

FOUR CHRISTMASES

by
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EXT. EMPTY SNOW DUSTED PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

A light snow blows. A MINIVAN sits alone in the parking lot of the *Tahoe Village Cinemas*.

SUPER: "CHRISTMAS EVE, 2001"

We HEAR the CRUNCH of fresh snow under tires as a VOLKSWAGEN GOLF pulls into the lot and parks next to the Minivan.

The driver is a beautiful woman with spindly blond hair, KATE KINGSBERRY (20's).

She steps out of the car to see TWO PARENTS with TWO YOUNG CHILDREN. The entire family wears little red Santa hats and stares awkwardly at Kate as she approaches the TICKET LADY.

KATE

One please.

TICKET LADY

There's not enough people here yet.

KATE

What?

TICKET LADY

We need at least six people to start the movie. You make five.

Kate smiles at the family, but they all seem agitated. The son walks up to Kate and tugs on her sleeve. Kate looks down to see this adorable boy with puppy dog eyes.

SON

Hello lady. Are you meeting your husband here?

KATE

Oh sweetie, I'm not married.

SON

Is your boyfriend on his way?

KATE

Awww, no. I don't have a boyfriend.

SON

A date?

Kate shakes her head in the negative. The boy frowns and retreats back to his family, not nearly so cute anymore.

TICKET LADY

If another person doesn't show up
in five minutes, the theater's
closed folks.

KATE

Don't worry...someone will show up.

They all stare into the silent abyss, hoping to see another
car pull into the lot...nothing. The DAUGHTER, a cute little
girl no older than seven, approaches Kate.

DAUGHTER

(To Kate) Where is your family?

KATE

Oh, my parents just got divorced a
few months ago...Christmas got
split in two this year and it's a
total mess. (letting go) When I was
your age, Christmas was fun. Now,
it's who's going to whose house,
for how long? Whose gifts are more
expensive, whose tree is bigger,
where's my drink, I thought you
said you loved me...(Beat) Anyway.
This was the only movie playing
within forty miles of here. I just
needed a little break.

DAUGHTER

You need therapy.

TICKET LADY

All right, people...I don't think
anyone's coming. We're gonna close
up now.

Just then, the son tugs on his Mom's jacket.

SON

Wait! Mom...Look...A car!

DAUGHTER

It's headed this way!

MOTHER

It's a Christmas miracle!

A NISSAN PATHFINDER pulls into the lot and parks next to
Kate's car. The driver, BRAD MCVIE (pronounced McVEE) (27),
gets out of the car to be greeted with APPLAUSE from the
entire group.

BRAD

Thank you?

Kate is smitten with Brad's rugged good looks, his air of casual confidence. He's her knight in shining Gortex.

KATE

They weren't going to start the movie until a sixth person showed up...you're the sixth.

BRAD

I'm happy all it took was a loser seeing a movie by himself on Christmas Eve.

KATE

Hey I take offense to that, I came here by myself too. Does that make me a loser?

BRAD

Since that's all I have to go on...yes.

The Dad gleefully turns and points at the ticket lady.

DAD

Looks like you're working late this Christmas Eve!

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate is already seated as Brad approaches her with a bag of Popcorn and a soda. He respectfully sits a few seats away from her.

KATE

So, loser to loser...why are you out alone on Christmas Eve?

The family is seated two rows in front of Brad and Kate. The father and mother hear their conversation and seem concerned.

Brad moves a seat closer as the lights go down and a soda commercial starts playing.

BRAD

You'd think after fifteen years of divorce my family would get better, but it's the same every year. No one knows whose house to go to.

(MORE)

BRAD (cont'd)
I've got two brothers and nephews
so there's always bickering about
who sees who and when...I just
needed a breather.

Kate's jaw drops. This is fate and she knows it. Brad sees
Kate looking at him with a bewildered look.

BRAD
I know...I need therapy.

KATE
No...no. I mean...maybe.

Kate moves closer, sitting in the seat right next to Brad.

KATE
It's just I can't believe you said
that.

The Dad turns around in a stern manner.

DAD
Could you please not talk?

BRAD
It's just a commercial.

No response. Kate continues the conversation by whispering.

KATE
My parents divorced this year too.
That why I'm here.

BRAD
Really? Sorry...believe me I
understand. Was it a messy divorce?

KATE
My dad's a divorce attorney...what
do you think?

BRAD
I can guess...that's what I do.
Well, not yet. I just graduated law
school. I'm Brad...Brad McVie.

KATE
Kate Kingsberry.

BRAD
(beat) As in Rob Kingsberry?

KATE
You know my Dad?

BRAD
Yeah...wow. He taught my contract
law class at Stanford. He was
great.

The commercial is still playing, but the Dad can hear Brad
and Kate talking and is furious.

DAD
Please! My family is trying to
enjoy themselves!

BRAD
(To Kate) You want to get out of
here?

KATE
(flashing her pearly whites) Sure.

They get up to leave, just as the trailers start.

DAD
Thank god.

INT. THEATER LOBBY -- CONTINUOUS

The Ticket lady spots Brad and Kate exiting.

TICKET LADY
You're leaving?

BRAD
Yeah, Good night.

KATE
Merry Christmas.

The Ticket lady smiles.

TICKET LADY
It's a Christmas miracle.

INT. THEATER -- MOMENTS LATER

It's the deafening end of the THX demonstration, right before
the film begins. The family sits on the edge of their seats,
eagerly watching with joy. Suddenly, the film shuts off.

DAD
Hey!

ROLL OPENING CREDITS OVER:

KATE AND BRAD'S PHOTO ALBUM

OPEN ON Brad and Kate's Christmas wedding one year later in VEGAS. Their minister is an ELVIS SANTA.

Then a series of photographs of Brad and Kate: A skiing trip, Kate's birthday, a tropical vacation, etc.

Every photo has one thing in common -- no family in sight.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- DAY

SUPER: "Sacramento, California - Present Day"

It's a frosty afternoon in this warm, tree lined family neighborhood. The homes here were built in the twenties, have large front lawns, are decorated with CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, and have a CHRISTMAS TREE in every window.

MOVE IN on a well manicured Spanish style home. No Christmas decorations on this place, only a "For Sale" sign on its front lawn.

An AUDI SEDAN pulls into the driveway. Kate, now even more beautiful and sophisticated, exits and heads for the front door carrying a green and red WREATH.

Upon reaching the entrance, she tries to hang the wreath on the front door, but can't manage to get it to stick. Suddenly the door opens, surprising Kate...She SCREAMS and falls back on her ass, wreath now around her neck.

Kate, giggling with nervous laughter, looks up to see an attractive brunette standing over.

KATE

You startled me. Are you the owner?

WOMAN

No, I'm an agent. (smug) The agent that's going to sell this house.

The woman drops the house keys in Kate's hand and walks off.

KATE

Nice to meet you too!

Kate picks herself off the ground as a rental car pulls into the driveway. In it, are SIMON (28) and MALI (26) KINBERG. Simon helps his very pregnant wife out of the car.

Kate brushes the grass off her skirt.

KATE

Sorry if I drove too fast. I thought I might have lost you back there.

SIMON

It's my fault, I probably drive a little too cautiously now that we've got a little one on the way.

MALI

(looking) This house doesn't look as big as the last one.

KATE

That last home was great, but I showed it first for a reason.

Kate leads the couple to the door, continuing her pitch.

KATE

I know you wanted to see as many homes as possible the three days you're in town, but trust me...for your situation this is the first, last and **only** home for you.

INT. SPANISH STYLE HOME - CONTINUOUS

As soon as they enter the home, Mali's eyes light up.

MALI

Wow.

Kate continues to lead them through the house, room by room.

KATE

It has three bedrooms and an office, so your family can grow here and it's got a big back yard any child would love.

MALI

What about the school syst...

KATE

Both the grammar and high schools in this area are the best in the city.

(MORE)

KATE (cont'd)

And there are a lot of couples with young children on this street so your child will have plenty of neighborhood friends. Plus there's a great public park within stroller distance.

As they enter the master bedroom, Simon can see the smile on his wife's face. She's bought it, hook line and sinker.

SIMON

How long would it take me to get downtown from here?

Not missing a beat, Kate reaches into her brief.

KATE

You just hop on J street and you're downtown in less than ten minutes. (Handing Simon a sheet) I printed out a map for you.

MALI

It's...perfect. It's like you knew exactly what we wanted.

KATE

(proud) Well, I just knew what you were looking for.

Simon smiles and puts his arm around his wife.

SIMON

It sure seems like it. (To Mali) I think we better grab this place before our realtor outbids us.

KATE

Oh...no. This is a place for couples like you...about to start a family. My husband and I aren't quite there...yet. We want to wait till everything's perfect, not make the same mistakes our parents did. (beat) Right now we're just enjoying being married.

INT. BRAD'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

BRAD (O.S.)

Two thirds of all marriages end in divorce...

Brad, now more seasoned, is in the middle of advising a prospective client, JERRY GARVIN (45). Brad's entire office is covered with GIFT BAGS and BASKETS filled with various BOTTLES of WINE and BOOZE.

BRAD

...It's not your fault Mr. Garvin,
the odds were against you.

Jerry hasn't shaved in days and sports venom in his eyes.

JERRY

My wife was against me, not the
odds. And I know it wasn't my
fault...it was hers! That's why
we're going to crush her!

Brad sits back, he's heard this a hundred times before.

BRAD

I understand you feel a lot of
anger toward your wife, but there
are other factors to consider.

JERRY

What...my daughters? They're eight
and (thinks) well...old enough to
understand their Mom's a skank.

BRAD

Jerry, I'll get you as fair a
settlement as the State of
California allows. But if you want
to put the screws to your wife,
that's going to involve
confrontation. And that
confrontation will likely happen in
full view of your children.

JERRY

Not really ideal for the girls huh?

BRAD

Ideal...no.

JERRY

So what you're saying is that it's
either burying my wife or sparing
my girls psychological trauma?

BRAD

More or less.

Jerry begins weighing the odds using his hands as scales.

JERRY

Hmmm.

BRAD

Jerry...let me tell you about my parents' divorce.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE BRAD'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Brad's Halle Berryesque assistant, MAGGIE (26) sits at her desk next to a mound of paperwork when Brad comes out of the office escorting a HORRIFIED Jerry Garvin.

BRAD

Trust me Jerry. Avoiding any and all confrontation with your wife is the best advice I can give you.

JERRY

You're okay McVie. I was skeptical at first when I found out you were the boss's son-in-law.

Brad frowns at the son-in-law comment.

BRAD

Well, when you work for Rob Kingsberry, you have to work twice as hard.

JERRY

I'm just glad you got my head back on straight. I want to do right by my two little angels.

BRAD

That's what I like to hear.

Brad and Jerry shake hands. From down the hall, Jerry's daughters yell out to their Dad.

DAUGHTERS (O.S.)

Daddy! Can we go to Mommy's house now?

JERRY

(sharp) What did I say about that?

DAUGHTERS (O.S.)

Can we go the to the house you bought, where Mom lives?

JERRY

That's better.

Brad and Maggie can only shake their heads as Jerry makes his way down the hall.

BRAD

Has Rob even come in today?

Maggie holds up a bottle of wine with a bow and card on it.

MAGGIE

He came in just long enough to give me my Secret Santa gift. Right now he's playing golf and then he's gone for the holidays. He said you could handle everything. He also asked if you could handle these for him before you left.

Maggie holds out a stack of files.

BRAD

(defeated) Of course he did. You know what, I'm gonna bail out of here before Rob dumps any more work on me...I'll just work these files from home.

MAGGIE

Good idea. (beat) What are you and Kate doing for the Holidays?

BRAD

Doing our traditional Christmas... staying as far away from our crazy families as possible. This year we're going up to Tahoe, my Mom's loaning us her cabin. That is, if I get out from under my workload.

MAGGIE

I think you mean Rob's workload. (shakes her head) What does Kate think about all that?

BRAD

Are you kidding me? She has no idea. Her whole family pretends that Rob's still the number one attorney in town. Besides, she'd be devastated if I told her how little effort he actually puts in.

Maggie is looking at the card from Rob's Secret Santa gift. It reads, "From Brad to Rob".

MAGGIE

Then I guess I shouldn't tell Kate, that Rob re-gifted your gift...some Secret.

Brad chuckles, switching gears.

BRAD

What are you doing for the Holidays?

MAGGIE

My boyfriend is coming up to meet my family in Seattle.

BRAD

I'm sorry.

MAGGIE

What? No, I can't wait for him to meet them. Being with my family over the holidays is my favorite time of year.

BRAD

Oh...that must be nice.

INT. BRAD'S SUV -- LATE AFTERNOON

It's crystal clear outside as Brad rolls down the windows of his old Pathfinder and blasts "Christmas In Hollis" by RUN DMC. Brad sings along to the lyrics.

The car is loaded with Christmas booze as he leaves for the holidays.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET -- CONTINUOUS

He slows at a STOP LIGHT next to some black HIGH SCHOOL KIDS in a CONVERTIBLE. Brad checks out the car before he spots the teens. He feels a bit self-conscious about the singing.

The teens look at him but Brad rolls with it, singing with even more verve.

Then, Brad's mobile phone RINGS. We see the phone is embedded in a Hands Free Kit, allowing it to be used as a speaker phone.

From the display, Brad can see that it's Kate. He turns down the stereo and answers the phone.

BRAD
(smooth) Hey.

KATE (O.S.)
(loud) Hey sweetie!

The teens mock him, "Hey Sweetie!!!" They all die laughing, before peeling away as the light turns green. Embarrassed, Brad pulls the phone off speaker as the convertible speeds off.

KATE (O.S.)
I tried you in the office, but
Maggie said you'd gone already.

As Brad hits the gas, the Pathfinder makes a KNOCKING sound and the "Engine check" light begins to flicker.

BRAD
(re: Pathfinder) Not again. Kate,
this car is going to die any day.

KATE (O.S.)
We talked about this sweetie, you
need a new car. We'll look after
the holiday. Volvo has a great
new..(beat) Brad?

BRAD
Yeah?

KATE (O.S.)
Are you using the hands free kit?

Brad immediately pulls the phone about six inches from his face and scratches the receiver to pretend like he is.

