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## **DOCTORS': A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE - SHOOTING SCRIPT**

by David Lloyd

### **EP105/SC1. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. SITTING ROOM.** **DAY 1. 08.20**

[**ROB OVEREND** IS **MID 40'S**, BAD TEMPERED AND OPINIONATED. HE HAS MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AND NEEDS A WHEELCHAIR TO GET AROUND. HE IS PRETTY IMMOBILE FROM THE WAIST DOWN, HIS HANDS DON'T WORK TOO WELL, AND HE NEEDS HELP WITH VIRTUALLY EVERY ASPECT OF PERSONAL CARE - EATING, TOILET, TRANSFERRING FROM WHEELCHAIR TO CAR OR BED ETC. HIS WIFE **JANICE** - **MID 40'S** - IS A CAREWORN INFINITELY PATIENT WOMAN WHO IS ROB'S MAIN CARER. SHE IS KNEELING ON THE FLOOR, PUTTING ON HIS LACE-UP SHOES. SHE'S STRUGGLING TO GET THE SECOND SHOE ON]

**ROB:**

For heaven's sake Janice, be careful can't you?

**JANICE:**

Sorry love, nearly there.

[SHE GETS THE SHOE ON AND TIES THE LACES]

**JANICE:**

We really should get you some slip-ons.

**ROB:**

I like laces.

**JANICE:**

I know love, it's just they're a bit fiddly.

**ROB:**

(SARCASTICALLY) How about my bedroom slippers? That'd be nice and easy for you.

**JANICE:**

I didn't mean...

**ROB:**

And tracksuit bottoms - that's what the well-dressed cripple is wearing these days...



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**JANICE:**

If you're going to have one of your moods...

**ROB:**

I am not having 'one of my moods'. Just because I'm stuck in this thing, doesn't mean I can't dress properly. But if it's too much trouble...

**JANICE:**

I'm not saying that...

**ROB:**

Just leave it will you. We're going to be late. Get the car.

[JANICE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S GOING TO SAY SOMETHING BUT THINKS BETTER OF IT. SHE HEADS FOR THE DOOR. ROB SHIFTS HIMSELF IN HIS CHAIR AND GRIMACES WITH PAIN]

**ROB:**

Aaaaah...

[JANICE LOOKS CONCERNED AS ROB TRIES TO HOLD BACK THE PAIN]

**ROB:**

Get me the paracetamol...

**JANICE:**

But you've already had two...

**ROB:**

Just get them will you!

[TIGHT ON JANICE. IT'S GOING TO BE ANOTHER LONG DAY]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC2. EXT. PRACTICE FRONT CAR PARK. DAY 1. 08.40**

[CANDY DRIVES INTO THE CAR PARK. SHE HAS A MASSIVE HANGOVER AND IS LATE FOR WORK. SHE LOOKS AROUND FOR A PARKING SPACE AND HURRIEDLY DRIVES INTO THE DISABLED PARKING SPACE. SHE GETS OUT OF THE CAR AND HEADS FOR THE ENTRANCE. AFTER A FEW STEPS SHE TURNS AND GOES BACK – SHE'S FORGOTTEN TO LOCK THE CAR. SHE LOCKS IT AND HEADS BACK TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC3. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 1. 08.43**

[CANDY RUSHES INTO RECEPTION. THERE ARE A FEW PATIENTS WAITING. FAITH IS AT THE RECEPTION DESK, LOOKING VERY BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL]

**FAITH:**

Hiya!

**CANDY:**

Sorry – overslept.

**FAITH:**

Not surprised – state you were in last night.

**CANDY:**

Don't remind me. What time did you get home?

**FAITH:**

About three.

[CANDY CAN'T BELIEVE FAITH IS LOOKING SO BRIGHT]

**CANDY:**

How do you do it?

**FAITH:**

Practice, girl. You stick with me, you'll be coming straight to work from an all-nighter before too long.

**CANDY:**

Oh... I don't think Justin would like that.

**FAITH:**

Joke.

**CANDY:**

Oh. Right. Can you cover for a couple more minutes? I've got to do something with my hair.

**FAITH:**

(SMILING) You're not wrong.

[CANDY HEADS FOR THE STAFF ROOM AS A PATIENT APPROACHES THE DESK]

**FAITH**

(WITH A WELCOMING SMILE) Hello... lovely day isn't it? How can I help?

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC4. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 1. 09.11**

[CANDY IS STILL NOT WITH IT AS CAROLINE TALKS TO HER]

**CAROLINE:**

... I'm writing to the hospital, and I need his notes.

**CANDY:**

Sorry. I was miles away. Who did you want?

**CAROLINE:**

Mr Billingham. Irritable Bowel Syndrome?

**CANDY:**

I put them on your desk.

[CAROLINE REACHES OVER AND PICKS UP SOME NOTES FROM THE DESK]

**CAROLINE:**

No you didn't.

**CANDY:**

No, I didn't. Sorry.

**CAROLINE:**

Is everything alright Candy?

**CANDY:**

Oh yes, fine thanks. Sorry. I'm just a bit... sorry.

[CANDY MOVES AWAY AS FAITH COMES THROUGH RECEPTION]

**CAROLINE:**

What's up with her?

**FAITH:**

I took her to Trinity's last night. There was laughing, there was dancing, there was vodka...

[SHE'S GONE BEFORE CAROLINE CAN ASK FOR DETAILS. ROB AND JANICE ENTER AND APPROACH THE DESK]

**CANDY:**

Hello, can I help you?

**ROB:**

Robert Overend. Come to see Dr... who is it?

**JANICE:**



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Mistry.

