

WE ARE NOT SHEEP

Cast of Characters:

BRENT: 40's, husband of Amy, father of a young girl.

AMY: 30's, Brent's wife, mother of a young girl.

DR. UMDEGBE: 40's, neurosurgeon.

Place:

A small waiting room of a hospital, USA.

Time:

The present.

ACT ONE - SCENE 1

Hospital waiting room. Disturbed, BRENT is on the phone. He scribbles notes on the back of an envelope.

BRENT

I'm hearing you.

(beat)

I'm hearing you.

(beat)

Yeah. Yeah.

(beat)

So, what you're saying is the fix is in.

(beat)

The fix is in. It's a cover up. (louder) A cover up.

His wife, AMY enters.

BRENT

(on phone)

I know that, yeah. I know. I know. I understand. A what? A what? Sorry, can you spell that? No, I'm not writing anything down. I just need you to spell, I never heard the term before... A Posterior Fossa Craniotomy. Okay. I got it, thank you.

(beat)

Yes. Yes. I appreciate that. I will. I will. Thank you.

He hangs up.

AMY

Who was that?

BRENT

Cody.

AMY

You were talking to Cody now?

BRENT

I wanted his opinion.

AMY

His opinion on what?

BRENT

I told you. This whole thing stinks.

AMY

Brent, don't start. This is not the time for, did the doctor show up?

BRENT

No.

AMY

He said he'd be up.

BRENT

Cody agrees with me.

AMY

Agrees with you about what? Brent, enough.

BRENT

There's too many coincidences, Amy.

AMY

I don't want to hear your...

BRENT

You don't want to hear my thoughts?

AMY

I heard your thoughts.

BRENT

You haven't heard what Cody thinks.

BRENT

Listen to me. Cody says that if they ask --

AMY

What does Cody know? He's not a brain surgeon, is he?

BRENT

Cody knows his stuff, you know that. He's a doctor --

AMY

Was a doctor.

BRENT

They struck him off but they can't silence him. He's still a doctor. He said this isn't the first time.

AMY

The first time, what?

BRENT

The first time he's heard about something like this. They've done this shit before.

AMY

I'm not doing this with you.

BRENT

He said if they suggest doing a particular procedure...

AMY

I don't give a crap what Cody thinks.

BRENT

(reading)

If they want to do a Posterior Fossa Craniotomy, then that's the give-away. We know what they're up to.

AMY

You're taking advice from a --

BRENT

It's Cody! This is coming from Cody himself. I actually got him on the phone. It wasn't easy, but I got him in person, spoke to him in person, you know how rare that is?

AMY

Brent, this is not the time for this.

BRENT

This is exactly the time for this.

AMY

Our daughter is lying in there in some kind of coma and we don't know if she's even going to -- this is not the time!

BRENT

I'm upset as you are...

AMY

You should be tracking down that doctor, not scouring the Internet for... conspiracies.

BRENT

I did go search for the doctor and that's another thing...

AMY

What do you mean?

BRENT

I ended up on some wing, some part of the hospital that was off-limits.

AMY

Off-limits?

BRENT

I walked through this door with one of those signs, off-limits to the public, whatever.

AMY

You mean like, staff only?

BRENT

I wasn't supposed to be there, all right? I was following the doctor, he vanished.

AMY

The doctor vanished?

BRENT

He was walking fast and I didn't want to make it look like I was tailing him. I entered this area. The doctor was gone. I didn't see which way he went. And right there there's a group of soldiers.

AMY

Soldiers?

BRENT

Military uniforms. They didn't look like grunts. They were older, intelligent-looking.

AMY

Intelligent-looking soldiers?

BRENT

They could have been officers, military intelligence, maybe Navy. Some of them wore glasses.

AMY

They wore glasses? So?

BRENT

So, they weren't regular soldiers. None of them looked like they saw a days combat in their life. They were desk jockies.

AMY

(almost hysterical)

What are you talking about?

BRENT

They turned and looked at me funny.

AMY

You weren't supposed to be there!

BRENT

They didn't know that. I acted cool, like I belonged. I wasn't being weird.

AMY

Where are you going with this?

BRENT

Okay, I acted normal, right? Didn't even look at them, pretended they weren't there...