BRAD
Of course I'm using it.

KATE (O.S.)
You're just holding the phone away
from your face.

BRAD
Uhhhh...(playful) Beep, Beep.
That's the other line, Gotta go!

Brad hangs up and continues on his way. His car is sputtering as he turns down a residential street and into the driveway of a modern tri-level condo. He clicks OPEN the garage door.

INT. DARK GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

ON KATE

She is fussing with a large red bow, when the automatic garage door begins to OPEN. Kate, startled at first, leaps towards the slowly opening door. She has to stop it from opening any further and decides to grab the door itself.

EXT. MODERN CONDO -- CONTINUOUS

ON BRAD, IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Brad sees his wife desperately trying to pull the garage door back down, to no avail. Kate, holds on to the door with all her might until finally, the door lifts Kate off the ground.

Brad sticks his head out his window to see Kate, suspended by the garage door. Next to her is what she was trying to hide -- A brand new silver BMW Z-4, with a GIANT RED BOW on it.

KATE

(still hanging) Merry Christmas.

Brad can't believe it. He jumps out of the car as Kate safely drops down off the garage door.

BRAD

What the...You said a two seater was totally impractical...

KATE

Surprised?

BRAD

Really surprised.

Brad runs his hand over the car, still more shocked than excited. He opens the door to the car.

BRAD

Wow...I just can't believe it.

KATE

But you...like it, right?

Brad snaps out of his shock.

BRAD
Are you kidding...I love it.

Brad kisses Kate.

BRAD
How am I supposed to top a gift
like this?

KATE
(smiles) Good luck. (beat) I
thought I gave myself enough time
to put the bow on, but *someone* left
work early today. Good to know your
work load is lightening up.

Brad smiles, biting his tongue.

KATE
Well then, I guess you only have
one choice left to make...

BRAD
What?

Kate seductively closes the car door with her hips.

KATE
What are you going to take for a
ride first?

Brad looks at the car, then back at Kate.

INT. BRAD AND KATE'S TOWN HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Brad carries Kate romantically through the kitchen entrance. The kitchen opens up into the living room which has a stunning view of the river through large bay windows. WE SEE the sun setting over the river.

The place is ultra-chic and modern with clean lines and every amenity; Sub Zero fridge, sixty inch plasma TV with surround sound. It's an MTV crib for successful college graduates but not a place to raise a child. Aside from Christmas cards taped to the Sub Zero, you'd never know it was Christmas time in this place...no tree, no lights, no nothing.

Brad kisses his wife, slowly at first, then more passionately. Kate grabs the back of Brad's head as his hands wander to her midsection. Kate unbuttons Brad's shirt as Brad pulls down her skirt...it's on.

Kate's skirt is at her ankles, when her NEXTEL phone BEEPS on the counter next to her. Kate instinctively reaches for it, but Brad grabs her arms, holding them down.

BRAD
Try answering that hands free.

KATE
(playful) Bradley Owen McVie!

Brad pushes the phone aside, and returns to the task at hand.

BRAD
Who's your Daddy? Huh? Tell me...Who's your Daddy?

MALE VOICE FROM PHONE
Katie? You there?! Hello?

KATE
Daddy?

Brad mimes "I'm not here", emphatically to Kate.

ROB (O.C.)
Yeah. Hey could you pick up the phone. I hate this two-way pager thing. What are you doing?

KATE
Oh...um, nothing.

Kate gives Brad an apologetic "What can I do" look then picks up the phone.

KATE
So what's up?

The call having killed the moment, Brad exits the kitchen.

KATE
Daddy, you know we're going up to Tahoe. Brad's planned a surprise for me at the cabin. I think it's great you're hosting a Christmas party, but...Uh-huh. Of course I love you but we can't. Why do you need us there? You sound so upset.

INT. KATE AND BRAD'S BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Brad is sitting up in bed, playing a Grand Theft Auto type game. Kate enters the bedroom with a sheepish look about her.

KATE
(tepid) Honey.

BRAD
Yeah?

KATE
Well, I just talked to Dad and he really, really wanted to see us...

Brad drops the game controller.

BRAD
You didn't. Tell me you didn't.

KATE
It's just for twenty minutes tops, he promised...he knows we have to be up at the cabin before nine.

BRAD
We had this all planned out!

KATE
He was so upset. You should have heard him...it just sounded so important to him.

Kate's face says it all. Brad knows she feels terrible, but he can't hide his displeasure nonetheless. Kate's eyes begin to well with tears. Brad softens immediately.

BRAD
I guess twenty minutes at your Dad's party won't kill us.

KATE
Really?

BRAD
The car bought you a little leeway.

KATE
(relieved) I'm going to get us two glasses of wine and when I come back...I don't want to see you wearing any clothes.

INT. KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate enters the kitchen and pulls out two wine glasses. She dials her mobile phone while pouring the wine.

KATE

Hi Michelle...No, Brad was totally surprised. My Mom never let my Dad have anything fun like that, and see what happened there. (beat) He loved it. At least I think he loved it...You know your son, not the easiest to read sometimes (shares a laugh). Thanks for leaving us the keys to your cabin.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brad still sits in bed playing the violent game, but now he's totally BUCK NAKED. He is having the game of his life running, carjacking and killing like a pro.

The home phone RINGS and RINGS. Fixated on the game, Brad answers reluctantly.

BRAD

Hello.

Brad stiffens upon hearing the female voice on the other end. He tries to continue to play, but is obviously distracted.

BRAD

Hi Cassandra, how are...Rob called? No, we're just stopping by, it's not like...No...Let me just...But I...Gimme a...Aww! Merry Christmas to you too.

On TV WE SEE Brad's player being shot numerous times before being engulfed in flame and falling dead to his knees.

BRAD

(yells) Kate!

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Kate is mid conversation with Brad's mother Michelle.

KATE

Sorry we're going to miss meeting your new boyfriend...

BRAD (O.S)

Kate!

Brad bursts into the kitchen, naked and frazzled.

BRAD
Are you happy? Your Dad called your Mom...Now we're going to BOTH your parents' Christmases!!!

Kate turns ghost white. She tries to cover the phone, but it's too late. The damage is done.

Kate holds the phone out to Brad.

BRAD
(nervous) Who is that?

KATE
It's your Mom.

Reluctantly, Brad takes the phone.

BRAD
Mom, hey. It's just a misund... No, I'm not choosing them...I do appreciate you letting us use the cabin. Okay. I said okay. You promise to leave before nine? We'll meet Ted then. Merry Christmas.

Brad hangs up.

BRAD
Why were you on the phone with my Mom?

KATE
Why did you cave in to MY Mom?

BRAD
How was I supposed to say no, when you already said yes to your Dad?

Our couple sits down, defeated at the kitchen table.

BRAD
I can't believe your Dad called your Mom to gloat. That's such petty bullshit.

The home phone RINGS again. Kate looks at the caller ID

KATE
It's your Dad.

INT. GARAGE -- CHRISTMAS MORNING

About to start their journey, Brad and Kate sit in Kate's spacious AUDI, all loaded up with Christmas gifts...mostly recycled booze from Brad's office. They wear terror on their faces and Santa hats on their heads.

BRAD

It's 87 miles to Lake Tahoe. We've got four Christmases to attend, a full tank of gas, 32 bottles of alcohol, it's dark, and we're wearing Santa hats.

KATE

Hit it.

Brad turns the ignition. NOTHING. The car is dead. Brad turns the key again, but it's no good.

BRAD

Come on, come on!

Brad keeps turning it and turning it in vain.

KATE

(sarcastic) Why don't you turn the key one more time?

Brad obliges. Nothing.

BRAD

Shit.

EXT. BMW Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

Brad, Kate, all the wine, and their luggage are crammed precariously and uncomfortably into Brad's sleek but small Z-4. They drive down the street, heading for the highway.

INT. Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

There is a case of wine wedged behind the driver's seat, at head level. With every bump in the road Brad's head slams repeatedly against the case. Brad is getting really annoyed by the constant banging of his head. He tries to turn around to re-adjust the case but in doing so he swipes the stereo, turning it on to some warm BURL IVES CHRISTMAS MUSIC. Brad's face turns sour at the music, but Kate's eyes light up.

KATE

Remember those Burl Ives Christmas specials.

(MORE)

KATE (cont'd)

Our whole family used to watch those together. And then afterward, Mom and Dad would always read "The Night before Christmas" to Courtney and I.

BRAD

My Dad used to watch those with us too...while getting bombed and going on about how Mom screwed him. Then afterward, he'd consume the milk and cookies my brothers left for Santa and pass out.

Brad notices he's bumming Kate out and changes the subject.

BRAD

How was work this week?

KATE

Not great. I thought I sold this home to a couple, but it turns out they're not moving here after all. It was that great Spanish we saw a few weeks ago.

BRAD

Sorry you lost the sale.

KATE

Yeah well, everything happens for a reason. Can we do a quick drive by?

BRAD

It's twenty minutes out of the way.

KATE

That's twenty less minutes with our families.

Brad whips the car around.

EXT. STREETS OF MID TOWN SACRAMENTO -- MORNING

Brad drives through the same tree lined family neighborhood we saw earlier. A father puts training wheels on his son's new bike, a little girl chases her brother with a remote control car, a family takes a Christmas stroll.

As they turn onto Nicholas Street WE SEE the same Spanish style home with a "For Sale" sign on the lawn.

KATE

Isn't it beautiful?

Just then, an excited COUPLE and their TWO CHILDREN come bounding out of the house. The husband kisses the wife. The attractive brunette realtor who had knocked Kate over follows the family out of the house and puts a "Sold" placard on top of the "For Sale" sign. Kate's eyes lock with the realtor.

Kate's smile turns to a frown.

KATE

It's gone.

BRAD

So? Big deal...we weren't gonna buy that house anyway. It's too big.

KATE

I thought you liked it.

BRAD

I *LIKE* our place.

Kate stares enviously at the happy family.

KATE

Let's go.

EXT. TWO LANE HIGHWAY, WEST SACRAMENTO -- LATER

The Z-4 is traveling down a two lane street in this blue collar section of town. Mini-malls, modest apartment buildings and homes line both sides of the road.

INT. Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

The Z-4 has come up behind a large slow moving DELIVERY TRUCK with dozens of angry, weird and threatening BUMPER STICKERS. Including; "HELTER SKELTER", "FREE MIKE TYSON" "WINE 'EM DIME 'EM 69 'EM", "SATAN'S SANTA!", "MY OTHER RIDE IS YOUR MOM" and a "How's my Driving? Call 1-800..."

INT. LARGE DELIVERY TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

A bearded MOUNTAIN MAN wearing worn flannel and a Santa hat is behind the wheel. You can't see his face through all the facial hair and his leather sided sunglasses.

ZZ TOP'S "TV Dinners" blasts from his crappy radio. His mountain man vibe is undercut by the fact that he's intermittently looking down dialing a MOBILE PHONE.

A Truck loaded up with Christmas trees, is trying to pull in front of the Mountain Man who is distracted by his phone.

INT. Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

Brad sees the Mountain Man up ahead through the truck's giant side view mirror.

BRAD

I didn't know the Una-bomber was out.

KATE

He looks like that guy I saw on the news...you know the guy who killed his family with a chainsaw.

BRAD

Come on, you can't even see the guy's face.

Kate looks more closely through the truck's passenger side mirror. Brad is getting closer to the guy's bumper.

KATE

Be careful Brad, this guy is dangerous.

BRAD

Just because he looks a little scrappy, doesn't mean he's some psycho.

KATE

It's not that. He's dialing a hand held phone!

INT. LARGE DELIVERY TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The Mountain Man finishes dialing, hits send, and looks up just as he's about to hit the Christmas tree truck!

MOUNTAIN MAN

(singing) TV Dinners...SHIT!!!

INT. Z-4 - CONTINUOUS

Brad and Kate see the truck lock its brakes!

KATE

Look out!

SCREECH! The Z-4 come to a halt, sending the case of wine forward into the windshield! CRASH/SPLASH! Brad and Kate get drenched in red wine.

They're on top of the truck's bumper but didn't hit it. The Mountain Man didn't hit the Christmas tree truck either.

BRAD

Are you okay? Jesus, that guy almost killed us.

KATE

You see! You see what happens when you don't use the hands free kit?

BRAD

Honey, are - you - okay?

KATE

I'm fine, my outfit is completely ruined, but I'm fine.

The Mountain Man collects himself and continues on his way.

KATE

Dammit! I didn't get his license plate.

BRAD

I'm just glad you're okay. (licks his lips) Mmmmm...Merlot.

Kate kisses Brad.

KATE

No, that's a cabernet. The merlot is what soaked through our suitcase with all our clothes in it.

She points to the wine drenched suitcase behind them.

EXT. SIMPLE SINGLE STORY HOME -- DAY

Drenched in alcohol, Brad and Kate pull into the driveway along the side of the house. Three late eighties Chevy Suburbans with vanity plates that read, "DALLAS", "DENVER" and "SLAPSHOT" respectively.

INSERT: A classic Norman Rockwell Christmas Painting.

SUPER: "CHRISTMAS I"

EXT. DRIVEWAY OF TOM MCVIE'S HOME - DAY

Still behind the wheel, Brad faces forward, pensive. Through the slats in the backyard gate, kids can be seen running and playing. A CHILD'S EYEBALL stares back through a knot in the fence.

BRAD

Denver's monsters are here.

Brad looks at his WATCH.

BRAD

Alright, here's the plan: We're in, we change, we do the whole family thing. Then, at eleven fifty, you tell me we forgot your mother's gift at home, and we leave by noon.

KATE

Honey, it's alright. I'll survive a meal at your Dad's. Besides, I'm uncomfortable lying to your family.

BRAD

Kate...my Dad and brothers are going to be drinking, their dog stinks, Dad's gonna go off about Mom, and Dallas is gonna make me feel his biceps. I want out of here ASAP. (begging) Please. Dad won't listen to my excuses...it has to come from you.

KATE

(uneasy) Alright...But I think you really overestimate how bad it is here.

The gate to the backyard swings open to reveal a kid, TYSON (7) holding a hockey stick and wearing a goalie mask that's way too big. Little Tyson waves at Brad and Kate.

KATE

Is that Tyson? He looks so cute in his little Hockey outfit.

