THE FISH BOWL

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FADE IN:

EXT. STREET – DAY

Cars are parked sporadically along a palm tree lined street in a suburban middle class neighborhood.

A small aqua blue TOYOTA pickup truck moves slowly up the street. The truck bed has a shell and on top of that is a big round fish bowl with live fish swimming in the bowl.

The car slows then lurches forward at house after house as if the driver is looking for a particular address.

A cell phone rings.

LOUIS (O.S.)
Hello. Louis Armsweak at your service.
(Pause)
Who do you want? Mr. Ass?!... Hello!

Laughter erupts from the other end of the phone then a click is heard.

A sign on the back of the Toyota tailgate that says: AQUARIUM SERVICING SPECIALIST – WIPING YOURS CLEAN FOR SIX YEARS.

The truck finally comes to a stop in front of a Cape Cod Grey home that seems neglected compared to others on the street.

INT. TOYOTA TRUCK – MORNING

LOUIS ARMSWEAK (35) balding man with thick bifocal glasses squints to read an address on a sheet of paper.

LOUIS
One...three...two... what is that.
Five. This is the the, the.

Louis sneezes as he reads then wipes the windshield, his face, and paper with is sleeve.
LOUIS
Shit. Place.

He looks at the house then removes his eye glasses and rubs his eyes.

LOUIS
No! Not this house again. Butch.

Louis gets out of the truck.

INT. BUTCH’S HOME – CONT.

BUTCH (13) with curly fire red hair, excess freckles, and eyebrows to match peers through the living room window. He flashes an evil grin and holds a phone in his hand as he sees Louis.

WOMAN’S VOICE (OS)
Hey, Butch, get away from that window. I just washed it... Is that Aquarium guy here yet?

Still peering out the window.

BUTCH
Yep. The Ass guy is here.

WOMAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
Stop calling him that. Use your manners.

EXT. TOYOTA TRUCK – CONT.

Louis wears white coveralls with big blue letters on his back that read: A.S.S. WIPING YOURS CLEAN FOR SIX YEARS.

Louis opens the tailgate and grabs a red hand tool box. He slams the tailgate shut and walks toward the house.

POV of Louis shows that the house is in need of some updating and repair. The flowers are dead and the grass is brown.

He walks up the weed infested walkway to the front door.
LOUIS
(mumbling)
One dirty trick. One zinger. One obnoxious smell and I’ll... Well I’ll choke the shit out of the little bastard.

FRONT DOOR

He puts the tool box down and tugs on his coveralls then rings the door bell. A slight laugh escapes his lips as he waits on the door to open.

BUTCH (O.S.)
Who is it?

LOUIS
Aquarium guy.

BUTCH (O.S.)
You mean Ass guy.

Louis motions with his hand as if he is going to choke Butch.

BUTCH (O.S.)
Mom the ass guy is at the door. Should I let him in?

WOMAN (O.S.)
Let him in Butch and watch your language.

Butch peer through the curtains then move away as Louis looks at him.

Louis is impatient and pushes the door bell button twice. The door opens and Louis walks in carrying his tool box.

LOUIS
(peering at Butch)
Just so you know I carry mace for my rodent troubles. You aren’t going to be trouble today are you?
BUTCH
And my mom bought me a spell book. It has lots of spells for making people disappear. You don’t want me to cast a spell on you do you… ass guy.

INT. BUTCH’S HOME - CONT.

Louis goes to the fish tank in the center of the living room and puts the tool box down. The fish tank contains four large gold fish and the tank is infested with sludge and moss.

The interior of the house is covered in dust. Laundry is stacked on the couch and dirty dishes and glasses sit on top of the coffee table and end tables.

Louis goes back to the van to fetch more belongings and Butch runs up the stairs.

INT. BUTCH’S HOME – MINUTES LATER

Louis scrubs inside of the fish tank. Sneezes.

Next, he struggles with fish tank pump. Sneezes.

Louis looks through tool box for tools. Sneezes.

He catches fish tank lid as it starts to fall to the floor. Sneezes.

Louis holds a bright orange vacuum hose. Carefully he sucks some of the water out of the tank.

BUTCH’S MOM (36) stands behind Louis. She has flaming red curly hair and a short round frumpy body shape. She wears bright colored polyester clothing with flowers on her blouse.

She taps Louis on the shoulder to get his attention and he jumps away scared. The hose accidentally moves and sucks up a gold fish.

BUTCH’S MOM
Mr. Armsweak I gotta go to the store.
Pointing at the tank.

BUTCH’S MOM
Do you have a fish to replace that one? If Butch sees his fish gone he will come unglued.

Louis pulls the hose out of the tank and looks into it as if he is trying to see the fish.

LOUIS
I’m so sorry. Yes, yes I have more gold fish in the truck. I’ll put a new one in the tank. Butch won’t even know any different.

She takes her car keys out of her purse.

BUTCH’S MOM
Good. I’ll be right back. (Beat) Oh, if you flush the fish, be careful. Butch was messing with the toilet and it is acting up.

