

House  
"Sweet Little Lyes"  
by  
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HOUSE  
"Sweet Little Lyes"

TEASER

FADE IN:

BAR OF SOAP

--at the kitchen sink.

A pair of man's cupped hands reach for it. Hands frozen stiff -- beyond arthritic -- connected to arms just as bad, can only fumble around and knock the soap into the sink.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Abandon the soap. A quick and lame towel-off, then the hands manage to close a grid-papered notebook.

A KEY IN THE LOCK, and the hands freeze.

They rush to slide the notebook into a shoulder bag, but the NOTEBOOK CLAPS against the linoleum floor.

The LOCK SNAPS open.

Frantic feet launch the notebook through an adjacent doorway.

Run after it.

The kitchen door closes just as the front door opens.

INT. CROCKETT'S HOUSE - ENTRY WAY - DAY

The first intruder is MAX CROCKETT -- 6 years of pure energy.

His older brother ISAAC -- 17, comfortable in his pimply skin -- follows in time to scoop up the Transformers duffel bag that Max drops in the middle of the floor.

Max coughs, with the distinctive sound of phlegm.

MAX  
Then you spit.

He looks for something, anything to spit into.

ISAAC  
I know how to hock a loogey, Max,  
I'm just not going to.

Max eyes a flowerpot.

ISAAC

Swallow.

Max obeys begrudgingly as the kitchen door opens.

MAX

Dad!

INT. CROCKETT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

VICTOR CROCKETT -- mid-40s, overweight, with the curved spine of a man hunched over his work far too long -- brushes his wet and rigid hands on his pants.

CROCKETT

Must have gotten in at just the same time.

ISAAC

It is seven, right? Good thing I had the key or Mom would have taken us home.

MAX

Why are your hands wet?

Isaac comes closer to study the elder Crockett, knows something's not right.

ISAAC

Dad, are you okay?

CROCKETT

Not feeling too well, actually.

ISAAC

I'll get your Flexeril.

CROCKETT

No, no.

(re: hands and arms)

But I may need you to drive me to the doctor.

MAX

(world's leading expert)

I had a cramp last week in soccer. You gotta stretch the muscle.

He reaches up and grabs Crockett's hands.

CROCKETT

Max, no!

Too late. Max forces his dad's FINGERS straight, which give a collective and unanticipated POP. Crockett's WRIST also SNAPS straight.

INSIDE THE HAND

Muscle fibers -- contracted and joined tightly to one another -- snap apart like a celery stick around the joint.

BACK TO SCENE

Crockett screams. This is no cramp.

ISAAC

Dad!

Crockett doubles over. Max stares, horrified.

ISAAC

Max, call nine-one-one.

CROCKETT

(between heavy breaths)

No. On the fridge. Call Dr. House.

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

CUDDY, a chart in her hand and authority in her cleavage, hurries after HOUSE. BEN -- a 19-year-old in a suit, moxie etched in his every feature -- follows.

HOUSE  
Go away, clacking heels of death.

CUDDY  
You don't even know --

HOUSE  
Paralysis guy. Heard all about him. Don't want him.

Cuddy and Ben catch up.

HOUSE  
Who's Doogie Trump?

CUDDY  
I told you about Ben. He's shadowing me this week.

HOUSE  
(to Ben)  
Three and a half feet behind gives the best view.

Ben sticks out his hand.

BEN  
Hospital administrator fasttrack.

HOUSE  
Rather suck people's blood than look at it?

CUDDY  
Today's lesson is dealing with asses. Step one: tell them when they're wrong.

She shoves the chart in his hand.

CUDDY  
It's not paralysis. It's rigor.

HOUSE  
Rigor as in you're happy to see --

CUDDY  
As in calcium ions pulled his  
sarcomeres together in a permanent  
contraction. As in rigor mortis.

HOUSE  
(intrigued)  
Except he's not mortised.

CUDDY  
And he'd like to stay that way.

She turns to go back the way she came.

HOUSE  
You're just going to walk away?

CUDDY  
I'm not that happy to see you.

HOUSE  
Shouldn't you be teaching Doogie  
the art of the deal?

Cuddy stops.

CUDDY  
Please. You should be giving me  
clinic hours for this case.

House hands the chart to Ben.

HOUSE  
(to Ben)  
Hostile work environment. Good way  
to lose your best doctors.

CUDDY  
Bluffing. Good way to lose your  
best cases.

He starts to walk off. Cuddy waits.

BEN  
Five clinic hours for the patient.

Cuddy starts to overrule.

HOUSE

Done.  
 (pointing like the Donald)  
 You're hired.

House reaches for the chart, but Ben pulls it away.

BEN

But you give us ten hours for the  
 chart.

House looks to Cuddy, who, this time, is happy to keep quiet.

BEN

Can't diagnose without the chart.

CUDDY

(to House, knows he thinks  
 otherwise)  
 Maybe. But then you'd have to talk  
 to the patient. Charts don't lie.

HOUSE

(to Cuddy)  
 Maybe you should be Doogie's  
 apprentice.

Ben hands the chart to House, who starts off down the hall.

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

FOREMAN pours himself coffee as TAUB and KUTNER reach for the  
 same pastry.

FOREMAN

Am I going to have to cut that in  
 half like Solomon's baby?

KUTNER

Dude. It's just a bear claw.

Kutner tears it. He offers half to Taub, who eyes Kutner's  
 hands and picks up an oatmeal packet. THIRTEEN reaches in  
 for the half-a-bearclaw.

House pushes through the door.

HOUSE

Quick survey. What's everyone's  
 favorite breakfast food? I'll bet  
 Thirteen likes links and donuts.

He ignores her glare and drops the chart on the table. Taub and Thirteen review.

HOUSE

Mine's steak. Lean, pink, juicy muscle.

Thirteen stops eating.

KUTNER

What?

Taub slides the chart over.

HOUSE

Rigor mortis guy.

KUTNER

No way.

HOUSE

Way.

KUTNER

No, I mean I know this guy. Sort of. I know of him. Victor Crockett.

Rings no bells.

KUTNER

He won the Jacob Fuchs fellowship as an undergrad.

HOUSE

The guy's forty-six. Your mommy read you bedtime stories from the ACS journals?

KUTNER

I'm serious. He researched toxic shock as a way to boost the immune response of AIDS patients. Something to do with superantigens.

