

1. I hate this.
 2. We all hate this.
 3. I can't believe I've practiced medicine for thirty years only to be reduced to one bureaucratic order written by an out of town doctor while my father is dying.
 5. So what does that mean, practically speaking?
 3. It means we say he's in pain every hour and the nurse will up the dosage.
 5. Isn't that sort of – like –
 4. What?
 1. You know –
 4. No –
 1. Like we're killing him?
 3. No, we're giving palliative care which this hospital is too screwed up to do.
 1. My rational sense tells me it's okay, the morphine, but emotionally –
 4. Annie –
 1. (*to 3 and 4*) You both know better than I do, being doctors – and in some ways it's worse for you – having to handle the medical side of things – when it's your own father – but it just doesn't seem – right –
 3. He's in pain, Annie.
 2. (*overlapping with "Annie"*) Now look, Annie, I've been taking care of Dad for the last two years, and I know when he's in pain. He's in a lot of pain right now. He would want us to help him.
 4. He's not walking out of here, Annie. I'm sorry.
- I starts crying.*
5. I'm with Ann. What's your rush? He'll let go when he's ready.
 3. It's not about rushing, my God. It's about staying ahead of the pain.
 1. It just – it reminds me of when we put the dog down – her body was riddled with cancer – she couldn't walk,

bleeding on the floor, it seemed like the right thing to do – but in the moment – at the vet – she sort of woke up – came to herself – she had these bright eyes – I was holding her paw – then this sterile injection – she looked up at me with these big eyes – like forgive them they know not what they do – and I felt like I killed her – I don't want to kill Dad!

1 cries.

2 puts his arm around her.

4. We can hold off on the morphine for now. If it makes you uncomfortable.

1. Well yes I guess it does. Thanks.

They sit.

They wait.

1 eats a mint.

Mint?

She offers them.

No one takes one.

The sound of 1 eating a mint.

Hospital machines beep.

The doctors – 3 and 4 – adjust Father's lines and look at his numbers; 4 takes his pulse.

3. What's his pulse?

4. Still forty.

1. Is that good?

3. Not really.

Blood pressure?

4. Sixty over thirty.

1. Which is –

3. Not good.

But he doesn't want to go.