

SPECIALIZED CELL REQUIRED

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FADE IN

INT. WHITE ROOM - DAY

ZACK THOMPSON, twenty, in white shorts, is strapped to a hospital bed. His eyes are closed and his body is covered in peeling skin. The room is empty except for a TV attached to the wall and one chair.

The door opens and DOCTOR WEST enters. He is a fat man in a white suit carrying a clipboard. He grabs the lone chair and situates it next to Zack's bedside.

DOCTOR WEST

Good morning. I'm Doctor West.

Zack's eyes flare open, startled. His eyes blink wildly. Doctor West settles himself onto the chair.

DOCTOR WEST

Good, your awake. Can you speak?

Zack struggles against his head restraint to turn his head toward the doctor, he sniffs the air and bites at the empty air between them.

DOCTOR WEST

Can you speak lieutenant?

Zack squirms uncomfortably before answering.

ZACK

Yes.

West nods.

DOCTOR WEST

Good. Do you remember who you are?

ZACK

Zack, Zack Thompson.

Doctor West smiles in approval.

DOCTOR WEST

Nice to meet you Zack. I'm Doctor West, president of these facilities and will be your principal care taker. Do you understand?

Zack swallows hard.

ZACK

Hungry.

Doctor West pats him on the arm reassuringly.

DOCTOR WEST

I know Zack. Hunger is a part of your condition. I'll be feeding you shortly, but first I need to ask you some questions.

He looks down at his clipboard and fidgets with one of the papers.

DOCTOR WEST

First, how is your memory?

ZACK

(beat)

Idaho. I remember Idaho.

Doctor West writes this down.

DOCTOR WEST

Your family?

EXT. THOMPSON HOUSE - DAY

A GIRL plays with a tonka truck on the grass. DAD walks up and picks her up. MOM smiles down at them from the porch of the house.

RETURN TO SCENE

INT. WHITE ROOM

Tears well up in Zack's eyes.

ZACK

Dad... mom... sister... but I can't remember their names. Why can't I remember?

DOCTOR WEST

Easy Zack. You're not the same man you were before the war. It is natural for you to have forgotten certain things. Do you remember the accident?

ZACK
(snivels)
Ac... accident?

DOCTOR WEST
While in Afghanistan you were in a serious accident. Both of your legs were blown off... your arm, gone, serious head and neck trauma. In fact, you were pronounced dead on two occasions.

Zack shakes his head and struggles against the restraints.

ZACK
I have legs. Arms. You're lying!

DOCTOR WEST
Easy there Zack. Relax. You have arms, legs, everything, now. You are the perfect specimen.

He pulls out the paper he was fidgeting with and shows it to Zack.

PICTURE

Zack in an emergency room with no legs or arms, shrapnel still protruding from his face.

DOCTOR WEST
It was an IED Zack. A very large one.

ZACK
How am I still alive?

West puts the picture away.

DOCTOR WEST
That is complicated Zack. But I'll try to explain. Your body is made up of billions of little cells: skin cells, muscle cells, nerve cells, etc. That die off and are replaced every seven years or so.

Zack goes through some type of attack.

ZACK
(croaks)
Hungry.

DOCTOR WEST

Stem cells are primal cells that divide quickly and can differentiate themselves into any specialized cell required. We've managed to increase the speed of the stem cell's reproduction via a rare mutation so that when insert them into a host it gives that organism the ability to regenerate tissue continuously.

ZACK

You injected me with stem cells?

Doctor smiles at him.

DOCTOR WEST

They said you were smart... We injected you with two gallons of mutated stem cells. It was amazing. Let me show you.

West pulls out a remote from inside his lab coat and turns on the TV.

DOCTOR WEST

We taped this yesterday.

TV SCREEN

Zack lies on his bed, a large MAN in a white suit stands over him with a pair of wire cutters. He places Zack's pinky finger between the blades.

The camera ZOOMS in on the hand. The man, with some difficulty, cuts Zack's finger completely off. Blood pools out of the wound like water.

