

Clean

By

Justin Drapkin

301 Winding Ridge Rd. Apt. #2
347-713-2909
jddrapki@syr.edu

INT. RESTAURANT- DAY

FLOYD, 39, a balding, average looking, middle aged cleaning man, stares blankly at himself in a mirror. A deep voice is heard over the rushing faucet in front of Floyd. FLOYD'S BOSS, 42, a gruff deep voice, speaks.

The voice over continues while Floyd goes about his normal morning routine. Floyd sits at a large rusty sink that is beside a small cot and an even smaller cabinet full of essentials.

Floyd is in the same wife beater and shorts that he slept in and begins to wet a rag in the sink. He then squirts some dish soap in to it. He begins to wash himself with the rag, slowly but efficiently.

FLOYD'S BOSS (VO)
Listen Floyd, I just don't know if
we can afford it anymore.

FLOYD (VO)
But... Who's gonna clean?

Floyd then puts the rag and soap away and slips in to his old dirty blue jeans and sloppy collar shirt that has the name tag "FLOYD" across the heart.

FLOYD'S BOSS (VO)
If I have to pay the bus boys a
little extra to carry around lemon
fresh spray and scrub some tables I
think I will.

A long uncomfortable silence while Floyd slips on his work boots and laces them up.

FLOYD'S BOSS (VO)
Listen. Just work the rest of the
week and we'll talk tomorrow. Ok?

Floyd squeaks out a weak...

FLOYD (VO)
Ok.

FLOYD'S BOSS (VO)
Oh, and I know it's not a great
time to mention this but...tomorrow
is the first, the rent is due.

Floyd squeaks out another one, weaker then the last...

(CONTINUED)

FLOYD (VO)

Ok.

Floyd sits on his mattress completely silent. He is staring in to the abyss.

CUT TO:

Floyd sitting in a wooden chair facing the customers. He stares ahead blankly, basically looking through everyone and everything in front of him. A portly family gets up from their table and he trudges towards them.

As he begins to walk toward the mess, he speeds up a little bit and begins to chipper up.

He gets a few side looks from some of the customers, confused why he is so eager to clean, while the regulars just smile at Floyd, understanding his process.

When Floyd gets to the table we get to see him in his element. He whips out his spray, squeezes the trigger and scrubs like he's done this a million times before, mainly because he has.

Once he's done, the table is sparkling and beautiful. A table that was filled with a chubby family's barbecue leftovers looks like it went through a car wash.

A small smile appears on Floyd's face. He sees another group get up from their table and he rushes over there to clean that one too.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT- DAY

Floyd is putting the finishing touches on a table when something to his right catches his eye. A MAN, mid 20's and in a sweat suit, sits at a table with headphones on and his computer open.

Floyd stares uneasily at this man. The look on his face slowly scrunches up as he notices the seemingly never ending amount of food and garbage that is on this man's table. Floyd slowly walks over to him.

Floyd walks with confidence but when he gets close he abruptly turns and pretends like he is cleaning the table next to it.

He does this to every table in the vicinity, continually staring at this man, and his garbage, the whole time.

(CONTINUED)

The man continues to ignore Floyd so he slouches his shoulders and gives up. When he walks away he sees the group of bus boys standing by the hostess not doing their job. He walks over to them.

FLOYD

Please, can one of you please clear table 3 so I can clean it.

(Beat)

Please?

JAKE, 17, young and handsome, answers him. None of the bus boys are working, they are all just standing around hitting on the hostess.

JAKE

Can't you see we're kind of busy here Floyd?

FLOYD

Well no...yea...Of course... I'm sorry. I just want to clean and I don't want to disturb him and..

JAKE

Listen dude, if you want it cleared so bad, just do it yourself.

Jake and the crew of teenage bus boys chuckle to themselves and continue to chat up the cute hostess. Floyd walks away glaring at the man at the table but as he walks back to his chair he changes his direction to walk towards him.

When Floyd reaches the table, he picks up a large plate with chicken bones on it. Without saying a word Floyd begins to walk away but before he can the man grabs Floyd's arm and Floyd, surprised, drops the plate, shattering it.

