FOUR DEGREES AND NO HIRE - [S01:E02]

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FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL - PEDIATRICS UNIT - DAY

We pan across the faces of MAGGIE and JOEL.

JOEL
When I said there were untapped resources out there, this is not what I had in mind.

Finally, we land on DEXTER, wearing clown make-up.

DEXTER
How the hell do you think I feel?

We pull back to see the three friends surrounded by a group of sick and dying children in a hospital pediatric ward. Like Dexter, Joel and Maggie don their own ridiculous outfits as magicians, complete with hats, capes and magic wands.

Dexter looks at his clown outfit and shudders. A young girl approaches Dexter.

YOUNG GIRL
(to Dexter)
Excuse me, mister.

Dexter kneels down to her eye level.

DEXTER
(slightly annoyed)
Yeah?

YOUNG GIRL
What’s your name?

DEXTER
(sighing)
General Fuzzybottom.

YOUNG GIRL
I don’t like clowns.

DEXTER
(trying to be polite)
I’m sorry, sweetheart. Unfortunately, some people do.

Dexter pats her on the head and stands. The young girl throws up on his clown shoes. Dexter groans in annoyance. A NURSE walks up to the young girl to comfort her.

(continued)
NURSE  
(to the young girl)  
Oh, honey. Are you not feeling well?

The young girl shakes her head.

NURSE  
(to the young girl)  
Okay. Let’s get you to bed.  
(to Dexter)  
I’m sorry. Are you okay?

Dexter examines his shoes, sighing and cursing under his breath.

DEXTER  
(lying)  
Yeah.

NURSE  
I’ll get the janitor up here to clean this up.

DEXTER  
You do that.

MAGGIE  
(to Joel)  
Where’s Isaac?

Joel shrugs. In the background, Dexter, still annoyed, paces and continues examining the ruined clown shoes.

DEXTER  
It’s a rental!

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ISAAC, donning janitor apparel, pushes a trash can down the hall, listening to a wireless radio headset. He bobs his head to the music and sings to himself. Clipped to his belt is a walkie-talkie.

WALKIE-TALKIE  
Isaac?

Isaac pulls the headphones off to listen to the call.
CONTINUED:

WALKIE-TALKIE
Isaac, you got a clean up in pediatrics. One of the kids threw up.

He responds to the call.

ISAAC
(into the walkie-talkie)
Vomit? I’m on it!

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - PEDIATRICS UNIT - CONTINUOUS

The nurse herds the children around Joel, Maggie and Dexter.

NURSE
Okay, gang! Is everyone ready for a magic show?

The kids are unenthused. They’re sick and drugged up.

KIDS
Yay.

NURSE
Good. Everyone gather around the Amazing...

The nurse looks to Joel for the name. Maggie is a bit confused and taken back.

JOEL
Bartleby.

NURSE
The Amazing Bartleby and his wonderful assistant Miss --

MAGGIE
(to the nurse)
Woah, woah. I’m the magician, he’s the assistant.

JOEL
No you’re not. I am. How can you be the magician? I did all the research.

Joel holds up a stack of books on magic. Maggie shakes her head no and holds up a DVD for a magician named Kris Angle. The DVD is called "Mindfuck."

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JOEL
Oh no, I’m not going to have that philistine encroach on this performance.

Maggie scoffs and gives in.

We turn to the nurse and Dexter.

NURSE
All right, you’re going to be in another room.

DEXTER
I am?

NURSE
Yeah. We got a special patient just for you. Come this way.

The nurse and Dexter exit.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isaac continues down the hallway, looking for the pediatric ward. He is obviously lost and turned around. He enters one room and somehow exits from the room across the hall. He’s a bit confused by this but he shrugs it off and continues his search.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The nurse ushers Dexter into the patient’s room. Lying in the bed is a girl, obviously on the downward slope. This is ASHLEY.

NURSE
Hi, Ashley. This is Captain Fuzzybottom.

DEXTER
General.

NURSE
Excuse me?

(CONTINUED)
DEXTER
It’s General. General Fuzzybottom.

NURSE
Oh. Okay. Well, Ashley, General Fuzzybottom is here to entertain you for a while. You excited?

ASHLEY
(really excited)
Yep.

NURSE
Great! Well, I’ll leave you two guys to the fun.

The nurse exits.

DEXTER
Okay. So, what do you want to do?

There is an obvious change in tone and demeanor in Ashley. More bitter and hateful.

ASHLEY
Not die.

DEXTER
Wait, what?

ASHLEY
I don’t care what we do. Let’s just get this over with.

