

THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGG (FULL SYNOPSIS)

A psychiatrist risks all to take on a corrupt drug company.

The Goose movie starts out with a scene of pills rolling off the assembly line. This cuts to an aerial view of a quiet street in suburban New Jersey.

AMANDA BELLACONDA drops her son JACOB off at school. He examines his acne in the rear view mirror. She reminds him to take his pill. A nurse who is embedded in the medical establishment and has trust in medications, she is not aware that the pill she is urging her son to take for acne will be the agent of his demise.

Jacob exits the car. He pauses to look back at his mother. It will be the last time.

Ginny gets home after a long day. She's tired. Calls for Jacob but no answer. She pulls herself up the stairs and enters his room. Something is out of place. She approaches the bathroom door and opens it. What confronts her is worse than her greatest fears. Jacob has hanged himself. She screams and rushes to him to lift his dangling legs – to see if he's alive... to save him.

DR. JACK FORTEO is an adult psychiatrist and brain scientist. He is introduced at a medical conference by PROFESSOR MORROW to a large audience by a colleague who lists his many accomplishments. A poster board next to the professor highlights the sponsor of the conference, Sercalm, a product of Adams Shulman Pharmaceuticals Corporation. Jack highlights the benefits of Sercalm for the treatment of anxiety disorders, while SAL SALINAS, product representative for Sercalm, looks on, pleased. Jack pauses as he adds sexual side effects to a list of possible side effects. Sal is not pleased. He has a few words for Jack as Jack exits the auditorium. Jack shows he is still on board with the pharmaceutical industry as he thanks Sal for his ongoing support of their PSYCHVIEW program. A flashback reveals Jack's trauma of his mother dying when he was a young boy, and the trajectory of his life and career in medicine and research.

Jack sits at his desk working on his computer when Amanda walks in, holding a Men's Life magazine containing an interview with Doug about depression. She asks Doug if he's the scientist in the article.

She then asks for Jack's help to understand what happened to her son. He asks if he was on any medication. She says only one for acne, Carinaderm. If depression is caused by Carinaderm, could he see it in the brain, the way that the magazine described how he could see depression in the brain with brain scans? He demurs, saying that research probably wouldn't get funded. That night he recounts his strange meeting with his wife, DR ISABELLA FORTEO. A researcher herself, she reminds him that you cannot do research without funding.

Later, Amanda and Jack meet in a coffee shop where she asks him to do the research on the effects of Carinaderm on the brain if she could find funding. Jack, however, is still conflicted. He can't take the money directly – not even his department – because it would appear to bias the research. They decide that if it's a donation to the university then the university could agree to the research. She asks him to meet with the attorneys that are representing her in lawsuit against the makers of Carinaderm, the Renzon Pharmaceutical Company. Amanda later informs him that she has raised the money for the research from the bereaved parents of Carinaderm suicide victims.

DR. LISA KANG, however, doesn't like it. She heads the Dermatology department. She's greatly concerned that his research might undermine the university's relationship with Renzon, the biggest pharmaceutical company in the world – and one of their largest donors. The cozy conflict-of-interest that exists between pharmaceutical companies and Universities is a recurring theme throughout.

Enter RED LEGHORN, the flamboyant, crusading (and independently wealthy) attorney for Amanda. Arriving on his Lear Jet from his native state of Texas, he and his co-counsel RYAN SINGH meet with Jack and pressure him to testify early. But Jack refuses because the study isn't done yet.

Jack begins to become concerned because he's squeezed from both sides: Leghorn (and Amanda) on the one hand, Lisa and the university on the other.

Jack begins the study. He looks at brain scans and interviews patients taking Carinaderm. His work also draws his thoughts to his childhood. He dreams about his mother who died of an illness shortly after the photo on his desk was taken – when Jack was just 5. We understand his agreement to help Ginny was partially related to the shared grief over the sudden passing of someone so close, even though he does not consciously make the connection... yet.

His work stirs up thoughts of his own unresolved feelings about the death of his mother. He dreams about her again. As he struggles with it, however, instead of helping, he just gets more distant. His wife and his young daughter, LUCY, try to get his attention, always hard, now impossible.

Jack's study, though, puts him in the cross hairs of Renzon Pharmaceuticals, whose Vice President for Marketing, LARRY CANE, shows up at Jack's office, encouraging him to give up the study. Jack asks for help with the study, but Larry refuses, and makes veiled threats about the consequences if he doesn't give up the project.

Later, Larry meets with Lisa, whom they have recruited for their cause, and CRYSTAL WATSON, the ruthless attorney representing Renzon in their upcoming litigation in the Bellaconda case, at the martini bar. Renzon is making a billion dollars a year in sales with Carinaderm, and they're not going to let some upstart

doctor puffed up with donations from disgruntled family members destroy their goose that lays golden eggs for them. Lisa reiterates that Carinaderm is a great drug for acne, and Forteo is not going to get any help from her. The assembled all toast to the future success of Carinaderm.