THIRTEEN

That doesn't sound promising.

TAUB

Would have twenty-five years ago.  
(to Kutner)  
How come you're the only one who heard of him?



Taub motions for the chart, and Kutner gives it back to him.

KUTNER

I'm the only one who studies? Plus  
I don't think anything came of it.  
But still... the guy's a legend.

HOUSE

A faded science celebrity. Nothing  
cooler. How long before the rest  
of Bill Nye's body decomposes?

FOREMAN

Proteolytic enzymes appear with the  
dissipation of rigor, approximately  
seventy-two hours after onset.

House writes "72 Hours" across the top of the board.

HOUSE

So we focus on what we can diagnose  
and treat before his muscles turn  
to --

House gets in Taub's face.

HOUSE

-- oatmeal.

Taub ignores him, keeps eating.

TAUB

You're assuming the rigor can be  
reversed.

HOUSE

You're right, let's assume he can't  
be cured. Everyone go home.

TAUB

I'm not saying he can't be cured.  
Just that his muscles are dying.  
(re: the chart)  
He had myosarcoma --

FOREMAN

Muscle cancer doesn't cause rigor  
mortis.

TAUB

No, but the surgery to remove it  
can.

(MORE)

TAUB (CONT'D)

Surgeon nicks an artery, leads to a blood clot, ischemia, muscle death.

He drops the chart on the table to punctuate.

FOREMAN

Nicked an artery on both arms?

TAUB

Cancer was in both arms.

FOREMAN

The surgery was months ago.

TAUB

Could have laid the foundation for ischemia. Big Macs did the rest.

FOREMAN

So we should just amputate his arms and hope for the best.

HOUSE

Then we can go home.

TAUB

Amputate his arms before the necrosis has a chance to spread. The heart's inches away.

HOUSE

Or we could figure out why he's the envy of the Royal Guard. Patients don't usually like to cut off parts of their body when it doesn't solve the actual problem.

THIRTEEN

Toxins could cause muscle death. Or infection.

House writes the possible diagnoses on the whiteboard.

KUTNER

A tumor could constrict the blood vessels.

FOREMAN

Not likely on both arms.

HOUSE

The cancer was in both arms.

FOREMAN

Come on.

HOUSE

(re: Taub)

What? It's the only valid point  
surgeon-hating boy made. I'm  
sorry, surgeon-hating surgeon.

TAUB

Which means I know what kinds of  
things can go wrong. We should  
amputate now while we can.

House ignores him, draws a line down the middle of the board.

HOUSE

Now that we've gotten the obvious  
choices out of the way, let's move  
on to diagnoses that our patient  
wouldn't think of all by himself.

THIRTEEN

Are we sure it's rigor? What about  
myositis ossificans?

TAUB

Admitting doc did an x-ray. No  
muscle calcification.

FOREMAN

Could be a complication of  
Polymyositis.

House writes.

KUTNER

Or Lupus.

House moves aside -- Lupus is at the top of the list, and  
he's already crossed it off.

HOUSE

Or...

No one offers another explanation.

HOUSE

What's that you say? Gaucher  
Disease?

FOREMAN

Gaucher would show other symptoms.  
Anemia. Enlarged liver, spleen.

HOUSE

If only there were a giant machine  
that could take pictures through  
people's skin.

FOREMAN

Taub just said admitting doc did an  
x-ray.

TAUB

Only of the arms.

HOUSE

Turn down the air while you're at  
it; keep him in rigor to buy us as  
much time as possible.

KUTNER

Wait, cold aggravates muscle death.

THIRTEEN

Yeah, if the cause is frostbite.

Rolling eyes and sighs around the room.

HOUSE

Okay, draw blood to rule out toxins  
and infection, x-ray his biggie-  
sized organs, and ask him if he's  
been dogsledding recently.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - LATER

Thirteen draws blood from Crockett's foot, and Kutner labels  
and hands her vials with tops of various colors.

Taub -- still worried about the heart -- looks over an EKG  
printout.

Isaac watches carefully, but Max hangs back.

Crockett tries to be upbeat, but the bags under his eyes and  
heavy lines on his face betray his worry.

CROCKETT

So which one of you gets to write  
up this case?

(without waiting)

(MORE)

CROCKETT (CONT'D)

What do you think, Max? Should we make them arm wrestle for it?

Max takes a step closer.

MAX

Why are they poking your foot?

CROCKETT

My cephalic vein is destined for greater things.

ISAAC

Your blood takes your muscles everything they need to work. Since Dad's muscles aren't working, the doctors can't trust the blood in his arms.

KUTNER

Not bad. Are we looking at a future Jacob Fuchs fellow?

CROCKETT

You sound like a fan.

KUTNER

I took micro from Dr. Monroe. He talked about you all the time.

CROCKETT

(mostly to Max)

Hear that? Your dad's famous.

ISAAC

Galileo, Einstein, Crockett.

KUTNER

What are you working on now?

CROCKETT

AIDS response to MRSA.

TAUB

Onto the next hot disease, huh?

ISAAC

Then you really can be famous.

CROCKETT

If it works.

Taub shakes his head at the EKG printout, puts his stethoscope on.

TAUB  
One more time.

Crockett falls silent as Taub listens to his heart.

Kutner leaves the vials in the tray and opens a central line kit. Max cringes when the big needle comes out.

ISAAC  
Max, know why most people are  
scared of hospitals?

Max shakes his head.

ISAAC  
Bacterial cultures.

MAX  
Really?

ISAAC  
Stupid, huh? That's the best thing  
about them.

Max still eyes the needle warily.

KUTNER  
So Max, do you have any other  
brothers and sisters?

MAX  
Just Isaac.

Taub takes off his stethoscope, broods as he writes in Crockett's medical chart.

ISAAC  
I'm the baby who started the  
marriage, and Max is the baby who  
couldn't save it.

CROCKETT  
Isaac.

ISAAC  
It's cool. Doesn't make me want to  
jump off a building or anything.

Kutner lowers the neck of Crockett's hospital gown to inject local anesthesia. But the three ports of an existing central line stare back from Crockett's chest.

TAUB  
He already has one.

Kutner shoots Taub a look: "Thanks, Sherlock."

KUTNER  
Who put in your central line?

Crockett shakes his head.

ISAAC  
Just another doctor.

Taub extends a gloved hand to Crockett's wrist to check his pulse. He makes a face and pulls up Crockett's hand for the rest of the team to see.

