

## Heartless

A hyper-feminine psychological horror exploring the cost of perfection

Short film synopsis

By Caitlin Adams

*A social media influencer wraps up filming a video for her channel, before proceeding to her lengthy and intense beauty routine. She ends her routine with a dark and disturbing secret.*

### **Synopsis**

Stacy Hart is a famous lifestyle influencer on social media, amassing millions of followers due to her beauty. Through her content, she shares her wellness habits and routines, marketing herself as transparent and selling curated intimacy between creator and audience, convincing them that she keeps no secrets and that criticism has no effect on her.

As Stacy closes her laptop after filming a video, she allows her online persona to drop along with her fake smile. She begins her beauty routine alone, her actions becoming slower, more deliberate, and obsessive, revealing a ritualistic approach to maintaining her appearance. She practices yoga, has a bath, grooms, and does her makeup with an increasing intensity that betrays her calm exterior.

Although Stacy markets authenticity, she hides the most extreme part of her routine from her audience. Online hate comments linger in her mind, fuelling a fear of aging, judgment, and loss of relevance. She believes that her beauty is truly maintained through a violent private ritual: consuming the hearts of those who criticise her online.

In the final scene, Stacy prepares the last step of her routine. She places a cloche on the table, a cruel tweet targeted at her taped to its surface. The cloche is lifted to reveal the heart of the user who made that comment, ready for consumption. Before indulging, she posts a message to her followers, claiming that her only secret is a “good diet”. As she brings the fork to her mouth, she smiles. Her ritual is now complete for the day.

# Heartless

Mood Board + Concept



**“American Psycho”, Mary Harron, 2000**  
Patrick Bateman’s obsessive morning routine reframes self-care as control and performance.



Contrast between clean, clinical aesthetics and the violence underneath



Margot Robbie’s morning routine (parody of “American Psycho”)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWc8V-iKJ7s>  
Highlights absurd extremity of modern beauty rituals.



**“Helter Skelter”, Mika Ninagawa, 2012**  
Hyper-feminine visual world, exposes cruelty and decay behind manufactured beauty.



**“Black Swan”, Darren Aronofsky, 2010**  
Perfectionism leading to self-destruction, driven by internal and perceived external pressures.  
A psychological horror shot like a body horror.



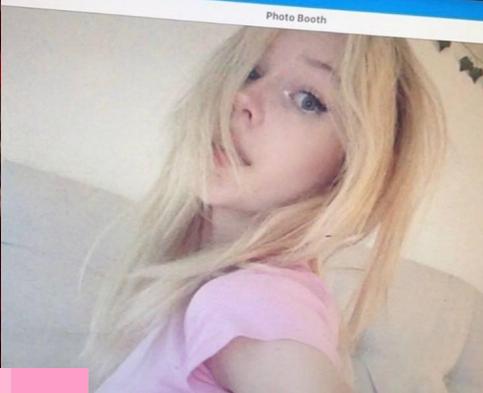
**“The Neon Demon”, Nicolas Winding Ref, 2016**  
Beauty is something that is both worshipped and punished. Slow pacing and cold style influence approach to atmosphere and unease.



**“The Substance”, Coralie Fargeat, 2024**  
Extreme exploration of the lengths some will go to resist physical aging and preserve beauty. Influenced by use of body horror to show fear of the decline and obsession with creating and maintaining an idealised self.

# Stacy - The Influencer

The protagonist is a lifestyle influencer, who shares her beauty 'secrets' with her millions of fans. Her online persona is built around transparency, marketing herself as open, soft, and confident. She offers her audience carefully curated access to her daily life, withholding her obsessive and violent nature.



She represents the extremity and toxicity of beauty and wellness culture, where self-care becomes obligation, routine becomes ritual, and the body becomes something to maintain rather than inhabit.



**My beauty secrets**

stacybeauty  
4.8M subscribers

500K

3.0M views 16 hours ago #beauty #secrets #wellness  
Today I'm going to share all of my secrets on how I keep my glowing appearance!

# Stacy's Lookbook



Filming - pink, casual dress  
Her online persona is flirty and fun.  
The pink represents her feminine,  
calm and innocent presence.



Yoga - pink  
bodysuit  
She carries her  
online persona  
into her real life,  
as she begins  
her rituals.



Running bath - white  
towel  
Her persona finally drops  
fully, as the pink is  
replaced by a sterile  
white.



After bath - white robe  
The sterile aesthetic  
continues as she wears  
a white robe for her  
beauty rituals before  
she gets fully ready.



