

MARIGOLD JUNCTION - PILOT TEASER

Written by

Jim Mortensen

1327 N. Central Ave, Apt E. Glendale, CA 91202
732.996.6026

We open on a picturesque grassy field. Idyllic cumulus clouds in the sky. Just the right amount of sunshine. Through the middle of the field runs a gentle dirt road. Alongside, a hand-carved wooden sign the size of a golden retriever proclaims: "Welcome to Marigold Junction!".

MITCH WALDING (FATHER)
This is the place! Weird that
there's no road though.

Pull wide to reveal that the view we're been lingering on is a Marigold Junction travel brochure. MITCH WALDING is holding the brochure up to compare it to real life. It's the same grassy field, but lacking a road.

We cut to the reverse to see we are...

EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF MARIGOLD JUNCTION - EARLY MORNING

Parked by the sign is a Ford Explorer filled to the brim with the possessions of a family on the move. A freshly-rented moving trailer is hitched to the back. A family of four (Dad, Mom, Son, Daughter) stands looking at the sign. Their clothes and demeanor are upper-middle class, but not in an ivory tower way. The blazer-wearing Jennifer Aniston-haircut mom jumps in, assuring the kids.

HEATHER WALDING (MOTHER)
Probably because no one ever
leaves! Look, says right there.
"Marigold Junction: A Town So Nice,
You'll Never Leave!"

TYLER WALDING (DAUGHTER)
Cause they disembowel you if you
try to escape!

The son is recording everything with his phone. And by his tone it's obvious that he's livestreaming the whole experience.

EMMA WALDING
Oh come on. (beat) Slow
dismemberment is much more likely.
A small town like this? Not a lot
of stable food sources. So they eat
newcomers. But not all at once...

TYLER WALDING
(talking to the livestream
audience) What's gonna kill us?
Place your bets in the chat!

MITCH WALDING

C'mon fam, don't be so cynical.
Just cause it's not the city
doesn't mean it's not a perfectly
nice place with perfectly normal
things happening and plenty of
perfectly normal people.

An ODD BOY rises into frame behind the Waldings.

ODD BOY

Y'all lost?

The Waldings startle at the sudden sight in front of them: A 7'4" muscular boy with... the face of an 11-year old and oddly mismatching clothes...? Overalls with a cumberbun? Tuxedo shirt and bowtie? But capped with a trucker hat? Shiny oxford wingtips? He's smiling, but vaguely threatening in an indescribable way (think: Totoro). His voice is like if Kenneth the Page from 30 Rock took thrice daily testosterone injections.

The Waldings recover quickly.

MITCH WALDING

I don't think we're lost? (showing
the brochure) Seems like we're in
the right place but--

ODD BOY

Hah, yeah, the road? Nobody's left
Marigold Junction in 20ish years so
the road's grown over. (staring off
& smiling in reverence) Nature
reclaims...

The kids give each other a look... Who is this "kid"? The mom cuts in, pleasant as always.

HEATHER WALDING

Well it's nice to meet you, um...

Heather goes for a handshake and trails off, clearly indicating a space for the boy to give his name. But the kid just keeps staring off.

HEATHER WALDING (CONT'D)

Well we're moving in today! Husbo
here was gifted some land here and,
well, we've always talked about
retiring to the country to spend
time raising these two so... here
we are, off on an a wild adventure!

(MORE)

HEATHER WALDING (CONT'D)
(awkward "Karen" chuckling which
trails off to silence)

The awkward silence is cut by the sound of an engine choking.
Mitch is in the driver's seat trying to start the car but it
won't turn over.

MITCH WALDING
(talking to the car) C'mon,
Magellan. I had you checked just
before you left. What's wrong with
you?

The ODD BOY leans into the car, puts his hand on Mitch's
shoulder, and intensely stares into his eyes.

ODD BOY
It's nature reclaiming. (intense
beat) I'll tow you!

The ODD BOY, still smiling, walks off. We're still on Mitch,
in shock as one by one the odd boy places the Walding family
in the Explorer. The whole family is... kinda weirded out.
But... nothing dangerous or scary has happened? Tyler shakes
out of it.

TYLER WALDING
(calling out) Thanks for the offer!
But where's your tow tru...

Tyler's interrupted by the nose of the car being raised. CUT
WIDE to reveal: the ODD BOY has tied a rope to the front
hitch of the Explorer. He's got the rope between his teeth
and is towing the Explorer towards the town. Back in the car,
the Waldings are doubly shocked. Tyler is filming out the
window with his cameraphone, talking to the streaming
audience again.

TYLER WALDING (CONT'D)
Who had "murdered by an eight foot
11-year old" on the betting wheel?
Cause it looks like that's gonna be
the payout.

EMMA WALDING
We're definitely gonna disappear
forever.

HEATHER WALDING
(chuckling awkwardly, trying to
cover) Eh heheheh, we're on an
adventure! Ehheheh!
Ehehehehehhhh...

The SUV is towed past the "Welcome to Marigold Junction" sign into a forest thicket as the Waldings force laughter to keep from panicking.

CUT TO BLACK.