BRAD

That kid is a menace.

KATE

See, that's what I'm talking about. Tyson is only seven, he's harmless.

SMASH!!! The Z-4's passenger side mirror explodes into shards of glass, jolting Brad and Kate inside.

They jump out of the car to observe a hockey puck wedged in where the side mirror used to be.

BRAD

Dammit Tyson! Aunt Katie just got me this car! Why would you hit it?!

TYSON

I was aiming for you, Uncle Brad.

BRAD

Then you stink, Tyson! You missed by four feet!?

MANLY VOICE (O.C.)

Merry Christmas kids!

The voice belongs to Brad's dad, TOM McVie (late 50's). He's emerged from the porch wearing a wife-beater tank top and sweat pants. Tom is all grizzled muscle and a deep gravelly voice. A "Red Wings" cap covers his short silver hair.

BRAD

Hey Dad.

KATE

Merry Christmas Tom.

Tyson approaches Kate.

TYSON

You smell like the clown that came to my birthday.

Tyson angrily starts banging his hockey stick against the car's license plate, jarring it loose.

TOM

Tyson! Don't hit your Uncle's toy car with your stick! You'll ruin it.

BRAD

Don't worry, Dad. I'm sure we're up to our deductible by now.

TOM

I was talking about the hockey stick. He just got it for Christmas.

KATE

I know, it was from us.

Tyson gives the license another WHACK! Tom grabs a nearby garden hose and makes like he's going to turn the nozzle.

TOM

(yells) You want the hose?!

Tyson bolts through a hole in the fence. Tom sets down the hose, staring curiously at Brad's new car.

BRAD

Kate went all out for me this year.

TOM

Is it a real car?

KATE

(excited) It's a new Z-4 Tom. BMW makes them.

TOM

Is that why you don't come around on Christmas? You're too busy gallivanting around town in your little sports car like a couple of fancy people? Huh?

Kate cringes at "fancy people" but an oblivious Tom gives his son and daughter-in-law hearty hugs and ruffles their hair.

KATE

Careful. We're covered in wine.

TOM

No worries, Dollface. It'll go with the cheese on my shirt. Let's get you two a change of clothes.

INT. SIMPLE SINGLE STORY HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

The three enter a LIVING ROOM that consists of a giant screen TV, two dingy couches, and a ghetto Christmas tree decorated with popcorn string. At the base of the tree sits the residue of opened Christmas gifts: crumpled newspaper and tin foil.

TOM

We already did the gifts this morning. Your brothers are in the back with the kids and Santa.

As they get further into the house, Brad stumbles over a huge pile of UNOPENED MAIL, just under the mail slot.

TOM

Watch out for the mail there.

Brad picks up what looks like a credit card bill.

BRAD

This was postmarked in October.

TOM

I'll get to it. You know your Mother used to handle all that.

BRAD

Eighteen years ago.

TOM

I still don't like doing all that organizational stuff.

BRAD

Yeah Dad, mail can be a real bitch.

TOM

So could your Mother.

Brad shakes his head.

DENVER (O.C.)

Well look who made it for Christmas!

They turn to see a frenetic wave of family charging into the front room, through the sliding door.

Brad's stocky brother, DENVER(33) leads the charge with a bottle of Moosehead in one hand, and his squirming four-year-old, TYLER (4), in the other.

BRAD

Denver, how's it going? Hey there Tyler, what's up?

TYLER

Chicken butt.

Denver's other two sons JACKSON (6) and Tyson (still in hockey helmet) rush in and Tyson starts chasing Jackson around the couch.

Weaving through the family chaos is an untrained skittish crotch-sniffing Irish Setter, JEROME.

KATE
(to kids) Hey guys.

No response from the kids. They keep running around.

Brad's other brother DALLAS(40) comes right at Brad with an open beer. He wears a sleeveless green T-shirt, red sweat bottoms and a mesh "Reno" baseball cap. He's got big arms and a barrel chest, but he's not that lean. Imagine a white Neville brother. He gives Brad a shoulder hug.

BRAD
Hey Dallas. You certainly look...Christmassy.

DALLAS
Good to see you little Bro.

Brad's eight month pregnant sister-in-law, Denver's wife SUSAN (33), emerges from the backyard. She wears a maternity-sized Bon Jovi T-shirt and carries a BABY on her arm.

SUSAN
Hey you two! Long time no see.
Merry Christmas.

KATE
Wow, Susan. Oh my god, is that Cammi? She's soo adorable!

SUSAN
First girl in the family and the last. Just found out (points to belly) this one's gonna be a boy.

DENVER
Another boy! Boo-yah!

Just then a middle-aged MAN IN A SANTA SUIT pokes his head in the front room.

SANTA
Tyler, Tyson, Jackson...I have more presents for you in the backyard!

The kids CHEER in unison and bolt for the backyard as Jerome gives chase.

BRAD
You guys hired a Santa?

TOM

No, that's Jeff Jones...an old friend that recently moved into the neighborhood. The kids love him.

KATE

That's so sweet.

DENVER

We're thinking of naming the next kid after you, Brad.

DALLAS

You're gonna name him Pussy Boy? Come on. What about me? Dallas is a great name.

DENVER

Nope. No more city names.

KATE

Why wasn't Brad named after a city?

Brad stiffens uncomfortably.

TOM

(confused) Orlando's not a city?

KATE

What? Who's Orlando?

TOM

(points to Brad) He's Orlando. You know, his middle name. He was born in Orlando.

KATE

But...his middle name's Owen.

There is a long awkward pause.

BRAD

Well, Owen's what I go by...so technically...

TOM

Owen? Owen?! (bad Scottish accent)
Owen was the dog's name!

Everyone LAUGHS except Kate and Brad.

KATE

Brad? What the hell?

BRAD

I hate that name, Wouldn't you?!
It's so embarrassing. Orlando?

DALLAS

Wouldn't want to embarrass the
Stanford boy.

BRAD

Shut up, Dallas.

Kate looks at Brad somewhere between bewildered and betrayed.

DENVER

You're busted Orlando! And I
thought I had secrets from my wife.

Susan gives her husband a smack upside the head.

TOM

Alright, alright. That's enough.
Let's get the winos some clean
clothes. Susan, you've got an
outfit Kate can borrow, right?
Brad, I've only got one clean thing
for you to wear.

Brad gives his father a look.

TOM

Don't worry, it's perfect.

INT. MCVIE BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kate puts on the clothes she was given when she notices
something peculiar. Next to the toilet is a MEN'S URINAL.

INT. HALLWAY OF MCVIE HOME -- LATER

Brad emerges from the bedroom door wearing an "Orlando,
Florida" tourist T-shirt and jeans.

Across the hall, Kate emerges from the bathroom in her new
outfit...a maternity dress with bees on it.

BRAD

There's an image I could do
without.

KATE

Like you should talk...Hey, what do
you mean by that?

BRAD

I just meant it's not flattering. I didn't mean...I didn't even think...I'm gonna stop talking now.

INT. FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brad and Kate walk into the front room to see a Grand Theft Auto type game playing on the big screen. The carnage on the screen is horrifying. Little Tyson is shooting cops and firemen with a sniper rifle and then burning them with a flame-thrower as they scream.

KATE

(shocked) Oh - my - god. (beat)
Tyson, do your parents know you have this game?

TYSON

They got it for me for Christmas.
(beat, to game) Burn Cop!

KATE

Your brother got this for a seven year old?

Brad continues to stare at the game.

KATE

(whispers) This isn't okay for kids. No wonder he's so violent. Can you imagine what this must do to his psyche? (beat) Brad?

BRAD

(To Tyson) Dude, use the chainsaw.

TOM (O.C.)

Bradley! Chore!

Brad and Kate turn to see Tom holding a Direct TV satellite dish, still in its box.

BRAD

(re: Direct TV) Good, you got our gift.

TOM

It's great, but you're gonna have to teach me how to work it.

KATE

We scheduled the installation for next Tuesday. They come out and show you how everything works...

TOM

Not in this family Kate. No sense spending the extra time and money. No, the boys and I will put it up today.

BRAD

Dad, you really should let a professional instal...

TOM

Shut it, Sally. I'm not gonna waste a day waiting for some lackey to show up. You and your brothers are on that roof in five minutes!

Tom walks into the backyard. Brad checks his watch again.

BRAD

I'm sorry...we're only thirty minutes from getting out of here.

KATE

I'm okay, really. Go hang out with your brothers Orlando.

EXT. ROOF OF TOM'S HOUSE -- LATER

Brad is on the edge of the roof, trying to bolt down the SATELLITE DISH while Tom, Denver and Dallas supervise over his shoulder. They are directly over a skylight that looks down into the kitchen below.

The men drink Moosehead, except Brad who has a bottled water.

BRAD

Nice going assholes. I'm in the doghouse now.

Brad holds his hand out for a screwdriver in Dallas' hand.

DENVER

We weren't the ones lying to your wife. Talk to the man in the mirror.

DALLAS

That's why I don't have a wife, I don't want to be forced to lie all the time.

TOM

You don't have a wife because you spend all your disposable income on Black Jack in Reno, and buying floozies drinks at Tequila Willies.

DALLAS

Captain of my own destiny.

BRAD

Hey Captain, you gonna sit there or hand me the damn screwdriver?

Dallas finally hands him the tool while eyeing the Z-4 in the driveway.

DALLAS

How come Kate got you this little sports car. I thought you two were thinking about having kids?

This has obviously been upsetting Brad. He doesn't have an answer.

BRAD

Who knows what woman want.

DENVER

(points to Dallas) Not him.

Denver's youngest boy, Tyler, YELLS up from the backyard.

TYLER

Grandpa! Give me an airplane ride?

TOM

Not now Tyler. Grandpa's busy.

TYLER

Grandma's boyfriend Ted gives me airplane rides whenever I want!

TOM

Grandma's boyfriend is a Jackass!

Tyler runs off, upset.

DENVER

Dad, take it easy. It's hard enough explaining why we don't see Grandma until the day after Christmas.

TOM

Well he is a jackass. Goddamn Hippie.

BRAD

And you wonder why I haven't had kids yet.

DENVER

Yeah, Dad it's time to let that shit go. First of all, you've never met Ted. Second, Ted makes Mom happy. You know Tyson asked me the other day if I'm gonna hate Susan as much as Grandpa hates Grandma?

TOM

If she leaves you high and dry after thirty years of marriage, I'm sure you will.

BRAD

Let's clarify...Mom didn't just up and leave you. She told you she thought you loved coaching high school hockey more than her and do you remember what you said?

TOM

"But honey I love you more than I love coaching baseball". (beat) Your mother never could take a joke.

BRAD

That would be a funny joke, except it was true.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Kate sits at the bar with Susan who holds Cammi.

SUSAN

Sure I miss my life before I was a mom. Denver and I used to go to Tasty Angus for dinner every Friday night and the dirt bike races every Saturday.

(MORE)

SUSAN (cont'd)

But the luxuries of life are the first things to go when you become a parent...Hell the last time I was at Tasty Angus, Denver and Dallas were only there to mess with the sign.

KATE

But it's worth it, right?

Jackson enters the kitchen from the backyard.

JACKSON

Mommy, Tyson peed on the dog again and now no one can pet him.

SUSAN

You tell Tyson to wash Jerome right this instant or no lunch!

SUSAN

What was your question again?

KATE

Oh, nothing. Cammi is so precious. Can I hold her?

SUSAN

Sure.

Susan holds out a smiling Cammi. Kate moves to take her.

KATE

Hey there cutie...

PLUNK! Cammi slips through Kate's hands, and hits the floor with a THUD! Kate freaks.

KATE

Oh my God, Oh my God, Oh my God! Is she okay? I'm so sorry!!!

Cammi continues to suck her thumb, obviously unharmed.

KATE

I'm sorry...I...

SUSAN

She's fine, she's a McVie. (beat) Maybe I'll just hang onto her though.

EXT. ROOF OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Brad and his brothers continue working on the dish. From their vantage point, they can see the entire backyard. The kids are playing and Tom is throwing meat on the grill.

Dallas flexes his bulky arm.

DALLAS
(to Brad) Feel that.

BRAD
I'm not touching that thing.

Brad checks his watch as a dejected Dallas lowers his arm. He turns toward his Dad, working the grill.

BRAD
(sniffing) Is that your garlic
sauce...man I forgot how much I
loved that stuff.

DALLAS
Remember how sick you got last time
you pigged out on it?

BRAD
That grass never grew back the same
color.

In the background Tyson is chasing Jerome with the hose.

BRAD
So you guys have met Mom's new
boyfriend, huh?

DENVER
Great guy.

DALLAS
Mom loves him. He treats her good.
Dad's the only one who's not taking
it well.

BRAD
Yeah, no shit.

TYSON (O.C.)
Uncle Brad!

Brad sees Tyson below him holding the WATER HOSE.

TYSON
Guess what?

BRAD
Chicken Butt?

TYSON
No. I'm squirting you, stupid!

Tyson sprays Brad with the hose, soaking him in the icy air.

BRAD
Dammit Tyson! It's kids like you
that keep people like me from
having children!

Tyson runs off, LAUGHING.

DENVER
You know better boy! Don't make me
come down there!

DALLAS
You're gonna have to start beating
your kids.

DENVER
(sighs) I know.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Susan is putting marshmallow spread on the Rice Krispy Treats and somehow breast feeding simultaneously. Kate is clearly uncomfortable, but tries to pretend she's not.

KATE
Wow...now that's what I call
multitasking.

Cammi starts CRYING. Kate, feeling useless, wants to help.

SUSAN
It's okay Cammi...shhhh.

KATE
Here let me take that.

Kate reaches for the Rice Krispy pan, but Susan is not ready. Kate knocks the tray to the floor with a LOUD CRASH.

KATE
I'm so sorry, I don't know what's
gotten into me today...

Cammi CRIES harder now as Kate wipes frosting from the floor.

SUSAN
(perturbed) Don't worry about it.

EXT. ROOF OF HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Denver is already off the roof as Brad and Dallas edge towards the ladder. Brad nervously checks his watch again.

DALLAS
You check that watch one more time,
I'm going to shove it up your ass.

BRAD
Sorry.

DALLAS
I know you got three Christmases
left. You probably want to get out
of here early right?