The floor is covered in broken plate pieces and leftover chicken wing bones. Floyd is obviously flustered, he begins to sweat and talk fast. Floyd knows everyone in the restaurant is looking at him, including his boss.

FLOYD

I- I'm sorry sir.

MAN AT TABLE

I was still eating that.

FLOYD

I..I..I didn't know. I'm sorry.

Floyd bends over to pick up all the pieces that he dropped. Jake rushes to help him.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE (WHISPERING)
What the hell did you do spaz?

FLOYD (WHISPERING)
I was just trying to clear-

JAKE
Well don't.

Jake picks up the remaining pieces of garbage and runs off to throw them away.

Floyd then does what he does best, clean. He scrubs that floor with his lemon fresh like it's never been cleaned before. The whole time Floyd is cleaning the man at the table stares at him intently and Floyd knows it.

When Floyd is done the floor is immaculate. An area that was disgusting is now more beautiful then ever before.

MAN AT TABLE
What's your name?

FLOYD
Floyd.

The man glares at Floyd for a moment and then turns back to type away at his computer. Floyd stands there for a moment and then walks away nervously.

FADE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT- EVENING

There are less patrons in the restaurant and it is a little darker. The plates on the man's table have piled up even higher.

We pan the restaurant and see that every single square inch of this restaurant is immaculate because of Floyd, except the man's table, which is exactly the opposite.

Floyd stares at the man still sitting at his nasty table just typing away at his computer. Floyd sits back in his seat and closes his eyes, absorbing the impact of this day.

CUT TO:

Syrup drips off the end of a waffle stick from one plate to another. The second plate is filled with BBQ wings and the syrup and barbecue mix in to a brown sludge.

(CONTINUED)

A plate with a half eaten burger and fries store a condiment bomb in the middle. A mix of ketchup, mustard, relish, mayo and any other condiment you can think of pile in the center like an active volcano. It's bubbling and oozing a liquid that would cause a fate worse than death for a custodian.

Towering over all of this is the worst part of all. A mountain of tissues, filled with snot, sauces and sorrow, looks like it's about to topple over and cause the world's most disgusting avalanche. Custodians and climbers alike are terrified of the impending crash of Mt. Tissue-manjaro.

CUT TO:

Floyd's eyes fly open and he sits up quickly. He fell asleep. The unclean table haunts his dreams.

A look of determination grows on Floyd's face and he stands up and walks over to this table. He is approaching the man from behind. Right before he reaches to tap the man on the shoulder and finally confront him, he stops.

Floyd reads what the man is typing on his computer. The man is a restaurant critic and he is rating this restaurant. The grades do not look pretty.

(reading) Food: F. The food looks unclean and tastes terrible. I wouldn't want to put it in my mouth again if somebody paid me.

(reading) Staff: D-. The Bus boys never came to clean my table because they were too busy talking to the hostess and my waiter forgot what I ordered every single time.

(reading) Appearance: D. This place looks like it was decorated by my dead grandmother.

When Floyd gets to the last section of the review he begins to smile a little bit as he reads it. It's finally good news.

(reading) Cleanliness: A. If there were any reason for you to come to this restaurant it would be to see how spotless it is. Not one employee here acts like they care except the custodian, Floyd. He works hard and it shows.

Floyd stands behind the man with a small smile on his face. Floyd stands there unmoving, soaking in the warmth of the appreciation.

(CONTINUED)

The man closes his laptop and turns around to face Floyd. He gives a half smile and pats Floyd on the shoulder.

MAN AT TABLE

Listen, I don't know how long this place can last.

The man extends a card toward Floyd.

MAN AT TABLE

Call me.

Floyd looks at it. Contemplating his decision.

FLOYD

I would but-

MAN AT TABLE

Whatever it is, we can figure it out. You're dedicated and it shows.

Floyd looks at the card again. He takes another long moment and then takes it and puts it in his pocket. The man cocks a half smile and then leaves.

There's a single beat before Floyd does what he's done a thousand times before, cleans the table.

Once again, when Floyd finishes, the table is absolutely spotless.

Once he finishes he sits back in his chair and looks out at the tables he cleaned. They are beautiful. He did that and he knows it. He takes out the card from his pocket and looks down at it. He smiles.