

CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

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FADE IN:

1 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY 1

JEFF PATTERSON, mid to late 30s, stands on the phone in the aisle staring at a snow globe. Annoyed and angry patrons express their displeasure as they bump, push, and maneuver around him.

VOICE
Jeff? Jeff, are you there?

BEGIN FLASHBACKS:

1A INT. CHURCH - DAY 1A

A beautiful BRIDE and GROOM stand at the altar, backdropped by a six-foot-tall Christmas tree. Red and green ornaments sway as if dancing. In the reflection of the ornaments, the bride and groom giggle in anticipation. The PASTOR smiles as he gives his instructions.

PASTOR
The rings.

The BEST MAN hands the rings over with a proud grin.

GROOM
Thanks, Patrick.

PASTOR
You may kiss the bride.

The bride looks up and back at her husband-to-be.

BRIDE
Is that mistletoe?

GROOM
I slipped the wedding planner
twenty.

BRIDE
I love you, Jeff.

GROOM
I love you, Angie.

They kiss! Rice surrounds the snow globe centerpieces. The wedding guests cheer and shower them with the rice as they make their way back down the aisle.

1B INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

1B

A tiny Christmas tree stands next to Angela's hospital bed. Fading, she talks to her husband. Jeff holds a baby in his arms while holding back tears.

ANGELA
Open it, sweetheart.

JEFF
You're sick and thinking of me?

ANGELA
I'm always thinking of you.

Jeff opens the gift.

JEFF
Our wedding centerpiece.

He shakes the snow globe.

ANGELA
When you see one, remember how much
I love you.

JEFF
You're my forever girl.

ANGELA
Cross your heart?

Jeff crosses his heart. Emotion swells.

ANGELA (CONT'D)
Remember that Ruby likes her bottle
warm in the afternoon and hot in
the mornings.

JEFF
Don't talk like that. You'll be
home in no time.

She smiles weakly.

ANGELA
I am going home.

JEFF
Please, God, not on Christmas.

ANGELA
I think give you a pretty great
gift. She needs you, sweetheart.

Her bleak laugh turns to coughing.

JEFF
I'll take care of her.

ANGELA
Take care of yourself, too.

We push in on the snow globe we...

END FLASHBACKS.

DISSOLVE TO:

1C

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

1C

Camera looks through a snow globe to see Jeff coming back to the present.

VOICE
Earth to Jeff.

JEFF
Hey, Patrick. Sorry, Yeah, I'm actually buying Ruby a truckload of stuff for Christmas right now.

VOICE
You coming in?

JEFF
Yeah, I just closed on the Sullivan property. They asked for 5 million. Offered 4.

VOICE
You didn't.

JEFF
I did! Done deal. Signing the docs and headed in!

VOICE
JEFF!

JEFF
After the year we've been having, of course I did. CLOSED!

Jeff walks to the snow globe and shakes it. He sets it down and shakes off the past. Jeff pushes a cart full of merchandise onto the TELLER's checkout counter. The teller wears a Christmas hat and elf ears as she rings him up.

TELLER
Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Jeff ignores her and motions for her to ring it up.

TELLER (CONT'D)
Merry Chr-

JEFF
Just ring it up. Hello? Sorry, Pat.

TELLER
Your total will be \$436.75

JEFF
Hold on, Pat.
(talks to teller without
looking at her)
Yeah, yeah, whatever. Just charge
it.

TELLER
You get twenty percent off if you
open a store card.

JEFF
Do I look like I need a discount? I
said, charge it. Sorry, Pat. Check
your inbox. Of course, I sent it.

Jeff drops the card on the counter. The teller picks it up
begrudgingly. The card machine BEEPS as she swipes.

WIPE TO:

1D INT. ANOTHER DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS 1D

Jeff is at another store. With each store, another card
machine swipe. BEEP. Each swipe carries us to the next store.

Begin montage.

Jeff, with bags and bags of stuff, swipes his card as he
bounces from store to store. Swipe, BEEP, swipe, BEEP, swipe,
BEEP.

End montage.

1E INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS 1E

Jeff looks at his pile of purchases. He takes out his phone,
snaps a photo, and posts to Social Media. His posts reads;

BEST DAD EVER.

1F INT. THE CLAUS'S KITCHEN - MORNING 1F

MRS. CLAUS, (1,157), but looks to be in her mid 70s, stands at the kitchen sink, COUGHING into her handkerchief. The cough persists. Hand tremors strike as she fills a cup with water and raises it to her lips. She struggles to drink. After taking a deep breath, Mrs. Claus smooths her dress, fixes her hair, forces on a smile, and carries the tray out of the room.

1 INT. SANTA'S GARAGE - NIGHT 1

SANTA, (1,172), but looks like he's in his late 70s, is lying under his sleigh. Christmas music BLASTS from a floating radio. His tools shimmer as they swoosh across the room into his hand.

SANTA

Almost got it.

A cloud of cinnamon and apple billows from a festive mug. Mrs. Claus enters the room.

MRS. CLAUS

You still working, sweetheart?

Santa slides out from under the sleigh.

SANTA

Can you turn down the music? Can't hear you, dear. Still working. Big deadline, you know.

He slides back under the carriage.

MRS. CLAUS

I made you some Apple Cider. You must keep your strength.

SANTA

Gotta fix this sleigh to deliver Christmas.

Mrs. Claus COUGHS. She adjusts her hair and straightens her clothes.

MRS. CLAUS

Have you forgotten something?

SANTA
Outdoor time with the elves?

MRS. CLAUS
No.

SANTA
Brush Comet's mane?

MRS. CLAUS
No, Kris!

SANTA
I'll take out the trash soon, I
promise.

MRS. CLAUS
No, not take out the trash. How
about taking out your wife?

Santa's legs jump as he lays under the sleigh.

MRS. CLAUS (CONT'D)
Our yearly date?

Camera hangs over head straight down on Santa's face. His
expression says everything. He stays under the sleigh.

SANTA
Honey, I am so sorry. In three
hundred years, I've never
forgotten. With the sleigh broken
and the big deadline coming up, it
just slipped my mind.

MRS. CLAUS
You never know how much time we
have left.

SANTA
What do you mean?

No answer.

SANTA (CONT'D)
What do you mean?

Still no answer.

Santa drifts out from under the sleigh.

Mrs. Claus is lying on the floor, unconscious. The tray and
its contents are strewn all over the floor.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Carol!

SMASH CUT TO:

1A EXT. MIAMI BEACH - GOLDEN HOUR

1A

The taste of salt water and the scent of tropical fruit layer the air. Sun-kissed shoulders sway in rhythm with the CARIBBEAN, CALYPSO, and LATIN music. The Palm trees beam with pride as they showcase their festive regalia. Men decked in open Aloha shirts and Santa hats cheer and sing with the women adorning elf tops and stockings. There is no mistaking the Christmas season in Miami.

END COLD OPEN.

SUPER.

CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

2 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING

2

Christmas music rings through the house. RUBY PATTERSON, 8, is parked at the living room table. An assortment of colored pencils keeps her company. She's drawing a picture! It seems to be of her and her dad by a fully decorated Christmas tree.

Jeff rushes around to get ready for work. He slaps aftershave on his face and takes a swig of black coffee.

RUBY

Daddy, wanna see the picture I made?!

JEFF

In a minute, honey. Daddy is getting ready for his big presentation at work today.

Cell phone CHIMES. He begins to text fast and furious.

RUBY

It'll only take a minute. Please? Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy.

Ruby works the cute angle, but Jeff is unaware.

JEFF

Not now, honey.

Ruby puts her picture down and goes to her room. Jeff types on.

RUBY
I'll be in my room.

JEFF
Make sure you brush your teeth.

Ruby walks to her room without reaction.

Beat.

Jeff looks up.

The kiddie art is next to him. He looks down at it. It's beautiful. Guilt seeps into his disposition. He calls for her.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Ruby?

RUBY (O.S.)
Yes, Daddy?

JEFF
Come here, please.

A moment later, Ruby appears in the doorway of the kitchen.

RUBY
Yes?

JEFF
Did you buy this?

Ruby cracks a little smile.

RUBY
Nooo.

JEFF
Are you sure?! It looks professional!

He walks toward her.

RUBY
No, silly, I made it.

JEFF
Well, you, my princess, are very talented. And I love it.

RUBY
It's of us at Christmas!

JEFF
You're going to get the biggest,
best presents ever.

RUBY
I just want you to be home for
Christmas.

JEFF
Sweetheart, of course, I'll be
here. Wouldn't miss it. Home is
going to be something special.

RUBY
Cross your heart?

He kisses her forehead as she smiles. He places her hand on
his heart.`

3 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY. PATTERSON CAR

3

Jeff pulls up to the drop-off at school. Ruby gets unbuckled
from her seat in the back.

JEFF
Have everything?

RUBY
Yes, Daddy!

JEFF
Don't forget your lunch. I packed
you something special.

RUBY
You can't cook, Daddio.

JEFF
I guess you'll have to tell me if
you like it, Ruby two shoes!

RUBY
You gonna pick me up?

He looks at his phone calendar.

JEFF
Of course! I have a meeting, but I
will be here.

RUBY
Promise?

JEFF
Cross my heart.

RUBY
You're the best, Dad!

They hug, and she gets out of the car.

4 INT. OFFICE - DAY

4

PATRICK THOMAS, president of the company, sits angrily as he looks over a presentation. Jeff enters in a great mood.

JEFF
Hey buddy, what's up?

PATRICK
I should ask you that.

JEFF
What do you mean?

PATRICK
I was looking at the Christmas presentation, and I have to say I am a little surprised.

JEFF
About what?

PATRICK
You sent this to the Board?

JEFF
Yup! I think it'll be great for us!

PATRICK
You mean great for you.

JEFF
What are you talking about?

PATRICK
You forgot to put my name on this.

JEFF
No way, we worked on this together.

PATRICK
Look at the credits page.

Jeff opens to the page.

JEFF

Oh man. Patrick, that was totally unintentional. I will correct this and resubmit. It was a space-out moment.

PATRICK

Don't worry about it.

JEFF

I am worried. I don't want you to think I did this on purpose.

PATRICK

You are the head of Physical design. Your job is literally to see all the details. So you either did this intentionally, or you're bad at your job.

Patrick gets up and looks at Jeff with a dishonest smile.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

It's okay. Everything happens for a reason.

They hold eye contact before he leaves the room.

5 INT. NEW MIRAWOOD ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY 5

Ruby sits in class close to the window. She stares out into the distance, daydreaming. She smiles to herself and continues on a project.

Ruby's POV: Beginnings of a new picture. Green dots and an outline. Ruby smiles as she works.

6 INT. OFFICE - DAY 6

The Board meeting is in full swing at G & G Ad Agency. The VPs and managers surround the table as the President, Patrick, addresses them with Jeff at his side. The mood is not great.

PATRICK

The fact of the matter is our numbers are down, and we have shareholders to answer to.

(MORE)

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Now, I know it's the holiday season, but at the end of the week, we are going to have to make some cuts.

JEFF

This is a tough pill to swallow. Believe us when we say that we are looking at other solutions, but finance is getting the numbers back to us this week. We're gonna need a miracle campaign to keep everyone.

PATRICK

Thank you, and good luck everyone. Let's get our miracle.

The Board members look around. The murmurs begin.

7 EXT. NEW MIRAWOOD ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AFTERNOON 7

Ruby sits, coloring, as she waits with her teacher for her daddy to arrive.

8 INT. OFFICE - DAY 8

Begin montage:

Jeff pounds out the phone calls. It's hectic, fast and furious!

JEFF

I understand, Marty, but we need to make it work! Yes, I -

Patrick knocks on the door frame. Jeff waves him in.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Yes, I'm with you. Gotta run. Okay... Bye.

Patrick takes a moment.

PATRICK

Can I come in?

JEFF

Well, ya, you run the place, so of course. I'm just about to head out to pick up Ruby. What's up, boss?

Patrick looks at the property agreement on the desk.

PATRICK

You weren't kidding. You bought the property.

JEFF

A million under asking!

PATRICK

Uh huh. I know you've been having a great year, but overall, you know how tough it's been on us here these last few quarters.

JEFF

Yeah, I know. I think we are gonna come out of it. I have a great lead-

PATRICK

I have to let you go, Jeff.

JEFF

Wait, what?

PATRICK

Jeff, look-

JEFF

I helped you build this. I sacrificed everything for this company.

PATRICK

I know, and I'm sorry.

JEFF

I have been here since the beginning.

PATRICK

And now it's the end.

JEFF

What are you trying to say?

PATRICK

There is no way we are going to save the type of money we need to unless I make a big move. It's either I let go of you, or I let go of me.