**CANDY:**

Oh yes... you're registered with Dr McGuire, aren't you?

**ROB:**

Yes, but when I phoned I was told it was his day off.

**CANDY:**

Only, you can make an appointment to see your regular doctor on another day if you want to.

**ROB:**

I know that. I'm not stupid. I want to see Dr Mistry. Alright?

[CANDY IS A LITTLE TAKEN BACK BY HIS BELLIGERENCE]

**JANICE:**

(EVER THE PEACEMAKER) Why don't we wait over here?

**ROB:**

Hang on a minute Janice. (TO CANDY) There's another thing...

**CANDY:**

Yes...?

**ROB:**

What's your policy on illegal parking?

**CANDY:**

Parking?

**ROB:**

Yes. Some moron has parked in the disabled parking bay. A grey Cavalier. (OR WHATEVER MAKE OF CAR CANDY DRIVES)

[HE ADDRESSES THE WAITING PATIENTS]

**ROB:**

Anyone here got a grey Cavalier?

**CANDY:**

If you'd like to leave that with me Mr Overend, I'll... er... make some enquiries.

**ROB:**

Good.

[JANICE STARTS TO WHEEL HIM AWAY FROM THE DESK]

**ROB:**

I can do it.



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[HE WHEELS HIMSELF OVER INTO THE WAITING AREA]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC5. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (RANA'S).**  
**DAY 1. 09.25**

[RANA IS AT HIS DESK AS ROB AND JANICE ENTER]

**RANA:**

Mr Overend? Hi, I'm Dr Mistry.

**JANICE:**

Is it alright if I stay? Only I do normally, with Dr McGuire.

**RANA:**

No problem. Let me just skim through your notes, if that's OK...

**ROB:**

Multiple Sclerosis. Diagnosed twelve years ago. Initially Remitting and Relapsing, now Progressive Degenerative. No leg mobility, limited use of hands. Catheterised. Current medication; Ditropan for the bladder, Prozac to keep me sane. Nothing else works.

**RANA:**

Right...

**ROB:**

And believe me, I've tried them all.

**RANA:**

(STUDYING HIS NOTES) You're not using the Prednisolone any more?

**ROB:**

The steroids? No – Consultant told me there was a risk of osteoporosis – bones falling to bits...

**RANA:**

Er, yes, I do know what osteoporosis is.

**ROB:**

They'd stopped working anyway.

**RANA:**

You're with Professor Spalding?

**ROB:**

Yes. For all the good it does me.

**RANA:**

Hmmm. Did you discuss the possibility of Beta-Interferon? I believe he's been getting some quite good results with some patients.

**ROB:**

Not eligible. Wrong postcode.



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**RANA:**

OK. And how can I help?

[ROB AND JANICE LOOK AT EACH OTHER]

**ROB:**

I've heard you're into some of these alternative treatments. I mean, I've tried a few things in my time. Acupuncture, reflexology, hyperbaric oxygen... all useless.

**RANA:**

Well, some MS patients respond favourably to those therapies.

**ROB:**

I don't. And I get these pains in my leg. Spasms, you know.

**RANA:**

Yes, that's not uncommon.

**ROB:**

Dr McGuire put me on paracetamol, but I can't take those all day. I want to try something else.

**RANA:**

There's a variety of painkillers we can look at...

**ROB:**

Cannabis. I want to try cannabis.

**RANA:**

OK. Now of course I can't prescribe cannabis...

**ROB:**

That's what Dr McGuire said.

**RANA:**

You've discussed it with him?

**ROB:**

Yes. He was dead against it.

**RANA:**

Hmmm.

**ROB:**

A mate of mine with MS, he uses it – grows his own – and he says it's fantastic. He never gets the muscle pains any more. He's an ex copper too...



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[HE LOOKS TO RANA FOR A RESPONSE, BUT RANA REMAINS IMPASSIVE]

**ROB:**

(WITH INCREASING DESPERATION) Doctor, I don't want to break the law. I've never even had a parking ticket, but I'm at my wit's end, I really am. I've got to try something to get rid of this pain.

[ON RANA]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC6. EXT. PRACTICE FRONT CAR PARK. DAY 1. 09.28**

[CANDY GETS INTO HER CAR. AS SHE TRIES TO REVERSE OUT OF THE DISABLED PARKING SPACE SHE GRINDS THE GEARS OF HER CAR. SHE GRIMACES WITH PAIN AT THE NOISE. HER HANGOVER ISN'T GETTING ANY BETTER]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC7. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (RANA'S).**  
**DAY 1. 09.30**

**RANA:**

I'm sure Dr McGuire has explained the risks involved.

**ROB:**

He just said it was illegal...

**RANA:**

Which it is. There is also some evidence to suggest that cannabis has carcinogenic properties, and obviously if it's smoked with tobacco, that presents its own health risks too.

**ROB:**

I just want something to stop my legs hurting.

**RANA:**

I understand. I know a couple of MS sufferers who use cannabis. They think it's the best thing since sliced bread.

**ROB:**

So you think it's OK then?

**RANA:**

I'm sorry Mr Overend, but that's not for me to say. Doctor McGuire is right when he says it's illegal, and as a doctor, I can't sit here and tell you to go out and break the law.

**ROB:**

And what if you weren't a doctor? What if it was you? What if you were sitting in this chair, day after day, not able to move, not able to go to the toilet on your own, not even able to stretch your legs to get rid of this constant flipping pain?

[A BEAT]

**RANA:**

(SYMPATHETICALLY) I'd want to try anything that might help me.