DEXTER
Woah. Listen, I don’t have time for games. What do you want --

ASHLEY
No. You listen, unless your rainbow wig and big ass shoes are gonna raise my blood cell count then I’m gonna go back to watching Glen Beck.

DEXTER
(speechless)
Uh...

CUT TO:
INT. HOSPITAL - PEDIATRICS UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Joel stands before the kids performing a card trick. Maggie stands behind him, wearing an obviously forced smile.

JOEL
Okay. And from this deck, I will procure your card, young man!

Joel gestures to an eager, freckled boy sitting at the front of the group. He pulls out a card from the deck and presents it to the spectators.

JOEL (CONT’D)
Is this your card?

The freckled boy nods his head. The group is in awe. They applaud the trick. Joel is filled with pleasure by the success of his sleight of hand.

JOEL (CONT’D)
(smug)
Thank you.

Maggie musters an applause and then rushes forward.

MAGGIE
Hey, guys! How about one of my magic tricks, huh?

The kids don’t respond. Maggie pulls up one of her sleeves anyway.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
As you can see, there’s nothing up my sleeve.

As she extends her arm to reveal there’s nothing up there, Maggie pushes Joel out of the way and pulls up another sleeve.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
See? Still, nothing up my sleeve.

She pushes Joel away further. In the process, she slips and falls in the vomit. Joel runs to help.

JOEL
Maggie, are you okay?!

MAGGIE (O.C.)
(annoyed)
Where the hell is that janitor?!
INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isaac still roams the halls looking for the pediatric ward. He enters a room without looking at the sign on the door. It reads MORGUE.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ashley watches TV, not paying attention to Dexter. He tries to get her attention.

DEXTER
Hey! How about I make you a balloon animal?

ASHLEY
(mockingly)
Hey! How about you make a shotgun to shoot yourself?

Once again, Dexter is left speechless but is starting to get fed up. He’s tried being nice.

DEXTER
Listen, I’m just trying to do my job.

ASHLEY
You’re not doing a very good job.

DEXTER
Well, you’re not making it easy.

ASHLEY
That’s not my problem, Brigadier Fuzzyballs. What kind of name is that anyway?

DEXTER
I didn’t pick the name! The agency did! And it’s General Fuzzybottom!

ASHLEY
General Dick.

(CONTINUED)
DEXTER
What did you say?

ASHLEY
Say what?

A beat. Tension is rising.

DEXTER
Do you want me to make you a balloon animal or not?

ASHLEY
Yeah. Fine.

DEXTER
What do you want?

ASHLEY
Make me a dog.

DEXTER
One dog, coming up.

Dexter whips out a balloon and starts inflating it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Isaac looks at the bodies lying on tables covered with white sheets and zipped up in body bags. It’s obvious he is scared and nervous. Slowly, a MORTICIAN with a pale complexion approaches Isaac from behind. He almost glides. Isaac is unaware of his presence.

MORTICIAN
(slow, ominous)
Sometimes they talk to you.

Isaac jumps, startled. He turns to the mortician.

ISAAC
What?

MORTICIAN
They talk sometimes.

ISAAC
Who? The dead?

(CONTINUED)
The mortician nods.

MORTICIAN
They talk, move, yearn to be alive again.

ISAAC
Oh.

MORTICIAN
I’ve seen many things throughout the years that no person should see. Horrible, horrible things.

Isaac turns back to the bodies, concerned. The mortician slowly glides away.

ISAAC
Like what?

Isaac turns to discover the mortician is gone. He’s freaked out further.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - PEDIATRICS UNIT - CONTINUOUS

Maggie and Joel stand away from the group of children, talking.

MAGGIE
So, what’s next?

JOEL
I don’t know. I’m out of tricks.

MAGGIE
What?

JOEL
I’m out.

MAGGIE
Dammit.
IOEL
I know.

MAGGIE
Well, they’re expecting more.

JOEL
I know!

Maggie looks around, thinking. She spots the Kris Angle DVD.

MAGGIE
Let’s do a disappearing act.

JOEL
What?

MAGGIE
A disappearing act. You did research one, right?

JOEL
Uh, kind of.

MAGGIE
Well, let’s do it then.

JOEL
But I don’t know what’s going to happen. What if it doesn’t work?

Maggie grabs Joel by the shirt.

MAGGIE
It’ll work. Trust me.

She lets go and walks to the group of kids.

MAGGIE
Alright, gang. This is our last trick of the day. Are you guys ready for a disappearing act?

KIDS
YAY!

Joel glares at Maggie.

JOEL
(mouthing)
It’s not going to work.

She glares back.

(CONTINUED)
MAGGIE
(mouthing)
Shut up!

