

THE MEDICINE GOES DOWN

Written by

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Logline: When a sweet, idealistic recent divorcee and her struggling young son reconnect over her favorite kid's film, Mary Poppins, the mom's desire to shield her son from the harsh realities of life through the movie leads to catastrophe.

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EXT. SUBURBAN USA - DAY

We fly above suburban U.S.A. as the morning begins and the title appears.

Down to a row of tired-looking town homes. A rooster crows as we focus on one of the cute yet frazzled looking residences - Mary's house. A pleasant voice calls from inside.

MARY (O.S.)
Jacob. Wake up honey.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - JACOB'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACOB (7-9) lies in bed ignoring his mother's calls from the other room. He's not a morning person.

MARY (O.S.)
Jacob. Honey, are you up yet?

A knock, and then the door opens as Jacob pulls the blanket over his head.

MARY(early 30's), the epitome of sweetness and as cute as a button, stands partially ready for the day. She waits for movement from the bed, but there's nothing.

Mary steps into the room and on something... unpleasant.

MARY (CONT'D)
Owe! I told you to clean this up last night.

She pulls him up to sitting.

MARY (CONT'D)
Come on sleepy head. You've got school.

A moan escapes his lips as he sits. Mary grabs some clothes from the drawers and places them next to him.

MARY (CONT'D)
Breakfast is almost ready. I expect you down stairs in 10 minutes, young man.

She's trying to be stern, but her natural sweetness makes it hard to take her completely seriously.

INT. MARY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Jacob, still in his pajamas and scowling, slowly eats cereal as Mary pulls out some medicine in liquid form. She pours and holds out the measuring cap to him. He shakes his head, no.

MARY

Come on, you promised dad you would take it every day. And I can't miss any more work for another meeting to review Miss Lapinsky's complaints.

She sets the medicine by him.

JACOB

Why can't you just home school me like Aunt Jane does with Conner, Allie, and Angie.

MARY

You know why. Sometimes plans change.

He glances down at the medicine in disgust.

JACOB

(whining)

It's so gross.

MARY

Buddy, you have fifteen minutes to take the medicine and get dressed, or we'll have to do this the hard way.

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Mary carries a screaming Jacob to her car.

JACOB

I'm not going! You can't make me! I hate you! I want daddy!

MARY

Yes, you are! Calm down!

She finally gets him in the car and puts his seat belt on.

MARY (CONT'D)

Sometimes we have to do hard things, whether we want to or not.

That statement is not just for Jacob. She looks up to see their neighbor, MRS. JOHNSON (50's) who's looking picture perfect and ready to take on the business world.

Mary, humiliated, attempts to adjust her outfit and messed up hair. She waves awkwardly and smiles sweetly at her neighbor.

MARY (CONT'D)
Mrs. Johnson, lovely day, isn't it.

One of Jacobs shoes flies out of the car and he screams.

INT. JACOB'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jacob, now in his pajamas, sits on his bed and plays a game on a cell phone. Mary enters and sees the room is still a mess. She carefully makes her way to Jacob and holds her hand out for the phone. He finally hands it over. She checks the phone history while he lays on his bed with a huff.

MARY
I'm sorry he didn't call.

He rolls away from her. She sits next to him.

MARY (CONT'D)
Hey bud, you want me to read to you? I could read your favorite.

He doesn't reply and she rubs his back. He tries to wiggle away from it.

MARY (CONT'D)
Corey's mom called and wanted to know if you could play tomorrow.

He still won't respond.

MARY (CONT'D)
It's been two months, honey.
Playing with others is important,
it's good for you to..

JACOB
I don't want to!

MARY
All right then. Good night.

She tries to kiss his hand, but he pulls it away.

Mary glances at Jacob with sadness before turning off the light.

INT. MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mary sleeps in her bed with an eyemask over her face.

Movement on the bed and then a spooky whisper.

DESTINY (O.C.)

Destiny is calling, calling you to
your birthday fun, Mary. You cannot
escape your Destiny.

Then a creepy haunted house chuckle. A moan from Mary. She
sleepily mumbles...

MARY

Please just let me sleep in.

DESTINY (early 30's) - she's sexy and she knows it - pulls
off Mary's sleeping mask.

DESTINY

Not today. I have the whole day
planned. And tonight we go dancing
with some delicious guys I know.

