

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

A MOVING BOX falls over the hedge and landing on an otherwise perfect lawn in front of a perfect house.

This is where pancakes are the traditional Sunday breakfast and where a new family picture is taken each year.

WOMAN/AMY HARDIN (O.S)
THAT'S MINE!

ANOTHER MOVING BOX is slowly falling from the neighbor's lawn, revealing--

a more CHAOTIC SUBURBAN HOUSE next door, a couple of other boxes stacked on top of each other and a moving truck parked outside.

INT. CHAOTIC SUBURBAN HOUSE

Stressful steps coming from the top floor in a house that doesn't have any family pictures. No furniture either. And DEFINITELY no pancakes.

AMY HARDIN (28), rushes down the stairs, holding a vase. Focused eyes. Doesn't smile easily, and even when she's cracking a joke it's more to make a point.

After her comes JIM HARDIN (30), carrying a half full moving box. He would be easy on the eyes if he had gotten any sleep last night.

JIM
You gave it to me.

AMY
I want it back.

He sighs.

JIM
Fine.

AMY
Really? It was a gift, and that means nothing to you?

Jim's silent.

AMY (cont'd)
You got the receipt?

JIM
That's your fucking plan? Trading in
gifts to pay alimony?

Amy opens her mouth but Jim doesn't give Amy any time to
answer before--

KITCHEN

--stumbling into the empty kitchen and placing the box on
the counter.

He opens a cupboard and empties it on cups, glasses and
bowls. ALL IN TWO-SETS.

AMY
Don't use those words when she's
around.

JIM
You owe us-- no, you owe her almost
10,000 dollars. That's like... 200
gifts. If you bought them all...

He clears the cupboard and continues into the--

LIVING ROOM

--searching for more. Amy follows him quickly.

AMY
I'll make it right, I--

JIM
--Like you did with her birthday gift
last year?

Jim puts the last stuff from the living room in the box.

AMY
She loved that elephant!

JIM
Which explains why she cried when the
police took it back.

Jim grabs the full box and patrols--

HALLWAY

--straight to the front door.

He opens it when Amy stands in the way.

AMY

Please. Don't take her away. She's
all I have.

Jim removes Amy's hand and opens the door.

JIM

In three days, she's all you had.

He stops for a moment. Maybe he's being too harsh.

JIM (cont'd)

Go and say goodbye to her.

ASTRID'S ROOM

Amy opens the door to a small, empty room, with no other furniture than a bed, and the name "ASTRID" spelled in goofy letters on the wall.

Astrid (8 and three quarters) sits on the bed, with her legs dangling above the floor. On her lap is a voucher for a new condo.

AMY

You excited about the move?

Astrid looks up. A soon to be "a head turner" face. She shakes her head.

Amy sits down beside her.

AMY (cont'd)

Why not?

ASTRID

Will you be there and help me with my
new room?

AMY

I promise.

ASTRID

You've said that before.

Amy swallows the lump in her throat.

ASTRID (cont'd)
What if all the kids are mean?

 AMY
Mean kids are just nice kids who
swear...

Astrid smiles with a glimpse of playfulness.

 AMY (cont'd)
Do you swear?

Astrid looks up, almost proudly.

 ASTRID
Never!

Amy smiles.

 AMY
Good. You know why?

 ASTRID
Because swearing is for bad people.

Amy couldn't be prouder.

Astrid reaches for something under her pillow. She takes out
an old stuffed elephant. She gives it to Amy.

 AMY
You don't want it anymore?

 ASTRID
If you have it, then you have to come
back.

Amy smiles.

 AMY
You didn't tell dad that you got the
gift back, right?

Astrid shakes her head and slips off the bed. A bit happier.

Amy looks down at the old stuffed elephant.

EXT. CHAOTIC SUBURBAN HOUSE

The moving truck makes a mark on the front lawn when driving
away.

Amy's holding the elephant like a tired toddler.

MAN (O.S)
You the new owner?

Amy looks over to the perfect suburban house.

HARRIS (35), with his perfect haircut and his perfect clothes, watches her from his side of the perfect hedge. Fuck you Harris.

Amy walks over.

AMY
No... My family just left me and I've been sleeping on a filthy mattress watching a dead cactus covered in someone else's vomit.

Harris doesn't know how to respond. Until--

HARRIS
Family comes in very different forms...

Harris smiles, almost embarrassed.

AMY
Aren't you the sweetest!

She leans over the hedge to hug him. Long and hard.

She releases, smiles and waves goodbye. And as she turns around, her big smile turns into an annoyed face.

She reaches inside her pocket, and picks up a wallet--

Containing HARRIS ID.

She checks it for money. Only 50 dollars.