(off her impatient look)

Just hear me out. I'm getting there. I went to the coffee machine. Real cool, like all I really wanted was a double espresso or something...

(off her more impatient look)

They turned back around, went back to their talking. But they were talking like, like it was all hushed, on the down-low, real secret. Whatever it was they were talking about, they did not want to be overheard.

AMY

And?

BRENT

I'm putting some money in the machine, my ears are primed, real primed to catch whatever it is they're scheming about.

AMY

And?

BRENT

I couldn't hear much, they were real careful. What I did hear was them talking about the project.

AMY

What project?

BRENT

They kept saying the project, like this was a top-secret thing, like what status was the project at and what were the next steps, kind of thing. I told you, I couldn't hear too much but it was the way they were gathered, the way they were huddled together, scheming about something.

AMY

So?

BRENT

So?

AMY

You saw some army guys talking in a hallway? So?

BRENT

So, first of all, what are they doing there? What are they even doing in this hospital? Visiting someone? I don't think so.

AMY

Why couldn't they have been visiting --

BRENT

Because they have their own hospital, don't they? A shit ton of their own hospitals. Why would they be admitting one of their own to a public hospital? This public hospital, famous for its screw-ups and inferior medical staff?

AMY is taken aback.

BRENT

Well, it is.

(beat)

There's not even an army or naval base near here for miles. And yeah, if the guy they're visiting is a civilian, why aren't they wearing civilian clothes? Why are they in uniform? But aside from all that, they didn't look or act like they were here visiting someone.

(MORE)

BRENT (cont'd)

They were on a floor, on a wing of the hospital where there are no patients. They weren't talking about a patient or sickness or illness, they were talking about a project, some secret mission they are obviously all involved with. You have to admit the whole thing is fishy.

AMY

Where did the doctor go?

BRENT

I didn't see him talking to them, if that's what --

AMY

That's not what --

BRENT

He knew I was following him, so he didn't want to risk been seen talking to them. Probably gave them a look and turned a corner, or went into a room --

AMY

He said he'll come up to talk to us.

BRENT

(calming)

I know. I don't know where he went. I'm sure he'll be here soon.

AMY

(distraught)

Our baby...

BRENT

(soothing)

I know.

AMY

(sobbing)

We weren't there, Brent. We weren't there for our baby.

BRENT

We didn't know. We couldn't have --

AMY

We weren't there! We were miles away! We deserted her!

BRENT

We didn't desert her, will you stop saying that? She fell. It was an accident. Shit happens.

AMY

Shit happens? Shit happens?

BRENT

You know what I mean. Accidents happen. We can't be there all the time. She's a kid. Kids get up to things.

AMY

And all you want to do is...

BRENT

What else can we do? It happened. We're here. She's in there with the doctors. Everyone is doing whatever they can for her. All we can do is wait. There's nothing more we can do for her.

AMY

If we were religious, we'd pray.

BRENT

Well, yeah.

AMY

Why aren't we religious?

BRENT

What?

AMY

Why aren't we religious, Brent?

BRENT

Are you being serious right now?

AMY

We're horrible parents. Horrible.

BRENT

No, we're not. You know we're not.

AMY

We abandoned her.

BRENT

Will you stop? We didn't abandon her.

AMY

We were miles away. We were miles away from our baby!

BRENT

She was in school! We couldn't have been there, even if we wanted to. Doesn't matter how many miles away we were, this was going to happen anyway.

(off her distressed look)

I don't mean it was going to happen. You know what I mean. She was in school. This happened on the school grounds. She was being looked after. She was supposed to have been looked after. It wasn't our fault. Blame the school but it wasn't our fault. It wasn't your fault. You hear me? Amy? It wasn't our fault. You understand that, right?

AMY settles.

AMY

She'll be okay? Emma is going to be okay?

BRENT

Of course she is.

AMY

Of course?

BRENT

I don't know. Why are you asking me? I want her to be okay. We both want her to be okay. I don't know the fuck.

BRENT hugs her. AMY softens.

AMY

And this is your way?

BRENT

What?

AMY

This is your way of, your way of coping?

BRENT

What? Hugging you? Sure. You bet.

AMY

Talking to Cody.

BRENT

What about Cody?

AMY

That's your way of coping. Wanting to do something. For our girl. You can't stay still. You can't stay silent. You need to be doing something. Trying to fix it. Always trying to fix things.

