

# **ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS**

## **“PURGE”**

Teleplay by Jeffrey Roun

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## **SCENE 1 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – NIGHT DREAM SEQUENCE**

*Edina is asleep in bed, an eye-patch covering most of her face. Her nose twitches. The twitching becomes pronounced as a black blob with arms and legs enters. The blob leaps onto the bed and removes her eye patch. Edina screams and bashes at the blob.*

## **SCENE 2 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – MORNING**

*Edina wakes screaming for real. She removes her eye-patch to discover she's bashing a small black teddy bear. Saffron rushes in wearing a nightgown, holding her chest and breathing heavily. She doesn't look well.*

**SAFFRON:** Mum, what is it? What's wrong?

**EDINA:** This – this thing, attacked me!

*Saffron pulls the bear from Edina's grasp and gives it an ironic look.*

**SAFFRON:** Really, Mum, you've got to stop watching horror films at night. *(coughs)* I've got to go rest. The doctor said I have to stay in bed for two more days.

**EDINA:** You're not *still* sick, are you darling? *(Saffron nods and turns to go. Edina's nose twitches.)* What's that smell?

**SAFFRON** *(sniffs)* I can't smell a thing.

**EDINA:** Cat urine. I smell cat urine!

*For a moment, Saffron thinks it might be herself.*

**SAFFRON:** I really don't smell anything. And we don't have a cat, so it's not likely ...

**EDINA** *(interrupting)* In the dream a giant black blob jumped on my chest and attacked me. Darling, do you know what this means?

**SAFFRON** No.

**EDINA** It means I've got a brain tumour. That's what happens. Black blobs attack you in your dreams. And you smell cat urine!

**SAFFRON** It's burned toast.

**EDINA** I've got a brain tumour, darling and you're worried about breakfast?

**SAFFRON** No, I mean the warning sign is you smell burned toast ...

**EDINA** (*sniffing furiously*) I do smell burned toast!

**SAFFRON** But it's only for epileptics. They smell burned toast right before an attack. What were you watching on telly last night before bed?

**EDINA** (*evasive*) Martha Stewart trials, darling. She's not guilty. She's not. She can't be.

**SAFFRON** I thought I heard screaming.

**EDINA** You did hear screaming, darling. It was Martha. She was screaming: 'They'll never take me alive!'

**SAFFRON** And what came on after that?

**EDINA** Just one of those ... Japanese genre films.

**SAFFRON** What genre, Mum?

**EDINA** Creatures from Mars genre.

**SAFFRON** And what sort of creatures did it have?

**EDINA** Black blobby sort of creatures, darling (*remembering*) that ate peoples brains!

**SAFFRON** Oh, Mum – stop it!

**EDINA** Dreams are warnings, darling. They tell you about impending disasters.

**SAFFRON** If you think you have a tumour, then see a doctor.

**EDINA** I don't like doctors. They prod and poke at you.

*Mother enters to overhear this.*

**MOTHER** Your father used to do that to me. I made him stop.

**EDINA** Well, that explains why I'm an only child.

**MOTHER** Oh no! After you, I never wanted more. (*beat*) I've come to tell you something got stuck in the toaster and burned to a crisp.

**EDINA** For heavens' sakes, if you can't afford to eat out, then go to a food bank. (*indicates Saffron*) I've got *her* on my doorstep because she has the sniffles ...

**SAFFRON** Pneumonia.

**EDINA** ... and bloody welfare refugees camped outside my pantry. This isn't a free zone ... get a job! Lend yourself out for medical experiments, if you have to. It's payback time for all that free Medicare when you had your tubes ripped out to deprive me of my brothers and sisters.

*Saffron and Mother exchange sympathetic looks.*

**MOTHER** It's true, I did. But not soon enough. *(To Saffron)* Shouldn't you be in bed, dear?

**SAFFRON** I just got up for a glass of water. I'll come down in a minute and help, Gran, before I go back.

*Mother exits.*

**EDINA** You'd help her with her old toast, but you won't help me with my brain tumour.

**SAFFRON** Mum, if you're really that worried, go to the doctor and have a cat scan.

**EDINA** Can't you go for me?

**SAFFRON** What good would it do for me to tell the doctor you need *your* head examined? *(beat)* I've got to go back to bed.