In a matter of minutes the bone can be seen reforming, then the veins, muscles, and, finally, the skin.

West turns the TV off and searches Zack's face for a hint at what he is thinking.

DOCTOR WEST

Zack, you are the next evolution of humanity. You will never age, never catch disease, never suffer from an accident...

West pulls a long strip of skin off of Zack's leg and shows it to him.

DOCTOR WEST

Your body even now is recreating itself.

Zack's body spasms again.

ZACK

I'm so hungry.

He cries out in pain.

DOCTOR WEST

I know Zack. Your bodies metabolism is faster then any other creature on earth. It requires a certain type of food.

ZACK

(in pain)

I smell it. Feed me. I know you have it.

West's face pales.

DOCTOR WEST

You are smelling me Zack. Your body instinctively craves the only thing that will sustain it. When you first woke up after the injections we tried to feed you regular food. You rejected it.

Sweat drips off of West's brow.

DOCTOR WEST

On the third day you were so hungry you could no longer control your instinct.

Zack's eyes widen.

ZACK

What did I do?

DOCTOR WEST

You... ate your nurse.

(beat)

A guard found you devouring her corpse and emptied a clip into you.

ZACK

(whispers)

I'm a monster.

DOCTOR WEST

You are a miracle. What we learn from you will save millions of lives and may someday thwart death itself.

Zack spasms again.

DOCTOR WEST

I'll be feeding you now. Once I let you
free your instincts will take over.

West stands up and takes a deep breath. The door opens
and a PRISONER bound in chains is forced into the room.

West undoes one of Zack's arm bonds. Zack's hand darts
out inhumanly fast and grabs West by the wrist. West
struggles with both hands to break the grip.

DOCTOR WEST

Let go Zack.

Zack forces West's hand up to his mouth and manages to
bite off one of the doctor's fingers. West SCREAMS in
pain and his knees buckle sending him sprawling to the
floor. His hand free of Zack.

Cowardly, West crawls toward the open door as fast as he
can passing the bewildered Prisoner. The door shuts
behind him.

INT. HALL

West cradles his injured hand to his chest and two GUARDS
help him to his feet.

SCREAMS and THUDS are heard from the other side of the
door.

INT. OFFICE

West, with his hand bandaged, sits uneasily in a chair
opposite a large desk in a sparsely decorated office.
Behind the desk is the GENERAL, forty, in uniform.

GENERAL

West were never granted permission to
tell ZT51 the truth. You went against a
direct order.

DOCTOR WEST

I didn't think it would make a
difference. His body changes so fast he
would forget it within a week.

A PICTURE

Of Zack hanging from the light fixture is set on the desk in front of West.

DOCTOR WEST
(hesitantly)
There was no way to know he would attempt suicide...

GENERAL
Luckily ZK51 survived the incident.

DOCTOR WEST
Impossible.

GENERAL
His body created an alternative air passage.

DOCTOR WEST
Why wasn't I notified? He is my charge.

GENERAL
He is no longer your charge. He is the property of the government.

West looks down at his bandaged hand.

DOCTOR WEST
What is to become of me?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

A PRISONER stands defiantly in the center of an unfurnished room. On one wall is a window with a view of Zack's room. Zack is huddled in a corner peeling skin off himself.

The General enters flanked by GUARDS.

GENERAL
Are you ready to tell us what we want to know?

PRISONER
Water board me again. I tell you nothing. I am a martyr to my people.

General points toward the window.

GENERAL
After you witness this you might have a change of ideology.

PRISONER

What? I'm not afraid of a scabby white man.

They watch as the door of Zack's room is opened and Doctor West enters the room.

Zack turns his head and sniffs the air. He stands. He turns slowly toward the doctor.

The doctor mouths something to Zack.

Zack sniffs the air one last time. He bares his teeth, his lower jaw shivering in anticipation as he attempts to control himself.

Failing, Zack bolts across the room like a crazed animal.

FADE OUT