

ERIC

"I Wonder As I Rhonda"

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EXT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

ERIC NELSON, 17, black, walks down the hallway with his roommates RON TYSON, 20's, black, and VANKA SMIRNOV, 30's, white. They carry gifts in their arms.

RON

Vanka, why'd you have to drag us here?

ERIC

Yeah, I can think of a million things I could be doing instead.

VANKA

(with a Russian accent)

It's Christmas time, and neither of us are with our families. This is perfect time to hang out with others!

ERIC

If you knew them, Vanka, you wouldn't say that.

RON

Yeah, especially Jacob. He's always mad about something.

ERIC

He would make The Grinch and Scrooge stage an intervention.

RON

I would rather be with my annoying family.

VANKA

Come on, guys. It won't be that bad.

They approach the door, which has tinsel around it and wrapping paper on it. Christmas lights are in a zigzag design across the door.

ERIC

What the heck is this?

Eric knocks on the door. SHARON ROSS, 20's, black, and her roommate, SHANA JONES, 19, biracial, open the door. They both wear Santa hats and "ugly Christmas sweaters".

SHANA

Merry Christmas! Come on in!

Eric, Ron, and Vanka enter. The apartment is heavily adorned with Christmas decorations.

RON

Wow, look at this!

VANKA

You girls have really outdone yourselves!

SHARON

Oh, we can't take credit for this.

SHANA

It was all my husband.

JACOB JACKSON, 19, white, enters, wearing a Santa hat and an "ugly Christmas sweater".

JACOB

Hey, hey! Merry Christmas Eve, guys!

ERIC, RON, AND VANKA

Jacob??

JACOB

In the flesh! How's everybody doin'?

RON

Uh, good. Man, Jacob, you look so...un-Jacob!

JACOB

It's a great day, Ronald. Me and Shana got a baby on the way, and Christmas Day is tomorrow!

ERIC

(looks around)

Yeah, speaking of Christmas, what did you do, rob Macy's?

Jacob advances to Eric.

JACOB

(angrily)

Hey, for the last time, I...

(pause, then chuckles)

Oh, you're joking! Good one! Ha, ha!

Jacob ruffles Eric's hair and playfully hits his arm.

RON

We brought the gifts for the Secret Santa.

JACOB

Oh, great! Just put 'em underneath the tree.

SHANA

Which one, dear? The one in the living room?

SHARON

Or the kitchen?

SHANA

Or the one in the bathroom?

JACOB

The living room is fine.

(claps his hand)

Oh, darn it! I forgot to bring out our gag gifts!

ERIC

You sure this isn't a gag?

JACOB

(guffaws)

Aw, Eric! Two for two! Hold on!

Jacob runs away.

VANKA

Well, ladies, it must be nice to have such Christmas spirit around here.

SHANA

It sucks!

SHARON

Kill us now!

RON

Personally, I like this change of pace.

SHANA

(to Ron)

Then you marry him!

RON

Sorry, I only do one fake marriage a year.

He puts his arm around Vanka.

VANKA

That's right.

ERIC

How did this change of heart come about,  
anyway?

SHANA

Probably due to the baby coming.

SHARON

Yeah, about that...

SHANA

Sharon, I'll tell him when the time is  
right!

SHARON

You haven't exactly been the best judge  
on timing!

SHANA

Well, not during Christmas! Besides,  
there probably isn't anything to tell.  
I'm pretty sure the baby's his.

ERIC

(sarcastically)

Wow! All this and Christmas presents,  
too?

Everyone else, except Shana, smirks. Jacob reenters with  
gifts.

JACOB

Alright, guys, here they are! "Yule"  
really enjoy them! See what I did there?

SHANA

Hey, Jakey, I gotta tell you something.

JACOB

Hey, babe, you don't have to worry about  
me cheating no more. And I'm getting used  
to being, "ShanaAndJacob Jackson" on  
Facebook.

SHANA

No, not that.

RON

Shana! Are you sure now's a good time?

JACOB

Nonsense, Ron!

(to Shana)

I'm all ears.

SHANA

Well...don't you think it's too much decorations in here? My butt can't take any more pine needles on the toilet.

JACOB

Aww, don't worry, sweetie. I'll take care of your butt.

SFX: Cell phone alarm BLARES.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Hey, that new Hallmark Christmas movie is premiering! I wonder will Amy Smart save the town before she finds true love or after!

Jacob runs to the TV.

SHANA

(hushed voice)

Man, was I ever that annoying, Eric?

ERIC

(hushed voice)

Why you talkin' in past tense?

SFX: His cell phone RINGS.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Hold on.

