

Do No Harm

By

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EXT. MASS GENERAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A Lexus sedan drives quickly into the parking lot, tires throwing up loose grit on the turns. It jerks to a stop in an assigned parking spot.

DR. ROBIN TURNER (37) sits in the car, jaw clenched. She fumbles with a necklace tucked into the front of her blouse. She pulls it out. A gold ring is threaded on the chain.

Robin roughly pulls the necklace over her head. She clenches her fist around the gold band and prepares to throw it to the ground.

She stops herself. Eyes closed, she purses her lips and shakes her head. She bounces her closed fist up and down on her thigh.

She puts the necklace back on and tucks the ring inside her shirt again.

Robin opens the car door, yanking the keys out of the ignition. She angrily slams the door shut. She jerks the back door open and grabs a white coat off the backseat. She slams that door too.

She puts the coat on as she walks purposefully towards the brightly lit building.

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Robin strides into the hospital, expertly dodging NURSES wheeling PATIENTS around.

The HEAD NURSE (38) behind the desk is surprised to see her.

HEAD NURSE

Dr. Turner! I didn't expect to see you tonight. You're not on call-

ROBIN

I'm not. I'm here anyway.

The head nurse looks behind Robin at DR. JOHN BENDER (45), who has graying temples and a pinched look.

DR. BENDER

Good evening, Robin. Planning to stay long?

ROBIN  
Yes, actually.

DR. BENDER  
My, my, someone is certainly  
gunning for head of cardio.

Robin glares at Dr. Bender.

ROBIN  
Not tonight. Tonight I just need a  
nice, bloody trauma case to roll in  
so I can get into an OR and feel  
like I'm good at something.

DR. BENDER  
(unbelieving)  
Mmhmm.

Robin glares at him.

ROBIN  
Look, Bender, do you want the night  
off or not? Go home to your wife.  
Or your mistress. Whichever you  
prefer.

Dr. Bender holds his hands up, both hurt and angry.

DR. BENDER  
Fine.

Robin signs in on the head nurse's sheet and clips her photo  
ID to the pocket of her white coat.

ROBIN  
(to the head nurse)  
Anything good tonight?

The head nurse shakes her head.

HEAD NURSE  
Just a couple of twisted ankles and  
a slipped disk so far.

Robin sighs.

ROBIN  
I'll be in my office. Page me if  
anything good rolls in.

INT. WAITING FOR AN ELEVATOR - LATER

Robin stands in front of extra wide elevator doors, tapping her foot, waiting for them to open.

The elevator DINGS and the doors slide open.

DR. SAMUEL NORTON (65), gray hair and shiny silver glasses, steps out of the elevator. He wears his overcoat and carries a briefcase, on his way out for the night.

DR. NORTON

Ah, Dr. Turner! What are you doing here tonight?

Robin pulls herself together, and tries to seem casual.

ROBIN

Dr. Norton. I had some... unexpected free time, so I thought I'd get in a few extra hours.

Dr. Norton smiles affably.

DR. NORTON

Good for you. You're a go-getter. I like that. But you should relax more. I should introduce you to my nephew.

He snaps his fingers together and points at her.

DR. NORTON

He'll be at my retirement party next month. I'll introduce you then.

Robin smiles and nods, but seems uncomfortable.

ROBIN

That sounds... thank you, sir. Have a good evening.

She gets into the elevator and the doors start to close. He stops them.

DR. NORTON

It looks good, Robin.

ROBIN

Sir?

DR. NORTON

I mean, I'm hoping to introduce my nephew to the new head of cardio.

He smiles. Robin is a beat behind but she smiles too.

ROBIN

That's... that's wonderful news.  
Thank you.

Dr. Norton lets the doors close. She slumps against the back wall as soon as she's out of sight. She fingers the necklace tucked inside her blouse.

The elevator DINGS. Robin snaps back into doctor mode. She strides out.

INT. ROBIN'S OFFICE - LATER

Robin's office is very orderly. Her diplomas hang in a neat row behind her desk. A large bookshelf against one wall holds rows of impressive looking textbooks but they aren't for show because the spines are all creased.

Robin looks at the phone. Instead of picking it up she grabs a set of neatly folded scrubs off a shelf.

She goes into the executive bathroom. She reenters after a moment, wearing the scrubs. She tucks her necklace into the front of the scrubs.

She goes behind her desk. She hesitates, then picks up the phone and dials. There is no answer. She puts the phone down and gets angry to avoid tears.

She sits down, business-like, and starts doing paperwork, pushing the pen a little too hard.

INT. ROBIN'S OFFICE - LATER

Robin's phone RINGS. She picks it up.

