

# HOUSE

"The Kid"

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TEASER

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

MIKE HOWARD, a well-built guy in his late thirties, stares at his x-ray on a white box. A small key is visible in the stomach.

Enter his careworn fiancée, BECKY SULLIVAN carrying coffees, and her son CHRISTIAN, a cross-looking boy of about five.

MIKE

Well, there's your handiwork, kid.

BECKY

Mike, I am so, so sorry.

MIKE

You know, Becky, don't worry. The nurse gave me this.

(waves a small cup)

Said it would just take a few hours, but they're gonna keep me in for observation. And it's a good story for the wedding.

BECKY

Christian, what have you got to say for yourself?

Christian glowers in silence.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Say sorry to Mike.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not sorry.

MIKE

Just leave him. He's...

BECKY

No it's not okay, Mike. He fed you the key to the safe in a burger. He watched us hunt round for days looking for it so we could get our passports out to go to Mexico. Then he...

MIKE

Well, you've gotta admire his style.

CHRISTIAN

Go away!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BECKY

Christian! It's serious Mike.  
Anything could have happened, you  
might have choked, you could have  
ripped something, been poisoned,  
anything.

MIKE

You know, my stomach does hurt.

BECKY

Really? Do want me to get the  
nurse?

MIKE

No I told her already. It's  
nothing unusual.

BECKY

I just don't know what's got into  
him.

MIKE

Well, it's a big change for the  
kid. He's not the man of the house  
any more.

CHRISTIAN

Neither are you!

BECKY

That's enough, Christian! Go and  
wait outside!

Christian stomps off.

BECKY (CONT'D)

And please. Stay out of trouble.

INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE -- DAY

CUDDY welcomes a news crew into her office, DEE PHILLIPS, a  
young, go-getter reporter, and her scruffy cameraman, KIT  
MARSHALL.

DEE

Dee Phillips. Nice to meet you at  
last Dr. Cuddy.

CUDDY

And you.

DEE

This is my cameraman, Kit Marshall.

CUDDY

Well, welcome to Princeton  
Plainsboro.

(CONTINUED)

DEE

Thank you so much for having us.

CUDDY

It's good PR for us, a slot on the local news. We're proud of what we do here.

DEE

And I will do my best to reflect that, Dr. Cuddy, because I am proud too. Proud, I mean, of our institutions. Hence this series.

CUDDY

Good for you. It's refreshing.

DEE

You say that. But you would not believe the battle I've had with the network just to get this far.

CUDDY

I can imagine.

DEE

They want me to do mostly fluff pieces, dogs on surfboards, that sort of thing.

KIT

I liked that one. It was funny.

The two women look at him, then back at each other.

DEE

So anyway. It gives me the chance to get taken a bit more seriously. Not always easy for a woman in a man's world. And boy, is TV a man's world.

CUDDY

And it's not the only one. Anything I can do to help, let me know.

DEE

Thank you.

CUDDY

And really, just make us look good!

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

HOUSE slowly wipes the white board. He notices a shape, picks up a pen, and turns it into a devil. He steps back to admire his work, then goes back to his office.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

He picks up his yo-yo, and spins it, bored.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Christian checks back through the glass, and with nobody watching, darts off.

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY

The doors closing on him, Christian bangs some buttons, then jumps out. He wanders down the hallway, then stops in front of House's office.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

House plays intently with his yo-yo. After watching a while, Christian pushes through the door. House glances up briefly, then back to the yo-yo.

HOUSE

Go away.

The boy steps closer, reaches out and entangles his hand. House bundles him out the door and starts again. Christian pushes back through the door.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Which part of 'go away' don't you understand?

CHRISTIAN

Can you show me how to do that?

HOUSE

No. And again, go away.

The boy goes up and kicks House on his bad leg.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Ow! You little...!

He grabs Christian by the ear and pulls him into the hallway where a few people wander by.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

HOUSE

This kid belong to anyone? I'm not an appropriate adult and...

No response. House drags the boy off by the arm.

INT. ELEVATOR -- DAY

Cuddy is in the elevator. They get in.

CUDDY

House, what are you doing?

HOUSE

Lost kid. Getting rid of him.

CUDDY

Why don't you just ask him where he came from? Hey  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY (CONT'D)  
(she smiles kindly at  
the small lost boy)  
Where's your mommy and ...

CHRISTIAN  
(looks accusingly at  
House)  
He hurt me here and here.

HOUSE  
What! You lying little...! And you  
hurt me here!

CUDDY  
House! If you're bad with people,  
you're even worse with little  
people. And you should be in  
Clinic. Let me handle this.

At that moment, the doors open onto another floor.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Becky spies her son.

BECKY  
Christian! Thank god! Could you  
just for once do as mommy asks, and  
be good? I'm sorry, I hope he  
hasn't been any trouble.

HOUSE  
Well going by most definitions of  
trouble, I'd say...

CUDDY  
No trouble at all. But try and  
keep an eye on him.

House and Christian poke their tongues out at each other.

CUDDY (CONT'D)  
Hospitals are no place for small  
boys to wander around in.

Becky pulls her son out as House steps out too, turning to a  
smirking Cuddy.

HOUSE  
I see what you did there! You got  
me right and good!

The doors close.

INT. WILSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

House perches on Wilson's sofa, trying to knock things off  
the desk with his yo-yo. WILSON finally gives in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

House. We're not meeting for lunch till one. So I can't play now. Because I'm really busy.

HOUSE

I'm bored.

WILSON

You surprise me!

HOUSE

I haven't had a case for four days now. Cuddy sent Taub and 13 on some symposium, Foreman is working on a research paper. And Chase is somewhere making babies. Hold on, I might have made that last one up.

WILSON

So instead of torturing them, you thought you'd come and torture me? Here's an idea, why don't you catch up on your clinic duty?

HOUSE

I think I answered that when I said  
(shouting)  
I'm bored!

A PATIENT timidly knocks and Wilson waves him in.

WILSON

Much as I'd like to continue this discussion, I have work to do.

HOUSE

(to patient)

When he says work, he uses that term loosely to mean wearing a white coat, sleeping with nurses and saying things like you've got three weeks to live.

WILSON

House, go away!

House flicks the yo-yo at Wilson's forehead. Wilson pulls the toy off him.

WILSON (CONT'D)

Go away!

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - OUTER OFFICE -- DAY

House pours a coffee, then notices the white board covered in squiggles. In the office, Christian sits in his chair, playing with the Gameboy.



INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

House carries the boy like a briefcase by his belt and rounds the corner into Cuddy.

CUDDY

I'm the Dean of Medicine, not a childminder!

She grabs Christian and sets him upright.

CUDDY (CONT'D)

You! Didn't your mommy tell you to be good?

Christian stares at her solemnly.

CUDDY (CONT'D)

(to House)

And you! Didn't I tell you to do clinic duty! You've got no cases, so no excuses. So go!

CHRISTIAN

(to House)

Is she a witch?

Dressed in black, Cuddy does look a bit witch like.

HOUSE

Yes, she is an evil witch. And she has evil plans which must be thwarted.

CUDDY

House, shut up, just go and do your clinic duty, and you young man, come with me.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Cuddy checks the room then leads the boy inside, where Mike is sleeping.

CUDDY

I found him in the hallway. If you could just make sure, he doesn't...

BECKY

Oh thank you so much. He gets bored, wanders off and just gets himself into trouble. He doesn't mean any harm. Say thank you to the nice lady, Christian.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not saying thank you. She's an evil witch. That man said so.

(CONTINUED)

BECKY

Christian! I'm, I'm so sorry. He's grouchy when he hasn't eaten. Christian, say sorry.

Silence.

CUDDY

Just try and keep him under control.

She leaves. The mother looks down exasperated.

BECKY

Don't ruin this for me, Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Sorry mommy.

BECKY

I know, I know. It will all work out. Christian, Mike's not a bad person, and...

CHRISTIAN

He is a bad person.

BECKY

Sweetheart, I know he's not your dad, but...

CHRISTIAN

He wants you; he doesn't want me.

BECKY

Of course he does, Christian! But you're not making it easy.

Christian stares at the floor.

BECKY (CONT'D)

Now. I'm going to get some doughnuts. So stay here like a good boy, and if Mike wakes up...

CHRISTIAN

I don't like doughnuts.

BECKY

Mike likes doughnuts. I'll get us something else. So if Mike wakes up, tell him I'll be back soon. And be a good boy.

She kisses him on the head and leaves. After a pause, Christian pulls out a board pen and looks across to Mike.

EXT. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY -- DAY

Dee and Kit set up for some location shots.

DEE

(mimicking Kit)

Surfing dogs. They're funny! You know what, Kit, if you could be less of a Neanderthal, that would be great.

KIT

Hey, chill. I was just saying people like that stuff.

DEE

And I've got a Masters in journalism from Georgetown.

KIT

Okay! Jeez!

DEE

Yeah, jeez. So I send in my resume, they say lose 20 pounds, get a nose job, and you can start as the weather girl.

KIT

I was just saying.

DEE

And I'm just saying, Kit. I'm done with the pets-do-the craziest-things crap.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

As House approaches his office, he hears yelling. Christian hurtles past and ducks into his office.

MIKE (O.S.)

You're gonna to pay for this one, kiddo! Can't hide all the time!

A furious Mike wheezes round the corner, with a crudely drawn moustache and glasses, and the words, 'Stoopid' on his forehead. He comes face to face with House.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Outta my way.

HOUSE

Of course. You probably need to teach the little tyke a lesson.

MIKE

And who the hell are you?

(CONTINUED)

**CONTINUED:**

Just then, Becky comes running up. Mike unclenches, turns sheepish. House watches him.

BECKY

What happened? I just left him for five minutes Mike. I..oh!

She tries not to laugh as she sees Mike's face.

MIKE

Yeah I know. Quite a character your son. And now I've got a nosebleed again. I'm falling apart here!

He laughs as Becky hands him a tissue.

BECKY

I'm sorry. You poor thing. Let's get you back.

(turning to House)

Sorry, you brought my boy back before. I'm sure you're a very busy man, but if you see him, we're in room 217.

HOUSE

Um..

He looks back into his office.

BECKY

And thank you. You're very kind.

(to Mike)

Christian'll come round Mike. He's a sweetheart really.

MIKE

Kids. What you gonna do.

Mike flashes House a look as they leave.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

House goes back in, and bends down to look under his desk. Christian sits there with the Gameboy.

HOUSE

You can't stay here.

CHRISTIAN

Just for a little while? He's kinda mad cos I fed him a key, and then drew all over his face.

HOUSE

I saw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

He doesn't like me.

HOUSE

Saw that too. Good luck with that one.

CHRISTIAN

I'll just sit here and wait for a little bit if that's okay.

House sighs, then spots Cuddy coming. He grabs Christian, pulls him onto the balcony, just as Cuddy enters.

CUDDY

House! I've seen you. It's no use hiding. I want my clinic hours!

EXT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - BALCONY -- DAY

House realizes he's trapped.

HOUSE

If you want me to save you from evil dad...

CHRISTIAN

He's not my dad.

HOUSE

Whatever. And from evil witch, you've got to trust me.

CHRISTIAN

Okay.

CUDDY (O.S.)

House!

House grabs the boy by his ankle and dangles him over the balcony, four floors up. Cuddy sticks her head through the door.

CUDDY (CONT'D)

Clinic duty. Now. You were supposed to be there hours ago. What are you doing?

HOUSE

Hiding.

CUDDY

Well, you do know I can see you, right? You lose. So clinic duty. Again, you lose.

HOUSE

But my question is, what are we playing and why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cuddy shakes her head and turns to go.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

She walks briskly out just as Wilson comes in holding House's yo-yo. Cuddy eyes it wearily.

CUDDY  
(yelling over her  
shoulder)  
I'm not playing! I mean it!

Wilson walks out onto the balcony.

EXT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - BALCONY -- DAY

WILSON  
What aren't you playing and can I  
not play too? Here, you left this.

He holds out the yo-yo, then notices House is strangely immobile.

WILSON (CONT'D)  
Are you alright House? Did I  
interrupt something?

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)  
Can I come up now? My head feels  
funny.

Stunned, Wilson looks over the balcony. House pulls the boy back up and unperturbed, they both straighten their clothes. Wilson follows them inside, words failing him.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

WILSON  
All right. I give up. Why were  
you holding a small boy over a  
balcony, 100 feet up?

HOUSE  
Because it would have been stupid  
to drop him. Small boys, velocity  
and sidewalks don't mix.

WILSON  
House, even you must know that's  
irresponsible! Anything could have  
happened!

HOUSE  
But anything didn't happen!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

Right, well I'm taking him back to someone who presumably doesn't hang him over a fourth floor balcony. Call me old fashioned, but I think that's the key to good parenting.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not going back!

House goes back over to the door and checks outside.

HOUSE

Relax Wilson! He's just hiding from his mom's angry boyfriend. Cuddy would have been all by-the-book and laws-of-the-state about it.

WILSON

How unreasonable of her! House, you can't...

CHRISTIAN

I'm hungry.

HOUSE

See, the kid's hungry. I'll take him down to the cafeteria, shove some junk food into him, and get him back in 20 minutes, everybody happy.

WILSON

I thought we were supposed to be going for lunch.

HOUSE

Well, come with.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not going if he's going.

WILSON

What? Why can't I go?

CHRISTIAN

Just cos.

WILSON

Listen kid, me and him had an arrangement. You can't just butt in and...

HOUSE

Oh for Christ sake, Wilson, we were going for lunch, not on a date!

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

It's not that, it's...Never mind.  
This is ridiculous. I'm being  
blown off by a five year old.

CHRISTIAN

Can we go?

HOUSE

(to Wilson)

I don't know, can we?

WILSON

Okay, but don't do anything life  
threatening.

HOUSE

Yes mom, and we'll be back before  
dark.

Christian giggles. Wilson sighs and leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Christian trots to keep up. House suddenly slows down and  
pats his pockets.

HOUSE

Listen kid, that idiot guy in the  
white coat has got all my money, so  
we'll have to, you know, play make  
believe, pretend. Well, lie  
actually. Have you ever done that,  
make belie..?

CHRISTIAN

(cuts in)

All the time.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA -- DAY

Christian, now dressed in a hospital gown, drip lurching  
behind, holds out an apple to the CASHIER. Further back,  
House piles food onto a tray.

CHRISTIAN

I've got cancer. Mommy's talking to  
the doctor man now.

The cashier bites back tears. Meanwhile, at full stretch,  
House uses his cane to push a ridiculously laden tray along  
the bars.

CASHIER

You take whatever you like,  
sweetheart. On the house.

Christian gestures to the tray coming to rest beside him.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

Okay, I'll have this please.

HOUSE

I've got a cane and he's got cancer, so if you could get that, that would be great.

They make for one of the tables. The cashier follows, slams the tray down.

CHRISTIAN

What's your name?

HOUSE

House.

CHRISTIAN

I'm Christian, but my mom sometimes calls me a handful, and Mike calls me a little shit, But not when Mom's around though.

HOUSE

Mike's your stepdad?

CHRISTIAN

He will be when they get married tomorrow.

(pauses)

Do you want to see my pet snake?

HOUSE

You brought a snake into a hospital?

CHRISTIAN

He goes out with me sometimes and I keep him in a bag. He likes it cos it's warm.

House spots Cuddy coming into the cafeteria.

HOUSE

Bandits at 12 o'clock! Quick, move!

Christian nips into another seat as Cuddy storms up.

CUDDY

House! This is the last time!

(staring at food)

Are you going to eat all that?

HOUSE

Absolutely.

CUDDY

Well, you've got ten minutes, then Clinic.

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE

Tell you what, why don't we fight  
for it? You and me, mano a mano?  
Now. Outside. Loser takes all  
those annoying clinic hours.

CUDDY

No offence  
(indicating House's  
leg)  
But I don't think anyone would take  
any bets on you.

HOUSE

Huh. I could take you down.

CUDDY

No you couldn't. And by the way,  
there's a news crew here, so just  
stay out of their way. Just to be  
on the safe side.

HOUSE

If you want to be on the safe side,  
don't invite in a news crew.

CUDDY

You do your job. I'll do mine.

As she leaves, Christian peers round, then slips back into  
his seat.

CHRISTIAN

Has the witch lady gone? Do you  
want to see Henry now?

HOUSE

Who's Henry?

CHRISTIAN

My snake.

He extracts a delicate orange and black snake from his  
clothes and hands it to House.

HOUSE

Corn snake. Harmless unfortunately.  
He's a beauty.

CHRISTIAN

Mike hates him.

EXT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Kit checks the exterior footage. He frowns and nudges Dee.

KIT

Hey Dee, look at this.

(CONTINUED)

They watch House hang Christian over the balcony.

DEE  
That could be a story.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA -- DAY

House holds the snake thoughtfully.

HOUSE  
Kid, I'm going to need to borrow  
your snake.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Cuddy looks up from her desk and is puzzled to see Kit and Dee waiting outside.

CUDDY

Hi. I didn't expect to see you two back so soon. Is everything alright?

DEE

Of course. You really have a fine hospital here.

CUDDY

I'm glad you think so.

DEE

However, we did film this a short while ago.

Kit flips open the camera viewfinder.

DEE (CONT'D)

And I thought you should see it.

Cuddy watches the footage and Dee watches Cuddy.

CUDDY

That really does not look good. So thank you for bringing it to my attention.

DEE

Not at all.

CUDDY

I will get right on it.

DEE

Do you know who it is?

CUDDY

Um no. It's quite difficult to make out, isn't it?

DEE

Should be easy enough to find the place though. Just count along and up. Fourth floor somewhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY

You know, I think you're right.  
And can I just say, this is in no  
way typical.

DEE

And I never thought it was.

CUDDY

It's probably just someone from the  
Psych Ward.

Cuddy bites her lip at her tactlessness.

CUDDY (CONT'D)

I'll need to deal with it. So if  
you don't mind.

She stands to ushers them out.

CUDDY (CONT'D)

So how is the filming going?

DEE

Well, I think. Lot's to go on.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Dee walks briskly down the hallway, Kit in her wake.

DEE

She knew who that was. And it  
wasn't someone from the Psych Ward.

INT. WILSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

Wilson, napkin tucked in, faces an irate Cuddy.

CUDDY

..and now it's on tape!

WILSON

Oh. That's not good.

CUDDY

'Not good' is precisely what  
happens if you let House wander  
round the hospital with some kid!  
Why didn't you go with them?

WILSON

I wanted to. They wouldn't let me!

CUDDY

Wouldn't let you! Or they'd what?  
Steal your pens!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

I...Look, anyway, do you think this news crew are going to follow it up?

CUDDY

Not sure. Don't think so. It's just a cub reporter, ex weather girl. She's hardly a pro.

WILSON

Hmm.

CUDDY

You know, I wouldn't put it past House to have done this deliberately. He's been spoiling for a fight all week.

WILSON

My advice, don't get into a fight with House. He never loses. Friends yes, the plot yes. Fights no. Could you pass the mayo?

Cuddy hands it over, distracted.

WILSON (CONT'D)

This is the kind of thing he does when he hasn't got anything to do.

CUDDY

He has got something to do! He's got about a million clinic hours!

WILSON

I doubt he's bored enough yet to go to clinic.

INT. CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #1 -- DAY

House strides into the exam room. A golden haired child, TANYA sits on the table, her immaculate mother, MRS BENTON close by. House rummages around his inside pocket, eventually pulling out a pen.

HOUSE

What seems to be the problem?

MRS. BENTON

Well, I don't know. That's why I came here. To ask a doctor.

HOUSE

Good instincts. Okay then. Symptoms?

The snake meanwhile, slides out of House's sleeve. Tanya freezes in terror. House switches his gaze to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. BENTON

She's just very lethargic. First  
she had a cold, then a cough, and  
now she's lost her voice. I'm  
worr...

Tanya empties her lungs, leaps off the table and runs  
screaming out of the room.

HOUSE

And she's cured! I really am that  
good!

Then the mother notices the snake.

MRS. BENTON

(choked whisper)

Snake! Snake!

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Dee and Kit are by the elevator and hear a screaming child.  
Kit instinctively starts filming.

INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

The mother points back into the exam room as the wailing  
Tanya tries to drag her away.

MRS. BENTON

Snake!

From the exam room, there's a yelp of pain from House.

HOUSE (O.S.)

The little sucker bit me!

The waiting room is frozen. House staggers out, clutching  
his neck.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

It's okay, folks. It's just a  
harmless corn snake!

(he staggers a little  
more, his voice  
faltering)

At least, I think it is. It's easy  
to mix up with the much rarer,  
highly venomous...

He slumps to the floor in a dead faint, and right on cue,  
the orange and black snake slithers across the floor.  
Pandemonium breaks out, as patients hurtle to the door.

In the chaos, Christian spies his snake slide off and  
scrambles after it.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Kit lowers his camera. Unnoticed, House gets up and ducks out.

KIT  
What the hell was that about?

A panting, HEAVY SET GUY nearby turns to him.

HEAVY SET GUY  
Snake in there! Orange and black mother!

DEE  
Really! What happened?

HEAVY SET GUY  
Bit this doctor in less than 10 seconds, he hit the deck.

Dee looks across to the empty clinic reception.

DEE  
So where is he?

HEAVY SET GUY  
Uh, they probably took him to ER. He looked pretty bad.

KIT  
(unconvinced)  
That was quick.

HEAVY SET GUY  
Sure was.

Cuddy arrives, sees the chaos and the news crew. She heads across to them, trying to look friendly.

CUDDY  
You know, normally nothing happens, but I guess this is just one of those days! This is probably just a fire alarm or something.

HEAVY SET GUY  
Don't think so lady. You've got a serious reptile problem.

CUDDY  
Excuse me?

HEAVY SET GUY  
Snake on the loose. Should maybe clear this whole area.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

CUDDY

A snake? Well it's probably just a grass snake. We do get them this time of...

HEAVY SET GUY

Saw it myself. That weren't no grass snake. Bout so long.

He demonstrates, exaggerating. Cuddy rolls her eyes.

CUDDY

And you know about snakes do you?

HEAVY SET GUY

I hunt ma'am, so yes I do. And I'd say going by its distinctive dark banding, that you've got yourself a copperhead. AKA Highland Moccasin. AKA death adder.

The word 'death' hangs in the air.

CUDDY

Oh please!

HEAVY SET GUY

Well, you know, that guy did collapse just after he was bitten. Or maybe he just fell over.

CUDDY

Bitten? Someone got bitten and collapsed? You saw that?

HEAVY SET GUY

Sure did.

Cuddy looks unconvinced.

DEE

Actually Dr. Cuddy. I think we got it on tape. Again. Kit?