BRENT

I don't know. I guess.

AMY

What else did Cody say?

BRENT

I don't know. We don't have to --

AMY

I want to know.

BRENT

No you don't. Forget about it.

AMY

I do. I want to know what he said. What you think is going on.

BRENT

You don't really want to know. It'll only upset you.

AMY

Brent, we spent our lives together trying to figure things out, right? Trying to get to the bottom of everything? Trying to get to the real truth. What's really going on?

BRENT

Yeah.

AMY

Then why stop now?

BRENT

I agree, but...

AMY

I won't get upset, I promise. I'll listen to you. You know I always listen to you. After Emma, you're my most important person, maybe the most important person...

BRENT

I don't know, Amy. It's not like I have any answers.

AMY

But you have your suspicions.

BRENT

Oh, yeah.

AMY

I want to hear them. We have time. What else have we got to do? What is it that's bothering you about this?

BRENT

Really?

AMY

Yes.

BRENT

You want to hear?

AMY

Yes.

BRENT

Alright.

(gathers his thoughts)

First thing I'm asking myself is why Emma?

AMY

What do you mean, why Emma?

BRENT

They said she fell out of tree, right? Hit her head?

AMY

Yeah.

BRENT

When has Emma ever climbed a tree?

Amy thinks about that.

BRENT

You ever see her climb a tree?

AMY

No.

BRENT

Ever heard her even say that she climbed a tree? We've got two trees in the back yard. Ever see her even show an interest in either of them? We've got trees all around us. The woods at the back? Even when she was younger, she never once wanted to climb a tree.

AMY

She'd always be indoors, her head stuck in a book.

BRENT

She was always reading, right? A book worm. She's not a tomboy. She never was a tomboy.

AMY

She wasn't an outdoors person all right.

BRENT

And she all of a sudden decides to climb a tree in school?

AMY

Other kids could have been, she wanted to fit in. Maybe she didn't want to be left out. Peer pressure, you know?

BRENT

Emma? Peer pressure?

AMY

Right.

BRENT

She never gave a fuck what anyone thought of her. Trying to fit in with other kids?

AMY

That's not Emma, you're right.

BRENT

We can't get her to play with other kids. There's no reason I can see for her to be climbing trees in a school yard full of concrete. Emma is not an idiot. You could never call Emma an idiot. Or foolish. Or stupid.

AMY

Emma is a genius.

BRENT

She's a little genius, right? We know that about her. She can think us under the table. No contest. Right?

AMY

It doesn't sound like something she would do.

BRENT

She's the smartest kid of all the other kids we know, we've talked about this. And we're not being biased. Sure, every parent says that about their kids, but Emma is different, right? Everyone knows she's different. We get it all the time, from the other parents, others that know her. How different she is, smart, intelligent. Different.

AMY

An old soul in a young body.

BRENT

Right? She's not climbing a stupid tree to show off to her pals. She has this ability, right? To see right through you. Like she's a human lie detector. She always knows when someone is bullshitting her. Always. We have to be really careful with her, that's what you said. To be really careful with her. Like that. She's sensitive. To the truth. Like when she hears a lie, it's like it hurts her, like she's psychic or clairvoyant maybe?

AMY

Intuitive.

BRENT

Intuitive. There you go. That's a nicer term. She's intuitive. As well as being a genius.

AMY

So, she didn't climb a tree? Is that what you're saying? That her climbing a tree, is some kind of cover story?

BRENT

I'm not saying anything just yet. We're looking at the evidence that we have, that's all. We're not taking anything at face value. We're doing what we always do. We're questioning what we've been told. Everyone has an agenda, we know that. We're looking at this from all angles, that's all. We're smart about everything else, like you say, we shouldn't stop being smart about this, just because our girl is hurt. That's probably exactly what they want. For us to stop being smart. For us to stop questioning.

AMY

If Amy didn't fall out of a tree, someone is lying.

BRENT

We're weighing up the possibilities, that's all.

AMY

The teachers are lying?

BRENT

Doesn't have to be all the teachers. Only one. Only one might not be telling the truth.

AMY

We never got on with, what's his name, Williams?

BRENT

Mr. Williams, yeah. Always insists he's Mr. Williams. Such a dick.

AMY

I could see him lying.

