

Breath
by
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1. EXT. BACKYARD-DAY

A bright summer day settles into a family's backyard. The sun peeks through the sheltering trees, a warm breeze passes over the gardens bordering the green landscape. Nature's strength and fragility share the day.

Jenny and Shayna, two young girls approximately six years old each, occupy the yard. A swimming pool, deck furniture, and toys add to their confined domain. Jenny licks a dripping popsicle over a bowl resting on a patio table. She sees her companion playing with various toys and trying to skip rope on her own. She decides to join in when her attention is directed towards a large ball.

They try to keep the ball from one another, kicking and scurrying across the yard and over the flowerbeds. They laugh as they play, falling and rolling on the grass together. One of the girls manages to strongly kick the ball away from both of them. It comes to rest against the pool fence and they both run after it. Shayna arrives first and picks it up. With her back against the fence she holds the prize above her head. As Jenny reaches upward, the ball slips away and arcs over fence surrounding the pool. It rolls to a stop near its edge.

Both girls turn and peer at the plaything. They follow the fence along to the gate, Jenny leading the way. She manages to open the gate and enter first into the restricted area. They both race along the edge of the pool towards the ball. Jenny wins, picks up the ball, and continues the race with Shayna following close behind, laughing.

Shayna trips and falls forward, striking her head against the concrete. Jenny, hearing a splash behind her, stops, turns around, and looks into the pool where Shayna has toppled. She drops the ball and walks back, staring at the water.

She stares into the water but does nothing. Waves of light reflect onto her face. She is frozen with innocent curiosity as her playmate becomes consumed by water. Her stillness is interrupted by a scream. Whether it's imagined or real, she runs furiously away.

She runs from the body rising motionless in the water. She exits through the gate where she entered. In her wake the gate painfully closes shut.

DISSOLVE TO:

2. EXT. BACKYARD-DAY

Both girls lay beneath the sun on the grass. Smiling, they enjoy the heat on their skin. They rest, like a memory waiting to disappear.

FADE OUT: