

FRACT

by

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"FRACT"

INT. ALICIA'S CAST - DAY

BLACK.

The darkness splits, creating a vertical rift of light.

A thin, stick-like object enters through the illuminated crevice and begins scraping the black edge.

We hear the SOUND OF NAILS SCRATCHING SKIN as the stick drives back and forth.

INT. ALICIA'S BEDROOM - DAY (SIMULTANEOUS)

ALICIA, 17, dressed in an unflattering company polo with no makeup and oily hair, sits on her bed. Her left arm is swathed in a blue cast and she is itching the skin underneath with a pencil.

The SCRATCHING SOUND gets louder as an expression of relief passes over her face. Her dry lips part with satisfaction.

A PHONE ALARM RINGS.

Alicia lets it ring as she makes a final itch with the pencil before pulling it out and slipping it in her ponytail.

She pulls her arm up to her nose and takes a long, deep sniff of the cast odour.

A beat as she breathes in the smell.

Alicia swipes her phone, turning off the alarm, stands up and leaves the room.

EXT. PAVEMENT - DAY (SOON AFTER)

Alicia cycles along the pavement, struggling with her injured arm.

We hear a TONGUE CLICKING in a steady rhythm.

EXT. "DRAIN CHECK" OFFICE - DAY (SOON AFTER)

LUCY, 18, terminally bored, wearing a matching polo, leans against the wall clicking her tongue.

Alicia wheels her bike down the pathway and leans it against a wall. She notices Lucy and pulls the sleeve of her sweater down, hiding the edge of her cast.

Alicia walks towards the offices.

Lucy follows Alicia with sulky eyes as she approaches.

Alicia meets Lucy's stare and immediately lowers her gaze to the ground.

She enters the offices.

INT. "DRAIN CHECK" OFFICE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

KATHERINE sits behind a large desk. She looks up as Alicia enters. Her eyes instantly flick back to her computer.

Katherine grabs a piece of paper and offers it to Alicia.

Alicia takes the paper and leaves.

INT. BATHROOM, HOUSE #1 - DAY (LATER)

Alicia's hands, covered in rubber gloves, pull thick hunks of human hair out of the shower drain. Her cast is enveloped in a plastic bag beneath the glove.

The hair catches on the edges of the drain as she wrenches it out, stuck together with shampoo residue.

Alicia dumps the hair into a plastic bag. She pours a thick, cleaning liquid down the drain. Globbs of fluid drip onto the mouth of the drain.

Alicia slots the filter into the top of the drain and wipes the few remaining hairs from the shower floor.

INT. BATHROOM, HOUSE #1 - DAY (SOON AFTER)

Alicia is sitting on the edge of the bath. Her face winces. She quickly pulls her gloves off and rips the plastic bag from her cast before snatching the pencil from her hair and shoving it down the side of the cast.

Instant relief.

CUSTOMER #1 (O.S.)

Hey.

Alicia freezes. She slowly turns her head towards the bathroom door to find the feet of CUSTOMER #1, female.

Alicia keeps her eyes on the ground. Her chest heaves. She looks back at the pencil in her cast. Eyebrows furrow. Her lips open to speak but no words come out.

CUSTOMER #1 (CONT'D)
How'd you do that?

A beat.

Alicia follows Customer #1's gaze to her cast.

Alicia gestures to her cast.

Customer #1 nods - obviously.

A beat.

ALICIA
I fell off my bike.

Grimace from Customer #1.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
Onto a gutter. I landed on it. The
forearm was right on the curb so
when my chest hit--

CUSTOMER #1
Okay-- got it.

Alicia stops talking and returns her eyes to the ground. She starts to pack up her gear.

CUSTOMER #1 (CONT'D)
Do you want a drink? Lemonade?

Alicia's eyes flicker up to Customer #1. Her stare is blank, confused... In awe.

INT. KITCHEN, HOUSE #1 - DAY (SOON AFTER)

CLASSICAL MUSIC PLAYING.

Candles and a large vase of flowers rest on a table in the lounge.

A jug filled with fresh herbs sits on the mantel by the stairs to the kitchen.

A third vase, this time a grand bouquet of tulips, is on a table next to Alicia.

Alicia sits on pristine, white armchair, eyes flicking around the room.

Customer #1, phone between ear and shoulder, hands a glass of lemonade to Alicia.

Customer #1 speaks on the phone whilst looking through the fridge and pantry.

CUSTOMER #1 (ON PHONE)

But it's salad-- and chicken. Do you eat eggs?

(beat for response)

Cause then that's some protein for you and you just don't have to have the chicken with it... There's salmon! Do you eat salmon?

Alicia looks around for a place to rest her drink. Unsuccessful, she raises the glass to her lips and starts gulping the lemonade.

CUSTOMER #1 (CONT'D)

It's gorgeous salmon.

(beat for response)

Well I wonder if you're eating healthily.

(beat for response)

Tell Milly, instead of chicken she could have salmon. So that's two alternatives and it saves me buying things and it's in the fridge.

Alicia is still downing the liquid, drinking the entire glass in one go.

CUSTOMER #1 (CONT'D)

So we can do chicken and salad and new potatoes or we can do the potatoes with like a potato salad-- there's spring onions... So I can start doing that now. I'll put the potatoes on--

(response from caller)

Well there's chicken or salmon and it's the bottom line. I'm not a restaurant and I'm sick of this every time.

Alicia finishes her glass and gasps. She looks down to her cast and smiles.

INT. "DRAIN CHECK" OFFICE - NIGHT (LATER)

Alicia walks into the office. Katherine is still behind the desk, typing on her computer.

Alicia drops a filled-out form onto Katherine's desk. Katherine notices Alicia's cast.

KATHERINE

You alright?

Alicia nods.

A beat as words are on the tip of Alicia's tongue and Katherine waits for them to come out.

ALICIA

I got given a free lemonade.

KATHERINE

Good for you.

Alicia smiles and leaves as Katherine returns to her computer.

EXT. "DRAIN CHECK" OFFICE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Lucy is smoking outside.

Alicia walks towards her bike on the pavement.

LUCY

What happened to your arm?

A beat. Alicia turns around and stares at Lucy.

Lucy shoots her an expectant glare.

ALICIA

I was in a cycling accident.

LUCY

Shit.

Lucy finishes his cigarette and puts it out.

ALICIA

It was really bad.

Lucy nods and walks into the offices, leaving Alicia frozen outside.

Alicia returns to her bike. She unlocks it and mounts. As she starts pedalling, her expression changes from surprise into a suppressed smile.

INT. BATHROOM, HOUSE #2 - DAY (NEXT DAY)

Alicia rips hair out of the drain. Small drops of a dark, thick sludge sprays Alicia and the bath floor.

Alicia's eyes are focused, almost manic as she pulls.

INT. LOUNGE, HOUSE #2 - DAY (SOON AFTER)

A cup of tea with a biscuit on the saucer is lead from the kitchen to the lounge by a paid of OLD HANDS.

The tea is passed over to a more youthful hand with dirty nails.

Alicia, sitting on an armchair, immediately starts drinking the tea.

CUSTOMER #2 sits down opposite her.

Alicia keeps her frenzied eyes locked on Customer #2 as she gulps the entire cup in one go.

Customer #2 fidgets.

Alicia finishes her drink and smacks the cup down onto the saucer.

EXT. "DRAIN CHECK" OFFICE - DAY (LATER)

Alicia walks up to the office. Lucy sits nearby on her phone.

A beat as Alicia watches her. She pulls a permanent marker out of her pocket and approaches.

ALICIA

Hi.

LUCY

Hey.

ALICIA

Do you want to sign my cast?

Alicia offers the permanent marker.

LUCY

Can I do a picture?

Alicia nods. Lucy takes the marker and starts drawing.

ALICIA
I was going to make salmon or
chicken for dinner.

A beat.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
It's gorgeous salmon.

LUCY
Cool.

ALICIA
Would you like some? We can do
potatoes.

LUCY
Maybe another time.

ALICIA
Next week?

LUCY
Sure.

Lucy gives Alicia the marker back and picks up her bag.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Bye.

Alicia smiles. Lucy walks off.

Alicia looks at her cast. She breathes out a half-laugh.

INT. WAITING ROOM, DOCTORS - DAY (LATER)

Alicia sits on a chair, in between TWO PATIENTS, sketching
hair and clothes on Lucy's drawing of a huge penis.

A DOCTOR walks into the room.

DOCTOR
Alicia?

Alicia looks up.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY (SOON AFTER)

The Doctor examines Alicia's arm.

DOCTOR
How's it feeling? Okay?

ALICIA

Itchy.

DOCTOR

I hope you haven't been sticking anything sharp in the cast.

A beat.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I think we're good to get this off.

ALICIA

It's only been a--

DOCTOR

I'm not sure it was ever necessary.

Alicia's lips start to twitch.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I had a look at your X-ray. You're lucky, don't have to get used to it. If you think the itch was bad now...

The Doctor lifts the cast and traces her finger down a line.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I'll just be drilling down here so if you hold it still...

The doctor moves to get the equipment. The colour drains from Alicia's face. We hear the BUZZ OF THE ELECTRIC SAW.

Alicia's eyes are filled with an expression of panic as they watch the doctor's hands and the SAW SOUND grows louder. Alicia sits through the sawing, still as stone, chin quivering.

INT. ALICIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

SILENCE.

Alicia sits on her bed, staring at her wrist. Her left arm is now adorned with a thin, elasticated bandage.

A long beat as she glares at it.

Alicia slowly pulls the bandage off, revealing her red arm.

A beat.

Alicia shuffles until she is perched on the edge of the bed. She sits up straight and brings her knees together, legs hanging off the side of the mattress.

Alicia weaves her left forearm over her left thigh and underneath her right thigh.

A beat.

Alicia takes the bandage and stuffs it in her mouth. She grabs her left hand, poking out the side of her right thigh, with her right hand and holds on tight.

A beat.

Alicia begins pushing her right thigh down whilst pulling her left thigh and right hand up.

Her eyes water, her eyes are manic with a mixture of determination and desperation, pain and excitement.

She pulls her left hand and thigh harder... harder...

Harder... Her wrist flicks back.

Harder...

CRACK.

BLACK.

THE END