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC8. EXT. PRACTICE FRONT CAR PARK. DAY 1. 09.40**

[JANICE WHEELS ROB ACROSS THE CAR PARK. ROB NOTICES WITH SOME SATISFACTION THAT CANDY'S CAR HAS GONE AND THAT THE DISABLED PARKING SPACE IS NOW EMPTY]

**ROB:**

Right, that settles it then. I've got that stuff that Jonesie gave me – I'm going to try some when we get home.

**JANICE:**

Are you sure love? I mean, drugs – it's not really you, is it?

**ROB:**

The doctor said it was OK - that's good enough for me.

**JANICE:**

I'm not sure that's what he...

[A CAR DRIVES INTO THE CAR PARK. THE DRIVER SEES THE VACANT DISABLED SPACE AND HEADS FOR IT. ROB SEES AND WHEELS HIS WHEELCHAIR INTO THE VACANT SPACE]

**ROB:**

Don't even think about it pal!

[THE DRIVER PRODUCES AN ORANGE BADGE AND WAVES IT AT ROB WHO LOOKS SUITABLY EMBARRASSED]

**ROB:**

Oh... right. Sorry mate.

**JANICE:**

Come on – let's get you home.

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC9. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (RANA'S).**  
**DAY 1. 11.05**

[RANA IS AT HIS DESK AS HE SEES CAROLINE PASS BY.  
HE CALLS AFTER HER]

**RANA:**

Have you got a minute?

**CAROLINE:**

Sure. What is it?

[SHE ENTERS RANA'S ROOM, LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN]

**RANA:**

What's your view on cannabis?

**CAROLINE:**

Recreationally or medically?

**RANA:**

How about as a palliative for MS?

**CAROLINE:**

The jury's still out. There's no conclusive evidence that it offers any medical benefit, but a hell of a lot of people feel better for using it. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society are carrying out those clinical trials - I'd be interested to see what they come up with.

**RANA:**

I was talking to one of Mac's patients - he wants to give it a go.

**CAROLINE:**

And what's Mac said?

**RANA:**

To leave well alone.

**CAROLINE:**

Right. So why's he come to you then? Second opinion?

**RANA:**

I'm not sure Mr Overend needs a second opinion. He's got plenty of his own.

**CAROLINE:**

So why then?

**RANA:**

Dunno. Reassurance?

**CAROLINE:**



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Could be. What did you tell him?

**RANA:**

I pointed out the risks of course, but in the end, it has to be his decision.

**CAROLINE:**

You should talk to Mac about it.

**RANA:**

Yeah, I will, soon as I get the chance. What's the police line these days?

**CAROLINE:**

Want me to ask around?

**RANA:**

Yeah. That'd be good, thanks.

[FAITH WALKS DOWN THE CORRIDOR AND WAVES TO RANA AS SHE PASSES]

**FAITH:**

Hi!

[SHE WALKS ON. RANA WATCHES HER GO]

**CAROLINE:**

(WITH A SMILE) Down boy!

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC10. INT. COFFEE SHOP. DAY 1. 11.10**

[MAC AND KATE SIT AT A TABLE. KATE SIGHS WITH RELIEF]

**MAC:**

You OK?

**KATE:**

Sore feet.

**MAC:**

I meant back there. If you wanted to go into that baby shop...

**KATE:**

It's fine, really. I just don't want to tempt fate, not after the last time.

[THEY BOTH SIT WITH THEIR THOUGHTS FOR A FEW MOMENTS]

**KATE:**

Are you still set on telling Jack?

**MAC:**

We've been through all this. You agreed, Jack should know about Jo's... 'involvement' in Jessie's death.

**KATE:**

I know.

**MAC:**

It'll be better for everyone when it's all out in the open.

**KATE:**

For *everyone*...?

[A BEAT]

**KATE:**

When will you tell him?

**MAC:**

I thought this afternoon. Maybe.

**KATE:**

You're not sure about this, are you?

**MAC:**

No.

**KATE:**

Give it another day. See how you feel tomorrow. If you still think it's for the best... well, you've got to do what you think is right.



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**MAC:**

Yes.

[CLOSE ON MAC. WHAT WILL HE DECIDE?]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC11. INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.**  
**DAY 1. 11.15**

[JO LIES IN BED, HOOKED UP TO A VARIETY OF TUBES. SHE IS IN A COMA. THE MONITOR BY HER BED BEEPS. JACK SITS AND LOOKS AT HER, GAZING INTENTLY, WILLING HER TO WAKE UP. HE TAKES HER HAND IN HIS AND STROKES HER FACE, WILLING HER TO WAKE UP]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC12. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. SITTING ROOM. DAY**  
**1. 11.45**

[ROB SITS AT THE TABLE. JANICE HOVERS BEHIND HIM, LOOKING ANXIOUSLY ON. HE'S GOT A PACKET OF CIGARETTE PAPERS, AND A BAG CONTAINING SOME HERBAL SUBSTANCE *WHICH WE CAN'T SEE*. HE LOOKS INSIDE THE BAG]

**ROB:**

How much am I supposed to use do you think?

**JANICE:**

I don't know. What did Jonesie say?

**ROB:**

He said go easy at first.

**JANICE:**

You can always try more if it doesn't work.

**ROB:**

Right.

[ROB OBVIOUSLY FEELS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT DOING THIS. HE PICKS UP THE PACKET OF CIGARETTE PAPERS AND WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY REMOVES ONE OF THE PAPERS FROM THE PACKET. HIS HANDS SHAKE SO MUCH, AND HIS FINGERS ARE SO UNRESPONSIVE, THAT IT SLIPS FROM HIS HANDS AND FALLS TO THE TABLE. HE TRIES AGAIN, WITH INCREASING FRUSTRATION AND DESPERATION. HE ACCIDENTALLY PULLS OUT A HANDFUL OF PAPERS. HE IS DISTRAUGHT]

**ROB:**

How am I supposed to roll this? I can't even get the papers out...