LED mask - red light  
The red contrasts with the  
white, violence in  
a sterile environment.



She paints her  
toenails red.  
Further juxtaposition  
of red with white.



Her makeup is  
hyper-feminine and 'clean'.  
Represents the mask she  
shows to the world - of  
cleanliness and order when  
her inner world is chaotic  
and messy.

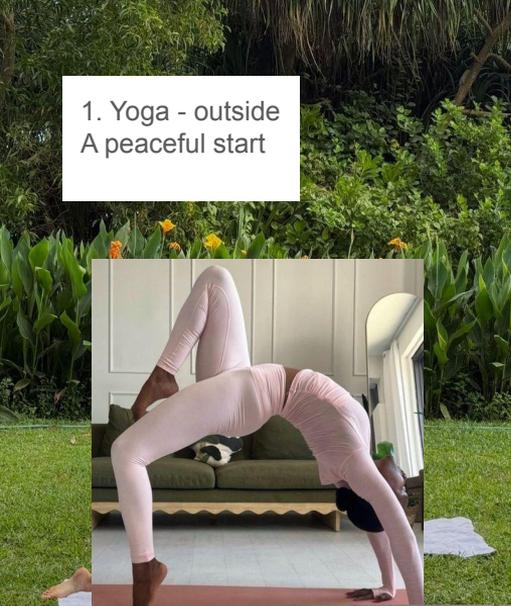


Final outfit - all black  
Her final outfit is fully black,  
representing power, mystery,  
death and evil, while still  
remaining elegant and chic.  
This is worn as she completes  
her routine and reveals her  
dark beauty secret. Shows  
how her true secrets are kept  
private, the "dark side" of  
her beauty.



# The Routine

1. Yoga - outside  
A peaceful start



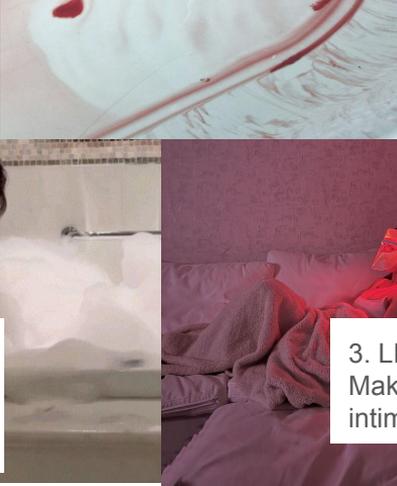
4. Paints her nails, red  
The varnish spills, glance  
at the 'crime scene' her  
rituals leave



5. Makeup routine  
An everyday thing for many  
women. The use of extreme  
close-ups and sound makes it  
appear tense and violating.



2. A bath  
Concept of violence  
creeps in as she cuts  
herself shaving



3. LED mask  
Makes her appearance  
intimidating and creepy



Her daily rituals are structured around control,  
discipline, and preservation, revealing an  
obsessive fear of aging, imperfection, and loss of  
relevance online.



**lucygoosey**  
@gooseylucy233

@stacybeauty probably gets so much surgery, that's her real secret

2:09 PM · Sep 02, 2025 · 524 Views

15 Retweets 2 Quotes 25 Likes 5 Bookmarks



Unseen antagonist -  
online hater  
We see a tweet left by  
her, and what we can  
assume is her heart,  
used at the end of the  
routine - the dark secret  
Stacy won't reveal



**Stacy <3** ✓  
@stacybeauty

my real secret is a good diet - haters, eat your hearts out

10:02 AM · Jan 16, 2026 · 5M Views

500K Retweets 40K Quotes 1M Likes 550K Bookmarks

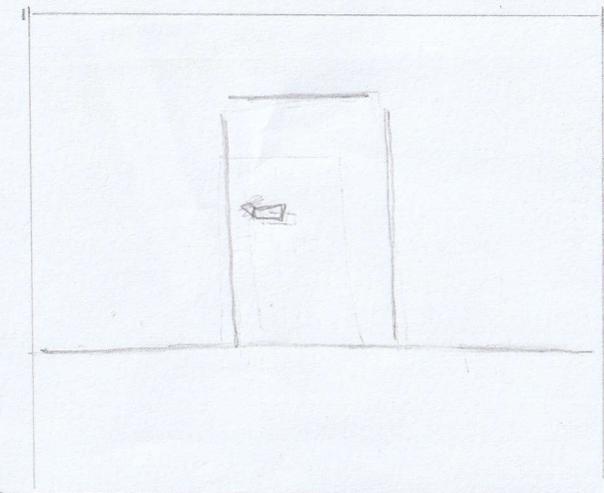




MS. Webcam Pov  
 Finishes filming her video, reaches out to close laptop.