FORCEPS, a KELLY CLAMP, and a pair of METZENBAUM SCISSORS hang from Crockett's fingers and JINGLE lightly.

ISAAC  
He said not to move that.

TAUB  
Sarcastic guy with a cane?

Taub slides the instruments into his palm.

Isaac, embarrassed, nods.

TAUB  
(to Crockett)  
Have you done anything out of the ordinary lately? Changed up your routine? Exposed yourself to anything harmful?

CROCKETT  
And not tell you about it first thing? You must be used to really stupid patients.

TAUB  
(to other docs)  
So nothing major since the surgery.

CROCKETT  
You're testing my blood -- you'll see for yourselves.

Thirteen finishes drawing blood, puts a cotton ball over the puncture site.

THIRTEEN

Okay, all done.

The docs gather the vials in a tray and start to head out.

TAUB

Your son's right about one thing.  
If this is a problem with  
oxygenated blood getting to your  
tissues, we're going to want to  
operate soon.

CROCKETT

(hopeful)

That's what Dr. House thinks it is?

THIRTEEN

We're testing several hypotheses.

ISAAC

Several hypotheses? You really  
don't know what it is?

CROCKETT

Don't worry, Boys. I hear House is  
the best.

KUTNER

You hear right. We'll figure it  
out.

Taub shoots him a look on the way out.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

TAUB

'We'll figure it out'?

KUTNER

You don't think we will?

TAUB

I think you blew any chance we had  
of getting the patient to agree to  
amputation without a nice and tidy  
diagnosis.

KUTNER

Guess we'll have to give him one.

CUT TO:



INT. GENERIC HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

PATIENT

It's not that I don't love you,  
Alexa. I just don't remember you.

PULL BACK to reveal --

INT. COMA GUY'S PATIENT ROOM - DAY

House swallows a spoonful of pudding as he watches the drama unfold on COMA GUY'S TV.

Ben comes in.

HOUSE

(re: Coma Guy)

Persistent vegetative iatrogenica.  
In hospital administrator speak, we  
waste resources on a man who will  
never get better because some idiot  
intern made him that way. Nothing  
else to learn here. Get out.

BEN

Shouldn't you be in the clinic?

HOUSE

Shouldn't you be at recess?

House stands to leave.

BEN

Where are you going?

HOUSE

To the clinic, Master.

BEN

No you're not.

HOUSE

Unless there's somewhere else his  
majesty would rather I go.

Out the door.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ben follows.

BEN  
Cuddy told me about you. You're  
leaving just to get rid of me.

HOUSE  
And yet...

They reach the nurse's station. Ben stops.

BEN  
(calling)  
Trying to help you.

House glances at Ben, who nods.

BEN  
I am.

HOUSE  
(in Yoda voice)  
Keep me from the dark side, you  
will.

BEN  
One of the patients is a plant.  
Here to report on the service we  
provide at the clinic.

HOUSE  
And I care because?

BEN  
Because whoever treats this patient  
has the chance to make an  
impression on the board.

House steps toward Ben.

HOUSE  
If Cuddy told you about me, you  
should know I don't wipe the butts  
of the people who sign my checks.

BEN  
(quieter)  
No, you're not that kind of person.

Ben casts an eye over House's shoulder.

House turns in time to see CHASE and his perpetually brown  
nose pretend not to eavesdrop.

Ben gives a coy smile as House watches him head toward the elevators.

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Taub and Thirteen report to Foreman.

THIRTEEN

IGG, IGM negative. Nothing on the GC. All organs normal-sized.

TAUB

Half a day wasted.

FOREMAN

It's not wasted if it teaches us something.

TAUB

It is wasted if it postpones amputation that we should have performed this morning.

THIRTEEN

It could be something from his research. Anybody know a lot about superantigens?

House walks in.

TAUB

A mistake in the surgery's simpler than some obscure test-tube concoction.

HOUSE

Yes, but since the patient works with obscure test-tube concoctions all day, I think it's worth looking into, don't you? Thirteen go to the house; Taub, you go to the lab.

THIRTEEN

You don't want me to go to the lab? Taub thinks we won't find anything.

HOUSE

Which means he'll be quick. Foreman, go with him to make sure he's also thorough.

THIRTEEN

Should I take Kutner?

HOUSE

Why not? He can leave our patient  
all sorts of love notes.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Thirteen sticks her head in.

THIRTEEN

Kutner, you're with me.

He's adjusting Crockett's IV meds.

THIRTEEN

What is it?

KUTNER

Fever.

THIRTEEN

How high?

Kutner's warning look is her answer.

As Thirteen walks over to see for herself, she accidentally  
bumps the bed.

Crockett's arm moves.

KUTNER

Whoa, what was that?

CROCKETT

Welcome, lysosomal enzymes.

He manipulates the arm -- it's like pudding in his hands.

MAX

You're better!

ISAAC

No, he's worse.

KUTNER

(incredulous)  
The rigor's over.

THIRTEEN

There go our seventy-two hours.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. PATIENT ROOM - EVENING

At the SLIDING of the DOOR, the Crocketts look up. House.

HOUSE

Three days.

CROCKETT

And you must be Doctor House.

HOUSE

Robert Redford uncovers a terrorist organization, the apostles start a religion, but you can't even call nine-one-one.

CROCKETT

Would you be this angry if you could figure out what was wrong with me?

HOUSE

I'm angry because you're too stupid or suicidal to give my team time to diagnose you.

House prods Crockett's arm with his cane, moves it with ease.

HOUSE

Why did you ask for me?

CROCKETT

Do you have to use the cane?

HOUSE

You don't think I'd touch a rotting carcass with my bare hands. Why did you ask for me?

Crockett sighs.

CROCKETT

You're famous in my circles. They say you can diagnose anything. My old boss actually said you were the smartest doctor alive.

HOUSE

Actually. Why now? Why not sit at home a fourth day and die?

CROCKETT

Is that what you want? Admit it, this case gets you. That's why you've visited us twice, even though you usually avoid patients.

HOUSE

No, but on occasion I do go to the morgue.

CROCKETT

Do you normally evade challenges with sarcasm?

HOUSE

Do you normally grow dead appendages to match a dead brain?

CROCKETT

Boys, please excuse us.

Isaac hesitates, but leads Max out.

CROCKETT

Don't ever insult my intelligence in front of my sons.

