

DOCTORS

'Basic Training'

by

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1 EXT. THE WESLEYS' HOUSE - DAY 0845 1
Establishing shot of a pristine house and beautifully manicured front garden. This is the home of a well-ordered family.

2 INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 0846 2
Extreme C/U on a photograph of a soldier with his mates on a foreign tour of duty - somewhere hot and dusty. Echoing in the b.g. is the sound of a drill sergeant putting squaddies through their paces on a parade ground. The sharp crack of feet marching in strict unison leads into...

3 EXT. THE WESLEYS' STREET - DAY 0847 3
A pair of Army boots, marching purposefully down the street, then pausing, uncertain, still some distance from the house. The boots belong to a young uniformed soldier with a kitbag slung over his shoulder - WILLIAM WESLEY (17).

4 INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 0848 4
MAJOR RICHARD WESLEY brushes a speck of dust off the photograph of the soldier and replaces it on the mantelpiece. It takes pride of place among the Army memorabilia that fill the living room, and he's making sure - as usual - that they're all in order. He tweaks a picture here, straightens a beret there. The retired officer (58), smartly dressed in jacket and tie, is justifiably proud.
MIRANDA WESLEY (47), a typical Army wife and highly efficient, pops her head round the door and smiles at him.

MIRANDA
Anything you want?

RICHARD
(absently)
Mmm?

MIRANDA
Shopping. I'm just popping out for a few bits.

RICHARD turns to her at last and flashes a forced smile.

RICHARD
All right, darling.

MIRANDA realises her original question has gone unheard, but it doesn't matter.

MIRANDA
Shan't be long, then.

She's about to go when she has second thoughts and steps further into the room.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
You all right, love?

RICHARD
(back with the pictures)
Fine, fine.

MIRANDA
You're missing him, aren't you?

RICHARD
Well, aren't you?

MIRANDA
Of course I am - I'm his mother.
But it's only for a few weeks,
while he does his basic training.
He'll be back before you know it.

Finally, RICHARD gives her his full attention, with a steely stare.

RICHARD
What are you talking about,
woman?

MIRANDA
(nonplussed)
William. He'll be home soon.

RICHARD
(highly irritated)
Not him, you stupid woman.
(He points at the
photos)
Arthur.

5 EXT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE - DAY 0850

5

ARCHIE arrives at the surgery on his bike, dressed in sleek black Lycra and kitted out with the latest headgear and trainers. As he freewheels towards the front door, he is almost run down by JOE, swinging his big car into a parking space.

ARCHIE
Hey, look out!

In a sweeping single movement, JOE gets out of the driver's seat with a briefcase in hand, slams the door shut and plips the electronic key to lock it. He glances over at ARCHIE's shiny machine.

JOE
Shouldn't be allowed - menace to
road-users.

ARCHIE sees the twinkle in his eye and joins in the game, nodding at JOE's car as MELODY strolls up in the b.g.

ARCHIE
Gas-guzzling planet-wasters.

MELODY
(teasing as she strides
between them into the
surgery)
Oh please! You boys and your
toys.

ARCHIE and JOE exchange a look - women.

6 EXT. THE WESLEYS' STREET - DAY 0851 6

MIRANDA emerges from the house, her mind on the shopping trip.

Watching from a distance, WILLIAM dodges back into a hedge to avoid being spotted. He sees her climb into her car and drive away in the opposite direction. Great - the house will be empty. He approaches the front gate with a quicker pace.

7 INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 0852 7

RICHARD is polishing a cap badge when he is disturbed to hear the front door. A moment later, WILLIAM appears at the living room door, kitbag still slung over his shoulder. They are both surprised to see each other.

RICHARD
William!

WILLIAM
Dad - I thought you'd be out.

RICHARD
What are you doing here? You're
supposed to be training.

WILLIAM
(Uneasily)
Yeah - they - I've... got a
couple of days' leave.

RICHARD

Leave? But you've only just begun.

WILLIAM

Yeah - I don't know - something cropped up with the CO, I think. Change in orders or something. (Beat) You know what he can be like.

RICHARD

The CO? Why would your commanding officer suddenly give you two days' leave in the middle of your basic training? It doesn't make any sense.

WILLIAM

I know, Dad.

He looks round the room at the photos and memorabilia.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

It wasn't like this in Arthur's regiment.

WILLIAM turns and walks out of the room before his father can respond.

RICHARD is left trying to stop himself from boiling over.

8

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE RECEPTION - DAY 0853

8

ARCHIE and JOE come into Reception. JOE heads straight through towards the staff room and ARCHIE looks set to follow when suddenly, without even looking up from her paperwork, VIVIEN thrusts out an arm in front of him. She's holding out a bulging paper bag.

ARCHIE is forced to stop abruptly.

ARCHIE

What's this?

VIVIEN takes off her glasses with her free hand and shakes the bag under ARCHIE's nose.

VIVIEN

A gift from a grateful patient. Seems you worked wonders with Mr Lawrence's piles.

ARCHIE takes the bag tentatively and peers inside.

ARCHIE
Doughnuts?

VIVIEN
Handmade, apparently.

ARCHIE
Let's hope he washed them
thoroughly.

VIVIEN gives a look of distaste. ARCHIE dips into the bag and pulls one out. He sniffs it warily, then takes a bite. His face changes to delight.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
(Approvingly)
Well, good old Mr Lawrence. Who'd
have thought it, eh?

VIVIEN is more interested in them now she knows they taste so good.

VIVIEN
So, would you like to spread some
of Mr Lawrence's goodwill?

ARCHIE quickly tucks the bag inside his bike helmet.

ARCHIE
Oh no, Vivien, you really
wouldn't want one. They're not
good for your health - full of
saturated fats.

He hurries off towards the staff room. Out on VIVIEN, annoyed she's missed out.

