

A BROKEN PRESENT

Written by

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The full script is 130 pages

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FADE IN

EXT. A SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD

People on a suburban neighborhood are unboxing stuff in their yards. Christmas decorations are being laid out and hung up. Some of the people are in a festive mood and others are in a frustrated mood. (Which all can relate to when Christmas is coming.)

(Credit Scenes)

A long haired guy, MIKE, is standing by a fence. The house he is in front of is not decorated. Mike is looking at his cell phone and does not notice a car parking. PATRICIA gets out of the car and notices Mike.

PATRICIA

Hey Mike!

Mike looks up to see her then dives over the fence and runs around the yard.

Patricia has a small laugh because she knows whatever he is up to, she is sure she doesn't want to know.

She looks around to see most of the other houses are being decorated, except the one she is in front of. Patricia goes to shut her car door.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM RICK'S HOUSE

RICK is working out when he hears a car door. He jumps up and sees Patty. (Which is what he calls Patricia.) She is getting something from her trunk. He runs around trying to clean the house up a little more.

CUT TO

EXT. FRONT OF RICK'S HOUSE

Patrica is carrying a big cardboard box to Rick's front door. She can't knock because her hands are full.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S FRONT DOOR

Rick opens the door and tries to act shocked that she is there.

RICK
So, I'm guessing the surprise
visit...You kind of miss me?

PATRICIA
I found these decorations in the
attic and I have enough.

Patricia hands the box to Rick.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
I figured this could give you more
to do with Cindy when she is over
here.

She starts to turn around to leaves but Rick stops her.

RICK
I have a house full of things for
me and Cindy to do. If you have
forgotten, come on over here.

Rick walks further into the living room. Patricia is hesitating, but Rick needs to blow off some frustration.

CUT TO:

INT. RICK'S LIVING ROOM.

RICK
Over there (pointing) a 10-foot
Skee-ball machine that I bought
her, (sarcastically) which she
played only twice! And over here is
a mini pool table. I couldn't fit a
full size one in here because
(sarcastically) "someone" has the
family house.

Rick got a quick jab in about their divorce by saying that.
He moves to the other side of the room.

RICK (CONT'D)
And last but not least, check out
the stadium seating I made for
movie night.

PATRICA

You know it's not easy for her either. She had two parents one day and two separate places to sleep the next.

RICK

Who's fault is that?

PATRICA

That's not what I am saying. I am saying, think of her. We both need to put our differences aside and do what's best for Cindy. I don't want to mess up her childhood. Or at least, I want to do the best, as a team, with you. To make her have the best one she can have with us as parents.

RICK

We disagree on almost everything ... but that one, I agree with.

PATRICA

Good, I am glad we are on the same page. We made a great kid.

RICK

Our love did!

She sensing their conversation might turn awkward. Patrica turns around and walks toward the door.

CUT TO.

INT. RICK'S FRONT DOOR

RICK

Oh, by the way, are you seeing someone?

PATRICIA

Good bye Rick.

Patricia leaves and Rick looks around the room. He is wondering if she saw anything neglectful in the house. He grabs the box of decorations and walks to the other room.

FADE OUT.

INT. BAR/RESTAURANT

Jonathan and his buddies are at the bar. His friends are trying way too hard to pick up on women but it seems the women are more interested in him. However, his focus is somewhere else, almost like he's bored to be there.

JONATHAN
I'll be right back.

He motions to the bartender for the location of the bathroom.

BARTENDER
Dining area!

She's pouring shots for the guys.

CUT TO.

INT. DINING ROOM OF RESTAURANT

Jonathan walks into the dining area. Two Ladies MARY and KAREN are eyeing up Jonathan as he walks by them. He gives them a polite gesture. Patricia walks in and sits down at the table.

MARY
About time.

PATRICIA
Hey, I'm a busy lady.

KAREN
I bet she was at Rick's.

MARY
Of course! (sarcastically) You're supposed to spend more time with your ex after your divorce.

PATRICIA
It's for Cindy, I dropped off-

KAREN
-It's always something, but remember now is your time.

PATRICIA
Time? Time for what?

MARY

Dating new guys! Any guys! To have fun!

PATRICIA

It's too soon.

KAREN

It's been a year, out with the old and in with the new, lady.

Patricia's purse slips off the back of her chair but she wasn't able to catch it fast enough. Jonathan just happened to be walking by and picked up her purse and handed it to her. Their eyes meet and a cute and awkward look is shared.

PATRICIA

Thank you!

JONATHAN

No problem, enjoy your meal ladies.

Jonathan walks away.

MARY

She definitely needs to start with him.

KAREN

Absolutely!

Patricia leans back to observe Jonathan.

CUT TO

INT. BAR/RESTAURANT

Jonathan rejoins his friends. Women surround him.

PATRICIA (O.S.)

No way! He's a party guy!

CUT TO

INT. DINING ROOM OF RESTAURANT

KAREN

Girl!! You need that!

Mary drooling.

MARY

No! I need that!

They focus back on each other as they start laughing. Mary leans into Patricia.

MARY (CONT'D)

Why not? This is your chance to live it up! If not for you, then shit ... for us!!

CUT TO

INT. BAR/RESTAURANT

Jonathan feels compelled to look in Patricia's direction. Something has him focusing on her and he doesn't know why.

CUT BACK TO

INT. DINING ROOM OF RESTAURANT

PATRICIA

No. No. My focus is Cindy. Speaking of her, I have to pick her up from my sister's.

MARY

Cindy isn't going to need you soon. Then there won't be any excuses.

Patricia gets up and is holding her purse.

PATRICIA

That's exactly why! My baby is growing so fast. Rick and I are trying to not make this hard on her.

KAREN

Hey! You didn't even eat.

PATRICIA

I appreciate the get together. Next one, I promise ... I'll have more time.

MARY

Doubtful! Tell Cindy we said hi.

Patricia leaves.

CUT TO

INT. BAR/RESTAURANT

Jonathan looks back to see that it's just Mary and Karen. He looks with curiosity.

CUT TO

INT. DINING ROOM OF RESTAURANT

Mary notices him watching them.

MARY
Oh, he is looking this way.

KAREN
Mary! You're engaged!!

MARY
(Frustrated) Yeah for two years.

Mary gets up.

MARY (CONT'D)
And still no wedding.

Mary takes a drink.

MARY (CONT'D)
Maybe this is the reason.

KAREN
Not worth it girl.

Mary starts to walk away.

KAREN(JOKINGLY) (CONT'D)
I'm going home to tell my husband,
I need new friends.

(In her mind, one friend won't do anything about her situation. And the other friend is trying to mess up her relationship.)

Karen's walks to the side area to pay for the meal and Mary returns.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Oh! I thought you were going home
with someone.

MARY

He wasn't there.

CUT TO

EXT. OUTSIDE FRONT OF THE BAR.

Jonathan is outside the front of the bar looking around.
DONNIE, his friend comes looking for him.

DONNIE

Man! Where are you going?

JONATHAN

I am not feeling good tonight
buddy. Apologize to the ladies for
me.

Jonathan walks away searching his pockets for his keys.

DONNIE (O.S.)

Dude! You drove me here.

FADE OUT

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN.

Patricia walks into her sister's kitchen. JENNIFER is
cleaning the counters.

PATRICIA

Hello, how are you and how are
things?

JENNIFER

Work, husband, kid, same old every
day. Maybe, I should follow in my
sister's footsteps and remove one
of those.

PATRICIA

Don't start.

JENNIFER

How is Rick?

PATRICIA

I think he was doing push-ups
before I came in.

JENNIFER

Sweet but pathetic.

PATRICIA

No! It's sweet.

Jennifer throws down her rag that she was cleaning with.

JENNIFER

Don't you dare, too many venting
days and too much stress. You made
the decision, you guys grew apart,
you took the big step. Don't go
back on that. It's not good for
you, Rick or Cindy.

PATRICIA

Don't you think we would all be
happier if we were all together.

JENNIFER

You're my sister. I love you. I
want what's best for you. I don't
care that Ricks a nice guy.
Question is ... Do you still love
him?

PATRICIA

Of course!

JENNIFER

I mean are you in love with him?

PATRICIA

Are you in love with Ben?

JENNIFER

Absolutely! I put up with his crap
everyday and every dumb thing he
does makes me know more and more
how much I love him.

PATRICIA

That doesn't make sense.

JENNIFER

Yes, it does.

CINDY, Patricia's 10 years old daughter, comes in the room.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Tell her Cindy.

CINDY

How did I get into this conversation?

PATRICIA (TO CINDY)

When are you not?

JENNIFER

Now Cindy ... is there anything you can possibly do that would make your mom stop loving you?

CINDY

I don't think so.

JENNIFER

I rest my case. Real love is that strong. You can do no wrong.

EMILY, Jennifer's 16-year-old daughter walks in.

EMILY

You must be talking about me.

JENNIFER

Ha Ha, No! I'm talking about your dad. You? I could get rid of.

EMILY

That is true, she does love him more than me.

They all laugh.

PATRICIA

Three hours Emily?

Patricia goes in her purse for money.

JENNIFER

That's her cousin, you shouldn't have to pay her.

PATRICIA

She picks her up and watches her.

Jennifer motions behind Patricia's back "Don't take the money".

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Don't listen to your mom. I'm sure she is silently yelling at you right now.

EMILY

I'm ignoring her (loudly directed towards Jennifer) since she loves dad more than me. Thank you!

Emily grabs the money and high-fives Cindy as she walks out the room.

JENNIFER

I definitely do now! Patty, don't pay her for helping family.

CINDY

It's OK aunt Jenny, Emily gives me a cut.

Both Patricia and Jennifer are shocked. Patricia points at Jennifer.

PATRICIA

They get this from you.

JENNIFER

Yeah, you're probably right.

Jennifer swings her arms open.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Give me a hug you little nugget.

Patricia also hugs Jennifer.

FADE OUT.

INT. CAR -PIZZA PLACE.

PATRICIA

What are we ordering?

Cindy removes her earbud.

CINDY

Cheese! Wait! You didn't order it?

PATRICIA

I kept asking you but you weren't listening. Your music was up too high.

CINDY

Daddy always orders it so I don't have to wait.

PATRICIA

Well, I didn't order ahead so you can stay in the car. Just lock the doors.

Cindy puts her earbuds back in while Patricia gets out.

CUT TO

EXT. CAR PARKING LOT -PIZZA PLACE.

Patricia motions for her to lock the doors as she's listening to the music. Cindy finally does. Patricia walks off to go into the carry out.

CUT TO

INT. PIZZA PLACE.

There is a line in the carryout. The guy in front of her turns around and it's Jonathan.

JONATHAN (HAPPILY SURPRISED)

Oh Wow!

PATRICIA (SHOCKED AND FIDGETY)

Oh! Oh! Ummm ... Hi!!

JONATHAN

Jonathan.

Jonathan puts his hand out to greet her. Patricia accepts and shakes his hand.

PATRICIA

Patty ... well Patricia, but everyone calls me Patty.

JONATHAN

Patricia. What a beautiful name. Nice to meet you Patricia.

(Patricia is a little taken back that Jonathan called her by her real name, signifying that he's different than everybody else.)

PATRICIA

Look, I am-

The line moves up. Jonathan turns forward to go a step closer.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I'm not-

Jonathan turns back around.

JONATHAN (SMILING CONFIDENTLY)

Not what?

Patricia is trying to find the right words not to offend him.

PATRICIA

Well, I saw all those girls at the bar.

Jonathan sees where her mind is going. He puts both hands up as to gesture for her to stop.

JONATHAN

Before you make a conclusion about me, please get to know me first.

Patricia sees the line moved again.

PATRICIA

I'm sure you are nice person but I have a daughter and I'm going through a divorce. I don't need to be hit on. If that is your intention?

Jonathan notice he is holding up the line so he steps forward then turns back around again.

JONATHAN

The daughter would scare me away and the divorce normally would turn me off. But oddly enough it doesn't. I don't know if I'm hitting on you because I have never felt this weird feeling of being drawn to anyone before. I'm just being honest.

Jonathan turns to order for his pizza.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

We can get these together. I'd like a small pepperoni and she'll have ...

He turns to Patricia to see what she wants.

PATRICIA (TO THE CASHIER)
No, no, no. Mine is separate.

PATRICIA (TO JONATHAN) (CONT'D)
But good choice. That's exactly
what I would have eaten.

JONATHAN
Well then I can get a large and we
can share.

PATRICIA
Thanks but I'm getting my daughter
a large cheese.

CASHIER
Sir! What is your order gonna be?

JONATHAN
OK. Make that a small cheese for me
please.

He turns around to pay.

Patricia smiles but doesn't let Jonathan see her. After
paying he steps aside to wait for his order.

PATRICIA
Large cheese please.

CASHIER
\$12.99

JONATHAN
So I guess we have a little bit of
waiting together.

Patricia shyly smiles but then the cashier hands Jonathan his
pizza. Jonathan looks surprised and disappointed.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Well, you still have to get yours.

The cashier then hands Patricia her pizza.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Oh, come on!

PATRICIA (SMILING)
Have a good night, Jonathan.

Patricia walks to the door as Jonathan watches her. She stops

and holds the door waiting for him. He smiles and walks fast to catch up with her.

JONATHAN
Does this-

PATRICIA
-443225

CUT TO

INT. CAR -PARKING LOT- PIZZA PLACE

Cindy sees Jonathan and her mom talking at the door outside the Pizza place. Jonathan is doing something like texting on his phone.

CUT TO

EXT. PIZZA PLACE- CARRYOUT DOOR

PATRICIA
OK, please don't let me regret
giving you my number.

JONATHAN
I won't, I just really want to get
to know you.

A car honks its horn.

JONATHAN
Your daughter I presume.

PATRICIA
Yeah, I have to go. I'm in trouble.

JONATHAN
Good luck!

CUT TO

INT. CAR -PARKING LOT- PIZZA PLACE

Patricia getting in and handing the pizza to Cindy.

CINDY
Who was that?

PATRICIA
A friend.

CINDY
A friend from where?

PATRICIA
The pizza place. You just saw us
come out there.

Patricia goes to start the car but stops.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
Don't be acting silly and don't
tell your dad. I just met the guy,
he might not even call.

CINDY
You gave him your number?

PATRICIA
Cindy, it's not big deal.

CINDY
Maybe not right now.

Cindy glances over to Jonathan and gives Jonathan a mean
look.

CUT TO

EXT. PIZZA PLACE- PARKING LOT

Jonathan watches them drive away. He gets in the car but
before leaving he quickly realized he left his pizza on the
roof of the car. Jonathan gets out to grab it. (Jonathan
realizes he's in trouble, he's never felt or behaved like
this before.)

FADE OUT

INT. RICK'S LIVING ROOM MORNING

Rick wakes up for work but when he comes down the stairs he sees Chinese food boxes and empty bottles everywhere. They are all over his living room and a long-haired bearded guy is passed out on his couch.

RICK
Mike! What did I tell you?

He kicks Mike awake.

RICK (CONT'D)
Keep it clean in case Patty stops over.

Mike falls off the couch.

MIKE
I don't need this nagging. I can get this from my mom.

RICK
Then buddy, stay home.

MIKE
You have the premier channels and by the way, if you would run the cable to the basement, like I asked, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

RICK
For the last time, you don't live here.

MIKE
You can believe that but look at the facts.

Mike waves his arms to point out his leftovers. Rick tries to clean up Mike's mess.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I'll make breakfast. You are running late for work.

Mike walks off to the kitchen. Rick still cleaning up.

RICK
I wonder why?

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S KITCHEN.

MIKE

I'm trying to help but just like most, you're under appreciating me.

Rick enters the kitchen.

MIKE (CONT'D)

When is Cindy coming over?

RICK

Next week, Patty asked to switch it so I'm working evening hours this week.

MIKE

That works out great for me. There are a lot of new R-rated shows to watch. Not for Cindy eyes if you know what I mean. Although, I do love popcorn nights with the little rascal.

RICK

How did you get in? Didn't I take your key back?

MIKE

Again, cable in the basement, easier access. Although they don't deliver food to the basement door by the way.

Rick's trying to get his stuff for work.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'll pay you back for the Chinese food. Cindy gave me access to your account. Or ... you could always tell me it's on you because friends help each other.

RICK

And how do you help me?

Mike hands him a loaf of bread.

MIKE

I got you breakfast.

CUT TO

INT. PATRICIA'S OFFICE

Patricia's at work, she answers her cell.

PATRICIA
Hello!

JONATHAN
Hello! Is this a bad time?

She's busy at work and thrown off by Jonathans unexpected call.

PATRICIA
This is ...?

JONATHAN
Jonathan!

PATRICIA
Oh Hello! Sorry! Very busy at work but I'm taking lunch soon if you want to call me back.

JONATHAN
Sure! Sorry to catch you at a bad time. How about you call me back when you are available? You have my number now.

PATRICIA
OK great! Bye for now.

Patricia hangs up and stops what she's doing, she's excited and nervous.

CUT TO

INT. JONATHAN APARTMENT.

Donnie knocks on Jonathan's door. Jonathan knows the knock pattern.

DONNIE
Man, those girls last night were crazy but fun. You missed out.

JONATHAN
I am glad you had a good time.

DONNIE
So, are you feeling any better?

JONATHAN
What do you mean?

DONNIE
Last night!

JONATHAN
Oh yeah!

DONNIE
Good, because we are hitting that
new club on 3rd Street tonight.

JONATHAN
I don't know a-

Jonathan cell phone rings.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Patricia!

Donnie's intrigued who is this lady.

DONNIE (SOFTY)
Patricia who?

JONATHAN
Yeah, I wanted to call you last
night but I figured it would be a
bad time with your daughter. And
yet I still called at a bad time.
(sarcastically joking)

DONNIE (SOFTLY)
Daughter?? What are you doing?

JONATHAN
Can we meet for lunch or coffee
this evening or tomorrow. Whenever
you are free?

Donnie's going nuts, he's never heard Jonathan talk this way.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Well, you tell me when you're
available and I'll make the time. --
OK, get back to me and have a great
day bye.

DONNIE
Who was that? Is she rich? Does she
have a sister? How old is this
lady?

Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN

I don't know the answer to any of those questions, yet. But I'm looking forward to finding out.

DONNIE

Man! What's going on with you? When did you meet this woman?

JONATHAN

The pizza place last night, well actually first that restaurant bar we were at last night.

DONNIE

This isn't like you ... and a kid man? That comes with emotional attachment. I didn't think you were that cold. Don't play a mom.

JONATHAN

I'm not playing anyone and I'm generally interested in her.

DONNIE

Why?

JONATHAN

I don't know, she's different.

DONNIE

But a kid man and dad? Are you ready for that?

JONATHAN

She has an ex so the kid has a father.

DONNIE

Oh my God, that makes things worse. I need a drink, what's the hardest stuff you got in here.

Donnie walks off to make himself a drink.

CUT TO:

INT. RICK'S CAR

Rick is in his car and he gets a call from Patty.

RICK
Everything OK!

PATRICIA
Yeah, well - could you get Cindy
today?

RICK
I thought you wanted next week to
be mine.

PATRICIA
No, just for today. If it's not too
much trouble. Emily can't get her
from school.

RICK
OK, I'll get someone to cover for
me. Team Cindy right?

PATRICIA
Thanks Rick.

RICK
Hey, we got each other's back. Take
care of your stuff, I'll get her.

CUT TO

INT. PATRICIA - OFFICE

Patricia hangs up. She's acting like she's doing something
wrong. She takes a deep breath and calls Jonathan.

PATRICIA
Hi! Can we meet maybe at six?- OK,
I'll text you where.

CUT TO

INT. PARKING LOT OF SCHOOL

Cindy gets in the car with Rick.

CINDY
Why are you picking me up?

RICK
You're not happy to see me?

CINDY
Of course but I thought we had
plans next week.

RICK
Just means we can put up the
decorations early. Does that sound
like a good plan?

CINDY
Are meals included?

RICK
Always!

CINDY
And what might that be?

RICK
Well, wherever I stop for the
food. It will be ready and there
are 10 different places we have
eaten from here to the house. It's
your job young lady to guess the
right one.

CINDY
What if it's a new place?

RICK
Why would I risk ruining your day
with bad food when I know what all
your favorites are, buckle up.

CINDY
What if it's all 10?

RICK
That was just on your birthday. Ten
places for 10 years old. I told you
don't expect it every year.

Cindy laughs as they drive off.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Cindy and Rick walk into the house with a pizza.

RICK

So she got you a pizza yesterday?
That's information that should have
been shared with me.

CINDY

Yeah but I couldn't enjoy it. I
kept thinking about that suit guy
Mom gave her number too.

Mike walks in from the other room.

MIKE

Hold the phone, what did she just
say?

CINDY

Hi uncle Mike.

She hugs Mike.

MIKE

Buddy, you gotta tell this little
rascal to back up on her
conversation.

RICK

Cindy, what did you mean by that-
your mom and -

MIKE

-Some guy!

CINDY

We got pizza.

MIKE

Yeah, yeah, I got three other ones
in the kitchen. I wasn't expecting
company this evening.

Mike gives a dirty look to Rick.

RICK

Cindy, the guy?

CINDY

Mom told me not to tell you because
he's just a friend.

Behind Cindy's back Mike is going crazy. (He is insulted, his
feeling are hurt for Rick who is his best friend.)

RICK
Where did she meet this new friend?

CINDY
At the pizza shop.

MIKE
I'll be right back.

Mike storms out of the house.

CINDY
Where is he going?

RICK
It's Mike, I can't even tell you
why he's here. Cindy-?

Rick's waiting for her to continue.

CINDY
Mom said..

RICK
But you already did.

CINDY
A guy who looked like he was
modeling suits. I didn't talk to
him. I was in the car but I didn't
like him. He just kept watching
mommy walk back to the car.

RICK
Well your mom is a smart lady, she
knows what she's doing.

CINDY
She left you.

RICK
Yeah there are certain things you
should just keep to yourself.

CINDY
I'm sorry!

RICK
I was joking, I love you baby girl.

Cindy points at him with her finger.

RICK (CONT'D)
Sorry just girl, let's eat so we
can call you a big girl.

Cindy gives her dad I mean look.

RICK (CONT'D)
I knew it was wrong as soon as I
said it.

CINDY
Let's spike uncle Mike's pizza with
hot sauce.

RICK
That's my girl.

(Rick plays it off but obviously he's concerned about Patty dating.)

CUT TO

EXT. JONATHAN FRONT DOOR.

Donnie's at the door when Jonathan is leaving.

DONNIE
Since you're not going with us
tonight, Monica and Amy bailed and
they were bringing friends.

JONATHAN
It's a new club. Look at it as a
chance to meet new people. I have
to go.

Donnie is left standing there watching Jonathan leave.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S KITCHEN

Rick is putting pizza slices on two plates. He's looking at his cell. Mike walks into the house.

CINDY(O.S)
Are you going to watch and eat with
us?

MIKE(O.S)
You know I don't turn down pizza.

Mike enters the kitchen.