Kit rewinds back through the footage.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

A tearful Christian looks up at House.

CHRISTIAN

I want Henry. He needs me.

HOUSE

Look, I need to get you...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

It was all those people, shouting.  
He doesn't like noise, he gets  
scared!

HOUSE

Right, I should've...

CHRISTIAN

And he's hungry! I haven't fed him  
for days! Mike wouldn't take me to  
the pet store!

Christian is genuinely heartbroken.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

We've never been apart before! I  
want Henry!

HOUSE

Listen, he's probably just slipped  
under one of these doors and is  
hiding where it's dark and quiet.  
We just have to look for him.

CHRISTIAN

Okay.

HOUSE

And if he's hungry, maybe we can  
tempt him out with something. What  
does he eat?

Christian wipes his eyes at the thought of a plan.

CHRISTIAN

Pinkies.

HOUSE

Your snake eats little fingers?

CHRISTIAN

No! Baby mice. They're called  
pinkies. But you can only get them  
at the pet store.

Christian looks tearful again at being thwarted. House  
thinks, then smiles.

HOUSE

Not necessarily, you wait here in  
case Henry appears. I'll be back in  
five minutes.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

Cuddy watches the footage of House and tries to keep her  
composure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIT

Isn't that the same guy as before,  
you know with the kid?

DEE

You know, you might be right!

KIT

Same dark suit, blue shirt.

DEE

What do you think, Dr. Cuddy, do  
you recognize him? He was the  
doctor in the clinic, so he must be  
one of your staff.

CUDDY

Erm.

DEE

Hold on, he can't be a doctor  
because they all wear white coats,  
right?

Cuddy is beginning to weary of Dee.

HEAVY SET GUY

Well, the guy was sure acting like  
a doctor, you know, treating  
patients. That girl and her mom  
came screaming out of the his exam  
room.

DEE

Well, is he one of your doctors or  
not?

INT. LAB -- DAY

House looks through a glass aquarium at the mice inside.  
Next to him is a LAB ASSISTANT.

LAB ASSISTANT

No you can't. We're monitoring  
them.

HOUSE

But for an LD50 test right? So  
they're dead anyway.

LAB ASSISTANT

Unfortunately yes. You know the  
rules of medical trials. We need to  
test for toxicity, so I won't be  
made to feel guilty, Dr. House.

HOUSE

I know, the greater good, blah,  
blah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAB ASSISTANT

Yes. The greater good.

HOUSE

Absolutely.

House picks up the glass box and exits.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY -- DAY

An agitated Becky comes into the lobby, starts to go towards reception, then spots Cuddy, still with the news crew, and rushes towards her.

BECKY

Have you seen my son? You brought him back last time, remember, he was wearing jeans, yellow sweatshirt? I can't find him anywhere!

Before Cuddy can answer, Dee makes the connection.

DEE

Yellow sweatshirt, small kid?

BECKY

Yes, have you seen him?

CUDDY

I think we need to talk in my office.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

House hands a dead mouse to Christian. As the boy places it on the floor, his sweatshirt rides up.

House frowns, then pushes the sweatshirt further up with his cane, revealing a large, vivid bruise.

HOUSE

Mike do that?

CHRISTIAN

Uh huh.

HOUSE

Mom know about it?

CHRISTIAN

Nope. She'd be sad. I don't want her to be sad.

HOUSE

You stay here and see if Henry turns up. I'm going to pay boyfriend a visit.

INT. CUDDY'S OFFICE -- DAY

In horror, the mother watches the footage of House and Christian on the balcony.

BECKY

My son! Please don't let anyone hurt my son!

CUDDY

I'm sure that won't happen, Mrs. Sullivan. I believe that the man on tape is Dr. House, one of our best doctors. Now, I don't know what he is up to, but I can assure you that...

DEE

Dr. House with the drug problem?  
Dr. House who was committed?

CUDDY

Yes...No! Look, I trust House implicitly. He would do nothing to endanger a young boy.

DEE

He hung him off a fourth floor balcony! He's got a snake!

BECKY

This doctor takes drugs and has been in an asylum? And he's got my son?

CUDDY

Believe me, it's not like that.  
(appealing directly to Becky)

I think House was just playing some prank to get out of clinic duty, and it's turned into all this chaos! But now he's got out of it, he'll just bring him back. He doesn't like children! I'm sorry, that didn't come out right. What I mean is, right now Christian is probably with er...

BECKY

Mike.

CUDDY

Mike. Why don't we go and see? I promise you, House might seem like a lunatic, but he would never hurt anyone.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

House scribbles on Mike's file. Mike still has the remnants of the pen markings on his over-scrubbed face.

MIKE

Didn't I see you before?

HOUSE

I'm Dr. House, the attending doctor. They called me when they saw this.

House points to the x-ray on the light box.

MIKE

I don't see nothing, except the key.

HOUSE

That's why I'm the doctor and you're the patient. There, see that shadow? Shouldn't be there.

House makes a perfunctory examination of Mike. As he pushes aside Mike's gown, he notices a rose colored rash on his chest. He looks puzzled.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

So we need to do some tests immediately, slightly unpleasant ones, I'm afraid.

(indicating the rash)

How long have you had that?

MIKE

Few days. Is it important?

House looks at Mike's chart, then feels his stomach. Mike flinches.

HOUSE

And the abdominal pains?

MIKE

Well, since that little twerp fed me the safe key. I didn't put it together at first, cos I didn't find out till I was looking for it, you know, the key. Then I knew it must be him, must have hidden it somewhere. Just didn't figure it was in me.

HOUSE

And the rash, is it itchy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

No, the nurse said it was probably a nickel allergy, reaction to the key. You think I'm sick?

House picks up Mike's wrist with its heavy sports watch.

HOUSE

I'm sure you'll be fine, but we'll run the tests just to be sure. These things are best caught early.

MIKE

So that shadow, it could be...?

House makes a 'C' sign with his hand, pulls a face, and slices his hand across his throat. Mike looks ashen. The nurse comes in and House hands her the file.

HOUSE

The nurse will see to everything.

INT. HOUSE'S OFFICE - INNER OFFICE -- DAY

House and Christian watch 'General Hospital' eating chips.

CHRISTIAN

I put all six mice out. Will that be enough?

HOUSE

Plenty. Henry will think it's snake Christmas.

They carry on watching TV and munching.

CHRISTIAN

See her? Rebecca?

HOUSE

You watch this show?

CHRISTIAN

Sure, with my mom. Rebecca's actually Emily, her twin. She's both, but not really if you see what I mean. It's just the same actress with a different haircut.

House laughs.

HOUSE

What? Do they think we're idiots!

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, I know!

(pause)

Have you done something bad to Mike? Is he dead?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

No, doctors have to swear not to kill people. But they can poke them with long metal pokey things, and they can make their poop glow in the dark.

CHRISTIAN

Cool!

HOUSE

And relax, Mike'll be fine. Though he might not be able to sit down for a few days.

Christian giggles. They carry on watching TV.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Cuddy looks at the file, then the nurse in disbelief. The news crew and Becky are with her.

CUDDY

An endoscopy, a colonoscopy and a barium meal? Who ordered these tests?

NURSE

Dr. House. Wanted them done right away, so I took Mr. Howard down immediately. I hope I've not done anything wrong.

CUDDY

No of course not.

DEE

I thought you said Dr. House would never hurt anybody?

CUDDY

These aren't dangerous tests! They're routine, but...

NURSE

He said there was a shadow on the x-ray.

Cuddy holds up the x-ray and frowns.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Christian skips down the hallway after House.

CHRISTIAN

We'll find Henry won't we? Then can we...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

HOUSE

Listen, sorry kid, I've got to get you back to your mom. She's probably worried about you. But I promise you I will find Henry.

