

# palate cleanser

a dark comedy

Come hungry.  
Leave **horrified**.



# Logline

At the medical conglomerate Health-Co, new hires must dispose of their predecessor through violent means. In this dystopia, new sales rep, Bart Lewis, needs the company's health insurance for his daughter's cancer treatment. Meanwhile, his boss struggles with the loss of her wife and child, ultimately hatching a plan to escape the company.

- Dark Comedy / Dystopian Thriller
- 2-hour runtime
- PG-13, possibly R-Rated

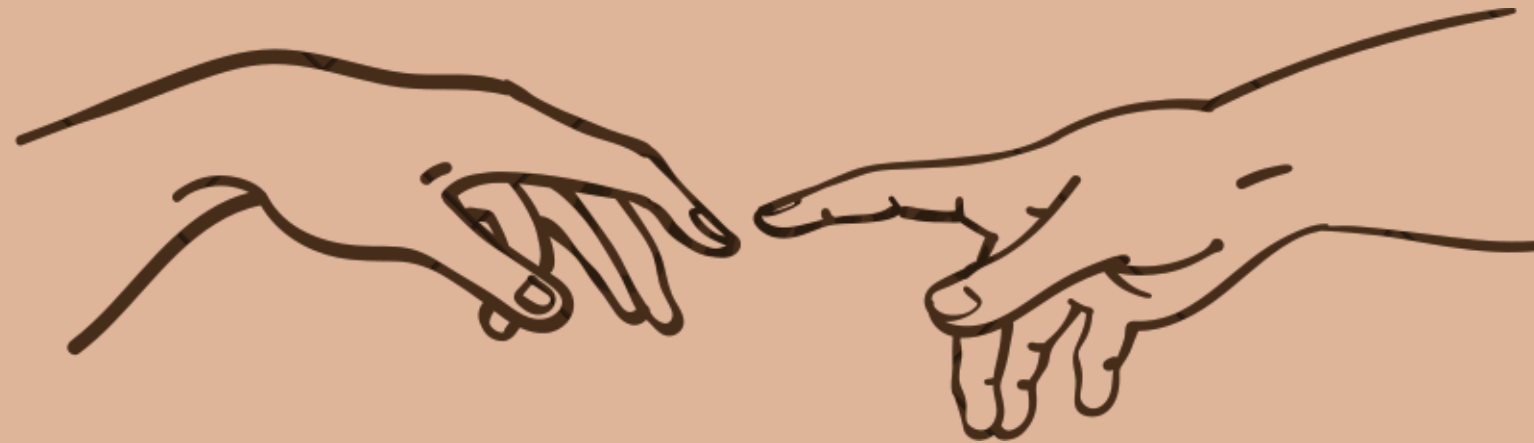


*The Lobster*  
meets  
*Severance*

Written by a **seasoned ER nurse** with disturbing coping skills, this narrative's **dark humor** reflects the unpredictability and heartbreak that Americans face daily at the hands of **for-profit healthcare**.

# synopsis

In a corporate-ruled dystopic America, unqualified Bart Lewis searches for a job that provides health insurance to treat his daughter's cancer. With an unlikely interview at an elite medical conglomerate, Lewis jumps through several hoops to prove he's worthy. His final test is to shoot his predecessor.



After choosing the job over his morals, his sanity is stretched thin as he grows distant from his family. This is only heightened by the unexpected death of his wife. Ms. Goodwin, his boss, fights a similar battle as she grieves her late wife and unborn daughter. After her brother, the CFO, is shot dead in the street, she executes a plan to run away with Lewis's daughter in pursuit of the life she lost.

# AWARD-WINNING PROOF-OF-CONCEPT

2026 OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**BEVERLY HILLS 26<sup>TH</sup>**  
film festival®

**PIFF**  
OFFICIAL SELECTION 2026

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**NASHVILLE**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
2025

OFFICIAL SELECTION

**deadCenter**  
film festival

2025

WINNER  
**TULSA**  
UNDERGROUND  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST HORROR SHORT

WINNER  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

*BEST THRILLER FILM*  
**FORT SMITH**  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION

2 0 2 5

WINNER  
**TULSA**  
UNDERGROUND  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST DIRECTOR

WINNER  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST DIRECTOR

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**The Remission**  
Film Festival  
2026

NOMINEE  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST OKIE SHORT

NOMINEE  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST ACTOR

NOMINEE  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST ACTRESS

- 15-minutes
- Self-Funded
- \$12k budget

viewing link:  
(PW: EggThalad)



NOMINEE  
**RED BRICK ROAD**  
FILM FESTIVAL  
BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

“Very poignant, well-written, very well-acted. **Would see the feature.**”

“Really, really beautifully shot... **The world has really been fleshed out** and it lends itself to being rich and fulfilling. Crisp and intriguing.”

