

## Beaten Angel

**Theme** – abusive relationships / domestic violence

**Characters:**

Sarah/ Daughter: 32 years old. Married for 4 years to Jack. She is strong willed but has low self esteem. She has had trouble with her father in the past, which has affected her relationships with males.

**Mum:** Sarah's mum is 41 years old. She is also strong willed and has strong ideas about what's right and wrong. If she believes in something she will stand up for it. She is a very sweet, kind lady but is not afraid to speak her mind.

**Set** – basic kitchen. Small round table, in the middle of the room, with a table cloth and flowers in a vase. A kitchen sink with a cupboard below and above. 'Front door' is on the far side of the sink (DSR). Door to rest of house is opposite. Window on the back wall in the centre and a painting hangs on the stage left wall.

**Lighting:** Natural looking lighting.

**Intention:** To look at the tension between the mother and daughter as the result of the abuse Sarah is experiencing. Sarah is trying to hide her suffering, but her mother knows what is going on and wants to help her girl. I want to look at the idea that your family is always there for you and that domestic abuse, no matter what the excuse, is not ok. I am trying to use the silences and pauses that we learnt about in Absurdism to draw out the unspoken tension and messages between the two women. I am also using a repeated mantra to show how people can talk themselves into putting up with stuff they shouldn't have to. (1)

*Daughter sitting at the kitchen table with a distant look on her face, arms folded. Knock at the door (stage right) Daughter doesn't move. Louder knocks on the door. Daughter still doesn't move.*

Mum (front of stage) Sarah, are you there?

*Daughter gets up and opens door*

Mum: I was beginning to think you had forgotten about our morning tea.

Daughter: Sorry Mum, I was a bit distracted.

Mum: That's ok, may I come in?

Daughter: Of course.

*They walk to the kitchen table. Mother sits down on the far side of the table.*

Daughter: would you like a cup of tea.

Mum: Yes please

*Daughter brings two cups of tea to the table*

Mum: Thank you

*Mum takes a sip of tea and places the cup back on the table.*

*Pause*

Mum: Your father used to love painting

Daughter: I know.

Mum: He would love these

*Pause*

Mum: Could I possibly take one home with me to show him?

Daughter: Sure

*Long pause. Daughter stares at her tea cup*

Mum: are you sure you are alright?

Daughter (*snappy*) I said I'm fine.

Mum (also *snappy but slightly less*): You don't seem fine to me.

Daughter: Well I am.

Mum: And what about Jack?

Daughter: What about him?

Mum: How is he?

Daughter: He's... (*Pause*)...good.

Mum: That's good.

*Pause. Daughter, slightly annoyed, starts to fiddle with the heart locket around her neck.*

Mum: I see you still wear that necklace of yours

Daughter: Of course I do, Jack gave this to me when we first met.

Mum: Ah Yes, I remember that.

*Pause*

Mum: So where is he?

Daughter (*toneless, looking down*): I don't know.

Mum: Is he still at the pub?

Daughter: (*Pause*) He's given up drinking.

Mum: You keep telling yourself that...

Daughter (*annoyed*): What's that supposed to mean.

Mum: Nothing (2, 3)

Daughter (*standing up, walks behind the table to stage left*): What do you have against my husband?

Mum (also *standing*): Nothing, I just want to know is he treating you right. You were so young when you got married, I'm just worried that...

Daughter (*cuts her off, stands facing away from mum*): Worried that what? We're not right for each other? That I'm not happy with him?

Mum: Are you?

Daughter (*Turns to face her*): What?

Mum: Are you happy with him?

Daughter: Of course I am! I love Jack, and he loves me!

Mum: If you say so...

Daughter: What do you mean 'if I say so'?

Mum: Nothing Sweetie.

Daughter: Don't call me sweetie. You hate him, don't you?!

Mum: I don't hate him.  
Daughter: Yes you do!  
Mum: I hate the way he treats you!  
Daughter: The way he treats me? You mean, feed me? Clothe me? Give me a loving home?  
Mum: But it's not, is it?  
Daughter: What?  
Mum: You know what I mean.  
Daughter: No I don't, and neither do you. (4)  
*Pause. They both sit down, not making eye contact. Daughter fiddles with necklace. It breaks.* (6)  
Daughter: Damn, now I need to get this fixed.  
*Pause. Daughter takes it off and places it on the table.*  
Mum (*calmly*): So how do you explain those bruises?  
Daughter (*denying*): What bruises?  
Mum: The ones you hide under all that makeup  
Daughter: I don't know what you mean.  
Mum (*raising voice slightly*): Don't play stupid. You think I wouldn't notice? I'm your mother, you can't hide forever.  
Daughter (*stands*): I 'm not hiding anything!  
*Mum stands up. Walks over to daughter and tries to comfort her.*  
Mum (*sweet, kind tone*): look sweetie.  
*Daughter cuts mum off and pushes her away*  
Daughter (*annoyed*): I told you not to call me sweetie. Mum (*keeping her cool*): Look, I know what's going on.  
Daughter: And what's that?  
Mum: He beats you, doesn't he?  
*Daughter looks away and doesn't answer.*  
Mum: Doesn't he?  
Daughter: No...  
Mum: Sarah, I'm on your side here.  
Daughter; so what if he does.  
Mum: So you admit it.  
Daughter (*snappy*): No! I'm just saying ... what if he does. I'm sure he has his reasons...But jack doesn't hurt me, he loves me. I'm his angel.  
Mum: What kind of man would hit the woman he loves?  
Daughter: Jack doesn't beat me!  
Mum (*stern voice*): Don't lie to me Sarah!  
*Daughter walks over to kitchen sink, facing away from mum.*  
Daughter: I'm not!

Mum: Tell me the truth! Daughter: I am!  
Mum: He hurts you, doesn't he?  
Daughter: No!  
Mum: Doesn't he?  
Daughter: No mum!  
Mum: Sarah! Tell me the truth. He beats you, don't deny it!  
Daughter:  
No!  
Mum: Sarah, please!  
Daughter (*turns to face mum*): Alright! Fine! You're right! About everything! Now leave me alone! Daughter sits down at table. *Pause.*  
Mum: Sarah, why do you stay if you're not happy?  
Daughter: I love him, and he loves me. He's given me everything I need. I have food on the table, clothes on my back, a roof over my head! He's done so much for me, I need him.  
Mum: No you don't! There is no justification for that kind of behaviour.  
*Daughter stands and heads for the door (SL)*  
Daughter: Just back off mum.  
*Mum stops her*  
Mum: No Sarah, I won't just sit around and do nothing while my only daughter is hurting.  
Daughter: Well what am I supposed to do?  
Mum: Divorce his sorry ass!  
Daughter: I can't leave him!  
Mum: You are so beautiful, you deserve so much more than this.  
Daughter: Do I really?  
Mum: Of course you do. Jack has got a lot of things wrong but he's got one thing right... (5)  
Daughter: Truly?  
Mum: You are an angel sweetie.  
*They hug*  
Daughter: Thanks mum.  
Mum: Now come on, let's get your stuff. You're staying with your father and me tonight.  
*They head for the door (SL); Daughter stops and reaches for the broken locket on the table.*  
Mum: leave it. We'll find you a better one. (6)