

'Tis The Season

By

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&  
J.P. Sanders

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - PHILLY FINANCIAL DISTRICT - DAY

Street signs, light posts and parking meters are decorated with Christmas paraphernalia. Crowds of pedestrians dressed for the cold scurry about with packages and shopping bags.

Tucked into the bottom floor of a huge, glittering office building is a small coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

NATHAN VAUGHAN, 38, waits impatiently in a long line at the coffee shop. He has on an expensive trench coat over an impeccable suit.

He peeks around the queue to see what the hold up is, and SIGHS so loudly that other patrons look at him.

The BARISTA, 20, rolls her eyes.

The line clears and Vaughan steps up to order.

BARISTA

Good morning. Can I...

VAUGHAN

(interrupting)

Large caramel mocha with whipped cream. To go.

He taps his foot as he waits for his drink.

The barista puts it on the counter, wordlessly, and Vaughan takes it to the only empty table in the shop.

He sits by himself, deep in thought. He pulls out his Blackberry, puts on a bluetooth earpiece and dials.

A dozen other men and women just like him sit at surrounding tables, alone, talking into their wireless headsets.

VAUGHAN

Hi, Donna. I guess you're not around. Well I just wanted to say I miss you and, well, I've been thinking about you non-stop ever since you left. I just wish there were some way to make it up to you. My world is crazy without you. Just gimme a call. We can work this out. Call me back when you get this.

His earpiece starts blinking, he taps it twice.

VAUGHAN

Vaughan here.

ALLISON (V.O.)

Mr. Vaughan, it's Allison Tanner from Investment Partners Inc. We were wondering why you stopped access to your account for payment transfer.

He stirs his coffee absentmindedly.

VAUGHAN

You don't get any payment. I'm finished with you people.

He sips the coffee and grimaces at it.

ALLISON (V.O.)

This loss is governed by our...

VAUGHAN

(interrupting)

Are you trying to bore me with technicalities? Don't. You should have protected me from any losses that B.P had.

ALLISON (V.O.)

That's not how it works, Mr. Vaughan. We can't foresee situations of massive corporate irresponsibility.

He gives the coffee one more try but nearly spits it out.

VAUGHAN

(dismissively)

Be that as it may I'm not paying any fees.

He slides the full coffee cup to the very edge of the other side of the table, as far away from him as possible.

Vaughan stands up abruptly. The coffee cup teeters. Other patrons halt their conversations to watch him.

INT. CALL CENTER - INDIA - DAY

An Indian woman sits in a tiny half-cubicle in a cramped, dirty call center with a thousand other operators. The name "Chilanti" is scrawled on duct tape attached to the back of her dilapidated chair.

She looks bored as she listens to Vaughan's RANT in her headphones.

VAUGHAN (V.O.)  
(shouting)  
I'm not paying for your firm's  
incompetence!

The call ends.

She types "customer verbally abusive" into the box on her computer screen and hangs up, rolling her eyes.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Vaughan plucks the headset out of his ear, squeezes it, trying unsuccessfully to crush it, and jams it into the pocket of his coat.

He turns and storms out of the coffee shop. The other patrons return to their own conversations.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Vaughan barrels out of the shop and bumps into a street SANTA ringing a collection BELL. The Santa is Indian.

SANTA  
(Indian accent)  
Donation today, my friend?

Vaughan gives him a dirty look, hails a cab.

A cab pulls up right away.

SANTA  
A donation for the cheeldren?

VAUGHAN  
I'm not paying for your kids,  
Loser.

He turns to get in the waiting cab, traffic stopping up because of it.

A SEPTA BUS screeches to a halt behind the cab.

SANTA

Not my kids, Sir. The donations  
are for the cheeldren's Community  
Center in Kensington.

Vaughan pauses.

CABBIE (O.S.)

Come on! My cab's gonna rust out,  
Mon!

VAUGHAN

(to Santa)

I don't care about that center,  
those kids, that neighborhood or  
your pitiful donation jar.

He kicks the jar over, spilling change and dollar bills all  
over the sidewalk.

The jar rolls away in an arc and ends up resting against a  
black boot. The boot belongs to OFFICER SANDERS, 40.

Officer Sanders watches the exchange in front of him, then  
leans into the radio attached to his shoulder.

OFFICER SANDERS

Dispatch, this is Beat 7. Roll me  
a paddy wagon to the corner of  
Broad and South Street. I've got a  
disturbance of the peace.

The cop starts to pull a nightstick out of his utility belt.

The cabbie HONKS.

CABBIE

Come on, Mon!

SANTA

Dat was uncalled for. Besides,  
there are people out there with far  
worse problems than you.

VAUGHAN

You're uncalled for! Begging like  
this out on the street. Ruining  
everyone's day. Get a real job!

Drivers lean out of their gridlocked cars to SHOUT and HONK  
at the delay.

VAUGHAN

You make me sick! You're like a  
parasite feeding off of hard  
working people like me!

CABBIE

Mon, I can't wait any longer!

VAUGHAN

(to cabbie)

And I don't need your mouth either!

The cabbie waves dismissively, drives off.

Officer Sanders' nightstick pokes Vaughan in the shoulder,  
jolting him forward.

OFFICER SANDERS (O.S.)

You got a problem with Santa, Sir?

Vaughan turns angrily to retaliate, arms spread out  
confrontationally, hitting Sanders' chest.

He notices Sanders is a cop. And two inches taller.

Sanders looks down at his chest where Vaughan hit him, then  
leans into the radio on his shoulder again.

OFFICER SANDERS

Dispatch, this is Beat 7 once  
again. Perpetrator has assaulted  
an officer. Request backup.

Behind him, Santa bends down to retrieve as much change as  
he can. Other passers-by stoop to help as well, casting  
dirty looks at Vaughan while doing so.

VAUGHAN

He was harassing me, Officer! This  
vagrant accosted me. I... I...  
think he was gonna rob me!

Sanders looks unconvinced.

Santa's jar is filling up as other spectators rapidly drop  
coins and bills in.

People suddenly stop what they're doing and watch as a paddy  
wagon pulls up to the corner, lights flashing.

Several people start snapping pictures with cell phones.

Sanders roughly spins Vaughan around, attempts to cuff him.

OFFICER SANDERS  
You have the right to remain  
silent...

Vaughan's face gets red. He struggles against the officer, pushing away from him. Sanders stumbles and knocks over an OLD LADY.

The growing crowd GASPS as she tumbles to the ground.

OLD LADY  
Oh! My back!

OFFICERS DAVIS and MCLAUGHLIN get out of the paddy wagon to assist.

Sanders stoops to help the old lady.

Vaughan tries to disappear into the crowd, but the spectators close ranks and stop him.

Officer McLaughlin grabs Vaughan roughly, but Vaughan keeps up the struggle.

VAUGHAN  
No! I didn't do anything wrong!

WITNESS 1  
Get that trash outta here!

WITNESS 2  
You punk!

Officer Davis steps in to help his partner, and the two cops take Vaughan down to the slushy sidewalk, smashing his face into the ground.

With a knee in his back, they finally cuff him.

The crowd starts CHEERING.

OFFICER MCLAUGHLIN  
Get up, Scumbag.

The cops hoist Vaughan up to his feet, still struggling against the officers. Davis opens up the rear doors of the wagon, McLaughlin is pushing Vaughan toward it.

He tries turning away to avoid getting stuffed in the wagon.

A snowball sails through the air from unknown origin, and pelts Vaughan right in the face. The crowd ROARS with laughter.

A man, TROY VINCENT, 20's, steps forward out of the crowd.

TROY  
Mr. Vaughan?

Vaughan instinctively looks at Troy, then tries to hide his face from more incoming snowball bombs. The cops finally shove him inside, McLaughlin getting in with him.

TROY  
Guess I'll cancel today's meetings.

The rear doors SLAM closed and Officer Davis climbs in the driver's seat.

The paddy wagon pulls out. The crowd goes back to its business.

Troy SIGHS and puts his forehead in his hand.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - DAY

The gray snowy sky dominates the distant center city Philly skyline, blocking out most of the early morning sun.

Rushing past hundreds of other flakes, one in particular seems to be on a mission. Its crystalline formations catch what little light is found in the sky.

Following the snowflake as it plunges toward the ground, a fast-moving commuter train runs along on elevated tracks.

EXT. ELEVATED TRAIN STATION - DAY

SCREECHING metallic brakes grip the tracks, slowing the train as it pulls into the station. Several waiting commuters gather as the trains stops.

Doors WHOOSH open and the crowd rushes in as others push their way through the exit and onto the snowy platform.

A flustered JEAN BENSON, 22, wearing a black pullover hat and long wool coat over a waitress uniform, exits the train pulling her twin daughters LILLY and DAWN, 6.

Lilly looks up at the sky as she hurries along hand-in-hand with Jean as Dawn keeps up the fast pace. Lilly spots the fast-moving snowflake falling toward her.

She opens her mouth, sticks out her tongue and catches the glistening flake. It melts instantly, causing a huge smile.

LILLY  
I caught one, Mommy! Right on the  
tip of my tongue!

Still moving hastily through the crowd, Dawn stays focused on the sidewalk in front of her.

JEAN  
That's great, Honey, but let's keep  
moving. Mommy's running late.

Lilly steps faster as they reach the stairs. At the bottom she leaps, skipping the last two steps.

EXT. KENSINGTON AVENUE - DAY

Jean and her daughters cross at the corner as traffic moves slowly along the slush-covered street.

Jean steps into a puddle at the curb, submerging her foot, ankle deep. She stops, stares at her soaking sneaker.

JEAN  
Great! Just great!

The girls look at their mom sadly.

Two down-and-out-looking MEN are standing next to a fire burning in a barrel. They see her and LAUGH.

Jean and the twins shoot the men a mean look and walk away. Lilly looks back at the laughing men and sticks her tongue out at them.

They continue to walk along a row of run-down storefronts, past an OLD MAN waiting for a liquor store to open.

They stop outside a large brick building with graffiti marring the white painted exterior.

Above the door is a sign.

INSERT SIGN, WHICH READS:  
Kensington Community Center

BACK TO SCENE

Jean tries to open the door, but it's locked. She sounds the BUZZER and an African American man, CORNELIUS WELLS, 60, opens the door.

Jean shoots him a grumpy look.

CORNELIUS

Sorry 'bout that, Ladies! I was  
takin' out the trash and musta  
forgot to unlock it. Get on in  
here and warm y'selves up. I got  
coffee on if you like, Miss Benson.

The twins rush inside.

JEAN

Thanks, but I'm late. I gotta sign  
in and run.

CORNELIUS

No problem. Gee, the twins look  
lovely today.

JEAN

Thanks, Mr. C.

Jean enters.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

The interior looks much larger than it appears from outside,  
with a large, open wood floor where the girls have already  
begun playing with a basketball.

Off to the sides are a kitchen, an enclosed daycare area, a  
seating area with worn sofas and chairs, and a long table  
with several computer terminals.

The center is empty, and the bouncing ball ECHOES.

LILLY

Mommy, we're first again.

Jean signs the girls' names on a log sheet sitting near the  
front door.

JEAN

I love you girls. Come here for  
hugs.

The girls scamper over, hug their mom. Jean cuts the  
embrace short, stands right up and turns to leave.

DAWN

Why do you always have to rush away  
so fast?

Looking back, Jean shoots the girls a sorry look and exits  
quickly.

The girls look up to Cornelius, who smiles warmly at them.

CORNELIUS

Now, which one of you's gonna get whupped by this creaky old man?

He snatches the ball playfully and begins dribbling away. He turns around to find neither girl is following him.

Dawn stands still, pouting. Lilly looks anxiously back and forth between her sister and Cornelius.

DAWN

I don't feel playful.

Cornelius nods knowingly, and sits down on the wood floor with crossed legs. Lilly sits next to him.

CORNELIUS

That's okay, Darlin'. Some days, I don't neither.

Dawn continues to stand silently, studying her shoes.

Cornelius looks down at Lilly. She looks back and shrugs.

CORNELIUS

You don't hafta talk right now if ya don't want to. I know things been tough for your family. But it's almost Christmastime, so I'm hopin' to get some of that joy right into you. What's it gonna take to cheer you up?

Lilly leans into Cornelius' shoulder, and Dawn gives him a halfhearted smile.

INT. MAYFAIR DINER - DAY

Jean hurries in the door of the greasy-spoon diner. It's crowded with regulars and the waitstaff is busy. She sees the manager, STEVE DUFFY, 50, glaring at her.

She glances at her watch.

INSERT: WATCH

8:28

BACK TO SCENE

Duffy diverts his gaze to a clock on the wall.

INSERT: CLOCK

8:32

BACK TO SCENE

She hurries over to him.

JEAN

Good morning, Mr. Duffy.

She offers him a charming smile. It's not returned.

JEAN

(cheerily)

Reporting for duty.

DUFFY

You always gonna be late?

JEAN

Just working the kinks out of this new schedule. I had to drop off my kids...

His glare gets colder.

JEAN

No, Sir.

DUFFY

Good. Ditch your stuff and get on deck. You're backing up Tricia on the counter.

Jean nods, hurries to put her stuff down.

TRICIA, 40's, grabs three plates from the kitchen window and spins quickly to put them on the counter. She narrowly misses slamming in to Jean.

TRICIA

Whoa! You gotta call out!

JEAN

Excuse me?

TRICIA

Let me know. Say 'behind ya' or 'watch your back' or 'nice butt, gorgeous'. Or else you're gonna get a lapful of pancakes.

JEAN

Got it. Hi, I'm Jean.

She extends her hand. Tricia doesn't even look at it.

TRICIA

Tricia. Glad you're here. The old man at the end needs more coffee.

Jean looks around the counter area, finds a coffee pot and takes it over to the OLD MAN at the end of the counter.

JEAN

(cheerily)

Morning! Freshen your coffee, Sir?

He keeps his head buried in his newspaper.

JEAN

Sir?

OLD MAN

Always. Freshen. My. Coffee.

Jean pours it, starts to turn around.

TRICIA (O.S.)

Behind ya!

Jean stops just in time to avoid knocking several plates of food out of Tricia's arms.