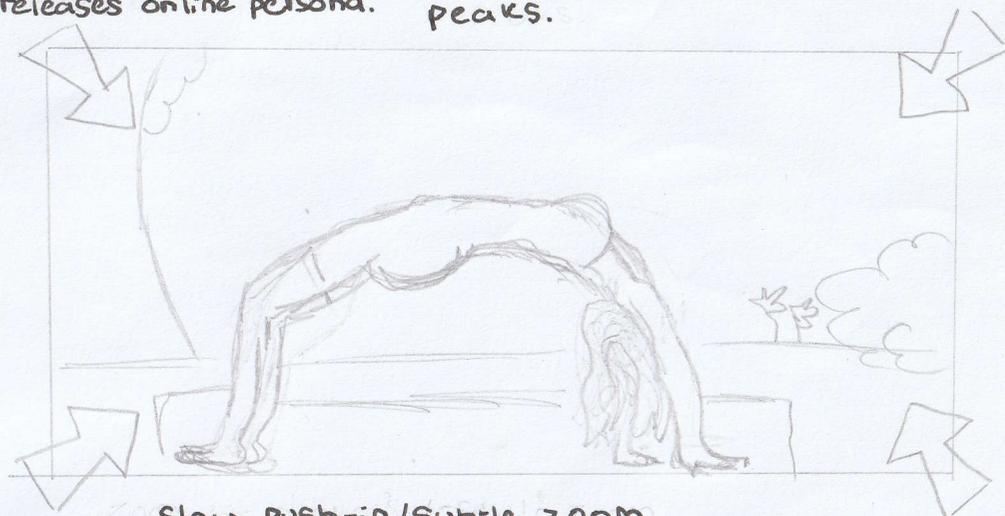
MS - same framing, switch from webcam quality to cinematic camera.  
 Audio becomes cleaner, empty room static begins softly.  
 Her smile drops as she releases online persona.



WS - she stands and leaves the room.  
 Camera remains still, holding on empty room as the static ambience peaks.



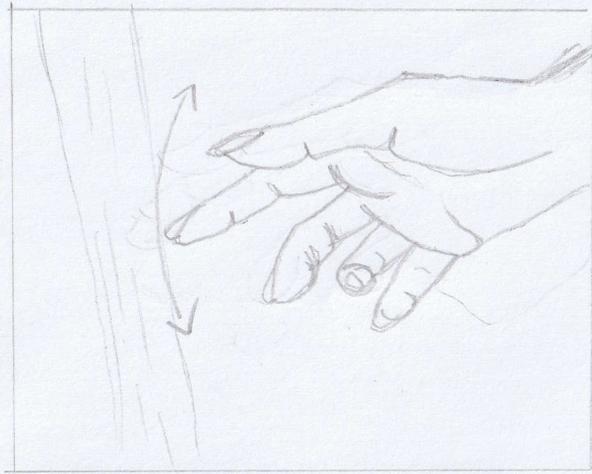
ES - exterior, Stacy's garden.  
 She practices yoga calmly.  
 The static audio cuts out during transition, replaced with birdsong and calm, quiet piano.



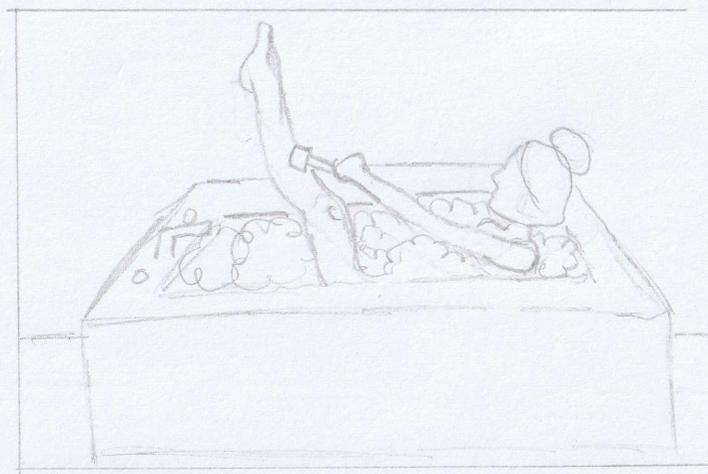
Slow push-in / subtle zoom  
 She changes poses. The static audio begins to creep in again, contrasting with the birds and piano as they fade out.