JEFF

I'm guessing it's not going to be you.

Patrick chuckles to himself.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Is this about the presentation? I told you that was an accident. Don't you think this is taking it a little too far?

Patrick seems to be gloating.

PATRICK

If it's any consolation, you have till the end of the week. If this doesn't go your way, there's a handsome severance package.

JEFF

You know that I just bought-

PATRICK

Maybe something spectacular will happen. Either way, Merry Christmas.

Patrick exits. Jeff's hands engulf his face.

JEFF

What am I going to tell Ruby?

Suddenly.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Oh no!

He looks at his watch. Ruby is still at school! He pulls out his phone and begins to dial.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Jessica! Hey, it's Jeff. Could you do me a favor?!

9

INT. NORTH POLE. CLAUS'S BEDROOM - DAY

9

Mrs. Claus lays in bed, eyes closed. Her color is less vibrant. Santa sits by her side, holding her hand.

SANTA

I'm so sorry, sweetheart. This is all my fault.

Snow globes from around the world line the bookshelf behind him. Some shimmer, and some are fading. Santa looks behind him at the snow globes.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Dear God. Please don't take her from me. I got so caught up in fixing everything that I missed everything.

Mrs. Claus's eyes open. She speaks faintly.

MRS. CLAUS

I'm sorry I got upset. How's the sleigh? I can't be lying down; too much to do.

She tries to get up.

SANTA

Please, Carol, rest. There's something I need to tell you.

She coughs.

SANTA (CONT'D)

The cough, the way you are feeling, the snow globes, they are all connected.

MRS. CLAUS

I don't understand.

SANTA

Well, sweetheart, it seems the deck is stacked against us.

MRS. CLAUS

No pun intended?

She musters a smile.

SANTA

Those snow globes are a representation of the level of Christmas spirit. Looks like people are more concerned with things than people.

MRS. CLAUS

What does this have to do with me?

SANTA

I'm tied to Christmas, so its magic sustains me. You're tied to me.

(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

At times, I'm weaker than others,
but, well, at this point in our
lives, you need the Christmas
spirit to keep you alive.

MRS. CLAUS

I thought-

SANTA

I should have told you.

MRS. CLAUS

After all these years, you failed
to mention it?

SANTA

No, after all these years, I've
failed you.

She turns her head away.

Santa (CONT'D)

That's why the sleigh is breaking
down as well.

Mrs. Claus turns back to her husband and looks at him with
emotion brimming.

MRS. CLAUS

Till death do us part.

SANTA

Don't say that, Carol.

MRS. CLAUS

Kris, you carry the weight of the
world on your shoulders. Tell me
what we need to do.

He sighs.

SANTA

We need to bring back the spirit of
Christmas.

MRS. CLAUS

A heart truly changed, and
Christmas spirit will remain.

SANTA (CONT'D)

... And Christmas spirit will
remain, yes.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Also, this is the 1700th
anniversary of Christmas.

(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

If I don't deliver all the presents by sunrise, we lose the spirit of Christmas altogether.

MRS. CLAUS

What does all this mean exactly?

SANTA

We'll live out the rest of whatever days we have left among man. Carol, I'll become mortal, and you will-

She places her finger over his lips.

MRS. CLAUS

Looks like we've got some work to do.

10

EXT. NEW MIRAWOOD ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER

10

Ruby waits at school as the last few stragglers are getting picked up. Her best friend is just leaving after school arts and sees her.

RUBY

Hi, Emily!

EMILY

Hi! You're still at school?

RUBY

Yeah, just waiting on my dad. I betchya my neighbor comes to pick me up again.

EMILY

Well, maybe your dad is talking to Santa about going Christmas shopping for you! Whatdya ask for this year?

RUBY

I made a picture for Santa to give me more time with my dad. He's even later than normal today. I'm starting to think Santa isn't real.

EMILY

RUBY! Don't be silly; of course, he's real!

RUBY

Well, maybe he just doesn't like me.

A car pulls up. Out walks JESSICA, 30's, beautiful, in that girl next door kind of way. She has a light and aura that shines. Around her, you immediately feel at peace.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Ms. Jessica!

Ruby brightens up.

JESSICA

Hey, Ruby! Hey, Emily!

RUBY

Hi!

EMILY

Hey, Ms. Jessica

JESSICA

So, Ruby, your dad called me up and thought it would be super fun if I picked you up today!

RUBY

He forgot.

JESSICA

No, he didn't forget; he's just...

Jessica thinks fast.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

He's just planning something huge for Christmas.

EMILY

Told ya!

JESSICA

Okay! So, let's hit the road, co-pilot! Emily, your mom almost here?

EMILY

Yup! I see her! Right on time!

Emily's mom exits her car. Emily runs to her. They hug. Ruby watches on. Emily feels the uncomfortable moment for Ruby.

JESSICA

Hey, you ok? Wanna stop for a milkshake on the way home?c

RUBY

No, I'm ok. I just miss my mom
sometimes.

She walks to the car and gets in.

11 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - AFTERNOON

11

Jeff sits in the house, waiting for Ruby to get home. How is he going to break the news?!! Just then, a car door slams outside. Then another door. They are home. Jeff shoots up in the air. Ruby comes in.

JEFF

Hey, sweetheart!

RUBY

You forgot me again, Daddy.

JEFF

No! No, baby, I could never forget
you. It's just that Daddy got-

RUBY

Caught up at work. I know.

JESSICA

We were gonna stop to get
milkshakes, but she just wanted to
come home.

JEFF

Thank you so much, Jessica. I am so
sorry to spring that on you last
minute.

JESSICA

Don't worry about me...

She gives Jeff a hug and whispers in his ear.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Worry about her.

Ruby is nowhere in sight. She has gone to her room.

JEFF

Thanks again.

He leans in to kiss her on the cheek. She went the same
direction. They almost kiss on the lips.

JEFF (CONT'D) JESSICA
 Oh my gosh. My fault- Oh, sorry. No it's okay.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 Really, it's okay. Call me anytime,
 Jeffery.

They stare at each other for a moment. She smiles and exits.
 Jeff gathers himself and walks toward Ruby's room.

12 INT. RUBY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 12

Ruby lays in bed, coloring another picture. Jeff stands in the doorway.

JEFF
 Hey, sweetheart.

RUBY
 It's okay, dad. You don't have to apologize again.

JEFF
 Well, sweetie, I need to talk to you for a second. Something happened, but I want you to know that we are in this together.

RUBY
 You're going out of town again for work?

JEFF
 No. I don't know how to say this but, I lost my job.

Ruby jumps up.

RUBY
 You did?!

She hugs him.

JEFF
 I take it you're okay?

RUBY
 Daddy, this means we can spend more time together!

JEFF
 Yes, but-

RUBY
Daddy, this is what I was praying
for! I even asked Santa for a
Christmas miracle!

JEFF
Well-

RUBY
I KNEW he was real!!!

JEFF
Ruby... Christmas is coming, I only
just started buying you presents. I
committed to a big change for us. I
don't know what I'm going to do.

RUBY
We'll be fine, Daddy! We have each
other. That's all that matters.

JEFF
I appreciate that, but I need to
provide for you. Don't worry, I
will figure something out.

RUBY
Breakfast tomorrow? You'll have
nowhere to go, sooooo pancakes?!

Jeff works through his disappointment and forces a smile.

JEFF
Pancakes.

RUBY
Cross your heart?

He kisses her forehead and places her hand over his heart.

JEFF
Dinner soon, so finish your
homework.

Ruby colors her picture with her dad and Santa, smiling to
herself.

RUBY
Yes, Daddy.

13 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - EVENING

13

Jeff is cleaning up dishes in the kitchen post-dinner. We can hear Ruby in the background. She is in her room as she shouts to her dad.

RUBY (O.S.)
Thanks for dinner, Daddy!

JEFF
Anything for my Ruby!!!

Jeff smiles to himself. Ruby puts the finishing touches on her picture with her with Jeff and Santa. Jeff finishes up and finds his phone. Seems like the good mood has carried him into courage. He starts to text:

Hey, Jessica, thanks so much for always helping out with Ruby. It means a lot.

End text

He stares at it with his finger hovering over the send button.

He pushes delete. Jeff nervously laughs to himself. He begins to type the same message again and, this time, pushes send. Jeff sets the phone down like it's a hot potato.

He takes a moment to himself as he looks out the window. Jeff stares longingly at a couple walking hand in hand. As he looks down, he sees his cardboard box full of some of his belongings from work. With resolve, he gathers himself, sits down at his computer, and begins to apply for jobs.

14 TIME LAPSE: INT. PATTERSON HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

14

Jeff sits at his computer in the living room and applies for as many jobs as possible. The cups of coffee are poured and downed by the dozens. His fingers type away, and the screens cycle in and out from job to job. Finally, we see the sun starting to rise.

END TIME LAPSE

15 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

15

Ruby walks out to find her dad facedown in his own drool at the computer.

RUBY
Daddy? Did you sleep at the desk?

JEFF
My tummy hurts, Mama.

RUBY
DADDY!

Jeff jumps awake.

JEFF
What? Huh?! Oh. I was just doing
some work on the computer. I'll
tuck you in. Give me a sec.

RUBY
You're so silly. It's morning!

JEFF
Morning?! I must have... I mean...
I need to-

RUBY
Drop me off at school? Yes, you do.

JEFF
I'm actually scheduled for my exit
interview, so I'm gonna have to ask
Jessica or call an Express.

RUBY
Okay. Ms. Jessica is pretty cool,
but I wish you could take me.

JEFF
She told me you guys have fun! She
gets paid in giggles... Wait a
second.

RUBY
Okaaaaay. I'm waiting.

JEFF
Paid in giggles. Paid to drive.

RUBY
Are you okay, Dad?

JEFF
I'm great! I found a job!

Jeff excitedly gets his stuff together.

JEFF (CONT'D)

On second thought, I'll take you. I have an errand to run after I drop you off.

They grab their things and walk to the door.

DING:

Jeff receives a text. It's Patrick.

PATRICK

You still have a week left. Come in.

JEFF

Will be there. Just running some errands.

PATRICK

You still have a week left. Come in!!!

JEFF

Got it.

PATRICK

To be clear, if you work for another company while on payroll... NO SEVERANCE.

15A EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

15A

Jeff and Ruby pull up to the convenience store. Jeff is lost in thought as he puts the car in park. They sit there for a moment, and Ruby finally breaks the silence.

RUBY

Daddy?

JEFF

I'm sorry, sweetheart. What's up?

RUBY

What are you doing?

JEFF

Just thinking. Thats all. Just thinking..

RUBY

I'm thinking, too... I'm thinking that I'm hungry!

Jeff snaps out of it.

JEFF

Oh. I'm sorry, snoopie... Yeah, let's get you something to eat.

He takes a moment and looks at the store. It's a small, locally owned convenience store. A step up from a liquor store. Not the type of place where a far cry from the stores from earlier. A homeless man sits near the door and just keeps to himself. Jeff summons up the courage, swallows his pride, and goes in to buy some bologna and bread.

They exit the car.

RUBY

You know that John Kemp created a new superhero called Rocket-girl and he drew her and everybody said that she looks just like me!

JEFF

That's great, honey.

RUBY

Yeah. He said it wasn't me. But he likes me.

JEFF

How could he not?!?

Just then, Jeff's phone RINGS. He looks down at it. Urgency kicks in.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Ruby, wait right here, I have to take this.

He takes her little shoulders and positions her in the front of the store, by the main entrance. He moves five steps away and takes the call. He looks back to make sure that Ruby is ok. Ruby is clearly disappointed. She realized that eating at the local store isn't ideal, but it's at least something that they could do together.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Don't move. This will just take a second, okay?

RUBY

Okay, Daddy.

JEFF

That's my girl. Don't talk to
anybody, got it?

(She nods as he pivots
away from her)

Hello?

Ruby is deflated and simply stands there. She looks at the posters covering the store window. One ad after another transports her to the vortex of a young girl's mind. She is soon lost in thought.

VOICE (OS)

Well, well, well. A Christmas
angel.

Ruby spins around to see an older gentleman sitting on the ground near the front door. He has clearly been there a while. He has a paper cup at his feet with a few loose coins drizzled about. He is disheveled with a long white beard. There is something sweet about him.

HOMELESS MAN

Good evening.

He says politely.

Ruby looks at him but gets scared and quickly looks away.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Oh my! I know that you can hear me.
I can hear myself.

Ruby crosses her arms and turns her nose up defiantly.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Well, if it's the whole "Stranger
Danger" thing... I get it. Just bein'
neighborly is all.

Ruby gives him nothing.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Name's Ned.

Beat.

NED

That's gotta count for something.
You knowin' my name and all.

