

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

original screenplay by

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rewritten by

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Final Draft: July 5, 1991

Revised: 7/9/91 - Blue
7/11/91 - Pink
7/15/91 - Yellow

A1 FADE UP ON: TITLE SEQUENCE

A1

Tight on eyes. Mechanical eyes. Their little eye lids fluttering in syncopated rhythm to an upbeat instrumental version of "All I Want for Christmas."

Tight on hands. Also mechanical. Little wooden fingers snapping along to the beat.

Tight on feet. Painted on boots toe tapping along.

A face. Sculpted to be child-like. Perpetually smiling. Non-threatening.

Now we see the whole figure. It's an elf. In his little green suit and worker's apron. Making elf-like movements. Busy with elf-like chores. We PAN to find his co-workers. Some are making toys. Others are putting ornaments on a Christmas tree. Others are wrapping presents.

We FOLLOW one as he "walks" to some robotic reindeer. Some elves feed them. Attach their reins on a beautiful red sleigh. Some load the bundles of presents on the back for the trip that will take them to the boys and girls around the world. Obviously the moment of departure is near. The tension mounts.

We PAN to the door of a snow-covered chalet. It opens and there is Mr. Claus himself. Fat, red-cheeked, and jolly. His wife, Mrs. C. equally sanguine. They embody the dream of every child's fantasy that makes Christmas the time of year for magic and miracles.

Now we TRACK BACK and see that this whole world is part of a large store (Macy's) window display. Reflected in the glass, we can see the faces of children of all ages carried away by this land of make believe.

We PUSH IN on the face of a family happy together and filled with the spirit. Besides the MOTHER and FATHER, there are three kids - TWO YOUNG BOYS and an INFANT GIRL. They stand right in front transfixed. We will soon get to know all of them very well.

FADE BRIEFLY TO
BLACK

1 FADE UP ON:

1

INT. TOWNHOUSE (JASON'S BATHROOM) - FOUR YEARS LATER

OPEN TIGHT ON

A strand of facial hair protruding from someone's chin. Much too much shaving cream is applied considering there is only one hair. A disposable razor enters the frame in an unsteady hand.

PULL OUT to reveal JASON LANGDON. This is not his first time shaving. He took off another hair six months ago. Jason's 13 and like most guys his age, he's defined by his hormones, which in Jason's case are raging. O.S. we HEAR A LOUD TUMBLING NOISE.

2 INT. TOWNHOUSE (HALLWAY) - CONTINUOUS

2

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Jason as he runs into the hall to see what's going on. As we move with him, we get our first look at the Whitmore Townhouse. It's the townhouse you wish you grew up in. It's a great combination of taste and drama.

3 INT. TOWNHOUSE (SECOND FLOOR LANDING)

3

The CAMERA CONTINUES TO FOLLOW Jason. As he reaches the second floor landing, he finds his brother GREGORY (age 9) - a boy who would sell his mother for a profit, or even just to break even - sliding down from the third floor stairs in one of those over-sized aluminum saucer sleds. He collides with Jason. Shaving cream goes flying.

JASON

Real mature.

GREGORY

Hey Jace, what's that pimple with the hair on it? Oh, excuse me - that's your head.

JASON

When are you going to grow up?

GREGORY

I've given myself to the end of the century. Want a ride?

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Before he can answer, Gregory grabs Jason by the ankle. He falls into the sled and they both go careening down the stairs to the ground floor. It's obvious Jason enjoys the ride despite himself.

4 INT. TOWNHOUSE .(BOTTOM OF STAIRS) - CONTINUOUS

4

They reach bottom and stop inches from a pair of shapely legs. They look to find their mother CATHERINE standing there, glaring at them. We recognize her as the mother from the store window. Catherine is a mother for the nineties. She works as a book editor, but only part time so she can spend more than just quality time with her kids.

CATHERINE

Why do you feel the need to do this?

GREGORY

It's a science project. I'm checking out the G forces on the stairs.

CATHERINE

Not you, him. Why do you feel the need to shave?

JASON

(guessing)

Because there's hair on my face?

CATHERINE

Wrong answer. When you're old enough to know how to stop the blood with toilet paper, then we can talk about shaving.

She exits into the living room as the two boys get up off the carpet. They jump in reaction to SOMEONE SCREECHING O.S.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Oooh my God! I can't bear it.

The boys turn.

5 BOYS' P.O.V. - LINDSAY

5

To see their six year-old sister, Lindsay coming down the stairs behind them carrying a shoe box filled with memorabilia. As we are soon to discover, she's the most dramatic little girl in the universe.

LINDSAY

See? It's the star from the top of the tree when we were all together. Doesn't it just rip your heart out?

She gives them both a significantly sad look and exits into the living room. Jason watches her go, shakes his head.

JASON

(to Gregory, heading for the living room)
Come here. I'd like to see you for a minute.

GREGORY

Why do you always talk like you're about to fire someone?

6 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

As soon as the boys come inside the well-appointed room, they find Lindsay watching Catherine and her mother, HILLARY WHITMORE, owner of the townhouse, attempting to launch upright a ten-foot Christmas tree. Hillary was the toast of the Broadway stage. She's had a life that both columnists and her grandchildren like to hear about.

CATHERINE

Mother, it's going to fall.

HILLARY

Catherine, I know what I'm do...

The tree crashes to the carpet with a THUD.

HILLARY

All right. I don't know what I'm doing. That's why I have paid help.

(calling O.S.)

Olivia! Venga aqui, por favor!

7 ANOTHER ANGLE

7

OLIVIA, the slightly plump El Salvadorian maid, comes running in and attempts to offer assistance.

LINDSAY

Daddy could make the tree stand up.
Daddy used to get it right up
there.

CATHERINE

Mother, don't say. I know it's
tempting.

HILLARY

I was just going to agree with the
child. Daddy could get it right up
there.

8 ANGLE - LIVING ROOM FIREPLACE

8

Jason leads Gregory to the fireplace mantle where dozens of
Christmas cards are on display.

JASON

Notice anything different about the
Christmas cards?

GREGORY

No.

JASON

Lindsay arranged them. She
separated families with two parents
from those with just singles.

9 GREGORY'S P.O.V. - THE MANTLE

9

All the photo cards on the right show two parents with their
kids, on the left photo cards with just one parent.

10 ANGLE ON JASON AND GREGORY

10

GREGORY

She's organized. What's the big
deal?

JASON

It's an obvious cry for help.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

GREGORY

So? We all miss Dad. But you got to look on the bright side. He's probably putting up a tree too. We'll get twice as many presents.

JASON

Do you ever think about anybody but yourself?

GREGORY

Hey man, I included you.

11 BACK ON THE CHRISTMAS TREE

11

Lindsay is studying it.

LINDSAY

The skinny part is in front. Daddy would put the skinny part in back.

CATHERINE

I'll fix it, honey.

Catherine goes to fix it. The tree falls over, breaking a window.

JASON

Great. No tree and we're all going to get the flu.

They all react to the cold air that blows through the room.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. HILLARY'S TOWNHOUSE - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

12

MICHAEL, the children's father and Catherine's ex, pulls up in his car. We will grow to like him. He's a good combination of work shirt and tie.

13 INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - NIGHT, SAME TIME

13

He checks his hair in the rear view mirror in the way we know he's not doing it for his kids. Don't tell me he doesn't care. The CAMERA FOLLOWS as he goes to the front door.

14 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM)

14

An EASTSIDE DECORATOR is hanging the last ornament on the tree that looks like it should be in window of Stuben Glass. Gregory and Lindsay are seated, watching. Lindsay takes a Snoopy ornament out of her memorabilia box.

LINDSAY

What about Snoopy?

HILLARY

(with enthusiasm)

Hang him from the highest branch.

DECORATOR

Mrs. Whitmore, when you hired me for this job, you told me I had free reign. Snoopy and crystal is just something I can't condone.

CATHERINE

Sweetheart, this is a different kind of tree. It's coordinated. Do you know what coordinated means?

GREGORY

Yeah. It has no soul.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Lindsay runs to get the door.

HILLARY

Little steps, darling. Little steps.

LINDSAY

But, it's my father. The man who's responsible for my very life.

HILLARY

Yes, I know. We don't run for any man, except if they have doctor or baron in front of their name.

Lindsay takes little steps and still manages to run to the front door. Catherine and Hillary follow as Jason enters and follows.

15 INT. TOWNHOUSE (FRONT HALLWAY) - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

15

Lindsay is just about ready to open the door when Catherine stops her.

CATHERINE

Remember, ask who it is.

LINDSAY

(at the door)

Mother wants to know who it is,
Daddy.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Tell her it's the man she gave the
best years of her life to.

Lindsay clutches her heart like the little actress she is.

LINDSAY

It's Daddy.

16 ANOTHER ANGLE

16

She opens the door and leaps into her father's arms. Jason and Gregory are there by now and included in the hug.

LINDSAY

You're just in time to help me get
the star on the top of the tree.
When the decorator isn't looking.

Michael swoops her up and puts her on top of his shoulders and heads for the living room. The boys follow. Catherine watches exasperated that her kids are so in love with her ex-husband. Hillary watches this happening.

CATHERINE

(to her mother)

I could fall down dead and they
would step over my body to get to
him.

HILLARY

You literally stepped on me once
when we ran into your father at the
beach. I still have flipper marks
on my back.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

A smile between them.

17 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) 17

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Hillary into the living room where Lindsay, still on her father's shoulders, is putting the star on top of the tree.

LINDSAY

(looking at her work)

I can hardly speak. It's glorious!

We PULL BACK to see the finished tree. Despite the boarded up window behind it, it is glorious. Only the Decorator is unhappy to find this homemade star on the top of his creation.

18 INT. TOWNHOUSE (HALLWAY) - ABOUT A HALF HOUR LATER 18

The three children are getting dressed in overcoats, boots, hats, and have book bags that serve as overnight suitcases. Michael has his hand on the front door. Hillary and Catherine are saying goodbye. Catherine envelopes Jason.

JASON

Ma, please - the hair.

CATHERINE

Jason, please... your beard is scratching me.

After Jason is released, Lindsay runs into Catherine's arms.

LINDSAY

Although I have the best time of my life with Daddy, I'm going to miss you so much.

GREGORY

Over the top, Lindsay. We're not going off to fight a justifiable war. We're going downtown for the night.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

HILLARY

I was in love with a wonderful soldier boy during the war. He came to all my performances of this bomb that closed out of town in Philadelphia. We made love in... in...

She looks at the kids and realizes.

MICHAEL

(cutting her off)

Inside. Just trying to help you out.

Hillary is relieved.

CATHERINE

Have the kids back by twelve. I'm taking them to see Santa Claus.

Lindsay gets excited.

LINDSAY

Santa Claus! The real one who lives at Macy's. I'll never forget you.

JASON

I'm not going to see Santa Claus.

GREGORY

Mr. Teenager's too big to come with us. I say he gets nothing this year. Show of hands?

CATHERINE

Jason, you have to come. It's always been a thing we do as a family.

Michael looks at Catherine. There's an obvious hurt for both of them.

They're out the door.

19 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

19

Catherine walks them to the car. Just then, a cab pulls up beside them. DR. TONY BOER, Catherine's boyfriend and a Park Avenue dentist, gets out with a bouquet of red roses that covers his head. Michael is not thrilled to see him.

MICHAEL

Hey kids, there's something you don't see every day - a bush wearing Florsheims. Hiya, Tony. How's the teeth game?

TONY

Michael.

(to the kids)

Hey kids, do you have a kiss for your Uncle Tony?

They look at him blank-faced.

TONY

Maybe next time.

(to Catherine)

You smell wonderful. What's that perfume?

MICHAEL

It's your flowers, Mr. Four-hundred-and-thirtieth-in-his-class-at-dental-school. The whole street reeks from them.

Catherine can't help laughing, though she tries to hide it.

CATHERINE

Ignore him, Tony. He was just leaving.

20 ANGLE ON CAR

20

The kids climb in the car.

CATHERINE

Don't forget. I'm crazy about each and every one of you.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

MICHAEL

Thanks, slick. That makes me feel warm and toasty.

CATHERINE

You know, you're not funny.

MICHAEL

(driving away)

I know. You've told me hundreds of times.

The car pulls away.

20A INT. MICHAEL'S CAR

20A

Michael looks in the rear view mirror as Tony puts his arm around Catherine. He tries to shrug it off, but it's not easy.

CUT TO:

21 INT. TWELFTH STREET DINER - NIGHT, ABOUT 45 MINUTES LATER

21

It's retro, and not because of some nostalgia craze. This is the real thing. It's obvious that the kids are with the program. They wear shirts that say TWELFTH Street Diner on them. Lindsay wears a mini waitress apron. Jason is helping SHEP, the short order cook. Gregory is at the cash register. Lindsay is helping SONYA, a middle-aged waitress whose smile is as big as her hips, to wait tables. Michael is cleaning up a booth. All the REGULARS know the kids and it's like a big extended family.

GREGORY

Sonya, what does this say?

SONYA

It's either B.L.T. or stuffed cabbage. I write them, I don't interpret them.

GREGORY

I know she's been working here for seventeen years, but we've got to get rid of her, Dad.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

Sonya affectionately swipes him in the butt with a dish towel.

JASON

Hey Al, you want your burger with cheese? It's not so good for the cholesterol.

AL is a limousine driver and a regular.

GREGORY

It's fifty cents extra and it tastes real good.

(smelling hard)

Picture that golden yellow spilling over the sides.

MICHAEL

That's my boy. He could sell malt liquor to the Pope.

22 ANGLE ON JASON AND SHEP

22

They're both working feverishly with burgers, pancakes, and eggs all going at once. It's a ballet of short order cooking. Shep turns to see Jason pouring syrup on a hamburger.

SHEP

Hey, what're you doing?

JASON

(realizing)

Whoops. Mistake. I saw something round. I went for it.