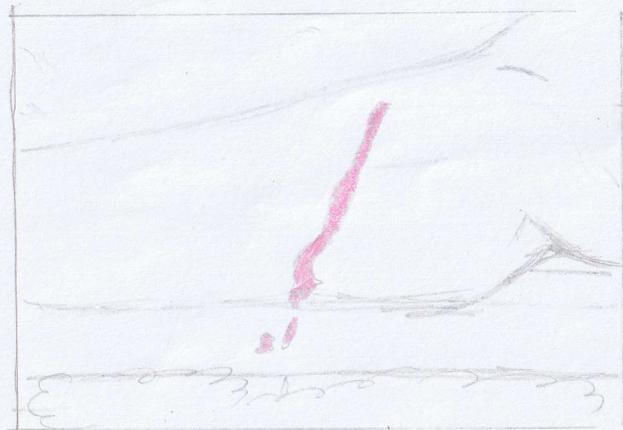
WS - int.; bathroom  
 She sits down on the edge of the bath, wrapped in a towel. The sound of running water is loud.



CU - water running from tap.  
 She tests the temperature with a finger, shaking her hand and hissing as it's too hot.



MWS/MS - in bath, shaving.  
 Mundane, intimate framing. She cuts herself accidentally and swears softly.



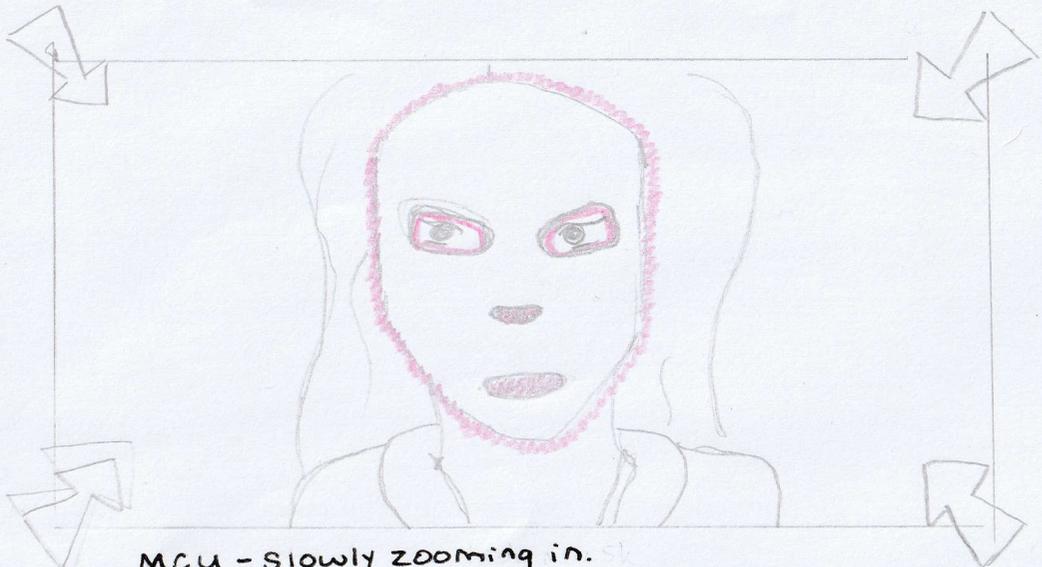
CU of her leg, a thin stream of blood running down it.  
 Static begins to rise again, adding tension as a mundane task turns slightly violent.



CU - water going down the drain, some blood mixed in.  
 The draining sound is uncomfortably loud, drowning out the static.



Mirror Pov  
 She wipes steam off the mirror (lense), revealing her face staring back. She's wearing a white robe now.



MCU - slowly zooming in.

She places a LED face mask on, the red light coming from it contrasting with the white bathroom and the white robe.  
 A low electronic hum comes from the mask.

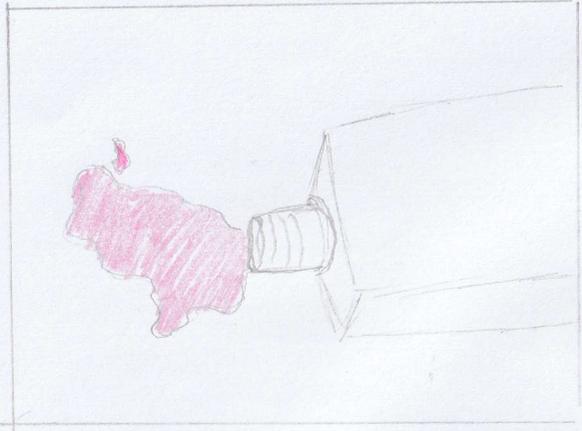


ES - int.; lounge.

