(Beat)

They're doing fine. Lotte's rash has improved.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, VILLA - NIGHT

Max shuffles through a newspaper while sitting at a table on the phone in a sparse workroom with two adjoining bedrooms. It's a 1930s hospice suite.

MAX

Any news with regard to the visas?

INTERCUT BETWEEN GRETCHEN AND MAX

GRETCHEN

Hermann is calling in favors. He thinks we'll get them soon.

(whispers)

Max, I'm worried. Army officers keep coming by the house inquiring about you.

Max runs his hand through his hair.

MAX

Hermann is competent. He'll get you here. I think that I can even get a villa for him and his family.

GRETCHEN

He won't come. He thinks everything will eventually calm down. You know Hermann; it's all a negotiation.

MAX

They pulled all the Jews off the train in the middle of the night! Where did they take them?

Gretchen begins to shake; she's unnerved and panics.

GRETCHEN

I don't know. I just want to get out of here!

Max tears up and tries to keep his voice steady.

MAX

You'll be fine, just be strong and remain calm. I love you.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, MEDICAL WARD - DAY

Max and Dr. Fleischner tend to a dying TEENAGED BOY on a steel-framed bed. Max listens to his breathing with a stethoscope. A plate of food is on the table next to him.

DR. FLEISCHNER

The holes in his lungs are getting larger. We haven't been able to get the tuberculosis under control.

Max picks up the full plate of food: meat and canned beans.

MAX

You have to stop feeding patients this poison. No more preserved food and no more beef.

Max sets the plate down and picks up a salt shaker.

DR. FLEISCHNER

They must eat, Dr. Gerson.

MAX

Nutrition can only be obtained from perfectly fresh food. Preserved food deters healing. And, so does salt!

Max drops the salt shaker into a waste bin.

MAX (CONT'D)

We need food presses in the kitchen. Patients need freshly pressed carrot juice and apple juice eight times a day.

DR. FLEISCHNER

Carrots and apples?

MAX

You have a garden, don't you, Felix? Good. Carrots are easy to grow. They have the proper nutrition to heal all sorts of degenerative diseases.

Fleischner sighs heavily.

MAX (CONT'D)

It's a clinical trial for a dietary regimen. What did you think we'd be doing?

DR. FLEISCHNER

I expect you'll train the kitchen staff.

MAX

Of course.

Dr. Fleischner beckons Max to follow him. He lowers his voice as they walk through the medical ward toward a private room.

DR. FLEISCHNER

This next patient is the Chancellor's niece. She's pregnant and has eclampsia and Cushing's Syndrome. It would be devastating for the hospital if...

MAX

I understand.

They step into the private room.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Dr. Fleischner walks along the side of RENATE's bed. She's in her mid 20's, very pregnant and rashes appear on her neck and round, bloated face. She's in pain.

DR. FLEISCHNER

Good afternoon, Renate. How are you feeling today?

Renate cracks her eyes open. She's clearly weak and tired. She nods and closes her eyes.

Max takes a clipboard from the end of the bed.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)

This is Dr. Gerson.

Dr. Fleischner checks the intravenous saline bag.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)

It's a concentrated saline solution. Initially it seemed to help, but her blood sodium levels are abnormally low.

As Max scans through her charts...

MAX

Does her urinalysis indicate that she's discharging sodium?

DR. FLEISCHNER

None. Her body just absorbs it.

MAX

She needs potassium, not sodium.

Max reaches past Dr. Fleischner and unhooks the IV.

DR. FLEISCHNER

Dr. Gerson, she's suffering from an extreme deficiency in blood sodium! Potassium is the chemical opposite of sodium. She needs sodium, not potassium.

MAX

A potassium deficiency has caused her cells to become porous and absorb the excess sodium.

DR. FLEISCHNER

(whispers)

If something happens to her, this could be disastrous!

MAX

(whispers)

Cell metabolism is dependent upon an electrochemical balance between the sodium and potassium ion levels. If we restore the potassium, the sodium will be expelled.

Dr. Fleischner takes a deep breath and nods slowly.

DR. FLEISCHNER

That sounds logical. I trust you, Max. But, if her condition makes a turn for the worse, put her back on the sodium solution immediately.

Max nods his agreement.

EXT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, CAMPUS - DAY

Max and Dr. Fleischner stroll across the huge complex of villas chatting quietly on a sunny afternoon.

DR. FLEISCHNER

You may work under my medical license for the time being, but you need to apply for your own as soon as possible.

MAX

I appreciate your benevolence. I never expected to leave Germany so suddenly.

DR. FLEISCHNER

The world is becoming a darker place. We need doctors like you... who truly bring healing.

EXT. POLICE STATION, GERMANY - DAY

Gretchen waits across the street from the police station as a NAZI OFFICER gets into a GOVERNMENT VEHICLE and drives away.

GRETCHEN

Come on, Lotte, let's go.

Gretchen grabs her daughter's hand to guide her across the street. Charlotte looks up at her mother with her blue eyes, more than a little concerned.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

It'll be okay, honey.

Gretchen takes a deep breath. They cross the street.

INT. POLICE STATION, GERMANY - DAY

The girls enter the small precinct office and stop at the reception desk. The austere SECRETARY, 50's, looks over the top of her glasses. She doesn't budge.

GRETCHEN

The immigration office sent me here to obtain police papers for my children and I.

The Secretary doesn't react.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

We need them to obtain the exit documents.

After a painful pause, she thrusts her hand forward.

SECRETARY

Passports.

Gretchen hands her her four passports. She opens Gretchen's passport, the 'JUDEN' stamp evident. She hands them back.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

We're busy at the moment. Come back on Monday, when the Captain will be here to help you.

Gretchen looks into the office.

A POLICE OFFICER, 30's, props his feet up on a desk, twirling a pencil. He sits up when he notices Gretchen staring at him.

GRETCHEN

He's not busy! The immigration office said that it was a standard procedure and wouldn't take long.

SECRETARY

They were wrong.

Gretchen fights back her emotions.

GRETCHEN

Why won't you help us?

POLICE OFFICER

What seems to be the problem?

Gretchen spins around to face the approaching Police Officer.

CHARLOTTE

We just want the papers that say we're not bad people.

The Police Officer quickly assesses the situation, then smiles and pats Charlotte's shoulder.

POLICE OFFICER

Well, we should be able to do that, shouldn't we?

Charlotte nods vigorously.

The Police Officer motions for Gretchen to follow him.

The Secretary scowls as the Police Officer guides them away.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)
I'll take care of it for you.
(whispers)
Hermann said that you'd be coming.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is abuzz with activity. Max demonstrates to THREE COOKS how to juice vegetables by first grinding them, then pressing them. Crates of apples and carrots are next to him.

MAX
Juice from a blender does not have the same healing quality as hand pressed juices. Therefore, we must prepare it by hand, just like this.

The HEAD COOK, a stout woman in her 40's, appears concerned.

HEAD COOK
But Dr. Gerson, this is an enormous amount of work.

MAX
It is. But proper nutrition gives the body the natural ability to heal itself. Now it's your turn. Try it.

Head Cook wrestles with the grinder as she juices carrots.

MAX (CONT'D)
Good. You'll get it.

HEAD COOK
This is too difficult! It's not going to work.

Max nods to a YOUNG COOK, who takes the Head Cook's place.

MAX
Why don't you have someone else grind vegetables. You don't have to do everything.

HEAD COOK
That's much better.

Max smiles as Head Cook happily wipes her hands on her apron.

MAX

Each patient will receive juice for breakfast, lunch and dinner, along with the soup.

Max moves to the far side of the kitchen where other workers chop parsley roots, celery knobs, leeks and tomatoes.

MAX (CONT'D)

This soup recipe was recorded by Hippocrates, 500 years before Christ, as a way to cleanse the body from toxins.

HEAD COOK

It seems odd that a Jewish man would speak in such terms.

Max shrugs it off and inspects the chopped vegetables. He smells the soup on the stove and tastes it. He's pleased.

MAX

Taste this so you know what the result should be. You should try it for lunch. It's healthy for you.

The Head Cook absorbs the insult.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Max enters Renate's private room in his white, lab-coat. He grabs the clipboard and quickly finds what he's looking for.

MAX

Ah... good. That's what I expected.
(to Renate)
It looks like the two of you are doing quite well.

Renate's face is thinner and the rashes are mostly gone. Her eyes are bright and she seems alert and happily pregnant.

RENATE

I feel much better. Thank you.

Max checks the IV and makes a note.

MAX

Until your child is born, no more beef, no animal fat, not even any dairy fats. No butter. No cream. And certainly, no processed sugars or canned foods.

RENATE

But, I'm pregnant. I have cravings!

MAX

You must have discipline. Your baby's health depends upon it.

Max replaces the clipboard.

MAX (CONT'D)

We'll keep you here until the baby is delivered, just to be certain.

(Beat)

The cooks will teach you how to prepare the food for yourself. It's time-consuming, but worth the effort.

RENATE

Thank you, Doctor.

Max waves as he steps out.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, VILLA - NIGHT

Max writes fervently at the table littered with medical journals, technical papers and various patient files. Directly in front of him is a thick volume, entitled '*FOLK MEDICINE AND TRADITIONAL CURES*'.

Max flips the thick book open to a chapter entitled '*The Healing of Cancer*' and searches for something. He makes a note of it, then searches for a technical paper. When he finds it, he scans it and makes another note.

Max reaches for a patient file. Under it, he finds a photo of his family. Tears well-up in his eyes. He prays...

MAX

If You're real, please keep my family safe. Just keep them safe.

He sets the photo aside, sighs and continues his work.

INT. DR. FLEISCHNER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Fleischner works at his desk as Max enters the room.

MAX

Hi Felix.

DR. FLEISCHNER
Max, come in! Have a seat.
(Beat)
Any progress with the family?

Max slumps into a seat across from Dr. Fleischner.

MAX
It's hard to say. It's not safe to
speak on the phone. Gretchen thinks
everything is in order. Their exit
interview is in a few days.

Fleischner's expression betrays his lack of confidence.

DR. FLEISCHNER
That's great. They'll be here
before you know it.

After an awkward pause, Fleischner picks up a sheet of paper.
He stands up and walks around his desk.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)
I have something that you're going
to want.

Dr. Fleischner hands a certificate to Max; he reads it.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)
It's your medical license.
Chancellor Dollfuss was so pleased
with Renate's recovery that he
intervened on your behalf with the
medical board.

Fleischner doesn't understand why Max doesn't react.

DR. FLEISCHNER (CONT'D)
You're the first refugee ever to
obtain an Austrian medical license.

Max tears-up.

MAX
What if they can't get out?

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, MEDICAL WARDU - MORNING

Max takes a food tray to the TEENAGED BOY with tuberculosis.
He sets the tray down and sits on the edge of his bed.

MAX

How are you feeling today,
Bernhard? Better?

The boy sits up and nods. He's struggles to breathe.

MAX (CONT'D)

Good. The color has returned to
your face.

Max reaches over and hands him a glass of juice.

MAX (CONT'D)

With the right food, you will get
better. Healing takes time.

A lovely WARD NURSE, 20's, humbly approaches the bed as she
speaks with a quiet, soft tone.

WARD NURSE

Dr. Gerson, we received a telegram
for you.

MAX

Thank you.

Max's face is marred with concern as he reads. He stands up.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'll be back later to check on you.

He tries to smile before leaving.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, VIENNA - AFTERNOON

Austrian police spread out on the crowded platform as Max
watches a GERMAN TRAIN pull into the station, a SWASTIKA
adorns the front of it. Max backs up to a column, suppressing
the panic in his heart.

An intense, desperate essence permeates the crowds of
dishevelled passengers who are watched closely by the
Austrian police as they disembark.

A GERMAN SOLDIER steps off the train to kiss his YOUNG WIFE.

Max frantically searches the platform for his family.

A young, JEWISH BOY finds his parents. They hug tightly.

Max pushes his way through the crowd, panic setting in.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
Daddy, daddy!

Max spins around as Charlotte leaps into his arms to hug him.

MAX
My Lotte! My precious Lotte.

Travel-worn, Gretchen, Johanna and Gertrude shuffle through the crowd, loaded down with suitcases.

Max looks up and sees Gretchen. He rushes over to her, sets Charlotte down and hugs her with all his might. Tears well-up in his eyes. He finally lets go and holds her at arms length.

MAX (CONT'D)
You've never looked so beautiful.

Gretchen is speechless. Tears well-up in her eyes.

Max holds her hand and kisses her tenderly.

JOHANNA
Hi Papa.

GERTRUDE
It's good to see you, Papa.

Max hugs the two girls.

MAX
My darling daughters.