SHEP

One time I put cayenne pepper on some ice cream. People complained. I called it a Cajun Sundae.

23 ANGLE ON SONYA

23

She's carrying a tray loaded with food on one hand with great expertise.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Lindsay is right behind her, trying to copy Sonya - including the swinging-hip walk that gets her all the tips. Lindsay trips. Sonya recovers the tray with her free hand. Huge APPLAUSE.

GREGORY

Nice save.

LINDSAY

Come on, Sonya. I'm absolutely dying to know. Did Mommy and Daddy kiss?

SONYA

Sure honey.

LINDSAY

Why do people stop kissing?

SONYA

They just don't feel like it anymore.

(getting a thought)

Remember blankie?

Michael stops to overhear this conversation.

LINDSAY

Of course I do. I used to have to go to sleep with blankie every night when I was a child.

SONYA

And now you're a big girl and don't have to.

Lindsay gets it.

LINDSAY

(loudly)

So my Daddy is blankie and my Mommy doesn't have to go to bed with him anymore?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: [2]

23

Michael gives Sonya a look that says, "thanks for your help."

CUT TO:

24 INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

24

The SCREEN IS NOW FILLED WITH FAMILY HOME VIDEO TAPE. We see the Langdons in happier times - Michael, Catherine, and the kids at various ages. On the beach, on vacations, holiday times together, Lindsay at a recital, Jason at a hockey match, Gregory dressed as a banker at Halloween. We can see through this family history that there were good times and laughs.

25 WE PULL BACK

25

To see that Jason has turned the VOLUME DOWN because he's using two VCRs and editing a family tape together to the tune of Madonna's "Papa Don't Preach." He's replaying a sequence of the family playing on the beach over and over again just to get it right. Michael, who is sitting at a table doing bills, looks up annoyed.

MICHAEL

Do you have to do that here?

JASON

It's a surprise for Mom.

MICHAEL

Make it a surprise for me too.
Shut it off.

26 ANOTHER ANGLE

26

The CAMERA FOLLOWS MICHAEL to Lindsay and Gregory who are having fun decorating the small tree. A word about Michael's apartment: he lives above the diner and has made a home for his children, not glamorous like Hillary's, but the type of place where kids can leave their toys around. Lindsay removes her Snoopy ornament from her memorabilia box.

LINDSAY

Do you think Snoopy looks better
here, or here?

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

GREGORY

Tough choice, does it look better with the strung macaroni or the clipped-on Reece's Peanut Butter Cups?

Lindsay puts the ornament on the tree.

LINDSAY

I think it's glorious.

GREGORY

What worries me, Dad, is where do the presents go?

MICHAEL

I thought this year instead of presents I would donate money to unfortunate children.

GREGORY

We're children of divorce whose parents would like to end arguments with pistols. How much more unfortunate can you get?

27 ANGLE ON MICHAEL AND LINDSAY

27

Lindsay sleepily crawls into Michael's lap.

LINDSAY

(sleepily)

What was it like?

MICHAEL

What was what like?

LINDSAY

Christmas. Last Christmas. I think hard about it and I think I 'member, but I don't know if I'm 'membering or making it up. I woke up in our old house. You and Mommy were still sleeping. It was dark. I went to see if Santa had come yet... And then... I forget.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

MICHAEL

We heard a noise and went running
and found you in the middle of a
pile of presents hugging Babar.
You wanted to marry him, remember?

LINDSAY

I was young.

MICHAEL

It happens.

LINDSAY

And Santa Claus brought me
everything I wanted?

MICHAEL

Yes he did. Everything you wanted.

LINDSAY

It's great to have a guy like that
in your life.

Lindsay leans back against her daddy's chest and closes her
eyes. She's too tired to stay awake.

CUT TO:

28 INT. MACY'S - DAY, THE FOLLOWING DAY

28

We are in a section of the toy department where Santa Claus
has been set up on his throne. There is a long line and
Catherine, Lindsay, and Gregory get on the end of it. Jason
moves away.

JASON

I'll be over there, where nobody
can see me.

Jason moves off line and Gregory follows him.

29 ANOTHER ANGLE - OFF OF THE LINE

29

GREGORY

(walks to Jason)

Stupid.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Big mistake, not getting with the Santa program. You're sitting on the guy's lap and Mom just happens to overhear what you really want.

JASON

(leaving)

I'm at an age where I don't want to be sitting on a guy's lap.

Gregory goes back to the line.

GREGORY

The line's not even moving. Why did we have to go to the busiest Santa Claus in town?

LINDSAY

Because all the others on the street corners and in the other stores are this one's helper.

GREGORY

This is going to take forever. A store this size should have two of these guys.

(off Catherine's look)

As if there could be two Santa Clauses.

Gregory feels he has made a good save.

30 ANGLE ON JASON

30

Who isn't too old to explore a toy department. At the moment, he's into rollerblades. He slides them back and fourth. Then he sees some REALLY COOL KIDS, who are at least fourteen trying some on. Jason gets even more interested. He picks one up. A SALESWOMAN comes over.

SALESWOMAN

Did you want to try those on?

JASON

No, I don't think...

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

REALLY COOL KID #1
What's really great is that these
make you taller.

JASON
(to the Saleswoman)
Sure. Size eight.

31 BACK TO SANTA CLAUS LINE

31

It has inched forward. A WOMAN and her beautiful - we're
talking knock-out - thirteen year-old daughter STEPHANIE and
FIVE YEAR-OLD SON approach. Catherine and the woman
obviously know each other.

CATHERINE
Susan!

SUSAN
Cath!

CATHERINE
Shouldn't you be working?

SUSAN
What about you?

CATHERINE
I'm editing a coffee-table book,
"Decorator Dogs." I deserve to get
out.

32 BACK TO JASON

32

He's finishing getting the skates on. He stands up. He is
taller. He feels pretty good standing there.

33 THEN: JASON'S P.O.V.

33

We see Catherine talking to Susan and Stephanie, the
daughter. Even from this distance, he is enchanted. He's
got to get near this beautiful girl. He's heard about love
at first sight, but it's never happened to him before. It
is his intention to casually skate over. He starts to move
forward, but he soon finds out rollerblading isn't his
thing.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

By hanging onto things, one doll after another, little children, etc., he works his way over to the Santa Claus line.

CATHERINE

(to Stephanie)

So, how are you enjoying your vacation?

STEPHANIE

I just got back from visiting my dad in Aspen. It was really fun.

(to Susan)

But not as much fun as being with you, Mom.

SUSAN

She's lying, but I appreciate it.

Just then, Jason slides into the frame. He's shaky, and does everything to steady himself. It takes a lot to look cool while you're sliding around, but he does his best.

CATHERINE

Oh, and this is Jason. Jason, Mrs. Rentzle - who I work with at Simon and Schuster - and her son, Mitch, and her daughter, Stephanie.

34 ANGLE ON JASON AND STEPHANIE

34

Jason is glad he has the skates. He's taller than Stephanie and can't take his eyes off of her.

STEPHANIE

Hi.

JASON

Hi.

CATHERINE

I've invited them to our Christmas party.

JASON

(it slips out)

Thank God.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

Catherine and Susan move ahead with the Santa Claus line and don't notice that Jason is starting to roll away from them.

JASON

Where are you going?

STEPHANIE

I'm not going anywhere. You are.

Jason looks down, realizes he's rolling backwards.

JASON

Oh yeah. Well, I'll see you.

His speed is picking up. He's going backwards fast.

JASON

(trying not to lose
it)

Nice meeting you, Stephanie.

And he disappears down the escalator at like 60 miles an hour.

35 ANGLE ON JASON

35

Jason rolls backward down the escalator. Miraculously he manages to turn around so that at least he can SEE the people he is having near collisions with.

At the bottom, on the ground floor, he tries to stop himself but grabbing onto a clothes rack. Unfortunately, the rack is on rollers, so now his view is totally blocked as he pushes it down an aisle narrowly missing the multitudes.

36 INT. MACY'S (TOY DEPARTMENT) - CONTINUOUS

36

Gregory and Lindsay are nearing the front of the line.

LINDSAY

Gregory - tell you a secret. I'm going to ask Santa to make Mommy and Daddy get married again so we can have our home back.

GREGORY

Oh, man. Listen, you can't ask Santa for that.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

LINDSAY

Why not? It's the only reason I wanted to come here. I have to make this happen.

GREGORY

First of all, Mommy is going to be close enough to hear. You don't want her to feel bad.

LINDSAY

She's going to feel great when Daddy's back with us. He'll take her dancing. She'll wear flowers in her hair. I love moon light, don't you?

GREGORY

What century are you in?

37 INT. MACY'S (GROUND FLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

37

Jason is still on a roll. Narrowly avoiding hitting people, he's heading right for a wall. He closes his eyes and gets bumped by someone in a hurry, sending him careening toward the revolving door at the entrance of the store. A security guard, FRED, watches him in amazement. Jason grabs onto the door and ends up revolving right out into...

38 EXT. MACY'S SEVENTH AVENUE - DAY

38

Jason is now rolling down the crowded sidewalk.

JASON

Oh God.

He's rolling right toward the gutter when a HEAVEY-SET STORE DETECTIVE grabs him just inches away from the curb.

JASON

Oh, thank you sir.. Thank you so much.

STORE DETECTIVE

Did you pay for those skates, son?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

JASON

Huh? Oh no, I don't think I'm
interested in them.

STORE DETECTIVE

I'm afraid you'll have to come with
me.

JASON

Fine. I'll follow you anywhere.

They guy holds on to Jason and rolls him back inside.

38A INT. MACY'S (TOY DEPARTMENT) - SAME TIME

38A

Lindsay and Gregory have reached the front of the Santa
line. Lindsay climbs on Santa's lap while Catherine
approaches.

SANTA

Ho, ho, ho. And what do you want
for Christmas?

LINDSAY

(seeing her mother
approaching, talks
quickly)

We're being watched. Just nod your
head at whatever I say.

(whispering)

I want my Mommy and Daddy to be
married again.

38B ANGLE ON GREGORY

38B

He hears and shakes his head like a little old man.

38C BACK TO SANTA AND LINDSAY

38C

LINDSAY

Daddy gave Mommy what she wanted
for Christmas last year. A horse.

SANTA

A horse?

(CONTINUED)

38C CONTINUED:

38C

LINDSAY

A dee-horse. Now I have two houses.

GREGORY

Mom is coming. Doesn't Barbie need anything?

LINDSAY

Nope.

(to Santa)

Just get them back together, okay?

Catherine reaches Santa just as Lindsay climbs off.

39 ANGLE ON GREGORY AND SANTA

39

Gregory is really happy with this timing. He gets on to Santa's lap. Catherine overhears.

SANTA

Ho, ho, ho. And what do you want for Christmas?

GREGORY

Cash. I feel it's good for a boy my age to learn the responsibility of handling large sums of money.

SANTA

Have you been a good boy this year?

GREGORY

That's a pretty personal question.

40 INT. MACY'S (GROUND FLOOR) - DAY

40

Jason is now between the security guard, Fred and TWO STORE DETECTIVES who are interrogating him.

JASON

My mom's upstairs with Santa but I don't think you should aggravate her with this. She's a single mother and she'll blame herself.

The heavier set of the two detectives takes Fred aside.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

STORE DETECTIVE

You said on your application you had experience. You let him skate out of the store.

FRED

C'mon, man. It's my first day.

STORE DETECTIVE

I'm gonna have to tell personnel.

FRED

Give me a break, it's Christmas.

JASON

It's not his fault. He tried to stop me, but I moved too fast.

Just then Susan and Stephanie pass him. Stephanie glances over and sees him.

STEPHANIE

Hi.

JASON

Hi.

He watches her walk off totally forgetting his predicament as the two detectives roll him off.

40A INT. MACY'S (TOP FLOOR ELEVATORS)

40A

Catherine, Jason, Gregory, and Lindsay are there with one of the detectives and Fred.

FRED

You should have seen him coming down that escalator. I thought to myself, now that should be on "Circus of the Stars."

GREGORY

We're not a very athletic family.

FRED

You're a good kid, Jason. I owe you one.

(CONTINUED)

40A CONTINUED:

40A

JASON

No problem.

GREGORY

And if you'd ever like a free meal,
stop by the Twelfth Street Diner.
That's not a bribe because he's
already being released.

LINDSAY

It's a warmhearted invitation.

41 INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

41

About forty people are gathered in the main foyer. They are
a curious mix of people from the theater and Catherine's
world.

42 INT. TOWNHOUSE (TOP OF STAIRS) - NIGHT

42

The CAMERA FINDS Jason and Gregory at the top of the stairs.
Gregory has an automatic water gun.

GREGORY

Check out the woman in the blue
dress. Did you ever see anything
so scary?

JASON

Yes. The woman in the red dress
with the matching husband.

GREGORY

What are these women thinking when
they're putting on their clothes.

JASON

"You know, tonight I'd really like
to look like a clown."

GREGORY

There's a good one.

He blasts someone with his water gun and then hides the gun
behind his back.

43 ANOTHER ANGLE

43

The WOMAN HE HIT looks around, confused.

JASON

What is the thrill you get from that?

GREGORY

It's hard to pinpoint. Let's just say I like working for the resistance.

44 GREGORY AND JASON'S P.O.V. - LINDSAY

44

She is encircled by several admiring adults. And she's in her element. The "charm meter" is off the scale as she smiles and chats.

LINDSAY

I either want to be a doctor... or a mermaid.

45 BACK TO GREGORY AND JASON

45

JASON

She's good.

Just then, Jason spots Stephanie.

JASON

Oh God, it's that girl.

Gregory picks up his semi-automatic.

GREGORY

Point me in the right direction.

JASON

Will you put that away? It's her. I'm dying a little bit here. What am I going to say?

GREGORY

Be honest. Say, "Will you dance with me naked?"

Jason starts to get up and fix his hair.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

JASON

You're such an infant.