Beat.

NED (CONT'D)

Well, little angel, if your gonna stand there, could you step a bit away from me. Ain't nobody gonna pay me any attention with Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Standing right there.

Making reference to her bright red nose due to the cold weather) She reaches up, shocked and grabs her nose.

NED (CONT'D)

So you CAN hear me. Well, thank the Lord. I'm still here!

This gets Ruby's attention. She looks at him for the first time. He doesn't look like danger. Now, he looks like a sweet, skinny Santa. Ruby gives him a confused look.

RUBY

Still here?

NED

Ahhh! She speaks. With a voice that befits the angel. Yes. I am still here, malady.

RUBY

You're still here. Where'd you go?

NED

I'm always here, darlin; just don't no one sees me.

RUBY

I see you.

NED

I know you do, angel.

RUBY

People don't?

NED

You see me cuz yer young. You see ME. You see me as I am. That won't last long.

RUBY

I don't understand.

NED

You will. We tend to see what we want to see and don't see what we don't. That's life.

RUBY

Well, I see you.

NED

And I see you.

Beat.

RUBY

I don't have any money.

Ned laughs.

NED

Angel, I don't want your money.

RUBY

Then what's the cup for?

NED

The cup is for hope. The cup lets me know that grown-ups can see me. Faith. Love. Kindness, and... A sandwich.

Ruby looks into the cup.

RUBY

Well, it looks like not a lot a people see you.

NED

Yeah. I know.

RUBY

Then why are you here?

NED

This is how I see it.

Ned holds up the cup, blocking the sun.

NED (CONT'D)

See this cup?

She nods.

NED (CONT'D)

It's faith. The empty space is
alllllll faith. Ain't nuthin taking
that away. As it fills with money,
the amount of faith is less. Not
that I have less faith, just that I
NEED less faith cuz I got money.
Make sense?

RUBY

Nope.

NED

Okay, okay. When the cup is full,
my faith has been rewarded by life.
I take my life cup. Then, what was
once faith is now a sandwich. That
cup could sit there all day with no
money in it. It's okay cuz it's
full...

RUBY

Of faith?

NED

Full of faith.

RUBY

But faith doesn't taste like a
bologna sandwich.

NED

No, ma'am. Faith tastes like steak.
Better than steak.

RUBY

I like faith and steak.

NED

I like that you just said that.

He smiles.

NED (CONT'D)

"I like faith and steak."
Beautiful.

She repeats it because she liked his reaction.

RUBY

I like Faith and Steak!

Ned laughs, then gets a bit more serious.

NED
Angel, do me a favor, okay?

RUBY
I can try.

NED
Never stop seeing people.

He can see that she doesn't understand.

NED (CONT'D)
Always give people their dignity.
See them. In the end, if you do
that, they see you too. And that's
a beautiful thing. No matter what,
see people.

RUBY
I promise.

This makes Ned Smile. Just then, Jeff grabs Rudy's hand and takes her into the store. The beautiful moment is abruptly shattered.

Jeff doesn't even look at Ned as he breezes by, taking Ruby's hand. Ruby looks back at Ned. Their eyes meet for a moment through the glass door. She sees him. He then breaks from the moment and rolls over on his side.

Ruby looks at her father as he is picking out the cheapest bologna.

RUBY (CONT'D)
That man was so nice.

JEFF
What man?

16 INT. SANTA'S GARAGE - MORNING

16

Santa is gathering all of his belongings. He settles his gift bags on the back of the sleigh. Mrs. Claus walks in slowly, wrapped in a blanket.

MRS. CLAUS
Kris, about earlier, I'm sorry for
being emotional.

SANTA
What? No, I'm sorry. You were
right.

(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

I need to tell you everything, even if it's difficult. From now on, no secrets.

MRS. CLAUS

Oh, darling. The whole world is relying on you. Really, our future relies on you. I should have been more understanding.

SANTA

I'm leaving a few days early. I'm going to raise Christmas spirit so high you'll think there's yeast in it.

She chuckles. It turns into a coughing fit.

Santa (CONT'D)

I'm going to deliver all the presents, and I will be back earlier than normal so we can have more time together, so don't go running away.

MRS. CLAUS

I'll be here.

She looks toward the sunrise.

SANTA

Don't worry about the, you know, mortal deadline business.

MRS. CLAUS

If it ends up that the sun rises and we, you know, or I... As long as I'm with you in the end, I'll be okay.

Santa turns away. He chokes down emotion and then recovers as if everything is fine.

SANTA

What do you say when I get back I take you down to the igloo on Main, and we can have some frosty shakes and fries.

Mrs. Claus lights up like a Christmas tree.

MRS. CLAUS

It's a date.

SANTA
I'll be there with Jingle Bells on.

She hugs him.

MRS. CLAUS
You are a Saint.

SANTA
I know. I'm sorry if I drive you
crazy!

He laughs that classic Santa Claus laugh.

Santa gets into his sleigh and starts to move as we...

17 EXT. ROCKET PIZZA - DAY

17

Jeff pulls up to the front of the store dressed in a suit.
His stomach is growling as he didn't have breakfast. He takes
a few breaths in and enters.

COUNTER GIRL
WELCOME TO ROCKET PIZZA!

Jeff is slightly awkward and doesn't make eye contact. He is
carrying a piece of paper.

JEFF
Thank you.

COUNTER GIRL
(Big smile)
Will you be dining in today?

JEFF
No, I'm fine, thank you. Could I
speak to your manager, please?

COUNTER GIRL
Sure thing. I think Mr. Parsons is
in the back

Jeff is suddenly panicked.

JEFF
Parsons? Actually, that's okay. I
have to go. I'll come back.

He takes a step towards the door.

COUNTER GIRL
Really, it's no big deal; he's
right back there.

Before he knows what to do, she speaks into the microphone, sticking up from the counter. This spins Jeff back around in horror.

COUNTER GIRL (CONT'D)
Mr. Parsons to the front! Mr.
Parsons to the front!

Jeff is in full panic mode now.

JEFF
No. No. No.
(Beat)
I gotta go.

He turns back towards the door and sees daylight. A few steps away. Just eight steps, and he will be free. His pace quickens as he makes his way to the door. The sunlight cascades in. He reaches for the door and can almost feel the heat from outside. Jeff's hand wraps around the handle. The door resists. He hears a voice from behind him.

VOICE (O.S.)
Putt Putt?

Jeff's shoulders sink as he turns around sheepishly. MARK PARSONS, a very tall man with a big smile and kind face, stands behind the counter.

MARK
Jeff? As I live and breathe!!!!
Come here!

He briskly walks from around the counter and gives Jeff a huge hug. Jeff reluctantly complies.

MARK (CONT'D)
What's going on, my friend?!

JEFF
Oh, you know.

Mark is beaming. He gestures, hands outstretched as if surveying his store.

MARK
Sit down!!

Mark leads Jeff to a table in the middle of the restaurant.

The entire eatery is space travel-themed.
Mark is overjoyed. They sit.

JEFF

I really can't stay. I have to pick
up Ruby.

MARK

Ruby! Oh my goodness, she's gotta
be just about grown now! How long
has it been?

JEFF

Yeah. Just about. Been awhile.

MARK

Dang, brother. Putt Putt. Crazy.
(All smiles)
So good to see you, man! How ya
been?

JEFF

(His voice dwindles with
each lie).
Well, you know. Business is good.
(Lie)
Looking to build a pool for Ruby.
(Lie)
We are actually going to Europe
next month.
(Lie)
I'm good.
(Lie)
Sooo happy.

MARK

Thirty-six and counting.

Changing the subject.

JEFF

So, how's the family?

MARK

Well, my Dad is gone. You knew
that. Mom moved to Phoenix. And now
it's just me. Me and my 400
children

He gestures around the restaurant, alluding that his
employees are his children.

JEFF

Yeah...

MARK

I'm proud of you, man.

JEFF

Me? How so?

MARK

I heard about Ruby's mother. You could have folded up the tents, but you didn't. Now look at you. I'm proud of you.

Jeff is embarrassed and wants to leave.

JEFF

I have to go.
Good to see you, Mark.

He abruptly gets up and turns toward the door.

MARK

Wait!

In his haste, Jeff almost drops his folder. The Rocket Pizza Application flies out. It lands at Mark's feet. He leans down to pick it up.

MARK (CONT'D)

Lemme get that.

He turns it over to see that it's an application from his store.

MARK (CONT'D)

Is this for Ruby? Dang. How old is she now?

Avoids eye contact.

JEFF

That's not mine.

Mark surveys the application.

MARK

Huh, it's got your name on it.

The two men make eye contact. Suddenly, Mark knows the score. Pity falls across his face.

JEFF
It's not mine.

It's now Mark that avoids eye contact. This makes it worse.

MARK
Of course, it's not.

Jeff snatches the paper from Mark as if hiding it would erase what just occurred.

MARK (CONT'D)
(Softly)
Hey, you know we're like brothers.
We always will be. Anything that
you need, I got you, Putt Putt.

JEFF
Don't call me that. I haven't been
that guy for a very long time.

Eye contact.

MARK
(Withdrawing)
Ok... Ok... I'm sorry.

Mark reaches into his top pocket and pulls out a card.

MARK (CONT'D)
Here, take this. Call me anytime
for anything. I mean that. I owe
you.

JEFF
Friends don't owe.

MARK
(Smiling)
They do because they wanna do..
Yeah, I know.

JEFF
(Repeating this long-
standing tradition)
They do because they wanna do.

MARK
"I got ten, you got five. You
remember that?"

JEFF

Yeah.

MARK

Well, it's still true.

Mark gives Jeff a huge hug. He whispers in Jeff's ear.

MARK (CONT'D)

I love you, brother.

Jeff turns his face to hide the tears.

JEFF

Merry Christmas.

Jeff exits.

Mark is left alone in the lobby, watching the broken shell of a man who was once his beautiful friend Putt Putt. He saw the tears and answers with some of his own.

MARK

Merry Christmas, Putt Putt.

18

EXT. THE "DRIVE ME CRAZY" RIDE-SHARE OFFICES - DAY

18

Jeff walks up to the DRIVE ME CRAZY inspection office. A HUGE THUMB is on the door. He starts having second thoughts but remembers Ruby and walks in. A guy in a GIANT THUMB costume dances in the lobby.

GIANT THUMB

Your cash flow need a little pick up? Well, you're in the right place at the right time! Are you ready to become one with the thumb?

Jeff forces a smile.

JEFF

Yes? Umm, I'm here to get my car inspected.

GIANT THUMB

Well, first, let's get that thumb inspected!

JEFF

Excuse me?

GIANT THUMB
Let me see that thumb.

Jeff isn't as amused.

GIANT THUMB (CONT'D)
Come on! Hold it up. You can do it;
put some knuckle into it!

Jeff acquiesces. He sticks his thumb out like a hitchhiker.
His pride bending as well.

GIANT THUMB (CONT'D)
YES! I love it! You have passed
step one: driving with fun!

JEFF
Got it. Okay, thanks so much for...
This. Where do I take my car now?

The Giant Thumb points with his thumb.

GIANT THUMB
THAT WAY!

Jeff forces one last smile and walks toward the registration
table. There sits a woman, the THUMB CLERK, who clearly
doesn't want to be there. She barely even looks up. She
mumbles as she smacks her gum.

THUMB CLERK
Can I help you, baby?

JEFF
Pardon me?

Her chewing gets even louder.

THUMB CLERK
May I help you?

JEFF
Sorry, with the chewing and
mumbling, I can't quite...

She finally looks up.

WOMAN
You sure you in the right place,
Wall Street?

JEFF
Umm, yes. Hi! Yes. I want to
register my car.

He cranks his thumb in the hitchhike motion he learned from GIANT THUMB.

WOMAN

Aren't you a little... Rich for this kinda thing?

JEFF

Me? No. Well, yes. Normally, yes, but not at the moment. So, just trying to stay productive.

WOMAN

Okay then. What kind of car?

JEFF

BMW 7 series.

WOMAN

DANG, Wall Street. Okurrr. You qualify for Thumb Plus. That just means you get a little extra for flossin with your whip.

Jeff checks his teeth.

JEFF

I'm sorry. I haven't flossed in a couple days, and-

WOMAN

You don't have to make fun of me. Have a good day.

JEFF

But-

WOMAN

BYE.

She hands him the packet. Jeff untangles himself from the uncomfortable moment he just weaved and heads toward the car.

One EMPLOYEE gives his car the once over and motions for the other guys to check it out. They all start posing with it. One asks Jeff a question while taking a selfie with him and the car.

EMPLOYEE

Sick car, bruh! You sure you need to be doing this?

Jeff smiles through his teeth.

JEFF

Yes.