CHRISTIAN

But I want to stay with you! Mom's with Mike and I don't want to be with Mike.

HOUSE

Yeah I get that. They been together long?

CHRISTIAN

Umm, few months, I guess. He met her at work.

HOUSE

And what does she do, your mom?

CHRISTIAN

She's a waitress. Now she says she won't have to work there anymore.

HOUSE

Huh.

CHRISTIAN

But I like it there, they give me nice food. And when I was sick, Jamal said she could stay at home and look after me, but they would still give her her money. He was my friend. We made planes together.

House slows down and looks slightly intrigued.

HOUSE.

Listen kid. I just want to check something, then I'll take you back.

CHRISTIAN

So I can stay with you?

HOUSE.

For a little while yes.

CHRISTIAN

Cool.

House sets off down the corridor, Christian in his wake, now attempting to mimic House's limp.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Mike is back. Cuddy is trying to get Kit to stop filming.

(CONTINUED)

CUDDY

Please, I really don't think this is appropriate. You should leave.

MIKE

No, I want this on tape! Your Dr. House threatens Becky's kid, then he runs weird tests on me, now him and Christian have disappeared? And he's some drugged up wacko?

BECKY

Mike, please!

CUDDY

This is not how it looks! This is normal for House!

DEE

I see. That's the hospital's position is it? Normal.

CUDDY

No!

MIKE

Boy, I am so going to make this hospital pay.

BECKY

Will someone please find my son! I want my son!

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Cuddy faces Dee outside Mike's room. Kit fiddles with his camera.

CUDDY

I think you should leave.

DEE

Actually, I don't need your permission to be here.

CUDDY

Why are you here, Ms. Phillips? And I mean, right here. Now.

DEE

Doing my job, Dr. Cuddy. What are you doing?

CUDDY

You know, I thought I was doing you a favour.

DEE

And it turns out you were. Thanks for that.

She leaves with Kit.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Wilson encounters House and Christian, in the hallway, Christian still mimicking House's limp

WILSON

House!

He catches up and looks in confusion at Christian.

WILSON (CONT'D)

I thought you were taking him back to his mom.

HOUSE

I was. I am. You stopped me.

WILSON

And why's he limping?

(to Christian)

Why are you limping?

Christian gives him a baleful stare.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

Because he's copying his hero who  
has a limp.

Wilson looks entirely sceptical. He bends down to talk to  
the boy.

WILSON

Did this man hurt you? Do you want  
to go back to mommy?

CHRISTIAN

It's the idiot man.

HOUSE

It is! You're right! This kid, I  
don't know, it's like he's Yoda or  
something. Great truth he speaks.  
He saw immediately that Cuddy was a  
witch and...

WILSON

Look never mind. Just take your  
mini me back. I need to talk to  
you about something else.

HOUSE

Okay.

WILSON

I had a cancer consult with a  
patient of yours, Mike Howard. He  
doesn't understand why he's having  
all these tests. And quite  
frankly, neither do I.

CHRISTIAN

Mike has got cancer?

WILSON

Mike? You know him?

HOUSE

It's stepdad-to-be.

CHRISTIAN

You gave Mike cancer?

HOUSE

What? No!

CHRISTIAN

I don't want him to die! I just  
don't want him to marry mom! He  
doesn't like me or Henry!

Christian is on the point of tears. Wilson looks  
increasingly confused.

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE

Listen, I haven't killed him! I'm not going to kill him! Wilson, tell him. He's very much alive isn't he?

WILSON

Very much. He was screaming blue murder and threatening to sue anyone who touched him.

HOUSE

See. That sounds like him doesn't it? I just got nurses to poke things into some holes.

WILSON

What!? So no hint of cancer whatsoever?

CHRISTIAN

So he's going to be okay?

HOUSE

Probably. But...never mind. He's fine.

WILSON

House, what on earth is going on?

Both his and House's pagers beep.

WILSON (CONT'D)

Oh, I forgot. Cuddy's after you.

HOUSE

She's just pissed because I haven't done my clinic hours.

WILSON

That and the fact that some news crew have some incriminating footage of you and the kid. They were outside filming.

HOUSE

Which is why you should never let in people with cameras.

WILSON

I'm just saying maybe don't add Mike to the mix.

HOUSE

Not my problem. And gotta go.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Rounding a corner, House sees Kit and Dee exit the lift. He grabs Christian by the collar and they back through some heavy double doors. After a pause, he looks out.

HOUSE

Coast clear. Let's go.

INT. MORGUE -- DAY

Behind him, Christian stares at a man's body laid out on a gurney, the whole chest cavity and abdomen pinned open, the heart in a steel dish nearby.

CHRISTIAN

Cool.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

CUDDY

Your son will be fine, Mrs. Sullivan. I'll track him down on the hospital CCTV. We'll have him back in no time.

BECKY

Thank you.

Mike is increasingly restless.

MIKE

I feel frigging lousy.

Cuddy checks the charts then Mike.

CUDDY

Something's not right.

BECKY

Is he okay?

MIKE

Hello?! Earth calling Becky? No, I am not okay! First your son, now that doctor. I feel like crap!

CUDDY

It doesn't make sense. We need to run some tests.

MIKE

Your crazy doctor already did that! He obviously did something to me, I don't know, slipped me a pill.

CUDDY

House wouldn't do that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Really? I think there's probably a lot of things he does that you don't know about.

CUDDY

I'll call the nurse.

BECKY

Mike! I'm worried about Christian. He's got Christian!

MIKE

And I'm sick, Becky. I'm sick. So who's your priority, me or your moron son?

Becky is stunned.

BECKY

Mike, I'm going with Dr. Cuddy. I want to find my moron son.

INT. MORGUE -- DAY

House walks up behind Christian. They look at the body.

HOUSE

Aren't you scared?

CHRISTIAN

Why would I be scared?

HOUSE

Well, most people when they see a dead body, get scared. I don't know why. It's the living that do the damage.

Christian pulls House in closer by the arm.

CHRISTIAN

What are all those things? Can I see?

House pulls up a stool and Christian clambers onto his lap. The boy looks down in amazement, and excitedly puts his hand in.

HOUSE

Whoa, easy! No touching!

Christian smears a bloody print on his sweatshirt.

CHRISTIAN

Am I like that too, inside?

HOUSE

We're all like that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

And what does it all do? What does that do?

HOUSE

That's the pancreas.

CHRISTIAN

And why do we need all that stuff?

HOUSE

Well, basically all that stuff is an engine. Cars need engines to go anywhere, and we need engines too. But instead of petrol, we put food in one end...

CHRISTIAN

(excitedly)

And it comes out as poop at the other end.

HOUSE

Exactly. But first, all the good stuff needs taking out. Food goes down the oesophagus, there, and into the stomach where proteins are broken down, then the small intestine absorbs the nutrients, while secretions from the pancreas here neutralize the stomach acids, and bile from the liver and gall bladder emulsify fats and help the enzymes. Then it's stored in the large intestine. And then, out comes poop, as you say. It's an ingenious design.

CHRISTIAN

Why did he die?

HOUSE

Good question. Probably that.

(he indicates the heart in the dish)

Again, just like a car, we need oxygen, sucked in through the lungs, those big things there, and pumped round in the blood by the heart.

CHRISTIAN

You know stuff.

HOUSE

I learn stuff. I think about stuff. And I look at stuff. For example, look at him. What do you see?

(CONTINUED)



CHRISTIAN

He's fat.

HOUSE

What else? Look at his fingers.

CHRISTIAN

They're yellowy there.

HOUSE

It's a nicotine stain from cigarettes. So he smoked and ate too much. What else? Is he the same color as me?

CHRISTIAN

He's kinda blue.

