

1

CONTINUED:

1

BEN

To be honest, I may be a little
offended by...golf.

KIRK

All of a sudden I'm feeling, screw
the deal--I want to kick their asses!
A par five--I had to be long off the
tee. That's when I felt it.

FLASH CUT TO:

2

EXT. DAY. GOLF COURSE

2

Kirk tees off, winces. As he watches the flight of his ball,
he feels his flank.

BACK TO:

3

INT. DAY. BEN'S OFFICE

3

Ben looks at Kirk with eyes both tender and searching...

BEN

That's when you first became aware
of it--a pain in your flank?

KIRK

A tug. Not really a pain. A pulling.
I thought it was a charleyhorse. A
couple of bourbons and a rubdown and
I'd be good as new. A damn
charleyhorse. Can you believe it?

BEN

(off files)

You're a venture capitalist?

KIRK

Do you invest much, Doctor Gideon?

BEN

Call me Ben.

KIRK

Then you can call me Kirk.

BEN

My wife put us in tech funds, a long
time ago.

KIRK

Smart wife.

BEN

Is that your wife in the waiting
room?

(CONTINUED)

→
M/M

A pain in
your flank

KIRK

My wife's a certified idiot. If there was any rationality in the world she'd be spayed.

BEN

I had been hoping, Kirk, that your other doctors had missed something, but--

KIRK

Impressed? I've been turned down by three of the top hospitals in the country.

BEN

You're quite ill. To treat you might do more harm than good.

KIRK

You want to know something interesting about me? I don't dream. I go to bed at night. I wake up in the morning. So if this is the part where you tell me to face reality, save it. I'm the world's leading expert in who's got who by the balls. I know what a lousy investment I am.

BEN

Knowing it and accepting it are two very different things.

KIRK

My cousin Grant calls you a wizard.

BEN

I'm not a wizard.

KIRK

You'd better be, because I need one.

BEN

The fact is there is simply no known effective therapy for--

KIRK

For someone like me. Isn't that it? Why save my life?

BEN

No, that isn't it.

Kirk reaches into his breast pocket for a checkbook...

KIRK

I want you to cook up some new magic.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

I'm not a wizard and it's not magic.

KIRK

You want a contribution for your research? How much?

BEN

Well, now you've insulted me. At least you're thorough.

KIRK

You're the head of experimental medicine. So make me a guinea pig.

BEN

Our rules--who gets treated, who doesn't--they're not simply arbitrary.

KIRK

Don't tell me what's arbitrary. The whole damned thing's arbitrary.

BEN

You simply don't fit the guidelines of any established medical protocol.

Kirk blows. He stands up and shouts at Ben.

KIRK

I won't take no for an answer! I don't buy that nothing can be done. I'm fifty years old. I'm not ready to pack it up and die. Look at me.

Ben does look, and for the first time we, too, see how profoundly ill Kirk is. He wheezes just from the exertion of losing his temper. His lips are blue. His belly, bloated from the cancer, strains at the buttons of his blazer...

Then Ben does something both simple and extraordinary. He takes the file with its hundred pages of damning evidence. Sets it aside. And replaces it with an empty white pad.

BEN

The new technology is wonderful. And if you're a doctor, it can be a wonderful thing to hide behind.

(beat)

Why don't you tell me your own story. As you see it. From the beginning.

KIRK

Let's start at the end. Isn't that the way all the best stories start?

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Okay. Let's start at the end.

As Ben poises his pen to write, Kirk's eyes bore into him.

KIRK

I know who you are, Ben. Your kids go to schools where they learn all about Harriet Tubman but never heard of Harry S. Truman. You avoid fatty foods. When you pass a bum on the street, you put a dollar in his cup, because when you went to college, people like me looked at you the way you look at him. I don't need you to love me.

(off Ben's look)

But when you see this cancer... Feel it with your fingers... Recall what you've seen it do a thousand times before, to people you cared about... At that moment, deep down, you're more like me than you'd like to think you are. You want to win.

BEN

I thought this was supposed to be your story.

KIRK

The end of my story is you, Ben. You're my last hope.

ON BEN, AS HE LOOKS AT KIRK,

FADE TO:

MAIN TITLE

END OF TEASER