

AIRBRUSHED

by MOLLY WU

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: A mother wrestles with how to address her daughter's poor self-image in a world that looks too good to be true.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: Encourage your actress to make the most of the silences and beats between lines, until the tone of the delivery feels appropriate.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1

TOPIC: Youth, Self Image/Self Esteem

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Psalm 139:13-18

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Sermon Introduction, Seeker Service

CHARACTERS:

SHELLY

PROPS: A box of laxatives, a few magazines for teenage girls

COSTUMES: Contemporary

SOUND: One wireless microphone

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Unspecified

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AIRBRUSHED *by Molly Wu*

Lights up on SHELLY, who frowns down at the box in her hand, her expression troubled and deep.

SHELLY: I found a box of laxatives in my daughter's nightstand. I was looking for my fingernail clippers and raised up a stack of Seventeen magazines, and there it was. Staring back at me, like an animal ready to pounce.

She closes her eyes and sighs.

Katie's fifteen years old. Fifteen years old and beautiful. And the thought of her swallowing this stuff so she can purge her body... it makes me want to be sick.

Beat; when she speaks again, her voice is edged with frustration and anger.

I don't know why I'm so surprised, though. Look at these covers—(Flipping through the stack in her hand) Britney Spears, Jessica Alba, Jessica Simpson. The paparazzi goes nuts if they gain six pounds and lose even a hint of their perfect 'Barbie doll' figures. How is Katie supposed to live up to that? How is anyone supposed to live up to that? When the world shows us nothing but anorexic models, and even adjusts those pictures in Photoshop before they hit the stands? Taking off pounds and inches with the click of a mouse?

Beat. She looks back at the box.

She'll be home from school soon. Any minute now, I'll hear the front door close, and she'll come into the kitchen and toss her backpack on the table and then we'll have to talk about this. (Raising the box of laxatives) But what exactly does a mother say? What can I say that's going to drown out all of this? (Holding up the other hand, weighed with magazines) That's going to speak louder than the images that scream at her every time she passes a billboard, or turns on the television?

She looks to the audience, eyes haunted and a bit hopeless.

How do I convince Katie that she's beautiful just the way she is?

How do I tell my little girl that imperfections are okay in a world that's been...air-brushed?

..... Lights down.

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