TRICIA

See? It works. Now Denny and Ida get their breakfast.

She sets the plates down on the counter just behind Jean, in front of a smiling elderly couple, then straightens and smiles warmly at her.

TRICIA

You're gonna do just fine, Sugar.

INT. POLICE LOCKUP - NIGHT

The cell is crammed with the usual suspects. The walls are covered with the scrawled memories of those who have come and gone.

Several inmates lay around on bunks in orange jumpsuits.

Vaughan sits on a top bunk, barefoot and staring intently at a very large, unshaven GORILLA of an inmate.

Gorilla Inmate fumbles around trying to raise his massive leg as he sits trying on new, unscuffed orange slippers.

He then reaches down with a GRUNT, and hurls a pair of dingy old slippers with holes at Vaughan, who blocks them, knocking them to the floor.

A robust GUARD making his rounds CLANGS his nightstick on the bars.

GUARD

Hey, Vaughan! Maybe you should ask  
Santa for some new slippers. Ha!  
Ha! Ha!

The guard's laugh exposes his lack of teeth.

VAUGHAN

Maybe I'll ask him to bring you  
some dental insurance.

The guard's laughter halts to reveal a grumpy frown.

GUARD

Hope you can sleep with your eyes  
open, Punk!

Inmates burst out LAUGHING.

Vaughan moves across his bunk and sits with his back to the wall, his arms folded around his knees. He watches his cellmates with fear in his eyes.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Morning sunlight cracks through rolling clouds. The hustle and bustle of officers coming and going through the entrance seems limitless.

INT. POLICE HOLDING ROOM - DAY

The toothless guard brings a cuffed and shackled Vaughan into the room, who looks as though he has been up for days. His ruffled hair looks like a discarded bird's nest.

Troy sits at a large stainless steel table with a mirror on the wall behind him. Vaughan catches an eyeful of himself.

VAUGHAN

Jeez. It looks like I just crawled out of a swamp.

Troy turns his nose away from Vaughan.

TROY

Smells like it too, Sir.

The guard escorts Vaughan to a seat in front of the table and cuffs him to a large eye bolt mounted on the top.

GUARD

Make it quick.

He turns and leaves, the door SLAMS as a BUZZER sounds.

VAUGHAN

Where are my lawyers?

Troy sits back down and opens a briefcase in front of him.

TROY

They'll be here soon. We need to get some things worked out before you go to court.

Vaughan tries to sit back but the chain restricts him.

VAUGHAN

What's to work out? I need to get out of here, like now. I don't have time for this!

TROY

I got a call from Eastman Investments yesterday. It seems they're unloading several large holdings of properties, and they are giving you first shot at picking them up.

Troy pulls a PDA out of his briefcase, begins to take notes.

TROY

Not sure where, but they want to get out fast. I think they're having IRS trouble. My sources say there may be some indictments.

VAUGHAN

(impatiently)

Offer 'em \$20 million for all lots. We'll unload them or something. Look, this isn't the time for this. I have more pressing issues here.

Vaughan tugs at the restraints to try to make them more comfortable.

VAUGHAN

Do me a favor, call Donna and let her know I'll see her tonight.

Troy looks a bit confused.

TROY

You want me to call your ex-girlfriend?

VAUGHAN

I know, I know. Just do it.

Troy SIGHS with resignation just as the guard opens the door to the room, letting five perfectly-groomed LAWYERS in.

LAWYER 1

Mr. Vaughan, we're ready to go.

The guard sneers at Vaughan, throws a pile of chains and a bulletproof vest on the table with a loud CLANG.

Vaughan regards all the gear warily.

VAUGHAN

Isn't this a bit much?

GUARD

You don't have many friends rootin' for you right now. They're calling you the Abominable Snowman. It's up to us to make sure they don't get to take a shot at ya. Before we do.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Snow covers the ground around the shoveled courthouse steps. A paddy wagon makes its way to the front of the building. It's met by many REPORTERS and outraged CITIZENS. Several people are wearing Santa suits.

Vaughan exits the van wearing the bulletproof vest and a riot helmet, cuffed and shackled.

Three COPS usher him past the jeering crowd, PHOTOGRAPHERS snapping shots and adding to the overall hum of contempt.

As the cop reaches the top step, a downpour of snowballs strikes Vaughan and the officers. The courthouse doors SLAM closed, taking the brunt of the bombardment.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The courtroom is stately in a historic way. The walls are covered with large portraits of judges past. A CROWD of spectators sits in anticipation.

Vaughan sits at the defense table next to Lawyer 2. He whispers to him.

Seated behind the defense table is Troy.

Sitting at the center podium is the JUDGE, 40's, an unfriendly looking Asian woman. She's in quiet discussion with lawyers from the defense and prosecution teams.

The judge breaks up the conversation, and the men and women walk back to their respective sides. Several are smiling, but not those returning to Vaughan's table.

Seated at the prosecution table is Vaughan's victim, the Indian Santa. It's SAHRIED PATEL 50, wearing a dark suit and glasses with long white hair and beard.

JUDGE

Nathan Vaughan, please rise and  
hear the finding of this court.

The entire defense team stands along with Vaughan.

JUDGE

Mr. Vaughan, you have been found  
guilty on all charges brought  
before this court.

VAUGHAN

You gotta be...

JUDGE

(overpowering Vaughan)

Enough Mr. Vaughan! Contain your contempt of this court, or I assure you this will not end well. Do I make myself clear?

Vaughan clams up as his lawyer grabs his shoulder.

JUDGE

It is the decision of this bench that you will spend the next three months incarcerated, thinking about your obviously warped vision of how people should treat one another. Shame on you Mr. Vaughan.

Vaughan deflates as the reality hits him.

The crowd breaks out in a low MURMUR of excitement.

LAWYER 2

Your Honor, with all due respect, might there be another way to use this time more productively rather than jail?

The judge looks on curiously. Vaughan looks uneasy.

JUDGE

Sir, the only reason I will entertain your question is so I have something to laugh at today at lunch. Please continue.

LAWYER 2

I propose that Mr. Vaughan be given 30 days community service at the very location where Mr. Patel works as a volunteer.

VAUGHAN

I object! Your Honor, this man no longer represents me in this case!

JUDGE

Sit down Mr. Vaughan! As far as I am concerned, this case is closed.

Vaughan sits down as Lawyer 2 gathers his belongings.

LAWYER 2  
Your honor, am I excused?

The judge waves him off.

LAWYER 2  
(to Vaughan)  
I've been waiting for this for a  
long time. You're on your own.

The entire defense team walks out.

Vaughan sits alone.

JUDGE  
You sure do have a way with people,  
Mr. Vaughan. But I think a good  
point has been raised. What is the  
time gonna teach you in jail? I  
suspect you wouldn't learn a thing.

The judge signals to the prosecution to approach the  
bench. As the prosecutor approaches, Vaughan looks back at  
Troy, who looks confused.

After a quick sidebar the prosecutor returns to speak with  
Vaughan's victim.

JUDGE  
Bailiff, would you please escort  
Mr. Patel to his vehicle?

The BAILIFF complies and the two men exit the courtroom.

Minutes pass like hours. Vaughan begins to sweat.

The main doors open to reveal Sahried carrying a large  
box. He makes his way down the aisle, escorted by the  
bailiff. He stops at Vaughan's table.

JUDGE  
Mr. Vaughan if you would be so kind  
as to take the box.

Vaughan stands and takes the box. Sahried is all smiles.

SAHRIED  
Merry Christmas, Mr. Vaughan.

Sahried turns and walks back to his seat.

Vaughan shoots him a nasty look and opens the box. He peeks  
inside, then quickly closes it.

VAUGHAN

You can't be serious, Your Honor!

The judge smiles.

JUDGE

Thank you, Mr. Patel. Mr. Vaughan, this court modifies its previous ruling. You are hereby sentenced to 30 days service at the Kensington Community Center. The Court also orders a fine of \$15,000 with \$10,000 paid directly to the Community Center.

Vaughan is dumbstruck.

JUDGE

Mr. Vaughan I warn you now, if for any reason you do not carry out this order to the letter you will be incarcerated for no less than six months in the city lock up.

Opening the box, Vaughan pulls out a Santa hat.

VAUGHAN

You've gotta be kidding me.

JUDGE

I'll leave it up to you. Six months in the hole now, or one month of service to a needy community. Make your decision by 9 am tomorrow, Mr. Vaughan. Bailiff, please remove the defendant.

The judge SLAMS the gavel.

Vaughan, with a look of ruin, turns to Troy who shakes his head in disbelief.

The bailiff escorts Vaughan away.

JUDGE

(smirking)

By the way Mr. Vaughan, have a Merry Christmas.

Vaughan pauses but is nudged along by the bailiff. As they leave the courtroom, onlookers CHEER and APPLAUD.

INT. POLICE LOCK UP - DAY

Standing in front of the cell doorway, looking in at his rowdy cellmates, Vaughan hesitates.

The toothless guard attempts to push him inside.

GUARD

Hey, fellas. Look who's back!

The inmates begin to harass Vaughan. A slipper clocks him in the jaw.

Vaughan tries to backpedal out of the cell. The guard shoves him inside the cell and SLAMS the door.

Vaughan, eying the inmates, quickly turns and approaches the cell door.

VAUGHAN

(to guard)

Get me Troy Vincent! Now!

The inmates slowly begin to gather around Vaughan.

INT. TROY'S CAR - DAY

Troy is driving as Vaughan sits in the passenger seat, head against the window, looking bummed. Troy fumbles with the stereo, lands on a station with a song ending.

TROY

You made the right choice, Sir.

Vaughan shoots him a grumpy look.

VAUGHAN

Did you get in touch with Donna?

Troy bites his lip.

TROY

Are you gonna need a ride tomorrow?

The song on the radio fades out.

DJ (V.O.)

Well we see here that this Nathan Vaughan character has been granted a chance to redeem himself. We're going to the phones for your thoughts on this wacko after the station break.

Vaughan kills the power to the radio.

VAUGHAN

This is unbelievable, I don't know  
if I can do this.

TROY

I don't think you have much of a  
choice, Sir. I mean, jail's not  
really your kind of place.

Vaughan reclines the seat as he looks at Troy.

VAUGHAN

How many times do we need to talk  
about the "Sir" thing?

TROY

Sorry, Sir.

Troy looks away and out his side window and cracks a smile  
unseen by Vaughan.

VAUGHAN

I'm hungry, let's hit Pat's.

TROY

I don't know how you can eat those  
things. But if you insist.

VAUGHAN

I insist. What's with  
you? Lighten up a little.

Troy pulls the car off the highway and down an off ramp.

EXT. PAT'S KING OF STEAKS - DAY

Crowds of people in winter jackets line the sidewalk outside  
the popular steak joint. The narrow streets where 9th and  
Passyunk Ave intersect are covered with slush.

Pigeons swarm the ground searching for scraps, but the  
frequent movement of the patrons seems to keep the birds  
from their feast.

TRAFFIC on the street is non-stop as even more people cross  
and line up to get their fill of the Philly legend.

Vaughan, trying to conceal his identity with sunglasses,  
stands at the counter next to Troy. The owner, a robust  
Italian man, FRANK OLIVIERI, 30's, tends to the customers.

FRANK  
So, what'll it be gentlemen?

VAUGHAN  
Gimme a Whiz Wit. Make that two.

FRANK  
Drinks wit dat?

Vaughan glances at Troy, who's looking around at the growing crowd that is now stretching around the block.

Troy spots two large MEN standing spread eagle with their coat sleeves pulled up past their elbows. Each man is chowing on a dripping steak, CheezWhiz running down their arms and elbows into a gooey puddle on the snowy ground.

VAUGHAN  
Just gimme two iced teas.

Troy quickly shoots his head back around.

TROY  
No! Make one with no Whiz and a diet please.

Frank looks the two over a moment, curiously stopping on Vaughan's face.

FRANK  
Say, haven't I seen you somewhere before?

VAUGHAN  
(jokingly)  
No, I don't think so. Well, maybe when I was a kid I was on the Al Albert's Showcase.

FRANK  
Naw, I know I seen you before but I can't place the face.

Behind Vaughan, a customer in line becomes restless.

CUSTOMER  
Lets go! I wanna get my grub on.

Frank shoots him a nasty look that shuts him down instantly.

FRANK  
(to customer)  
Hold up there, Bub!

Frank passes Vaughan's order to another WORKER.

EXT. PAT'S KING OF STEAKS - DAY

Vaughan stands next to Troy's BMW, wiping CheezWhiz from his elbows. Troy sits in the drivers seat and rolls the passenger window down.

TROY

Make sure you get it all. The last time it took me an hour to clean the Whiz from the armrests.

VAUGHAN

That's all part of the experience.

Several PEOPLE in line begin to take notice of Vaughan.

A man in an Eagles coat sitting with his family as they eat stands and points to Vaughan.

EAGLES FAN

That's the guy who jacked up Santa!

The crowd of people waiting in line looks toward Vaughan, several SHOUTING out as they gather snow from the ground.

Eagles Fan grabs his Sandwich and hurls it at Vaughan.

Vaughan ducks to avoid the flying food as it sails through the open window and splatters all over the inside of the BMW's windshield.

The angry crowd bombards Vaughan as he dives head first into the BMW through the open window.

Troy slams the car into gear as Vaughan pulls his legs inside. The side window rolls up as dozens of snowballs SLAM the glass.

The car's tires slip on the snow as Troy tries to pull from the parking spot.

Troy shifts desperately from drive to reverse.

The hail of snowballs continues. The crowd approaches.

VAUGHAN

Go! Go! Go!

The tires finally catch and the car pulls erratically from the parking space and onto Passyunk Ave.

The crowd continues its assault as the car speeds away.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

Troy tries to maintain control of the car as he wipes the splattered Whiz Wit from the windshield with his forearm.

VAUGHAN  
This is insane!

TROY  
Ya think?

They speed off.

EXT. PAT'S KING OF STEAKS - DAY

The angry mob runs into the street continuing to hurl snowballs at the fleeing car.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - OFFICE - DAY

The Philadelphia Inquirer is being read by someone sitting at a large cluttered desk.