*Saffron gets up to leave.*

**EDINA** I could die, darling, and no one would care. I'll be sitting at my desk one day and keel right over. Then what'll you say? Um? 'My poor mother worked herself to death'?

**SAFFRON** That would fall under the category of criminal exaggeration.

**EDINA** I know what my gravestone will say, darling. It'll say, "See? I told you I was sick."

*The door opens and Pasty enters, her tie stuck in the toaster, which dangles from around her neck. She bats at the clouds of smoke following her in.*

**SAFFRON** Speaking of epileptic convulsions...

**PATSY** Oh, Eddie. The Azuni Collection! Everything's made from big bones, old teeth, mother-of-pearl hoop-like things. And the after-party was unbelievable. *(wavering as she speaks)* They had gamma ray lights that followed you round and round the room and in the middle of it we all sat and had Electro Shock Therapy. It was fabulous!

**EDINA** Pats, I have some terrible news.

**PATSY** (*glaring at Saffron*) You're not letting *her* move back in, are you?

**EDINA** No, it's just till she stops coughing. (beat) I can't go with you to Tangiers tomorrow.

**PATSY** (*throws herself against the door in horror*) How will I eat?

**EDINA** Pats ... I ... have a brain tumour.

**PATSY** My god! (*Edina nods sadly*) Eddie, that's fabulous! Liz Taylor had one and she made the covers of all the scandal rags in America for the first time in twenty years! (*Edina looks more pleased than shocked*) We'll dye your hair white ... you'll need fashion accessories!

**EDINA** I could commission Stella McCartney to make a little pin – I-Heart-My-Tumour.

**SAFFRON** Stop it! You two are deranged.

**EDINA** Oh, right! No one's allowed to be sick around here but you. (*she fakes coughing and points to a stick on the dresser*) Pass me my magic medicine stick, darling.

*Saffron goes to the dresser and passes Edina a stick ornamented with dried chicken bones and feathers. It's revolting.*

**SAFFRON** It looks like a toilet bowl brush.

**EDINA** It's from my dream clairvoyant. The dream catcher wasn't working.

*Edina looks to her wall where a giant dream catcher is surrounded by dozens of smaller ones.*

**SAFFRON** One probably would have done the trick.

*Edina is shaking the stick in the air around herself.*

### **SCENE 3 INTERIOR DREAM CLAIRVOYANT'S WORKSHOP – DAY – FLASHBACK**

*Edina lies on a mat looking up at the Dream Clairvoyant's enlarged face.*

**DREAM CLAIRVOYANT** There are many things we must purge from your life.

**EDINA** What sort of things?

**DREAM CLAIRVOYANT** Negative people, keepsakes from those who wish you harm ... old boyfriends, excess weight ...

*Edina imagines a series of people passing in front of her and leering: Bubble, Mother, Saffron, Marshall, Justin ...followed by herself, thin and smiling.*

**EDINA** How do I do that?

**DREAM CLAIRVOYANT** Cross your eyes and look up to your fourth eye while I wave the magic medicine stick over you.

**EDINA** Can't I just throw things out the window?

**DREAM CLAIRVOYANT** You won't get rid of the negative energy that way. You have to purge them. Now concentrate on seeing those people in your fourth eye ...

*Edina doesn't know where that is, but crosses her eyes and concentrates anyway. The Dream Clairvoyant shakes the stick over her.*

**DREAM CLAIRVOYANT** Purge, purge.

#### **SCENE 4 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – MORNING (con't)**

*Saffron listens dubiously as Edina recalls her session.*

**SAFFRON** And this is supposed to help you get rid of things?

**EDINA** Yes, darling. If you concentrate, all negativity is banished.

**SAFFRON** (*noting Patsy*) Then why is *she* still here?

*Saffron and Patsy glare at one another.*

**EDINA** Maybe I can purge my tumour ...

*Edina concentrates, crossing her eyes and waving the stick over her head. The phone rings.*

**EDINA** I hear bells!

*Saffron picks up the phone receiver and places it in Edina's hand.*

**EDINA** Yes? Hello?

**SCENE 5 INTERIOR EDINA'S PR OFFICE – SAME**

*Bubble sits holding the telephone at arms' length. She's petting a cat on her lap.*

