

Onion Witch

written by

Rob Herzog

4431 N. Menard Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60630
773-545-5469
robherzog@hotmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

PAUL MATTHEWS, 20s, whisks a disposable razor across his cheeks and jaw--a fast, reckless shave.

He bleeds from multiple nicks. Red-pink-white gobs of shaving cream seep down the sink basin toward the drain.

Paul's wife ASHLEY, 20s, paints her nails while seated on the closed lid of the toilet. She brushes slowly--high gloss red.

ASHLEY

I'm going to a seance tonight.

Paul swipes downward.

ASHLEY

The witchy lady who owns the antique shop has one every month--she chats with the dead.

PAUL

Sorry--What?--I'm late--

ASHLEY

Wanna go with me? Anyone can come.

Paul shakes his head, nicks himself, grunts, dribbles blood.

ASHLEY

Suit yourself, non-believer.

She blows on her red nails.

ASHLEY

Calling her a witch isn't cool, but that's her vibe. Just roll with it.

She grins. Perfect teeth. Perfect nails. Pure confidence.

ASHLEY

What if I become best friends with her? Seance buddies.

PAUL

Please don't do that.

ASHLEY

If you bleed to death from shaving, I'll have her track down your soul.

PAUL
Don't do that either.

ASHLEY
Jeez, Paul, you can't handle a
razor, but you sure can worry.

PAUL
'Cause I love you.

Ashley rises, caresses Paul's shoulder, and gives him a quick
kiss on the cheek. A bit of shaving cream sticks to her nose.

Paul smiles and splashes some water on his face.

SUPER: "Two Months Later."

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Paul shaves, but now his movements are slow/agonized/weighed
down. He stares at the mirror with exhausted eyes.

Ashley sits on the toilet lid and paints her nails--frantic,
erratic, imprecise.

Red nail polish sloshes onto her knuckles. Her hair points in
all directions.

ASHLEY
Gotta get it Paul. Gotta get--

PAUL
I will.

ASHLEY
Let me remind you...

PAUL
I know what I'm buying--

ASHLEY
Go to her shop--and buy that brass
piece--it's shaped like an onion--a
brass onion--from her--the witch.

Paul nods gravely.

ASHLEY
My soul's inside it.

He stares at her reflection in the mirror as she dribbles
nail polish all over her rumpled night shirt.

ASHLEY

You don't believe me. You don't think my soul's been taken...

Paul reaches out and touches her forehead tenderly.

PAUL

I'm with you, Ashley.

She recoils.

ASHLEY

Nah. No. Listen. She put my soul inside the onion--it's a vessel-- Don't you see?

PAUL

Yes.

ASHLEY

So--buy it from her. Bring it back here. But don't mention me. Don't say we're married. Just buy it. No chit chat. In and out. The onion.

Paul nods. He resumes his dour shaving. Slow. Painful.

ASHLEY

But it won't work. She'll kill you, Paul. You're too stupid for her...

Slash, slash--Ashley smears nail polish over her face. Red across cheeks. Red across nose. Red in the eyes.

Paul reaches--lunges--

Ashley paints her tongue and teeth with nail polish--wild, crazy, bloody red.

Paul wraps his arms around her but she thrashes aside.

ASHLEY

Too stupid. So stupid. Tricked me. Seances. Lured me in. I smelled the cobwebs inside her. The rot...

PAUL

Ashley, please.

ASHLEY

Too stupid. Too stupid.

She pushes away, grabs Paul's razor, holds it to her neck...

Paul gasps.

She drops the razor and hides her head in the sink basin. Her hair falls over face.

ASHLEY

You have to get it from her Paul.
Or else...Or else...Or else.

Paul steps back. Way back.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY

Cramped and cluttered. Narrow aisles.

Paul slips in--crouched, tentative, a nervous rabbit.

No employees. No anybody.

He moves past items: paintings, figurines, plates, wood carvings, porcelain goddesses--but no brass onions.

Paul scans high and low.

He hesitates before calling out--

PAUL

Hello? Anyone here?

Nothing.

Paul glances over the shelves. A jar of old tin soldiers sits. Most of the men have been melted or chewed.