He answers the phone and steps aside. His mother, RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, 40's black, speaks on the other end.

INTERCUT - ERIC/RHONDA

RHONDA

Hey, Eric! You still comin' down tonight?

ERIC

For what?

RHONDA

For Christmas Eve!

ERIC

Aw, Mom, I think I'm all "Christmas'd" out!

RHONDA

But we were gonna put up the tree tonight! You know, like when you were a kid!

ERIC

(sighs)

I don't know.

RHONDA

Well, look, it's not a huge deal.

ERIC

Really? Thanks, Mom! Merry Christmas!

RHONDA

But Eric...

Eric hangs up.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rhonda sits at the dining room table. Her older son, BILLY NELSON, 20's, black, and his infant son, WILL, enter.

RHONDA

What are you guys up to?

BILLY

Well, you know, Christmas is tomorrow, and Will's birthday is right after that.

RHONDA

(to Will)

I know, ain't that right, googly woogly?

She pokes Will and speaks "baby talk". Will coos, while speaking telepathically.

WILL

Do babies actually like this stuff? I'm just wondering.

BILLY

(to Rhonda)

Yeah, and what better way to spend those two days than with family?

RHONDA

Yep.

BILLY

So we're going back to Madison to spend time with Sharon.

RHONDA

But what about the Christmas tree?

BILLY

Oh, right. Look, we'll try to rush back home. Feel free to start without me! Love ya!

Billy and Will rush out and SLAM the front door.

RHONDA

Great.

Her husband, MATT JAMES, 40's, black, wearing a Santa suit, enters.

MATT

Ho, ho, ho, etcetera! Hey, baby, what's the matter?

RHONDA

You know our Christmas tradition, putting up the tree?

MATT

That we haven't done in billions of years?

RHONDA

But I did mention bringing it back, and you all were on board.

MATT

Right, and?

RHONDA

I don't think the boys will make it.

MATT

Dang. That sucks. Can I borrow some money for Timmy's?

RHONDA

Excuse me?

MATT

Well, since the kids won't be here, I was gonna go to the bar after my Santa gig at the mall.



RHONDA

No! Use your Santa money!

MATT

Do you wanna see me there afterwards?

RHONDA

Matt, do it look like I wanna see you now?

MATT

Uh, I'm gonna split!

Matt races out and SLAMS the front door. Rhonda turns to the family pets, BONY DOG and EDDIE THE CAT, who sleep in their beds on opposite sides of the room.

RHONDA

I guess it'll be just us tonight, guys.  
Well, I might as well get some work done at the school.

Rhonda exits the house. Bony and Eddie remain sleep in their beds. Rhonda quickly opens the front door and peeks her head back in.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Guys?

SILENCE.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Hmm.

She exits again. Eddie lifts his head and turns to Bony, who shakes his head at Eddie. Rhonda quickly enters again. The pets put their heads back down.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

You guys have been acting weird lately.

She exits again.

SFX: Car DRIVING OFF from off-screen.

The pets jump up.

BONY

Okay, everybody, places!

Eddie runs to a mouse hole in a wall. He KNOCKS on the wall.

EDDIE  
Whiskers, Friskers, you ready?

WHISKERS and FRISKERS MOUSE respond.

MICE (O.C.)  
Coming!

They run out and stand next to Eddie. Bony puts on a beret, sits in his director's chair, and speaks through a megaphone.

BONY  
Annnnd action!

Eddie chases Whiskers and Friskers through the living room. The mice jump inside an empty gift box and places the lid over it. Eddie slows down, making a BRAKING sound. He picks up the box and reads the gift tag.

INSERT - THE TAG, WHICH READS:

"Do not open until Christmas".

BACK TO LIVING ROOM

Eddie places the box down and looks at a clock on the wall. He paces back and forth. The hands on the clock rapidly move.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Eddie impatiently taps his foot, then runs to the box. He opens it, reaches inside, and pulls out a ticking bomb. His eyes open wide as he GASPS.

SFX: Bomb EXPLODES!

Eddie lies on the floor. The mice roll on the floor LAUGHING.

BONY  
And cut! That's it!

The mice get up.

BONY (CONT'D)  
Keep 'em guessing. That's what we do here.

EDDIE

(moaning)

Good. That was the first thing on my mind.

INT. COLLEGE - HALLWAY - DAY

Rhonda walks down the hallway. She runs into MATTHEWS, the dean, male, 50's, white.

DEAN MATTHEWS

Professor Nelson-James, what are you doing here? Shouldn't you be out buying last-minute gifts?

RHONDA

No need. The family won't be in town, except my husband. So I'm gonna catch up on some work here.