BRENT

Oh, yeah. Totally.

AMY

He could be, what? Some kind of plant? At the school? Reports back about the kids? About the special kids? Kids with special abilities?

BRENT

Well, we know they're always on the lookout for kids that have abilities they can use, they can train them to use. Could be they've been watching Emma all along...

AMY

The teacher, Williams could be in on it?

BRENT

He could be. But let's say he isn't. Maybe he isn't involved. Maybe he's just a jerk. But he keeps records, right? On all the kids. School reports. Who's doing well. Who's doing okay. Who's doing exceptional. Year after year. The kids' records are on line, right? Someone outside the school has access, they're monitoring the reports. Picking out kids of interest. Keeping track of them?

AMY

And this was their chance? To grab her? What? Why now?

BRENT

Okay, consider this. When was the last time we went away during the school week? Never, right?

AMY

No.

BRENT

Your Dad gets sick. That's legit. We drive off. Leave instructions for my Mom to look after Emma... Okay, if this accident happens or if any accident happens to Emma when we're around? We're there in like, what, twenty minutes?

AMY

It took us two hours to get back from my Dad's.

BRENT

The one day, ever, we're more than twenty minutes away from Emma... Coincidence? Maybe.

AMY

But if they took her. If they're doing something...

(almost breaks down)

If they're doing something to her, I mean, what? Why? What could they be doing?

BRENT

This is all just speculation, okay? We're just spit-balling. All this is just... what we always do --

AMY

What could they be doing to her?

BRENT

Okay, relax, okay? Let's keep this...

(gestures calm)

We know they have these secret programs, for kids, right? It's mostly kids of army, military personnel but it could be others, other kids of special abilities...

AMY

They've been training her all along? On one of these secret programs?

BRENT

I'm not saying yes. I'm not saying no. We keep a good eye on her. It would be hard for them to, but then again, she's away from us a lot of the time, while she's at school, for instance.

AMY

The school is in on it?

BRENT

The school doesn't even have to know. They could get her to leave class, for instance. Take her to a room, or a van parked outside, whatever. She could be programmed to follow certain commands.

AMY

This isn't the first... they have her brainwashed?

BRENT

She wouldn't even know what she's doing.

AMY

Emma is a Manchurian --

BRENT

I'm not even going to go there, Amy. That possibility is too out there to even consider.

AMY

You just said.

BRENT

We're looking at all possibilities, that's all. Some of this is wild, I'd be the first to admit. But that's what blue sky thinking is. We're being creative here, that's all.

AMY

If they were, if she was being programmed, or picked for their training... what are they training her for?

BRENT

What are they training any kids for? To be their agents in the field. Their assets. That they can use later. Call on them when the need arises. Train them as spies.

AMY

As a spy?

BRENT

Okay. Let's look at this at different levels. Emma has no special abilities. She's a normal kid. Why would they be interested? Right?

AMY

Okay.

BRENT

Emma is a child, an only child of us. You and me.

AMY

Okay?

BRENT

Known agitators. Non-conformists. Conspiracy theorists, yeah, for sure. We're not sheep. We question. Right? We question everything. They hate people like us. We won't do what they tell us to do. We don't go along with their bullshit. We call them on their bullshit. They must have a file on us the size of, the size of Australia.

(off her amused look)

You know what I'm saying. Imagine them having a sleeper kid, a spy kid, living among us? Reporting back to them without us knowing, without her knowing... can't you see them getting a hard on just thinking this shit up? An inside source not just to us but to all our contacts? Other kids in other families? A whole network of non-conformists totally compromised by their own kids? That would be a wet dream for them, right?

AMY

(almost amused)

Doesn't bear thinking about.

BRENT
It's possible.

AMY
It's not possible.

BRENT
It's not possible.

AMY
Could they really?

BRENT
It's ingenious though, right? I mean, even if their parents found out, that their little son or daughter was compromised? What could they do? They're not going to turn the kid in, are they? Turn the kid into who? The authorities? No. They wouldn't tell a soul, not even their closest friends, the ones the little kid has been spying on all the time. And the kid will keep spying because if the parents tell anybody, then they'll want the parents to take care of the kid, you know what I'm saying. And what parent wants to harm their own kid, right? It's foolproof.

AMY
I don't know, Brent.

