

INHUMAN FACES

Written by

Tom Stohlgren

Representation:
Eleni Larchanidou, LLM
Literary & Talent Manager
GREECE: +30-697-9619813
(WhatsApp, Viber)
USA: +1-714-702-5507
movieselenilllm2014@gmail.com
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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Doctor (DOC) BROOK O'MALLEY (35), a young, cute, highly successful dermatologist in a white lab coat smiles as she examines a Young Blonde Woman's (25) face with a light-up magnifying scope (dermatoscope).

We SEE diplomas and certificates from the wall behind her, including a picture of her handsome husband, EUGENE (30), in a tuxedo.

She steals glances at the man's photo.

DOC

No scaring whatsoever. Another perfect facelift. No one will see you as 38-years-old ever again. I'll see you in six months. Tell my receptionist, what's her name, to send in the next patient.

The Young Woman stands, smiles, and hands Doc a prescription pill bottle, and kisses her on the cheek.

Doc slips the pills in her pocket, and watches the Young Women walk out with a sexy sway.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - DAY

SUPER "THREE MONTHS LATER"

Doc, wearing scrubs and a soiled lab coat, trudges through the empty waiting room, and flips the sign on the door from "Open" to "Closed." The phone rings on the receptionist's desk behind him.

She trudges past a cute Latina receptionist, MARIANA REYES (25), in a short colorful dress, who answers the phone in a tearful voice. Mariana always turns her face away from Doc, as if she is pathologically shy. She wears very heavy makeup on her face.

DOC

Tell 'em I've gone home for the night.

MARIANA

Dermatologist of the Stars, Doctor O'Malley's office, where your skin becomes alive again. How may I help you?

She pauses, and wipes tears from her eyes, as Doc stops at the open door to her office.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, the Doctor isn't accepting new patients, at this time. Leave your contact information at the sound of the tone for a referral.

Mariana hangs up.

Doc enters her private office and slams the door. Mariana walks slowly to Doc's door, and KNOCKS.

DOC (O.S.)

You can go home. I'll be fine.

Mariana knocks again.

MARIANA

It's just me. Mariana? Can I speak to you?

DOC (O.S.)

No use.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE/ PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mariana opens the door, but stays outside and hides her face. Doc is removing diplomas and certificates from the wall behind her big desk. She stares at a photo of a handsome man with Botox cheeks.

MARIANA

You gonna be okay?

DOC

He took everything when my license to practice was suspended: my home, my car -- he even took my dog, Botox.

MARIANA

I'll finish the billing tomorrow.

Doc turns to her. Mariana turns away to hide her face.

DOC

I'm so sorry this happened to you. Mariana, is it? Not easy to lose a job at the holidays.

MARIANA

I'll find something. I worry about you. Your...

DOC

(interrupting)
Husband.

MARIANA

Your husband was furious on the phone with me today. And, yesterday.

DOC

Sorry you had to hear that.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc guides Mariana to the front door. Mariana hides her face as much as possible.

MARIANA

And the AMA and Derm Society, all on the same day. I'm so sorry.

DOC

I had it coming. I'll be okay. Three-month suspension. Don't worry about me. And I'll take care of the billing tomorrow. I'm sorry that a reference from me won't help you. And, I'm sorry I didn't get a chance to take a look at that rash of yours.

Doc opens the front door, and Botox (a Husky-wolf mix) greets them both.

DOC (CONT'D)

Botox? How did you get here?

Doc and Mariana look out to see a suitcase, dog bowl, leash, and a bag of dog food. Doc falls to one knee, greeting Botox, while tearing up.

Mariana pulls the suitcase and dog supplies inside.

MARIANA

I'd best be going. I'll stop by tomorrow, Doctor O'Malley.

DOC

Thanks... Mariana. Don't worry about us.

Mariana sneaks out. Doc shuts and locks the door. She leads Botox back to her private office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc sits at her desk and mopes.

DOC

What am I gonna do, Botox? What am I gonna do?

Doc ambles over to small refrigerator, opens the door, pulls out a bottle of water, and shuts the door.

She puts half the bottle of water in the dog's bowl, returns to her desk, and sits down.

She reaches under the seat of her chair, and rips off a pill bottle taped to the underside of the chair.

She stares at the bottle which reads, "Oxycodone."

DOC (CONT'D)

Haven't used in sixty-two days. How could such big problems come from such a small Persian poppy?

The phone RINGS at the Receptionist Desk. It won't stop. Doc trudges to the phone and picks it up. Doc's angry husband, Eugene, waits impatiently.

DOC (CONT'D)

Dermatologist to the Stars, Doctor...

EUGENE (O.S.)

You aren't a doctor for three months, pill-freak! Where's my money?

DOC

I'll pay you when I can, Sweetheart. Thanks for dropping off Botox, but what's with the suitcase?

(MORE)

DOC (CONT'D)

Thought we had an agreement 'til I got a research job.

EUGENE (O.S.)

When they canceled your credit cards, they canceled my credit cards. Nobody's gonna hire you. You're like a leper in Hollywood.

(beat)

You're out of the house. I sold your cars, and I want my alimony! You took the Hippocratic Oath to help people. Look at you now!

Doc is puzzled and sad.

DOC

So, if I don't pay you alimony, I'm breaking my Hippocratic oath to heal people?

EUGENE (O.S.)

(yells)

Get a job, and pay me my money!

CLICK.

Doc trudges back to her office. She stares at the bottle of pills and half a bottle of water on her desk. She sits down, picks up the pill bottle.

Doc HEARS the front door being unlocked. She hurriedly returns the pills to their hiding place, before yelling.

DOC

Who's there? I have a gun, and I'm calling 9-1-1.

We see an African American janitor, HERB JACKSON (50), strolling into the reception area with ear-nubs in his ears, oblivious to the Doc.

DOC (CONT'D)

I said, who's there? We don't carry any money, and our prescription drugs require two keys.

Herb makes his way down a hallway to a closet next to the rest room. Doc tip-toes out of her office holding scissors ready to strike.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herb turns to see Doc and they both scream, as Herb knocks the scissors from Doc's hand.

HERB

It's me, Doc! Herb Jackson! You hired me to clean up.

Doc's hands are shaking.

DOC

I did?

HERB

Three months ago. Other fella quit.

Doc tries but fails to recognize him, as Botox comes out of Doc's office shaking his tail. Botox sniffs Herb's legs for an uncomfortably long time.

Doc reprimands her dog, as Herb pets him.

DOC

Some watchdog you are!

HERB

Who's this? And what are you doing here?

DOC

They shut me down temporarily. That's Botox, my only friend. Lawyer-husband took everything else. Bo was a cancer-smelling dog 'til he failed his last three tests. I adopted him and changed his name from Bo to Botox, of course.

Herb nods like he knows the story.

HERB

Your license to practice was suspended.

DOC

You knew?

HERB

I was here when they raided the place. Midnight. Three months ago. Cops, drug-sniffing dogs, detectives, AMA, everybody.

DOC
Took my main computer, files,
everything.

HERB
Pills. A shitload of pills. Come on
and sit down.

Doc follows Herb to the waiting room, and they take a seat.
Botox, goes to lie down in the corner.

DOC
I won't be able to pay you.

Doc looks away.

HERB
I know. That's okay.

Doc isn't listening.

HERB (CONT'D)
Did you hear me, Doc?

Doc looks back to Herb.

DOC
Huh. Sorry.

HERB
Said I know. That's okay.

Doc stands. He's bewildered.

DOC
You...you...don't need money?

HERB
I have money, and nobody sees me.

DOC
Nobody sees you?

HERB
Funny, huh. It's the things you
don't see that matter most. And
nobody sees me.

Doc looks bewildered at what Herb is saying.

DOC
The things you don't see that
matter most! Huh? That was the
theme of my Ph.D. defense.

HERB

You're what?

DOC

Before med school, I got a Ph.D. in microbiology. Youngest ever. Nineteen. I studied microscopic mites that live on our faces.

HERB

Sounds like a horror movie.

DOC

They don't hurt us. Our skin provides them a home, is all.

HERB

What are you going to do now?

Doc ponders the horrifying question.

DOC

Don't know. Sleep here, I guess. Lease is paid a year in advance. Try to find work in a research lab, maybe. That's when I was happiest.

HERB

Not gonna practice medicine? Dermatology? Plastic surgery?

Doc is upset.

DOC

Maybe in three months. Can't practice now! Impossible without a license!

Herb is upset. He whips out a smartphone and sends a text message to someone. The text reads, "Never mind. She won't do it." Doc sees the message before it's sent.

Herb jams in his ear-buds, and begins to stomp away.

HERB

Gotta clean the rest room and vacuum.

Doc sees he upset Herb, but doesn't know how.

Doc stands and stomps into her office. Botox follows. Doc shuts the door.

Herb cleans the bathroom. He vacuums the floors.

Doc storms out of the office and gets in Herb's face.

Herb shuts off the vacuum.

HERB (CONT'D)

What?

DOC

What did you mean, "Never mind. She won't do it" in your text message?

HERB

My people need you.

DOC

Your people?

HERB

The poor, homeless, vets. They could never afford your services, but they need you.

DOC

I could go to jail for practicing without a license.

Herb turns on the vacuum.

HERB

You took some kind of oath to heal the sick! My people need you now! Tonight!

Doc paces in the waiting room. She pulls the plug on the vacuum.

DOC

One. I'll see one patient. As a favor to you.

HERB

Good thing. She's waiting outside.

DOC

She is?

HERB

Her son has a skin condition she needs you to look at.

Herb goes and unlocks the front door, and waves in the mother, EVE WEATHERS (32), a smiling, poor woman in a long, tattered coat;

and her son, CASEY (12) a scrawny lad with bright RED RASH on his face. They are both nervous and embarrassed.

HERB (CONT'D)

Doc will see you now.

Doc shakes their hands and introduces herself warmly, while staring at the boy's facial rash.

DOC

I'm Doctor O'Malley. Everybody calls me Doc, until today that is.

EVE

Thanks for seeing my son.

Casey is excited and obnoxious.

CASEY

I'm Casey, Doc. Do you know anything about ligors: a cross between a lion and a tiger?

DOC

I'm not that kind of doctor.

CASEY

They grow bigger than lions or tigers, they eat more, and one got to almost one-thousand pounds.

EVE

Now, Casey, don't bother the kind doctor.

DOC

I don't know much about ligors, but I do know my rashes! This is all off the record, but come in, and let me take a look at you.

Doc leads them to her examining room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Casey is hesitant to sit on the examining bench.

DOC

Not gonna hurt you, Casey. I'm just gonna look and see what we have.

EVE

Maybe we should go.

DOC

Please, let me have a look. It's probably nothing.

Doc grabs her light-up magnifying dermatoscope and examines the boy's rash.

DOC (CONT'D)

The skin is our largest organ, ya know. It guards our underlying muscles, bones, ligaments and internal organs.

CASEY

Duh.