DEAN MATTHEWS

Well, I hope you're gonna swing by the office Christmas party.

RHONDA

I'll see about that, Dean.

DEAN MATTHEWS

Well, I won't keep you.

RHONDA

Merry Christmas. Oh, speaking of which, that's a cool ugly sweater!

Matthews stares at her in silence. He starts to frown.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Oh, I mean...

DEAN MATTHEWS

(laughs)

Just kidding, Professor! Thank you!

RHONDA

Oh, good! You got me for a minute!

She exits. Matthews looks around. He slowly unbuttons and takes his sweater vest off. He creeps over to an open window.

EXT. COLLEGE - CONTINUOUS

The sweater vest flies behind MAUREEN WALKER, 20's, black. She wears a skimpy dress and heavy makeup.

MAUREEN

Oh, I just gotta tell somebody!

She enters the college building.

INT. COLLEGE - CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maureen approaches Rhonda's desk, where Rhonda sits and writes.

MAUREEN

Excuse me, Professor, do you provide after-hours sessions?

RHONDA

For students, primarily.

MAUREEN

Well, I am on campus a lot!

RHONDA

Yes, the male students mention that every day.

MAUREEN

Never mind.

Maureen begins to walk away.

RHONDA

Look, you're here now, Maureen. What's the problem?

Maureen returns and sits opposite her.

MAUREEN

Okay. This is the first time I ever did this. And it involves your son's baby mama.

RHONDA

Okay.

MAUREEN

(sighs)

You know college is all about trying new things, right?

RHONDA

Uh, it can be.

MAUREEN

And normally, I just can't stand her smug ass.

RHONDA

Okay.

MAUREEN

Well, I saw her at Timmy's one night. I had a couple of drinks, she had a couple of drinks. Then we kept taking shots.

(hesitates)

It was only one time, but I find myself wanting to do it some more!

(sighs)

Me and Sharon talked. And laughed!  
And...bonded! I think we're friends now!

RHONDA

What? That's it?

MAUREEN

(sobs)

Yeah, I'm so ashamed! I've hated her for years! And I don't have any female friends at all! I don't know what to do!

RHONDA

Calm down, Maureen! There may be a good chance that Sharon feels the same way.

MAUREEN

But what if she doesn't? I'll be so embarrassed!

RHONDA

There's only one way to find out. Why don't you call her?

MAUREEN

(clicks her tongue)

I'll think about it. Thanks.

RHONDA

No problem.

MAUREEN

Oh, why can't I just stay friendly with guys?

Maureen gets up and exits out of the building. She picks up cell phone and hesitantly DIALS.

INTERCUT - MAUREEN/SHARON

SHARON

Yes, Maureen?

MAUREEN

(hesitates)

I've been thinking about the other night.

SHARON

(sighs)

Look, I don't know what I was thinking. Maybe it was a mistake.

MAUREEN

Do you really believe that?

SHARON

Look, I don't even like you!

MAUREEN

And why not?

SHARON

Because you...well, that one time...I mean...dang, I don't even know why I don't like you!

MAUREEN

Well, there you go! Don't fight it! I don't not-like you, either!

SHARON

But...I'm scared.

MAUREEN

I am, too. But just let it go. Be free.

SHARON

Well, we do have some things in common.

MAUREEN

Yeah, we do.

SHARON

Okay, I guess on a trial basis.

MAUREEN

Oh, good, girl! Maybe we can go on shopping trips together.

SHARON

Yeah, sure.

MAUREEN

And you can give me the number to the girl that does your hair!

SHARON

Hey, don't push it!

MAUREEN

Sorry. Later, girl.

Sharon hangs up.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jacob, wearing a pajama set that has Christmas-related designs printed over it, walks past Sharon.

JACOB

So you and Maureen are friends now?

SHARON

I guess so. Until next week, anyway. Why are you wearing pajamas? It's still light out!

JACOB

I'm so excited for Christmas, I'm gonna go to bed early!

SHARON

Uh...you and Shana have been...doing it, right?

JACOB

(laughs)

Oh, of course! Ain't that why she's pregnant?

SHARON

Uh, yeah. Good night.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - JACOB AND SHANA'S ROOM - LATER

Jacob lies in bed, sleeping. Smoke appears. An unseen MAN speaks.

MAN (O.C.)

(spookily)

Jacob. Jacob.

Jacob wakes up. The man is his father, K.J. JACKSON, 40's, white. He wears ragged, grey clothes, and is covered in chains.

JACOB

Hey, Dad! What can I do you for?

MAN/K.J.

What?? Man, you got it bad!

JACOB

What do you mean?