BRAD
I guess I'm being pretty obvious.

DALLAS
Dude, I'm your bro...let's make an
excuse and get you out of here. You
want me to dislocate my nose? I
could bleed all over the food, the
house, Kate. That'd clear a room
pretty fast. Let me be your wing
man on this.

BRAD
We still think alike...(looks
around) No need though, I already
have Kate saying we forgot a gift
at home at Noon.

DALLAS
(laughs with Brad) Good one, that
sounds less painful.

BRAD
I know I don't need to say this...

DALLAS
Don't worry. Your secrets are safe
with me.

BRAD

Thanks. (Joking) I wouldn't want to have to kick your ass.

Brad realizes his mistake just as the words leave his mouth. Dallas whips around, flexing both arms. He has a look in his eye Brad recognizes from their childhood.

DALLAS

You think you're finally big enough to be king of the mountain?

BRAD

Dude...don't.

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Directly behind Kate and Susan is a window looking over the driveway where the Z-4 is parked.

Kate looks through the skylight, but doesn't see anyone. She looks out the window, but only sees Denver next to the car.

KATE

Are Dallas and Brad still on the roof?

Through the window we see Brad's body fall off the roof and land on top of the Z-4 with a THUD, denting the hood and cracking the windshield.

SUSAN

Dallas is.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Brad lays on the couch as Denver and Kate stand over him.

KATE

Are you sure you're okay?

DENVER

He's fine.

BRAD

I'm hurting...and the car....

DENVER

Sack up!

DALLAS

Sorry about that, I really thought you were gonna be stronger.

BRAD
But you hit me with pliers.

TOM (O.C.)
Lunch is served!

Tom enters the front room holding heaping plates of barbecued meat. The aroma of marinated beef fills the room.

Brad nudges Kate and points to his watch...almost Noon. He nudges her again. Kate's uncomfortable, but she promised.

KATE
Oh my god. Brad, we have to go. We forgot Mom's gift at the house. We're gonna have to go back and get it, before we see her.

Dallas points at Kate.

DALLAS
That's a lie!

Kate turns ghost white.

KATE
What? No.

DALLAS
Brad told me all about your plan to duck out early.

KATE
Brad!? What are you doing?

BRAD
Dallas, I thought we were bonding!

Dallas just LAUGHS at his little brother.

TOM
What lie?

DALLAS
Brad made up a lie to leave early. He didn't even have the guts to lie himself, he tried to have Kate do it for him.

KATE
I am so embarrassed.

TOM

(to Brad) You know, I've just about had it with you, hotshot. You want away from your Dad and brothers, you got it.

INT. DINING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Tom, Kate, Dallas, Denver, Susan (holding Cammi) and Santa/Jeff sit at the dinner table. Brad is absent. Barbecued ribs and steak are piled high next to a stack of paper plates and a roll of paper towels.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL, BRAD, demoted to the kids table. He sits awkwardly in a little chair between Tyson and Tyler.

TYSON

(To Brad) You should've gotten the hose.

TOM

Kids, thank Je...Santa again for the great gifts you got.

The kids spit their "Thank you's" while chewing.

SANTA/JEFF

Don't mention it, that's what Santa is for.

DENVER

Play Station 2, a remote controlled truck, and a bike? It's more than we got them. This is a Christmas we won't soon forget.

SANTA/JEFF

I just love kids (hearty laugh). So Dallas, why no lady friend on your arm this Christmas?

DALLAS

Lady friends tend to take a visit with the family on Christmas as a sign of commitment...and commitment is no friend of mine, Santa.

SANTA/JEFF

What about kids?

DALLAS

I took care of that. I got a vasectomy years ago.

SANTA/JEFF

You're that sure?

SUSAN

(rolls her eyes) He wasn't sure. He got snipped a year after his junior college sweetheart dumped him.

TOM

You don't have to be one of Brad's therapists to figure that one out.

DALLAS

I got a vasectomy because I didn't want the responsibility of having kids.

TOM

I'm sick and tired of hearing that. Raising kids isn't that hard.

SUSAN

Excuse me?!

Cammi spits up in Denver's lap as he tries to eat.

DENVER

That's cause Mom did all the work.

TOM

Next topic.

SANTA/JEFF

(To Kate and Brad) What about you two? Are children in your future?

BRAD

Next topic.

SANTA/JEFF

Oh...looks like Santa hit a nerve.

TYSON

Brad said he's not gonna have kids because I'm so bad.

BRAD

No...I didn't.

TYSON

Yes you did.

DENVER

Yes you did Brad, I was right there. Don't lie to my children.

TYSON

You're a liar.

JACKSON

(points) Liar liar liar!

BRAD

No...I didn't mean it that way. I meant that I didn't want Kate to see you behaving so badly...

KATE

Brad?!

TYSON

You don't like me, Auntie Katie?

KATE

No, Tyson I like you very much.

SUSAN

(At Kate) How dare you judge my children!

RING, RING. It's Brad's mobile phone. The annoyed crowd now focuses on Brad. He tries to scoot away from the table and answer his phone, but instead falls backwards. Finally, he answers the phone, still on his back.

BRAD

Hi...can you hold on a minute?

He picks himself up to find a table full of angry faces staring back at him.

BRAD

I have to take this...it's a client.

Kate stares at Brad in disbelief.

BRAD

They're...Jewish.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Standing over the pile of unopened mail, Brad talks on his phone in a hushed voice.

BRAD

You know what...I don't know if this is the best idea. With the way things are going with my wife right now, I don't know. Shelly, I'm not saying that it's over, calm down...

INT. DINING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Jeff Jones joyfully continues his duties as Santa. The children climb on his lap, tug on his beard and poke his belly. Jeff laughs a robust Santa laugh. A small semblance of Christmas normalcy has reared its head.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

BRAD

...I'm sorry, I can't.

Brad hangs up and looks down, disappointed. When he focuses his eyes, he notices a piece of mail marked "urgent" from the City of Sacramento which he opens immediately.

BRAD'S POV

"In accordance with **MEGAN'S LAW**, the city is required to inform you that a **CONVICTED CHILD MOLESTER --- JEFF JONES** has moved into **841 47th Street...KNOWN FOR DRUGGING HIS VICTIMS...**

BRAD (O.S.)

841 47th? That's just down the street...

There's a photo of Jeff, his only distinctive feature is a scar on his chin.

Brad peers around the hallway TO SEE the children's table where "Santa" now sits with Tyler on his lap. His fake Santa beard covers most of his face.

Santa has a LARGE PILL in his hand and readies it for Tyler's mouth.

TYLER

We love you Santa.

JEFF

And Santa loves you...so very much. Now open up.

Tyler opens his mouth, and sticks out his tongue. Jeff makes a swirling motion with his hand like a choo-choo going into the tunnel. He's about to put the pill on Tyler's tongue...

Without warning Brad flies into frame, TACKLING SANTA HARD, SMASHING him against the back wall! Jeff is flat on his back as Brad jumps on him straddling his chest. Brad swings wildly PUNCHING Jeff in the face. The kids begin to scream.

KATE

Brad!!! What are you doing?!?

JACKSON

Why? Why is he hurting Santa?

DENVER

You crazy son of a bitch!!!

Susan screams. Denver, Dallas and Tom jump up.

BRAD

This isn't Santa. This is Jeff Jones...(PUNCH!)

TOM

Jesus Christ Brad! Get off of him!

BRAD

You don't understand...he's a child molester! He was giving them drugs!

Tom has reached Brad and pulls him off using a sleeper hold. Jeff bleeds from the face and is barely conscious.

TOM

You idiot! J-E-F-F Jones was the guy who used to live down the block before we took care of him.

Tom points out the window. A block down WE SEE a lot with a house burned down and only a brick fireplace remaining.

TOM

This is G-E-O-F-F Jones!

SUSAN

He was giving Tyler his vitamin!

BRAD

You mean...

Brad removes the Santa beard and hat from GEOFF Jones' face. He looks nothing like the man in the photo, and no scar.

BRAD

Oh Shit.

The kids see Geoff Jones without the hat and beard.

JACKSON

You're not Santa?

TYSON

Santa's just a neighbor in a suit?

GEOFF

(weak) I...I'm sorry.

The kids begin to cry.

TYLER

There is no Santa Claus?

DENVER

(To Brad) Way to go douche bag.

The kids rush to Susan's leg.

BRAD

Come on, it was an honest mistake.

SUSAN

It's a good thing you two don't have children...look what you've done to mine! Just go and try not to ruin anyone else's Christmas!

TOM

Except your Mom's.

EXT. LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PART OF TOWN -- DAY

Kate is at the wheel, perturbed and driving fast. They are way behind schedule.

Kate throws the car into various gears accelerating and downshifting. Kate is getting a real rush behind the wheel of this fun to drive sports car.

Brad has the uneasy look of a backseat driver whose wife is justifiably pissed off.

BRAD

Honey? I know we're late...

As Kate weaves faster in and out of traffic, Brad's grip tightens on the upholstery.

BRAD

It's just...I don't want to be early to my funeral.

Kate eases off the gas, returning to a reasonable speed.

KATE

I can see why you wanted this car.

BRAD

(queasy) Thanks for slowing down.

Lying next to his wallet and keys in the center console, Brad's cell phone RINGS, the display reading "SHELLY". Kate, already annoyed, glances at the phone with disgust.

Brad hurriedly shoves the call into voicemail.

BRAD

Sorry...clients.

KATE

We can't be alone two minutes without clients calling...

Up ahead, Kate spots the Mountain Man's truck roughly five hundred yards away.

KATE

(points) Look! It's that guy!
(beat) And he's on the phone again!

Katie's eyes narrow with anger as she drops the car into third and punches the gas! The car leaps forward.

BRAD

Holy shit, what are you doing?!

They pass cars left and right, like an Indy car racer.

KATE

I'm gonna catch up to this asshole...He got one of those "how's my driving" stickers...I'm calling the number.

Traffic is getting thicker. Approaching ninety miles per hour, Kate's swerving is scaring Brad as well as considerably adding to his nausea.

BRAD

Your driving, (burp) garlic sauce.

KATE
Serves you right. Just get the
phone number.

They're behind the truck, Kate accelerates.

KATE
Can you read it?

BRAD
(squints) A little closer...it's 1-
800...

The audience can now clearly read the bumper sticker.

BRAD
(flat) EAT-SHIT.

THEN, SIRENS and LIGHTS blare behind them.

KATE
Damn! The fuzz.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

TIGHT ON: a "Don't Drink and Drive" bumper sticker. A heavy-set police OFFICER with a double chin and moustache gets out of his cruiser.

Kate sits on the shoulder of the road, right in front of a "TASTY AN US" steak house. Brad holds back a BURP.

KATE
Brad, just be quiet. I can talk my
way out of a ticket.

The officer is now at Kate's window.

KATE
Officer, that man ahead of us
was...

OFFICER
Ma'am, just hold on. Do you know
how fast...(smells the car) Jesus
Christ! How much have you been
drinking?

KATE
I haven't been drinking at all...

A nauseated Brad vomits right out the passenger side window.

KATE

He may have had a light beer.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY SHOULDER IN FRONT OF "TASTY AN US" SIGN

An embarrassed Kate is being given a field sobriety test on the shoulder of the highway as everyone eating in the TASTY AN US looks on

MONTAGE:

We see Kate breathing into a Breathalyzer.

- Extending her arms and touching her nose.
- Walking a straight line.
- Reciting the alphabet backwards, she keeps flubbing.
- Touching her nose while standing on one leg.
- Giving a blood sample.
- Touching her nose while HOPPING on one leg, until finally FALLING ON HER ASS. Everyone in the TASTY AN US laughs.

INT. Z-4 -- LATER

Kate drives through this lavish neighborhood that screams of old money. A private driveway leads to each home.

Kate puts on her blinker and slows down, approaching their destination. Brad shovels chewing gum into his mouth, nervously looking at his watch.

KATE

We wouldn't be so late if you hadn't sold me out at your Dad's.

BRAD

Getting us pulled over didn't exactly help either.

Brad and Kate stare at each other, tempers starting to flare.

KATE

After what you've done to the car, I'm surprised we didn't get another ticket, because I don't think this thing is even street legal!

Kate pulls off to the side of the road, a hundred feet before the driveway to her Grandparent's regal home.

KATE

This is crazy. We can't let our families get us this riled up.

BRAD

Once we're at the cabin alone everything will be great.

Kate takes a long deep breath.

KATE

Let's go now.

BRAD

What?

KATE

I'm serious. No one knows we're here. Let's just keep on driving.

BRAD

Say no more. No one's seen us. We'll say the car got a flat...

KATE

Shit!

BRAD

What?

Brad sees what Kate is reacting to: a villainous silhouette of a FEMALE FIGURE in the upstairs bedroom, reminiscent of Norman Bates' mother, staring right at them.

KATE

Mother.

INSERT: Another Classic Rockwell Christmas Painting

SUPER: "Christmas II"

EXT. GRANDPARENT'S HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

Our disheveled couple pulls up to the house. Christmas lights line every angle of the home and a beautifully decorated tree is displayed through the front window.

As they exit the car, we see the silhouette dart-waddle from the bedroom to greet our couple.

KATE

Is she ever planning on moving out?

BRAD

Let's say hi, tell them we're behind schedule and leave.

KATE

I'm sure that will work, honey.

EXT. GRANDPARENT'S PORCH -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate and Brad stand at the front door when it swings wide to reveal -- Kate's mom, CASSANDRA BRAUN-KINGSBERRY (53), with a bottle of wine in one hand and glass in the other. She wears a matronly blue semi-formal dress. She could be a cute older version of Kate (plus 15 pounds), but instead looks like a woman that's been clinically depressed for a decade.

As soon as Cassandra sees her daughter in the maternity dress, the wine glass drops from her hand.

CASSANDRA

Oh my god! My baby...

KATE

Oh shit...No. Mom, I'm not pregnant, I borrowed this at the last Christmas.

Cassandra's excitement is replaced with a disappointed frown.

CASSANDRA

Oh...Well. Merry Christmas my little DINKS.

KATE

Mom!

BRAD

Dinks?

KATE

Double Income No Kids.