19

INT. PATTERSON CAR - DAY

19

SERIES OF SHOTS: Jeff cleans his car, turns up his radio, wipes down the console, and lastly, puts on the big THUMB sticker in the bottom right windshield corner.

The rides have begun! Jeff takes out his phone and activates his THUMB App. It immediately starts to make the hitchhiking motion, and he is on his way! He pulls up to the first person, a nice gentleman in a suit.

JEFF

Umm, Kevin?

KEVIN

Yes. Jeff?

JEFF

Yup!

KEVIN

Alright!

JEFF

Let's do this!

Kevin gets in the car.

KEVIN

I'm not going far, just up the street to a meeting.

JEFF

No problemo.

Jeff looks in the rearview mirror and sees him typing on his phone.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Good day so far?

Kevin looks up.

KEVIN

Oh yah. Really great day. And you know what, my car broke down, so you are really helping me out. I appreciate it. Oh, this is me!

JEFF

Oh, wow. That was easy.

KEVIN

Thanks again. Have a good one.

Jeff lets him out. He checks his app. Five dollars appear. Jeff talks to himself.

JEFF

This is not a bad deal at all.

The thumb motion starts up again.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Here we go.

He pulls up to his next pick up. It's a woman with a giant St. Bernard. Jeff is mortified.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Umm, Rochelle?

ROCHELLE

This is a service animal. He comforts me.

Drewl splashes from the dog's mouth.

JEFF

Umm, oky doky then. Umm, Hop on in.

The dog gets in and immediately flaps her hair. Jeff forces another smile.

20

INT. PATTERSON CAR - DAY

20

A very LOUD MAN in a Miami Vice-colored button-down shirt, with chest hair peeking out, is on his phone. As he gets in the car, the anxiety level jumps through the roof.

LOUD MAN

Oye, my flight leaves in fifteen minutes.

JEFF

Okay, but the airport is forty-five min-

LOUD MAN

Papi, we could've been driving already.

JEFF

You know what, you're right. Here we go!

Jeff begins to drive.

LOUD MAN

NO! Don't go that way. It's gonna be gridlock, Papa Dios!

JEFF

Oh, it's just the app says it's the fastest.

LOUD MAN

You're making me late!

JEFF

You know what, you're right, and I'm sorry. Here we go!

Jeff is working hard to stay positive. The volume of Loud Man on the phone becomes ridiculous.

LOUD MAN

I'm never gonna make it! VAMOS!!!
Yeah, this driver is just negative!

Jeff forces a smile as all goes silent as we still see Loud Man's mouth flap in slow motion.

SMASH CUT TO:

21 INT. PATTERSON CAR - DAY

21

Jeff pulls up to the school to pick up Ruby. She sees him, smiles, and waves as she trots to the car. Jeff pulls out his phone and checks his app. Not enough money there. A little deflated, he closes the app and texts Jessica.

JEFF (TEXT MESSAGE)

Can you hang out with Ruby tonight?
I have a night shift.

JESSICA (TEXT MESSAGE)

You got a job?! Fantastic!
Absolutely. I'm here for you guys.

Ruby gets in the car.

RUBY

Hi, Daddy!

22

EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE - NIGHT

22

Ruby and Jessica wave as Jeff pulls away.

JESSICA

Looks like it's you and me tonight!

RUBY

Yah. You know what, let's have a slumber party!

They walk inside.

JESSICA

Ice cream?

RUBY

I knew I liked you!

Jessica goes to the freezer.

JESSICA

So, how is everything?

RUBY

It's great now! Daddy is gonna be home more. I mean, he isn't tonight because he is running errands, but you know what I mean?

JESSICA

Your daddy loves you very much.

RUBY

Are you guys gonna get married?

Jessica blushes.

JESSICA

What? No! I mean, not that anything is wrong with him. I just-

RUBY

It's ok. I can tell you like him. I won't tell.

JESSICA

Ice Cream?!!!

Jessica, changing the subject, opens the ice cream.

23

INT. PATTERSON CAR - NIGHT

23

Jeff checks his app. A new rider requests him. He looks at the clock through bleary eyes. Jeff struggles to stay awake. He looks ahead, and he thinks he sees a sleigh. Jeff slaps his face to wake up. The sleigh is getting closer.

JEFF

I'm hallucinating. Just keep driving.

Closer. He squints his eyes. Closer! Determined not to give in to his fatigue, he drives on and SMASH! He rear-ends the sleigh. A hat very much like Santa Claus's hat flies into the air and flutters to the earth in front of the sleigh.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Oh my gosh.

Santa, holding his neck, winces in pain.

SANTA

What in the name of Rudolph is going on here?

Jeff, stunned, tries to process what is happening.

JEFF

Are you...?

SANTA

Hurt? Yes, I am!

He gingerly steps out of the sleigh.

JEFF

No, are you Santa?!!!

SANTA

What I am is in trouble! My neck!
Is there damage to the sleigh?

Jeff suddenly feels like a kid again. He looks at the sleigh.

JEFF

Ummm.

Shimmers flake from the sleigh.

JEFF (CONT'D)

This is AWESOME! I mean, not the you getting hurt part, but I totally rear-ended SANTA!

SANTA
I need to sit down.

JEFF
Here, let me help you.

Santa sits down on the sleigh's edge. It breaks just a little more with a thud.

SANTA
Well, this is horrible.

JEFF
Don't you mean ho ho horrible? Get it? Ho -

Santa stares at him. Not amused.

SANTA
People I care about are depending on me.

Santa turns away.

JEFF
Yeah, but not the naughty. And for the record, I have been nice.

Santa gives him a look.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Well, niceish.

Santa keeps staring.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Well, I don't deserve coal... I don't think... Never mind. Focus, Jeff. Neck, sleigh, SANTA!!!!

SANTA
If my sleigh doesn't work, then every kid in this city won't have a Christmas.

JEFF
Yeah, that would be bad.

SANTA
I promised I would be home early.

JEFF
That's bad, too.

SANTA
The Sunrise prophecy-

JEFF
Sounds terrifying.

SANTA
Jeffery, I have an idea.

JEFF
Okay, what is it? Wait, how did you know my name?

SANTA
I'm Santa Claus. All these packages are to be delivered, right?

JEFF
Yes.

SANTA
And my sleigh isn't working after your attempted vehicular pancaking.

JEFF
I take full responsibility for that.

SANTA
I'm glad to hear that, Jeffery. You are going to deliver these packages for me.

JEFF
Come again?

SANTA
Your mission, if you choose to accept it, deliver these packages and save Christmas. It'll be like an Express delivery service with Christmas spirit.

JEFF
Look, I'm really sorry about the mess I've caused, the rear ending and everything. I have great insurance, by the way, but I can't deliver all these presents. I have to find a job.

SANTA
You said, I, four times in one sentence, young Jeffery.
(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

Sometimes, we need to think outside of ourselves.

JEFF

I have a lot at stake here-

Santa peers over his glasses.

SANTA

Did it again. Jeff, you are looking for a job right now and driving to make ends meet.

JEFF

How did you know?

SANTA

Santa Claus. I'm going to use some Christmas magic on your car. With your persistence, I know you can do it!

Santa smiles at Jeff through the pain in his neck.

JEFF

I appreciate the vote of confidence, I really do, but trust me, I'm over-committed, sorry.

Jeff turns and gets in his car.

Santa is somehow already in the passenger seat.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What the- How did you?

Santa motions to himself.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Santa, got it. Right.

SANTA

Jeff, this is something you must do.

JEFF

Actually, what I must do is find a way to pay for this new house and still give my daughter a crap ton of Christmas presents. She deserves it.

SANTA

What she deserves, you can't buy.

JEFF

I'm trying my best here.

SANTA

You can start by being the father
Ruby believes you to be.

JEFF

You see Ruby?

SANTA

I do, but the question is, do you?
You are her hero. You've been
thinking about this all wrong.
You're trying to get a job when you
already have one. Be a father
first.

JEFF

I'm trying my best for her.

SANTA

You're trying your best for you. Be
a father to Ruby, and help Father
Christmas.

JEFF

Will I go on the nice list for
sure?

SANTA

The list is of those whose heart is
in true alignment with the
Christmas Spirit. Let's see how you
do.

JEFF

Well, I don't think I have much
choice. And you sure I'm up for
this?

SANTA

As sure as Carol's Apple Cider.

JEFF

Okay, I'll do it.

SANTA

Wonderful. Let me check in my bag
for something.

Santa looks in his bag and starts pulling out random
Christmas items. None of them are what he is looking for.
Finally, he finds it.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Aha! Here it is.

He smiles and holds it up to the moonlight.

JEFF

Umm, Excuse me. I'm sorry. Is that an air freshener?

SANTA

A Christmas tree air freshener.

JEFF

So this will help me deliver packages?

SANTA

No, this is because your car stinks. I smell it from here.

JEFF

Sorry, gym clothes from a couple of weeks ago.

Santa hands him an ornament.

SANTA

Hang this on your rearview mirror.

Jeff cautiously takes the ornament from Santa. He examines it, walks to his car, opens the door, and hangs it over the rearview mirror. Light shimmers around the car.

The vehicle seems to come to life! A wreath pops out the front, Christmas lights, and decorations grow out of the car, and it begins to hover.

JEFF

Holy Christmas...

SANTA

Okay, Jeffery, Christmas in Miami now rests in your hands. Much rests in your hands, more than you know.

JEFF

I'll do my best.

SANTA

We hope so.

JEFF

Who is we?

SANTA
Here are the presents.

He hands Jeff a bag.

JEFF
Okay. I can do this.

SANTA
I believe in you. Now, could you
drop me off at a hotel? I need to
rest.

They get in Jeff's new and improved car. On the side of the car, it now says CHRISTMAS EXPRESS. Jeff giggles like a little kid as the SLEIGH takes off and zooms away. We hear laughter as the EXPRESS zooms off into the night.

24 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - NIGHT 24

Jeff tip-toes into the house. Jessica is sleeping on the couch. Jeff pulls the blanket up on her. She snuggles the blanket and touches Jeff's hand in her sleep. Jeff catches his breath and feels the gentle touch of her fingers. Content, he heads to Ruby's room.

25 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE RUBY'S ROOM - EVENING 25

Ruby lays in bed, fast asleep. Jeff looks at her with pride. As he peers in closer, he sees that she is holding the picture from earlier that she was drawing. Jeff looks at it. Emotions flood in. He tucks her in a little more, kisses her on the forehead, and closes the door.

26 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - MORNING 26

Jessica wakes up to a symphony of pots and pans clanging together. Jeff is up, wide-eyed and bushy-tailed. He has his chef's apron and hat on. The table is dressed with fresh made pancakes, orange juice, cereal, and eggs. Jeff whistles "Jingle Bells" to himself as he cooks with a smile. Jessica groggily wakes up.

JESSICA
Oh man, I totally passed out. I'm
so sorry. I didn't mean to
overstay.

JEFF

What? Are you kidding!? You saved me last night! It's nice to wake up to you.

Jessica blushes.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What I mean is it's nice to see your face first thing. No, actually, what I meant is that your energy is here, nicely.

Jessica chuckles to herself.

JESSICA

Is English your first language?

JEFF

I'm going to, umm, check on the uh, orange juice.

Ruby walks out of the bedroom. She surveys the food. A smile spreads across her face. She hasn't seen this type of breakfast spread since, well, her mother was alive.

RUBY

Woah!

JEFF

I know! Look at all the food!

RUBY

And you and Miss Jessica had a slumber party!

JEFF

I know! No, wait! No!

Ruby sits down and starts to eat and drink.

JEFF (CONT'D)

No, honey, Jessica just slept here, on the couch, while Daddy was out.

RUBY

Out? Where?

JEFF

Well, that's the good news!

Ruby looks on, confused.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Well, honey, you know how important Christmas is to me...

RUBY

Yeah, and now we get to celebrate together!

JEFF

And we get to actually have... Stuff! Daddy got a new job!

RUBY

What?

JEFF

Part-time.

RUBY

Doing what?

JEFF

I'm the new Santa!

RUBY

Dad?

JESSICA

Jeff?

JEFF

Exciting, right?

Jessica and Ruby stare at Jeff, who is smiling hopefully.

JEFF (CONT'D)

It's a long story, but basically, I was really bummed about losing my job and letting you down. I went to The Thumb and started driving. It started out great, but unfortunately, I rear-ended Santa. He wasn't seriously injured, but he can't make his rounds, so now I am.

Ruby stares at him.

RUBY

If you don't want to tell me the truth, all you have to do is say so.

Ruby runs to her room. Jeff turns to Jessica.

JEFF

Jessica, I'm telling the truth.