9

INT. THE WESLEYS' KITCHEN - DAY 0855

9

WILLIAM, having dumped his kitbag on the kitchen table, switches on the kettle and starts to make a drink. RICHARD, back in control of his anger, follows him through from the living room.

RICHARD
This isn't about your brother,
you know.

WILLIAM
Isn't it?

RICHARD
Of course not. It's about you
fulfilling your potential.

WILLIAM says nothing, won't even face his father.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(persisting)

Look, I know square-bashing's no fun at your age and you probably feel as if you've made the biggest mistake of your life, but trust me - it'll be worth it in the end. Just stick these few weeks out and you'll come out the other end a different person.

WILLIAM

(turning)

A different person? You'd like that, wouldn't you?

RICHARD grits his teeth to stay in control.

RICHARD

Now that's not fair and you know it.

WILLIAM grunts and resumes his tea-making.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Look, if we get you back there this morning, I could have a word with the CO, they probably won't even follow it up.

WILLIAM turns again and stares at his father.

WILLIAM

You think I've gone AWOL?

RICHARD stares back - well, haven't you? WILLIAM is about to carry on when he thinks better of it and turns away again.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

(sullen)

I wouldn't do that.

RICHARD

Then what is going on?

Still no reply from WILLIAM.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

It's not just your name at stake here, you know. My own reputation still counts for something. And don't think I'm going to let you drag Arthur's memory through the mud, just because you can't hack it.

RICHARD stomps out of the kitchen, slamming the door behind him.

Facing away from his father at the sink, WILLIAM hides the fact that every word is a crushing blow to him.

10 INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE STAFF ROOM - DAY 0857 10

MELODY and GEORGE are both hovering round the coffee percolator, getting themselves drinks, when ARCHIE enters.

MELODY
Morning, Archie.

ARCHIE puts his cycle helmet and the bag of doughnuts down on a work surface and waits for MELODY and GEORGE to clear the decks by the coffee machine.

ARCHIE
Morning all.

GEORGE
(indicating the cycling gear)
Keen start to the day?

MICHELLE enters the staff room and, by some infallible instinct, makes straight for the bag of doughnuts behind ARCHIE.

ARCHIE
I find it helps blow the cobwebs away.

MICHELLE
Ooh, doughnuts. I love doughnuts.

Before ARCHIE can say anything, she's helped herself and is heading back out of the staff room again.

ARCHIE
Hey -

GEORGE's antennae have been alerted. MELODY's keen too.

GEORGE
Doughnuts, eh? Are they for public consumption?

ARCHIE quickly grabs the bag, like a jealous schoolboy guarding his sweeties, and backs out of the room.

ARCHIE
No, sorry. Actually they're not mine. I'm taking them to...
(MORE)

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
 (making it up as he goes
 along)
 A patient... at St Phil's.

He escapes with the rest of the bag intact. MELODY and GEORGE don't believe a word of it.

11 INT. THE WESLEYS' KITCHEN - DAY 0920

11

RICHARD has returned to the kitchen to continue his grilling. WILLIAM has resorted to washing up his tea mug to avoid having to look him in the eye.

RICHARD
 (in mid-flow)
 Nobody expects you to be another Arthur. God knows, the last thing we want is to lose you too. But it's the first thing they should be drumming into you - honour. You were desperate to sign up after your brother. I was so proud of you. We both were. And even when you didn't get the grades to follow Arthur to Sandhurst, you were still so determined you weren't going to let the family name down. And now you've got the chance. I know it means working your way up from the bottom, but if you apply yourself, you'll make a commission in no time at all.

Outside in the hall, the front door slams shut. WILLIAM pauses over the washing up, half-dreading, half-wanting what's coming.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
 Think of what it would mean to us, William - to all of us. Don't do it for me or your mother, do it for Arthur.

MIRANDA appears with a shopping bag in each hand. Seeing WILLIAM across the room, she drops them instantly and rushes over to hug him.

MIRANDA
 Oh God, what's happened?

WILLIAM tries to shake her off.

WILLIAM
 Nothing's happened, Mum. I've just got a couple of days' leave, that's all.

She breaks away from him and looks to RICHARD for reassurance. He shrugs.

MIRANDA
Leave? I didn't think you had
leave during your basic training.

RICHARD
Neither did I.

WILLIAM
It's nothing, Dad. Just forget
it.

MIRANDA
Do you feel all right?

She puts a maternal hand to his forehead.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Have you got a temperature? Are
you ill?

WILLIAM
I'm fine, Mum. Leave it.

He grabs his kitbag from the kitchen table and barges out past RICHARD. His parents exchange a look of concern and bewilderment.

12 INT. WILLIAM WESLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY 0925 12

WILLIAM slams his bedroom door closed behind him and hurls the kitbag into a corner, slumping on the bed without even taking his boots off.

13 INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE STAFF ROOM - DAY 0926 13

As MELODY sits drinking her coffee - no doughnut - GEORGE checks her watch to see if she's got time for a chat. She has.

GEORGE
So, how's our rising star getting
on then?

MELODY
(smiling)
I don't know about 'star'.

GEORGE

Oh, you'd be surprised. There've been some pretty favourable words bandied about concerning a certain trainee doctor sitting not a million miles from this very spot.

MELODY

(flattered)

Really?

GEORGE

Really.

MELODY

Well, I must confess I do feel as if I'm starting to enjoy myself properly.

GEORGE

Enjoy? Oh yes, I remember that.
(Beat) Vaguely.

MELODY laughs.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And how are you finding your mentor?

MELODY

Joe? He's great. I'm learning loads from him - and from the rest of you as well, of course.

GEORGE

Of course. You'll find the learning bit never ends. You just acquire it in a rather different way from medical school. All those spotty youths running round sticking things in each other to see if it hurts. Well, you're certainly starting to look the part, I must say. Confident. Authoritative.

GEORGE gets up to leave.

MELODY

(pleased)

Thank you, George.

GEORGE

Almost like a proper doctor.

GEORGE flashes her a smile and goes, her confidence-building job done. MELODY double-takes at her back-handed compliment.

14

INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 0945

14

MIRANDA is sitting anxiously on the sofa with a cup of tea. RICHARD paces in front of the shrine to Arthur.

MIRANDA

I don't understand. What is he doing home?

RICHARD

For God's sake, woman, how many times? I don't understand it either.

MIRANDA

Can't you talk to him?

RICHARD

What do you think I was doing when you walked in? He just doesn't want to listen. You could talk to Arthur, have an intelligent conversation with the boy, but William -

MIRANDA

Do you think we've been too hard on him?

RICHARD

Hard? He doesn't know the meaning of the word. Good God, he can't even last five minutes of his training. I've a good mind to -

He stops short, struck by an idea. Inspired, he goes to the telephone on a low table and dials a number.

MIRANDA

What are you doing, Richard? Who are you calling?

RICHARD

(into phone, ignoring her)

Hello? Yes, this is Major Wesley. Put me through to the CO, would you? Yes, I'll hold.

He looks at MIRANDA, nervous on the sofa.

MIRANDA

Oh Richard, do you think that's a good idea?

RICHARD

(into phone)

Hello - Jimmy? Richard Wesley here. About this leave of William's... (Beat, then confusion) Medical leave?

Out on MIRANDA, alarmed.

15 INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE TREATMENT ROOM - DAY 1005 15

ARCHIE stares at the bag of doughnuts on the table in front of him for a long while. Then he gives in to temptation. Again.

16 INT. WILLIAM WESLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY 1020 16

WILLIAM is lying on his bed with his back to the door, pretending to nap. The room is filled with military bits and pieces - Army posters, cadet uniform, photos, etc - in a kind of scruffy teenage mirror image of the perfect living room downstairs. His kitbag remains unopened in the corner.

There is a soft knock at the door and MIRANDA eases it open, a mug of tea in her hand for him. He refuses to turn round, even acknowledge her.

17 INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE TREATMENT ROOM - DAY 1022 17

ARCHIE is guiltily stuffing his face with yet another doughnut.

Out of nowhere, MICHELLE barges in, catching him mid-mouthful. There's a freeze-frame moment, then MICHELLE bursts out laughing.

MICHELLE

You're going to turn into a right porker at this rate.

ARCHIE

(his mouth full)

I'm extremely fit, I'll have you know.

MICHELLE

Yeah, right, and I'm Miss Letherbridge 2009.

She reaches out to take another doughnut from the bag but he slams his hand down on top of it to stop her.

ARCHIE

No, no. You can't go lecturing me and then start helping yourself.

MICHELLE

You can't eat them all on your own.

ARCHIE grins.

ARCHIE

Watch me.

He takes another one out and is about to take a large bite.

MICHELLE

Oh well, at least you won't have to worry about a puncture on that bike of yours.

ARCHIE is curious, in spite of himself.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

(pointing at his belly)

You'll be carrying your own spare tyre around with you.

She flounces out of the treatment room. ARCHIE, wanting to be outraged, looks at the doughnut, then his belly, then the doughnut again. Finally he plonks it back in the bag, beaten.

18

INT. WILLIAM WESLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY 1025

18

MIRANDA is sitting on the edge of WILLIAM's bed, trying to get through to him. The mug of tea is going cold in her hand. He remains with his back to her, refusing to engage.

MIRANDA

I know there's something wrong, darling. (Beat) You can talk to me, you know.

She reaches out to put the mug down on his bedside table, then lays a caring hand on his shoulder.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

You may find this hard to believe, but your brother nearly gave up during his training.

WILLIAM is surprised to hear this. He turns to face his mother.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Oh yes. Don't think he had it easy. Your father's a tough act to follow. That's why Arthur chose a different regiment.

On a look from WILLIAM...

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
I know. You've got it doubly difficult. You're following in both their footsteps, and you're in your father's old stomping ground. We do understand some things, you know. We're not just a couple of old farts with no grasp on reality.

For the first time, WILLIAM smiles.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
So. Anything you want to tell me.

For a moment, WILLIAM debates with himself. Then...

WILLIAM
I fainted. On parade.

MIRANDA looks concerned.

MIRANDA
You fainted on parade?

WILLIAM
(ashamed)
Twice. That's why they sent me home. R and R.

MIRANDA
You fainted twice and they prescribed rest and recuperation? I'm getting straight on the phone to the doctor.

WILLIAM
I don't need a quack, Mum. The regiment's got its own medical officer.

MIRANDA
And what does he say?

WILLIAM
(unwillingly)
I haven't seen him.

MIRANDA is about to explode but WILLIAM cuts her short.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

It's OK, Mum. Sarge said it was probably just a combination of heat and fatigue, and a couple of days at home would see me right.

MIRANDA

Oh did he? And just where did Sarge get his medical degree?

WILLIAM goes quiet.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

Exactly. I'm booking you an appointment at The Mill. Today.

MIRANDA gets up to leave, very business-like. WILLIAM turns away again, torn between gratitude for his mother's concern and shame at his own pathetic attitude.

19

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE RECEPTION - DAY 1230

19

JOE and VIVIEN are at the reception desk.

JOE

Right, that's me for the morning, Vivien. Lunch.

VIVIEN

Anywhere nice?

JOE

Haven't decided yet.

ARCHIE appears from the staff room, back in his cycling gear and clearly all set for a lunchtime bike ride.

JOE (CONT'D)

But I feel like treating myself.

VIVIEN

Good for you, Dr Fenton.

ARCHIE

(teasing)

Nothing too fattening, I hope.

MICHELLE now emerges from the staff room.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)

Can't have the surgery's image maligned.

MICHELLE

Says Mr Doughnut.

JOE and VIVIEN stifle sniggers.

ARCHIE

Yes, thank you, Oprah. When I want your dietary advice, I'll ask for it.

MICHELLE

Well, come on, Archie. You might fool everyone else with your fake fitness regime but you're not fooling me.

ARCHIE

(affronted)

There's nothing fake about it. And I'd say I'm in pretty good shape, wouldn't you?

He casts around the assembled company for support. He is greeted with shrugs and uncertainty.

MICHELLE

Ha! I reckon Dr Fenton's fitter than you are - and he must have twenty years on you.

JOE

(insulted)

Thank you, Michelle.

MICHELLE

(realising)

No, I didn't mean - it was a compliment.

JOE

None taken.

ARCHIE

(to Michelle)

You what? I could beat him standing on my head with both hands tied behind my back.

JOE

(to nobody)

None taken there, either.

ARCHIE

Sorry, Joe, no offence, but let's face it, you're no spring chicken.

(To MICHELLE)

And you're not getting any more of my doughnuts.

He stomps off to the front door, pulling on his cycle helmet.

As he barges his way out, he pushes unapologetically past MIRANDA and WILLIAM, who are just arriving for his appointment.

Out on JOE, speechless at ARCHIE's insult.

20

INT. MELODY'S CONSULTING ROOM - DAY 1233

20

MIRANDA and WILLIAM are entering the consulting room, where MELODY is sitting at her desk. She smiles welcomingly as they come in.

MIRANDA

Thanks for seeing us at such short notice, Dr Bell.

MIRANDA makes as if to settle down in a chair. WILLIAM hovers uncertainly.

A little confused, MELODY checks the patient notes in front of her.

MELODY

That's OK. But I thought I was seeing William?

MIRANDA

Oh, you are. But I wanted to be here.

She reaches out a hand and squeezes William's arm.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

To help.

MELODY

I see.

(She looks at WILLIAM)

Is that all right with you?

Boxed into a corner by his mother, WILLIAM shrugs his reluctant agreement. MELODY motions at him to pull a second chair over and sit, which he does.

MELODY (CONT'D)

So. What seems to be the problem?

MIRANDA

(leaping in)

He's a soldier, you see. Recently started his basic training.

MELODY

(looking at WILLIAM)

Ri-i-ght. And how can I help?

MIRANDA
He's been fainting on parade,
doctor.

WILLIAM
(embarrassed)
Mum! It was only a couple of
times.

MIRANDA
It doesn't matter how many times.
It still means there's something
wrong with you.

MELODY
(stepping in)
Mrs - er - Wesley?

MIRANDA
(keenly)
Yes.

MELODY
I know you want to help William,
and I'm sure he'll be relying on
you for your support.

She's finding it hard to impose her authority.

MELODY (CONT'D)
But for someone of his age, a
consultation with the doctor
would normally be carried out...
in private.

MIRANDA
But he's my son.

MELODY
I understand that.

MIRANDA
If there's something wrong I need
to know about it.

MELODY
Mrs Wesley -

MIRANDA starts to become emotional and pulls out a
handkerchief from her handbag.

MIRANDA
I've already lost one son. I'm
not about to risk losing another.

Finally MELODY finds some backbone.

MELODY

(forcefully)

Mrs Wesley. I'm sorry about your other son, really I am, but my job right now is to focus on William and sometimes there are things that teenagers would prefer to talk about... without their mum present?

MIRANDA is floored at this: she'd never even considered it. She pulls herself together and puts her hankie away again. WILLIAM looks hopefully at her.

MIRANDA

Right. Well.

(To WILLIAM)

If that's what you'd like.

She looks hard at him. He can't say the words, but it's clear that is what he'd like.

MIRANDA gets up and goes to the door.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)

I'll be waiting outside then.

She goes. WILLIAM's demeanour changes visibly as a weight is lifted from his shoulders.

MELODY

Now then. Fainting on parade. Any other clues?

21

EXT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE - DAY 1235

21

JOE is about to get into his car when ARCHIE pulls up on his bike. He looks sheepish and obviously hasn't got far on his ride before turning back.

ARCHIE

Look, Joe, about before. I didn't mean to insult you back there.

JOE looks hurt - but won't let on to ARCHIE that it's just a front.

JOE

Oh? What did you mean to do?

ARCHIE

It's just a silly argument with Michelle. She accused me of having a spare tyre, I wanted to prove a point.

JOE
At my expense.

ARCHIE
I've said I'm sorry.

JOE
Apology not accepted.

ARCHIE
Oh, come on, Joe -

JOE
No. You want to prove a point?
Then don't just brag about it -
prove it.

ARCHIE
What are you talking about?

JOE
Put your money where your mouth
is.

It takes a moment for the implication of this to sink in
with ARCHIE.

ARCHIE
You want to... stand me a bet?

JOE
That's right. Your mouth against
my fitness. Shall we say a
hundred?

ARCHIE
(flabbergasted)
A hundred? You're on, old man.

He starts to pedal off enthusiastically.

ARCHIE (CONT'D)
(calling behind him)
It'll be like taking candy from a
baby.

JOE
(shouting after him)
In your dreams!

Almost immediately he has second thoughts about what he's
just done. He turns back to the car and is about to open
the door when he changes his mind, locks it with his
'plipper' and strides purposefully away.

22

INT. MELODY'S CONSULTING ROOM - DAY 1245

22

MELODY is unstrapping a blood pressure gauge from WILLIAM's arm.

MELODY

And there's no history of anaemia
in your family?

WILLIAM shakes his head.

MELODY (CONT'D)

You hadn't skipped breakfast?
Been drinking heavily the night
before?