K.J.

You haven't been yourself lately. None of the hatred, brash delivery that we Jacksons have been known for.

JACOB

Come on, Dad. Didn't you hear? You're gonna be a grandpa!

K.J.

Hey, hey, not so loud!

JACOB

And once the baby's born, I don't think I'll ever be angry again!

K.J.

Oh brother. I hate that it had to come to this, but tonight, you'll be visited by three spirits.

JACOB

Are you one of them?

PAUSE.

K.J.

You'll be visited by four spirits.

JACOB

Fine with me, as long as they don't keep me up. Christmas is only once a year.

K.J.

Oh god, I wish somebody could kill me again.

JACOB

You got killed??



K.J.  
 By your mother. I'll explain later.  
 (spookily)  
 Good night!

He disappears in the smoke.

JACOB  
 Alright. Catch you later! Gee, what a  
 cool guy.

Jacob lies back down and closes his eyes.

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

A line of WOMEN stand outside a fashion store. The line is blocked off with a velvet rope. An employee stands by the door. Shana's half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 17, white, walks behind the employee and into the store.

ELEANOR  
 Gee, I wonder what everyone's in line  
 for.

One of the women yells at Eleanor.

WOMAN  
 Hey!

Rhonda walks out of the store next door.

RHONDA  
 Man, every store is wiped clean!

She exits the mall and comes across a sign on the door. She reads aloud.

RHONDA (CONT'D)  
 "Our employees have families at home,  
 too." Aww.  
 (continues reading)  
 "So they'll be working here all day  
 Christmas."

She SIGHS and walks to her car. Eleanor, with clothes in her hand, approaches her.

ELEANOR  
 Hey, "Mrs. Nelson-Jamisez"!

RHONDA  
 Eleanor, you don't have a shopping bag  
 for those clothes?

ELEANOR

(scoffs)

And get 'em all wrinkled? What are you up to?

RHONDA

Apparently window shopping. It's slim pickings for last-minute gifts.

ELEANOR

Well, I don't think windows are great Christmas gifts, anyway. I mean yeah, they can keep the sun out, but...

RHONDA

Well, nice talking to you!

She opens the driver's door.

ELEANOR

You know, my sister is in Madison, too, so I can relate to you feeling lonely.

RHONDA

Gee, thanks, Eleanor, but I'm okay, really.

She SHUTS the door and begins to open the back. The MANAGER of the fashion store and a MALL COP approach Eleanor.

MANAGER

There she is!

MALL COP

Ma'am, you forgot to pay for your items again.

ELEANOR

I told you before, put it on my tab!

MANAGER

We don't have a tab!

ELEANOR

So they're free? Oh boy!

RHONDA

Oh, crap! I locked my keys in the car! Eleanor, can you drive me back home to get my spare?

ELEANOR

Sorry, Mrs. Nelson-Jamisez, but I'm a little busy right now.

MALL COP

(to Eleanor)

That's right, ma'am, come with me.

ELEANOR

Hey, can we make a deal? I can give you one of these shirts. You look like you could use a new shirt.

Eleanor, the manager, and mall cop walk away. Rhonda GRUNTS.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - JACOB AND SHANA'S ROOM - LATER

Jacob sleeps in his bed. His sister, GRETCHEN "GRETCH" JACKSON, 20's, white, climbs through the window. She wears tattered clothing.

GRETCH

Jacob! Wake up! I'm the Ghost of Christmas Past!

Jacob awakens.

JACOB

Gretch? They let you out?

GRETCH

Yeah, let's go with that. Matter of fact, let me cut to the chase. I was sent here to get you to tone it down.

JACOB

Tone what down?

GRETCH

Your Christmas spirit! It's sickening!

JACOB

Oh, come on, Gretch, not you, too!

GRETCH

Jacob, don't you remember the struggle when we were kids? It was not a happy time. I had to play mother, father, and sister.

JACOB

And juvenile delinquent.

GRETCH

Come on, let's take a trip.

Jacob gets out of bed. He wears nothing but an undershirt and underpants.

GRETCH (CONT'D)

Oh, god! Put on some clothes!

JACOB

Sorry, I didn't know I'd be time-traveling.

He goes to his dresser and puts on some pajamas.

GRETCH

You should have on your good clothes when spirits come around. Don't you know anything?

Gretch tries to snap her fingers.

GRETCH (CONT'D)

Oops, I never learned how to do that.

JACOB

Exit through the window?

GRETCH

A Jackson tradition. See, you're coming around already.

They both exit through the window.

INT. JACKSON HOME - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jacob and Gretch enter the apartment. YOUNG JACOB, 6, sits at the kitchen table. YOUNG GRETCH, teens, enters with a bag.