She looks at him with a touch of doubt in her eyes.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Look, I was wondering if you could help me out and-

JESSICA

Watch Ruby? Sure.

JEFF

Thanks. I know she isn't thrilled, but I have to deliver the best Christmas not only to Ruby, but now I have to deliver Christmas to all the kids in the city.

JESSICA

You think this is about presents?

JEFF

It's not just that. I bet on myself, big time. I don't think this bet is going to pay off.

JESSICA

It's none of my business, but you should know that you have a girl in there that adores you. She misses her dad. Don't forget about her.

JEFF

I could never forget her. This... What I am doing, this is *for* her. When this is all done, she'll understand. I, um, can't do this without you.

He looks at her long and hard.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Can I count on you?

JESSICA

Always.

He takes her hand and squeezes it.

JEFF

Thanks, Jess. I'll be back soon.

He exits. Jessica looks in the direction of Ruby's room. She heads over that way.

27 INT. JEFF'S CAR - MORNING

27

Jeff is ready to get his things going! He sits in the car with excitement. He reaches for a bag under the passenger side seat. He opens the bag and takes a classic tree air fresher out. He smiles at it as he hangs it on the rearview mirror.

He shifts the car into drive and rolls forward. He is in the car wash! Jeff turns the music on and all the way up. He rocks out to the Christmas music as the soapy rainbow covers the windshield.

The song rolls on, as does his dance moves until the car wash is over. Once it's finished, he steps out of the car to inspect it. Squeaky clean. He pats the hood. Jeff stops for a moment. He looks over his shoulder. He is getting the feeling that he is being watched. He does one last check, gets in the car, and heads off.

28 INT. HOTEL - AFTERNOON

28

Jeff walks into the lobby. It is empty but very festive in its decorations. A couple of teenagers man the front desk. Jeff, toward the front desk, stands and smiles. One of the girls, a blonde teenager, TAMMY, is on her phone and pays no attention. The other teen brunette, VANESSA, is singing show tunes in her headphones. Jeff DINGS the bell.

DING.

No response. Tammy keeps typing into her phone. The selfies are nonstop.

DING.

No response. Vanessa is now practicing a dance move behind the desk. Jeff DINGS the bell several times slowly while smiling until Tammy looks up.

TAMMY

Oh! Sorry! I was totally distracted by Vanessa's singing.

JEFF

No problem at all. I'm here to see, umm, Santa Claus.

Tammy looks at her. She tries not to laugh.

TAMMY

Say what?

JEFF

I know it sounds ridiculous, but
he's here in the hotel.

TAMMY

Please hold.

Tammy walks over to Vanessa and taps her on the shoulder. Vanessa stops dancing and takes her headphones off. Tammy whispers in her ear while Vanessa's gaze is locked in on Jeff.

After the secret conversation is finished, Vanessa walks toward the front desk with Tammy flanking her.

VANESSA

Hi! I'm the manager here. Can I
help you?

JEFF

You're the manager?

VANESSA

Yes.

She taps her name tag, which is decorated with musical notes.

JEFF

But you're so young.

VANESSA

Age doesn't define you. Your
actions do. Have you seen the new
musical about age only being a
state of mind-

JEFF

I need to see Santa Claus.

VANESSA

And how old are you, Sir?

JEFF

I know it sounds crazy, but I rear-
ended him. He hurt his neck, and
now he's here. His sleigh is
broken, and I am taking his place,
so... Can you help me?

The girls BUST out laughing. Taking the hint, Jeff walks away. The laughter echoes in the distance.

29

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

29

Jeff checks his watch as he steps into the courtyard. Urgency strikes. He looks down the hallway. Banging comes from that direction. Jeff cautiously walks over.

It's Santa! Neck brace and all, banging on the ice machine.

JEFF

Santa?

SANTA

It's so hot in that room.

JEFF

What are you doing?

SANTA

I need to ice my room down.

He continues to bang on the machine.

JEFF

Can I help you?

Jeff pushes the button that reads, **PUSH HERE**. Ice falls into the bucket.

SANTA

It's a Christmas miracle!

JEFF

I wish it were that easy. Okay, Santa, I tried to find you, but the hotel's "Breakfast Club" at the front desk laughed at me.

SANTA

You should feel good, Jeffery. You brought joy into their hearts.

JEFF

Good point. Okay, can we talk?

SANTA

Let's head back to my room.

They move with purpose down the hall to Santa's room. **A DO NOT DISTURB** sign hangs from the door knob.

They enter.

30 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

30

A head peeks around the corner. It's Patrick. He starts walking quietly and slowly toward Santa's room.

SWHOOP!!!

Patrick steps on some spilled ice and slips. After catching some hang time, he crashes to the ground.

POV PATRICK - A blinding ceiling light flashes in and out. The light is eclipsed by MICK, late teens, works part-time as the mechanic on staff who looks down at Patrick.

MICK

Why are you lying on the ground?

PATRICK

I'm not lying, I'm relaxing.

MICK

Can you relax somewhere else? I need to install a new bulb. Thanks.

Mick waves bye-bye without smiling and ushers him out of the way.

31 INT. SANTA'S ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

31

Snow globes from around the country line every surface of the hotel room. Each snow globe is bright and active except for Miami. Jeff looks at them curiously.

JEFF

(To himself)
Angela?

SANTA

Hello, Jeffery.

He changes his energy.

JEFF

It's freezing in here!

SANTA

Really? Oh, the AC wasn't cooling below 50. I had to go get some ice.

JEFF

Thanks for the information.

SANTA
Don't mention it.

He motions to the table and chairs.

SANTA (CONT'D)
Have a seat, Jeffery.

He does so.

JEFF
What's up, Nick?

SANTA
Excuse me?

JEFF
Like Saint Nick, like Jolly
Saint... Sorry, Santa.

SANTA
It's Kris, but you can call me
Santa. I need you to listen to me,
Jeffery. Christmas is one of those
holidays that holds everything
together. It's a big deal.

JEFF
Totally! Big deal, check!

SANTA
I know you are looking for work,
and things have been a little
unstable at home.

JEFF
It's been a little shaky, but I can
do this.

SANTA
Jeffery, this isn't about just a
job-

JEFF
Santa, my little girl lost her mom,
and now, I'm the only person who
can give her the type Christmas
that she deserves.

SANTA
Don't you see that it's not just
about things for her? Time,
Jeffery.

Santa holds back emotion.

SANTA (CONT'D)

It's about having time with the ones you love most. Time is a gift that can't be measured.

JEFF

I understand, but-

SANTA

You hear but don't understand. Do you think that if your wife was here, she would give time away with her?

JEFF

That's why I'm here, why I'm doing this. There are other kids who don't have a family, and Christmas is all they have to help them feel normal. I do things my way. It's gotten me this far.

SANTA

Be careful how you spend your days. They are expensive. Once you spend one, it's gone.

JEFF

I know, and I know how I'm going to spend my next few days.

SANTA

One other thing. I didn't want to overwhelm you earlier, but this is the 1700th anniversary of Christmas.

JEFF

Okay...

SANTA

There's something I haven't told you. Christmas spirit is at an all-time low. If you don't deliver all the presents by sunrise, we will lose the spirit of Christmas and live out the rest of my days as a mortal, probably in Cleveland.

JEFF

Not Cleveland! Wait, you said we. Like, me too?

SANTA

Carol, Mrs. Claus. She's sick. If she loses the Christmas spirit, I'm afraid she won't make it.

JEFF

But I don't understand. You're Santa. You're in charge. You have a boss?

SANTA

My boss is The Boss.

Santa points heavenward.

JEFF

Why didn't you tell me earlier?

SANTA

Would you have been ready to hear it?

JEFF

Sometimes, we need to hear what we aren't ready for.

SANTA

Well then, Jeffery, you are ready now. As you can see, the snow globe for Miami isn't snowing the way Wyoming, Georgia, or even Tennessee is, for that matter.

JEFF

It doesn't snow here, Santa!

SANTA

These globes represent the odds of Christmas success. I delivered to the other cities, but now it's up to you to save Christmas here.

JEFF

(to himself)

The snow globes represent a lot.

Santa hands him a phone. It has a map, lists, and scrolls like a government-encrypted device.

SANTA

This has everything you need. The toys are in your car. The Christmas spirit is now up to you.

JEFF

I got this, Santa; I won't let you
or Ruby down.

SANTA

We are counting on you.

Jeff looks at the phone and starts to walk out.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Oh, and Jeffery, if you are
successful here, you will find more
presents will present themselves.

Jeff looks on curiously and exits.

32

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

32

Patrick holds ice to his head while pointing a flashlight in
each car. He is determined to find something.

PATRICK

Where is it, Jeff? I know you have
a car full of merch here.

As he snoops around, Mick and Tammy are peering out of a
window. With military precision, they approach Patrick.
Stealth mode signals allow them to move into position.

Mick signals, "eyes on you; move left." Tammy understands and
whips out her mace.

Meanwhile, Patrick is looking into a car with a handicapped
sticker.

Mick and Tammy look at each other. They are disgusted! Mick
signals for Tammy to call the police.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

(talks to himself)

Ahah! Hiding your plans by driving
a car with a disability sticker.
You sicko.

He tries to pry open the door. Mick enacts the plan. He steps
out of the shadows.

MICK

What are you doing?

TAMMY

Breaking into a disabled's car?

PATRICK
No, I-

MICK
Gross.

MICK (CONT'D)
I thought I told you to leave.

PATRICK
Look, kid, this is adult stuff I'm
dealing with.

Suddenly, Tammy rolls army style and unleashes the mace into Patrick's eyes. A high-pitched SCREAM rings out!

MICK
RUN! Tammy, call the police!

Tammy pushes the emergency button on her phone. Mace rains down on him. Patrick dances in place and SCREAMS while rubbing his eyes. POLICE SIRENS wail in the distance. Mick and Tammy high-five. Patrick runs for his life and just escapes as the police roll up.

Just then, Jeff enters the parking lot. He sees the Police head in Patrick's direction.

JEFF
Wow, guess you can never be too
careful.

A couple of officers are shining their flashlights, looking for the culprit.

Jeff drives off, looking at his phone, happy as can be.

INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeff quietly comes into the house. Ruby is asleep on the couch. She is dressed in her tutu. Jessica sees him come in and walks over to greet him.

JEFF (CONT'D)
I forgot!

JESSICA
She had a recital waiting for you.

Jeff walks over to her. Picks her up and carries her to her bedroom.

33 INT. RUBY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

33

Jeff lays her down and tucks her in. Ruby stirs.

RUBY
Did you forget, Daddy?

JEFF
I'm so sorry, sweetheart. I was
worki- I wasn't here, and I should
have been. I'll do better.

RUBY
It's okay, Daddy, I'm used to it.
Love you.

Ruby turns over and goes to sleep. Jeff walks back into the living room.

34 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

34

Jessica is waiting for him.

JESSICA
Don't worry about it. There will be
others.

JEFF
I'm running out of time, Jess.

JESSICA
What do you mean?

JEFF
Things don't always turn out the
way we want them to, and I get
that, but I can't let Ruby inherit
my problems.

JESSICA
What are you talking about?

JEFF
Living! Living like this! She
deserves more. She has no mom,
Jess. I bought a 5 million dollar
home, and now I have no way to pay
for it.

JESSICA
You think that little girl in there
cares about the size of her house?

JEFF

Maybe not now, but-

JESSICA

Big house, no dad in it.

JEFF

I'm trying!

JESSICA

Trying to what?

JEFF

You wanna know what she just said to me in there? I apologized to her for missing, and she said it was okay because she's used to it. She expects me to fail!

JESSICA

Life happens, Jeff. You're a good father carrying a mountain by yourself, but the thing you keep missing is that she doesn't want giant house and new clothes. All she wants is time with her father.

JEFF

No, she wants a normal family life. She doesn't even know what that is. I feel it! Parents are supposed to protect their children. My child is stuck without her mom and with a dad who can't keep a job. This Christmas is a constant reminder of where I've let her down.

JESSICA

You are not responsible for what happened. You know that, right?

JEFF

I worked too much, and because of that, she doesn't have a mother.

JESSICA

Stop! Stop making this about you. I'm sorry, Jeff, but until you realize that you aren't the victim but the hero, Ruby won't get the wonderful father that you could be. She lost her mother, yes, but she still has a father.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

She will always have Christmas, but she needs you to show up. If you want her to have that life you talk about, go handle your business and come back to her.

JEFF

Wow.

JESSICA

What?

JEFF

You're honest.

JESSICA

Always.

She hugs him. It's comfortable. Awareness separates them from the moment.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna run. It's getting late.

JEFF

I'll walk you out. And thanks again.

35

INT. HOTEL

35

Santa sits in a comfortable chair. He begins to work on a little project. We can't make out what it is, but he is enjoying the beginnings of the process.

36

INT. OFFICE NEXT - DAY

36

Patrick sits at his desk dressed in yesterday's clothes. A dazed and deranged look rests in his eyes. He stands up and paces the room.

PATRICK

(he talks to himself)

I know you are up to something, Jeff. I will figure this out!

Jeff is standing at the door.

JEFF

Are you talking to yourself, Patrick?

Patrick fumbles.

PATRICK
Um, yes, I am testing a new script
for our next new doll.

JEFF
It's named after the guy you are
firing?

Patrick stares at him blankly.

PATRICK
Uh, yes?

JEFF
Okay, well, listen, I have to run
some errands for my last account,
so I'll be back later.

PATRICK
Yup. Sure, sounds good.

JEFF
Okay, I'm gonna leave now.

PATRICK
Yup. I actually have a lot to do,
too. Swamped.

JEFF
You okay? You don't look well.

PATRICK
Great, perfect, fine. Just so
swamped that it makes me look..
Dusty...

Jeff stares at him, confused, and exits.

Patrick looks in the mirror and tries to put himself
together. He calls for his assistant.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Clara?

His assistant Clara walks in.

CLARA
Yes, sir.

Hold all my calls. I need to go out into the field.

CLARA (CONT'D)
Yes, sir. What about your meeting
with the Board?

JEFF

Postpone the meeting. I have a feeling I am about to save the company a lot of money.

37 INT. JEFF'S CAR - DAY

37

Jeff turns on the music, straightens his air freshener, puts on his red jacket, and turns on his new phone. As he does this, the jacket starts to glow, the car starts to shimmer, and the ride to save Christmas begins!

Jeff pulls up to the first house. He checks into his gift bag. The gifts are all wrapped in different colors. The names on the phone all have a color and symbol next to their name: a candy cane or a piece of coal. Jeff has a moment of understanding! He grabs his Santa hat and heads out!

He takes out the gift and heads toward the back of the house.

Jeff, out of breath, awkwardly climbs over the fence. He looks up and sees the classic chimney.

JEFF

Ya know, I always wanted to do this.

Jeff looks around, trying to figure out ways to get on the roof. He tries to scale the wall.

Several cuts of him climbing and falling to the ground.

Finally, Jeff, on the ground, looks and sees the back sliding glass window slightly ajar. Jeff dusts himself off and heads inside quietly.

38 INT. HOUSE NUMBER ONE - NIGHT

38

Quietly, Jeff opens the sliding glass door. He looks around. The coast is clear.

JEFF

Well, this was easy.

He hears a SHUFFLE. He stops for a second to listen more closely. All quiet. He sets his Christmas bag down with a THUMP. The SHUFFLING emerges again. This time, more noise accompanies it.

GROWL.

Jeff spins around and sees a huge, unhappy dog. The GROWLING intensifies.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Good poochy pooch.

Jeff extends his hand to calmly pet the dog.

SNAP.

The dog chomps at his hand. Luckily, Jeff pulls it away just in time! Jeff, now being backed into a corner, reaches into his pocket... Dog Treats! There it was, a little sticky note with Santa's face winking. Jeff takes one of the treats and ever so carefully tosses one at the doggy. Very quickly, the big, ferocious dog turns into a puppy dog and gobbles up the treats. He goes to sit down and relax.

39 Jeff smiles to himself, takes the presents out of the bag, 39 and sets them under the tree.

JEFF (CONT'D)

One house down, all of Miami to go.

40 EXT. SECOND HOUSE - NIGHT

40

The delivery to the second house is much different. The poverty is overwhelming. He walks around back and enters through the back door. Jeff sees a few crates that act as seats, a card table in the "living room," and a tiny fridge. Jeff walks over and opens the fridge, afraid of what he might see. His fears were confirmed. It's basically empty. A box of orange juice, half a loaf of bread, and a block of cheese are the only things to be found in the fridge.

ANGLE ON: The card table. A plate of cookies and a small single serving size of milk. Under the plate, a note.

DEAR SANTA!

WE ARE SO EXCITED FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR! PLEASE EXCUSE THE HOUSE. IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT IT'S HOME. WE WEREN'T ABLE TO GIVE YOU EXACTLY WHAT WE WANTED, BUT AS A FAMILY, WE MADE SOME COOKIES FOR YOU TO ENJOY ON THIS BUSY NIGHT. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO.

SINCERELY,

THE FERGUSONS.

PS: HERE IS A PICTURE OF US FOR YOUR SLEIGH!

With eyes full of emotion, he closes the letter and places it in his pocket. He takes a bag of presents out and leaves them under the humble little tree. Resolve takes over his face. He is going to save Christmas.

41 INT. JEFF'S CAR - NIGHT

41

Jeff gets into his car after the emotional delivery. He takes a moment, gathers himself and his composure, and turns on the radio. The Christmas music starts to lift his spirits. A smile creeps on his face as he turns up the music...

MONTAGE - JEFF DELIVERING CHRISTMAS GIFTS

-- Jeff slams the car door and exits the car in different locations.

-- Jeff entering the car in different locations.

-- Series of Jeff always picking up his bag, pulling different gifts out, different Christmas trees, and different cookies!

-- Jeff delivers gifts to several homes and starts to have a ton of fun!

END MONTAGE

41A EXT. RESIDENTIAL HOME - DAWN

41A

As Jeff finishes a delivery, he notices that the sun is about to rise.

JEFF

Time to get home.

Jeff turns the car around. He takes a special phone out and starts to call Santa.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Hey, Santa. It's me, Jeff. I covered the first half of the route, and I'm going to finish the rest of them tomorrow for Christmas Eve. By the way, this is a great gig!

He hangs up the phone and heads to his house.

42

EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE - DUSK

42

Jeff pulls up to the house. A car is already parked in the driveway.

Jeff exits the car and goes inside. Patrick is sitting on the couch inside, talking to Jessica. They both rise as Jeff walks in.

JEFF

What's going on here?

PATRICK

Jessica and I were just getting to know each other a little bit.

JESSICA

Hey, when I heard a car, I thought it was you. I went out to see you, and it was actually...

PATRICK

Patrick.

Jeff looks at him incredulously.

JEFF

Is there something I can help you with?

PATRICK

No, no! I was just filling Jessica in on the great news of your severance package. That if you are in non-compete for 30 days prior to and post-release, you'll be set for a long time.

JEFF

You couldn't have sent an email?

PATRICK

I like to do things in person.

JESSICA

Well, we appreciate you coming by with the good news.

Just then, Ruby enters.

RUBY

Daddy, you're home!

JEFF

Hey, sweetheart! I love you so much!

RUBY

Are you gonna leave again?

Patrick's ears perk up.

PATRICK

Where did you say you were again?

JEFF

I didn't.

PATRICK

Right.

JESSICA

I was going to start on breakfast-

PATRICK

Ah yes, I have to go anyway. Good to see you guys are all so... Cozy.

JEFF

Good to see you're the same as you were yesterday.

PATRICK

I'll never change!

JEFF

Isn't that the truth.

They stare at each other both with a fake smile. Patrick pulls his business card out of his pocket.

PATRICK

If you need anything, Jessica, or have anything you want to share, give me a call.

JESSICA

Thanks.

JEFF

I'll walk you out.

Jessica puts the card aside. Jeff walks him to the door. As Patrick is leaving, he quietly mutters under his breath and through a smile.

PATRICK
I'm watching you.

JEFF
You should watch your zipper
because it's down.

When Patrick looks down to check, Jeff slams the door.

43 EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE - DAY 43

Patrick pulls out his phone and dials a number.

PATRICK
I think one of our, um, employees
is up to something, Sir. Yes, Sir,
I will get proof.

He hangs up the phone, gets into his car, and drives away.

44 INT. HOTEL - LATER THAT EVENING 44

Patrick, very aware of the experience he had last time, has returned to the hotel. He is more determined than ever to find out what is going on that could implicate Jeff.

Patrick tip-toes into the lobby. The front desk is quiet. The only thing to be heard is Vanessa singing "Memory" from Cats. He whispers to himself...

PATRICK
She's not bad.

As if she heard him, she stops singing. Spins on a dime and grabs her mace.

Patrick freezes and claps his mouth over his hands from behind the corner of the wall.

She pauses and listens quietly. Nothing. She goes back to singing.

Patrick exits the way he came in. It's too risky with Vanessa on duty. He walks around the side entrance. There again is Mick. He looks like he's talking to... SANTA?

Patrick can't believe his eyes. He blinks a few times to get a clearer look. Same visual. Santa and Mick walk out of frame. Patrick advances toward them.

Patrick turns the corner. Santa and Mick are in the lounge. Tammy is eating some chips and laughing at something or other. The three seem to be having a good time.

Patrick sees them and then looks a few doors down. A door is cracked, partially open, with a red light emanating from it. He slowly heads to the room, careful not to be seen.

He opens the door. His mouth is agape. Christmas lights, a tree, ice, and fog adorn the room.

ANGLE ON:

Shelf of Snow Globes.

He walks over to the shelf. He sees the Snow Globe with Miami. Under the Miami globe is a sticky note with Jeff's full name on it.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Gotcha.

Patrick picks up the snow globe, opens his phone, and dials.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Sir, I have something I would like to discuss with you. Oh, and this is important. I recommend assembling the Board. Yes sir. This will be worth your while.

He puts the snow globe in his bag and exits.

45

EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE - PATIO - MORNING

45

Jeff sits outside, looking at the stars. He holds a picture in his hand. He seems a bit emotional.

The sound of LAUGHTER and TALKING fade in.

JEFF'S MEMORY

Angela, Jeff's wife, sits on his lap as they look up at the stars together.

JEFF

I used to love this. Sitting out here with you. Counting the stars.

ANGELA

This is my favorite part of the day.

JEFF
Technically, it's not day!

ANGELA
You know what I mean, silly!
Sitting here with you, evening
breeze on our face, dreaming with
the stars.

Jeff stares at her while she speaks. The love shines through his eyes.

JEFF
Wherever you are, I am.

They take a breath together and enjoy the silence.

ANGELA
I want to have a baby.

JEFF
Like, right now? It doesn't work
like that.

Jeff teases.

ANGELA
Jeff, I'm serious! I want to start
our family! We've been married for
a little while now, and I think
it's time!

JEFF
I think that you are going to be
the greatest mother in the history
of the world. Our baby will be the
luckiest baby ever. I love you.

ANGELA
I love you so much. What should we
name this magical being?

JEFF
Well, if we have a boy, Jeff Jr. Or
JJ is a great name.

ANGELA
Oh, is it?! And if we have a girl?

END OF JEFF'S MEMORY.

JEFF
Ruby?

Ruby has walked in and sat on his lap.

RUBY
Hey, Daddy.

JEFF
Hey, muffin. You alright?

RUBY
Yes. I missed you.

JEFF
I know. I know I've been busy. But I want you to know I've been doing it for you.

RUBY
I know, Daddy. I just, I just want to be with you.

JEFF
I want to be with you, too, all the time, munchkin, and we will. I just need a little more time.

Ruby gets up and looks at her dad, eyes full of emotion.

RUBY
I know I'm little, but I remember thinking mommy would always be there. We ran out of time. You're all I have left, and I just want my Daddy back.

Ruby runs to her room.

JEFF
Ruby. Ruby wait!

Jeff's phone lights up. It's Patrick. He answers.

PATRICK
Hello, partner.

JEFF
What do you want?

PATRICK
Great question! Now that I have proof, I want so much more than before.

JEFF

Proof? What do you mean? Proof of what?

PATRICK

This little game... It's over, Jeff. I know. You're working for Santa.

Jeff's face goes blank.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I have the Snow Globe.

JEFF

Pat, look-

PATRICK

No, you look. I am calling a meeting tomorrow with the Board of Directors. I expect you there. And Jeff, you can kiss that severance package goodbye.

JEFF

Why are you doing this?

PATRICK

You always thought you were smarter than me, better than me. Guess what, I won! With you gone, factor in payroll and insurance, I'll save the company a quarter million dollars. I think that warrants a promotion for me.

JEFF

Board of Directors.

PATRICK

I knew you were smart. Once I'm on the board, I'm untouchable. See you tomorrow!

Jeff hangs up.

46

INT. OFFICE - DAY

46

The office is a buzz. The conference room is packed with ten board members. Patrick is smiling as he holds a box in his hand.

BOARD PRESIDENT

Patrick, this better be good.
You've called us all away from our
families, and Christmas is around
the corner.

PATRICK

Think of this as an early Christmas
present. As soon as Jeff gets here,
we will begin.

