

SERVICE TO MAN
by
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FADE IN:

1 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - DAY 1

A BEAT UP, POCKMARKED ROAD in the Middle of Nowhere.
The well worn tires of ELI'S STATION WAGON rumble past.

2 INT. ELI'S STATION WAGON - CONTINUOUS 2

Eli keeping his eyes on the road ahead. He steals a quick look at himself in the rear view mirror, pleased with both the reflection, and the young man behind it. He returns to the road but the temptation to recheck his reflection becomes too great. Instead of comfort, however, the image in the mirror brings a wince of pain.

ELI
Ah, *shit*.

3 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS 3

Eli's "Dynamic 88" stops on the side of the highway.
A POLICE CRUISER rolls to an ominous halt behind. A pair of spit-shined black boots step out onto the hot asphalt, loudly clicking a direct path to Eli's open window.
The boots halt. The HIGHWAY COP leans down- reflective sunglasses, pressed shirt, wide brimmed hat, and a *sneer*...

4 INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - ANOTHER RURAL HIGHWAY - SIMULTANEOUSLY 4

MICHAEL DUBOIS, black, twenty three, immaculately overdressed for driving, looks timidly up at the SAME STOIC HIGHWAY COP that looms just outside his open window.

MICHAEL
Is there a problem, Officer?

HIGHWAY COP
License and registration, *boy*.

MICHAEL
Excuse me?

The Cop places a hand on his CLUB. Michael fumbles for his paperwork and hands it to the cop, who frowns.

5 INT. DYNAMIC 88

5

The Cop looks up from Eli's license, same frown.

HIGHWAY COP
 "Rosenberg." What nationality is that?

ELI
 Nationality? I'm American.

HIGHWAY COP
Jewish. Right?

Eli falls silent, shocked, as the Cop inspects his license.

HIGHWAY COP
 Long way from New York, Rosenberg. You
 registrin' voters?

ELI
 What?

HIGHWAY COP
Negros. You registrin' 'em?

ELI
 No. I'm... I'm going to Medical
 School.

6 INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

6

The cop furrows his brow at Michael.

HIGHWAY COP
Medical School? What the hell kind of
 medical school could you possibly be
 going to, boy?

MICHAEL
 Meharry Medical College.

7 INT. DYNAMIC 88

7

The Cop lowers his glasses to get a better look at Eli.

HIGHWAY COP
 Wouldn't have figured you for a
 Meharry Man.

ELI
 Because I'm white?

COP
Because you Jews own Harvard and Yale.

ELI
Really? I wish I would've have applied
there- would have saved me a pile in
application fees.

The cop stares, motionless behind the reflective sunglasses.

COP
Your brake light's out.

ELI
(incredulous)
My brake light?

8 EXT. MICHAEL'S CAR 8

The sound of SMASHING GLASS. The cop appears back at Michael's window.

COP
Yeah. The back left one.
(writing a citation)
You have ten days to fix it.

9 INT. DYNAMIC 88 9

The cop passes Eli a fix-it ticket.

COP
Welcome to Dixie, Rosenberg. Better
watch your ass. The darkies don't like
you any better than we do.

10 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY 10

The police car roars past the Dynamic 88, sending a thick cloud of choking dust into the open window.

TITLE CARD: NASHVILLE, 1967

MAIN TITLES UNDER THE FOLLOWING:

11 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - DAY 11

The small but stately buildings of Meharry Medical College stand proudly between rows of ancient trees, surrounded by the run down homes of the indigent community it serves.

An army of crisply dressed BLACK STUDENTS file in and out of the buildings, down the street, out of the dormitory, talking excitedly with BLACK PROFESSORS and BLACK ADMINISTRATORS. A proud island of Black Education thriving amongst the rampant anxiety, anger, racism, and poverty of 1960's Nashville.

12 EXT. DORMITORY - DAY 12

Eli, lugging his SUITCASE, stumbles toward the single DORMITORY entrance. Highly entertained Black students file past, chuckling.

13 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY 13

Eli struggles down the hall to room #202 and opens the door.

14 INT. DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS 14

MICHAEL DUBOIS looks up from his suitcase. Eli halts in the doorway.

ELI

Oh- sorry. Wrong room.

Eli closes the door. Michael returns to unpacking.

A SOFT KNOCK. The door slowly opens and Eli steps back in.

ELI

I'm sorry- is this- is this 202?

Michael points to the "202" on the door beside Eli's head.

ELI

They told me I'm in 202.

MICHAEL

They told me *I'm* in 202.

Silence. THE R.A. barges in with a KEY.

R.A.

Here's your key Rosenberg.

MICHAEL

Excuse me- I thought I was in 202.

R.A.

(testily)

Name, Newbie.

MICHAEL
Dubois. Michael Dubois.

The RA glances at his LIST.

R.A.
Take 210.

MICHAEL
You told me 202.

R.A.
Now I'm telling you 210, Frenchie.

He tosses Michael a KEY.

MICHAEL
It's not French. It's Creole.

R.A.
Tell it to Rosenwhite.

He leaves. Michael glares at Eli. Eli smiles.

ELI
Rosenberg, actually. Eli Rosenberg.
Nice to-

Michael grabs his suitcase and storms out.

ELI
"Nice to meet you."

15 INT. ELI'S DORM - LATER

15

Eli has finished unpacking, bathed in sweat. He opens his window and looks down at the passing throng of students.

VOICE (O.C.)
(whispered)
Hey!

Eli looks around outside, confused.

VOICE (O.C.)
Over here!

Eli turns to his right, and a sheepish looking WHITE STUDENT is leaning out the neighboring window.

WHITE STUDENT
Help me.

ELI
What's the matter?

WHITE STUDENT
They hate me.

ELI
Maybe I hate you too.

WHITE STUDENT
I'm coming over. You can hate me in person.

He disappears. A few moments pass. THREE QUICK KNOCKS.

ELI
Yeah?

The door swings open and ZACHARY GELB slips in, quickly slamming the door behind him. He is a little chubby and a little more than a little neurotic.

ZACK
Boy am I glad to see you. Zack Gelb,
Brooklyn New York.

ELI
(shaking his hand)
Eli Rosenberg, Avenue J.

Zack checks out the room and Eli's things.

ZACK
Nice to see a fellow Tribesman. I
heard we're the only ones.

ELI
Whites?

ZACK
Jews.

Zack anxiously stares out the window.

ZACK
Sure are a lot of black guys here.

ELI
You surprised?

ZACK

No, but it's still a shock, you know?
I mean, I've seen them in the city,
you know, on the subway, but, I've
never, you know...

ELI

Yeah. Me neither.

Eli joins him at the window. They watch the students below.

ZACK

Weird.

16 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE- DAY

16

Students stream up a stately marble staircase, through heavy wooden double doors beneath an imposing vaulted archway. The main building itself is a deep red brick, etched with history, its age lines perhaps outrunning the monies needed to keep her young. It is a small complex of three interconnected buildings- the two level lobby with offices, connecting to HUBBARD HOSPITAL to the East and classrooms, laboratories, and Nurses' quarters to the West.

Eli notices all the students leaning down to reverently touch an ETCHED PHRASE in the marble:

DEDICATED TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD THROUGH SERVICE TO MAN, 1876

17 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS

17

As Eli enters into the pulsing student throng, he negligently allows the door to SLAM behind him. He turns to find

A HUGE HEAVYSET PROFESSOR looming above him.

DEAN HOLMES

These are hallowed halls, young man.
See that you treat them as such.

ELI

(terrified)
Okay. Sorry.

DEAN HOLMES

Were you raised in a jungle, son?

ELI

No- Brooklyn.

DEAN HOLMES

Then prove to me they are unrelated by referring to your professors, or any other person deserving of respect, with the appellation of "sir."

ELI

Yes, sir, sorry, sir... *Sir.*

DEAN HOLMES

Didn't you see the engraving outside?

ELI

...The engraving?

DEAN HOLMES

Something wrong with your hearing, son?

ELI

No, sir.
(reciting)
"The worship of Man—"

DEAN HOLMES

God, son. "Dedicated to the worship of God through service to Man."

ELI

Yes, sir.

DEAN HOLMES

"Dedicated." As in consecrated.

ELI

Yes, sir.

DEAN HOLMES

That's a sacred vow, young man. What are you dedicated to, aside from awkwardness and sloth?

ELI

(beat)
Doing exactly what you want me to do at this particular moment in time.

DEAN HOLMES

You can start by not slamming these doors.

ELI

Yes, sir.

He stalks off. Eli stands, frozen. Zack joins him, shaking.

ZACK

I don't think you want to piss that
guy off.

ELI

Thanks for the tip.

18 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - CONTINUOUS

18

The room is filled with thirty eight male BLACK MEDICAL STUDENTS, and two FEMALES. Eli and Zack make a beeline for two open seats in the front row. The side door flies open and

DR. MARTIN FELDMAN enters in a perfectly bleached white coat. He is, to everyone's abject surprise, WHITE...

Without acknowledging the silent class, he opens up the ROLL at his LECTERN, settling on a random name. With a sneer:

DR. FELDMAN

Doctor Williams...?

FRANKLIN, an anxious STUDENT answers from his seat.

FRANKLIN

Yes, sir?

DR. FELDMAN

Would you please dazzle us with the largess of your knowledge by naming the dizzying array of the ligaments of the human knee, starting with the anterior?

FRANKLIN

Uh...

DR. FELDMAN

Stand up, *Doctor*. For the benefit of the whole class, if you would.

Franklin stands, visibly shaking.

FRANKLIN

...The ligaments of the knee?

DR. FELDMAN

Don't *tease* us, Doctor.

FRANKLIN

I'm sorry, sir. I can't.

DR. FELDMAN

Of course you can't. But you *will*. In fact, by the end of this course, you will name and identify every ligament, muscle, bone, nerve, tissue, artery, vein and capillary in the human body, if I have to break every one of yours to get it out of you... *Doctor*.

FRANKLIN

Yes, sir.

He remains standing, terrified.

DR. FELDMAN

You may sit.

He quickly sits. Eli whispers to Zack:

ELI

How did we end up with Dr. Mengele?

Dr. Feldman's sharp gaze falls upon them.

DR. FELDMAN

Need I remind you gentlemen that although being White might get you served faster in a local restaurant, it has not yet been proven to be a balm for ignorance and stupidity.

ELI

(pause, terrified)

I don't know how to respond to that.

DR. FELDMAN

I believe my point has just been made.

The black students chuckle.

DR. FELDMAN

Welcome to Anatomy, *Doctors*. If you can set aside for the moment your pre-pubescent masturbatory delusions of Medical Grandeur and open your hymnals to page thirteen, we shall begin...

The class pulls open their massive copies of GRAY'S ANATOMY.

DISSOLVE TO:

19

INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - LATER

19

The class sits rapt at attention to a very different voice: a rich lyrical cadence, not of authority, but of complex experience and enduring tradition.

DR. JOHNSON

...How will you be shaped? By the patients you encounter? By the systems you master?

ANGLE ON: DR. MOSES JOHNSON, black, late forties, firm in speech, movement and bearing; a distinguishing gray just beginning to inquire at his temples.

DR. JOHNSON

By Physiology?

(beat)

Or will you seek for the spirit *beneath* the numbers and the names and the mitochondria? Men and Women of passionate dedication beyond your comprehension have sat in the very seats you occupy now. Will you allow the ghost of their genius to inhabit and inspire you?

Eli watches, more than a little awed.

DR. JOHNSON

Now, I do believe we have a Michael Dubois in attendance this afternoon.

Michael stands up in the middle of the class.

MICHAEL

Right here, Dr. Johnson, sir.

DR. JOHNSON

(grins)

Well, look at you. I haven't seen you since you were small enough to hold in the palm of my hand.

MICHAEL

Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON

In fact, if I remember correctly, I *did* hold you in the palm of my hand, the very day you were born.

MICHAEL

(smiles)

Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON

You see, ladies and gentlemen, I was honored to have received my MD here at Meharry alongside Mr. Dubois' Father, who has, incidentally, a very successful practice in New Orleans. Isn't that true, Michael?

MICHAEL

Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON

(beat)

Then perhaps you can tell me, Michael: what is the most common cause of Iron Deficiency Anemia in a man over 60 years of age?

Michael, and indeed the entire class, freezes.

MICHAEL

Uh... Sir?

DR. JOHNSON

Didn't you hear me, son? You heard me pretty clearly when I was talking about all the money your Father was making.

MICHAEL

Yes, sir-

DR. JOHNSON

It's a simple question, son. What is the simple answer?

MICHAEL

(sheepishly)

I'm sorry, sir. I don't know.

DR. JOHNSON

That's alright. I don't think your father ever learned that either.