YOUNG JACOB

Hey, Gretch, I saved you a saltine.

YOUNG GRETCH

Save it for New Years', bro. I went to five different diners and told them it was my birthday. Enjoy your free burger, appetizers, and ice cream!

She puts the bag on the table.

YOUNG JACOB

You mean we don't have to carve the Christmas ketchup packet this year?

YOUNG GRETCH

Let's dig in.

She sits with Jacob, and they begin eating.

YOUNG GRETCH (CONT'D)

Jacob, I know that Mom and Dad skipped town again, but this holiday's gonna be different.

YOUNG JACOB

Please, you say that every year.

YOUNG GRETCH

But it's different. Look around you! No rats running around today. Working lights. We even got a Clapper from that guy off the corner.

Gretch CLAPS her hands. The ceiling fan PLOPS down on the kitchen table, collapsing it.

YOUNG GRETCH (CONT'D)

Dang, it's doing that thing again.

SFX: CLICK!

The lights shut off in the apartment.

YOUNG JACOB

There goes the working lights.

YOUNG GRETCH

Not to worry! My friends don't call me, "The Female MacGyver" for nothing!

Young Gretch goes to the power box and puts two wires together.

SFX: ZAPPING SOUNDS!

She gets electrocuted from the shocks, which mess up her hair and clothes.

YOUNG GRETCH (CONT'D)

They called me other things, too.

YOUNG JACOB

Like, "idiot"?

Fire breaks out near the box.

YOUNG JACOB (CONT'D)  
Great, another fire!

YOUNG GRETCH  
Let's jet!

They run to the front door. There is BANGING on the other side of the door by a FEMALE COP.

FEMALE COP (O.C.)  
Open up, Gretchen, I know you're in there!

YOUNG GRETCH  
Let's jet out the window!

YOUNG JACOB  
Right.

They run to the window and jump out of it.

JACOB  
(to Gretch)  
Okay, so we had humble beginnings.

GRETCH  
Our lives made ghetto kids cry!

JACOB  
But we had to go through that in order to reach the good life now! I'm glad how my life turned out, especially with my new baby on the way!

A piece of burning wood PLOPS on the ground.

GRETCH  
Let's go before we burn up.

JACOB  
I thought we weren't really here.

GRETCH  
Fine, stay here and find out.

JACOB  
Hold on to my hand. I'll snap.

Jacob SNAPS. They disappear within a cloud of smoke.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - JACOB AND SHANA'S ROOM - LATER

Jacob sleeps in his bed. Eric, wearing tattered, grey clothes, emerges from a cloud of smoke.

ERIC

Jacob! Time to get up!

Jacob opens his eyes and fans the smoke away with his hands.

JACOB

Oh, hey, Eric, I didn't even see you.

ERIC

Yeah, well, tonight, apparently, if you blink, you'll miss me. Look, I'm not really Eric; I'm the Ghost of Christmas Present.

JACOB

Okay, I really don't understand the point of you ghosts coming. Not that I don't appreciate your company.

ERIC

See, that right there. You're pissin' everybody off with your happy-go-lucky style.

JACOB

Nonsense. Now, if you don't mind, I need to get back to sleep. Otherwise, a certain guy in a red suit won't come!

ERIC

Is it the devil? 'Cuz you're already making this place hell.

(sighs)

Come with me.

JACOB

What?

ERIC

Hurry up! I gotta spook somebody else in an hour.

Jacob grabs Eric's hand. Eric SNAPS his fingers, and they disappear in a cloud of smoke.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Jacob and Eric appear at the restaurant, which is adorned with Christmas decorations.

ERIC

We're back in Milwaukee now. Take a look around.

Rhonda enters the restaurant and approaches the bar, where the bartender, IKE, black, stands.

IKE

(in a surfer-dude dialect)  
Hey, like, happy holidays, Rhonda? Want some egg nog? Heavy on the nog!

RHONDA

Not right now, Ike. I got locked out of my car. Can you give me a ride back home?

IKE

Ask your student over there. I'm busy working.

He sits down and sips his egg nog. Rhonda walks over to a booth where GINA RICHARDS, 20's, black, sits. She wears her cheerleading uniform.

GINA

Hey, Professor! Have a seat!

RHONDA

Thanks, Gina, but I really don't...

GINA

Oh, come on! It's Christmas! Let me order you something!

Rhonda sits.

RHONDA

Ms. Richards, it's a nice gesture, but...

The owner of the restaurant, TIMMY ROBERTS, 40's, white, walks over to the booth.