ROBIN

Dr. Turner.

INT. ER - HEAD NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

The head nurse stands behind her desk holding the phone to her ear with her shoulder.

HEAD NURSE

We've got a trauma case rolling in.  
ETA 6 minutes. Not a lot of details  
yet, but they said it looks bad.

INT. ROBIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ROBIN

Page an intern to the trauma bay  
for me. And call the OR. Tell them  
we might need to get in there stat.

Robin puts the phone back. She jogs out of the office,  
shutting off the lights on her way out.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Robin grabs a paper smock out of a dispenser and shoves her  
arms through the sleeves. Dr. PATRICK JOHNSON (25), an eager  
young intern, ties the back for her.

ROBIN

Okay, Johnson, ground rules. We've  
got a trauma case rolling in. It's  
going to be hectic and it may get  
messy. I want you behind me at all  
times. Do exactly what I say, when  
I say it. Clear?

Dr. Johnson quivers with excitement.

JOHNSON

Yes, ma'am. Er, Doctor.

Robin walks through the automatic doors, Dr. Johnson  
trailing behind.

EXT. TRAUMA BAY - CONTINUOUS

The ambulance backs into the bay and stops. Two police cars  
pull in behind the ambulance. Robin gives them a quick look,  
unsure what to make of them, but then refocuses on the  
ambulance doors.

ROBIN

Here we go.

She opens the doors and two PARAMEDICS spill out, already rolling the gurney out the door. The PATIENT is a woman, covered in blood. A third paramedic holds an ambu bag over the patient's face, obscuring it. She pumps the bag, breathing for her.

ROBIN

What have we got?

PARAMEDIC 1

Jane Doe. Late 30s. Blunt head trauma. B.P's 70 over 40 and falling. Multiple lacerations on the upper body and head. We hung a unit of plasma in the field.

Robin grabs the side of the gurney by the patient's feet.

ROBIN

(nods to the other side)

Johnson!

Johnson gets the other side and they lift the gurney down. When the third paramedic hops down the ambu bag is momentarily jostled, revealing the woman's face. Her curly blond hair is matted with blood and there are multiple cuts on her face.

Robin stops moving, despite the frantic activity around her.

ROBIN

Oh my God... Amber...

Everything slows down as Robin looks at the woman, who is AMBER RUTTLAGE (39). Robin looks at Amber's hand, which is streaked with blood and grime, but the nails are a jaunty purple, incongruous with the surroundings.

EXT. BOSTON CITY STREET - FOURTEEN YEARS AGO - DAY

A very young Robin (23) kneels in a crosswalk, about to block traffic, frantically gathering up dropped biochemistry notes. The other PEDESTRIANS rush past her.

She reaches for one of the last pages and her hand is covered by a grease-stained hand with purple nail polish. Robin looks up and the hand's owner and sees a woman in a black leather jacket, with big hoop earrings and a thin black choker necklace. Her curly blond hair is pulled into a messy topknot. It's Amber.

They stand and Amber holds out several pages of notes. Their eyes lock for a second, then Robin takes the notes and ducks her head shyly.

ROBIN  
(quietly)  
Thank you.

AMBER  
No problem, kiddo.

The light changes and the yellow cab behind them lays on the horn again. Robin flinches and runs for the other side of the crosswalk.

Amber flips him off.

CAB DRIVER  
Bitch!

AMBER  
Asshole!

Amber goes to the other side of the street and looks back. She catches Robin watching her. Robin ducks her head, hiding behind her long hair, and goes into SIMON'S COFFEE SHOP.

Amber smiles and takes a sip of coffee from a to-go mug. Between her purple-nailed fingers the "Simon's" beverage sleeve is visible.

EXT. TRAUMA BAY - PRESENT

DR. JOHNSON  
Dr. Turner? Dr. Turner?!

Robin snaps out of her memories.

ROBIN  
All right people, let's move!

She grabs the gurney and begins jogging into the ER.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They stop the gurney near a hospital bed. Robin grabs the edge of the blanket Amber lies on.

ROBIN  
On my mark. Mark!

They pick Amber up and transfer her onto a hospital bed. The paramedics start slapping on monitors.

Robin begins frantically performing a physical exam on Amber. She runs her hands over Amber's torso, pressing, feeling for injuries.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Amber? Amber, can you hear me?

Robin shines her penlight in Amber's eyes, flicking it to the side.

The monitors begin BEEPING frantically. Robin looks up at the monitor. The heart monitor is jumbled and messy.

PARAMEDIC 1  
Doctor, she's in V-fib!

ROBIN  
Johnson get the crash cart!

Dr. Johnson rushes to get the cart.