Michael sits, beaten, as Johnson opens his lecture...

DISSOLVE TO:

20

EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - LATER

20

The students file out, shell shocked. Eli somehow ends up walking next to Michael.

ELI
Guess we all took one on the chin
today, huh?

Michael glares and walks on. Eli hesitates for a second, and then catches back up to him.

ELI
Listen, I'm really sorry about the
room.
(Michael says nothing)
Really- If you want to switch-

MICHAEL
Keep it, I don't care.

ELI
Hey, what did I do?

MICHAEL
Nothing. I don't like you.

ELI
Why- because I took "your room?"

Michael halts and spins on Eli.

MICHAEL
No- because you took a black man's
place. There's one less black doctor
treating one less black family in one
less black neighborhood because of
you.

He storms off. ZACK catches up, clapping Eli on the shoulder.

ZACK
So, what do you think so far?

ELI
I think it's suicide.

ZACK
Better than the alternative, right?
Parents ship us off to some Banana
Republic Medical School.

ELI
We don't have the money. Try Vietnam.

GARRISON smacks into Eli as he passes.

GARRISON
Watch it, White Boy.

He plows off. Eli turns to Zack.

ELI
Suicide it is.

21 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - NIGHT 21

Eli, books in hand, walks down the hallway, passing room after room of INTENSELY STUDYING STUDENTS.

TWO GIGGLING STUDENTS scatter from just outside his door.

22 INT. ELI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT 22

Eli enters and closes the door, tossing his books on the bed.

He SMELLS something odd. Everywhere. Overpowering. He goes to the door. Sniffs at the bottom. Opens it...

THE TWO GIGGLING STUDENTS are crouched low, blowing MARIJUANA SMOKE under his door. One looks up, caught.

STONER STUDENT
Hey, man- got a light?

ELI
I'd say you two are pretty lit up as it is.

23 INT. OUTSIDE ZACK'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT 23

Eli bangs on the door.

ZACK (O.C.)
'S open, brother.

Eli opens the door to find Zack on his bed, his left hand dangling over his head, his eyes riveted to it.

ZACK
Is my hand not the most beautiful thing you've ever seen? Like a woman's hand, only masculine.

Eli takes a WHIFF of the air and frowns.

ELI

Jesus.

He goes to the window and throws it open. The moment he does, THREE STUDENTS BELOW switch on a radio, BLASTING it.

Eli shuts the window and gathers up Zack's materials.

ZACK

Don't fight it, Eli. We're all one when we're all tripping.

ELI

Not when we're all *flunking*. Let's go, Mr. Palmolive, we got a test to pass.

He lifts Zack, who falls into his arms, staring deeply into his eyes.

ZACK

I see my soul reflected in your eyes.

ELI

That's the F we're gonna get in about eight hours, Flyboy. Come on.

He drags Zack out the door.

24

INT. LAB - DAY

24

DR. JOHNSON sits behind a desk, as the students file past station after station for the first PHYSIOLOGY Exam.

At one station, a CADAVER, cut open at the wrist to reveal a small FLAG marking a particular MUSCLE GROUPING. Students write down the answer as they pass.

FRANKLIN elbows GARRISON (whose hair is now trimmed close), and indicates ELI is about to move to the station. Garrison REMOVES the flag and affixes it to a DIFFERENT MUSCLE. They snicker, moving on.

Eli arrives at the station, and after agonizing a bit, scribbles down an answer...

DR. JOHNSON (O.C.)

Excuse me, Mr. Rosenberg.

Dr. Johnson reaches out and switches the FLAG back.

DR. JOHNSON
I believe this has been accidentally
misplaced. Carry on.

He walks off. Eli hesitates for a second, shrugs, and re-
investigates the flag position...

Dr. Johnson approaches Garrison and Franklin, who keep their
heads low at the next station, terrified...

He walks off, and Garrison nearly faints.

25 INT. ELI'S DORM - DAY 25

Eli enters, closes the door behind him, throws down his
bookbag... and COLLAPSES.

26 INT. ELI'S DORM - NIGHT 26

Eli passed out, same position, still clothed. There is a LOUD
KNOCKING on the door. He paddles to the door and opens it.

GARRISON AND FRANKLIN burst in, grabbing Eli.

GARRISON
Gelb, you fucking bastard, I'm gonna
kick your ass!

ELI
What?

FRANKLIN
Bennie heard you tell Dr. Johnson we
switched your flag, Gelb!

ELI
Why are you calling me Gelb?

GARRISON
Because you're Gelb.

ELI
I'm Rosenberg. Eli Rosenberg.

Garrison lets him go.

GARRISON
Garrison Hill.

ELI
(still terrified)
Nice to meet you.

GARRISON
Where's Gelb?

ELI
203.

GARRISON
Thanks.

He leaves with Franklin, respectfully closing the door. A few moments go by. A loud KNOCK is heard next door, followed by a loud commotion.

Eli collapses back onto his bed, screaming in the distance...

DISSOLVE TO:

27 INT. ELI'S DORM - MORNING 27

A gentle ray of sun brings Eli to a contented consciousness. He slowly gets up, stretches, and looks around, confused.

28 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 28

A crowd of students stand in the doorways of their rooms, dazed. Eli emerges, and catches a similar expression on the students around him- first ZACK (sporting a colorful black eye), then GARRISON to his other side.

ELI
Morning.

GARRISON
Morning.

They stand frozen, without a task for the first time.

ELI
When's Anatomy?

GARRISON
Two hours.

Silence.

ELI
What are we supposed to do.

29 EXT. DORMITORY - MORNING

29

The dazed medical students emerge, and at the edge of the street, they HALT, lining up as a group...

A PROCESSION OF EXQUISITE, IMPECCABLY DRESSED YOUNG BLACK WOMEN walk past, wending their way from the stately buildings of FISK UNIVERSITY across the street towards the MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE MAIN HALL.

The men watch, absolutely transfixed...

ELI
What are *those*?

GARRISON
Fisk Girls.

ELI
Can I have one?

GARRISON
Depends.

ELI
On what..?

30 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE LOBBY - DAY

30

THE GRADES have been posted inside the lobby. The FISK WOMEN, in small tight knit groups, peruse them with great interest.

Eli and Zack poke their heads above the throng.

ELI
(pleasantly surprised)
"76." I'll take it.

ZACK
You'll "take it?" You're second in the class, asshole. I'm practically last.

ELI
(squinting)
Who's first?

MICHAEL appears, emerging from the crowd.

MICHAEL
(coldly)
I am.

He walks past without another word.

ELI
 Someone ought to tell him that being
 first is a *good* thing.

31 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS

31

The Meharry Men have arranged themselves outside on the grass, and one by one, a FISK GIRL approaches demurely, making polite conversation.

Michael comes down the stairs...

VOICE (O.C.)
 Michael?

MELANIE DIXON rushes over to him with an iridescent smile. She is arguably the most gorgeous woman at Fisk, and the fact she behaves unaware of this makes her even more attractive. Michael's icy demeanor thaws the moment he sees her.

MICHAEL
Melanie! Hey!

She gives him a warm, friendly hug.

MELANIE
 I'm so impressed! That's you, right?
 "M.D?" "Michael Dubois." "Head of the
 Class."

MICHAEL
 Yeah, it's just the first test-

MELANIE
 Come on, Mike, you're allowed to
 smile, you know- just this once.
 Eighty Seven! That's fantastic.

MICHAEL
 (fidgets uncomfortably)
 It's ok. You know what my Dad'll say.

MELANIE
 Yeah: "What happened to the other
 thirteen?"

They both laugh. She takes his face in her hands.

MELANIE
 Look at you- my "Big Brother," the
 Doctor! Remember what my Mom said-
 you're going to have to beat those
 women off with a stethoscope.

Michael nonchalantly edges away from her touch.

MICHAEL
How *is* your Mom?

MELANIE
Insane. She still thinks we're getting married.

MICHAEL
(flushing)
Well- that's... crazy.

MELANIE
Right? As if we'd ever risk a lifelong friendship for a few sweaty nights of physical passion.

MICHAEL
(perspiring)
Ridiculous.
(beat)
How many nights?

She laughs and takes his arm, as they walk down the street.

MELANIE
So, tell me. Who's Number Two?

MICHAEL
Two?

MELANIE
You know. You're Number One. Who's Number Two? "E.R."

Michael halts.

MICHAEL
Why do you want to know?

MELANIE
I've always had a thing for Number Two. He has to work a little harder. I like that.

MICHAEL
Don't be too sure. This one doesn't have to work at *all*.

MELANIE
Introduce me.

MICHAEL
No way, Mel.

MELANIE
(playfully)
Mikey...

MICHAEL
Forget it.
(he goes cold)
I have to go to class.

He starts off the other way.

MELANIE
I'll see you later?

He doesn't make an answer. She watches after him...

32 INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

32

Eli wolfs down a TURKEY SANDWICH, as he reads a medical text.

MELANIE (O.C.)
Excuse me?

MELANIE stands before him in all her glory. Eli GAWKS.

MELANIE
Are you "E.R.?"

ELI
Am I...? Oh! Yes. "E.R." Yes. Those
are my initials.

Silence. Melanie waits, but no more info is forthcoming.

MELANIE
Do they *stand* for something?

ELI
Yes. They do. My name, actually.

Silence.

MELANIE
Which is...?

ELI
(light bulb goes off)
Sorry- Eli. Eli Rosenberg.

MELANIE
 (laughs)
 I'm Melanie.

ELI
 I'm speechless.

She laughs again. Then silence. She waits... He is absolutely lost as to what his next step should be.

MELANIE
 May I sit down?

ELI
 Oh, Jesus, yes. I mean, *not* Jesus, not-sorry about Jesus, I - *Yes*. Of course. Sit. Please.

He stands as she sits across from him. He re-seats himself.

She looks at him, dubious.

MELANIE
 Everyone's talking about you, but no one knows a thing about you. In fact, everyone told me *not* to go looking for you. So, of course, here I am.

ELI
 Yes. Here you are. And here I am.
 (beat)
 What can I do to you- *For* you?
 (takes a deep breath)
 Sorry. What can I do *for* you?

MELANIE
 To be perfectly honest, when I heard you were...

ELI
 Not exactly Black...

MELANIE
 I wasn't exactly sure.

ELI
 And now?

She gazes at him for a moment.

MELANIE
 I'm *still* not sure.

ELI
 (grins mischievously)
 Well, Miss...?

MELANIE
 Dixon.

ELI
 Well- I *am* studying to be a Doctor,
 Miss Dixon. Perhaps I could be of
 assistance.

MELANIE
 Oh? What do you propose, Doctor
 Rosenberg?

He elegantly opens to a page in the TEXT:

ELI
 "In case of Acute Feminine Indecision,
 accompany patient to nearest Italian
 restaurant for a candle-lit dinner and
 stimulating conversation until cured."

Her face betrays nothing.

MELANIE
 I think I need a second opinion.
 (she stands)
 I'll get back to you.

ELI
 Take your time. I'll be reading this
 until...
 (checks the book)
 ... Doomsday, I think.

She laughs and floats off. GARRISON slides down next to Eli.

GARRISON
 I know you're *white* and all, but I
 think you just officially became my
 hero.

They both turn to watch her disappear down the hall...

33 INT. DORMITORY - NIGHT

33

MICHAEL is hunched in a corner on a PAY PHONE:

MICHAEL
 I know, Dad, but it *is* the highest
 grade in the class...

As FRANKLIN passes by:

FRANKLIN
Send the limo, Daddy, I'm a-commin'
home!

MICHAEL
(into the phone)
No, I'm not happy with it either, but
it's only the first exam-
(listens, chastised)
I didn't mean "only," you know what I-
(listens)
OK. I'll do better the next time. I
promise.
(phone goes dead)
Dad? Dad are you...?

He hangs up and softly bangs his head against the wall.

34 EXT. DORMITORY- NIGHT

34

Michael emerges in a deep gloom. He freezes, as he spots...

ACROSS THE STREET

MELANIE floats down the stairs of Fisk University to meet up
with ELI. He moves in to KISS her. She quickly leans back.

MELANIE
Hey- not so fast, cowboy.

ELI
Plague free, I promise.

MELANIE
Sense free. You want to get us both
locked up?

ELI
Uhm... together?

MELANIE
(laughs in spite of
herself)
Come on.

OUTSIDE THE DORM:

Michael watches them disappear off down the street...

35 EXT. PERRONI'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

35

PERRONI'S looks like any other average mediocre "family style" Italian restaurant- faded green and white awning, corny painting of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, etc.

Melanie tries to peer in the window.

MELANIE
How does it look?

ELI
... Like an Italian Restaurant.

