

SHOW ME by Amber Wood

Short Audio Microfiction for 1 or 2 actors

NARRATOR

THE GIRL, teenager (15 yrs)

Summary: Rural West Texas, August 1966. A teenager returns from church camp determined to find proof of whether or not angels are real, an experiment with lasting ramifications.

NARRATOR

The bathroom cherubs beamed at the girl from the cross-stitched dusty rose hand towels, their wings outstretched in the Green Stamp print over the toilet, their sweetheart cheeks carved into the rose and lily-scented soaps reserved for guests. *These* faces were familiar. The face in the *mirror* belonged to someone the girl didn't quite recognize anymore.

THE GIRL

(hopeful) Older?...Definitely dustier.

NARRATOR

And decidedly sweatier after the rickety bus ride home from church camp. The girl inhaled sharply, threw back her shoulders, and summoned her best Sunday smile.

THE GIRL

(saccharine; a perky, religious girl scout selling cookies) "Angels are real. Ask me how I know!" *(she sighs)*

SOUND: the Girl sighs

NARRATOR

Her smile slid back into a scowl. She pushed her sweaty bangs off her forehead with the back of one hand and yanked the safety-pinned camp button off of her shirt with the other.

SOUND: Clatter of a decently sized wearable pin-button at the bottom of a porcelain basin.

NARRATOR

The clatter of the button at the bottom of the sink's basin subsided to silence. The girl looked down and read the camp theme written in a halo over yet another cherubic face.

THE GIRL

(reading the button, a mocking singsong that falters and then collapses) "Angels are real. Ask me...how I know!"

NARRATOR

The girl collapsed onto the toilet seat and creekbeds formed down her cheeks.

THE GIRL

(angrily) How would I actually *know* if You never *shown* me nothin' like that? Would that be so.....*(trying not to curse)* dang hard? *(pause)* *(imploringly)* Why couldn't you just show me?

SOUND: *The girl breathing in silence*

NARRATOR

A fugitive bead of sweat escaped her scalp and took brief shelter in her clavicle, before racing down into her shirt with her next deep breath.

THE GIRL

(With forming belief, a discovery, a breath in) You could show me.

SOUND: window sash opening

NARRATOR

The girl opened the window and found a new seat, this time on the bathmat. She stared directly at the toilet paper roll, willing it to obey.

THE GIRL

(a test) Show me?

(Nothing. Long pause.)

THE GIRL

(an act of faith) Show. Me.

(Nothing. Long pause.)

SOUND: a fly buzzes briefly

NARRATOR

The girl's concentration waned in the waiting and the August heat. She propped herself up against the cool of the bathtub and had just begun to nod off when a light breeze lilted over the red clay and through the open window.

SOUND: light breeze

SOUND: girl breathing in as if waking from light sleep

NARRATOR

As she roused, her eyes refocused on the toilet paper roll... *(light surprise)* a section of sheets hung almost to the floor.

THE GIRL

(whispering, a little scared) Was it...like that before?

NARRATOR

She held her breath and gently re-rolled the paper, careful to use only her fingertips on the very outside edges.

SOUND: light shuffle of rolling toilet paper back onto the roll

NARRATOR

When she was sure the paper was resettled, her hands found themselves instinctively retreating to her chest in a posture of prayer.

THE GIRL

(A whispered prayer, as if in church.) Again.

SOUND: *A brief pause, then a surge of wind that gusts at points through the following (not tornado level)*

NARRATOR

The shower curtain rippled, lightly at first, then undulating fiercely in the sudden gale. The girl was immobilized. Only the whipping of her hair and quivering of her clothes conveyed her frenzied anticipation. The toilet paper bucked and danced, unfurling itself and covering the girl in its sacrifice.

SOUND: the wind dies

NARRATOR

The wind departed, and the girl gathered the offering to herself, burying her face in the assurance of this strange sacrament.

THE GIRL

(quietly, sincerely, and full of belief) Angels are real...Ask me how I know.

(Long pause.)

NARRATOR

Many years later, she prayed for the wind to return, that she might know again. In an act of faith, she spread her open palm on her daughter's forehead...and commanded that the demons depart.

SOUND: a single gust and swirl of wind.

(End.)