

PRCKS

"Pilot"

by

Blake Ross

THIS IS A PARODY WORK OF FICTION
IT HAS NOT BEEN PEER-REVIEWED

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FADE IN:

INT. ALLISON'S OFFICE - DAY

Silicon Valley is a gambler's town. Off her framed "DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY" English degree, we find the baritone ALLISON, 30s, that wide-eyed blackjack player you root for even as she keeps hitting on 19.

Dealing her is BLADE, 40s and imposing, the guy we somehow trust at the card table even though we know his dinner table is stocked by the house.

And DR. ADLER is facepalming a lot for a silver fox.

ALLISON

Okay. How about "I know our tests work. I can feel it in my blood."

BLADE

Damnit Ali! Every time a reporter corners you for a quote, you start punning.

ALLISON

It's approachable.

BLADE

It's a nervous tic. Last week, you told the Times you thought Dynapy was "D.N.A. great job."

FUCKIN' BOB (nickname "Bob"), 50s and bald from a lifetime at the penny slots, pokes his head in.

BOB

Jackson's getting cold feet about the tests.

ALLISON

Shit.

(beat)

Promote him.

Bob out.

BLADE

Focus. I need something more datey from you guys.

Dr. Adler wipes his glasses.

DR. ADLER

"Datey"?

BLADE

Like, data-y. Numbers. Graphs. Charts. This is the Journal, they're not gonna bend over for a warm and fuzzy.

DR. ADLER

We could just try actually fixing the tests.

Long pause: Never bring science to a punfight.

Bob bobs back in. It's just the head. It's always just the head; never in this series do we see his body. If this is *Home Improvement*, he is the anti-Wilson. As messengers go, he is eminently shootable.

BOB

CVS heard about the article. They want to chat.

ALLISON

What are you, the VP of Broken Dreams? Get outta here!

Bob out.

Allison sighs and surveys the wall of frames behind her desk. Scars of war? Nostalgic shrapnel from The Early Days? Nah: We pan over a "Fastest Typist" award.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Ten years. That's, that's a third of my life. You know why I started Dynapy?

Beat.

BLADE

Our founder myth brainstorm's at 4.

ALLISON

Then tell me the fucking pull quote! We hired you guys for a crisis. Do your job. What are we--

BLADE

This IS my job: Saving you from yourself. Fine -- you want a quote -- here's one for ya. Guess where I was on Tuesday.

DR. ADLER

CERN?

BLADE

The Holiday Inn Express on 8th. The Holiday Inn *EXPRESS*, Ali. Because someone looked at the Holiday Inn and said, "looks good -- I'll take that to go."

(beat)

That one -- she was Carla, Marla, something like that. And the Tuesday before? The Westin. Nicer, but I didn't get the points. They couldn't find my Starwood account under the name "Clyde Maldonovan."

ALLISON

Glad you're back to the more believable "Blade." Fun story, is it going anywhere?

BLADE

(ignoring)

I can only meet up with the girls on Tuesdays -- that's Kathy's Toastmasters night. My wife's winning Table Topics, I'm bending Darla over the table.

ALLISON

If you're asking me to sleep with Mike to spike the article, that's not really my deal.

BLADE

No, see, here's the thing. This morning I woke up to a message from a different chick. Ashley. And the very first thing she said was: "All of us at Ashley Madison would like to reassure you that your credit card information was not compromised in this attack."

(beat)

That pic I sent to Brit from the third-floor bathroom at Wrigley, caption, "Hebrew National"? The Inside Out sequel I filmed with Tiff in her Corolla? Sure, my family might be watching those together over Thanksgiving. But my credit card number?

(MORE)

BLADE (CONT'D)

The one I give out to trick-or-treaters, the one that's already printed on half the soccer jerseys in Guatemala? Safe and sound.

ALLISON

Hebrew National? Really?

BLADE

The crazy thing is: I felt better. They took a fear I didn't even have, told me I *should* have it, and then dismissed it all at once.