Gregory SQUIRTS JASON in the face, which causes him to lose his balance, and he starts stumbling down the stairs. He finally manages to regain his balance on the last step in front of Stephanie.

46 INT TOWNHOUSE (BOTTOM OF STAIRS) - CONTINUOUS

46

JASON

(trying to be
nonchalant)

Hi.

STEPHANIE

Hi. You're not good with stairs,
are you?

Jason LAUGHS like he's in a Noel Coward play.

STEPHANIE

So are you going to serve time?

JASON

My mom straightened everything out.

STEPHANIE

It looked very exciting. I'm
fascinated with the criminal mind.

JASON

Well, I do have tendencies.
Perhaps you'd like to join me in a
crime spree tomorrow?

STEPHANIE

I'd love to, but I'm going to the
Stella exhibit at the Modern.

Just then, Stephanie's mom, who has been standing nearby with Catherine, take her daughter by the arm and leads her off.

SUSAN

Remember I told you about Nathan?
He's here.

47 ANGLE ON JASON AND GREGORY

47

Stephanie smiles uncomfortably and moves off. Jason watches her every step. Gregory can't help but notice this.

JASON

Do you believe in love at first sight?

GREGORY

What do you need it for? Next thing you know, she leaves you and gets half your comic books.

Jason gives his brother a well-placed elbow to the solar plexus. Gregory gives Jason a shot in the leg. The fight escalates.

48 ANOTHER ANGLE

48

Catherine comes and breaks it up.

CATHERINE

Come on. Let's mediate. What's this about? Jason, you first.

JASON

You know your friend's daughter over there.

Catherine looks over at Stephanie and nods.

JASON

Gregory says she's going to divorce me.

Catherine isn't sure how to deal with this.

49 ANGLE ON HILLARY

49

She's at the piano with her accompanist.

HILLARY

All right, everybody. You ate my food, you trampled my carpet, now I'm going to make you suffer.

The smattering of APPLAUSE as people LAUGH and gather around her. She launches into a MEDLEY OF CHRISTMAS SONGS.

50 ANGLE ON JASON AND GREGORY

50

They start into the living room to watch their grandmother.
They're stopped by Tony.

TONY

Come here, guys, for a second.

He leads them over to the Christmas tree where Catherine and Lindsay are standing. He hands the kids three brightly wrapped boxes.

TONY

Here you go. Pre-Christmas presents.

GREGORY

(worried)

But you are giving us Christmas presents as well.

CATHERINE

Gregory! Remember I told you greed is not an attractive trait.

TONY

That's okay. He's a delight.

LINDSAY

That's what we were just saying about you. Can we have the presents?

51 ANOTHER ANGLE

51

Tony hands out three boxes, not even wrapped. It's just what the kids want - Interplaks and dental floss.

TONY

These are not toys.

JASON

You could have fooled me.

CATHERINE

C'mon you guys, what do we do when we get presents?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: 51

GREGORY

Return them if they suck... but
these don't.

52 INT. TOWNHOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT 52

Hillary is just finishing "WHITE CHRISTMAS" (or something).

53 ANGLE ON JASON 53

He sits among the guests. However, his attention is
someplace other than the music. He glances across the room.

54 HIS P.O.V. 54

Stephanie is sitting with her mother. After a moment, she
glances back and catches Jason looking at her.

At once, Jason looks away. His eyes can only stay off
Stephanie for a moment or two, before he has to look back.
However, due to guests shifting in their seats, his view
becomes blocked.

55 ANGLE ON HILLARY 55

She finishes the song. The place bursts into APPLAUSE.

HILLARY

And now, a chip off someone's block
who shall remain nameless, my
granddaughter, Lindsay.

Lindsay comes up to the piano with the assured confidence of
Shirley Temple.

LINDSAY

Hit it.

She sings Mel Torme's classic "CHRISTMAS SONG" with a big,
belting voice that's hard to believe for someone of her
size.

56 ANGLE ON JASON 56

He's still trying to look over heads to see Stephanie.
After a moment or two, he discreetly stands and moves to a
better location. And in the process, he steps on toes.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

JASON
I beg your pardon.

Stephanie turns back and sees Jason. Jason tries to look casual. He sits in an empty FOLDING CHAIR. It COLLAPSES and he hits the floor. At once, a GENTLEMAN(#2) helps him up.

GENTLEMAN #2
(whispered)
That chair's broken, son.

JASON
(whispered)
Oh. Thank you for the warning.

57 ANGLE BACK OF THE ROOM

57

Tony and Catherine speak softly to each other. They are unaware that Gregory is standing close by, listening.

CATHERINE
No. I want to tell the kids first.
This is a pretty big thing in their
lives.

TONY
It's the best thing that ever
happened to me. Dr. and Mrs. Boer.
Don't you love the way that sounds?

They kiss. Gregory is devastated.

58 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

58

ANGLE ON JASON

He's gotten up and is moving towards another empty seat. He tests it and sits. In the background, Gregory is trying to get his attention.

59 JASON'S P.O.V.

59

Stephanie is sitting right in front of him. She glances back and sneaks a look at him. Almost at once, she turns away. However, it is long enough for Jason to realize she has some interest in him as well. He smiles.

60 ANGLE ON LINDSAY

60

Gregory is waving madly, trying to get her attention. Big showbiz finish to her song. The crowd goes crazy. Lindsay blows kisses to her adoring public as Catherine and Hillary come up and hug her. Then Tony steps up to the front of the room, dragging Catherine with him.

TONY

An act like that is hard for a dentist to follow, so I'll make this brief. I'm happy to announce that Catherine and I are going to be married... on Christmas Eve.

The crowd APPLAUDS and comes to congratulate them, separating the couple. They AD LIB congratulations. Hillary gets a hold of Catherine.

CATHERINE

Tony, I don't understand why you...

TONY

Hey, I'm in love.

CATHERINE

Why Christmas Eve?

TONY

Why not?

61 ANGLE ON JASON

61

His face frozen in disbelief.

62 ANGLE ON LINDSAY

62

Upset by what all this means.

63 ANGLE ON GREGORY

63

Trying to convince himself this is okay. He turns to the STRANGER next to him.

GREGORY

(to the stranger)

Do you have any idea what a dentist makes?

64 ANGLE ON HILLARY AND CATHERINE

64

Her mother pulls her away.

HILLARY
(to Catherine)
Should I be happy for you?

CATHERINE
I want you to be.

Hillary cups her daughter's face in her hands.

HILLARY
Happy enough to pay for the
wedding?

CATHERINE
Mom, you don't have to.

HILLARY
I want to.

Hillary hugs her daughter.

HILLARY
My baby girl. It's nice to see you
smile.
(then cleverly)
You are smiling aren't you?

The CAMERA SHOWS us Catherine wasn't, but with her mother's
reminder she does.

65 INT. TOWNHOUSE (KITCHEN) - NIGHT, ABOUT AN HOUR LATER

65

Catherine and her three kids are sitting around a table.
There is milk and cookies in front of the kids, but nobody's
touching it.

LINDSAY
But Mom, what do we need him for?

CATHERINE
You know how you have friends you
want to be with? Well, I want to
be with Tony.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

LINDSAY

Why can't you just make a play date?

CATHERINE

We want to be more to each other.
We want to make a life together and
of course that includes all of you.

JASON

I'm going to be out of here in four
years, so it doesn't affect me so
much. But what about these kids?

CATHERINE

Do you think I would do anything to
hurt you?

GREGORY

Marrying a dentist sounds pretty
painful to me.

Catherine looks at their faces, sees how frightened they
are.

CATHERINE

We're going to be fine. I promise.

66 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LINDSAY'S ROOM) - NIGHT, ABOUT 30 MINUTES
LATER

66

Lindsay watches as Jason and Gregory operate remote control
cars which keep smashing into each other. Only Gregory has
come to terms with what is going to happen.

GREGORY

Look at it this way. We're going
to be better off.

JASON

Better off how? Our parents are
ruining their lives.

GREGORY

He'll buy us stuff. Look, we'll
take the useless toothbrushes back
and get the cash.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

JASON

How can two people who give their undying love to each other change their minds?

GREGORY

Come on, guys. Be realistic. Our parents got a "dee-horse." Let's make the best of it.

JASON

I'm moving out and getting married as soon as I can.

GREGORY

All of a sudden, this little number you met is the love of your life. What did she do, re-enact "9 1/2 Weeks?"

LINDSAY

It's all my fault. I asked Santa to have Mommy and Daddy get married again...

(the tears flow)

... but I forgot to say to each other.

The CAMERA LINGERS for a moment on three unhappy children.

67 INT. MUSEUM OF MODERN ART - DAY

67

In TELEPHOTO, we see Stephanie moving along, taking in contemporary paintings. At the same time we hear:

JASON (O.S.)

Let me ask you something. If you ran into a beautiful girl, would you use for an opener, "Wow, I'm blown away?" Too Ninja Turtle, right?

68 ANOTHER ANGLE

68

The CAMERA FINDS Jason talking to a stone-faced MUSEUM GUARD.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

JASON

Maybe just a simple, "Hey, wow,
what are you doing here?"

He takes the guard's facial twinge as a positive.

JASON

Thanks, you've been very helpful.

Jason is as confused as ever. Suddenly, he realizes Stephanie is moving on, heading toward the room he is in. Quickly, he assumes a casual pose leaning against a section of nearby sculpture. He turns and is startled to see his head almost between the mammoth breasts of a giant Henry Moore torso. He jumps away quickly and stares with feigned interest at a contemporary oil of a sexually benign pastoral.

69 ANGLE ON STEPHANIE

69

Stephanie enters the room.

70 ANGLE ON JASON

70

Jason's eyes remain on the painting. Though he does not look around, he is keenly aware when Stephanie stops up behind him, looking at the same painting. His back to her, she does not recognize him. He knows he has to make the move. His lips move slightly, attempting one last rehearsal, "Hey, wow... Hey, wow..."

71 ANOTHER ANGLE

71

Unfortunately and unseen by Jason, Stephanie steps away and an ELDERLY WOMAN steps in where she had been standing. Jason takes a deep breath and TURNS. Propelled by adrenalin, he gets out:

JASON

Hey, wow...

Jason smiles at the Elderly Woman. She flashes her bridge work back at him. Jason looks around. No Stephanie. Annoyed, he turns and:

Comes face to face with Stephanie.

They look at one another for a moment. Then:

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

JASON/STEPHANIE

What are you doing here?

They LAUGH.

STEPHANIE

I didn't expect to see you.

JASON

You were the last person I expected
to see.

STEPHANIE

Who was the first?

72 ANOTHER ANGLE

72

Jason points to the Elderly Lady who gives him a little wave
back.

JASON

Someone like her.

Stephanie smiles at him, then turns her attention to the
abstract in which Jason seemed to show interest.

STEPHANIE

Rothko was an incredible painter,
wasn't he?

JASON

(still staring at her)

Hmmm?

(realizing)

Oh... yeah.

Jason looks at the painting. He looks around at the other
paintings. After a moment or two, he attempts conversation.

JASON

I've said it before and I'll say it
again. This painting is derivative
of other paintings which are
derivative of other paintings which
are just like it.

Stephanie looks at him. He grins. So does she.

73 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

73

We SEE Jason and Stephanie coming down an escalator. This time he's not going backwards on rollerblades.

STEPHANIE

You know, this is a whole new side of you. I've never seen you go down a level without almost killing yourself.

JASON

I'm full of surprises

74 ANGLE ON STEPHANIE AND JASON

74

They're at the bottom. His untied shoelace gets caught in the teeth of the escalator, jerking him back. Stephanie can't believe it's happening again. He jerks with all his might to get his shoe free and tries to look cool while he's doing it. One last pull. He frees his shoe, but ends up falling on his behind.

JASON

(still sitting)

So tell me the truth, is the whole store laughing at me?

STEPHANIE

Yes, but you'll never see these people again.

JASON

Are you secretly laughing at me?

STEPHANIE

No.

She bursts out LAUGHING. Just then, Fred the security guard comes by and sees Jason sitting there.

FRED

Hey Jason.

JASON

Fred, my man.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

FRED
(picking Jason up)
Word of advice. Escalators are not
your friend.

Fred leaves.

75 INT. COSMETICS DEPARTMENT - DAY

75

Stephanie and Jason start through the cosmetics department.

JASON
Wanna smell good? I'd like to give
you a little gift.

He leads her to a VENDOR hawking sample perfume. The vendor
takes Stephanie's wrist and sprays. Stephanie takes a whiff
and grimaces. So does he.

JASON
This should be called E'Au
d'Elizabeth, New Jersey.

She giggles.

JASON
Let me take you to lunch.

76 INT. DEPARTMENT STORE BASEMENT - DAY

76

They are in the food department where various vendor
demonstrate their wares. A SALES LADY (#1) is pitching "Mr.
Crepe," offering shoppers free samples.

JASON
It's on me.

STEPHANIE
Or it will be, if we have to go
down stairs while we're eating.

SALES LADY #1
Thin and light as air, perfect
every time (etc.).

(CONTINUED)

77 ANGLE ON SALES LADY #2

77

Another SALES LADY (#2) demonstrates the Wonder Waffle waffle iron.

SALES LADY #2

No sticking ever. Waffles better
than those served at the finest...

78 ANOTHER ANGLE - VARIOUS SALES PEOPLE

78

One after another, various sales people offer up food samples as Jason and Stephanie make their way along them.

JASON

Save room for Mr. Instant Sushi.

79 EXT. CENTRAL PARK (CAROUSEL) - DAY

79

It's empty except for these two kids.

STEPHANIE

This brings back memories.

JASON

Yeah, bad ones. I threw up on this thing. And they wouldn't stop it.

STEPHANIE

My parents used to bring me here.
Then, when they separated, my mom
would bring me here on Saturday and
my dad on Sunday. It got me dizzy.

JASON

How long, as they say in my family,
have they been dee-horsed?

STEPHANIE

Five years. It's unbelievable.
They won't even talk to each other
on the phone. They just send nasty
faxes. Why get married in the
first place if you're going to get
unmarried?

