

OMO

DIRECTOR'S TREATMENT FOR "LITTLE BROTHER" BY xxx

DIRECTOR'S INSIGHT

This commercial is a delightful little story of a busy and imaginative little boy, who in entertaining himself as an imaginary hero character, decides to use his mom's lace or embroidered tablecloth as a cape. He's so caught up in his adventures in his back garden that the 'cape', and of course his clothes, become dirty and muddy and 'tomato-sauced'. He simply doesn't notice the dirt (which superhero does?) - he's completely caught up in his imaginary world of crime fighting and super powers. His older brother though, who is quite sweetly protective of him, notices the state of the tablecloth and in trying to keep his little brother out of trouble, tells him to take off his cape before his mom notices. However, she catches them in the act, and thinking about the dire consequences, the older brother takes the fall. The mom, while initially a bit shocked, can't help but smile at their cute faces and her older son's selfless act. Besides, she knows that with Omo her table cloth will soon be as good as new.

The spot that has been provided as a reference for the Omo remake is a really sweet little ad. It's well shot, lit and edited and I would relish the opportunity to work with you on the recreation. The commercial has a lovely lighthearted tone and it celebrates being a child. The sense of carefree and inventive fun. Our hero boy seems to epitomise the feeling of an endless morning with unhindered freedom combined with a creative sense of purpose.

I believe I can remake this ad successfully and that there may even be a couple of ideas that could improve it slightly.

OUR HERO

Our little boy has to be 'oh so cute'. He is between the ages of 3 and 5 and life just glows out of him. I'd like to choose a young boy because that will cement our portrayal of him being active and full of imagination, not a naughty boy. By using a younger child he will appear innocent and cute. He's not maliciously causing havoc, he's just having fun. And that'll make it easy for all of us (and his mom) to forgive him.

He's one of those little boys who is always busy. Constantly on the move. Always thinking of what to do next. He's not naughty, he's just super active and completely involved in life. He's adventurous and curious. Trying to explore his world and learn new things. In his mind he's a superhero. Or a fire fighter. Or invisible. Or an athlete. He can entertain himself for hours and does everything with utter *joie de vivre* - he exults in life.

Therefore casting this character is going to be really important. We want someone with that appealing, cute face with a full smile and twinkle in his eye. I'll be looking for someone who is naturally outgoing and enthusiastic. Once we've cast him, the filming should be relatively easier because his vibrancy will be visible in the actual tasks that we get him to act out in play.







LOCATION

The entire little story plays out in the back yard of a typical 2 - 3 bedroom home in a built up suburb. It's a reasonable sized house that is quite modest, but falls somewhere between poor and wealthy. A middle of the road kind of look. Possibly something like the built up areas in Khayelitsha.

The home is neatly painted and well maintained, with a back garden - I want to create the feeling that while this isn't a very affluent area, the family is proud and care about their home and their family life together. It should have at least a patch of grass (with some muddy bits) some trees and simple plants around the edges. It shouldn't be too lush and developed because we want to maintain a realistic look and feel but at the same time I want there to be some obstacles and elements that form part of our little boy's play. He needs to have a bit of space to move and get dirty and provided the garden we use feels like it fits within this type of neighbourhood, it could work.

I like the idea of having a boundary wall or fence. It helps the audience to feel that the little boy is safely contained within his environment, despite the fact that he is quite young and playing alone. He can be seen by his mom inside the house and he can't get into too much trouble.

The sense of the location is important because it adds to the honesty that I'll be trying to achieve. This isn't a white picket fence neighbourhood. It's not modern and pristine and it makes us appreciate the story all the more because people will be able to recognise their own upbringing or alternatively their own pride in their house and family.

THE SCENES

WASHING LINE

The spot opens with our lovely little boy unpegging a white tablecloth from the washing line. He can barely reach and is using the line for balance as he unpegs the cloth. The way that he is dressed immediately makes us think he is creating a costume. In the reference commercial he is wearing his underpants outside his shorts and I think we should maintain that look - the typical superhero statement. But we could add a few other imaginative items that he is using to create his costume. They should be items that he could easily have found in the house - possibly yellow washing up gloves on his hands, or fabric (or sweatbands) wrapped around his wrists, or his brother's goggles perched on top of his head. I wouldn't use all these ideas but I think one or two in combination would help to create the sense that this boy is creative and resourceful. We see his little feet on tip toe on a plastic chair or stool as he reaches up to unpeg the cloth, which then falls down beside him on the ground.





ACTIVITIES

And he immediately jumps into action. I'd like to show him involved in quite a variety of tasks - swinging on a branch and landing in a puddle, running around a corner of the house with the 'cape' dragging on the ground behind him, jumping over rocks or off a step, racing through the sprinkler and then rolling on the ground. Stealing a chip (covered in tomato sauce) from the kitchen window, lying on his belly watching an ant crawl by. To show how very busy and active and inquisitive he is and how many things he's doing I'd like to use an editing technique of quick jump cuts. So we don't show any of the actions in too much detail but we cut between various activities quickly. This will help to create the sense of all the different things he's busy with. We see him running in one direction. Then immediately we see him swing from a branch. Then we cut to his feet landing in a puddle and mud splattering up. We see him running in the other direction. We see him steal the chip. By cutting quickly in this way, we can quickly portray his energy, how rapidly his ideas change, and how full of life he is.

He is completely engrossed in his various games and ideas and seems completely unaware of the camera and his entire focus is on his current physical activity. Because he's still quite young and little, he's sometimes a little shaky. He doesn't land perfectly. He runs with arms pumping and his body wobbling a bit. He may even trip over his feet or slip on the grass. He's young and this is all part of his development.

We will really be able to capture some interesting angles by shooting up at him in a tree, or capturing the water droplets of the sprinkler in the sunlight, or focusing on his muddy feet or shoes.



REFERENCE - 'ACTIVITIES' TECHNIQUE



These two video references for Weetabix make use of the jump cut editing technique that I would like to incorporate for the little boy's busy adventuring. A series of actions are shown back to back with quite quick jump cuts - changing from running, to spinning, to swinging, to jumping into a puddle, rolling in the mud, running in the other direction, chasing the cat. By using these quick cuts showing one action and then very quickly another we'll be able to create the sense that this little boy is very busy - constantly on the move, always changing what's he's thinking and doing. The audience will get a lovely sense of just how active, experimental and resourceful he is.

OLDER BROTHER

Then we will cut to a shot of his older brother. I imagine him to be around 9 or 10 and he's a sweet boy. He's protective of his younger brother. His face shows his horror when he notices what his little brother is up to. He immediately thinks that his brother is going to get into trouble and rushes to stop him.

He's not cross with his brother, he merely wants to prevent their mom finding out. He's merely being responsible and thoughtful. He thinks that the table cloth will be ruined. We see him racing across the garden towards his brother.

We can see in his body language that he loves his brother and is merely being protective. The little kid brother admires his older brother but is not quite sure what all the fuss is about - he is just aware that playtime has been interrupted.







IN TROUBLE WITH MOM

As the older brother turns around with the tablecloth in his hand, his mom is there looking rather cross. He steps in front of his brother and admits that he made the mess, taking the fall for his younger brother.

We see our little boy peeking around his older protector, and he's staring up at his mom, not entirely sure why there's trouble brewing. He looks a bit worried but also a little confused. He doesn't quite understand why mom looks cross.





WASHING

But mom takes one look at their adorable faces, the cute younger one and the self sacrificing older boy and immediately smiles at them. She knows that she has the solution and that the mess happened innocently. Her sons are instantly forgiven.

We cut to the mom hand washing the tablecloth in a large plastic tub of suds, with Omo next to them while the boys look on. And finally they all hang up the spotlessly white tablecloth on the line together, with the older brother helping the younger one to reach for the pegs.

CASTING & PERFORMANCE

Casting is really important for this to be a successful commercial. As I said before I'll be looking for an adorable and expressive young boy for the lead role. He needs to be a naturally outgoing personality, be sociable and confident. The older brother needs to look like a kind and friendly boy - one you could easily believe cares about his little brother. They're both healthy, upbeat kids who can look after themselves and each other, are not self conscious nor competitive with each other. They should seem natural and normal to make the outcome more honest and believable.

I want each performance in each scene to seem completely natural and authentic; especially for the action sequence where the young boy's gestures, expressions and actions are entirely a result of his own thought processes. To make it a more believable performance I would like to encourage him to do tasks that he may actually find a little challenging so that we can capture expressions of concentration, or sheer joy, or focus, depending on the situation. I'd like to merely keep the cameras rolling while he really has fun. I'd prefer for him to be doing things authentically - to really be trying or concentrating, or giving his all - rather than just pretending.

For the older boy, the performance is rather more subtle. I will focus on achieving expressions that are honest and real. I don't want the look of horror to be acted as that often appears forced. If need be, I will get him to imitate me to achieve subtle changes of expression. Overall, we will keep the atmosphere on set lighthearted and fun so that this never feels like work - rather like real play.

The mom in this commercial needs to be portrayed as a loving mother. She's never really that cross with them. She loves them and nurtures them and understands that their play is part of their development. She's not that scary really - she just seems to be angry for a second. She wants her boys to explore and play and she is proud of their characters and love for each other.



LIGHTING & GRADE

The predominant lighting look will be natural, light and bright; a similar look & feel to the original clip. I think I'll make use of a long lensing which helps to create intimacy with the characters and feels more natural, as opposed to wide lenses which leave everything in focus. As most of this takes place outdoors, I'd like to incorporate soft lens flares and gorgeous soft lighting, filming at the time of day when the light is not too bright and harsh.

I imagine a rich, saturated colour palette (i.e. working within a range of colours) that fits with the South African and modern context of this commercial, perhaps with a slight emphasis on blue, the overall brand colour. (I wouldn't want to overdo the branded colour - it shouldn't be too obvious which would look artificial but we could bring in hints of it.



REFERENCE - MOOD FILM