(beat)

So. Dynapy's blood test causes syphilis? Tell me zero ponies were harmed in the making of these platelets. Some guy lost a finger in your lab? Even Bernie Madoff won't do business with you? Tell me that a hundred percent -- a hundred percent! -- of all Dynapy patients were found not to be pedophiles; tell me not a single patient contracted rabies during the exam; tell me your tests have tested gluten-free. Paint the minotaur of doom in the stars before my eyes and then swaddle me in the warm blanket of Dynapy until I fall fast asleep suckling at its teat.

(beat)

Give me *that* quote!

OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE:

A slow-boiled cinematic tour of a Dynapy blood test in action: CLOSE on the warm compress cradling the pointer finger. Massaging it. Readyng it. SWAB it with rubbing alcohol. Flinch! The lancet GLIDES in. The lancet GLIDES out. Bright RED d r i p s. Collated gently in a vial so small it's nigh invisible: the Teenytainer(tm). It's next to a quarter for size. Now triage: blood to the BIOHAZARD bin, lancet to the sharps container. The SEMI pulls up. Package the specimen in the ICY refrigeration pack. Drive it to the lab. Deliver it to the technician. Double check it. Centrifuge it. And now take it -- slowly, carefully, easy does it -- right into the TRASH CAN. Then flip another quarter and reach for the stamp: Positive? or Negative? We randomize the diagnosis each episode. STAMP HARD on the Lab Results form to leave your mark: "PRICKS".

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Allison is Powerpointing.

ALLISON

...So while our pricks are growing steadily quarter over quarter, they still pale in comparison to our venous draws. But our fingering team will crack this. We've got the finest medical professionals in the world. Yeah, Dre?

We pan to the board of Dynapy: Dr. Oz, Dr. Phil, and esteemed chairman Dr. Dre...

CHAIRMAN DRE

Yeah, uh, I don't understand why we need to reup Adler's package if you're saying we're barely even using the new fingerprick hotness. It's way more guac than Stan got before he...left.

ALLISON

He's the one who knows our science; let's keep him happy and prevent...Stannish outcomes. Actually, that brings me to the final item. At 5 today, the Wall Street Journal is going to be publishing an article about our testing procedure.

DR. PHIL

What about it?

ALLISON

Whether or not we "have one," per se.

BLADE

We don't expect it to be favorable.

DR. OZ

Did you comment?

ALLISON

No comment.

DR. PHIL

No comment to them, or no comment to us on whether you commented to them?

Beat.

ALLISON

Yes. Also, it's unclear if they have inside sources or if they're just fishing. We've cracked down on leaks precipitously this quarter--

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Kutch, are you periscoping again?

Oh yeah, Ashton Kutcher is also on the board. For gravitas.

KUTCH

No!

(smirking, to Dr. Phil)
Meerkat.

Phil pounds Kutch.

BLADE

Aside from not livestreaming our board meetings, we need something else from you.

Blade's turn to Powerpoint.

BLADE (CONT'D)

This is a graph of new wells constructed in Eritrea over the last decade.

It's mostly linear, but there are some spikes and dips. Blade starts stepping through the spikes, using his clicker to reveal callout bubbles over each in turn.

BLADE (CONT'D)

(pointing at a spike)
This is when the CEO of Lululemon told fat women to be less fat.

BLADE (CONT'D)

(another spike)
This is when Spagetti-O's tweeted out a smiling noodle to commemorate Pearl Harbor.

He clicks as he says it, revealing a photo of the tweet (this really happened):



SpaghettiOs ✓
@SpaghettiOs



Follow

Take a moment to remember #PearlHarbor with us. pic.twitter.com/B8E1cFKgEo

Reply Retweet Favorite More



5,023
RETWEETS

2,284
FAVORITES



BLADE (CONT'D)
(another spike)
Sure, U2, feel free to preinstall
your album on our phones.

BLADE (CONT'D)
(another spike)
What's that, Netflix? Some of your
customers are too happy? Okay,
shuttle them off to an abortion
called Qwikster.

DR. OZ
And that huge spike at the end?

BLADE
Ah, yes. That's when we all learned
that Jared was eating a little too
fresh. God bless Subway, they
practically wiped out hunger in
Sudan after that one.

CHAIRMAN DRE
(pointing)
Why does the graph go down there?

BLADE
Africa felt bad for Clinkle, so
they donated back.
(beat)
You see, guys, it's okay to mess up
in the corporate world. You just
gotta make sure to wellwash it
after.

