

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY-MORNING

Rose curtains, two door armoire, a bedroom only large enough for a single queen-sized mattress. Silk sheets and a pile of home-made quilts cover two motionless bodies sprawled across the waterbed. An alarm clock dances on the edge of an oak-blend bed stand. A small hand reaches for it. A larger hand overtakes the smaller hand, stopping the sound emitted by the clock.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

CALVIN, (91) a frail veteran who still recalls the details of D-Day wearing a white undershirt tucked into navy DICKIES work pants, sifts through a pile of mail on the kitchen counter. He pulls out one larger envelope from the pile:

FRONT OF ENVELOPE

JONATHAN GREEN -- FOR THE BEST LAWN IN TOWN -- FAST GROW GRASS SEED MIXTURE

CALVIN

Puts the envelope aside. After a moment's pause, he collects the pile of mail into a stack and pulls out the one larger envelope from the pile:

FRONT OF ENVELOPE

JONATHAN GREEN -- FOR THE

CALVIN

Pleased with himself, he looks up.

CALVIN

(yells)

Sally-- Your boyfriend sent you a letter.

(looks down, sing-song yells)

John Green--

SALLY, (75), a little under 5 feet tall and endowed with large breasts, dance-hops into the kitchen.

SALLY

(quizzical)

Who is this new suitor Calvin?

She snatches the envelope out of Calvin's hands. He turns slowly away from her and notices a pile of letters on the counter. After a moments pause, he collects the letters into a pile and turn to Sally noticing a large envelope in her arms.

CALVIN
Whatcha got there Sal?

He pulls the envelope out of her tight grip.

FRONT OF ENVELOPE

JONATHAN GREEN -- FOR THE BEST LAWN IN TOWN -- FAST GROW
GRASS SEED MIXTURE

CALVIN

Confused, he looks up.

CALVIN
You crazy woman.

SALLY
(pretend-serious)
Who are you calling crazy?

CALVIN
(push points at her)
You. Woman.

SALLY
(smug)
Well, then you're darn right.

CALVIN
Why are you spending my money on grass
seed? I already have enough grass to
cut Sal.

SALLY
(pretend-serious)
Honey, I'm just trying to confuse you
to death so I can take all your money.

Sally nuzzles her head into Calvin's laughing belly. He pulls her in for a real hug.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

POINT OF VIEW: Small feeble hands tossing grass seeds in the largely barren lawn.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

A small, extraordinarily average backyard. No pool to speak of, a chain link fence, a somewhat kept garden, a small patch of grass surrounded by excess dirt, a weathered shed for tools which haven't been used in years.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MIDDAY

Burnt orange shag carpet, porcelain dolls perched on wooden shelves, aged knick knacks collect dust. Calvin is lying on his side in the reclined LA-Z-BOY chair. His mouth is open. The sound of his snore mixes with the hourly FOX NEWS report. A pool of saliva collects on the chair.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MIDDAY

Sally peaks through the kitchen window out onto the front lawn. After a moment, she scurries across the tile floor towards the back door.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MIDDAY

A middle-aged NEIGHBOR relaxed against the fence waves Sally over. Behind him in the driveway are a few younger men dressed in work clothes, hanging out of a muddy pickup truck.

NEIGHBOR

Hey Sal, is Calvin home?

SALLY

You know Cal. He's asleep in his chair.

NEIGHBOR

(dry laugh)

Well I got your roll of sod in the back of the pickup. I'll bring her

out--- if that's okay with you?

Sally nods the men in. She holds the gate open as they pass her and roll the sod out across the barren lawn.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

ANGLE ON: A lawn mower on top of a patch of sod.

We hear the roar of the engine starting.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

POINT OF VIEW: Small feeble hands wrapping a chain around the door handles of the shed, securing it with a lock and key.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Calvin stiffly shuffles through the kitchen to the back door.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Calvin shuffles over to the shed. He yanks on one of the handles. He notices they are locked together with a chain. He pauses for a moment and then shuffles back towards the house.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Calvin shuffles through the kitchen to the back door. Under his arm is an industrial bolt cutter.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Calvin smoothly cuts the lock and chain off of the shed handles. He enters the darkness of the shed. When he re-emerges back outside, he is wheeling out a red lawn mower weathered by years of use.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Pulled by the weight of her breasts forward into a hunch, Sally peaks over the kitchen sink window into the backyard.