Brad shakes his head...It's started already. Kate peeks around her mother's shoulder, spotting other dressed up RELATIVES in the LIVING ROOM.

KATE

Why are Aunt Mary and Uncle Neil here? Why is everyone dressed up?

CASSANDRA

It's been so long since we've seen you on Christmas, we decided to make an event out of it. Your sister's coming too!

KATE

Courtney's coming? Mom, I told you we were just going to stop by.

CASSANDRA

Nonsense. Everyone wants to see you two...but not looking like that. Let's get you cleaned up before your Grandfather's toast.

Cassandra takes Kate by the arm and pulls her into the house, but Brad just stands on the porch.

CASSANDRA

Are you gonna come in Brad? This isn't your wedding...everybody's invited.

Brad swallows the dig and promptly enters.

INT. STAIRWAY OF HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

Cassandra leads the couple up the stairway of the opulent home.

CASSANDRA

I'm sure your sister will have an outfit you can borrow, but she's still a half hour away so you'll have to borrow one of mine until then. Brad, I'll get you one of Dick's suits.

BRAD

(whispers to Kate) Tell her we're running late.

CASSANDRA

And Courtney says she has a big surprise for all of us, so don't even bother with an excuse to leave early until she gets here.

BRAD

We would never...

CASSANDRA

You know, I had a husband who used to do that all the time...Make up excuses and lies so he could do whatever he wanted. But, that's just what lawyers do, right Brad?

BRAD

I plead the fifth.

INT. CASSANDRA'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Kate checks herself out in a full length mirror, now wearing the exact same dress Cassandra wears.

CASSANDRA

It looks great on you...we look like twins! (beat) You know twins run in our side of the family.

KATE

Can you cool it for like eleven seconds on the "kids" thing. And what was that with Brad back there?

CASSANDRA

I was only kidding him.

KATE

Well your timing stinks.

Kate flops onto the canopy bed behind her. A concerned Cassandra sits next to her.

CASSANDRA

Honey, what's the matter?

KATE

Well...I'm having a hard time reading Brad lately. I don't see him as much, he's always working late at the office, and he's been really secretive. I don't know. I'm not sure what's going on in his head...if he's ready to start a family or if he really wants one at all. He says he does, but you should have seen him this morning with his brothers.

Cassandra has a very concerned and serious look on her face. She puts her hands on Kate's lap.

CASSANDRA

It never feels like the "right time" to start a family...Your father was the same way before I got pregnant with you.

KATE

I guess what I'm asking is...Did Dad give you any signs before things started to go south?

Uncomfortable, Cassandra heads over to her night stand.

CASSANDRA

Oh, honey...Is that what this is about? The only thing Brad has in common with your father, is that they're both divorce lawyers. (beat) That and they both came from lower-middle income households.

KATE

Why do you do that? I'm asking you if I should be concerned about my marriage, and you ignore me by insulting Brad. If there's a problem in my marriage, I don't want to ignore it Mom. I want my marriage to last.

Cassandra has opened a bottle of pills and shakes two into her palm and downs them with a glass of wine.

KATE

Are you taking a Xanax?

CASSANDRA

Two...it's the holidays.

KATE

Mom, are you gonna answer my question?

CASSANDRA

I'm sure you don't have anything to worry about. Is Brad complaining?

KNOCK KNOCK. Brad pokes his head in the room, holding a suit bag. From his POV he can only see Kate.

BRAD

This suit smells like it crawled
out of a coffin. Does your Mom have
anything else, anything at all?

Cassandra enters Brad's frame of vision. She stares at him in
his T-shirt and dirty jeans.

CASSANDRA

Not up to the McVie high standards
of dress is it?

Brad sees Mother and Daughter, in matching outfits, staring
at him intently. It's a visually jarring moment.

BRAD

That's not what I was saying...

WE HEAR Brad's cell phone RING. Brad looks at his phone. It's
"Shelly" again. He sends the call into voice mail.

KATE

Who keeps calling?

BRAD

Just a client.

CASSANDRA

A client, on Christmas?

BRAD

Yes Cassandra. A client on
Christmas.

CASSANDRA

You can't talk to a client in front
of your wife and mother-in-law? (to
Kate) Are these the kind of secrets
you're talking about, honey?

KATE

Mom!

Brad looks at Kate upset. What has she told her Mom? Shaking
it off, Brad just wants out of that room.

BRAD

This should be fine. I'll lose the
cravat, slip into it...yeah, okay.

He slips behind the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" plays softly in the background. Mistletoe, a roaring GAS FIRE, and a ceiling high Douglas Fir, with a pile of gifts at its base. At first glance it has everything a Christmas should, but it feels hollow and cold.

Standing at the mantle, looking every bit the patriarch of the family is DICK BRAUN(78). He has a pipe in his mouth and a Brandy in hand. Moving as quick as she can with a full beverage tray, GRANDMA EVA (76) serves the guests.

Kate's AUNT MARY (43) and her husband NEIL (57) sit on a burbury couch sipping wine. Mary has a face lift slightly too tight, but is an attractive woman. Neil is a balding, schluby man clearly in his fifties.

DICK

Ahhh...It seems our ghosts of
Christmas past have arrived.

Everyone turns to see Kate and Brad descend down the stairs. Brad wears a crested blue blazer with gold trim and matching slacks. He is clearly uncomfortable.

An oil painting of Dick rests above the mantle. In it, Dick wears the very same yachting outfit.

Kate doesn't look much better, in her mother's dress.

GRANDMA EVA

(clapping) The DINKS are here! The
DINKS are here!

KATE

Hi Grandma, Grandpa. Merry
Christmas everyone.

Everyone replies with a droll, "Merry Christmas".

DICK

Smashing you two, smashing. Brad,
there's a spiffy cravat that goes
with that, but I'm glad you're in
time for my annual Christmas toast.

AUDIBLE SIGHS throughout the room.

BRAD

(under breath) I feel bathed in the
love of your family.

KATE

Welcome to my big fat WASP
Christmas.

Dick loudly clears his throat. All eyes are again on him.

DICK

Well it's been another year for the Braun clan and I'm proud to report that aside from the untimely death of my underachieving brother Steinhardt, it was a dandy. (long awkward pause) My lovely wife, Eva and I recently celebrated sixty years of marriage. That's the big SIX-0 folks! You don't see that every day. Hmm, mmm? (beat) Our youngest daughter, Mary, and her husband Neil continue...on and are in...good health. That they've stayed together this long is a testament to the institution of marriage. And in the face of Neil's recent financial troubles, it's practically a miracle.

Neil and Mary slam their drinks simultaneously.

DICK

And to my eldest daughter Cassandra, how glorious that older parents should be so fortunate to see their daughter's smiling face every day, day after day, and so on. (beat) I'm sure this is the year you'll get back on your own feet, pumpkin.

Cassandra gulps down what's left of her champagne.

DICK

In fact, I'd like to use this opportunity to thank all the women of the Braun family. You've been the glue that's held us together from the beginning. And us men shouldn't forget it...I'm talking to you Brad! You've got a winner in our little Katie and if you need more proof, look no further than this room to see the kind of wife and mother she'll be in the future.

Kate turns bright red.

KATE
(whispers) Brad, no...

Brad eyes Kate then Cassandra then Eva. Eva is turning a flute upside down as champagne pours down her chin.

DICK
Without these strong women...

EVA
(shaking her empty glass) I want some more.

DICK
Dammit woman! Can I get through one toast without your infernal interruptions!?

A very uncomfortable silence ensues. Then, DING DONG!

CASSANDRA
Thank God. This is it...everyone gather around. Courtney's arrived!

Cassandra opens the door, revealing COURTNEY (22). She looks and sounds like the spoiled slut version of Kate. Next to her is an attractive olive skinned euro-stud with dark flowing hair. This is ARNAUD (34) (pronounced R-NO).

COURTNEY
Merry Christmas everybody!

Neil whispers in Mary's ear, "Who is that guy?"

COURTNEY
Everyone, I'd like you to meet Arnaud Peugeot...my husband!

CASSANDRA
Husband?

BRAD
(whisper) Arnaud Peugeot?

Arnaud's French accent is thick.

ARNAUD
The pleasure of meeting Courtney's family is all mine.

COURTNEY

We met in Cabo two weeks ago, and Arnaud said he just couldn't live without me! He proposed right there...Isn't he to die for?

DICK

Four hundred thousand Americans in two world wars already did.

COURTNEY

Grandpa!

ARNAUD

Is okay, you know. Where would us French be without you, the Americans? My family would never have been so successful in the automobile industry without you.

DICK

Peugeot, as in the car company?

ARNAUD

Yes, is true. That is my family.

Courtney grabs Arnaud tight.

COURTNEY

That's right Grandpa. He's rich, he's gorgeous...(at Kate) AND WE'RE going to give you the most beautiful grandchildren.

Tears stream down Cassandra's face as she hugs Courtney.

DICK

Here Here! To the newest member of our family Arnaud Peugeot and his lovely bride.

Everyone raises their glasses to drink, but no one has any booze left. They all take pretend sips.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- LATER

The annoying TICK TOCK of a grandfather clock is audible as Dick puts his arms around Arnaud and Brad.

DICK

(To Arnaud) A car tycoon huh?

ARNAUD

What can I say, I am very fortunate to come from such a family.

DICK

And Brad...Rob's number one man at the firm! That Rob Kingsberry is one shrewd businessman. A class act too. Cassandra was a fool to let him get away.

BRAD

You have no idea.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Courtney tosses her dress on the bed in front of Kate.

COURTNEY

Right away, Arnaud and I connected on the deepest of levels. Did you see his body?

KATE

Yeah, he seems like a real catch. Congratulations Courtney. I'm glad you're happy.

Kate is out of her dress and starts to put on her sister's.

COURTNEY

I wish Mom called before I got on the road. I could have brought you a dress that would fit better.

KATE

What do you mean? We're both a size four.

Courtney eyes her sister up and down.

COURTNEY

Really?

Kate ignores the dig, and starts putting on the dress.

KATE

Courtney, I need to ask you something.

COURTNEY

What?

KATE

Did you ever see Dad cheat on Mom?

COURTNEY

Are you kidding me?

KATE

No, I'm asking you.

COURTNEY

Why the sudden interest? You never cared what was going on when you were off at college.

KATE

Of course I cared, but I was three thousand miles away from home.

COURTNEY

You're not better than me because you went away for college!

KATE

Are we even having the same conversation?

Kate's got the dress mostly on, but just needs to be zipped up in the back. Her sister starts to zip her, but then stops.

COURTNEY

I find it really coincidental that on the day I introduce my new husband you want to bring up the past. That's so selfish of you. (beat) If you wanna know who Dad's banged over the years, ask his girlfriend.

KATE

I'm not asking Angie, I'm asking you.

COURTNEY

Why are we talking about YOU and DAD when we should be talking about ME, MY husband, MY wedding, and the good looking children I'M trying to have!

Kate sees an E.P.T. PREGNANCY TEST KIT sticking out of Courtney's purse, purposely displayed.

KATE

You really want to start a family right away? You've known this guy all of three weeks. What if you find out he's some psycho who chainsawed his whole family, or...his middle name's different than you thought!

COURTNEY

It's just like you to shit all over my happiness. Zip up yourself, if you can even fit into it!

Courtney turns dramatically away from her sister and exits.

KATE

I can fit into it!

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

ON GRANDFATHER CLOCK, TICKING louder than ever.

Brad and Arnaud sit on one end of the couch while Neil and Dick are on the other. Brad looks at his WATCH as Dick continues his diatribe.

DICK

These are the salad years, boys. Enjoy yourselves, enjoy your wives while you're all still young.

Arnaud and Brad sit next to one another.

ARNAUD

(To Brad) Courtney is only twenty two. That is hot no?

BRAD

I'm sure I have no idea what you're talking about.

ARNAUD

You know without the condom, sex is super fantastic. How you say...Raw dog yes? Even though you have the old one, is still good n'est pas?

Arnaud elbows Brad who can barely tolerate another minute.

NEIL

(To the group) Now that the kids have moved out, it's like Mary and I are teenagers again. We sleep late, go to Starbucks, take a kick boxing class...

ARNAUD

Your story is as bland as your chain cafes old man. You, a kickboxer? Please...Now, to excuse me.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate is struggling to zip up the back of her dress, but it's a tough reach. In her valiant attempt to zip, she contorts her body awkwardly, loses her balance and falls down.

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

We follow Courtney as she makes her way down the staircase. At the same time, Arnaud pops out of a doorway in the upstairs hall. He is examining paintings, clocks, crystal etc. He looks more like he's appraising the house than looking for a bathroom.

Arnaud pokes his head into the room where Kate now changes.

ARNAUD'S POV

He can see Kate's naked back, but to him it looks like Courtney. He quietly sneaks up behind her and puts his hands on her shoulders and kisses her neck.

KATE

Mmmm...wait, stop it. I'm mad at you.

Arnaud pulls back immediately hearing Kate's voice. After the initial shock he continues to kiss Kate's neck. His hands slip over her shoulders and cup her naked breasts.

KATE

I'm not that mad, I guess...but we don't have time for this. Do we?

Kate is getting into it. She reaches behind her and runs her hand up Arnaud's leg, moving to the CROTCH. As she cops a feel, her eyes go vacant.

KATE

Brad?!

She spins around to see Arnaud - SCREAMING instantly.

ARNAUD

I thought you were Courtney. From behind you look so similar.

Kate is cupping her breasts with her hands.

KATE

Well, I'm not...so you can leave.

ARNAUD

I could leave...I could stay. Oui?

KATE

You couldn't be more wrong...

ARNAUD

Shhhhhh....There is no "right", no "wrong". There is only what you do and what you do not.

SLAP! Kate's hand flies off her breast and across his face returning to cover herself before you can see a thing.

KATE

You want me to DO that again?

INT. KITCHEN --DAY

Cassandra, Mary, and Eva are admiring Courtney's RING.

CASSANDRA

It's just beautiful honey.

MARY

Wow...huge. Have you had it appraised for insurance yet? Neil would be happy to.

COURTNEY

I'm sure Arnaud's taken care of that.

Face still a bit flushed, Kate enters.

MARY

Are you okay? You look like you've seen a ghost.

CASSANDRA

Sweetheart, what's wrong?