CHAIRMAN DRE
"Wellwash it"?

BLADE
Well it doesn't *have* to be a well.
Some companies like to schoolwash
it, churchwash it, whatever. Lulu
even tried gymwashing. Only rule is
that it's gotta be *after*. I had
some guys build a bunch of stuff
upfront, tryin' to create option
value for future fuckups. Total
waste of a school. Doesn't work
that way.

(MORE)

BLADE (CONT'D)

Now, in Dynapy's case, having Allison donate *money* would only call attention to the company's rather...rich...valuation. Which could magnify the spotlight in a way we don't want right now.

ALLISON

Also, I don't have any actual money yet.

BLADE

Also, she doesn't have any actual money yet.

(beat)

But there's something else we can donate.

Allison dramatically pulls a washcloth off a very tiny suite of teenytainers.

KUTCH

What the eff is that?

ALLISON

That...that's our product. Have you never taken a Dynapy test?

Long beat.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

We want to get a photo of you all donating blood to counterbalance the shitstorm.

BLADE

But since we don't actually have time to do that, we brought a few vials of my blood.

CHAIRMAN DRE

So we're going to demonstrate that we're an ethical company by donating just enough blood to resuscitate a small hamster, and it doesn't even belong to us?

BLADE

Yes.

A beat, by Dre.

CHAIRMAN DRE

Okay.

DR. OZ
Okay.

KUTCH
Coo.

BLADE
Line up over here...

INT. LAB - DAY

Dynapy prides itself on being a tech company, not a stuffy medical outfit. But some of those cultural details don't quite translate. Maybe it's seeing a poster in a blood testing laboratory that says DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT. Maybe it's the RipStik in the eyewash station. Certainly it doesn't help that JACKSON and LIZZY, late 20s, are practicing phlebotomy whilst sharing a "sushirrito." It takes dexterity to balance a bagel roll in one hand and your teenytainer in the other, but that's why these guys get paid the big bucks...

LIZZY
Twelve billion! Twelve motherfuckin' billion. I've started measuring things in stock, it's not healthy. Like yeah, why not get the jumbo bag of Pirate's Booty? It's only one more share.

JACKSON
Mmmhmm.

LIZZY
I think I'm gonna put the downpayment on the SoMa loft today.

JACKSON
What? No. Why would you do that?

LIZZY
(teasing)
Because you won't invite me to move in.
(re: no flirts back today)
What's with you?

JACKSON
Nothing. Can I borrow that?

Lizzy takes a swig from her Evian and then hands it to Jackson, who pours the rest into the teenytainer he's working on. Standard Operating Procedure around these parts.

The teenytainer slips from his fingers and falls to the floor. Also SOP -- Dynapy employees lose teenytainers like keys.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

God damnit.

Jackson searches on hands and knees.

LIZZY

You're weirding me out. Did we fail PT's or something?

JACKSON

No, we aced the tests. We always ace them. Where the *hell* is this thing? We might as well be storing blood in an Apple TV remote.

LIZZY

Shit...mo money mo problems, but I've never seen it happen this quickly.

JACKSON

We don't *have* any money yet, Liz. Look -- don't you think things are a little...off? Ali's been holed up all day with a guy who doesn't even work here. We dilute all our samples with water...

LIZZY

Bottled water.

JACKSON

...They had a board meeting at ten that wasn't scheduled, I got a promotion out of nowhere...

LIZZY

(laughing)

Humblebrag! I'd give you the world's tiniest violin, but you'd lose that too. So it's a weird day at the office, big whoop. Maybe we're going public.

JACKSON

It's not just today...

Quick flashback montage.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - HOLIDAY PARTY - NIGHT

Banner: "Merry Christmas '06"

ALLISON

...and don't forget your company gift! Laptop privacy screens for everyone!

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - DAY

ALLISON

Our warmest Dynapy welcome to our brand new general counsel!

G.C.

Hello. I have a religious objection to e-mail. Please find me in person to discuss anything.

ALLISON

Thanks Stu, and welcome aboard! He'll be working from home in Iceland.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - HOLIDAY PARTY - NIGHT

Banner: "Merry Christmas '08"

Allison holds up a screen with a blueprint labeled "TEST PROTOCOL".