HOUSE

Are you serious? The maggots are gathering, and you want to play Godfather?

CROCKETT

I know you have to pretend it's my fault you can't solve my case--

HOUSE

Only if you have more time bombs. A concussion, maybe a gunshot wound from a couple days ago.

CROCKETT

You're using the time you do have to poke me with a stick and tell my kids I'm as good as dead.

House is already on his way out.

HOUSE

If they don't know that, they're bigger idiots than you are.

INT. ER - SAME TIME

CAMERON catches up on charts at the nurse's station.

ISAAC (O.S.)

When muscle cells run out of ATP,  
they get stiff. You remember what  
ATP is?

Isaac and Max find an empty bed. Isaac offers a hand.

MAX

Energy from oxygen.  
(re: bed)  
I can do it.

He climbs up after Isaac.

ISAAC

Good. Now after awhile, the  
muscles lose their stiffness. But  
it's not because they got the ATP  
back. It's because little  
chemicals called enzymes start to  
eat what holds the muscle together.

Max sniffs.

MAX

Can they get the ATP back?

ISAAC

The doctors can try to stop the  
enzymes. And if they figure out  
what took the ATP away to begin  
with, they can bring it back.

Chase walks in, brushes Cameron's shoulder.

CAMERON

Hey, what are you doing down here?

CHASE

Avoiding Mini Cuddy.

She smiles. He sits next to her.

CHASE

It's not funny. I spent three  
hours treating a non-existent  
plant.

CAMERON

No. You spent three hours treating people who need it.

She leans over to kiss him.

CHASE

Oh, crap.

He ducks.

Cameron looks up: Ben carries a clipboard through the ER.

Chase rolls his chair sideways to where stacks of charts on the counter hide him.

Ben stops when he sees Isaac and Max.

BEN

Please don't take your wristband off until you've been discharged.

ISAAC

We're not patients.

CAMERON

(to Chase)

You should have heard this kid explaining science to his brother. Like mini-House, only less wounded.

BEN

If you're not patients, please get off the bed.

CHASE

(responding to Cameron)

You mean less sarcastic.

ISAAC

This is the ER. You think some gangbanger with a GSW and herpes is gonna notice a couple wrinkles in the sheets?

CHASE

Maybe just less of an ass?

BEN

I think your blatant disregard for hospital policy is grounds for me to remove you from the facility.



CHASE

Are we in some sort of hospital  
power play Twilight Zone?

ISAAC

(staring Ben down)

Max, what's the best thing about a  
hospital?

MAX

Bacterial cultures.

ISAAC

Let's go see some.

CAMERON

(notating in a chart)

At least the future of medicine  
takes the high road.

No response from Chase. When Cameron turns to him, he's not there. She looks back up and gasps.

Ben stares down at her, but instantly sprouts a goofy, enamored teenage-boy grin.

BEN

Dr. Cuddy says you have an  
exemplary manner-side bed.

Off Cameron:

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The team's in the middle of an argument.

TAUB

We don't have time. If the  
necrosis has been in his arms for  
three days, we're lucky it hasn't  
spread to his chest already.

House comes in, senses the tension.

FOREMAN

We found a truckload of bacteria in  
the lab.

HOUSE

Anything from the house?

THIRTEEN

Just stuff we already tested for.

KUTNER

And a few articles about you.

HOUSE

I hope they had pictures. And ones that don't make my butt look fat.

TAUB

We need to amputate now. Buy us time to figure out what's causing the necrosis. Otherwise, we can diagnose him at autopsy.

House considers his options.

HOUSE

Start him on broad-spectrum antibiotics.

Taub sighs at the ceiling.

Kutner and Thirteen start for the door.

HOUSE

And make him NPO. If we need to take his arms, we'll need to do it quickly.

Kutner and Thirteen head off. Taub paces.

INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE - EVENING

WILSON steps in on his way out.

WILSON

I just gave a presentation about bladder cancer with a teenage boy.

Cuddy pulls out a list and crosses off an item.

CUDDY

That's wonderful.

WILSON

At one point, he giggled.

CUDDY

He can giggle all he wants. For the first time, things are really getting done around here.

WILSON

Things that you couldn't get done,  
but a nineteen-year-old can?

CUDDY

Oh, please. It's not like he  
thinks of this stuff on his own.

Wilson sits.

WILSON

If you wanted me to give the  
speech, why didn't you just ask me?

CUDDY

I did! Two weeks ago. You said  
you were busy with the cancer walk.

WILSON

I was. I am.

CUDDY

And yet, you found a few minutes  
for Ben. That's what's so  
brilliant. People learn to avoid  
me, but Ben they never see coming.

WILSON

And you don't worry about what  
effect this will have on him?

CUDDY

He's the one who gave me the idea.  
Do you know he conned House into  
giving me five clinic hours?

WILSON

And twenty discharge summaries, I  
hear.

CUDDY

No, that was me.

Wilson smiles and shakes his head.

WILSON

Where does this boy come from?

CUDDY

Modern Medical Ethics, and I'm just  
sorry he has to go back next week.

A knock, then a NURSE sticks her head in.

NURSE #1

Dr. Cuddy, your shadow wonders if the agreement he signed precludes him from assisting on an appy.

Cuddy looks to Wilson.

WILSON

It's alive.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

Kutner administers the antibiotics.

MAX

Dad has bugs inside him? Cool!

ISAAC

Not so cool. The bugs are what's making him sick. But the medicine they're giving him will chase the bugs away.

MAX

Then he'll get better.

CROCKETT

Hope so, Max. Gotta build that solar system, right?

MAX

It was due last week.

Isaac tries to hush Max.

MAX

Isaac helped me.

CROCKETT

Oh.

ISAAC

Just worry about getting better, okay, Dad?

CROCKETT

I'm sorry I didn't help you get that done.

He sits back.

CROCKETT

Just one more thing, I guess.

KUTNER

C'mon, you don't need to be thinking about regrets now.

CROCKETT

When would be a better time?

KUTNER

I'm just saying. You should concentrate on what to do to fix your regrets. When you get well.

ISAAC

What are your regrets, Dad?

CROCKETT

All right.

(thinks)

For starters, I think if I had focused more on MHC-two. I know that's going to be the key. Just a little more time...

ISAAC

To spend in the lab? That's your regret?

