

EPIDEMIC

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY.

Shot of sleepy town - busy morning bustle.

TITLE: SUNNYVALE, CA - 9:00AM, TUESDAY

EXT. BIOTRONICS OFFICE BUILDING - DAY.

INT. BIOTRONICS OFFICE.

CLOSE UP on man's hand. This is BUSINESS MAN - early 40s - nervously tapping a pencil on his knee.

PAN UP to see his face. He looks sickly, bags under his eyes and sweat beading on his forehead.

SUPERVISOR - Late 40s - leans across the desk, and slides a paper towards him.

SUPERVISOR

Well, I've got some good news and
I've got some bad news. Which would
you like first?

BUSINESS MAN

I'll take the good - no wait, the

ba- well, which would you choose?

SUPERVISOR

(smiling sympathetically)

How bout we end on the good? Get
the bad news out of the way first?

BUSINESS MAN

Sure. I do want to say Sir, the
rumor about the fax machine -

But it's clear that Supervisor is no longer paying attention -
he seems very focused on something happening with Business
Man.

SUPERVISOR

Randall, your nose it's...

BUSINESS MAN

Sir, I would never - ever - fax
pictures of nude body-parts to
corporate. Ever.

Business Man reaches up to touch his nose - blood comes away
on his fingers.

CLOSE UP: On Business Man's face - only a trickle of blood is
visible.

CUT TO:

Reaction Shot of Supervisor.

CUT TO:

Business Man pinches his nose, but blood still runs between
his fingers.

BUSINESS MAN

Oh geez. I'm sorry - I've never had
a nosebleed before.

SUPERVISOR

It's a lot of blood - are you sure
you don't want a tissue?

It's really coming now - nearly gushing. Business Man is
holding both hands to his nose - tipping his head back.

BUSINESS MAN

No - that's alright. But I feel
kinda...

Business Man trails off and faints out of his chair. Startled
Supervisor bolts from his.

SUPERVISOR

Nancy - call an Ambulance!

CUT TO:

INT. GROCERY STORE CHECK-OUT LINE - DAY.

TEEN, girl, is putting items onto the conveyer belt. Cough
syrups and lozenges. A box of tissues. She sniffles while she
does this.

Teen advances in line. Before she can even speak, she is
wracked with a coughing fit.

CLERK - woman, late 20s - looks concerned.

CLERK

Are you alright sweetie? You need
some water?

Teen nods and Clerk turns to motion to BAG-BOY - early 20s.
Clerk turns back with a sympathetic expression and starts to
ring up groceries.

The Teen has stopped coughing and is reaching into her wallet
for money when another fit takes over - as both her hands are
occupied - she doesn't have time to cover her mouth.

A large mouthful of blood flies from Teen and lands on Clerk's face in splatters. Clerk is horrified and begins swiping at her face, almost frantically.

Teen seems too dazed to be ashamed and watches with sleepy, blood-shot eyes. Bag-boy returns with water just in time to catch Teen as she faints.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY.

A elementary FEMALE-TEACHER, late 30s, is herding a group of kids out onto the playground. She pulls a kleenex out of her pocket and wipes at her sore, red nose. Her eyes are bloodshot.

She blows into a whistle - reprimanding some children. Then clutches her head and wavers on her feet a bit. A SMALL BOY tugs at the hem of her dress. He is presenting a scraped elbow to her - it's not bleeding. She bends down to him, resting her hands on his shoulders.

SMALL BOY

Miss Robinson? Johnny shoved me down on the pavement and now look at my -

He stops mid-sentence and stares.

FEMALE TEACHER

Well you tell Johnny to come over here.

He points at her face with a chubby, dirty finger.

SMALL BOY

Why are you crying?

FEMALE TEACHER

What do you mean?

Tears of blood are trailing down her face.

SMALL BOY

It's red. You're crying red.

She touches her face now and feels the moisture. Her fingers come away bloody. She stands straight up and calls out.

FEMALE TEACHER

James!? James!? Can you watch the kids? I need to -

She is nearly running back towards the school. Several other children see her and some of them shout in alarm.