HOUSE

Because of too little oxygen. Given his smoking and general porking out, plaque built up in the coronary artery, then a section broke off. Result, blood clot and heart attack. Crying relatives, crying friends if he had any. Game over. No more him.

Christian strokes the man's arm.

CHRISTIAN

Do you think there were people crying for him?

HOUSE

A body can't tell you that. It can only tell you what's wrong physically. Examine the symptoms, identify the problem. Then fix the problem. If it's not too late.

House looks thoughtful for a while. Christian waits patiently on his lap, fiddling with House's cane.

HOUSE (CONT'D)

Except sometimes, there are no symptoms. That's the symptom. We need to go.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

As they exit, House sees the small handprint of blood on Christian's sweatshirt.

HOUSE

And mom doesn't need to see that.

House pulls the sweatshirt over the boy's head and dumps it in the garbage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE (CONT'D)

In fact, don't tell mom about the whole body thing. Or come to think of it, the hanging upside down thing. Actually the snake thing too. In fact, don't tell mom about anything. She might hit me.

CHRISTIAN

I'll just tell her you're my friend. Then she'll like you too.

House gets a bleep on his pager, and checks the message.

HOUSE

Christian, go check the hallway. We really don't want to meet anybody.

Christian scoots ahead and round the corner. House spots something out of the corner of his eye and bends to pick it up. Christian scampers back.

CHRISTIAN

Is it hard to be a doctor?

HOUSE

Um some of the time.

CHRISTIAN

Is it harder than being a sniper? I mean do you have to go to college for ages?

HOUSE

For which one, the doctor or the sniper?

CHRISTIAN

Both.

HOUSE

A doctor yes, a sniper I don't know.

CHRISTIAN

I thought you knew stuff.

HOUSE

Obviously not the right stuff.

CHRISTIAN

Mom says snipers are probably not nice people.

HOUSE

Has she met any?

CHRISTIAN

No.

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE

Then she doesn't know does she.  
It's just a supposition.

CHRISTIAN

What's a supposition?

HOUSE

Not based on evidence.

They both hobble off chatting as they go.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Kit and Dee hurry down the hallway.

DEE

Euugh! What is that! It's a goddam  
mouse!

KIT

Look there's another one.

DEE

Euugh. This hospital is a  
disgrace. Get that on tape, we'll  
nail them on their vermin problem  
too.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE -- DAY

Cuddy and Becky stand in a darkened room full of CCTV  
screens. A TECHNICIAN fiddles with monitors.

CUDDY

Can we track down House? He must  
be on one of these things.

TECHNICIAN

Well actually, a bunch aren't  
working. A power surge fried the  
circuits last week. I put in a  
maintenance request, but I guess no  
one read that memo.

CUDDY

Great!

BECKY

So we can't find him?

CUDDY

Have you seen Dr. House at all?

TECHNICIAN

Well I didn't know anyone was  
looking for him. And actually, I  
did see him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

He was in the morgue with some kid  
a while back. It was kind of  
weird.

BECKY

The morgue? With a little boy in a  
yellow sweatshirt?

TECHNICIAN

Yeah. That's him

CUDDY

What were they doing?

TECHNICIAN

Hang on. I can show you.  
Everything's recorded.

INT. NURSE STATION -- DAY

House runs his finger down a clipboard. Christian waits  
nearby. A MALE NURSE approaches him.

MALE NURSE

Can I help?

HOUSE

No, we're fine.

INT. MRI ROOM -- DAY

Christian stands in a hospital gown by the MRI scanner.  
House comes through from the control room.

CHRISTIAN

What are we doing?

HOUSE

We're checking for something that  
isn't there. Have you been sick  
recently?

CHRISTIAN

Umm. No, but I was in the holidays.

HOUSE

And did you have stomach pains,  
poop go funny, get really hot?

CHRISTIAN

Yes, I think so. I don't really  
remember.

HOUSE

And was Mike living with you then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

No. Mom only met him in November,  
just after my birthday. Why am I  
dressed like this?

HOUSE

I need to see your insides, but I  
don't want to cut you open like  
that man we saw.

CHRISTIAN

No, then I'd be dead.

HOUSE

Exactly. So I'm going to use this.  
It's an MRI scanner. It takes  
pictures of your insides, and don't  
worry, you're not sick but I think  
Mike is. So I need to check it  
out, okay?

CHRISTIAN

Okay.

HOUSE

They'll be a lot of banging and  
noise, but just lie as still as you  
can so the pictures aren't fuzzy.  
And don't be scared.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not scared.

House goes back into the control room.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE -- DAY

Cuddy face softens as she watches House and Christian.

CUDDY

Well, it doesn't look like the boy  
is in any danger.

BECKY

But he's taken Christian into a  
morgue! Why would anyone do that?

CUDDY

I don't know, but believe me, your  
son is completely safe.

BECKY

Promise?

CUDDY

Absolutely.

(to the technician)

If you see House, can you page me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY (CONT'D)

(to Becky)

Let's go find Christian.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Kit pulls up, spotting Christian's sweatshirt.

KIT

Look familiar?

Dee takes it and sees the bloody handprint.

DEE

Bingo. I'm going to get the Pulitzer Prize for this. Thank you God! Kit, get that on tape.

Kit looks surprised but does as he's asked.

KIT

So what about the kid? Looks like he's hurt.

DEE

Oh yeah. Come on, let's find them, confront House. And keep that camera ready.

They approach the nurse's station.

INT. NURSE STATION -- DAY

DEE

Have you seen Dr. House, maybe with a small boy?

MALE NURSE

Sure. They were here a while back.

DEE

Do you know where they are now?

MALE NURSE

He was checking the MRI schedule, so I guess he's gone there.

DEE

And where's there, exactly?

MALE NURSE

Third floor. Room 307.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Cuddy gets paged and looks at the message.

CUDDY

Damn!

(CONTINUED)

BECKY

What is it?

CUDDY

House must be in the MRI room. The news crew are outside.

BECKY

So we've found them. That's good isn't it?

CUDDY

We need to go. Now. An MRI is a giant magnet. That camera is a chunk of metal.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. MRI ROOM -- DAY

In the control room, House's pager goes. He ignores it.

HOUSE  
Just witch lady. She can wait.

CHRISTIAN  
Is she your girlfriend? Is that why  
she tries to find you all the time  
and gets so mad?

HOUSE  
That is most likely the reason,  
yes.

CHRISTIAN  
So do you like her too?

HOUSE  
Umm. I think mostly I want to pull  
her pigtails.

CHRISTIAN  
Yeah, I'm like that with Susie  
Duggan.

They contemplate their respective women in silence.  
Suddenly, the news crew bang through the door.

DEE  
Dr. House? We need to ask...

HOUSE  
Get that thing out of here!

CHRISTIAN  
Who are they?

DEE  
It's Christian, isn't it? Are you  
okay?

As they advance into the room, the camera is wrenched out of  
Kit's hand, glances off House's head, then embeds itself in  
the scanner tube.

Christian is trapped. House is out cold on the floor.

KIT  
Christ!

DEE  
What happened?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

CHRISTIAN

House! I'm stuck, get me out! I  
can't get out!

House stirs on the floor. Kit tries to pull the camera away,  
while Dee just stands dumbstruck.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

I'm stuck! I'm stuck!

KIT

Just hold on, kid. I can't get the  
camera out. Are you hurt?

CHRISTIAN

I want House. Where's House?

Just then, Cuddy rushes in, Becky in her wake.

BECKY

Christian!

CHRISTIAN

Mommy, I'm stuck!

KIT

I can't get the goddam camera off!  
The kid's stuck! Jesus!

CUDDY

You idiot! Didn't you see the sign  
on the door! No metal objects!  
House, are you okay?