Kate looks around the concerned room, but focuses on the glaring eyes of her sister.

KATE
I'm sure it's just the dress is a little tight for me is all.

Courtney beams with pleasure.

EVA
Whose ring is bigger, Katie's or Courtney's?

COURTNEY
Grandma! That's so rude.

When Kate's not looking in Courtney's direction, she mouths the words, "Mine's Bigger" to Eva.

Brad enters through the kitchen door.

BRAD
I just came in to tell you it's time to exchange our gifts. Then Kate and I really have to go.

CASSANDRA
Wouldn't want to be late for Rob's little soiree, Hmmm?

COURTNEY
No one's going anywhere until I give you all our gift. It's really special, so it has to be last.

BRAD
As long as we're out by three.

He looks at his watch and sets the alarm to go off at three o'clock. He looks back up to see all the women in the room staring at him with the evil eye.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATER

BRAD'S POV - TIGHT ON the face of his watch, it is 2:52 and counting.

The watch pulls out of frame to reveal Eva opening a gift. She unwraps the bow first, then the tape, one piece at a time. Her hands shake as she continues to unwrap the gift. It's taking forever.

CASSANDRA
We're completely out of wine.

BRAD
(under breath) Thank god.

KATE
We've got some more wine in the car. I'll go grab a bottle.

BRAD
What a good idea, more wine for your mother.

Dick rudely grabs Eva's gift and tears it open.

EVA
Dick!

DICK
Just because you look like a corpse, doesn't mean you have to move like one!

CASSANDRA
Daddy!

MARY
Daddy!

EXT. GRANDPARENT'S HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate pops the trunk and randomly grabs a nice looking bottle of red, still in its gift bag.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate enters just as Brad opens a gift from Cassandra. It looks like a voodoo doll with a dress on.

BRAD
Look what your Mom gave us honey, a fertility doll.

KATE
Another one?

Courtney grabs it from Brad, rubs it on her belly, then hands it back.

COURTNEY
It only works on the willing.

Kate hands the wine to Cassandra, still in gift bag. A small card hangs off the side of the bottle and Cassandra wastes no time reading it.

CASSANDRA

(reads aloud) Wishing you the very best these holidays. Love...Rob.
(Angry to Brad) You couldn't have picked a different gift to recycle?

Brad looks behind him as if Cassandra couldn't possibly be speaking to him.

KATE

Mom it's my fault. I just grabbed the first bottle...I'm sorry.

Cassandra bursts into tears.

DICK

(admiring the bottle) How about that Rob...Ridgeport, 1965.

Cassandra cries harder now.

DICK (CONT'D)

For God's sake, pull yourself together.

COURTNEY

I've got something that will make you forget all about Kate's thoughtlessness.

Courtney has the attention of the room as she picks up a giant 4' x 6' box. Cassandra is trying to dry her eyes as Dick looks at her with disapproval.

COURTNEY

(To Cassandra) Although it's your gift, it's really for all the women in our family.

ARNAUD

So much love...from us, to you.

Kate holds back her contempt as a glassy-eyed Cassandra, still sniveling, pulls off the wrapping paper.

CASSANDRA

Oh - my - God.

KATE

What is it?

COURTNEY

(proudly) It's a portrait of the women of our family.

Cassandra shields the audience from the picture.

CASSANDRA

I just love it. It's so beautiful. Something we can treasure in our family forever.

ARNAUD

You send photo of the people you want in the picture, and the artist, he paint it for you.

KATE

Mom, turn it so we can all see.

Cassandra turns the painting so that now Eva and Mary can see it, but still Kate and the audience cannot.

EVA

Look Dickie! It's me.

DICK

(rolling his eyes) I know.

MARY

Oh Courtney, it's wonderful! I look so beautiful.

KATE

Mom, let me see. (To Courtney) What photo did you use of me?

COURTNEY

I could only find one with you in a dress. I think it was from...

Cassandra turns the painting towards Kate. Brad puts his head in his hands.

WE SEE a cheesy portrait style oil painting of a spirited Eva, Cassandra looking thin and happy, Mary before she needed surgery and what looks to be a modeling shot of Courtney. Everyone in the picture looks fantastic...except Kate.

Kate looks chubby, dated hair, braces, just plain awful.

COURTNEY

...your junior prom.

KATE
 (shocked) Why...didn't you call me?
 I could have sent you a photo that
 actually looks like me!

CASSANDRA
 Honey, you look fine.

KATE
 That's not the point.

COURTNEY
 Is this gonna continue? More you,
 you, you! Wasn't grilling me about
 Dad's affairs enough?

KATE
 Affairs? There was more than one?!

CASSANDRA
 Please girls...It's Christmas...no
 more talk of Rob.

COURTNEY
 Sorry Mom, I forgot...Not in front
 of Kate. Can't upset Daddy's little
 princess.

Kate's all too through with her sister and turns to her Mom.

KATE
 What the hell is she talking about?

Cassandra's brain is on overload.

CASSANDRA
 Of course this is all, nonsense...I
 love my picture. I love it.

KATE
 Mom, a little reality...please!

Hopped up on Xanax and wine, Cassandra's had it.

CASSANDRA
 You want reality, hmmm? *Reality* is
 scouring your father's car for
 lipsticks because I was afraid you
 girls would find them first.
 Reality is telling you girls Dad
 was working late when I knew he was
 at the Sleepy Time Inn.

(MORE)

CASSANDRA (cont'd)

Do you really think that was poison
ivy that gave your father that rash
in '87...

COURTNEY

You don't have to get into all this
Mom. I was there. Kate just can't
stand the fact that I'm happier
than her.

KATE

For the last time Courtney, I'm not
jealous of you!

Courtney gets right up in Kate's face and begins pointing at
her sister, pushing her finger in her chest.

COURTNEY

Of course you are. (at Brad) You're
jealous because I found a man who
wants children as much as I do.

Kate's personal space is being violated. She gives Courtney a
small push backwards but Courtney's heel catches the edge of
a rug. She swings her arms as she tumbles backwards. Brad
tries to catch her but he just misses. Courtney falls into
the painting, ripping the canvas beyond repair!

COURTNEY

You bitch! You ruined my painting!!

Brad's watch goes off, BEEP-BEEP, BEEP-BEEP, BEEP-BEEP!

EXT. Z-4 ON OPEN ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Brad is having trouble seeing through the cracked windshield
as he drives away from hell.

An annoyingly joyful "Frosty the Snowman" plays on the radio.

BRAD

I think that went well.

Nothing from an obviously distraught Kate who stares blankly
back at the house.

BRAD

I'm sure the worst is behind us.

EXT. ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

The Mountain Man is listening to a HEAVY METAL cover of
"Frosty the Snowman" as he approaches a draw bridge.

As he downshifts, he grinds the gears JOLTING the truck. The jolt knocks a NEW CHAINSAW out of the back onto the road.

EXT. Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

Brad and Kate are driving down Highway 50, to Lake Tahoe.

BRAD

We'll make it to the cabin with time to spare...Mom and Ted won't be that bad.

Up ahead we see an exit for "Sunrise Blvd."

KATE

Forget that...we're definitely going to Dad's Christmas now. Get off on Sunrise.

BRAD

What?

KATE

Get off on Sunrise! I want to talk to my Dad.

BRAD

Do you really think that's such a good idea?

The exit is coming up fast, Kate's running out of time to convince Brad. Kate yanks the steering wheel violently, pulling the car into the Sunrise exit.

BRAD

Jesus!

KATE

We're going.

BRAD

(almost afraid) Okay.

POP! The Z-4 rolls right over the CHAINSAW puncturing the tire. They skid briefly but now on a rim, Brad is forced to pull over on the bridge. Kate and Brad get out of the car to inspect the damage.

BRAD

Now can we skip your Dad's?

There's no play left in Kate.

BRAD
I'll get the jack.

HONK HONK!

KATE
Was that a car?

WE SEE a Boat with a tall mast headed for the Bridge.

BRAD
No, it was that boat.

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

KATE
THAT wasn't the boat.

BRAD
No, that was the bridge signaling
to the boat that they're about
to...oh shit get in the car!

KATE
Why?

EXT. TOP OF RIVER BRIDGE, BRIDGEMASTER'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The BRIDGEMASTER is a filthy man who is paying way more attention to his roach clip than the bridge. From his vantage point he cannot see the small stranded Z-4. He pulls the LEVER to lift the bridge.

EXT. BRIDGE, ON KATE AND BRAD -- CONTINUOUS

DING DING DING!!! Both ahead and behind, the traffic signals go off, the arms come down to block traffic from coming on the bridge. The draw bridge is about to go up!

BRAD
Let's go!

Kate rushes to the car, but the bridge is already raising up!

KATE
Don't they see us?!

Kate HONKS to get the Bridgemaster's attention.

BRAD
Go, go!

EXT. TOP OF RIVER BRIDGE, BRIDGEMASTER'S ROOM

Kate's HONKS fall on stoned ears. The Bridgemaister is clueless.

EXT. BRIDGE, ON THE Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

Kate pulls forward, but she's got no traction as the bridge's angle raises. The car starts rolling backwards.

Brad looks in horror to see there's now a space between the road and the bridge, almost big enough to swallow the car.

BRAD

Punch it! We'll roll back into the water!

The wheels, especially the flat one, can't get enough traction on the metal grating of the bridge and they continue to roll backwards.

EXT. TOP OF RIVER BRIDGE, BRIDGEMASTER'S ROOM

Finally, having cashed the joint, the Bridgemaister looks out the window and sees the Z-4.

BRIDGEMASTER

Holy smoke!

He punches the emergency stop.

EXT. BRIDGE, ON Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

The Z-4 has rolled back so far that it's now pinned between the road and the elevated bridge. Brad and Kate sit tight, terrified. Suddenly, the bridge stops and moves back down.

BRAD

It's okay. We're gonna be okay.

As the bridge comes down, the bumper of the Z-4 gets caught in between the road and the bridge and is chopped off.

EXT. ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

We follow the Z-4 down a windy road, along the banks of the American River. The bumper is tied to the roof, the hood is smashed in, windows are broken, the license plate hangs off, and the rearview mirror is now gone.

EXT. BOAT DOCK OF THE AMERICAN RIVER - LATER

The Z-4 pulls into a loose gravel parking lot just outside the dock.

INSERT: ANOTHER ROCKWELL PAINTING

SUPER: "Christmas III"

As they exit, Brad and Kate look like an extension of their car; beat up and on their last legs.

Kate gets out first and slams the door, knocking a windshield wiper to the ground.

KATE

Goddamit! I never should've got you this car.

BRAD

We can get it fixed.

KATE

A forty thousand dollar way to tell you we can have kids and still have fun...what a waste!

BRAD

What? That's what you were trying to tell me?

KATE

What the hell did you think I meant?!

BRAD

I didn't know what you meant...You're not that easy to read sometimes.

KATE

Me? I'm not that easy to read?! You're the one with all the secrets!

BRAD

All what secrets?

A cell phone RINGS.

KATE

That's just perfect!

Brad fumbles in his pocket.

BRAD
Actually...that's you.

Embarrassed, Kate pulls her Nextel out. It's "Rob". Kate hits the speaker to answer.

LOUD MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Are you two coming aboard, or are you just going to stand there and argue like your Mother and I used to? (Laughs)

They look down the dock to see ROB KINGSBERRY (50's) on the bow of a 65' yacht talking into his cell and waving.

Rob is a distinguished man with a full head of silver hair. He wears a dark tailored suit.

Rob's girlfriend, ANGIE (37), is at his side. Provocative, yet tastefully dressed, Angie is the Bo Derek to Cassandra's Linda Evans, the fifteen year younger version.

Kate and Brad begin their descent down the dock. As they make their way down, Brad is anxiously checking to see if his phone has a signal...it does not.

EXT. PORT SIDE OF YACHT -- MOMENTS LATER

The party is bustling with roughly a hundred people. Most of them middle aged, but a mishmash of Black, White, Indian, Asian etc., all drinking, dancing and generally having a good time. A '70s funk cover of "Hey, Santa Claus" emanates from the yacht's stern.

Kate and Brad step onto the boat. Brad knew what to expect, but Kate takes in this scene with a slight bewilderment. It looks like a booze cruise for the newly divorced. Rob and Angie greet Kate and Brad as they board.

ROB
Welcome you two! I knew you'd make it. Angie thought you'd blow it off.

Angie gives Rob a stiff elbow. Rob hugs and kisses his daughter before giving Brad a hearty handshake.

ANGIE
I knew you'd come too.

Hugs from Angie too, but she looks sad.

ROB
How's your Christmas going so far?

KATE
Don't ask.

ROB
I'm sorry your Mom ruined
Christmas, sweetie.

KATE
I didn't say that.

ROB
You didn't have to.

Kate shrugs it off.

KATE
Dad, who are these people?

ROB
Clients mostly.

A middle-aged Polo-clad divorcée, JOYCE, sneaks up behind Brad and puts her hands on his shoulders.

JOYCE
(to Rob) You really struck gold
with Brad here, Rob.

ROB
I told you. (to the group) I did
Joyce's first divorce back in
eighty-two...Brad just finished her
second.

JOYCE
Thirty-two years of marriage and
only two divorces...not bad for a
Californian, huh?

Everyone is forced to LAUGH at Joyce's bad joke.

JOYCE
Seriously, Brad was great. He
really knows how to talk to
women...(to Rob) He's you, twenty-
five years younger.

Angie rolls her eyes.

ANGIE
I'm getting a drink.

Angie walks off, obviously perturbed at Rob.

KATE
Is she alright?

ROB
Don't mind Angie. We got into it a little earlier.

KATE
Dad, I was hoping I could talk to you in private.

ROB
Sure pumpkin, can it wait until after the announcement? Ten minutes, then I'm all yours.

Across the boat Kate spots Courtney and Arnaud coming aboard.

KATE
Jessica Rabbit and Pepe Le Peux are here.

JOYCE
(cat noise) Reeerrrr!

Everyone looks at Joyce who wisely scurries away to the bar.

ROB
Who's the guy with your sister?

BRAD
You're not the only one with an announcement this Christmas.

ROB
Oh, Christ. (To Kate) Your sister didn't get knocked up, did she?