TIMMY

Ladies, how can I help you?

GINA

I'll have the usual. Rhonda?



RHONDA

Gina, listen, I really need a ride home from somebody.

GINA

Professor, I'm ordering dinner. Try to stay on topic.

RHONDA

Never mind.

She gets up and exits.

JACOB

(to Eric)

I don't get it. Why'd you bring me here to see Rhonda's life? What does it have to do with me?

ERIC

Nothing. I just wanted to see how my mom was doing.

JACOB

But I thought you weren't Eric.

ERIC

Hey, whose dream is this, mine or yours?

JACOB

Mine!

ERIC

Look, if you're gonna keep acting like this, I'm gonna leave.

JACOB

Good!

PAUSE.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Oh, I get it. You're trying to get me all riled up. Nice try, you ol' kidder!

Jacob playfully punches Eric's arm.

ERIC

(groans)

Oh, I can't take this no more! Find your own way back. I'm out!

Eric SNAPS his fingers and disappears in a cloud of smoke.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - JACOB AND SHANA'S ROOM -  
EVENING

Jacob awakens.

JACOB

Boy, what a grouch. Makes me think he was  
trying to show me something. Oh well.

He lies back down and closes his eyes.

JACOB (CONT'D)

This is gonna be the best Christmas ever!

Eric, K.J. and Gretch GROAN off-camera. Jacob opens his  
eyes, looks around, then lies back down.

EXT. SHOPPING MALL - EVENING

Rhonda paces back and forth outside her car. It starts to  
snow.

RHONDA

Great, snow. I need to do something.

(pause)

Oh, I know!

She pulls out her cell phone and DIALS. A recorded FEMALE  
VOICE speaks on the other end.

FEMALE VOICE

Thank you for calling roadside  
assistance. We are closed, so that our  
employees can be at home with their  
families. If you are having problems with  
your car, that would be something, since  
you should already be home with your  
family. Merry Christmas!

Rhonda hangs up.

RHONDA

I'm gonna get Matt for this. Trying to  
save money by signing us up for "A".

KRISMAS KLAUZ, a black man donning a white, dingy Santa  
hat, a dirty, grey beard, and a wrinkled, red, track  
suit, drives up to Rhonda on his moped. He slurs his  
words throughout.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

"Rhonda Underpants"! You not ho-ho-hoein' out here in these streets, are you? I'm a little intrigued!

RHONDA

It's "Underwood", and I'm married now, Myron!

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Hey, keep it down! You know it's "Krismas Klauz"! And I know you're not still married to Willie Jr.!

RHONDA

No, not that it's any of your business. And if you don't mind, I'm trying to find a way home.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

What man would leave you out in the cold like this?

RHONDA

I'm locked out of my car, moron!

KRISMAS KLAUZ

You're locked out, and I'm the moron? Say goodbye to your ride.

RHONDA

What you talkin' about?

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Hop on the back and hang on tight.

RHONDA

I think I'd be safer if I caught frostbite.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Suit yourself.

RHONDA

(sighs)

Hold on.

She jumps on the back and grabs him by the waist.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

This is the closest I'll get to being in your arms.

RHONDA

Taxi!

KRISMAS KLAUZ

I'm just playing, dang!

They drive away.

EXT. OUTDOORS - LATER

Rhonda and Krismas Klauz ride on the moped through the snow.

RHONDA

Thanks again for taking me back home.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

You know Krismas Klauz, always helping out damsels in distress!

RHONDA

Um, so I take it you'll be hanging out with one of your damsels tonight?

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Oooh, Rhonda, are you finally coming on to me?

RHONDA

(sighs)

I mean, do you have any family to spend the holidays with.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Just a goofy little brother.

RHONDA

I never knew you had one.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

I don't talk about him much. We don't even talk to each other much. But I guess we're there for each other when we need each other.

RHONDA

(pause)

I see.

KRISMAS KLAUZ

Especially when it comes to stealing my ideas! Every Valentine's Day, he becomes Valentine Victor!

RHONDA  
 "Valentine Victor"?

KRISMAS KLAUZ  
 You know, the guy who travels around  
 Milwaukee dropping presents off to  
 everyone that's in love.

RHONDA  
 Of course.

They stop at Rhonda's car. Rhonda hops off of the moped.

KRISMAS KLAUZ  
 Happy holidays, Rhonda Underpants.

RHONDA  
 You too, Myron.

Krismas Klauz drives away.

RHONDA (CONT'D)  
 Okay, I still have a few minutes to get  
 to a store.

She unlocks the door, then pauses.

RHONDA (CONT'D)  
 If I hadn't left my purse at home!