They head toward the exit, smiling.

MAX (CONT'D)
Everything's going to be okay!

Gretchen grabs Max's hand as they walk.

INT. SANATORIUM AUTOMOBILE - AFTERNOON

Max and his family fill the sedan as it travels through town.

MAX
The grounds are lovely, plenty of space for the girls.

CHARLOTTE
Is there a place to play?

MAX

There's a forest that we'll have plenty of time to explore.

CHARLOTTE

How many bedrooms are there?

MAX

Two. You'll have to share a room with your sisters.

Charlotte jumps in her seat with joy.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, good! We get to share!

Charlotte looks at her sisters, who aren't happy about that.

MAX

But, there's no kitchen.

GRETCHEN

How are we to prepare food then?

As Gretchen looks over at Max, Max slams on the brakes!

The car screeches to a stop as several TEENAGERS run across the street chanting repeatedly...

TEENAGERS

It's time for change! Hope in change!

Students paste an ADOLF HITLER POSTER on a shop window as they chant.

Shock and horror mar Gretchen's face.

Max glances over at her, attempting to suppress his own fear.

MAX

I've not seen this in Austria.

Max waits for a clearing to drive by. He stares straight ahead.

MAX (CONT'D)

We'll be fine.

The tension is tangible as the girls stare out their window.

Students paint the heels of their shoes red and march around, imprinting red swastikas on the pavement.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, CAFETERIA - DAY

Gretchen follows Max to a table with a full tray of food: soup, vegetables, potatoes and juice. The girls lag further behind, chatting away with each other.

MAX

The first few cancer patients that we put on the diet passed away within a couple of days. But, their physicians had already told them nothing else could be done.

GRETCHEN

Max, do we have to talk about this over dinner?

Max sits down, somewhat excited.

MAX

But you don't understand, they didn't die of cancer. They died from hepatic liver comas. Their livers were overloaded with toxins. The diet works for cancer patients!

Gretchen is distracted by their noisy daughters.

GRETCHEN

Except that it's killing them.
(to the children)
Girls!

MAX

We gave critically injured men coffee enemas during the great war to keep them from going septic.

Disgusted, Gretchen holds up a fork with a potato on it.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. It was the only boiled water we had.
(Beat)
It gave them lots of energy.

Gretchen shoots Max an angry look. Max looks down and eats.

MAX (CONT'D)

It must have been the caffeine.

DR. FLEISCHNER (O.S.)

Dr. Gerson, Dr. Gerson!

Fleischner makes his way across the crowded cafeteria and stands across from Max, unsure of how to proceed.

MAX

Is everything okay?

Fleischner hesitates. He glances around the table.

GRETCHEN

Please have a seat, Dr. Fleischner.
Join us.

The girls wave politely.

Dr. Fleischner sits down next to Gretchen, across from Max. He hesitates before speaking. He leans forward and whispers.

DR. FLEISCHNER

I spoke with Chancellor Dollfuss today. Tensions are rising over the possibility of a Nazi occupation. He told me to get my family out of Austria... and suggested that all Jewish people should do the same.

GRETCHEN

Max...

Gretchen tears up. Max reaches across and grabs her hand.

MAX

What do you plan on doing?

DR. FLEISCHNER

I'm making arrangements to move my family to Palestine. Anymore, I think it's the only safe place to go.

(Beat)

I think you should do the same.

MAX

Thank you, Felix.

Fleischner stands up, and leaves.

GRETCHEN

Lady Greville said we could call on her anytime we needed. Maybe she can help.

Max nods introspectively.

INT. WESTEND SANATORIUM, VILLA - MORNING

Gretchen eats sliced fruit as Max puts on his tie. The PHONE RINGS; he sits at the table and answers it.

MAX

Hello, this is Dr. Gerson.

GRETCHEN

Who would call at this time?

MAX

Yes, you have the correct Dr. Gerson.

GRETCHEN

Who is it?

Max motions for her to let him listen.

MAX

I see. And who is this German dignitary?

(Beat)

You can't say? Why does he want me in Passau?

GRETCHEN

In Passau? Max, that's in Germany!

Max covers the receiver to speak with Gretchen.

MAX

(whispers)

Part of the city is in Austria.

GRETCHEN

The Nazis have been luring Jewish emigrés to border towns to arrest them. It's not safe!

Gretchen shows Max the morning paper emphatically.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

German Troops at Austrian Border!

Chancellor Dollfuss delivers
Patriotic message to Austria.

Max becomes tense. He's distracted by the article as he speaks into the phone.

MAX

I'm sorry, I won't be able to make it. It's not possible.

(suddenly angry)

No, I won't! It's not safe for me to travel so close to the border.

(yells)

Good day to you, sir!

Max slams the phone down and leans back in his chair. He eventually sighs, releasing some tension.

MAX (CONT'D)

You were right. We have to leave. We're moving off the mainland!

Exacerbated, Gretchen tears up.

GRETCHEN

To where? When will this end?

INT. GERSON'S LONDON FLAT - AFTERNOON

Gretchen looks down. She's tired. She drops her luggage inside a little, furnished flat.

Max and the girls shuffle around her with their luggage.

GRETCHEN

It's not very big.

Gretchen plops her bags down in the middle of the room and heads to the window.

CHARLOTTE

Where's my room, mom?

MAX

You girls will share the room on the left.

The girls drag their luggage down a hallway.

Gretchen looks outside at the TYPICAL, BUSY LONDON STREET.

GRETCHEN

Can we finally stop running?

MAX

I think we've found a safe place.

GRETCHEN

Is London safe?

Max wraps his arms around Gretchen and gazes out the window.

MAX

It seems so.

INT. LONDON BISTRO - DAY

Lady Greville sits across from Max and Gretchen having tea in an upscale bistro. She has an extremely wealthy presence.

LADY GREVILLE

I was afraid that we'd lost touch when I couldn't get through to you in Bielefeld.

(to Max)

The timing of your wire couldn't have been better.

MAX

Lady Greville, We never expected you to travel all the way back to London.

Lady Greville smiles slyly.

LADY GREVILLE

Well, we do own several passenger ships. And, it's important that I speak with you face to face. I have a great favor to ask of you.

Gretchen glances apprehensively at Max.

MAX

Of course.

LADY GREVILLE

My sister is bed-ridden with a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis, and her doctors have had no success in treating her. I know from experience that you have the ability to treat her.

MAX

What would you have me do?

LADY GREVILLE

I'd like you to travel back to the United States with me, to consult with her physicians.

(Beat)

(MORE)

LADY GREVILLE (CONT'D)
The American ambassador here in
London is a close friend. He can
get you a work visa.

Max glances at Gretchen's horrified expression.

MAX
I'm afraid that's not possible.

Gretchen sighs a sigh of relief.

Confused, Lady Greville looks from Max to Gretchen.

MAX (CONT'D)
I can't leave my family again.

Lady Greville smiles confidently. She understands.

LADY GREVILLE
Of course, we would process the
paperwork for permanent visas for
the rest of your family as well.
And, I'll make arrangements for
their passage as soon as they have
them. It shouldn't take more than a
couple of months.

Gretchen exchanges a painful glance with Max.

Lady Greville reaches across the table and places her hand
over Gretchen's.

LADY GREVILLE (CONT'D)
I know it's a lot to ask, but you
were so good to me during my
recovery and I know you'll be able
to help my sister.

Defenseless, Gretchen nods.

GRETCHEN
When would he leave?

LADY GREVILLE
The Normandie sails in two days.
We'll have his visa by then.

Gretchen tears up, her eyes pleading with Max.

Lady Greville notices. She stands to excuse herself.

LADY GREVILLE (CONT'D)
If you'll excuse me. I'll let you
discuss it.

Gretchen's tears flow more freely when Lady Greville leaves.

GRETCHEN

I don't think I can do this again.

MAX

We'd be far enough away that we'd never have to run again.

(sighs)

I don't know what other options we have. How else can I provide for our family and keep you safe?

Gretchen wipes her tears away as she concedes.

INT. GERSON'S LONDON FLAT - MORNING

The flat looks more lived-in and the radio is on in the background as Gretchen and Max prepare for his trip.

MAX

I'll need to take this as well.

Max lays a large book on top of the clothes in the suitcase and heads out to the main living area. He stops to listen...

KING EDWARD (V.O.)

A few hours ago I discharged my last duty as King and Emperor, and now that I have been succeeded by my brother, the Duke of York, my first words must be to declare my allegiance to him. This I do with all my heart.

MAX

The King of England is Abdicating the throne!

Max continues into the dining room. The King's speech continues in the background...

KING EDWARD (V.O.)

You all know the reasons which have impelled me to renounce the throne. But I want you to understand that in making up my mind I did not forget the country or the empire, which, as Prince of Wales and lately as King, I have for twenty-five years tried to serve.

MAX
 (yells)
 Gretchen, where did you put my
 passport?

When Max turns around, Gretchen is directly in front of him, holding his passport.

GRETCHEN
 Promise me that this will be the
 last time we separate.

MAX
 I promise.

Max looks up as if to pray as he hugs Gretchen.

EXT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, NEW YORK - MORNING

Max looks up at the huge building in awe. The sign above the main entrance bears the Hospital's name.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - MORNING

Lady Greville follows Max and PROFESSOR IRVING FISHER, 60's, a dignified gentleman who sits on Gotham Hospital's board of directors.

IRVING FISHER
 You'll be working alongside Dr.
 Miley He's one of Gotham's senior
 attending physicians.

Fisher stops at a private room. He motions for them to enter.

IRVING FISHER (CONT'D)
 After you.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, PRIVATE ROOM - MORNING

Lady Greville heads directly to her SISTER, 50's, who lays motionless in the bed, obviously in pain.

LADY GREVILLE
 Hi Janet, I'm back. I brought Dr.
 Gerson all the way from Europe to
 get you better. How are you doing?

Her Sister doesn't say anything, she's not well.

DR. GEORGE MILEY, early 40's, stops perusing the patient's chart and extends his hand to Fisher. He's wearing a white lab coat.

GEORGE MILEY

Professor Fisher, good to see you again, sir.

(to Max)

Dr. Gerson, your arrival warrants introduction by a member of the Board of Directors! Impressive. I'm Dr. George Miley.

Miley extends his hand. The men shake.

MAX

It's a pleasure to meet you, Dr. Miley.

GEORGE MILEY

I've been reading through your publications on the success of your dietary protocols. I'm convinced you've uncovered a fundamental principle which warrants a much more thorough investigation.

IRVING FISHER

Dr. Miley convinced the Board to establish a special ward for clinical trials of your regimens.

GEORGE MILEY

Lady Greville was instrumental in securing the funding for us.

Lady Greville blushes and shrugs when Max smiles at her.

LADY GREVILLE

It's the least I could do.

MAX

Well, let's start by seeing what we can do for your sister. She needs to be placed on this diet.

Max hands Miley a yellow booklet. Miley flips through it.

MAX (CONT'D)

Those are the basic dietary protocols. I'll modify them once we get the test results back.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, FISHER'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Fisher reclines behind his desk as Max reads an article in an old issue of the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

IRVING FISHER

I need to protect the hospital's reputation. That article presents a bit of a problem. We can't risk negative publicity.

Max slams the magazine down on Fisher's desk.

MAX

He betrayed me! Dr. Mayer knows how the regimen works. He didn't apply it properly. He even says so!

Fisher leans forward.

IRVING FISHER

You know Edgar Mayer?

MAX

Yes. He reviewed my research in Bielefeld. He said he was favorably impressed. Then, he turns around and calls my therapy a failure!?

IRVING FISHER

There must be a misunderstanding. We know your therapy works. Perhaps, we could sort it out if you submitted a rebuttal.

Max takes a deep breath. He thinks about it.

MAX

I could write a rebuttal. It's a medical journal, they'll have to treat it scientifically and professionally.

INT. JAMA, RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Max and Miley stand at a desk, located under an impressive '**Journal of the American Medical Association**' sign.

GEORGE MILEY

We're here to see Dr. Fishbein.

ELLEN SMITH, 20's, professional but bored, barely glances up from her entrenched routine. She presses an intercom.

ELLEN SMITH

Dr Fishbein, Dr. Miley is here to see you.

(to Miley)

He'll be right out.

She goes directly back to her work.

MAX

I appreciate you making this introduction for me.

GEORGE MILEY

Dr. Fishbein is extremely influential. And, it's a compelling rebuttal. He'll straighten it out.

Max straightens his tie when Dr. Morris Fishbein, now mid 50's, emerges from his office.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

George, it's good of you to stop by. Won't you come in?

GEORGE MILEY

Morris, this is Dr. Max Gerson. He's performing the clinical trials at Gotham.

Fishbein hesitates. He seems to recognize Max.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Of course... Have we met?

Max isn't sure.

MAX

I don't believe so. But, it's a pleasure to meet you, sir.

They shake. Fishbein guides them into his office.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Come on in.

INT. JAMA, FISHBEIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As the men settle into chairs, Fishbein heads to the wet bar.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Scotch?

GEORGE MILEY
Straight up.

MAX
No, thank you.

As Fishbein pours the drinks...

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
So, you've written a rebuttal to an
article evaluating your
tuberculosis therapy... which was
published nearly 15 years ago?

Max reaches into his briefcase and pulls out his article.

MAX
Yes, sir. I didn't know about the
article until recently.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
What's the basis of your argument?

Fishbein hands George his drink and sits behind his desk.

Max hands Fishbein his article. Fishbein flips through it,
disinterested.

MAX
The single most important factor in
healing is having the right food
grown in the right conditions.
Cancer occurs in bodies that suffer
from years of nutritional abuse,
which destroys the liver.

Fishbein leans forward, now concerned. He almost yells.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
These protocols also have an affect
on cancer!?

MAX
Yes, that's why my protocols must
be followed precisely.

GEORGE MILEY
The clinical trials are for cancer,
not tuberculosis. So far, it's been
very successful.

Agitated, Fishbein sets the article aside.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
The AMA will certainly consider the merits of your rebuttal. But, I can't promise anything.

MAX
I believe physicians should have the privilege of knowing the truth.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
I'm sure you do. If you don't mind, Dr. Miley and I have a few other matters to discuss.

Fishbein abruptly stands and extends his hand.

Uncomfortable, Max stands and shakes his hand.

MAX
Of course not. Thank you.

Max leaves the two men. When the door is closed, Fishbein downs his drink.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
You do know, George, the AMA is heavily vested in X-ray radiation and chemotherapy technologies?

GEORGE MILEY
I understand.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
I don't think you do.

Fishbein rips Gerson's article in half and tosses it into a waste basket. He then puts his arm around Miley's shoulders

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
There's too much at stake. We can't allow some quack refugee to flip the entire apple cart upside-down with a fucking diet!

Miley stifles his shock.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
Make sure his clinical trials fail!
Go do whatever you need to do!

GEORGE MILEY
Okay...

He downs his drink and walks out like a hurt puppy.

Fishbein turns the AHNENERBE SIGNET RING on his finger as Miley leaves. He sees Gerson waiting outside his office.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 (to self)
 He was in Bielefeld.

INT. BROWNSTONE, NYC - EVENING

JOHN GUNTHER, 38, an educated man with a tough New York attitude, steps into his son's bedroom.

JOHN GUNTHER
 He's in here.
 (to his son)
 Johnny, Dr. Gerson is here.

JOHNNY GUNTHER, 16, lies in bed, motionless and pale with bruises on his chest and neck. He's bleeding from a large mass on the side of his skull and from his gums.

MAX
 Hi Johnny, how are you doing today?

JOHNNY
 (wheezes)
 Couldn't be better.

Confounded, Max pauses.

MAX
 Well, your sense of humor is still healthy.

JOHN GUNTHER
 Our doctor said he's incurable, but Raymond Swing told me about your therapy and said you might be able to help.

MAX
 The talk show host? I know Mr. Swing. He was a patient of mine.
 (to Johnny)
 May I?

Max motions to the bed.

JOHNNY
 Sure.

Max sits down on the edge of Johnny's bed and tenderly inspects the bruises on his chest, then his head.

MAX

Glioblastoma is an aggressive form of cancer. They've removed bone from his skull?

Max sighs audibly when John nods the affirmative.

MAX (CONT'D)

It's well-advanced. I don't know what we can do at this point.

JOHN GUNTHER

(desperate)

Dr. Traeger said that you're a quack. But, we have nothing to lose. He's my only son. I've got to do something! Please help us.

Johnny struggles to speak. It's painful to watch.

JOHNNY

He said if your diet works, they could chuck millions of dollars into the river and get rid of cancer by cooking carrots.

Max chuckles, even though he's stressed.

John tears up. He's frustrated and passionate.

JOHN GUNTHER

I'll not give up on my son. If he dies, I'll know it wasn't because I didn't do everything I could.

(gulps)

Doctor, never give up on a patient while there is still life in him!

Max chokes up. He nods his agreement.

MAX

Okay, I'll do what I can. You'll need to admit him to the hospital immediately. But, I can't make any promises.

(to Johnny)

We're going to put you on a healthy diet and see if we can give your body a chance to recover.

JOHNNY

Genius.

EXT. PORT OF NEW YORK - MORNING

Max waits anxiously in a crowd as passengers disembark from the Normandie. He sees his family and waves frantically.

MAX
Gretchen! Girls! I'm here!

He pushes his way toward the disembarkation point.

Gretchen finally sees him.

GRETCHEN
There's your father. Come on!

Gretchen and the girls pick up their pace. Gretchen drops her bags as she leaps into Max's arms.

MAX
Finally!

The girls gather around and hug him. He laughs.

MAX (CONT'D)
Welcome to America!

Max notices a rash on Charlotte's arm and inspects it.

GRETCHEN
It's the food.

MAX
It'll be gone in a few days.

Max gets Gretchen's attention as the girls settle down.

MAX (CONT'D)
You're going to love it here.

They hug one more time.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

Max reads the evening news as reorganizes and decorates.

MAX
Look at this drawing. They portray
the German army like an army of
supermen!

Max holds up the picture for Gretchen, then goes back to reading the paper.

MAX (CONT'D)

The German army is using my diet
for their troops.

GRETCHEN

How would you know that?

MAX

It's in this article. Apparently,
they've captured a German
warehouse. Everything they've
described is on my list of foods.
The diet has been published in
Germany for a long time.

GRETCHEN

I suppose that's why they're
supermen.

They both chuckle.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Max, you should write an article.
People should know about it.

Max leaps to his feet and embraces Gretchen.

MAX

I've missed you so much!

Max kisses her and then grabs a note pad and pencil.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, OFFICE - DAY

George Miley sits by Max's desk as Max scans through his
bookshelf, searching for a book.

GEORGE MILEY

Raw calf's liver juice?

Miley leans forward and takes a copy of a TYPED ARTICLE
titled FEEDING THE GERMAN ARMY off Max's desk and reads it.

MAX

Three times a day. It has nutrients
that support the liver. Toxins from
late stage cancers will overload
the liver without it. Here it is!

Max grabs a book off the shelf and thumbs through it as he
returns to his desk.

Miley folds the TYPED ARTICLE and slides it into his coat.

MAX (CONT'D)

And, it has to be young calves, not mature animals; they've already ingested too many toxins.

Max finally looks up and hands Miley the open book.

MAX (CONT'D)

This is the source. You'll find my personal notes there as well.

Miley flips through a few of the pages. He stands.

GEORGE MILEY

This is helpful. Thank you.

Max smiles and nods when they make eye contact.

The PHONE RINGS. Max answers. Dr. Miley waves and leaves.

MAX

Hello, this is Doctor Gerson.

(Beat)

Doctor Fisher....

INT. UPSCALE MANHATTAN RESTAURANT - DAY

Irving Fisher and Max sit at a table with SENATOR CLAUDE PEPPER, 46. His large-framed glasses, dark suit and white tie exude confidence.

SENATOR PEPPER

I'm interested in learning a little more about your cancer diet.

MAX

It's not just diet, Senator. It's a set of protocols that heals cancer, which is based upon diet.

SENATOR PEPPER

Where did you get the idea to cure cancer with a diet?

MAX

Ironically, my mother suggested I change my diet in medical school to help with my migraines. When it worked, I had the notion that other health conditions might also be caused by defective diets.

SENATOR PEPPER
Old, wives tales bearing truth?

MAX
Perhaps.

SENATOR PEPPER
How did you make the leap from
curing migraines to curing cancer?

Max waits as a WAITRESS, 20's and stunning, sets cocktails in front of Fisher and Pepper and a glass of water for him.

MAX
Thank you.
(to Senator Pepper)
By accident, really. A few patients
were inadvertently healed from
cancerous tumors after following
the diet for other health concerns.

SENATOR PEPPER
Dr. Fisher, Do you have any
measurable results, yet?

Max waves cigarette smoke away as a smoking customer passes.

IRVING FISHER
It's been extremely successful.
Numerous patients have experienced
complete remission, even a few late
stage cancer patients.

SENATOR PEPPER
And this is all documented?

MAX
Of course. The result at the sick-
bed is decisive, Senator.

Senator Pepper relaxes into his chair.

SENATOR PEPPER
That's remarkable. So far, all the
research I've seen is related to
chemotherapy and radiation
treatments.
(Beat)
I've introduced a 100 million
dollar congressional bill to fund
cancer research. Do we really need
that much?

IRVING FISHER
Perhaps not.

SENATOR PEPPER
Dr. Gerson, I'd like to see what
you're doing at Gotham. And, I may
want you to testify before a Senate
subcommittee, if you'd be willing.

MAX
I'd be honored, Senator.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

John Gunther fusses over his son, Johnny, as he eats soup and
juice, propped up in bed.

JOHNNY
It's not too bad, if you like
vegetables.

Max knocks on the open door.

MAX
I see you're all settled in.

JOHN GUNTHER
Thanks for everything, Doctor. I
appreciate what you're doing.

MAX
It's quite all right. The important
thing is to restore Johnny's
health. We'll start the enemas
today. The nurses will train you.

Johnny's ears perk up.

JOHNNY
What are enemas?

MAX
We use coffee to cleanse your
colon, five times a day initially.

JOHNNY
You're putting coffee up my
keister!?
(whines)
Dad!

John Gunther tries not to laugh.

MAX

Unfortunately, it's necessary. It will keep you alive. It helps the liver expel toxins.

(to John)

These are the protocols we will be following. His diet is also there.

Johnny gags on a brown colored juice as Max hands his father a yellow booklet

JOHNNY

What is this?

MAX

It's raw calf's liver juice. It has nutrients that your body needs.

JOHNNY

Oh, this just keeps getting better.

Max sniffs the air. He turns toward the door.

MAX

Is someone smoking?

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, RESEARCH WARD - MOMENTS LATER

MRS. SZABO, 60's, gaunt and in a hospital gown, hides her cigarette and tries to wave the smoke away as Max approaches. She's props herself up against an open window sill.

MAX

Mrs. Szabo, you know that smoking is prohibited!

MRS. SZABO

I'm sorry, Doctor. It's not that easy to stop. I've been smoking for 20 years.

MAX

Put the cigarette out now.

Max takes her open pack of cigarettes from the sill and crumples it in his hand.

MRS. SZABO

Dr. Gerson, can't you allow me this one, little sin?

Max takes her cigarette and snubs it out.

MAX

No. If you insist on smoking, I'll have to discharge you. There are people who need these beds and want to be healed. It's your choice.

Mrs. Szabo tears up.

MRS. SZABO

Can you give me a few days?

MAX

That was your last one. Let's get you back to your bed.

Max takes Mrs. Szabo by the arm and guides her away.

INT. OLD TOWN BAR - DAY

Fishbein and Miley sit at a dimly lit booth in a smoky pub with Hans Schmidt. Only Schmidt's shoulder and hands are visible. His identity is HIDDEN by the back of the booth. Miley drops the folded, TYPED ARTICLE on the table.

GEORGE MILEY

This is the article.

Fishbein picks it up and scans through it.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

I'm glad you brought this to my attention. A lot is at stake. The bill will provide 100 million dollars for cancer research.

(Beat)

We can't allow him interfere with the Senate Hearings.

Schmidt twists the AHNENERBE SIGNET RING on his right index finger, his identity still HIDDEN by the back of the booth.

GEORGE MILEY

But, that's not ethical.

Fishbein shoots Miley a hard look.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

The AMA decides which therapeutic approaches to ameliorate. a dietary approach is not in the cards.

GEORGE MILEY

But the protocols are working.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Dr. Miley, you'll find an enormous
amount of resistance if you
persist. Gerson is a quack.

REVEAL Hans Schmidt, his icy expression is fixed on Miley as
Miley drinks nervously.

HANS SCHMIDT
My company is extremely generous to
those who support our interests.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
And as you know, the Journal can
make or break careers very quickly.
I need you to go along with this.
(Beat)
You on-board?

Miley glances from one to the other, not sure what to say.

HANS SCHMIDT
You'll be rewarded handsomely for
your contributions, once the funds
are secured.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Choose wisely, George. Don't screw
this one up.

Miley nods uncomfortably.

GEORGE MILEY
Okay. What do you need me to do?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Just keep Gerson distracted until
the senate hearings are over. We
don't want him to know about it.

Schmidt grins and nods his approval to Fishbein.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - MORNING

Max nearly spills his tea as he opens the morning paper.

MAX
Gretchen, come here. Gretchen!

GRETCHEN
(concerned)
Max, what's wrong?

Max flips the paper around to show her. She's shocked.

INSERT - NEW YORK TIMES HEADLINE

**SOVIET DECLARES WAR ON JAPAN;
ATTACKS MANCHURIA, TOKYO SAYS;
ATOM BOMB LOOSED ON NAGASAKI**

MAX

We struggle with all our might to save one life, and two bombs dropped on Japanese cities have killed hundreds of thousands of people in the blink of an eye.

Gretchen's eyes well-up with tears.

GRETCHEN

There's nowhere to hide.

MAX

we'll do what is right. It's all we can do.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, KITCHEN - MORNING

The kitchen bustles with activity; cooks chop, wash and juice fruits and vegetables, and prepare the soup. Irving Fisher and Senator Pepper follow Max into the food preparation area.

MAX

This is the heart of the ward. We provide nutritious food that hasn't been contaminated with artificial fertilizers or chemical pesticides.

IRVING FISHER

In addition to the other regimens, Doctor Gerson prescribes a strict diet in lieu of medications.

MAX

Medical students are only taught to prescribe drugs. But, most pharmaceuticals cause more harm to the body than they cure.

SENATOR PEPPER

Pharmaceutical companies won't respond well to a statement like that.

MAX

I'm only saying the body has an amazing ability to restore its own equilibrium and heal itself, even the most serious diseases, if given the correct nutrients.

SENATOR PEPPER

That's a much safer statement.

Max chuckles. Then motions to all of the food preparation.

MAX

However, the difficulty in applying this treatment and keeping it up, is to many physicians and patients, a great hindrance. As you can see, it requires a lot of work.

George Miley meanders into the kitchen as they turn to leave. He pulls Max aside and speaks softly.

GEORGE MILEY

Who is that?

MAX

Senator Pepper. He's sponsoring a large cancer research bill. There may be funding available for us. And, he wants us to testify! We can talk about it later...

Miley stands in shock as Max rushes out of the kitchen.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Fisher and Pepper follow Max into Johnny Gunther's room. He looks much better: bruises have faded, his skin color seems to be back, and his eyes are bright.

MAX

Hi Johnny, how are you feeling?

JOHNNY

Hi, Doctor Max. I feel pretty good.

MAX

Good. You're looking much better. These gentlemen are just here to see what I do.

Max pulls Johnny's apron aside so he can see his chest.

MAX (CONT'D)
Your bruises are fading.

JOHNNY
I discovered a cure for tapeworms.

MAX
You did?

JOHNNY
You put the patient on the Gerson
diet and they evacuate themselves!

Senator Pepper chuckles.

MAX
Still struggling with the diet?
But, it's having its affect, isn't
it?
(to Senator Pepper)
Johnny had a part of his skull
removed to relieve the pressure
from glioblastoma.

Max turns Johnny's head to the side.

MAX (CONT'D)
The tumor has reduced in size by at
least 60 percent. He's only been on
the diet for, umm...

Max thinks about it.

JOHNNY
(exasperated)
Eleven and a half days.

The Physician is surprised.

SENATOR PEPPER
A 60 percent reduction in less than
two weeks? That's remarkable.

MAX
Our goal is to heal the entire
body, to find the root cause of
disease, not simply address the
adverse symptoms.

SENATOR PEPPER
I have to say, based on what I'm
seeing, I'm favorably impressed.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, OFFICE - EVENING

Max shuffles through files scattered on his desk as Dr. Miley relaxes and watches him.

MAX

Have you seen George Gimson's case file? I left it here on the desk. It seems to have gone missing.

Miley shakes his head.

GEORGE MILEY

No, I haven't. So, the Senator wants you to bring patients to Capital Hill?

Max stops looking and glances up at Miley.

MAX

He thought if we brought patients who have actually recovered from cancer after being diagnosed as terminally ill, the bill would stand a better chance.

Frustrated and tired, Max sits down to think.

MAX (CONT'D)

I can't find it. Not only was his recovery dramatic, but he was also diagnosed by the military.

GEORGE MILEY

Why don't you go home and get some rest. I'll look for the file. There's always tomorrow.

Max sighs as if a burden has been lifted. He nods agreement.

MAX

That sounds good. Thanks, George.

Miley dials the phone after Max leaves.

GEORGE MILEY

Morris, it's George. Gerson is definitely testifying at the hearing. He's also bringing five recovered patients.

INT. JAMA, FISHBEIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Fishbein leans against his desk with a cocktail in his hand.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Are they scheduled to testify?

INTERCUT BETWEEN MORRIS AND FISHBEIN

GEORGE MILEY
Yeah, and they had all been
diagnosed as terminally ill.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Damn it, Miley, you were supposed
to keep this from happening! We
could lose our funding!

GEORGE MILEY
I understand.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
I don't think you do!

GEORGE MILEY
I'll bring copies of Gerson's
patient files over. At least you'll
know who's coming.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
If you've screwed this up, I'll
kill you!

Fishbein slams the phone down and smashes his cocktail.

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 424 - AFTERNOON

Senator Pepper listens attentively from the center of the dais, where the FIVE CONGRESSMEN are seated, as DR. CORNELIUS RHODES, 48, a distinguished professor type, speaks passionately into a microphone during the SENATE HEARING.

DR. RHODES
There exists at this very moment,
upwards of 500,000 individuals
suffering from cancer in the United
States. Think of those who are near
and dear to them who await, with
vital interest, the course of this
bill. I don't believe that we can
dismiss these responsibilities
lightly.

SENATOR PEPPER

The purpose of this hearing is to gather information and hear expert testimonies in relation to Senate Bill 1875, which would appropriate \$100,000,000 for cancer research.

Max sits in the assembly and anxiously clutches his overstuffed briefcase. He watches the head table, where...

Fishbein leans forward in his seat, listening attentively.

DR. RHODES

Many believe money is the only important factor in finding a cure to this horrible disease, but without expert personnel, equipment and policy based on scientific experience, only bitter disillusionment can result.

SENATOR PEPPER

The bill also authorizes the president to mobilize the world's leading experts in an international endeavor to discover the means of curing and preventing cancer. Thank you for your input, Doctor Rhodes.

(Beat)

At this time, I'd like to call on the representative from the American Cancer Society, Roy Hertz.

ROY HERTZ, 50's, a representative of the American Cancer Society approaches the head table as Dr. Rhodes leaves.

ROY HERTZ

Congressmen, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

SENATOR PEPPER

Of course. Mr. Hertz, what is the American Cancer Society's position with relation to this bill?

ROY HERTZ

It's simple. Research is necessary. When it comes to war against this dreaded disease, deploying new tactics is essential. We must gather resources and end the war as quickly as possible, to save the most men from death.

SENATOR PEPPER

What research prospects do the American Cancer Society consider to be the most promising?

ROY HERTZ

We believe the answer to this critical question lies with a relatively new technology called chemotherapy, which utilizes a nitrogen mustards and folic acid to concentrate X-Ray and radiation treatments. To date, it's the only method with any proven results.

Agitated, Max shifts forward in his seat.

MAX

That's not true!

He distracts several people in the assembly. Fishbein glances over at him from the head table with a satisfied grin.

SENATOR PEPPER

From your perspective, are there other areas where medical research for cancer looks promising?

ROY HERTZ

No. There haven't been any other promising breakthroughs. It's my opinion that research should focus on advancing chemotherapy and surgical techniques.

MAX

(whispers)

They're killing patients with that technology! They kill perfectly healthy cells along with the tumors. It overloads their livers.

Gretchen tries to calm him down.

GRETCHEN

Max, you'll get your turn.

SENATOR PEPPER

Dr. Fishbein, Do you agree with that opinion?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 Yes, of course. The American
 Medical Association would agree
 with that assessment.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLUB OF WASHINGTON DC, RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Salt pours out over a 12 ounce New York Strip.

Dr. Fishbein leans over to speak with Senator Pepper, who
 enjoys the first taste of his steak.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 All of the credible medical
 journals indicate the solution to
 the cancer problem lies in
 radiation technologies.

SENATOR PEPPER
 But, aren't there are alternative
 approaches that show great promise,
 such as Doctor Gerson's therapy?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 He hasn't finished the clinical
 trials. He can't be considered
 seriously until he clears those
 hurdles. And frankly, they don't
 have the resources for it.

Dr. Fishbein cuts into his steak, victorious.

SENATOR PEPPER
 Can't the AMA help him clear those
 hurdles and perhaps, give him a
 break on the cost of the trials?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 (frustrated)
 We adhere to the laws that Congress
 has put in place! Isn't public
 safety a concern to your Committee?

SENATOR PEPPER
 Certainly, but it hardly seems
 reasonable that a healthy diet
 would be contrary to public safety.
 (Beat)
 His approach has been written up in
 several European medical journals.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Most of his articles have to do with tuberculosis. His theories are completely unproven for cancer!

(Beat)

Senator, you shouldn't undermine the integrity of this investigation by giving every quack with some unproven theory a place in the spotlight. It will turn the whole proceeding into a circus.

Fishbein eats his steak victoriously as Pepper considers it.

SENATOR PEPPER

His work is impressive. I don't think there's any harm in letting him speak.

Fishbein deflates.

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 424 - DAY

Max wrings his hands nervously at the head table.

SAMUEL MARKEL, 60's, highly-educated and formally dressed, leans forward to speak into his microphone.

SAMUEL MARKEL

I suffered from osteoarthritis, which had been pronounced incurable by several respected physicians.

SENATOR PEPPER

I see. And you credit Dr. Gerson for curing your arthritis?

SAMUEL MARKEL

Absolutely. Nothing that the other physicians prescribed had any affect whatsoever.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Excuse me, Senator, if I may...

Senator Pepper looks to Markel, who shrugs it off.

SENATOR PEPPER

Go ahead, Dr. Fishbein.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

There's no recognized cure for osteoarthritis.

(MORE)

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

The only thing physicians can do for this disease is to mitigate the pain and provide physical therapy for joint flexibility. Besides, it has nothing to do with cancer.

SAMUEL MARKEL

But Dr. Gerson healed me! I have no more pain.

Markel flexes his fingers and arms, to demonstrate it.

MAX

Osteoarthritis and cancer are both degenerative diseases and dependent upon a healthy, functioning liver in order to be cured.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

That's impossible! They're not related. There must be some other explanation.

MAX

Mr. Markel doesn't suffer from arthritis, because of my diet.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

(yells)

It's widely known throughout the medical community that there is no known cure for osteoarthritis! And, there is no cure for cancer... yet.

Markel points at Fishbein as his anger begins to boil over.

SAMUEL MARKEL

My quarrel with these gentlemen is the fact that they will immediately say such things are impossible, or the doctor is a fake, without even stopping to inquire what is being done!

SENATOR PEPPER

Gentlemen, please! I understand that you're passionate about your stated positions, but let's keep the conversation cordial. This is a Senate Hearing. Mr. Markel, do you have anything further to add?

Markel takes a deep breath to calm himself.

SAMUEL MARKEL

My interest in this matter is purely a humanitarian one, having lost my wife to cancer. I can only ask that the proposed commission be absolutely independent. It would be a calamity if anything happened to Dr. Gerson with no one left to carry on his research.

SENATOR PEPPER

Thank you, Mr. Markel.

Markel stands up and returns to the galley.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Can nutrition really be exacerbating or causing such ailments? I think not.

SENATOR PEPPER

That's precisely the question we want to address, Dr. Fishbein.

(motions to George Miley)

Dr. Miley, you've been working side by side with Dr. Gerson. What is your opinion of his research?

Miley glances nervously at Fishbein before speaking.

GEORGE MILEY

When Dr. Gerson first suggested the potential use of diet as a cure for cancer, it seemed rather fantastic to me. But I have to say, it no longer does. It's the first promising method that treats cancer as a systemic disease.

Fishbein's angry glare makes Miley uncomfortable.

SENATOR PEPPER

Would you please explain the basis of Dr. Gerson's therapy?

Miley hesitates. He's nervous.

GEORGE MILEY

Basically, it's a dietetic regimen designed to heal the liver. But, it might be better if Dr. Gerson explains it himself.

SENATOR PEPPER

Of course. Dr. Gerson, please.

Max, now focussed, moves the microphone closer. He doesn't notice Hans Schmidt step behind him to speak with Fishbein.

MAX

The diet was first developed to relieve my own severe migraines. But, after opening my practice, I discovered that it also treated lupus, tuberculosis and arthritis.

Hans Schmidt, now 60, whispers in Fishbein's ear as Max continues. He glares directly at Max.

HANS SCHMIDT

Now, he's giving us migraines.

As Max pulls papers from his briefcase, he's distracted by Schmidt and Fishbein. He's unnerved as he recognizes him.

MAX

I've prepared this report for your consideration...

SENATOR BRIDGES, 48, a Bob Hope look-alike, becomes agitated.

SENATOR BRIDGES

Does any of this have anything to do with your current cancer research at Gotham Hospital?

Max steps forward to hand copies to each committee member.

MAX

Yes, Senator, it's Case Histories of Ten Cancer Patients, Clinical Observations, Theoretical Considerations and a Summary.

Fishbein leans forward and grabs the microphone.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Excuse me, Senators, Congressmen, something urgent has come up. I need to step out for a few minutes.

SENATOR PEPPER

Certainly, Doctor.

(to Max)

(MORE)

SENATOR PEPPER (CONT'D)
 Dr. Gerson, speaking of case histories, I understand you have patients prepared to testify to the effectiveness of your therapy.

Fishbein follows Schmidt out of the chambers.

MAX
 Yes, five patients who were pronounced terminally ill by their primary physicians.

SENATOR BRIDGES
 Can you please introduce the first patient?

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, HALLWAY - DAY

Schmidt points at the FINANCIAL REPORT Fishbein holds as they walk down the hall.

HANS SCHMIDT
 This report summarizes the possible fiscal impact if Gerson's diet becomes actually public knowledge.

Fishbein flips through several charts.

HANS SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
 Entire industries would be decimated: tobacco, alcohol, food processing, pharmaceuticals, hospitals, surgeons, medical supplies.

Schmidt motions to himself.

HANS SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
 Industries that fund political campaigns and provide for research.
 (Beat)
 We can't afford to let this happen.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
 What should I do?

Schmidt stares directly into Fishbein's eyes.

HANS SCHMIDT
 (yells)
 Anything necessary!
 (Beat)
 (MORE)

HANS SCHMIDT (CONT'D)

We've arranged for a social after the hearing. That report needs to get in front of the Senators and they need to understand it.

(Beat)

One other thing, I got the American Cancer Society to publish this.

Schmidt hands Fishbein a paper. He peruses it and grins.

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 424 - AFTERNOON

Max looks tired. His tie is pushed to the side.

MAX

When Mr. Gimson first came to see me, his basal cell carcinoma had metastasized and grown from the base of his skull into his brain. It was inoperable. Army physicians refused deep X-ray therapy, which is very dangerous to the brain. His face was severely swollen. His left eye was entirely closed and he could barely see with the right.

GEORGE GIMSON, 26, stands stoically in his pressed military uniform, looking completely healthy.

SENATOR PEPPER

Mr. Gimson, when did you first see Dr. Gerson, and what did he do differently than the Army's doctors?

Fishbein enters the room and returns to the head table.

GEORGE GIMSON

I went to Doctor Gerson after the Army told me I was going to die. Doctor Gerson gave me this book.

Gimson holds up a yellow booklet.

GEORGE GIMSON (CONT'D)

I just did what it said and I was cured.

Fishbein grabs a microphone.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Excuse me, but you can't claim to be cured of cancer unless you've survived five years beyond the date of the cure. How long has your cancer been in remission?

GEORGE GIMSON

Four and a half years.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Gentlemen, I have new information for you to consider.

Fishbein approaches the dais to deliver the American Cancer Society's report. He hands one out to each committee member.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

This is a published list by the American Cancer Society of Unproven Therapies. Dr. Gerson's therapy is included in that list. He claims to have cured cancer without any form of acceptable evidence!

MAX

I have not claimed to have cured cancer, only to have healed my patients!

SENATOR PEPPER

Gentlemen, please! Dr. Fishbein, you are out of order.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

I apologize, Senator, but that information is critical to the committee's investigation.

SENATOR PEPPER

Thank you, Dr. Fishbein, we will take it into consideration.

Fishbein glares at Max as he returns to his seat.

SENATOR PEPPER (CONT'D)

I'd like to thank Dr. Gerson's patients for testifying today.

(Beat)

Dr. Gerson, let me ask you one final question. Do you favor the objectives of this bill?

MAX

All physicians must have money for research. The most important thing in medicine is research.

Pepper notices RAYMOND GRAM SWING, 60's, a flashy radio announcer with greying blonde hair, wave his hand.

SENATOR PEPPER

Mr. Swing, would you care to comment?

People nearby shift to see if it's really Swing. Further back in the audience, a person stands up to get a look at him.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

I would, Senator, but I can only speak as a layman.

SENATOR PEPPER

Of course, please come forward.

(to the Court Reporter)

Raymond Gram Swing is recognized as a distinguished radio commentator.

Several people in the assembly lean forward or stand up to see Swing as he approaches the head table. A flash bulb pops off, then another. Swing is given a microphone.

SENATOR PEPPER (CONT'D)

Go ahead, Mr. Swing.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

This bill is one of the most encouraging expressions of intelligent democracy I've seen.

(Beat)

I was a patient of Dr. Gerson and am delighted, Senator, that you have had the courage to bring the doctor here with some of his patients. His work is inspired and I hope that this bill gets the full approval of Congress.

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 424 - MOMENTS LATER

Senator Pepper shakes Max's hand after the hearing.

SENATOR PEPPER

Dr. Gerson, thank you so much for your participation. I have high expectations for this bill.

MAX

It was an honor to be here,
Senator. I was glad to do it.

SENATOR PEPPER

Would you mind joining me? I've
arranged for a press conference,
and I'm certain that the press
corps will want to hear from you.

Max looks to Gretchen, who nods excitedly.

SENATOR PEPPER (CONT'D)

Good. Let's go close this deal!

Pepper motions for Max and Gretchen to lead.

INT. RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING, PRESS ROOM - AFTERNOON

Senator Pepper follows Max and Gretchen into the press room,
followed by Raymond Swing. ONE FLASH BULB goes off.

There's one PHOTOGRAPHER and one NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST seated
in the empty room.

NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST

Excuse me, Senator Pepper, am I in
the correct location for the news
conference?

SENATOR PEPPER

Yes, you are. At least, I thought
so.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Something fishy is going on!

SENATOR PEPPER

Let me go see what's happening.
It's strange that nobody is here.

Senator Pepper rushes out in a panic.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLUB OF WASHINGTON DC - NIGHT

Senators, reporters and businessmen crowd the fashionable
night club.

Schmidt crosses the room with LARRY WEBSTER, 50s, who has a
comb-over and Cuban cigar hanging out of his mouth. Webster
interrupts Senator Bridges, who is speaking with Dr. Fishbein
and Dr. Miley, and holding the FINANCIAL REPORT in his hands.

SENATOR BRIDGES

Larry, good to see you again. It's been a while.

Senator Bridges reaches over to shake Larry's hand.

LARRY WEBSTER

Since your last campaign.

Larry turns and blows cigar smoke into Fishbein's face.

SENATOR BRIDGES

This is Dr. Morris Fishbein, president of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Larry barely nods to him.

LARRY WEBSTER

Tell me, Doctor, if this Gerson fellow can really cure cancer without surgery or radiation treatment, what does that say for the medical profession?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Healing someone whom the experts have already declared incurable has always been politically dangerous.

The men laugh.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

If he cures disease with diets, he'll break our backs. He'll put us out of work.

HANS SCHMIDT

The entire pharmaceutical industry would be thrown into a state of crisis.

LARRY WEBSTER

Senator, I'm sure I don't need to explain what would happen if you were to publicize that tobacco causes cancer. The entire industry would be extremely upset.

GEORGE MILEY

I suppose the same would be true of the alcohol industry.

HANS SCHMIDT
That's precisely right.

Webster grabs the FINANCIAL REPORT that Bridges is holding.

LARRY WEBSTER
Senator, the numbers in this
represent hundreds of millions of
dollars and hundreds of thousands
of jobs. Don't screw this up!

Webster smacks Bridges forehead with the report and hands it
back to him before leaving.

As Bridges regains his composure, Fishbein whispers to Miley.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Now, you understand.

Fishbein puts his hand on Miley's shoulder and squeezes.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
Stop him before I have to stop you.

Miley squirms with pain.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - EVENING

Max leans over next to the radio during Swing's show.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING (V.O.)
Senate Bill 1875 would provide 100
million dollars of federal funding
for cancer research! And, after the
Senate hearings that I personally
testified at yesterday, I have
great hope that a cure for this
dreaded disease will be announced
soon.

MAX
Gretchen, Mr. Swing is talking
about the Senate hearings. Come in
here, quickly!

Gretchen enters the room, wiping her hands on her apron.

GRETCHEN
Is he going to call?

Max nods. The phone is next to him.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING (V.O.)

To say that Dr. Gerson has cured cancer with a dietary treatment is medically impermissible; There must be five years without recurrence before such a statement would be allowed. But, people are being healed!

As Swing speaks, Gretchen gets excited.

GRETCHEN

Max, this is the break you've been waiting for! The world is going to know about your therapy.

Gretchen leans over and hugs Max.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

I'm so proud of you.

INT. RADIO STATION, RECORDING BOOTH - EVENING

Raymond Swing is "ON AIR;" he's excited. As he speaks, he looks over to his ENGINEER in the OUTER BOOTH.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Dr. Gerson has shown me hundreds of case studies. He's cured migraines, arthritis, tuberculosis and many other diseases, but he's only documented his cancer research for four and a half years.

The ENGINEER gives him the thumbs up as he speaks.

INT. RADIO STATION, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A panicked EXECUTIVE, 60s, rushes down the hall.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING (V.O.)

Yesterday, I had the great pleasure of meeting some of Dr. Gerson's cancer patients. They all had the same story; they didn't find a cure with traditional medical practices, but by changing their diet and stopping a few bad habits, like drinking and smoking, their cancer was miraculously cured!

EXECUTIVE
 Son of a bitch!

The Executive charges through a door.

INT. RADIO STATION, OUTER BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

The phone banks are lit up. A PRODUCER, late 30's, frantically tries to answer phones.

PRODUCER
 This is the Raymond Swing show, can you hold please?

The Executive bursts into the outer booth.

EXECUTIVE
 Get that dip stick off the air!

PRODUCER
 Why? What's going on?

EXECUTIVE
 Our advertisers are hacked off. He's telling our audience that their products are causing cancer.
 (Beat)
 What the hell are you thinking?

PRODUCER
 Our ratings must be spiking! Look at the phone banks. Everybody wants to talk with Dr. Gerson.

All of the phone lines are lit up.

EXECUTIVE
 Get him off the air, now!

PRODUCER
 Cut to break!

The Producer motions to cut through the glass at Raymond Swing, who is distracted by the chaos in the outer booth.

INT. RADIO STATION, RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Raymond Swing watches the Executive frantically motion to cut. The Producer shrugs as he motions to cut.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

I went to see Dr. Gerson for severe cramps after traditional treatments failed. It almost ended my career. But, after only 6 weeks on the Gerson Diet, the cramps were gone and I was back at work! Personally, I hope this bill gets the full approval of Congress.

(Beat)

It's now time for a station break. We'll be back right after this for the rest of the Raymond Swing Show.

The Engineer give him the thumbs up.

INT. RADIO STATION, OUTER BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Swing charges into the outer booth as the advertisements play in the background.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

What's going on here? You're disrupting my show!

EXECUTIVE

You need to retract everything you just said about those Senate hearings.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Why? I was there. It's all true.

EXECUTIVE

You told our listeners that our advertiser's products cause cancer. Retract it!

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

What advertisers?

EXECUTIVE

Camel and Kellogg's, to name two. And, they're not the only ones! I need you to retract everything you just said about Gerson's testimony.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

I've been reporting news for this station for thirty years. And now, you don't trust me?

EXECUTIVE

It's not about trust. Retract it or you're fired.

Swing slowly realizes what's really going on.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

You're censoring me? You can't do that!

PRODUCER

We're back on the air in 15.

EXECUTIVE

You're fired; get out of here!

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - EVENING

Max listens to the radio intently as the commercial ends. A SPORTS COMMENTATOR comes on.

SPORTS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

It's a hot one in Boston today at the sold out All-Star Game. Ted Williams is up to bat. Here's the pitch. Williams swings.

Max quickly adjusts the radio as Gretchen comes back into the room, but he can't find the Raymond Swing show.

SPORTS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

It's a hard line drive down the first base line. He rounds first. The throw won't be in time. Williams slides into second for a double... and the American League has men on second and third. They're in scoring position for the first time today!

GRETCHEN

Did they just stop broadcasting the show?

Max nods slowly. He switches the radio off.

MAX

That's unusual.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Senator Pepper hunches over, his arms hang at his side.

SENATOR PEPPER

They redacted your testimony along with the testimony of all of your patients. The bill was squashed.

(Beat)

I'm sorry Dr. Gerson. There's nothing I can do.

Agitated, Max shuffles files on his desk as he speaks.

MAX

Do you need more documentation? I have dozens of other cases.

SENATOR PEPPER

No, you've done everything you can.

MAX

I don't understand. It went so well. You even said so yourself!

Senator Pepper stands up.

SENATOR PEPPER

I know, but... let's just say it was decided that the money would be better spent elsewhere. I'm sorry, Max. I really wanted this to work.

As if on cue, George Miley knocks on the open door.

GEORGE MILEY

Am I interrupting?

SENATOR PEPPER

No. We're done here.

(to Max)

Perhaps it'll come back around at some point. I'll show myself out.

MAX

I understand. Thank you, Senator.

Miley steps in and sits across from Max after the Senator leaves.

GEORGE MILEY

I heard what happened.

(Beat)

This isn't going to bode well with the foundation. They had high hopes for that Senate bill.

MAX

I think I'm going to be sick.

Max sits down and buries his head in his palms.

GEORGE MILEY

There's more bad news. Dr. Traeger insisted that Johnny Gunther be given hormones to strengthen his immune system.

MAX

We mustn't give the patient a 'little something' for temporary relief. It does too much damage.

GEORGE MILEY

Traeger convinced his father that Johnny was being cured because of his previous radiation treatments. I've been directed to administer the shot.

MAX

I won't take such risks with the life of this boy!

GEORGE MILEY

The Board of Directors has already backed him on his decision. I've already taken it to them.

MAX

And, you didn't consult with me? I'm his physician!

GEORGE MILEY

I tried to intervene, but it is the parent's decision. Sorry.

MAX

But, Johnny has been making such promising progress...

Max chokes up.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

Max peruses Johnny Gunther's clipboard as George Miley prepares a hormone shot.

JOHNNY

You fixed my brain, Doc. The bump is gone and I applied to Harvard!

MAX

That's great Johnny. So, I guess your parents had a conversation with Dr. Traeger about giving you a hormone shot.

JOHNNY

Yeah, my other doctor said we had to put my hormones back together. Said it would help me feel better.

MAX

How do you feel?

JOHNNY

As good as a guy with brain cancer can feel, I guess.

Dr. Miley takes a seat right next to Johnny.

GEORGE MILEY

Why don't you give me your arm?

Dr. Miley administers the shot.

INT. GOTHAM HOSPITAL, OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Dr. Fisher knocks on Max's open door.

IRVING FISHER

Hi Max, are you okay?

MAX

I'm fine. I'm not happy about the situation with Johnny Gunther. And, I keep trying to get my research published, but none of the medical journals accept them. It seems like everyone is against me.

IRVING FISHER

I'm sorry. But, I've got some more bad news. Do you have a minute?

MAX

Of course.

Dr. Fisher slumps into a chair across from Max and drops a copy of the Journal of the American Medical Association on his desk, with a bookmark inserted in the middle of it.

IRVING FISHER
Have you seen this yet?

Deflated, Max opens it to the marked page.

MAX
No, but I'm guessing that it's not favorable.

Dr. Fisher shakes his head.

INSERT - JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ARTICLE

CANCER AND THE NEED FOR FACTS
Frauds and Fables - Dietary Treatment

Max scans the article.

MAX (CONT'D)
I can't believe they published this! They've seen my results and know that it's more effective than traditional cures.

IRVING FISHER
The hospital has been under tremendous pressure and scrutiny to have you removed.

MAX
But Irving, look what it says...
(reads)
"There is no scientific evidence whatsoever to indicate that modifications in the dietary intake of food or other nutritional essential are of any specific value in the control of cancer."
(to Fisher)
You know that isn't true. Here's the scientific evidence! The result at the sickbed is decisive, not some stupid magazine article.

Max takes a stack of files and slams them down on the middle of his desk.

MAX (CONT'D)

They don't want me to cure cancer!
It's sinister.

Fisher measures his next words carefully.

IRVING FISHER

The board instructed me to inform
you that the cancer research ward
will be closed. There's nothing
more I can do. I'm sorry, Max.

Max chokes back tears as Fisher leaves.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Max wanders around aimlessly in his pajamas and a robe.

GRETCHEN

You can't just mope around in your
pajamas for weeks on end.

Gretchen sets the table for guests.

MAX

Why not?

GRETCHEN

We've had to start over at least a
half dozen times. Just because
Gotham closed the cancer ward...

Infuriated, Max rants.

MAX

The American Medical Association
calls me a fraud and just like
that, it's over, without
consideration for results!

(Beat)

My life's work means nothing.

GRETCHEN

It means everything! Don't just get
mad about it, Do something.

MAX

What do you expect me to do? Nobody
wants to cure cancer! They're more
concerned about their jobs or
research money or... something
else.

Max storms away and slams the door to their bedroom.

Gretchen takes a deep breath. Tears well-up in her eyes.

EXT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

As Gretchen fetches the mail, a car pulls up. John Gunther steps out of his car, looking a little dazed.

JOHN GUNTHER

Hi, Mrs. Gerson.

GRETCHEN

Mr. Gunther, how are you doing?
How's Johnny?

Mr. Gunther's eyes well up with tears. He can't speak.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

(suddenly concerned)

Let's go inside. I'll get you some
tea.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Max, John Gunther and Gretchen sit in the front room with hot tea. Max is dressed, but dishevelled. John fights back tears.

JOHN GUNTHER

He graduated from high school, and
was even accepted to Harvard. He
was a smart kid.

(regathers himself)

I should have listened to you. As
soon as they changed his diet and
put him back on the hormone shots,
the tumor returned. I didn't
understand what was happening.

John's tears flow freely.

GRETCHEN

You did what you thought was the
right thing for him.

Max is deeply troubled.

MAX

I should have stopped them from
giving him the hormone shot.

John shakes his head.

JOHN GUNTHER

No, I would have demanded it. They convinced me that it wasn't your therapy that cured him, but it was.

John gathers himself. Eventually, he stands up.

JOHN GUNTHER (CONT'D)

I won't take any more of your time.

(Beat)

You gave us an extra year with our son and I just wanted to thank you.

Max follows him to the door. He pats him on the back.

MAX

I'm sorry for your loss... Gretchen and I are praying for your family.

JOHN GUNTHER

Thank you, Doctor.

Max closes the door behind him and sighs heavily. He steps back inside to sit with Gretchen.

MAX

I could have saved him.

Tears form in Max's eyes.

GRETCHEN

Mr. Gunther just told you that you couldn't have changed his mind. It's not your fault, Max.

MAX

But, I was his physician.

Max stands up and heads toward the front door.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'm going for a walk. I have to clear my mind. I don't know what to do anymore.

Gretchen closes her eyes as if in prayer. She sighs.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - AFTERNOON

Max meanders down a sidewalk along a busy residential street, the weight of the world on his shoulders. He steps on a sticky wrapper and stops to pull it off his shoe.

When Max tosses the wrapper on the ground, he notices one ant separate from the rest of the line and head directly toward the wrapper. He watches it for a moment.

Max continues to the corner with several other pedestrians and arrives as the light turns red. A PEDESTRIAN, 20s, shoves his way through the crowd.

PEDESTRIAN

Excuse me. On your left. Pardon me.

The Pedestrian sees the red light, looks both ways and darts across the street, against the red light.

Across the street, a PEACE OFFICER, leans against a building with a MORTON'S SALT AD painted on the side. Astonished, he watches the Pedestrian dodge traffic and rush past him.

PEACE OFFICER

Hey buddy, watch it! No jay walking!

Max grins and starts to match the pedestrian's gait, but suddenly becomes introspective. He's deep in thought as he absentmindedly steps off the curb against the red light.

A DRIVER in an OLD JALOPY attempts to make the light as Max steps out in front of him. He honks his horn, but it's too late. He hits Max and hits him. He jumps out.

DRIVER

He never even looked!

The Peace Officer rushes across the street to assist. He checks Max's pulse.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

I had the light, Officer. You saw it. Didn't you? My brakes ain't good and he just jumped right out in front of me!

PEACE OFFICER

He's dead.

The Driver freezes, scared to death.

The Peace Officer commandeers a taxi stuck in the cross traffic. He yells at the TAXI DRIVER, 20s.

PEACE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Hey you, Taxi! You're taking a passenger to the morgue.

He opens the back door of the taxi and walks over to Max.

TAXI DRIVER
To the morgue!? Hey wait...

PEACE OFFICER
(to Driver)
Help me out here!

DRIVER
Am I going to jail? I honked! I
just couldn't stop in time.

The Driver and the Peace Officer pick Max's body up and lay it in the back seat.

PEACE OFFICER
Help me get him into the taxi!
(to Taxi Driver)
Tell them I'll be down there as
soon as I finish up with this guy.

TAXI DRIVER
Who's paying for the fare?

PEACE OFFICER
This one's on you. Get outta here!

The Peace Officer slams the door.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The Taxi Driver punches it. He's scared to death.

TAXI DRIVER
There's a dead body in my car.

The Taxi Driver slams on the brakes at the next light.

Max regains consciousness and sits up in the back seat. He's sore, but reaches over and taps the Taxi Driver's shoulder.

MAX
Where are you taking me?

TAXI DRIVER
Holy shit! To the morgue.

The Taxi Driver lunges forward, then looks over his shoulder.

MAX
Why?

TAXI DRIVER
You're dead.

MAX
Well, I'm not. Can you please take
me directly to my home?
(sotto)
Directly to the home.

Max rubs a bloody wound on his head as he looks at a Morton's
salt ad on a building.

TAXI DRIVER
You paying the fare?

MAX
Of course. It's on Park Avenue.

TAXI DRIVER
Well, I'm glad you're not dead.

MAX
Me too.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - EVENING

Max storms into the foyer.

MAX
Gretchen! Gretchen, where are you?

Gretchen runs into the foyer.

GRETCHEN
What's wrong? What's going on?

MAX
When it rains, it keeps pouring.

Confused, Gretchen tries to understand, but has nothing.

MAX (CONT'D)
If the candy is somewhere else, you
blaze a new trail to it, like ants.

GRETCHEN
What? You're not making any sense.
(Beat)
Do you have blood on your head?

Max stops her from trying to tend to his wound.

MAX

Probably. I actually know where the hazards are. I can avoid the obstacles, even if I have to go against the red lights! I just needed a plan.

GRETCHEN

And you have a plan?

MAX

Yes. I can't get the medical establishment to take my work seriously, so I'll take it directly to the people. I'll write a book.

Gretchen suddenly realizes what he's talking about.

GRETCHEN

That's a wonderful idea.

MAX

People don't care about the medical industry, they care about results. The case studies are my proof.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Gretchen looks at Max apprehensively.

MAX (CONT'D)

Are you expecting someone?

GRETCHEN

A realtor.

MAX

What for?

GRETCHEN

I want to talk about opening a sanatorium, like we did in Bielefeld. Go clean your head.

Gretchen shuffles Max toward their room.

MAX

Why didn't you just say something?

GRETCHEN

I was afraid that you would say no before you heard my proposal.

Gretchen opens the front door after Max heads down the hall.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)
Hi, thank you for coming.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT - NIGHT

Max is a little dishevelled as he shuffles through photos of real estate properties. A REALTOR, 30's, helps Gretchen build a case for a new sanatorium.

REALTOR
I believe there would be room for 20 patients. And, there is ample space for offices and guests.

GRETCHEN
You could write your book and continue your work.

REALTOR
There's also a huge kitchen and pantry which would be perfect for preparing meals for patients.

Max leans back in his chair, overwhelmed.

GRETCHEN
Max, we've done this before.

MAX
I don't expect that we would have any trouble filling the beds.

GRETCHEN
And it's a lovely property, a place where people could truly heal.

Max leans forward. He's re-engaged.

MAX
Okay. Where is this place?

REALTOR
Nanuet. About five miles west of the Hudson, near Spring Valley.

MAX
Well, I suppose we should take a look at it.

Gretchen's eyes sparkle as she smiles at Max.

EXT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC - AFTERNOON

Max, Gretchen and the Realtor stand in the driveway, in front of the lovely, three story building, which is surrounded by spacious lawns and tall trees. A smaller building is connected by a breezeway.

MAX

This could actually work.

Max smiles and hugs Gretchen. She's relieved.

GRETCHEN

We can get the patients out of the city. But, it's still close enough.

Gretchen winks at the Realtor as Max rushes toward the door.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC - MORNING

Max opens the door. Standing before him is George Miley.

MAX

Hi George, thank you for coming.
Please, come in.

Miley scans the entrance as Gretchen arranges the furniture and decor in the front room.

GEORGE MILEY

It's certainly a lovely piece of property you've found.

MAX

There's room for 18 patients, and every room has a private bath, which of course is necessary for detoxification.

(Beat)

Let me show you around.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, KITCHEN - MORNING

A NURSE cleans and organizes the large, spacious kitchen. She stops, not sure what to do when Max and Miley enter.

GEORGE MILEY

There's plenty of space for all the food preparation.

Max opens the door to the pantry.

MAX

The pantry is large enough to run a restaurant.

(Beat)

George, I'd like you to come on staff and help with the clinical trials. I intend to write a book about the therapy and go directly to the public with it. But, I need help.

Miley is taken aback. He doesn't know what to say.

MAX (CONT'D)

We could prove that nutritional protocols cure cancer!

GEORGE MILEY

I don't know what to say.

MAX

George, You'd be a great asset. At least, think about it.

Max pats Miley on the back as they leave the kitchen.

INT. UPSCALE MANHATTAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

George Miley, Senator Bridges and Morris Fishbein converse intently around a table, drinking cocktails.

GEORGE MILEY

I thought he was out of the picture when the Gotham ward shut down. But now, he's offered me a job.

Senator Bridges looks skeptically at Fishbein.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Doing what?

GEORGE MILEY

He's opening a cancer treatment facility in Nanuet.

Senator Bridges nods at Miley, while addressing Fishbein.

SENATOR BRIDGES

I thought you said he was an ally.

GEORGE MILEY

I am. I've convinced the medical review board at Gotham to publish a report, indicating that the Gerson therapy provided no significant improvements for cancer patients.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

He's also intercepted a number of Gerson's case studies, which were supposed to be distributed to much of the medical establishment.

SENATOR BRIDGES

And he's still offering you a job?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

He's naive, Senator. He has no idea what he's up against.

(to Miley)

George, you've got to accept that job he offered you!

GEORGE MILEY

Why would I do that?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

What better way to keep tabs on him? Distract him, or... whatever. You'll be able to manage him.

Senator Bridges laughs. Lifts his drink for a toast.

SENATOR BRIDGES

The devil is in the details.

(Beat)

The new bill will appropriate funds specifically for radiation and chemotherapy research. We have to keep Gerson out of it.

Miley is uncomfortable as they clink their glasses together.

INT. NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, ELEVATOR - EVENING

Max fidgets with his brief case. Gretchen is at his side.

GRETCHEN

Why didn't you make an appointment?

MAX

There's no harm in stopping in. It's close to the radio station.

(MORE)

MAX (CONT'D)

(Beat)

If you surprise these guys, they don't have time to prepare an argument against you.

GRETCHEN

But Max, it doesn't mean they're going to publish your work.

The elevator door opens.

MAX

If I can just meet with him, I'm sure he'll see the value in it.

INT. NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, RECEPTION - EVENING

Max and Gretchen approach the receptionist's counter.

MAX

I'm here to see Dr. Kaiser.

The RECEPTIONIST searches her appointment book.

RECEPTIONIST

Did you schedule an appointment?

Gretchen shoots Max an 'I told you so' expression.

MAX

No, but this should only take a few minutes.

RECEPTIONIST

It's five o'clock on a Friday afternoon.

MAX

I know, but I have an interview on the Long John Nebel show in an hour. It's right down the street.

RECEPTIONIST

Dr. Kaiser doesn't take walk-in appointments. He's a very busy man.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER, a short, Jewish doctor in his late 40's, rounds the corner next to the Receptionist's desk.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER

I'll see you next week, Rachel.

The Receptionist points awkwardly at Max.

RECEPTIONIST

This couple is here to see you,
Doctor, but I've told them they
need to schedule an appointment.

MAX

It won't take long.

Dr. Kaiser sighs, and after a moment, nods toward his office.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER

C'mon, let's see what you have.

Max shoots Gretchen a 'told you so' expression.

INT. NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, KAISER'S OFFICE - EVENING

Kaiser motions to chairs as he sits down behind his desk.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER

Please, have a seat. What may I do
for you...?

Kaiser realizes that he doesn't know Max's name.

MAX

Dr. Max Gerson. I've been
researching nutritional therapies
for the treatment of cancer.

Kaiser immediately recognizes Max's work.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER

The article in the AMA journal was
rather unfortunate. Dr. Fishbein
says that you're a quack.

MAX

That's why I've brought these
documented case histories. They
demonstrate the effectiveness of my
protocols.

Kaiser opens the first case file.

MAX (CONT'D)

That's actually Gretchen's, my
wife's file.

GRETCHEN

I developed breast cancer at
exactly the same age as my mother,
who succumbed to it in 1926.

Kaiser breathes a sigh of relief.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER
That probably wasn't even cancer.

MAX
The others are well-documented terminal cancer cases with reports, X-rays and treatments by respected physicians. They've all been healed.

Kaiser pours over the files for quite some time.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER
Well, sometimes you European refugees come to America and simply want to make a splash. So, you go ahead and apparently, cure cancer.

MAX
I should make it clear to you that I'm not looking for money from the National Cancer Institute. I'm only asking that NCI review the therapy and give it careful consideration.
(Beat)
Further research is warranted.

GRETCHEN
You just said yourself that he apparently cured cancer.

MAX
The medical establishment has been telling me that it's not possible to cure cancer. I say it is possible, and I do it!

With all the files spread across his desk, Kaiser resigns.

DR. RAYMOND KAISER
Five case studies aren't enough to make any kind of decision. We'll need at least 25 more cases to evaluate the treatment.

Max and Gretchen are both excited.

MAX
Certainly. I understand. It wouldn't take me much time to put those together. Thank you, Doctor.

Max jumps up and reaches across the desk to shake hands.

EXT. NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE - EVENING

Max and Gretchen emerge from the building, excited.

GRETCHEN

You did it, Max. I can't believe it! They're going to evaluate your therapy!

Gretchen kisses Max.

MAX

It's finally going to be recognized for what it is.

GRETCHEN

It will take the pressure off.

They walk hand-in-hand down the street.

INT. WOR RADIO STATION, RECORDING BOOTH - NIGHT

Gretchen watches from the outer booth as LONG JOHN NEBEL, 45, blonde, energetic and sporting black, horned-rimmed glasses, interviews Max. Both are wearing headsets.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

We're back with Dr. Max Gerson, who heals cancer patients through diet. Now, Dr. Gerson, I understand that you have been strongly criticized for your approach to curing this horrific disease.

MAX

Yes, I've found that new ideas and unorthodox methods are often rejected by traditionalists, who are only interested in protecting their own professional turf.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

You're talking about corruption in the medical industry! Is that a widespread disease in and of itself?

Max shifts uncomfortably.

MAX

Those are strong words.

(Beat)

The fact that I get good clinical results is undeniable. But, if a cancer patient comes into my care, after being sent home by a large hospital to die, and I heal him after the orthodox method have failed... then disfavor and enmity from other physicians increases.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

But, you're only using natural methods. You're not selling a product. This is amazing!

MAX

Only natural methods can bring about healing. Our bodies will heal themselves if we give them the proper nutrients to work with.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

If your diet works, then why hasn't your work ever been published?

MAX

It's been published extensively in Europe, but not here. The Medical Society, the American Medical Association and various medical journals have all sent committees to investigate my methods... five times so far.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

And?

MAX

Nothing ever comes of it.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

Buried! They don't want you to cure cancer. Unbelievable! Is this the way the medical profession works?

MAX

There was a Hungarian physician, Dr. Ignaz Semmelweiss, who was hounded out of the medical profession for daring to suggest that surgeons should wash their hands and change their robes between dissections of cadavers and their work in the delivery room with mothers and infants. Today, it's common practice. New ideas deserve to be explored.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

You, no doubt, have made enemies! You don't allow patients to smoke, drink, or consume canned foods. I'm not even sure our own advertisers would approve of it. Wow!

Nebel laughs.

MAX

I didn't create the diet to make friends, but to cure cancer.

LONG JOHN NEBEL

Well said. Folks, that was Dr. Max Gerson of the Oakland Manor Cancer Clinic. If you're one of the millions of people suffering from cancer, I suggest you look him up.

(Beat)

This is the Long John Nebel Show, and I'll be back, right after this station break!

John Nebel reaches over and shakes Max's hand.

LONG JOHN NEBEL (CONT'D)

That was great!

Gretchen claps excitedly as the session wraps up.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - DAY

Max moves a stack of case files from his desk onto the small, crowded table where Gretchen is typing; she's buried.

MAX

This makes 20. I only need five more case studies. Can you do that for me?

Frustrated, Gretchen stops suddenly.

GRETCHEN

Max, don't I have enough on my plate already!?

Max is dumbfounded.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Between the paperwork, the filing, trying to publish your papers and overseeing the kitchen operation, and everything else... I can't keep up with all of this! And now you want me to figure out what other case studies you should submit?

MAX

It's only five more case studies.

GRETCHEN

Max!

Gretchen is at wit's end. She's about to cry.

MAX

I'm sorry. You're right, my love. Maybe I should hire a secretary.

Gretchen nods her head.

GRETCHEN

That would be good.

Max kisses her forehead, tenderly.

MAX

Why don't you place an ad in the newspaper? I've got to check on the patients.

Max walks out, leaving Gretchen with another task.

INT. UPSCALE MANHATTAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Dr. Morris Fishbein and Hans Schmidt talk quietly in a private booth, drinking cocktails.

HANS SCHMIDT

Do you realize what that would do to pharmaceutical sales if his protocols were readily available?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
It wouldn't just impact
pharmaceuticals.

HANS SCHMIDT
If people found out that he cures
cancer the way he cured my wife,
he'd put us all out of business.
The whole industry would suffer.

Fishbein suppresses his shock.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
He cured your wife of cancer?

HANS SCHMIDT
She had a relapse several years
later and died.
(Beat)
Just put a lid on him; shut him up!
We're not paying you for nothing.

Fishbein chuckles; he motions for Schmidt to tone it down.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Keep it down. You're unbelievable.

HANS SCHMIDT
He's like cancer. He just keeps
coming back for more.
(Beat)
Why can't you revoke his medical
license?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
There would have to be a hearing. A
jury would see right through it.

Fishbein slowly realizes the potential in that idea.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
But, there may be an immediate
course of action we can take. We
did make his testimony at the
Senate hearing disappear... 'Poof.'

HANS SCHMIDT
Make him disappear... 'Poof!'

Fishbein takes a moment to absorb it.

INT. JAMA, RECEPTION AREA - MORNING

Dr. Fishbein walks past the receptionist's desk with his head buried in a newspaper.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Morning, Ellen.

Ellen Smith watches him not notice her as he passes.

ELLEN SMITH
Good morning, Doctor. Your coffee
is on your desk.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Thank you.

Fishbein disappears into his office.

INT. JAMA, FISHBEIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Fishbein settles in, reading the paper. He sits, reaches for his coffee and sips it, without glancing up. He sets his coffee down, lays the paper out on the desk and circles an ad, then hits the intercom button on his phone.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Ellen, can you come here, please?

Ellen steps in with a note pad in hand.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
Please, have a seat.

Concerned, she takes a chair at Fishbein's desk.

ELLEN SMITH
Is there a problem?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
No, there's no problem, just a
proposition.
(Beat)
I was wondering if you would like
to take a job working alongside Dr.
Miley.

ELLEN SMITH
Am I being fired?

Fishbein leans forward.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

You don't understand. You'll still have your job here at the journal, but I want you to apply for this secretarial job with Dr. Gerson. George Miley is working with him.

Fishbein slides the newspaper ad in front of Ellen.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

You'll receive two paychecks. One from him and one from me, but your presence there will enable us to keep tabs on Dr. Gerson's research and clinical trials.

ELLEN SMITH

That seems unethical.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

The American Medical Association is very interested in seeing his research advanced, and if there's anything we can do to help him along the way, I'd like to make sure we are in a position to do so. That's why your presence there would be so important. It's for the advancement of health care.

ELLEN SMITH

It's a very noble cause.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

The only thing is... is that Dr. Gerson can't know you are working for the AMA, because that would be unethical for him. We need to keep it undercover to protect him.

Ellen smiles; she's excited by the idea of it.

ELLEN SMITH

Oh, this is exciting!

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC - DAY

Dr. George Miley puts his arm around Ellen Smith as he guides her toward Max's office.

GEORGE MILEY

I spoke with Dr. Fishbein last night.

(MORE)

GEORGE MILEY (CONT'D)
We probably shouldn't let Dr.
Gerson know that we already have a
professional working relationship.
It will help to keep things on the
up and up.

ELLEN SMITH
(whispers)
I understand. Mum's the word!

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - DAY

Max peruses Ellen's resume as she and Gretchen wait.

GRETCHEN
How fast do you type?

ELLEN SMITH
I've never been officially timed.

Max looks up from the resume.

MAX
But you consider yourself a typist?

ELLEN SMITH
I answered the advertisement,
didn't I?

Max looks back down at the resume.

MAX
It appears that you're familiar
with medical terminology.

ELLEN SMITH
Yes, my whole career has been in
the medical industry.

Max sets the resume down.

MAX
I've decided to write a book about
my protocols to heal cancer. Your
responsibilities will include
research and compiling case files.
Are you comfortable with that?

ELLEN SMITH
Absolutely. I've done quite a bit
of that. It's exciting work, sir.

Gretchen smiles; she's pleased with Ellen and speaks to Max.

GRETCHEN

I think she'll work out just fine.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Ellen types away, alone in the office, when Dr. Miley enters.

ELLEN SMITH

Dr. Gerson, I'm a little confused.

(Beat)

Oh, hi George. I thought you were
Dr. Gerson.

GEORGE MILEY

Is there something I can help with?

ELLEN SMITH

It looks like Johnny Gunther was on
the road to recovery, but he went
back into remission and I don't
understand why. I'm not sure he
should include this case in his
book. He died.

Miley thumbs through the file, his mind spinning.

GEORGE MILEY

This is an interesting case. You'll
be meeting with Dr. Fishbein soon?

ELLEN SMITH

In a couple of days. Why?

GEORGE MILEY

He would probably want to see this.

(whispers)

Why don't you take these files with
you, so he can take a look at them.
He'll want to copy them. But, don't
let Dr. Gerson know.

Ellen becomes excited when Miley winks at her.

ELLEN SMITH

Mum's the word.

INT. JAMA, MEDICAL LAB - NIGHT

Fishbein slips into the lab and flips the light on after he
locks the door. He takes a deep breath.

Fishbein unlocks a supply cabinet and scans the shelves. He inspects the contents of a couple bottles, but then puts them back. He finds an UNLABELED BOTTLE in the back corner.

Fishbein grabs the UNLABELED BOTTLE and sets it on a table. He opens a drawer and retrieves an empty dropper bottle, then carefully transfers liquid into the bottle with a pipette.

Fishbein turns off the light. He opens the door and peeks into the hallway, then slips out with the UNLABELED DROPPER BOTTLE.

INT. JAMA, FISHBEIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ellen Smith is waiting by Fishbein's desk when he returns.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Sorry to keep you waiting.

Fishbein leans against his desk and begins thumbing through some of Gerson's files.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)
Thank you for bringing these case files in for me to review.

ELLEN SMITH
The Johnny Gunther file is the one that really grabbed my attention.
(Beat)
Dr. Miley convinced his parents to resume X-ray radiation treatments with his previous physician. But, I don't think Dr. Gerson knows that.

Fishbein chuckles.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Yeah, I know.

ELLEN SMITH
The boy died. He seemed to be getting better and when they resumed the chemotherapy, he died.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN
Cancer is evil. Unfortunately, we can't cure everyone.
(Beat)
Look, Ellen, I'd like to keep these files for a few days.
(MORE)

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

We're trying to get Dr. Gerson all the backing he needs, but we need to slow him down a little to give our research team a chance to catch up.

Fishbein pulls the unlabeled dropper bottle from his pocket.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

I want you to do me a favor. I'd like you to add one small drop of this to Gerson's coffee every day... He drinks coffee, right?

Ellen nods.

ELLEN SMITH

Yeah, but what is it?

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

It's just a relaxer. It will make him a little groggy and slow him down a bit, but nothing more. It will just give us time to verify his results before he publishes his book. I want to do everything I can to protect his reputation.

(Beat)

We don't want him publishing anything erroneous, do we?

Ellen shakes her head.

ELLEN SMITH

No, of course not.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN

Ellen, you are working for the greater good. It's harmless. We have an entire nation to protect. Those case files are valuable to the American public and they deserve to be treated with the full backing of scientific research and knowledge.

Fishbein hands Ellen the bottle. She slips it into her purse.

DR. MORRIS FISHBEIN (CONT'D)

One drop in every cup of coffee and bring me the files. Just don't let him catch you.

Ellen nods apprehensively. She's bought into it, for now.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Ellen types away at a desk while Max searches through file cabinets.

MAX

Ellen, do you have the Gunther file on your desk?

ELLEN SMITH

No sir, I haven't seen it.

MAX

I don't understand. It was here last week. Maybe Gretchen pulled it out for some reason.

Gretchen enters, sorting through the mail.

MAX (CONT'D)

Have you seen the Gunther file?

GRETCHEN

No, why would I?

MAX

This is strange. I haven't been able to find the Gimson file either. I must have misplaced them.

Gretchen hands Max a letter.

GRETCHEN

There's a letter from the National Cancer Institute. Maybe they've decided to publish your paper!

Max sits to open the letter and he reads it. As he does, his expression turns sour. He runs his hand through his hair.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

MAX

Ellen, could you get me a cup of coffee, please?

ELLEN SMITH

Of course, Doctor.

Max waits until she's gone. He's really frustrated.

MAX

The ACI won't publish my paper until there is more evidence that my therapy works. They already have thirty case files, and now Dr. Kaiser wants another hundred! How many do they need?

GRETCHEN

Oh Max, I'm sorry.

MAX

There are forces at work that are clearly against me... and it's not my imagination! They really don't want me to cure cancer.

GRETCHEN

Why would they not want a cure?

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Ellen pours a cup of coffee, then hesitates as she checks her surroundings. She pulls the UNLABELED DROPPER BOTTLE from her pocket and adds one drop to Dr. Gerson's coffee. She puts it away and heads back to the office with the coffee.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Max finishes writing a chapter. He dots the last line of the manuscript, leans back and finishes his coffee. He stands up and walks over to Ellen with the tablet of paper.

MAX

Here's the next chapter

Max yawns and rubs his eyes.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'll be back in a little while. I just want to check in on a few of the patients.

ELLEN SMITH

Yes, Dr. Gerson. I should have this one done fairly soon.

When Max leaves, Ellen takes a file from his desk, slips it into a newspaper and places it under her purse. She and resumes her typing and is startled when Dr. Miley enters.

GEORGE MILEY
How's it going, Ellen?

ELLEN SMITH
Oh, Dr. Miley, you scared me. You
should check the news.

Miley takes a deep breath and forces a smile as Ellen hands him the newspaper. Ellen's smile dissipates after he leaves.

INT. GERSON'S NEW YORK APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Max leans against the headboard as he reads his nearly complete MANUSCRIPT. He's pale and gaunt.

GRETCHEN
You look exhausted, Max.

MAX
I don't feel well. It's probably
just a virus or something.

GRETCHEN
Maybe we should take a vacation. We
could go to California again.

Max nods. He sets his manuscript aside.

MAX
Yeah, maybe after I finish the
book. Just a couple more chapters
and it will be over.

Gretchen leans over and kisses Max.

GRETCHEN
Let's get some sleep. Tomorrow is a
new day.

Max turns out the light.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - MORNING

Ellen sets a cup of coffee in front of Max as he thumbs through his MANUSCRIPT. He's pale and sickly.

Gretchen leans into the office and puts her arm around Max.

GRETCHEN
How are you feeling this morning?

MAX
(whispers)
There was blood in my stool again
this morning.

GRETCHEN
We need to put you on the therapy.

Max takes a sip of his coffee.

MAX
I've been on the diet my whole
life, sweetheart.

GRETCHEN
Maybe you should start the enemas.

MAX
It's not a degenerative disease.
It's something else.

GRETCHEN
Why don't you get some fresh air?
Let's go for a walk.

Max struggles to stand. They walk out.

Ellen's attention follows them out of the office.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC - MORNING

George Miley watches Max and Gretchen from another room as they walk across the grounds outside. He picks up a stack of files and hurries toward the office.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - MORNING

Dr. Miley slides into the office and hands Ellen a stack of case files.

GEORGE MILEY
We need to re-file these.

Miley looks around uncomfortably.

ELLEN SMITH
He's returning all the files?

GEORGE MILEY
Just file them.

Miley leaves as quickly as he came.

INT. OAKLAND MANOR CANCER CLINIC, OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Max enters the office in a coughing fit as Ellen files the case studies. When he recovers, he takes one from her hand.

MAX
The Johnny Gunther file!
(to Ellen)
Where did this come from.

ELLEN SMITH
I've just been re-filing some of
the case files.

Max opens the file and flips through it. Only the top page is real, the rest is blank paper.

MAX
This isn't his file. It's all gone!

Shocked, Ellen looks like a deer caught in headlights.

MAX (CONT'D)
(yells)
Where is his file!?

Ellen is speechless as Max thumbs through several files.

MAX (CONT'D)
You stole my files! What are you
doing with them?

Ellen shakes her head nervously as Max goes into another coughing fit. As he slumps into his chair to recover, he suddenly realizes that something bigger is happening.

MAX (CONT'D)
What have you been doing to me!?

Gretchen rushes into the room.

GRETCHEN
What's wrong? What's going on?

MAX
She's stealing files.
(to Ellen)
Who do you work for!?

ELLEN SMITH
You.

With increasing anger, Max stands and steps toward Ellen.

MAX

No. No, you don't. You're working for somebody else, and I want to know who it is!

Ellen backs away as Max draws closer.

ELLEN SMITH

What are you doing? Leave me alone!

Max coughs up blood. He grabs his chest and drops to his knees. Blank pages from the file flutter to the ground.

GRETCHEN

Max! Max, what's happening to you?

Gretchen props him up, but his weight is too much for her. She cries and gently lays him down as he begins to slip away.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Stay with me. This isn't happening!
No, don't leave.

Gretchen glares at Ellen; she's red with anger.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

What have you done to my husband!?

Ellen backs away as Gretchen becomes enraged.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

Get out! Get out of here!

From MAX'S POV, Ellen watches in horror as Max blacks out.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Blackness. Only the sound of Gretchen gently sniffing.

From MAX'S POV, a blurry image of Gretchen whispering with a DOCTOR in the doorway slowly begins to focus.

GRETCHEN

What about a Chelation therapy?

The Doctor shakes his head.

DOCTOR

It would be ineffective. His liver isn't functioning.

Max lays in a bed with IVs in his arm. He looks ghastly.

GRETCHEN

But, he's always been healthy.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry, ma'am. We'll do what we can.

Gretchen gasps for air as she cries a little harder.

Max squints. He tries to focus.

MAX

Gretchen... sweetheart?

Gretchen rushes over to his bed. She wipes her tears away.

GRETCHEN

Max. Max, I'm here.

From MAX'S POV, Gretchen's loving face comes into focus.

MAX

What happened? Where are we?

Gretchen makes room for the Doctor to check his heart rate.

GRETCHEN

You blacked out. We're at the hospital.

The Doctor places his palm on Max's forehead.

MAX

What's the prognosis?

The Doctor hesitates. Max knows by his expression that it's not good. He closes his eyes.

DOCTOR

Do you have any ideas how arsenic might have gotten into your bloodstream?

Max opens his eyes and looks at Gretchen as if pleading for forgiveness. He tears up.

MAX

I didn't see it coming.

Gretchen caresses Max's hands as she weeps helplessly.

MAX (CONT'D)

I didn't think they'd go this far.

GRETCHEN

I should have seen it. I should
have known.

Max pulls Gretchen closer.

MAX

How could you have?

Gretchen lays her head tenderly on Max's chest and weeps
silently as she listens to his struggled breathing.

Max wraps his arms around Gretchen. A single teardrop betrays
his peaceful expression. Resigned, he closes his eyes to the
SOUND OF THE DOOR GENTLY CLOSING as the Doctor leaves.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER

Dr. Max Gerson published his book, A Cancer Therapy, in 1958,
just prior to his death in 1959.

MAX (V.O.)

I have observed that the closer
one's diet is to nature, food grown
without pesticides and planted in
naturally fertilized soil, the
nearer one is to normal health.

SUPER

Dr. Max Gerson: "One of the most eminent geniuses in the
history of medicine." - Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Physician,
Theologian, Composer and Nobel Laureate

MAX (V.O.)

We must take a holistic approach to
healing and treat the whole
organism, not just parts of it.

FADE OUT.