MELANIE
(anxiously)
That's not what I - Never mind.

He gallantly throws upon the door for her.

ELI
Your table awaits, Madam.

MELANIE
Senorina.

ELI
Whatever.

She nervously enters, an oblivious Eli follows.

36 INT. PERRONI'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

36

The restaurant is practically EMPTY. Just two tables are occupied. Eli and Melanie wait to be seated...

A WHITE COUPLE enters, standing beside them. A WAITRESS immediately rushes directly over to the new couple.

WAITRESS
Table for two?

She seats them in the corner. Eli smiles at Melanie, who is already ashen.

MELANIE
Let's go. I don't really feel like Italian now that I-

Before she can protest, Eli catches the eye of the Waitress.

ELI
Excuse me- table for two?

WAITRESS
 (sweet as pie)
 Of course, darlin'. Just give me one
 second.

She bustles off, leaving them standing, awkwardly.

MELANIE
 So, tell me, what brings a-

ELI
 Jew.

MELANIE
 A-

ELI
White Jew-

MELANIE
 What brings *you* to Meharry?

ELI
 (fidgets a bit)
 Well, in my family, there are only a
 few professions worthy of pursuing...
 Law...
 (thinks)
 Medicine...
 (thinks)
 Did I say Law?

MELANIE
 (laughs)
 And what do *you* want to pursue.

ELI
 You.

MELANIE
 Besides me.

ELI
 (beat)
 I don't know.

MELANIE
 You don't *know*?

ELI
 Not exactly. It's- complicated.

MELANIE

It can't be too complicated. There must be *something*-

He fidgets, obviously uncomfortable with the question, and directs his anxiety to the passing waitress.

ELI

Excuse me- how's that table coming?

WAITRESS

Just have to clean one off, be right with you, hon.

Another WHITE COUPLE enters. The waitress immediately acknowledges them.

WAITRESS

Right this way, folks.

They walk in, separating Melanie and Eli. He watches them sit and chat with the cheerful waitress. He looks over at Melanie, whose eyes are riveted on her shoes.

MELANIE

Can we go now?

ELI

... Yeah.

37 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

37

They walk together, slowly, in silence.

ELI

I'm such an idiot.

MELANIE

It's okay.

ELI

I've never seen *anything* like that. I've heard, you know, stories, but...
(pause)
I feel so humiliated.

MELANIE

I wish you wouldn't.
(smiles)
But I have to admit, I'm a little relieved you are.

They stop at the base of the FISK STAIRCASE.

MELANIE
Good bye, Eli.

ELI
Don't you mean good *night*?

She smiles sadly, kisses him gently on the cheek, and walks up the stairs.

Eli hesitates a moment, and then walks back toward the DORMITORY across the street.

38

EXT. DORMITORY - CONTINUOUS

38

MICHAEL is still sitting, waiting, and fuming, as Eli starts up the stairs, avoiding Michael's acid gaze.

MICHAEL
Isn't it enough for you to steal our school, you have to go and steal our women as well?

ELI
(had enough)
Fuck you, ok?

Michael stands.

MICHAEL
Stay away from her.

ELI
(moving in)
Stay away from *me*, man. I've had it with you.

MICHAEL
You've had it with *me*?

Michael shoves Eli, who stumbles back, losing his footing.

A few STUDENTS standing by CHEER Michael on.

STUDENT
Get 'im Mike! Kick his ass!

Michael heats up with the encouragement as the crowd grows, students pouring out of the dorm.

MICHAEL
You don't belong here, White Boy!

ELI
The hell I don't!

He **SHOVES** Michael. Michael **SHOVES** him back.

Eli abruptly **PUNCHES** Michael and he collapses like a sack of potatoes. The crowd **ERUPTS**, grabbing Eli.

GARRISON appears out of nowhere, pushing the crowd back.

GARRISON
Relax! Everyone just chill out! **CHILL!**

They back off a few paces, still yelling.

ELI
Thanks, Brother.

GARRISON
(spins on him)
I ain't your *Brother*. What's the matter with you? The fuck didn't you just walk away?

ELI
He was pushing me.

Garrison **SHOVES** Eli.

GARRISON
Yeah? Now *I'm* pushing you!

DR. JOHNSON (O.C.)
HEY!

The crowd **FREEZES**. DR. JOHNSON storms between them.

DR. JOHNSON
What the hell is going on here?
(Silence)
Mr. Rosenberg- you come with me.

ELI
Me? What did *I-*

Johnson **GLARES**.

ELI
Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
The rest of you get your butts inside before I flunk the lot of you.

They disperse. He grabs Michael's arm, taking him aside.

DR. JOHNSON
I don't care if you are your Father's son. You're *my* student. Start acting like it.

MICHAEL
Yes, sir.

Johnson wheels around on Eli.

DR. JOHNSON
Let's go, Mr. Rosenberg.

He storms off. Eli follows...

39 INT. DR. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

39

The office is simple, unadorned. An immaculately organized desk, a few small but well-crafted pieces of furniture, a bookcase, sporting framed pictures of past graduating classes, diplomas, a sea of medical texts and journals.

Eli sits in a well-worn, surprisingly elegant arm chair, drinking his coffee, his hand trembling. Dr. Johnson sits in another, studying Eli, delicately sipping his. Silence.

DR. JOHNSON
Why are you here, Mr. Rosenberg?

ELI
Meharry accepted me, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
You might as well say you're alive because the Doctor slapped your bottom.

ELI
I just want to be a Doctor, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
I don't know what that *means*.

ELI
I want to graduate. I want to intern.
I want to practice-

DR. JOHNSON
I know what a Doctor *does*, son. That's not what a Doctor *is*.

(pause)
(MORE)

DR. JOHNSON (cont'd)
 Look at that chair you're sitting in.
 What do you see?

ELI
 (studies it)
 I see... the seams, a coffee stain,
 the texture of the cloth...

DR. JOHNSON
 I see Mr. Harold Douglass. I diagnosed
 him with Crohns disease. We fought
 against it, he and I, for two years.
 He died. His son made that for me.

Eli's revisits the chair with a new appreciation.

DR. JOHNSON
 When I see a dislocated shoulder, I
 see a man's job, I see his family's
 livelihood. When I see an application,
 I see a small town's savior.
 (leans in closer)
 What do you see, Eli? When you look at
 Meharry, do you see a lifetime of
 service, or do you see a paycheck?

Eli is absolutely silent. Johnson leans back in his chair.

40 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - NIGHT 40

A whispering, giggling group of CONSPIRATORS, including a
 still simmering GARRISON and FRANKLIN, clog the hallway. They
 fall silent as ELI passes and enters his room...

41 INT. ELI'S DORM - CONTINUOUS 41

He walks inside to find his room TRASHED. Without registering
 any surprise whatsoever, he removes his SUITCASE from under
 the bed and begins packing up his SCATTERED BELONGINGS.

42 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - NIGHT 42

Eli walking toward the parking lot with his suitcase.

ZACK (O.C.)
 HEY!

ZACK tackles him into the grass.

ZACK
 Where the hell are you going?

ELI
Anywhere but here.

He throws Zack off and gets up. Zack quickly SITS on his suitcase, preventing him from leaving.

ZACK
You can't! I'll fail if you go.

ELI
You're failing already.

ZACK
You'll fail if you go.

ELI
So what? I don't know what the hell I'm doing here in the first place!

ZACK
Don't you want to be a doctor?

ELI
No!
(pause)
No. I don't.

Eli slumps on the ground beside Zack.

ELI
When they go around the room, you know, when you're a kid, and they ask you what you want to be, everyone has an answer, right? Fireman. Fighter Pilot. President of the United States. I froze up. Nothing. I think I copied the kid who said "Rabbi."

ZACK
Jesus.

ELI
Scared the hell out of me. I didn't have an answer.
(beat)
I still don't. I'm faking it, Zack. Every day. And I'm failing.

Eli shakes his head, looks over at a few black students chattering outside the dorm.

ZACK
So where are you going? Vietnam?

ELI
Fuck that.

ZACK
Home?

ELI
I guess.

ZACK
To do *what*...?

Eli struggles to find the answer. Let's out a long sigh.

ELI
(long pause)
Fuck.

MONTAGE:

43 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - DAY 43

Dr. Feldman lecturing. Eli listening, only HALFHEARTEDLY...

44 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - DAY 44

Dr. Johnson lecturing. Eli listening, now QUARTER-HEARTEDLY...

45 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT 45

Zack studying. Eli's book is open, but his attention is outside the window, down the street, and far, far away...

MONTAGE ENDS:

46 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - DAY 46

Eli checks the posted grades:

DUBOIS: 91... WILLIAMS: 84... CARTER: 83...

He runs his finger all the way down to:

ROSENBERG: 27...

DR. FELDMAN (O.C.)
Trouble in Paradise, Mr. Rosenberg?

DR. FELDMAN leans against the corner of the hallway.

ELI
No, sir. Couldn't be happier.

DR. FELDMAN
I see you're even worse at lying than
you are at Endocrinology.

Feldman gestures for Eli to follow. Eli lowers his head and
complies...

47 INT. DR. FELDMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

47

Dr. Feldman's office walls are filled with boisterous
CITATIONS and DIPLOMAS. A few elegantly FRAMED ARTICLES
complete the decoration of the space, giving it the
appearance of a shrine to accomplishment.

FELDMAN sits behind his desk, staring intently at Eli.

DR. FELDMAN
Why did you tank my exam, Mr.
Rosenberg?

ELI
(protesting)
I didn't-

DR. FELDMAN
I am well aware you were a Biology
major and not, in fact, a College
Thespian, so please spare me the
histrionics.

Eli falls silent, chagrined.

ELI
I don't know what I'm doing here.

DR. FELDMAN
You're here to *leave* here. You're here
for a degree.

ELI
A degree in *what*?
(beat)
Sorry. Look, I don't want to offend
anyone-

DR. FELDMAN
Please. Offend away.

ELI

Alright, then- all I hear is, all day long, what we owe, our responsibility, "Service to Man," you know? I mean, am I not allowed to say I'm here to be *successful*? To get my ass the hell out of Brooklyn? Is that wrong? Is that *immoral*?

Feldman takes a moment, choosing his words carefully...

DR. FELDMAN

There are roughly four hundred thousand words in *Gray's Anatomy*. I cannot recall, to the best of my recollection, "Morality" being one of them. I will say there are legions of earnest men and women who practice medicine with great honor and genuine concern. I will also say that it makes very little difference to a patient, when you read them their pathology report, which part of your *soul* it comes from. They want to be *cured*, Eli, not sympathized with.

Eli stares, shocked.

DR. FELDMAN

Do I offend you, Mr. Rosenberg?

ELI

No, it's... surprising. It's a little closer to what I expected-

DR. FELDMAN

To what you *wanted*, you mean.

ELI

(pause)

Yes.

DR. FELDMAN

Well, keep your eyes open, Mr. Rosenberg. There's more than one way to thread a catheter around here.

ELI

Yes, sir.

DR. FELDMAN

Now get your ass into my class and your head in the game.

ELI
 (with a new resolve)
 Yes, sir.

48 EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

48

NEW GRADES are posted:

94... HILL; 87... FREDERICKS; 82... WILSON...

MICHAEL runs his finger down the list until he finds...

71... ROSENBERG.

ELI (O.C.)
 It's like "The Mummy's Shroud."

Michael turns to find Eli grinning at him.

ELI
 Just can't kill me, can you?

MICHAEL
 Actually I was thinking more like "The
 Fly," because I keep hearing-
 (in a tiny falsetto)
 "Help me... Help me... Help me..."

Michael strides off. Eli, initially offended, suddenly tilts his head, confused.

ELI
 Hey- that was *funny*.

He shrugs and turns, crashing into:

A STRANGE ELDERLY MAN, wheeling a CADAVER out of a classroom.

ELI
 Oh- excuse me.

The elderly man just stares at him.

ELI
 I didn't see you.

The man abruptly wheels the cadaver off, HUMMING, as ZACK steps up to check his grade and WHOOPS excitedly.

ZACK
 Fifty- Two! That's what I'm talking
 about!

ELI
 (still eying the old man)
 Ever seen a cadaver wheeled around by
 a cadaver?

ZACK
 Who- Rip? Yeah, he's a trip.

ELI
 Rip?

They start off down the hall.

ZACK
 Yeah. R.I.P. "Rest In Peace." He'll
 set you up.

ELI
 With what?

ZACK
 Whatever you need. Stuff "falls off"
 the stiffs from time to time. Watches,
 jewelry, Randy's toupee-

ELI
 Randy wears a *rug*?

ZACK
 (looks at Eli)
 You *do* study too much.

As they pass the FACULTY OFFICES they hear:

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
 Mister Rosenberg?

