

The Pillar Tree Mansion  
(or The Baker-Sanchez Kids & The Pillar Tree Mansion)

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EXT. MIDDLE CLASS SUBURBAN COMMUNITY -- MORNING

A typical cookie cutter suburban community. Where every second house is the same just different colors, or the front door is to the left of the attached garage not the right.

The house with the front door on the left that's painted in colors slightly resembling an Easter basket is the Baker-Sanchez home.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

The house is alive with commotion. CYNTHIA SANCHEZ, 14, the eldest child, tall and slender, has her suitcase open on her bed and her stacks of outfits neatly folded beside it. She picks her head up from underneath her bed.

CYNTHIA

Mom!

MARIA SANCHEZ (O.S.)

Yes!

CYNTHIA

Where're my Ugg boots?

MARIA SANCHEZ (O.S.)

Try the front closet.

Cynthia gets up and leaves her room.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, FRONT FOYER

Cynthia walks down the stairs. She finds her step brother MARK BAKER, 8, short, hyperactive and imaginative, kneeling in the closet throwing shoes out one by one.

CYNTHIA

Mark, what are you doing?

MARK

I can't find my Major Franklin action series five. I think his last mission brought him to the smelly jungles of shoe forest. But I can't be to sure. Major Franklin is a Major so he probably got out of that one no problem.

(He looks at Cynthia.)

You haven't seen him have you?

(CONTINUED)

CYNTHIA

No. I have no idea where Major Franklin is.

MARK

Oh...

Mark turns back into the closet and continues his search.

CYNTHIA

Did you see my Ugg boots?

MARK

Are they those weird looking things you always wear?

CYNTHIA

They're not weird, okay!

MARK

Here they are! Oh wow they're really soft.

CYNTHIA

Yeah, I know. Can you give them to me?

MARK

Hey, Major Franklin, yes!! He must have been catching some R and R before his next mission.

CYNTHIA

Can I have my boots now?

MARK

Yeah, here they are.

Mark comes out of the closet, stands up, and hands Cynthia her Ugg boots. Cynthia looks at the boots and sees Major Franklin hanging on the edge.

CYNTHIA

Get Major Franklin out of my boot.

MARK

But he likes it in there.

CYNTHIA

Mom!

MARK

Okay, okay, I guess he's rested up enough for his next mission.

Mark pulls Major Franklin out of Cynthia's boot. Cynthia takes her boots and walks back upstairs.

Mark begins to move Major Franklin around making various PUNCHING and KICKING noises. He walks down the front hallway to the stairs that lead to the basement. He takes them down.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, BASEMENT

Mark walks over to his bed and sits down continuing the adventures of Major Franklin. His sleeping bag and his overstuffed backpack sit at the foot of his bed.

The back half of the basement is divided into two. Mark's bedroom and his brother's bedroom EDDIE BAKER, 13, chubby, strong, and kind of a bully. Eddie sits at his desk playing computer games. He swivels on his chair and looks at Mark.

EDDIE

Can you stop making those stupid noises?

MARK

Why?

EDDIE

Because I said so.

Mark closes his mouth and Eddie swivels back to his game. Mark slowly starts to move Major Franklin around this time mouthing the sound effects.

Eddie quickly turns back around. Mark immediately throws Major Franklin against the wall. Eddie SCOFFS then goes back to his game. Beat. Mark hops off his bed and goes over to him.

MARK

Aren't you excited for the camping trip?

EDDIE

No.

MARK

C'mon it'll be fun Eddie. We're gonna have s'mores and hot dogs and chips and Dad's gonna make a fire

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARK (cont'd)  
and we'll tell ghost stories and we can go fishing. Then we can wake up really early and wander in the forest and we can pretend we're in some other world and we can make swords out of sticks. Don't you want to make swords out of sticks?

EDDIE  
No.

MARK  
Oh, well I do.

EDDIE  
That's great. Now go away.

Mark walks away dejected. He spots Major Franklin leaned up against the wall and he's instantly happy again. He runs over to him.

TODD BAKER (O.S.)  
Guys! Were heading out! Grab your stuff!

Mark picks up the Major and runs over to his bed. He grabs his bags and runs upstairs.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, MAIN FLOOR

Mark arrives at the top of the stairs. He runs to another door beside the foyer, opens it, and jumps inside.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, GARAGE

Mark lands inside the garage and the door SLAMS behind him. The garage door is open and the family van is parked outside on the driveway.

His Dad, TODD BAKER, 45, a playful office professional and wannabe outdoors man, is walking with bags in hand towards the van. Mark runs by him.

TODD  
Wow! Someone's excited.

MARK  
Yeah Dad, aren't you!?

(CONTINUED)

TODD  
Yeah I'm excited. Just not that excited.

EXT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, DRIVEWAY

Mark gets to the van, opens the trunk and throws his bags in. He runs to the passenger side sliding door opens it and hops in.

Todd finally reaches the van and looks in. Mark is sitting in the back already buckled in, trying to hold in his excitement.

TODD  
Mark, do you wanna do me a favor?

MARK  
Yeah, Dad.

TODD  
Go get Alan. He's in his workshop.

MARK  
Okay.

Mark immediately undoes his belt, hops out of the van and runs into the house.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME

The door to the garage flings open and Mark runs through the house. His brother Eddie arrives at the top of the stairs carrying his bags. Mark quickly darts out of the way narrowly avoiding a collision.