A small label taped to the jar says "Brokens."

Paul taps the glass.

A door with peeling paint at the far end of the shop rattles. A sign on it says "Keep Out."

PAUL

(to the door)

Hey. Hello?

Heavy, metallic footsteps echo from the other end of the shop. Thud. Clomp. Thud.

Into the room stomps the ONION WITCH, 40s.

With the help of aluminum drywall stilts, she stands at an imposing eight feet tall. She towers over the shelves.

She wears a mold-removal respirator over her face, and her shoulders are covered by a shiny, black hairdresser's cape, blending with her mane of dark hair--teased up in '80s metal band style.

PAUL
(dizzied by her presence)
Whoa. Hey. Uh...

The Onion Witch looms over him and points with a three-inch long fingernail that's painted burnt pink.

ONION WITCH
Stay there.

She thuds to the "Keep Out" door, ducks inside, and slams it. Paul's eyes widen with disbelief.

PAUL
Son-of-a-bitch.

He listens as her footsteps trail off in the room behind the door. She mutters something angry and indecipherable.

A soft industrial hissing follows--a sprayer of some sort.

Something smashes. The Onion Witch shouts. Silence falls.

Paul watches the door. He paces. Several moments crawl by.

All of the figurines, porcelain goddesses, and subjects in the paintings now seem to be staring at Paul. Dozens of prying, menacing, devilish eyes. All closing in.

Paul looks away. He removes his wallet--thick with cash. He thumbs through a bunch of twenties.

He puts back the wallet/retrieves a medium-sized folding knife from his pocket. He pulls the blade out. He folds it back in.

One more time. The blade comes out. It goes back in.

Paul glances. All the eyes in the shop remain upon him--unbearable scrutiny. Slowly he pockets the knife.

He flinches when the Onion Witch's voice blasts from behind the "Keep Out" door...

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Whatcha want, handsome man?

PAUL
 (off guard)
 Hey, Okay. Yeah. I'm looking for a
 brass piece. It looks like an
 onion. Something for my personal
 collection. You might have one?

The "Keep Out" door opens just a crack. Three giant burnt-
 pink nails curl around the door's edge: menacing claws.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Stinks in here, don't it? Just
 sprayed. Killin' bugs. Don't wanna
 spread more fumes. Gonna talk to
 you through the door.

She taps a sharp fingernail against the door frame.

PAUL
 Do you have it? An onion? Brass?

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Sure. I got one, but it ain't ready
 yet. I been soaking it in metal
 cleaner. Come back next week.

PAUL
 I need it right now. I don't need
 it refurbished. I'll buy it as is.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 This's for your wife?

Paul hesitates.

PAUL
 For me. I've got cash.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Bet your wife would like it.

PAUL
 I'm in a hurry.

She scratches the door frame with her nails.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Did she send you?

PAUL
 No.

Her fingernails on wood: tap, tap, tap.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Well, if you want that onion right now, you'll have to fish it outta the bucket.

PAUL

The bucket?

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

In the corner, there's a bucket. The onion's inside.

Paul spots a tall, ten gallon bucket in the far corner.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Watch out now. It's full of solution--metal cleaner. Don't get none on your clothes. Stains like a bitch. And poisonous.

Paul hurries to the bucket. The solution inside it is thick, red, and putrid. Dark fleshy chunks float near the surface.

Paul recoils/gags/puts his hand over his nose and mouth.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Reach down and pull out that onion if you want it. It's on the bottom.

PAUL

This is metal cleaner? Really?

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Nasty, ain't it? That's why you're gettin' it an' not me.

She scratches the door frame with her nails.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Careful. Don't spill none on my floor.

Paul shakes his head in disbelief, rolls up his sleeve, holds his breath, and plunges his arm into the bucket, elbow deep.

He feels around in the sludge for several moments, repulsed.

Deeper he goes. His bicep submerges into the solution. His shoulder. His collar bone.

Desperation. Shock. Paul sloshes around.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)

Feel along the bottom. Down deep.

Paul struggles with himself--fights an awful impulse...

Gulping air, closing his eyes, Paul sticks his head into the reddish solution. Forehead. Eyes. Nose. Mouth. He clearly doesn't want to do this, but can't stop.

The displaced liquid sloshes out of the bucket onto the floor.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Careful now. It's poison.

Long moments pass. Air bubbles from Paul reach the murky surface and pop.

Submerged, Paul reaches the drowning point.

But he pulls out--head and arm covered in red solution. Fleshy chunks stick to him.

He coughs. Gulps for air. Groans with disgust.

But he's got it--in his hand is the onion piece--covered in red slime.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Sounds like you spilled. Did ya spill? Make a mess?

The red solution is everywhere--resembling the scene of an ax murder. Vile fluid drips onto Paul's shirt and pants.

The Onion Witch scratches the door frame with her long nails.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Aw, I knew it. C'mon back here and I'll clean you up. You and your onion.

Paul stands, coughs, slowly wipes the sludge from his face. He mutters, stumbles, spits, grasps the onion tightly.

He yanks out his wallet and tosses all the cash on the floor. It takes him a long time to form his words.

PAUL
Here's money. Everything in my wallet. More than enough. I'm gonna go. Got the onion. All square.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
You got poison on you, handsome. C'mon back here with me. I insist.

The "Keep Out" door moves. The hinges groan.

Paul stumbles back, but then takes two steps toward the door.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 You're wife ain't gonna like them
 stains on your shirt. She's gonna
 blame me.

PAUL
 Something's not right...

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Women like her see the worst in me.
 They say I ride a broomstick and
 howl at the moon.

PAUL
 Something's wrong...

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Yeah, handsome. She's got it wrong.

Her claws beckon Paul.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 But I can't blame her for thinkin'
 it. Dark days is here again, if you
 ain't noticed. So many strange
 thoughts are taking hold. Can't
 nobody help it. The earth's
 shifted. Fear's running wild.

Paul's only a few feet from the door now. He struggles to
 move away but he can't. He still holds the onion.

PAUL
 What is this? What're you doin' to
 us?

All the eyes on the figurines and paintings in the shop
 follow him.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
 Buyers beware. That's my motto.

She pushes the "Keep Out" door open a few more inches. Her
 shadow looms.

Paul reaches into his pocket and pulls out his knife. It
 almost slips out of his hand, but he's got it.

He pulls out the blade.

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Come on back here.

Paul takes a deep breath--fights to say something.

PAUL
I love her. I want to make things
right...

ONION WITCH (O.S.)
Sure you do. We'll clean up this
mess, handsome. Don't you worry.
You'll be on your way in no time.
We'll settle this once and for all.

Paul grasps the onion in one hand and the knife in the other.

The Onion Witch's clawed hand extends and pulls him through
the doorway. He disappears into some unseen section of the
back room.

There's a small thud. A groan.

Then the door slams hard.

The shop falls completely quiet. Just paintings and figurines
and a jar of old, broken soldiers.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul and Ashley dine together in the candlelit room--both
clean and nicely groomed.

They sit amid champagne and elegant plates of food. A
celebratory feast. They smile widely, blissfully.

At the center of the table is the brass onion--clean,
polished, free of sludge. The candlelight flickers along its
contours.

Ashley casts a long, contented look at the brass piece, and
places an appreciative hand upon Paul's arm.

He nods and grins. He came through for Ashley. So happy.

Then Ashley picks up a sharp-pronged serving fork from a
plate of meat.

Her face is joyous as she slowly sticks the fork into the
near side of Paul's neck.

Paul never stops smiling, even as he bleeds out of his
pierced jugular.

Ashley rejoices with ancient, ritualistic movements. After a moment of this, she pulls the fork out of Paul's neck and sticks it into her own. Her blood flows, but she smiles.

For the first time, it's clear that someone else is seated at the table--the Onion Witch. She, too, grins widely.

Her teeth are rotten, but she remains quite pleased.

Ashley slumps over, dead.

The Onion Witch stands up to congratulate the freshly sacrificed Ashley and Paul. The witch is as tall as the ceiling.

She hovers over them, breathing in deeply, growing in vitality at the carnage and freshly acquired souls.

A bit of blood squirts onto the brass onion and...the day reaches its conclusion.

FADE OUT:

THE END