He picks up his things. Max doesn't know what to do, starts to follow Isaac.

CROCKETT

No, that's not what I --

ISAAC

If you could just get back every other weekend, you'd have the Nobel prize by now.

CROCKETT

Wait! That was just the first one that popped into my mind.

ISAAC

(to Max)

Stay here.

Isaac shuts the door behind him.

CROCKETT

Isaac!

Breathing heavily now. Crockett gives a sharp cry, moves his head over his arm in an attempt to double over.

KUTNER

What is it?

A grimace as Crockett watches the invisible pain travel up his arm.

MAX

Dad?

Crockett contracts his chest, rolls his shoulders forward. This is more than arm pain.

KUTNER

You're having a heart attack.

He goes for the crash cart.

KUTNER

Need some help in here!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SURGICAL FLOOR - NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

Taub reams out a SECRETARY.

TAUB

My patient's spreading necrosis just caused him to have a heart attack. We're taking an OR now.

Foreman arrives with CHASE.

CHASE

Calm down, Man. You catch more surgeons with honey.

(to secretary)

We'll be in OR 3.

The secretary writes it down as Thirteen hurries over.

TAUB

(to Chase)

Thank you.

THIRTEEN

He won't do it.

TAUB

What?

THIRTEEN

He's refusing the surgery. Wants a diagnosis first.

FOREMAN

Call House.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - NIGHT

House slams the door open, wakes Max.

HOUSE

I knew you were an idiot, but even the imbecilest of imbeciles has a survival instinct.

CROCKETT

(calm)

I don't have a survival instinct because I don't want to cut out my chest and my arms?

HOUSE

If you understand that the amputation means staving off the Darwin Awards just a little longer.

CROCKETT

You only want this surgery because you don't understand my illness. Gee, I just thought you were better than that.

House studies the guy -- starts to see him in a new light.

CROCKETT

Great Doctor House. I'd hate to be the mystery he can't solve. By the way, this is visit number three.

HOUSE

Are you getting off on this? You're dying, and you don't care.

CROCKETT

I started dying the day I got cancer.

HOUSE

So if you're not here to get better, you're here to what? Stump me? Prove you're smarter?

CROCKETT  
That only works if --

HOUSE  
You know what you have.

CROCKETT  
Not much logic in that. Wouldn't  
you say?

Crockett shifts, and something catches House's eye.

HOUSE  
Turn back.

House uses his cane to tip Crockett's arm back. The fatty  
underside looks white, waxy... soapy.

HOUSE  
Sopanification.

CROCKETT  
Surprise, surprise.

END OF ACT TWO



ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - NIGHT

Foreman follows a determined House to where the rest of the team waits anxiously.

FOREMAN

How could he know what he has?  
That doesn't make any sense.

House goes straight to the whiteboard, wipes it clean.

FOREMAN

His skin is turning to soap. You  
don't think he would prevent that?

HOUSE

(ignores him)  
What do we know about this guy?  
Other than medically.

THIRTEEN

Does that matter?

KUTNER

He's divorced, seems lonely.

House writes Kutner's facts.

HOUSE

We thought he was stupid, but he's  
not.

House writes "Not Stupid" on the board.

HOUSE

He hasn't given us time to diagnose  
the symptoms. But if he's already  
diagnosed himself, we just have to  
figure out what he thinks he has.  
What else?

FOREMAN

Crockett's not a diagnostician. Or  
even a practicing physician. If we  
can't figure it out, he can't  
either.

KUTNER

Unless he gave it to himself.

THIRTEEN

Gave himself rigor mortis?

KUTNER

Maybe not on purpose, but he knows what he did to cause it.

TAUB

He specifically told us he hadn't done anything strange since the surgery.

HOUSE

Certainly he can't lie. That's against the rules.

(back to the board)

What else?

TAUB

If he's engaging you in some battle of wits, then it is against the rules.

KUTNER

But wait, he didn't actually say he hadn't exposed himself to anything. He said we'd see for ourselves from the bloodwork.

A thinking beat.

THIRTEEN

(convinced)

He gets along with his kids. Until today.

House hangs his head and sighs dramatically.

THIRTEEN

What? I'm supporting your point.

When House looks up, he's smiling serenely.

HOUSE

Wish I'd been there.

TAUB

You wish you were there to hear a father say he wished he'd spent less time with his kids?

HOUSE

To hear someone on their deathbed finally admit the truth.

FOREMAN

Dying people aren't lying when they say they want to spend time with their families.

HOUSE

They only want that because they think their time is too limited to accomplish anything else. Ants build hills, dogs chase birds, people trade stocks and make spreadsheets. It's in our DNA.

FOREMAN

It's also in our DNA to look after our offspring.

HOUSE

To preserve the genes. Not to bond over baseball and Disneyland.

THIRTEEN

Someone has Daddy issues.

KUTNER

(epiphany)  
He's fat.

Everyone turns to Kutner.

HOUSE

Your dad's fat.

KUTNER

You're talking about work. Weight doesn't have to be a medical symptom. Might be a sign of his depression over not accomplishing anything.

THIRTEEN

Wow. So just because someone's fat, they must be a failure in other areas of their life?

KUTNER

Not every case, but maybe this one. He really has failed in his work, and he knows it.

HOUSE  
 Okay, we have a divorced, lonely,  
 failed scientist who offends his  
 kids with the truth. What else?

FOREMAN  
 This is ridiculous.

HOUSE  
 Your dad's ridiculous.

Foreman gathers his things.

FOREMAN  
 Take a Vicodin and get some sleep.

He leaves, and Taub stands to follow.

HOUSE  
 (to Taub)  
 Sit down. You, I still have power  
 over.

TAUB  
 But Cuddy has power over you. What  
 do you think she'll say when you  
 take her this theory after a  
 sleepless night?

HOUSE  
 Thirteen, go home. Taub, you stay.

Thirteen happily obliges. Off Taub:

HOUSE  
 You don't buy the theory. I don't  
 need you to be the rested one.

THIRTEEN  
 Happy studying, Boys.

CUT TO:

SCALPEL

Is slapped into a gloved hand, then hovers over Betadine-  
 stained skin.

CUDDY (O.S.)  
 (through intercom)  
 Cut him open and you're both fired.

PULL BACK TO  
REVEAL:

INT. OPERATING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chase and Ben -- scalpel in hand -- turn from an unconscious patient to the observation room, where Cuddy steams.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Cuddy and Chase face off.