He runs by the kitchen and sees his step mom MARIA SANCHEZ, 45, loving but strict, packing the coolers full of food.

MARK  
Hi Maria! Bye Maria!

MARIA  
Hi Mark.

Mark swings the screen door open and heads out into the backyard.

MARIA  
Hey slow down, you're gonna break something.

The screen door SLAMS shut. Maria shakes her head.

EXT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, BACKYARD

Mark runs to the back right corner of the yard. Where a decrepit wooden structure, somewhere in between a garage and an outhouse, has been built. Mark swings open the door and hops inside.

INT. ALAN'S WORKSHOP

Mark leans over and GASPS for air. His step brother ALAN SANCHEZ, 10, timid but brilliant for his age, is working on some mechanical device. Alan quickly throws a sheet over his latest project.

MARK

(Out of breath.)

Grab... Your stuff... We're leaving...

ALAN

Okay.

MARK

(Regaining his breath.)

What are you... Building?

ALAN

Nothing, nothing.

Mark walks over to it.

ALAN

No, don't do that.

Mark pulls off the sheet revealing what looks like a model rocket launcher. It's equipped with five rockets all pointed in different directions.

MARK

Wow! This is amazing.

Mark starts to dart his head around the launcher looking and touching everything.

ALAN

Hey! Don't play with that.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

This is like something a scientist  
would build.

Alan gets between his project and Mark and tries to pull the  
sheet back on.

ALAN

Mark, stop it!

Mark sees a big red button with a wire running to the  
launcher.

MARK

What happens if I press this?

Mark presses the button.

ALAN

Noooooo!!

BOOM. One rocket takes off lifting the sheet with it and  
sticking itself into the roof. Two other rockets take off  
and bounce around the workshop. Mark stares at the spectacle  
in amazement. Alan ducks for cover.

MARK

Coooooooool.

Alan pulls Mark down beside him. Another rocket sticks into  
the roof. Beat. SILENCE. Mark and Alan both stand up.

MARK

That was awesome!

ALAN

One rocket didn't fire.

Alan looks at the launcher. One rocket remains and it's  
pointed right at the workshop window that faces the house.

MARK

We're lucky it didn't it probably  
would have hit the house.

ALAN

Yeah, probably.

BOOM. The rocket takes off. The boys fly backwards and land  
beside each other. The rocket smashes through the window.  
The boys grab each other and listen intently hoping that it  
misses the house. Beat. SMASH. Their jaws drop.

(CONTINUED)



MARIA (O.S.)  
What in the world?!... Alan!...  
Mark!

Mark looks at Alan.

MARK  
Do you think we could just stay in  
here forever?

Alan shakes his head.

ALAN  
No, I only have enough rations for  
three days.

MARK  
Oh.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, LISA'S BEDROOM

LISA SANCHEZ, 11, but reading at a tenth grade level, puts down her archaeological textbook and stares at the rocket sticking into her wall. Dirty Harry is muted on her TV in the background.

She gets up from her bed and walks over to the window. She looks out the basketball sized hole. Maria is leading Mark and Alan back into the house by the scruffs of their shirts.

Todd enters her room.

TODD  
Alright Lisa. Let's head out.

Lisa quickly turns off the TV.

TODD  
What were you watching?

LISA  
Nothing.

Todd looks to his right and sees the rocket sticking out of the wall.

TODD  
Whoa, what happened here?

LISA  
I think Mark got into one of Alan's  
projects again.

(CONTINUED)

Todd walks up to the window and examines the hole.

TODD

Ah, yes. Well, I guess this is nothing a garbage bag and a lot of duct tape can't take care of, at least until we get back.

(To Lisa.)

Now go grab your sister and head down to the van, while I patch this up.

LISA

Okay.

Lisa picks up her bags, grabs her textbook and leaves her room.

Todd assesses the situation. The rocket falls off the wall and hits the floor. He turns to look at it. The parachute deploys, flies across the room, and hits him in the face.

TODD

(Through the parachute.)

Well, isn't that just great.

INT. BAKER-SANCHEZ HOME, CYNTHIA'S BEDROOM

Lisa enters. Cynthia is still organizing her suitcase.

LISA

You're still packing?

CYNTHIA

Well if my goal was to look like a grandma it would probably take me five minutes to pack too.

LISA

I prefer to spend my time on things that actually matter.

Cynthia motions towards Lisa's textbook.

CYNTHIA

Like what Anthropology?

LISA

You mean Archaeology?

(CONTINUED)

CYNTHIA

Whatever, at least I can put an outfit together.

LISA

I don't think you can call draping yourself in pink, putting an outfit together.

CYNTHIA

It's called self expression Lisa get into it.

The girls hear MOANING coming from the hallway. Todd slowly waddles into the room, the parachute still stuck on his face, holding his arms out in front of him.

CYNTHIA

That isn't scary Todd.

Todd stops waddling.

TODD

Really?

Cynthia places her last few items in her suitcase and zips it up.

LISA

It's mildly amusing, but definitely not scary.

Todd puts his arms down.

TODD

Not even a little bit?

LISA

No.

CYNTHIA

No.

Todd peels the parachute off his face.

TODD

Well, it was worth a shot. Alright girls the van's waiting outside. Hurry up.

The girl's both leave the room.

TODD

Now, what was I looking for?... Oh  
yeah, right, duct tape.