BRENT
I know.

AMY
This is too much.

BRENT
I know. I know.

AMY
Where is that doctor?

BRENT
I need a coffee. You want one? You have to eat or drink something, Amy. I'll get you some food?

AMY
Just a coffee. Black.

I'll be right back.

BRENT

BRENT exits.

DR. UMDEGBE enters, a black man in his forties. He carries consent forms.

Doctor! How is she?

AMY

DR. UMDEGBE
Emma is still in a medically induced coma.

AMY
A medically induced coma?

DR. UMDEGBE
Yes. You weren't told?

AMY
They told us that Emily fell and hit her head and went into a coma. They didn't say that you were the ones that put her into a coma. You deliberately put our daughter into a coma?

DR. UMDEGBE
We induce a coma in a patient to protect the brain from any further harm. It's standard procedure.

AMY
Standard procedure to be putting young children into a coma?

DR. UMDEGBE
In a situation such as this one, yes.

AMY
Don't you need parent's permission, our permission to do that?

DR. UMDEGBE
Normally, yes, but you were not contactable. We had to act fast.

AMY

So, if you put her into a coma, you can take her out of the coma?

DR. UMDEGBE

It's not as simple... my colleagues and I have been discussing the best approach from here.

AMY

And?

DR. UMDEGBE

I have some consent forms you both need to sign. Your husband is not with you?

AMY

He went for a coffee. He'll be right back.

DR. UMDEGBE

(leaving)

I shall return.

AMY

No! Don't go! Tell me! Tell me now! What's going on with my daughter?

DR. UMDEGBE

Your husband needs to be here to sign --

AMY

I'm not letting you leave till you tell me what you're doing with my girl! I'll tell him what you said.

DR. UMDEGBE

I can assure you, we're doing everything possible for Emma. Your daughter is getting the best of care.

AMY

What have you decided?

DR. UMDEGBE

We're all doing our very best --

AMY

You can't keep her in an induced coma for long, right? There's a ticking clock here. You and your colleagues, you're deciding what's the best course of action.

(MORE)

AMY (cont'd)

I want to know what that is.

DR. UMDEGBE

As soon as we come to a decision, I'll inform you both, you and your husband --

AMY

You'll tell me. You'll tell me right now. I'll tell my husband. I'll tell my husband everything. What have you decided? You have decided to do something?

DR. UMDEGBE

Yes, we're deciding --

AMY

You've already decided, haven't you? Otherwise you wouldn't be here wanting us to sign these papers. I want to know.

DR. UMDEGBE

Mrs. Ledwidge, we're doing the very best --

AMY

You keep saying that. I want to know what that means, the very best. I want details.

DR. UMDEGBE

Details?

AMY

You want to operate. You're going to be opening up my daughter's brain. Yeah, I want details.

DR. UMDEGBE

You want details of the operation?

AMY

I want to know what you're going to do to my daughter's brain. I have a right to know.

DR. UMDEGBE

Mrs. Led --

AMY

Stop calling me Mrs. Ledwidge. I'm not an old woman. My name is Amy.

DR. UMDEGBE

Alright, Amy. Brain surgery is not...

AMY

Is not understandable to muggles like me?

DR. UMDEGBE

Is not easily explainable to --

AMY

To a pair of simpletons like us, is that it? We're just another husband and wife pair of morons, bow to everything you say, like we're what? Like we're grateful you're even talking to us? We should just bow our hats to you exalted ones? Take what the "experts" say at face value? Trust that the "experts" are doing all this for us? That the experts have no stake in anything and they're what, doing everything they can not for themselves but for the benefit of mankind? You've no stake in what goes on here? You're not looking for a promotion? You're not wanting to make some kind of name for yourself for some outstanding achievement in brain science or making the record for the most brain surgeries performed in a day? You don't have your own agenda going on?

DR. UMDEGBE

Amy, I assure you, it's nothing at all like that. Me, my colleagues and I and only here for Emma. All we do, everything we are doing right now is for Emma. To get her well and get her home to you. So she can continue her life, as best she can...

AMY

I'm sorry. I'm...

DR. UMDEGBE

You're upset and distraught and that's perfectly understandable. I'll leave these papers with you...

AMY

No! You're not leaving until you tell me.

DR. UMDEGBE

Excuse me?

