

"Kokoro"

by

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Adapted from the feature
script of same name

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COLM O'Sullivan (60s), a tall Irish-american man with silvery white hair and a reddish face, sits in a chair outside a medical office.

He looks at his watch, lets out a big sigh.

COLM
(to himself)
No way to treat a doctor, keeping
him waiting like this.

ORLA WALSHE (40s) walks down the hall towards him. Orla is similar to her father and brother, reasonable height, a certain seriousness to her but also a glint in her eye. Behind her is Niall.

ORLA
Look what I brought with me.

COLM
Beer, I hope.

NIALL O'Sullivan (30s) walks up from behind her.

Niall is an average type, a slight sadness to his eyes. Although Colm has a slight Irish lilt, Niall and Orla have American accents.

NIALL
Hey Dad.

Colm's face lights up on seeing him initially, and then dissolves back to his stern expression.

COLM
Well now look who it is. The
prodigal son himself. Come here so
I can take a good look at ya.

Colm pats the empty chair beside him. But Niall doesn't sit down.

COLM
How is my computer genius son in
New York?

NIALL
Saving the world Dad. How are you
feeling?

COLM
Surviving, son.

COLM

Lean in kids, so I can tell you
the secret to life.

Niall and Orla are surprised at how serious he is. They lean in, expecting him to whisper, but he yells at full volume.

COLM

Fuck life!

He laughs at his own dark joke. Niall is taken aback. Orla has that look of being well used to his 'jokes'.

ORLA

Dad...

COLM

Oh lighten up Orla.

He turns to Niall.

COLM

She treats me like I'm some simple minded infant that doesn't know I have Hodgkin's.

NIALL

Dad?

COLM

Sure what else could it be? The drinking never caused me this type of pain.

ORLA

But you don't...

COLM

Oh here comes the psychiatrist claptrap.

Orla shakes her head, irritated.

ORLA

But you don't have other symptoms like dementia, forgetfulness.

NIALL

(sarcastically)
As far as we know.

ORLA

Can we not do this today?

She sighs, she's tired of hearing this record.

ORLA

I need to get some coffee, you
want anything while you wait?

COLM

Tea if they have it love.

He pulls on Niall's collar to bring him in closer.

COLM

(whispers)
Bring me some beer son.

NIALL

I doubt they have any in a
hospital, but I'll try my best.

Niall gets up to leave with Orla.

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INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

2

Niall comes back with two cups of coffee and sits beside
Orla. She takes a sip, makes a face. She's focused on her
phone.

NIALL

What are you looking at?

ORLA

Other possible diagnoses.

NIALL

Right. I took his scans, ran it
through our medical software.

Orla raises an eyebrow as she looks at her phone.

NIALL

I saw that. If your field of
psychiatry has to be taken
seriously, so does my technology.

A beat.

NIALL

Do the doctors really think it's
that bad?

ORLA

At first they thought it was an
overdose.

NIALL
Overdose..? Wait, what?

ORLA
He was found at home collapsed,
with a spilled bottle of
painkillers. I told you this.

NIALL
You know I tune out over the
phone. You think it's epigenetic?

ORLA
What is?

NIALL
Our families love of drama. That
little joke of his back there.

ORLA
He's terrified.

NIALL
Of dying, sure, we're all afraid.

Orla looks at him confused.

ORLA
No, you know. This all reminds him
of Mom.

NIALL
Mom? What about Mom?

Orla puts her phone down.

ORLA
Mom's cancer.

NIALL
Yeah...she had cancer...

ORLA
And she didn't get it treated in
time because...

NIALL
...they caught it too late...

ORLA
...Dad misdiagnosed her.

Niall's face drops.

NIALL

He what?

Orla registers how shocked Niall is.

ORLA

You...you knew. Right? Everyone knew.

NIALL

He never told me...

ORLA

Everyone knew Niall, it was the gossip at his medical practice. It's what kicked his drinking into high gear.

Niall receives the news as if he just got the real answer to life, which in a way, he has.

NIALL

Fuck.

ORLA

You never knew? In like the years since Mom died? I thought you blamed him...

NIALL

I never asked...

ORLA

(raising her voice)

You never cared to ask Niall. You got the fuck outta here and left your family behind as soon as Mom died. You couldn't wait to leave.

Orla starts crying.

ORLA

How could you not know? Are we that distant from each other?

Niall snaps out of his thoughts, and tries to comfort her. It's awkward. Niall gets a beep from his phone, he takes it out and looks at it.

ORLA

What?

NIALL
My medical program. Says there's
no match for Hodgkins.

Orla's dries her eyes and looks at her phone. Her eyes
light up.

ORLA
I may have found something.

3 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY, LOS ANGELES - DAY

3

Colm is standing by a window at the end of the hospital
hallway. Niall and Orla.

ORLA
There you are.

COLM
You got my...?

NIALL No beer in hospitals. ORLA And the tea is awful.

COLM
Well, doctor confirms it's
Hodgkins. We'll start the chemo
this week.

Orla and Niall look at each other, unsure how to approach
this.

NIALL
Dad, we analyzed your MRI scans
through my software program. We
don't think it's Hodgkin's.

COLM
And what does my non-physician son
think it is?

Niall looks at Orla.

ORLA
Castleman's.

Colm rolls his eyes. He speaks to both of them.

COLM
A deus ex machina at the eleventh
hour, is it?

ORLA

Dad?

COLM

I couldn't save your mom, so you both gotta save your father with some woo-woo science.

NIALL

Dad, c'mon that's not what's happening here.

Colm looks at him angrily, bitterly.

COLM

We see what we wanna see Niall. We don't want to accept the hard truth so we see what we wanna see.

ORLA

Dad, it's not just his program. Your symptoms, they don't quite match up...

COLM

Why can't you just get me beer so I can die in peace...

ORLA

Dad, listen, psychiatry isn't woo-woo, it's...

COLM

(shouting)

I was trying to kill myself, ok? I was trying to overdose on my pain pills. How's that for your psychiatry!? Didn't even know, did ya?

Orla and Niall are stunned. Orla bursts into tears. She runs down the hall and out of the building.

Niall sits beside Colm. Colm can't look at him.

NIALL

Shit Dad. What the hell?

COLM

I don't want to talk about it.

NIALL

Seems to be a family trait.

A beat. Niall pauses, thinking to himself.

NIALL

Do you remember saying goodbye to Mom?

Colm is thrown by the question. He turns to Niall.

NIALL

I'm not sure how I even forgot, really. We went home after mom died to take a nap, and...

COLM

Stop...

NIALL

...I dreamt mom visiting me. Her spirit? And just feeling how excited she was, for her next journey. She felt free...

Colm is choking up.

COLM

Please stop...

NIALL

..and I felt her say goodbye to me and then go across the hall to your bedroom. I remember you were crying out to her. You asked her to forgive you, and I never knew why, till now. She told me, Dad. She told she never blamed you. It was her time. You couldn't have prevented it.

Colm is in tears. He can't take what Niall is saying. He hangs onto Niall, collapsing in tears into his arms.

NIALL

She'd want you to hold off, just a little longer Dad. Just get the biopsy for Castleman's before we start doing chemo. Please, Dad, for Mom.

Colm nods his head as cries in Niall's arms.

THE END