ALLISON

Company gift. New laptops!

They're Etch-a-Sketches. She shakes hers in excitement, with predictable results.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB - PRESENT DAY

LIZZY

I guess. But like Allison says -- people who challenge the status quo always look crazy from the outside.

JACKSON
Yeah. But I'm inside...for now.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The board is finishing up its photo shoot. Phil and Kutch are cracking up over the blood type label Kutch put on his vial: "aplusk". Blade and Allison have pulled Dr. Oz aside and seem to be in the middle of a tutorial.

ALLISON
(slowly)
Assay.

DR. OZ
Assy.

ALLISON
(summoning patience)
Ass-ay.

DR. OZ
Ass-ay.

BLADE
Good!

DR. OZ
What is this, anyway?

ALLISON
It's Harvard for "blood test."

BLADE
Mike's thorough. A story like this, he's gonna want to talk to the board. And he'll be looking for anything to nail you with.

ALLISON
(restarting)
How do we diagnose patients?

DR. OZ
(recalling)
"We meticulously study their assy."

Blade and Allison exchange a glance: Their assy is grassy.
Hey guys: Relax! Your credit card information is safe.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Weekly company Q&A.

EMPLOYEE TODD

Our stock is up 4000% on
SecondMarket right now. There are
nannies in Idaho who have made more
money than some of us who have been
here for years. When are we going
to allow secondary sales?

ALLISON

Yes thank you, Todd, for again
asking that important question
this week.

(beat)

But I want to talk about something
more exciting today. As you all
know, we're under attack from a lot
of angles right now...for nothing
more than daring to be disruptive.
We've gotta put out a united front.
Think about the way red and white
blood cells team up to attack
disease--

DR. ADLER

That's not how it works.

ALLISON

(ice)

Thank you, Dr. Adler.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I know the rumors are already
circulating, but let's make it
official: I'm promoting Jackson
Kalani. Jackson was one of the
first people to bet on us, and me
especially. He joined ten years
ago, passing on a very lucrative
lacrosse scholarship to oversee our
federal Proficiency Testing
program. This week, the FDA
informed us that we've passed PT's
on 35 of our specialty draws.

Applause.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I also want to introduce this
little ray of light.

(MORE)

ALLISON (CONT'D)
This is Blade Perkins from Blade
Perkins & Associates. They--

BLADE
A division of Blade Perkins
Enterprises.

ALLISON
...yes. They're one of the top
public relations firms in the
world.

Blade fires off air guns. *How did he get those women?*

EMPLOYEE NEIL
Aren't these the guys who defended
that hedge fund douche -- I'm
sorry; that hedge fund owner --
when he tried to charge like a
grand for some life-saving miracle
drug?

BLADE
Yeah, well, best part of signing
with the best? SWAG. I've got a 5%
friends and family discount on
Daraprim with your name on it. Who
here has toxoplasmosis?
(silence)
Anyone wanna join Qwikster?

EMPLOYEE NEIL
Why do we need a national PR firm?
We're only really operating in New
Mexico right now.

EMPLOYEE LUCY
Yeah, and I've never heard anything
about Quest or LabCorps or
Bloodworks in the media. They seem
to just be killing it behind the
scenes.

ALLISON
We feel that--

BLADE
What's your name?

EMPLOYEE LUCY
Lucy...?

BLADE

Well Lucy, unless you'd cherish a husband who wished you "Happy anniversary, Lucy or Lacy, or Carla, or Marla," spare us the "Quest or LabCorps or Bloodworks" loser lingo. We didn't raise half a billion dollars to be "Or Dynapy," the 67th best lab in the country. We're not making Tinder for Blood Tests over here.

(then, thoughtfully)

Although...

(takes out a notepad, jots something down)

...that partnership would make a lot of sense.

ALLISON

Look, bottom line, I think Blade can help us. So we're gonna give it a shot. If it doesn't work, it doesn't work. He'll report directly to me, and Jackson will report to him.

JACKSON

What?

Dr. Adler shakes his head like Benjamin from *Animal Farm* when the pigs emerge on hind legs. He's seen this tale before...