INSERT NEWSPAPER:

Tuesday, November 30, 2010

The front page shows Vaughan being thrown into the back of the paddy wagon, with the headline "Abominable Snowman Hates Santa". Vaughan's face is twisted into a warped mess as a large snowball disintegrates across his cheek and eye.

BACK TO SCENE

A KNOCK at the door.

The paper drops as its reader, BILL SHAW, 50's, looks up. He has peppered hair and is dressed in ruffled khakis and an out-of-date sweater over a polo shirt.

MR. SHAW  
Yes! What is it?

The door creaks open slowly, the head of SUSAN PAIGE, 40's, peeks in. She has an ear-to-ear smile, short fake-blond hair and horned rim glasses.

SUSAN  
Mr. Shaw, would you like more coffee?

Shaw stares at her for several seconds.

MR. SHAW

Miss Paige, you folks sure do drink a lot of coffee. I think we alone are keeping Columbia in business.

He puts the paper down on his desk.

MR. SHAW

Is that really why you came in?

Smirking, she steps aside to reveal MR. STONE, 40's. He has on a dark suit and wears a short military-style haircut.

Shaw stands quickly.

MR. SHAW

Mr. Stone! Please, come in.

Mr. Stone politely squirms past Susan and closes the door.

He approaches the desk and sits down before Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw sits. Mr. Stone CLEARS his throat, gives Mr. Shaw a dirty look. Mr. Shaw stands quickly again.

Mr. Stone places his briefcase on the old shabby desk, popping it open. Shaw looks a bit fearful.

MR. STONE

Let's have it.

Shaw snaps out of his frozen stance and quickly turns to a large picture behind him of a cat hanging by its claws from a tree branch.

He moves the picture sideways to reveal a safe. He keys in a code and the door pops open.

Shaw retrieves two large stacks of money. Placing them on the desk, he returns to close the safe. He slides the painting over to its place.

He hands the money over to Mr. Stone, who places one stack in his briefcase.

MR. SHAW

It's all there. Count it if you like.

MR. STONE

You'd be gone already if it wasn't.

Mr. Shaw sits nervously.

Mr. Stone puts the other stack in the briefcase, tosses a small envelope in front of Shaw.

MR. STONE

Enjoy the holidays, Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw picks up the envelope checking the weight of it with his hand. A twisted, yellow-toothed smile cracks across his face, then instantly disappears.

MR. SHAW

Speaking of the holidays, what about this thing with the court? I think this Nathan Vaughan character is gonna be dragging around a lot of press. Is all the outside interest gonna be a problem?

Mr. Stone reaches into his briefcase and grabs a cell phone.

MR. STONE

You tell me.

Mr. Stone pushes a button on the phone, it beeps.

The office door opens, in step two THUGS dressed in cammo pants and hooded black sweatshirts.

MR. STONE

It seems that Mr. Shaw here is wondering if we can handle any problems that might arise. What do you think, boys?

Thug 1 tips over a large table next to Mr. Shaw's desk, sending books and a lamp CRASHING to the floor. Shaw jumps out of his seat trying to get away from the debris.

MR. STONE

Any questions, Mr. Shaw?

Mr. Shaw walks over to the table and gingerly sets it back on its legs.

Susan opens the door quickly, looking concerned.

SUSAN

Is everything okay, Mr. Shaw?

She looks at the pile of crashed debris.

MR. SHAW

Everything's fine, Susan. I got a little too close to the end of this table. I'm just having one of those days.

Unconvinced, Susan looks around at the others.

SUSAN

Well, should I bring you and your guests something to drink? Maybe some coffee or soda?

Thug 1 raises his hand.

THUG 1

Yo, Blondie, cud I get a beer?

Mr. Stone plants a fist firmly into Thug 1's midsection, doubling him over. Thug 1 GASPS for air.

MR. STONE

Please forgive my associate for his lack of manners.

Susan stares in shock.

MR. SHAW

Uh, I think that'll be all Susan, thank you.

Mr. Shaw gestures for her to leave, she catches his signal.

SUSAN

I'll just leave you boys to your little, uh, whatever it is you're doing. Play nice now.

Mr. Stone slaps Thug 1 in the back of the head.

THUG 1

(winded)

Sorry lady!

She raises an eyebrow and leaves, closing the door.

Mr. Shaw picks up the lamp and places it on the table.

MR. SHAW

Look, this is all real impressive but you're not gonna be able to strong-arm the press. This ain't some third world nation.

Mr. Stone stands, closes his briefcase, turns and walks to the door with his thugs in tow. He puts his hand on the knob and pauses.

MR. STONE

Surely by now you understand that I do what I want and I get what I want. I'm not about to let that rich punk playing King Of the Fat Elves ruin my plans for this neighborhood.

Mr. Stone and his thugs leave.

Mr. Shaw collapses into his chair and SIGHS.

MR. SHAW

Tomorrow's gonna suck.

INT. VAUGHAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Vaughan sits on his fancy leather sofa in his upscale apartment, his face twisted in a snarl of disgust.

On the coffee table in front of him is the box Sahried gave him in court, and a half-empty tumbler of brown liquid.

He takes a gulp from the glass, SIGHS, and opens the box to reveal the Santa suit.

He stands and takes the suit out of the box, holding it up to himself. It's too big and very tattered.

He sniffs it, is displeased with the smell. Immediately grabs his phone and dials.

VAUGHAN

Vic, it's Nathan Vaughan. Good, and you? Listen, I need a Santa suit tomorrow.

He checks his watch, a very fancy Rolex.

VAUGHAN

Ten's not that late. Come on, you know you'll get paid well. You're kidding me. What if I double your price? Aww, come on. Three days?! Fine.

He ends the call, throws his phone on the sofa.

VAUGHAN

Tomorrow's really gonna suck.

He takes off his pants and shirt and gets into the Santa suit, then looks at the mirror hanging over his fireplace. The costume's very baggy and floppy on him.

He looks around his apartment, searching.

Vaughan picks up the newspaper and looks at the front page photo of himself getting busted.

VAUGHAN

Definitely not your good side.

He crumples up the newspaper and stuffs it into the suit,

He stoops down to grab the rest of the newspapers and begins crumpling pages into balls, stuffing them into the suit one after the other.

Eventually it just looks way too lumpy.

INT. VAUGHAN APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Vaughan puts on a sweat suit over multiple layers of shirts and sweaters, then pulls the Santa suit on over everything.

The suit looks acceptable, but Vaughan's face is red.

VAUGHAN

Ugh, I'm gonna die in here.

He starts peeling off layers.

He goes back to...

INT. VAUGHAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

He grabs several throw pillows from the sofa and tries stuffing them into the suit.

He looks in the mirror again. This time he's pleased.

VAUGHAN

That's more like it.

He grabs his glass, drains it.

VAUGHAN

Got a big day tomorrow, fat man. Let's get this over with.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

Troy drives along Erie Avenue. Vaughan, dressed as Santa and sipping coffee, is in the front seat.

TROY

Don't worry. Outside of Philly, nobody knows what's going on with you. All your clients have been notified you're simply unavailable for a month.

VAUGHAN

Good. Thanks. Hopefully some real news happens and the media forgets all about this.

TROY

I'm sure this news cycle won't last long. The media's very fickle. Facebook, however... I'm not sure that's going away any time soon.

The car turns the corner onto Kensington Avenue. They both notice the large crowd outside the Community Center.

TROY

Uh-oh.

VAUGHAN

Ah, my adoring fans. Oh well. Might as well play it up, right?

TROY

'Fraid so. Sorry, Sir.

The car pulls to a stop and the crowd swarms Troy's car.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

The Center entrance is packed with REPORTERS and other onlookers being held back by several POLICE OFFICERS.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

Troy watches the crowd begin to gather around the car. Many reporters are attempting to get a statement from Vaughan through the car window. Flashes blind them until the police pull the crowd back.

Vaughan waves through the closed window.

VAUGHAN

Yes, yes. Your meal ticket's here.

Vaughan continues to wave for the image-hungry mob.

TROY

Shall we, Sir?

Vaughan hands his cell phone to Troy, who looks perplexed.

TROY

Now?

VAUGHAN

Please?

Troy rolls his eyes. He dials and listens for an answer as Vaughan continues to put on a show for the waiting press.

INT. DONNA DIMITRI'S APARTMENT - DAY

DONNA DIMITRI, 34, sits in her ultra-modern living room, snuggled on a large white leather sofa, wrapped in a green silk robe. Her red hair's tied up in a messy bun.

She suppresses a sneeze long enough to grab a tissue from a box on the table next to her. She lets loose with the SNEEZE into the tissue, crumples it and drops it into a waste bin next to her.

Her nose is red with dryness, eyes are swollen.

She reaches for a cup of hot tea sitting on the table next to an array of medicines. Sipping on the tea, she picks up a remote control and switches on a large TV.

The local news is on.

INSERT TV IMAGE:

Standing next to a BMW surrounded by reporters on the side of a rundown building is a female REPORTER in an overcoat.

Everything is silent.

BACK TO SCENE:

Donna, with a blank look, aims the remote and turns the volume up.

REPORTER (O.S.)

... of the biggest news stories in the Philly area. We're live at the

REPORTER (O.S.)  
Kensington Community Center, where  
Nathan Vaughan, Philly's own  
abominable snowman, begins his  
30-day community service sentence.

INSERT TV IMAGE:

The news camera turns its attention to the men in the BMW.  
Vaughan is in the front seat, waving, as Troy dials a phone.

BACK TO SCENE:

Donna rolls her eyes, lifts the remote.  
Her phone RINGS on the table. The remote lowers slowly.  
She picks up the phone, looks at the screen.

INSERT CELLPHONE SCREEN:

Nathan 215-555-9876

BACK TO SCENE:

She immediately sends the call to voice mail, then tosses it  
on the sofa and shuts off the TV.

She has a look of disgust about her, but only until a large  
SNEEZE erupts, and she reaches for the tissues again.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

The police clear the crowd away from the vehicle, opening a  
path to the front door of the Center.

Vaughan continues his display of foolishness as Troy ends  
his call.

TROY  
Nope.

Vaughan ends his mocking as he takes back his phone.

VAUGHAN  
I'll try later.

TROY  
Don't take hints well, do you?

VAUGHAN

Guess not.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Vaughan exits the vehicle. As he SLAMS the door shut, his beard gets caught, ripping it off his face and nearly pulling him over as tries to walk away.

He recovers and forcefully RIPS it out of the doorjamb.

Cutting through the crowd are Jean and the twins, wiggling their way toward the front entrance.

They make it. Dawn stops when she sees Vaughan, angrily clutching a crumpled-up beard in his hand.

DAWN

Lilly! Santa shaved his beard!

Lilly looks on as if she knows better. Jean tries to hurry the girls on.

JEAN

Sweetie, that's not the real  
Santa. Just one of his helpers.

Jean looks at Vaughan, trying unsuccessfully to hide her disappointment. She herds the girls through the door.

Troy steps out of the car carrying a briefcase and Vaughan's Santa hat, rushing to keep up with Vaughan as he reaches the front door.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Troy enters the center and looks around. He notes the kitchen, computer area and worn furniture.

Vaughan stands next to Troy, looking bored.

VAUGHAN

(under his breath)  
What a dump, right?

Mr. Shaw approaches from the kitchen area.

MR. SHAW

(cheerfully)  
Good morning, Santa! Did you bring  
treats for the good little Center  
Director?

VAUGHAN

No.

Mr. Shaw gets serious.

MR. SHAW

Well... ahem. Let me show you around. As you can see we have a large multipurpose area. Over there is the day care center.

Vaughan and Troy begin walking with Mr. Shaw.

Troy's phone RINGS and he holds back to answer, putting a bluetooth headset in his ear.

TROY

Hello, this is Troy.

Vaughan continues the tour with Mr. Shaw to the kitchen.

MR. SHAW

We have a fully functional industrial kitchen. Freezers, cutting stations, double broiler, dish room and serving facilities.

VAUGHAN

Great.

They stop to regard a folding table with ancient computer equipment on it.

MR. SHAW

Our Tech Center here is obviously in need of an upgrade. We still have dial-up.

Across the Center, Troy is engrossed in his conversation while deftly manipulating his smartphone.

TROY

Mr. Vaughan won't personally be available for the meeting, but I assure you a rep from his office will serve just as well.

A basketball rolls across the wooden floor toward Troy.

TROY

That's not part of our due diligence. Your office will be responsible for those steps.

The ball bumps into Troy's foot. He instinctively tap-kicks the ball up and catches it in one fluid motion.

TROY  
(angrily)  
Don't try and dodge your  
responsibility. This ball's in  
your court!

Troy suddenly notices Jean standing in front of him. She looks insulted. Troy is transfixed by her.

He seems to suddenly become aware of the basketball tucked under his arm. And that Jean wants it.

TROY  
We'll discuss this in the  
conference call this afternoon.

He taps his earpiece, ends the call.

TROY  
Hi.

JEAN  
(annoyed)  
Just gimme the ball.

TROY  
Oh my God, I'm so sorry. I wasn't  
talking about you.

He holds up his phone for effect, then holsters it. He hands her the ball. Her stance softens.

As they touch the ball simultaneously, they share a moment staring at each other.

LILLY (O.S.)  
Mommy? Why are you and that man  
just standing there holding the  
ball? Is he giving it back or not?

JEAN  
(snapping out of it)  
What? Yes, of course.

Troy lets go, smiling a warm, peaceful smile at Jean, then turns his charm toward Lilly.

TROY  
Sorry about that.

Jean hands Lilly the ball, she bounces it a few times and catches it.

LILLY  
That's okay. We're just messing  
around with Cornelius.

Troy looks up to see Cornelius watching the exchange from a distance. Troy waves, Cornelius smiles and waves back.

LILLY  
So what's the deal?

TROY  
What deal?

LILLY  
You just drive fake Santas around?

JEAN  
Lilly! Manners!

TROY  
I only drive this one Santa  
around. Actually, when he isn't  
dressed as Santa, he's my boss.

LILLY  
(to Jean)  
Oh, like that mean Mr. Duffy at  
your diner?

JEAN  
Don't call people mean, Lilly.

LILLY  
But you said it!