MIKE (CONT'D)
There isn't any suit guy at the
pizza shop.

RICK
You really thought you could track
the guy down?

MIKE
Hurt my boy? I'm gonna be looking
for you.

Rick grabs the two plates with pizza.

RICK
Come on buddy let's eat, by the way
that is your plate. Cindy went
crazy with the hot sauce. You might
wanna switch those slices.

MIKE
No way, it makes her laugh, I'll
take it.

Rick chuckles at the fact that Mike is weird but so loyal to
the family with a good heart.

RICK
You are something else buddy.

MIKE
Does that mean I get cable down
there?

Rick starts to walk out and stops.

RICK
Part of me really wants to call
her.

Mike is getting drinks from the refrigerator.

MIKE
Forget that! Can you track her
phone? I'll go!

Mike points at the door.

CINDY(O.S)
You guys are missing half of this.

RICK
Let's enjoy the movie.

CUT TO

INT. RESTAURANT- EVENING

Patricia shows up at the restaurant, Jonathan is already there.

PATRICIA
Have you been here long?

JONATHAN
A little bit.

He gets up to pull her chair out for her.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Well played lady.

PATRICIA
What?(Smiling)

JONATHAN
You didn't deliberately choose the place that I could run into my friends or possibly associates.

PATRICIA
Big word, could have many meanings?

Patricia sits down and Jonathan does the same.

JONATHAN
Well the laughs on you because our dining is causing a stir on your side of the fence.

Patricia's puzzled, she looks around but doesn't see anyone she knows.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Behind you.

Patricia turns around Karen and Mary are a few tables away watching them.

PATRICIA
I don't think those two ever eat at home. (Laughing)

JONATHAN

Good friends or associates?

PATRICIA

Friends! But good enough that I will be on the phone most of the night answering questions.

JONATHAN

Fire away, I'm an open book.

PATRICIA

Okay, what is this focus you have on me? I'm grounded, my daughter comes first. In your world, I'm called someone with baggage.

The waitress comes over.

JONATHAN

Whatever the lady wants, I will have the same.

PATRICIA

Thanks for putting me on the spot.

Patricia grabs a menu very quickly, she takes a few seconds to look at it.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Can you give us a few minutes.

WAITRESS

Sure, just flag me down.

JONATHAN

Thank you.

PATRICIA

See, I don't like that.

JONATHAN

Being asked what you want.

PATRICIA

No, being caught off guard.

JONATHAN

Sorry, back to your question. The mere fact that you know I'm focused on you leads me to believe maybe you have the same feeling as well.

PATRICIA

Yes, I'm attracted to you but I don't know anything else.

JONATHAN

I was engaged at a young age. 20 if you must know. Heart broken when it ended. I focused on my career. Cut to years later, successful and for the last few years I've been living it up. My friends, well the few that are close, use me a little bit but they were there when I really needed them. Lately feeling a change, maybe getting older.

PATRICIA

Midlife crisis?

JONATHAN

Honestly, I don't know. I know I got hit by something when I helped you with your purse.

PATRICIA

Weird feeling almost like time slows down a bit.

JONATHAN

You felt it as well?

PATRICIA

No, just guessing, seeing if you were playing the sappy card.

JONATHAN

I really felt something, I can't explain it.

Patricia flags the waitress.

PATRICIA

Yeah, I did too.

(Jonathan smiles at hearing that from Patricia. Both of them feeling something when they first met is a good start.)

The waitress pulls out her pen.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Are you going to pay for this?

JONATHAN

Of course!

PATRICIA

Two of the most expensive meals you have.

WAITRESS

And your drinks?

PATRICIA

He can choose those.

JONATHAN

Any bottle of red wine will do, thank you.

The waitress smiles and grabs the menu as she walks away from them.

PATRICIA

Here's your chance to duck out to the bathroom for your exit.

JONATHAN

I know you're scared, I know you didn't want to meet me. But I'm not leaving unless you asked me to.

Patricia shocked to hear this from Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

You might not know it just sitting across from you my heart is pounding out of my chest. I'm way more scared than you are Patricia.

PATRICIA

This is not a good time for me.

JONATHAN

I don't think we get the choice in that. A year ago, I wouldn't have let these feelings even get to me.

Patricia thinking about it.

PATRICIA

And I was still married.

Jonathan throws his hands up to agree maybe this is a good time for both of them.

JONATHAN

Just dinner. Maybe next week lunch or a movie. I am not in a race. I just want to get to know you.

PATRICIA

Fine! But we share the bill tonight. Sorry about the order.

JONATHAN

If that's what you want. I'm a hip, modern, up-to-date guy. You can gladly pay for everything if it makes you happy.

PATRICIA

Nice try.

Jonathan smiles but he's OK with this being a costly evening. Patricia's cell is blowing up.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Nope Ladies, they are going to have to wait until later.

She turns her cell phone off.

FADE OUT

EXT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT

Jonathan comes home to find his friends in his apartment. He leaves to let them have fun. Jonathan pulls out his cell. He is thinking about Patricia but knows it's too soon. He just goes for a happy walk.

CUT TO:

INT. RICK'S FRONT DOOR

Patricia shows up at Rick's.

PATRICIA

Is Cindy ready?

RICK

It's 9:30 she's asleep.

PATRICIA

Do you want to carry her to the car.

RICK

No! If she gets up she will be up all night and fall asleep in school. She did her homework, I'll take her to school in the morning.

PATRICIA

I wish you would've told me so I could've went straight home.

RICK

Patty, I texted you 10 times and left multiple messages trying to call you.

She checks her cell, it was still off from the restaurant.

PATRICIA

I'm sorry.

RICK

We are supposed to be best friends. Team Cindy. Anytime she asked about you, I had to divert the question. I didn't even know if you were OK.

PATRICIA

It was work, just a crazy day.

RICK

I thought it was hard to handle our split. You lying to me, I don't even know how to handle that.

MIKE(O.S.)

Yeah!

Mike shouts off from the distance.

PATRICIA

Mike go to bed. Look, I don't know what you are thinking.

RICK

Cindy told me about your new friend.

PATRICIA

That doesn't mean I was with that guy.

RICK

Were you?

PATRICIA

Yes, but you jump to conclusions. That has always been our problem, ask and get the facts first.

RICK

Patty, I never had to ask, we told each other everything. Why would you just lie to me?

Mike from a distance again but getting closer.

MIKE (O.S.)

Nice! Drop the Mic on her buddy.

Patricia's almost in tears turns away to leave.

RICK

Where are you going? Please, come in, we are supposed to support each other.

PATRICIA

Rick you can't handle this, I don't know if I can. I wasn't looking for anyone. I'm not trying to hurt you. I'm just confused right now.

RICK

Well, I'm sure Cindy would be happy if she woke up and you were here.

PATRICIA

I need to change clothes and shower before work.

RICK

Leave early and run home. I'll still take her to school.

PATRICIA

I can't sleep here, it's too loud.

RICK

Mike go home!

Mike gets up all frustrated and grabs his stuff, he starts to leave.

MIKE

This is so wrong.

He runs back in to get the pizza boxes.

PATRICIA

Thanks Mike.

Mike just growls at her.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
I'll sleep on the couch.

RICK
Are you sure? Mike's been there for
a few days now.

PATRICIA
OK, you have the couch.

RICK
Welcome home.

PATRICIA
That's not funny.

RICK
A little bit - it is.

Patricia heads up the stairs.

RICK (CONT'D)
Hey, your business is your business
but I'm here if you ever need to
talk.

PATRICIA
I know - good night.

FADE OUT.

INT. RICK'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

Cindy comes in to wakes up Patricia.

CINDY
What happened?

PATRICIA
Got too late but I needed to see
you. Your dad's gonna take you to
school because I have to run home
before work.

RICK (O.S.)
I've made pancakes already.

They get out of bed.

PATRICIA
Oh my God! Your dad's pancakes.

CINDY
They're the best.

Cindy runs out.

CINDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
See you downstairs.

Patricia sits back down on the bed remembering better days and family breakfast times.

CUT TO

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Patricia's cell rings it's Jonathan calling. She turns off her cell phone very quickly and continues to eat her pancakes.

RICK
Eat up! Everyone has to be somewhere, work or school, the day isn't going to wait for us.

CINDY
Where is uncle Mike?

Patricia starts to talk but Rick cuts her off.

RICK
Someone spiked his pizza! I'm sure that didn't have anything to do with him leaving.

CINDY
It was so funny. Daddy and I were crying laughing. He was grabbing our drinks.

PATRICIA
I thought Mike loves hot sauce.

Rick motioning behind Cindy's back that Cindy doesn't know that.

CINDY (LAUGHING)
Not that much.

RICK
Let's go, eat up.

Patricia kisses Cindy who is still eating.

PATRICIA
Love you sweetie, I'll see you
after school.

She tries to leave but Rick hands her a bag.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
What's this?

RICK
I'm not gonna make Cindy lunch and
not you? That would be rude.

Patricia smirks at him. She knows Rick is playing a good guy
and he is but she doesn't need him showing off.

PATRICIA
OK. Later!

CINDY
Mommy say thank you.

PATRICIA
Thank you! How come you guys didn't
put up the decorations yet.

RICK
How come you had to work so late.

Patricia knows Rick was trying to get her back for that
decoration statement.

PATRICIA
Well, I guess we all got busy.

Patricia gives Rick an evil eye as to say well played.

CINDY
Christmas is in three weeks.

RICK
I hope we all get what we want this
year.

CINDY
There's only one thing I want. They
made a new version of the town
player.

RICK
Don't you already have that.

PATRICIA

It's new. She has the old last year thing.

RICK

We could probably fix the other one up in a new way.

PATRICIA

I have to go. Don't worry, we'll get your dad updated this Christmas.

Patricia leaves.

CINDY

You know all my friends are getting it.

RICK

If all your friends got poison ivy would you want that?

CINDY

Dad, be serious.

RICK

Remember all the RC cars we fixed and had fun with or how I showed you how to build a bike and jump a ramp?

CINDY

Yeah, I still have the scars.

She tries to show him her elbow.

RICK

OK, Bad point! Just saying to appreciate something is more -

CINDY

-Dad I'm almost 11. Wanting things, that's who I am and that helps me to develop.

Rick laughs

CINDY (CONT'D)

-And socially you are going to make me awkward, if I don't get it. Do you want me to be the weird kid?

RICK
Uncle Mike is weird

Cindy puts her dish in the sink.

CINDY
You are just proving my point, get
with the times old
man.(sarcastically)

RICK
Yeah, yeah get your book bag.

FADE OUT

INT. PATRICIA OFFICE

Karen walks in Patricia's office.

KAREN
You have some explaining to do?

PATRICIA
Not you too.

She's looking at her cell.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
He keeps calling and texting. I
don't know what to say?

KAREN
"Yes" is a good word.

Karen walks up nexts to her to peek at the phone.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Maybe he'll get you to say a lot of
yeses. How did this happen?

PATRICIA
I wish I knew, Rick is jealous.
Even though he isn't trying to show
it.

KAREN
Rick knows?!

PATRICIA
Long story.

KAREN
I got time, we're at work.

PATRICIA
Your boss might not like that.

KAREN
My boss is the one in over her
head.

PATRICIA
Maybe, we'll see.

KAREN
From my angle last night that guy
really is into you. Mary, all she
saw was you were dating a hot guy.

Karen leans up against Patty's chair.

KAREN (CONT'D)
But that's not what I saw.

Patricia cell rings.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Patty, do you like him yes or no?

PATRICIA
I don't know.

Karen clicks on Patricia cell.

KAREN
Stop lying to yourself.

PATRICIA
Jonathan, sorry, can you hold on a
second?