EMPLOYEE NEIL

Doesn't it create a crazy incentive to have our testing team managed by our PR team?

ALLISON

No one's "managing" anyone. Think of this as a merger.

She writes on the whiteboard: "PR/OFICIENCY"

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Blade is our new director of PR.

(points at first word)

And Jackson is our new director of...Oficiency. Communicating our successes is an increasingly important part of the job, and these two are better together. Red cells, white cells. Jackson doesn't have a background in PR.

DR. ADLER

Does he have a background in
medicine?

ALLISON

Well, he's worked in medicine for
nearly ten years. OK, thanks,
everyone!

INT. BLADE'S OFFICE - DAY

Blade's setting up his new office, unpacking his boxes. Every
time his hand goes in, it comes out with another memento from
some past PR disaster: a bottle of thousand-dollar
toxoplasmosis pills, a Qwikster DVD... This is also the
moment Allison realizes that he's been wearing Lululemon
pants all day.

ALLISON

So everything you own was too
defective to sell?

BLADE

SWAG!

ALLISON

It's like I'm getting PR advice
from Filene's Basement.

BLADE

Yeah, well. At least Filene lets
her guys sell stock.

Off Allison's chilly glare, Blade's watch suddenly becomes
fascinating to him.

BLADE (CONT'D)

I don't mean to be a pain, but...

ALLISON

I know. I know. You'll have it by
5.

Allison pours vodka into a teenytainer and shoots it.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

How did we get here? None of the
things the Journal implied in their
advance -- I mean, I didn't do this
for the fame. I'm not pushing
"pills 4 gold" here. I'm making a
difference.

BLADE

Don't beat yourself up over this.
Everyone knows you mean well.

ALLISON

Thanks.

BLADE

They're just worried you'll kill
someone because you don't have any
medical experience.

ALLISON

Oh.

Another 'tainer of vodka.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

(quoting from article)

"The CEO has been unwilling to
submit to peer review, citing
'trade secrets'." Bullshit! Plenty
of my peers reviewed...my whole
freakin' book club reviewed. Two
hundred FDA submissions, not one
dangling participle.

(beat)

This doesn't happen with 23andme,
you know.

BLADE

Ali, you're a woman and you started
a \$12 billion company that
threatens to bankrupt people who
have been doing this stuff since
blood was in black and white. Now
some thirtysomething rides in on
her Harvard horse? The Man will
protect his turf.

ALLISON

23andme was started by a woman too,
and they get glowing press now.

(acidly)

Anne Wojciciciciciciciki. I can
save more lives than her.

BLADE

Oh. Well..."23andme" sounds more
datey. I told you! What the hell
does Dynapy mean, anyway?

ALLISON
It's a portmanteau of "diagnosis"
and "therapy."

BLADE
(muttering)
Fucking English majors...

Bob in.

BOB
The board finished the shoot. I
emailed you the pic.

Allison pulls it up on her phone. All you can see are hands. A parade of thumbs and pointers squeezed together to grasp teenytainers that are barely there. It looks like a bunch of "A-OK" signs from a corny stock photo celebrating diversity in the workplace.

ALLISON
You can't see any of their faces...

BOB
Well, if you don't zoom in close
enough, you can't see the
teenytainers...

BLADE
Jesus Christ, Bob. The whole point
was the celebritygasm. Nobody gives
a fuck about the blood.

Bob out.

BLADE (CONT'D)
(back to consoling Ali)
Hey. You got in the ring for a
reason. Stay true to it, okay?
(beat)
That reminds me, we're meeting in
twenty to hear marketing pitch the
story of why you got into the ring.

ALLISON
I don't understand why we need to
do this origin myth stuff.

BLADE
Perfect. More job security for me.

ALLISON
My story's not good enough?

BLADE

Your story's fine. Lots of things are "fine." Your story doesn't break hearts, or win them.

(beat)

Look, every time the Times writes some exposé about how easy it is for some prepube to recreate Newtown using a few A+++++ spare oven parts he bought off eBay, you know how they lead that story? With some fat load about how Pierre started the company in his garage to help his fiancée find Jughead Pez dispensers.