She checks his head as he sits up, dazed with a head wound.  
Christian is whimpering.

CHRISTIAN

I want to get out! I can't get out!

Cuddy rushes into the control room and slams her palm down  
on a switch. Great clouds of supercooled helium hiss into  
the room.

Kit's camera drops down, freeing Christian. Becky pulls him  
into her arms.

CUDDY

Get the kid, and get out! The  
helium's toxic.

Cuddy grabs House under the arms, drags him out. She goes  
back in and pulls Dee out, then slams the door behind her.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

They all sit there slumped under the flashing red light over  
the door. Cuddy turns on Dee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUDDY

What the hell were you thinking!

Dee rouses herself and hands her the bloody sweatshirt.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Mike looks increasingly ill. Wilson is with him.

WILSON

There seems to have been some kind of mix up. I'm here to...

MIKE

There's no mix up! That doctor did this! I'll sue his ass off!

WILSON

Dr. House is our best diagnostician.

MIKE

You don't say. Let me guess, he's your boss.

WILSON

He's not my boss.

MIKE

Know what I think? I think the guy doesn't like me. Figures he'll have a bit of fun. Get some nurses to run some painful tests I don't need, humiliate the blue collar guy. What do you think? Either that or you're scamming my insurance.

WILSON

You know, those tests do actually test for cancer.

MIKE

All on the same day? One after another? You think I'm an idiot? There wasn't any shadow on my x-ray.

WILSON

Okay, it's odd, I agree.

MIKE

Yeah. It's like in a restaurant, they don't like you, they spit in the food.

WILSON

You know what? You're getting worse. There is a possibility that...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

I ain't got cancer! You know that!  
Your cripple doctor did something,  
gave me something else. And I'm  
going to find out what!

He gets out of bed, and leaves the room. Wilson's pager goes.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

Cuddy patches up House whilst a worried Christian tries to pull away from his mother.

CHRISTIAN

Is he going to be okay?

CUDDY

No he's not going to be okay  
because I'm going to kill him.

HOUSE

(woozy)

And the guy with the camera. You  
going to kill him too?

CUDDY

I had to instigate a quench so the  
scanner is screwed. Do you know how  
much that is going to cost the  
hospital?

HOUSE

And how is that my fault?

CUDDY

What were you doing in there? Have  
you any idea of the chaos you've  
been causing?

CHRISTIAN

Is he okay?

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

Wilson walks down the hallway towards the ER. He spots a dead mouse and kicks it, puzzled.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

Wilson enters and checks House, sitting on the bed.

CUDDY

He's fine. Unfortunately.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILSON

You're going to have quite a bruise. So you blew up the MRI with your new best friend? Wow.

HOUSE

I did not blow up the MRI! That news idiot brought a camera in. And that idiot

(pointing at Cuddy)

Ran a quench. All I did was get hit on the head.

CUDDY

And all I did is ask you to do clinic duty and the sky falls in! I'm a good person. I do not deserve this.

WILSON

I'm just going to take a ringside seat here. Round one. House versus boss.

He settles in a seat with a box of lollipops.

CUDDY

This isn't a game, Wilson. The hospital is in trouble.

HOUSE

And how is that my fault?

CUDDY

House! You stole this lady's son! Dee Phillips, the reporter, thinks you've been trying to kill him. Along with the stepdad.

HOUSE

What?

Christian pulls away from his mother and wraps himself defensively round House's leg.

CHRISTIAN

He was trying to help!

HOUSE

Absolutely. Just like the kid said.

CUDDY

Help? The morgue, House? The MRI? The unnecessary tests on a patient? Pretending to be bitten by a snake?

WILSON

Ah, that might account for the dead mice in the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

He helpfully points his lollipop out the door. Cuddy looks baffled.

CUDDY

I've got one member of staff complaining that you stole food, another that you sabotaged a clinical trial. How does all this help?

WILSON

You're going down, House.

CHRISTIAN

Stop being horrible to House!

HOUSE

Yes stop being horrible. And shut up Wilson.

CUDDY

Oh, and I forgot. Most of this has been caught on camera, so we're going to be all over the six o'clock news!

HOUSE

Now the news crew. That was definitely not my fault. That was you being all open-day-at-school about it. It was bound to backfire.

CUDDY

Only because Dee Phillips turned out to be some psycho Bernstein Woodward mutant. I couldn't have seen that coming.

HOUSE

I would've! And the rest of it, I can explain.

CUDDY

How? What possible explanation could you have for the havoc you've caused?

House narrows his eyes as he sizes up his opponent.

HOUSE

I think the kid's mom's boyfriend has typhoid.

Cuddy is completely floored. Wilson lets out a snort of laughter.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY -- DAY

A sweating Mike marches unsteadily through the hallway, pushing people aside.

MIKE

Get out the way!

He stops, scans the board by the elevator, then jabs impatiently at the call button.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

CUDDY

Of course, now we have a plague to add to today's list of problems. Now I just need you to send a swarm of locusts, get frogs to drop from the sky and kill all the firstborn male children. Then I've got the complete set.

HOUSE

Much as I would love to do those things, I really think I should confirm my diagnosis of a highly infectious disease. Or I don't know, maybe it could go on and kill all those firstborn males. And all their relatives.

BECKY

Typhoid? Is Christian okay?

CUDDY

Nobody has typhoid. House is just concussed.

Christian clambers onto the bed next to House and checks his bandage, then settles down.

HOUSE

But stepdad has some of the symptoms right? Fever, abdominal pains, distended stomach, a nosebleed, and the rash.

CUDDY

I didn't see any nosebleed.

HOUSE

Well I did.

CUDDY

He swallowed a key! That could explain all those symptoms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE

So why is he getting worse? He is getting worse isn't he? And you don't know why.

CUDDY

It's probably a nickel allergy! The key's going to be coated in it, and it's been in his digestive system for two days now. It explains the fever, the pains, the rash...

Christian pulls a pen out of House's pocket. House pulls it off him and returns it.

HOUSE

It's not a nickel allergy! The rash would be itchy! And he had a sports watch, nickel coated. Why wasn't his wrist red? Just his chest?

WILSON

Hence you think it's typhoid? So you test him for cancer?

HOUSE

I wasn't testing him for cancer!

WILSON

So what were you doing?

HOUSE

I was screwing with him! He's an ass.

CUDDY

You think everyone is an ass! And yet you don't shove metal up them. Why's this one any different?

House looks across to Becky. Christian climbs onto House's lap.

HOUSE

Because he's a bully. He hit the kid. Christian's got a bruise the size of my hand on his back. He's five for Christ sake!

Becky looks horrified, then furious.

BECKY

Christian is this true?

Curled up, he nods, slightly nervous.

(CONTINUED)

BECKY (CONT'D)

Right, excuse me for a moment.  
Come on Christian, let's go and  
find Mike.

They leave. House gets up, looking to go.

HOUSE

Kid was sick a few months ago.  
Most doctors would have diagnosed  
your garden variety salmonella  
enterica, food poisoning, or maybe  
from the snake as he's so young,  
more susceptible to their bacteria.  
But it wasn't salmonella enterica;  
it was salmonella typhi. Symptoms  
are almost identical early on.

WILSON

Where would he get typhoid in New  
Jersey?

HOUSE

Kid eats in his mom's restaurant.  
These places are full of migrant  
workers from all over. Probably  
picked it up there.

CUDDY

But stepdad has the symptoms, not  
Christian. And anyway, he only  
would have been contagious in the  
early stages. You said it was  
months ago.

HOUSE

Ah, but he's a Typhoid Mary.

WILSON

What?