KAREN(SOFTLY)
You're allowed to be happy! That's
why you got a divorce, remember?

Karen leaves.

PATRICIA
Jonathan ... sorry. Another busy
day.

JONATHAN

Look, I don't want to bother you.
Just be honest with me.

Patricia doesn't speak after a few seconds.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

Patricias weighing her options.

PATRICIA

Lunch?

JONATHAN

Name the time and place and I'll be
there.

CUT TO

INT. A LITTLE CAFE.

Jonathan walks up to Patricia's table and sits down.

JONATHAN

Were you close to here?

PATRICIA

I work across the street.

There is an awkward silence between the two of them.

JONATHAN

Did I do something wrong? We had a
three hour dinner. I heard all
about Cindy, Rick, your sister
Jennifer and her family.

PATRICIA

Yeah, so why are you still here?

JONATHAN

I like you.

PATRICIA

Is me being one of your conquest
worth all this?

JONATHAN

I was hurt before so I would never
knowingly do that to anyone else.

(MORE)

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

If I am coming on too strong it's because I think we could make each other happy. Why are you fighting this?

PATRICIA

Do you truly have any idea of what you're getting into? Cindy alone will break you. I'm just trying to save everyone the heartache.

JONATHAN

Well, I guess it's time I meet her Patricia.

PATRICIA

Are you nuts we only had one date?

JONATHAN

Yes but you will never accept happiness if it causes your family problems - and I'll accept it. I'm not asking for a chance with you - giving me a chance with them.

PATRICIA (LAUGHING)

No way!

JONATHAN

It solves all your excuses. If they don't like me, we don't have to continue.

PATRICIA

They won't. It's unfair.

JONATHAN

Maybe. I am willing to go this route for you.

PATRICIA

I have to go back to work.

She gets up, Jonathan out of respect stands as well. Patricia doesn't know how to say goodbye with a kiss or a handshake. She just ends up waving.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Don't you have to work?

JONATHAN

Have a great day Patricia.

PATRICIA

No really, I know you have your own business but when do you work?

JONATHAN

My business runs even when I'm not there so whenever. I'm available for you.

Patricia a little disgusted at how perfect he is, she walks off.

An elderly lady dining patron was listening to the conversation.

ELDERLY LADY

Never thought being too perfect was a bad thing.

JONATHAN

Me neither but I guess it's a flaw. Enjoy your lunch.

ELDERLY LADY

If you're interested in someone older, I'm available.

JONATHAN(SMILE)

Thank you! I will keep that in mind.

The older lady blushes.

CUT TO.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN.

Patricia walks in to Jennifers kitchen.

JENNIFER

I heard rumors. Why haven't I met him.

PATRICIA

Not even funny, I need advice.

JENNIFER

Go on a date and have a good time. It's not that complicated.

PATRICIA

After one date he wants to meet everyone.

JENNIFER

Well, aren't you special?

Patricia puts her head down in confusion.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Damn you're serious! You just met him didn't you?

Patricia with her head still down

PATRICIA

Yeah!

JENNIFER

Run! He's too clingy tell Rick and Mike to scare him off.

PATRICIA

No, no, he wants to meet them too; to put me at ease with dating him.

JENNIFER

Still, he's an idiot. Even if one of us likes him, the odds of Cindy, Rick and me approving. He might as well play the lottery.

PATRICIA

Well job wise, he doesn't need to play, apparently.

JENNIFER

He's got my vote.

Patricia picks her head up.

PATRICIA

Thank you for putting a price on me.

JENNIFER

I was just kidding. Between you and Rick, you guys do pretty well. But I still don't see your dilemma. Meeting us will end it.

Patricia stares at her sister.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Unless you don't want it to end.

Jennifer walks up to her and playfully smacks her shoulder.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

This is why we wanted you to date
before the right guy came along.

Cindy walks in.

CINDY

What guy? Mom's friend, Mom's
boyfriend.

She laughs.

CINDY (CONT'D)

That sounds funny.

Neither Patricia nor Jennifer were laughing.

JENNIFER

So Cindy ... what would you think
if your mom went on a date with
someone?

CINDY

I don't know. I guess if it made
her happy.

Emily walks in.

EMILY

Don't forget your book bag.

CINDY

Just not that weirdo from the pizza
shop.

Cindy leaves to get her stuff. Patricia puts her head down
again.

EMILY

What's going on?

JENNIFER

Aunt Patty might be seeing someone
Cindy might not like.

Emily looks back to make sure Cindy isn't there.

EMILY

Don't tell her. No one has the
right to know who you're doing
things with.

JENNIFER

If I was you, I would stop talking because I don't think you are giving advice. I think you're talking about personal experience.

EMILY

Maybe a little of both. Wouldn't you like to know?

JENNIFER (YELLS)

Ben!

EMILY

Touchy -narcing on me.

Emily pointed at her eyes and then her mom.

JENNIFER

Ben- Emily wants to talk to you.

EMILY

I'm out, I'll call you for bail money later.

JENNIFER

Not funny young lady, I can still ground you.

Emily leaving.

EMILY (O.S.)

You can try.

JENNIFER

See what you are going to have to look forward to.

Cindy comes back in.

CINDY

What did I miss?

JENNIFER

A hug and a kiss from me.

They get ready to leave.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Tomorrow you and I have plans after work. We'll take care of the situation together. Don't stress.

CINDY
Mommy stressing?

JENNIFER
Of course! Christmas is coming
quick. There's a lot to do.

CINDY
Speaking of that ... where am I
sleeping Christmas Eve?

PATRICIA
At home.

CINDY
What about daddy? He won't be there
Christmas morning.

PATRICIA
We will figure it out.

JENNIFER
You guys can always spend the night
over here.

CINDY
Not the same Auntie Jenny. There
are traditions.

JENNIFER
Oh sorry Missy, I wasn't thinking.

FADE OUT

INT. JONATHAN'S HOME OFFICE.

Jonathan is on his computer when his cell rings.

JONATHAN
Patricia! What a delight, how are
things?

PATRICIA
I got the rug rat in the bath and
I'm making dinner. Can you text me
your address? - My sister and I
want to swing by tomorrow after
work say 4:30.

JONATHAN
Perfect! I'll get to meet Jennifer!
Probably the best first step for
me.

PATRICIA
She's not going to be a pushover.

JONATHAN
I wouldn't expect it. I'm figuring
she's going to be pretty
straightforward.

Jonathan text Patricia.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
I just sent you my apartment
information.

CUT TO

INT. PATRICIA KITCHEN

PATRICIA
You live on the east side.

JONATHAN
Yes ma'am! Closer to my business.

Patricia pours noodles in a pot.

PATRICIA
So what are you doing now besides
chatting with me?

Patricia is enjoying the sneaky phone call.

JONATHAN
Working. Actually or rather
checking up on things. A business
can run without you but the people
you leave in charge can sink things
fast if you don't keep track of
everything.

PATRICIA
OK well, I don't want to bother
you.

JONATHAN
You're never a bother.

Jonathan is working on the computer while talking to her.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
What are your plans after dinner?

PATRICIA

Same thing most nights, a fight to get her to finish the homework. Then a small argument about how she's still too young for the movies that all of her friends already have seen.

JONATHAN

I really can't wait to meet her.

PATRICIA

She will be the last one.

JONATHAN

Oh great, so Rick is up next?

PATRICIA

Just focus on the first round that you need to get through tomorrow.

Cindy from upstairs yells down.

CINDY(O.S.)

Mom, where is my sloth PJs?

Patricia yelling back.

PATRICIA(LOUD)

It should be in the dryer.

She talks normal with Jonathan.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I have to go.

JONATHAN

Bye-bye. Text me later if you get a chance.

Patricia giggling and hangs up.

CINDY (O.S.)

It's still wet!! It was in the washer!

Patricia runs out.

PATRICIA

I'm sorry it will dry fast.

CUT TO.

INT. JONATHAN'S HOME OFFICE.

Jonathan calls Donnie.

JONATHAN

I need your help. Call Monica and Amy, have them come over here as soon as possible.

Jonathan gets up and starts moving things around.

CUT TO.

INT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT

Donnie shows up with Monica and Amy.

JONATHAN

Ladies, I need a big favor.

MONICA

Going with the direct approach Jonathan.

AMY

Still probably work for me.

Donnie closes Jonathan front door.

DONNIE

Do you have enough liquor here?

JONATHAN

That's one of the problems, get rid of all the liquor. Give it to Brandon if you have to but it has to go.

DONNIE

I'm confused.

AMY

I second that.

JONATHAN

Tomorrow, I'm meeting the sister of a lady I really like so I need to Un-bachelor my apartment.

MONICA

So we're here to make you look good.

JONATHAN

We're all friends. I need help and a female perspective would be a big help.

DONNIE

Buddy, we came to party!

JONATHAN

You can do that any night.

MONICA

This is lame.

Monica leaves.

AMY

Quick question, why haven't you ever tried to hook up with me.

JONATHAN

I value our friendship. It's important. Not to mention, Donnie has a crush on you.

DONNIE

Bro what?!

Amy looks at Donnie.

AMY

Is that true?

DONNIE (SHYLY)

Maybe a little.

AMY

You're sweet but a moron. OK, how old is this lady?

JONATHAN

You know, I don't know. You can't really ask a woman her age.

AMY

Good point!

DONNIE

She has a kid and an ex.

JONATHAN

Cindy's 10 I know that.

Monica comes back.

MONICA

Are you guys really not coming.

AMY

No! Hold on.

JONATHAN

Amy! Help me out.

AMY

I am Jonathan! You know better than anyone, changing yourself will doom it from the start. Just be you.

Amy puts her hands up in the air showing the apartment.

AMY (CONT'D)

If she doesn't accept it, whether you want it or not, she's not right for you.

Amy leaves with Monica.

DONNIE

Whatever you wanna do man, I'll help.

JONATHAN

She's got a point but I'm sure there's some stuff that we can move or hide so it won't put me on the spot as much. Look around.

Jonathan picks up a few things.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Try to think like a woman.

DONNIE

Really?!

Jonathan's frantically walking around his apartment.

CUT TO.

EXT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT PARKING AREA - NEXT DAY

Jennifer and Patricia pull up to Jonathan's apartment complex.

PATRICIA

Now, you are going to give him a fair chance, right?

JENNIFER

Karen and Marie said he was good looking so he's got my vote already.

PATRICIA

Be serious.

JENNIFER

You tell me what you want and I'll do it. Do you want me to scare him off? Done! Or welcome him with open arms?

PATRICIA

Just be fair. I want your honest opinion.

JENNIFER

You're gonna get that good or bad but what's the goal?

PATRICIA

I haven't gotten that far yet.

They are at the door.

JENNIFER

You keep lying to yourself. This will be difficult for everyone.

Patricia knocks on the door. After a few seconds and now getting antsy.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Come on dude! Let's get this show on the road.

PATRICIA(SARCASTICALLY)

Nice!

Jonathan opens the door.

JONATHAN

Hello! You must be Jennifer.

JENNIFER

Who else would I be?

JONATHAN

I am delighted to meet you.

JENNIFER

Are you gonna let us in?

JONATHAN

Of course, my apologies.

The ladies walk in and Jonathan takes a deep breath before shutting the door.

PATRICIA

You have a nice apartment.

JONATHAN

Thank you Patricia, that was very kind of you to say.

JENNIFER

Buddy you seem a bit high class for my sister. Doesn't fit.

PATRICIA(OFFENDED)

What?

JENNIFER

You're a nice person, dress well but this guy is above your league. What's your angle?

JONATHAN

Maybe your interpretation of your sister is different than mine. I see someone that fascinates me, someone I want to be around. I don't see a status level.