(beat)

And every time the Economist writes a profile of the Craigslist killer, they open with the tale of a jolly customer serviceman named Craig who just wanted nothing more in life than to check his list twice.

(beat)

The founder's intention is *everything*. And it's the only part of the story we can control. The Journal wants to shove a thousand-dollar pill down people's throats? Fine. Let's help it go down a little easier.

INT. DR. ADLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jackson knocks.

JACKSON

You got a sec?

DR. ADLER

Not really.

JACKSON

Does our stuff work?

Interest piqued, Dr. Adler sets down his coffee.

DR. ADLER

The Director of Oficiency, asking if our technology works. Quite a confidence boost.

JACKSON

You know as well as anyone that 99% of our tests aren't even run on our \bar{N} [EN-yeh, ñ] machines. They're run on the same mass-produced crap you can find at any lab on the Internet.

DR. ADLER

This isn't lacrosse, Jackson. The Class II regulations are complex.

JACKSON

And the science?

(beat)

Hey, I follow protocol. Every day at 9AM, you know, I pour half a liter of my damn Evian into our samples like they're fucking chia pets.

Jackson tosses a paper on Dr. Adler's desk.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

But this. Remember this? 1998, University of Maryland. You said that diluting blood samples increases the risk of cross-contamination and false positives by over 20%.

DR. ADLER

Ah, College Park. My colleagues and I did some of our finest work there. You know who uses it now? My colleagues and I.

JACKSON

There are only three people in this building who understand enough about this mystery box to tell me if we're the next Volkswagen or not, and you're one of them. But maybe you'd rather die a rich cheater than a poor academic. Just like everybody else.

DR. ADLER

Watch your tongue. Want to know if our stuff works? My daughter actually knows what I do now. So something is working.

JACKSON
And what if it was your daughter
taking these tests?

Jackson points to a framed photo of a young girl on Dr.
Adler's desk. (It's next to a keychain paper shredder that
says "Merry Christmas '07".)

DR. ADLER
That's quite a hypothetical.

JACKSON
It could happen.

DR. ADLER
Probably not -- that was Stan's
daughter. Still cleaning out his
office.

He throws the frame into the hallway.

DR. ADLER (CONT'D)
You want to save lives? Fine.
That's what we're all here to do.
But while you grapple with your
quarterlife crisis, remember
there's lives at stake here too.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Establishing shot of the conference room's title sign. This
particular prison is called "The Blood Cell"...and that's the
least cringeworthy of the lot.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Some bubbly young marketing interns are making pitches so
cheesy, they wouldn't even make the B-Roll on Shark Tank.

INTERN SUZY
MOOOOOM! I don't want to go to the
dentist! You can't make me! I
quit!!!

INTERN DEBRA
But sweetie, if you go, you might
get a verrrrry special surprise...

BLADE
(from behind a sheet)
Ain't that the tooth!

Allison nods appreciatively: Good one.

Blade emerges as the Tooth Fairy: the wings, the crown, the wand, the tights, the loose teeth hanging off the breasts. The works. (He didn't even have to change pants.)

INTERN SUZY

THE TOOTH FAIRY!!! Ohmygosh mom I want to go to the dentist, please take me please take me please take me.

ALLISON

Literally nobody has ever said that, and I never use "literally" lightly.

The Intern Improv Players regroup behind a sheet (poorly, it sounds like) while Intern Larry narrates.

INTERN LARRY

(reading from index cards)
"Scenes like this play out every day in homes all across--"
(catches himself, skips ahead)
Uh, "studies show dentists are feared even more than doctors. But with the help of the lovable 'Tooth Fairy,' it's become a \$120 billion industry. This character bridged the gap between a child's fear of surgical instruments and an adult's need for regular, high-quality dental healthcare."

INTERN LARRY (CONT'D)

"So why did you start Dynapy? To fill this same gap on the medical side. Look -- being a single mom is tough."

(Larry looks about 13)

"With your busy schedule, the last thing you need is your daughter getting sick. But growing up, little Patty was always afraid of the doctor. You needed a way to teach her that taking care of your health could be empowering and fun. So by night, you were the mad scientist, working toward a cure for her needlephobia. And by day, you were..."

BLADE
(muffled, behind the
sheet)
Not yet.

