

PRETTY MAIDS ALL IN A ROW

by MOLLY WU

GENRE: Dramatic monologue

SYNOPSIS: A mother reflects on the painful discovery of her daughter's eating disorder.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: Obviously, the description of the daughter's resemblance to Ashley can be changed depending on the casting choice of the actress.

TIME: 3 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1F

TOPIC: Parenting, Christian Living

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Psalm 139:13-16

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Sermon starter

CHARACTERS: ASHLEY

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Contemporary

SOUND: Wireless mics if desired

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: A home

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ISSN 1084-5917

Drama Ministry is a division of
Belden Worship Resources
www.beldenworshipresources.com

Publisher: **Regi Stone**

Executive Editor: **Kimberlee Crisafulli** / Assistant Editor: **Scott Crain**

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Lights up on ASHLEY.

ASHLEY: When people heard I was expecting, and would ask if I wanted a boy or a girl, I'd always just smile and say, "I don't care, as long as it's healthy."

But that wasn't true. I did care.

I wanted a little girl.

And some nights, when Jason went to bed, I'd stay up flipping through baby magazines and pictures of those perfect, pretty little girls with pink ribbons in their hair and ask God to give us one.

Smiles.

And He did.

Kennedy was born six pounds, seven ounces—a little underweight, but healthy. Ten perfect fingers, ten perfect toes. Big blue eyes and blonde hair, just like her mother. And the night she was born, as I was holding her in the hospital room and we were both drifting off to sleep, I promised myself that I'd get it right as a mother. That I'd raise her up to be just as perfect as she could be, that I'd keep her safe and healthy and as beautiful as the little angels in the magazines.

Beat.

That was sixteen years ago. And even though nobody gets it "perfect" as a parent, if you would've asked me a little while ago, I would've said I did pretty well. Jason and I raised her in the church, to love the Lord. We taught her right from wrong and kept her safe from the bad stuff, or so we thought.

She pauses, lowering her eyes.

But a couple of weeks ago, while Kennedy was at school, I slipped into her room and was going through her nightstand, trying to find a book of mine that I thought she might have borrowed.

And under a stack of magazines...I found all these little boxes.

Full of diet pills and laxatives.

Pause.

We had a very long talk when she got home, and now Jason and I are looking for treatment options, because it turns out that our little girl has been struggling with an eating disorder.

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Her eyes shine with tears.

And some nights, when Jason goes to bed, I stay up just glaring at the magazines that I found in Kennedy's nightstand. The same ones I used to adore. Those images that I filled my little girl's head with for sixteen years.

Pictures of the perfect little angels that we expected her to be.

..... *Lights down.*

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