A moan from Mary. She opens one eye.

MARY

It's only been a month since the
divorce was final. You're horrible,
Destiny.

DESTINY

I'm not asking you to sleep with
the guy. You need some fun! Please,
I need this too. When was the last
time you spent the day with me?

Destiny resorts to puppy dog eyes. Mary rolls her eyes.

MARY

What about Jacob?

DESTINY

Your sister will take him. Come on,
let's get your sunshine back.

Destiny rolls Mary on to her stomach and straddles her.

DESTINY (CONT'D)

Time for birthday spankings.

Mary squeals and howls as Destiny starts dispensing the
birthday spankings.

MARY

No! Ouch! That hurts! I'm too old for this!

DESTINY

I could give some of these to Jacob.

MARY

You will do no such thing!

DESTINY

He's the one who deserves them, the little turd. Shit, what number was I on? I guess I'll start over.

Destiny begins spanking again.

MARY

No! No! Not from the beginning!

INT. JANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door lock moves. Mary quietly opens the front door and sneaks in. She's had a great time and looks fabulous.

JANE (mid 40's) Sits in the front room in her robe reading a romance book. Jane meets Mary and gives her a big hug. They talk quietly.

JANE

Looks like your birthday outing wasn't so bad.

MARY

Sorry about it being so late. Was he okay?

JANE

Take a look.

Lizzie glances into the family room. Jacob sits on the couch wrapped in a blanket and watching a movie on a laptop with headphones. He's completely enraptured, and grins at something funny.

JANE (CONT'D)

He's watched that movie three times today. I can't believe you never showed him it.

MARY

What?

JANE
Only your favorite movie of all
time!

MARY
He watched it three times?

JANE
Ah-huh. And he goes giddy every
time at that song after the horse
race. You know supercalifraga...
whatever it is. Anyway, he's not
going anywhere till it's done. So
just lock up when you leave.

MARY
Thanks.

Jane gives Mary a kiss on the cheek.

JANE
Happy birthday, "Marry munchkin".

Mary scowls at her big sister and wags her finger.

MARY
Don't you..

Mary's even more adorable when angry. Jane chuckles and heads
up the stairs with her book.

INT. JANE'S FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mary quietly scoots up to Jacob as he watches the movie. He
smiles up at her. *This is different.*

He hands her a home made birthday card. She gazes down at the
card, deeply touched. It's a drawing of mom and son holding
hands and smiling. The mom holds an umbrella to protect them
from the rain. She kisses his forehead.

MARY
Thank you, my little man.

She snuggles up next to him and he doesn't mind.

JACOB
You want to share headphones?

He holds one of the ear plugs out for her.

MARY

That's very thoughtful of you, but
I have it memorized.

She's being a show off.

JACOB

Really?

MARY

Watch this.

She turns and looks at the screen and then says the next few lines of the movie with a horrible British accent.

MARY (CONT'D)

"Banks, where are you going?" "I don't know. I might pop through a chalk pavement picture, and go for an outing in the country. Or I might seize a horse off a merry-go-round and win the Darby. Or I might just fly a kite! Only Poppins would know!"

JACOB

Cool!

He puts the earphones back in and watches. He snuggles up closer and takes her hand. They watch together and laugh at the same time. A tender moment between mom and son, and she's cherishing every moment.

INT. MARY'S HOUSE - JACOB'S BEDROOM - DAY

MARY

What would Poppins say if she saw this room?

Jacob sighs despondently.

JACOB

"Well begun is half done"

MARY

I think your right.

JACOB

But mom.

MARY

You may watch it again after the room is clean.

Jacob looks desolate.

MARY (CONT'D)
Cheer up. We can get the job done
in no time flat.

JACOB
But it's so much easier with magic.

MARY
I bet we have more magic in our
fingers than you think. Let's play
the... magic snapping game.

*She's coming up with it on the spot. Jacobs a little
skeptical.*

JACOB
Are you sure it's a game?

MARY
Of course it is, party pooper. Now
take a good look at the room.

He looks around.

MARY (CONT'D)
Are you sure you can remember where
everything is?

He nods.

MARY (CONT'D)
Now let's see if you have any magic
in your fingers.

She pulls him over to face a wall.

MARY (CONT'D)
Close your eyes - no peaking.

