

HOUSE PLANTS

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INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

ANDREW, 7, messy hair, bright blue eyes stands at the side of a house plant.

It's dead.

Andrew waters it with a measuring jug, pouring a good amount of water down into the pot.

All around him there are more and more house plants, and all of them are dead.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - LOUISE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Andrew stands at the base of the bed, the curtains are drawn. And a television on top of a set of drawers is on behind him.

LOUISE, 38, pretty, long curly brown hair and glasses is lying in bed.

She mutes the television and looks across at Andrew.

LOUISE

I'm too tired, I'm sorry Andrew but we'll go out and do something tomorrow I promise. I'm just not feeling very well. You're dad's left me with everything and nobody is helping.

(she begins to cry)

He's just completely disappeared, as though those eleven years of marriage we had meant nothing. I can't find him. He's not replying to my texts anymore, not answering his phone. None of his friends are saying a word to me and his family just say they have no idea. But he's alive and well. Now I'm here all on my own without even a god damn explanation.

(holds a hand to her forehead)

I'm exhausted.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Another house plant in a corner by the bath. It's dead too.

Andrew waters it.

Louise appears in the open doorway.

LOUISE

What are you doing?

Andrew is startled, he spins around to face her.

ANDREW

I just want dad to come home,
things were better. It's better if
he's here.

She reaches out and takes the measuring jug out of his hands.
Pouring what water remained in it down the sink.

LOUISE

Well he's not coming back. You only
have me now. You need to understand
that. But you don't need him, you
can grow up without a dad just
fine.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Several letters are pushed through the letter slot.

Andrew watches them fall to the floor. He picks them up,
mostly bills but amongst them is a flyer boasting the skills
a local landscaper. 'Can bring any garden, no matter how bad
back to life.'

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Andrew is on the phone, sitting on the edge of the sofa.

ANDREW

I think all of my dad's plants are
dying. I need you to fix them, make
them like they were before. I think
some of them might be dead though.

JONATHAN

What is this, come on I've got
better things I could be doing.
Listen kid I need work, I don't
need to have my time wasted with
bad pranks.

ANDREW

My dad hasn't come home, but when
he does I don't want him to see his
plants this way. He spends so much
time with them. I don't want him to
get upset, or blame me. I just need
someone to fix them.

EXT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

Andrew digs up soil from a colorful flower bed with his bare
hands and bumps it down into a bucket beside him.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Andrew drags the bucket now filled with soil behind him and over to a long since dead house plant. With his hands he picks the soil up and dumps down it into the pot.

Louise watches on from the counter, she pours herself out a large glass of wine.

LOUISE

What are you doing, Andrew come on.
That's not going to do anything for
it.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Andrew is back on the phone, his hands dirty with mud, the bucket that had been filled with soil is now empty and down on the floor in between his feet.

JONATHAN

Is this serious, because I just
need work right now.

ANDREW

I just want you to get my dads
plants back to how they used to be.

JONATHAN

And can you pay me?

ANDREW

Yes. My mom can.

JONATHAN

What do you want doing exactly, are
these plants all in the house?

ANDREW

Yeah, they're my dads. When they
changed color and started to look
like they are now I stopped hearing
from him. I just don't want him to
see them like this.

JONATHAN

Alright. My dad left me and my two
brothers when I was very little and
we never saw him again. So you
know, not matter what I fix he
still might not come back.

Andrew frowns, he hangs up the phone.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

JONATHAN, 35, tall, handsome and dressed in overalls.

He stands over one of the dead house plants.

Andrew stands with him. Jonathan looks over at him.

JONATHAN

These don't look so good, you know
that right?

ANDREW

I've been watering them.

JONATHAN

Listen kid, these plants and I mean
every single one I've seen are
gone. I can't fix what is already
dead. But I tell you what, I can
replace them. Good as new.

ANDREW

My dad can't know.

JONATHAN

He won't know the difference, I
promise.

Andrew's face lights up, happy.

EXT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - DAY

Jonathan leaves the front door open behind him as he walks
over to a parked white van. Opening up the back of it, it's
filled with gardening equipment and potted plants. He grabs
hold of a couple of these plants and tucks them under his
arms.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - LOUISE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Louise's in bed, wrapped up under the covers. She's watching
the television tearfully.

Andrew enters as quietly as he can, being very careful to go
undetected.

He finds her purse on a side table, opens it up and takes out
all the money.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Andrew and Jonathan work together, they remove the dead
plants and replace them with live ones.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - LOUISE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Louise hears something, she mutes the television and sits up in bed.

She looks over towards the door.

LOUISE

Andrew?

She glances over towards the side table and can see her purse open.

She reaches over for it and discovers that the money has been taken out, furious.

INT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Andrew and Jonathan are replacing the last of the dead plants for live ones.

Louise walks in.

LOUISE

What's going on in here?

Andrew spins around to face her, shocked.

ANDREW

Louise!

Jonathan looks over at her.

She stares at him, coldly.

LOUISE

Who the hell are you?

JONATHAN

My name's Jonathan, I'm a landscaper and I'm...

Andrew jumps in.

ANDREW

I asked him here, he's helping me fix dad's plants. Well not fix, but make them like how they were before.

Louise steps closer to Jonathan.

LOUISE

I want you to leave. And I want you to take your plants with you.

Jonathan swaps between Louise and Andrew before settling onto Louise.

JONATHAN

Alright I'll go, I honestly don't want to cause you any distress. I like your son. I've only just met him but he's obviously a good kid. A sweet kid. He just misses his dad.

Louise comes over to Andrew and grabs a hold of his arms.

LOUISE

What are you doing, what are you even thinking? You're dad isn't coming back. Getting him a bunch of dumb plants isn't going to bring him home.

Andrew with tears in his arms yanks his arms free from Louise's hold.

ANDREW

I know. I know dad's gone. I get it. I thought bringing his plants back to the way they were would get him to come home. And I thought that's all I wanted. But he doesn't want to be here or he already would be.

(points at Louise)

But now it's your turn.

She taken aback.

LOUISE

My turn?

ANDREW

You need to admit dad isn't coming home either, no matter how much it hurts. You have to say it too.

She gasps.

LOUISE

Andrew.

ANDREW

You're still waiting for him mom. But you said it yourself, he's not coming back.

She's struck silent.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

I'm right aren't I?

A beat.

She steps closer to him, hugging him tight he buries his face into her stomach.

LOUISE
You're right. I'm sorry. We both
want him here but he's gone. I'll
be better from now on Andrew. I
promise.

EXT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - DAY

Louise goes out with Jonathan towards his van.

LOUISE
I want you to finish what you've
started with Andrew. I want you to
help him?

JONATHAN
Are you sure?

LOUISE
He needs this. I'll pay you of
course.

Jonathan considers. He lets out a deep breath.

JONATHAN
No, that's fine. I would be glad to
finish this.

EXT. ANDREW'S HOUSE - KITCHEN -DAY

Louise and Jonathan both stand together, smiling and watch as Andrew replaces the rest of the dead house plants with alive ones all on his own.

Louise smiles, proud.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END