The DOOR to Dean Holmes' office lies open...

ELI
 ...Yes?

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
 Could you come into my office, please?

Zack vehemently shakes his head "no!"

ELI
 Uhm... Sure.

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
 Are there any other students out there
 with you?

Zack SCATTERS.

ELI

No.

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)

Come in then, young man.

Eli gulps and walks inside...

49

INT. DEAN HOLMES' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

49

Dean Holmes sits behind his desk, smoking a pipe, arms folded tightly across his chest.

DEAN HOLMES

Sit down, Mr. Rosenberg.

Eli looks around, but there are NO CHAIRS in the office.

ELI

Thank you, sir, I think I'll stand.

DEAN HOLMES

As you wish. It has come to my attention that you've taken an intellectual hiatus.

ELI

I'm actually doing a bit better, sir.

DEAN HOLMES

Well then, I'm sure you can tell me the diagnosis for a patient with chronic diarrhea and low potassium?

ELI

I don't believe we've studied that yet, sir.

DEAN HOLMES

Is that what we're teaching you here at Meharry? How to compose a finer excuse?

ELI

No, sir.

DEAN HOLMES

Then I suggest you do some research of your own before I call you into this office again, or it will be the last time I summon you, do you understand?

ELI
Yes, sir.

Eli leaves. Holmes looks after him, stoic.

50 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT 50

Eli, alone, poring through Physiology texts. He looks up and rubs his eyes. Across the room...

MICHAEL is rubbing his eyes, draped over a Physiology text.

Their eyes meet. Something crosses between them- like two weary but determined gunslingers.

They each dive back into their tests with renewed vigor.

51 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - DAY 51

DR. JOHNSON lecturing. ELI daydreaming. He notices MICHAEL furiously writing something down and quickly bolts back to focus, writing down every word Michael does...

52 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - 52

DR. FELDMAN lecturing. Now, Michael and Eli are both aware of the other. When one takes a note, so does the other (as slyly as possible, of course); and visa versa, back and forth...

53 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 53

Eli walks out of class, and runs right into Michael.

ELI
Excuse me.

MICHAEL
Excuse *me*.

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
Mr. Dubois...?

They freeze, terrified. Eli drops his BOOK on Michael's toe. He yelps in pain.

DEAN HOLMES
Mr. Dubois, is that you?

MICHAEL
 (realizes he's been
 "outed")
 Yes, sir?

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
 Come in, young man.

Michael's eyes shoot poniards into Eli, who smiles gleefully.

MICHAEL
 (teeth clenched)
 Coming, sir.

54 INT. DEAN HOLMES' OFFICE - DAY

54

Michael standings before Dean Holmes.

DEAN HOLMES
 So- tell me, Mr. Dubois, since our
 last soiree, have you learned the
 function of the pituitary gland?

Michael gapes.

MICHAEL
 I thought you asked me to diagnose a
 low potassium level?

DEAN HOLMES
 I did.

MICHAEL
 And I looked it up for you.

DEAN HOLMES
 For *me*? Mr. Dubois, do you think I
 extend myself in these little sessions
 for *my* education or *yours*?

MICHAEL
 (sighs)
 Mine, sir.

DEAN HOLMES
 Then perhaps you'd be so inclined as
 to shoulder a more significant portion
 of the burden of your education.

MICHAEL
 Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

55 INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

55

Michael slowly closes Holmes' office door (leaving it cracked, of course), to find Eli smugly grinning.

MICHAEL
Don't you say *shit*.

ELI
I didn't say anything.

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)
Mr. Rosenberg- is that you?

ELI
(beat)
Shit.

Michael ever so graciously opens the door, gesturing for Eli, who enters, head down...

56 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY

56

Michael, a new pile of books in his arms, struggles to his door, and then struggles even more to retrieve his key.

DOWN THE HALL

GARRISON leans his head out of his door.

GARRISON
Hey, Mr. Shit-Don't-Stink. Daddy Shit-Don't-Stink called, and he wants you to call his Shit-Don't-Stink ass back.

FRANKLIN leans his head out of his room.

FRANKLIN
Better hop to it, Ritchie Rich.

They burst into laughter, as Michael finally manages to open his door, slamming it shut behind him.

FRANKLIN
Man, that Ritchie's awfully tight.

GARRISON
You would be too, Daddy gonna take away your Caddie and make you walk your ass to cotillion.

Michael bangs out his door, and walks down the hallway, passing Franklin.

MICHAEL
I've never been to a cotillion in my
life.

GARRISON
(beat)
Hey- what about the cadillac?

Michael turns back. Grins at them. Walks on.

GARRISON
Son of a *bitch*.

57 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT 57

Eli, with a MASSIVE STACK OF BOOKS of all subjects. Suddenly, he looks up from the one he's reading. Checks the COVER.

ELI
Denton's Nephrology? I already *read*
this!

He lets out a frustrated scream and sends the books flying.

58 EXT. LOADING DOCK - NIGHT 58

Eli BANGS out a side door of the Main Building, releasing another agonized SCREAM. He FREEZES, and slowly turns to find "RIP" pushing a gurney with a CADAVER inside a black bag.

RIP
You tryin' to wake the dead, son?

ELI
Sorry.

Rip shrugs and rolls the CADAVER to a nearby VAN, HUMMING an old BLUES TUNE. As Eli watches, Rip opens up the rear door and a thick mist of refrigerated air billows out.

ELI
You're the man that knows how to get
things, right?

Rip turns and stares at him.

ELI
I'm trying to date this girl-

RIP
Then what you need is a *psychiatrist*.

He lifts the cadaver-

ELI

I got no chance in hell, but maybe,
you know, if I had something to give
her, something *special*-

Rip hesitates. ZIPS open the cadaver and sticks his hand in.
He emerges with a thin GOLD BRACELET and hands it to Eli. Eli
uncomfortably fingers the BRACELET. Hands it back.

ELI

I don't think I should take this.

RIP

Probably best. If she's expecting gold
when you're in debt, imagine what
she'll expect when you're *practicing*.

Rip replaces the bracelet, as Eli joins him, transfixed.

RIP

You know, I've been selling these
things to you Doctors for years- a
ring, a watch, the hair off their damn
head, when what you *really* need you
could have gotten off them for
nothing.

Eli looks down at the dead woman's cold blue face.

ELI

What can I get from *her*?

RIP

Nothing. She's dead.

Rip zips up the bag and tosses it into the back of the van.

RIP

Get 'em while they're *alive*, kid.
Don't they teach you that in there?

ELI

Who knows. They shovel so much shit at
me, I think my head's going to
explode.

RIP

That's *books*, kid. How do you expect
to learn anything in *those*?

He slams the back door of the van, leaning against it.

RIP
 There's nothing wrong with books, son.
 But for a Physician- I'm talking about
 an honest to God *Healer*- for one of
 them...

Rip nods off toward SOMETHING in the distance.

RIP
 - class is *always* in session.

Eli turns away, following the point of Rip's gaze to...

THE HUBBARD HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE

The hospital doors are closed, the area totally devoid of
 life, save the fluttering pulse of fluorescent lights.

Eli looks back, but RIP and his car are GONE. He looks back
 towards the ER, intrigued...

59 EXT. HUBBARD HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS 59

Eli stands outside a moment in the silence. The doors
 suddenly slide OPEN for him, and he walks inside...

60 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS 60

PANDEMONIUM!

DOCTORS rushing from station to station, barking orders at an
 army of NURSES. The high pitched squeal of metal curtain rods
 as station drapes are savagely ripped open and closed.

The repetitive electronic percussion of medical machines call
 out the eternal alarm of the emergency room in action.

PATIENTS are wheeled in, wheeled out, CRIES of pain are
 drowned out by the SHOUTING of technicians and orderlies...

ELI watches from the doorway, his eyes straining to stretch
 large enough so he might take in the visual cacophony.

VOICE (O.C.)

HEY!

DR. WYATT, an African American EMERGENCY ROOM DOCTOR is
 pointing right at him, his finger sharp as a scalpel.

DR. WYATT
 No visitors.

ELI
But, I-

DR. WYATT
No visitors.
(to a Nurse)
Nelda, call the cop.

ELI
I'm a student.

DR. WYATT
What?

ELI
I'm a medical student.

Dr. Wyatt shifts from righteous fury to all business:

DR. WYATT
Great. Get a coat.

ELI
What?

DR. WYATT
NELDA?!

The NURSE tosses a WHITE COAT at Eli.

DR. WYATT
Put it on.

He grabs Eli, dragging him down the row of stations.

ELI
Wait- is this legal?

DR. WYATT
Look, I got a backlog of about a dozen
people bleeding to death, and I'd
rather save a life or two right now
than argue about the finer points of
Medical Malpractice, ok?

Eli stops him.

ELI
Are you *listening* to me? I'm only a
student-

DR. WYATT
Here-

He takes off his STETHOSCOPE and places it around Eli's neck.

DR. WYATT
- Now you're a Doctor.

He rushes off. Eli hesitates. Rushes after him.

61 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - BED STATION

61

Dr. Wyatt yanks back the curtain and they enter a station with an OVERWEIGHT MAN in obvious pain, writhing on a gurney.

DR. WYATT
Alright, Mr. Grady, this is Dr. Rosenberg. He's going to ask you a few questions. I want you to answer them as precisely as you can.

He starts to leave.

ELI
HEY!

He grabs the doctor, lowering his voice:

ELI
What the hell am I supposed to do?

DR. WYATT
Ask him anything you can think of that might be relevant. Where does it hurt, how does it hurt, how long has it hurt... got it?
(beat)
Go get 'im, Doctor.

He flies off. Eli turns back to the patient, terrified. The man stares at him, grimacing. Eli stands frozen, incapacitated before an actual, breathing, writhing patient.

ELI
... Hi.

GRADY
(through pain)
Hello.

ELI
(pause)
You don't look so good.

GRADY
I don't feel so good.

The man winces in pain.

ELI
What's wrong?

GRADY
Heck, I don't know. You tell me.

Eli sits in a chair beside the gurney.

ELI
Well, you have to- you have to tell me
what hurts, ok?

GRADY
My whole body.

ELI
(forcefully)
No it doesn't. *What* hurts exactly.
Pinpoint it for me.

GRADY
Well, I guess it's... It's right here.
Under my chest.

ELI
Is it a sharp pain, or a dull
throbbing one?

GRADY
It's sharp. Really sharp.

Eli grabs the man's CHART, and scribbles on an open page.

ELI
Uh huh. Does it come and go, or-

GRADY
No, it's there, all the time.

ELI
Getting worse, or constant?

GRADY
Worse.

He GROANS in pain.

ELI
Hold on. I'll be right back.

Eli rushes out and grabs Dr. Wyatt away from a Nurse.

ELI
He's having a heart attack.

DR. WYATT
No he isn't.

He grabs the file and reads Eli's notes.

ELI
He's overweight, flushed, sharp pain
in his lower chest-

DR. WYATT
Gas.

ELI
... What?

DR. WYATT
He has to fart.

He grabs an ENEMA BAG out of a nearby drawer.

DR. WYATT
Give him this.

The DR. WYATT is gone. Eli contemplates the ENEMA.

62 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - BED STATION- NIGHT

62

Eli sits beside Grady, the EMPTY ENEMA BAG beside his bed.

A large, clear, razor- sharp FART.

ELI
Better?

GRADY
Much.

Eli gets up as Dr. Wyatt comes in.

DR. WYATT
Well...?

ELI
He farted.

DR. WYATT
Congratulations. Come with me.

63 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

63

Eli struggles to keep up with Dr. Wyatt.

ELI
I feel so stupid.

DR. WYATT
Was he feeling sick?

ELI
Yeah.

DR. WYATT
Is he feeling better?

ELI
Yeah.

DR. WYATT
That's Medicine, kid.
(beat)
You're a first year, right?

ELI
How could you tell?

DR. WYATT
Wild guess. How are you doing in
Johnson's Physiology class?

ELI
Fifth in the class.

DR. WYATT
We'll have to work on that. Got a car?

ELI
(proudly)
1964 Dynamic 88.

DR. WYATT
Mom's?

ELI
(deflated)
Grandma's.

DR. WYATT
Shocking.
(gives him a slip of
paper)
You got a Skater on 26th.

ELI
"Skater?"

DR. WYATT
Slipped in the bathtub. Not an
ambulance in sight, so it's up to you,
Grandma, and that Dynamic 88.
(at the door)
Bring him in, Rook.

ELI
(brandishing the address)
Dead or Alive, sir!

Eli plows out the door...

DR. WYATT
Preferably *alive*, kid!

64 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

64

Eli gets out of his car and looks up at a DECREPIT HOUSE:
Windows broken, trash in the driveway, roof in tatters.