Jack meets with DR WILLIAM PETERSEN of the FDA and his colleagues. He asks for help with his research, or at least for the FDA to require Renzon to provide them free study drug, which is very expensive, for the research. No dice on either account. The FDA doesn't have the budget to do research, and can't force drug companies to do anything.

Lisa stops by the study center to mess with some of the study files, but is interrupted by Jack. Meanwhile, a research assistant alerts Jack to the latest study results. Carinaderm is shutting off the frontal cortex, a key brain area that mediates depression. Jack recognizes that this is a game changer. But that makes the Renzon pressure cooker even more intense.

KIRSTEN BEST, attorney and head of Research Compliance for Dunson University, pops in to tell Jack that Renzon has subpoenaed all of his study data. And, oh, by the way, the Dean wants to meet with him.

Next day in the meeting with DEAN LESLIE WATKINS, she expresses her displeasure with Jack's research. She bars him from testifying as an expert witness ... a huge setback.

Black cars begin following him. His house is broken in to and his computer records are stolen. Renzon hires private investigators to show up at Jacob's school to get kids on the record that Jacob used drugs – presumably so they can blame “drug use” for his suicide.

Red intervenes at the office of the university Dean. Next thing you know, Jack is allowed to testify, but now he's cracking under the pressure. He didn't think it would be like THIS. Maybe it would have been better, he thinks, to just forget it all.

JENNY MCNEIL, one of the study participants, arrives for her brain scan with her mother, WENDY MCNEIL. She's depressed. Her mother is distraught. Jack decides to take her off Carinaderm.

At the MIDPOINT of the film, Jack has his first deposition. Crystal threatens his job and his career. He had no idea how far they would take this! Afterwards, he throws up. He didn't sign up for this.

Jack and Amanda have a late night discussion about their losses. Jack talks about his mother's death. He says he doesn't even know where her ashes are. Amanda tells him that he should be able to find the ashes if he finds a death certificate. He wonders if he should look for his mother's ashes or visit the grave site? There is an

evolving attraction with Jack and Amanda. Do Jack and Amanda have real feelings for each other or is Jack spiraling emotionally? Or both?

Renzon continues to find small errors in the research. Data issues.... It looked like a minor was mistakenly enrolled in the study but they turned 18 just in time. Jack is deposed again and amidst a heated argument between the opposing lawyers, Renzon appeals to have Jack excluded as a witness.

Jack's marriage is increasingly strained by his emotional distance and close ties with Amanda. In court, Crystal makes him go to the white board and make a calculation demonstrating a mistake he made in his Carinaderm paper. His marriage, his career, and the case against Renzon are all now in jeopardy.

At the end of Act Two, everything crashes down: First, his university announces he's under ethical investigation because of his research into Carinaderm. His career hangs in the balance. Second, the judge announces he's barred from testifying as an expert witness, which means that everything has been for naught. And finally, Isabella walks in on a conversation where Jack is on the phone with Amanda and she overhears him telling her that he thinks about her... all the time. Isabella is not amused. An inquiry at the university triggered by Renzon's accusations of fraud does not go well. The university is not on his side.

Jack follows up on his conversation with Amanda by getting the death certificate for his mother. He visits the funeral home and finds out that her unclaimed ashes are located there in a crypt. He returns home and has a confusing interchange with his daughter who is frustrated by his frequent absences. Isabella is at her wit's end with him, but in a moment of compassion she suggests that they should have a ceremony for the proper burial of his mother's ashes.

With their backs against the wall, the plaintiff's legal team hits the book. Amanda is instrumental in finding a wrinkle in the case law that allows them to appeal. She has gone from a subservient member of the medical establishment to someone who exerts her innate intelligence in the quest for truth... and justice.

With the ethic's complaint behind him, the courtroom drama continues. Red and Ryan appeal to the New Jersey Supreme Court so that Jack can be allowed to testify and his study entered as evidence. During a break in the hearing Red tells the others the story of the goose that laid the golden egg, and how it was part of Renzon's training materials for the Carinaderm reps, with Carinaderm identified as their golden egg. Red reminds the others of how the man cut open the goose to get all the eggs at once, and that the moral of the story is that he who is too greedy gets nothing. They return to the courtroom and hear the judge's verdict. The appeals court rules in their favor. Red reminds Amanda that their fight has just begun. Amanda has an emotional moment with Jack, where she thanks him for everything

he has done for Jacob and the Carinaderm victims, and suggests that maybe his mother was the goose, and he is the golden egg.

Jack has a service for his mother in the cemetery where they bury her ashes. His whole family is there. In a parallel shot, Amanda visits Jacob's grave.

Jack and Isabella relax over a glass of wine in their garden. Isabella compliments him on his victory, and he states that he couldn't have done it without her. As the view pulls away over the Chattahoochee River and the Atlanta skyline, Jack reflects in his idiosyncratic way on Quantum Physics and its implication for seeing our love ones who have left the earth, some day, in the future.

A final card reports that all plaintiffs in the Carinaderm cases settled with Renzon for undisclosed sums, and part of the settlement was that they could never use the word settlement. And that no case related to Carinaderm and suicide or depression was ever heard before a jury.