DOC

Really. It helps you stay warm when it's cold, and cool when it's hot. There are about nineteen million skin cells on every inch of your body.

CASEY

Duh.

EVE

Well, I didn't know that.

DOC

Is your son allergic to any foods?

EVE

None.

DOC

Taking and medications or using new soaps? Allergic to pets or dust?

EVE

No, no, and no.

DOC

Come in contact with noxious plants? Poison oak? Nettles?

CASEY

I mostly stay inside and read about science.

DOC

Kids tease you at school?

CASEY
Don't go to school.

Doc pauses.

DOC
How long have you had this rash?

Eve looks away.

EVE
One year.

DOC
And it's the first time...

EVE
No insurance.

Casey drops his head in shame.

DOC
It's probably rosacea. Common rash.
Mostly in people over thirty.

EVE
But he's only twelve. What caused
it?

DOC
Sun and wind exposure, stress,
spicy foods, sometimes hot baths.
Rare in kids Casey's age, but it's
not harmful. Relax, Casey.

CASEY
When will it go away?

DOC
Hard to say. I can give you a
moisturizing cream that might help
a little. Like for pimples.

Doc turns and goes to a cabinet. She hesitates to grab a jar
of moisturizer.

DOC (CONT'D)
Can't tell anyone I gave this to
you.

Eve grabs it from her hands, as Herb walks by the door and
glances in. He makes eye contact with Doc, and smiles.

EVE
Anything that might help my son.

Casey jumps off the table.

CASEY
Can we go now, Ma?

EVE
Why don't you sit out in the
waiting room for a moment, and let
me talk to the doctor for a minute.

Casey leaves the examining with a smile as he sees Botox
waging his tail and waiting for him.

CASEY
Cool. A dog that looks like a wolf!

DOC
That's Botox. He's part wolf, so
I'm not supposed to own him. Maybe
you can keep him company, while I
talk to your mom.

As Doc shuts the door, he sees Herb standing by, listening,
watching everything.

Eve pulls out a small vile, with a small pile of flaky skin
cells in the vile. She hands it to Doc.

DOC (CONT'D)
What's this?

EVE
It's getting worse. All year, and
every night.

DOC
Every night?

EVE
Every night his pillow is covered
with flakes of skin.

DOC
We have about twenty layers of dead
skin cells outside our new ones,
made every day.

Doc looks worried.

DOC (CONT'D)

That's a lot of dead skin! On his pillow? Every morning?

EVE

And his face gets worse at night. Little better in the day, but not much.

Doc leaps out of the examining room, into the waiting room, where he pulls Botox from Casey's arms.

DOC

I'd better put Botox in my office for now.

HERB

What's going on?

Doc pockets the vile of skin cells, and weakly smiles.

DOC

I want to check a few things out, with a powerful microscope. Just for fun. Relax. Would you mind waiting here for a few minutes?

Herb, Casey, and Eve look nervous, as Doc disappears into her office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Inside the office, the Doc puts the skin cells under a powerful microscope.

She's very puzzled. She looks again. And again.

She ambles out of the office with a perplexed look.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DOC

I'm going to be straight with you.

Eve holds Casey's hand, and Herb looks on curiously.

EVE

What is it, Doc? What did you see?

DOC

Nothing too unusual. Relax.

Herb and Eve sigh with relief.

DOC (CONT'D)

Dead flakes of skin and mites.
Dermodex mites. We all have them.
Microscopic, eight-legged creatures
that live on our faces. I did my
Ph.D. research on them, as I told
Herb earlier. That's what makes
your visit so strange.

Herb looks away.

EVE

Strange? In what way?

DOC

I was trained as a scientist first,
and a doctor second.

HERB

So?

DOC

So, I don't believe in
coincidences.

EVE

You saw mites?

DOC

The two species common to every
human face. We usually have two to
three mites per square inch of
skin. People with rosacea can have
twenty to thirty per square inch of
skin.

EVE

Why?

DOC

We don't know why. We don't know a
lot about them. We've shared them
with domesticated dogs for twenty-
thousand years. That's why I put
Botox in the office.

EVE

And they're more active at night?
The mites?

Doc is surprised.

DOC

They are more active at night. How did you know?

EVE

Casey's pillow in the morning.

CASEY

Why did Botox sniff me for so long?

Doc turns away. Eve turns angry.

EVE

My son asked you a question, Doctor.

CASEY

Why, Doctor?

Doc gets down on one knee to talk to Casey and Eve.

DOC

I don't know. Or more accurately, I can't be sure, but people with immune deficiencies often have higher counts of mites.

Herb is anxious and annoyed.

HERB

I have to use the rest room.

Herb secretly takes out his phone, as he races to the rest room.

EVE

An immune deficiency?

DOC

I told you, I don't know.

(beat)

I can tell you that the skin I examined under the microscope was loaded with mites.

EVE

How loaded?

Doc turns away, then back to Casey's rash.

Doc pulls Eve away and whispers to her.

DOC
Hundreds. More than usual. Never
seen that many. Not sure why. I
need more time to think about it.
Maybe run some more tests.

Doc's hands shake. Casey and Eve see this.

Herb races out of the rest room.

HERB
What are you going to do, Doc? That
pimple cream isn't gonna do
bullshit!

The Doc glares at Herb.

DOC
You knew!

Herb looks away.

DOC (CONT'D)
You knew! There are no
coincidences. You knew this boy had
a problem. You arranged for him to
see me.

HERB
I... I...

DOC
You knew!

They HEAR a loud knock on the front door.

Herb goes to answer the door.

Doc is furious.

DOC (CONT'D)
Don't you dare open that door!

Herb ignores Doc and unlocks the door.

Doc races to prevent the person from entering, but a woman's
shapely leg is already in the doorway.

Mariana forces her way in with three pizza boxes hiding her
face, and a lunch bag (three bottles of a *Probiotic drink*).

MARIANA
I brought you dinner!

DOC

That wasn't necessary, Mariana.
Three pizzas? Wait! I have some
money in my desk.

Casey's eyes light up, as Doc races to her office.

CASEY

Cheese? Pepperoni?

MARIANA

(to Casey)

Both.

(whispers to Herb)

Does he know?

Herb shakes his head 'no,' as Doc returns with two twenty-dollar bills.

DOC

Here you go, Mariana. Thanks.
What's in the lunch bag?

MARIANA

Probiotics. Helps digest this lousy
pizza!

Mariana takes the money, laughs, and turns her face away.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

Thanks, Doc.

Casey, Eve, and Herb bust into the pizzas, eating like wild dogs. Casey, Herb, and Mariana each has a bottle of a Probiotic drink.

DOC

Herb called you?

MARIANA

Thought you might be hungry. I live
just two blocks from here, with the
pizza place in between.

Mariana sees them eating, and giggles.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

Good thing, huh. I ate, so I'll
take Botox for a walk and feed him,
while you grab a slice. Looks like
you'd better hurry.

Mariana leaps into Doc's office, and retrieves Botox on a leash.

DOC

Thanks, Mariana. How will I ever repay you for your kindness?

Mariana sneaks out the door with Botox. She speaks without turning around.

MARIANA

I'll think of something.

She shuts the door.

Doc grabs a slice of pizza. She chews and thinks.

DOC

Herb, something still puzzles me.

Herb goes to grab another slice.

HERB

What is it, Doc?

DOC

How do you know Eve and Casey?

HERB

Same church.

Doc seems satisfied.

DOC

What church is that, Eve?

HERB

Evangelical. New one in town.

Doc ponders the answer.

DOC

And Mariana? From work here, when she worked late?

HERB

Yep. When she worked late doing billing, I'd come in and clean.

DOC

Yes, she's been wonderful. How long's she worked here?

HERB

Little more than three months. Like me. It's the people you don't see that matter.

Doc turns to Eve.

DOC
Right. Right. How long have you
known Herb?

Eve begins to speak, but Herb interrupts her.

HERB
'Bout a year.

DOC
Huh?

Herb and Eve look away.

HERB
Something wrong?

DOC
I had some personal issues about
three months ago, and several
office staff quit.

HERB
Created openings for Mariana and
me, I guess.

EVE
Sure is good pizza!

CASEY
The best!

HERB
Damn good pizza.

Doc laughs and toasts her pizza.

DOC
Yes, it is. Here's to unemployment!

Herb pulls Doc into her private office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Herb takes a huge wad of money from his pocket and counts out
four one-hundred-dollar bills, and drops them on the table.

Doc's eyes open widely.

HERB
More where that came from.

DOC
Where'd you get that kind of money?

HERB
Not important. Thanks for seeing my friends.

DOC
Can't take it. I can go to jail for practicing without a license.

HERB
I won't tell anyone, if you don't.

Doc looks away. She sees her husband's photo.

HERB (CONT'D)
There's another four-hundred in it for you if you see Mariana.

DOC
I can't. You understand.

HERB
I understand.

Herb starts to walk out, but he turns.

HERB (CONT'D)
Does your husband understand?

Doc pauses. She takes the money and shoves it in her pocket, as they hear Mariana returning with Botox.

Herb goes out to meet them, blocking Doc's view of Mariana.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

HERB
I'll take Botox. The doctor will see you now, Mariana.

Mariana smiles and bounds into the examination room. Doc greets her at the door. Doc speaks to her back.

DOC
Change into a gown if you wouldn't mind.

Mariana giggles, but doesn't turn around.

MARIANA

Been waiting for you to say that
for three months!

Doc is embarrassed. She looks away.

Herb eyes everyone around him like a general in command.

Doc slips into the Examination Room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc enters the room to see Mariana on the examining table
naked, and clinging to the hospital gown, but not wearing it.

DOC

Need more time to get dressed?

MARIANA

No.

DOC

We can't report that I'm seeing you
as a patient. Do you understand?

Mariana drops the gown, exposing her small but beautiful
breasts, except for a slightly red rash on both breasts.

MARIANA

They're too small, aren't they?

Mariana looks away, and Doc avoids eye contact too.

DOC

No. No. They're perfectly shaped.
Have you had children?

MARIANA

No.

DOC

Are you on the pill or taking
hormones?

MARIANA

No.

DOC

Mind if I examine your rash?

MARIANA

No, but it's not why I'm here.

Doc grabs her light-up magnifying dermatoscope, and examines one breast.

DOC
May be nothing but a heat rash.

Doc examines the other breast.

MARIANA
It's not why I'm here!

DOC
How long have you had this rash?

MARIANA
I want a boob job.

DOC
I'm not a plastic surgeon.

MARIANA
Big ones, like a movie star. I could get any job I wanted if I had the surgery.

DOC
Your breasts are fine. How long have you had the rash?

MARIANA
A while. I don't know.

DOC
Change your diet lately?

MARIANA
No.

DOC
Have any pets?

MARIANA
A cat.

DOC
How long have you owned the cat?

MARIANA
A year.

Doc pauses. She looks at Mariana's face up close for the first time. She sees the thick makeup, a solid cake of foundation to match her brown skin tone.

DOC
Mexican? You wear a lot of makeup.

MARIANA
Yes, Mexican. And acne. Pimples everywhere.

DOC
Why don't you wash it off and let me have a look?

MARIANA
That's okay.

DOC
Please. Maybe I can help. We have marvelous new cleansers, medicated pads, and ointments.

MARIANA
No. I'm uncomfortable.

DOC
Come on! You showed me your breasts. I need to see your skin. I'm a dermatologist!

Mariana jumps off the table and begins to dress quickly, with her back to Doc.

MARIANA
I'll be fine. I like my makeup. I want to be beautiful. Is that so hard to understand?

Doc is bewildered, as Mariana races out.

Herb steps in the examining room and shuts the door.

HERB
May I have a word with you, Doc?

DOC
Maybe you can tell me what's going on around here!

Herb pulls out a giant wad of bills, and counts off four one-hundred-dollar bills. She plops them on the examining table.

Doc stares at the money, but doesn't pick it up.

HERB
Take it! It's yours.

DOC
Eight-hundred bucks in a half-hour.
My husband would love you. Still
something bothers me.

Doc paces.

HERB
What?

DOC
Why here? Why now? Casey's rash,
the mites? Mariana's rash. Why
here? Why now?

Herb looks away and mumbles.

HERB
Coincidence.

DOC
I don't believe in them.

HERB
Maybe you should!

Doc stops, and examines Herb's face.

DOC
Your face looks fine. Rosacea is
rare in African Americans and
people of color, but it does
happen, you know!

Doc paces again.

HERB
Maybe it's an outbreak of something
at our church?

DOC
Mariana's Catholic.

HERB
Maybe it's something local?

Doc stops and stares at Herb.

DOC
And where does a janitor come up
with thousands of dollars in cash
to find out?

HERB

These people are friends of mine.

Doc shakes her head in disbelief.

DOC

Sure, Herb. Sure.

HERB

I know of nine more cases within a few blocks of here.

DOC

I'm done. Count me out. Call the Center for Disease Control and report an outbreak of rosacea, common heat rash. I'm taking Botox, and we're getting out of here.

HERB

You got nowhere to go.

Doc swings open the door and yells.

DOC

I'm leaving this place! That's for sure!

Eve, Casey, and Mariana huddle in their chairs, looking frightened, as Doc takes off her white lab coat, flings it in her office, pulls off her scrubs and tosses them, and puts a leash on Botox and stomps toward the front door.

The phone RINGS, as Doc passes Mariana's desk. She picks it up.

EUGENE (O.S.)

Where's my money!

Doc hangs up and storms out of the office.

End Act One

ACT TWO

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc unlocks the front door, and trudges in with Botox.

Casey jumps up to hug Doc, as Eve and Mariana smile.

Herb has is back turned in the corner of the waiting room. He is texting messages. He turns, unsurprised.

Doc stops, squats down, and speaks Casey in a solemn way.

DOC

I've abandoned my principles, my husband and colleagues abandoned me, but I won't abandon you.

Casey tears up, and Eve looks Doc in the eyes.

EVE

Thank you, Doc.

DOC

I need to take some photos, and test a new cream or two, Casey. You gonna be okay with that?

Herb looks uneasy behind Doc, but doesn't say a word.

Doc leads Botox to her office and shuts the door. She steps into the examination room, and emerges with a second tube of lotion, and walks slowly over to Casey under the watchful eyes of Herb.

DOC (CONT'D)

Have you applied any of the other cream I gave you?

Casey glances at Herb before answering.

CASEY

No, Ma'am.

DOC

Good, and call me Doc.

CASEY

Not yet, Doc. Hey, Doc, know anything about killer bees? Cross between an Italian honey bee and an African honey bee?

DOC

They're becoming a huge problem in the southern United States. A patient of mine came in a couple of days after she got over four-hundred stings. Bumps all over, but she lived.

CASEY

That's a hybrid, too. Like the ligor. The hybrid bee is much more aggressive than either parent.

EVE

Casey, Doc has work to do.

DOC

Great. I know, let's do some science together, shall we.

Casey smiles, but Herb looks suspicious.

CASEY

What do I gotta do?

DOC

We'll use the scientific method. Let's take some before photos of each cheek before we get started.

Casey turns his cheeks to Doc's camera.

CASEY

How's this?

DOC

Perfect. Now, we'll apply a small amount of one cream on one cheek, and a small amount of the other cream of the other cheek, while we make a guess, or a hypothesis, of which cream will work the best.

CASEY

How are the creams different?

DOC

Good question. The one on your right side contains moisturizer and an anti-bacterial.

CASEY

And the left side?

DOC

Has only moisturizer, not an anti-bacterial.

CASEY

Are bacteria good?

DOC

Most are good. We rely on bacteria! We have ten times more bacteria in us than human cells. They help keep our skin, nose, and mouth clean, and help us digest food.

Herb is typing notes in his smartphone.

CASEY

How long before the creams work?

DOC

Good news takes a while, but bad news travels fast. We'll learn soon if you have an allergic reaction, but the rosacea may heal very slowly?

CASEY

Days?

DOC

Or weeks. Sometimes longer.

Casey looks disappointed.

CASEY

Science is slow.

EVE

Mustn't be overly optimistic, Dear.

Doc turns to Eve with a smile.

DOC

Hope is a powerful tool.

Casey hugs his Ma.

CASEY

Yeah, Ma! Hope is a powerful tool.

DOC

Mariana, would you like to participate in our little experiment?

Mariana glances at Herb who gives her the okay.

MARIANA

Sure, Doc.

Mariana starts to remove her top. Casey's, Eve's, and Doc's eyes open widely.

Doc shields Casey from Mariana's bare chest, as she guides her to the examination room.

DOC

In the examination room?

MARIANA

This is fine. I watched. This cream goes on my right breast. This one on my left.

Mariana has her top off, as Doc tries to shield her from Casey's eyes.

DOC

Good. You can put your top on now.

Mariana turns and puts her top on, under Herb's watchful eyes.

HERB

Not sure this will do any good.

DOC

I'll see what else I have on hand, and I'll check with a colleague of mine who is much more experienced with rosacea.

Herb leaps over to get in Doc's face.

HERB

Let's keep it in-house. Don't want you getting arrested for practicing medicine without a license.

Doc nods in agreement.

DOC

You're right. I've got to be careful.

HERB

Good idea. Let's keep this on the down-low.

DOC
Down-low. Right!

Herb slowly walks away, while talking.

HERB
We find out what works on Casey and Mariana, then you can sell me the best medicine for the others.

Doc is alarmed by what he hears.

DOC
That's not the way it works, Herb. Science, that is.

Herb turns, and is back in Doc's face.

HERB
It has to.

DOC
What works on one patient may not work on another.

HERB
What?

DOC
We're each a little different.

HERB
What do you mean?

DOC
African-Americans, for example, rarely get rosacea, but some do get it.

HERB
Then what happens?

DOC
Sometimes their skin gets darker. Rosacea can be harder to see.

MARIANA
And brown people, Doc?

Doc turns to Mariana.

DOC
They get rosacea, but it's often less severe than on white people.

HERB
That isn't right.

DOC
Lucretius said, "What is food for
one man may be bitter poison to
others."

Herb pauses.

HERB
What do I tell the others?

DOC
What others do you keep talking
about?

HERB
Others, that's all!

DOC
And I suppose they all have rashes?

Herb turns.

HERB
Or indigestion. Or both.

Casey races to the bathroom. Doc watches him run off.

DOC
What's going on around here?

Herb has trouble answering.

HERB
Well, I... I... We...

DOC
What is it?

HERB
Might be something going around our
church.

Doc sees Eve and Mariana look away. Casey comes back, and Mariana races to the bathroom.

DOC
Everyone at your church has
digestion problems and rashes?

CASEY
Just twelve of us.

Herb turns, and pushes Casey down in his chair. Casey looks down.

DOC

Herb, that was uncalled for!

CASEY

Member of my Congregation. I'll do as I please.

Doc gets in Herb's face.

DOC

No, you won't! That's child abuse!
And it won't be tolerated here or
anywhere! Got it?

Herb looks around for support, but gets none.

CASEY

Sorry, Mr. Jackson. Won't happen
again.

DOC

What won't happen again?

EVE

We don't discuss church business
with outsiders.

DOC

That what this is about? I'm an
outsider?

Herb looks away.

HERB

We relocated here as a group.

Mariana comes out of the bathroom holding her stomach.

MARIANA

Maybe it's the flu?

The Doc begins to pace.

DOC

Very puzzling. Rashes, the flu, but
not everyone. Herb, do you have a
rash or indigestion?

HERB

Indigestion.

DOC
Eve?

EVE
No.

DOC
And Casey's rash began a year ago?
Doesn't sound like the flu.

EVE
It's probably nothing.

HERB
Doc, I'd like to pay you five-
hundred extra to find a cream that
works on Casey and Mariana.

Doc is suspicious.

DOC
Where do you keep coming up with
this money, Herb?

HERB
Charitable donations. Rich members
of my congregation.

DOC
While you moonlight as a janitor?

HERB
The Lord works in mysterious ways.

They all HEAR several loud KNOCKS on the door. It's Doc's
angry husband, Eugene. He yells.

EUGENE (O.S.)
I know you're in there! If you
don't hand me one-thousand dollars
right now, I'll tell the cops
you're selling drugs and you'll do
two years in jail starting tonight!

DOC
(whispers)
Shhhh! He'll go away.

Herb dashes around with a worried look. They whisper.

HERB
We need to hide!

DOC

There's no place to hide. It's a doctor's office, not a mobster's mansion with secret passageways.

MARIANA

We can't let him in. He'll call the police!

DOC

He has a temper...

HERB

Police would be bad!

Eugene yells.

EUGENE (O.S.)

One grand! I'm calling now!

Herb pulls out his wad of cash, and counts out \$1000.

HERB

Pay the man.

DOC

I can't. He'll be back tomorrow for more.

HERB

Pay him! No cops!

Doc sees that Herb's hands are shaking. Herb wobbles around, unstable. Eve, Mariana, and Casey hide behind the chairs in the waiting room.

DOC

Okay, okay.

Doc takes the money from Herb. Herb hides behind a chair.

Doc opens the door wide enough for his hand, and Eugene grabs the money out of Doc's hand.

Doc shuts and locks the door, as Casey falls back and has an epileptic seizure.

Eve panics standing next to her son.

EVE

What do I do? What do I do?

Doc races to Casey's side, as he convulses.

DOC
Stay calm. Looks like a seizure.

Doc bends down, and gently turns Casey on his side.

HERB
What's the matter with him?

MARIANA
Is he dying?

DOC
Seizure. Has he had them before.

EVE
No.

DOC
No?

EVE
Maybe in his room alone. I don't know.

The seizure stops. Casey is exhausted and sleepy, but okay.

DOC
You're gonna be okay, Casey. Your mom's here.

Eve bends down to comfort her son.

HERB
Why now? Was it the creams and lotions for his face?

DOC
No.

HERB
How can you be sure?