Stacy is sitting on the floor, painting her toenails red.



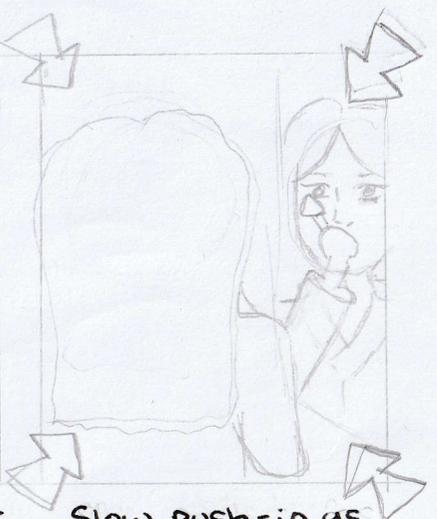
Low-angle CU of Stacy with her mask on as she sits and paints her toenails.  
 The angle makes her appear imposing paired with the red mask.



CU of spilled nail varnish bottle on the floor. The varnish pools out, appearing like blood.  
 Static rises slightly again.



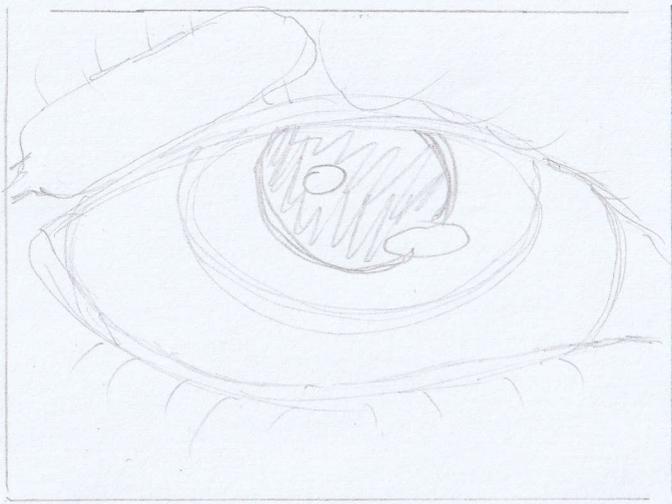
Over-the-shoulder shot of bathroom mirror. She removes the mask.



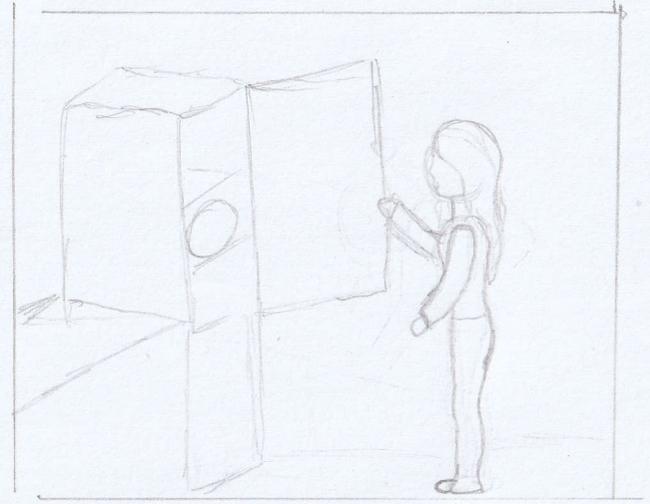
Slow push-in as she begins to apply makeup.  
 Static is soft, creating unease.



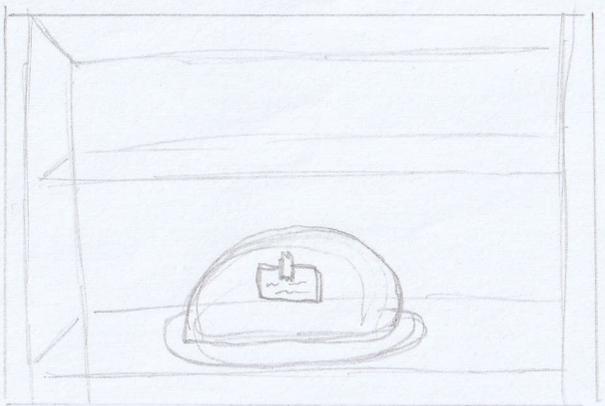
Cu, mirror Pov, slow push-in.  
She uses an eyelash curler.  
Static continues to rise.