[HIS FACE CRUMPLES. HE DISSOLVES INTO TEARS OF FRUSTRATION. JANICE IS UNSURE WHAT TO DO AT FIRST. SHE'S NOT USED TO SEEING HIM LIKE THIS. AFTER A MOMENT'S HESITATION, SHE REACHES OUT AND TAKES HIM IN HER ARMS. THEY EMBRACE AWKWARDLY, AS SHE SOOTHES AWAY HIS TEARS]

**JANICE:**

Ah, come on love.

**ROB:**

This pathetic body... It just won't do what I want it to...

**JANICE:**

It's not pathetic. It's a lovely body. Just doesn't work very well that's all.



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[THEY HAVE A MOMENT OF TENDERNESS - THEIR FIRST FOR SOME TIME. SHE KISSES AWAY HIS TEARS]

**JANICE:**

Now give that stuff to me.

[ROB PASSES OVER A BAG]

**JANICE:**

I'm going to bake you a cake!

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC13. INT. POLICE STATION. CORRIDOR. NIGHT 1. 22.20**

[THE CUSTODY SERGEANT ESCORTS CAROLINE OUT OF A CELL - SHE'S JUST BEEN DOING A BLOOD TEST ON A DRINK DRIVER - AND LOCKS THE DOOR BEHIND HIM. MUFFLED SHOUTING AND BANGING COMES FROM BEHIND THE CELL DOOR. THE SERGEANT LOOKS THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE]

**SERGEANT:**

Shut up and go to sleep! Thanks Doctor. Breathalyser showed him three times over the limit.

**CAROLINE:**

You'll have the results of the blood test tomorrow.

**SERGEANT:**

Flaming drunk drivers. You should have seen the state of the other car - he was lucky no one was killed. And they found a bag of dope on the back seat - wouldn't surprise me if he was on drugs too.

**CAROLINE:**

It'll all show up in the test.

**SERGEANT:**

Drink, drugs - it's all the same. As far as I'm concerned, anyone who drives a car when they're not in a fit state wants locking up. Whether they're drunk, stoned or buzzing on too much coffee.

**CAROLINE:**

What about someone who was very ill who was using cannabis to relieve pain?

**SERGEANT:**

Officially? It's a controlled drug. Possession is against the law.

[THE DRUNK IN THE CELL KICKS UP A HUGE FUSS]

**SERGEANT:**

Unofficially, we've got more important things to do.

[MORE ROW FROM THE CELL]

**SERGEANT:**

And I'll say one thing about your average pot-head. When it comes to sleeping it off - they don't need telling twice!

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC14. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. BEDROOM.**  
**NIGHT 1. 22.30**

[ROB AND JANICE ARE IN BED. ROB IS PICKING UP CRUMBS FROM A PLATE. HE IS LIGHT HEADED AND MILDLY EUPHORIC]

**ROB:**

You sure you won't try a piece?

**JANICE:**

No ta love. I'll stick to wine.

**ROB:**

You should. It's very, very, very, very nice.

**JANICE:**

It tasted alright then?

**ROB:**

Best cake I've ever had. You should make more.

**JANICE:**

I will. How are your legs?

**ROB:**

What legs?

[HE PEERS UNDER THE DUVET]

**ROB:**

Oh... those legs. Hello legs. How are you? (FROM UNDER THE COVER, IN A DIFFERENT VOICE) We're fine, thank you. (BACK UP AGAIN) Glad to hear it. (TO JANICE) They're fine.

**JANICE:**

Not hurting anymore?

**ROB:**

Dunno. Forgot to ask them that.

[HE SEEMS TO FIND THIS VERY FUNNY, AND GETS A FIT OF THE GIGGLES. JANICE LAUGHS TOO]

**ROB:**

Silly legs. Hey - remember when we first met? The sponsored walk?

**JANICE:**

Twenty five miles! You virtually carried me for the last two or three.

**ROB:**

Well, you'd hurt your poor little footsie.



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**JANICE:**

I've got a confession to make.

**ROB:**

Oh yeah?

**JANICE:**

There was nothing really wrong with my ankle.

**ROB:**

Oh no?

**JANICE:**

No. I just thought it was a good excuse for you to put your arm round me.

[ROB PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HER]

**ROB:**

Back in the good old days eh? When I could walk.

**JANICE:**

I know things are different now Rob – but the days can still be good.

**ROB:**

Yeah. Maybe they can. And the nights.

[HE PULLS HER TOWARDS HIM. THEY KISS, TENTATIVELY, THEN PASSIONATELY]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC15. EXT. HOSPITAL MAIN ENTRANCE. NIGHT 1. 22.44**

[MAC SITS IN HIS CAR, LOOKING UP AT THE LIGHTED WINDOW OF JO'S HOSPITAL ROOM]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC16. INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.  
NIGHT 1. 22.45**

[JO IS STILL IN THE SAME POSITION WE SAW HER IN EARLIER. JACK SITS IN THE CHAIR BY HER BED. HE HAS DOZED OFF. NURSE CARRIE STEELE COMES INTO THE ROOM AND SHAKES HIM GENTLY]

**NURSE:**

Mr Helm?

**JACK:**

What...?

**NURSE:**

It's gone half ten Mr Helm. You should get yourself off home.

**JACK:**

Oh... right...

**NURSE:**

We'll take good care of her.

**JACK:**

I'm sure you will. See you in the morning then.