Jennifer starts walking around.

JENNIFER

Well played. I'll give you credit for that.

She notice the liquor bottles.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

You have whiskey and wine.

JONATHAN

Beers are in the refrigerator if you prefer that.

JENNIFER

She has a young daughter.

JONATHAN

That would never be here unattended.

PATRICIA
He does not have to change for-

Jennifer puts her hand up to stop Patricia from interrupting her.

JENNIFER
- Her ex is still in love with her.

PATRICIA
What are you!-

Again Jennifer stopped Patricia and controls the situation and waits for Jonathan's answer.

JONATHAN
Rick has good taste. I definitely understand why his feelings are still there.

JENNIFER
Job, money. Any skeletons in your closet?

JONATHAN
Nothing is guaranteed but pretty set for now and everyone has a past. However, I'm more concerned about my future with your sister.

JENNIFER
You have some big-

PATRICIA
-Jenny!

JENNIFER
No really! I mean this.

She walks over and hugs Jonathan.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Nice hug.

JONATHAN
She wouldn't know we haven't done that yet.

PATRICIA
Thanks sis.

Jenny pulls back from Jonathan.

JENNIFER

You're going through all this trouble and you haven't even got anywhere yet?

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Marry him.

JONATHAN

Wow! I thought I was coming on too strong.

JENNIFER

Well, we know his limitations but get in there and at least take a hug shot.

PATRICIA

Don't push it on me.

JENNIFER

Somebody has to.

Jonathan opens his arms.

PATRICIA

You're supposed to be tough on him.

Jennifer pushes Patricia into Jonathan's arms. Patricia is so uncomfortable and Jonathan smiles.

JONATHAN

I have your blessing?

JENNIFER

More than that, you have my thanks in case you two don't see it.

Jennifer looks around.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

He couldn't be more perfect for you. You were never going to date anyone. You were unhappy with Rick. However, comparing guys to Rick is a big problem because Rick is a good guy.

Jennifer walks around the apartment.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

You have a fighting chance with this dude. As long as Rick don't hurt him.

JONATHAN

You said he was a good guy.

JENNIFER

Good or not, you are messing with people's family. You will bring out the worst out of him for sure.

JONATHAN

I kinda understand but I am hoping for the best.

JENNIFER

You can let go of her now.

Patricia steps away from Jonathan.

JONATHAN

One down two to go.

JENNIFER

I suggest you guys go on dates see if it develops that far. I understand you have to go above and beyond to kick this one into gear.

Jennifer points at Patricia.

PATRICIA

Hey you're supposed to be on my side.

JENNIFER

I am but you are your own baggage.

Patricia looks at Jonathan.

JONATHAN

She said it, I didn't.

PATRICIA

You think that way also, don't you?

JONATHAN

Patricia, all do respect, it should have been dates, hanging out, movies.

Jonathan turns to Jennifer.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Other stuff, no offense.

JENNIFER

No, you're good. I am with you.

JONATHAN

Then hey, let's go to lunch with my amazing sister.

Jennifer high-fives Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Oh, she loves you. Maybe a pizza and drinks with Rick. Wow, they're best friends. Let's see if Rick can help with Cindy.

JENNIFER

He's got a point, Rick could sway the little one.

JONATHAN

Instead, I'm walking a tight rope.

JENNIFER

Voluntarily willing to.

JONATHAN

Yes-thank you!

JENNIFER

Never put the blame that way buddy.

She again points at Patricia.

PATRICIA

Well this is't going how I expected. What is this? gGang up on me day?

JONATHAN

No- I'm putting out all the effort.

JENNIFER

Nooo! Bad choice of words.

JONATHAN

Scratch that, putting in the-

PATRICIA

-Look stop! I get it. I'm making this way too difficult for him. Rick and Cindy are my world.

Patricia starts to get emotional.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

You can crush me but you are not hurting them.

JONATHAN

Are you sure you should be divorced?

Patricia and Jennifer are shock to hear that from him.

JENNIFER

Oh buddy! You were doing so good, up until there.

JONATHAN

I'm confused.

JENNIFER

Because you're used to dating single floozies.

JONATHAN

And, no offense, but explain this better to me please.

JENNIFER

A family! Divorce doesn't stop family, that's her wall.

JONATHAN

OK! That one is rough for me to understand. Lost my parents when I was young. - I'm guessing we take a break until you are ready?

JENNIFER

I think it's the other way around.

Jonathan is even more confused.

PATRICIA

We need to go for now.

They leave with Jonathan doubting everything and wondering what he is doing. He sits down on his couch. There is a knock on the door. Jonathan was hoping it was them. Donnie walks in to the apartment.

JONATHAN

What were you outside watching?

DONNIE
Basically, but I couldn't read
lips. It looked like it was going
good up until the end.

Jonathan depressed he sits back down on the couch.

JONATHAN
I still don't even know what the
fixation is. I never had this
before.

DONNIE
Voodoo?

Jonathan doesn't like that answer and gives him a dirty look.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
I say we hit the club and let the
Christmas magic fix everything.

JONATHAN
Three weeks away.

DONNIE
And when it gets here everything
will be great. Until then, let's
get on Santa's naughty list.

JONATHAN
Not in the mood.

DONNIE
You owe me.

JONATHAN
How do you figure that?

DONNIE
You outed me with Amy.

JONATHAN
True! Sorry but you should've said
something to her earlier.

DONNIE
Not all of us can be confident like
you buddy.

JONATHAN
Confidence isn't helping me here in
this situation

DONNIE

Anyway, OK, maybe it wasn't a bad thing. She did invite me out but I need my wing man, please!

Jonathan thinks about it.

JONATHAN

Fine! Let's go.

Donnie super excited and they head out.

FADE OUT

INT. RICK'S FRONT DOOR- NIGHT

Someone knocks on the door. Jonathan's there as Mike opens the door.

JONATHAN

Hello!

MIKE

Well dressed for a delivery man.
Where is my Chinese food?

JONATHAN

No! I'm here to speak to you. I'm not drunk but I did have some courage juice.

Jonathan whispers.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Is Cindy here?

MIKE

Buddy, you're gonna have a badddd night.

JONATHAN

No, I don't want to meet her until I talk to you.

MIKE

Come on in.

Mike looks down the street to make sure no one is a witnesses to him letting Jonathan in.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Rick comes home and steps on a tree bulb by the front door.

RICK(YELLS)

Mike!

Mike comes running.

RICK (CONT'D)

Did you spill the decorations?

MIKE

Things got messy with the struggle.

RICK

What were you struggling with?

Mike move out of the way to reveal. Jonathan is in a chair in the corner wrapped with Christmas lights.

RICK (CONT'D)

Have you lost it?! I knew it would happen one day. I have to turn you in.

MIKE

What! It's like the perfect present. He's the guy messing with Patty.

Rick doubts him and removes the wrapping paper from Jonathan's mouth.

RICK

Sorry!

Jonathan is cheery when meeting Rick.

JONATHAN

I call her Patricia, you must be Rick.

Rick looks at Mike shocked that he was telling the truth.

MIKE

Bam!! The gift that keeps on giving. I'm gonna go get the hot sauce ready.

RICK

Let me get this stuff off of you.

Rick tries to untie Jonathan.

JONATHAN

No need, he really doesn't know how to tie.

Jonathan moves around and half the wrapping falls off of him.

RICK

What are you doing here?

JONATHAN

I might want to join your family.

RICK

What?

JONATHAN

Not might, I do.

RICK

You show up here at my house unannounced and drunk?

JONATHAN

Excuse me sir, tipsy. There is a difference.

Mike comes back with hot sauce and a fry pan. He sees Jonathan is loose and goes after him. Rick stops Mike and pulls out his cell to call Patty.

RICK

Is Cindy in bed yet?

PATRICIA

No! Cindy your dad on the phone.

RICK

No! ----- Oh hey pumpkin, have a great night, love you. Can I speak to your mother?

CINDY (O.S.)

Mom!! You're in trouble! He called you "mother".

PATRICIA

Go to sleep young lady! -- Rick what's the matter?

RICK

You know what, I'm going to take a picture for you.

Jonathan smiles with Mike holding a frying pan behind him.

PATRICIA
Just tell me.

Rick is sending the photo.

RICK
No! You have to see this! You
remember I did switched my shift
for you. I'm tired and moody.

PATRICIA
What? Why?

RICK
Yeah that was my question as well?
Don't throw the blame this way, he
showed up here.

JONATHAN
Patricia dear, I'm sorry Donnie had
me go out after you and Jennifer
left today. But I couldn't stop
thinking how to get past this Rick
thing.

RICK
Rick thing?

PATRICIA
Jonathan, please be quiet. Rick,
call him a ride! I'll pay you back.

JONATHAN
I have money. I can get a ride.

MIKE
How much you got?

RICK
Mike! You don't have a license.

MIKE
I didn't say I was going to drive
him home. I just wanted to know how
much money he has on him.

Mike is patting the frying pan in a threatening manner.

RICK
You're not taking the man's money.
I'll take him home.

JONATHAN

They were right. You are a nice
guy.

Patricia is speechless. Anything she says at this point could
be taken the wrong way.

RICK

Well, we'll talk later after I get
a couple hours sleep before I have
to go back to work.

As Rick is hanging up Jonathan can be heard.

JONATHAN (O.S.)

I'll be happy to explain this to
your boss if you want.

CUT TO.

INT. PATRICIA'S BEDROOM

Patricia just sits there in shock.

CINDY (O.S.)

Ma, I think I need a new
toothbrush.

Patricia isn't listening.

CINDY (CONT'D)

Ma! You OK? What's daddy mad about
now?

PATRICIA

No! Your dad is not to blame. Can
we talk?

Cindy walks into the bedroom.

CINDY

Can I get a new toothbrush?

PATRICIA

There are more in the cabinet next
to the towels. Sit up here.

Patricia pats the bed. Cindy gets up on the mattress.

CINDY

Is it about my Christmas present?

PATRICIA
No! You're getting it.

CINDY
I've heard it's hard to find so I
am trying not to get my hopes up. I
understand if you guys can't. I
just really want it.

PATRICIA
Why? Because it will make you happy
right?

CINDY
Yes, so happy.

PATRICIA
What if there was some thing that
would make mommy happy.

CINDY
You've been good, you deserve it.

Patricia takes a deep breath.

PATRICIA
What if Cindy might not like what
mommy wants?

Cindy takes a minute to realize what her mom might be talking
about.

CINDY
The suit guy...

Patricia starts laughing.

PATRICIA
Maybe or maybe something like that.

CINDY
It's the suit guy. I'm 10 you know.

PATRICIA
OK let's say that it is what mommy
wants. How do you feel about it?

CINDY
I don't like him.

PATRICIA
Cindy you don't know him. Remember
Tammy down the street, you didn't
like that girl.

(MORE)

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

And once you got to know her, now she's your best friend.

CINDY

Yeah but -So has daddy met him?

PATRICIA

I'm afraid they're getting acquainted right now. I don't even wanna think about it.

CUT TO

EXT. JONATHAN APARTMENT- NIGHT

Ricks dropping Jonathan off at his apartment. Donnie is by the door.

JONATHAN

Donnie my boy.

RICK

Do you know this guy?

DONNIE

Yeah! Man where'd you go?

RICK

Keep him away from me.

Rick walks away.

JONATHAN

Have a good night Rick!

DONNIE

Who was that?

JONATHAN

The ex. He is a nice guy.

Jonathan's trying to get his keys to his apartment door.

DONNIE

Buddy you're crazy.

Jonathan drops his keys. Donnie gets them.