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

JASON

I've been giving this a lot of thought. They're immature imbeciles about love.

STEPHANIE

When I get married, I'm going to stay married.

JASON

Even if it's torture and Mr. Universe comes to your door with five million dollars in his fist?

STEPHANIE

I say if you're married, you're married. No exceptions.

JASON

None.

They're quiet for a moment. Two kids contemplating the complexities of adult relationships. Jason turns to Stephanie.

JASON

How's you're horse? Mine's slow.

80 INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY, ABOUT AN HOUR LATER

80

Jason and Stephanie are walking toward the commuter train. A GROUP OF BOYS passes them and turns to take a second look at Stephanie. While Stephanie does not notice, Jason does and moves his body so they can't see her.

JASON

Listen... Perhaps in the near future, we could get together again... What did you do to me? I sound like an English butler.

STEPHANIE

Well, perhaps we can.

JASON

Great.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

STEPHANIE

Yeah, it'll be fun.

JASON

Shouldn't we pin this thing down?
Help me out here, I've never asked
anyone out before. How about
Saturday afternoon? I have to go
to Cotillion, but...

STEPHANIE

Cotillion?

JASON

(a little embarrassed)
My grandmother makes me go. It's
at the Waldorf and good for a
laugh.

81 ANOTHER ANGLE

81

At this point, the two are standing in front of Stephanie's
train.

STEPHANIE

No thanks. I think when murderers
die, they go to Cotillion.

JASON

So, it sound like the near future
is out.

STEPHANIE

'Sorry.

(smiles then)

Gotta go. Bye.

And she quickly boards the train. Jason turns to go, then
Stephanie calls to him from the window of the departing
train.

STEPHANIE

Jason, I think you're unreal.

JASON

You're unreal too.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: 81

The train pulls away.

82 ANGLE ON JASON 82

He watches it go into the distance a long time.

83 INT. TOWNHOUSE (CATHERINE'S ROOM) - DUSK 83

Hillary watches while Catherine tries on a too fancy dress. What they don't know is that Lindsay is watching. She's not happy seeing her mother as a bride.

CATHERINE

I look like a country western singer on a bus tour.

HILLARY

I would agree with you, but we're desperate.

CATHERINE

Maybe if we took off the bows.

HILLARY

And added cowboy boots.

Lindsay leaves.

HILLARY

You know darling, I would be honored if you would wear the gown I got married in.

CATHERINE

Oh Mother.

HILLARY

Too bad I'll be wearing it that night.

84 INT. TOWNHOUSE (HALLWAY) - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 84

Lindsay gets her coat out of the closet and puts it on. In the background, we hear Hillary and Catherine talking but can't make out the words.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

LINDSAY
(not loud enough for
them to hear)
Goodbye, and I love you.

85 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - DUSK

85

Outside in the crisp winter air, as poised and self-assured as a determined six year-old can be, Lindsay heads off down the street.

86 INT. MICHAEL'S DINER - SAME TIME

86

SHEP
You should write a book, Al.
Everybody wants to know what goes
on in the back of a limo.

AL
I couldn't do it. I got loyalty to
my customers.

87 ANOTHER ANGLE

87

Jason enters and waves to a couple of the regulars, crosses behind the counter, and throws on an apron. Michael turns and is surprised to see him.

MICHAEL
Hey, this isn't Sunday.

Jason starts washing dishes.

JASON
I didn't think you'd mind a few
extra hours of unpaid labor.

MICHAEL
I'm glad you're here, Jace. I've
been looking for someone to do this
to all day.

Michael grabs the dish hose out of Jason's hand and splashes him with it.

JASON
That's really mature, Dad.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

MICHAEL

I'm not stopping until you tell me why you're really here.

JASON

Okay, stop. I met a girl. It's time for advice.

MICHAEL

Terrific. As you know, I'm very successful with the gals and I'm planning to start dating any minute now.

JASON

Yeah, right. You know what your problem is? Girls are very sensitive and you're not.

MICHAEL

Oh, you're giving me advice? Now it's starting to make sense.

JASON

Yeah. I'm the one who's in a good relationship.

MICHAEL

You're also the one who's cleaning dishes with Jello.

JASON

(covering)

I know.

He looks down and realizes he's pouring green Jello into the dishwasher.

88 INT. TOWNHOUSE (CATHERINE'S ROOM) - DUSK

88

Catherine is getting into yet another dress.

CATHERINE

Would it be out of the question to wear jeans and a very nice blouse?

(CONTINUED)

HILLARY

Let me guess. The idea of a big deal wedding was Ralph's idea.

CATHERINE

Tony, Mother. And he happens to think these things are important.

HILLARY

I hate to get you nervous, but you're rebounding like crazy. You don't have to marry the first man who sends you roses. Red roses. They're so common. Retired men in Saratoga send red roses!

CATHERINE

You had romance. Why can't I? I remember sitting on the top of the stairs watching while some man, who looked like a handsome prince, came to the door with a gardenia and he'd pin it on you. Then the two of you would float off into the night.

HILLARY

Oh God! You didn't think I was having a good time, did you? I mean, I'd meet a man, he'd stay around for a couple of years, and I'd get bored or he'd get bored. Anyway, it was boring and over. That's what happens when you get hooked on romance.

CATHERINE

This isn't just romance. And I know love takes work.

HILLARY

Do you? Then why did you fight with Michael day and night? Beginnings are easy. It's the middles that are hard. You do enough Tennessee Williams, you learn that.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: [2]

88

She walks off, leaving Catherine unsettled by the conversation.

89 EXT. NEW YORK STREETS (VARIOUS) - DUSK

89

We SEE Lindsay making her way along the sidewalk. Head held high, eyes fixed on the road ahead, this is a youngster on a mission.

She skillfully side-steps various obstacles along the way; A WAYWARD TRASH CAN rolling across the sidewalk, TWO GUYS carrying a SOFA, assorted PUDDLES.

She passes a SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER ringing a bell by a Christmas Kettle. She stops, opens her purse, pulls out a dime, and deposits it.

She walks further and stops at a cart where a MAN is selling candy apples.

LINDSAY

One please.

The Man gives her one. She doesn't pay.

LINDSAY

Thank you.

She walks on before the Man realizes what happened.

90 ANOTHER ANGLE

90

She checks the STREET SIGNS as she goes.

She waits at a STREET LIGHT, obeying the signal like the good citizen she is. Always alert, she spots a CAR coming very close to the curb. She deftly steps behind a MAN READING A PAPER who is not quite as observant. SPLASH! The car hits a puddle. The Man is soaked. Lindsay, however, steps out from behind him, dry as a bone. The light changes to GREEN. She looks both ways and crosses.

91 INT. DINER - SAME TIME

91

Jason has taken Michael to a booth where no one can hear.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

JASON

You can't provoke them. Women are ready to fight. I know that. It's up to you not to give them the opportunity.

MICHAEL

All right. That's enough advice.

JASON

And you know what really scares me?

MICHAEL

I'm afraid to ask.

JASON

I kept cracking jokes and I couldn't stop. 'Cause if I did, she could tell what I was really thinking.

MICHAEL

Get to the scary part.

JASON

That's what you always did with Mom. Scary, isn't it?

MICHAEL

(realizing he's right)

Very.

Father and son stare at each other. Jason knows he's scored a point.

92- INT. TOWNHOUSE - SAME TIME

92-

93

93

Catherine searches the bedrooms for the kids. Obviously Hillary has been searching too. They meet on the landing.

HILLARY

Jason still isn't back, and the other two aren't anywhere in the house.

CATHERINE

Oh God.

(CONTINUED)

92- CONTINUED:
93

92-
93

HILLARY

Maybe they're with Olivia. Just because she doesn't speak English and has no sense of direction is no reason to panic.

Catherine does panic.

DISSOLVE TO:

94 INT. DINER - A WHILE LATER

94

Only a few customers remain. Shep, Sonya, Michael, and Jason are cleaning up. Michael holds a huge container that Jason is putting dirty plates from tables in.

MICHAEL

I was good to your mother. Right from the start.

JASON

The first time I saw Stephanie, she was standing far away, but it was like I had a magnet in my heart and it was pulling me toward her.

MICHAEL

Your mother and I met because we both ran for cover from the rain. We were standing on the steps at St. Peters on Waverly and... it was like I had a magnet in my heart and it was pulling me toward her.

95 ANOTHER ANGLE

95

Sonya crosses to them. Obviously she's been eavesdropping. She's teary.

MICHAEL

Hey, come on. Didn't you see the sign out front - "no crying."

SONYA

So how's your mother? Things with that guy Tony getting serious?

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

JASON
(looking at Michael)
Not really. Not unless you
consider getting married serious.

Michael stands there unable to hide his feelings and then
exits toward the kitchen.

DISSOLVE TO:

96 INT. DR. TONY BOER'S EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

96

Gregory is sitting in the chair. Tony walks in checking a
chart in a folder.

TONY
And who's the handsome young man we
have here?

GREGORY
It's just me, Dr. Boer. My teeth
looked weird so I thought I'd stop
by.

TONY
Good to see you, Greg.

Gregory winces.

TONY
Something wrong?

GREGORY
It's just that I hate nicknames.
Now Tony, that's a good name. You
can't shorten it.

Tony starts to examine Gregory.

GREGORY
So Dr. Boer, have you thought of
where you and my mom and us are
going to live?

TONY
My place first. Then we're going
to buy an apartment.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

GREGORY

I'll bet you could afford a nice place. Lawrence Field's dad is a dentist and he gets, like a thousand dollars for a root canal.

Tony smirks.

GREGORY

Way off, huh? Seriously, just in round numbers, what's the tab for a root canal?

TONY

(annoyed)

Why do you have to know?

GREGORY

We're talking about my future, your future. So how much do you make?

TONY

What is it with you kids? All day long, kids come in here with questions, questions, questions. Is it gonna hurt? How long will it take? And now you with how much do I have in my bank account? All I want is for a kid to sit in the chair, open his mouth, and let me do what I do best - drill.

Tony holds up a needle with novocaine.

TONY

And before you ask, yes, this is going to hurt, Greg.

GREGORY

Gotta go, Tone.

And he's out of there. Gregory has no use for this man anymore.

97 INT. TOWNHOUSE (KITCHEN) - SAME TIME

97

Catherine and Hillary sit nervously by the phone.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

HILLARY

I think you should call Michael.

CATHERINE

Mother, I really don't think
Michael...Hillary grabs the phone and dials. She then hands the phone
to Catherine.98- INTERCUT:

98-

99

99

INT. DINER/TOWNHOUSE - SAME TIME - DUSK

Michael answers.

MICHAEL

Twelfth Street Diner.

CATHERINE

Michael, have you seen the kids?

MICHAEL

Oh, it's the dentist's wife.

CATHERINE

(ignoring him)

I can't find the kids.

MICHAEL

Relax, Jason's right here.

CATHERINE

(to Hillary)

Jason's with him.

(to Michael)

What about Gregory and Lindsay?

MICHAEL

You can't find them either?

CATHERINE

It's getting late. They...

MICHAEL

What do you do, just let them run
around in the street?

(CONTINUED)

98- CONTINUED:

98-

99

99

Just then Jason passes by.

JASON

Let me guess... Mom? You're
provoking her, Dad.

MICHAEL

Do you know where your brother and
sister are?

100- INTERCUT:

100-

101

101

INT. TOWNHOUSE/DINER - DUSK

Just then, Gregory and Olivia enter the townhouse.

CATHERINE

Hold on a second. Gregory just
came in.

(to Gregory)

Where's your sister?

GREGORY

Probably entertaining our boys
overseas.

CATHERINE

(into the phone)

He doesn't know.

MICHAEL

Where the hell could she go in the
middle of Manhattan?

102- ANGLE ON JASON

102-

103

103

Thinking it over. Realizing.

JASON

Oh God. Dad, get off the phone.
Hurry.

MICHAEL

What?

(to Catherine)

I'll call you back.

Michael slams down the receiver just as Jason runs out.

104 INT. MACY'S (SANTA) - DAY

104

We SEE two petite feet, obviously in some pain. The toes wiggle inside dainty white tights.

The CAMERA PEDESTALS UP to reveal Lindsay, holding her Mary Janes and rubbing her tootsies as she waits in line with OTHER KIDS to see Santa.

Lindsay is at the front of the line with only one LITTLE GIRL ahead of her. She taps the girl on the shoulder.

LINDSAY

Excuse me. May I take cuts? I've walked seventeen blocks and my feet are killing me. I won't take long, I just have to clear up what I've already asked for.

LITTLE GIRL

You can have cuts for a dollar.

LINDSAY

Forget it.

And, at this moment, the girl is led up to Santa. Lindsay says to her, as she goes:

LINDSAY

Be sure to tell Santa what a little creep you are.

105 EXT. MACY'S - ALMOST NIGHT

105

We see Michael's car pull up. He double parks and he and Jason race inside.

106 BACK INSIDE WITH SANTA

106

At last it is Lindsay's turn to be lifted up on Santa's lap. At once, Santa recognizes her. She smiles that smile.

LINDSAY

Hello again.

SANTA

Well, hello. I remember you.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

LINDSAY
(renewing her belief)
You do? I knew you would.

SANTA
You had a very unusual request.

LINDSAY
I know. But please listen really
hard. We have to get it right this
time.

Lindsay whispers in Santa's ear.

107 ON JASON

107

As he makes his way quickly through the crowd. Suddenly he
comes to a stop. Michael stops behind him.

108 WHAT THEY SEE

108

Lindsay hugs Santa goodbye, and like the little lady that
she is, she adjusts her coat and purse before walking away.
She spots her Dad and Jason, smiles and gives them the "ok"
sign.

Michael crosses to her, picks her up, and hugs her.

LINDSAY
I'm glad you showed up, Dad. I'd
hate to have to hoof it back.

109 INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

109

Hillary and Catherine are hugging Lindsay as Michael,
Gregory, and Jason look on.

CATHERINE
Macy's?

HILLARY
That must be fifteen blocks.

LINDSAY
Seventeen.

110 ANOTHER ANGLE

110

GREGORY

Unbelievable. If I pulled something like this, I'd be grounded until we manned a space station on Mars.

CATHERINE

She's not going to get off that easily either.

(to Lindsay, with strength)

Never. And I mean never do you leave this house without permission again.

MICHAEL

We need your promise.

Realizing the tide has turned against her, Lindsay clouds up and the tears start to roll. Michael and Catherine instantly melt with Michael scooping her up into his arms.

MICHAEL

It's okay. You're all right.

CATHERINE

(grateful, to Michael)

Thank you.

They connect uncomfortably for a moment.

HILLARY

Come into the kitchen. Olivia bakes some cookies.

111 ANOTHER ANGLE

111

They all parade into the kitchen leaving Gregory and Jason watching the procession in awe.

JASON

Amazing. Who taught her to cry on cue?

GREGORY

My luck to be born in the middle.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

The boys sit on the steps.

GREGORY

You're going to have to tell her
there's no Santa Claus. She's
putting too much faith in this guy.

JASON

Why me? I don't want to break a
little kid's heart.

GREGORY

I got a credibility problem. She
saw me sitting on his lap for God's
sake.

112 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LINDSAY'S ROOM) - NIGHT

112

Dressed for bed, Lindsay has been feeding her GOLDFISH. As
we join the scene, she is turning to Jason.

LINDSAY

No Santa Claus?

At once, Jason CROSSES and closes the door.

LINDSAY

(continuing)

Since when?!

JASON

No Santa Claus in the way you
think.

(trying to be gentle)

Uh... see... Santa Claus is more of
an idea. A spirit.

Not having any interest in discussing it, Lindsay goes back
to feeding her goldfish.

JASON

(continuing)

Like, a long time ago there was
this girl named Virginia and...
she wrote to this newspaper asking
if there was a Santa.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

JASON (CONT'D)

And the answer was yes, but... it was more like Santa lives in the hearts of...

LINDSAY

Jacie, you always make things complicated. Santa lives at the North Pole except for the three weeks he's here in Mid Town. I don't know who this Virginia is or what she has to do with anything, but I know Santa. He's jolly and fat with a fluffy white beard, red suit, a sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer who have names like... like... Dasher and other names that rhyme with Dasher. And that's really all any of us need to know about it.

Jason gives in.

JASON

All right. Let's say this guy does exist. He may not be able to get Mom and Dad back together. Mom's marrying Tony.

LINDSAY

Don't worry about it, Jace. Last year Santa brought me a doll with hair that grows. If he can do that...

Jason realizes he'll never get through to her.

113 INT. TOWNHOUSE (JASON AND GREGORY'S BEDROOM) - MORNING

113

Jason is doing what a lot of males do when they're in love. He's working out with weights. After each curl, he checks the mirror to see if anything is developing.

Catherine is trying to talk to him.

CATHERINE

You have to go to Cotillion.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

JASON

I met the girl I'm probably going to marry someday. So there's no point in going.

CATHERINE

Jason, you're thirteen years old. Isn't it too soon to pick out a wife?

JASON

I don't think so, Mom. when someone good comes along, you got to snap them up.

CATHERINE

(her patience wearing thin)

Get dressed for Cotillion, because I am a kind, understanding mother and I said so.

114 INT. HOTEL (SMALL BALLROOM) - NIGHT

114

A small combo made up of three men over seventy plays "JINGLE BELL ROCK" in a lifeless swing rhythm.

115 SIXTY BOYS AND GIRLS AGE 12-14

115

All dressed in suits and party dresses. Most all of the girls are taller than the boys. Some only slightly, some by nearly a foot, as is the case with:

116 ANGLE ON PAIGE AND JASON

116

Poor Paige has shot up to her full adult height very early, temporarily out-stripping any coordination she might have had. Jason works hard at wheeling her around the dance floor, but it's clear his heart isn't in it.

PAIGE

So, my sister insisted that I took the cap off the ketchup. And I said "I'm not a ketchup person -- you are."

She notices Jason is not listening.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

PAIGE

Jason.

(he looks at her)

You're supposed to talk. God.

She'll start clicking...

Sure enough, a matronly type, MRS. GRAFF, clicks loudly on a CASTANET. The MUSIC STOPS. The COUPLES STOP.

MRS. GRAFF

Dancing is a form of social interaction, boys and girls. Now when we dance, it's a chance to hone our communication skills. Now, converse.

PAIGE

(mortified)

I told you so. God. God.

Reluctantly, the kids start TALKING to one another. We overhear some of them as they pass by the CAMERA.

BOY #1

...yeah, but it itches.

GIRL #1

You're disgusting.

GIRL #2

So, when do your braces come off...

BOY #2

This is just a retainer, you dope.

Jason and Paige swing back through the frame. Suddenly, something catches Jason's attention O.S. He practically has to stand on tip toes to see over Paige's shoulder.

PAIGE

So, anyway, she made such a big deal about this stupid cap that I took it and threw it out the window. Then she says, "you can kill a person with a cap from fourteen stories up."

117 JASON'S P.O.V.

117

Through the dancing young people, we see Stephanie. She is dressed like the others, in a party dress. However, hers reflects a slightly higher level of sophistication. She looks about the room. She spots Jason and smiles, as if to say, "Well, here I am."

118 ANGLE ON JASON

118

Jason smiles back. Then, he quickly glances to the side. At once, Jason goes into action.

JASON

Paige, you know who I heard likes you?

PAIGE

God! Who?!

JASON

Kevin Mars.

PAIGE

God, really?!

Paige drops Jason and heads for a boy who's standing on the side. Relieved, Jason heads toward Stephanie.

119 ANGLE ON JASON AND STEPHANIE

119

As he reaches her. They look at one another, then:

JASON/STEPHANIE

(together)

I didn't expect to see you.

He offers her his arm. She accepts and they CROSS to the dance floor.

STEPHANIE

I thought I'd stop by and see if your Cotillion is as bad as mine was.

(looks around)

Worse. You've got nothing but mouth breathers here.

They LAUGH.

120 ANGLE ON THE DANCE FLOOR

120

Jason takes her in his arms to dance, but something is wrong. Like the other girls, Stephanie is taller than Jason.

STEPHANIE

Wait a minute.

She kicks off her two-inch heels. This brings her down just about nose to nose with Jason. Jason smiles.

THEY DANCE right out of the room.

121 INT. HOTEL (LOBBY) - DAY

121

Out the door, Jason walks Stephanie across the floor toward the entrance of the Main Ballroom. A sign in glitter reads, "Congratulations Marsha and Rick." As they approach, it becomes clear Jason intends to go inside.

STEPHANIE

We can't go in there. We weren't invited.

Jason is cool, glancing beyond the SECURITY GUY who guards the door. He catches the eye of MIDDLE AGED WOMAN. He smiles and waves. The Middle Aged Woman smiles and waves back.

JASON

Now we are.

Stephanie looks at him questioningly as they slide inside.

JASON

Reflex. You smile and wave to somebody, they'll smile and wave back seventy-eight percent of the time. Watch.

He waves to a couple who are dancing. They both wave back.

122 INT. INSIDE THE BALLROOM

122

It's the wedding that a young couple from Queens would die for. Bridesmaids, flower girls, all in polyester gowns. The bride and groom are short and probably won't produce the best looking children. This wedding will be the highlight of their life.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

Jason leads Stephanie toward a waiter with hors d'oeuvres.

JASON

Some day, I'm going to actually buy
you food. I promise.

123 ANOTHER ANGLE

123

As they scoop up some of the food from the waiter, the band stops and the bandleader makes an announcement.

BANDLEADER

Ladies and gentlemen, here to do
their first dance as husband and
wife, Mr. and Mrs. Shatz.

The band plays. Everybody applauds enthusiastically.

Jason looks at Stephanie through rose-colored glasses.
She's wearing them too.

STEPHANIE

She loves him.

JASON

And he's crazy about her.

BANDLEADER

And now, the mother and father of
the bride, will you join our happy
bride and groom?

STEPHANIE

Wait here.

('a la '40s film)

I have to powder my nose.

JASON

Really? You use powder?

124 ANGLE ON JASON AND OLDER MAN

124

Jason is more in love than ever. He goes over to the buffet line and gets two plates. An OLDER MAN gets behind him in line. We've seen this man before, but it's a little hard to recognize him without his red suit.

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED:

124

OLDER MAN

You really like that young lady.

JASON

Does it show?

OLDER MAN

I knew right away.

JASON

Yeah, me too. Of course, my Mom thinks I'm too young.

OLDER MAN

Your mom was young and in love once. She just forgot.

JASON

Both my parents forgot. They're not together anymore.

OLDER MAN

Maybe they need you to remind them.

JASON

Mom's marrying a dentist on Friday. It's too late.

OLDER MAN

Maybe, but the truth is the enemy of time.

JASON

I know that was heavy, but I missed it.

OLDER MAN

I mean, if something is right, really right, it can change anything in the blink of an eye.

JASON

How do you know that?

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED: [2]

124

OLD MAN

You're the one who believes in love
at first sight and you're asking
me?

Jason turns to see Stephanie floating toward them.

JASON

Stephanie, I'd like you to meet a
friend of mine... I don't even
know your name.

He turns and the Old Man is nowhere to be seen.

PUSH IN ON Jason's face as his expression transforms from
confusion to realization.

125 INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - A LITTLE LATER

125

It turns out that Jason, when not restricted by Cotillion,
is a very snappy dancer. And not this new kid stuff. Real,
old fashioned Fred Astaire stuff. Stephanie has no trouble
following.

JASON

I'm going to have to take things
into my own hands.

STEPHANIE

Jason, you can't get your parents
back together. It's every kid's
fantasy, but it just doesn't
happen.

JASON

But mine are still in love.

STEPHANIE

How do you know that?

JASON

I don't know it. I feel it.

They stop dancing and look at each other.

JASON

Will you help me?

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

STEPHANIE

I'm afraid I'm too much of a
realist for that.

Jason is bewildered. How could his love fail him?

126 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - DAY

126

A van with ELITE PARTY SERVICE written on it is parked in front. A couple of guys with heavy duty cleaning equipment are unloading and entering the house.

127 INT. TOWNHOUSE (JASON AND GREGORY'S ROOM) - DAY

127

Jason, Gregory, and Lindsay are all looking out the window, watching. They don't look happy about this.

LINDSAY

Oh Jacie, I just had the most
horrible thought.

JASON

What?

LINDSAY

That Santa always comes in the
middle of the night and if Mom is
supposed to get married Christmas
Eve, he may show up with Dad too
late.

LINDSAY

That would be horrible. What would
we do?

GREGORY

(resigned)

There's only one thing we can do --
kiss up to the dentist.

JASON

(ignoring him)

I've been thinking we might just
have to help Santa out ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

127

GREGORY

Us? Bring Mom and Dad back together? You're damaged.

LINDSAY

We can't do this without Santa. Mom and Dad are mad at each other.

JASON

They just think they're mad at each other.

GREGORY

Yeah, I suppose they just think they want to ralph every time they're together in the same room.

JASON

That's what being in love is. You feel so good you feel sick.

Gregory looks at Lindsay. He thinks it over for a beat. Then:

JASON

Are you in?

He nods somberly. Lindsay, who is in the middle, puts her arms around her two brothers.

128 INT. PET SHOP - DAY

128

Jason and Gregory are standing across the counter from a CLERK. Lindsay is there, barely able to peek over the counter.

GREGORY

How many mice can we get for twenty-eight bucks?

LINDSAY

It's for a secret plot.

GREGORY

Great Lindsay, that'll get us a discount.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

CLERK

You can get eight for twenty-five
plus tax.

JASON

(to Gregory)

Cough it up.

GREGORY

Tell me again why I'm the only one
who's going to be spending money.

JASON

Because you're the only one who
held onto every dime you've ever
gotten since you were three.

GREGORY

So I'm being punished for being
fiscally prudent?

CUT TO:

129 LINDSAY'S BIG EYE

129

It fills the screen. We hear her voice:

LINDSAY (V.O.)

There's Squeeko and Pee Wee. And
Bubba and Fluffy.

A wider shot reveals that we are:

130 INT. TOWNHOUSE (JASON AND GREGORY'S BATHROOM) - DAY

130

Lindsay has her eye up to the cage that the mice are in.
Gregory and Jason stand nearby.

JASON

You named them?

LINDSAY

They're so little and cute. How
could you not love 'em. Does the
fat one look like a "Harold" to
you?

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

GREGORY

(to Jason)

You know these mice are a little too cuddly and white. Not exactly scary.

JASON

I'm way ahead of you.

He pulls out a bottle of hair color rinse and opens it. He pours everything that's needed into a plastic squeeze bottle.

LINDSAY

Autumn Leaf Auburn by L'Oreal. I clipped it from Grandma. My heart's still pounding.

JASON

I'll hold Harold down. We'll start with him.

Gregory grabs the dye and starts squeezing it on the mouse.

LINDSAY

I'd name him "Mickey," but I hear the Disney people sue.

JASON

Careful. All I need are auburn thumbs.

GREGORY

I am being careful.

Jason applies the dye carefully.

LINDSAY

He's beginning to look like Grandma.

Gregory slips and squeezes a lot of dye into Jason's hair. Jason looks up and freaks.

JASON

Oh my God, you've ruined my best feature.

131 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LINDSAY'S ROOM) - A LITTLE LATER

131

Lindsay has the blow dryer out and is drying the mice in a box that Gregory is holding steady.

LINDSAY

They're finished. I just love the way they turned out.

132 ANGLE ON THE DRESSER AND BOX

132

We see eight mice, all nicely dyed a dirty auburn. Little hands close the top and the box becomes a Christmas present. Jason enters. He has an auburn streak in his hair.