A weather- stripped WOMAN sits outside on a weather-stripped
wooden bench, fanning herself in the humid night.

ELI
'Evening, Ma'am.

MRS. PARKER
The hell do you want?

ELI
I'm here for...
(checking paper)
Mr. Calvin Parker.

MRS. PARKER
You his Parole Officer?

ELI
No ma'am. I'm from Meharry, Ma'am.

She looks at him, head tilted.

MRS. PARKER
You looking for a donation?

She laughs long and hard.

MRS. PARKER
Well, let me get my checkbook, young man. What can I do you for? Couple scholarships? A new buildin', perhaps?

ELI
I'm here to take your husband to the emergency room.

She stops- she likes this possibility.

MRS. PARKER
Can you keep him there a while?

ELI
If he's sick enough.

MRS. PARKER
Well go on and get him, then. I could use a break from his black ass.

65 INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

65

Eli walks into a room even more run down than the exterior.

MR. PARKER, about fifty-five, sits in a frayed CHAIR, dressed in an old tattered SUIT.

ELI
Mr. Parker?

MR. PARKER
You a parole officer?

ELI
No, sir.

MR. PARKER
She told me she was in College. She looked about Thirty.

ELI
I'm here to take you to the Emergency Room.

MR. PARKER
Bullshit.

ELI
Sir?

MR. PARKER
I want a Negro Doctor, not some damn
white administrator.

ELI
I'm not an administrator, I'm a
medical student.

MR. PARKER
They sent a damn *student* to get me?
Forget it. I'll fix my own damn leg.

He tries to get up. COLLAPSES. Eli leaps forward and catches
him.

MR. PARKER
Leave me alone!

He tries to take a step, and cries out in pain.

ELI
(yells)
STOP IT! Stop fighting me, or I'm
going to drop you like a sack of
potatoes, okay?

The man freezes, shocked.

ELI
If you can't put weight on it, it's
broken, and if it's broken, it's not
going to heal, understand? Now you
have two choices- one, you go with me
to the hospital so we can fix you up;
or two, you sit on your ass for the
next three months, the bones fuse
incorrectly, and you never walk right
again.
(beat)
Pick one, pops.

The man stares at Eli...

67

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

67

DR. WYATT is studying a chart as Eli rushes up to him.

ELI
We wrapped him up in four. Broken leg.

DR. WYATT
Good work, Rook.

He returns to the chart. Eli stands patiently, waiting...

DR. WYATT
(without looking up)
What?

ELI
What else?

DR. WYATT
Go home.

Wyatt closes the file, takes Eli by the shoulder, and walks him to the EXIT.

ELI
Home?

68 EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

68

Wyatt hustles Eli out the front door.

DR. WYATT
Now- next time I see you, I want you
number three in that class,
understand?

Eli nods and starts off, noticeably disappointed.

DR. WYATT
Hey, Rook!
(Eli turns back)
Don't be a stranger, OK?

ELI
(grins)
No, sir.

ACROSS THE STREET

GARRISON and FRANKLIN, sharing a beer, watch Wyatt shaking Eli's hand.

FRANKLIN
What the hell's he doing?

GARRISON
What am I, a lip reader?

Franklin walks off, but Garrison remains, watching...

69 INT. ELI'S DORM - NIGHT 69

Eli, thoroughly exhausted, eases the bloodied, sweat stained shirt off his back. He catches a glimpse of himself in the mirror- HE IS A MESS.

ELI

Cool.

DISSOLVE TO:

70 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 70

MICHAEL walks down the hall holding a small wooden FOLD UP CHAIR. He stops, face to face with ELI, who not coincidentally sports an identical chair.

MICHAEL

(nodding slightly)

Mr. Rosenberg.

ELI

Mr. Dubois.

DEAN HOLMES (O.C.)

Gentlemen?

Eli gestures to Michael, who nods and enters into HOLMES' OFFICE...

71 INT. DEAN HOLMES' OFFICE - DAY 71

Dean Holmes frowns. Across from him ...

Eli and Michael sit contentedly in their folding chairs.

DEAN HOLMES

Tell me, Mr. Rosenberg, what is the meaning of the diagnosis Coarctation?

ELI

A differential blood pressure between the arms and legs caused by a severe blockage of the aorta.

DEAN HOLMES

(turns quickly to Michael)

The most common cause of high calcium in the blood?

MICHAEL

Hyperparathyroidism.

DEAN HOLMES
 (back to Eli)
 Cholangitis?

Eli pauses... Stumped...

ELI
 Gosh, I don't know.

DEAN HOLMES
 (grinning)
 Well, Mr. Rosen-

ELI
 (grinning himself)
 Severe blockage of the common bile
 duct, leading to infection of the
 duct, leading to infection in the
 bloodstream from the liver.

DEAN HOLMES
 (quickly, to Michael)
 Otherwise known as-

MICHAEL
 Whipple's Syndrome.
 (smile)
 Sir.

Silence. Dean Holmes blinks once... Twice...

DEAN HOLMES
 As you were, Gentlemen.

ELI AND MICHAEL
 Thank you, sir.

They fold up their chairs and leave.

After ten long seconds, Dean Holmes SMILES...

72 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

72

Eli and Michael face off outside the office:

ELI
 "Hyperparathyroidism."
 (scoffs)
 Gave you the easy one.

MICHAEL
 "Cholangitis."
 (scoffs)
 (MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)
 Good thing I bailed you out with
 "Whipple's Syndrome."

They glare at each other.

ELI
 Jerk.

MICHAEL
 Jerk *Off*.

ELI
 That's the same thing.

Michael glares. Then turns and strides off.

ELI
 (calling after)
 Yeah- I'll Whipple *your* Syndrome.

73 EXT. STREET - DAY

73

Eli, walking with an arm full of books spots

MELANIE walking with TWO GIRLFRIENDS across the street.

ELI
 Hey! Melanie!

Melanie recognizes Eli, and tells her friends to wait further down the street before he plants himself before her.

ELI
 Hey.

MELANIE
 (neither warm nor cold)
 Hello.

ELI
 So, how about you give me another chance? This time, I promise we'll actually make it to a table.

MELANIE
 I'll think about it.

She starts off, and he swoops in front of her.

ELI
 What's to think about- look at me.
 (he preens for her a bit)
 Come *on*.

(MORE)

ELI (cont'd)
 He's smart, he's relatively good looking (in that Jewish, mysterious sort of way), he still has a *mostly* full head of hair...

She smiles in spite of herself.

MELANIE'S FRIEND (O.C.)
 Mel? Let's go!

MELANIE
 Sorry- I'm going be late.

Melanie smiles- perhaps a tiny chink in her armor, and starts off. Eli hesitates, then makes chase, struggling to keep up.

ELI
 What? Where are you going?

MELANIE
 There's a protest, a sit-in.

ELI
 I can sit.

MELANIE
 Eli-

ELI
 I'm an *amazing* sitter: Chairs, couches, stools... you name it, I've sat in it.

MELANIE
 You've never sat in like *this*.

ELI
 Try me.

Melanie stops and sizes him up...

74 EXT. PERRONI'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

74

PANDEMONIUM: THE FRONT DOOR BANGS OPEN

POLICEMEN yank out Eli, Melanie, her two girlfriends, LANCE (another friend of Melanie's), and two other young males.

ELI'S POV:

A CROWD of ANGRY WHITES envelop the stampeding students, CURSING the young protesters, yelling themselves hoarse.

75 INT. JAILHOUSE - NIGHT

75

POV: FROM INSIDE AN EMPTY CELL, LOOKING OUT

Terrified young black men are corralled down the hallway by screaming POLICEMEN.

A POLICE SERGEANT, stationed on the other side of the hallway spots ELI as he passes, grabbing him.

SERGEANT
C'mere, you!

LANCE grabs a protective hold of Eli.

SERGEANT
(struggling with him)
Get back, nigger!

The Sergeant brings his CLUB crashing down onto Lance's shoulder, breaking his hold on Eli.

The young men protest as Eli is dragged away, but there is little they can do, as the police herd them off...

76 INT. JAIL CELL - CONTINUOUS

76

POV: HALLWAY TOWARDS CELL

Eli is tossed into the cell and the iron door is slammed shut. He stumbles to his feet, and strains against the bars.

The CONCUSSIVE SOUNDS of VIOLENCE.

The defiant thunder of the young men shifts to high pitched SCREAMING. The screams fade to whimpers, which fade to silence, save the unremitting report of baton against flesh.

Silence. Eli holds his breath.

Then, the clicking shoes APPROACH again. Eli, terrified, backs further and further into the cell...

The GROUP OF COPS halt before his cell and stare in at him, their clubs dripping thick blood.

Eli stares back out at them, frozen in terror.

The Sergeant spits, and then starts off, the rest following close behind.

Eli slowly slides down the wall into a sitting position.

He cries- first silently, then softly, then uncontrollably...

DISSOLVE TO:

77 INT. JAIL CELL - THE NEXT DAY 77

The cell door slides open.

Eli slowly looks up from the floor in a daze to find the Sergeant staring down at him.

SERGEANT
Let's go, New York.

Eli slowly climbs to his feet and walks out into the hall, looking down towards the protesters' cell.

SERGEANT
Something on your mind?

Eli avoids the Cops hard gaze. He nods toward the left, and Eli shuffles off.

78 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY 78

DR. JOHNSON is lecturing before a SLIDE of the PANCREAS.

DR. JOHNSON
...and as you can see from the cross section here, this sample clearly shows an aggressive calcification...

Among the sea of furiously scribbling students, ELI is fast asleep in his notes.

DR. JOHNSON (O.S.)
Mr. Rosenberg?

ELI
(bolting awake)
Acidosis!

The class laughs. Dr. Johnson is not amused.

DR. JOHNSON
Although I appreciate your enthusiasm for electrolytes, that is indeed not the answer to my question. Would you care to hazard another guess?

ELI
 (wild guess)
 The Island of Langerhans?

DR. JOHNSON
 I believe you are referring to the
 "Isle" of Langerhans. The "Island" of
 Langerhans is where you are going to
 wish you were, after I get through
 with you in my office.

ELI
 (sighs)
 Yes, sir.

79 INT. DR. JOHNSON'S OFFICE - LATER

79

Dr. Johnson sits stiffly across from a sulking Eli.

DR. JOHNSON
 Why were you sleeping through my
 lecture, Mr. Rosenberg?

ELI
 I was at a Sit-In last night.

DR. JOHNSON
 (unimpressed)
 Yes...?

ELI
 And that led to a sleep- in... at the
 county jail.

DR. JOHNSON
 Yes...?

ELI
 I thought you might...

DR. JOHNSON
 Be proud of you? Of course I am, Mr.
 Rosenberg. How could I feel anything
but pride, as yet another promising
 career is flushed down the toilet?

ELI
 (shocked)
 It was a *Sit- In*, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
 You said as much.

ELI
For Negroes.

DR. JOHNSON
For *Negroes*? How many Negroes did you
save in that cell, Mr. Rosenberg?

Eli falls silent.

DR. JOHNSON
You want to do something for Negroes?
Be a doctor and save one of their
lives.

ELI
Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
Only two things get accomplished in a
jail cell, son- shitting and sleeping.
(beat)
Now, go do the latter.

ELI
Yes, sir.

80 INT. LABORATORY - DAY

80

The students stand around multiple DISSECTION STATIONS, two students per table, hovering anxiously over ANAESTHETIZED LABRADOR RETRIEVERS. DEAN HOLMES paces through the room.

DEAN HOLMES
... Now I appreciate the fact that all you fine young men and women can effortlessly navigate your way around the digestive tract in a medical textbook, but unfortunately, *Parker's Anatomy* won't be appearing as a patient in your emergency room any time soon. The question today, ladies and gentlemen, is whether or not you can do so within a living breathing organism- without turning it into a cadaver.

Eli skillfully makes an incision with Zack, his lab partner, assisting. Mike and Garrison are at the neighboring station. Garrison looks closer at his dog and HALTS.

GARRISON
Shit.

MICHAEL

What?

GARRISON

I think I over anaesthetized him!

MICHAEL

What the fuck did you do that for?

GARRISON

I didn't *mean* to, Mike.

HOLMES lumbers from station to station, getting closer.

GARRISON

Oh shit- he's coming.

Eli looks up from his work.

ELI

What's the matter?

GARRISON

I think I over anaesthetized him.

ELI

What the fuck did you do that for?

HOLMES moves ever closer.

GARRISON

(to Michael)

I'll tell him it was my fault.

MICHAEL

It *was* your fault, you idiot! Now we *both* flunk!

Eli suddenly puts down his scalpel.

ELI

Switch stations with me.

GARRISON

What? Why?