JONATHAN

Crazy in love, I think. That's the only way to explain this.

Donnie opens the door.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

What happened with Amy.

DONNIE

She left with Monica. I had to come find you and make sure you were OK.

CUT TO.

INT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

They walk into the apartment.

DONNIE

You know I think Monica has a thing for you like Amy. They both just kept talking about you.

JONATHAN

Buddy, I never touched Amy. I knew you like her.

DONNIE

Does that mean you hooked up with the Monica?

JONATHAN

I don't want to answer that. I'm not perfect you know.

DONNIE

Well that explains a lot because I think she has some harsh feelings for you.

JONATHAN

I'll have a talk with her tomorrow. I'm going to bed.

FADE OUT.

INT. JENNIFER'S KITCHEN

Patricia goes to see Jennifer.

JENNIFER

What happened? Why did he turn crazy? I had to get Ben to make him to stop calling me.

PATRICIA

Jonathan went to Rick's drunk.

JENNIFER

Well, I told you having a lot of liquor at his place was a bad sign.

Ben comes out for a beer.

BEN

Did her boyfriend call back?

PATRICIA

Not my boyfriend.

BEN

Well it looks like that to everyone else. How's Rick handling it?

JENNIFER

Private sister time.

BEN

Oh but you needed me when the dude keeps calling.

JENNIFER

That is your job, to protect the family.

BEN

Speaking of family, did you ask her?

JENNIFER

Not yet.

PATRICIA

Ask me what?

BEN

Patty, next week we are trying to get Emily to go to the street of lights and you know how teens are. Can you get Cindy to convince her to go?

PATRICIA

Yeah, trying to keep them young is a hard thing. I'll talk to her.

BEN

We appreciate that.

Ben leaves.

JENNIFER

Hey - maybe if you are dead set on this guy he could run into us there. A good way to introduce him to Cindy.

PATRICIA

After Rick's house, I haven't even returned any of his messages.

JENNIFER

That's normal, he messed up. Let him sweat it out. It's only over if you want it to be over.

Patricia thinking.

PATRICIA

I have to go get Cindy. I wish I knew why this was happening.

JENNIFER

Maybe that's your problem. Stop trying to figure everything out.

PATRICIA(LAUGHING)

You're saying that to me?

JENNIFER

Hey don't knock my shows. Those crime dramas might save our lives one day.

FADE OUT

INT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Donnie comes in.

DONNIE

Still no luck?

He didn't notice Jonathan was on the phone. Jonathan tries to show him.

JONATHAN

Yes, dozen roses with the note, sorry again -Jonathan. Thank you!

Jonathan hangs up the phone.

DONNIE

Buddy the lady can start her own florist shop with how many you sent over there.

JONATHAN

I messed up pretty bad. I've been debating on having the card say love Jonathan but I don't-

DONNIE

-Don't want to come off like a stalker?

JONATHAN

I was going to say ... I don't want the first time the love word comes up to be on a note and not in person.

DONNIE

That's a smart move but please tell me you don't think you are in love with her? Not that fast.

JONATHAN

I don't know but I certainly wouldn't do all of this for anyone else.

DONNIE

Not even me?

JONATHAN

OK maybe. We have been friends for half of our lives.

DONNIE

That just sounds weird to hear. I know it's true but crazy to think about. Anyway, you know I have your best interest at heart.

JONATHAN

What did you do?

DONNIE

Nothing yet.

JONATHAN

Unless it's to get her to take my calls.

Donnies thinking about it.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Otherwise, I don't think you can help.

DONNIE
There has to be a way I can help.

Jonathan looks at Donnie.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Besides getting you in more trouble.

JONATHAN
No, it was my fault. I went over there. I caused this. Maybe I can get Rick's number.

Donnie jumps off the couch and grabs Jonathan cell.

DONNIE
Bad! Bad! Bad idea! What about the sister? You said you thought she liked you.

JONATHAN
Called her 15 times but I did get to semi meet Ben.

DONNIE
Ben! Who's Ben?

JONATHAN
Jennifer's husband, he picked up the last call and said he welcomed me to come over and if I call again, he'll find me.

DONNIE
So the tone was a little negative?

JONATHAN
You could say that.

DONNIE
Well you know, I would suggest going to the club but I know you won't go, so I'm going.

Donnie gets up to walk to the door.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

I'll run out and get us some food so we can brainstorm; come up with some ideas to fix this.

JONATHAN

Thanks buddy.

DONNIE

We'll figure it out. Do you wanna anything special?

Jonathan just shakes his head sadly "no".

CUT TO.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Patricia shows up to get Cindy.

RICK

Cindy! Your mom's here!

PATRICIA

Hey, don't forget the present. Stores are packed in the evening and Christmas is coming fast.

RICK

What present? Who's it for again?

PATRICIA

That's not funny.

Cindy comes running down.

CINDY

Did daddy tell you?

PATRICIA

What?

CINDY

Uncle Mike broke the tree and lights, so we have to go get all new Christmas stuff this weekend.

PATRICIA

New stuff is great but sad because we got that tree when you were born.

RICK

Well sometimes it's out of our control. Things change and we just have to make the best of it.

CINDY

I thought uncle Mike couldn't be any weirder. For him to get scared like that is really really weird.

Patricia sis cared but she needs to know what Rick told Cindy.

PATRICIA

What happened?

Rick immediately jumps in.

RICK

Mike thought it was a burglar and tried to defend the house with the Christmas decorations.

PATRICIA

Strange but not for Mike.

Patricia lips "thank you" to Rick as Cindy is putting her coat on.

RICK

Hopefully that burglar won't try to come back.

Rick gives Patricia a look.

CINDY

Do you want to come with us?

PATRICIA

No! This weekend is your time with your dad.

Cindy give Rick a hug and kiss. Patricia and Cindy leave.

FADE OUT.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Mike comes in with a box. He looks up the stairs to make sure no one is around. He didn't notice Rick sitting in a chair putting on his shoes.

RICK
What are you doing?

Mike gets scared and throws the box in the air.

RICK (CONT'D)
Do I even want to know?

MIKE
Yes you do! It's for you!

Rick gets excited.

RICK
You got the town player?

MIKE
No, but my mom's second cousin
knows a lady that might know a guy.
I have things in the works for
that.

This, buddy, is how we keep ties on
Patty.

Mike opens the box to reveal a Santa suit.

RICK
Buddy nice thoughts but-

MIKE
-But, but, shhh. The less you and I
know about what I do the better.

RICK
I have to get Cindy from school.

Rick doesn't want to say he likes the idea and encourage
Mike, but he actually does like the idea that Mike can blend
in with a Santa Suit.

FADE OUT

INT. JONATHAN'S FRONT DOOR

Jonathan answers the door and is shocked to see Patricia.

JONATHAN
What a pleasant surprise? Wasn't
expecting to see you for a while
since I made that terrible decision
earlier this week.

PATRICIA

Are you going to invite me in or not?

JONATHAN

Oh sorry, please come in. Can I get you something to drink?

PATRICIA

Yes please! Wine would be great.

JONATHAN

Red or white?

PATRICIA

Doesn't matter.

Patricia is checking out his place.

JONATHAN

Here you go.

He hands her the glass.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

What's the occasion? Am I forgiven for you know what?

PATRICIA

Don't want to think about that but it was a sweet gesture. Just you should have been sober.

JONATHAN

Tipsy.

PATRICIA

Good word. That's what I'm looking for.

JONATHAN

What is the matter?

PATRICIA

Cindy and Rick are out shopping for a tree. And I need to give them their together time but I was feeling a little lonely.

JONATHAN

Have you been drinking before you came over here?

PATRICIA

No!

JONATHAN

Well, I am honored that you want to spend time with me.

Patricia's cell phone rings and she answers it.

PATRICIA

Yes, yeah I'm not home. I'm out.
How do you know, I'm not home. You checked my cameras.

Patricia looks at Jonathan.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Jenny says hi!

JONATHAN(SHOUTING)

Hello Jennifer! Sorry about the calling.

PATRICIA

I'm fine, I'll call you later -bye.

Patricia smiles as she hangs up the phone.

JONATHAN

Mental note, she watches you at your house.

PATRICIA

No one's watching us here.

She gets very close to Jonathan.

JONATHAN

Patricia are we going to kiss?

PATRICIA

Among other things, if that goes well. Do you have a problem with that?

JONATHAN

If you don't, I don't.

She goes in for a kiss.

FADE OUT.

INT. JONATHAN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Jonathan is in the kitchen making breakfast. Patricia walks in wearing Jonathan's shirt.

JONATHAN

Good morning! I was trying to get everything ready before you got up and perhaps surprise you with a breakfast in bed scenario.

PATRICIA

Smells good.

JONATHAN

I didn't know what you would like. That's what took me so long.

PATRICIA

This is perfect.

JONATHAN

Speaking of perfect ... last night! I mean...

PATRICIA

Yeah it was pretty good.

JONATHAN

Pretty good? I think we set some records but all kidding aside, are you OK with this next step? It is a big leap in our relationship.

PATRICIA

No regrets. You?

JONATHAN

No! If anything it just made me more sure about everything.

PATRICIA

Even though I'm not what you're used to.

JONATHAN

I'm happy! I've never felt so comfortable. No stress. I just feel right around you.

PATRICIA

Same.

Patricia is giggling as she eats a bite of toast.

JONATHAN

Well dig in. The only thing I don't really make well is pancakes but everything else should be good.

Patricia tries not to let that affect her because Rick makes the best pancakes. They start putting food on their plate.

PATRICIA

So what's on the agenda for today?

JONATHAN

What do you normally do on your Sundays?

PATRICIA

Without Cindy, I would be at Jenny's. With Cindy, skate park or someplace to try to make the day fun for her.

JONATHAN

How do you want to make the day fun for you or what do you want to try?

PATRICIA(LAUGHING)

Very funny.

JONATHAN

No! I was serious! Boat ride downtown? Dinner? Shopping? Whatever you want to do?

Patricia remembers the present.

PATRICIA

Might need to do that, shopping. There is something Cindy wants that I know Rick didn't pick up yet.

JONATHAN

A quest, together we shall find it. I am eager for the journey.

PATRICIA

You can't be this perfect.

JONATHAN

I was thinking the same thing about you.

Patricia blushes as she continues to eat.

CUT TO.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Rick and Cindy are putting up the tree.

CINDY
We should've made mommy help.

RICK
What! You think we can't do this?

CINDY
No- so she's not alone.

RICK
You know this is when your mom gets her errands done. This is our time.

CINDY
I think she wants to go on a date with that guy.

Rick breaks a tree bulb in his hand. The pieces fall on the floor.

RICK
Crap, you stay still. I'll get a broom.

CINDY
Dad, have you met this guy?

RICK
Not really, I've seen him.

CINDY
Why does she want to date him? You guys told me nothing would change except split time, double the love and presents.

Rick sweeps up the floor.

RICK
Well you're not a little girl, you remember your mom and I laughing and having fun at places like the park and the beach?

CINDY
Yeah!

RICK
She is just looking for someone to have times like that again with.

CINDY
Why did you guys stop having fun?

RICK
Honestly, I couldn't tell you
because I feel I still have fun
with your mom.

CINDY
So it's her.

RICK
That's a question I can't answer.

Rick wants to say yes but he can't put the blame all on
Patty.

CINDY
I don't understand.

RICK
You're not supposed to. You just
have to do your best to enjoy your
time. Whether you're with your mom
or me.

CINDY
And if that guy is there?

RICK
I never said you had to have a fun
around him.

Mike over hears this as he walks in from the kitchen.

MIKE
Planting the seed.

RICK
What are you talking about?

MIKE
Cookies are done.

