

IMPURITIES

written by  
Ryan Blackwell

FADE IN:

A CRY OF PAIN is heard from somewhere nearby. Not this room.

In this narrow, windowless room sits an old, wiry man at a small desk. A small, dim lamp directs light onto a clipboard on which he writes. He sips at a cup of tea.

Another CRY is heard. This one louder than before.

The wiry man, DR. FINCH, speaks into a nearby microphone.

DR. FINCH

That'll do, Mr. Peck. He may go.  
Please bring in our next guest.

He lights the end of a cigarette, but does not smoke it, and continues to write.

A DOOR is heard to open and light fills the room.

DR. FINCH

One moment. Yes.

The room again goes dim as the door CLICKS shut. Dr. Finch ignores the WHIMPERS behind him. He stands and hangs the clipboard on a hook on an adjacent wall and removes another. The wall is covered in them. Dozens.

He returns to the desk and picks up the cigarette, flicking off the excess ash. He walks to the other side of the room, gently blowing on the end of the cigarette. The ember glows.

Dr. Finch stands in front of a young woman, BESS, who is gagged and bound in a heavy chair. She is sweating, shaking. He gently removes the gag from her mouth.

DR. FINCH

Thank you for your patience, Ms...

(checks  
clipboard)

... Kotkin. May I call you Bess?  
Allow me to introduce myself. I am  
Dr. Finch and the gentleman behind  
you is Mr. Peck. Would you care  
for a cigarette? You do smoke, if  
I'm not mistaken?

Finch carefully places the filter near her lips and holds it there for an uncomfortably long moment until, finally, the young woman draws a breath. The glow intensifies. The smoke crawls out of her mouth and Finch places his nostrils on her lips, breathing it in.

DR. FINCH

I, myself, no longer partake.  
Thank you for that.

BESS

Why are you... what do you want?

DR. FINCH

We want to help you, dear. A  
strange way of showing it, I'm  
sure, with these crude bindings  
and what not. Mr. Peck, I do  
believe these are quite  
unnecessary now.

Peck, face always unseen, removes Bess' restraints. She,  
however, does not move.

Finch moves across the room to the desk. Consults his notes.

DR. FINCH

I do apologize for any discomfort  
you may have suffered during  
your... transport. You replied to  
our newspaper advertisement, it  
seems. Yes...

In the blink of an eye, Bess leaps from the chair and lunges  
at Finch, scratching his face with her nails. He recoils,  
gasping, as she goes to strike again. Peck, however, throws  
her to the floor and pins her there with a knee in her back.

She screams and struggles. Peck replaces the gag in her  
mouth.

DR. FINCH

(composing  
himself)

As it is written: if your hand  
causes you to sin, cut it off. It  
is better to enter life maimed  
than with two hands to go to hell,  
where the fire never goes out.

He moves to a large chest of drawers nearby. Opening one of  
the drawers, he removes an industrial iron. He plugs it in  
and turns it to its highest setting. He then opens another  
large, flat drawer revealing a variety of blades, drills and  
various cutting instruments.

Dr. Finch removes a large pair of bolt cutters and faces  
Bess.

DR. FINCH

Did you know that bone is often  
stronger than reinforced concrete?  
It's quite annoying.

He places the jaws of the cutters around her wrist as Mr.  
Peck holds her in place.

Snap. Scream. Snap. Scream.

Mr. Peck escorts Bess back to the chair and binds her. He  
then grabs the iron and presses it firmly against the  
bleeding stump where Bess' hand once was. Bess screams,  
weaker now, as fluids sizzle and steam rises from her wrist.

Dr. Finch replaces the bolt cutters and Mr. Peck resumes his  
place behind Bess.

DR. FINCH

I can understand you being  
distressed, but these outbursts  
will not do. No. We are here to  
help you, as requested.

Bess tries to talk through the gag.

DR. FINCH

I'm sorry, dear. I can't  
understand you through that...  
here...

He removes the gag...

BESS

How the fuck are you helping me by  
cutting off my hand you fucking...

... and replaces it.

DR. FINCH

Yes, yes. Perfectly sensible  
question. I... I certainly didn't  
mean for it to happen like that.  
It just turned out that way. And  
for that I truly apologize. I do  
like to maintain a semblance of  
order. I must say, however, that  
it did get the job half done.

Bess goes silent. Half done?

DR. FINCH

Care for another cigarette? It's why you're here, after all...

(consults his notes)

... yes. Yes, I see right here. Twelve years. Yes. It'll kill you, you know. You must - you've tried to quit... seven times. Seven? And why has every attempt thus far failed? Patches. Gum. Hypno-therapy. Yes. You see, you, like most people, have tried to eliminate desire. Rarely successful. I have found more... rudimentary approaches to be far more effective. To answer your question, my dear - I help people by eliminating ability. I've helped hundreds of people just like yourself. Why, even Mr. Peck here is a product of my services. His vice? Chronic overeating. Morbidly obese for most of his life. Nothing helped. He happened upon my advert and, like yourself, was intrigued by my guarantee of satisfaction. We arranged a consultation and I realized he certainly can't overeat if he can't eat at all. And so I eliminated ability. You can see...

Bess strains to turn and see Peck for the first time. A tall man in a shabby suit... his jaw completely removed from his face. Feeding tubes run to his nose and exposed throat.

DR. FINCH

... he's now a handsome weight and quite happy.

Peck smiles a grotesque, jaw-less smile. Bess screams.

DR. FINCH

So happy, in fact, that he returned to aide me in my pursuit. Now, how does that apply to you? Well, you can't exactly smoke if you can't hold a cigarette, can you?

Bess cries, desperate and futile. Dr. Finch retrieves the bolt cutters once again.

DR. FINCH

Oh don't worry dear. The first is always the hardest. This will be a cinch. Mr. Peck... if you will.

Peck holds her hand in place. Tears swell in Bess' eyes as she watches the two nightmarish men stand over her.

Snap.

EXT. DR. FINCH'S LABORATORY - DAY

A small, windowless building stands alone in the middle of seeming nowhere next to an old and dusty road. A black town car waits on the side.

An unmarked door to the building opens. Bess, dazed and in shock, stumbles out into the daylight, her arms drawn in tight. Dr. Finch emerges and stands at the door.

DR. FINCH

Our driver here will see you home.  
Good luck, Bess.

The car door opens. Bess stares momentarily and then lumbers over to it, practically falling inside. The door shuts and they're off.

DR. FINCH

You're welcome.

INT. DR. FINCH'S LABORATORY - LATER

IN BLACK

DR. FINCH (V.O.)

Good work, Mr. Peck. Who do we have next?

A door opens to another small, windowless room filling it with light. A young man sits bound and gagged in a chair. Finch and Peck observe him from the entrance. The doctor reviews a clipboard.

DR. FINCH

Mr... Perkins? Learned of our service online, it seems. Hm. No one ever selects 'referred by a friend'. Pity. Now, let's see... ah... sexual promiscuity. Yes. A personal favorite. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Dr. Finch.

The door closes. The room goes dim.

FADE OUT