Intern Larry wasn't expecting to have to make small talk with
Chief Executive Allison.

INTERN LARRY
Uhm...any plans to give
stock to interns?

BLADE
(still behind the sheet)
Christ. Just go.

The sheet comes down.

INTERN LARRY
By day you were...THE BLOOD
FAIRY!!!

The marketing team meant well, but it's -- literally -- the
most terrifying thing you've ever seen. The left hand's magic
wand is now a syringe connected to wings pregnant with blood.
The right hand grips a flask of rubbing alcohol. The Blood
Fairy is gauzed up like a mummy with a five o'clock shadow.
Blood is splattered randomly about the hands and clothes. One
loose tooth still hangs precariously off the right breast, an
apparently relic of fairies gone by. His arms are
inexplicably lined like spiderwebs.

But he's smiling!

ALLISON
Holy f---. Are those track marks?

BLADE
Easy-to-find veins! Just what the
doctor ordered.

ALLISON
(re: a label on the
bloodwings)
"A Plus"?

INTERN DEBRA
Well, it's -- it's "A positive".
This particular fairy gathers type
A-positive blood, but we're
envisioning a whole franchise of
them.



This won't
hurt
a bit!

INTERN LARRY
You've, uh...looks like you've got
a loose tooth there, Blood Fairy.

Larry yanks it.

BLADE
Oops. Changed too fast.

Bob in.

BOB
Sorry to interrupt this...
(taking stock)
...obviously important meeting.

ALLISON
I've never been so happy to see
you.

BOB
Jackson wants to talk.

INT. LAB - DAY

Jackson is pacing as Allison enters.

JACKSON
Enough. Enough, Ali.

ALLISON
Ten years together. You're a leader
of this company. Talk to me.

JACKSON
A "leader," but I just got a new
boss who's worked here for three
hours. Why? Why today, why now? Why
can't you just tell us what's going
on?

Allison knows he needs a bone.

ALLISON
The Wall Street Journal is writing
an article about Dynapy. It's
coming out at 5. They want me on
the record. They've shown us bits
of the advance. It's not good.

JACKSON
So let's just go on record. Let's
tell the truth.

ALLISON

The truth is, when you punch the status quo, the status quo punches back.

JACKSON

Don't dazzle me, Ali! I'm not the others, I'm not swept up in you. I was there for the loan, I've seen the kid behind the curtain.

ALLISON

I'm not bullshitting you, Jackson.

Jackson starts walking to the far end of the lab.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Hey, you're not supposed to--

JACKSON

How can that be? How is it that I'm not supposed to touch the machines that *we make*? They're like poison here.

ALLISON

Don't be ridiculous.

Quick pan. There, behind a wall of SLIPPERY WHEN WET barricades, beneath a BEWARE THE LEOPARD sign, mostly shrinkwrapped, are Dynapy's patented Ñ-model machines.

JACKSON

Okay then, let's try one.

ALLISON

Jackson...

JACKSON

The FDA *thinks* they've approved us for 35 tests, but exactly one of those was run on Ñ. Right? Am I wrong? So let's try it out.

ALLISON

Fine. Sure.

Jackson takes a fingerstick sample. He gets the results a second later, just like marketing promised. He waves them in the air.

JACKSON

(whispering)
I have herpes.

ALLISON

Every lab in the country gives the occasional false positive, Jackson. You know that's not an indictment of Dynapy, especially when you analyze the results this quickly.

JACKSON

True, except the test doesn't say I have herpes. The test says I *don't* have herpes. And it said that the day before, and it said that the day before that, and the day before that, and...

(beat)

I do actually have herpes.

Long beat. Hope this year's Christmas gift is an icebreaker.

ALLISON

Ok, so, what now, Jackson? We're a startup; we're pre-precision. And you're upset we've built a product that *won't* give you bad news? If that's what you're looking for, maybe you should go work for Bob.

JACKSON

What I'm looking for is a job that doesn't ask me to grin and bear it. Our board is a reality show. The only person in this place who has any medical experience whatsoever is Adler, and you bought him with some red carpet fantasy. I don't even know how I got this job. And "Director of Oficiency"? You're nuts.

ALLISON

Well you may not have to worry about it much longer.