ZACK

Eli-

ELI

Do it. Now.

Holmes looks down at another station. Eli and Garrison quickly swap stations.

MICHAEL
What the hell are you doing?

ELI
Give me the forceps!

MICHAEL
What? Why are you-

Eli reaches past Michael and grabs a long thin rod like instrument, quickly burrowing it deep inside the dog's open chest (off camera).

ELI
Cover me.

Michael throws a SURGICAL PAD over Eli's arm, covering it from view, and moves closer to him, shielding him.

Holmes arrives, and hesitates, frowning.

DEAN HOLMES
Since when are you two lab partners?

They say nothing. Holmes sighs and briefly looks at the dog.

THE DOG'S HEART rises and falls in rhythm.

DEAN HOLMES
Very well, gentlemen.

He moves on. Eli stops manipulating the instrument, and the dog's heart STOPS.

Eli and Michael lean over the dog, relieved.

THE DOG'S HEART LURCHES BACK TO LIFE.

Both leap back, screaming.

DEAN HOLMES
(from another station)
What's the problem over there?

ELI
His heart's beating!

DEAN HOLMES
That is the *idea*, isn't it, Doctor?

The heart beats on...

81 INT. HALLWAY

81

Garrison leads Zack, Eli and a morose Michael out of the lab.

GARRISON
Cheer up, Mike- you look like you just failed.

MICHAEL
(glaring at Eli)
I *should* have.

He starts the other way.

ELI
Hey- I was just trying to help.

MICHAEL
I don't need your help.

GARRISON
I sure as hell did.

MICHAEL
Then *you* take it.

He stalks off. Eli and Garrison watch him go.

GARRISON
Man. That is one white Negro.
(beat)
No offense.

FRANKLIN interrupts them.

FRANKLIN
Hey, Garr- feast your eyes on this:
four tickets to the Vandy game.
(Garrison chatters
excitedly)
Let's go see Perry Wallace humiliate a
half a-dozen pasty white boys.

GARRISON
Hell, yeah!

Garrison and Franklin start off. Garrison HALTS. Turns back to Eli. After a slight hesitation...

GARRISON
You comin?

ELI
Me?

GARRISON
No, the you behind you. Yeah, *you*.

ELI
(beat)
Yeah. Ok.
(checks in with Zack)
Can Zack come?

Zack backs up a step.

ZACK
Nah- I gotta study.

ELI
"Study?" You? Why break with
tradition?

Garrison and Franklin roll.

ZACK
Screw you, Rosenberg.

FRANKLIN
Suit yourself, Gelb.

GARRISON
C'mon. 'S go.

The three take off, Zack staring after them.

82 EXT. VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

82

THE SOUNDS of CROWDS CHEERING echo in the air, as Eli, Garrison and Franklin stroll through the beautiful campus, slyly passing a FLASK of whiskey back and forth.

GARRISON
Man, Eli- you whiteys just cannot ball anymore.

ELI
Yeah, come on up to Brooklyn- we put up a much better fight there.

FRANKLIN
You know, I bet in fifty years time, there'll only be, like, what- a handfull of white players in the ABA and NBA *combined*.

Eli grabs back the flask from Franklin.

ELI
 You do know you're drinking whiskey
 and not LSD, right?

Eli takes a big drink as all three stop, overwhelmed by the
 beauty of the campus.

GARRISON
 Say, Eli- did you apply here?

ELI
 Yup.

FRANKLIN
 Did'ja get in?

Both Eli and Garrison look at him as if he were a moron.

GARRISON
 "Did he get in?"

Garrison shakes his head and they walk on.

GARRISON
 So- why Vanderbilt? What makes this
 place so special?

ELI
 It's the *best*.

FRANKLIN
 (forcefully)
 Because it's *white*?

ELI
 No- because it's the *best*.

The three of them break into an ARGUMENT, as...

VOICE (O.C.)
 HEY!

A VANDERBILT POLICE OFFICER approaches, hand on his HOLSTER.

VANDY POLICEMAN
 (directly to Eli)
 You want to be here, son?

ELI
 (confounded)
 What?

VANDY POLICEMAN
 Do you want to be here?

Eli hesitates. Notices the cop is looking at his FRIENDS.

ELI

Uh... yeah. Everything's fine. It's cool. *We're cool.*

VANDY POLICEMAN

Ok. I'm here if you need me, son.

The cop walks off. The three friends are SILENT for some time, neither of them knowing what to say.

Finally, Garrison looks at Eli.

GARRISON

... Because it's *white.*

Garrison and Franklin walk off. Eli follows behind...

83 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY

83

At the PHONE, Michael blankly stares off, the receiver a good foot from his ear, while his Father chatters on.

FATHER (O.C.)

... and it's just not going to cut it.

MICHAEL

I know, Dad.

FATHER (O.C.)

You keep saying you know, but then you keep leaving points on the table.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. I'll try harder-

FATHER (O.C.)

It's not about how hard you try, son- I just don't see any improvement, here-

As his father talks, Michael looks down the hallway:

GARRISON and FRANKLIN, whisper conspiratorially as they hurry down the hallway.

MICHAEL

Say, Dad, I have to go.

FATHER (O.C.)

Well, I'm not finished talking!

MICHAEL
That's ok- I'm finished listening.

Michael hangs up the phone. The silence pleases him beyond description.

84 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

84

Garrison and Franklin sit in the front seat of his idling CAR, chattering. Before they can take off...

MICHAEL (O.C.)
Say, Garrison?

Michael knocks on the window and Garrison rolls it down.

GARRISON
Yeah?

MICHAEL
Where are you going?

GARRISON
(conspiratorially)
E.R. Taxi.

MICHAEL
(beat)
Can I come?

GARRISON
Sure. Hop in.

Michael moves to the door and stops.

MICHAEL
What's an E.R. Taxi?

GARRISON
Man, you really need to get out more.

Michael shrugs, opens the door, and slides in...

85 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

85

... to find himself seated right beside ELI.

GARRISON
You two know each other, right?

Garrison laughs and drives off.

86 EXT. WOODSEN'S HOUSE - DAY

86

Garrison's car pulls up to a RUN DOWN HOUSE, with rotten furniture on the lawn. Garrison, Michael, Eli and Franklin jump out. Eli gets a brown paper BAG OF SUPPLIES out of the trunk as Michael hesitates at the gate.

MICHAEL

Are you sure this is safe?

GARRISON

Don't worry, Mike. Poor ain't contagious.

He drags Michael through the gate and up the path...

87 EXT. WOODSEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

87

Franklin knocks, and MR. WOODSEN, an irritated middle aged black man in a filthy undershirt jerks the door open.

MR. WOODSEN

Yeah? What do you want?

The young men freeze, terrified.

ELI

(stammers)

Uh... You called the Meharry Clinic?

MR. WOODSEN

I didn't call you, white boy.

ELI

Oh. Ok. Sorry to trouble you, sir.

They turn to go-

MR. WOODSEN

My daughter did.

They slowly turn back.

88 INT. WOODSEN'S HOUSE - DAY

88

A young OBESE GIRL of 14 years old lies on a sweat stained bed, shivering in pain.

The four students stand at the foot of the bed, Woodsen watching them closely from the doorway.

ELI
Hello, Miss Woodsen. We're from
Meharry Medical College-

MR. WOODSEN
You *students*? Shit.

Eli ignores this and calmly sits beside her, speaking softly
but firmly. Michael watches, impressed.

ELI
Can you tell me where it hurts?

OBESE GIRL
My stomach.

MR. WOODSEN
I told her to stop eating so damn
much, but she won't listen. She'd eat
the house too, if she had enough
ketchup.

Garrison leans in, whispering to Eli.

GARRISON
Food poisoning? Reflux?

ELI
Have you had any nausea? Vomiting?
Diarrhea?

She shakes her head and GASPS in pain.

ELI
Do you mind if we examine you?

She anxiously looks to her Father.

MR. WOODSEN
What do you want, boy?

ELI
I need to examine her abdomen.

MR. WOODSEN
Her *what*?

ELI
Her stomach.

MR. WOODSEN
Well, go ahead then.

Eli slowly raises her NIGHTSHIRT, revealing the naked skin of a DISTENDED ABDOMEN.

Eli reaches out, touching her and Woodsen noticeably STIFFENS at the WHITE HAND against his daughter's skin.

Michael SPOTS the connection and steps forward, delicately placing a hand on Eli's shoulder, which halts his hand.

MICHAEL

Dr. Rosenberg- lower abdominal pain is my specialty. Allow me.

Eli glares at Michael, then follows his gaze back to the uncomfortable Woodsen. IT CLICKS. He nods, trading places at the bedside with Michael, who carefully examines her swollen abdomen. Suddenly his hand JERKS back.

MICHAEL

She's pregnant.

MR WOODSEN

What did you say?

MICHAEL

She's pregnant. I just felt a contraction.

Mr. Woodsen stalks into the room, looming over Michael.

MR. WOODSEN

My daughter is fourteen years old! She ain't pregnant.

MICHAEL

(standing)

I'm telling you, sir, she's pregnant. She's due any day.

MR. WOODSEN

(threatening him)

And I say she *ain't*.

Eli delicately steps between them.

ELI

Now, Mr. Woodsen, sir- how can you be so sure she's not?

MR. WOODSEN

(menacing Eli)

Cuz, if she *was*, I'd *kill* her.

ELI
Well, let's assume she's not, then.

FRANKLIN (O.C.)
Doctor Dubois!

FRANKLIN has his hand on the girl's abdomen, examining her.

FRANKLIN
How could you miss this? She clearly
has an acute appendicitis.

MICHAEL
Appendicitis?

FRANKLIN
Not only is it inflamed, I think it's
about to rupture.

Franklin stands and approaches them.

FRANKLIN
Mr. Woodsen, can we have your
permission to take your daughter to
the hospital for an emergency
appendectomy?

MR. WOODSEN
A what?

FRANKLIN
We need to get this appendix out stat.
If it ruptures, her life may be in
danger.

Genuine concern floods Woodsen's face.

MR. WOODSEN
Yeah.
(beat)
Yes. Of course.

89 INT. GARRISON'S CAR - DAY

89

The car peels out into the street as the young girl MOANS in
the back seat between Eli and Michael.

GARRISON
Delivery?

FRANKLIN
Step on it!

ELI

(beat)
Delivery? Why are we going to
 delivery?

MICHAEL

I thought you said it was
 appendicitis!

FRANKLIN

Appendicitis? All those damn A's, and
 not a brain between either of you.

She SCREAMS. Both Eli and Michael realize she is indeed
 pregnant, and begin to check on her.

ELI

I don't think she's going to make it.
 Pull over.

GARRISON

We're almost there.

ELI

Pull over- I think her water broke.

GARRISON

Broke? Where?

ELI

All over the damn place!

GARRISON

Damnit, not in my car, Eli!

ELI

It's not exactly under my control,
 Garrison!

Garrison yanks the wheel to the side, tires screeching.

90

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

90

The car SKIDS over to the side of the road, blocking one side
 of a busy intersection. Eli, Garrison, Michael, and Franklin
 leap out and throw open the trunk.

HONKS from behind.

They emerge from the trunk with various gauze packs,
 syringes, etc, and dive into the back seat of the car.

More HONKS, curses.

91 INT. GARRISON'S CAR - DAY

91

Eli and Michael carefully angle the screaming girl, as Garrison looks at the destruction of his back seat.

GARRISON

Damn! How am I ever going to have sex
in that seat again?

The girl is situated on her back with her legs up- tied with GAUZE to the hand hold and the driver's headrest. Eli and Michael freeze and look at each other.

ELI

Well...?

MICHAEL

Well what?

ELI

Don't look at me.

MICHAEL

Don't you know how?

ELI

I don't have the slightest fucking
idea!

The girl SCREAMS.

MICHAEL

Jesus, Eli, I read "Collins'
Obstetrics," same as you!

ELI

I didn't read Collins!

Michael blinks. Looks to Franklin in the front seat.

FRANKLIN

Don't look at me.

Michael spins on a terrified Garrison.

GARRISON

I ain't goin' anywhere near that
thing!

HONKS. She SCREAMS. Michael holds his head for a second, and then springs into action.

MICHAEL

Ok, I need fifteen milligrams of demarol and all the gauze you can give me.

ELI

We used all the gauze to tie her legs.

MICHAEL

That's all you brought?!

ELI

I didn't expect we'd have to turn this car into a Neonatal Wing!

Michael looks around frantically.

MICHAEL

Ok- give me your shirts.

GARRISON

I just bought this one!

She SCREAMS. The men spring into action, yanking off their shirts and passing them to a furiously working Michael.

MICHAEL

Ok, ok, I think I stemmed the geyser.