DOC
The brain controls how the body moves. It sends out tiny electrical signals through the nerves to the muscles. Seizures occur when the electronic signals from the brain are abnormal.

EVE
Can he have more?

DOC

It's possible. When was the last time Casey had a medical exam?

Doc sees Eve glance quickly at Herb. Doc controls her temper, as she stands to pace.

DOC (CONT'D)

Somebody better tell me what's going on around here. Why does everyone look at Herb before answering a goddamn question?

Everyone is silent.

DOC (CONT'D)

And don't give me this same church crap! Nobody started praying when the seizure came.

Doc and Eve help Casey to a chair. Everybody sits.

DOC (CONT'D)

I'm waiting for answers.

Herb covers his face with his hands and speaks slowly.

HERB

We're like second-class citizens. We're a group with terrible skin ailments. Don't know why. But we can't get good jobs, or promotions when we get jobs, because L.A. is for pretty people.

Doc looks away, then at Mariana.

DOC

You feel your personal appearance defines you?

MARIANA

Doesn't it? Used to be just skin color! Whites got the jobs before browns, who go the jobs before blacks.

HERB

Now it's pretty people over ugly people, and God forbid you should be fat!

EVE

I just wanted my son to have the same chance as any other boy; to have friends; get a job, have a girlfriend someday, go to college.

Doc stands and paces. She stares at each of them, then at Herb. She speaks quietly.

DOC

There's something else here. There might be a hierarchy in society like you suggest. Prejudice comes in many forms. But there is a hierarchy in your group that I don't understand.

Silence.

HERB

Don't know what you're talking about.

DOC

Yes, you do, Herb. You're the leader. The one with all with the answers. The one with the cash. The head of some kind of congregation.

Doc races to Mariana's desk. She grabs yellow-sticky notes and pens from the desk. She hands paper and pen to each person.

HERB

What's this for?

DOC

Without looking at Herb, or each other's answers, I want you each to write down the address of your church? What street is it on?

HERB

This is ridiculous.

DOC

Go on. Then write down the month and year you met each other.

Herb tosses down the paper and pen. Doc goes to check the others' answers, and all the notes are blanks.

DOC (CONT'D)

Are you legal U.S. citizens?

Everyone's head drops.

DOC (CONT'D)
I thought so.

MARIANA
You can't turn us in.

EVE
Herb is trying to protect us.

Doc seems satisfied with the answers, and goes to comfort Casey in a calming voice.

DOC
Casey, you had a seizure. Probably brought on by stress. Hasn't been an easy evening. Nothing big, but I'll want to monitor your vital signs while you're here. And I suggest you get a full checkup as soon as possible. Okay?

Casey nods his head 'yes.' Eve hugs Doc.

EVE
Thanks, Doc.

DOC
Come on, Casey. Let's check your blood pressure, temperature, and pulse.

Herb watches suspiciously as Doc leads Casey to the examining room.

Herb glares at Mariana and Eve.

LATER

Casey reenters the waiting room with a weak smile. Doc follows him partway.

DOC (CONT'D)
Perfectly normal. I'll be in my office on my computer doing a little reading on rashes.
(smiles)
Gotta keep up with the latest medical findings. Back in a few minutes.

Doc enters her office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc shuts the door, and sits at her desk with a laptop computer.

She searches for "rosacea and seizures." She reads for a few seconds, until she SEES the vile of dead skin cells. Doc hears Eve's voice in her head.

EVE (V.O.)
It's getting worse. All year, and every night.

Doc stares at the vile.

She prepares another slide to examine under her powerful microscope.

Doc stares into the microscope. She looks away, worried. She looks back into the lens.

Doc moves back to her laptop computer and pulls up "scary" PHOTOS OF THE DEMODEX MITES.

We SEE close-ups of the mites.

DOC
Eight legs. Yep. Two species. But I can't believe the number of them I'm seeing...astronomical!

There is a loud KNOCK on Doc's office door.

HERB (O.S.)
May I come in, Doc?

DOC
Just a minute.

Doc shuts off the light on the microscope, and closes her laptop.

DOC (CONT'D)
Come in.

Doc is reading a medical journal when Herb enters and sits.

HERB
Is he going to be okay?

DOC
I think so. A full check-up and some blood work would help.

HERB
No medical insurance.

DOC
There's always the emergency room
at the hospital, but don't tell 'em
I sent you.

HERB
The seizure? Think it's related to
the rash?

DOC
I doubt it. Very slight chance.
Sometimes seen in women with
thyroid disease. Casey is neither.

HERB
Eve's worried. Says the rash is
getting worse.

DOC
Lots of teens have acne.

Herb stands.

HERB
This isn't acne, Doc. I think you
know that.

DOC
The money, Herb. Where did you get
all that money, and why are you
doing this?

HERB
Told you. Personal savings. All my
life. Helping my people, that's
all.

Doc isn't convinced.

DOC
Uh huh. First, they're
contributions. Now, they're
savings.

Herb sees the slide under the microscope.

HERB
Can I have a look?

DOC
Why don't you leave the doctoring
to me?

Mariana calls out from the waiting room.

MARIANA (O.S.)
Doc, come quick!

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herb and the Doc race out to see Casey's rash is redder and larger on the right side of his cheek. The left side looks a little better.

Doc examines the two sides of Casey's face.

DOC
Redder on the right side, where we
applied the moisturizer containing
the anti-bacterial.
(beat)
Better on the left. Fascinating.

CASEY
Why?

DOC
My hypothesis was that the anti-
bacterial cleanser would have had a
positive effect. I thought the rash
would decrease there, compared to
the moisturizer-only side.

MARIANA
He looks worse.

DOC
Skin issues are often worse at
night.

MARIANA
Why?

DOC
Facial mites and skin micro-
organisms are more active at night.
I mentioned that before.

EVE
But what does it mean, Doc?

DOC

The moisturizer cream helped a little, but neither is working as well as I'd like. I don't mind telling you, I'm puzzled by the anti-bacterial results.

HERB

I'd like to get a dozen or so samples of the cream that worked right now, if you don't mind. Personal use.

DOC

Sure. I guess so. They're free samples.

Doc wanders to the Examining Room and returns with twelve small sample tubes of facial moisturizer cream.

Herb takes them and puts them in his pocket.

DOC (CONT'D)

(mumbles)

Wonder if the same result is true for Mariana?

Mariana starts to take off her top.

DOC (CONT'D)

In the examining room, this time.

Mariana puts down her top. Casey sighs.

Doc leads Mariana to the Examining Room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mariana sits topless on the table, sticking her breasts out and wiggling seductively. Doc puts on plastic gloves and her light-up magnifying dermatoscope to examine the Mariana's breast. Her right breast is noticeably redder.

MARIANA

You see, if they were bigger, people wouldn't judge me on my brown skin.

DOC

Your breasts are fine. The problem is with others, not you.

MARIANA
How's my little rash?

DOC
Is it always redder at night?

MARIANA
I suppose so. Like you said.

DOC
Hmmm.

MARIANA
What?

DOC
Would you mind if I scraped a
little skin sample? We don't have
to tell anyone.

MARIANA
You mean, Herb?

DOC
Exactly. Our secret.

Mariana is hesitant.

MARIANA
I guess so? Will it hurt?

Doc smiles, seductively.

DOC
I'll be gentle.

Mariana smiles back.

MARIANA
Okay. Our secret.

Doc takes a scalpel and two small glass slides from a drawer
in the examining room.

She scrapes a tiny amount of skin from each of Mariana's
breasts.

DOC
Must be our secret. I could go
straight to jail for any
procedures.

Mariana flirts with Doc.

MARIANA

Your secret is safe with me. Maybe sealed with a kiss?

DOC

Totally inappropriate.

MARIANA

You're not a doctor anymore.

Doc puts the two glass slides and the scalpel on the counter.

She looks away, then back. She sets down her magnifying dermatoscope, and hugs her.

DOC

Learn to feel good about yourself.

Mariana reaches behind Doc, grabs her butt, and pulls her closer. Mariana moans in happiness.

Doc's eyes open widely, and she pulls away.

DOC (CONT'D)

Totally inappropriate! That's got to be our secret, too.

Mariana smiles as she puts on her top.

MARIANA

Whatever you say, Brook.

She bounds out of the Examining Room with a smile on her face, as Doc yells to her.

DOC

It's Doc or Doctor.

Doc slips the two slides into her left and right lab coat pockets.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mariana is giggling when Doc enters. Herb, Eve, and Casey notice the change in Mariana's behavior.

DOC

(clearing her throat)

Everything checked out fine. The rashes are a bit more active at night, is all. Nothing to worry about.

HERB

Nothing?

DOC

I have a bit more reading to catch up on, if I'll be applying for research jobs soon, so, if you'll excuse me.

Doc turns toward her office.

EVE

I could make us coffee or tea?

DOC

I'd love some coffee.

MARIANA

I'll get it.

Eve and Mariana race to the tea and coffee table in the corner of the waiting room, competing for the task.

Herb and Casey look on as Doc disappears into her office, and Eve and Mariana battle each other to make coffee.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc locks the door, and quickly examines the two slides from Mariana.

She looks at one then the other. She repeats the process.

Doc doesn't believe her eyes. She grabs her head, stands, and paces around the room. Doc mumbles.

DOC

Patient history? Co-habitation?
Chance?

(beat)

Others? Epidemic?

Doc hops to her laptop computer. She begins to type furiously.

Doc hears and sees the doorknob turn.

Herb bursts in the door, breaking the lock.

DOC (CONT'D)

What's the meaning of this?

Herb grabs the Doc's laptop, rips out the landline phone cord, puts out a hand, and glares at Doc.

HERB
Cellphone, now!

Doc stands defiantly.

DOC
I want you all out of here right now!

Mariana, Eve, and Casey are at the door looking in. They look helpless and powerless.

HERB
Afraid we can't do that.

DOC
I said now! You're trespassing! I will call the police.

HERB
Is that a threat?

Doc marches out of the office. The others follow.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc unlocks the front door.

DOC
I'm sorry.

HERB
I paid out \$800 to you, and \$1000 to your husband. After I get our money back, we'll go.

DOC
That's impossible. My husband...

HERB
That's your problem.

DOC
But...

HERB
And practicing without a license?

DOC
You said...

HERB
We want answers.

Doc shuts and locks the door.

DOC
Why did you tear out my phone line?

HERB
To make a point.

MARIANA
I'm sorry, Doc.

EVE
We need you. Casey needs you.

DOC
I need my laptop to do my research.

Herb hands it over.

HERB
Fine.

DOC
I need my mobile phone for
emergencies.

HERB
Nope. And all doors stay open. It's
all going to be transparent from
here on out.

DOC
From here on out?

HERB
We leave right before dawn.

DOC
Promise?

HERB
Promise.

Doc trudges back to her office in defeat.

DOC
I don't know what to do?

EVE
Do you have different medicines to
try on Casey and Mariana?