JACKSON

Ah yes, there's that "culture of honesty" we prize so highly. Way to intimidate.

ALLISON

Nobody is trying to intimidate you here, Jackson.

Reassuring, but rather undermined by the SUDDEN ENTRANCE of a man with BLOODY HANDS wielding a syringe.

Blade heard the yelling -- so has everybody else, now -- while he was in the middle of deconstructing the Blood Fairy. Now he's a mutant.

Meet the Blade Fairy.

BLADE
Everything okay?

ALLISON
Everything's great. Looks like Jackson's just angling for a job at the Journal.

JACKSON
You know, that's not a terrible idea.

ALLISON
(enough.)
Then go! Go, you deadbeat. What's stopping you? Ah, I guess you're in quite the bind. If you blow the whistle, you gotta share something that will make Lizzy stop blowing yours. Well, maybe I can help.

Allison steps out into the hallway: her Jerry Maguire moment.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
(in one breath)
Hi everyone Jackson has herpes. Now I want to be clear that they're mostly non-genital. Still, he's pretty upset about it. So let's double down on our testing precision here and make sure we all catch Jackson's herpes in the future.

(off a horrified Jackson, who looks like he's about to pull a Stan, and then off Lizzy, Allison turns to the TestOps team...)
Now, our systems. They're not called "the Ñ." We're not a Mexican convertible. It was cute in 2005; it was old in 2007; it's fireable in 2015. N-Y-E. Nye. After one of the greatest scientists of our time, William "Bill" Nye. Wordplay's great but not when we're up on the shoulders of giants. It stops today.

(MORE)

ALLISON (CONT'D)

(to marketing)

Guys? The blood fairy? That already exists. They're called vampires. Leaving vials of blood under your pillow? Great idea. Let's introduce kids to the concept of *actual* blood money. Plus I don't even have kids--

INTERN SUZY

(so. impossibly. cheery.)

But that's part of the origin story!!! I actually found a photo of this girl in the hallway we can repurpose, it's like a sign!, can we use her??, whose daughter is this?

(holding up the photo of Stan's daughter to a very long, very dead silence.)

ALLISON

We already have an origin story: I started this company because I, not my fairy tale daughter, I was afraid of needles that look like freakin' bayonets. So the Wall Street Journal wants to scare me? Well, good luck -- our core competency isn't medicine. It's fear, always has been.

(beat)

Every generation has its villain, right? Big Tobacco. Big Sugar. Big Pharma. In this office, we answer the call of the millennial. In this office, we fight Big Needle.

(to groans)

No, I'm not -- that wasn't -- I'm not making a pun. I just mean that our work will not be in vein...

(more groans)

Forget it, you're never with me. Oh, but you're my peers! Peer review, the Nye must have peer review! Well: are you my peers? Leaking stories to the Journal? Playing dressup on days that will make or break us? Where are my peers? Because all I heard today was this creeping, toxic, corrosive pessimism. And the real builders, the founders, we don't get that luxury.

(MORE)

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Because while you're busy preparing for all the things that might go wrong, I have to prepare for everything that might go *right*. So show me: Where my peers at?

(beat)

A thousand shares right now to anyone who wants to walk out that door and never come back. Anyone? Todd? You loved stock earlier. Jackson? That pays for a lotta Valtrex. No?

(checking the clock --
4:52 -- and turning to
Blade)

Then you can go ahead and tell the Journal: "The end is Nye."

Allison pauses expectantly on her triumphant close...and gets nothing.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

Come on, that one *was* the pun. The end is Nye? Like, our machines will win in the end?

Blade can't help it.

BLADE

What about, "The end is Ñ"?

ALLISON

(rabidly, through teeth)
Not "datey" enough. Gotta speak in graphs. How bout this: Tell them our pricks are up and to the right.

Allison goes to her office and slams the door. Sits down, pours a 'tainer of vodka, shoots it. Closes her eyes. The start of a smile? A moment of inner peace. This is just what it feels like to be in the ring. We can do this. We got this. We slowly pull away as the aspirational theme music **beGINS TO SWELL--**

Bob in.

BOB

FDA's here. Surprise inspection.

Bob out and...

FADE OUT.