HOUSE

Mary Mallon, Irish immigrant,  
worked as a cook early last  
century, infected at least 53  
people with typhoid and killed  
three. Never exhibited any  
symptoms, though probably had an  
initial bout, and refused to  
believe she had any disease. So  
they locked her up in an isolation  
ward where after 23 years, she  
died. And not of typhoid.

CUDDY

That's horrible.

(CONTINUED)



HOUSE

Kid's the same. Asymptomatic carrier. He fed nasty boyfriend a key in his burger. Probably didn't wash his hands, after all he's only five, and I didn't start washing my hands till puberty. The boy's faeces get in the burger, so typhoid gets in boyfriend. Luckily, it's easily treatable. But that's only if doctors are allowed to do their jobs.

He pulls a 'please' face at Cuddy, who looks cheesed off.

WILSON

And I call that round to House I think.

INT. MIKE'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

On the warpath, Becky goes into Mike's room.

BECKY

Where's he gone?

CHRISTIAN

Can we go back to House now? He probably needs our help.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

Just then a sweaty, red faced Mike barges into the room, ready to fight. He pushes House back onto the bed.

WILSON

And round two, House versus patient.

MIKE

Shut it. Let's get down to business. First you mess with Christian, dangling him out of windows, then you try and mess with me, running all kinds of crapola tests and making me sick.

HOUSE

Actually...

MIKE

Button it. You're his boss right?  
(turning to Cuddy)  
No lawyer's going to look at this stuff and not turn cartwheels.

Just at that moment, Becky comes back in, and seeing Mike, slaps him round the face.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTIAN

Way to go Mom!

Mike is completely dazed.

MIKE

What? What I do? What was that for?

BECKY

Wedding's off!

MIKE

But honey, I'm going to get shed loads of money off these people, we can go to Rio instead. We...

Cuddy just throws up her hands at the turn of events, and like Wilson, decides to pull up a seat. Christian climbs back onto House's lap.

BECKY

You hit Christian!

MIKE

What? Yeah, but just once. He scratched the Tahoe.

BECKY

Just once?

MIKE

Yeah, but forget that. If we sue Dr. House, we can send Christian to a good school, buy a...

CHRISTIAN

Leave House alone!

BECKY

Ssh, darling, let mommy handle this.

HOUSE

Be my guest.

BECKY

If you sue Dr. House, I'll report you to child's services. I mean it Mike.

MIKE

You what? Report me? Okay fine, and you know what, I wouldn't want to marry you anyway! Sloppy seconds ain't my style. And don't get me started on the kid.

(CONTINUED)

The audience suck in their breath at the low blows.  
Christian hides his head in House's jacket.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
And what are you all looking at?

HOUSE  
You've got typhoid.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Dee pulls off her oxygen mask, slips off the bed and grabs  
Kit lying in the other bed.

DEE  
Get up. You're fine. Let's find  
that son of a bitch House.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM -- DAY

A broken looking Mike is taken away by a nurse. Passing them  
in the hallway is Dee and Kit, clutching his camera.

DEE  
Ah Dr. House, Dr. Cuddy. I'm glad  
you're both here.

WILSON  
And round three. House versus the  
media.

Dee looks at him in disdain. Christian plays with a pen.

DEE  
I don't think we've met.

WILSON  
No we haven't.

DEE  
Well, I won't beat about the bush.  
We won't sue over almost being  
gassed to death before.

CUDDY  
Sue us! That was your fault!

DEE  
Like I say, I'm prepared to set  
that aside. What I am here to tell  
you, or forewarn you really, is  
that we'll be running a piece on  
next week's news. And it will  
raise some issues.

CUDDY  
Fine. You know what. Go ahead,  
because I don't care anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEE

I don't think you need to be quite so hostile. I'm actually giving you and Dr. House the opportunity to respond to our concerns. The public's concerns. We'll be making some serious allegations.

HOUSE

What exactly do you think you have uncovered here at the evil hospital of Princeton Plainsboro?

DEE

Well specifically, dangerous and inappropriate interactions with a minor, introduction of a venomous reptile into a public area...

HOUSE

Really?

WILSON

I think she should duck.

DEE

Maybe you're not aware Dr. House, that many of these, um, activities of yours, have been caught on tape.

HOUSE

On that camera you nearly killed me with?

CHRISTIAN

And me!

DEE

Following up a legitimate concern for a child's welfare.

HOUSE

That camera there? Well, now we can all relax.

DEE

Excuse me? We taped you holding the boy off the fourth floor. We taped you...

HOUSE

No you didn't.

DEE

And I can assure you we did.

HOUSE

No. You didn't.

(CONTINUED)

CUDDY

Unfortunately they did House. I saw the footage. It doesn't look good.

DEE

I believe our viewers will be...

HOUSE

Your camera is broken!

KIT

No actually, it just got a cracked lens and casing, so I can still record sound.

He shows them the red record light.

DEE

As I was saying...

HOUSE

Broken!

House removes Christian from his lap, gets up and goes to snatch the camera. Dee steps in his way.

DEE

No violence.

HOUSE

You idiot. I'm not going to smash it. I don't need to. It got clamped onto a giant supercooled magnet, which I'm guessing might have fried the memory card.

Kit looks panicky, fiddles with the controls, rewinds, checks the footage, rewinds again, then looks up.

KIT

It's all gone.

House looks triumphant. Christian hands him his cane and holds onto his other hand, facing the enemy.

WILSON

And he counters!

HOUSE

In fact, how about we turn the tables? You owe us a new MRI scanner.

DEE

Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)

HOUSE

You entered a restricted area where there were clear warnings not to enter with metallic objects...

DEE

Well...

HOUSE

You endangered the life of a child...

DEE

I...

HOUSE

You almost killed a doctor; you exposed five other people to a toxic gas, and finally you caused irreparable damage to a key piece of hospital equipment.

WILSON

She's going down.

HOUSE

I'm guessing your insurers would be happy to settle with just buying us a new MRI, so we can forget the other stuff.

Dee contemplates her position. House sits down again, slightly woozy. Christian scrambles up beside him.

DEE

I see. But perhaps Mrs. Sullivan, would you like to press charges against Dr. House?

BECKY

I've nothing but praise for the way Dr. House has looked after my son.

DEE

Well, Kit, it was you that brought in the camera...

KIT

Hey, don't blame me, lady. You're in charge, I just do what I'm told.

HOUSE

My advice, don't burn any bridges. You might be looking for a new job soon.

WILSON

And it's a knockout!

(CONTINUED)

A furious Dee makes to leave. Christian wraps House's arm round him.

DEE  
This isn't over House.

HOUSE  
You lost. You came here looking for dirt. You didn't find any.

DEE  
I will.

HOUSE  
I don't think so. But thanks for the new scanner.

Dee and Kit exit. Christian looks a little sad.

CHRISTIAN  
But you didn't find Henry.

House notices Christian for the first time, rummages about inside his jacket, and pulls out the beautiful snake.

HOUSE  
He was sneaking up on a mouse.

CHRISTIAN  
It's Henry mom, he found him!

He clambers down to show his mom. Cuddy takes stock.

CUDDY  
What just happened there? How did we come out on top?

WILSON  
I told you. House always wins fights.

HOUSE  
And yet  
(looking at Cuddy)  
Nobody would take any bets on me.

Becky strokes her son's hair, paying attention to only him.

BECKY  
You just can't let boys get bored. They just seem to get into trouble.

CHRISTIAN  
House?

HOUSE  
Yes Christian.

CHRISTIAN

Will you marry mom? Because she's  
free now, and you rule.

Wilson shakes with laughter and goes to leave. Cuddy  
follows, holding House's gaze.

House hesitates, then pulls Christian onto his lap and turns  
to face the mother. He pulls out the yo-yo and guides the  
boy's hands as he shows him how to spin it.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW