

Pre-Existing

by
Dahlia D. Welsh

(Inspired by true events)

DahliaWelsh@gmail.com
WGAE Registered
(347) 687-1090

BLACK.

MRI MACHINE
Breathe in... Hold your breath...

WE HEAR: NO SOUND AT FIRST THEN THERE IS THE LOUD BANGING OF THE MRI MACHINE.

MRI MACHINE
Relax.

WE HEAR: TERI BROOKS, MID-THIRTIES, EXHALE

FADE IN:

INT. PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL NEW YORK/MRI SUITE - MORNING

TERI is inside the MRI machine with her arms above her head there is an IV attached to the crook of her right arm.

POV INSIDE MACHINE: THERE IS ABOUT AN INCH OF SPACE BETWEEN TERI'S FACE AND THE INSIDE OF THE MACHINE. SHE KEEPS HER EYES CLOSED AND IS BREATHING HEAVILY.

MRI NURSE (O.S.)
Teri are you okay?

Teri nods.

MRI NURSE
You have to say something Teri,
because if you're nodding or
shaking your head I can't see you.

TERI
Yes.

MRI MACHINE
Thanks, remember if you start
feeling claustrophobic let us know
and we can take a break, okay?

Teri nods, she does get claustrophobic but wants the test to be over.

MRI MACHINE
I need you to say either yes or-

TERI
Yes, yes can we just- please.
(heavy breathing)

MRI NURSE

Okay honey, we're almost done. Now for the contrast injected intravenously. You may experience a slight metallic taste in your mouth and a hot sensation running through your body but, that's normal.

INT. PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL/BATHROOM

Teri still dressed in her hospital gown splashes water on her face.

SFX: KNOCK ON THE DOOR AND THEN SOMEONE TRIES TO OPEN THE DOOR.

Teri stares at herself in the mirror, she's been through a lot over the last couple of years and it's starting to take a toll.

INT. PRESBYTERIAN HOSPITAL/CHANGING ROOM

Teri is standing at her locker getting dressed, she pulls on her sweater, sits down and pulls on winter boots. She's tired - not only physically but emotionally. She sits in silence for a moment. She puts on her earrings, winter coat and wool hat. Teri pulls back the curtain and heads out, she turns around and re-enters the changing room, closing the curtains behind her. She opens a drawer and pulls out a couple pair of clean hospital socks, a hospital gown and shoves them into her bag. Teri closes the drawer and exits the changing room.

INT. APP FOR THAT! COMPANY - LATER THAT DAY

Teri walks to her cubicle, she takes off her coat and hangs it on the back of her chair. Her coat falls to the floor, she doesn't pick it up. Teri plops down in her chair and devours an apple fritter. DONNY walks over. He picks up Teri's coat from the floor and hangs it on a hook in her cubicle.

DONNY

Good day my lady, nice of you to join us.

(leans in)

Rumor has it you're interviewing, do tell.

Teri grabs Donny's tie, she pulls it so hard he's forced facedown on her desk. Teri staples his tie to her desk.

Donny struggles to remove the staple from his tie without strangling himself. Teri winks at him. Donnie grabs Teri's staple remover and frees himself. Teri goes back to her apple fritter and Donny scurries away.

INT. APP FOR THAT! COMPANY/STAIRWELL

Teri is on the phone, INTERCUT PHONE CALL AS NEEDED.

YUKI

Hi, Teri this is Yuki from Dr. Aguilera's office. I have the results from today's MRI. And I'm sorry but there are more lesions on your liver than last time, so we're going to have to watch them carefully.

TERI

What does that mean?

YUKI

As you know your liver disease eventually progresses to liver cancer and that's why we're trying to be proactive with getting you a transplant but, for now, we'll keep an eye on things on our end and raise your MELD score so you can be closer to the top of the list.

INT. APP FOR THAT! COMPANY/CAREY'S OFFICE

Teri is sitting in the chair opposite CAREY, her boss, with an iPad, AD LIB him giving her notes. Teri is looking out the window distracted by what's going on outside. Carey stops talking, it takes a moment for Teri to notice.

CAREY

So, what's going on?

TERI

Why don't you tell me.

CAREY

Some of the office staff are complaining again.

TERI

(mafia voice)

You want I should talk to them?

CAREY

No, just rein it in okay? Also, why were you late on Monday?

TERI

I told you, and I put it on your calendar, I had a doctor's appointment.

CAREY

Again?

TERI

You say again like there is a limit to sick days.

(off look)

There is? Wow, who knew. I figured that since I practically built this company from scratch.

CAREY

You did not.

TERI

I was there when your office was your fourth floor walk up.

CAREY

There was an elevator.

TERI

Now you tell me. Can I go?

She stands up.

CAREY

Yes and rein it in Teri.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - EARLY EVENING

Teri is on her cell phone.

TERI

I'm not going to call every time I have an MRI or a bone density scan or ultrasound, I'm just not mom... because I can handle it...

(MORE)

TERI (cont'd)

I will, I'll call them and tell them to stop sending sensitive medical information to your house because my nosey mother can't help reading my mail, which is a federal crime, by the way, for which you could spend considerable time in jail.

Teri steps into the street without looking and gets honked by a passing car that nearly hits her.

TERI

No, that was me almost getting run over. I told you, you'd be the death of me.

INT. ANGRY WADE'S BAR/BROOKLYN, NY - LATER

Teri enters and looks around for her childhood best friend ANGIE. She spots Angie with her boyfriend LOS and a guy she doesn't know, GABE. Angie rushes over as Teri turns to flee.

ANGIE

Teri, Teri, Teri.

TERI

Why oh why do you keep doing this?

ANGIE

He's a really nice guy.

TERI

They're all really nice guys, there were the twins Barry and Larry, Hakim the butcher, Alejandro the aspiring DJ do you really have to aspire to spin records? Must I go on?

ANGIE

This guy is the real deal, he went to NYU with Los they even traveled through South America after graduation. It was very "Motorcycle Diaries".

TERI

Yeah, cuz Los is a regular Che. Listen, has this guy cured cancer? I got standards you know.