GARRISON

Geyser? Oh my God...

MICHAEL

Do we have anything like a forceps?

Franklin riffles through the BAG OF SUPPLIES.

FRANKLIN

Forceps? I don't know what a fucking forceps looks like!

MICHAEL

Did they crush your brain with one when they delivered you?

ELI

She's squirting again!

GARRISON

Squirting?

MICHAEL

She's bleeding all over the place. More, I need more, dammit!

ELI
 (blurts out)
 Pants! Take off your pants!

All four men lurch about, yanking off their PANTS.

HOOTS join the HONKS outside.

MICHAEL
 Oh my God, I think I see the head.
 It's stuck. Forceps! Give me
 something!

FRANKLIN
 I got nothing!

Eli spots a small BAG under the seat beneath Michael and yanks it out, tearing through it.

GARRISON
 Hey- that's my Mom's stuff!

Eli emerges with a SALAD SERVER with giant spoon and fork.

ELI
 I got something!

MICHAEL
 Perfect!

Michael eagerly snatches it away and goes to work.

GARRISON
 Man- you are gonna have to explain
 that one to my Mom *yourself*.

92 EXT. GARRISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

92

AN ANGRY AFRICAN- AMERICAN MOTORIST storms around the side of the car.

MOTORIST
 Hey, move this car, motherf-
 (sees the guys in
 underwear)
 What the fuck is wrong with you-
 (sees the girl)
 What the fuck is *that*?

FRANKLIN
 She's delivering.

The Motorist looks closer.

MOTORIST
What the fuck *is* that?

GARRISON
(astonished)
The baby's head.

MOTORIST
That ain't right!

MICHAEL
She's bleeding again! I need more!

The guys freeze, clad only in their underwear. Eli turns to the motorist.

ELI
We need your shirt.

MOTORIST
The hell you do, white boy!

She SCREAMS.

MICHAEL
Give him your goddamn shirt!

MOTORIST
Take it, take it!

He yanks it off and throws it into the melee.

93 INT. GARRISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

93

Michael begins easing his hands back.

MICHAEL
Oh my God- it's coming!

Eli, Garrison, Franklin, and the Motorist all crowd closer.

ELI
It's coming!

FRANKLIN
Oh my God!

GARRISON
Oh My God!

MOTORIST
That ain't right!!

OBESE GIRL
OH MY GOOOOOOOOD!

She releases a long blood curdling SCREAM...

94 EXT. BUSY INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS 94

The now shirtless *and* pantless Motorist emerges from the car and yells at the gathered CROWD.

MOTORIST
It's a BOY!

The crowd CHEERS.

95 INT. GARRISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 95

THE BABY, swaddled in the Motorist's PANTS, cries on the chest of the sobbing, but much relieved GIRL.

The STUDENTS surround her in the car, all beaming.

She reaches out to Michael and weakly takes his hand.

OBESE GIRL
Thank you, Doctor.

Michael, overwhelmed, looks around at his fellow students, who each nod at him, one by one.

FRANKLIN
That is the coolest fucking thing I
have ever *seen*.

96 EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM - LATER 96

Eli, now clothed in scrubs, emerges from the emergency room. Michael, also in scrubs, sits on the steps, staring off. Eli sits beside Michael, who continues staring off.

MICHAEL
I had no idea.

ELI
Yeah.

MICHAEL
None.

ELI
 Yeah.
 (silence)
 Welcome to Medical School.

They laugh, thoroughly exhausted.

ACROSS THE STREET, Eli spots MELANIE walking with LANCE.

ELI
 Be right back.

He slowly rises and starts across the street.

ELI
 Melanie!

97 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

97

Melanie and Lance walk a little faster. Eli catches up.

ELI
 Melanie, hey!

She silently continues to walk.

ELI
 Are you ok? I haven't been able to
 reach you since-

Lance slides between Eli and Melanie.

LANCE
 She doesn't want to speak to you.

ELI
 (stopping)
 What? What did I do?

MELANIE
 (grabbing Lance's hand)
 Let's go, Lance.

They start to walk but Eli blocks them.

ELI
 Wait! What's going on?

LANCE
 I told you-

ELI
 You shut up.
 (to Melanie)
 What's going on?

MELANIE
 (coldly)
 They separated you.

ELI
 Yeah...?

MELANIE
 They *separated* you, Eli. They didn't touch you.

ELI
 (stunned)
 So? Would you rather they'd beaten me?

LANCE
 Let's go-

Eli GRABS Melanie.

ELI
 Wait- tell me! Would you rather I'd have gotten the shit kicked out of me?

Lance SHOVES Eli.

LANCE
 That's it. Stay away from her.

ELI
 Fuck you!

Eli SHOVES Lance hard. Out of nowhere,

TWO OF LANCE'S FRIENDS appear.

FRIENDS
 The fuck are you doing?/ I'll kick your *ass!*/ Back off!

MICHAEL suddenly jumps between them.

MICHAEL
 Whoa- calm down, alright! Everyone just calm the fuck down, ok?
 (turns Eli around)
 C'mon, Eli.
 (with a glance at Melanie)
 It's not worth it.

LANCE

Look at you- saved again, white boy.

Eli RIPS free from Michael and PUNCHES Lance in the face, TACKLING him onto the grass.

MICHAEL

Eli!

The others CHEER Lance, as the two roll around on the ground, kicking, punching and screaming.

TWO MEHARRY SECURITY GUARDS leap into the fray, yanking Eli off Lance, dragging the both of them away.

Eli calls out to Michael as he carted off:

ELI

Don't call Johnson- he'll kill me!
Anyone but Johnson!

98

INT. DR. FELDMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

98

Dr. Feldman sits behind his desk, staring at a disheveled and embarrassed Eli. After a long, awkward silence...

ELI

I don't belong here.

DR. FELDMAN

What makes you say that, Mr. Rosenberg?

ELI

The color of my skin, for one.

DR. FELDMAN

Well, unless I've gone through a profound metamorphosis since the last time I checked, I do believe we share that color.

ELI

You're a doctor here.

(beat)

I'm a prisoner.

DR. FELDMAN

You're not the only one doing time here, Eli. We're *all* in process. So tell me- what exactly are you in the process of, aside from slowly flushing your career down the toilet?

ELI
I don't know.

DR. FELDMAN
I don't think that's true. I think you know *exactly* why you're here. You just haven't *accepted* it yet. The sooner you *do* that, the sooner you accept the fact that you're *better, yes, better* than those around you, that you are destined for a better *place* than those around you, the sooner you'll know what the hell you're doing here, and more importantly- how to get the hell *out* of here.

Eli is silent. Feldman leans back in his chair.

DR. FELDMAN
Now, you are welcome to tell me that everything I just said is the antithesis of everything you believe.
(beat)
Go ahead. Tell me I'm *wrong*.

Eli is silent. Feldman cocks his head.

DR. FELDMAN
I'm impressed, Mr. Rosenberg. I always figured you for one of Johnson's boys.

ELI
(bristling)
I'm *nobody's* boy, sir.

DR. FELDMAN
Then *prove* it, Mr. Rosenberg.

Feldman ruffles some PAPERS on his desk.

DR. FELDMAN
You can start by *acing* my exam tomorrow. Yes?

ELI
Yes, sir.

DR. FELDMAN
I have call. Take a moment.
(beat)
Take whatever you *need*.
(beat)
Doctor.

Feldman walks out, solidly closing the door behind him.

Eli's eyes fall back to Feldman's desk. Right there, right in the very center:

THE NEXT EXAM.

A STACK of them have been turned to face him directly. Eli takes a breath and turns back to the closed door. He sits, looking at the stack of TESTS, frozen...

99

INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - ELEVATOR - DAY

99

Eli rides the elevator down from the offices, hands firmly in his pockets. The car STOPS at a floor and the door opens.

DR. JOHNSON nods and enters, standing beside Eli, who stiffens even further.

DR. JOHNSON

I hear you experienced a little extracurricular excitement.

ELI

Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

DR. JOHNSON

Ah yes- I heard about your little *altercation*, too. I was, however, referring to the 9th Inning back seat delivery.

ELI

Oh- yes.

(pause)

About the *altercation*-

DR. JOHNSON

I am resolved to take the bad as well as the good with you, Eli. You are apparently determined to leave me little choice.

The door opens and he turns to Eli for the first time.

DR. JOHNSON

I'm proud of you, son.

He steps out and the doors close on a tortured Eli.

100 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY 100

Eli rushes over to a TRASH CAN, whips the STOLEN EXAM out of his pocket and crumples it up.

ZACK (O.C.)

Eli!

ZACK stands in his open doorway.

ZACK

Where you been, man? I need your Mojo.

ELI

Ok. Give me a minute.

Eli nonchalantly tosses the crumpled PAPER into the trash and enters his dorm room. Zack calls through the door.

ZACK

I may not be *alive* in a minute, this shit's killing me.

Hearing nothing, he sighs and leans back against the door. His attention is piqued by

THE CRUMPLED PAPER,

which has fallen to the floor on the side of the trash...

101 MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - HALLWAY - DAY 101

THE GRADES are posted, and a CROWD gathers excitedly.

ELI squeezes past the thrum of students. MICHAEL passes back through the crowd, a cheerful expression on his face.

ELI

You certainly look relieved.

MICHAEL

I am.

(beat)

Congratulations, Eli.

He shakes Eli's hand.

ELI

You, too.

Michael walks off, and Eli pushes to the board, placing his finger on the SECOND SCORE. He runs it to the right, and it halts before

MICHAEL'S NAME.

Eli blinks, confused. Looks to the TOP GRADE and sees:

ELI ROSENBERG.

ZACK (O.C.)
Damn, Eli- Ninety Seven!

ZACK squeezes in beside him.

ELI
Yeah.
(beat)
Wonder what I missed.

They squeeze their way back out.

ELI
How'd you do?

ZACK
Top Ten.

ELI
Long way from the Bottom Ten.

ZACK
You're telling me!

DEAN HOLMES stands before them with a severe look on his face, even for him.

DEAN HOLMES
I need to speak to you in my office.

ZACK
(points at Eli)
Him?

DEAN HOLMES
Both.

102 INT. DEAN HOLMES' OFFICE - DAY

102

THE CRUMPLED COPY OF FELDMAN'S EXAM lies smoothed out on Holmes desk, it's typeface turned accusingly towards Eli and Zack, who sit ramrod straight at rapt attention.

DEAN HOLMES rages at them behind his desk. DRS. JOHNSON and FELDMAN stand behind him, their faces hard as granite.

Holmes gives up, shaking his head. The young men file out.

ELI is the last out of the office, and turns, just as Johnson closes the door in his face.

103 INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

103

Eli and Zack walk the halls in shock.

ZACK
You think we'll get expelled?

ELI
He said we'll know after the break.

ZACK
Some break. My Dad's gonna break my arm.

ELI
Not if I break it first.

Zack SHOVES Eli.

ZACK
Fuck you, Rosenberg! Selfish asshole!

ELI
Selfish? Fuck you!

ZACK
Fuck you- steal an Eagle, you don't even share it with your best friend?

ELI
I threw it out, you idiot!

ZACK
After you went through it with a fine tooth comb!

ELI
I told you, I didn't even *look* at the damn thing!

ZACK
You got the highest grade in the class! How the hell did that happen?

ELI
I STUDIED, YOU FUCKING MORON!

He HURLS Zack against the wall and GRABS him, hard.

ZACK
 Jesus, Eli, relax! We're in this shit
 together, you know.

ELI
 I'm not together with you in *anything*.
 Anymore. Got that?

ZACK
 Yeah you are Eli, whether you like it
 or not. They don't believe your
 bullshit story any more than I do, so
 just chill out, ok? I'm the only
 friend you got.

Eli hesitates. Releases him.

ZACK
 That's it, man. Stay cool. We just
 have to make it to break.

A BLACK STUDENT passes by, SLAMMING his shoulder into Eli.
 Eli dubiously looks back at Zack...

104 INT. PUBLIC HEALTH LECTURE HALL - DAY 104

DR. FELDMAN lecturing, cross section of a HEART behind him.

ELI sits beside Zack in the front row. He notices...

THREE VACANT SEATS on each side of the Whites, creating a
 BUFFER. He catches the eye of

MICHAEL a few rows back. Their gaze locks for a moment before
 Eli turns back to the board. Michael sadly shakes his head...

105 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - HALLWAY - LATER 105

ELI walks down the hall, and as he passes, the Black Students
 CLEAR a large path, avoiding eye contact.

106 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT 106

As Eli enters into the controlled *sturm und drang* of the
 emergency room, he is immediately stopped by DR. WYATT.