KATE
Who knows...I'll let her tell you. I can't deal with them right now.

ROB
Okay, after I talk to your Sis, I'll make the announcement.

Rob leaves Kate and Brad standing there. There's a tension neither would like to touch.

Kate watches Rob greet Courtney and Arnaud. As soon as she sees Courtney flash her rock to Rob, she turns away.

Brad nervously twirls his mobile phone in his hand. Across the yacht, Kate sees Angie nursing a drink, tears streaking down her cheek.

Kate and Brad turn to each other at the exact same moment.

KATE
I'll be right back.

BRAD
I'll be right back.

*

Brad darts away to make a call, and Kate heads for Angie.

ON BRAD

He whips out his phone but still cannot get a signal. Frustrated, he hurriedly walks to another part of the boat.

OTHER SIDE OF PARTY, ON ANGIE

Angie stares out into the river drinking a giant Martini when Kate comes up behind her.

KATE
Angie, are you alright?

ANGIE
I've been better.

KATE
Is everything okay with you and Dad?

ANGIE
Yeah...I knew what I was getting into when I started dating him.

KATE
I don't mean to pry, but...has he been cheating on you?

ANGIE
Good god no. Don't be ridiculous.

Kate breathes a sigh of relief.

ANGIE
We've always had an open relationship sweetheart. (beat)
Your Dad's screwed half the women on this boat. So what makes me so special, right?

Angie grabs another drink from a passing by waiter as Kate slumps into a deck chair.

OTHER SIDE OF PARTY, ON BRAD

Brad holds his phone at various angles unsuccessfully trying to get a signal. A group of BLACK PARTY GOERS pass by Brad.

PARTY GOER

Did you see that tore up Z-4 in the parking lot? Now that's ghetto.

Frowning, Brad continues to look for a signal.

ANOTHER SECTION OF THE PARTY, ON ROB COURTNEY AND ARNAUD

Courtney is clinging to Arnaud's arm.

ARNAUD

The Peugeot is much like a woman. When it is working, you've never had such a good ride but when it breaks down, oh baby...it's going to cost you a bundle.

ROB

Arnaud, grab me a scotch. I need to talk to my daughter for a minute.

ARNAUD

There is no love like a father's love...

ROB

Scotch Frenchy. Now.

Arnaud walks away.

ROB

Are you kidding me with this guy? Tell me you at least got a pre-nup.

COURTNEY

A pre-nup? Just because he's not Mr. Perfect lawyer like Brad, he's not good enough, right?

Rob looks at his daughter as if he's failed.

ROB

No, he's not good enough because he's a predator. Trust me, I should know.

OTHER SIDE OF PARTY, ON KATE AND ANGIE

Angie points out various women Rob has been with.

KATE

My au pair?! Dad slept with my au pair?

ANGIE

We had a threesome with her.

BACK ON BRAD

BRAD

Shelly? Thank god...finally.

Brad has finally gotten a signal. WE SEE however, that he is standing on the very edge of the boat, body leaning out over the water. He holds onto the railing with one hand and the phone with the other.

ON KATE AND ANGIE

Angie continues to fill Kate in about the realities of Rob.

ANGIE

It's not so much him as it is the job. Think about it. All these vulnerable women coming in to see a big powerful lawyer, an ally against their ex.

Kate spots Brad hanging off the edge of the boat looking as ridiculous as he does suspicious on his mobile phone.

ANGIE

It's only natural...all that time they spend at the office around that element and well...you know...Kate?

Angie turns around, but Kate is already gone. She's making a B-line towards an unsuspecting Brad.

ON BRAD

He's on the phone, still hanging off the boat and doesn't see Kate behind him. She can clearly hear his conversation.

BRAD

(into phone) We're totally back on...Shelly, can you hear me? We're back on! Hello? Shelly?

KATE

Brad what the hell are you doing?

A started Brad, spins around, loses his balance and falls forward onto the deck. His phone drops at Kate's feet.

As Brad picks himself up, Rob's voice comes over the P.A.

ROB (O.C.)

Everybody...gather round towards the stern of the boat please.

The room's attention shifts to the rear of the yacht, where Rob continues to address the crowd.

ROB

Where are you Brad? Brad? Come on up here.

Kate and Brad were about to get into it, but now Brad's trapped...all eyes on him. Brad reluctantly makes his way to Rob's side. Kate picks up Brad's PHONE and begins scrolling through Brad's recent calls...all Shelly.

Kate dials his voicemail, punches in his code and listens to his last saved message. It's Shelly saying, "Brad, I don't care what kind of problems you're having with your wife, we need to talk about this. You can't keep ignoring me!"

As soon as Brad reaches Rob's side, he begins his speech.

ROB

It so good to see so many members of my family, so many friends, employees and clients who agreed to come here on Christmas day. Many of you may be wondering why this year in particular, I've insisted that so many of you attend. (Dramatic pause) Well please indulge me this bit of selfishness on this...the last Christmas for Robert Kingsberry Law Corporation.

The place goes silent. Brad doesn't know how to react, and Kate is stunned.

ROB

Because, I'm happy to announce that Brad is now a full partner with the firm! Congratulations Brad and Merry Christmas!

Everyone starts CLAPPING for Brad, but he's in shock. He looks out into the crowd and spots Kate listening to his messages. He panics and puts his hand back to brace himself against the rail but miscalculates. He trips over the stern rail, and falls overboard into the river!

INT. FORWARD CABIN BEDROOM -- LATER

Brad is changing out of his wet clothes and into some of Rob's dry clothes...A suit similar to the one Rob is wearing.

Kate tosses Brad his phone.

KATE

Quite a game of phone tag you've been playing with your "client" Shelly.

BRAD

It's really not what you think.

KATE

Save your excuses Brad, I heard what you said to her. All your late nights at the office, it all makes sense now. I feel like such an idiot!

BRAD

You've got it all wrong. The reason I've been working so late...

KATE

Yes?

Brad is out of options.

BRAD

Kate, I've been covering for your Dad.

KATE

That's great Brad. I just discover my Dad's a complete fraud as a husband and now you try to use it as an excuse for your affairs?

BRAD

This isn't an excuse, this is the truth.

KATE

Brad I don't even know if you're capable of telling me the truth right now. All I do know is that something is going on between you and this "Shelly".

BRAD

Will you get off Shelly?

KATE

Will you?!

BRAD

This isn't about Shelly...It's about that fact that the only thing your Dad's shown up for in the past six months is his tee times!

Rob enters, clueless.

ROB

Did someone say golf? (laughs)
Brad, I know I should have prepped you first, but I didn't know you were going to go so overboard... literally. I just wanted it to be a surprise.

Rob and Brad stand side by side in similar suits. The imagery is not lost on Kate.

KATE

Well well well, if it isn't my husband's partner...in crime.

ROB

Kate?

KATE

Brad has just been telling me how he's having to cover for you at work Dad.

ROB

Brad, what are you telling my daughter? (to Kate) I'm sure it's just the shock of the promotion...

BRAD
Thanks a lot Rob...You're the
father-in-law of the fuckin' year!

KATE
Don't talk to Dad that way!

BRAD
You're right. (beat) Rob...

Brad slaps Rob hard on the shoulder.

I quit!!! (to Kate) How about that
way?

KATE
Get out!

BRAD
Fine!

Brad turns to leave, when Rob grabs Brad by the arm.

ROB
Brad wait, don't go...please.

Brad pulls his arm away, walks out the cabin door and slams
it in Rob's face.

ROB
(through door) Brad, don't leave! I
can explain...Please, I need you. I
need some of that Orlando magic!

EXT. ROB'S BOAT DOCK -- CONTINUOUS

Brad blows past Courtney, Arnaud, and other party-goers,
jumps into the Z-4, and skids off. The license plate finally
dislodges and rattles behind in the parking lot.

INT. YACHT, FORWARD CABIN BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate's eyes are red from tears. Rob tries to comfort her.

ROB
What happened? What's wrong with
Brad?

KATE
I'm hoping you can tell me.

Rob hugs his daughter, lovingly.

ROB
I think I know what it is. Let me
tell you about Brad...Something I
should've told you a long time ago.

Kate's eyes narrow with concern.

EXT. DARK ROAD -- NIGHT

Brad is headed up the highway, distraught.

RADIO DJ (V.O.)
I hope you and your family are
having a very merry Christmas.
Gotta request from Sandy in
Placerville for Celine Dion's
"Silent Night, Holy Night". Well
it's your lucky night Sandy...we're
gonna play it ten times in a row!

Brad turns the station, but nothing happens...broken. He then
tries to turn it down, no good. He struggles to shut the song
off, until finally he punches the stereo, knocking the
detachable face off the mount. Still, Celine sings on.

BRAD
Goddamit!!!

INT. YACHT, FORWARD BEDROOM CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

Rob starts to open up to his daughter.

ROB
...and when your Mom finally got
the courage to leave me I started
seeing more women, spending more
money, and losing interest in work.
But when Brad started working for
me...I just knew he had what it
took, so I really started coasting.
(beat) He's been doing everything,
Katie, I mean everything. I haven't
read a file in over three months.

KATE
So he really has been covering for
you? But why didn't he tell me
about this?

ROB
He's a good man, pumpkin. He's not
like your father.

EXT. DARK ROAD TO LAKE TAHOE -- NIGHT

Brad is turning off a highway exit, when his phone RINGS from the hands free cradle. Celine Dion still plays. He sees it's his father and hits the speakerphone.

BRAD

Dad?

TOM

(speaker phone) Hey head case, you were so busy beating the shit out of Saint Nick, you left your clothes in the dryer!

Celine's shrill is undeniable.

TOM

Jesus. Rob's party sounds awful.

BRAD

I left Rob's party. It was awful. I'm heading to the cabin...alone.

TOM

What happened?

Brad picks the phone up out of the cradle.

INT. YACHT, FORWARD BEDROOM CABIN -- LATER

Kate and Rob are in the middle of a long overdue heart to heart.

ROB

Your Mom knew, but didn't want to know. Looking back on it, I suppose there were a lot of other women, but it didn't get really bad until you were off at college. Ever since, I've spent a lot of energy trying to shelter you from my shortcomings.

KATE

Why would you do that?

ROB

Because you're the only one who remembers when everything was great with our family.

(MORE)

ROB (cont'd)

You never really saw me screw up the way your Mom and sister did...now their memories of me are tainted, *forever*...but yours weren't. I didn't want you to see me as that guy. But I was wrong to keep you from the truth. For that, I am deeply sorry. I hope I haven't put a wedge between you and Brad.

EXT. DARK ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Brad is still on the phone with his Dad.

BRAD

...and then she told me to leave.

TOM

Sounds like you blew it, but one thing's for sure...Katie loves the crap out of you. Don't run away like I did, just go back and tell her how you feel.

Brad can't believe what he's hearing from his father.

BRAD

Who am I talking to?

TOM

(confused) It's your Dad.

BRAD

You're right. What am I doing?

Brad initiates a U-turn back to the Yacht, and drops the phone in the process.

BRAD

Shit. (yelling) Hold on, Dad.

He fishes for it around his ankles and drifts into the opposite lane. He looks down for a split second, finds the phone and looks back up to see the ONCOMING HEADLIGHTS OF THE MOUNTAIN MAN'S TRUCK!

BRAD

Shit!!!

Brad locks up the wheel and slides sideways on the black ice. The Mountain Man takes evasive action as well, but it's too late! CRASH! The impact sends the Z-4 spinning backwards, finally slamming into the snow embankment.

The truck slams into a pine tree across the road.

TOM'S VOICE

Hello? Brad, you okay? Brad! If you
can hear me, turn that goddamn
music off!

Nothing. We see Brad, slumped over the deflating airbag to
the annoying shrill of Celine.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Tom, turns to Denver who sits on the couch with his family.

TOM

I think your Brad's been in an
accident near your Mom's cabin.
Call your brother.

Before Denver can respond, Tom's already out the door.

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD, EMBANKMENT -- NIGHT

The Mountain Man is a little woozy, but manages to pull
himself out of his truck. Across the road he spots Brad,
still passed out. He makes his way over to him and tries to
pull the door open, but it's impossibly jammed. He beats his
fists on the Z-4's door trying to get in.

The Mountain Man looks close at Brad. He can see his breath.

INT. ROB'S BOAT, FORWARD CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

Rob and Kate are still talking.

KATE

I can't believe you and Mom would
go through all that, just to
maintain this image of a perfect
marriage.

ROB

We did it with the best intentions,
but I hope that it didn't leave you
trying to recreate that kind
marriage with Brad. That's not what
our marriage was. That's not what
any marriage is.

Kate's phone RINGS, she answers.

KATE

Hello? Oh my god...(to Rob) Brad's
been in an accident.

EXT. SIDE OF ROAD, EMBANKMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The Mountain Man is fishing for something in the back of his truck. He emerges with an AXE, and heads back to the Z-4.

INT. CHEVY SUBURBAN -- CONTINUOUS

Tom approaches the highway exit at nearly 100 m.p.h.

INT. Z-4 -- CONTINUOUS

Brad, now semi-conscious, realizes he is trapped in the car.

He sees a figure moving towards him carrying an AXE. As the figure gets closer Brad realizes it's the Mountain Man.

BRAD'S POV

Still fighting to maintain consciousness, Brad stares helplessly as the Mountain Man is about swing the axe down!

INT. CHEVY SUBURBAN - LATER

Tom's good headlight illuminates the completely totaled Z-4. Ten yards beyond, he sees the Mountain Man dragging his son with one hand, an axe in the other.

He jumps out of his truck and races towards them.

TOM

Get off my boy!

Tom tackles the Mountain Man, sending the axe to the icy road.

MOUNTAIN MAN

Wait! Stop!

The Mountain Man tries to defend himself, but Tom is a monster. They're both on the ground, but finally the Mountain Man rolls away from Tom after a good kick.

MOUNTAIN MAN

He's hurt. I was just trying to get him up to the cabin.

TOM

Up to what cabin?

MOUNTAIN MAN
(points) That cabin!

Tom pauses a moment as he realizes he's pointing to his ex-wife's cabin.

TOM
You're the hippie my ex-wife is
banging?

MOUNTAIN MAN/TED
You're the Cro-Magnon that never
gave oral!?

