

THE QUIET HOURS

Beat Sheet

by ScriptPipeline Examples

OPENING IMAGE

4 a.m. at St. Brigid's. Mara restocks a supply cart with surgical precision while a code blue rages two bays over -- she is calm where others flinch. The quiet hours are hers.

SETUP

The rhythm of Mara's night: rounds, charting, black coffee at 3. A photo of Tomás folded -- not displayed -- inside her badge holder. Iris jokes that Mara is the only nurse who volunteers for nights. We feel why without being told.

INCITING INCIDENT

The overdose in Bay 6. While checking Daniel's airway, Mara sees the saint's medal. The traffic-cam still she has stared at for three years snaps into focus on a living face.

DEBATE

Mara verifies instead of reacting: old news articles on her phone in the supply room, the police sketch, the medal. It's him. She tells no one. The first wrong thing she does is also the smallest: she volunteers to take Bay 6 herself.

FIRST ACT BREAK

Daniel, half-conscious, grips her wrist: "Don't fix it. Please." The overdose was deliberate. Mara realizes she holds both his death wish and her own -- and that they are not the same wish.

B STORY

Iris, who pulled Mara through the funeral year, watches her friend go quiet in the wrong way. Their friendship becomes the night's conscience.

MIDPOINT

The 3 a.m. conversation. Daniel, lucid now, talks to the anonymous nurse about the thing he can't say to anyone -- a child, a road, dusk. Mara, unrecognized, hears the confession she has begged the universe for, addressed to no one. It changes the question from "does he deserve to die" to "does he get to die unknown."

LOW POINT

Okafor's unrelated visit. Seeing him, Mara understands that handing Daniel over means reopening every wound in discovery, in court, in the news -- grief as a public performance, again. Letting him slip away quietly would be easier for everyone. She catches herself drawing up the extra vial, and doesn't remember deciding to.

SECOND ACT BREAK

Daniel codes. The monitor flatlines into the only thirty seconds that matter. Nobody would ever know.

CLIMAX

Mara works the code like a war. Two shocks. He comes back. Her choice is made physical: his pulse under her palm. She identifies herself to Daniel -- name, mother of Tomás -- and sets her terms: he lives, and he confesses, out loud, today.

RESOLUTION

The confession to Okafor at dawn. Mara declines to watch through the glass; she stands inside the room. Iris drives her home in daylight.

FINAL IMAGE

Mara requests the day shift. The photo of Tomás comes out of the badge holder and onto the break-room corkboard with everyone else's kids. The quiet hours end.