DR. WYATT
 Sorry, kid, gotta bench you for a few
 innings. Orders from the dugout, you
 know.

Eli nods sadly, and turns, walking toward the door.

DR. WYATT
 Hey, Rosenberg-
 (Eli turns back)
 Fight's in rounds. Stay off the ropes.

Eli nods again with a similar lack of enthusiasm, and walks out. DR. WYATT shakes his head, and rejoins the fray...

107 INT. MEDICAL LIBRARY - NIGHT

107

The Library is open, but deserted. The only figure in sight is ELI, who sits poring over three medical texts at once, yellow pads scattered across the table.

DR. JOHNSON (O.S.)
 Mr. Rosenburg?

DR. JOHNSON stands across the table.

ELI
 (avoiding eye contact)
 Sir?

DR. JOHNSON
 Not going home for the break?

ELI
 I figured I'd enjoy my last days at
 Meharry... at Meharry. Sir.

Johnson is silent for a moment.

DR. JOHNSON
 May I sit down?

Johnson sits, and once again is silent, pondering something.

DR. JOHNSON
 They've already made up their mind
 about you, so what you say to me right
 now means nothing to anyone.
 (beat)
 Except me.
 (pause)
 Did you know what you were doing when
 you took that test?

ELI
 (pause)
 Yes.

DR. JOHNSON
Did you read it?

ELI
I think I saw two questions. The first was on heart valves, and the second, I think... was about the pericardium.

Johnson can't disguise a grin.

DR. JOHNSON
Didn't you *miss* the pericardium?

ELI
I admitted to cheating, sir. I never admitted to being good at it.

Johnson nods.

DR. JOHNSON
I want you to know I argued strongly for expulsion. For you in particular.
(beat)
I'd like to apologize for that.

After a long moment, Johnson gets up.

DR. JOHNSON
I *am* harder on you, Mr. Rosenberg, I admit that. I am harder on you... because I expect *more* from you.

ELI
Yes, sir.

DR. JOHNSON
Whatever the future holds for you, whether I am your professor or not, you need to expect more from you.

ELI
Yes, sir.

Johnson sighs. Hesitates. Then-

DR. JOHNSON
Good night, Mr. Rosenberg.

ELI
Good night, sir.

Johnson walks off, his hard soled shoes echoing down the empty hallway. Eli returns to his studies...

DISSOLVE TO:

108 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - DAY 108

CLASS IN SESSION. The paths and streets are once again swarming with students.

109 INT. DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY 109

ELI unlocks the door to his dorm, swinging it open. On the floor, lies

AN OFFICIAL ENVELOPE, with the Meharry insignia.

Eli stops breathing. Bends down and picks up the envelope. Opens it, his hands shaking. He reads...

110 INT. ZACK'S DORM - DAY 110

Eli BURSTS into Zack's room.

ELI
We have a *choice*?

Zack looks up from his nearly packed SUITCASE.

ZACK
Yeah- probation at Meharry... or transfer to Vanderbilt! You call that a *choice*?

ELI
How'd he get them to take us?

ZACK
Who the hell cares? Hallelujah!

Eli returns to the letter, confounded.

ELI
They'd really take us? After *this*?

ZACK
Because of this. White Cavalry to the rescue, right?

ELI
 (pause)
 Yeah, I guess so.

Zack rushes over to Eli and GRABS him.

ZACK
 Eli- wake up! *Vanderbilt!*

ELI
 (still dazed)
 ... *Vanderbilt?*

Zack grabs Eli's LETTER and shakes it in his face.

ELI AND ZACK
 VANDERBILT!!!

112 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

112

Students flood into the class, excitedly taking their seats.

DR. JOHNSON enters and approaches the lectern, removing his NOTES from a briefcase and arranging them before looking out into the lecture hall.

TWO EMPTY SEATS face him from the front row.

He checks his watch. Checks the clock on the wall. Looks up at the CLOSED DOOR at the top of the stairs.

He waits for a moment, his eye on the DOOR...

Finally, he sighs, looks down at his notes, and begins.

SLAM- the DOOR closes and the whole class turns to find...

ELI casually walking down the stairs with his suitcase, completely unperturbed by the eyes tracking him. Instead of taking an empty seat in the front row, he slides into one on the aisle, next to an immediately uncomfortable GARRISON.

DR. JOHNSON checks his watch.

DR. JOHNSON
 You're late, Mr. Rosenberg.

ELI
 Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

Eli stands up. Faces the entire class:

ELI
I'm *sorry*.

He sits. Garrison immediately gathers his work to move away, but he drops a NOTEBOOK on the desk. He reaches down to get it, but Eli GRABS it first, perturbed.

ELI
Just sit *down*, will you?

Garrison hesitates, the whole class watching him.

Johnson remains silent, as rapt as everyone else.

Garrison SITS. Eli tosses the notebook back onto his desk.

Johnson grins ever so slightly.

DR. JOHNSON
Very well, class. Now that we've mastered the complicated process of human supination, perhaps we could venture forth into the equally mysterious world of human reproduction...

DISSOLVE TO:

113 EXT. PARKER'S HOUSE - DUSK 113

MRS. PARKER (the woman from Eli's first ER Taxi) hobbles onto her front porch and smiles as ELI appears at her gate, carrying his BAG OF SUPPLIES. She greets him warmly and invites him into the house...

TITLE CARD BELOW READS:

APRIL 4, 1968

114 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - DUSK 114

NURSES crash through the front door, wheeling in a bloody, writhing PATIENT.

DR. WYATT meets them, taking a spot on the gurney.

DR. WYATT
Wha'd'you got?

NURSE
Gunshots. Two in the chest and one in the abdomen.

DR. WYATT
Another gunshot? Put him in five.

They wheel him off as Wyatt scans the teeming ER.

DR. WYATT
 What the hell is going on out there?

115 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - HALLWAY - DUSK 115

SCREAMS echo through the hallway. Students SCATTER, running every which way.

A student RUNS past MICHAEL, nearly knocking him down.

Michael GRABS another STUDENT running by.

MICHAEL
 What's going on?

STUDENT
 They shot him.

MICHAEL
Who?

STUDENT
 Dr. King. They shot him dead!

The student rushes off leaving Michael frozen.

116 INT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE LOBBY - DUSK 116

GARRISON hurries towards the exit.

MICHAEL (O.S.)
 Garrison!

MICHAEL catches up to him at the door as students continue to flood past, screaming and crying.

MICHAEL
 Dr. King's dead.

GARRISON
 I know. The whole city's on fire.

FRANKLIN rushes over.

FRANKLIN
 They're burning cars on the other side of campus.

Garrison FREEZES.

GARRISON
Oh, shit.

MICHAEL
What?

GARRISON
Eli's out there.

117 INT. PARKER'S HOUSE - NIGHT 117

ELI takes MR PARKER'S blood pressure.

MRS. PARKER appears in the doorway, very concerned.

MRS. PARKER
Young man, I think you need to go.

118 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE - NIGHT 118

Eli walks out the gate to find the darkened street eerily
DESERTED. Muted SIRENS in the far distance.

He hurries to his car and opens the door, tossing his bag of
supplies onto the passenger seat.

A GUNSHOT in the distance.

He freezes- listening. Silence. He quickly jumps in.

119 INT. ELI'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 119

Eli starts the car.

ANOTHER GUNSHOT, just ahead.

He slams the car into reverse, and eases backwards, as his
eyes continue scanning the road in front of him...

THUMP! The car STRIKES something.

He JAMS on his breaks.

Silence, save his PANTING and the low rumble of the engine.

He slowly eases forward, eyes glued to the REARVIEW MIRROR:

A YOUNG GIRL is splayed out in the street, her BICYCLE a
tangled mess, the front wheel still spinning.

ELI

Shit.

GUNSHOT. CLOSER. Off to the side.

He looks FORWARD:

THE CAMPUS REAR ENTRANCE.

He looks BEHIND:

The girl appears still, but it is difficult to tell...

ELI

Get up.

(pause)

Get up, dammit.

Nothing.

He looks back at the safety of CAMPUS, so close...

120 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

120

Eli jerks open the door and leaps out of the car, just as

A BLACK WOMAN runs into the street.

BLACK WOMAN

What happened?

ANOTHER WOMAN- the INSTIGATOR rushes over.

INSTIGATOR

He killed that girl! He killed her!

Eli drops down beside the GIRL, who stirs, woozy.

ELI

Are you alright?

YOUNG GIRL

(crying)

My leg hurts.

MORE PEOPLE join the crowd.

CONCERNED MAN

What's going on?

INSTIGATOR

He tried to run her over!

The chatter escalates as Eli tries to comfort the girl.

ELI
It's ok. I'm a doctor. I'll be right
back.

He stands up and PUSHES through the growing crowd.

ANOTHER MAN
Where you goin, White Boy?

MAN #3
He's tryin' to run!

WOMAN #3
Somebody stop him!

121 INT. ELI'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 121

Eli climbs into his still-running car and leans over to get his bag of supplies...

HANDS GRAB HIM, yanking him back out into the street.

122 EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS 122

The screaming CROWD hauls Eli away from the car, shoving him down the street. RIOTERS from another street battle RUSH over, anxious to join in the assembled fury.

ELI
I'm trying to help her!

They crush in around him, screaming, their faces contorted in rage.

ELI
I'm a Doctor! I'm a Doctor, Goddammit!
I'm from Meharry!

THE ANGRY RIOT LEADER grabs him by the throat.

RIOT LEADER
Bullshit, boy! There ain't no whites
in Meharry.

VOICE (O.S.)
Yes there is!

MICHAEL stands across the street with GARRISON and FRANKLIN.

MICHAEL
There's *one*. Him.

The MOB, unmoved, holds Eli tight.

INSTIGATOR
He killed that girl!

MAN #3
We're gonna do him like they did Dr.
King!

MICHAEL
You're not doing anything. He's ours.
Give him back.

The RIOTERS step forward from the crowd, brandishing
splintered BATS.

RIOT LEADER
Back off, Uncle Tom.

Garrison CHARGES towards them.

GARRISON
Who the *fuck* you callin' Uncle Tom?

RIOT LEADER
You! I'm callin' *you* Uncle Tom, boy-
what you gonna do about it?

GARRISON
I'm gonna jam my foot down your
esophagus and dance on your duodenum!

The Rioter cocks his head, uncertain as to the level of
offense he should take.

RIOT LEADER
The *fuck* did you say?

GARRISON
(enunciating each word)
I Am Gonna Kick... Yo'... Ass!

They LUNGE toward each other, and-

INSTIGATOR
WAIT!!!

The two sides HESITATE, a breath from conflagration.

INSTIGATOR
Where'd he go?

They look around- Eli is GONE.

MAN
The fuck did he go?

The MOB frantically scans the street in outrage.

WOMAN #1
There he is!

IN THE STREET

ELI kneels beside the YOUNG GIRL, affixing a makeshift SPLINT to her right leg, his BAG OF SUPPLIES beside him.

The BATS lower. The SHOUTS cease.

Silence, save Eli's voice, softly soothing the girl.

Michael turns to the Mob.

MICHAEL
Just go home and let us do our job,
ok?

He pushes through them and walks over to Eli. Garrison leans in close to the Riot Leader.

GARRISON
You know where to find me if you still
need yo' ass kicked.

The Rioter LUNGES at Garrison, but the Mob restrains him. Franklin drags Garrison over to join Eli and Michael.

As the Crowd watches, the students delicately lift the Young Girl up into Eli's ARMS and carry her toward Eli's car...

123 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

123

The YOUNG GIRL is wheeled off on a gurney, attended by a Nurse who holds her hand, comforting her.

DR. WYATT
We'll take it from here, gents.

DR. WYATT regards the bruised and battered young men.

DR. WYATT
Now if you ruffians want to wash up,
the ER's a little hot today. We could
sure use a few extra hands on deck.

Eli, Michael, Garrison, and Franklin share a look...

124 INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

124

The STUDENTS, cleaned and standing stiffly in their white coats are introduced by Wyatt to the Nursing staff.

DR. WYATT

Ok, folks, reinforcements have arrived. This is Dr. Rosenberg-

(Eli nods)

Dr. Dubois-

(Michael nods)

Dr. Williams-

(Franklin nods)

And Dr. Hill-

Garrison tries to nod, but ends up grinning like a four year old at Christmas.

DR. WYATT

Will someone please inform Dr. Hill that it's not appropriate to smile in the Emergency Room?

Garrison frowns as seriously as possible... Then breaks out into a huge grin...

125 EXT. MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

125

STUDENTS stream into the open doors of the College...

ANGLE ON:

The GLIMMERING PLAQUE outside the College entrance:

THE WORSHIP OF GOD THROUGH SERVICE TO MAN

FADE TO BLACK.