MALE TEACHER

Debbie, what in God's name?

She shakes her head, and takes two more steps, then collapses on the ground. Immediately several children encircle her.

Male Teacher brushes them back and pulls a radio from his pocket. His speech is frantic, but garbled and the noise starts to fade.

A cell-phone ring tone - a pleasant and cheerful tone picks up and the image FADES OUT.

INT. OLD, DIRTY KITCHEN IN A ROW HOUSE - DAY.

TITLE: Boston, Massachusetts - 3:00pm

CLOSE UP of a purse, the source of the ringing cellphone, draped over the arm of RILEY COLLINS, a muscled and athletically attractive woman in her late-20s who enters the kitchen. She's dressed in scrubs and wearing a jacket. She's juggling an arm-load of groceries.

She tosses all her items on the kitchen table, filled with other clutter. She starts digging frantically in her purse.

RILEY COLLINS
(Shouting in the direction
of another room)
Dad? Are you here?

A muffled, indistinct grumble from the same direction.

RILEY COLLINS
Well you could have helped me with
the - never mind.

Another muffled grumble.

She reaches the phone and flips it open.

RILEY COLLINS
This is Dr. Riley Collins. Can I
help you?

CUT TO:

EXT. CDC OFFICE BUILDING/COMPOUND - DAY.

TITLE: Center for Disease Control, Atlanta Georgia - 3:00pm

INT. NIMA DESAI'S OFFICE - DAY - INTERCUT WITH ROWHOUSE.

NIMA DESAI, an attractive South East Asian woman in her mid 40s is on the other end of the phone. She is frantically typing on a keyboard - incredibly multi-tasking.

NIMA DESAI
You certainly can. We're going to
need you sooner than we anticipated
- a potential Hot Zone has
presented itself in Southern
California. Can you fly down
tonight?

CUT TO:

Riley drops the phone as a large pitbull enters the room and leaps on her.

CUT TO:

INT. NIMA DESAI'S OFFICE - DAY.

Nima is still seated at her desk, on the phone - face puzzled.

CUT TO:

INT. ROWHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY.

Riley laughs and growls as she shoves the dog off herself. It's slobbering and licking all over her face.

RILEY COLLINS
Dammit Grover. Get off!

She gives him a shove and scrambles to pick up the phone. She chuckles a little into the receiver.

RILEY COLLINS
I'm going to need a few hours.

ACT I.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ROWHOUSE - DAY.

Riley Collins exits the front door of the rowhouse, juggling three bags of luggage. She's still dressed in her scrubs and

jacket.

Title: Boston, Massachusetts - 5:00pm Tuesday

JOSEPH COLLINS - father mid 60s, grizzled and seemingly absent-minded - follows her out the door. He is wearing a tattered bathrobe and boxer shorts. He is speaking rapidly to her and gesticulating energetically with a banana in his hand.

JOSEPH COLLINS

This is ridiculous!

RILEY COLLINS

Dad - I've been planning this move for two months, and you know it. Things are just - going a little faster now.

JOSEPH COLLINS

Too fast, if you ask me. Your mother wouldn't like it. She'd make you stay.

Riley throws her luggage down at the curb and turns back to her dad. She surveys his outfit with a frown.

RILEY COLLINS

I said I'd stay with you for a year after Mom...and it's been three. I'm moving on with my life. Just like you should.

It's Joseph's turn to frown.

JOSEPH COLLINS

I'm going to starve to death.

She spies a taxi cab moving down the street towards her. She stands up and turns towards her Dad.

RILEY COLLINS

You'll be fine. Mrs. Green next

door is keeping an eye on you.
And I'm a short plane ride away if
you need me.

The cab pulls up to the curb and the trunk pops open. Riley starts loading her suitcases.

JOSEPH COLLINS
(waving his arm)
Planes rides. Hah.

Riley closes the trunk with a decided snap.

RILEY COLLINS
Gimme a hug.

Joseph shirks away. Riley cocks her head and puts an arm on her hip. She strides over and hugs him roughly.

Riley breaks away. She looks down at the banana in his hand, concerned.