Rick sees smoke.

RICK
No burning.

Rick runs away to the kitchen.

MIKE
I like mine burnt.

CINDY
You're so weird.

MIKE
You got that little hint from your
dad right?

CINDY
Loud and clear.

MIKE
Nice! That's my girl.

Mike fist bump Cindy.

CUT TO.

Ext. Jonathan apartment

Jonathan And Patricia are back at the apartment after not
finding the toy.

JONATHAN
I'll ask everyone I know. Someone
has to have a lead on it.

PATRICIA
I hope we didn't wait too late. I
don't want her to be heartbroken.

Patricia kisses Jonathan at his door.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)
I have to go get her from Rick

JONATHAN
I guess it's too soon to see Rick
and apologize.

PATRICIA
He's last on the list now.

Donnie shows up.

JONATHAN
Patricia this is Donnie, a good
friend of mine.

PATRICIA

Nice to meet you. Sorry I can't chat. I have to go get my daughter.

DONNIE

Bye.

Patricia leaves.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Do you know her daughter will take up half of her time then work, the ex. What are you left with?

JONATHAN

A lot of special moments.

DONNIE

Oh is that it? She only has a little time so she only can do private time.

JONATHAN

No, not at all. I wasn't even thinking about that. I just like being around her.

Donnie walks into Jonathan apartment.

DONNIE (O.S.)

Well, if you want out of it, I have ideas. Just say the word.

Jonathan smiles watching Patricia drive away.

FADE OUT

INT. PATRICIA'S KITCHEN

Cindy comes up to Patricia who is washing dishes.

CINDY

I finished my homework. It was easy. They are slacking off because of the holiday break.

PATRICIA

Are you excited for Christmas?

CINDY

Mom, I'm a kid. This is the golden time of the year.

PATRICIA

You know it's about giving not receiving.

CINDY

That's a hard way to look at it for me. I got no job or money. So what can I get everyone?

PATRICIA

You can help or do something nice for someone.

CINDY

Why do I get a feeling you already have something you want me to do?

PATRICIA

Sit down please.

CINDY

Oh no, here it comes.

PATRICIA

Aunt Jenny and uncle Ben love spending time with Emily, like your dad and I do with you.

CINDY

Of course, that's their daughter.

PATRICIA

But she's more into her friends than family right now but she still has a soft spot for you.

CINDY

This sounds like a shakedown mom.

Patricia shocked.

PATRICIA

Where did you hear that word?

CINDY

From Emily, she teaches me a lot of cool stuff.

PATRICIA

Well, do you think you can talk her into joining us to see the street of lights? It would mean a lot to Aunt Jenny and Uncle Ben.

CINDY

No problem! I got you covered. Is that their gift?

PATRICIA

It can be all of ours.

CINDY

Come on. Gifts like this, I can handle all day.

PATRICIA

You are a gift to me.

CINDY

Mom, get it while you can.

PATRICIA

Well, - you could also invite you know who.

CINDY

I knew I should've quit while I was ahead.

PATRICIA

It's OK, you don't have to.

CINDY

If I don't, I'm guessing he'll just probably randomly run into us there.

Patricia shocked, she can't believe how fast Cindy is growing up and how smart she is.

CINDY (CONT'D)

I'm going to bed, all these Christmas presents are wearing me out.

PATRICIA(YELLS)

Is that a yes?

CINDY(O.S.)

I'll think about it.

PATRICIA
It's not a no.

Patricia smiles.

FADE OUT

INT. JONATHAN'S APARTMENT

Patricia outside Jonathan's door. He opens it up.

JONATHAN
What a wonderful surprise!
Shouldn't you be at work?

He grabs her and kisses her. She does not kiss back.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

PATRICIA
Cindy has a half a day, I'm picking
her up and she's coming here.

Jonathan panics.

JONATHAN
What, why? What do I do?

PATRICIA
This is big.

JONATHAN
Yeah, I think I know that.

PATRICIA
Please tell me you don't have plans
on Friday.

JONATHAN
If I did, I don't now. What's going
on?

FADE OUT.

EXT. JONATHAN APARTMENT PARKING AREA

Mike is in the Santa Suit looking for the right apartment. He scares off a few people trying to come up to him.

MIKE
Off duty back off!

CUT TO

INT. JONATHAN'S FRONT DOOR

Jonathan's pacing, he opens the door then shuts it again. Trying to walk away but thinks he hears something and runs back to the door. No one is there. However, Mike is around the corner in the Santa Suit. Jonathan's cell phone rings in the kitchen. He quickly runs to the phone leaving the door open. Mike sees his chance to look in. He hears someone approaching from the hallway and rushes inside to hide in Jonathans apartment.

JONATHAN. (O.S.)
Hey Donnie! Still waiting. I don't know, I think they were supposed to be here by now. She did not give me a set time.

CUT TO.

He comes walking out.

JONATHAN
I'm super nervous.

CINDY
You should be.

JONATHAN
Oh!

Jonathan drops his cell phone and puts up a goofy karate stance. Cindy laughs.

PATRICIA
Who leaves their door open?

Jonathan picks up his cell phone. Mike is hiding in another room but trying to listen in.

JONATHAN
Donnie, I'll call you back. Cindy nice to meet you.

Cindy's just quiet and walks around.

PATRICIA
Cindy you promised, be nice.

CINDY

Hi! --- I don't like him.

Patricia has a sad look on her face. Mike is happy to hear Cindy response until Jonathan replies.

JONATHAN

I don't like you either.

Cindy and Patricia are shocked. Cindy is now intrigued but pretends to be pouting.

PATRICIA

Cindyyyy!!

CINDY

Mommy, he hurt my feelings.

JONATHAN

Patricia it's fine, I did! Cindy you don't even know me-

CINDY

Why did you call her Patricia?

JONATHAN

That's your mother's name.

CINDY

Mother? It's mom and everyone knows she's Patty.

PATRICIA

OK, maybe this was a bad idea.

(She sees the two of them are acting like children. Although, Jonathan's only doing it to relate to her.)

JONATHAN

No actually, I don't think it was. Cindy, I'm not trying to replace your dad. I heard from everyone he's awesome. I even met him, not the best first meet like this one. I'm just asking for a fair chance for you guys to get to know me. So when you're with your dad your "mom"

(He points at Cindy because he changes the name as she requested to be.)

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Isn't lonely and has someone to spend time with.

CINDY

And then you'll add more and more and take my time.

JONATHAN

I'll make a deal with you. You seem like a fair person. How about I will only spend time with your mom if you are OK with it?

CINDY

How would I know?

JONATHAN

Smart girl. How about a pinky swear?

Jonathan holds up his pinky.

PATRICIA

I disagree with this.

CINDY

Why don't you trust us?

JONATHAN

Yeah, don't you trust us?

PATRICIA

You know by pinky swearing with my daughter, if I know about it, lying to her is lying to me.

Jonathan with confidence looks at Patricia then Cindy. He is not backing down.

CINDY

You are one cool customer.

JONATHAN

I take that as a good thing.

CINDY

Yeah, you are hard not to like but I'm not done yet.

Cindy locks pinkies.

PATRICIA
This turned out bad.
Cindy Let's go.

CINDY
Two questions.

JONATHAN
Shoot!

CINDY
Are you rich?

PATRICIA
Cindy, you don't ask someone that.

JONATHAN
No, but I have money.

CINDY
So you can buy me things?

JONATHAN
Is that your second question?

CINDY
He's good.

Cindy smiles and walks to the door.

PATRICIA
Sorry, things turned out like this.

JONATHAN
Things went well.

PATRICIA
Really?

JONATHAN
She still has one more question.

Cindy opens the door.

CINDY
You know I'm not done right?

JONATHAN
Is that your second question?

Cindy giggles.

Patricia sees they are playing their own little game.

Jonathan wants to hug Patricia but can't.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Can, I hug your mom goodbye?

CINDY
A wave will do.

Jonathan smiles, he apparently has an inside track on Cindy second question. Jonathan grabs his coat.

JONATHAN
I'll walk you guys to the car in case Cindy has another question?

Mike hears this and stops eating Jonathan's food. This could be his escape. Cindy stops and turns around.

CINDY
I didn't say you could spend time with her.

JONATHAN
Well, you did not state how long or when a visit would end. Furthermore, you didn't elaborate as to when together time pauses or reconvenes when we are not in the same room. You also did not agree upon distance which indicates if I am or I am not around her.

PATRICIA
What?

CINDY
Dude, I'm 10.

JONATHAN
It is your game. I'm just merely stating that the rules were never defined.

Cindy looks up at her mom in disbelief.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
If you want I can have someone draw up a contract so everyone knows everything is fair.

CINDY
Yeah, yeah and we have to spend more time together. So I have to get to know you.

(MORE)

CINDY (CONT'D)

You aren't the only one that can see the next step.

JONATHAN

Yes! I would love to go with you guys to the street of lights.

CINDY

I didn't say, do you want to go to the street of lights with us?

PATRICIA

Technically.

JONATHAN

Actually, you just did.

CINDY

No! I said I did not say "Do you want to- ,oh crap."

JONATHAN

Yes! Cindy I would love to and I answered this one so that counts as your second question.

CINDY

Yeah, I get it. Mom let's go.

Patricia gives Jonathan a dirty look for playing a cruel game on Cindy. Jonathan just smiles, Cindy steps back in the door.

CINDY (CONT'D)

Outsmarting a 10-year-old, that's low---- but making a game out of it.

She gives him a thumbs up.

CINDY (CONT'D)

For now, but it can easily turn this way.

Cindy turns her thumb down.

Jonathan holds up both of his fist with thumbs up.

JONATHAN

I'll see you on Friday Cindy.

Cindy grunts and she goes out the door.

PATRICIA

Are you sure you want more of this?

JONATHAN

Go! I'll call you later.

They leave. Jonathan, waits at the door to make sure they get to the car safe. He then hears a noise in the kitchen and goes to just find a single white glove on the table. Confused he walks out to see his door open again.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Rick is sitting on the couch alone. Mike walks in wearing the suit and missing a glove.

MIKE

The little whippersnapper is not here. Let's take care of some guy needs.

Mike goes into his phone for his contacts.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Brenda, she's missing a few teeth but what a woman. Option two, Bertha or rather big Bertha. She's strong but good to cuddle. Just don't let her hold on too tight or you'll pass out.

RICK

Thanks buddy but no.

MIKE

Dude, here's your shot. She's dating, you can have some fun without guilt. Doesn't mean you're closing the book on getting back together. Just taking advantage of the split.

RICK

This just bothers me. I did everything right.

MIKE

Well, I had him but you have that whole catch and release program going on, so.

Rick gets up and looks at a picture of Patricia, him and Cindy.

RICK

It's not fair. How come she doesn't feel the same about me how I feel about her?

MIKE

You are asking the wrong person. My mom keeps throwing a fit when I am there but constantly calls me when I am not.

Mike cell rings.

MIKE (CONT'D)

See! - Mom I'm home.

RICK

You aren't home.

MIKE

Lets not go there again, according to my mom and me. This is where I live.

Mike walks up to Rick.

MIKE (CONT'D)

We can't change peoples opinions no matter how bad we want to. But we can have fun.....

Mike pulls out a coin.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Heads toothless, tails big girl.

FADE OUT

INT. PATRICIA BED - NIGHT

Patricia calls Jonathan at night.

PATRICIA

Sorry it's so late.

JONATHAN

No worries, I can't sleep. I been calling around still no luck on the towns player.

PATRICIA

Yeah, I have as well, It's not your problem you know.

JONATHAN

That toy could actually save the day and put me in a good standing with everyone. Plus like you said, Cindy really wanted it. Are you sure Rick didn't get one?