AMY

The operation. What operation have you and your colleagues decided?

DR. UMDEGBE

I really can't explain, I mean, in layman's terms, I can't. .. I mean, it would require years and years of schooling to even understand, the terminology alone... I wouldn't know how to explain --

AMY

It has a name, this operation. This procedure, whatever it is, it has a name.

DR. UMDEGBE

Well, yes.

AMY

You don't have to explain it. Just tell me the name. What the operation is called.

DR. UMDEGBE

Amy, I'd strongly advise against Google searches on medical procedures or anything medical for that matter. The Internet can, well, it tends to confuse people more than providing true clarity... there's too much misinformation on the Internet.

AMY

You want these papers signed? Just tell me what the operation is called.

DR. UMDEGBE

Alright. We haven't fully decided but we're currently leaning towards performing a Posterior Fossa Craniotomy.

AMY nods her head robustly.

AMY

Okay.

DR. UMDEGBE

I'll come back for the consent forms...

BRENT enters with two cups of coffee. Looks at Amy, then the doctor.

BRENT

What's going on? What's the update?

DR. UMDEGBE

I've been speaking to your wife --

AMY

(to Brent)

I'll tell you everything.

DR. UMDEGBE

I shall return presently.

BRENT

Hey, before you go. Can I ask you where you're from?

DR. UMDEGBE

Where I'm from?

BRENT

Yeah. Just curious. Where you're from.

DR. UMDEGBE

I'm from Detroit.

BRENT

I mean, originally. Where are you from originally?

DR. UMDEGBE

I'm from Detroit.

BRENT

And that's where you got your medical degree, is it? In Detroit? Or maybe you did your training overseas?

DR. UMDEGBE

I got my medical training in Detroit.

BRENT gives a "do you believe this" look to his wife, who shakes her head, knock it off.

DR. UMDEGBE

I'll come back for the consent forms.

DR. UMDEGBE exits.

BRENT

You see that? Looked me in the eyes and lied straight to my face. He's from Detroit? Detroit, Nigeria? And who gets their medical degree in Detroit? Do they even have a university in Detroit? Ever hear of the university of Detroit? I haven't. If he got his degree in Detroit it must have been from a Community College.

(beat)

What forms?

(looking through papers)

He wants us to sign these? We'll need to get a lawyer look them over.

AMY is in her own world.

BRENT

You know why they get foreign doctors to work for them, don't you? Because if they don't do what they ask, they can threaten them with deportation. Black and foreign, there's all the leverage they need, right there. Black people are ten times less likely to turn whistle-blower, do you know why? Because no one would believe them, that's why. No one higher up, anyway. No one in a position of authority that could actually do something about whatever crimes they were spewing about.

(beat)

If he lied about where he's from, what else is he lying about?

AMY

You were being racist.

BRENT

No, I wasn't.

AMY

He thought you were being racist. Even if he is from Nigeria, he's not going to tell a racist bigot where he's really from.

BRENT

I'm a racist bigot? You're calling me a racist bigot?

AMY

I'm saying that's probably what he was thinking.

BRENT

I asked him where he was from and where he got his medical training. He's going to be performing surgery on our daughter's brain! I'm entitled to ask, aren't I? If Curly from the Three Stooges walked in here --

AMY

Who?

BRENT

Curly from the Three Stooges, the idiot brother...

AMY

Aren't they all idiots? Isn't that why they're funny?

BRENT

I'm just saying. I'm making a point. If any of the Three Stooges or the Marx Brothers was going to do brain surgery on Emma, wouldn't I be entitled to ask where they got their medical training? That's all I'm saying.

AMY

What did Cody say?

BRENT

What? When?

AMY

When you talked to him. What did he say, exactly.

BRENT

What did he say exactly? He said what I said all along, this whole thing stinks.

AMY

He said that? This whole thing stinks?

BRENT

In so many words, yes. He said it ticks all the boxes.

AMY

Ticks all what boxes?

BRENT

Of a set up. Of a conspiracy. Of a cover-up. The whole nine yards.

AMY

I want to know what he said, his words, what exactly did he say?

BRENT

Well he couldn't come out and say exactly what he thought was going on, could he? He spoke in code, like he always speaks.

AMY

He spoke in code?