RILEY COLLINS
Get some rest Dad. Enjoy
retirement. You've earned it.

He reluctantly kisses her on the cheek and steps back.

JOSEPH COLLINS
What am I supposed to have for
dinner?

Riley opens the cab door and turns back to him.

RILEY COLLINS
Lasagna in the freezer. With the
directions and everything. I'll
call you when my plane gets in to
Atlanta.

She climbs in the cab and leaves the door open.

JOSEPH COLLINS

You'll be back soon Riley. You
don't belong there.

Riley smiles sadly and closes the door.

RILEY COLLINS
Thanks Dad. Love you too.

The cab pulls away from the curb. Joseph waves as it drives
off - with the hand holding the banana.

EXT. CDC OFFICE BUILDING/COMPOUND - NIGHT.

TITLE: Center for Disease Control, Atlanta Georgia - 9:00pm

A cab pulls up to the curb. Riley climbs out - she's dressed
in a skirt suit and high heels. She peers up nervously at the
top of the building.

The trunk of the cab pops open and she removes the three
suitcases.

She turns back and takes a deep breath. Squares her shoulders
and starts to walk towards the building. Then pauses and
races back towards the cab which has started to drive away.

It squeals to a stop and she dives in to the backseat. She
retrieves a briefcase and slams the door shut. She turns and
smooths out her skirt.

She picks up the suitcases and struggles with them into the
building.

INT. CDC OFFICE BUILDING/COMPOUND - NIGHT.

Nima Desai strides into the main lobby to greet Riley Collins
with a huge smile on her face.

NIMA DESAI

Thanks for showing up on such short notice Dr. Collins. But as you can understand, it is an emergency and we need everybody we can get.

Riley leaves her luggage with a security guard.

Nima hands Riley a security pass and ushers her through a metal detector - waving to the security guard on duty.

INT. CDC LAB SPACE - NIGHT.

Nima points at a desk at the far right of a lab.

NIMA DESAI

This is going to be your work space. We've set you up to shadow one of our epidemiologists - his name is Xavier Barnes. He should be here -

Nima looks around, a bit confused. She shrugs and then motions to the desk.

NIMA DESAI

You can set your briefcase there. You won't need that right now.

Riley nods and sets the case down. She looks at the computer space and notices a picture is still up on the counter. It's a portrait of an old man hugging two small children.

RILEY COLLINS

This is Dr. Spektor. I didn't realize I'd be sitting at his old desk.

Nima appears flustered.

NIMA DESAI

No. I'm sorry. That was supposed to

be removed. I'll speak to Xavier. I hope it hasn't made you uncomfortable.

Riley shakes her head.

RILEY COLLINS

This is a nice picture. Kind of the way you'd want to remember him.

Nima nods and takes the picture, laying it face down on her new desk, and Riley sets her suitcase on the counter.

NIMA DESAI

He and Xavier were very close. Xavier's had a difficult time adjusting to the death. I was hoping he'd - well, please let me know how things progress with him.

Riley nods, and then frowns.

RILEY COLLINS

Dr. Desai -

NIMA DESAI

Please, call me Nima.

RILEY COLLINS

Nima, I'm afraid I'm going to have to make this temporary. I know we had a verbal agreement, but things with my dad are...well, I think I should stay up in Boston.

Nima stares at her intensely.

NIMA DESAI

I see. Perhaps you'll change your mind after spending some time with us.

RILEY COLLINS

(smiling)
Perhaps I will.

NIMA DESAI
That's all we can ask. There will
be time for a comprehensive tour
later, but I'm afraid we're going
to have to cut this short.

Nima smiles broadly and they exit the room - Nima efficiently
snapping off the lights.

CUT TO:

INT. CDC HALLWAY - NIGHT.

Nima pushes through a door and they advance down a hall-way.

NIMA DESAI
We have a helicopter prepped with
our mobile lab, and the team will
be meeting us there.

CUT TO:

EXT. CDC COMPOUND/HELI-PAD - NIGHT.

A spotlight blinds Riley as she exits a door out of the
compound building. She squints and holds a hand up to shield
her eyes.