47 INT. JEFF'S CAR- DAY 47

Jeff sits in his car. He looks dejected but ready to accept
his fate. He opens the car door and walks into the building.

48 INT. OFFICE DAY - CONTINUOUS 48

Jeff enters the Conference Room.

PATRICK

Ah, the guest of honor. Have a
seat. Let us begin.

Jeff sits. The Board looks on disgruntled.

Patrick takes front and center of the room.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen of The Board,
we all know the financial situation
our company has been in and the
unfortunate decision that had to be
made regarding Jeff.

Jeff awaits the news.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

In our paperwork, we clearly laid
out that in order for Jeff to
receive the severance package so
graciously set up for him, he would
have to not work for the remainder
of his contract.

BOARD PRESIDENT

Yes, yes, get on with it.

PATRICK

Yes, Sir, right away, sir. It has come to my attention that Jeff, sorry to say, has broken the agreement.

BOARD PRESIDENT

Proof, man, what proof do you have?

PATRICK

BEHOLD.

Patrick holds up a snow globe and sticky note.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Jeff is working for Santa Claus!!!

Jeff looks up. The Board looks around at each other.

A slow laugh starts with the Board President and infects the whole room. Jeff starts to laugh nervously. Then the laughs turn into full-blown hysterical belly laughs.

After the moment dies down, the president looks up at Patrick.

BOARD PRESIDENT

Patrick, I'm laughing to keep myself from firing you on the spot.

PATRICK

Wait, what?

BOARD PRESIDENT

You brought us here to show us a SNOW GLOBE AND STICKY NOTE???

PATRICK

No, no, you don't understand! I saw him! Santa and he is at this hotel, and there are snow globes everywhere.

BOARD PRESIDENT

I'm starting to think your recommendation of doing this on your own was the wrong choice.

The Board President stands.

BOARD PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

Let me be clear. If you pull a stunt like this again, YOU'RE FIRED!

PATRICK
But, but, the snow globe!

The President gives him a stern warning look and exits.

Patrick sets the snow globe down on the table and goes after The President in full brown-nose mode.

Jeff sees the snow globe, grabs it, smiles, and exits.

49 INT. JEFF'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER 49

With a much-needed victory in hand, Jeff pulls out his phone to call Santa.

JEFF
Santa! It's me, Jeff. I have something that belongs to you.

50 EXT. RESTAURANT FRONT - DAY 50

Jessica and Ruby head inside.

JESSICA
Your Dad said we can get anything we want!

RUBY
I already know what I want.

Jessica senses that she is down.

JESSICA
Well, let's go inside and look at the menu.

A less fortunate man and his young child sit with a sign.

"HUNGRY! Please Help!"

Ruby looks in her bag for something to give him.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

RUBY
We are supposed to help those who are less fortunate than us.

JESSICA
But he's a stranger.

RUBY

Yes, but he is also one of us. We need to help those who can't help themselves. I want to help him.

JESSICA

Ruby, listen to me, and this is very important. No matter what happens to you in your life, never let it change your heart. Your heart is what keeps you human. Compassion is one of your gifts. It's not what happens. What happens happens to everyone. It's what you do about what happens. Shine, understand?

RUBY

Yes, Ms. Jessica.

They hug. Ruby takes the money and hands it to the little boy.

LITTLE BOY

Merry Christmas.

Ruby smiles a little.

51 INT. HOTEL. SANTAS ROOM - AFTERNOON

51

Santa's project is coming along nicely. He works away on the items. A beautiful chain hangs off the desk. As he works toward the main part of the necklace, a thought strikes him. Santa makes takes out his phone to make a call. He opens it out to dial. Santa scrolls through his contacts. We see several funny names. Rudolph, Frosty, The Rock, and finally to, Mrs. Claus's name. He smiles fondly and dials.

It rings.

No answer. It goes to voicemail.

SANTA

Hey sweetheart. It's me, Kris. So, looks like we ran into a snag. To make a long story short, I got rear-ended, my sleigh is out of commission, I have a great guy helping out, but it seems like those who have lost hope are gaining the edge on those who believe. I am sorry about all of this.

(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

I should have come to you sooner.
I'm not giving up, but we may be
out of Christmas miracles.

52

EXT. HOTEL - LATER THAT EVENING

52

Jeff parks his car and holds the snow globe up to the light.
He looks heavenward.

JEFF

I'm trying.

Jeff places the snow globe in his bag and rushes into the
hotel. As he passes the front desk, our dancing blonde points
toward Santa's room in a dancing motion. Our young repair guy
gives him a thumbs up. Jeff looks with a confused but warm
smile and keeps going. He approaches the door.

He knocks.

SANTA

Come in, Jeff.

JEFF

How did you-

Santa looks at him with an "I'm Santa look."

JEFF (CONT'D)

He knows.

SANTA

What does he know?

JEFF

He had the snow globe.

SANTA

He had a snow globe.

JEFF

I don't know what I'm doing here.
Everything is so messed up. I keep
letting Ruby down; I'm flailing
with Jessica, NOT that there is
anything. Although sometimes I wish
there was. But then I keep seeing
snow globes, like EVERYWHERE. I'm
about to get creamed by Patrick,
and now I am going to blow
Christmas for, like, everybody.

SANTA
Are you done?

JEFF
With what?

SANTA
Pity party of one.

JEFF
Think so.

SANTA
Okay, Jeffery, listen. There's a reason why I chose you for this job.

JEFF
Wait? You chose me?

SANTA
Of course.

JEFF
But the accident-

SANTA
There are no accidents.

JEFF
But I don't know how I'm going to do this.

SANTA
You're not supposed to know. Life is a mystery. If you take away the mystery and everything was certain, you wouldn't need faith.

JEFF
I'm running out of faith.

SANTA
Faith works best when you don't know. Jeffery, sometimes, God puts us in positions where we don't know to keep us from relying too much on what we do know. You are here now for a reason.

JEFF
What's that?

SANTA

For starters, I believe you have something for me.

Santa looks at Jeff's bag.

JEFF

The snow globe!

He hands it to Santa.

Santa stands and takes it over to his shelf, places it, and chuckles to himself.

SANTA

Ah, good.

He walks back to his chair.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Jessica is waiting for you, but you know this. Patrick is hurt, but find out why, and help him move past it.

JEFF

It's about the presentation.

SANTA

It's never about the thing itself but the thought or lack there of behind it. Talk to him. You may be surprised with how it turns out.

JEFF

Okay, I will. He wants to take my severance. Maybe I can settle with him.

Jeff's face is in his hands.

SANTA

When are you going to realize that you can't buy your way out of this. She wants your time, and she wants it to be quality time. So give Ruby quality time.

JEFF

I'll do my best.

SANTA

Now, you have some deliveries to make. Your house included.

JEFF

Oh my gosh! I haven't delivered to my house yet!

SANTA

This is true.

JEFF

How am I going to do this? I can't do it alone.

SANTA

You're never alone.

Jeff begins to rush.

JEFF

Thanks, Santa!

53 MONTAGE: 53

Jeff deliveries to a few more houses. He is doing it with ease. He crosses them off the list. He hears Santa's voice in his head.

SANTA(V.O.)

Find out why he is hurting and help him move past it.

54 INT. PATRICK'S CAR - EVENING 54

Patrick lies forward with his face on the steering wheel.

55 INT. JEFF'S CAR - EVENING 55

He takes out his phone and texts Patrick.

Patrick, you were right. I do have something going on. I don't want to hide it anymore. Let's meet so I can tell you everything.

56 INT. PATRICK'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 56

Patrick gets the text, takes his face off the steering wheel and stares at the phone.

57 INT. JEFF'S CAR- CONTINUOUS 57

Patrick texts back.

The park from when we were kids. See you in twenty.

58

EXT. PARK - LATER

58

Jeff enters the park to find Patrick sitting on a swing looking. He hears Jeff walking and is startled.

PATRICK

I guess that you're pretty proud of yourself.

JEFF

Excuse me?

PATRICK

Gentlemen, Jeff wins again and is STILL the nice guy.

JEFF

No, Patrick. It's not like that.

PATRICK

It IS like that. It's how it's always been. You always come out looking like the hero, and I'm always the jerk.

Jeff stands in front of Patrick, feet in the sand, looking at him. Jeff is about to get angry but remembers Santa's words and takes a moment to center.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Is that how you see it?

PATRICK

(Not looking up)

No, that's how it is. Always.

JEFF

Why do you think that's the case?

PATRICK

If I have to tell you, you don't deserve to know.

JEFF

Mind if I sit?

Jeff motions to the swing next to him. Patrick nods.

PATRICK
I'm here. What's the latest way to
remind me of everything I'm not?

JEFF
That's not why I'm here.

They stare at each other.

JEFF (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

PATRICK
What?

JEFF
I'm sorry. I've been so busy
thinking about what happened to me
and not about why.

Jeff sits on the swing next to him.

JEFF (CONT'D)
But what happened to us?

PATRICK
What are you talking about?

JEFF
We used to be brothers. We used to
come to this playground, play,
talk, eat dirt.

PATRICK
Life moved faster than we could
keep up.

JEFF
One summer, we're inseparable. The
next, we don't talk.

PATRICK
You don't remember?

JEFF
Remember what?

PATRICK
Our sophomore year? The worst year
of my life? It was terrible.

JEFF
I don't remember sophomore year
like that.

PATRICK

If you don't remember, I don't want to get into it.

Patrick gets off the swing and starts to walk away.

JEFF

Patty, please.

PATRICK

I was supposed to be the one. I was supposed to be the golden boy, the athlete. Every year, you were my backup. High School was going to be my time-

JEFF

As I recall, you quit.

PATRICK

That's your version of the story, that I quit?

JEFF

You did quit!

PATRICK

I got kicked off the team, and you stole my job.

JEFF

No, Patrick. You quit. Yeah, I got more time, but you were not kicked off. You chose not to come back.

Patrick looks around, taking the moments in.

PATRICK

You really didn't know.

Jeff puts his hands up in the air as if to say he has no idea.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Coach gave me the option to leave or get publicly humiliated. So yeah, I guess I quit.

JEFF

But why? I always thought that you quit to open up the company. When you called me about working together, it seemed like all a part of the plan. What happened?

PATRICK

I made a mistake. I broke into Regency Square with the guys, but I was the only one caught. Coach Withrow gave me the ultimatum: quit or get kicked off.

JEFF

So that's why you dropped off the grid. I never saw you at school.

PATRICK

I saw you. Running my team, scoring my touchdowns, getting my credit.

JEFF

I didn't know-

PATRICK

And it's still happening. You landing in the end zone while I'm getting kicked off the team.

JEFF

Patrick, I'm sorry about high school, but to be honest, there has to be a time when you take accountability for what you do. I can't speak for what happened back then. But at the office, this attack on me, has been all you.

PATRICK

Gentleman Jeff never does wrong.

JEFF

Please, don't call me that.

Jeff takes a step toward Patrick.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Look, I do plenty wrong, trust me. But I try to learn from my mistakes. You're someone that I've looked up to. Believe it or not, you still are.

PATRICK

Yeah.

JEFF

Yeah, but you gotta remember who you are and stop pointing the finger. This crazy, twenty-five-year-old grudge, get rid of it. I love you like a brother.

PATRICK

Cain and Able.

JEFF

Hah, no, seriously. I remember the kid inside that never failed. That kid was tenacious.

PATRICK

Times change.

JEFF

Nothing changes but the clothes and the music.

PATRICK

Life was so much easier then.

JEFF

Maybe it was, but it's better now.

PATRICK

Better for you. You've got Ruby.

JEFF

I've got you, brother. YOU... The Patrick that owned the world. The Patrick that had a pocketful of magic and could score from anywhere on the field.

PATRICK

The magic is gone.

Patrick gets up and walks away.

Jeff smiles and calls out to Patrick.

JEFF

Is it? What is the one thing that you've always wanted for Christmas from your childhood?

PATRICK

What are you talking about?

JEFF
Anything. Think of something that
you wanted and never got.

Jeff is smiling and excited.

PATRICK
What are you doing??

JEFF
Anything!!

PATRICK
Ok, I'll play along.

Patrick begins to think.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Okay... An Action Engineer guy.
Never got one of those.

JEFF
Why not?

PATRICK
My father didn't want me playing
with "dolls".

JEFF
Ouch.

PATRICK
Yeah.

Jeff grabs his gift bag and starts to fish around.

Suddenly, we see a huge smile on his face.

JEFF
If I can grant this childhood
Christmas wish, would you have a
bit of hope and faith for your
future and give yourself a little
slack for your past?

PATRICK
What are you saying?

JEFF
You need to remember the magical
person that you truly are. I think
this may help.

PATRICK

I don't even know what that means.

JEFF

Just believe and go out from there.