Louis starts to talk and sneezes. He wipes his nose with his sleeve.

LOUIS
Damn cold. Yes. I’ll be careful. Bye.

EXT. TOYOTA TRUCK – CONT.

Louis has the tailgate down. He picks up a baggy with a gold fish in it, slams the tailgate shut and walks back toward the front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONT.

Butch stands at the fish tank crying. All of the fish are dead and floating at the top.

BUTCH
You ass! You killed my fish!
Louis expresses a look of confusion.

    LOUIS
    No. I accide...

    BUTCH
    Fish killer!

    LOUIS
    Look... I accidentally sucked...

    BUTCH
    I’m gonna cast a spell on you ass man.

Louis switches from a sorry look to laughing at Butch’s threat.

    LOUIS
    Hey, while you’re casting spells could you cast a spell on my refrigerator and load it up with beer.

    BUTCH
    (evil stare)
    Think you’re funny do ya. Just wait.

Louis opens up the baggy and lets the new fish swim into the fish tank.

He scoops up the dead fish and walks off toward the bathroom.

Butch shakes and twitches while he follows him with his eyes. As Louis walks out of the living room Butch begins to chant.

    BUTCH
    Hey ya fish. Bey ya fish. Hey ya fish. Bey ya fish. Swirl and twirl and sink the bad man. Hey ya fish. Bey ya fish. Swirl and twirl...

While chanting he walks toward the bathroom light.
INT. BATHROOM – CONT.

Louis stands over the toilet and dumps the dead fish into the bowl.

    LOUIS
    (to self)
    After today I’m done with this crappy job.

Something catches Louis’ attention. He turns to see Butch standing at the bathroom door chanting.

Louis flushes the toilet lever and nothing happens.

He jiggles the lever a few times then lifts the toilet lid and jiggles the inside floater.

Butch keeps on standing at the door dazed and chanting.

INT. BATHROOM – CONT.

    LOUIS
    Oh, I forgot to ask if you could fill my fridge with Coronas.

Louis sets the lid down and pushes the toilet lever again to flush the toilet.

The toilet begins to flush and Butch chants louder and in a more shrill voice.

The water swirls and rises.

Louis attempts to stop the overflow.

He grabs a plunger, jiggles the lever frantically but the water keeps rising and swirling.

    LOUIS
    Get out of my way you little devil!

He tries to push past Butch.

Butch kicks him in the shin so he grabs the kid and pulls him into the bathroom. The door slams shut.
LOUIS
That hurt you little son of a...

The water keeps rising and swirling around like a tornado.

Butch and Louis are spinning around and around as the water rises throughout the bathroom.

Suddenly you hear a release in the toilet and it flushes.

LOUIS (OS)
(fading voice)
Shit.

BUTCH (OS)
(fading voice)
Whoa!

INT. BUTCH’S MOM CAR – CONT.

Butch’s mom arrives. She parks behind the Toyota.

BUTCH’S MOM
What is that?

EXT. TOYOTA TRUCK – CONT.

Kids and adults are starting to gather around the fish bowl that is attached to the truck. They are mesmerized.

Air bubbles perk inside the fish bowl on the truck.

It scares the crowd of people and they move back a step. The crowd screams in unison. Some put their hands over their mouths in horror and others point at the fish bowl.

Butch’s mom gets out the car and pushes through the crowd to see what all the commotion is.

BUTCH’S MOM
What’s the matter? Why are you all screaming?
She sees Louis is a LARGE GOLD FISH and Butch is a SMALLER GOLD FISH.

There are FISH BODIES and HUMAN FACES on the gold fish. Louis chases Butch round and round in the fish bowl with anger on his face.

Butch’s mom squints in disbelief to see Butch inside the fish bowl swimming as a gold fish.

BUTCH’S MOM
Butch!

Horror strikes her face.

BUTCH’S MOM
And you...you ASS!

She tries to get into the fish bowl to save Butch. She jumps one, two, three times desperately, but her attempts are in vain.

BUTCH’S MOM
Someone help me save my son!

Nobody comes to her aid.

She tries once more and manages to get on top of the fish bowl.

Her hand scoops through the water attempting to catch Butch.

BUTCH’S MOM
I’ll getcha Butchee... my baby... hang on!

A LARGE BETA fish appears! BUTCH’S MOM eyes pop wide open in disbelief. So do Butch’s!

The large beta jumps and SWALLOWS Butch in one gulp! The crowd goes crazy!

A large BURP is heard.
BUTCH’S MOM

NO!

Louis swims faster afraid of the beta. Horror can be seen on his face.

Butch’s mom SCREAMS.

BUTCH’S MOM

Noooo!

EXT. TOYOTA FISH BOWL - LATER NIGHT

Now the crowd has gone. The circus is over and just one person stayed.

It is Butch’s mom fishing in the fish bowl with a net.

She tries to catch Louis. He swims fast with fear on his face...

BLOOP, BLOOP!

FADE OUT