In front of her is a chinook helicopter with an armed soldier
ushering them forward.

Nima grabs onto Riley and tugs her.

Riley stumbles and they duck into the helicopter's open door.

INT. CHINOOK HELICOPTER - NIGHT. INTERCUT.

Nima points Riley into a seat.

The soldier outside pulls the door closed and motion towards the pilot.

Nima helps Riley buckle up and leans in.

NIMA DESAI

I'm going up front until we lift off. You'll be fine back here?

Riley nods briskly.

RILEY COLLINS

What can go wrong?

Nima moves from her line of vision and immediately facing her are four people also strapped into the helicopter - Riley takes a moment to survey them - three men and one woman. They're staring at her curiously. She recognizes one face - Janelle Walker - a black woman in her mid 50s sitting to her right.

She holds her hand out and Janelle reaches for it.

RILEY COLLINS

Janelle - it's good to see y-

Just at that moment the helicopter lifts upward from the ground and Riley stops mid-sentence, jerking her arm back and clenching both hands tightly around the straps.

Her eyes squeeze close.

The man sitting directly across from her laughs. This is Moses Ramos, a scruffy man in his mid 30s with tortured eyes.

MOSES RAMOS

First time in a chopper?

Riley opens her eyes.

MOSES RAMOS
You'll get used to it. This is
Sweet Susannah -

He pats the interior metal of the helicopter lovingly, like
you'd pat a dog on the head.

MOSES RAMOS
she flies us and the M-Lab all
around the country.

Riley attempts a weak smile.

RILEY COLLINS
I'm Dr. Riley Collins. I'm
here...I'm here as an
epidemiologist. For now.

Moses gives a playful salute.

MOSES RAMOS
I'm Sargeant Moses Ramos. I'm the
medical doctor and grunt with this
outfit. You look kinda young to -

Nima interrupts as she returns from the cockpit, smiling
widely. A few heads turn towards her.

NIMA DESAI
Now that we're safely in the air I
wanted to introduce all of you to
Dr. Riley Collins. She works as an
epidemiologist and medical doctor
at the Dana Farber Cancer Research
Institute. She was Dr. Spektor's
Oncologist, and he recommended her
as his replacement.

Xavier looks up at this and catches Riley's eye. They share a
moment - annoyance and attraction - Xavier ducks his head
again and frowns. Mixed reactions from the other members of

the team.

NIMA DESAI

However, she'll only be joining us for this assignment temporarily. Riley, this is Dr. Xavier Barnes - he's a brilliant epidemiologist and you two will be working closely during this outbreak.

Riley smiles at him from across the helicopter. He merely nods without looking up and continues writing in a composition notebook spread on his lap.

Nima gives her an apologetic look and Riley shrugs.

A man in his mid 50s raises his hand in greeting and peers at her over the horn-rimmed glasses perched on his nose, a watchful and intelligent expression.

ELIJAH HILL

I'm Elijah Hill - the lead veterinarian. Did you say you'll only be joining us temporarily? I was led to believe you would be replacing Dr. Spektor's permanently.

Riley and Nima exchange glances. Xavier stops his writing and looks up at Nima, waiting to hear the answer.

NIMA DESAI

Let's just focus on containing the outbreak in California for now. We'll work out those details later.

Janelle breaks the tension.

JANELLE WALKER

It's nice to see you again Dr. Collins.

RILEY COLLINS

Just Riley. Riley's fine.

JANELLE WALKER

Riley then. After such a compelling introduction, we're all anxious to see you in action.

Riley smiles awkwardly and glances across the faces of her new co-workers.

RILEY COLLINS

Yeah - this should be fun.

Xavier mutters from across the room.

XAVIER BARNES

Maybe you need to change your definition of fun.

EXT. SUNNYVALE HOSPITAL LIFE-FLIGHT HELIPAD - DAY.

TITLE: Sunnyvale, CA - 9:00am Thursday

Slow-motion shot of helicopter touching down, and the team exiting the helicopter, carrying bundles. They are meant by hospital staff, who begin unloading the helicopter.

