We Can Breathe In Space

Ву

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FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL BUS - AFTERNOON

Two uniformed children exit a school bus.

CHRISTIAN MARTIN (13) an intelligent and straight forward male preteen who takes pride in revealing the falseness in people. Christian is wearing a green jacket and tie with khaki slacks.

NELLIE MARTIN (9) the sweet and innocent younger sister, takes everything literally and in face value, never questions presented facts. Nellie wears a green and red plaid skirt and green knee highs.

EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

The school bus passes as Christian and Nellie proceed to the sidewalk. Christian listens to music, until Nellie distracts him.

NELLIE

Who are you listening to?

Christian becomes distracted, and removes the headphones.

CHRISTIAN

Huh? Say that again, Nellie.

NELLIE

Just wondering who you were listening to.

CHRISTIAN

Does it matter? It's not like your going to know who the band is anyways.

NELLIE

Well if you don't know who you're listening to you could have just said that.

CHRISTIAN

Joy Division, I'm listening to Joy Division. Are you happy now?

NELLIE

Cool! Which song?

Christian examines phone.

CHRISTIAN

Love Will Tear Us Apart.

NELLIE

Never heard of that song. Do they scream and go like this?

Nellie overly imitates a musician's body language.

CHRISTIAN

You're silly. Hold up, we're about to cross the street.

Christian retrieves Nellie's hand in order to cross the street onto the sidewalk.

EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Both children walk in a steady pace as they head home. Nellie's distracted by the cracks in the sidewalk, trying her best to avoid them. Christian takes note of this.

CHRISTIAN

What are you doing?

NELLIE

If I step on a crack I'll break Mom's back. I'm being careful.

CHRISTIAN

Seriously? Who told you this?

NELLIE

Eddie, this new kid in my class. He's from England so he's really smart.

CHRISTIAN

Pretty sure he was just teasing you.

NELLIE

No he wasn't, it's true. He told me that he forgot one time and his Mom was in the hospital for six weeks.

Christian shakes head.

CHRISTIAN

Doubt that.

NELLIE

Or, what if Dad got into the car accident?

CHRISTIAN

This hasn't been our best conversation.

Nellie pauses.

NELLIE

For sale.

CHRISTIAN

What's for sale?

EXT. MARTIN HOME - FRONT YARD - AFTERNOON

A green grass way fills the yard with a split of pavement down the middle leading to the entrance. In the center of the yard hold a "for sale" sign.

NELLIE

Are we moving?

INT. FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Christian is followed through the front door by Nellie. Christian steadily closes the red wooden front door. Christian and Nellie set their backpacks along the hallway.

CHRISTIAN

Mom, we're home.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The living room accompanies a large high definition television with a long leather red couch and a matching love seat boxing the area in.

STACY MARTIN (38), short dark hair, lengthy figure. Stacy sits in the love seat.

AUSTIN MARTIN (41), firm and handsome figure, dressed in business casual attire. Austin paces through the room, thinking with his body.

Christian and Nellie enter.

NELLIE

Are we moving mom? What's happening?

CHRISTIAN

Dad, you're home early.

AUSTIN

Kids, please have a seat. Your mother and I have something we need to discuss with you.

Christian and Nellie both take a seat on the large leather red couch.

NELLIE

I really don't like this couch. It's so loud and uncomfortable.

Christian and Nellie take a few seconds to adjust themselves in a comfortable position.

Austin stops pacing and pauses to a dress his family.

CHRISTIAN

Dad, are we moving? We better not be moving or I swear to God I'll runaway.

NELLIE

I'll runaway too.

CHRISTIAN

And the only place you will see me is on a board a Wal-Mart. Nellie, are you ready to see what you'll look like ten years from now?

Austin ignores Christian to progress the conversation.

AUSTIN

We are not moving...it's much more complicated than that.

STACY

Raise your hand if you want a divorce.

Austin sighs heavily after hearing Stacy's comment.

AUSTIN

Come on, Stacy. Christ.

NELLIE

Who or what is a divorce? Is he buying our house.

STACY

A divorce is when your father only wants to see you on the weekends.

NELLIE

The weekends? So, you don't love us anymore.

CHRISTIAN

Who's to say he ever did.

NELLIE

Daddy, why do you only love me on the weekend?

AUSTIN

Christian, stop manipulating my words. Nellie, look at me princess.

Austin approaches Nellie and bends down to eye level.

NELLIE

Yes, daddy?

AUSTIN

I will always and forever love you and your brother. I just don't love your mother anymore.

NELLIE

When you make me go to bed I don't love you. But that goes away.

AUSTIN

It's different with adults. Trust me, one day you will understand.

CHRISTIAN

Ten years from now.

NELLIE

So, when I grown up I will get divorced too? Then why did I get married in the first place?

CHRISTIAN

Great point, Nellie. Dad, care to enlighten us with anything close to the truth?

AUSTIN

Christian, you aren't making this any easier.

NELLIE

Geez, ten years isn't enough time to figure all of this out.

Austin retreats back to pacing through the living room.

AUSTIN

Hear me out. Your mother and I have ran into some issues and it would be best if we weren't together. Can you try to understand?

CHRISTIAN

Sure, I understand. Mostly, because most of my friends parents are divorced. Can't fight biology, huh?

AUSTIN

Can't fight biology? What's that even suppose even mean?

STACY

Christian is the one who told me about the affair. Correction, affairs.

NELLIE

Okay, what is an affair?

Stacy cuts Christian off.

STACY

You'll visit your father every other weekend, starting this Friday.

AUSTIN

But it's really not that bad when you think about it. I mean people get divorced everyday.

Austin absorbs the awkwardness and begins to exit.

STACY

Kids, tell your father goodbye before he leaves.

Christian and Nellie remain seated, ignoring Austin.

Stacy glances towards Christian.

Christian then rises and proceeds to approach Austin.

CHRISTIAN

Dad.

AUSTIN

Yes, what is it son? Is there something on your mind?

CHRISTIAN

Can I have some lunch money?

Austin battles emotion.

AUSTIN

Oh, sure no problem.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Stacy leans against the wall as she begins to light a cigarette. After several attempts Stacy tosses the lighter out of frustration. The lighter hits the "For Sale" sign, knocking the sign at an angle.

Christian enters.

Christian pulls a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. Stacy observes in shock.

CHRISTIAN

What? I'm a teenager. Besides, I need to get this out of my system while I'm still young.

Christian hands Stacy a cigarette and the lighter.

STACY

Today was just so exhausting. You're lucky I'm too tired to care.

CHRISTIAN

Don't beat yourself up, Mom. You didn't do anything wrong.

STACY

Are you sure? After all, your father was hoping from woman to woman like a fucking bumblebee.

CHRISTIAN

Women, what women? I'm confused now.

Stacy takes one last drag of the cigarette and retreats to the ground as she slowly pieces together the situation.

STACY Martin, party of four.