DOC
Maybe. I'll have to check.
(beat)
And test them. Casey, will you be a
brave little soldier and let me
shave a few skin cells from your
face?

Casey looks nervous.

MARIANA
It doesn't hurt.

Herb gets right in Mariana's face. He's angry.

HERB
Did she touch you?

MARIANA
No?

HERB
She'd better not have touched you!

Herb spins and yells at Doc.

HERB (CONT'D)
Did you touch her?

DOC
Don't be ridiculous.

HERB
I asked you a question.

DOC
No.

Doc and Mariana glance at each other without Herb seeing, but
Eve sees the glances.

HERB
Better not! And no skin samples
from Casey! Got it?

DOC
How am I supposed to do my work?

CASEY
It's okay, Herb. I don't mind.

Herb races up to Casey, and pushes him to the ground.

DOC
Hey, hey.

HERB
I said no!

Eve turns away. Mariana turns away. Casey turns away. Doc turns around and throws her arms up.

DOC
Don't know how to proceed without research!

HERB
Figure it out.

DOC
I could use that coffee.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc is staring at an article on the computer, when Eve comes in carrying a cup of coffee. Doc looks up.

DOC
Thanks, Eve. How is Casey doing?

Herb leans toward the door to listen in on their conversation. Casey and Mariana do the same. Doc sees Casey get up to use the rest room.

As Eve sets the coffee down, she secretly places a small folded note down beside it.

EVE
He's doing much better. I think you've given him hope. You've given us hope.

Doc sees the note, and palms it. Herb looks through the open door, but sees nothing suspicious.

Doc smiles briefly at Eve, then looks back at her laptop. Mariana peeks into Doc's office satisfied.

Doc reads Eve's note behind the laptop. It reads, "I adopted Casey one year ago. I love Casey, but I'm not with them! Only trust me."

Doc looks out to see Casey return from the rest room, then she looks at her computer and reads.

Again, Doc looks out to the waiting room. Only Mariana looks in Doc's direction. She winks at Doc. Doc waves back, innocently.

Mariana gets up to go to the rest room.

Doc quietly rips Eve's note up like a shredder, and tosses it the wastebasket.

We SEE small dot on the frame of her husband's photo, over Doc's shoulder. We ZOOM IN closer to see that it's a tiny camera lens.

Mariana returns from the restroom.

Doc looks out to the waiting room to see Herb stand. He stretches.

HERB

I'll be in the rest room if anybody needs me. You all sit tight. Don't go anywhere without me. Ya hear?

Everyone nods 'yes' as Herb goes to the rest room.

Doc leans back to look in the microscopes one more time.

As he does, we SEE another small camera lens on the other wall.

Doc returns to her laptop computer. She looks out to see Casey laying down on the floor, using Eve's coat for a pillow.

When Herb steps back into the waiting area, he gives an evil glare toward Doc and Eve.

Mariana pops out of her seat and stands in the doorway of Doc's office.

MARIANA

Doc, you offered to take a few measurements and photographs, and use your fancy software to show me what I'd look like with breast enhancement.

DOC

I have access to the software, but I'm not that kind of doctor. I'm a bit busy with the rashes...

HERB

Now!

DOC

What?

HERB

If she wants to see what she looks like with big tits, do it now!

Mariana turns to smile at Herb.

MARIANA

Please, please, please. You promised!

Herb stands and uses his most forceful tone.

HERB

Now!

MARIANA

Will I be allowed to shut the door?

HERB

Yes, of course. We're not twisted!

No one sees Eve roll her eyes.

Behind Eve, we SEE a small lens like the other spy-wear.

MARIANA

Just a little bigger. I promise.

Doc stands, and guides Mariana to the Examining Room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mariana quickly disrobes, as Doc shuts the door.

DOC

I don't suppose I can dissuade you?

MARIANA

Brook? Really? After all we've been through?

DOC

I'm just saying...

MARIANA

I'm curious. That's all. I know you have that fancy software that lets you see the future.

DOC
Possible scenarios.

MARIANA
My future.

Mariana looks away' not listening.

DOC
It's expensive, and sometimes
dangerous.

Mariana turns back.

MARIANA
Maybe, our future.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Eve is making a cup of tea at the small table in the corner of the waiting room.

From behind her, Herb approaches with a large syringe dripping with fluid.

As Herb gets closer to Eve, he looks back at Casey to see him fast asleep. Herb smiles.

He reaches Eve, covers her mouth and nose with one hand, and jams the syringe into her back.

He picks her up as she struggles to scream and break free.

BACK TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc uploads photos on a desktop computer in the corner of the room. Mariana, still topless, clings to her back, while leaning around her to view the display.

DOC
You can get dressed.

MARIANA
So excited to see me, ya know...

DOC
Be happy with a healthy body, I
tell patients.

Mariana is jumping up and down.

MARIANA

Show me! Come on! Show me.

Doc stalls, but slowly gives in.

DOC

Okay, okay, but I suggest we start small.

MARIANA

Small is why I'm here.

DOC

I mean, smaller enhancements. First, let's show the baseline condition.

Doc shows Mariana a photo of her chest. Doc points to the larger, redder rash on the right breast.

MARIANA

See, too small.

DOC

Didn't notice this a few minutes ago, but that rash of yours seems to be spreading a bit.

Mariana ignores Doc.

MARIANA

Okay, let's watch 'em grow! I've heard those women hooting and hollering in this very examination room on seeing the possibilities. Your husband was your biggest fan.

DOC

Look where it got him.

Mariana continues to ignore Doc, as Doc shows her with larger breasts.

MARIANA

See, I look better already.

DOC

It's not just cup size, there's the extra weight to consider. Strain on a back designed to carry less weight. Leakage? Many reasons why I don't do the surgeries.

MARIANA

I could be somebody special.

DOC

Natural breasts in Hollywood and
the rest of the world are...

MARIANA

(interrupting)

Bigger, fuller.

Doc adds the next image.

DOC

The primary cause for concern from
my point of view is infection from
bacteria and mold which can be
released from the implant into the
body.

MARIANA

I said, bigger, fuller!

DOC

Of course, there are surgical
risks, anesthesia risks, possible
chronic breast pain, numbness, and
scar tissue to consider.

MARIANA

Hmmm. I'll need new tops and
sweaters.

DOC

Are you listening to me?

MARIANA

And bras, of course.

DOC

Surgery plus follow-up exams run
eight to ten-thousand dollars.

Doc turns away.

DOC (CONT'D)

When I was able to perform the
work. Can't do it now.

(beat)

Those days are gone.

MARIANA

Money is not a problem. I have it,
and I can get more any time.

DOC
From Herb?

MARIANA
I've been saving.

DOC
You didn't answer my question. From Herb.

MARIANA
What does it matter?

Doc paces the room.

DOC
I'm not doing surgeries. I can't order supplies. No anesthesiologist will work me. No nurses. I'm done for three months.

Mariana goes to hug Doc.

MARIANA
Not done with me.

They hear a loud KNOCK on the front door.

DOC
Put your clothes on!

Doc races out of the Examination Room door and into the dark Waiting Room (all lights are off). Doc sees Casey and Herb asleep on the floor.

More KNOCKS on the door.

Casey and Herb slowly wake, as Doc races by them to open the front door. Doc opens the door only a few inches. We HEAR the voice of a hefty, white private security guard, OFFICER DOWNS (40), constantly paranoid, and wearing a security guard's uniform. The officer is heavily armed, and psychotic, due to an advanced rash on his face and body.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)
Office Downs, neighborhood business owners' security guard. Saw lights on in the back of the building. Not usual. Not usual for you to be here, either.

Doc is speechless.

Herb stands up and moves behind Doc, and leans out to talk to Officer Downs.

HERB

Officer Downs, you've seen me before, right? Night janitor? Herb Jackson?

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)

Yes, Mr. Jackson. But the light on this late? And who's this?

DOC

I'm Doctor Brook O'Malley. Dermatologist to the Stars? This is my practice.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)

No, it ain't. I was in here before that raid a few months back...

DOC

Yes, Thank you for that. That's what I needed to turn my life around.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)

(sarcastic)

You look like you turned nothing around.

(beat, yells)

Who else you got in there?

Doc and Herb whisper.

DOC

Shhh! It's take your children to work day.

HERB

Kid's asleep. Didn't care much about my cleaning.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)

I don't like this! I don't like this!

DOC

Yes, Officer. Thanks, Officer.

HERB

Thanks, Officer. You have a safe and pleasant evening.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)
(leaving)
Weird, if you ask me. That's all
I'm sayin'. I don't like this!

Doc shuts the door.

CASEY
Where's Ma?

Casey looks around, not in a panic, as Mariana bounces in smiling from the Examination Room.

MARIANA
Anybody want to see pictures of me
with large breasts.

CASEY
Where's Ma?

HERB
She stepped out for yogurt.

CASEY
Okay. Yogurt's good.

HERB
For your stomach issues.

MARIANA
They're really huge.

CASEY
When's she gettin' back? My stomach
is acting up again.

HERB
Any minute, I guess, I was almost
asleep when she left.

Doc pauses.

DOC
Wait a minute. I had to unlock the
door to speak to the cop!

HERB
(defensive)
I must have got up to lock it
after. That a crime?

Mariana gets in Herb's face.

MARIANA

Doc didn't mean nothing by it!

Herb raises a hand to strike Mariana, but doesn't. He glares at Marian, then Doc, then Mariana. Herb pushes Mariana away.

HERB

Don't want to crack that mountain of makeup on your face. Get out there and fetch the boy's Ma.

DOC

I'll go.

CASEY

I'll go, too.

Doc and Casey lunge for the door, but Herb halts them with a powerful right arm.

HERB

I'm sending Mariana. Doc has work to do, and the streets aren't safe for a kid.

Herb points to the floor.

HERB (CONT'D)

Lie down, Casey. Get some rest. Doc, get back to work. Find a cure for our rashes.

Doc shakes her head with disgust, and heads to her office.

Mariana puts her head down.

MARIANA

I'll find her.

Herb pulls Mariana's arm down hard. He takes out NINE of the sample facial cream tubes from his pocket and hands them to Mariana. She puts them in her pocket.

HERB

(yells)
And don't forget the yogurt! Got it?

MARIANA

Got it.

HERB

(mumbles)
Stomach's killing me.

Herb pushes Mariana out the front door, and he locks it behind her.

Doc reenters the waiting room with an empty coffee cup.

HERB (CONT'D)

See? Force of habit locking the front door.

(laughs)

Probably from working nights in this neighborhood.

Doc, bewildered and a little frightened, stares at Herb. Doc gets another cup of coffee, and heads back to her office.

DOC

Guess I'll go back to work.

HERB

Guess you better!

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc drinks a cup of coffee, while reading dermatology textbooks.

Herb enters with a worried look.

DOC

No sign of Eve or Mariana?

HERB

I'm sure they're fine. Worried about these rashes.

DOC

I've never seen anything like it.

HERB

Never?

DOC

Even going over my notes from med school, old textbooks on dermatology, new studies in journals. I got nothing.