**EDINA (V/O)** Yes? Hello? Who is it?

**BUBBLE** *(talking to the phone at arm's length)* It's the office, Madame.

**EDINA (V/O)** Bubble? Why do you sound as though you're far away, darling?

**BUBBLE** When Madame yelled at me the other day, she told me to keep my distance. I'm keeping my distance, Madame.

**EDINA (V/O)** I didn't mean on the phone, Bubble.

**BUBBLE** *(to the cat)* Oh ho! Now she tells us.

**SCENE 6 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – MORNING (con't)**

*Edina tries to get the phone closer to her ear till it's almost jammed inside.*

**EDINA** Bubble? Hold the receiver closer so I can hear you.

**SCENE 7 INTERIOR EDINA'S PR OFFICE – SAME (con't)**

*Bubble is still holding the telephone at arm's length.*

**BUBBLE** Madame missed her morning appointment. Naughty, naughty.

**EDINA (V/O)** My morning appointment? What are you talking about? Who made an appointment for me?

**BUBBLE** Your loyal servant did, Madame.

**EDINA (V/O)** Who would that be?

**BUBBLE** That would be I, Madame.

**SCENE 8 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – MORNING (con't)**

*Edina is still fighting the phone. She hits it with the medicine stick.*

**EDINA** Bubble – stop calling me 'Madame' and just listen to me, darling.

**BUBBLE (V/O)** Yes, Madame.

**EDINA** Now, whose appointment did I miss?

**BUBBLE (V/O)** American lady. Very old. Face-lift. Maybe more.

**EDINA (to herself)** American lady ... face-lift ... *(beat)* Bubble, I've got a brain tumour and it's affecting my memory. You've got to think. Now, who was it?

*Patsy is filing her nails, bored. Saffron just shakes her head at the two of them.*

**BUBBLE (V/O)** Can't remember, Madame.

**EDINA (to Patsy and Saffron)** I can believe that – her brain is one big tumour from end to end.

**BUBBLE (V/O)** She's a friend of that funny man, Madame.

**EDINA** What funny man?

**BUBBLE** The one who thinks he's Peter Pan and married Elvis Parsley's daughter.

**EDINA** Peter Pan? Elvis Parsely? ... You mean Michael Jackson?

**BUBBLE** That's correct, Madame.

**EDINA** What's Michael Jackson doing in my office?

**BUBBLE** Not him. He left already. It was his friend, the American lady with the face-lift.

*It dawns on Edina what she's talking about.*

**EDINA** Elizabeth Taylor?

## **SCENE 9 INTERIOR EDINA'S PR OFFICE – SAME (con't)**

*The cat has climbed onto Bubble's shoulders.*

**BUBBLE** It might be so, Madame.

**EDINA (V/O)** How did I have an appointment with Elizabeth Taylor and not know about it?

**BUBBLE** It was made by your loyal servant, Madame. She said she'd be back – and you'd better be here.

**SCENE 10 INTERIOR EDINA'S BEDROOM – MORNING (con't)**

*Edina is about to have a conniption. Patsy is excited.*

**EDINA** Listen, Bubble. I'm coming in. If she gets there first, just detain her.

**BUBBLE (V/O)** Yes, Madame.

*Edina looks at the receiver and hits it with the stick again.*

**PATSY** Oh, my god, Eddie! Liz Taylor! The Queen of Hollywood!

**EDINA (to Saffron)** Don't just stand there! Liz Taylor's coming to my office! *(motioning frantically)* Clothes, darling! I need clothes! Mamma needs to get dressed!

*Saffron stands looking on in disgust at her mother's helplessness.*

**EDINA** Be sick later!

*Edina points to her head, indicating her tumour, and makes a sad face. Saffron rolls her eyes and relents, opening the closet to help her mother get dressed.*

**SCENE 11 INTERIOR EDINA'S PR OFFICE – LATER THAT MORNING**

*Edina can be heard coming frantically down the hall. Bubble hides the cat in a filing cabinet.*

**BUBBLE (to the cat, closing the drawer)** Stay there till the toast is clear.

**EDINA (entering)** Where is she?

**BUBBLE** Who would that be, Madame?

**EDINA** Liz Bloody Taylor, that's who! 'Face-lift'? 'Very old'?

**BUBBLE** Oh, the American lady. She's stuck in your office, Madame.

**EDINA** Stuck? In my office?

**BUBBLE** Madame said to detain her if she returned. She returned, so I lured her into the office and locked the door. *(swinging a key on a chain)* Now she's stuck.