JEAN  
That reminds me, I better get  
going.

She leans down and hugs Lilly quickly.

JEAN  
(to Troy)  
Nice to meet you.

She turns and runs over to Dawn, hugs her, then heads for the door and exits. Troy's eyes follow her the whole time.

TROY

Nice to meet you too.

He notices Lilly still standing there, sizing him up.

TROY

And you. My name's Troy.

He extends his hand to her. She keeps eying him warily. Troy gulps.

Lilly cracks a big smile and shakes his hand vigorously.

LILLY

I'm Lilly my sister's Dawn you can meet her later she doesn't talk as much as I do, but we're the same age, six, we're twins my mom is Jean, she's a waitress, bet you were gonna ask me that, huh?

TROY

Well I was wondering about that.

LILLY

She works at a diner that makes the best chocolate chip pancakes ever.

TROY

That's good to know. I love chocolate chips, especially in pancakes. Where is this diner?

Lilly looks at him. Something about him seems trustworthy.

LILLY

The Mayfair Diner you have to take a train and a bus to get there we go there every Saturday with my Grandma Lil.

CORNELIUS (O.S.)

Hey Lilly, you gonna play with us t'day?

TROY

It's so nice to meet you, your sister, and your mom.

Troy sees Vaughan and Shaw near the computer table.

TROY

But I have to go over there and help those guys. Hope to see you again someday soon, Lilly.

LILLY

Bye, Mr. Troy.

She runs off with the ball to join her sister and Cornelius.

Troy joins Vaughan and Mr. Shaw.

VAUGHAN

So when do I start ringing the stupid bell?

MR. SHAW

Excuse me?

VAUGHAN

My sentence. I have to do 30 days' service, blah, blah, blah. What corner do you want me standing on?

MR. SHAW

That's not going to be your only duty, Mr. Vaughan.

Vaughan looks confused.

MR. SHAW

You'll help run the soup kitchen, assist users in the technology center, help Cornelius with maintenance matters. On days you're not soliciting, dressed as Santa of course, you'll...

VAUGHAN

(interrupting)

Whoa, whoa, whoa. I thought all I had to do was stand outside with the stupid bell.

(to Troy)

Right?

TROY

(shaking his head)

I'm afraid Mr. Shaw is correct. And the court's relying on him to report your... performance.

VAUGHAN  
(grimly)  
Let's get on with it.

Mr. Shaw smiles a little too cheerfully.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A sour-faced Vaughan in Santa suit stands on a sidewalk, next to a donation jar, RINGING a bell in his hand. He's completely unenthusiastic.

A few reporters snap pictures, take video and talk into nearby news cameras.

Pedestrians stop and gawk because of the media. Many give Vaughan dirty looks. Some take pictures with their phones.

A BALD MAN, 50, hurries over and drops some change into the jar, CLINK, and smiles warmly at Vaughan.

BALD MAN  
Merry Christmas!

VAUGHAN  
Yeah, yeah, yeah.

His smile fades and he hurries away.

A FAT GUY, 40, sees the media hubbub and begins fishing money out of his wallet. He waits until cameras are pointed at Vaughan, then purposely walks into frame, pretending as though he's surprised to see the camera.

He makes sure he's seen putting two bills into the jar.

VAUGHAN  
Good job. Now everyone knows what a big giver you are.

FAT MAN  
Giving is a selfless act, always.

VAUGHAN  
Whatever. Aren't you late for something?

The Fat Man scurries off.

A young HIPPIE wearing headphones drops a few coins in, CLINK, and keeps walking.

VAUGHAN  
 (snarling)  
 That's it? C'mon, Big Spender!

Vaughan looks at his watch - a very expensive Rolex.

VAUGHAN  
 God! This is the longest two hours  
 of my life! C'mon, my feet are  
 killing me.

Pedestrians walking by start giving him a wide berth.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

Troy is driving, Vaughan reclines in the passenger seat.

VAUGHAN  
 God, that was the longest two hours  
 of my life! You should have seen  
 'em, Troy. Scumbags. There were  
 some seriously filthy people out  
 there.

TROY  
 They're just people, Sir.

VAUGHAN  
 The public. The dirty, savage  
 public. What's next on our  
 God-awful to-do list?

TROY  
 Soup kitchen's next, Sir.

VAUGHAN  
 Can't be any worse than begging in  
 this idiotic costume.

He shivers at the thought of it.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - KITCHEN - DAY

Vaughan is wearing an apron over jeans and a t-shirt and, sweating profusely, pours a five-gallon bucket of grayish-brown liquid into a huge steaming double broiler.

Mr. Shaw watches things from a distance. Cornelius and several other VOLUNTEERS dash around quickly; cutting, prepping, cooking. The group is obviously familiar with how to run the kitchen.

VAUGHAN  
 (calling out)  
 Now what?

CORNELIUS  
 Just set that bucket down by the  
 dish station. Johnny gonna clean  
 it out so we can use it again.

Vaughan complies. Volunteer JOHNNY grabs it as he cruises  
 past the double broiler on his way somewhere else.

VAUGHAN  
 This is ridiculous. I've never  
 been so hot. How much longer?

MR. SHAW  
 'Til what?

VAUGHAN  
 'Til we're done.

Cornelius smirks, looks from Vaughan to Shaw.

MR. SHAW  
 Well, you've been prepping soup for  
 a whole 30 minutes, Mr.  
 Vaughan. Our clients arrive in  
 another half hour, then we serve  
 for two hours.

Vaughan GROANS. Cornelius cracks a big smile.

CORNELIUS  
 You got ta keep stirrin' that soup,  
 Mr. Vaughan. Keep it mixin' so it  
 don't burn.

MR. SHAW  
 Oh, and I already counted up your  
 donations for today. Not too  
 shabby. But I expected your star  
 power to bring in a little extra.

Vaughan starts stirring the huge cauldron of steaming soup,  
 wrinkling his nose up at it.

CORNELIUS  
 What'd we take in t'day, Mr. Shaw?

MR. SHAW  
 \$77, Mr. C.

CORNELIUS

Ain't bad.

VAUGHAN

What?! No way. People were dropping twenties in that pot like it was a wishing well. We took in at least \$200.

MR. SHAW

'Fraid not. Only time we ever saw \$200 in a day's donations was when Sahried Patel's daughters were in town, and performed some of those traditional Indian dances right next to him.

(to Cornelius)

Remember that?

CORNELIUS

Oh, that was somethin' like I never seen befo' or since! Beautiful, talented ladies.

Vaughan grimaces, puts a little more effort into stirring.

VAUGHAN

God! My back's killing me.

CORNELIUS

We'll change it up, Mr. Vaughan.

Cornelius cheerfully takes over at the soup pot.

CORNELIUS

You go on over there and start gettin' all our plates ready.

Vaughan takes a deep breath, goes across the kitchen to a huge cupboard and begins taking plates out.

MR. SHAW

And the bowls, Mr. Vaughan. Our clients won't like having soup served to them on plates.

Vaughan gives him a dirty look, starts pulling bowls out of the cupboard as well.

Mr. Shaw leaves.

VAUGHAN  
 (under his breath)  
 Clients. More like mooches.

He fumbles a couple of plates, catches them just before they crash to the ground.

Cornelius comes over to help, starts stacking things out of the way.

VAUGHAN  
 Hey, thanks.

CORNELIUS  
 Not a problem, Mr. Vaughan.

They work together quietly for a bit.

VAUGHAN  
 So. Cornelius. That guy Sahried... he made more money than anyone else on the donation jar?

CORNELIUS  
 Yup, sho' did. More n' me, more n' Johnny over there. Even more than that one time Mr. Shaw tried it.

VAUGHAN  
 Hmm. Shaw doesn't seem like the type of guy to try panhandling.

CORNELIUS  
 Oh, it ain't panhandling. And Mr. Shaw will do anything to make sure this center's got what it needs.

Vaughan nods with understanding.

VAUGHAN  
 We'll see how long Sahried's record stands.

MR. SHAW (O.S.)  
 Clients!

Vaughan looks up to see a long line of people begin streaming into the Center. Many look destitute. Some look mentally ill. But they're in an orderly line and progressing quietly.

CORNELIUS

Let's go, Mr. Vaughan. They ain't goin' to serve themselves.

Cornelius hurries the plates and bowls to the serving area counter and takes up a station opposite all the clients.

He nods to Vaughan, who steps up next to him.

CORNELIUS

Follow my lead. They each get a bowl o' soup, bread, starch, and on down the line. You servin' 'em their bread.

The assembly line begins, with the clients holding out their plates in a practiced manner.

A very heavy woman, MAGGIE, 50, has tattered blankets wrapped around her and dirty, stringy hair. She looks grumpy and mean as she steps up to Cornelius' serving station.

CORNELIUS

Maggie! Hi, Honey. You sho' lookin' good today. Here you go, Darlin'.

Maggie doesn't even acknowledge Cornelius. Just takes her plate and stares at Vaughan, waiting. Vaughan stares back, not hiding his disgust.

Maggie GRUNTS at Vaughan, snapping him out of his trance, and he quickly flings a dinner roll on her plate, trying not to get too close.

CORNELIUS

(chuckling)

Careful. Don't upset that one.

VAUGHAN

What's her problem? And why are you so nice to her?

CORNELIUS

Don't want her barkin' at me.

VAUGHAN

These scumbags should be more thankful you're giving 'em a meal.

Several more clients go through the line.

CORNELIUS

Could be right. But just 'cause  
gestures of kindness get lost don't  
mean you should stop makin' 'em.

VAUGHAN

Yuck. I can smell some of 'em from  
ten feet away.

The serving line is moving very quickly. Vaughan, Cornelius  
and the other volunteers work in silence, moving everyone  
along. It resembles a well-oiled machine.

Vaughan wipes his sweaty brow with the back of his hand.

VAUGHAN

Ugh, this is killin' me. How much  
longer do we have to keep this up?

He looks at his watch... which is gone.

VAUGHAN

Aww! What the...? How'd that  
happen?!

Across the Center, in the dining area, an old VAGRANT pulls  
a fancy Rolex watch out of his soup. He examines it a  
second, then slurps the soup off of it and puts it on.

EXT. VAUGHAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Troy's BMW pulls up to the curb. Vaughan can barely keep  
his eyes open.

TROY

Here we are, Sir.

VAUGHAN

I told you to knock that off.

Troy looks doubtful.

VAUGHAN

No 'sir'.

TROY

I'll be here at 7am sharp. 'Night.

VAUGHAN

Will you try one more time?

TROY  
 Why? I tried this morning and she  
 didn't answer.

VAUGHAN  
 I just really need to talk to her.

Troy SIGHS, takes the phone from Vaughan's hand, dials.

VAUGHAN  
 And leave a message this time.

TROY  
 (excessively business-like)  
 Hi, Miss Dimitri. It's Troy  
 Vincent from Nathan Vaughan's  
 office. Again. Mr. Vaughan's  
 quite interested in speaking with  
 you, sooner rather than later. If  
 you'd please call back, you can  
 reach me to get on Mr. Vaughan's  
 schedule by dialing 215-555-9898,  
 or by calling Mr. Vaughan  
 directly. I suspect you have the  
 number. Thanks for your  
 time. Have a good evening.

He ends the call, hands the phone back to Vaughan who SIGHS  
 heavily and looks defeated.

TROY  
 There y'go.

VAUGHAN  
 Yep.

The engine is still running. Vaughan stays put.

TROY  
 Is there anything else, Sir?

Vaughan's eyes seem lighter, as though he's thinking about  
 something pleasant.

VAUGHAN  
 Nah. It's nothing. See ya at 7.

He gets out of Troy's car, heads up to his building.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Vaughan is on the sidewalk, dressed as Santa, donation jar close by. He has a bright smile on his face, and is ringing his bell vigorously.

The media's still around, snapping some pictures and recording some video, but fewer than the day before.

Vaughan's trying to greet each and every PEDESTRIAN, like a carnival barker.

VAUGHAN

(cheerfully)

Hey there! Welcome to Philly,  
Ma'am. Beautiful day. There's  
nothing like Philly air on a cold,  
crisp day, wouldn't you say?

He moves as he talks, up and down the sidewalk but never far from the donation jar.

A ROCKER DUDE who resembles Troy, wearing dark glasses and with surprisingly thick long hair walks by, drops a \$20 into the jar.

VAUGHAN

Atta boy! Way to go! Thank you,  
Sir, for your donation to the  
Kensington Community Center. A  
place where young and old alike can  
enjoy... uh, the community!

Sahried appears among the crowd, watching from a distance.

A PRIEST with dark glasses and surprisingly thick, short hair, also looking like Troy, walks by. He's going the opposite direction of Rocker Dude and he also drops \$20 into the jar.

VAUGHAN

Thank you, Father! You are the  
epitome of generosity.

Vaughan is smarmy, slick and engaging with the public, and people seem to be drawn to him and his donation jar.

Sahried's eyes narrow, and he watches Vaughan more closely.

A HIPPIE with garish, costume-like tie-dye and surprisingly thick long hair walks by in the opposite direction of the Priest. He looks a little like Troy. The hippie drops a \$20 into the jar.

Sahried focuses on the hippie.

VAUGHAN  
 (stoner voice)  
 Dude... right on, Man! Like,  
 that's so totally gracious.

The hippie rolls his eyes and keeps on walking.

Sahried smirks, shakes his head as he realizes the Hippie, Priest and Rocker are all the same guy in different getups.

INT. TROY'S BMW - DAY

The car cruises along the city streets, Vaughan still dressed as Santa.

Troy looks irritated as Vaughan counts the money from the donations jar.

VAUGHAN  
 Ha! \$527! I beat that little punk.

TROY  
 Is it that great a victory?

VAUGHAN  
 Absolutely! I'm gonna point it out to Shaw, who's going to report it to the court. Thanks for all the stand-ins, by the way.

The car pulls up to the Community Center.

VAUGHAN  
 What's next?

TROY  
 You're helping with the technology center today.

VAUGHAN  
 Ugh!

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Vaughan is wearing jeans and a sweater, standing over RANDY, 75, who's sitting at the computer table.

RANDY  
 Where's the rest of the screen?

VAUGHAN  
You have scroll down.

RANDY  
I didn't think it was a scroll.

VAUGHAN  
(irritated)  
No, no, no. Move your cursor here  
and just click over and over and  
you'll see the rest of the screen  
appear down at the bottom.

RANDY  
Why don't they just make it so it  
all of it fits on the screen?

VAUGHAN  
I don't know! This is just how it  
is. You get used to it.

RANDY  
How do I know how to go to the next  
part of it?

VAUGHAN  
Just mouse over this part of the  
page, here.

RANDY  
Mouse what?

VAUGHAN  
Mouse over! Mouse over! It just  
means to use your mouse to roll  
your cursor over the words.

RANDY  
I'm not a curser. I don't use foul  
language.

Vaughan rolls his eye.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Shaw looks up as he hears a KNOCK at the door. Vaughan  
pokes his head in.

VAUGHAN  
Okay, your technology center sucks.

MR. SHAW  
Thanks for pointing that out.

VAUGHAN  
I've done all I can with those  
people.

MR. SHAW  
You still have an hour today.

VAUGHAN  
Seriously? You're gonna make me  
stick to that?

MR. SHAW  
It's the court's idea, not mine.

VAUGHAN  
(sighs)  
What else can I do?

MR. SHAW  
I need the invitations taken to the  
post office.

He hands Vaughan a box with hundreds of envelopes in  
it. Vaughan paws through some of them.

VAUGHAN  
Seriously? All these people?

Mr. Shaw shrugs. Vaughan picks one envelope in particular.

VAUGHAN  
Even her?

MR. SHAW  
Yep. Now, you can also take the  
raffle tickets for the Christmas  
party over to Sahried's deli. Oh,  
I almost forgot.

Shaw stands and goes over to his table to a large box. He  
reaches in and pulls out a handful of posters.

MR. SHAW  
You can put these up.

He hands the posters to Vaughan.

Vaughan scowls, then nods. Shaw goes to his desk, pulls an  
envelope from a folder and hands it to him as well.

MR. SHAW

Here y'go. You're done for the day  
once this is delivered.

Vaughan snatches the envelope from Shaw, heads out the door.

MONTAGE: VAUGHAN COMPLETES TASKS

-- Vaughan dressed as Santa, walks the neighborhood

-- Vaughan puts up posters

INSERT POSTER, WHICH READS:

Christmas Party! Lights! Music! Fun for the whole family  
at the Kensington Community Center. December 22nd.

BACK TO MONTAGE

-- Vaughan interacts with neighborhood kids

-- Vaughan interacts with Old Folks

-- Vaughan interacts with burn barrel winos.

EXT. SAHRIED'S NEW DELI - DAY

TRAFFIC and NEIGHBORHOOD PEOPLE are alive with activity all  
along Kensington Ave. Maggie strolls past Vaughan as he  
duct tapes his last poster to a pole.

He turns and almost runs into Maggie, who stops dead in her  
tracks and stares at him like a wonderstruck child.

MAGGIE

Could you bring some good strong  
boots this year, Santa?

Vaughan looks at her in Santa mode.

VAUGHAN

I'll see what my elves have in  
stock. Merry Christmas. Maggie.

Maggie looks at him and smiles, then continues on her way.

Vaughan SIGHS contently and looks up to see Sahried's Deli.

INT. SAHRIED'S NEW DELI - DAY

The dilapidated deli is crowded and noisy with the sound of friendly CHATTER. Most of the patrons are Indian.

Vaughan walks in the door, sounding a high-pitched BELL, freezing all of the chatter.

SILENCE.

Vaughan looks around for Sahried, searching each of the faces peering back at him.

He shifts uncomfortably from one foot to another.

Some of the customers look as though they're expecting Vaughan to say something. He CLEARS his throat.

VAUGHAN  
Is Sahried Patel here?

Nobody responds.

Vaughan GULPS.

VAUGHAN  
Oh. Kay. If anyone sees Mr. Patel, let him know Mr. Vaughan was looking for him.

He turns to leave the deli.

SAHRIED (O.S.)  
Welcome to Sahried's New Deli, Mr. Vaughan. I am here.

Vaughan turns back, sees Sahried step out from behind the deli counter.

All the patrons watch intently as Sahried walks slowly over to Vaughan and his out-of-place Santa suit.

VAUGHAN  
Delivery. From Shaw.

He holds up the envelope. Sahried takes it.

SAHRIED  
(smirking)  
How kind of you to be running errands for Mr. Shaw.

VAUGHAN

Yeah, well. It needed to be done. Now I can go home.

He turns again to leave the deli.

SAHRIED

Nice job with the donations today.

Vaughan stops in his tracks, faces Sahried with a big, proud smile on his face.

VAUGHAN

Oh, you heard about that, did you? Word travels fast. I guess your record... \$200 was it? I guess it was bound to be broken eventually.

The customers' eyes move from Vaughan to Sahried.

Sahried smiles graciously, nods his head.

SAHRIED

Indeed, it was. And a funny thing while I was counting up the donations. An unusual number of bills were in sequential order. How 'bout that now?

The customers all look at Vaughan.

His smile evaporates.

SAHRIED

I bet it feels good to break my record. I only wonder if it would still stand had the donations not been ordered.

Vaughan's face reddens. His jaw clenches. The deli customers keep watching him.

Sahried lets the heavy silence infect Vaughan a bit more.

SAHRIED

Go and have a peaceful evening, Mr. Vaughan.

He turns and walks away.

Vaughan storms out of the deli.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER OFFICE - NIGHT

The radio plays softly in the background. Mr. Shaw is asleep, reclined in his chair, arms folded on his belly.

SNORING away.

A BUZZER sounds from the phone sitting on the desk.

Mr. Shaw jumps forward sitting up and hits the switch.

MR. SHAW

Yes?

SUSAN (O.S.)

You said to wake you at 9 pm.

Mr. Shaw sits back in his seat catching his breath.

MR. SHAW

Yeah, so?

SUSAN (O.S.)

It's 9 pm, Sir.

The door to Mr. Shaw's office opens. Mr. Shaw looks up and Mr. Stone appears in the doorway.

SUSAN(O.S.)

Oh. That, and Mr. Stone is here.

MR. SHAW

I see that! Thank you, that will be all.

He removes his finger from the speaker button, looking at Mr. Stone's sullen face.

MR. SHAW

Ah! Stony my boy. You should learn to lighten up some.

Mr. Stone enters and sits in front of the desk.

Mr. Shaw pours from a bottle of expensive whiskey into a large glass and downs it, pouring another.

MR. SHAW

This'll warm yer cold blood.

Mr. Stone patiently sits and maintains a deafening silence.

Mr. Shaw downs another drink, stuffs the bottle in a drawer and sits behind the desk.

MR. SHAW

To what do I owe the honor?

MR. STONE

I'm a bit worried about my investment here.

Mr. Shaw looks concerned. He stands.

MR. SHAW

Wait a minute you ain't backin' out on me are you? 'Cause this deal...

MR. STONE

(interrupting)

Sit down, Mr. Shaw!

Shaw pauses in mid-rant, sitting again.

Stone collects himself and continues.

MR. STONE

No one is backing out of anything. I just want to talk about your new Santa. Thirty days is a long time to have him wandering around here, trying to play Mr. Goody Bags.

Mr. Shaw looks away momentarily, reaches into his desk drawer and pulls out an envelope. He tosses it on the desk in front of Mr. Stone.

MR. SHAW

Well you're gonna love this. It came in the mail today.

Mr. Stone opens it and removes a check.

MR. STONE

What is this?

MR. SHAW

This was part of his fine ordered by the courts. \$10,000 is a lot of cash for this place.

Mr. Stone inserts the check back in the envelope and pitches it back to Mr. Shaw.

MR. STONE

Hope, Mr. Shaw. That's what this represents. The one thing we can't let these people have.

Mr. Stone gets up.

MR. STONE  
Walk with me.

Mr. Shaw reluctantly complies.

EXT. KENSINGTON AVENUE - NIGHT

The street is lit by overhead lamps below the elevated train platform. Commuter trains come and go. Cars move slowly to avoid sliding on the slush-covered street.

Several MEN stand huddled around a burning trash can as a scattered few roam the snowy pavement.

A corner newsstand, still lit from within, is busy with activity even in the cold.

Mr. Stone stands, thumbing through a magazine with finely fitted black leather gloves. Mr. Shaw fidgets around in the cold, trying to warm his hands.

MR. STONE  
It's a dangerous pastime we have;  
giving out hope. People will line  
up for miles just get a whiff of it  
these days.

Mr. Shaw, still shaking off the cold, steps lively to the side as a MAN comes running around the corner at full speed, sliding on the ice, keeps his balance and darts off.

A split second later, Stone's thugs come around the corner chasing after the running man.

Mr. Shaw watches as the thugs catch the running man and proceed to beat him up.

RUNNING MAN (O.S.)  
No! No! Here take the  
money! Take the money!

The sounds of a beating dominate the night air.

MR. STONE  
You see, we can't allow...

The CRASH of a trash can rolling off the running man momentarily drowns out Mr. Stone's voice.

MR. STONE

As I was saying, we can't allow them to become this. We're the ones who can save these people.

Mr. Shaw watches the beating wind down.

MR. SHAW

How is this saving them?

Mr. Stone bangs on the closed glass of the news stand. As it slides open, Mr. Stone hands a \$20 in the window and is immediately handed back a large bag and some change.

Mr. Stone opens the bag, reaches in, grabs a pretzel and hands it to Mr. Shaw.

MR. STONE

What? You mean this?

He motions to the beating.

MR. STONE

This introduces them to fear, Mr. Shaw. It's what their life will become. Eventually, they'll learn to just go away.

Mr. Stone leisurely wanders down the street, Mr. Shaw in tow. They pass the beaten running man who just lies there mumbling to himself, pockets turned out and no shoes.

MR. SHAW

I'm out after this one. I just ain't got it in me any more. These are just good people trying to...

MR. STONE

(interrupting)

Trying to what? Stand in the way of progress?

Mr. Stone stops walking.

Mr. Shaw continues, then stops, turns back toward Mr. Stone.

MR. STONE

Soon this will all change. The people in this God-forsaken area will know it was for the good.

MR. SHAW

I think the only good coming out of this is in our bank accounts.

Mr. Stone steps closer to Shaw, their noses nearly touching.

MR. STONE

Don't go growing a conscience on me now, Mr. Shaw. It never seemed to bother you in the past.

Mr. Shaw nervously breaks eye contact as the thugs step up menacingly from behind Mr. Stone.

MR. STONE

Within a year, progress will have replaced all this.

He gestures to surrounding buildings.

MR. STONE

And we'll move on.

Mr. Shaw shakes his head in disapproval, turns and walks away, leaving Mr. Stone and his henchmen in the night.

INT. MAYFAIR DINER - DAY

The diner is crowded with locals.

Jean seems comfortable with her duties, making her rounds and filling the empty coffees and leaving creamers.

She returns the coffee pot to the brewer and notices one of her tables has a new customer, hidden behind a newspaper.

She heads over.

JEAN

Good morning. Are you ready to order or will you need a minute?

Troy lowers his newspaper.

TROY

Actually, I hear you guys have the best chocolate chip pancakes ever.

Jean stares for a moment trying to place the face, then realizing, she offers up a huge smile.

JEAN

Hey, you're that guy who drives fake Santas around.

TROY

Yeah, if it were only that easy.

JEAN

So you came all the way across town for our pancakes, huh?

TROY

Well, yes and no. I'll have the pancakes, but I was wondering if we could go out some time.

JEAN

You know, I've been wondering when you'd stop by. Gonna butter me up and sneak me back to your place?

TROY

I'd love to do that. But my creepy neighbor with all the video cameras might scare you off.

JEAN

Yikes. I don't like video cameras on the first date. Maybe we should just go have some dinner.

TROY

You read my mind. You sure it won't be a problem with the girls?

JEAN

Well, Lilly hasn't shut up about Santa's driver liking chocolate chip pancakes. So I think they'll be fine with a sitter as long as they know I'm with you.

Troy doesn't try to hide that he's blushing a bit.

TROY

She's a sweet little girl. You've done well with her and her sister.

JEAN

It's been no picnic, believe me.

A bell RINGS from the order counter at the same time Troy's phone begins CHIRPING. Jean looks back as Mr. Duffy places several plates on the counter.

MR. DUFFY  
Order up, Jean!

Jean looks at Troy as his phone RINGS again.

JEAN  
I gotta get that, but dinner and  
drinks sound great.

She writes her number on a blank ORDER CHECK and tears it off. She slides it to Troy.

JEAN  
Call me.

Troy's phone continues to CHIRP. He just keeps staring at Jean with a silly grin on his face.

JEAN  
Santa's calling.

She smiles and walks away as Troy watches her.

His phone CHIRPS again breaking his concentration. He answers it.

TROY  
Troy here.

VAUGHAN (V.O.)  
Hey, where you been?

TROY  
Having chocolate chip pancakes.

VAUGHAN  
What?

Troy stares longingly at Jean as she delivers her order to the next table over. He smiles as she looks back at him.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Snow falls lightly, covering the cars parked along Kensington Avenue. Several pedestrians walk along the slushy pavement, trying to keep from slipping.

Vaughan shovels the best he can. An empty parking spot by the front entrance serves as a dump site for the accumulating pile.

Vaughan leans on the large shovel, BREATHING heavily.

He takes out his cell phone and dials.

Cornelius exits the community centers front doors dragging behind him an old red RADIO FLYER WAGON containing several bags of rock salt.

He pulls the wagon over to Vaughan and chats with some PEOPLE carefully walking by.

Vaughan lets the shovel fall against a large pile of snow as he puts the phone to his ear

JANET (O.S.)

Good morning, Dimitri Studio and Galleria, Janet speaking. How may I direct your call?

VAUGHAN

Donna Dimitri please. This is Nathan Vaughan.

JANET (O.S.)

Oh, Uh. Could you hold please?

Vaughan turns around and sees Cornelius chatting away to Maggie wearing several overcoats, torn pants showing a second pair underneath and a pair of ripped up black Chuck Taylor SNEAKERS with the toes missing.