LINDSAY

Jacie, you look like a rock and roll star.

JASON

(looking into the mirror)

You think so?

LINDSAY

Yeah. The way they used to look before I was born.

Jason stops looking in the mirror and puts his head in his hands.

LINDSAY

And the mice look like little Grandmas.

We push in tight on one of the mice and...

DISSOLVE TO:

133 TIGHT ON HILLARY

133

There is a resemblance. Pull back to reveal that we are in...

134 INT. TOWNHOUSE (DINING ROOM) - DAY

134

Hillary is busy looking at sample menus with Joyce, a smartly-dressed caterer.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

JOYCE

We usually serve the prime rib with stuffed potatoes and creamed spinach.

HILLARY

Wonderful. Let's send everyone's cholesterol through the roof.

RACK FOCUS to Hillary's hand, where reminiscent of the Mad Hatter's tea party, we find a mouse (maybe it's Harold) scampering out of a tea cup. Nearby his auburn dyed buddies move onto the table whizzing under Joyce's elbow.

135 ANGLE ON JASON, GREGORY, AND LINDSAY

135

Hiding behind the doorjamb. Eyes wide. Waiting.

136 ANGLE ON HILLARY AND JOYCE

136

JOYCE

And what's a Christmas wedding without egg nog.

HILLARY

But don't water it down. I want more nog in it than egg.

As Joyce continues making notes we notice one of the mice scurry up Hillary's chair and perch casually on her padded shoulder.

Just before Joyce looks up, the rodent heads for points north.

The kids, wanting a closer look, move like an army in a battlefield around to the back of the couch.

Just then, Olivia enters with a tray of tea. Several of the mice see the open door as an opportunity to exit. and they do so, promptly.

137 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

137

Who are desperately miming the mice back into the room. Only Gregory crawls after them.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED: 137

GREGORY
(sotto)
Twenty-eight bucks!

138 ANGLE ON LINDSAY AND JASON 138

Looking disappointed, thinking that their scheme is not going to work.

139 ANGLE ON JOYCE AND HILLARY 139

HILLARY
Olivia, put *los* tea on *los* tables.
Merci beaucoup.

JOYCE
Do you want Crudities?

HILLARY
I hate serving roughage. How about some of those mini quiche things.

Joyce goes back to her notes, absently brushing a fly off her leg. It's no fly, folks. It's Harold.

140 ANGLE ON THE KIDS 140

Relieved to see that Harold is still in the game.

141 ANGLE ON HILLARY 141

HILLARY
And for desert I thought Chocolate Mousse.

As she talks, her hair does a peculiar thing. It moves. Or at least one of her curls does. In fact, it's a curl with a mind of its own as it seems to jump from one side of her head to the other.

142 ANGLE ON LINDSAY 142

As Gregory crawls back to her and Jason. They both have to stifle Lindsay's gleeful response, putting all four of their hands over her mouth.

143 ANGLE ON THE TABLE

143

Joyce looks up and Hillary's hair has a momentary cessation of activity.

JOYCE

We make a delicious mousse. We...

She stops, struck dumb by her realization that Hillary's hair is alive.

HILLARY

(confused by Joyce's
stare)

What?

144 TIGHT ON HILLARY

144

The "hair" does a half gainer and "Harold" sticks his little head out, proud of his acrobatic prowess.

145 ANGLE ON JOYCE

145

She freaks the way women freak when they see rodents.

JOYCE

MOWWWWWWSE!!!!!!

HILLARY

You got a problem with mousse?

Joyce can only point apologetically to Hillary's head. Just then Hillary realizes that something is amiss up there. She cautiously swats at her scalp, flicking the mouse onto the table. Then she joins Joyce in a sisterhood of horror.

HILLARY

OH MY GOD!

146 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

146

Hands still over Lindsay's mouth. She's about to implode with laughter while her brothers just gawk in amazement at what they've wrought.

147 ANGLE ON HILLARY AND JOYCE

147

They attempt to stand, only to find that several mice have returned and are under their feet -- not to mention the two that are now gnawing on the Entenmann's coffee cake on

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

Joyce's plate. They both stand there catatonic with fear, howling for help.

JOYCE

You can't possibly have the wedding
in a house with rodents!

148 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

148

Jubilantly hugging each other. Mission accomplished!

149 INT. TOWNHOUSE (DINING ROOM) - A COUPLE OF HOURS LATER

149

A couple of guys who look like exterminators and have the mouse traps to confirm it, are working in the dining room. Hillary supervises. We can hear the occasional SNAP OF THE TRAPS as they are being set and tested. The kids watch them work, depressed.

JASON

(to Gregory)

Exterminators. You never thought
of that.

GREGORY

Why is it my fault? You know how
long it takes to save twenty-eight
bucks?

Catherine enters with Lindsay.

CATHERINE

Any luck?

HILLARY

The Shuberts are dark, but they
won't open for us because of union
rules.

CATHERINE

I tried twenty places. We're
stuck, we have to have the wedding
here.

Just then, Hillary and Catherine enter as a trap snaps shut accompanied by a little YELP of anguish. Lindsay tries to hide her anguished look.

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

149

HILLARY

Did you get one?

EXTERMINATOR #1 holds the trap up, which is clamped around one of his fingers.

EXTERMINATOR #1

(annoyed anguish)

Does it look like I got one?

LINDSAY

Grandma, it's so cruel and heartless to destroy our cute little furry friends.

HILLARY

They're not our friends, sweetheart. Humans don't make friends with species below cat.

CATHERINE

Honey, sometimes we have to hurt things that can hurt us.

LINDSAY

They're not hurting anybody. You'd just kill anything to get married.

That little tear she's famous for rolls dramatically down her cheek and she exits like a five-year-old Meryl Streep. Catherine watches her go, actually feeling a little stung by her words.

150 PAN TO JASON AND GREGORY

150

JASON

Time for plan "B."

151 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - DAY

151

Some KIDS ranging in age from eight to ten are playing a vigorous game of basket ball. Their T-shirts read St. Andrew's. Nearby, their coach, REVEREND CLARKE is cheering them on.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

REV. CLARKE

Stevensen, go for the rebound! The rebound!

152 ANGLE ON JASON, GREGORY, AND LINDSAY

152

Gregory is dressed in sweats and doesn't look too happy about this. Lindsay adjusts his baseball cap to the side to make him look cuter.

GREGORY

I hate sports. Especially basketball. We're not athletic people.

JASON

You don't have to play.

GREGORY

Just go over there and get Reverend Clarke's attention so we can talk to him.

Gregory SIGHS and walks right over.

REV. CLARKE

Gregory! I'm glad you decided to come down and join the team. Why don't you go in for Jackson?

GREGORY

Thanks anyway, but would you...?

REV. CLARKE

Hey, the only way to play is to get in there and play. Now get in there.

Gregory turns to Lindsay and Jason, looking for their help. All they can do is shrug. Reluctantly, Gregory walks onto the court and unfortunately someone throws him the ball. He panics, clutches the ball to his chest, and starts running in the other direction. It works -- he's gotten the Reverend's attention. He blows his WHISTLE violently. All action stops on the court. Gregory takes advantage of this lapse in the action.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

152

GREGORY
Reverend, can we talk?

CUT TO:

153 EXT. SCHOOL YARD - A COUPLE MINUTES LATER

153

Reverend Clarke, Jason, Lindsay, and Gregory are standing at the opposite side of the school yard. In the background, we can see that the practice is continuing.

REV. CLARKE
So in other words, you want me not to show up at the wedding.

JASON
Not in other words. Exactly that.

LINDSAY
He's a dentist. A great, big dentist.

JASON
We are willing to make a substantial contribution to the church building fund.

REV. CLARKE
Twelve dollars?

GREGORY
That's all I have to spare at the moment.

REV. CLARKE
You're not only asking me to throw the wedding, you want me to take a bribe.

GREGORY
Think of it as a donation.

REV. CLARKE
Thanks for the opportunity.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

153

REV. CLARKE (CONT'D)

It's nice to be tested every now
and then.

(beat)

Gregory, come on, get in there and
play.

The Reverend puts his arm around Gregory's shoulder and
leads him back to the court. Gregory looks back at his
siblings and mouths, "help me."

154 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - DAY

154

Abby Rents are unloading folding chairs.

155 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

155

Olivia supervises lethargic RENTAL GUYS in the setting up of
the chairs.

PAN UP to find the kids at the top of the stairs watching
the proceedings grimly.

JASON

Okay, plan A and plan B were busts.

GREGORY

Don't tell me you got a plan C.

JASON

Yeah, but this one's not going to
be easy. It's going to take
timing, teamwork, and attention to
detail.

LINDSAY

I'd do anything for Mom and Dad.
Anything. Just give me the chance.

HILLARY (O.S.)

You kids are bad. And I like that.

She's smiling. She's obviously been standing there for a
while.

JASON

You like it?

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

155

HILLARY

You're more like me than I thought.
Obviously deviousness skips a
generation.

GREGORY

You won't say anything, Grandma?

HILLARY

Absolutely not.

She winks and glides down the stairs.

GREGORY

When I grow up, Grandma, I'm going
to be a producer and put you in one
of my shows.

HILLARY

(without looking back)

I'm counting on it. Jason, what
happened to your hair?

JASON

Industrial accident.

Hillary accepts this and walks off.

156 ANGLE ON THE KIDS - ON THE LANDING

156

JASON

Get ready for Operation: T.O.N.Y.

GREGORY

Tony?

JASON

Tonight - Only - Nobody - Yawns.
It's a stretch, but you get where
I'm going.

LINDSAY

Where?

JASON

Back to the first moment Mom and
Dad met.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED:

156

JASON (CONT'D)

The first moment is monumental
between two people. It's what
forces them together for the rest
of their lives.

157 INT. DINER - DAY

157

TIGHT ON a shaky glass of milk carried ever so carefully.
PULL BACK to reveal Lindsay wearing her little waitress
apron serving the milk to a little boy and his Mom. She
bats her eyes at him in a way that would make Madonna blush.

LINDSAY

There you go. Drink it all down
for me like a big boy, okay?

At the next booth, Jason is working on Al, the limo driver.

AL

I just can't. Christmas Eve's one
of my biggest nights.

JASON

We need you Al.
(pointing to Lindsay)
Look at her. Do you want to break
that little girl's heart?

RACK to Lindsay scooping up some tips and still acting like
a vamp.

RACK BACK

AL

All right, okay. But don't expect
any Christmas presents. This is
it.

PAN with Lindsay as she walks past Gregory at the register.

GREGORY

Where's my cut?

She reluctantly hands him some coins.

LINDSAY

Did you talk to Shep and Sonya?

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED:

157

GREGORY

They're cool. They're working on
Dad now. Let's keep as low a
profile as you're capable of.

158 ANGLE ON STEPHANIE

158

Stephanie enters the diner.

STEPHANIE

Hi, I'm Stephanie -- a friend of
your brother's. He asked me to
meet him here.

GREGORY

(yelling)

Jason! Stephanie is here. Want me
to get rid of the other babes?

159 ANGLE ON BOTH JASON AND AL

159

They turn to see Stephanie.

AL

She's beautiful, Jase.

JASON

I know.

Jason heads toward her.

160 ANGLE ON JASON AND STEPHANIE

160

JASON

I didn't think you'd come.

STEPHANIE

You've very convincing. My parents
are better off without each other,
but you've got me believing that
yours aren't. What did you do to
your hair?

JASON

I'm searching for a new image.

161 ANGLE BEHIND THE COUNTER

161

Shep and Sonya are indeed working on Michael.

SONYA

We'll put up lights. Put out
tablecloths.

SHEP

I say if we've got to work
Christmas Eve, let's enjoy
ourselves.

MICHAEL

(angry)

Look, I'm not in the mood to make a
big thing out of a lousy Christmas
Eve, okay?

Everybody looks over at him. He's even surprised himself at
his outburst.

MICHAEL

All right, all right you guys. You
got your heart set on it. Let's do
it.

SONYA

Wonderful. Michael, I think we
should all get dressed fancy. You
got a tuxedo?

MICHAEL

Somewhere. I'll look like a maitre
d' who got lost.

They signal to Gregory with a thumbs up. He smiles and
grabs more tip money out of Lindsay's hand. She grabs it
back.

162 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

162

The CATERERS are bringing in trays of food.

163 INT. TOWNHOUSE (KITCHEN) - NIGHT

163

The catering staff hustles about, getting ready. Olivia
opens the pantry door to find Jason and Stephanie crammed in
there. Jason is talking quietly on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

JASON

We'll be out in a minute, Olivia.

Olivia closes the door.

164 INT. PANTRY

164

He tries to speak with the DEEPEST, MANLIEST VOICE he can manage.

JASON

(into phone)

That's right. Doctor Tony Boer.

Right, I'm cancelling the tuxedo.

I don't care if I already paid for it. Keep it. Well, that's the kind of guy I am. Thanks.

(to Stephanie)

He bought it. Your turn.

She takes the phone from him and starts dialing.

165 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

165

Gregory and Lindsay are listening to Hillary go over last minute details of the ceremony with members of the wedding party.

HILLARY

Then after Catherine comes down the aisle, I make my entrance, hit my mark, and stand just right of center.

Catherine, in her dressing robe, comes up behind them.

CATHERINE

I don't believe the traditional order is for the mother of the bride to enter last.

HILLARY

Yes, but we're not traditional people. We're spontaneous. We make things up as we go along.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

165

CATHERINE

Mother, in case anybody asks, this is the reason I struggle with insecurity.

(turning to the kids)

I need to talk to you guys.
Anybody seen Jason?

The kids shake their heads a little too vigorously. Then Olivia, who was nearby, blows Jason's cover.

OLIVIA

(in Spanish)

He and his girlfriend are in the kitchen closet doing God knows what.

CATHERINE

The kitchen closet?

166 INT. PANTRY - NIGHT

166

With Jason coaching her, Stephanie talks on the phone.