CUDDY

Are you trying to get us sued?  
He's nineteen years old!

CHASE

His age didn't seem to matter when  
he was switching peds over to the  
new software or tricking doctors  
into clinic hours.

CUDDY

You really want to compare that  
with an appendectomy?

CHASE

Only the initial incision. Which  
seemed mild after I talked to the  
nurses in ortho.

Cuddy rocks back on her heels.

CHASE

I'll bet the board doesn't know  
about that.

CUDDY

What do you want?

CHASE

I want to know what you want. Ben  
stumped House, but you're wasting  
him on trivialities. There has to  
be something significant you need.

Chase starts to walk off.

CHASE

And it doesn't involve Cameron  
teaching your empathy class.

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - NIGHT

House puts on his coat.

KUTNER  
You're not staying?

HOUSE  
I think better over a bubble bath  
and a Ginkgo biloba smoothie.

He leaves, and Taub turns back to his --

TEXTBOOK

-- open to a diagram of saponification. Cartoon triglyceride molecules react with sodium hydroxide to produce glycerol and carboxylic acid salts.

The diagram morphs into:

INSIDE CROCKETT'S ARMS

The same reaction actually taking place.

PUSH through black, necrotic tissue, past healthier tissue in the neck, through the brain, and along the optic nerve to the eyeball.

The sclera -- the eye's protective covering -- now inflamed, sports several red nodules.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

TAUB  
You can't see?

Crockett shakes his head. Last night's cool confidence is this morning's cold depression.

Kutner tries to distract Max, and House watches from a distance as Thirteen pulls out a pinlight, shines it in Crockett's eyes.

THIRTEEN  
How about this?

CROCKETT  
Nothing.

TAUB  
Your arms are decomposing, and you  
can't see.

THIRTEEN

Any other symptoms?

CROCKETT

Woke up this morning and everything was black or hazy.

HOUSE

Answer her question. And remember lying is cheating.

CROCKETT

Doctor House?

HOUSE

Or the terminator who stole his voice.

Max's eyes widen. Two days ago, that would have been awesome.

HOUSE

Either way, if you don't answer the question, I'm going to kill you.

CROCKETT

No other symptoms.

House searches Crockett's face for signs of deceit, then heads out.

CROCKETT

He left?

TAUB

He thinks you're challenging him to figure out a diagnosis you already know.

THIRTEEN

Are you?

CROCKETT

I'm decomposing, and he's playing mind games? That's crazy.

THIRTEEN

Yes it is. But are you?

CROCKETT

I promise, if I knew anything that would help me, I would tell you.

THIRTEEN

House thinks you don't want to get better.

CROCKETT

Then I promise I'm not trying to kill myself.

(then)

Has Isaac come back?

KUTNER

Not yet.

CROCKETT

He's not answering his cell or at home. Can you send someone to check if he's there?

THIRTEEN

We can let you know the second he gets here.

MAX

He took the car. He could have gone anywhere.

Crockett leans his head back in frustration.

CROCKETT

Dr. Kutner?

Kutner approaches.

CROCKETT

I know it's not your job, but you've been so nice to us. Will you find my son before I die?

KUTNER

You're not going to die.

CROCKETT

(suddenly sharp)

You won't go to my house. But you broke in before, right? That's House's way.

The doctors exchange a look. Caught.

CROCKETT

Searching patients' homes is something you do.



TAUB  
Only if it helps the diagnostic  
process.

CROCKETT  
Meaning if I admitted to tricking  
Doctor House, I could leverage that  
information for my son's return?

He shakes his head.

CROCKETT  
Somewhere I have gone terribly  
wrong.

The doctors exchange uneasy looks.

CROCKETT  
Wake up one day and realize you've  
been blind your whole life.

Suddenly, Kutner takes a step toward the bed.

KUTNER  
Did you sleep well last night?

THIRTEEN  
Kutner.

KUTNER  
You said you woke up this morning  
and couldn't see. Did you sleep  
through the night?

Crockett nods.

KUTNER  
You feel rested?

CROCKETT  
I suppose so.

KUTNER  
Then why are there bags still under  
your eyes?

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - LATER

KUTNER  
It's lupus. Fever, swollen eyes,  
blindness, heart attack.

TAUB

The MI was the necrosis.

KUTNER

Which spread to his heart and  
nowhere else?

HOUSE

Good. You've explained every  
symptom but the rotting arms.

KUTNER

The lupus caused something that  
caused the necrosis.

HOUSE

"Something." Brilliant diagnosis.

THIRTEEN

Plus the necrosis started before  
the lupus.

FOREMAN

Almost like the necrosis caused  
"something" that caused the lupus.

HOUSE

(to Foreman)

Find your own insult.

KUTNER

And necrosis doesn't cause anything  
but more necrosis.

HOUSE

Not without help.

FOREMAN

So now he gave himself rigor mortis  
and lupus?

TAUB

We asked him directly if he knew  
what he had and he denied it.

HOUSE

What did he say? Specifically.

THIRTEEN

He doesn't know anything that would  
make him better and he's not  
committing suicide.

House turns to the whiteboard.

HOUSE

So he doesn't think there's a cure  
for what he has.

FOREMAN

House! Listen to yourself. If he  
outwits you, he still dies.

HOUSE

But he outwits me.

FOREMAN

But he dies.

THIRTEEN

But his kids see him outwit you.  
He's failed at everything; this is  
his last chance to be the hero.

KUTNER

Now who has daddy issues?

THIRTEEN

I thought you were on our side.

KUTNER

I changed my mind. You saw him.  
He wants to be with his kids, not  
be their dying hero.

HOUSE

C'mon. What father doesn't dream  
of being Decomp Man? Annihilate  
cities with a single whiff of his  
arm.

House stops suddenly.

HOUSE

The necrosis hasn't spread. If the  
heart attack was lupus, then  
decomposition progresses in the  
arms, but it barely touches the  
surrounding tissues.

KUTNER

What are you thinking?

HOUSE

I'm thinking there's no such thing  
as "something."

He starts out the door, pokes his head back in.

HOUSE  
Whoever even thinks about finding  
the son is fired.

INT. WILSON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Wilson is deep in conversation with a PATIENT when House barges in.

WILSON  
Get out.

HOUSE  
I was just going to say that.

WILSON  
We're discussing treatment options.

