

House md

Season 6 Episode 6

Known Unknowns

This episode looks at issues of withholding information, lying and truth telling, and continues themes of guilt and forgiveness, and taking human life, that have been hallmarks of the previous episodes.

Synopsis:

Jordan, a teenage girl and her friend Phoebe are waiting in line for a concert when she decides to jump the queue by pretending to be the DJ's assistant. The bouncer catches the lie, but then a band member sees her and makes sure that both girls get in. Jordan is next seen telling her girlfriends about her night at the band's party, including skinny dipping in a roof top pool. This isn't true either, but before the girls can find out, she collapses and becomes Dr House's patient.

Dr Wilson is off to a medical conference and insists Dr House must come too as he is looking out for him. Dr House resists. At the hospital, House notices Dr Cameron sitting a long way away from her husband Dr Chase and while suggesting a diagnosis for the patient suggests that the cause of Cameron and Chase's distance is that Chase is concealing something from her. In the next scene, Chase reveals that his wife thinks he is cheating on her, but the real reason for his distant and miserable behaviour is that he deliberately killed a patient (Dibala, in a previous episode called *The Tyrant*). Chase does not want to tell her because it would be imposing a burden on her forever.

Dr House goes to ask Dr Cuddy for Jordan's discharge and discovers that she intends to go to the conference. He says he's going too, which bothers her as she thought he would not be there. House goes to find Wilson and finds him sitting with a dying patient who is suffering terrible pain. House tells Wilson he's going to the conference after all, and watches as Wilson turns back to the sick man who is asking for morphine. Wilson promises to be there for him and wraps the patient's hand around the morphine pump.

Chase says House can't leave because he stirred things up with Cameron. House says 'now you have to tell her a convincing lie or tell her the truth'. Chase also tells House his diagnosis is wrong. House gets Jordan to air drum to Metallica, but her arms become weak and she can't keep doing it. This proves that her story about climbing a fence to go in the pool can't be true and the medical history is wrong: 'our patient's a big fat liar'.

Phoebe and Jordan explain that they went to the concert because they learned from Twitter that Keener, a comic book writer they are passionate about would be there. They told the 'night with the band' story to impress the other girls who wouldn't understand their passion for comic books. They followed the writer around and did whatever he did, ate the same meal and so on. The doctors send out for the same food but see no reason why it should make Jordan ill. They wonder if she is bulimic.

House discovers that Wilson is giving a paper on 'Patient perceptions of complications during end stage chemotherapy' and wonders why Wilson didn't tell him about it and ask for feedback. He tells

Wilson he hopes to woo Cuddy over the conference weekend. Meanwhile, Cameron tells Foreman that she's worried Chase is having an affair. She followed him but he told her the truth about where he was going – to the gym. She asks Foreman if Chase *is* having an affair. Foreman says no, but that she must talk to Chase. She says 'why should I believe you?' and he replies 'you shouldn't. You should believe him'.

Jordan collapses again when her parents arrive. House, on the phone from the conference, says the doctors have to get the truth from her about what she's been doing. As he's not registered at the conference, he steals someone else's badge and pretends to be Dr Perlmutter. When Foreman asks Jordan to recount her movements she starts to lie again, saying that she went to Bruce Springsteen's house and played his guitar. Phoebe begs her to tell the truth: 'why are you lying?' Jordan says 'how can you not believe me?'

Foreman decides the lying is being caused by bleeding in Jordan's brain. Phoebe says they were together all the time except when Jordan went to get ice, so that's the only part where they don't really know what happened.

Meanwhile, House attends an 80s party, though he has chosen fancy dress from a different century to most people. He meets Cuddy and they dance, going over their history together. House says he was going to call her and look for a relationship, but got expelled from med school and so didn't contact her. Cuddy leaves.

Next morning, House is woken by Wilson getting a call to say his cancer patient died. They agree that dying was the best thing but Wilson regrets not being there with him. House calls this a 'reflex of guilt', wondering if Wilson knew he would die for certain. He then takes Wilson's laptop and starts reading his paper: 'Euthanasia. Let's tell the truth. We all do it.' House asks Wilson if he's insane to consider saying such a thing in public. Wilson walks away.

Back at the hospital the team discover where Jordan was from surveillance camera tapes. She had the comic book writer's journal and they decide she must have gone to his room with it.