STEPHANIE

(into the phone)

I'm sorry, Dr. Boer. I know the wedding's at seven o'clock, but your tuxedo won't be finished until six o'clock... That kind of language is not going to get it done any faster.

She hangs up. They look at each other deeply. Their faces just inches from one another. They move closer and... the door flies open.

Catherine is standing there with Gregory and Lindsay, looking into the pantry.

JASON

Hi, Mom. You remember Stephanie?

CATHERINE

Of course. Stephanie, will you excuse us for a second?

(CONTINUED)

166 CONTINUED:

166

JASON

If she goes, I go.

CATHERINE

Wrong. Get over there.

Stephanie crosses out as Jason joins his brother and sister.

CATHERINE

Now look, you guys. I know this wedding isn't easy for you. And maybe you don't totally understand why I'm doing it. But I want you to know it won't affect the way I feel about you. Nothing will ever change that.

LINDSAY

Even if we turn into vicious criminals and you see us on "America's Most Wanted"?

CATHERINE

Even then.

She gives them all a hug and walks off.

GREGORY

Let's just hope she remembers she said that.

Gregory charges up the stairs while Lindsay and Jason cautiously move to the door. Seeing that the coast is clear, they make a mad dash outside.

167 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

167

Al and Stephanie are waiting for them across the street standing in front of Al's limo. They hop in and take off just as the first guests start to arrive.

168 INT. LIMO - NIGHT

168

Jason dials the back seat cellular phone.

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

168

JASON

Us kids kind of saved up and rented you a limo. Right. It's a wedding present. See you in ten.

169 EXT. DINER - NIGHT

169

The limo pulls up down the street.

170 INT. LIMO - NIGHT

170

JASON

Okay, Lindsay, ready to do your stuff?

LINDSAY

I'm always ready. God, isn't this ever so exciting?

Al helps her out of the car, and through the window we can see her run toward the diner.

171 INT. DINER - NIGHT

171

The place is an ode to Christmas. Lights are strung everywhere. Tablecloths with candles on the table. The staff is all dressed up including Michael who looks rather self conscious in his tux. Shep spots Lindsay approaching the door, signals to Sonya.

SONYA

Oh my god, Michael. It's Lindsay.

MICHAEL

(surprised)

Lindsay?

Lindsay bursts in, pouring buckets of tears. She's going for Best Supporting at this moment.

LINDSAY

Daddy! I don't feel very good.

She goes racing for his arm. He holds her, concerned.

172 EXT. TONY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

172

The limo pulls up. Al gets out and calls over to the DOORMAN.

AL

Hey pal, can you help me? I got a pick up here. I can't make out the name.

As the doorman crosses to Al, Jason and Stephanie sneak out the backdoor and move behind him into the building.

173 INT. TONY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

173

Tony is just stepping out of the shower. He wraps a towel around himself and checks out his body in the mirror. He likes what he sees. Just then the doorbell rings.

TONY

About time.

He crosses into the living room and to the front door. He swings it open.

174 TONY'S P.O.V. - THE HALLWAY

174

Nobody's there.

175 ANGLE ON TONY

175

He looks around confused then closes the door.

176 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

176

TIGHT ON Tony's doorknob. A hand comes into FRAME and ties some string around it. CAMERA follows the trail of string down toward a door that says "Storage" on it. There we find that the string ends in a box that says "Johnson & Johnson Dental Floss." The hand holding the box tears off the string and closes the door.

177 INT. TONY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

177

Tony is moving back toward the bathroom when he hears a voice somewhere out in the hallway.

VOICE (O.S.)

Tuxedo delivery.

(CONTINUED)

177 CONTINUED: 177

Tony races back toward the door. He opens it and goes out into the...

178 INT. HALLWAY 178

Again nobody's out there. He stands there for a moment wrapped in his towel, confused. Then, from around the corner he hears:

VOICE

It's for Dr. Boer.

TONY

I'm right over here.

Tony goes racing around the corner.

179 ANGLE THE DOOR KNOB 179

The floss pulls the door shut.

180 ANGLE - HALLWAY 180

Tony comes racing around the corner and to his amazement nobody is there.

TONY

Hello! I'm Dr. Boer. Hello?

A door opens, a WOMAN sticks her head out, stares at him.

TONY

(explaining)

I'm looking for my tuxedo.

WOMAN

Good for you.

181 ANGLE - HALLWAY IN FRONT OF TONY'S DOOR 181

Stephanie pulling the floss off Tony's door. Jason comes up the other way. Signals for her to hurry. She tosses the floss down and takes off with Jason into the stairwell. Just then, Tony comes back around the corner. He tries his door. It's locked. He's pissed.

TONY

I don't believe this.

(CONTINUED)

181 CONTINUED:

181

As he races off toward the elevator, we PAN DOWN to see him step over a wad of dental floss on the carpet.

182 ANGLE - ELEVATOR

182

As Tony gets there, TWO ATTRACTIVE WOMEN exit and check out Tony in his towel. He smiles casually and gets in.

183 INT. APARTMENT LOBBY - NIGHT

183

The stairwell door opens. Stephanie and Jason come running out just as the elevator opens. Tony dashes out.

JASON

Hey Tony, nice threads.

TONY

This is a disaster. I'm locked out and even if I could get in, I don't have a tuxedo.

STEPHANIE

Wait a second. Jason, don't you have that friend who could help?

FRED

You're right -- Fred. C'mon Tony, Fred'll fix you up.

TONY

I can't go out like this.

JASON

You got another idea?

He doesn't. Jason opens the door for him and he runs as fast as he can into the limo.

184 INT. TOWNHOUSE

184

GUESTS are drifting in. Hillary is greeting them, playing hostess.

HILLARY

Betty Comden and Adolph Green, you know my late great agent Sam Cohen?

185 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LINDSAY'S ROOM)

185

Catherine comes in, sees the bathroom door is closed.

CATHERINE

Lindsay, the guests are here.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Mom, it's bad luck to see your daughter before the wedding.

CATHERINE

Don't be silly, honey. Hurry up.

186 INT. BATHROOM

186

TIGHT ON a cassette player. We HEAR Lindsay's voice coming from it.

LINDSAY (VOICE ONLY)

Be right out, Mom.

CATHERINE (O.S.)

Okay. And round up your brothers.

As we HEAR her footsteps recede, we PAN UP to find Greg turning off the cassette. He breathes a sigh of relief.

187 EXT. MACY'S - NIGHT

187

The limo pulls up.

188 INT. LIMO - NIGHT

188

Tony is surprised to find himself in front of the shuttered store.

TONY

Macy's? Macy's is closed.

JASON

That's when Fred works there.

189 EXT. MACY'S - NIGHT

189

Jason leads a freezing Tony to the loading dock area of the store. He knocks and Fred comes out.

FRED

Jason. How are you doing?

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED:

189

JASON

Fred, this is my new stepdad, Tony.

TONY

Hi, Fred.

FRED

This the guy you told me about on the phone?

Jason nods.

190 INT. MACY'S - NIGHT

190

Fred shows Tony toward a door at the back of the men's department.

FRED

They got the tuxedos right through there.

TONY

I don't know how I can ever repay you.

FRED

Next time show up with your wallet and we'll work something out.

191 ANOTHER ANGLE

191

Tony heads for the door.

JASON

Wait for you here, Tony.

TONY

You know, Jason. I always thought you weren't too happy about me coming into your life. But you've really come through. Maybe we can be mates.

JASON

Mates. Oh yes, I'd like that.

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED:

191

He gives Tony a big pat on his naked back. Tony smiles and enters the door. As soon as he's inside Jason signals to Fred, who locks it.

192 INT. STORE WINDOW - NIGHT

192

TIGHT ON Tony as he enters, looks around and freaks. PULL OUT to reveal that Tony has walked into Macy's window wrapped in nothing but a towel. It is the same Macy's display we saw in the beginning of the film. Tony tries the door. It's locked.

TONY

Hey, there's no tuxedos in here.
Open this door. There's just elves
in here. Jason! Jason this isn't
funny. Open up right now you
little bastard!

Just then, he realizes he's not only in a store window -- he's in a story window and he's freezing. He looks around for something to wear.

193 TONY'S P.O.V.

193

A large mechanical elf is tossing presents onto Santa's sleigh. Tony tries to pull off the "elf's" green coat. It's not easy. He has to fight the mechanism that causes the elf to never stop moving. Tony grabs a sleeve and the "elf" belts him in the face. He tries again and the thing lets him have another shot to the kisser. Tony attacks from behind and this time gets smashed by the other "hand" in the gut. Tony gets pissed and starts attacking the elf the way Tyson went after Ruddock.

194 REVERSE ANGLE OVER TONY THROUGH THE WINDOW

194

Jason and Stephanie watch Tony's plight from across the street.

JASON

I wish I had time to stay here and
enjoy this.

STEPHANIE

I better go. I'll be waiting at
the finish line.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

194

Jason hails a cab. As she starts to get in, she turns to him.

STEPHANIE

Promise me if it doesn't work
you'll be all right.

JASON

It's got to work.

Realizing she can't protect him from disappointment, she instinctively reaches out, pulls him close, and kisses him gently. It has all the magic of a first kiss. She then gets into the cab. It speeds off leaving Jason with feelings he's never had before.

195 INT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

195

MORE GUESTS milling about. Eating quiche. A PHOTOGRAPHER is taking pictures of a distracted looking Catherine.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Now let's get one of the bride with
her groom.

CATHERINE

He doesn't... he's not here yet.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(he's seen this one a
hundred times before)
Probably caught in traffic.

CATHERINE

(checks her watch)
Sure, Christmas Eve. It's a zoo.

PHOTOGRAPHER

How 'bout the bride with her
adorable children?

196 ANGLE ON GREGORY

196

Catherine comes up to him.

CATHERINE

Have you seen your brother and
sister?

(CONTINUED)

196 CONTINUED:

196

GREGORY

Yeah. They're around. They're both... going to the bathroom so they don't have to pee during the ceremony.

CATHERINE

Tell them we want to take a picture.

She dashes off. Gregory looks around nervously.

197 ANGLE HILLARY

197

She comes up to Catherine and the photographer

HILLARY

Still not here?

Catherine shakes her head.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(trying to be
comforting)

Probably caught in traffic. I've been to five-thousand weddings -- the groom didn't show up only once.

Hillary takes Catherine aside.

HILLARY

I want you to know that the best thing I ever did in my life was you.

CATHERINE

Oh, Mom. When did you get so sentimental?

HILLARY

I think when I realized I love weddings more than marriages.

Joyce, the caterer, comes up to them.

JOYCE

There's an urgent call from a Michael.

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED:

197

CATHERINE

Michael?

198 INT. DINER - NIGHT

198

Michael is waiting on the phone. Sonya comes out of the bathroom.

MICHAEL

Is she any better?

SONYA

(shaking her head)

She's one sick little girl.

199 INT. DINER (BATHROOM) - NIGHT

199

Lindsay pours a glass of water in the toilet and makes GAGGING NOISES.

200- INTERCUT THE TOWNHOUSE WITH THE DINER DURING FOLLOWING
201

200-
201

CATHERINE

Michael, why are you...?

MICHAEL

It's Lindsay. She's not feeling well.

CATHERINE

Michael, why are you doing this to me?

MICHAEL

I'm not doing anything to you. Our daughter is ill and asking for you.

CATHERINE

This is really sick, Michael. I just talked to her upstairs.

MICHAEL

I'm telling you, she's here.

CATHERINE

You really should get some professional help.

(CONTINUED)

200- CONTINUED:
201

200-
201

MICHAEL

Look, I wouldn't ruin this night
for you if it was the last night on
the planet. I'm thrilled you're
getting married. Give him a kiss
for me.

Just then, Lindsay comes out of Michael's bathroom, looking
absolutely awful. Michael picks her up.

MICHAEL

Here baby, say hello to mommy.

LINDSAY

Mommy can you come and get me? I
don't feel very good. I need a
mother's warmth.

CATHERINE

(shocked)

Lindsay?

LINDSAY

Yes, Mommy?

CATHERINE

What are you...? How did you get
there?

LINDSAY

(pushing the alarm
button)

I hitched a ride with a nice man
who gave me some Gummi Bears. I
could probably get back that way.

CATHERINE

You stay right there, honey.
Mommy's coming.

MICHAEL

Now do you...

Catherine slams down the receiver and races out of the room.
Michael hangs up.

(CONTINUED)

200- CONTINUED: [2]
201

200-
201

MICHAEL
Feeling better?

LINDSAY
A little.

He holds Lindsay close to him gently stroking her forehead.

202 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

202

Catherine throws open the hall closet, grabs a deep red cape, and tosses it over her wedding gown. Hillary comes up to her.

HILLARY
Where are you going?

CATHERINE
To Michael's. It's Lindsay. She's sick and asking for me.

HILLARY
Am I getting old, or is there a lot of confusion?

CATHERINE
There's a lot of confusion.

Unnoticed by them, Jason dashes in from outside. Gregory joins him. Catherine opens the door.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Your boys are here. All we need is the little girl and we can get started.

CATHERINE
She isn't here.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Traffic?

AND SHE'S GONE.

203 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

203

Jason and Gregory race toward Al's limo and jam inside. It takes off.

204 EXT. MACY'S WINDOW - SAME TIME

204

A crowd has gathered. We PUSH through past them. All the elves are still working hard in Santa's workshop. All except one of them. The big one in the ill-fitting green suit. No, he's definitely not a team player. He pounds on the window, SCREAMING SOMETHING at the crowd. Unfortunately, his screams are drowned out by the CHRISTMAS MUSIC which is blasting out of the speakers.

SENIOR CITIZEN

I've been coming here over fifty years. This is the best window they ever had.

CUT TO:

205 INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

205

Michael stands outside the bathroom door.

MICHAEL

How're you doing?

Lindsay opens the door. She forgets to look sick.

LINDSAY

A touch better.

Lindsay remembers she's supposed to be sick and swoons.

LINDSAY

But not fabulous. Let's go, I better get some of that wonderful New York fresh air.

MICHAEL

We can't leave. Your mother's on her way. I'll open the window.

Lindsay takes a look at the clock. It takes her a while to figure out the time, and her lips move as she does. It's getting late.

LINDSAY

No. My toes need air too.

She grabs her coat and runs into the hall and down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

205 CONTINUED:

205

MICHAEL

(hanging over the
balcony)

Lindsay. Come on, Lindsay!

(he starts to run
after her)

It's the middle of the night. You
can't go out there. Slow down. I
have a bum knee.

LINDSAY

(yelling up the
stairs)

I know, Daddy. Mommy used to say,
"Sit down, Michael. You have a bad
knee."

(she stops running for
a minute)

She cared.

Lindsay takes off at full speed. Michael takes off after
her. We can tell he has a bad knee. Lindsay gets to the
front of the door just as Michael is halfway down the
stairs. He's too busy following Lindsay to notice Gregory
putting up a sign on his apartment door.

206 CLOSE ON SIGN

206

In rather childish print, it reads: "Dear Catherine.
Lindsay ran away and I had to follow her. I have no idea
where she went, although she did mention something about St.
Peter's Church. Love, Michael."

Gregory makes sure the sign is secure and leaves.

CUT TO:

207 EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - NIGHT, A SHORT TIME LATER

207

Lindsay is running full speed and enjoying it. Michael
keeps her in sight and tries to catch up.

LINDSAY

You're doing great, Daddy!
Fabulously well.

CUT TO:

208 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MICHAEL'S APARTMENT 208

Catherine arrives at the door and sees the note. It doesn't make sense to her. She bangs on the door. No answer. With the note in her hand, she heads down the stairs.

209 EXT. MICHAEL'S DINER - NIGHT, A MINUTE LATER 209

Since Michael lives over the "store," Catherine comes out of a doorway right next to the diner. She doesn't notice, but all the regulars in the diner are watching.

210 EXT. ST. PETER'S CHURCH - NIGHT, A SECOND TO TWELVE 210

We're going for picturesque here. Neighborhood church, New York, dressed for Christmas. People are entering for Midnight Mass. We can see the inside of the ornate church the candles are burning and the choir is singing. Even the non-religious would be inspired. Lindsay turns the corner and bursts up the stairs. Jason is there urging her on.

JASON

Hurry. Hurry.

The CHURCH BELLS START TO RING.

JASON

Right. Here, this is where they met. Too bad it's not raining.

Michael rounds the corner. Jason ducks.

LINDSAY

Here, Daddy. Up here. Isn't it glorious? Don't you just love Christmas?

211 ANGLE ON CAB PULLING UP TO CHURCH 211

Catherine exits the cab and looks around.

LINDSAY

Mother, you've come at last.

Michael ends up standing on the top of the steps as the BELLS RING ON.

LINDSAY

Up here, Mom. Don't you just love it?

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED:

211

Michael turns around, but Jason yanks Lindsay out of sight. Catherine runs up the steps. She doesn't notice Michael is there and he doesn't notice Catherine because he's not looking for her. The two parents are headed to meet. Jason takes Lindsay by the hand and pulls her down the stairs where Gregory is getting out of Al's limo. The kids are at the bottom of the stairs. Their parents are at the top of them.

212 ANOTHER ANGLE

212

The kids look up and from their P.O.V. we see Michael and Catherine miss each other and then come face to face just as the BELL RINGS TWELVE. Why not?

213 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

213

JASON

Will you look at that? Boy, it's not every kid who gets to see the moment their parents met.

LINDSAY

It's glorious. Absolutely glorious.

GREGORY

Slow down. We're not home free yet. They've got to remember.

The kids don't exactly cross their fingers, but they're hoping hard.

214 ANGLE ON MICHAEL AND CATHERINE

214

CATHERINE

Where's Lindsay?

MICHAEL

Somewhere around here. She ran away.

CATHERINE

She's out in the middle of the night while she's sick?

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED:

214

MICHAEL

She's not sick. We've been had.

215 ANGLE ON KIDS

215

GREGORY

I wish I could read lips.

LINDSAY

Maybe they're saying, "I love you.
I love you, my darling."

JASON

(wishing)

Kiss. Come on, Dad. Land a big
one on her.

215A ANGLE ON MICHAEL AND CATHERINE

215A

CATHERINE

(looking O.S.)

I thought I heard Jason.

MICHAEL

Do you realize where we are?

CATHERINE

(without looking
around)

Yes. This is where we met. I'm
not totally unsentimental, although
you would like to think I am.

MICHAEL

I would never think you're
unsentimental on your wedding day.

CATHERINE

Could you please find our children
so I can get on with the ceremony?

MICHAEL

(yelling)

Jason, Gregory, Lindsay. Your
mother wants to get married.

216 ANGLE ON KIDS

216

Jason and Gregory hold Lindsay back.

LINDSAY

They need us.

JASON

They're going to need a couple of minutes to feel really, truly in love.

217 ANGLE ON CATHERINE AND MICHAEL

217

MICHAEL

Hard to believe, seventeen years ago. We were so young.

CATHERINE

And so dumb.

MICHAEL

We never went into the church that night.

CATHERINE

We fell in love instead.

Catherine and Michael look at each other.

218 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

218

JASON

Oh, man. That's it. That's the love stare. I got it from Stephanie.

(too loudly)

Come on, man. Grab her.

219 ANGLE ON MICHAEL AND CATHERINE

219

They turn to see the kids.

220 ANOTHER ANGLE

220

Jason has gotten their attention and given away their location.

CATHERINE

Okay, everybody. The fun's over.

(CONTINUED)

220 CONTINUED:

220

MICHAEL

Your mother is right. The fun is
over. It's time for her wedding.

Michael and Catherine start down the steps.

221 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

221

GREGORY

It wasn't my fault. They made me.

Jason jabs him in the ribs.

222 ANGLE ON THE KIDS

222

Who instinctively run. They jump into Al's limo.

223 INT. AL'S LIMO - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

223

Al, who took a little nap, is startled.

AL

What's happening?

JASON

We blew it. The magic is gone.

GREGORY

Step in it.

Al does.

JASON

It's step on it.

GREGORY

What's the difference? We made a
mess.

Lindsay kneels on the seat and looks back.

LINDSAY

They're getting smaller and
smaller.

224 EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

224

CATHERINE

We've got to be together on this.
They've got to learn that they
can't manipulate adults' lives.

Michael is trying to hail a cab.

CATHERINE

It's impossible getting a cab on
Christmas.

Just then, from out of nowhere, a Hansom cab pulls up.
Horse drawn. Romantic.

MICHAEL

This is the only thing in sight.

He helps Catherine inside.

CATHERINE

You think they did this?

MICHAEL

I don't know. They're good.
(to the driver)
Follow that cab.

He indicates the limo the kids are in.

MICHAEL

It couldn't have been. I never
told them this part of the story.

CATHERINE

What story?

MICHAEL

Jason asked me how we met. I told
him about the church and running
from the rain, but I forgot there
was a Hansom cab sitting there
waiting for us.

CATHERINE

I never could figure out where it
came from.

225 INT. AL'S LIMO - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

225

The kids are numb. Al drives on.

JASON

Maybe when you grow up you forget
how to fall in love.

GREGORY

We wouldn't know. We haven't had
the pleasure of falling in love
like you have in eight tenths of a
second.

LINDSAY

I can't bear it. Maybe I'll go
live in deepest, darkest Africa and
live with the chimps.

GREGORY

(sleepy)

Say goodbye before you go.

He closes his eyes. Lindsay turns around and looks out the
back window of the cab.

LINDSAY

Look, just look. Mommy and Daddy
are following us in the most
fabulous sleigh. It's glorious.

The boys don't turn around.

JASON

It's not cute anymore, Lindsay.

Lindsay keeps looking behind. The boys, thinking she's
over-the-top dramatic don't bother looking.

226 EXT. HANSOM CAB - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

226

Michael and Catherine can't help but be moved by this
romantic ride through the glittering streets.

CATHERINE

Michael, this is so strange. I'm
feeling... I don't know what I'm
feeling. Weird.

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED:

226

MICHAEL

Me too. Maybe I shouldn't have had the meatloaf tonight.

(beat)

No more jokes. I haven't felt like this in a long time.

CATHERINE

How about since the last time we took a ride like this?

MICHAEL

Exactly. No, not exactly. There were flowers.

Michael reaches out and hands her a plastic bouquet of gardenias from the vase on the side.

MICHAEL

Well, in those days the flowers were real. Other than that, it's amazing.

Catherine looks at Michael. It's almost as if she's never seen him before.

CATHERINE

Amazing.

There's a pause as they both look at each other. This time it's the look the children had hoped for.

MICHAEL

So you want to get married? I want to have three kids and a diner someday

CATHERINE

I'd like to have four kids and a diner.

Beat as they get totally caught up in the moment. Catherine shivers.

MICHAEL

You cold?

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED: [2]

226

DRIVER

There are blankets.

Catherine and Michael are surprised that he heard them.
They pull the blankets up and cuddle.

They smile. She closes her eyes. He carefully puts his arm
around her.

227 INT. AL'S LIMO - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

227

The boys stare ahead, depressed. Lindsay is still looking
back.

LINDSAY

They put blankets on. It's like
they're in bed.

This gets the boys' interest up. They turn around. Now all
three of them are kneeling on the seats, eyes wide.

JASON

They love each other. They
actually love each other.

And the kids do too. They move together in victory.

228 EXT. HANSOM CAB - NIGHT

228

Catherine and Michael sit in silence, floating on the wings
of some unseen force. Finally:

CATHERINE

All I wanted was romance. Who
would have figured I'd get it from
the father of my children?

MICHAEL

C'mere.

They kiss. A long, big incredible one.

229 EXT. AL'S LIMO (THROUGH REAR WINDOW) - NIGHT

229

We see the three kids wide-eyed.

JASON

Look what we did.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED: 229

They're stunned at their own power.

230 EXT. HANSOM CAB - NIGHT, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 230

There's a red light and the limo stops for it.

MICHAEL

Driver, will you pull up beside
that limo, please?

DRIVER (O.S.)

Delighted.

The Hansom cab pulls up beside the limo.

MICHAEL

(to Al)

Follow us.

The Hansom cab takes off. The limo follows.

231 INT. TOWNHOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT, THE SAME TIME 231

The five piece combo is playing. People are dancing. You'd
never guess the wedding was called due to a lack of
interest.

232 ANGLE ON HILLARY 232

Dancing with a DAPPER MAN. She's got a romantic look in her
eye.

233 EXT. TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT, ABOUT 25 MINUTES LATER 233

The Hansom cab pulls up, followed by the limo. The family
jumps out, jumps up and down, hug each other. It's as if
they haven't seen each other in a year. Actually, they
haven't seen each other like this in a year.

LINDSAY

(crying)

Oh Mommy, Daddy -- this is the
happiest day of my young life.

GREGORY

(re: Lindsay)

Hey, look, real tears.

(CONTINUED)

233 CONTINUED:

233

Everyone captures Lindsay for a group hug.

MICHAEL

One question -- how did you get the
Hansom cab there?

They all look at the cab. The driver tips his hat.

JASON

We didn't have anything to do with
that.

MICHAEL

Let's just chalk it up to the
bizarre unknown and leave it at
that.

They smile and head for the house. Gregory gets between
Michael and Catherine and takes each of their hands.

GREGORY

We need you. Both of you together.
I was a jerk to think we didn't.
(he wipes a tear away)
I'm not crying. Yes I am.

He puts his parents' hands together so they can be hand-in-
hand. They go into the house.

GREGORY

(to Lindsay and Jason)
It was worth the twenty-eight
bucks.

Lindsay CROSSES to the Hansom cab and for the first time we
SEE the driver. He's the Santa from Macy's and the man who
spoke to Jason at the wedding.

LINDSAY

(to the Hansom cab
driver)
Thank you very much.

DRIVER/SANTA

The pleasure was mine.

(CONTINUED)

233 CONTINUED: [2]

233

LINDSAY
I never imagined in my whole life
that I would be talking to Santa
Clause on such a busy night.

234 ANGLE ON GREGORY AND JASON

234

Now they recognize him too and are amazed.

DRIVER/SANTA
Next year ask for something a
little easier, like peace on earth.

He's off with a wink and a smile. Lindsay waves and then
goes to run into the house. Gregory is still at the door.

GREGORY
That was Santa Claus?

LINDSAY
Yeah. Nice guy, isn't he?

Lindsay runs into the house. Gregory slowly follows her.

GREGORY
(looking off)
I believe in you...
(to himself)
I hate being confused.

He exits into the house. Jason just stands there, watching
the Hansom cab O.S. Then something stuns him. His eyes
follows as the OFF CAMERA carriage floats skyward. He
cranes his neck as it moves off into the heavens.

He stands there for a very long time, knowing that miracles
can happen.

235 INT. TOWNHOUSE - SOME TIME LATER

235

Michael, Catherine, Hillary, and the kids sit as one very
happy family in front of the T.V.

236 ANGLE ON T.V.

236

We see the VIDEO Jason has been working on. It's a rock
video commercial which sells why his family should always
stay together.

(CONTINUED)

236 CONTINUED:

236

OVER this, we PLAY CLOSING CREDITS

BRIEFLY FADE TO BLACK

FADE BACK UP ON

237 EXT. MACY'S WINDOW - NIGHT

237

A HUGE CROWD has gathered to watch that big wacky elf in the window. It's obvious that Tony has gone over the edge as he waves, dances, and in general goes berserk. Some KID WITH TWO FRONT TEETH MISSING watches with delight.

KID WITH MISSING FRONT TEETH

You know, that elf looks like my
dentist.

Over Tony's MUTED SCREAMS we...

FADE TO BLACK.