HOUSE  
(to Patient)  
Cancer's a slow disease; those  
options won't change in the next  
five minutes.

He holds the door open expectantly. The Patient hesitates, but when Wilson does nothing, she leaves.

WILSON  
What's so important you couldn't  
wait five minutes?

HOUSE  
Cause of death. Murder and suicide  
can look the same.

WILSON  
You mean could I kill you and make  
it look like suicide? It's worth  
some thought.

HOUSE  
I mean could I commit suicide and  
make it look like you did it. More  
specifically, could a cell commit  
suicide and make it look like  
murder?

WILSON  
Cell suicide. Apoptosis?

HOUSE

Go with me on this. Cancer is only possible because it prevents malignant cells from committing hara-kiri.

WILSON

You are talking about apoptosis.

HOUSE

So to kill the cancer, you have to remotivate those kamikaze cells.

WILSON

Which is the subject of a lot of current research. What's your point?

HOUSE

If you get the troops riled up, they might get so excited they all fall on their swords at once. And that might be hard to distinguish from the scene of an actual battle.

WILSON

You're suggesting your patient tried to trigger apoptosis in a last-ditch fight against cancer?

HOUSE

("so cool")

And got way more than he bargained for.

WILSON

It's intriguing, but --

HOUSE

How did he do it? How would you do it?

WILSON

I don't know. I guess I would start with pro-apoptotic proteins. Inject them, maybe?

HOUSE

Sounds reasonable. Now help me convince Cuddy you can treat him.

WILSON

He doesn't have cancer anymore.  
Why would I treat him?

HOUSE

Because there's only one sworn  
enemy of apoptosis. You're going  
to give him cancer.

Off Wilson --

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE - DAY

CUDDY

You want me to let you give him cancer?!

House stands on the other side of her desk, while Wilson and Ben watch from a safe distance.

HOUSE

We could buy him cigarettes and hope for the best, but this way the hospital gets paid.

CUDDY

You actually want to give him cancer.

HOUSE

I want to treat his disease!

CUDDY

Apoptosis on spring break?

HOUSE

It all fits. Apoptosis causes autoimmune response: loss of vision, fever, heart attack. Also accounts for selectivity in tissue death, why his arms belong on CSI Miami and his shoulders are fine.

BEN

The only way it could be apoptosis is if he gave it to himself, right?

HOUSE

Don't worry, it doesn't attack Jedi masters...

BEN

And none of your staff thinks he infected himself.

HOUSE

... unless they're underhanded little bastards.

Ben bites his tongue.

WILSON

In House's defense, Crockett wouldn't have infected himself as much as tried to treat himself unsuccessfully.

CUDDY

And once it didn't work, he came here to stump you and go out in a blaze of glory?

HOUSE

Exactly.

Cuddy sighs.

CUDDY

(to Wilson)

Do you think it's apoptosis?

WILSON

I think it's possible.

CUDDY

(back to House)

Even if you did treat him, he would still have cancer.

HOUSE

Not the kind he had before. Do you want to kill him?

WILSON

I'd give him Hodgkin's, so we could treat the Lupus at the same time. Six months of chemo. It's risky, but better than no hope at all.

CUDDY

You'd still be asking him to put himself in the same position he started from when he "gave himself" apoptosis. With the possibility of a longer, more drawn out death.

HOUSE

A drawn out death gives him time to reconcile with his son.

CUDDY

What do you care about that?



HOUSE

You do.

Cuddy's out of arguments. She shakes her head in defeat, then looks at her mentee.

CUDDY

No.

HOUSE

Bu--

CUDDY

Absolutely not.

HOUSE

Bu--

CUDDY

This hospital does not give people cancer.

She sits -- final answer.

HOUSE

Just migraines.

House and Wilson shuffle out into:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - OUTSIDE CUDDY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

WILSON

Still want me to do it, don't you?

HOUSE

If it works, she'll cave. If it doesn't, she'll cover.

WILSON

He's an educated man. If you can convince him, I'll treat him.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - OUTSIDE THE LAB - SAME TIME

The wild card. Isaac's back.

He clutches a rolled up stack of papers and stares through the doorway into the space between microscopes and pipets.

Cameron, bag of blood samples in hand, is heading towards the lab when she spots him.

CAMERON  
Isaac, right? You're with Doctor  
House.

Isaac comes back to the present, nods.

Cameron frowns, recognizes a tortured soul when she sees one.

CAMERON  
Come sit down.

She leads him into:

INT. HOSPITAL LAB - CONTINUOUS

They sit at a workbench.

ISAAC  
Do you believe in hell, Doctor?

Cameron falters.

ISAAC  
If I hate someone when they die, do  
you think I'm going to hell?

He hands her the --

PAPERS

-- an academic article, "Effect of p53 and BAX on end stage  
myosarcoma: A case study." And in bold letters underneath:  
"by Victor Crockett, Ph.D., with Isaac Crockett."

ISAAC (O.S.)  
He left it for me in the glove  
compartment.

PULL BACK to reveal --

INT. HOUSE'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

And now House is holding the article. He steps into the  
doorway to --

INT. HOUSE'S OUTER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

-- where Foreman, Taub, and Thirteen wait.

HOUSE  
Paging Doctor Foreman.

Cameron takes Isaac aside.

FOREMAN

You really need me to say it? You were right.

HOUSE

Duh. Take this to Cuddy.

TAUB

She still won't let you give a patient cancer without his consent.

HOUSE

He's going to give consent.

THIRTEEN

You're withholding his son?

HOUSE

That would be unethical. I'm creating a bigger rift between them. One that will take weeks to heal.

FOREMAN

We can't let you do that.

HOUSE

You're going to stop me?

Foreman fixes his gaze. Yeah, he'll stop House.

HOUSE

If we give Crockett peace, he dies in peace.

The team has no comeback.

HOUSE

You don't want to be a party to it, you can all deliver the article.

All three leave, and House turns to Cameron.

CAMERON

(to Isaac)

Your dad just wants you to be proud of him.

HOUSE

Don't you have an ER full of needy patients?

Cameron takes House aside.

CAMERON

(sotto)

House, he's seventeen. He's not a pawn in your duel with this guy.

HOUSE

Mixed metaphor; doesn't even makes sense. Now shoo.

He steps back into --

INT. HOUSE'S INNER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

-- presses her outside and closes the door. Turns back to Isaac and raises the article.

