

NAILS

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INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

ISAAC, early 20s, sits on the edge of the bathtub, chewing anxiously on his right hand thumbnail. His eyes dart around the room, nervous as hell.

The bathroom is tiny, but about what you'd expect for a one-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles.

Isaac looks down at his left hand --

He stretches out his fingers. His nails are overgrown and unkempt. Well overdue for a decent trimming.

Finally, Isaac takes his thumb out of his mouth and examines it --

Chewed and uneven. Gross.

A nasty, childish habit.

Isaac lets out a heavy sigh.

His face drops. He's ashamed of himself.

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Isaac peels off a small piece of generic adhesive bandage --

He wraps it tight around his thumb.

He looks slightly relieved.

But it's not enough.

Isaac looks again at his left hand --

SLOW ZOOM ON ISAAC'S FACE.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Isaac grabs a pair of stainless steel nail clippers from the edge of the bathroom sink. They're a long compound lever style, with a high handle, tight fulcrum and razor sharp jaws.

Isaac gently places the jaws around his left index fingernail --

His eyes widen with a careful precision --

CLIP!

CLIP!

CLIP!

Isaac pulls the clippers back and looks down at his work --

Flawless. The nail plate is perfectly sliced, leaving a healthy amount of room above the tender red skin in the nail bed underneath it.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MONTAGE:

- 1) CLIPPING THUMB NAIL
- 2) CLIPPING PINKY FINGER NAIL
- 3) CLIPPING MIDDLE FINGER NAIL

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Isaac finally reaches his left hand ring finger.

He moves the clippers in --

BUT IT'S TOO HARD TOO FAST --

CLLLIPPP!!!

The edge of the nail hangs off his finger.

Isaac reaches for it carefully --

He steadies his grip --

ISAAC TEARS THE HANGNAIL OFF --

BUT IT SPLITS TOO FAR INTO THE REST OF HIS NAIL --

THE TORN NAIL CUTS INTO THE EXPOSED SKIN --

ISAAC WINCES --

BLOOD POOLS IN THE NAIL BED --

ISAAC PUTS THE CUT FINGER IN HIS MOUTH --

He sucks blood out of the wound. The sweet taste fills his face with relief.

He holds it there for a moment longer, breathing through his nose.

His breathing intensifies --

Finally, Isaac opens his eyes --

He holds his breath.

The point of no return.

He's in too deep.

Should I...?

After a moment --

ISAAC SLOWLY MOVES HIS FINGERNAIL BETWEEN HIS TEETH --

HIS MOUTH CLAMPS DOWN ON THE NAIL --

CRRRKKKKK!

ISAAC BITES DOWN ON THE NAIL AND PULLS BACK --

IT STARTS TO SEPARATE FROM THE REST OF HIS FINGER --

BLOOD GUSHES OUT OF HIS MOUTH --

CRRRKKKKK!

THE NAIL STARTS TO GIVE WAY --

IT SLOWLY RIPS OFF HIS FINGER --

ISAAC'S FACE TIGHTENS --

CRRRKKKKK!

ISAAC PULLS HIS HEAD BACK --

THE NAIL BREAKS OFF THE FINGER --

Then --

Eerie silence. A moment of respite.

Isaac tries to catch his breath. He seems somehow calm, despite the throbbing pain in his hand.

Finally, we see --

ISAAC HAS THE TORN FINGER NAIL BETWEEN HIS TEETH --

BLOOD DRIPS DOWN THE CORNERS OF HIS MOUTH --

HE HOLDS IT THERE FOR A FEW SECONDS --

FINALLY --

CRUNCH!

ISAAC BITES DOWN ON THE BLOODY NAIL --

CRUNCH!

HIS EYES SHUT TIGHTER --

CRUNCH!

HIS TONGUE MOVES ALL THROUGHOUT HIS MOUTH --

GULP!

ISAAC SWALLOWS THE BLOODY FINGERNAIL.

He breathes a deep sigh of relief. The inside of his mouth is covered in blood.

He did it.

Isaac smiles.

After a moment, he looks down at his feet --

He raises an eyebrow.

His toenails --

Overgrown. Unkempt. Well overdue for a decent trimming.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - LATER

Isaac holds a long, steel, common household spike nail in his left hand.

In his right --

A heavy duty claw hammer. Its head is well worn from years of use.

Isaac twirls the nail between his fingers.

He slowly raises his left foot up to the bathroom sink --

He rests his heel on the front edge --

Slowly... carefully... Isaac places the spike nail in between his toe nail and the fat of his big toe.

He wedges the nail in deeper --

He holds it in places with his index finger and thumb --

Isaac takes a deep breath --

He gently taps the front of the hammer onto the head of the nail --

Lining up his shot --

With a burst of energy --

ISAAC LIFTS THE HAMMER HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD --

HE SWINGS IT DOWN WITH HORRIFYING SPEED TOWARDS THE NAIL WEDGED INTO HIS TOENAIL --

THE HAMMER SLAMS ONTO THE HEAD OF THE NAIL, SENDING IT DEEP INTO HIS BIG TOE --

CUT TO BLACK

THE END