**NURSE:**

Good night.

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC17. EXT. HOSPITAL MAIN ENTRANCE. NIGHT 1. 22.55**

[MAC COMES TO A DECISION. HE STARTS UP HIS CAR AND DRIVES AWAY. AS HIS CAR DISAPPEARS OUT OF SIGHT, JACK EMERGES FROM THE HOSPITAL ENTRANCE, BREATHING THE NIGHT AIR IN DEEPLY]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC18. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. BEDROOM.**  
**DAY 2. 10.00**

[THE NEXT MORNING. ROB IS ASLEEP IN BED. HIS ALARM CLOCK SHOWS THE TIME. JANICE COMES INTO THE ROOM CARRYING A CAREFULLY LAID BREAKFAST TRAY WITH A COVERED PLATE ON IT]

**JANICE:**

Morning lover boy!

[ROB STIRS IN BED]

**JANICE:**

I thought you deserved a lie in after last night's exertions!

[ROB STARTS TO TRY AND SIT UP]

**JANICE:**

And I've done you your favourite breakfast.

[SHE UNCOVERS THE PLATE WITH A FLOURISH]

**JANICE:**

A nice hot kipper!

[ROB LOOKS AT THE KIPPER WHICH JANICE IS WAVING UNDER HIS NOSE AND IS VIOLENTLY SICK]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC19. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (MAC'S).**  
**DAY 2. 11.45**

[MAC IS WASHING HIS HANDS AT THE SINK, HAVING JUST FINISHED MORNING SURGERY. KATE ENTERS, LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN BEHIND HER]

**KATE:**

Sounds like I picked the wrong day to take off yesterday.

**MAC:**

What happened?

**KATE:**

Candy and Faith were out on a bender the night before, and apparently our super-sub receptionist was rather the worst for wear.

**MAC:**

Problems?

**KATE:**

Not really. I've had a word – the poor girl's mortified. Says it won't happen again.

**MAC:**

Good.

**KATE:**

It better hadn't. I'm out again this afternoon – Cluster Group meeting.

**MAC:**

Close the door would you?

[KATE DOES]

**MAC:**

Come here.

[HE TAKES HER IN HIS ARMS]

**MAC:**

You know I love you, don't you?

**KATE:**

Yes.

**MAC:**

And you know I wouldn't do anything you didn't want me to unless I thought it was really important, and unless I'd talked to you about it first.

**KATE:**

I know that.



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**MAC:**

Well...

**KATE:**

You're going to tell Jack, aren't you?

**MAC:**

Yes. I was going to do it last night, but we agreed - one more day...

**KATE:**

Thanks for that.

**MAC:**

So what do you think?

**KATE:**

I think this is really, really important to you.

**MAC:**

It is.

[A BEAT]

**KATE:**

And I think if you get off to the hospital now you'll be back in plenty of time for evening surgery.

[MAC SMILES AND KISSES HER]

**MAC:**

Thanks darling.

[HE PICKS UP HIS BAG AND HEADS FOR THE DOOR]

**KATE:**

I just hope you know what you're doing, that's all.

**MAC:**

Yes. Me too.

[HE GOES, LEAVING KATE ALONE WITH HER THOUGHTS]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC20. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 2. 11.48**

[MAC PASSES THROUGH RECEPTION]

**MAC:**

I'm just off to the Hospital, Candy. Any calls?

**CANDY:**

Yes... Mrs Overend. Her husband's got diarrhoea and vomiting, and it's a bit difficult for him to come in...

**MAC:**

No problem. It's on my way. Call her back would you, tell her I'll be there in twenty minutes.

**CANDY:**

Sure.

[SHE REACHES FOR THE PHONE AS MAC HEADS FOR THE EXIT]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC21. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. BEDROOM.**  
**DAY 2. 12.20**

[MAC HAS FINISHED CHECKING OVER ROB WHO IS SITTING UP IN BED. JANICE IS THERE TOO]

**MAC:**

So, what was in this cake then?

**JANICE:**

Chocolate.

[ROB AND JANICE EXCHANGE A GUILTY LOOK, WHICH MAC SPOTS]

**MAC:**

And...?

**ROB:**

Cannabis.

[MAC'S REACTION IS ONE OF DISAPPOINTMENT RATHER THAN ANGER]

**MAC:**

After everything I said?

**ROB:**

Yeah, well – I needed to try something, and it worked, too.

**MAC:**

But look at the state of you now. Still think it was worth it?

**JANICE:**

Are you sure it was the cannabis?

**MAC:**

No... but it can make people sick, particularly if they're not used to it. And there's a lot we don't know about the possible long term effects...

**JANICE:**

Could it be food poisoning?

**MAC:**

(GIVING HER A LOOK - IT'S OBVIOUSLY THE CANNABIS!) I'll leave you a specimen pot; drop a stool sample into the surgery as soon as you can and I'll get some tests done.

**JANICE:**

Oh... well, actually...



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[SHE INDICATES THE COMMODOE BY THE SIDE OF ROB'S BED]

**JANICE:**

I haven't had a chance to empty that yet... if it's urgent...

**MAC:**

I'll get a pot.

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC22. INT. ROB OVEREND'S HOUSE. HALLWAY.**  
**DAY 2. 12.40**

[MAC IS LEAVING. JANICE IS SHOWING HIM OUT]

**MAC:**

I'm going to the hospital now, so I'll pop this into the lab while I'm there. The full culture test takes 3 days, but I'll get them to do a microscopy for me... might even have a result back later today if I call in a few favours.

**JANICE:**

And if it's food poisoning?