House and Wilson discuss the paper. Wilson says that doctors are rarely indicted for euthanasia in end of life situations, but House says it could still end his career. Wilson says someone needs to tell the truth about what it's like for dying patients, for doctors making decisions without guidance. House agrees but says it should be done anonymously. Wilson says 'I'd be telling the truth. I'd be saying what we're all thinking'. House says that the benefactors of oncology departments won't want them run by murderers. Wilson says all doctors are murderers but don't have the guts to admit it. House says again that it's career suicide. Wilson says that he has learned from House that he should do what is right and not worry about the consequences.

Cameron and Chase go to the comic book writer's room and confront him about having Jordan in his room. He says she was never there and wants to know why they are pretending he's lying. He shuts the door in Cameron's face. Chase says Keener would be crazy to risk his marriage for a one night stand with a teenager and that he himself is not cheating. Cameron says Keener would be ruined if he admitted statutory rape of Jordan and that's why 'we'll never hear the truth out of him'.

Cuddy and Wilson talk about House. Cuddy says that now she's a mother she needs a man she can always rely on and that's not House.

The team are still perplexed by what's wrong with Jordan but decide they will not get the truth out of Keener or out of Jordan, so Cameron suggests using a 'truth' drug on her. Chase says Cameron is only suggesting a dangerous drug because she's angry that Keener and himself might be lying to her. Foreman says 'we need to know the truth'.

House drugs Wilson so that he cannot give the incriminating talk as Wilson tells him to offer to babysit for Cuddy. Meanwhile, Jordan takes the 'truth' drug and tells a story about going to Keener's room taking drugs and being molested by him. But it turns out the whole story is a lie. House offers to babysit but Cuddy lies to him about Rachel being in day care and House realises she is with Lucas, his erstwhile private detective.

Foreman wakes Wilson from his drugged sleep, looking for House. House has stolen Wilson's trousers and gives Wilson's talk himself, still masquerading as Dr Perlmutter. The doctors are shocked by what the paper says, including a case (presumably his recently dead patient) where he loudly told a nurse how to override the morphine pump and so allowed the patient to overdose. House changes the admission by Wilson that he let his patient down by going away so that when the patient died, he could not be implicated in his death, saying that Wilson never let the patient down or shirked his responsibility. Ignoring a storm of questions, House is thanked for his courage by another participant.

Wilson and House argue about what he did. House accuses Wilson of feeling guilty about his dead patients and in the course of arguing realises what is wrong with Jordan. She is ill from eating oysters because she has a pre-existing medical condition that makes her susceptible to an organism oysters carry. Jordan lies about eating the oysters, - which proves it must be true.

House asks Cuddy how she got together with Lucas. Cuddy tells a story but Lucas tells the uncomfortable truth, that Cuddy concealed her 'dirty little secret' to protect House while he was recovering from Vicodin addiction.

Finally, Jordan tells the truth. She took the journal to Keener's room but left it at the door. He was telling the truth when he said she never went in.

Wilson says that when you do what he did then you need to hear from another source that you did nothing wrong, if not from God, or society, then a friend. He thanks House for what he said in 'his' paper. The real Dr Perlmutter is in Toronto, and so won't get into trouble.

Cameron tells Chase she is sorry she suspected him and that she will believe that he tells her the truth. Finally, Chase confesses to her what is eating him, that he killed Dibala.

Some excerpts to watch:

- Various clips of Jordan lying
- Cameron confesses to Foreman that she followed Chase
- House reads the paper to the medical conference
- Chase confesses to Cameron

Some questions:

- How do you feel about Dr Cameron's behaviour in this episode?

- How do you feel about the way the various characters go about getting at 'the truth'?
- What do you make of House and Wilson's argument about the euthanasia paper?
- If you were Dr Cuddy, what would you have said to House about Lucas?
- What do you think about the idea that the truth hurts?
- What did this episode make you think about why and how people tell lies?
- Does this episode make you feel that some things should be kept secret and unsaid?
- If you were Dr Wilson, would you have acted as he did, - and need confession/forgiveness?
- What do you think Dr Wilson and Dr Chase would say to each other if they talked about killing their patients?

Some passages from scripture to use if you want to:

- John 18. 33-38
- 1 Kings 3. 16-28
- 1 John 1. 5-10