*In a panic, Edina grabs the key and unlocks the door. Elizabeth Taylor is standing inside, furious.*

**ELIZABETH TAYLOR** ‘Face-lift’? ‘Very old’?

**EDINA** (*pointing to Bubble*) It was her ... that.

**ELIZABETH** I’ve never had a face-lift in my life.

**BUBBLE** (*to Elizabeth*) I told her so.

**ELIZABETH** But you could use one. A tummy-tuck, too, by the looks of it. (*beat*) I trust you’re familiar with kidnapping laws?

**EDINA** I (*collapsing pitifully against the wall*) ... am a very sick woman.

**ELIZABETH** You look healthy as a cow.

**BUBBLE** And she eats like a horse.

**EDINA** I have a brain tumour!

**ELIZABETH** Tsk-tsk. Been there, recovered from that. (*beat*) Well, what have you got to say to me?

*Edina clasps her hands and squeaks out a non-verbal apology.*

**ELIZABETH** Not that. Where is the diary?

**EDINA** The diary! The diary?

**BUBBLE** (*to Elizabeth*) It’s in a very safe place, Madame’s Madame.

*Edina does a double take on hearing the phrase, then turns back to Elizabeth.*

**EDINA** It’s in a very safe place.

*Edina is trying frantically to get Bubble to tell her whose diary they’re talking about, but Bubble ignores her.*

**ELIZABETH** When can I see it?

*Edina looks at Bubble who consults a collection of watches on her wrist. She seems to be stuck on a stutter.*

**BUBBLE** You can s-s-see it, s-s-s-s....

**EDINA** Soon!

**ELIZABETH** When is “soon”?

*Bubble thinks again as Edina waits impatiently.*

**BUBBLE** We ... *(She seems to be looking for the answer in the air around her)*

*Edina can wait no longer.*

**EDINA** ... just have to ...

**BUBBLE** ... go-o-o-o ...

**EDINA** ... and get it!

**ELIZABETH** When?

*Bubble is stuck again and can't get the words out as she taps her watch six times.*

**EDINA** She'll bring it by six o'clock!

**BUBBLE** To Madame's house!

**ELIZABETH** Bring the diary and I'll drop the kidnapping charges.

*Edina salaams Elizabeth out the door. Edina brings out the medicine stick and chases Bubble with it around the room.*

**EDINA** Purge! Purge! What diary is she talking about?

*Bubble throws herself up against the filing cabinet where she put the cat.*

**BUBBLE** It's not in here, Madame!

*Edina's nose twitches furiously. She opens the drawers and sees the cat.*

**EDINA** What is that?

**BUBBLE** It's a ...

**EDINA** Don't say 'cat.' I know what it is. *Why* is it a cat?

**BUBBLE** It was a present from Madame's Madame, Madame.

**EDINA** A present? For me, darling? I mean, did she really bring it for me?

**BUBBLE** Actually, she said it was for me.

*Edina glares and closes the drawer.*

**EDINA** What diary was she talking about?

**BUBBLE** The diary of that other American lady, Madame.

**EDINA** Don't give me that 'American lady Madame' crap. Whose diary?

**BUBBLE** The rich one with the jo-o-o-wels. First she married the dead president and then she married the Greek baboon.

*Edina stops dead.*

**EDINA** 'Dead president'? 'Greek Baboon'? We have Jackie Bloody Onassis's diary? Where did we get it?

**BUBBLE** We acquired it at Sotheby's, Madame.

*Edina digests that for a moment, then thinks again.*

**EDINA** And how much did we pay for it?

**BUBBLE** Four hundred thousand pounds, Madame.

*Edina collapses back against the wall.*

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**To read the rest of this script please contact Jeffrey Round for a full version.**