

The Neighbourhood

By

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EXT. FURNACE STREET - DAY

Rows of picturesque houses, perfect lawns and spotless pavements. A fictional, almost photoshopped feel - a street straight from a magazine.

A DOG WALKER, mid 50's, ambles down the pavement, an overweight jack russel struggling to follow at his side.

EXT. 12 FURNACE STREET - FRONT GARDEN

Number 12 stands out as different to the rest of the street. Imperfect, large patches of dead grass bordered by weeds, the picket fence broken, the house dirty and in disrepair.

ALISON, 25, over-dressed for gardening, struggles to lift a watering can. She pours water over two freshly planted crocuses, satisfied.

The dog walker passes her gate, peers over at her efforts.

Alison smiles. Waves.

ALISON

Morning!

The dog walker pauses, looking from Alison to the lawn.

DOG WALKER

You're letting the street down,
you know. Have been for some
time.

ALISON

Excuse me?

The Dog Walker doesn't respond further. Expressionless in response.

Alison loses her smile, gathers her garden tools and leaves the uncomfortable exchange.

The dog walker takes a lingering glance of disgust, and carries on.

INT. 12 FURNACE STREET - DOWNSTAIRS

Alison stomps through the house, straight through the hallway and into the open plan living area.

She sets down her tools on the kitchen counter.

ALISON

What is it with the people round
here?

GARY, 26, dressed for a day on the sofa, sits a few feet away, back to her. He doesn't respond.

ALISON
Sorry if we're letting the
perfect little street down.
There's no need to be so rude.

She washes her hands under the kitchen tap.

GARETH
Hey, Alison? Can you come over
here and take a look at this?

Alison notices specks of mud over her top.

ALISON
Hang on, let me just pop upstairs
and get changed.

INT. 12 FURNACE STREET - UPSTAIRS

Alison scampers up the stairs and towards the bedroom, passing Gareth's Office on the way past. She stops suddenly, and double takes.

Gareth is in the office, sat at the computer, tapping away on the keyboard. Alison steps into the room, confused.

ALISON
Gareth, how did you get up here
so fast?

He stops typing, impatient with interruptions.

GARETH
Huh?

ALISON
How did you get up here so fast?

Gareth rolls his eyes and continues to type.

GARETH
I've been up here for hours.. And
no, I'm not getting anywhere.
Thanks for asking.

Alison turns back to the staircase, unsettled.

INT. 12 FURNACE STREET - DOWNSTAIRS

Alison heads back down to the living area, almost trancelike, trying to make sense of Gareth's movements.

She enters the space, and sure enough, Gareth is seated, back to her, looking down at something in his lap.

GARETH

Alison? Can you come here a second?

ALISON

Gareth. Are you messing around?
You're freaking me out.

Gareth doesn't react.

GARETH

Can you come here a second?

ALISON

Gareth! Seriously. How did you get down here so fast?

Behind Alison, a young woman enters silently, creeping step by step.

The figure moves quietly through the kitchen, drawing a knife from the block.

ALISON

Gareth!

A long silent pause as Gareth finally turns to face Alison, his expression blank. Cold.

A voice from upstairs.

GARETH (O.S)

Who are you talking to down there?

Alison's eyes open in terror. Before she can react further the intruder walks confidently up behind her, knife raised. She looks *exactly the same* as Alison.

OFF CAMERA there are screams, the thudding of feet and chaos. Up on the wall A PICTURE OF THE HAPPY COUPLE.

After a few moments there's silence.

Alison, covered in blood, steps into view and moves towards the window.

Through the blinds a number of people have gathered. The dog walker and a handful of other neighbours, all returning blank expressions.

Alison nods with a smirk, they nod back, as Gareth, also bloody, walks up and places an arm on her shoulder. They smile.

END