Vaughan watches closely as Cornelius reaches into his pocket, takes her hand, turns it palm up and hands her some cash. He embraces her and sends her on her way.

Cornelius waves her off, then turns to face Vaughan, who pretends as if he didn't notice his act of generosity.

JANET (O.S.)

I'm sorry, Mr. Vaughan, but she's in a photo session with a client right now. Can I take a message?

INT. DIMITRI STUDIO - DAY

Large black and white photographs cover the walls of a dimly lit modern office with a large stainless steel reception counter in the center.

Seated behind the counter dressed in red sport jacket is JANET, late 20's, her golden blond hair pulled back into a large french braid.

With a phone to her ear, Janet looks up at Donna Dimitri standing next to her in a white t-shirt, black leather vest and a large CAMERA dangling from her neck.

VAUGHAN (O.S.)  
 Sure, could you please tell her I  
 called again? And that I'll try  
 again later. Thanks.

Janet looks up at Donna who just rolls her eyes.

JANET  
 Certainly. Have a great day.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Vaughan tries to hang up. Checking his phone, he notices  
 the connection is still open. He puts it back to his ear.

INT. DIMITRI STUDIO - DAY

JANET  
 Why are you torturing him?

Donna fiddles around with the camera.

DONNA  
 I'm not torturing him, he's  
 torturing himself.

JANET  
 He's loaded isn't he?

DONNA  
 Yeah, well that's his biggest  
 problem.

Donna walks away. Janet hangs up the phone.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Vaughan, phone still to his ear, stands in the cold.

He slowly pulls the phone away from his ear, digesting  
 Donna's last remark.

Realization settles onto Vaughan's face. He looks like he's  
 had his heart ripped out.

CORNELIUS  
 Mr. Vaughan? Is everything  
 alright? Y'all look like somebody  
 jus pissed on your sandcastle.

Vaughan snaps out of his daze and sees Cornelius.

VAUGHAN  
I'm OK. Just... never mind.

CORNELIUS  
Bad news?

Vaughan stoops and picks up his shovel. He looks at the sidewalk and sees new snow covering his work.

VAUGHAN  
Aw, that's the story of my life.

Cornelius notes the sidewalk, then looks back to Vaughan.

CORNELIUS  
Y'know, when I was a kid my ol' man used to make me shovel out the horse manure from the stall every day. Man, I use ta curse that old horse sum'thin terrible.

Vaughan looks confused as he listens to the old man's story.

CORNELIUS  
Then one morning before the crack a dawn as I was heading out to the stall to get my daily dose of poop, my father met me at the barn door and told me that old nag died during the night. I was pretty broke up. In a way I kinda liked that ol' beast.

Vaughan listens more intently.

CORNELIUS  
I remember it was later that day my ol' man come driving up the lane beside the field on some beat up ol' red tractor. For ten years after, we done used that thing for everything. It did the work of ten horses. I even took my high school sweetheart to homecoming on that ol' beast. Never once had to shovel manure again. But that there tractor was just as ornery.

Vaughan, getting restless, grabs a cup full of rock salt from a bag in the wagon.

VAUGHAN

What's that got to do with  
shoveling snow, old man?

Cornelius sticks the shovel head to the ground and begins to push the snow away.

CORNELIUS

Well to tell ya the truth, nothin'.

Vaughan begins to salt the path that Cornelius is cutting.

VAUGHAN

Well what then?

Cornelius stops a moment in mid shove.

CORNELIUS

Years later when I asked my ol' man  
why he didn't jus get rid of the  
horse sooner and get the tractor,  
he told me it was because me and  
that there horse both needed to  
feel important, like we had some  
reason to be there. That horse  
taught me a lot 'bout life.

VAUGHAN

So the horse's job was to give you  
poop to clean up?

Cornelius begins to shovel again.

CORNELIUS

Into everyone's life a little poop  
must fall. It's how you deal with  
it that makes you wiser. Don't ya  
think, Mr. Vaughan?

Vaughan LAUGHS.

VAUGHAN

You sure took the long way around  
telling me that.

CORNELIUS

At least ya got what I'm  
sayin'. Don't you feel wiser now?

Vaughan stares at Cornelius, then smiles warmly at him.

VAUGHAN

Do me a favor. Call me Nathan.

Cornelius just smiles his response and continues shoveling, Vaughan following behind with rock salt.

INT. ARTURO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Elegant Greek decor fills the dining area, illuminated by soft light. Wall-sized murals of Grecian countrysides gives the feeling of openness in the cozy setting.

Restaurant STAFF move about like a well orchestrated waltz serving the well-dressed diners. Smooth MUSIC enhances the classy, refined mood.

A handsome young WAITER carries two drinks on a tray as he navigates the room. He approaches a table.

Seated at the table, alone, is Troy dressed in a finely tailored dark suit. He finishes a bite of his meal as the waiter arrives. The table has empty wine glasses and plates on it.

WAITER

Sir, your drinks.

He places the drinks on the table.

WAITER

Sir, would you like the check now?

He holds out a finely crafted leather check folder.

TROY

Thanks. Everything was wonderful,  
compliments to your Chef.

Troy takes the folder, places a credit card inside and hands it back to the waiter.

The waiter leaves. Troy sips his WHITE RUSSIAN.

From the corner of his eye he catches a glimpse of Jean as she strolls back to the table.

She is dressed to kill in a long, tight low-cut dark blue number that looks as though it is sprayed on. She looks as though she has stepped out of one of the murals of goddesses that adorn the walls.

Troy is mesmerized as she navigates the room, several heads turn as she approaches the table.

Troy stands to welcome her back.

TROY  
You look stunning.

He circles the table to help her take a seat.

JEAN  
Thank you, I must say this place is so beautiful. I've never been to a place like this before.

Troy returns to his seat.

TROY  
Well you certainly look like you belong among the gods.

JEAN  
It sure beats being stuck in my uniform all day.

TROY  
I'll bet.

He returns to his drink.

JEAN  
I've been meaning to ask you something all night.

Troy, intrigued, arches an eyebrow.

JEAN  
Why does your car smell like CheezWhiz?

Troy nearly shoots his drink out his nose as he laughs.

Jean giggles with him.

TROY  
Wow! That's a long story. We were, uh... well, lets just say...

The waiter returns to the table, interrupting Troy.

WAITER  
Excuse me, Mr. Vaughan, your card Sir. Will there be anything else tonight?

He hands over Troy's credit card. Jean looks confused.

Troy looks at Jean, trying to read her expression, then back to the waiter.

TROY

Thank you, no we're fine.

The waiter leaves.

JEAN

And now I'm meaning to ask you why you said your last name was Vincent.

Troy shifts a bit in his seat, but collects himself quickly.

TROY

Well, that's a long story as well.

JEAN

Your boss lets you use his card?

TROY

Well actually, I am Mr. Vaughan.

Her expression assures Troy she expects an answer quickly.

TROY

I guess it's out of the bag now. I'm Nathan's brother. Well, step brother. My mother married his dad when we were both kids and, well, it's a bit complicated.

JEAN

So you work for your brother? I heard you call him Sir. What's up with that?

TROY

I kinda owe him. It's a respect thing.

Jean sits back in her seat, lifts her drink.

JEAN

Seems like he's running a bit low on the respect scale these days.

TROY

It would seem that way these days, but Nathan's a good man. He's just having a rough time now.

JEAN  
(laughing)  
I'll say.

She sips her VODKA MARTINI.

TROY  
You're a good person, I could tell  
that from the first time I laid  
eyes on you. I feel like I can  
tell you anything.

Jean returns her drink to the table and sits forward,  
listening intently.

JEAN  
(jokingly)  
You're not wanted by the Feds or  
something, are you?

TROY  
No, no, nothing like that.

JEAN  
Well what is it then? You can tell  
me anything, remember.

Troy finishes his drink, SIGHS, then signals to the waiter  
for another.

TROY  
When we were kids our parents were  
killed in a plane crash. It was a  
rough time for us. We were well  
cared for and all. They left us  
both huge trust funds, so money was  
never a problem. Until I hit  
eighteen that is.

The waiter returns with Troy's drink.

TROY  
Nathan had gone away to college in  
New York and I was pretty much on  
my own. I did some traveling,  
backpacking through Europe, China,  
things like that.

Jean reaches across the table and takes his hand in hers.

TROY  
I got mixed up with some people  
and, well, let's just say two

TROY  
million dollars doesn't go far when  
you're supporting high society  
leeches and their drug habits.

JEAN  
So what happened?

TROY  
Four years went by pretty  
quickly. Then all of a sudden I  
was in the hole to some pretty  
nasty people. My so-called friends  
were gone and I was stuck in Prague  
with a hefty price on my head.

Jean hangs on his every word.

JEAN  
So what did you do?

TROY  
Nathan came to Prague and took care  
of things. And I kinda owe him.

JEAN  
Are you working the money off? Why  
the name game?

TROY  
I paid him back years ago. It's  
just that he saved my life and  
that's a debt that can never be  
repaid. I use that name because I  
don't want any of that coming back  
on me. Vincent was my dad's name.

Jean sits back in her seat.

JEAN  
Wow, that's like right out of the  
movies. So now you work for him  
and he makes you call him Sir?

TROY  
No that's an inside joke. He hates  
it when I do that, but it's my way  
of getting to him for some of the  
crap he puts me through.

JEAN  
So how about now? Are you done  
with all that... lifestyle?

TROY

Those days are long gone. I've had too many good things come into my life to screw it up again.

He reaches for her hand. Jean's smile lights up the room. Troy basks in it.

TROY

So. There's something I've been meaning to ask you all night.

JEAN

No, my car doesn't smell like CheezWhiz.

TROY

Thank God.

His smile fades to a more serious expression.

TROY

You're so amazing, and your daughters are great. Why no Mr. Benson?

Jean becomes distant. She absentmindedly rubs her thumb against the place that a wedding ring may have been.

JEAN

There is no Mr. Benson.

Jean sits up firmly and readies herself.

JEAN

My husband was killed two years ago this past August.

Troy is deflated, he backs down into his seat, red faced.

TROY

I'm so sorry. I was just...

JEAN

It's okay Troy, you had no idea. He was a good man, and a loving father. But now he's gone.

TROY

How? I mean, if you don't mind me asking. How did he die?

Jean reaches across again to take his hands.

JEAN

He was a firefighter. It was early August and I remember him getting up in the middle of the night. He was called to a fire on the docks. He kissed me goodbye and I just laid there in bed thinking everything would be fine. He left and I fell back asleep.

Troy's eyes moisten.

JEAN

About an hour later I got the call. When I answered, they told me that Ronnie had been rushed to the hospital. But by the time I got there he was already gone.

Jean sets her jaw with resolve.

JEAN

I cried until I had no more tears.

TROY

I remember reading about that fire in the paper. Your husband was a hero, if I remember correctly. He pulled a homeless man from the blaze and went back to find another. You should be proud.

JEAN

At the funeral the Mayor presented Dawn with a flag and Lilly a medal. Pride came with the job along with the risk. We both took that risk. I just wish I could have said goodbye.

Troy gives her a moment to ponder her loss.

TROY

Your girls are quite the treasure. You're a strong and caring mom. Life's jigsaw puzzle gets built and rebuilt many times. You seem to have put the pieces back together just fine.

JEAN

It's a lot of work and, well, everything I do is for them.

TROY

And that's the way it should  
be. You're doing a great job.

Jean sits up and takes a deep breath as a small tear rolls down her cheek. She brushes it away as if to clean away her suffering.

They enjoy each other's eyes.

JEAN

You really are something, Mr.  
Vaughan.

Troy stands and takes her hand. They move through the room to a small dance floor and embrace, slowly dancing to the soft music that fills the air.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - DAY

The sun has just cracked the sky, illuminating a fresh layer of snow that has fallen throughout the night.

Cornelius comes through the back door, lugging two big garbage bags. Dragging them across the alley, he sets them on the ground in front of a large dumpster sitting behind the Center's van.

He flips open the lid of the dumpster, it CRASHES loudly.

As the crash subsides, Cornelius pauses, listening to the silence. He smiles to himself, looks at the thick snow.

CORNELIUS

You always did like the silence  
that fresh snow brings.

He reaches into his jumpsuit pocket and retrieves a tattered yellowing envelope. He opens it and pulls out a photo of himself with a beautiful woman 40 years ago.

He looks at the picture and raises it to his lips, kissing it. He stares to the sky a moment, serene.

Placing the photo back in the envelope, an old telegram peeks out from behind. He places the photo behind the telegram, his face transforming into melancholy.

He opens the telegram.

INSERT TELEGRAM:

WESTERN UNION DEC. 13, 1969. LANCE CORP. CORNELIUS WELLS,  
23RD INFANTRY..VIETNAM...STOP...WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU OF  
THE LOSS OF MRS LILLIAN WELLS IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT ON DEC.  
11... STOP...PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO RETURN STATESIDE TO  
MAKE FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND TO ATTEND TO FAMILY...  
STOP...OUR THOUGHTS ARE WITH YOU...PASTOR WALLACE  
SHEPPARD...STOP

BACK TO SCENE:

He wipes a tear from his eye and returns the photo and document to the old envelope then places it in his pocket.

He takes out a pipe and tobacco pouch. He seems to take comfort in the ritual of stuffing the pipe.

Putting the pipe into his mouth, he returns the pouch to his pocket and retrieves his lighter.

He strikes the Zippo.

From behind the van appear Mr. Stone's thugs, joined by a THIRD, wearing dark hoodies. They rush Cornelius from behind before he has a chance to react, knocking him to the ground. His pipe and lighter land in front of the dumpster.

Cornelius is still, and the thugs drag him across the alley, into the Community Center's door, closing it behind them.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - KITCHEN - DAY

The thugs lay Cornelius on the floor behind the counter.

Coming out of his daze, Cornelius begins moving around, clutching his chest, writhing in pain, red face. He rolls over trying to get to his feet. He passes out.

Thug 1, not noticing Cornelius, checks out the doorway leading to the Center's main area.

THUG 1

Let's do this!

Thug 2 complies and the two rush out to the main area of the Center. They return quickly, each holding computers. Thug 3 appears in the back door.

