

FARWELL

FADE IN:

INT. SMALL HOSPITAL ROOM

POV

Straight up on a ceiling vent, long rectangular lights slightly below.

Human palms enter the frame in a close-shot, meeting at the center.

They turn over in unison,

And after a beat, they turn back to the original position.

A deep, grating male voice mumbles.

The hands fall out of frame.

A stocky nurse, early fifties, enters the POV frame right. With a Cheshire cat smile, and an unknown foreign accent:

NURSE

All five on each hand, yea?
(snickers asthmatically)
Lemme get the doctor right over, Mr.
Farwell!

She turns her head right, squints at something out of frame. And makes some kind of grunting noise. She then leans over the POV, her milk ready jugs center frame.

CLICK.

A loud sustained "game show" buzzer sound goes off.

NURSE

(grunting wail)
Not that one!

CLICK. The buzzer stops.

CLICK. Displacing of the phone receiver.

NURSE (O.S.)

Doctor Fritz to room two-two-two. Doctor
Fritz to room two-two-two.

Sound of phone receiver replaced.

CLICK. Buzzer goes off.

NURSE

Ahhhhhrat one!

CLICK. Buzzer stops.

CLICK.

The jugs-and-body move back and the nurse's face is looking down.

NURSE

(smile stretching her face)
Hold out a minute, Mr. Farwell.

In a grating, narrative voice:

FARWELL

What happened?

NURSE

Lookin' at-cha, not a whole lotta good,
yea?

(snickers asthmatically)

Dr. Fritz'll be here in a minute.

She leaves the frame. POV moves his head down, where the view extends to his feet and the end of the gurney. In the b.g. a customarily dressed hospital room.

POV looks left and inspects the room. Nothing out of the ordinary.

POV turns right and sees the nurse running her hog knuckled hands under the sink water.

She shuts the water off. Grabs a nearby towel, drying off.

After, she folds the towel thrice, lumbers to the opposite end of the room (by the door), not minding the patient on the bed.

She grabs a broom and dust pan snug between door and corner, and begins sweeping the tiles.

LATER

...the power goes out. She stops. Looks up at the patient, the grin stretching her face for a beat, then her gaze falls down.

Continues on.

Door knock, and the door swinging open.

The POV centers on a DARK FIGURE at the door, silhouetted by the emergency lights from the hallway.

Unexpectedly, the power turns back on. DOCTOR FRITZ, mid-thirties, at the door. His eyes glued on the chart in his hand.

Steps inside, and with his free hand closes the door.

DOCTOR FRITZ

Eight centimeters dilated. Vertex at
station minus two. Not a bad start if you
ask me, Mrs. Ruff.

The sweeping nurse moves closer to the bed. Doctor Fritz looks up at the POV.

DOCTOR FRITZ

(chuckles)

H-oh, you're not Mrs. Ruff.

The nurse looks up at the doctor then at the POV.

NURSE

This is Mr. Farwell, Dr. Fritz.

DOCTOR FRITZ

Yes, I can see that now. Must've grabbed
the wrong chart by mistake. Say, how are
things looking Mr. Farwell?

FARWELL

I feel fine. What happened, doctor?

NURSE

He just woke up, Dr. Fritz.

DOCTOR FRITZ

Sleep okay? Morning sickness? Wait, pardon me.

(chuckles)

Lemme start off on the right foot. I'm Doctor Fritz. Practitioner of Practitioners of this Hospital unit. That is, newly appointed practitioner of practitioners. We do the talking so you don't have to. Yes, Mr. Farwell, it's a unit where the doctor lives for the patient and the patient lives til he's dead.

Right frame, the nurse shoves half the broom underneath the bed --

DOCTOR FRITZ

Our staff, equipped with state-of-the-art training with a capital S...

-- and sweeps out a dead rat.

DOCTOR FRITZ

..carries puissance from task to task, duty to duty, labor to labor.

The broom pushes it into the dust pan.

DOCTOR FRITZ

It's no surprise then Mr. Farwell, Mr. Lyvik from Board of Health awarded Dr. Shirley the Public Health Leadership Award. Now, granted it may be the case Dr. Shirley is among the departed, his spirit swans every nook and cranny, which makes us...

(smiles)

...call it, a little warm inside.

The nurse stops and looks at the patient concerned.

NURSE

Stomach touching your back, Mr. Farwell?

A beat.

FARWELL

I'm good, thank you.

She smiles then lumbers back to the corner of the room --

DOCTOR FRITZ

Well, Mr. Farwell. Perhaps I should examine you more closely now.

-- restoring dust pan and broom. The doctor approaches the patient and sits on the bed, places the stethoscope to the patients's chest and listens through the earpieces.

DOCTOR FRITZ
 (as if listening to a
 telephone call)

Yes.

The nurse enters and exits the frame behind him--frame right to frame left.

DOCTOR FRITZ
 Mmmm. Yes. Yes.

SWAT

POV turns his head left and sees the nurse holding a fly swatter pressing against a mirror. She releases pressure and sets the swatter down on a counter, the dead fly guts smeared.

DOCTOR FRITZ (O.S.)
 You won't like it, Mr. Farwell.

The nurse turns towards POV and lets out her stretched grin.

DOCTOR FRITZ (O.S.)
 You've got a heart condition. Yep. It ain't sitting pretty.

She turns her head and deadpans. POV turns to the Doctor.

DOCTOR FRITZ
 This could keep you in bed for months. Understand, it's common for a man who's lived for this age.

A beat.

Sincerely staring into his eyes:

DOCTOR FRITZ
 I don't know how else to put it, Mr. Farwell. But it ain't sitting pretty.

The nurse passes through in the b.g.

A beat.

DOCTOR FRITZ
 It ain't sitting pretty...one hairy bit.

Fritz stares into the POV for another beat then leaps out of the bed and heads for the door.

He opens the door and exits, without turning back to the patient.

After a beat the lights go off.

Off screen, the sound of a sweeping broom becomes audible.

CUT TO BLACK.