Robin vaults up onto the hospital bed and straddles Amber, doing chest compressions.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
No you don't! Come on, stay with me!

She pauses. The monitor is still haywire.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Johnson, where's the damn crash cart?!

He runs in, screeching the cart to a stop. Robin leaps off the bed and grabs the paddles. A NURSE squirts gel on them and Robin hastily rubs them together.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Charge to 200. Clear!

Robin shocks Amber. Amber arches up under the shock. The monitor doesn't change.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Charge to 250. Clear!

Robin shocks Amber. No change.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Charge to 300! Clear!

Robin shocks Amber, again, and again...

The monitor BEEPS, picking up a weak but steady rhythm.

DR. JOHNSON  
She's stabilizing!

Robin closes her eyes and drops the paddles. She takes several deep breaths and puts a hand on Amber's forehead.

ROBIN  
Get Dr. Dickson from neuro down here right now for a consult! I don't care what he's in the middle of. And get me 5 milligrams of Dexamethasone stat!

Robin stands next to Amber's prone form watching nurses work, cleaning up the blood, exposing the wounds.

Dr. Johnson, barely one step behind Robin, stands on tiptoe to see better.

DR. JOHNSON  
What now, Dr. Turner? Shall I begin debriding the lacerations on her arms? Chemical or mechanical do you think? Or-

ROBIN  
Not now, Johnson.

The head nurse starts filling out a chart.

HEAD NURSE  
(to the paramedics)  
ID?

PARAMEDIC 2  
(shaking her head)  
Jane Doe.

ROBIN  
No.

They all look at her. Robin clears her throat.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
Her name is Amber Ruttlage.

DR. DAVID DICKSON (45), with dark hair and a kind face, approaches.

DR. DICKSON  
You know her?

Robin nods.

Dr. Dickson looks at Amber then at Robin's pale face.

DR. DICKSON (cont'd)  
Robin, are you all right?

Robin puts a hand up to her mouth.

ROBIN  
I'm sorry. I just-

Robin turns around and half-runs, pushing her way out of the ER and into a white-tiled bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Robin opens one of the stalls and collapses in front of the toilet. She throws up, shaking.

INT. SIMON'S COFFEE SHOP - FOURTEEN YEARS AGO - DAY

Simon's is a crowded college-town coffee shop. The place feels cramped because all the tables and chairs are mismatched and crammed together. Groups of STUDENTS sit chatting and studying, sipping lattes.

Amber, still wearing her biker jacket and choker, pushes the door open, JINGLING the bell. She glances around.

Robin sits alone, with several textbooks open around her. She pours over a stack of biochem notes.

Amber pays for her drink, and accepts a cup from the BARISTA. She shoves her change into a tight jean pocket and goes over to Robin's table.

AMBER  
Hey, kiddo.

Robin looks up, looking slightly dazed from studying.

ROBIN  
Oh! Um. Hello?

Amber flips a chair around and sits in it backwards, resting her arms on the back. She holds out her hand.

AMBER  
Amber Ruttlage.

Robin takes the hand tentatively.

ROBIN  
Robin. Robin Turner.

AMBER  
Nice to meet you, Robin Turner.

She gestures to all the textbooks.

AMBER  
All these yours?

Amber picks up the corner of "Robbins' Pathologic Basis of Disease" to check the title. She whistles.

AMBER (cont'd)  
You some kind of doctor?

ROBIN  
Just a med student. Second year.

Amber nods, impressed.

AMBER  
Good for you, kiddo.

A small smile tugs at the corners of Robin's mouth.

AMBER  
What kind of doctor do you want to be when you grow up?

ROBIN  
I don't know.

She looks down at her notes.

AMBER  
What's that?

She points at a molecule.

ROBIN  
(immediately)  
1,2-dichlorobenzene.

AMBER  
And this one?

ROBIN  
Cyclohexanecarboxylic acid.

AMBER  
And this?

Robin smiles.

ROBIN  
Cyclopropenium tetrafluoroborate.  
That's my favorite.

AMBER  
Damn, kid, what are you studying  
for? You're a walking encyclopedia.

Robin shakes her head.

ROBIN  
There's a lot left to learn.

She reaches down beside her chair and pulls out "Medical Gross Anatomy," "Development of the Human Heart," the "Merck Manual" and the "Medical Ethics Manual," setting them in a pile twice as tall as her coffee cup.

AMBER  
Oh.

Amber stands up and flips her chair around, pushing it in.

AMBER  
Guess I'll see you tomorrow then.

ROBIN  
Yeah.

Amber gives Robin a two finger salute. She puts one hand in her jacket pocket and saunters out.

ROBIN (cont'd)  
See you tomorrow.