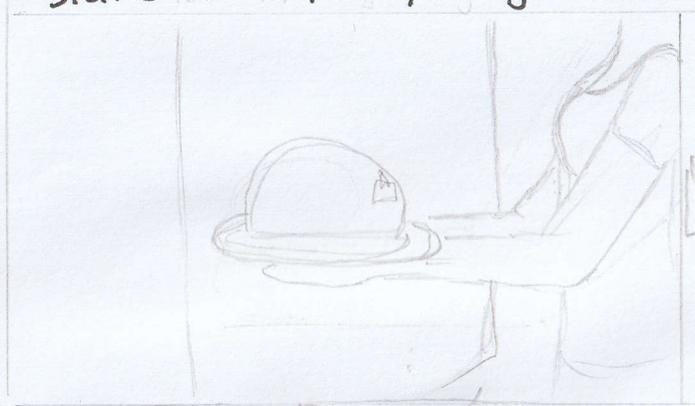
Extreme CU of her eye as she  
applies mascara.  
The closeness makes the simple task  
tense and invasive.  
Static volume peaks, adding to tension.



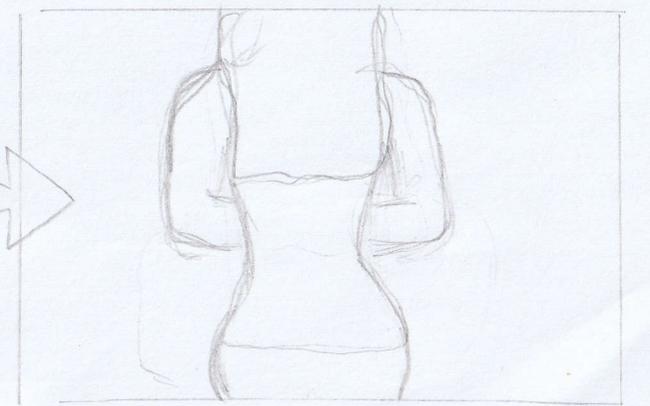
ES - int.; kitchen.  
Stacy walks to the fridge and  
opens it.  
No static sound - quiet and domestic.



Pov - inside fridge.  
We see a covered plate with a  
hateful tweet targeted at her taped  
to the cover.  
The hum of the fridge is loud and oppressive.



Low side view.  
She picks up the plate, closing  
the fridge.



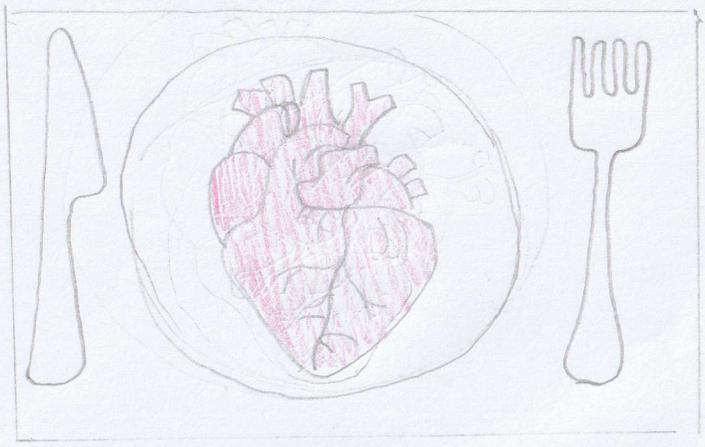
Tracking, slowly follows her.  
Her back's to the camera as she  
~~turns~~ turns away and walks to the  
dining room table.



Continuation of shot, stops at a wide-view of her placing the plate on the table, then sitting down in front of it.



MS. She reads the tweet out loud. "@stacybeauty probably gets so much surgery, that's her real secret." Amused, she tosses it to the side and lifts the cover off the plate. Static rises, creating tension.



Pov/cu of plate, a human heart placed on it - the heart of the person that tweeted what she read aloud. Static peaks at the reveal.



MS. Stacy picks up her phone, typing out and posting a tweet, which appears on screen as she types it, paired with clicking sounds as she types and a slight 'ding' as she posts it. Low static as background noise.



Slow push-in. Static sound rises as she cuts a piece of the heart off-camera. Sound peaks as she brings the fork to her mouth. Static fades out as she takes the bite, the sound stopping as she smiles to herself, fading into soft piano. Cut to credits.