INTERCUT WITH:

NIMA DESAI

(voice-over)

I'll make this brief. Area doctors are not capable of confirming whether or not it's a lethal infectious agent, so we're going to run tests and reduce the spread. If this is a hemorrhagic virus then we've only got a 72 hour window to contain the spread before it becomes an epidemic.

EXT. SUNNYVALE HOSPITAL - DAY.

TITLE: Sunnyvale, CA - 11:00am Thursday

INT. M-LAB - ROOM 1 - DAY.

Xavier and Riley are seated at a counter-top filled with vials of blood samples. Riley is peering through a microscope while Xavier is making notations in a composition notebook. Riley looks up from her work and glances over at him.

RILEY COLLINS

This one's clean.

She rubs at her eyes and hands the slide over to him. As Xavier reaches out to grip it, their fingers accidentally touch. Xavier flinches and jerks his hand away. The slide goes flying and smashes on the ground. Riley grimaces at him.

XAVIER BARNES

(mumbling)

I'll get that.

RILEY COLLINS

Ok. I'll make up another one.

She sighs and turns back to the microscope - she works up another blood sample slide. She slides it over to him on the table, so they don't have to touch. Xavier notices this, and seems even more uncomfortable than before.

Riley sets up another slide, all the while stealing surreptitious glances at Xavier - measuring him up. He appears to be completely absorbed in her work. But when she's turned away - he's measuring her up with quick looks.

PAN OUT - to reveal another section of the mobile lab - they are in a room at the center of a network of rooms where patients are being interviewed, screened and then

quarantined.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUNNYVALE HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY.

Janelle Walker is leading a press conference on the hospital front steps. Cameras are rolling and reporters are straining for better positions.

JANELLE WALKER

This is a routine operation for the CDC. Our focus is to discover the source of the infection and prevent it's spread outside the vicinity of Sunnyvale. More information will be available to the public as this situation unfolds.

As she pauses, the reporters burst forth with a maelstrom of questions. Janelle smiles politely and holds up her hand.

JANELLE WALKER

I will answer questions but am not at liberty to disclose the identities of any patients or their medical information.

The reporters rattle off another stream of questions and Janelle calmly addresses a MALE REPORTER in the front row.

MALE REPORTER

How similar is this disease to the Ebola virus?

JANELLE WALKER

Only in that it appears to cause bleeding from bodily orifices. There have been no deaths at this time.

Another flurry of voices picks up again and she motions at another reporter. Their voices become indistinct and fade into a larger buzz.

PAN OUT

To reveal a large crowd of people milling about the parking lot behind a police barricade. Some are gawkers, and others are energetically pleading with the officers.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. QUARANTINE ROOM - DAY.

Moses is seated next to a patient's bed. The person laying on the hospital bed is Business Man. He looks worse than before, if that's possible.

Moses is taking notes on a chart - nodding and hhmung his way through the questions. He seems bored and is barely looking up at Business Man as he makes his check marks.

MOSES RAMOS

Have you had any sexual contact for which you exchanged money or services within the last six months?

BUSINESS MAN

(deeply offended) Absolutely not.

Moses pauses and looks up, smirking.

MOSES RAMOS

Are you sure?

The BUSINESS MAN scowls even further.

BUSINESS MAN

Of course I'm sure. I'm married.

Moses scoffs and leans in.

MOSES RAMOS

This is very important to a possible diagnosis. You need to be honest with me here.

Business Man looks as though he's about to confess and then scowls again.

BUSINESS MAN

I love my wife.

Moses smiles widely and makes a check on the page without even looking.

MOSES RAMOS

That's what they all say.

He goes back to his check-list - obviously disinterested once again.

MOSES RAMOS

(in a flat voice))

Have you traveled out of the country in the last 6 months?

BUSINESS MAN

Yes.

Moses - still not looking up.

MOSES RAMOS

Oh really? Where? Hawaii? You look like the type of guy who's been there at least once or twice.

Business Man scowls again.

BUSINESS MAN

Actually - I went to the African

Congo. My oldest son is doing Peace Corps in Owondo and we visited him for a week. (smugly) I know - not your typical boring vacation.