Jacob closes his eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)
Snap your fingers and then slowly
count to ten. Keep your eyes
closed.

Jacob snaps his fingers. As he counts to ten, Mary quickly
puts some of the stuffed animals away, and then stands where
she was before.

JACOB

One, two, three, four, five, six,
seven, eight, nine, ten.

MARY

All right, open your eyes and let's
see if you have any magic in your
fingers.

He turns around and looks at his room.

MARY (CONT'D)

I don't know. It seems like... Wait
a minute. Where's Mr. Bear?

Jacob searches and then opens the stuffed animal bin.

JACOB

Here he is!

MARY

Look at that! And his friends are
there too! Oh my heaven's how could
that be? You must have magic!

She winks at Jacob and he gets it.

MARY (CONT'D)

Shall we see if my fingers have any
magic in them, too?

Jacob smiles and nods. Mary turns towards the wall and closes
her eyes. She snaps her fingers and slowly begins counting as
Jacob fills his hamper with dirty clothes.

MARY (CONT'D)

One, two, three, four, five, six,
seven, eight, nine...

EXT. MARY'S HOUSE - DAY

Mary and Jacob stand at their door ready for the day. Mary
double checks to make sure the door is locked, then turns
towards Jacob who's got a smaller version of Mary P's black
umbrella and carpet bag.

MARY

It looks like you've got all you
need for your adventure at school
today, Mr. P. You ready?

Jacob nods and grins.

JACOB

Yes! I can do hard things!

That touches Mary. She smiles.

MARY

Yes you can! And once you've done them enough times, what happens?

JACOB

It becomes easy.

MARY

That's right! Well then, "spit spot!"...

JACOB

"And off we go!"

They march towards the car. She opens the door for him.

MARY

Your carriage, my little man.

She helps him in, then gets a phone call. She answers as Jacob buckles his seat belt and waits.

MARY (CONT'D)

It's final then? The judge gave the sentence?... No, we won't be visiting. I'm not taking him there... Not yet. Thanks for letting me know.

She hangs up the phone and sighs heavily, then tries to put on a happier face.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hey, bud. Dad's not going to be able to see you this weekend.

JACOB

Again?

MARY

Sometimes no matter how hard we try, we can't keep some promises.

JACOB

It's work?

MARY

Kind of. He got himself in trouble at work, and now he has to fix it.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)
I know it's yucky. I can't say
anything that will make it right.

Jacob looks solemnly at his feet. Mary takes his hand.

JACOB
You could say...
Supercalifragilistic...

Mary tickles him and he can't finish the word.

MARY
All right then, I will!
Supercalifragilisticexpiali..

She stops as she sees her neighbor Mrs. Johnson about to get in her car, watching. A moment of embarrassment, then the neighbor finishes it for her.

MRS. JOHNSON
..docious.

They all smile, then yell at the top of their lungs together.

MARY, JACOB, AND MRS. JOHNSON
Supercalifragilisticxpealidocious.

The rooster joins in and drowns out the last syllable.

INT. MARY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Mary sneaks a drop of root beer concentrated candy seasoning into Jacobs medicine and stirs it around.

Jacob sits with his eyes closed waiting.

MARY
Have you thought of all your
favorite nummy things?

Jacob nods.

MARY (CONT'D)
Alright, now open your eyes.

She hands him his medicine.

MARY (CONT'D)
What do you think it will taste
like this time?

Jacob swallows and then smiles.

JACOB
Root beer!

MARY
Hurray! Now my turn.

She takes several vitamin pills and swallows with water.

MARY (CONT'D)
My favorite, red velvet cake!

JACOB
Why don't I get any pills?

This is unusual.

MARY
You're too little. It would be hard to swallow, and not as good for you as it is for mommy.

She get's an idea.

MARY (CONT'D)
But... I do have.

She opens the cupboards...

INT. JANE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Jane places a quart jar of applesauce on a towel.

JANE
I can't believe you got him to take his medicine and vitamins!

The women are canning applesauce in the kitchen as kids play outside. It's the idyllic picture of perfect motherhood. They slice apples as they talk.

DESTINY
He does know that just because the dad in the movie gets his shit together at the end, it doesn't mean his dad will too, right?

MARY
We haven't had that conversation yet. He's not ready.

