

HANG UPS

By Nicole Davis

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CHARACTER: Laura is a petite girl in her late twenties whose appearance is a put together, but she is clearly exhausted and frustrated. She is dressed in office attire and her hair is pulled back.

SCENE: A chair sits center stage with a phone beside it.

TIME: Late in the evening.

SETTING: A chair, desk, and phone are located Center Stage.

AT RISE: Laura sits in the chair, obviously bored and looking fondly at the phone.

It's strange; I feel a connection with those numbers on the LCD screen. They've become so familiar to me that when I turn and see the 10 numbers, I smile because half the time I already know exactly who they want to speak to and where I'll be transferring them in a few seconds . . . Seconds that we call *moments*. We call them moments so no one can yell if it takes too long, because, hey! We didn't specify exactly how much time it would take. I've learned to measure my life in moments instead of months and weeks and hours.

(Standing)

I'll get over you in a moment.

(Laughing)

It's been two years . . .

(Pointing and smirking)

but that still qualifies as a moment. So I still haven't lied to myself. I still haven't lied to anyone. And you know, I pride myself on that, my honesty, but all that is required in being honest is knowing the right loopholes, the right words, the right tones.

(Begins pacing)

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Honesty isn't telling your friend her hair is terrible, honesty is telling her . . .

(Searching for the words)

. . . that you liked it better before. And honesty isn't telling your sister that mom probably isn't going to make it; honesty is telling her that mom's trying her hardest, but she should still go see her.

(Sitting down)

Oh man, our mom . . . She's trying her hardest, and Kathleen still won't go see her? It's her own mother who raised her from start to finish, giving her everything her precious little heart asked for and didn't give me anything and I'm the one that is taking care of her.

(Chuckling)

I guess that just proves that money can't buy you love.

(Turning to the right and looking down)

I'm the one that loves you, Mom. I'm the one that comes to work everyday at this job that I hate so I can help pay for your doctor's bills and you're the one that lays there and asks about Kathleen everyday as I keep signing the checks just to keep you alive when both of us by this point SHOULD know that Kathleen would pull the plug in a heart beat because she's getting everything and she knows that . . . We both know that, Mom.

(Sigh)

I got more of who I am from Dad, which means . . .

(Grows increasingly irritated)

That I got the heart in the family and I can't watch you die when there is still a chance . . . even though that daughter that you just shower in . . .

(Stops and takes a deep breath)

I guess it doesn't matter . . . anyway . . . where was I? . . . oh, yeah, honesty . . .

(Phone rings, but SHE ignores it)

No one cares if you tell a lie if it was for their own good . . . so that's what you learn . . .

(Phone rings again)

. . . how to tell a lie and make it sound like it was for their own good, because then . . .

(Laughing and wagging her finger at the audience)

. . . you can call it honesty.

(Phone rings again, and SHE looks at the phone)

Look, I'm in the middle of something here, so you're going to have to wait.

(Looking up)

We lie to ourselves and we see what we want to see. We hear what we want to hear. Because everything is softer if we saw it coming . . .

(Phone rings again and SHE answers in a very forced, polite manner)

Thank you for calling . . . just a moment. Yeah, good luck getting that extension, buddy.

(Sitting down)

ANYWAY! We don't like to be fooled. We don't like to be blindsided, so we use our perfect hindsight vision and pretend we saw it coming. That way, we can tell ourselves that we were just trying oh so hard to fix it.

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