She FACEPALMS.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - SHANA AND JACOB'S BEDROOM -  
 LATER

Jacob sleeps in his bed. His pitbull, DEXTER, BARKS off-  
 screen.

JACOB  
 Okay, okay, Dexter, I'm up.

He gets out of bed.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
 I told you about eating that fruitcake.

Jacob sees Dexter wearing a black jacket with his hood  
 on, and a leash.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
 At least you're already dressed for the  
 elements. Let's go.

Jacob grabs the leash. Dexter ZOOMS away with him out the room and outdoors through the sky.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
 Wow, Dexter, I've never known you to be airborne like this!

INT. JACKSON AND JONES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jacob and Dexter land in the living room of a house.

JACOB  
 Where are we? Oh, you must be the Ghost of Christmas Future!

The maid, CYNTHIA, walks past them.

MAID  
 No [BLEEP SOUND], Sherlock!

JACOB  
 Was she supposed to hear me?

An OLDER VERSION of Shana enters the living room with a tray of Christmas cookies. A BOY and GIRL run downstairs.

OLD SHANA  
 Okay, kids, I got the cookies for Santa!

KIDS  
 Yay!

BOY  
 This is gonna be the best Christmas ever!

GIRL  
 Yeah, the best!

JACOB  
 Cool, I have a son and a daughter!

GIRL  
 When is Daddy coming back from the corner store?

OLD SHANA  
 (sighs)  
 Dear, don't you remember? Your daddy went to a better place.

GIRL  
 Oh yeah.

JACOB

Oh no.

OLD SHANA

He went to Bloomingdale's to finish  
Christmas shopping!

GIRL

(chuckles)

Oh yeah!

BOY

I can't wait 'til he comes back, Grandma!

JACOB

"Grandma"? But that must mean...

Jacob looks in the mirror and sees an OLDER VERSION of himself with grey hair and a beard. He then looks at his body and touches his beard as he becomes the older version.

OLD JACOB

Dexter? Where'd you go, boy?

OLD SHANA

(to Old Jacob)

Oh, honey, don't you remember? We went to the Nelsons and traded Dexter for their maid!

OLD JACOB

What? Why?

OLD SHANA

You were in such a giving mood 35 years ago!

OLD JACOB

That doesn't really sound like me.

Cynthia reenters.

CYNTHIA

Imagine me, being equal to a dog.

An OLDER VERSION of Eric enters, with grey hair.

OLD ERIC

Merry Christmas, fam! Hey, Jacob!

OLD JACOB

Okay, so Eric, you have my dog now? Can I see him? I think I wanna go back.

Everyone else GASPS.

OLD SHANA  
 Jakey, don't you...

OLD JACOB  
 (exclaims)  
 No, I don't remember!  
 (calmly)  
 I mean, please tell me, dear.

OLD ERIC  
 I accidently ran him over after he dashed  
 in front of the car. That was years ago.

OLD JACOB  
 Oh no!

OLD ERIC  
 But you know what? You told me that it  
 was meant to be, and that we should be  
 happy that Dexter went to his maker.

OLD SHANA  
 And that right there made me love you  
 even more!

KIDS  
 Us too!

OLD JACOB  
 I don't believe this.

He walks around.

OLD JACOB (CONT'D)  
 And if it's Christmas, where are all of  
 the decorations? Where's the tree?

GIRL  
 Well, you said that it should be  
 Christmas everyday, so we're making the  
 actual day seem like everyday!

BOY  
 And you said that all we need is each  
 other!

OLD JACOB  
 I feel like going back and kicking my own  
 butt.

Jacob and Shana's daughter, JENNIFER, enters.



JENNIFER

Hey, guys!

KIDS

Aunt Jennifer!

JENNIFER

(to Old Jacob)

Hey, Dad!

OLD JACOB

Jennifer? Oh my god, you're beautiful!

JENNIFER

Well, thanks!

OLD JACOB

You look a little dark, though.

(to Eric and Shana)

No offense!

(pause)

You don't really have my features at all!

OLD SHANA

Well, yeah, don't you...

Old Jacob stares at her.

OLD SHANA (CONT'D)

...recall? There was an entangled web that I weaved. You did the same, though. But I forgave you. And you really, really, really forgave me!

OLD JACOB

Do all of those "really's" equate the number of times, and kids?

OLD SHANA

(chuckles)

Oh, Jakey!

Everyone else LAUGHS. JACOB "J.J." JACKSON III, 20's, enters.

KIDS

Daddy!

They run to J.J. and hug him.

J.J.

Hey, everyone.

(to Old Jacob)

Hey, Dad.