BRENT

Not a real code, a secret code or something. Everything was on the down-low, words he used that mean something else. Like when drug people say horse, they mean heroin.

(off her displeased look)

I'd say what I thought was going on and he'd confirm or deny. He confirmed everything I told him. He said trust no one. Which goes without saying.

AMY

And the operation he mentioned?

BRENT

He came up with that, that didn't come from me. What about it?

AMY

Why that operation?

BRENT

Allows them easy access, to her brain. Let's them, I don't know, maybe implant something, deep in her brain. Where it can't be detected.

AMY

He said that? An implant? Cody said that? That they'd be putting in some implant? Into her brain? Into Emma's brain?

BRENT

No, he didn't say that. Well, he did, in so many words. He hinted at it. He couldn't go into details, for obvious reasons and besides, I wouldn't have understood, the guy's a genius and he's a real doctor. The things he said, well, it's not good. Whatever that operation is, it's not good. There's nothing good or beneficial about it. For Emma.

(MORE)

BRENT (cont'd)

It's good for them but it's not good for Emma. That's the gist of it. Why are you interested in what Cody has to say, all of a sudden?

AMY

If we have to make a decision and we do have to make a decision, it's my decision to make, okay?

BRENT

What do you mean, your decision?

AMY

I'm not going to go round and round with you in discussion. There is no time for, there will be no discussion, okay?

BRENT

What do you mean no discussion? She's our baby girl. Both of us --

AMY

I brought her into the world.

BRENT

What? So?

AMY

From my body. I brought her into the world. My body. My blood. My flesh. I gave her life.

BRENT

So did I bring her into the world!
(off her sceptical look)
Well, I helped!

(beat)

What do you mean, your decision? What decision?

AMY

They want to do a Posterior Fossa Craniotomy.

BRENT stands in shock.

BRENT

He told you that? He came right out and told you --

AMY

No, he wasn't going to tell me. I had to threaten not to sign the papers.

(MORE)

AMY (cont'd)

Treated me like I was some dumb ass nobody.

BRENT

Then we won't sign the papers. Simple as that.

AMY

Is that what you want?

BRENT

Isn't that what you want? Hold on, let's think about this. This is probably the most important decision of our lives. We need to think. Really, really think.

AMY just watches her husband.

BRENT

Are you thinking?

(beat)

I know that look. Your mind is made up, isn't it? You made up your mind already. Are we signing these things?

(beat)

Amy. Are we signing these or what? If we don't sign... they'll do nothing? No operation? Then what? Amy? Talk to me. No operation? Then what? Amy!

AMY

I don't know, Brent.

BRENT

You don't know?

AMY

No, I don't know. Nobody knows, do they?

BRENT

What?

AMY

They don't do the operation, nobody knows. Nobody knows what will happen to our little girl. She wakes up? Maybe she's fine? Maybe she isn't. Maybe you're right. It's a full cover-up, there was nothing wrong with her in the first place. We only have their word. Then what? They let her go and she's fine? We're all back to normal? Or they let her go and she's... she's damaged? She's our girl but she's not Emma any more? You know what I'm saying?

BRENT

They could damage her brain on purpose? Just to make a point?

AMY

That's not what I'm saying.

BRENT

What are you saying?

AMY

Forget them for a second. Whoever they are. No operation and she wakes from her coma. She could be okay?

BRENT

You asked the doctor? The chances? The risks? What her chances are without the operation?

AMY shakes her head, no.

BRENT

You didn't ask because what was he going to say, right? They're pushing for the operation, he's not going to say the thing is unnecessary, is he? He's not going to say they're just doing it if it wasn't her only chance. He'd sell the shit out the operation, course he would. We're between a rock and a hard place.

(off her look)

That's the expression, right? The polite way of saying fucked if we do, fucked if we don't?

DR. UMDEGBE enters.

DR. UMDEGBE

How are you all holding up?

BRENT

What do you think? How we're holding up...

AMY

Fine, thanks.

DR. UMDEGBE

You have signed the...

DR. UMDEGBE senses a problem.

DR. UMDEGBE

You have not signed the consent forms?

BRENT

We're still thinking about it.

DR. UMDEGBE

You don't have much time. The clock is ticking --

BRENT

That's the classic get them to close speech, isn't it? We know what you're doing.

