

AMERICA'S BEAUTY EXPERT

By Kelly Meadows

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A Comedic Duet

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SYNOPSIS: A battle of the beauty queens! Sophia has found success as a social media influencer, while Alexia just doesn't have what it takes. So she takes it upon herself to stop Sophia! Can Sophia withstand the onery onslaught? Find out just who will be America's next beauty expert!

TIME: Present day

SETTING: On social media

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females)

SOPHIA LAVONNE (f).....A social media influencer and beauty expert. *(30 lines.)*

ALEXIA VANDERGLOSS (f).....A former social media and beauty expert. *(28 lines.)*

COSTUMING: Present day attire, but also something "fashion forward." They could also "overdo" their makeup, so while they project being beauty experts, we can see they aren't so much.

STAGE: Bare stage, with each actress on her own side, and we should see they are "on screen".

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: In this play, both characters are live on social media, such as YouTube. So while they will respond to each other, they don't physically interact, as they're not in the same space. This will allow them to speak to each other, as well as make asides to the audience, and put double meanings in a lot of their speeches.

SOPHIA: (*This is a “humble brag”.*) Being a world-famous beauty expert isn't easy. I can't just leave the house in any slap-dash outfit, no mismatched socks, no “oops, the eyeliner's off kilter” ...Noooo, not me. (*Complaining about her good fortune.*) I always have to look my best. Even if I'm just going to Walgreens to get some lip gloss—

ALEXIA: (*Interrupting, and incredulous.*) You get lip gloss at Walgreens? (*To audience.*) Sophia Lavonne gets her lip gloss at Walgreens? (*To SOPHIA.*) I thought you were America's Beauty Expert.

SOPHIA: (*Backtracking.*) ...for my friends... Being this put together 24/7? It's the price I pay for fame. The price I pay for being... (*With panache and grandiose movements.*) America's Beauty Expert. It's hard work!

ALEXIA: (*Snarky.*) It's hard work to watch. (*To audience.*) The beauty world is cutthroat. It's not about being pretty, it's about smashing your competition, about finding the most popular beauty expert at any given time and then (*With glee!*) turning her fans against her right when she's at the pinnacle of success! Then watching her tumble until she's washed up, begging for samples at the dollar store lipstick display. I know that firsthand. Thanks to Sophia's lies, I live in a trailer park eating frozen dinners on a laundry table full of runny mascara and scratched off lotto tickets.

SOPHIA: When it comes to beauty, some people just can't be helped, and I know my reputation for telling it like it is has made me unpopular (*Meaning ALEXIA here.*) with a select few.

ALEXIA: No, it's your reputation for telling it like it isn't, otherwise known as lying, and particularly about me—Alexia VanDerGloss, America's former Beauty Expert, (*Sneering and nasty.*) thanks to you.

SOPHIA: But you're all still watching, and you're all clinging to that last lonely hope that one day you might be as famous... and as pretty... as I am. Well, if I can tell it like it is yet one more time, most of you will not, ever, (*Points to herself.*) be this pretty. Nonetheless, in this video, I'm going to show you exactly how it's done. Because while I'm very average myself, I know how to conceal, cover, converge, and coagulate, so that in the end, you'll compliment and congratulate! Let's get started!

ALEXIA: And I'm going to bitterly comment on everything she says and everything she does. I'm going to take her down off her high horse because... I didn't even think horses came that high. I'm going to show you the ugly side of beauty.

SOPHIA: If you haven't seen me before, well, first of all, where have you been, and second of all, I'm Sophia Lavonne, on location in Fiji, where everyone just naturally looks prettier than they do in places like Newark, New Jersey or Youngstown, Ohio.

ALEXIA starts to react and SOPHIA cuts her off at the pass with an eyeroll.

SOPHIA: Sorry, the truth.

ALEXIA: As a resident of Youngstown, Ohio, I'm here to tell everyone what I know about your lack of insight on the very topic on which you claim to be an expert.

SOPHIA: *(Ignoring her and going ahead.)* Today we're going to get ready to go out to the dance—*(Or... is she?)* Well, those of us who got invited, that is—and you'll want to look your best, so I'm going to reveal my special "going to the dance" beauty secrets so you can all learn first hand.

ALEXIA: If there's anything you're doing, it's keeping your beauty a secret.

SOPHIA: There's no secret to beauty if you know where to look.

ALEXIA: Elsewhere would be a good start.

SOPHIA: You simply take what you have and make it better.

ALEXIA: *(With mock sadness.)* In Sophia's case, she's got nowhere to go but up, yet, she can't.

SOPHIA: *(Striking back.)* Because all the product in the world can't gloss over an ugly interior. You can conceal a wrinkle, an age spot, or a blemish, but you can't, Alexia, blot out a crack in your character. *(To us, but aimed at ALEXIA.)* I have people who can't handle my success... success that comes thanks to millions of minions trusting my beauty hints. I now get ready for the dance in a seven-million-dollar mansion instead of a seven-hundred-dollar broom closet on the butt end of Los Angeles. I don't even have to go to the dance. I can host it... here! And there's plenty of room... *(Points to the*

audience with an inviting smile.) for you... because Alexia and her ever-shrinking clown-makeup entourage won't be invited.

ALEXIA: It's time for an expose. I'm going to get Sophia kicked out of her seven-million-dollar mansion so she's living out on the streets with nothing but pigeons for conversation and talcum powder for a best friend.

SOPHIA: OK. Can I just ask you...

ALEXIA: What? Wow she's paying attention to me. I'm so exalted.

SOPHIA: What is your problem?

ALEXIA: My problem is you, Miss "Lie About Others to Ruin Their Career."

SOPHIA: I didn't lie, I just shared a little-known truth in a way that changed lots of minds. So it's bigger than that, Miss Lied-to-Compete-But-Can't. You could simply turn me off and go about your business, but instead you watch me every day as a Mount Vesuvius of vitriol and hostility. You think I'm going to crack, but I won't, and even if I did, I have the product to caulk it up.

ALEXIA: I want to see you fall. Spalt, kerplow. Whamm. I want you to do a Humpty Dumpty off your top floor balcony.

SOPHIA: No problem, the king's men are at the bottom holding a trampoline.

ALEXIA: You're always bragging about how pretty you are. It's revolting.

SOPHIA: So am I supposed to say "this doesn't work for me, but maybe it'll work for you." Or how about, "Here, I tried these products and I'm still a cow." That kind of modesty would be horribly misplaced.

ALEXIA: *(Smug.)* Well, you are, still, a cow.

SOPHIA: *(Steamrolling over her.)* And if I was a cow, I'd be tired of your bull. So mooove on.

ALEXIA: She's not a cow, yet she says moo. *(SOPHIA tries to talk, but ALEXIA barrels ahead.)* Do you know how she treats her staff? Her husband? Her butler? Her chauffer? Her cook? Her accountant? Her... *(Pause.)* What else do you have?

SOPHIA: Here's what I have. A blush, a concealer, a gel, and a spackling paste. Oh, and a following. Beauty isn't about how you look. It's about how you feel.

ALEXIA: When did this happen?

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