OLD JACOB  
Okay, this is more like it.

He looks at J.J. up and down.

OLD JACOB (CONT'D)  
You actually look like me! Except for  
that shiner!

He gently touches J.J.'s black eye.

OLD JACOB (CONT'D)  
What's up with that?

J.J.  
Nothing, just got into a little fight.

OLD JACOB  
Now I know you're my son! What happened?

J.J.  
I got beat up by somebody who wanted my  
wallet.

OLD JACOB  
What?

J.J.  
But it was my fault for not having enough  
money. I told her I would give her extra  
tomorrow.

Old Jacob GASPS. He looks upward.

OLD JACOB  
Noooooooooooo!!!

J.J.  
Yeah, Dad.

OLD JACOB  
Man, get me outta here!

He runs to the closed front door and JIGGLES the knob.

OLD ERIC  
What's up, Jacob? This is what you  
wanted!

Everyone else approaches and surrounds Old Jacob.

OLD SHANA  
Yeah! The best Christmas ever!

THE OTHERS  
 (repeatedly)  
 The best Christmas ever!

OLD JACOB  
 No! No! Get away! Stop! Dexter, where are you?!

EXT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - SHANA AND JACOB'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sharon, wearing pajamas, walks past Jacob and Shana's bedroom door.

JACOB (O.C.)  
 No! Stop! Don't touch me! Get away from me! Stop!

SHARON  
 That's coming from their room? I must be dreaming.

Sharon exits.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rhonda enters the front door.

RHONDA  
 What a day. I can't...

She GASPS and looks around. What she sees is a decorated Christmas tree and other decorations around the house. Eric, Matt, Billy, and Will stand next to it. Bony and Eddie sit near them.

FAMILY  
 (to Rhonda)  
 Surprise!

RHONDA  
 Oh my god! Look at this! It's beautiful! You guys!

She hugs each one of them.

MATT  
 Yeah, honey, we got you good!

BILLY  
 You should've seen your face this morning! It looked...

Rhonda stares at Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
...pretty and youthful.

ERIC  
Hey, Mom, I'm home for the holidays!

RHONDA  
I see that! If I knew you were coming, I would've made sure to get your Christmas present sooner! Can you wait until after the holiday?

ERIC  
Sure. That's okay.

BILLY  
But we're still good, right?

Matt nudges Billy.

MATT  
(smirks)  
Billy!

RHONDA  
And I was gone all day, so I didn't get a chance to cook.

ERIC  
Aww, Mom, you really shouldn't have!

Rhonda smirks and fake-laughs.

MATT  
Merry Christmas, ya'll!

They all CLAMOR and hug each other.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ron and Vanka sit on the couch and exchange gifts. Shana sits and rubs on her pregnant stomach. Sharon opens up a gift. Her house phone RINGS. She looks at the caller ID, rolls her eyes, and answers it.

SHARON  
(hushed voice)  
I told you not to call me here!

MAUREEN (O.C.)  
Well, you wouldn't answer your cell!

SHARON

Look, you gotta give me some space!

MAUREEN

Just wanted to wish you merry Christmas!

SHARON

Maureen...

MAUREEN

What? Tell me it wasn't good, and I'll stop calling!

Sharon GROANS and hangs up. Jacob opens up his bedroom door and marches through the living room.

VANKA

(to Jacob)

Hey, you! Guess what day it is!

She presents Jacob with a wrapped gift.

JACOB

Baah!

He SLAPS the gift out of Vanka's hand. The gift falls to the ground and makes a GLASS-BREAKING sound. He marches over to Shana.

SHANA

Hey, Jakey, uh, what's up?

JACOB

Shana, tell me something. Is that baby mine?

RON

Uh, we better go.

JACOB

No, stay! I'm sure everyone knows but me, right?

SHANA

Look, Jacob...

JACOB

Shana!

SHANA

Okay, there's a chance, a chance, that it's not yours. But I'm pretty sure it's yours!

JACOB

Oh my god!

SHANA

And Sergeant Hopper's baby...may or may not be yours, too.

JACOB

Good to know. I'm out!

SHANA

Wait! Can't we discuss this after the holiday? It's a special day!

JACOB

I don't wanna hear it!

He approaches some tinsel on a door and RIPS it down. He GRUNTS and marches to the front door.

RON

Hey, Jacob, look at it this way! You'll still be a father to somebody!

JACOB

Aw, screw off, Ron!

He looks to the camera, breaking the "fourth wall".

JACOB (CONT'D)

Screw off, everyone!

He exits and SLAMS the door. The others smirk.

THE OTHERS

(halfheartedly)

Awww.

THE END