THUG 3

Yo! Car's waitin'! Let's roll!

Thug 3 glances to the floor where Cornelius lies motionless.

THUG 3  
 (motioning towards Cornelius )  
 What's up wit dat?

Thug 2 shifts his weight impatiently.

THUG 2  
 Come on man! Let's clear out!

THUG 3  
 I'll grab some more stuff!

Thugs 1 & 2 make their way to the door. Thug 3 disappears into the main room as the others dart out the back door.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - DAY

The two thugs exit, carrying their stash to the waiting car, its trunk open. They toss the goods inside.

Thug 2 begins to rush back inside, but is halted by Thug 1.

THUG 1  
 Hold up! Get in and drive.

EXT. SEDGLEY AVENUE - DAY

Vaughan and Sahried step out of Donut King, carrying a tray of coffee and boxes of donuts. Vaughan is wearing a shiny, custom-tailored Santa suit and Sahried looks comfortable back in the tattered one.

They head toward the alley behind the community center.

SAHRIED  
 I am telling you this, it is no pic-uh-nic for me as you know. You t'ink you have these problems and every'ting. Try being an Indian Santa! There's no Ho, Ho, Ho for Sahried, for sure of this I tell you.

VAUGHAN  
 Yeah, try being the crazy psycho Santa that's plastered around the city news. As an added bonus, I got people taking pictures of me and posting them on Facebook.

SAHRIED  
 Yes, I feel what you are saying.

The two Santas make the turn into the alley.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - DAY

Thug 1 slams the full car trunk closed. Thug 3 comes out the door carrying three big frozen hams.

THUG 1  
Good call! Christmas dinner!

THUG 3  
Wish I coulda grabbed 'em all!

The two thugs laugh as they enter the car. It speeds away down the alley, just as Vaughan and Sahried spot it.

As it disappears around the corner, Vaughan and Sahried run to the dumpster.

SAHRIED  
What was that?

Vaughan looks around the ground by the dumpster, notices Cornelius's pipe and lighter. He bends to pick them up, staring at them a moment.

He looks at the open back door.

VAUGHAN  
God no!

SAHRIED  
Cornelius?

They rush inside.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - KITCHEN - DAY

Once inside they spot kitchen supplies scattered around.

Sahried rushes into the main room as Vaughan darts behind the kitchen counter. He pauses, dazed momentarily as he spots a heap on the floor. He snaps out of his trance and realizes it's Cornelius.

Rushing to his side he tries to wake him. No response.

The front door BUZZER sounds.

Vaughan puts his ear to Cornelius's chest, then raises his head and shouts.

VAUGHAN  
Sahried! Sahried! Come quick!

Sahried darts back into the kitchen, along with Susan.

SAHRIED

They have taken all the computers!

Vaughan, holding Cornelius, looks up towards Sahried and Susan, as they stare down in shock.

SAHRIED

Oh! Dear God, No!

SUSAN

Is he alive? How did this happen?

Vaughan checks his pulse.

VAUGHAN

Barely! Where's the closest hospital?

SUSAN

Six or seven blocks north, but we should call 911!

Vaughan looks around quickly and sees the KEYS for the Center's van hanging on the kitchen door frame.

VAUGHAN

Grab those keys and go open the side door of the van! Sahried, help me get him outside.

Susan rushes to the keys and out the back door.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - DAY

The door to the van SLAMS closed as Sahried sits on the floor of the van holding onto Cornelius. Vaughan rushes around to the drivers side.

VAUGHAN

(to Susan)

Call the cops, let them know what's going on and that we are en route to the hospital!

The van slams into gear and shoots off down the alley running over the donuts and spilled coffee, leaving Susan on her cell phone.

EXT. SEDGLEY AVENUE - DAY

The Community Center van comes around the corner almost on two wheels. It speeds off down the block, then suddenly slides to a stop on the snowy street at the red light.

Vaughan looks in both directions. He sees a police car sitting on the corner, OFFICER ADAMS staring at the van.

They look at each other.

Vaughan looks at the light. Still red. Back at Adams.

VAUGHAN

Hold on!

SAHRIED

What are you doing my friend?

Vaughan guns the accelerator and blows through the light, onto Kensington Ave.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Officer Adams smiles and guns his cruiser.

ADAMS

Nice!

He grabs his radio.

ADAMS

Command, Unit 90 in pursuit of a white van, north bound Kensington at Sedgley coming up on Erie, roll backup... Plate number, Alpha, Zebra, Charley, One, One, Seven Three.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Copy 90, One unit en route, maintain.

INT. VAN - DAY

Sahried looks back at the fast-approaching police car and tries his best to keep Cornelius stable as the van swerves in and out of traffic.

Vaughan tries to keep it under control, slowing but still running red lights.

SAHRIED

Why are you trying to wipe us out?

VAUGHAN

How's he doing?!

Sahried looks back at the pursuing police cruiser.

SAHRIED

He is catching us!

VAUGHAN

No! Cornelius!

SAHRIED

How do I know? I failed medical school! Why do you t'ink I run a crappy deli?

VAUGHAN

Is he still breathing?! Breathing, is he breathing?!

SAHRIED

Yes! Yes, he's breathing. But I don't know for how long I will be still breathing!

Focusing on the road, Vaughan swerves to avoid another police car that has just joined the chase.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Officer Adams is on the tail end of the van.

ADAMS

Unit 90, I have visual on Unit 77. Requesting Command confirm Pit!

A pause of STATIC erupts from the radio.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Unit 90, confirm are the occupants wearing Santa suits and beards?

He looks through the rear window of the van as Sahried raises his head.

ADAMS

Uh... Command, confirm passenger is in Santa suit. Advise.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
 Advise 90, van is en route to  
 Frankford Hospital Emergency,  
 patient on board. Priority Escort,  
 90. Will inform 77.

Adams accelerates the cruiser along side of the van.

INT. VAN - DAY

Sahried watches as the cruiser comes along side the van. Vaughan catches a glimpse through his side mirror.

SAHRIED  
 Ohhh! This is it, we are dead men!  
 Just stop, you crazy Santa man!

The cruiser keeps pace with the van.

Vaughan spots the cruiser's passenger window roll down and sees Adams wave him along.

ADAMS  
 (on P.A.)  
 Keep pace, follow me!

The cruiser pulls in front of the van, running blocker, as Unit 77 runs on ahead to clear the road.

SAHRIED  
 Yes! Man, yes! Follow them! This  
 is just like in my favorite  
 American show, Starkey's and  
 Butch! Yes, I love that one!

Vaughan looks into the rear view mirror at Sahried.

VAUGHAN  
 Will you just shut up and let me  
 drive?!

Sahried clams up but maintains his excited look, while checking on Cornelius.

SAHRIED  
 (to Cornelius )  
 Don't worry my friend! You will be  
 fine. Very good! I will make you  
 my best Reuben ever when this is  
 done!

INT. FRANKFORD HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

The automatic doors swing open. Cornelius is on a gurney, surrounded by EMERGENCY PERSONNEL. They rush him into a closed area, out of view.

Vaughan and Sahried rush to the doors, but are blocked by Adams.

ADAMS

Hold on fellas. This is as far as you go! You want to tell me what's going on here?

SAHRIED

This is how we found him. He was beaten. Real bad!

VAUGHAN

We were coming in to work at the Community Center, we were robbed. You need to get someone over there...

ADAMS

(interrupting )

We already have units on site. What did you see when... wait a minute. Aren't you the Abominable Snowman?

Vaughan, visibly embarrassed, looks away and cracks a frustrated smile.

VAUGHAN

Yeah that's me. We need to find out how our friend is doing. Can you help us?

Adams looks at the two Santas and smiles.

FLASH.

INSERT STILL FRAME IMAGE

Adams sits on Vaughan's knee in the hospital corridor. Santa-Vaughan doesn't look happy about it.

BACK TO SCENE

The officer walks off laughing as he looks at his cell camera. He talks to a nurse at a counter, who then grimly approaches Vaughan and Sahried.

They watch her expectantly.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

With the sun setting, light snowflakes begin to fall. The back alley is getting darker and the light above the door flickers on.

Vaughan sits on a 5-gallon bucket, head in his hands. He's looking at the pipe and lighter.

Sahried steps from the Center's door and slowly walks over to him, placing his hand on his shoulder.

SAHRIED

I t'ink you should get some rest my friend. It's been a hell of a day, and we did all we could do. You know this is the truth.

Vaughan looks up and sees Sahried cloaked in the overhead light. He turns away, staring down the alley and beyond.

Vaughan looks back toward Sahried.

VAUGHAN

You really are my friend, Sahried.

SAHRIED

I have been saying that since the first time we met.

Vaughan takes a deep breath, exhales into mist.

VAUGHAN

How does a man get to that point in his life when he can do that for people and not need anything in return? I just don't get it. Here I am, the worst person in the world, being forced to be good, when someone like Cornelius just gives it away for free. I wish I could know how that happens.

Vaughan bows his head and weeps into his own hands, his tears cutting through the snow as they crash to the ground.

Sahried kneels down, grabbing Vaughan by the head, raising it to eye level.

SAHRIED

Listen to me now. You are not the same man that was dragged in here kicking and screaming. The only difference between you and Cornelius is that he has been doing it for very much longer. Good is not measured in how much you do, but that you do it at all.

Vaughan, staring into the eyes of Sahried, looks like a child who has just been talked out of a great crying fit.

SAHRIED

You have answered your own question. How does a man bring himself to help, without asking anything in return? You just do. That is reward enough.

Vaughan looks into his friend's eyes. He sees the truth.

VAUGHAN

You're right. I'm going to take care of this myself.

Vaughan stands and walks away, down the darkening alley.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - OFFICE - DAY

A KNOCK at the door. Vaughan peeks his head into Mr. Shaw's office.

VAUGHAN

Mr. Shaw? We need to talk.

Mr. Shaw looks nervous.

MR. SHAW

You're here nice and early. What are you even doing here on Saturday? Is there news about Cornelius?

VAUGHAN

No, nothing new. But that's why I'm here. We need to do something about security.

Mr. Shaw fidgets.

MR. SHAW

What do you have in mind?

VAUGHAN

We can't let anything like this happen again. I think it would be a good idea to have security personnel, or cameras, or something.

MR. SHAW

(condescendingly)

Mr. Vaughan, it's not your responsibility to handle that kind of thing. It's mine.

VAUGHAN

So what can you do?

MR. SHAW

I'll take care of it and keep you informed.

VAUGHAN

That's not good enough. Cornelius is in the hospital right this minute because things haven't been good enough. We need to step it up. You need to implement something now.

MR. SHAW

I'll look into this and get back to you when I know what our options are.

VAUGHAN

How about if I help give you some options? I know for a fact that you've been enjoying a certain percentage of the donations for yourself. I haven't said anything about it 'til now because how you screw your own place over is your business. But now someone, a good man, is feeling the effects of your greed.

Mr. Shaw's face drains of color.

Vaughan takes a step toward him, menacingly.

VAUGHAN

And since the law has taken such interest in what I do around here, not to mention the press, I'm sure they'd like to know what your little slush fund gets used for.

Shaw sits back in his seat, pulls open the side drawer.

Vaughan takes a step back, eyeing Shaw's hand.

Mr. Shaw pulls out a bottle of Scotch and two glasses.

MR. SHAW

Have a seat Mr. Vaughan and let's discuss this like gentleman. Would you care for a drink?

VAUGHAN

It's 9am. I don't need a drink.

Shaw pulls the cap off the bottle.

MR. SHAW

I'm tired of keeping this bottled up. I'm tired of seeing people getting hurt. Sometimes you don't realize just how deep you're in until it's too late.

VAUGHAN

Into what? What are you rambling about? All I care about is the security situation around here.

MR. SHAW

This is deeper than you know.

VAUGHAN

I don't care how deep it goes, we just need some security, even if I have to pay for it myself.

MR. SHAW

You seem smart. Let me clue you in on reality. It doesn't end with me. This guy Stone is some kinda middleman, a piss ant, for an even bigger player. He runs the game for some corporate shell. Eastman Investments or something like that.

A spark of recognition flashes in Vaughan's eye.

MR. SHAW

They're trying to run this whole neighborhood into the ground so they can bulldoze it and make God-knows-what.

Mr. Shaw pours himself a drink.

MR. SHAW

Condos? Yet another mall? I really couldn't care less what their plans are. I'm as low on the totem pole as it gets. They asked me to skim a little and promised they'd take care of me.

He sips from his glass.

MR. SHAW

Now it's bigger. People are getting hurt. I'm tired of all this. The only reason they've got me doing this is so they get a leash around my neck. But I'm not letting this go on.

VAUGHAN

It's time to do something about it.

MR. SHAW

What am I gonna do? I got no options.

VAUGHAN

Wrong. You're gonna help me take 'em down.

Mr. Shaw looks skeptical.

VAUGHAN

What did you say the name of that company was?

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Vaughan and Mr. Shaw walk through the apartment building hallway to the door marked 303. Vaughan's hand reaches for the bell, just as the door creaks open.

Jean begins to exit Troy's apartment. She's smiling and giddy, giving Troy an affectionate hug goodbye.

Vaughan and Mr. Shaw appear surprised.

Jean spots them, turns a new shade of red.

TROY  
Nathan! What are you doing  
here? With Mr. Shaw...?

VAUGHAN  
We gotta talk, man.

Troy and Jean look at each other.

JEAN  
(shrugs)  
The sitter's on the clock.

Troy and Jean kiss each other affectionately.

TROY  
Bye.

VAUGHAN  
See ya.

Jean leaves. Vaughan and Mr. Shaw push their way past Troy into his apartment.

TROY  
Why, please come in.

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Vaughan and Mr. Shaw stand in the living area of Troy's clean but modest apartment. Vaughan eyes the empty wine bottles on the kitchen counter.

VAUGHAN  
Okay, so now I know why you haven't  
been answering your phone.

TROY  
What's going on? You look like  
you're on a mission.

VAUGHAN  
We need your help. We can't let  
this kind of thing happen again.

TROY  
Let what happen?

