

FADE IN:

EXT. MODERN SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - EARLY MORNING

Nicely designed modern homes and manicured yards. A damaged real estate, yard sign with a picture of BEAUTIFUL WOMAN smiling.

Sound of an ALARM blaring.

EXT. HARTNETT'S RESIDENCE - SAME

A compact, white modern house. Alarm sound continues.

INT. HARTNETT'S RESIDENCE - SAME - LIVING ROOM

Junk food strewn on the couch and floor --

KITCHEN

Open floor plan as the main foyer merges into the kitchen.

Stacks of grimy dishes lie on the counter and in the sink.

INT. HARTNETT'S RESIDENCE - SAME - EMILY'S BEDROOM

CLOSE ON a digital clock- it's 6:00 a.m.

Though the alarm is deafening, it hardly agitates **EMILY HARTNETT (35, African-American)**, who is swaddled in the covers. Though married, her ring finger is bare. Her face is the one on the yard sign from earlier.

Her husband, **PAUL HARTNETT (38, Caucasian)**, wearing plaid pajamas and sitting in bed, takes a moment to look at his wife. He turns the alarm off (showing his ring on his finger).

PAUL

Emily? Emily? It's time to get up.

Emily slowly wakes, letting out a deep SIGH --

EMILY

(in a whiny voice)

Paul... let me sleep, please. I just want some more sleep...

BATHROOM

SOUND of a baby CRYING, reverberates through the scene.

A small, modern bathroom with bright lights. Emily, looking in the mirror, pulls down the skin under her eyes. She's wearing plaid pajamas (which she will wear throughout until the introduction of the love pill).

EMILY (CONT'D)
 (to herself)
 Shit.

She pulls back her curls, but rather than fix it, she lets it fall.

BABY'S ROOM

TIANA HARNETT (1) sits in her play-pen balling her eyes out as Emily approaches with an orb-shaped toy, passing it to her. Tiana immediately stops crying as a screen on the round object begins to light up while playing upbeat music.

EMILY (CONT'D)
 Really? I feel like this is getting a bit old. You know, if you really wanted to get someone's attention, why don't you try having a conversation? It's kind of what normal people do. You know? I'm just saying...

LIVING ROOM

A darkened room with the curtains, drawn to the side.

Emily places Tiana, who still holds her toy, in a giant, purple, hand-shaped FUTON. She then turns on the TV and picks up a remote, queuing her Netflix Account.

Nearby, a heap of junk food - chips, boxed chocolate, twizzlers - on an end table. Emily grabs a twizzler and places it between her teeth.

PAUL (O.C.)
 Em, have you seen my pink tie?

Pointing the remote at the T.V., Emily navigates to "Real Housewives of L.A."

EMILY
 (with a raised voice)
 No, I haven't.

KITCHEN

Paul stands in the messy kitchen, buttoning his white dress shirt.

PAUL
I'm calling Liza to see if she can help again this week.

His eyes soon fall on his daughter **DANIELLE HARTNETT (5)** who sits at the breakfast table lifting a soggy peanut butter sandwich out of a cereal bowl.

EMILY (O.C.)
I wasn't sure if to make cereal or peanut-butter jelly for breakfast, so I made both. Enjoy.

Paul exchanges a look with Danielle.

PAUL
Tell your mother that that's what Peanut Butter Reese's Pieces are for. I'll get you some, okay?

Paul and his daughter exchange a smile while **MARK HARTNETT (8)** shuffles in holding a folded piece of paper. He glances at his dad and then his mom, who's cuddled on the couch watching T.V.--

Mark moves toward his mother --

LIVING ROOM

Mark (**speaks with a slight stutter**) extends a pen and the unfolded paper to his mom.

MARK
Mom, can you sign this for school?

EMILY
(eyes glued to the T.V.)
Yep.

MARK
It's uhm...

Mark wants to tell her more but doesn't -- Emily yanks the paper, pressing it against the sofa.

EMILY
(ref: paper)
I'll sign whatever kid, just as long as you do't interrupt my Netflix binge again.

Mark is slightly incredulous as his mother signs with her free hand, the pen soon puncturing a hole in the paper --

KITCHEN

Paul, watching as Emily passes the paper to Mark, pours some milk in a bowl of Reese's Pieces as Mark approaches. He slides the bowl over to Danielle, who begins eating.

PAUL (O.C.)
There you go.

DANIELLE
Thanks, Dad.

Mark approaches.

PAUL
(to Mark)
What was that your Mom signed?

MARK
(placing the paper in his
back pocket)
Nothing.

PAUL
(not convinced)
Really? Okay. Go finished get ready-

Emily, still holding the remote, enters the kitchen.

EMILY
(to Paul)
Did you find your tie? Cause you
have like hundreds in the closet.

PAUL
The staff at work is wearing pink
today. In support of Meredith - who
died from breast cancer, remember?

EMILY
Uhm, no --

DANIELLE (O.S.)
Mommy, I don't want to go to school
today.

Danielle speaks with her mouth full of cereal.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)
Can I just stay home with you?

EMILY

Danny, school is not an option just like being your mother isn't a choice. We just can't always have things our way.

PAUL

Why would you say that?

Paul shakes his head at his wife.

EMILY

What?

Mike and Danielle watch as their parents exchange a look.

PAUL

(raising his voice)

You know what kids, I think it's time to go.

INT. ST. ANGELO'S ACADEMY - DAY - HALLS

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS of all ages, sizes and colors flood the area, moving toward lockers, grabbing books, and conversing with each other.

Mark stands by his locker, looking at a math paper with a red 'F' grade on it. His mother's signature is at the bottom. He places it in his open locker on top of another paper with a distinct 'F.'

ART CORNER

A colorful corner with kid-sized tables and chairs and the phrase "Art Corner" hanging on the wall.

Danielle sits at a table, using a crayon to draw the picture of a woman with a bloody knife. A TEACHER, placing a craft kit on a shelf, looks over Danielle's shoulder viewing the drawing.

DANIELLE'S CLASSROOM

A few rows of uniformed FIRST GRADERS sit quietly in their chairs. TEACHER 1 points to a projector screen with the advert for "Family Day." Danielle examines.

TEACHER 1

Family day is coming up next week.
Make sure invite your whole crew,
especially that older sibling who
gets on your nerves every so
often...

MARK'S CLASSROOM

Mark sits in a similar classroom of FIFTH GRADERS, looking at
the same digital flyer.

TEACHER 2

See to it that those persons that
you love are present.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - SAME - BRICKSHIRE FIRM

A DING on Paul's I-phone.

Paul, glasses on and wearing a red tie, sits at his computer,
grabbing his phone.

Text notification: "St. Angelo's Academy celebrates Family
Day!"

BACK TO SCENE

PAUL

Shit.

Paul clicks the phone off, which reveals his screen saver: a
beautiful picture of Emily - her hair pulled back and a smile
on her face.

INT. HARTNETT'S RESIDENCE - LATE AFTERNOON - LIVING ROOM

Emily sits on the couch eating ice cream and watching a fight
scene on "Real Housewives" while Tiana sits in a mini couch
eating from a bowl of ice cream as well --

EMILY

(to the screen)

I really wish you wouldn't trust
her Magnus. She's really not a good
person, but you're a glutton for
punishment, aren't you?

SOUND of the CURTAINS being drawn to the side --

EMILY (CONT'D)

Liza, may you close the shades,
please? A dark room just feels a
little more theatrical.

ELIZA (O.C.)

Yes, Mrs. Hartnett.

ELIZA (Hispanic maid, 60) holds a remote for a small, orb-shaped, PORTABLE VACUUM, which rams into the couch Emily lies on and sucks up some junk food --

EXT. ST. ANGELOU'S SCHOOL - SAME

Mark and Danielle walk over to the parking lot.

EXT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS - PARKING LOT

Paul stands next to his car, waving at his kids.

PAUL

Hey, sorry I'm late. Had lots to do
at the office --

Paul opens the back door and gestures for the kids to get in.

MARK

When is mom going to start picking
us up from school?

Danielle gets in -- Mark follows.

PAUL

After she finishes the 20th season
of Real House Wives, I think.

Paul sniggers to himself as Mark gets comfortable in the back seat.

DANIELLE

That's not funny, Dad.

PAUL

Sorry.

Paul closes the car door.

INT. HARTNETT'S RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS - KITCHEN

The area is spic and span. Dishes are put away. On the counter, silver bookends contain Real Estate Magazines.

LIVING ROOM

Tiana sleeps in her day pen while Emily sleeps on the couch, a few opened chip bags scattered on her and the ground. Emily pitches up at the sound of Mark's voice.

MARK (O.C.)

Hey, Mom.

FRONT FOYER/KITCHEN

Mark, clutching his school backpack, rushes toward the hall, disappearing. Paul, holding a briefcase, walks over to the kitchen counter.

PAUL

(to Mark)

No running in the house.

Danielle mopes through the door. Her father touches her shoulder, stooping to her height.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're okay?

Danielle shakes her head.

DANIELLE

It's just that Miss Caroline took my art supplies.

PAUL

I'll get you more, alright?

Paul pats her head as she nods, soon moving toward the hall -- Emily approaches Paul, holding his pink tie, now bleached and spotty in color.

EMILY

Look what Liza found in the washer.

Paul takes the tie.

PAUL

What's with the white spots?

EMILY

I don't know. I might have attempted to wash last week and screwed it up.

PAUL
 Hmmmm.
 (sighing)
 Okay. Go figure.

MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING

Emily sits in the bed, eating twizzlers while watching Real Housewives on her tablet. She wears earphones. Paul, dressed in his flannel pajamas, sits next to her. There's considerable distance between them.

PAUL
 The kids are down for the night.

Emily takes out a single ear bud.

EMILY
 What?

Still looking at his book, dryly:

PAUL
 I said the kids are down for the night.

FLASHBACK

STUDY ROOM

Paul, in his same pajamas, lie on the ground smiling as Danielle, smirking, uses a face paint pen to draw a circle on his cheek. Mark lies near Paul's feet, laughing.

BACK TO SCENE

MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING

Emily uses her finger to click on the next episode of Real Housewives --

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Tiana is vomiting a lot more. Have you noticed at all?

EMILY
 No, I didn't.

PAUL
 I mean, what are you feeding her?

FLASHBACK

KITCHEN - EVENING

Paul feeds Tiana, who sits in her high chair, from a bowl of mashed fruits.

As he places the spoon near her mouth, she throws up on her bib --

BACK TO SCENE

MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING

EMILY
(distracted)
The usual, I guess.

Paul looks at his wife.

PAUL
You mean junk food.

Emily adjusts her ear bud back in her ear.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(upset at her nonchalance)
I mean if you're still going to be
in this at least help me to parent,
Emily.
(slamming his book on his
lap)
Damn it.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - MORNING

A black-and-white theme office with sleek, modern furniture.

Emily, her hair shaggy and still dressed in pajamas, slouches in a black wing chair while looking at **DR. ANNE STEINBERG (55, wearing black-rimmed glasses)** who sits across from her. Dr. Steinberg scribbles on a writing pad.

DR. STEINBERG
Does your husband know that you're
still coming to therapy?

EMILY
No.

DR. STEINBERG
Why not?