

PLUS AND MINUS

by MOLLY WU

GENRE: Dramatic Monologue

SYNOPSIS: A young wife wrestles with the challenges of infertility.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: Encourage the actress playing Shea to keep it real; it's an emotional and sensitive subject, and there's no need to go "overboard."

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1

TOPIC: Parenting, Family

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Genesis 30:1-24, 1 Samuel 1:1-28

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Seeker Service, Sermon Starter

CHARACTERS: SHEA

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Contemporary

SOUND: One wireless microphone

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Unspecified

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Lights up on SHEA.

SHEA: “You’re just a little below normal.” That’s what the doctor said. “Just a little below normal. And so is Ted. If either of you were a few points higher then it wouldn’t be a problem, but since you’re both a little below normal...it’s going to be very difficult to conceive on your own.”

And I sat there in my paper gown, with the back of my legs crinkling the paper they stretch over those cold examination tables, and I just stared at her.

Beat. She sighs.

When Ted and I first got married, our friends used to ask us all the time when we were going to have kids. Ted’s mother used to ask me every time we visited—when are you going to give me some grandbabies? (*beat*) Nobody really asks us that anymore. They avoid the topic like it’s something to be ashamed of, and I know it’s not, but I can’t help but feel like there’s something wrong with me.

“A little below normal,” the doctor said. Like I’m below average. Or abnormal. Not quite right.

And pregnancy tests. Did you ever notice how some of them give a plus or minus sign? Plus if you’re pregnant, minus if you’re not? What is that implying?

Like if you’re not pregnant, you’ve just hit a negative? Like you’re missing something? Or some invisible amount has just been debited from your account?

Ted’s asked if we could look into in vitro. “We’re thirty-two years old, Shea—this could be our last chance,” he says. But I’ve got questions about that. Lots of questions.

On the one hand, I was always raised to believe that God’s the only one who can give you children, and I wonder how He feels about us using science to make babies happen, even creating them outside of the womb.

But then, on the other hand, I think about holding a little baby that’s ours and rocking it to sleep every night.

And then I have to start wondering about when life begins, because if it really does begin at conception, what about all of the fertilized eggs waiting in freezers...?

But then I think about packing a little sack lunch and sending a tiny boy or girl off to school.

(*sighs*) I don’t know. Is there a right and wrong here? Does the Bible say anything about this? Seems like there are lots of pluses and minuses...

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...what am I supposed to do?

..... Lights down.

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