PATRICIA

He would have told me. It's late, Good night Jonathan.

JONATHAN

Sleep well Patricia.

FADE OUT

INT. JONATHAN APARTMENT

Jonathan is on the phone and hangs up a little frustrated.

Donnie brings in coffee he bought them.

DONNIE

Trouble in paradise?

JONATHAN

No! Something else.

DONNIE

How did it go with the daughter?

JONATHAN

Better than I hoped. She definitely has plans to give me a hard time. She's just trying to make sense of the grown-up thing happening around her.

DONNIE

I don't know, to me that still seems more trouble, than it's worth. Plus, the lady's husband is still in the picture.

JONATHAN

Haven't you ever heard the expression, "anything worth having doesn't come easy."

Donnie shakes his head "No".

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Patricia and I went to every store-

DONNIE

-Shopping, red flag buddy.

JONATHAN

It's not like that, Cindy wants this present and most of the stores are out.

DONNIE

Let me guess, Town Player.

JONATHAN

Yes! Do you know where I can get it.

DONNIE

No, I wanted one too.

Jonathan cell phone rings.

JONATHAN

Hello - Cindy! Hello...
I wasn't expecting a call.

CINDY

Why do you like my mom?

JONATHAN

Why do you love your mom?

CINDY

Because she's awesome and loves me.

JONATHAN

I think she's awesome as well.
Matter fact since I have you on the phone, I wanted to ask your mom to go Christmas shopping with me. May I have your permission?

CINDY

Are you getting presents for me?

JONATHAN

I think we both know you're list is priority over everyone else's.

RICK(O.S.)

Cindy who are you talking to?

CINDY

Fine bye!

She hangs up.

DONNIE

What happened?

JONATHAN

Her dad caught her talking to me.
Should I call back and explain.

DONNIE

Nooo! Just be ready if he does.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Rick confronts Cindy on her call.

RICK

Cindy?

CINDY

It was that guy mom likes.

Ricks is very mad but trying to control himself.

RICK

He called you?

Rick reaches for Cindy's cell.

CINDY

No! I called him, he keeps
outsmarting me and I thought I had
an idea but you caught me off
guard.

RICK

If you ever are talking to ANYONE
and you think you have to hide it
from your mom or me, you should not
be talking to that person.

CINDY

He made a deal with me that he
couldn't spend time with mommy
unless I say OK. Now I agreed for
them to go Christmas shopping
tonight. He's tricky.

RICK

I thought you are all going to the street of lights.

CINDY

Yeah, he tricked me on that one too. It's like that one game you tried to teach me with the horse and the queen figures.

RICK

Chess?

CINDY

Yes! Remember how you said to win was planning a lot of moves ahead.

RICK

Cindy you have the perfect move. Just say no and he can't see your mom.

CINDY

He'll just bring in a lawyer, he already told me.

Rick is confused.

RICK

What? Cindy you don't have to even talk or be around him.

CINDY

He's not so bad. I just need to be smarter. I'll get the chess game.

Rick should be happy that Cindy wants to play chess with him but his focus is that Cindy might like this guy.

Rick calls Mike to get him to follow them.

RICK

Hey buddy, they are going shopping tonight. Santa needs to be on watch.

MIKE

I'm on the case.

Mike comes running up out of the basement.

RICK

You were in the basement?

MIKE

Do you want to talk about that or
do you want me to report for duty?

Cindy's coming down the steps with the chess game.

CINDY

Uncle Mike, we're gonna play. Do
you?

MIKE

No time young-in, I have to go to
work.

Mike grab a trash bag from the closet that looks like it has
clothes in it but actually has the Santa suit. He's
practicing his ninja techniques as he goes out the door.

CINDY

He got a job?!

RICK

Just for the holidays. Let's play.

FADE OUT

EXT. STREET

Mike's in Santa suit following Jonathan and Patricia. People
keep stopping Mike for pictures. Mike loses them.

CUT TO.

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Cindy trying to get her dad's attention.

CINDY

Dad it's your turn.

RICK

One second, I need to take this
call.

CINDY

You said that the last six calls.

Rick walks away to speak privately on the phone.

RICK

Well?

MIKE(O.S.)
I see them again. I'm taking this
kids bike.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Mike on a bike on his cell phone.

MIKE
I'll return it later.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Cindy gets frustrated goes upstairs to call her mom.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S BEDROOM

The call goes to voicemail. She throws her cell down on the
bed.

FADE OUT

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE.

Emily brings Cindy home from school. Cindy drops her backpack
on the floor and sits on the couch.

EMILY
Are you ok? You been down since I
got you from school.

CINDY
My parents. First they fight over
me and then they both ignore me.
They are weird.

EMILY
All parents are. One they don't
think you'll understand and two,
they don't want you to know what's
going on.

CINDY

My dad always calls and begs me to spend time with him. Why is he acting like he doesn't care?

Emily sits next to Cindy on the couch.

CINDY (CONFUSED) (CONT'D)

It doesn't make sense.

EMILY

Actually it does. And don't get mad for me saying this, I know you heard it time and time again. We all have but in this case, it's totally true. "You'll understand when you are older!"

CINDY

This is bogus.

EMILY

Where did you learn that.

Cindy just looks at Emily.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oh Yeah!

Emily smiles knowing she's the one teaching Cindy. She then hugs Cindy to console her about Cindy's parents.

EMILY (CONT'D)

It's all good even if it doesn't look that way. You are the one thing we all agree on.

CINDY

Speaking of that.

EMILY

I didn't like that tone. They got to you didn't they.

Emily knows her parents are using Cindy to make her do something. She can't say "No" to her little cousin.

CINDY

What can I say, I am a sucker for the street of lights?

EMILY

Traitor!

Emily smiles and starts tickling Cindy to cheer her up and also her way of agreeing to go.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S HOUSE

Rick is making a game plan with Mike.

RICK

You know where the street of lights is?

MIKE

Yes I do. There are lights on every street. Which one are we talking about?

RICK

The block with the full Christmas sceneries

MIKE

Man, I'm just messing with you.

Mike is suiting up in the Santa Suit.

MIKE (CONT'D)

A buddy I know is a basement dweller there. He lives in one of those houses, we watch peoples feet sometimes.

RICK

I don't even wanna know. Just don't lose them and keep me informed.

MIKE

Come on, there's six of them. It's impossible for me not to see one of them.

Mike leaves. Rick calls Cindy.

RICK

Hey, how are you?

CINDY

We are leaving now for the street of lights?

RICK

OK, I just want to apologize for last night. I should've turn my phone off so work couldn't call.

CINDY

That's just as bad mommy, she did that and I couldn't even call her last night.

PATRICIA(O.S.)

I did what?

CINDY

You were shopping with that dude, you turn your cell off.

Rick gets another call.

RICK

Cindy!

PATRICIA (O.S.)

I knew you were with your dad, I didn't think-. I won't do it again. I told you.

RICK

Cindy!

CINDY (O.S.)

I'm just saying it was bad.

Rick clicks on hold.

RICK

What?

MIKE (O.S.)

I'm at Jennifers when they leave I'll follow them.

Rick frustrated.

RICK

They're already gone.

Cindy hangs up. Rick tries to call her back it goes to voicemail.

CINDY(O.S.)

This is Cindy, if you know me leave a message.

RICK
Sorry I hit the button, call me
back.

Rick grabs his coat and runs out.

CUT TO

EXT. STREET OF LIGHTS

Rick gets to the street of lights where train sets run through peoples houses. The whole block decorated with Christmas sceneries. However, Rick can not see the beauty, he is just trying not to get seen by Patricia and Jennifer's family.

Ben, Jennifer's husband does see Rick but doesn't say anything to anyone. Finally, Rick gets behind them and he watches his whole family enjoy the Christmas lights spectacle but he's not a part of it. The depression is too much for him to bear. He turns and walks away in the opposite direction of the crowd.

Rick walks down a dark street and ends up sitting on a bus stop bench. After a few minutes of loneliness Mike calls.

MIKE (O.S.)
Hey buddy, my mom's second cousin,
Nancy knows this guy Tony. He sells
the towns player. It's pricey but
he has one left. He's on the east
side.

RICK
Text me the address.

CUT TO

EXT. CARS

The family gets into their car's.

BEN
OK, hot chocolate then home.

JONATHAN
I enjoyed this greatly but hot
chocolate, I have to draw the line.

PATRICIA
You can't turn this down.

CINDY

Even, I am OK with you joining us.

JONATHAN

Normally, I can't say "no" to that but.

Jonathan kneels down to show Cindy his cell phone.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

I had an urgent message from my friend. "Come to the apartment as soon as possible."

JENNIFER

Did you try to call him.

JONATHAN

Yes! But it went to voicemail. I didn't want to ruin the fun but this would be my chance to exit gracefully.

PATRICIA

You should've told us. We would've understood. Go!

JONATHAN

You guys have a great night. Thank you Cindy for inviting me.

PATRICIA

Oh crap, we picked you up.

JONATHAN

It's fine, I'll call for a ride.

JENNIFER

Well, we can take Cindy, you take Jonathan.

PATRICIA

Cindy it's up to you. Do you want to go with them or us?

CINDY

They're getting hot chocolate. I don't like him that much yet.

Everyone laughs.

JONATHAN

I'll work on being better than chocolate.

CINDY

No one can reach that level.

Patricia kisses Cindy. Jonathan waves goodbye and they walk away.

PATRICIA

I hope everything's OK.

JONATHAN

I hope it's important. I think I was really making a good impression on Cindy.

PATRICIA

Sometimes it's best not to overdo it.

CUT TO

EXT. DARK CRAB PLACE PARKING LOT

Rick's at a crab place back entrance. The dark alley seems shady, he recalls Mike.

RICK

Is this a joke?

MIKE (O.S.)

No! That's the code, knock on the door.

RICK

You better not be playing with me.

Rick knocks and odd looking fella who seems like he's a cook answers the door. Rick gets the courage to ask.

RICK (CONT'D)

Is there an elf named Tony here?
Santa needs a town player.

This guy isn't amused he just stares at Rick.

RICK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry my friend is playing a
joke on me.

TONY

That's fine, if you read the rest
maybe you'll get what you are
looking for.

Rick is confused he looks at his cell phone again.

RICK
Oh, the reindeer will pay top
dollar for it.

TONY
Hold on.

RICK
Really man!

The guy closes the door and opens it back up.

TONY
500 jingle bells, last one.

RICK
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle
bells.

Rick is counting on his fingers.

TONY
Seriously, \$500 Homies.

RICK
This is so weird. How am I supposed
to know?

Rick digs for his money.

RICK (CONT'D)
I got 300. Can I owe you?

Tony pulls out a credit card scanner.

TONY
Hurry up, I'm burning food here.

Rick gets out his card and pays. Tony hands over the gift.

TONY (CONT'D)
Enjoy now - ho, ho the heck out of
here.

CUT TO

INT. RICK'S LIVING ROOM

Rick comes home and Mike is taking off the Santa suit. Rick seems worried and confused.

MIKE
Did you get it?

Rick shows the present but the box is crushed.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Is that how he sold it.

RICK
No! Long story. If Patty comes here tell her I'll be right back. I am going to get Cindy from Jennifer's.

MIKE
What's going on?

RICK
I ended up on the east side so I went to Jonathan's and they showed up. It's a mess, I fill you in later. Remember keep her here if she shows.

MIKE
I got you, I'll be your alibi.

Rick runs out.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You were here all night.

CUT TO

INT. PATRICIA'S CAR.

She is parked and crying. Her cell keeps ringing, it's Jonathan but she won't answer it.