PATRICK

If you pull out an Action Engineer Action Figure from that tiny little briefcase, I will believe that I can sing solo for the New York Philharmonic.

JEFF

Well, tune-up, brother!

Jeff slowly pulls a pristine action figure from his bag and hands it to Patrick. Patrick's eyes grow wide as he smiles.

PATRICK

How? How? I mean, What???

JEFF

Magic, buddy. Magic, faith, hope, and friendship.

Jeff's car starts to shimmer a little brighter.

PATRICK

I don't know what to say. I have no idea what's happening.

JEFF

Join the club.

PATRICK

What can I do? How can I repay you? I've been so terrible to you. I'm so sorry.

JEFF

It's good, Patty. You don't need to do anything. Wait, what are you doing the rest of the night?

PATRICK

Well, my schedule is suddenly clearer.

JEFF

How about sharing some of this newfound Christmas magic?

PATRICK
What do you need?

JEFF
A helper.

Jeff reaches into his case and presents Patrick with a smaller Christmas ornament air freshener.

PATRICK
What is this?

JEFF
Magic.

PATRICK
A magic air freshener?

JEFF
Yup. Hang it on your rearview.

Patrick eagerly moves to open his car door. He puts the air freshener around the mirror. Suddenly, the car comes to life! Lights and sounds explode as the car's transformation takes place! When the magic makeover is complete, the car is decorated like a huge ornament. The hood of the car has reindeer paintings on it, with Christmas lights to boot.

Patrick is all smiles as he notices that he is dressed as an elf. He even has the stockings and shoes!

PATRICK
I'M AN ELF!!!

JEFF
Apprentice Elf, but if you do great this year, who knows??

Jeff smiles.

PATRICK
So, what do I do?

JEFF
Well, there is no way I can finish all of South Florida by myself. As it is, I'm going to have to call in reinforcements.

PATRICK
More elves?

JEFF
Bigger.

PATRICK

Santa?

JEFF

The big man himself.

PATRICK

Shut your face! Can I meet him? Can I meet him? Please? Pleaseeee?

JEFF

Take the West Coast, and I'll take the South East. I still need to finish and then make it to Ruby in time. We can all meet up at my place. Patty, there's a lot at stake here. Santa needs us.

PATRICK

You can count on me.

Patrick salutes.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I will handle this for you.

JEFF

Partners?

He extends his hand to Patrick.

PATRICK

Partners.

They shake.

JEFF

Okay, mount up!

They both get into their cars. Just before they close their doors, Patrick calls out to Jeff.

PATRICK

Hey Jeff!

JEFF

Yeah?

PATRICK

You are still a gentleman. Thank you.

JEFF

Thank you, my brother. Now, let's
RIDE!!!

Both cars take off and ride into the sky!

Jeff checks his app.

ANGLE ON PHONE.

ETA- 5 Hrs. The sands of the hourglass fall downward.

Jeff, worried, pulls out his phone to call Santa.

He dials, and the phone rings.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Hello? Hello, Santa. Are you there?

59

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

59

Santa answers the phone.

SANTA

Hello, Jeffery. How can I help?

JEFF

Glad you asked because, more than
anything, I need your help. Well,
first of all, I took your advice
and all is good with Patrick.

SANTA

I know.

JEFF

Right, magic Saint and all that. I
need your help!

SANTA

Okay. Go ahead.

JEFF

No, like, right this moment!

SANTA

For the love of Scrooge,
What did you lose, Jeff?

JEFF
Time! I'm losing time and losing
Ruby, I'm failing you and Mrs.
Claus.

SANTA
Slow down, Jeff.

JEFF
I can't slow down! I just need to
get home. With our last deliveries,
I'm at least five hours away. This
isn't good.

SANTA
I want you to listen to me. I'll
guide you, and you'll arrive in
time... (sotto) I hope.

JEFF
You hope? WHAT?

SANTA
You heard that?!

JEFF
Kinda freaking out here!

SANTA
Jeffery, stay on track!

JEFF
Okay, you're right, sorry.

Indistinctly, we begin to hear Santa guide Jeff through
numerous routes and turns. As the sand falls away, his
anxiety grows. Presents drop from the car into chimneys.
The clock ticks.

SUPER: Four hours later.

59A INT. JEFF'S CAR - NIGHT

59A

Jeff is losing hope and feeling lost. He turns off-road and
emotionally sinks to rock bottom.

JEFF
(to himself)
Running out of time. I'm sorry,
Ruby.

Suddenly, he finds Santa standing in the corner of a
sidewalk. He walks towards Jeff's car with a smile on his

face and gets into the passenger seat. His color seems dull, but his smile feels bright.

SANTA
Let's get you home, Jeff.

JEFF (STARTLED)
Wh-what? How'd you get here?

Jeff looks on in amassment.

SANTA
That's for me to know and you to wonder.

JEFF
Are you okay? You don't look so hot.

SANTA
You don't look like a million bucks either, Jeff.

Jeff looks in the rearview mirror. His eyes are red with begs to boot.

JEFF
Touché.

SANTA
We're in trouble, Jeffery.

JEFF
I know. I need to get home.

SANTA
Your little one, Ruby, has lost her Christmas spirit, and the only way she can get it back is by you being there for her. That's all that matters now.

JEFF
I know! This is why I'm so mad at myself. I was trying to do something right by everyone. I've let down the one who needs me most. I just need to give her -

SANTA
Jeffery, stop. No, you don't need to give her anything you already have.

(MORE)

SANTA (CONT'D)

The only gift Ruby truly wants is for you to be there with her on Christmas day. So, that being said, let's get you home. Your real home.

Santa then lifts a cover on the dashboard, revealing a big, bright red button that says "ZOOM" in big white letters.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Hold on tight, Jeffery.

Santa pushes the button, and suddenly, the car moves at the speed of lightning; Jeff is screaming loudly, not even holding onto the wheel anymore.

Seconds later.

60 EXT. PATTERSON HOUSE - DAWN 60

The car arrives at the front of JEFF's house, Unfortunately, we notice that it already seems to be morning.

9 INT. CLAUS'S BEDROOM - DAY 9

Mrs. Claus lay in bed. Coughing, fading, watching the hourglass just about run out of time.

61 INT. PATTERSON HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 61

Jeff rushes into the house, only to find RUBY sitting on the couch with Jessica, looking upset.

JEFF

Ruby, I-

RUBY cuts him off.

RUBY

You're late. You weren't here.

JEFF

Ruby, I'm sorry, I can explain everything, trust me.

RUBY

I understand, Daddy. It's okay. You don't want me here, and that's exactly why mommy left us, too, because she didn't want me.

These words hit Jeff like a Mac truck.

Jeff crouches down to RUBY.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Ruby, honey, that isn't true at all. I love you... SO much. Mommy did, too. She just had some work to do in heaven.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Why did she have to go?

JEFF

She left us with each other. She knew everything would be okay.

RUBY

She left us each other, but you're never here.

JEFF

I thought I could buy my way out of everything. I was wrong. I was scared to face life with mommy. I was scared to disappoint you.

RUBY

For Christmas, I wrote Santa. I asked him for more time with you.

JEFF

Listen, I need you to remember how beautiful Christmas is. Never lose hope.

RUBY

He didn't answer. I don't even know if he exists anymore.

JEFF

I brought someone to see you.

Santa walks into Jeff's house; Ruby looks up at Santa and is completely blown away.

SANTA

Hello, Ruby. I have something very special for you.

Santa reaches into his pocket, where he pulls out a beautiful ruby necklace.

RUBY

I-is that for me?

SANTA

It is, and it's from your dad.
See, Ruby, your dad helped me in
delivering presents while my neck
was badly hurt.

Santa gives a wink at Jeff while still smiling.

RUBY

You really were helping Santa,
Daddy?

JEFF

I was, honey, and I'm sorry if I
made you feel like you weren't
important.

RUBY

But, Daddy.

JEFF

Yes, Ruby?

RUBY

What about a job? Don't you need
one?

JEFF

Well, I-

SANTA

No need to worry, Ruby; your dad is
now officially in charge of ground
transportation for Santa's
Delivery, the Christmas Express!
Now, he can be at home, spending
time with you while still having a
job!

JEFF

My home... What do I-

SANTA

It seems that the lender's
appraisal came in lower than the
offered price on your property. I
made a cash offer and bought it. It
will be the new South Eastern
headquarters, run by you, Jeff.

RUBY

Really?

SANTA

Don't worry, Ruby. It's seasonal.

Jeff, looking at SANTA with sincerity,

JEFF

Thank you, Santa. I couldn't have done this without you. Thank you for everything.

SANTA

Ruby, your dad not only saved Christmas in Miami, but he restored the Christmas spirit in two individuals who needed it most.

Patrick's car pulls up outside with magic shimmering around it.

JEFF

Oh, please, the pleasure is all mine.

SANTA

Let's talk about driver's school, Jeff. Rear ending peo-

JEFF coughs, trying to cover up Santa's rear-ending talk.

JEFF

Well, enough talking. Let's have an amazing Christmas breakfast.

We hear a woman's voice.

MRS. CLAUS

Maybe I could join you?

Mrs. Claus enters the room and heads directly to Santa's arms. She is bright, shiny, and new.

Santa

Carol!

MRS. CLAUS

You're not the only one who can surprise people.

SANTA

Jeffery, you did it. And look you and Patrick made the Nice List.

And another voice.

PATRICK
I'm hungry!

JESSICA
Is that Patrick dressed as an elf?

Patrick enters and gives Jeff a handshake and a hug.

PATRICK
Mission accomplished, partner.

JEFF
You got em all delivered!

PATRICK
Had some magic left in my pocket.

JEFF
Why don't you keep my severance?
Save the company some dough. I see
a promotion in your future.

Patrick and Jeff hug it out.

Mrs. Claus and Santa stand hand in hand.

SANTA
I almost lost you.

MRS. CLAUS
You can't get rid of me that
easily.

She kisses him on the cheek. He blushes and chuckles
heartily.

MRS. CLAUS (CONT'D)
Well, now that your delivery is
done, maybe we can head down to the
beach?!

SANTA
We haven't had a vacation in 200
years. I think the beach is just
what the doctor ordered!

They laugh and embrace.

Jeff and Ruby say goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. Claus, who make
their way out of the house. Santa's sleigh is parked out
front as good as new. They hop in it.

SANTA (CONT'D)

Ho, Ho, Ho! MERRY CHRISTMAS! And good job, Patrick. I'm proud of you!

Patrick beams.

PATRICK

Thanks, Santa! It's nice to meet you, by the way. Big fan!

SANTA

Go home and check under your tree, Patrick. There is a little something to go with that action figure you always wanted.

PATRICK

Is it the Ranger Combat Jeep to go with-

He excitedly holds the figure Jeff gave to him. Santa smiles. Patrick runs to the door as he talks to Jeff.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thanks for everything, Jeff. Okay, gotta go! Merry Christmas, love you all bye!

They laugh. Santa looks at Jeff and then at Jessica. Santa waves Jeff over.

JEFF

Yes, sir!

Santa looks over at Jessica.

SANTA

It's time.

Jeff looks on knowingly, smiles, and shakes his head. He understands.

Ruby runs back toward the house. Jeff stops and pulls Jessica aside.

JEFF

Listen, Jess. I want to thank you for everything.

JESSICA

It's nothing.

JEFF

No, it's everything. I needed someone, and you were there. You took care of Ruby, you've helped me-

Jessica leans in and gives Jeff a gentle kiss on the lips. In the background, Ruby smiles as she jumps up and down.

RUBY

YES! Finally!!!

Jeff stares in a bit of amazement at Jessica.

JEFF

What was that for?

JESSICA

I figured someone had to make the first move.

He smiles.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

No rush. I just wanted you to know how I felt about you, and when you're ready, we could talk about it...

JEFF

Maybe we could start by spending Christmas together?

JESSICA

You, sir, have yourself a date.

JEFF

Cross your heart?

Jeff leans in and kisses Jessica. She smiles. Suddenly, it starts to snow.

JESSICA

It never snows in Miami!

JEFF

It does now.

They walk into the house. Ruby hugs Jessica. They close the door to the house. The reef's bells jingle.

62

EXT. MIAMI BEACH - DAY

62

Santa and Mrs. Claus sit on the beach sipping lemonade. Suddenly, it's snowing in Miami! The camera pulls back to reveal the city of Miami covered in snow. Then we see Florida covered in snow. Then Earth. We pull back further, and we see a snow globe. This snow globe is on Santa's shelf. Next to the snow globe are many other worlds shimmering with light. Santa and Mrs. Claus smile as waves wash up against their toes in the sand.

SANTA

Merry Christmas, my love.

FADE TO BLACK.