We hear the roar of a lawn mower.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Calvin shuffles through the back door, leaving a trail of muddy footprints on the cream tiles. His white undershirt, drenched in sweat, clings to his chest. Sally is perched up next to the kitchen sink holding the CHARLOTTE OBSERVER in her left hand and a pencil in her right. She furiously scribbles letters into the weekly cross word puzzle.

SALLY

(looks up)

Calvin, I just mopped the floor.

Sally turns her head to make eye contact with him as he approaches the sink. Her reading glasses slide down her nose a bit. Calvin passes by her without looking up.

CALVIN

Woman don't tell me what to do.

Sally playfully lunges over to pull Calvin into a hug, but he swats her away and shuffles out of the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Sally stands in the center of the kitchen with a landline phone to her ear.

We hear the roar of a lawn mower starting.

SALLY

Okay, I'm coming out to get you now.

Sally trips over herself to place the phone on the charging stand. She hurries out of the kitchen towards the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

BROCK, (45) a prematurely balding police officer in uniform, enters the living room. Sally wobbles behind, in his shadow.

We hear the roar of a lawn mower.

BROCK

Mom, you don't have to tell me--- I
can hear him struggling for dear life
by myself.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Brock reclines up against the counter. Sally matches him across the kitchen. She reclines up against the refrigerator, decorated in the family's holiday greeting cards from the past 10 Christmases.

SALLY

I tried hiding the mower behind the
bushes.

BROCK

(interrupting)
He found it?

SALLY

I tried emptying the can of gas.

BROCK

(interrupting)
He went to the store.

SALLY

I tried buying seed and sod.

BROCK

(interrupting)
He mowed through that.

SALLY

I tried locking up the shed.

BROCK

(interrupting)
Bolt cutters?

Calvin moves through the door, leaving a trail of muddy

footprints on the newly scrubbed cream tiles. Sally pulls the mop out from behind the refrigerator. Brock pulls it out of her hands. He begins cleaning the tiles as Calvin exits the kitchen.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Sally and Brock sit in rusting white lawn chairs facing the small garden and neighboring shed. Brock digs his boot into the freshly mowed dirt beneath him.

BROCK

Well, I, honestly don't know what to tell you Mom.

Both are looking down at the dirt surrounding them. Sally kicks a little towards Brock. He is looking the other way. He doesn't notice.

BROCK

Maybe it's time to consider what the doctor said.

SALLY

Brock, I don't want to talk about that.

Brock pauses for a moment and then reaches out to hold his mother's hand. They sit in silence. Their hands hang in the air, bridging the distance between the two lawn chairs.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY-MORNING

Sally and Calvin lay on their sides facing the east and west wall, respectively. The clock sashays for a moment's time before Calvin reaches out to end the dance. Dressed in white briefs and a tank, Calvin slowly pulls his legs out from under the quilts and rests both feet on the shag rug. He takes in the bedroom--- a pair of khaki slacks hang outside of an oak-blend armoire, hearing aids rest in a plastic bowl, a porcelain teacup half full.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKYARD TOOL SHED - MORNING

A few shafts of sunlight expose an assortment of garden tools

hanging on the far wall. Calvin pulls a string hanging in the center of the room. The bulb emits a light that doesn't reach the far ends of the room. Calvin takes in the contents of the shed--- a coiled up watering hose, a set of planters, the red lawn mower.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Sally lends up against the sink, dressed in a FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH VACATION BIBLE STUDY XL white T. She flips to the weekly crossword in the CHARLOTTE OBSERVER. The muffled sound of Cal reaches her. She turns to put in her hearing aids.

We hear Calvin yelling for help.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Sally comes out the back door, moving quickly towards Calvin. Calvin stands in front of the shed, motionless. Sally slows her pace. She surveys the scene.

SALLY

Why are you out her hollering like
you're hurt or something?

Calvin pulls his left hand out from under his right armpit. Blood covers his middle three fingers.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Oh honey, what have you done to
yourself?

CALVIN

(frustrated)

Woman, I didn't hurt myself.

He kicks the shed, indicating who was to blame for the injury. Sally relaxes her grip on his arm.

SALLY

(softly)

Come on in Cal. I have band-aids
behind the mirror.

Calvin places his hand back under his armpit and follows her back into the house.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Sally pulls gauze out of the first aid kit. Calvin holds his hand out towards her, looking away from the blood. Sally meticulously cleans the hand.

CALVIN

Ouch!

Calvin pulls his hand back towards himself, shrinking away from Sally.

SALLY

Come on Cal. I have to clean it.

Calvin hesitantly pulls his hand out from under his opposite arm. He looks down startled by the blood and flings it towards Sally.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MIDDAY

Brock and Sally crouch over the pathetic garden trying to salvage the small amount of vegetation left.

SALLY

He hurt himself yesterday.

Brock grabs a hand full of the dirt from the lawn. He loosens his grip and allows the streams of dirt to fall back onto the lawn.

BROCK

And he still mowed today.

SALLY

It's worse now Brock.

BROCK

How bad?

SALLY

He forgot that his hand was bloody only minutes after he asked me to wrap it.

BROCK

Have you gone to the doctor again?

SALLY

I don't know if I can handle it Brock.

BROCK

One of these days he is going to kill himself out there.

SALLY

He forgot that he organized the mail two times in a row.

BROCK

Mom, you have to bring him to the doctor.

SALLY

Don't worry, Brock. I've been writing it all in my journal.

BROCK

What is it going to take though?

SALLY

His check up isn't for another few weeks.

BROCK

One of these days he is going to kill himself out there.

SALLY

I have things under control.

BROCK

I don't know about that.

After a moment's pause, Sally looks up into Brock's eyes, curiously.

SALLY

I have another idea.

BROCK

And that is?

SALLY

What if I give...
(cocks her head)
you the lawn mower?

BROCK

You want me to take away that man's
life?

SALLY

(hesitantly)

Maybe.

BROCK

Let's be reasonable for a moment.

SALLY

(interrupting)

I think it could really work Brock.

BROCK

Think about it for a second. Dad wakes
up every morning thinking it's
Saturday, thinking that the grass
needs to be cut. It's brown out there
now. Isn't that a sign?

SALLY

Stop Brock.

BROCK

Maybe just consider what the doctor
said.

SALLY

Brock, I know what is best for your
father.

BROCK

You know what is best for you.

SALLY

Brock don't say that. You know how
much I am sacrificing for this family.
I will not send your father to a
goddam care center.

Sally begins to shake. Brock immediately pulls her into his
chest. He strokes her hair, softly. They stand in a silent
embrace.

BROCK

I'll...

(beat)

I'll take the lawn mower.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Sally holds open the shed door and Brock rolls the red lawn mower out. They walk over to the end of the driveway and place it in to the bed of his pickup truck.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY-MORNING

Calvin pulls his legs out from under the sheets and plants his feet into the shag rug.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Calvin shuffles through the kitchen to the back door.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Sally lays still, peacefully asleep under the quilts. Calvin bursts through the bedroom door with the phone in his hand. He shuffles quickly over to Sally. He shakes her shoulders until her eyes open.

CALVIN

I'm calling the police.

SALLY

You are doing what?

CALVIN

Someone has robbed us Sally.

(panting)

I'm calling the police.

Sally pulls the phone out of Calvin's hand, hiding it behind her back.

SALLY

Oh no you are not. You are going to talk to me.

(beat)

What is going on Calvin?

CALVIN

Sally, I've looked everywhere for my lawn mower. It's no where. Someone has robbed us.

A short silence.

SALLY

I told Brock to take the lawn mower.

CALVIN

(confusion)

But Brock has a lawn mower.

SALLY

Yes, he does Cal.

CALVIN

Why would he need my lawn mower?

SALLY

He didn't need it.

CALVIN

Why would he take it? I need to cut the grass. I haven't cut the grass in weeks.

SALLY

Cal.

(beat)

You cut the grass yesterday.

CALVIN

No.

(beat)

I couldn't have. Yesterday was Hilda's birthday. I didn't have time to.

SALLY

Yes you did Cal.

CALVIN

No.

(beat)

No. No. I couldn't have. Yesterday was Hilda's birthday. You remember that right?

Sally reaches her hand out to grasp onto Calvin's shaking hand.

SALLY
Come with me Cal.

Sally, holding Calvin's hand, walks him out of the bedroom.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The couple walk out onto the lawn. Sally kicks the dirt beneath her up.

SALLY
Now you can see yourself. There is no
more grass to be cut.

Calvin takes in the backyard-- an endless sea of dirt, fence to fence.

CALVIN
It's been a real dry week.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

It's a party. The kitchen is packed. The 30-something-year-olds gather around the sink. The toddlers crawl on the creme tiles through the maze of legs. The pre-teens gather in the corner planning their escape. Sally is busy at the stove. She is placing the final garnishes on the deviled eggs. No one notices her. Sally's two daughter weave through the crowd, out the back door. Brock follows them out back.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Calvin sits on the lawn chairs with another man of his age. He jumps, with excitement, when he sees his children. He embraces his eldest daughter and his youngest daughter. He turns towards Brock, pauses for a moment, and then turns back around to sit down and continue his conversation.

CUT TO:

INT. DINNING ROOM - DAY

A china cabinet, a stand for the landline, a center table with five too many chairs around it. People begin to move into the dining room with plates overflowing with food.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is empty. It bears the remnants of a southern family gathering. Brock and Sally stand in the kitchen alone.

We hear the eruption of laughter from the brunch guests in the neighboring dining room.

BROCK

He hugged Sarah and Melissa, and then turned to me--- looked at me blankly like he didn't even know me.

SALLY

He did what?

BROCK

I don't know what I did.

SALLY

I'll talk to him, Brock.

BROCK

It's fine.

SALLY

I know your father.

BROCK

It doesn't really matter. I guess I just got this weird feeling inside that he remembered.

SALLY

Remembered what?

BROCK

He looked at me like he knew I was the one who stole his lawn mower.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Everyone is seated at the dinning room table in front of newly emptied plates. Parents place their fingers to their lips to silence the younger children. Calvin struggles to pull himself to stand up. He uses the shoulder of a neighboring relative to support himself. Slowly the brunch

guests notice and stop speaking to one another. He picks up a fork and a plastic glass from IKEA. He hits the plastic glass with the fork. Smiles and laughs spread across the room at the weak sound.

CALVIN

I'm happy to see y'all today. I know I saw some of y'all yesterday at Hilda's, but hey I'm not complaining.

The brunch guests shift in their seats, uncomfortable.

CALVIN

I don't know why this crazy woman planned a brunch without telling me.

A few guests chuckle.

CALVIN

(nervous, confident)

I am supposed to be mowing the lawn right now. It's been weeks, but she invited all of you over here.

A silence.

CALVIN

I guess that's why I love her though.

There is confused laughter from the brunch guests.

CALVIN

(wink)

I have thing for crazy women.

There is an eruption of laughter from the brunch guests.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sally pulls Calvin into the bedroom.

CALVIN

Well these deviled eggs haven't made me go diarrhea yet.

SALLY

Cal, why didn't you hug Brock?

CALVIN
Sometimes your food even makes my poop
green.

SALLY
Did you hear me?

CALVIN
What Sal?

SALLY
I said. Why didn't you hug Brock?

CALVIN
I didn't hug Brock.

SALLY
I know Cal. Why didn't you hug your
son?

CALVIN
I don't know Sal.

SALLY
You've ignored him all morning.

CALVIN
(irritated, angry)
Sally, I don't know.

SALLY
(reassuring)
Cal, it's okay.

A silence.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Just talk to me.
(beat)
Please, Cal.

CALVIN
I don't know why, but something's
wrong.

SALLY
With our son Brock?

CALVIN
I got this feeling inside that
something wasn't right.

SALLY
Do you know what might have been
wrong?

CALVIN
I. I.
(beat)
I know Brock did me wrong---

SALLY
(interrupting)
When did Brock do anything?

CALVIN
I can't hug no one when I have that
feeling inside.

SALLY
What did he do?

A long silence. Calvin looks startled.

CALVIN
What time is it Sal?

Sally looks down at her watch.

SALLY
It's only twelve after eleven, Cal.

CALVIN
For god-sake woman. Stop yapping.

SALLY
Calvin!

Calvin's head turns at the sound of loud laughter from the
other room.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Calvin, I'm serious. You are gonna
tell me about why you aren't talking
to our son.

Calvin's head drifts forward. He loses sight of Sally. He
blinks. He sees her again.

CALVIN
Do you know where the lawn mower is?

SALLY
(defeated, sympathetic)
Right where you left it honey.

CALVIN
Oh good. I was beginning to worry.
It's been weeks since I cut the grass.
And you know dam Loretta from the HOA.
(giggles)
She is gonna slap my buttock if I
don't cut that grass.

SALLY
(chuckle)
I don't want anyone slapping your butt
except for me.

Calvin turns around and shakes his bottom in Sallys face. She cracks a smile.

CALVIN
Sal you better grab that lawn mower
quick then. Because the ladies are
just looking for an excuse to touch
this.

Calvin shoves his bottom into Sally's face. The force of it pushes her back. Playfully, she slaps it and then hugs him from behind.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.