Moses is very interested now. He drops his pen onto the clipboard and leans into the man.

MOSES RAMOS
Did you say the African Congo?

CUT TO:

INT. M-LAB ROOM 1 - DAY.

Moses bursts into the lab - waving a clipboard with a chart on it. He slams it down on the counter next to Xavier.

MOSES RAMOS
I've got something you are going to want to see Mr. Barnes. It's veery interesting.

Xavier glances up from his notes and looks at the chart as if he's stumbled upon a new species of bug. His eyebrows raise in delight.

XAVIER BARNES
Does that say African Congo?

MOSES RAMOS
You bet your sweet grumpy face.

XAVIER BARNES
That could mean...

Xavier trails off. He grabs the clipboard and stalks off towards his lap-top at the far end of the room.

MOSES RAMOS
(shouting after Xavier)

Hey! You're welcome.

He turns to Riley and smiles.

RILEY COLLINS
Is he always like that?

Moses shrugs.

MOSES RAMOS
Yes and no. But he seems to like
you.

RILEY COLLINS
Really? Could have fooled me.

MOSES RAMOS
Nah - but don't give up. Someone's
got to bring the sparkle back to
his pearly whites.

Moses gets up and wanders off. Riley watches him go, puzzled.
She turns back to her work. She picks up another slide and
slips it under the microscope.

She adjusts the knobs and the cells come into focus. She
squints and sucks in her breath.

RILEY COLLINS
What the hell?

CUT TO:

INT. M-LAB ROOM 2 - DAY.

Xavier is examining viral slides on a laptop. Underneath each
sample is the name. The current one he examines is Marburg -
it looks strikingly similar to the blood cells Riley Collins
was looking at through the microscope.

The information on Marburg is on display - history, symptoms

and in large font: "Mortality Rate: 95%."

FADE OUT.

ACT II

INT. M-LAB ROOM 1 - DAY.

Riley grabs the sample from the microscope and races in to Room 2.

INT. M-LAB ROOM 2 - DAY.

She bursts in on Xavier, who jumps a little as she enters.

RILEY COLLINS

I think I've found something.

Xavier glances up at her, a troubled expression.

XAVIER BARNES

Me too.

Riley frowns, the wind clearly blown from her sails.

RILEY COLLINS

Alright, you first.

XAVIER BARNES

Moses interviewed and examined a patient who recently returned from a trip to Africa.

RILEY COLLINS

Well, that might explain this.

She holds up the slide.

INT. MOBILE LAB ROOM 1 - DAY.

Xavier looks up from the microscope. He looks concerned and not entirely convinced of what he's seeing.

RILEY COLLINS

It's not a perfect match for Marburg. But it's close enough.

XAVIER BARNES

No - it's not. And that's a problem. Just because something looks similar to Marburg, doesn't mean that's what it is. We shouldn't be jumping at shadows here.

RILEY COLLINS

I think that's exactly what we should be doing. Marburg originated in the African Congo. It's a serious infection - the mortality rate -

XAVIER BARNES

Look, you don't have to tell me about this disease.

RILEY COLLINS

You don't have to tell me either. I may be the new kid around here, but I'm not uneducated.

Xavier pauses.

XAVIER BARNES

I didn't say you were.

Riley stares at him, puzzled.

RILEY COLLINS

I think we should take this to Dr.
Desai.

XAVIER BARNES

I disagree. We need to move with
more caution and determine what
precisely it is we're dealing with.

RILEY COLLINS

We have a narrowing window to
contain this infection. People
could die if we don't move now.

Xavier slides the tray of blood vials towards her.

XAVIER BARNES

There's always time to look at
another sample.

He gets up from the table and heads back to M-Lab Room 2.
Riley watches him go - glowering. She looks down at the vials
- debating.

INT. M-LAB ROOM 2 - DAY.

Xavier is sitting at the table again - the laptop computer
open in front of him. But his head is down and he's massaging
his temples.

He stops and glances up at the computer screen. He pulls up
another window, which reads "Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic
Fever." He glances towards Room 1.

INT. M-LAB ROOM 1 - DAY - INTERCUT

Riley glances towards Room 2 - stewing silently. She picks up
the Marburg Sample and a few printed pages and heads out of
the room.

Xavier enters.

XAVIER BARNES
Dr. Collins, maybe you were right.
Can I see that -

He stops dead in his tracks. Riley is gone - the door closes.

XAVIER BARNES
Dammit.

Xavier pulls a radio from his belt.

XAVIER BARNES
Moses - you around?

MOSES RAMOS
(off-screen)
Where else would I be?

XAVIER BARNES
I need you to check something for
me.

MOSES RAMOS
Of course - it's a pleasure to
serve.

He sets the radio down and pulls out his cell-phone.

XAVIER BARNES
Elijah?

EXT. SUNNYVALE FARM - DAY - INTERCUT.

Elijah Hill is standing next to a giant green barn, taking a blood sample from a mooing cow. He and an assistant are both dressed in bio-suits. He hands off the blood vial to the assistant. A phone rings and removes his hood, tucking it under his arm.

He swipes at his forehead and answers the phone.

ELIJAH HILL

Hey - what's going on?

XAVIER BARNES

I have a patient here who recently traveled in the Congo. I think he brought something back with him.

ELIJAH HILL

Like a virus?

XAVIER BARNES

No - like an insect. Can you do some investigative work at the address I'm texting you?

ELIJAH HILL

Sure. Although this shots a giant whole through my scheduled day of stepping in cow feces. Damn.

XAVIER BARNES

You're funny Hill - real funny.

ELIJAH HILL

I'll be over there in 30 minutes.
Let you know if I find anything.

Elijah hangs the phone up and puts it in his pocket. He looks towards his assistant.

ELIJAH HILL

Looks like our work here is done-

He pauses and looks at the assistant's name-tag.

ELIJAH HIL

Ling. Lets finish up our last test subject.

He motions towards another assistant, also wearing a bio suit.

ELIJAH HILL

Yes - gonna miss this.

His next cow victim bellows loudly as he sticks her with the needle.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAB ROOM 3 - DAY.

Riley bursts into the room where Nima and Janelle are quietly conversing. They look up, startled.

RILEY COLLINS

I think you should see this.

She holds out the slide and the pages to them.

Nima takes the pages, and slide. She surveys them both, troubled.

NIMA DESAI

This could be Marburg. But it's...I don't know. Is this the only sample?

Riley nods, biting at her lip.

RILEY COLLINS

Yeah - the others I looked at were clean. There were a few more vials to be checked. And we don't have anything back from Elijah yet.

Nima nods.

NIMA DESAI

Xavier is aware of this, correct?

Riley sets her jaw - indignant.

RILEY COLLINS

I told him. He thought we should hold off on telling you. I didn't agree. If this is a life threatening infection, we should move quickly.

Nima and Janelle exchange a wary glance.

NIMA DESAI

Yes, that would be the case IF this is Marburg.

Nima's radio squawks and she answers it.

NIMA DESAI

Hello?

XAVIER BARNES

Dr. Desai - is Collins there with you?

Riley frowns at the use of her last name.

NIMA DESAI

Yes - she is showing us the potential Marburg sample.

XAVIER BARNES

I see. I think we should hold off on approaching this outbreak as Marburg. I'm sure you and Janelle would agree that we should proceed with the utmost caution.

NIMA DESAI

I will take that into advisement.

Nima sits for a moment, contemplating. She looks up at Riley.

NIMA DESAI

I'm sorry Riley, but at this
time...we need to test more
samples.

Riley is visibly irritated. She nods curtly and leaves the
room. Janelle and Nima exchange another look.

JANELLE WALKER

Looks like the kids aren't playing
nicely.

Nima stares off towards the door, pondering.

INT. M-LAB ROOM 1 - DAY.

Riley enters the room. She dumps the pages and slide onto the
table. Just then, her phone rings. She digs around in her
pockets, finds it and answers it.

RILEY COLLINS

Hello? Dad?

A loud beeping and Grover barking can be heard in the
background.

JOSEPH COLLINS

Riley. Where are you?

RILEY COLLINS

I'm in California with the CDC.
Dad, what's going on?

JOSEPH COLLINS

Well, I tried microwaving some
leftovers. I guess I hit a wrong
button. There's smoke in the
kitchen now. And the alarm's going
off.

Riley grabs her forehead with frustration.

RILEY COLLINS

Dad - get Mrs. Green from next door
to help you. I can't do anything.
I'm all the way across the country.

Behind her, Xavier enters the room. He scowls at her at
first, and then hangs back, listening to her conversation.

JOSEPH COLLINS

I knew this wouldn't work.

Riley grits her teeth.

RILEY COLLINS

Alright. You gotta...get a chair.
The smoke alarm is right above the
fridge. If you give it a good poke
with the broom, that should shut it
off.

JOSEPH COLLINS

Where's the broom?

RILEY COLLINS

Beside the fridge Dad, where it
always is. Hey, can you call me
later? I'm - things aren't - I have
lots of work here Dad.

JOSEPH COLLINS

Fine. I'll see you later.

RILEY COLLINS

Dad, I'm not coming b-

Joseph has already hung up the phone. She closes it and looks
up to see Xavier standing in the doorway. He is embarrassed
to be caught eavesdropping and looks the other way.

RILEY COLLINS

You win. They're not going after
the Marburg sample. Hope you're

happy.

XAVIER BARNES

It's not like that Riley.

RILEY COLLINS

Don't worry about it. I've got work to do. Let me know if you need anything.

She turns away from him, back to the samples. Xavier stands in the doorway for a moment studying her back.

Moses enters the room. He is holding another clipboard.

MOSES RAMOS

Hey Barnes - I found those bites you were asking about. Even got some lovely pictures too.

He produces a thumb drive from his pocket.

Riley looks up from the microscope and studies Xavier for a moment. Xavier looks like a deer caught in the headlights.

MOSES RAMOS

(noticing the tension)

Oh, was this supposed to be top secret?

XAVIER BARNES

No - not exactly.

Moses rolls his eyes and starts to head out of the room.

MOSES RAMOS

Let me know what comes next. It would be my pleasure to send some of these whining civilians home, whether they're infected or not.

He leaves. Riley gives Xavier a final hard look and then returns to her microscope.

Xavier pockets the USB and goes into the other room.

Riley fiddles with the microscope for a moment then gets up and marches into Room 2.

INT. ROOM 2 - DAY.

Riley enters.

RILEY COLLINS

This is bullshit. I have every right to know all the details of this investigation.

Xavier looks up from his lap-top screen mildly.

XAVIER BARNES

I'm sure that's true. But after what you pulled earlier, I'm not sure I trust you.

RILEY COLLINS

I'm not sure I trust you!

XAVIER BARNES

Well, then - it's a draw.

RILEY COLLINS

What are the bites? What are those pictures of?

They stare hard at each-other.

INT. ROOM 3 - DAY.

Janelle and Nima are still seated at the table. Janelle stands up.

JANELLE WALKER

I've got to go out there and make a statement. It would be nice if your guys could give me something substantial to work with here.

Nima shrugs.

NIMA DESAI

They're working on it. Xavier is right - we can't rush the scientific process.

JANELLE WALKER

If we wait too much longer, that crowd out there is gonna bum rush the police barricades. The public is spooked, and I can only give them so many press conferences without any real information.

Nima nods.

NIMA DESAI

Give me another few hours Janelle.

JANELLE WALKER

Two hours. But then I've got to feed the mob something that will reassure them. For all they know we're cooking up Ebola in here.

Nima glances at her computer screen. She smiles wryly.

NIMA DESAI

You never know Janelle, maybe we are.

INT. QUARANTINE ROOM - DAY.

A Nurse is helping Business Man back into bed when Teen Girl

to the right of him begins convulsing and bleeding from the nose and mouth.

Moses rushes over to the bed and grabs her with both arms.
Teen Girl coughs blood all over the front of his scrubs.

MOSES RAMOS

Nurse Kramer - call Dr. Desai now.

This girl is crashing!

END ACT II