**MAC:**

Could be salmonella, or there's another nasty bug called Campylobacter.

[JANICE LOOKS CONCERNED]

**MAC:**

Don't worry. If it is food poisoning, it's only a mild dose. Make sure he drinks plenty of fluids, and he should be alright in a day or two.

**JANICE:**

And if it's the cannabis?

**MAC:**

Then maybe you can persuade your husband to listen to medical advice next time.

**JANICE:**

He does normally. You know what he's like - he's not one for taking risks. That's why he wanted to see the other doctor before he went ahead.

**MAC:**

Which other doctor?

**JANICE:**

Doctor Mistry. We saw him yesterday. He said that if it was him, he'd probably want to give the cannabis a go.

**MAC:**

Did he? Did he indeed?

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC23. EXT. HOSPITAL MAIN ENTRANCE. DAY 2. 13.20**

[MAC PARKS HIS CAR AND GETS OUT. HE LOOKS UP,  
TAKES A DEEP BREATH AND GOES INTO THE HOSPITAL]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC24. INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.**  
**DAY 2. 13.25**

[JO IS AS WE LEFT HER. JACK SITS IN HIS CHAIR. MAC ENTERS]

**JACK:**

Hello Mac.

**MAC:**

Any change?

[JACK SHAKES HIS HEAD]

**JACK:**

Why did she do it, Mac? Why?

**MAC:**

Er... that's what I wanted to talk to you about actually. Fancy a walk?

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC25. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR. DAY 2. 13.30**

[A LONG SHOT DOWN THE CORRIDOR. PEOPLE GO ABOUT THEIR DAILY BUSINESS AS MAC AND JACK TALK IN THE DISTANCE. WE DON'T HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING, BUT MAC IS CLEARLY TELLING JACK THE TRUTH ABOUT JO AND JESSIE. CUT TO A TIGHTER SHOT. JACK IS STUNNED BY WHAT HE HAS JUST HEARD AND IS STRUGGLING TO GET HIS HEAD AROUND IT]

**MAC:**

You OK Jack?

**JACK:**

Er... yes... no. It was Jo? You're telling me it was Jo? Jo gave Mum those pills?

**MAC:**

Yes. I should have told you sooner, only... (I DIDN'T KNOW HOW)

**JACK:**

But the trial... did you know then?

**MAC:**

Yes.

**JACK:**

And you didn't say anything? What if you'd been found guilty?

**MAC:**

(SHRUGGING) Well, I wasn't was I?

[BEAT]

**MAC:**

It was what Jessie wanted, Jack.

**JACK:**

Yeah. But what about what anyone else wanted, eh Mac? What about that?

[HE TURNS AND WALKS AWAY. MAC WATCHES HIM GO. HAS HE DONE THE RIGHT THING IN TELLING HIM? JACK WALKS BACK UP THE CORRIDOR, TOWARDS THE CAMERA. WE SEE THE LOOK OF PAIN AND SHOCK ON HIS FACE]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC26. EXT. PRACTICE FRONT CAR PARK. DAY 2. 15.45**

[MAC DRIVES INTO THE CAR PARK AND STOPS HIS CAR. HE IS STILL AFFECTED BY HIS CONVERSATION WITH JACK. HE SEES RANA'S CAR, AND SETS OFF TOWARDS THE DOOR WITH A GRIM SENSE OF DETERMINATION]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC27. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 2. 15.47**

[PATIENTS ARE BEGINNING TO GATHER FOR EVENING SURGERY. CANDY IS AT THE DESK AS MAC ENTERS]

**CANDY:**

Message from Mrs McGuire. She's been delayed at the Cluster Meeting, and she'll see you at home.

**MAC:**

OK.

[MAC WALKS STRAIGHT PAST HER TO THE STAFF ROOM. CANDY IS NONPLUSSED]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC28. INT. PRACTICE STAFF ROOM. DAY 2. 15.48**

[RANA AND FAITH ARE STANDING QUITE CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, SHARING A JOKE AND LAUGHING. MAC ENTERS AND GLARES AT RANA]

**MAC:**

My room. Now!

[MAC TURNS AND WALKS OUT. FAITH LOOKS QUIZZICALLY AT RANA]

**FAITH:**

You been a naughty boy then?

**RANA:**

Erm... not sure. But give me half a chance...

[HE LEAVES]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC29. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (MAC'S).**  
**DAY 2. 15.48**

[MAC SITS SEETHING AT HIS DESK AS RANA COMES IN,  
STILL SMILING FROM HIS ENCOUNTER WITH FAITH]

**RANA:**

You know, she's quite something...

**MAC:**

(LAUNCHING IN) What the hell do you mean by going round advising my patients to take illegal drugs?

**RANA:**

What?

**MAC:**

Robert Overend. I was at his house this morning. He's flat on his back throwing up into a bucket, because you told him it was alright to take cannabis.

**RANA:**

I didn't...

**MAC:**

Then how come his wife's baked a whole great big lump of the stuff in a cake, just hours after talking to you about it?

**RANA:**

We did have a conversation about cannabis – I just think they wanted a different angle...

**MAC:**

It is not the policy of this practice to condone the use of illegal drugs! I told Mr Overend as much when he came to me last week, and now I find you're sneaking around behind my back...

**RANA:**

Now hang on...

**MAC:**

... deliberately going against me!

**RANA:**

Excuse me, this 'policy' on cannabis use? That's something we all talked about is it? You, me, Steve, Helen, Caroline? Something we all agreed?

**MAC:**

Some things don't need talking about, they're so blindingly obvious...

**RANA:**



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Obvious to you maybe, but not to me. I thought I was a partner now, I thought we were supposed to talk about these things, you know, share views, hold discussions...?

**MAC:**

Since when do we need to have discussions about the rights and wrongs of breaking the law?

**RANA:**

And if the law is wrong? And if we think that a bit of weed is going to give some pain relief to a man who we can't help in any other way?

**MAC:**

We are doctors Rana – we can't put ourselves above the law.

**RANA:**

Oh yeah? And does that apply to giving an overdose of diamorphine to a dying woman?

[THESE LAST WORDS ARE LIKE A SLAP IN THE FACE TO MAC]

**MAC:**

You what?

[MAC IS FURIOUS. HE TAKES A STEP TOWARDS RANA, AND FOR A SECOND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S ABOUT TO HIT HIM. RANA TAKES A STEP BACK IN ALARM. MAC VISIBLY CONTROLS HIMSELF, THEN CONTINUES WITH BARELY RESTRAINED FEROCITY]

**MAC:**

So that's what you really think is it? That I killed Jessie Helm?

[RANA IS A BIT FRIGHTENED ABOUT THIS TURN OF EVENTS]

**RANA:**

Mac...

**MAC:**

(BUILDING TO A CRESCENDO) The trial was all for nothing then eh? The jury got it wrong? So... Jo's overdose, Kate losing her baby... that's all my fault is it? Well, is it?

[CAROLINE ENTERS]

**CAROLINE:**

Mac? There are patients out there!

[MAC AND RANA ARE FACE TO FACE]



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**CAROLINE:**

Rana?

**RANA:**

You'd better ask him.

[HE PUSHES PAST MAC AND LEAVES. MAC DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY]

**CAROLINE:**

You want to talk about it?

**MAC:**

I've got surgery.

**CAROLINE:**

OK. Later?

**MAC:**

Yes... Later.

[CAROLINE LEAVES. WE STAY WITH MAC FOR A MOMENT. HE LOOKS CLOSE TO TEARS]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC30. INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.**  
**DAY 2. 17.00**

[JO LIES IN BED, AS WE LEFT HER. JACK IS BY HER SIDE.  
HE PULLS A STRAND OF HAIR AWAY FROM HER FACE]

**JACK:**

Oh baby, why? I don't understand. Your own Nan! Why? Wake up baby.  
You've got to tell me why you did it. Please wake up. Please... please...

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC31. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (MAC'S)**  
**DAY 2. 18.30**

[MAC'S LAST PATIENT IS JUST LEAVING]

**MAC:**

Take care then Mr Holloway – and good luck with the job search.

[THE PATIENT LEAVES. MAC RUBS HIS EYES. HE'S TIRED.  
THE PHONE RINGS. HE PICKS IT UP]

**MAC:**

Yes?

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC32. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 2. 18.30**

[CANDY IS ON THE PHONE. WE SEE MR HOLLOWAY PASSING]

**CANDY:**

I've got the lab on the phone for you Doctor McGuire. The microscopy results for Mr Overend – they said it was urgent.

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC33. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (MAC'S).  
DAY 2. 18.30**

[MAC ON THE PHONE]

**MAC:**

Thanks Candy... Hello Peter, thanks for getting back so quickly, I owe you one... right... you sure? OK. Bye.

[HE PUTS THE PHONE DOWN. THERE'S A KNOCK AT THE DOOR]

**MAC:**

Yes?

[CAROLINE POPS HER HEAD ROUND THE DOOR. MAC IS CALMER NOW, BUT STILL ANGRY WITH RANA. CAROLINE IS SYMPATHETIC BUT FIRM]

**CAROLINE:**

Is it safe?

**MAC:**

I think so. Come in.

**CAROLINE:**

So what was that all about then, with Rana?

**MAC:**

He went behind my back, to one of my patients, and virtually gave him carte blanche to go out and break the law!

**CAROLINE:**

This wouldn't be Mr Overend would it – the MS patient?

**MAC:**

He's talked to you about it then? Pity he couldn't have extended the same courtesy to me.

**CAROLINE:**

Come on Mac - you weren't here – that's why he spoke to me. He said he was going to discuss it with you first chance he got.

**MAC:**

He directly contradicted my advice!

**CAROLINE:**



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I'm not taking sides or anything, but are you sure that's what happened? I got the impression he'd been pretty neutral with Mr Overend – he certainly pointed out the medical risks.

**MAC:**

Cannabis use is against the law – we can't be seen to be condoning illegal acts.

**CAROLINE:**

I'm not sure that's how the police see it Mac – I think in Mr Overend's case they might well look the other way.

**MAC:**

It's not our job to second guess the police.

**CAROLINE:**

It's not as simple as that, and you know it.

[MAC CAN SEE THE LOGIC OF WHAT SHE'S SAYING]

**MAC:**

I know...

**CAROLINE:**

There's something else, isn't there? I know Rana can be infuriating sometimes, but I've never seen you so angry. I thought you were going to thump him.

**MAC:**

I probably would have done if you hadn't come in.

**CAROLINE:**

So what is it then?

**MAC:**

I'd had a tough day, just come back from the hospital...

**CAROLINE:**

To see Jo?

**MAC:**

Er... yes... no change I'm afraid. And there was... something else I needed to deal with. Anyway, Rana said some stuff which... well, I overreacted... OK?

**CAROLINE:**

You two need to get this sorted.

**MAC:**

Yes, I know.

**CAROLINE:**



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No time like the present.

[SHE GETS UP TO LEAVE]

**MAC:**

Thanks Caroline.

**CAROLINE:**

That's OK. We're supposed to talk about these things – we're partners, remember? And so is Rana.

[SHE LEAVES. A BEAT, AND MAC FOLLOWS HER]

**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC34. INT. PRACTICE RECEPTION. DAY 2. 18.35**

[CANDY IS AT HER DESK. MAC APPROACHES]

**MAC:**

Any idea how much longer Rana will be?

**CANDY:**

He's with his last patient now.

**MAC:**

Thanks.

[JANICE COMES DOWN THE STAIRS WITH FAITH]

**JANICE:**

Thanks ever so much.

**FAITH:**

No problem. Just let me have them back when you've picked up your prescription.

[FAITH LEAVES]

**JANICE:**

Oh hello Doctor – I forgot to take Rob's prescription to the chemist - just popped in to scrounge a couple of leg bags from the nurse.

**MAC:**

I'm glad I caught you actually, I've had the microscopy results back from the lab.

**JANICE:**

Yes?

[TAKING HER TO ONE SIDE]

**MAC:**

It is food poisoning I'm afraid – Salmonella. I'll prescribe some antibiotics. It may well have been the eggs you used. You should be a little more rigorous with your use-by dates in future.

**JANICE:**

Oh no! I will, don't worry. So it was nothing to do with the... er... you know, the cannabis.

**MAC:**

Well...

**JANICE:**



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You know, Rob didn't have the pains at all last night – he's feeling a lot better now so I brewed some up in a teapot for him before I came out – just a little. Only you did say he had to drink lots of fluids.

**MAC:**

That wasn't quite what I had in mind.

**JANICE:**

But there's another thing. He's never been the easiest of people to live with – always thinks he knows best, you know...

**MAC:**

Yes, I know.

**JANICE:**

But since his MS has got worse – well, sometimes I don't know if I can put up with him and his moods...

**MAC:**

I'm sure it must be very difficult.

**JANICE:**

To be honest Doctor, I think it's great if that stuff stops his legs hurting, but as far as I'm concerned, he's a much nicer person to live with when he's taking it than when he's not – and that's good enough for me!

[MAC CAN'T HELP SMILING]

**MAC:**

Fair enough. You will remember what I told you about the possible risks though, won't you?

**JANICE:**

Oh yes. Doctor Mistry was very clear about that too...

[MAC'S REACTION]

**JANICE:**

Only in the end, it's our lives, isn't it? Goodbye then...

**MAC:**

Yes... bye.

[JANICE LEAVES. AS SHE DOES, RANA'S LAST PATIENT EMERGES FROM THE CORRIDOR]

**CANDY:**

I think Doctor Mistry's free now, if you wanted to see him.

**MAC:**

Right. Thanks Candy.



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**CUT TO:**



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**EP105/SC35. INT. PRACTICE CONSULTING ROOM (RANA'S) DAY**  
**2. 18.40**

[RANA IS CLEARING UP AFTER SURGERY. MAC KNOCKS AND COMES IN THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR. MAC IS TRYING TO BUILD BRIDGES BUT RANA IS VERY RESISTANT]

**MAC:**

Can I come in?

**RANA:**

(DEFENSIVE) Why – so you can take another pop at me?

**MAC:**

(BEAT) I owe you an apology. Two apologies.

**RANA:**

Go on.

**MAC:**

Losing it like that. It was unforgivable. I was very angry but I had no right to react the way I did.

**RANA:**

Yeah, well...

**MAC:**

And I've been talking to Caroline and Mrs Overend - it seems you weren't as unequivocal in your praise of cannabis as I thought...

**RANA:**

You know what your problem is Mac? You think your way is always the best way – the only way. You can't deal with the fact that people might have different opinions to yours, and that sometimes they might even be right...

**MAC:**

And that I might be wrong?

**RANA:**

Precisely. I was over the moon when you offered me the partnership here, but sometimes I think you still see me as your little junior, worshipping at the feet of the great Doctor Mac. But I'm your *partner* now, and it's about time you started treating me like one.

**MAC:**

I see.

**RANA:**

I hope you do, Mac. I really hope you do.



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[A BEAT. CAROLINE ENTERS]

**CAROLINE:**

Well? You two OK now?

**MAC:**

I'm not sure. You'd better ask Rana.

**RANA:**

We're... OK.

**CAROLINE:**

Good. Anyone fancy a drink?

[A BIT OF A STAND OFF BETWEEN MAC AND RANA]

**MAC:**

Er... no, I should be getting back, but thanks anyway.

**RANA:**

I'd love one.

[WOULD RANA HAVE SAID YES IF MAC HAD BEEN GOING?  
PROBABLY NOT]

**CAROLINE:**

Right. Come on then. Sure you're OK Mac?

**MAC:**

Sure.

**CAROLINE:**

Right. See you tomorrow then.

[SHE LEAVES. RANA IS ABOUT TO FOLLOW HER]

**RANA:**

(BEAT) ... what I said about Jessie, the diamorphine... that just sort of came out.

**MAC:**

Yes, it did, didn't it?

**RANA:**

So I guess I owe you an apology too.

**MAC:**

For what? Saying it, or believing it?

[A BEAT]



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This 'Doctors' script entitled A Suitable Alternative was written by David Lloyd. TX date 21/05/01. It may be used as a resource tool and as a reference by writers who visit the Writers' Room website.

**RANA:**

We all get it wrong sometimes Mac. I shouldn't have said those things, but after what you did today, I'm not sure we still have a professional relationship. We need to sort this out, and I think it's you that needs to do the sorting.

[MAC'S REACTION]

**RANA:**

I'll see you tomorrow.

[HE GOES, LEAVING MAC ALONE, ISOLATED AND ON THE EDGE]

**END OF EPISODE**