Tom CHARGES Ted again! They fight with a now greater passion.

TOM
Ahhhh!!!!

They trade blows like men over Brad's unconscious body.

EXT. BEAUTIFUL LAKE TAHOE CABIN -- NIGHT

A six inch layer of snow blankets the A-frame roof of this charming picturesque Tahoe cabin. White smoke dissipates from the brick chimney into the starry night...a true white Christmas.

SUPER: "CHRISTMAS IV"

INT. CABIN BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Brad's eyes flicker open to see his mother, MICHELLE (55) hovering over him. Michelle is an attractive, but plain woman with long dark hair pulled back in a loose ponytail.

MICHELLE
Honey....Bradley. How are you
feeling?

BRAD
Mom?

MICHELLE
Yes dear...I'm here. You're safe.
Everything is going to be okay.

BRAD
(Groggy) Everything's...not okay.
(beat) I really screwed things up
with Kate today.

MICHELLE

What happened?

BRAD

I've had so much bottled up lately...It all came out at Kate.

MICHELLE

Trust me...she'll be fine. You just need to talk is all.

BRAD

I'm not so sure.

MICHELLE

You let things build, you and Kate. You two never fight. (beat) If I had a nickel for all the times I wanted to say something to your father, but put it off instead because...*it was Denver's birthday, or your graduation, or we were about to go on vacation, or the Holidays were coming up.* They were all thoughtful excuses, but that doesn't mean they weren't excuses.

Brad considers her simple yet true words.

BRAD

I really should start seeing my shrink.

MICHELLE

Don't be too hard on yourself. It took me over thirty years to figure that out.

TOM'S VOICE

Hey hey! He's alive! You've taken quite a beating today, kiddo. Proud of yah.

Brad jerks up hearing his Father's voice. Tom's got some battle wounds of his own, but doesn't seem to care. Michelle moves to Tom's side.

MICHELLE

Can we get you anything?

It dawns on Brad that his Mom and Dad are occupying the same space without fighting.

BRAD
Mom? Dad? You're together?

MICHELLE
Well, we're together here, for you.

TOM
That's what you wanted for
Christmas isn't it, ya little lady?

Brad sees a figure over his father's shoulder. It's Ted holding an Axe.

BRAD
(points and screams) Mom, Dad look
out!

Tom laughs a deep robust laugh. Ted sets down the axe and the wood he was chopping for the fireplace.

TOM
Don't go beating anyone else
up...This is Ted, your Mom's
boyfriend.

TED
How's he doing?

TOM
He'll be fine, Teddy. Thanks to
you. Brad, I don't think you've
met. I know you met his truck.

BRAD
I...guess I owe you an apology...I
dropped the phone and...you're my
Mom's boyfriend?

Ted nods.

BRAD
Mom, have you seen this guy's
truck?

TED
(laughs) That's my brother's truck.
I borrowed it to drop off
everyone's presents.

TOM

Ted's a good egg. Sure, he needs a shave and a drug test, but he takes good care of your Mom, and he's got a hell of a right hook. (to Ted) You two want to come to the Sharks game Monday? I have the team box.

TED

I'd like that.

MICHELLE

I love to see all my men getting along.

Brad sees his mother with her arms around his Dad and Ted. Everyone's smiling. Brad shakes his head as if in a dream.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY TO FRONT ROOM OF CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

Eyes foggy, Brad wanders towards the archway to the front room. He can see Rob and Cassandra acting friendly as they mix drinks behind the bar together. He can't believe it.

BRAD

Rob? Cassandra? What are you doing here?

ROB

Bradley, you're awake! We came as soon as we heard about your accident.

CASSANDRA

And I'll be damned if he got to spend more time with you than me on Christmas. So we all came.

BRAD

All?

Brad enters the

FRONT ROOM TO SEE

Almost the entire family cramped in the woodsy front of the cabin...Dick and Eva, Mary and Neil, Denver, Susan and the kids; Tyler, Tyson and Jackson and Dallas (the only one not dressed for the cold, he still wears the sleeveless T-shirt).

Brad scans the entire room...no Kate.

BRAD
Did Kate come?

DALLAS
Nope. Didn't want to see you.

BRAD
(Devastated) Oh.

SUSAN
Dallas is just kidding. She's in
the ladies room.

INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Just off the toilet, Kate goes to flush but it's broken. She
jiggles the handle repeatedly to no avail.

KATE
Of course.

INT. FRONT ROOM OF CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

Everyone is consoling Brad when Courtney and Arnaud burst in
the front room from the cold.

COURTNEY
Traffic is like...so bad out there.

Upon spotting Arnaud, Dallas leaps up from the couch.

DALLAS
Hey Arnie! What are you doing here?

COURTNEY
How do you know my husband?

DALLAS
From...years ago. Wow, husband huh?
I never thought you'd settle down
Arnaud. Small world.

COURTNEY
That's weird...whatever. (At Brad)
So I guess you're okay...where's my
sister?

Just then Kate enters the room and spots her bruised and
beaten husband.

KATE
You're awake!

She charges him, leaps into his arms and knocks him backwards into the hallway from which he emerged.

HALLWAY

She's all over him, kissing his bruised face.

BRAD

Ouch, Ah...I promise to always use the hands free kit from now on.

KATE

I don't care about that, I'm just so happy you're okay.

BRAD

Ouch.

Kate releases Brad.

KATE

Sorry.

BRAD

No, I'm the one that should be sorry. I shouldn't have freaked out the way I did.

KATE

Brad, stop. You don't have to apologize. Dad told me everything. I'm sorry he put you in that position.

BRAD

No, I'm sorry...for not trusting our marriage enough to tell you everything about your father from the start.

Brad and Kate kiss, more gently this time.

KATE

Dad's not making you partner. He's giving you the firm.

BRAD

What?

KATE

He just wanted to announce the partnership publicly...He's going to officially retire next month. The firm is yours.

BRAD

As in mine? I won't be working for your Dad anymore?

KATE

You won't be working for anybody anymore. You'll run the firm.

Brad is all smiles.

Our couple is distracted by the sound of a DOOR CLOSING from the other room.

BRAD

You believe what's going on in there? Mom and Dad are being civil to each other.

KATE

Mine too.

Our couple holds one another in each other's arms.

BRAD

Let's make each other a promise.

KATE

Anything.

BRAD

From now on, let's make it a point not to keep anything from each other.

KATE

I couldn't agree more.

Dallas spins around the Hall archway, spoiling Brad and Kate's intimate moment.

DALLAS

Brad, there's some hottie at the front door looking for you. You should see her rack.

KATE

Shelly.

DALLAS

How did you know her name?

Kate and Brad turn the hallway corner to see SHELLY whom we immediately recognize as Kate's real estate nemesis. She's showing tasteful, but revealing cleavage. A briefcase is slung over her shoulder.

SHELLY

Brad...I didn't expect so many spectators.

KATE

(Brad) What the hell is she doing here?!

Shelly walks over to Brad.

SHELLY

Do you want to tell her, or should I?

KATE

Brad, are you sleeping with this slut?!

DALLAS

Reeerrr!

SHELLY

(to Dallas) Don't I know you from Tequila Willies?

Brad focuses back on his wife.

BRAD

I have been spending a lot of time with Shelly lately, but we're not sleeping together. I'll give you a hint...1225 Nicholas Drive.

Long pause.

KATE

The house?! (beat) THE HOUSE!
(Thinks a moment) That house is sold. We saw the family that bought it this morning.

BRAD

(smiles) That was the sellers, it's our home now. We just need to get your signature.

Shelly pulls a thick wad of documents from her briefcase and slaps them down in front of Kate.

SHELLY

(To Kate) I told you I'd be the agent that sold this house.

KATE

Oh my god. I don't know what to say.

BRAD

Don't say - sign.

Kate immediately puts pen to paper then looks dreamily into her husband's eyes.

KATE

I can't believe you went through all this...did all this, for us. (beat) This is the most perfect Christmas gift ever.

Kate searches for a safe spot to kiss Brad, finally settling on his lips.

Courtney's envy is obvious.

COURTNEY

Congratulations Kate. I can't wait until the day Arnaud and I will be able to bring our kids over to play in your backyard.

DALLAS

That'll be a cold day in hell, right Arnie?

Arnaud half-laughs, but doesn't acknowledge the comment.

COURTNEY

Why would that be Dallas?

DALLAS

Are you kidding? That's how I met Arnaud. We got our vasectomies at the same clinic.

COURTNEY

What?! What! Is this true?!

ARNAUD

Courtney...look at me. The only thing that matters is you and me. Nothing else.

KATE

Then I guess I was hallucinating when you snuck up behind me and kissed my neck earlier today?

ARNAUD

Liar! You came on to me. Do you deny that you grabbed my package?

KATE

(To family) I thought he was Brad. I didn't know it was Arnaud until I reached behind and grabbed... (shivers) Uck.

ARNAUD

Your family is full of lies...don't you see Courtney? We don't need this...this...pack of crazies! Let's go.

EVA

(To Kate) You felt up both Brad and Arnaud? (beat) Who's bigger?

KATE

Grandma!

CASSANDRA

Mom!

Arnaud tries to take Courtney by the arm, but she retreats.

COURTNEY

Leave me alone!

Courtney runs to the bathroom crying. Concerned, Kate follows after her sister but as she passes Eva she mouths the words "Brad's bigger".

INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Courtney is blowing her nose.

COURTNEY

How come I haven't had one successful relationship in my entire life?

KATE

You're twenty-two, Courtney.

COURTNEY

I know, but you seemed to have it all, even when you were sixteen.

INT. FRONT ROOM TAHOE CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

The family is surrounding Arnaud.

NEIL

You're not even related to the Peugeot car family are you?

ARNAUD

Please, you don't know shit...
You're just some small time jeweler.

Neil spins around and PUNCHES Arnaud square in the face!

NEIL

Well I know that if you were a member of a wealthy family, you could do a lot better than a cubic zirconium engagement ring.

Mary, Dick and Cassandra witness Neil's uncharacteristic display of balls. Dick comes up and puts his arm around Neil.

DICK

I hate the French.

EVA

Settle down Dickie...You hate everybody.

Arnaud has recovered from the punch.

ARNAUD

What the hell do I care. I'll get a nice settlement out of this. Enough to live off your family's money for years!

ROB

No you won't. You got married in Cabo San Lucas? A thirty day annulment can be filed in California and signed in Mexico within the day.

Rob pushes Arnaud out the front door. Cassandra then SLAMS the door in Arnaud's face and joins Rob.

ROB

Besides her trust fund is so insulated, even I couldn't dip into it...lord knows I tried.

INT. BATHROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Courtney is sulking as Kate consoles.

COURTNEY

I'm sorry Sis. I've been a real bitch to you lately. I don't even know what I've been doing with all this pregnancy talk.

Courtney pulls her E.P.T. from her purse, rips it from the box and dumps the whole thing in the toilet.

KATE

Will you stop? You'll be a great Mom. You just need to find someone to be a great Dad.

KNOCK at the door.

KATE

Who is it?

Brad pokes his head in. One of his Band-aids is hanging off the side of his face.

BRAD

How's everything going in here?

KATE

We'll be out in a minute Brad...Oh, you might want to change that Band-aid, not sexy.

Brad pulls it off his face moving to throw it in the toilet.

BRAD

Ahhh...honey, what are these blue sticks in the toilet?

COURTNEY

Blue? Did you say blue sticks?

Courtney rushes to the toilet seat's edge with crazy eyes.

COURTNEY

Who used this last?

Brad and Courtney look at Kate simultaneously.

INT. FRONT ROOM OF CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

Tom and Ted are helping Neil wrap ice around his punching hand as Mary kisses him with pride.

Dick is serving drinks while Eva kicks up her heels.

Everyone in the room is CHATTING it up when Brad and Kate come out of the bathroom led by a clear eyed Courtney.

COURTNEY

Everybody...Brad and Kate have an announcement to make!

Courtney steps aside leaving Brad and Kate to address their families.

BRAD

I thought I had her with the house, but Kate has a much better gift.

All eyes turn to a beaming Kate.

KATE

I'm pregnant!

CHEERS fill the cramped cabin room. Rob and Cassandra are the first to rush Kate and give her a collective hug.

EVA

The fertility doll worked!

Everyone rushes around Kate congratulating her and Brad. The families surround them, everyone getting along, united at last.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FRONT ROOM OF CABIN -- LATER

Rob and Cassandra are reading "The Night Before Christmas" to a well behaved Tyler, Tyson and Jackson.

Across the room, Shelly is feeling Dallas' biceps.

Tom and Ted arm wrestle while sipping eggnog.

Susan extends little Cammi for Kate to hold. This time she doesn't let go of the smiling baby...everything is perfect.

SUSAN

So. (beat) What are you going to name the kid?

There's a long silent pause.

KATE

Well if it's a boy...

BRAD

Not Orlando.

TOM

Sacramento?

EVA

Little Dickie!

ROB

How bout Heff?

TYSON

Pinocchio!

TED

Nugent?

DALLAS

I guess O.J.'s out.

DENVER

So's Kobe.

SUSAN

Wait a minute, what if it's a girl?

Everyone starts speaking over one another, suggesting female names. Kate and Brad look at one another and just laugh. Amidst their families who continue to shout out names for the baby, our couple is happy.

Kate and Brad embrace and kiss.

EXT. TAHOE CABIN -- CONTINUOUS

AS WE PULL AWAY from the picturesque snow drenched cabin, the live action shot of the cabin morphs into a Norman Rockwell painting.

THE END

FADE OUT:

As the screen goes dark, we hear Courtney's voice, "Hey, what happened to Arnaud?"

FADE IN:

EXT. LONELY TAHOE HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Arnaud, shivering from the cold and with a black eye is walking along the shoulder of the road, not a car in sight.

Then from behind, HEADLIGHTS! Arnaud turns around to see a WINDOWLESS VAN pulling over to offer him a ride.

The door opens to reveal a creepy bearded man.

DRIVER

Need a lift?

Arnaud jumps in, slams the door.

ARNAUD

Get me out of here...I was stuck up here with this asshole family.

DRIVER

Yeah, I hated my family too.

ANGLE ON: A Bloody CHAINSAW on the floor of the van behind them.