“Awesome short film that **begs for a feature** with its interesting characters and enigmatic world.”

“Intriguing, funny, suspenseful. *Palate Cleanser* is **worth the watch.**”

“...perfect foreshadowing. 15/10 would recommend... **This is distribution-worthy. I wished it was longer.**”

**“I want more!!!”**

“I genuinely **had no idea where the story would land...** To evoke such powerful, conflicting emotions in a short runtime is no small feat – and **it’s exactly what makes this film linger long after the credits roll.**”

CHALLENGE BUILDS  
CHARACTER

“Subtle performances with nuance that make you forget you’re watching something uncomfortable unfold. **Strong writing and an honest review of how healthcare affects everyone...** Camerawork is top tier and is **begging for a feature-length film.**”



## Cain Graham as BART LEWIS (*attached*)

Our lanky, milquetoast protagonist who just wants to provide for his family. After multiple failed career attempts, he throws a hail-Mary at Health-Co for the great healthcare benefits that could treat his daughter's cancer. A guilty conscious makes his hiring difficult as he must shoot his predecessor.

## Tori Lane Ross as MS. GOODWIN (*attached*)

The head of sales at Health-Co who hires Lewis. Since the death of her pregnant wife, this sociopath develops a conscience and a desire to leave the family company. She paints her own bloody canvas to fake her death and escape – but not before taking something with her.