DESTINY
You mean you're not ready.

JANE

It's just like the *Parent Trap* predicament. Someone's got to be the bad guy and break the news that their parents aren't getting back together.

Mary is a little defensive.

MARY

But you finally got a sister in the deal.

JANE

I didn't talk to dad for a month.

Mary's really not liking that idea. She turns and there is Jacob. He's added a long dark coat and a hat to the carpet bag and umbrella. It's a miniature male version of Mary P.

The ladies look nervous, wondering if he overheard. He grins and they're relieved.

MARY

Hey there, bud. Are you up to playing with the rest of the kids?

JACOB

Yep!

MARY

Yeah! Good for you!

JACOB

I'm going to have a rooftop party with dancing. And I'm going to fly, because I can do hard things!

MARY

You bet you can! Just make sure to stay in the yard, okay?

Jacob nods and heads outside where the rest of the kids play. Jane and Mary smile, while Destiny is creeped out.

JANE

It is kind of cute.

DESTINY

You mean delusional.

MARY

He just has a great imagination, like I did.

DESTINY

I'm taking photos and blackmailing him when he get's a girlfriend.

The realization hits.

DESTINY (CONT'D)

If he get's a girlfriend.

MARY

Stop! There's nothing wrong with it. We really should have the kids see some of the other old classics we used to watch.

DESTINY

You know what movie always freaked me out? *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

JANE

Our dad used to change the C H for S H.

Mary smacks Jane with a hand towel.

MARY

Jane, we are not continuing that tradition!

(to Destiny)

What scared you in the movie?

DESTINY

That creep with the long nose who kidnapped all the kids. I swear there was some sort of sexual subliminal thing going on there.

JANE

For you, everything does.

Destiny thinks about it for a moment, then concedes.

JANE (CONT'D)

He was scary, though. The worst part for me was the king and queen trying to kill each other. What demented writer thought that kind of relationship should be in a children's movie?

MARY

It wasn't that bad.

Jane imitates the song in the movie.

JANE
YOU'RE MY LITTLE COOCHI COO. Eek,
Eek.

She stabs at the air like she's a psycho.

DESTINY
Nice! I changed my mind. Let's
watch it.

JANE
I don't think so! You know it's the
music. That's how they got away
with it. Look at *Bedknobs and*
Broomsticks. There was a huge
outcry with *Harry Potter*. But all
they needed in *Bedknobs* was a few
songs, and the witchcraft became
harmless fun.

A sound is heard on the roof. Destiny and Mary look up,
questioning. Jane yells out to the kids.

JANE (CONT'D)
I'm not getting the frizbee down
again!

She sighs and shakes off her frustration.

JANE (CONT'D)
Kids.

They go back to the apples.

DESTINY
You're right. Everything is better
with music.

She's thinking naughty. Jane gets it, but Mary is focused on
other concerns.

MARY
Maybe that's how I can tell Jacob
where his father really is.

DESTINY
(sarcastic)
Sure, that's going to make him not
freak out.

JANE
Now I've got to hear this. Lay it
on me sister. Come on, now.

MARY

Really?

Jane and Destiny nod. They're intrigued.

MARY (CONT'D)

Okay then... uh.

Mary makes up words and a dance to the song *It's a Jolly Holiday with Mary*. She puts on a big smile and then starts.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'VE GOT NEWS ABOUT YOUR DADDY. HE
STOLE MILLIONS FROM HIS CLIENTS.
THEY CAUGHT HIM LEAVING THE COUNTRY
IN A HURRY. AND NOW HE SITS IN JAIL
DAY AND NIGHT. HE REALLY IS A
BASTARD IN THE WORST SENSE.
UNFAITHFUL, UNTRUTHFUL AND AN ASS.

She yells out the last sentence with vigor.

Mary covers her mouth in shock. The girls clap.

MARY (CONT'D)

I said that out loud!

DESTINY

It's about freakin time!

MARY

Gosh that was therapeutic.

She yells out like a warrior.

MARY (CONT'D)

I can do hard things!

The ladies chant as Jane lifts her arms in victory.

JANE

Hard things! Hard things!
Hard things!

DESTINY

Hard things! Hard things!
Hard things!

Through the window we see...

Jacob with his umbrella and bag jumps from the roof

Black screen as...

A crash as he hits garbage cans below.