Maggie and Joel walk to an open hospital curtain. Maggie walks behind it.

JOEL
(to the kids)
As you can see, there’s...

Joel taps on the floor with his wand and sighs.

JOEL (CONT’D)
... no trap door and no false wall of any kind, well, because there are no walls here. Maggie, my wonderful assistant, will stand behind this curtain and I will magically make her disappear into thin air.
(to Maggie, gulping)
Are you ready?

Maggie nods. Joel pulls the curtain closed.

JOEL (CONT’D)
And now, I will say some words of magic to, uh, make her disappear.

Joel hesitates. Behind the curtain, Maggie closes her eyes and mumbles something -- a magic chant. Joel hears her.

JOEL
What was that, Maggie?

MAGGIE
Nothing!

Joel shrugs. Maggie resumes mumbling.

JOEL
(to the kids)
Okay. Now... uh... ABC... 123... um, it’s as simple as do-re-mi!

Joel pulls the curtain open. Maggie is gone. The kids gasp. Joel is confused. He races behind the curtain to look for her.

JOEL
Maggie? Maggie?!

No response. She’s gone.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 12.

JOEL
Oh shit.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dexter is frustrated. He is having difficulty making a balloon animal.

ASHLEY
Having problems there, Legionnaire Fuzzybottom?

Dexter gives up and throws the balloon at Ashley.

DEXTER
Here.

ASHLEY
What is it?

DEXTER
An eel.

ASHLEY
But I asked for a dog.

DEXTER
Well, make a wish. I mean, you get one of those, right?

ASHLEY
You’re an asshole.

DEXTER
You’re a douche.

ASHLEY
What kind of clown are you if you can’t make a dog?

DEXTER
I’m not a clown.

ASHLEY
Yes you are.

DEXTER
No I’m not!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ASHLEY
Yes you are.

DEXTER
NO I’M NOT!

Ashley reaches for a hand-held mirror from the bedside table and holds it up to Dexter.

ASHLEY
Yes you are! Look!

Dexter shudders and turns away.

DEXTER
No! Put it away!

Ashley is confused.

ASHLEY
What? Why?

DEXTER
Nothing.

ASHLEY
Are you... afraid of clowns?

Dexter tenses up.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK

Dexter stands before a mirror, nervous and trying to apply clown make-up. As he lifts the make-up to his face, he closes his eyes.

DEXTER
(to himself)
You can do this. You can do this.

He stops, opens his eyes and tears up.

DEXTER
(sobbing)
No I can’t.

In the background, we hear the maniacal cackle of a clown and the honk of a clown horn.

RETURN TO:
INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - PRESENT

DEXTER
No.

ASHLEY
(smiling)
You’re afraid of clowns.

DEXTER
Shut up.

ASHLEY
(laughing, mocking)
You’re afraid of clowns!

DEXTER
I said shut up!

Dexter rushes to the bed with a balloon. He raises it to hit her. As he crosses to the bed, Dexter trips on a wire, unhooking Ashley from a machine. She starts to flatline. Dexter stops, eyes growing wide.

DEXTER
Oh shit.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Isaac walks around the room, looking at the bodies, still timid and creeped out. Then:

VOICE (O.C)
(almost a whisper)
Help me.

Isaac freezes.

ISAAC
Who was that?!

VOICE (O.C)
(still whispering)
Help me. Please.

He looks around the room frantically.

ISAAC
Who’s there?! What do you want?!

There is a long pause. Absolute silence. Finally:

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 15.

VOICE (O.C)
(a terrific scream)
HELP ME!

A body bag moves. Scared, Isaac screams and runs out of the morgue.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Isaac bursts through the morgue doors and runs down the hallway in full speed, trying to put as much distance between him and the morgue as possible.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - HAPPY HOUR

Dexter and Joel sit in a booth, nursing beers and looking beat. They’re still dressed in their respective work outfits from the day. Isaac enters the bar and sits down with them. No one speaks. Finally:

ISAAC
Where’s Maggie?

Dexter and Isaac exchange a puzzled look. Joel sinks into his seat.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Maggie, the moving body from the previous morgue scene, squirms in the body bag, trying to get out.

MAGGIE
Hello? Is anyone out there? I need a little bit of help here. Anyone?

Nothing.

MAGGIE (CONT’D)
Fuck.

CUT TO:
INT. HOSPITAL - PEDIATRICS UNIT - CONTINUOUS

The throw-up girl stands with the Kris Angle DVD, reading the back. We slowly zoom in on the DVD cover. An ominous piano melody sounds off...

END OF EPISODE TWO