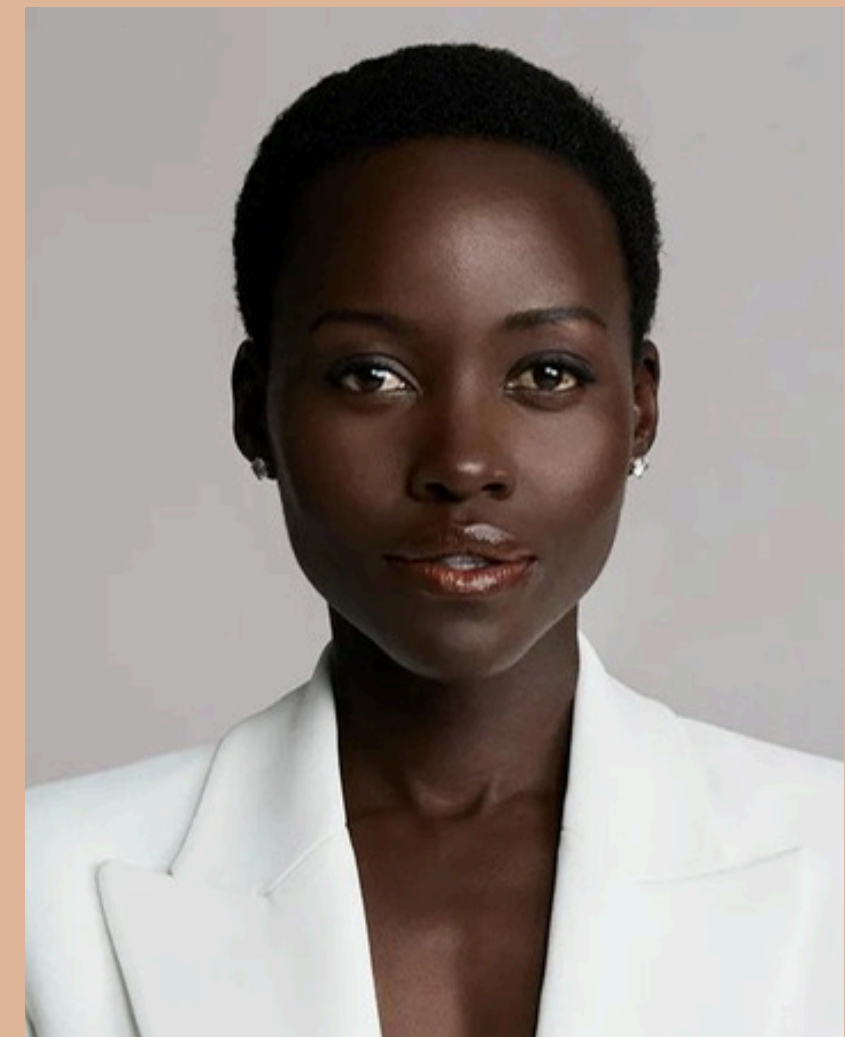


## Colman Domingo as KEITH PONCE (*ideal*)

The Golden Boy of Health-Co who teaches Lewis to be a medical sales rep. After learning Lewis's daughter has cancer, they grow closer as his wife's illness also drove him to the job. He offers his position, and his life, to Lewis in order to get his daughter treated. He comes back to haunt Lewis in his nightmare-fueled ketamine-hole.

## Lupita Nyong'o as MELINDA PONCE (*ideal*)

Keith Ponce's wife and cancer survivor. Her role grows after Ponce dies, leading her to target the Goodwin family, and shoot August dead in the street, setting off the finale.





## Laura Dern as MOMMA GOODWIN (*ideal*)

The manipulative matriarch of Health-Co who cusses like a sailor and runs the show. She orders August and Ms. Goodwin around, using their desire to please her to her advantage. Lacking any empathy, she isn't above killing a whole floor of staff if her emotions demand it.

## Cameron Britton as AUGUST GOODWIN (*ideal*)

The CFO of Health-Co and Goodwin's violent glutton of an older brother. He just wants Momma's approval. He gets shot in the street much like the United Healthcare CEO.





## Kyrria Hancock as ISLA LEWIS (*attached*)

Lewis's wife and his rock. She supports him through his failures and cares for their daughter. She wears a surgical boot throughout our story, prioritizing her daughter's health over her own. Despite her struggles, she remains light-hearted with her family, ignoring signs of a blood clot that eventually kill her.

## KAL LEWIS (*talent search*)

Bart and Isla's elementary age daughter fighting Leukemia. She brings levity to dark moments with her bubbly innocence, even through her chemo. She's the heart of the story and the driving force behind multiple characters' choices. She loves her wigs.





## Noah Wyle as SENATOR LEBLANC (*ideal*)

Senator LeBlanc is up for re-election, and Health-Co wants to schmooze him in exchange for his vote against universal healthcare. He's blunt, insensitive, and loves recreational drugs.

## Olivia Jordan as LADY LEBLANC (*attached*)

~500k IG + Miss USA 2015

The Senator's wife and hypochondriac. She is the rich and daft gatekeeper to her husband, who Lewis needs to win over. Her cats are her world.



# Why this story?

Most Americans are one ER visit away from bankruptcy. We skip a step in our world: if you don't have insurance, you are refused medical treatment – full stop.

**So, no job = no healthcare = no treatment.**

In our film, corporations like Health-Co take advantage of this unjust law by having horrific hiring (and firing) practices that keep their proprietary secrets safe and harmful labor practices quiet, knowing their staff usually has **no other option**.

The Senator character in our story actively lobbies *against* free healthcare while using his ties to acquire controlled drugs for his own recreation.

**(Any of this sound familiar?)**

# Why now?

If it wasn't already relevant, recent **cuts to Medicaid** are forcing more Americans into financial turmoil.

Although our script was written *before* it happened, **the timely murder of UnitedHealthcare's CEO** shares a very similar fate with the CFO of our fictional Health-Co.

There's a simmering dissatisfaction with our country's healthcare system – and it's close to boiling over.



SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, dir. Boots Riley

- Completely original story, dark comedy, first-time director
- Dystopian near-future
- 3.2 million USD budget
- **18.2 million USD revenue**

comps



THE LOBSTER, dir. Yorgos Lanthimos

- Dark comedy, similar themes
- Dystopian near-future
- 4 million USD budget
- **15.7 million USD revenue**



At its core, this film is a commentary on the **lack of universal healthcare** and **corporate greed** in the U.S. through the lens of a **dark comedy dystopian thriller**.

We're seeking:

- funding and distribution to make this unique and powerful feature
- someone to believe in us as creators, now that we've proven ourselves through the success of our short POC



We already have:

- a finished screenplay
- an award-winning proof-of-concept
- audiences hungry for the full-length story

thx :)

[click here for links](#)

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