DR. UMDEGBE

I beg your pardon?

BRENT

The clock is ticking, you only have a small window before the deal is gone for good, act now or lose it, classic sales tactics. Well, we're not falling for it.

DR. UMDEGBE

This is no sales... the clock is ticking on your daughter.

AMY

What are her chances? If we don't agree to this operation. What are Emma's chances?

DR. UMDEGBE

There's no way of knowing, Amy.

BRENT

Amy? It's Amy now, is it?

AMY

Shut up, Brent.

(to the doctor)

What is your professional opinion on the degree of risk, of this operation?

DR. UMDEGBE

It's almost impossible to --

AMY

You know the risk, or else you wouldn't be deciding that this is the best way forward.

DR. UMDEGBE

I try not to give risk assessments to family --

BRENT

We're not going to sue you, if that's what you're worried about. If she doesn't have this operation, what are her chances? That's all we want to know.

DR. UMDEGBE

Quite frankly. Without the operation. Not good.

BRENT

Not good what? We're talking what, permanent brain damage here?

DR. UMDEGBE

Permanent brain damage, certainly.

BRENT

In figures. Put it in numbers. She doesn't have the operation. Fifty percent brain damage? Twenty percent?

DR. UMDEGBE

I cannot put numbers on brain damage, I am sorry.

AMY

But you can estimate the expected success of this operation?

BRENT

Greater than fifty percent success rate?

DR. UMDEGBE

(exasperated)

We're doing the best we possibly can for your daughter. The best minds of this hospital, the consultants, outside experts --

BRENT

I bet.

DR. UMDEGBE

Have weighed up all the possibilities, have given this some grave and serious thought. The overwhelming consensus is to operate without delay. Any more than this, I cannot tell you.

AMY stands. As if about to make a decision. She extends her hand to BRENT, who takes it.

They stand as one. Defiant.

AMY

Then, no.

DR. UMDEGBE

No?

AMY

No, we're not signing the papers. You do not have our permission to operate brain surgery on our daughter. When Emma wakes up, we're taking her home. Whatever shape, whatever condition our daughter is in, we're taking her home. To care for her and to love her, no matter what.

BRENT

We want our daughter back. Give us our daughter back.

DR. UMDEGBE

(shaking his head in
disbelief)

This is most... irregular. In all my years of medicine, I've never --

BRENT

You never met people like us who don't take everything you say like it's the word of god or something. You never met someone like us that challenges you, that say no to your bullshit.

DR. UMDEGBE

This is not... Bullshit? You think what I'm saying is bullshit? You don't see the seriousness of all this? Your daughter has --

BRENT

We know what our daughter had, what you said she had, you don't have to go over all that again. We're not signing the papers and we'd like to take our daughter back home, please. She's our daughter, not your property or something to be operating on, experimenting on her brain --

DR. UMDEGBE

What?

AMY

That's enough, Brent.

(MORE)

AMY (cont'd)

(to the doctor)

Thank you for doing everything you can for our daughter. We appreciate all you've done for her, we really do. But it's our right, it's up to us, and not anyone else, to decide what's best for our daughter and, well, we just want her home. We want our child home, with us. As she is. We're entitled to make whatever decisions... We're entitled to that. We want our girl home. Please.

DR. UMDEGBE

(reluctantly)

Very well. If this is your wish.

BRENT

It is our wish.

DR. UMDEGBE

You are entitled to decline our expert medical advice. If it's the insurance, if it's the money --

BRENT

It's not the money. It's the principle. We'd like her back, please.

DR. UMDEGBE

Very well.

(collects the forms)

I'll inform the medical team of your decision.

DR. UMDEGBE exits. BRENT looks at AMY, who appears still in shock.

BRENT

We're making the right decision. See his face? We're probably the first people ever to stand up to their manipulations. All those military intelligence dick-wads up there, throwing ructions right now. Their plans gone to shit. We showed them. They can't mess with us. They picked the wrong couple to mess with. We're not sheep. We don't go along with their programs like docile little sheep. They messed with the wrong --

AMY

Shut up, Brent.

BRENT

Oh, yeah.

AMY

Not now.

BRENT

I know. You're right. Just saying, that's all. Just saying.

*They stand apart, looking unsure
and defeated.*

LIGHTS DOWN.

END OF PLAY