He shakes again.

MELODY (CONT'D)

And you felt fine immediately
before passing out?

WILLIAM

And pretty much straight after
again.

MELODY is mystified.

MELODY

Well, I can find no obvious
factors. Your blood pressure's
normal, your breathing sounds OK
and you're telling me you've
experienced no other symptoms.

WILLIAM

Nothing at all.

MELODY

Mmm. Well, your sergeant's advice
is probably the best thing at the
moment - rest up for a couple of
days. Meanwhile, I'd like to
arrange for some more tests at St
Phil's, if that's OK with you.

WILLIAM is far from happy at this suggestion.

WILLIAM

Tests? But you've just done them
all, haven't you?

MELODY

Oh, there's lots more they could
do at the hospital. You know,
blood tests and so on.

WILLIAM
No, really, I'm fine.

MELODY
William, people don't just faint for no reason at all. I don't want to scare you, because it could be nothing serious, but you really should get yourself checked out thoroughly.

WILLIAM
(curtly)
I said I'm fine.

He gets up and heads for the door.

MELODY
William!

He stops with the door half-open.

MELODY (CONT'D)
If you change your mind, come back and see me. Please.

WILLIAM doesn't reply - just leaves, closing the door behind him.

MELODY frowns, bemused by both his illness and his attitude.

23 EXT. LETHERBRIDGE PARK - DAY 1250

23

JOE has opted for a power-walk instead of lunch and is striding along a footpath through the park. However, he is beginning to struggle and slows the pace visibly.

Unfortunately for him, ARCHIE has taken the same route for his exercising and comes whizzing by on his bike, screeching to a halt a few yards in front of JOE.

ARCHIE
(amused)
Everything all right, old timer?
You don't want to overdo it, you know.

JOE
I don't need your fitness tips, thank you very much. I'm quite capable of organising my own training routine.

He sets off again at a quicker pace, passing ARCHIE's bike. ARCHIE immediately begins pedalling hard, overtaking JOE once more and looking back over his shoulder.

ARCHIE
 (calling)
 See you at the finish line,
 Gramps.

JOE growls after him then, when he sees he's rounded a corner, stops again and pants with his hands on his knees.

24

INT. THE WESLEYS' KITCHEN - DAY 1300

24

WILLIAM is chopping vegetables on a board for MIRANDA, who is busy preparing the family's lunch. RICHARD stands over them both, the self-appointed authority figure.

RICHARD
 So there's nothing wrong with
 you. Is that what she said?

WILLIAM
 She didn't have to.

RICHARD
 What do you mean, she didn't have
 to?

WILLIAM
 I told her that myself.

RICHARD
 I don't understand. You went to
 the doctor and you told her there
 was nothing wrong with you?

MIRANDA
 Richard, give the boy a chance to
 speak.

RICHARD
 (to MIRANDA)
 And where were you all this time?

MIRANDA
 I was there. In the waiting room.

RICHARD
 The waiting room? Why didn't you
 go in with him, find out what the
 hell's the matter?

MIRANDA
 (quietly)
 He didn't want me there.

RICHARD turns on WILLIAM.

RICHARD
 Now look here, William, I've had
 just about enough of this
 nonsense. It's high time you told
 us what's going on.

WILLIAM keeps chopping relentlessly. It's a diversion to
 avoid confrontation.

WILLIAM
 There's nothing 'going on', Dad.

MIRANDA has a spark of an idea.

MIRANDA
 (brightly)
 Maybe it's M.E.?

RICHARD
 M.E.? Don't be ridiculous, woman.

MIRANDA
 They say it's very hard to
 diagnose.
 (To WILLIAM)
 And you do look peaky.

RICHARD
 It's a load of old rubbish,
 that's what it is. A 'Get Out of
 Jail' card for malingerers. (To
 WILLIAM) Is that what this is?
 Because if you're angling for a
 medical discharge with some
 trumped-up fakery, you can think
 again, young man.

MIRANDA
 Richard! William would never do a
 thing like that. Would you,
 darling?

WILLIAM keeps his head down, chopping furiously.

25

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE STAFF ROOM - DAY 1305

25

MELODY is sitting alone in the staff room with an uneaten
 sandwich on the table in front of her. She is wracking her
 brains over the mysterious case.

GEORGE flounces in and heads for the kettle. After putting
 it on and popping a teabag in a mug, she turns round and is
 surprised to find MELODY there.

GEORGE
 Oh, you startled me!

MELODY

Sorry.

GEORGE

How long have you been sat there?

She notices the worried look on MELODY's face and goes over to her.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Are you all right?

MELODY

Not really.

GEORGE

What's up, chuck? You were all bright and breezy this morning. Something happened?

MELODY

You could say that.

GEORGE sits down with her at the table. She looks disdainfully at the limp homemade sandwich.

GEORGE

Don't suppose a lettuce sandwich'll help much.

MELODY

George, can I ask you something?

GEORGE

Course you can. Fire away.

She picks up MELODY's sandwich and takes a bite. As MELODY talks, she grimaces and looks around for the bin.

MELODY

Do you ever wonder if your patients are taking you for a ride? Medically, I mean.

GEORGE has failed to locate the bin and surreptitiously spits the mouthful out into her hand, which she hides under the table.

MELODY (CONT'D)

It's just that I've heard of cases of hypochondria, and I know it can be linked to mental disorders, but what if somebody was actually trying to pull the wool over your eyes? What would you do about it?

GEORGE
Trouble diagnosing?

MELODY
Not just that. The patient won't
even go for further tests.

GEORGE
Doesn't sound much like
hypochondriasis to me.

MELODY
Then what?

GEORGE
(shrugging)
Hard to tell without more
information. Do you want a second
opinion?

MELODY shakes her head.

MELODY
Bit late now. (Beat) Maybe I'm
overreacting.

GEORGE
Maybe.

MELODY
It's just - I can't help feeling
there's something I'm missing. I
mean, simple diagnosis is one of
the first things you learn at
medical school, isn't it? Do the
initial tests, come up with a
hypothesis, test it against the
facts.

GEORGE
Except there are no facts.

MELODY
Exactly. Which leaves me where?

GEORGE
(shrugging again)
Can't help you there, I'm afraid.

MELODY comes to a decision and dismisses her anxieties.

MELODY
Oh, stuff it! I'm a good doctor,
aren't I? I'd spot the symptoms
if there was something serious
going on.
(In fake New York
accent)
(MORE)

MELODY (CONT'D)
 And if there ain't no symptoms,
 there ain't no disease.

GEORGE looks uncertain.

GEORGE
 Unless...

MELODY is cut short again.

MELODY
 What?

GEORGE
 Are you sure you've checked
 everything?

MELODY
 Everything I can, yes.

GEORGE
 Cos some people can be very good
 at disguising their illnesses.

MELODY
 Then why go to see a doctor?

GEORGE
 Maybe they weren't given the
 choice. Maybe it was for show -
 for someone else's benefit?

This makes MELODY think hard.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
 Take a tip from me. You want to
 be careful of writing patients
 off as hypochondriacs. You never
 know when a real disease is going
 to come back and bite you on the
 bum.

GEORGE gets up and goes off in search of a bin, leaving
 MELODY back where she started - anxious and mystified.

26

INT. THE WESLEYS' KITCHEN - DAY 1310

26

WILLIAM is now peeling potatoes as his mother and father
 fret around him.

WILLIAM
 I've told you, there's nothing
 wrong with me.

RICHARD

(angrily)

Then what are you doing back here, boy? Fetch your kitbag from your pit and get back to headquarters p.d.q.

MIRANDA

Leave him alone, Richard.

RICHARD

And don't you start telling me what to do in my own home.

MIRANDA

(surprised and hurt)

Richard!

RICHARD

Ye gods! It's as if I've suddenly become invisible. Was Arthur the only person in this family who understood how to obey an order?

(Waving dismissively towards WILLIAM)

Look at him - useless lump. Doesn't even know how to peel a potato.

This is the final straw. WILLIAM breaks.

WILLIAM

(yelling at Richard)

Stop it, Dad! Stop it!

RICHARD is taken aback at the outburst.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

This isn't about Arthur. This isn't about obeying orders. This isn't even - believe it or not, Dad - about you.

He slams the potato peeler down on the chopping board.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

It may come as a total surprise after all your years doing things 'the Army way', but actually, out there in the real world, there's more than one way of doing things. And if I want to peel the potatoes with a peeler then I will. I don't care if Arthur was the best potato peeler in the world and always did it with a knife. I'm not Arthur. I never have been and I never will be.

WILLIAM suddenly stops his rant, his eyes glaze over and he collapses in a heap on the kitchen floor.

MIRANDA
William! William!

She dashes to his side.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
(To RICHARD)
Quick - call Dr Bell. Tell her
it's an emergency.

27 INT. MELODY'S CONSULTING ROOM - DAY 1315

27

MELODY sits at her desk with a mug of coffee in front of her. She's staring vacantly at the computer screen when the phone rings, making her jump. After a moment, she picks it up.

MELODY
(into phone)
What is it Vivien? (Beat)
(Frowning)
Yes, put him through. (Beat)
Major Wesley?

As she listens, she becomes increasingly concerned.

MELODY (CONT'D)
Did he hurt himself in the fall?
(Beat) OK. And you've put him in
the recovery position? Right.
Cover him with a blanket. I'll be
there as fast as I can.

28 EXT. LETHERBRIDGE PARK - DAY 1320

28

A breathless JOE is still pursuing his walk manfully when a stupidly grinning ARCHIE whizzes past again - this time in the opposite direction.

29 EXT. THE WESLEYS' HOUSE - DAY 1335

29

MELODY pulls up in her car and hurries to the front door with her doctor's bag. MIRANDA, expecting her, has the door open ready.

30 INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 1336

30

WILLIAM is sitting up on the sofa covered with a blanket and sipping at some tea. RICHARD is pacing among the memorabilia impatiently.

MELODY enters the room, followed by an anxious MIRANDA.

MELODY
Oh, you're awake then?

MIRANDA
Came round soon after we phoned
you. We thought it best if you
still had a look.

MELODY
Of course.

She waits for RICHARD and MIRANDA to leave the room but
neither moves.

MELODY (CONT'D)
Would you mind... waiting in the
other room?

RICHARD looks as if he's about to erupt, but MIRANDA steps
in.

MIRANDA
Richard - I think we could both
do with a cuppa ourselves.

She motions to him and they both leave. MELODY perches on
the sofa beside WILLIAM and puts her medical bag down on
the low table in front of it.

MELODY
How are you feeling?

WILLIAM
A bit better, thanks.

MELODY looks around the room and its contents, taking it
all in.

MELODY
Pretty impressive stuff.

WILLIAM nods but keeps his eyes cast down.

MELODY (CONT'D)
I hope they're proud of you.

WILLIAM
Me? Oh, they're not mine.

MELODY
(confused)
But I thought - isn't that you in
the photos?

WILLIAM
(shaking his head)
My brother Arthur.

MELODY
Oh. I didn't -

WILLIAM
He died in Afghanistan. Two years ago.

MELODY
I'm sorry.

WILLIAM
Yeah. Me too. It kind of put the spotlight on me.

MELODY looks surprised and rather shocked, and he catches the look.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Oh, don't get me wrong. I loved my brother. We were really close. Did everything together till he signed up.

MELODY
And then?

WILLIAM
Then we hardly saw him. Within a few months of joining up he was on active duty in Helmand. Caught a sniper's bullet and...

He shrugs, resigned. He came to terms with it a long time ago.

MELODY
Is that why you joined the Army?

WILLIAM
Didn't really have much choice. You've met my Dad.

MELODY
But it wasn't what you wanted.

WILLIAM is starting to feel uncomfortable talking about this.

MELODY (CONT'D)
It's OK, you don't have to talk to me about it. But it might be worth trying to talk to them.

WILLIAM

Any suggestions on how you talk
to someone who won't listen?

MELODY smiles sympathetically and opens her bag, pulling
out a portable blood pressure gauge.

MELODY

I'm going to run those tests, you
know. Whether you like it or not.

31

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE RECEPTION - DAY 1340

31

VIVIEN is filing patients' folders when JOE staggers in,
breathing heavily and clearly very unfit. She's initially
amused.

VIVIEN

Good lunch, Dr Fenton?

JOE

Now's not the time, Vivien.

VIVIEN

(more concerned)

Are you feeling all right?

JOE

I'll be fine in a minute. Just a
little... out of condition,
that's all.

VIVIEN

What on earth have you been up
to?

MICHELLE appears from the staff room and catches the gist
of the conversation. She hangs back out of sight and
carries on listening.

JOE

Power-walking.

VIVIEN

I thought you were going out for
a nice lunch?

JOE

Change of plan.

VIVIEN

Well from the look of it, this
power-walking doesn't seem to be
doing you much good. Do you have
to do it?

JOE
Oh yes, can't back out now.

VIVIEN
Back out?

JOE
My honour's at stake. Or at least
my hundred quid.

VIVIEN
(dismayed)
Are you doing this for some kind
of bet?

JOE
(nodding)
Archie, yes.

VIVIEN
Not that macho posturing from
earlier?

JOE
I prefer to think of it as the
Alpha males of the tribe
jockeying for supremacy.

VIVIEN
You can think what you like, Dr
Fenton. From here it looks like a
couple of juveniles winding each
other up.

JOE
You say potato, Vivien...

Out on MICHELLE, smiling to herself. She's got a plan.

32

INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 1345

32

MELODY is coming to the end of the same round of tests she
completed earlier. She's putting her stethoscope away after
listening to WILLIAM's chest.

MELODY
Well, I have to admit you've got
me rather puzzled, young man.
Can't find anything wrong with
you.
(Trying to make light of
it)
And I have the cheek to call
myself a doctor.

WILLIAM smiles but he's not really amused. He just wants
her to go.

WILLIAM

Ah well. Better luck with your next patient.

MELODY

Oh, I don't give up that easily. Next phase in the battle...

She opens her medical bag again.

MELODY (CONT'D)

A blood test.

WILLIAM suddenly becomes agitated.

WILLIAM

No, no. I don't want a blood test.

MELODY

But if I take a sample now, I can get it sent off to St Phil's -

WILLIAM

(very excitable)

I told you, I don't want a blood test.

MELODY reaches into her bag and pulls out a large syringe.

MELODY

It's nothing to be afraid of. You must have had one for your Army medical -

She turns to look at WILLIAM, but one glimpse of the syringe and he's passed out on the sofa.

As if pricked by the needle herself, MELODY suddenly understands.

33

INT. THE WESLEYS' KITCHEN - DAY 1350

33

RICHARD and MIRANDA are sitting in worried silence at the kitchen table with a pot of tea between them and a cup each.

A smiling MELODY breezes in from the living room. She pauses when she encounters the grim-looking pair.

MELODY

Oh, sorry. I just came to get William a glass water.

MIRANDA

Go ahead, love.

RICHARD
If you think it'll help.

MELODY
Oh, I think so.

She goes to the sink and fills a glass she finds on the drainer.

RICHARD
(sarcastically)
You've worked out what it is,
then?

MIRANDA
Richard!

RICHARD
Well! How can they expect to give
their patients proper care if
they let this slip of a girl out
to do home visits?

MIRANDA
She's not a girl. She's fully
trained.
(To MELODY)
Aren't you, dear?

MELODY
Well, not quite -

RICHARD
See? No wonder this country's
going to the dogs. We're left in
the hands of novices and
meanwhile I've got a son in there
whining and whimpering about
nothing.

MELODY
I'm sorry, Mr Wesley -

RICHARD
Major Wesley, if you don't mind.

MELODY
(correcting herself, but
still forceful)
I'm sorry, Major Wesley, but I
don't have to listen to this.

RICHARD
What?

MELODY

I've come here today in my professional capacity to visit a patient. I don't have to put up with abuse of any kind, and I certainly don't have to listen to my credentials being called into question. Now if you don't mind, my patient wants to see me.

She goes to the door with the glass in her hand. RICHARD, almost apoplectic at the way he's been spoken to, gets up to follow her.

She turns back and cuts him dead.

MELODY (CONT'D)

In confidence.

34

INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 1355

34

MELODY comes in with the glass of water and smiles sweetly at WILLIAM, conscious again but still laid out on the sofa.

WILLIAM

I thought I heard raised voices.

MELODY

Just having a little chat with your Dad.

WILLIAM starts to react but she holds up a placatory hand.

MELODY (CONT'D)

Not about you - don't worry. I thought you should be the one to hear about that.

WILLIAM

Hear what?

MELODY perches beside him on the sofa again. Her voice is calm and reassuring.

MELODY

I think you've been having vasovagal attacks.

WILLIAM

Vaso - what?

MELODY

Don't panic. It's actually a very common cause of fainting in perfectly healthy people, so you can relax.

WILLIAM

There is something wrong with me,
then?

MELODY

You could put it that way, if you
want. I'd say it's more of a
nuisance than an illness. If you
want the full medical
description, it's a temporary
loss of consciousness due to
sudden slowing of the heartbeat,
usually brought on by severe
pain... or stress.

WILLIAM

Stress?

MELODY

Ring any bells? Parade ground?
Square-bashing?

WILLIAM

Dad!

RICHARD has appeared at the living room door, his face like
thunder.

35

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE RECEPTION - DAY 1400

35

ARCHIE arrives back from his lunchtime bike ride and enters
the surgery, taking off his cycle helmet.

VIVIEN looks up from the reception desk.

VIVIEN

Ah, the other half of the double
act.

ARCHIE

I'm sorry?

VIVIEN

Morecambe and Wise? Cannon and
Ball?

(She pulls a face)

Ant and Dec?

ARCHIE throws her a bewildered look.

VIVIEN (CONT'D)

Comedy double acts. I gather
Fenton and Hallam are the latest
pair to give us all a laugh.

ARCHIE
I'm sorry, Vivien, I have no idea
what you're talking about.

He begins to pass her, heading for the staff room.

VIVIEN
You know you're in danger of
killing him, don't you?

ARCHIE laughs derisively and keeps on walking. VIVIEN looks concerned.

36

INT. THE WESLEYS' LIVING ROOM - DAY 1405

36

RICHARD and MIRANDA have come through from the kitchen and are hovering in the doorway, anxious to know what's going on.

MELODY remains seated on the sofa beside WILLIAM, who's mustering up the courage to face his father.

RICHARD
(To MELODY)
Well?

MELODY
I'm sorry, Mr - Major Wesley. I
can't discuss William's case with
you.

WILLIAM
(interrupting)
It's OK, doctor. I'll tell him.

RICHARD
Tell me? Tell me what? Have you
found out what's wrong with the
boy?

WILLIAM
There's nothing wrong with me,
Dad. I keep telling you. I'm
fine. I've just been having
these...
(To MELODY)
What did you call them?

MELODY
Vasovagal attacks.

WILLIAM
That's it.

RICHARD
Which means what, exactly?

MELODY
 (quickly)
 Oh, it's not serious. It just
 means -

WILLIAM
 (evenly)
 It just means that when I'm under
 stress I'm likely to pass out.

RICHARD
 (exploding)
 Stress? What do you know about
 stress?

MELODY
 (losing patience)
 I know he's under a lot of it
 right now.

She indicates around the room.

MELODY (CONT'D)
 What do you think all this is
 doing to him? He already had you
 to live up to, now he's got to
 somehow prove he's as good as his
 dead brother?

She stops herself, realising she's probably overstepped the
 mark.

RICHARD is struggling to control himself but fortunately
 for everyone, MIRANDA steps in.

MIRANDA
 (To WILLIAM, very
 concerned)
 Oh darling! What have we been
 doing to you?

She hurries over to the sofa and gives WILLIAM a big,
 tearful hug. MELODY stands to give her space, and finds
 herself face-to-face with RICHARD.

RICHARD
 (strained)
 So you're saying we've caused
 this? His mother and me?

MELODY
 Not you. The whole situation.

RICHARD
 But he's got to be able to cope
 with a bit of stress. He's got
 his Army career to think of.

WILLIAM
No, Dad. I haven't.

RICHARD
What?

WILLIAM
I'm not going back.

RICHARD
But -

WILLIAM
No, Dad. These... vasovagal attacks just prove it's not for me. (Beat) Truth is, I don't think I ever wanted to be a soldier.

RICHARD begins to react to this bombshell but WILLIAM's started, so he'll finish.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
No, Dad, it's what you wanted, it's what Arthur wanted. The whole Army thing - it's all I've ever known, right from being a little kid. Arthur and me, we were always going to end up in the Army. There was never any question. It was all about honour. Obligation. I know that now. But I know something else, too. I never really wanted it. Not really.

MIRANDA
So what do you want, love?

WILLIAM
(hesitantly)
I don't know. (Beat) But I know I'm not going to be a soldier. I don't suppose I'm going to be a doctor either, if I faint every time I see a needle.

MELODY smiles.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
The point is, it's going to be me who decides, Dad. Me. (Beat) OK?

RICHARD
Why don't you at least see out your basic training, then see how you feel?

MIRANDA sees he's clutching at straws and gets up to go to him.

MIRANDA
Darling, it's not what he wants.
Surely you can see that?

RICHARD is lost for words and, probably for the first time, not in complete control of his family.

Out on MELODY: she can sense the sea-change in the dynamic.

37

INT. THE MILL HEALTH CENTRE STAFF ROOM - DAY 1530

37

JOE is making himself a much-needed coffee when ARCHIE bounces in, full of himself and in the mood for more taunting.

ARCHIE
So, do you just want to give me
the cash now and get it over
with?

JOE
Oh, ha ha. Very funny.

ARCHIE
Would save a lot of time and...
energy.

MICHELLE comes in behind ARCHIE but the two men are too busy to notice.

JOE
Don't think I'm not going to give
you a run for your money, because
I am.

MICHELLE
Run for your money? That's
exactly what I wanted to talk to
you about.

ARCHIE and JOE exchange a glance.

JOE/ARCHIE
Who?

MICHELLE
Both of you.

She moves between them, beside the low chairs, and puts a hand on each of their shoulders, forcing them to sit down side by side, while she stands over them.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

This bet of yours. Why not make
it a bit more interesting?

They look at each other again, then back at her.

JOE/ARCHIE

Go on.

MICHELLE

It's Children in Need on Friday,
isn't it? So why don't we have a
race, the two of you against each
other - say round the park - and
the loser gives their hundred
pounds to charity?

JOE and ARCHIE look at each other again, a spark of
competitiveness behind both their eyes. After a moment,
they nod at each other decisively. It's a deal!

HOOK: JOE and ARCHIE's bet is on.

END OF EPISODE