

Confessions of a Cadaver

written by

Matthew Taylor

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Scripts.by.MT@gmail.com

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER: "I am the architect of my own catastrophe"

INT. GROSS ANATOMY SURGICAL ROOM - DAY

Gloved hands grip a scalpel, slice a large "Y" into the abdomen of a CADAVER lying on a steel table.

SURGEON

Male, twenty-five years old.

OBSERVER (O.C.)

Jeez, so cold.

Feet away from the table stands OBSERVER (25) his bright clothes in stark contrast to the plain concrete walls.

The craggy and expressionless SURGEON (50's) doesn't acknowledge the Observer's presence as he peels away the cadaver's skin like a banana.

OBSERVER

He had a name you know. A life.

Surgeon takes a RIB CUTTER from a table, it GRINDS as it makes contact with bone.

Observer looks away, can't bear to watch as Surgeon pulls the rib cage out whole, sets it aside.

SURGEON

It's important to remain emotionally distant from your patient.

Observer rolls his eyes. Surgeon digs his hand into the cadaver.

OBSERVER

Henry, born October first, favourite colour was blue, first kiss at fourteen, lost his virginity at--

SURGEON

--Extensive liver damage...
(holds up liver)
...Due to excessive alcohol consumption.

Observer chuckles.

OBSERVER

Yeah, well, alcoholics have their reasons. Check the heart.

(MORE)

OBSERVER (CONT'D)

His father broke it so often I bet
it has more scars than a blind
carpenter.

Surgeon holds up the heart.

SURGEON

Myocardial scars. Unusual given the age.

Surgeon checks the inner elbow.

SURGEON

Copious track marks on the cubital fossa
(checks groin)
And on the femoral vein.

Observer raises both hands as if comparing the weight of
invisible objects.

OBSERVER

Loveless father, drug abuse. Same thing.

Surgeon drops the heart, it PANGS against the cold steel of a
tray. Observer watches, disgusted.

OBSERVER

(disbelief)

Wow.

Surgeon raises the arms of the cadaver, 7-inch unhealed
vertical cuts. Underneath, healed scars.

SURGEON

Several healed horizontal cuts
suggest history of self-harm.

Observer rolls up his sleeve, the same healed scars as the
cadaver. He points at them individually.

OBSERVER

First one, fourteen, I came last at
sports day and "embarrassed" you.
This one, twenty-two, got kicked
out of medical school and brought
"shame" on the family.

Observer points at more scars, one after the other.

OBSERVER

I "let you down", I "failed" you, I
would mount to "nothing", you
wished I wasn't born--

He stops, takes a breath, calms his mounting anger.

OBSERVER

You set the bar so fucking high,
where else was I supposed to go
other than under it?

Surgeon takes a deep breath. Inspects the fresh cuts.

SURGEON

Deep vertical lacerations to the
radial arteries of both wrists.

OBSERVER

The signs were there.

Observer points to the pile of organs on the tray.

OBSERVER

You didn't notice. You could have stopped
this. Look at me!

Reluctantly, Surgeon looks at the Observer.

Scalpel in hand, Observer slices open his wrists.

OBSERVER

It's your fault.

Horrified, Surgeon squeezes his eyes shut.

STUDENT (O.C.)

Suicide.

Surgeon slowly opens his eyes. Observer has gone.

For the first time, we see MEDICAL STUDENTS in a huddle
nearby, eagerly studying the surgeon.

SURGEON

The body can reveal the life of the
patient. Listen to it, listen to
them. It may be their last chance.

He nods to the medical students, they walk to other surgical
tables, each with a cadaver.

Surgeon pulls off his gloves, stares lovingly at the cadaver.

Tears roll down his cheeks as he strokes the cadavers hair.

SURGEON

I'm... so sorry.

FADE OUT.