HERB

What's puzzling you?

DOC

You, for one. You'd do anything to help your congregation, or whatever they are. Your group.

HERB

Nothing wrong with that.

DOC

Holding me hostage here to help.
(laughs)
But you knew that!

HERB

You took those opioids, not me.

DOC

I know. I know. I screwed up.

HERB

Why can't you help us?

Doc stands and paces. He's calm, but frustrated.

DOC

No trust, Herb. I've been trusted my entire life. Trusted by teachers, professors, other doctors, the scientific community.

HERB

You messed up.

Doc stops pacing and gets in Herb's face.

DOC

So why did you hunt me down? Single me out to work for me three months ago?

Herb looks away.

DOC (CONT'D)

You've got an endless supply of money, a dozen followers who bend to your every word. Why me?

Herb stands and glares at Doc.

HERB

Needed your help.

DOC

Plenty of other doctors,
dermatologists, and specialists to
choose from. Why me? Why now, after
my practice and life has fallen
apart?

Herb paces.

HERB

You wouldn't have helped us earlier
when you were high and mighty,
pulling in a million dollars a year
doing face-lifts and Botox like the
corner oil-change mechanic.

Doc panics.

DOC

Botox, where's Botox?!

HERB

Sleeping under your desk.

Doc looks, and sees Botox fast asleep.

DOC

Okay, okay.

HERB

Now is when that boy outside needs
you. His face is on fire. He
doesn't complain, but I see the
pain in his eyes every day!

DOC

Every day? You see him every day?
What kind of a group do you lead?
Is it a commune? A cult? What is
it?

Herb is equally angry and frustrated.

HERB

We're not U.S. citizens. We get
lousy jobs. We don't get promoted.
We don't have medical insurance. We
can't vote. And nobody sees us.
Really sees us!

Herb breaks down in tears. Doc comforts him.

DOC

I'm sorry. You don't sound like
foreigners. Your English is great.
I didn't know.

HERB

You have no idea.

Doc and Herb turn at the same time to see Casey standing at
the door, listening to every word.

Doc steps back from Herb.

DOC

Casey, I'm...

Casey glares at Herb, who sinks into a chair like a punished
child.

Doc sees Herb's reaction to Casey's glare.

Herb puts his head down like a defeated gladiator.

CASEY

(sad)

I'm going back to sleep. Wake me
when Ma comes back, or when we have
yogurt. I like yogurt.

Doc looks confused by Casey's remark.

Casey trudges to the dark waiting room.

Herb covers his face with his hands. Speechless.

DOC

I need more time to do research.

Herb stands and exits to the waiting room.

DOC (CONT'D)

I'll do what I can.

Herb's right hand waves slightly, but he doesn't turn around.

Doc returns to her laptop computer, but glances back at her
microscope and pauses to think.

Doc sees her husband's photo.

She hears a KNOCK on the front door.

Herb and Casey don't wake up to get the door.

Doc trudges toward the door.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc steps quickly to unlock the door. Mariana stands outside the door, covering the left side of her face with her coat. She has a small shopping bag in her other hand.

DOC
Come in. Come in.

Mariana enters the dark waiting room, as Doc locks the door.

MARIANA
Thanks.

DOC
Where's Eve?

MARIANA
Nobody's seen her. I got the yogurt.

Doc is puzzled.

DOC
I have a small refrigerator in my office.

Mariana follows Doc to her office.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc takes the small shopping bag from Mariana's hand, and puts it in her refrigerator.

Mariana takes off her coat as Doc turns to see her heavily bruised left cheek.

They whisper.

DOC
What happened? Who did this to you?

MARIANA
I fell.

DOC
I can see a handprint!

MARIANA
I fell.

DOC

Let me get some ice.

Doc turns to the small refrigerator, and takes an ice tray from a small freezer compartment.

Mariana shivers in fright.

Doc fills a towel with ice cubes and gently holds it to Mariana's cheek.

She tries to smile.

MARIANA

Thanks.

DOC

Want to talk about it?

MARIANA

Can't.

DOC

Want to call the police?

MARIANA

No. Never.

DOC

Because you're not citizens?

Mariana nods, 'yes.'

Doc carefully pats her cheek with the towel. Her heavy makeup begins to wipe off, exposing a rash that is worse than Casey's.

Doc stares at Mariana with compassion.

MARIANA

What?

Mariana pulls Doc's hand down, and sees her makeup covering the towel. She panics, and races out to the rest room.

Doc collapses in her chair, looking helpless.

LATER

Mariana returns with fresh, heavy makeup, and a forced smile.

Doc continues to whisper.

DOC
What the hell is going on around
here?

MARIANA
Nothing.
(beat)
I need to get some sleep.

Mariana turns to leave the office, but Doc gently holds her hand.

DOC
Sit with me a while.

Mariana shakes her head, 'no.' She looks around the office suspiciously.

Doc looks around the office curiously. Doc finally sees a small camera lens in the frame of her husband's photo on the wall. She turns away slowly like she doesn't see it.

Mariana steps to the corner of the office, and holds up two fingers for a split-second.

Mariana looks to the far side of the office, then back at Doc.

Doc looks around nonchalantly, until she finally sees the second camera lens, opposite her desk.

DOC (CONT'D)
Mariana, you look tired. Why don't
you get some rest?

Mariana smiles weakly, turns, and walks out.

Doc slumps in her chair. She looks around the office and thinks.

Doc pulls the laptop close to her body, so the camera behind her can't see over her shoulder.

She adjusts the display on the laptop, so the camera in front of her can't see the screen.

Doc unplugs the Ethernet cable.

She pulls up "Notes" and begins to type a list the list reads:

1. Eve's husband dies, Casey is adopted, and Herb and Mariana move into the area exactly one year ago. Coincidence?

2. Three months ago: Herb and Mariana hired. I began using. Coincidence?

3. Today, my license gets suspended, Eugene throws me out, and Casey and Eve show up. Herb and Mariana are here too. Coincidence?

4. Casey (white) and Mariana (Mexican) have severe rashes. Don't know about Herb or Eve.

5. Facial mite densities are off the charts on Casey's face and Mariana's breasts.

6. Not US citizens, except Eve, who wrote "Not one of them. She disappears and nobody cares. Everybody cares about yogurt."

Doc deletes her note, and powers down and closes her laptop.

She stands at the door to see three sleeping bodies. Doc considers her options.

She puts a hand in her pocket, and takes out eight, one-hundred-dollar bills. She returns them to her wallet.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM

Doc tiptoes to the door.

She looks back at Casey, with his bright red, boiling cheeks.

She agonizes for a moment, before unlocking the door.

She opens the door a crack, looking back at Casey.

Doc's eyes open widely in fright.

Officer Downs is standing guard at the door, with a .44 Magnum pistol drawn. They whisper.

DOC

Officer Downs? What's the gun for?

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)

On duty, and I don't trust you!

DOC

I was just stepping out for a bite to eat.

Officer Downs hands a restaurant to-go bag in the narrow door opening.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)
 Chinese take-out. Eat this and get
 back inside. These streets aren't
 safe for you at night!

DOC
 I prefer to find my own food.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.)
 Got my orders! Not 'til you help
 us! You're no good to nobody if
 you're dead!

Office Downs cocks his pistol. We see the barrel of the
 pistol pointed at Doc's head.

OFFICER DOWNS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Is that clear?

Doc shakes in fright.

DOC
 Very clear.

Office Downs un-cocks her pistol, and removes it from the
 door.

Doc closes and locks the door. She carries the bag of Chinese
 food, and slowly trudges toward her office door.

HERB
 (tired)
 Would have shot ya dead.

DOC
 Figures. He's with you, isn't he?
 Had a terrible facial rash.

Herb doesn't answer.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc sits alone in her office, eating Chinese take-out with a
 look of despair.

She grabs a bottle of water from the refrigerator, and sits
 back down.

She plugs in her Ethernet cable. She mumbles.

DOC
 Why not?

Doc powers up the laptop. She gets to a search engine line and types: "survived by wife, Eve Weathers."

A newspaper story appears. We see a handsome man in a Marines uniform with several decorations. The story reads, "Sergeant stabbed in the back and poisoned while on leave in L.A."

Doc yanks out the Ethernet cable from her laptop, and types notes into her computer. We SEE her list:
"1. Illegal immigrants with bad skin and stomach issues, forcing me to help them out of desperation for medical care.
2. There's twelve of them total. Three here, the security guard, and eight others with similar problems.
3. Bet they share a tiny, unhealthy, apartment filled with bugs and germs.
4. These people are sick in the head. Thank God they're leaving tomorrow!"

Doc deletes the notes he just typed in.

She powers the computer down and closes the lid.

She pauses to think, as she stares out to see the three sleeping bodies in the waiting room.

Doc takes a sip of water.

She reaches under the seat of her desk, and pulls out the bottle of pills taped to the bottom of the seat.

She opens the bottle.

She pours all the pills out onto her desk.

She stares at the pills.

End Act Two

ACT THREE

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT

Doc's head is on the desk. The pills are gone. An empty carton of Chinese take-out, and an empty bottle of water, are next to her head.

Casey enters the door, and shakes Doc's shoulder.

Doc doesn't respond.

Casey shakes him again. And again.

Finally, Doc slowly lifts her head off the desk.

DOC

Casey?

CASEY

Thanks for not abandoning me.

DOC

Abandoning you?

CASEY

My... My Ma didn't come back yet,
but we did get yogurt.

Doc is confused. She checks the time on her phone. It reads, "3:34 AM."

DOC

Let's give her more time.

(beat)

How's the rash?

CASEY

First, tell me about hybrid vigor!

DOC

Strange question.

CASEY

Most beef cattle are hybrids, but
they're dumb as posts.

DOC

Casey, it's three-thirty in the
morning.

CASEY

How come some hybrids are bigger,
and stronger, and some are dumber
than posts?

DOC

Good question. I'd ask Charles
Darwin if he was here.

Casey starts pacing.

CASEY

I don't get it. A polar bear mates
with a grizzly bear and makes a
pizzly? Who's going to be afraid of
something called a pizzly?

DOC

I don't know, but Botox is half-
huskey and half-wolf, and city
officials are very afraid of him.
Most gentle dog in the world.

CASEY

You're right. But the ligor and the
Africanized honey bee...

Doc struggles to wake and interrupts Casey.

DOC

How is that rash of yours?

CASEY

Better on the left. Worse on the
right.

Doc stands. She wobbles a little.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You okay, Doc?

DOC

Rough night. Let me wash up, and
I'll see you in the Examination
Room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT

Casey is already sitting on the examination table when Doc
comes in.

DOC

Let's have a look.

Doc grabs her light-up magnifying dermatoscope and stares at Casey's left cheek, which looks a little better, then his right cheek that looks much worse.

Doc smiles.

DOC (CONT'D)
Left side, moisturizer-only side,
looks a little better.

CASEY
I thought so, too. I like science!

Doc re-examines the right cheek that looks much worse.

DOC
Right-side seems to be spreading.

Herb COUGHS, standing at the door, peeking in. Mariana, smiling, comes up behind Herb.

MARIANA
Any progress?

CASEY
Some.

Herb puts his hand in his pocket, and produces one of the small sample tubes of face cream.

HERB
Shouldn't Casey put the cream that
worked all over?

DOC
That's not how science works, Herb.
We need to follow the experiment
through.

Herb is agitated.

HERB
I don't see why...

DOC
(interrupting)
That's all for now, Casey. Mariana,
would you mind if I had a look?

Mariana bounds into the Examination Room, almost knocking over Casey to get on the examination table. She's already lifting her top.

MARIANA
Anytime, Doc.

Herb stomps back to the waiting room.

Doc gently grabs Mariana's arm.

DOC
I need a more complete examination.

Mariana lifts her top up.

MARIANA
Wouldn't you rather look at these?

Doc looks away. A moment later, Doc sees a small camera lens on a painting frame on one wall.

Doc yells.

DOC
Fine, we'll do this later!

Doc grabs one painting from the wall, and smashes it on the floor. Botox races in and begins to bark.

Herb and Casey come running to the door.

DOC (CONT'D)
My husband won't let me come home!
He's always hated Botox!

Doc grabs another painting and smashes it on the floor.

HERB
Control yourself, Doc.

DOC
I'm broke. No job. No future!

Doc grabs the painting with the tiny camera lens on it, and smashes it on the ground.

CASEY
You'll be okay, Doc.

DOC
No hope.

Mariana looks on sadly, as Doc stomps on the frames of the paintings.

We see the camera lens get squashed.

Doc races out to her private office, still in a rampage. Casey, Mariana, and Botox follow.

Herb examines the broken lens, and races to Doc's office. Botox returns and GROWLS at Herb.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc is smashing everything in a frame; paintings, diplomas, and certificates. She pauses as she grabs the photo of her husband.

DOC

I'll move in with my brother on his farm in Oklahoma. Become a pig farmer!

Doc smashes the frame to the floor, and jumps up and down on it.

Herb arrives too late to stop her. Botox is right behind Herb.

Doc continues her tirade for effect. She storms into the waiting area.

HERB

(whispers)
Must be on drugs again.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Doc turns on all the lights, and starts knocking over furniture, and throwing magazines around when they all hear three loud KNOCKS on the door.

Casey unlocks the door. His expression goes from upbeat to depressed a second later.

CASEY

Officer Downs, come in.

Officer Downs charges in with his pistol drawn. He's obviously psychotic.

OFFICER DOWNS

What's going on in here?

Doc looks at Casey and Office Downs.

DOC

You two know each other?

Casey and Officer Downs glance at each other.

OFFICER DOWNS
Small world, isn't it?

All, but Doc, laugh at the joke.

Doc pauses. She stares at horrible facial rash on Officer Downs.

We also SEE a close-up of extra-dark blotches on Herb's face.

Doc's eyes open widely. She has an epiphany.

Doc turns quickly and begins to pick up magazines and chairs.

DOC
I'm okay. Sorry for going
ballistic. Had a rough night.

OFFICER DOWNS
What you lookin' at? You 'bout got
yourself shot!

Doc puts an arm around Casey.

DOC
Casey, I promised I wouldn't
abandon you, and I won't.

CASEY
Really, Doc! Thanks.

Doc races into her office, and turns on her computer, but she can barely hear the whispering in the waiting room.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Find my Ma yet?

OFFICER DOWNS
No yet. Somethin' ain't right.
Tonight is my night.

MARIANA
Where could she be?

HERB
Went for yogurt. Never came back.

CASEY
That's not like her.

MARIANA

Lady at the corner store didn't see her. I asked.

OFFICER DOWNS

Strange. Very strange. That's why tonight is my night! Got my AR's in my trunk. Can't trust nobody!

CASEY

No need for violence. We got the yogurt.

Doc rolls her eyes in disgust.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE PRIVATE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Doc examines the chemical composition of several creams and lotions.

We SEE a spreadsheet of chemicals in face creams.

Doc races out of the office, and returns moments later, with several to the small samples of creams.

While the others whisper in the waiting room, Doc takes a small amount of lotion from one of the tubes and adds it to a glass slide marked "C1."

Doc adds a second drop of lotion to the second slide marked "C2."

She puts the C1 slide under the microscope and examines it. She then studies the slide marked C2.

She waits, as the conversations in the other rooms continue about seemingly random topics; the weather, pizza.

Doc yells out.

DOC

Casey, can I see you for a second?

Casey races in, full of anticipation.

CASEY

Yeah, Doc?

Doc hands Casey a small sample tube of cream.

DOC

Try this one on your right side; the side that's the reddest.

Herb, Mariana, and Officer Downs race to the door.

HERB

Got a cure, Doc?

Casey jumps up and down with excitement.

DOC

Something to ease the symptoms. If you want a cure, I'll need to examine you all.

Casey applies the cream on the right side, and races to the rest room.

HERB

What do you mean, all of us?

DOC

We all have slightly different skin. Not just color, but genetic and chemical makeup. I need to find out what works and what doesn't work on a broad array of faces, skin types, and bodies. Only way to find a cure.

Casey screams with joy in the rest room.

CASEY (O.S.)

Ya-hoo! It's working.

HERB

Don't care about me. I care about the others.

DOC

Checking everyone's skin reactions is the only way to help everybody.

OFFICER DOWNS

I don't trust druggies!

Doc ignores Officer Downs.

DOC

Just like an allergy scratch test, but with little patches! If any of you are sensitive to these creams, it might mean that the creams might be ineffective or even deleterious to your skin in the long-term.

MARIANA

Because we're different ages?

DOC

And skin tones, skin types...

MARIANA

I get it! We could help Casey by being his Guinea pigs!

DOC

Right! Casey could help, too. If I give ya few little scratches, put a tiny dab of several creams on your backs with a tiny patch, I could quickly learn about allergic reactions and potential effectiveness. Because skin mites are more active at night, we have to get started right away.

Herb is defensive. He backs up and yells.

HERB

No! Won't allow it!

DOC

(yells at Herb)

You were the one who wanted a cure!

Silence.

Casey returns. He senses what's up, and confronts Herb.

CASEY

You gotta help me! You gotta help me. I'll die without you!

Casey eyes open widely, and he freezes. He falls to the floor with another epileptic seizure.

Herb and Mariana panic.

Officer Downs pulls his pistol and starts waving it around.

OFFICER DOWNS

What did you do to him, Druggie?

DOC

Stay calm. Talk softly. Give him room.

Botox wakes and GROWLS at Officer Downs.

Officer Downs aims his pistol at Botox, and threatens Doc.

OFFICER DOWNS

If that dog comes near me, I'll
blow his head off.

Mariana butts in between Casey and Officer Downs.

MARIANA

I got this. You're going to be
okay, Casey, thanks to Doc.

The seizure stops. Herb smiles weakly at Doc.

DOC

I think he'll be okay. I'll take
his vital signs when he's relaxed.

OFFICER DOWNS

(neurotic)

I don't like it here. Tonight's the
night.

MARIANA

I'll do it! For Casey! The patch
test, that is!

OFFICER DOWNS

Me, too.

DOC

That's the spirit.

CASEY

Science! Thanks, Doc.

DOC

One at a time in the Examination
Room.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE EXAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT

Mariana has her shirt off in a New York minute.

Doc applies a 6 x 6 grid of 1-centimeter patches on her back.

Officer Downs lifts the back of his security uniform shirt for
his patches, but he keeps his pistol drawn for good measure.
His back has a horrible rash and festering blisters.

DOC

You should have this looked at
tomorrow.

OFFICER DOWNS

(angry)

There is no tomorrow!

Doc adds the patches quickly to Officer Down's back. She sees the area around the first patch causes an immediate blistering reaction. The others don't see it.

DOC

Sure, there's a tomorrow.

(smiles)

We're here to help.

Herb glares at Doc, and is reluctant to remove his shirt. Herb looks at Casey standing in the doorway, and finally gives in.

Doc puts on the first patch, and again, the skin blisters before he finished with the other patches.

HERB

How does it look?

DOC

It all looks great, Herb. Thanks for volunteering.

The others trudge to the waiting room.

Casey is last. He removes his shirt, and is skin and bones.

CASEY

So, there are thirty-six patches?

DOC

Identical treatments. Like the others. I'll do mine on my belly, but it will have the same effect.

The first patch on Casey also causes a blistering reaction.

CASEY

Each patch is different?

DOC

Different chemical compositions of creams and lotions.

CASEY

(nervous)

Some have anti-bacterials? They made me redder and itch.

DOC
Science is like that!

CASEY
What do the others contain?

DOC
Some are moisturizers, some acne
medicines, and some new ones have
probiotics to stimulate good
bacteria.

(beat)
There! All done. That didn't hurt,
did it?

We SEE the blistering around the patches is beginning.

Casey stresses out and jumps off the table. He yells, as he
puts his shirt back on.

CASEY
Don't patronize me! Some contain
bad bacteria, don't they?

DOC
We have to test the extremes to see
what works. You know that?

CASEY
But how will the mites react?
Demodex folliculorum and *Demodex*
brevis?

Doc paces.

DOC
You are well-read for a twelve-year-
old, aren't you? I never mentioned
the species names of mites on our
skin.

Doc puts an arm around Casey.

DOC (CONT'D)
I get it. You've a tough life. You
all have. Illegal immigrants with
bad skin. Probably live in a less-
than wholesome environment.

Doc eyes Casey, who is calm again.

CASEY
It's wholesome enough.

DOC
Probably eat cheap fast-food. Very
oily and loaded with bacteria.

Again, Casey react calmly.

CASEY
We eat well enough.

DOC
(smirks)
You don't go out for fresh grilled
salmon and vegetables every night,
do you? Well, join the club!
Welcome to my new hell-on-Earth.
But I'm still trying to help you
and your friends, because it's the
right thing to do. I took that
Hippocratic Oath to heal people!
I'll solve your little rash, and
you can all go home!

Casey glares at Doc, like she doesn't understand.

CASEY
You don't know me. You don't know
us!

DOC
(sarcastic)
Oh. You think I don't understand
you?
(whispers)
Well, I don't like being spied on,
lied to, have a gun put to my head,
or being taken hostage -- even if
I'm being paid.
(beat)
But I took my oath as a doctor, and
I'll stick to it!

CASEY
Your stupid Hippocratic oath?

DOC
I will remember that there is art
to medicine as well as science, and
that warmth, sympathy and
understanding may outweigh the
surgeon's knife or the chemist's
drug.

CASEY
And do no harm, right?

Doc looks around in a few drawers to find just the right tubes of skin lotion. She finds twelve of them, and counts them out.

DOC

Right. Do no harm. But if you want to help the four of you, and your eight others out there, you'll each use an entire tube of this on your faces immediately.

Casey examines the tubes of cream.

CASEY

This is what you gave me, and it worked great!