HOUSE

So you knew about this the whole time.

ISAAC

Of course not.

HOUSE

Do you know what happens when you withhold information about someone else's medical condition?

ISAAC

Because my name's on the article? He did that.

House scoffs.

ISAAC

Look at it. He left the end blank for me to fill in the final data.

House starts to walk out. Isaac scurries after him into:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isaac digs an envelope out of his back pocket, holds it out for House to see. House keeps walking.

ISAAC

(reading)

"Send to ACS." I'm not getting in trouble because he wants to be famous.

HOUSE

What's that they say about apples  
and trees?

ISAAC

No thank you. I've seen what that  
dream can do.

House pretends to ignore him.

ISAAC

People think it's cool I'm named  
for Newton. It's because when I  
was born, he'd just finished his  
Ph.D. and felt like the next Isaac  
Newton. How arrogant is that?

HOUSE

So arrogant.

ISAAC

It has nothing to do with me. He  
only thinks about himself. He  
drags us down here so we can what?  
Be proud of him for stumping you?

HOUSE

Which he didn't even do.

ISAAC

Want to know the last time I got in  
trouble? Or got a 'B'? Never.  
But does he say 'I'm proud of you'?

HOUSE

You want him to pat you on the head  
and tell you you're a good boy.

ISAAC

No. I want to him give a... rip.

HOUSE

Nice.

ISAAC

I want him to think about me more  
than MRSA.

HOUSE

Very touching. But I'm not the one  
you should be telling all this to.

Isaac looks up -- they've reached Crockett's room. The enormity of his rant hits him.

ISAAC

I can't.

HOUSE

If you don't, you'll be angry the rest of your life. Believe me.

House slides open the door.

HOUSE

Kutner, buy Max an Icee.

KUTNER

(to Max)

I'm betting you're a blueberry man.

They join House and Isaac. Kutner waits expectantly.

HOUSE

In what world would I give you Icee money?

Isaac reaches out, but Max hangs back.

ISAAC

I'm sorry.

Max doesn't move.

ISAAC

I should have taken you with me. Max, this isn't the time to be mad at me.

MAX

I don't want to touch you. I don't want you to lose your ATP.

Isaac envelops Max, kisses the top of his brother's head.

ISAAC

(whispering)

You're a good boy.

After a moment, Kutner steps over.

KUTNER

I hope you like blueberry, 'cause that's really all we have.

Isaac nods his okay to Max, who reluctantly follows Kutner.  
House escorts an equally reluctant Isaac into --

INT. PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isaac looks to House, starts to the bed.

ISAAC

Dad.

Crockett lights up at his son's voice.

CROCKETT

Isaac, you came back. I'm so --

ISAAC

I'm talking. Please listen.

Isaac steps closer to study Crockett's arms.

ISAAC

(in wonder)

Your lipids turned to soap.

(then)

But this doesn't impress me. I get science, too. My photosynthetic antenna design beat every other project in the state, remember?

He looks to House, who nods.

ISAAC

Mr. Ross had to give the opening speech because you wouldn't do it.

Another step.

ISAAC

You said that night was about me.  
I'm already proud of you.

House erupts.

HOUSE

At least there's nothing wrong with the lying gene in your family.

ISAAC

Dr. House.

HOUSE

Two minutes ago your son said you  
brain only had room for yourself.

ISAAC

Please. Stop!

CROCKETT

(to Isaac)  
Come here.

Isaac does as he's told.

CROCKETT

If I could, I'd shake your hand.

HOUSE

You're both morons.  
(to Isaac)  
Do you want to absolve your father,  
or do you want to save him?

CROCKETT

You have a treatment?

HOUSE

Hodgkin's.

Crockett laughs in spite of himself.

HOUSE

Desperate men take desperate  
measures. Yesterday, you were a  
desperate man.

CROCKETT

My arms are gone, aren't they?

HOUSE

Yes.

Crockett sinks his head into his chest, glooms.

House begins the walk of shame out the door.

CROCKETT

When you treat the Hodgkin's, I'll  
get my sight back?

House turns back. Studies the two Crocketts.

HOUSE

I'll get the oncologist.



INT. CLINIC - DAY

House comes up behind NURSES speaking in hushed tones.

HOUSE

The lifeblood of hospital news.  
What did Doctor House do this time?  
Did he, perhaps, cure a patient by  
giving him cancer?

NURSE #1

We're not talking about you today,  
Sweet Cheeks.

She nods across the room to Ben, who walks purposefully to House. A REPORTER and CAMERAMAN follow.

NURSE #2

(to Nurse #1)

Did you hear what he did to the  
nurses in ortho?

House stares meaningfully into the camera.

HOUSE

My heart always knew Doogie was  
destined for the nobility of  
reality TV.

BEN

They're here for an exclusive on  
your rigor mortis patient.

HOUSE

Oncology, then follow the smell of  
rancid meat.

BEN

Cuddy wants you to give them an  
interview.

HOUSE

Tell Cuddy promises I make in bed  
don't count. Oops, is that thing  
still on?

He turns to leave, the trio in tow.

BEN

Actually, they need to interview  
the person in charge. If you want  
to tell them that's Cuddy...

House stops, looks at the camera, still trained on him.

Ben smiles underneath his beady snake eyes.

House walks through the group to the nurse's station. He sits on the counter, swings his legs up next to him, and, with his cane, hoists himself to a standing position.

HOUSE

Good people of Princeton-  
Plainsboro, lend me your ears.  
There is one among us today who has  
turned your fears into healing.

He has everyone's attention. The camera's eating this up.

HOUSE

That's right. Cancer, the most  
feared of plagues, is today a boon.

Doctors passing by stop to listen.

HOUSE

Thanks to this man, the very one  
you see before you.

Cuddy comes over to see the commotion.

HOUSE

(re: Cuddy)

But thanks to this woman, for my  
trouble I have received not  
gratitude, but provocation. Not  
the deserved carrot, but the stick.

He looks Cuddy in the eye.

HOUSE

And highly contagious tuberculosis.

The entire clinic takes a conjoint step back. Patient by patient, startled becomes collectively panicked.

House slides off the counter.

HOUSE

(to Ben and Cuddy)

Fifteen clinic hours to clear up  
the misunderstanding.

(into camera)

(MORE)

HOUSE (CONT'D)

The queen is dead. Long live the  
king.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW