

FEMALE 35-45/ YOUNG MALE 12-16

Helen (mid-late 30s) and Josh (her teenageson) walk towards a beat up car parked in the driveway. They are in the middle of a heated conversation.

JOSH

I have a life to lead, you know. I have better things to do than hanging out with that retard.

HELEN

Don't use that word.

JOSH

Well, I'm sick of him always following me around. He's like a dog or something.

HELEN

He looks up to you. You're his big brother. Try putting yourself in his place.

JOSH

No thanks.

Helen opens the trunk, points at a brand new backpack.

HELEN

They said this was the best frame for hiking.

Josh glances at it with a lackluster expression.

HELEN (CONT'D)

You could at least pretend to be excited. It cost seventy dollars.

JOSH

I'm getting shipped off to some camp with a bunch of geeks and you expect me to act excited?

Helen reels around to face him.

HELEN

Why not try it? It's better than being angry all the time!

Josh smiles bitterly.

JOSH

Who says I'm angry?

Helen picks up the backpack and pauses a beat, as if choosing her words carefully.

HELEN

Look, I know you're still dealing with a lot of stuff. But the only way we're gonna get through this is if we all stick together.

JOSH

Together? You're never even home!

Helen is stung. After a beat -

HELEN

Where do you think I am twelve hours a day? Sipping daquiris by a pool somewhere? Reading Cosmo? No, I'm out there in the trenches, busting my butt so we don't end up living out of the back of this goddamned car, and you're telling me I'm not around enough?

Josh looks around nervously.

JOSH

Mom, get a grip. You're like yelling.

HELEN

Do you think I wanted it to turn out like this? Gimme a break for once.

JOSH

Okay, okay, just chill out.