DOC

Exactly.

CASEY

Tested with science.

DOC

Absolutely.

Casey hugs Doc, who hugs him back. Doc separates and smiles.

DOC (CONT'D)

I'll be in my office.

Doc strolls out.

Casey sees that she's serious about helping him. He sighs.

CASEY

After all that, she still wants to help me? Help us!

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herb, Casey, Mariana, and Officer Downs rush to rub the new cream all over their faces.

Herb hands the other eight tubes to Mariana.

HERB

Have the others do the same. Now! It's a matter of life and death.

MARIANA

Right away! Back in five minutes.

Herb opens the door, and pushes Mariana out the door.

Herb locks the door.

Everyone hears Botox barking outside the Janitor's supply closet.

Doc races to Botox to calm him down. Herb, Officer Down (with pistol drawn) and Casey race to the closet. Doc tries to open it, but it's locked.

DOC
Open it, Herb!

HERB
No.

DOC
Open it. There's something wrong.

HERB
Can't believe a dog!

DOC
Botox has a keen sense of smell.
Open the door!

OFFICER DOWNS
I can shoot the dog!

Casey gets in Herb's face.

CASEY
Open the door, Herb!

Herb freezes with fear. His hands shake. He looks at Casey sadly, and opens the door.

Eve's falls back out of the closet, dead!

Casey hugs his Ma's body, but only for a second or two.

CASEY (CONT'D)
Ma! Ma! How could we?

Officer Downs, in panic and despair, points his pistol alternately at everyone.

OFFICER DOWNS
It's my night. The ARs are in the trunk of my car. Tonight. I gotta!
I gotta hear those rifles sing!

Officer Downs races to the front door. Everyone follows him.

Officer Downs stops. He pulls and waves his pistol around.

OFFICER DOWNS (CONT'D)

They lied to us. Said we'd fit right in.

DOC

(smirks)

Sadly, you do fit right in. Average intelligence, believe in miracle cures, paranoid, neurotic, well-armed, and about to implode.

OFFICER DOWNS

My face is about to explode! What did you do to us?

DOC

The organisms and bacteria on your bodies followed their own evolutionary process. It remains the survival of the fittest!

OFFICER DOWNS

They won't survive long, once I get to my automatic rifles. Bought 'em from thugs. Easy as pie...

Officer Downs unlocks the front door, Casey calmly puts a foot in front of the door preventing its opening. This temporarily freezes Officer Downs.

CASEY

(to Officer Downs)

These people did nothing to harm us! All they've done is try to help us! Ma was willing to take in a perfect stranger one year ago. She asked for nothing in return. That's what it is to be human!

HERB

Let him go, Casey. He has a job to do.

CASEY

So, he can become the next mass-killer?!

(to Herb)

No! Never! Aren't you satisfied by killing Ma?

DOC

You killed Eve?

HERB

She wasn't one of us. She had perfect skin.

DOC

You people are nuts. But, you're not people, are you?

Office Downs struggles to move Casey out of the way. Casey is stronger than he appears. Officer Downs can't move him, but he turns his pistol toward Casey.

Casey battles Office Downs by grabbing the barrel of the pistol.

Botox springs from the hallway, and runs, and leaps at Officer's Downs' neck. The dog forces Officer Downs' head to hit the wooden door frame hard, but before he conks out, he spins and fires the pistol accidentally at Herb, who takes a bullet in the stomach.

OFFICER DOWNS

(falling)

All your fault.

Officer Downs falls to the floor, unconscious.

Blood oozes from Herb as he falls, bleeding helplessly.

Doc pulls Botox off Office Downs, and races to Herb to add pressure to his wound.

Mariana bursts through the front door, shocked at hearing the gunshot. Casey and Doc immediately SEE that the rash on her face is much worse. It's blistering.

Mariana grabs her chest.

MARIANA

Eating me alive. My heart! Burning up.

DOC

Call 9-1-1. Immediately.

CASEY

No! No! We can't!

Mariana collapses to the floor.

Casey races off to the restroom to see his face in the mirror.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Casey sees his face blistering and being eaten alive.

CASEY

No! No!

BACK TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MARIANA

What's happening to us?

DOC

Facial mite populations are exploding. Yours were also on your breasts. By your heart. I couldn't stop them! I'm so sorry.

HERB

(sadly)

It was a matter of time.

DOC

The mites. Saw them on the skin samples under the microscope. The two species of mites interbred and created...

Casey trudges in sadly and interrupts.

CASEY

A hybrid species, like the ligor, the cross between the lion and the tiger, but grows bigger and eats much more of our faces.

DOC

It all happened so fast! Smaller creatures have faster reproductive cycles.

Casey slumps into a chair. His head drops.

CASEY

I know! Our commander was the bio-engineer on our ship. These were our first human clones. We called them "Pioneers." I was among them.

DOC

Your ship?

HERB
 (to Casey)
 I tried to protect you.

DOC
Near-humans. Don't beat yourself
 up. You got close. Tell me about
 your ship?

CASEY
 The best we could clone from your
 DNA samples. Abductions.

Herb struggles to speak.

HERB
 Nailed the human DNA. We fit right
 in...almost. Didn't realize skin
 color would be a major determinant.

CASEY
 Or the facial mites. They had their
 own DNA.

DOC
 And specific bacteria in their
 guts, which determined what they
 ate and how much. But, where did
 you come from?

Casey and Herb ignores Doc, and speaks to each other. Doc
 speaks to herself.

CASEY
 In our case, the mites ate much
 more on us than they do with real
 humans.

DOC
 We co-evolved with these mites for
 millions of years.

HERB
 We had one year to adapt.

CASEY
 Not enough time. But the medicine,
 Doc, the lotions and creams?

DOC
 I did what I could. The anti-
 bacterial cream killed some bad
 bacteria on the skin, but it killed
 good bacteria, too.

CASEY

I imagine the surviving bacteria
became more resistant to
applications of cream.

(beat)

Because small organisms have faster
reproduction times, they evolved
faster than our defenses.

Mariana gasps for air, clinging to life.

MARIANA

I did nothing wrong!

HERB

Did you give the others the same
creams?

MARIANA

They used it right away.

CASEY

It's extinction for us.

Silence.

DOC

Extinction?

CASEY

(to Doc)

Only twelve of us. Same rashes.
Same mites. Same lotions and
creams.

DOC

Same hybrid cross. Drat the luck,
huh?

Casey turns from sad to angry, in Doc's face.

CASEY

Luck? Coincidence? You don't
believe in either!

Doc paces.

DOC

All of you moved into the area one
year ago, and Herb, Mariana, and
Officer Downs were hired three
months ago, just before my troubles
started.

Casey looks away.

CASEY
We needed a good dermatologist.

Doc yells!

DOC
I was set up! Mariana, wanna talk
about the drugs?

Mariana looks away. She can barely speak.

MARIANA
Tiny amounts of opioids in your
coffee, every day. Tiny increases,
so you wouldn't notice. I'm so
sorry. So sorry.

Mariana dies before their eyes. Her face disappears.

HERB
She was following orders.

Doc releases tension on Herb's wound. She stands, defiant.

DOC
You're animals!

CASEY
We would have died.

Doc is still angry.

DOC
We're all going to die. No one gets
out of here alive, humans or
clones!

No one notices that Officer Downs regains movement in his
hand. He struggles quietly to reach his pistol, but he can't.

CASEY
We thought we would be better than
you. Smarter, prettier, more
accomplished. Maybe even rise to
power.
(beat)
Look at us! Pathetic!

They hear a SIREN approaching.

DOC

Devious. Manipulative. Uncaring.
Psychotic. The worst that humans
have to offer. Like a medical
doctor who tires of keeping her
Hippocratic Oath! Like a doctor who
justifies hurting people.

The SIREN gets louder.

CASEY

The siren? It's coming here?

Doc produces Herb's smartphone.

DOC

I dialed 9-1-1 with Herb's phone.

CASEY

But they'll find the opioids under
your office chair.

DOC

Dumped them down the drain hours
ago. After I figured it all out.

CASEY

They'll find Eve's body.

HERB

They'll never believe you.

DOC

Killed the same way Eve's husband
was murdered one year ago.
Coincidence? I think not!

Casey paces.

CASEY

You tried to hurt us?

DOC

I'm the monster?

(beat)

You ripped from my heart the joy I
had in helping people. None of you
were likable. You weren't
compassionate. You faked every
emotion. You cared more about
yogurt than your mother. You're not
fun to be around. You poisoned me
with drugs, spied on me, and killed
people who stood in your way.

(MORE)

DOC (CONT'D)

One of you was about to go on a killing spree. I couldn't let that happen! You're the worst that human DNA has to offer!

Doc pulls out a small recording device from her pocket.

No one sees that Officer Downs has reached his pistol.

DOC (CONT'D)

I use this to record all patient interviews for the notes I type up later. I recorded the past eight hours with you, my patients. Had you shown real compassion toward one another or to others, I would have helped you.

CASEY

You...You didn't help us?

DOC

The patch tests on your backs were designed to determine what would aggravate your skin mites and facial bacteria the most. The tests were conclusive immediately.

Casey drops his head.

CASEY

Science.

DOC

The first patch told me everything I needed to know. It contained an attractant for the Demodex facial mites, and bad bacteria. It was a feeding frenzy in seconds. I put the other patches on slowly to enjoy the fun.

Casey is furious. He yells and paces!

CASEY

You're as sick and twisted as we are!

Doc laughs maniacally.

DOC

I knew you had a militaristic chain of command. You'd follow orders without questioning.

(MORE)

DOC (CONT'D)

You would use any weapon available
if you thought you'd gain the upper
hand.

(beat)

Sound familiar! I had to do the
same! I couldn't help you win!

The SIREN seems to pull up to the door and stop.

Herb loses consciousness, and his face.

Casey is frantic.

CASEY

It's over! It's over! They'll never
give us another chance!

Office Downs, still lying on the floor, finally grabs his
pistol and aims it at Doc, but his hand is shaking, and his
rash looks far worse on his blistering face.

DOC

You almost won.

CASEY

Don't you want to know where we
come from? How we got here?

DOC

You can tell the police all about
it!

They all HEAR loud KNOCKS at the door by two Police Officers;
30, one male, one female, both white).

Casey SEES Officer Downs about to shoot Doc, but Casey leaps
in front of Doc to take the bullet. BAM!

Botox leaps on Officer Downs and bites him in the neck. Blood
spurts everywhere.

Casey falls dead. His face is near gone.

The Police Officers break down the front door, ready to fire
pistols.

The Officers survey the scene.

DOC (CONT'D)

Thank God, you're here! We have
these four, and another dead body
in the janitor's closet.

Doc finally gets a good look at the Police Officers. They have severe, red facial rashes.

Doc pauses to think, as Botox sits next to her, growling at the Police Officers.

DOC (CONT'D)

(smirks)

By the way, I have some facial creams that may be great for those rashes of yours. You should make an appointment to see me.

End Act Three

FADE OUT.

THE END