

Script: Life in Plastic

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Research Week

Performing Art Presentation

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Script: Life in Plastic

I've lived 30 pretty bird years
Of this great big pretty bird life
And I think I pretty bird pretty much know what I'm talking about
Look at my long clean coat
At my pretty pretty bird pretty pink legs
When pigeon men track me cross sky highway

They are happy to trace hungry orange eyes
between my pretty pretty bird bird feathers
To busy fantasizing pretty bird
to poke fun at permanently preening pretty bird

Life in plastic so fantastic

We live in a world where the media
pulls us out, nurses us and teaches us our first words
skinny pretty skinny pretty
girl: soft quiet pretty
boy: manly muscles pretty

Well somewhere along the line of aging and scrutiny and time
I was taught to despise myself
but i kept myself beautiful so someone would love me someday
so i could belong to someone someday
because that's the most important thing a little girl could ever want right?

I have only lived 7 pretty bird years

I want to be A blonde barbie-woman with a miniskirt name like sarahhhh or Jenniferrr

Instead, I was named a name that sounds like mouse brown hair -Barabara
I want child-sized heels, lipstick, and to be mistaken for a nine year old

I want nothing more than to be beautiful,
I think barbie is the most beautiful human I have ever seen
Oh, barbie tell me
Is your life in plastic so fantastic?

Pigeon man wants pretty bird to be pretty bird
Until pretty bird fulfills ideas of prettiness
Then she's too paralyzed and preened
Look at my long clean coat
At my pretty pretty bird pretty pink legs

Barbie, I think you are the most beautiful human I have ever seen
I have only lived 13 pretty bird years
I spend half an hour before volleyball, every day, curling my hair
Once, I dropped my curling iron on my leg.
My thigh read Revlon for a week.
At least my hair was curly for volleyball practice
Oh Barbie tell me is it true that pain is beauty?

I grew up on a diet of breadcrumbs catalog clippings and sidewalk cracks
Pretty sure i know what im talking about
Pretty sure
pretty sure
Maybe not
Sorry sorry sorry sorry

Barbie, can i ask a question

Sorry look at my sorry look at

Look at my long clean coat

At my pretty pretty barbie pretty pink legs

I have only lived 16 pretty bird years

It's such a waste I grew into my mother's face crooked nose and pox-marked where the hormones went finger-painting.,

“Don't worry. We'll get it all fixed!” She would say, grasping my face,
Twisting it this way and that, as if it were a cabbage she might buy.

I'm pickled with ointments, medications, peroxides

Hair bleached, neck aching from the uncomfortable hair rollers I slept in last night looking like
George Washington

I do pray to something that I Could look beautiful enough today
for the ruthless boy who told me I wasn't worth loving because I didn't meet his attraction
standard

and I would go home and put on a sweatshirt with my eyes closed

denying myself the right to be shown myself

because I didn't dare insinuate beauty in regards to something so insulting as my body

Oh, Barbie tell me, how do you afford your surgery?

Do you promise he'll stay forever if your face stays together?

Look at my long clean coat

At my pretty pretty bird pretty pink legs

Take a picture I beg you

Take a picture pretty bird pretty bird

My left side is my best side

I have a best side

I have a better half

I am, I am a half

When I had only lived 18 pretty bird years

I laid in a hospital bed, face packed with gauze, cushioning the brand new nose the surgeon had carved.

Belly gorged on 2 pints of my blood I had swallowed under anesthesia,

And every convulsive twist of my gut like my body screaming at me from the inside out,

“What did you let them do to you!”

All the while this never-ending chorus droning on and on, like the IV needle dripping liquid beauty into my blood.

“Will I be pretty? Will I be pretty? Will I be Pretty

Pretty enough for my friends to like me, pretty enough to get hired for that job, pretty enough for my boyfriend to stay, enough so that his eyes don't wander in another direction.

echoic accusations of not good enough never good enough

All I've ever wanted to be is enough

Life in plastic so fantastic

Oh Barbie tell me, have you ever felt so numb that it hurts?

Baby bird used to sing

And baby bird could compose whole symphonies

But the reviews came in

And they preferred apology

So she shrank

learned to make herself small enough

to nearly fit back in her eggshell

but they caged her up

for her pretty pretty bird long clean coat

and they said sing pretty barbie sing

but I forgot how
so I said
pretty pretty bird bird look at my long clean coat

at my pretty pretty bird pretty pink legs
but they were bored of me

They condemn mediocrity
But how does one achieve complexity when all she was ever taught to be was basic

I've realized...

Life's fantastic, because I'm **not** plastic.

I've sat here listening to complaints about society but I don't think we realize that society is made by us.

We complain about masks, but we're masked by our poetry and trust me, it's trendy:

But words are just air.

I can stand on this stage and tell you you're beautiful, but this isn't a call for help.

This is a call to arm yourself.

This is a battle cry because I am sick of waiting for a future that should've happened yesterday.

Now, I have not seen my own face in 10 years.

I have not seen my own face in 10 years, but this is not about me.

This, this is about my own some-day daughter.

When you approach me, already stung-stayed with insecurity, begging,

“Mom, will I be pretty? Will I be pretty?”

I will wipe that question from your mouth like cheap lipstick and answer,

“No! The word pretty is unworthy of everything you will be, and no child of mine will be contained in five letters.”

“You will be pretty intelligent, pretty creative, pretty amazing.

But you, will never be merely 'pretty'.”

Performance Preview

<https://youtu.be/8wPvzY6m2ts>



References

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