MR. SHAW  
Cornelius was attacked. Somebody  
broke into the Center yesterday,  
and apparently he got in the way.

TROY  
That's terrible!

VAUGHAN  
Turns out we have a bigger issue to deal with.

TROY  
Okay... so you came all the way over here just to tell me that?

VAUGHAN  
That, and I need you to dig up the details of that deal we did with Eastman Investments.

TROY  
You bought some of their sub prime properties. So what?

VAUGHAN  
But which properties?

TROY  
I don't recall. Let's see.

Troy goes to a small desk and laptop against the wall, logs in and begins opening files on the computer.

Several spreadsheets and legal documents appear.

TROY  
When you agreed to buy up their distressed assets, it looks like it was about 100 acres.

Troy keeps tinkering with the keyboard. The spreadsheet yields actual addresses... thousands of them.

TROY  
Here are some of the addresses.

The scrolling spreadsheet appears as a blur.

MR. SHAW  
Wait! Go back.

Troy does.

MR. SHAW  
There. Look.

VAUGHAN

What?

MR. SHAW

You don't know?

Troy and Vaughan appear confused.

MR. SHAW

That's the address of the Center,  
that's damn near every address in  
the neighborhood.

Silence. Mr. Shaw looks suspiciously at the two of them.

MR. SHAW

So, how long have you owned the  
Kensington Community Center and  
surrounding blocks?

TROY

Oh my God! You really do need to  
spend more time going over your  
books.

MR. SHAW

(incredulously)

And you didn't even know it?!

VAUGHAN

Okay, this is good. Right? We  
don't need to worry about a  
thing. We can just sit back and  
let things take their course,  
'cause I'm not selling. And I'm  
certainly not bulldozing anything.

MR. SHAW

No, you don't understand. Stone  
isn't going to sit back and let  
this go.

VAUGHAN

So, what's he got to say about it?

MR. SHAW

Let's just say this is going to set  
him off, and we don't want more  
people getting hurt.

VAUGHAN

(indignant)

Did this scumbag have something to  
do with Cornelius?!

Mr. Shaw looks down at the floor.

Vaughan's eyes pierce him with rage.

MR. SHAW

Look, now I realize how bad this  
guy is, and I want to work with you  
to take him down.

TROY

So what's our next step?

VAUGHAN

Proof.

Troy and Vaughan look at Mr. Shaw. Mr. Shaw SIGHS heavily  
and sits down.

MR. SHAW

Let's do it.

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Vaughan, Troy and Mr. Shaw stand in the hallway outside of  
apartment #304.

The door is cracked open, and thumping dance MUSIC blares  
from within. Troy pushes on the door.

TROY

(calling out)

Buck?

The three of them push slowly into...

INT. BUCK'S APARTMENT - DAY

There sits BUCK, 40, dressed in sweats and an old PRINCE  
concert shirt, hunched over a small table with his back to  
the room.

The entire apartment seems crammed with cameras, lights and  
video monitors.

TROY

(loudly)

Buck! Hey!

Buck's hand shoots up to silence the group. They freeze.

Buck takes a single snapshot of a miniature scene with  
plastic army men.

Then he wheels around, a huge smile on his face.

BUCK  
Whuddup, guys?!

TROY  
(reluctantly)  
Hey... neighbor. Sorry to bug you,  
but we were wondering about some of  
your video equipment.

BUCK  
Whaddaya wanna know?

VAUGHAN  
Can you record people having a  
conversation from a distance?

BUCK  
Tch! No prob-lay-mo.

Buck whips out business cards and hands them to the others.

BUCK  
AllVid Services Inc., at your  
service boys. Podcasts, video  
production, live surveillance, etc,  
etc, etc. You can even watch my  
live podcasts, once a week right  
from this humble little studio.

He gestures to the cramped room.

BUCK  
You want to eavesdrop from, like,  
ten feet or, like, 200 yards?

Troy regards the business card, sticks it in his wallet.

Vaughan looks at Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw gulps.

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Troy, Vaughan and Mr. Shaw stand in the hallway outside of  
Troy's apartment. Troy is scowling.

VAUGHAN  
You sure you're good with this,  
Shaw? We can't have you getting  
cold feet at the last minute.

MR. SHAW

I'm fine.

VAUGHAN

Good. We're lucky we can rely on  
Troy's crazy neighbors.

Troy keeps scowling.

VAUGHAN

Lighten up, will ya?

No response from Troy.

VAUGHAN

(to Mr. Shaw)

Look, why don't you go back to the  
Center? I'm gonna chat with Troy  
for a little while.

Mr. Shaw nods and leaves them in the hallway.

Vaughan motions toward Troy's apartment.

VAUGHAN

Shall we?

Troy and Vaughan head into...

INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The two men stand, facing each other, in the entryway.

VAUGHAN

Why are you so grim?

TROY

(sighs)

You know, sometimes you just don't  
get it.

VAUGHAN

Get what?

TROY

You see everything, everyone around  
you as just tools to get your  
way. People just do your  
bidding. 'At your command, Sir'.

VAUGHAN

First of all, I've been saying for  
a while now to knock it off with

VAUGHAN

the 'sir' thing. And as for being used as tools... I don't know why that's such a big deal.

TROY

Exactly! You don't get it! 'Cause you're not the one who's being used. Used to drive people around. Used to keep track of tens of millions of dollars of business transactions. Used to call your ex girlfriend, for cryin' out loud!

Vaughan steps back, lets Troy's words sink in a bit. He looks at the carpet.

VAUGHAN

I called her day two days ago. Let's just say that call helped me figure a few things out.

TROY

Whoop dee doo. The grown man can make his own phone calls. Big progress.

VAUGHAN

Troy, this has been a hell of a month. For both of us. And at the risk of getting all sappy, I need to point out that this thing we're planning, with Shaw and Stone and your oddball neighbor, is a chance to do something really good. For people who don't always have real good things happening in their lives.

TROY

Yeah, I get that. It's just...

VAUGHAN

Just what?

TROY

Dammit, Nathan.

Vaughan smiles.

TROY

The hell are you smiling about?

VAUGHAN  
I like that.

TROY  
Like what?

VAUGHAN  
When you call me Nathan.

Troy looks away.

VAUGHAN  
I can see that I've taken people  
for granted. I've taken most of  
the good things in my life for  
granted, and I can see a better  
path before me now. It's my  
journey to take, but I can't get on  
this path alone.

TROY  
So you need another tool.

VAUGHAN  
I need my brother.

Vaughan steps up and hugs Troy. Troy stays rigid.

Then softens and returns his brother's embrace.

Vaughan pats Troy on the back in a manly way.

VAUGHAN  
Now knock it off with the touchy  
feely stuff. We've got a party to  
get ready for.

TROY  
Yes Sir.

Vaughan gives Troy a dirty look.

Troy cracks a smile.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

The sun has just set and the Community Center is covered  
with Christmas decorations. A warm glow and festive MUSIC  
leak out onto the darkening street as people begin streaming  
into the building.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

It's busy and crowded inside. Center volunteers, children and adults are dressed up, but some clearly homeless people are interspersed throughout the crowd.

There are heaping trays of food near the soup kitchen.

Kids anxiously show their artwork to parents in the daycare.

Gleaming computer monitors rest on sturdy desks in the technology center.

Vaughan is dressed in his fancy well-tailored Santa suit, and is cheerfully mingling.

The Judge walks into the building, stern faced. She looks critically around the room at the diverse mixture of people before settling her eyes on Vaughan.

She smiles and walks further into the merry crowd.

MR. SHAW (O.S.)

Ah, Your Honor. Thank you so much  
for accepting our invitation.

She turns to greet Mr. Shaw, who's wearing a nice coat with a cheesy holiday tie.

JUDGE

I'm glad I could make it. For a  
while there, I almost thought your  
reports were the stuff of  
fairytales.

She gestures back at Vaughan.

MR. SHAW

Not at all.

JUDGE

I'm surprised, but delighted.

MR. SHAW

Actually, it's quite surprising how  
much good can come from one person.

A loud CHEER erupts from a corner of the room, and the Judge and Mr. Shaw turn to see what the fuss is about.

Cornelius stands at the entrance, a joyful, victorious smile lights up his face.

Many party goers rush over to him, and he's deluged with hugs, handshakes and well-wishes.

A giant "Welcome Back Mr. C" sign is being hoisted up one of the Center walls by some of the volunteers.

Cornelius' entourage make their way further into the Center.

The faces in the crowd are all smiling and jovial.

A pair of terribly worn-out Chuck Taylor sneakers shuffle across the floor.

Near the soup kitchen, Maggie peruses the counter with her normal scowl of discontent. She's holding out her grubby shirt to create a makeshift basket, and loads rolls and cheese wedges into it.

VAUGHAN (O.S.)

Here you go, Maggie.

She turns to see Vaughan holding out a large Tupperware container for her. Her scowl relaxes and her eyes light up at the sight of Santa.

VAUGHAN

This will make it easier to carry some of these goodies.

Maggie's face remains serene as she slowly takes the container from Vaughan's hands. He just smiles.

VAUGHAN

Besides, I've been told there's something special for you under the tree, so you'll want to have your hands free later during the gift exchange.

Vaughan turns away from her.

MAGGIE

Thank you, Santa.

VAUGHAN

You're welcome, Darlin'. 'Tis the season, after all. Excuse me. I need to make a call.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Vaughan breathes in the fresh, crisp night air and exhales a swirling cloud of warmth. He puts his bluetooth headset into his ear, dials his phone.

He begins pacing in random circles.

VAUGHAN

Hi, Janet. It's Nathan. Is Donna still around?

JANET (V.O.)

Hey Nathan. She's here, but she's still with the client. Their shoot got pretty complicated.

VAUGHAN

(playfully)

Boy, the staff at Dimitri Studios never rest, do they?

JANET (V.O.)

I think it'll be at least an hour.

VAUGHAN

An hour? Okay. Thanks Janet. And Merry Christmas.

JANET (V.O.)

You too, Nathan.

As he ends the call and stops pacing, he turns suddenly to head back into the center and bumps into two partygoers, who had apparently been standing out in the dark night.

VAUGHAN

Oops! Excuse me guys. Gotta get back to the party.

Vaughan walks back in, not recognizing Thug 1 and Thug 2.

The thugs watch him closely, then Thug 1 motions for his partner to come along.

INT. LINCOLN TOWN CAR - NIGHT

Mr. Stone sits in the back seat, flanked by Thugs 1 and 2.

MR. STONE

Good job, boys. I might need that ace up my sleeve. Go for it.

The thugs leave the car.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

Vaughan smiles cheerfully at people as he cuts quickly through the crowd. He stops to watch Buck, who's using a fancy but small video camera to interview one of the homeless party guests.

Buck senses he's being watched, spots Vaughan out of the corner of his eye. Vaughan taps his bare wrist where a watch would be.

Buck nods, quickly wraps up the interview.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - OFFICE - NIGHT

A KNOCK at the door. Vaughan peeks his head in.

VAUGHAN

Let's go. It's Shaw time.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - GARAGE - NIGHT

Mr. Shaw opens the door and walks nervously through the dim garage. It doubles as storage space, and is crammed with junk, pallets and supplies.

He stops when he sees a dark Lincoln Town Car backed into one of the spaces.

The rear door of the Town Car opens and a grim-faced Mr. Stone strides slowly toward Mr. Shaw.

He doesn't stop until he's an inch from Mr. Shaw's nose.

MR. STONE

Let's have it, Shaw.

Mr. Shaw looks around nervously, pulls an envelope out of his inner coat pocket and hands it to Mr. Stone. Mr. Stone snatches it, regards Shaw with disgust.

MR. STONE

You're pitiful. What kind of a man walks away from easy money like you were getting?

Mr. Shaw swallows.

MR. STONE

A weak one, obviously. One without guts. A man without vision and no hope for the future.

He turns and begins to walk away from Mr. Shaw.

MR. SHAW (O.S.)  
 (a little too loud)  
 That's the last extortion payment  
 you'll ever get from me, Garrett  
 Stone.

Mr. Stone whirls around, eyes quickly darting around the garage, burning with fury.

MR. STONE  
 You shut your mouth! Keep it down,  
 you moron. The last thing we need  
 is someone hearing...

Realization settles into Mr. Stone's face.

MR. STONE  
 Who were you just talking to?

Mr. Stone storms back to Mr. Shaw, roughly grabbing his tie and yanking on it like a dog on a collar.

MR. STONE  
 Are you trying to make some sort of  
 point, you clueless punk?

Behind a pile of pallets, Vaughan is hunched down beside Buck, who is looking into his camera.

In the middle of the garage next to several pallets of FROZEN HAMS, Mr. Shaw is toe to toe with a furious Mr. Stone.

VAUGHAN  
 (whispering)  
 He's had enough, I'm going in.

Before Buck can stop him, Vaughan jumps up and steps around the pallets and into garage.

VAUGHAN  
 Your game's over, Stone! You're  
 finished! We got the whole thing  
 on video. It's over!

Mr. Shaw is shoved into the side of a fork truck, nearly knocking him unconscious as Mr. Stone faces Vaughan.

MR. STONE  
 I kinda figured it would go  
 something like this. You gotta  
 play all the cards. When you got  
 'em that is.

He snaps his finger and from behind a closed door Thug 1 and 2 enter holding Donna.

Vaughan freezes at the sight of terrified Donna.

VAUGHAN  
Donna! I'm so Sorry. I...

MR. STONE  
(interrupting)  
I'll bet you are, Mr. Vaughan. I'll  
bet you are.

Mr. Stone grabs hold of Donna. The thugs circle behind Vaughan.

Vaughan reaches slowly into his pocket.

MR. STONE  
I would be very careful right now  
if I were you.

Mr. Stone tightens his grip on Donna as Vaughan slowly pulls a PDA out of his coat pocket. He presses a button.

VAUGHAN  
You realize that you never had a  
chance, right?

He slides the PDA across the floor towards Mr. Stone.

Mr. Stone picks it up and looks at the screen.

VAUGHAN  
You're looking at the new owner of  
this whole neighborhood. Your  
buddies at Eastman Investments sold  
you out long ago. You're finished!

Mr. Stone drops the PDA, kicks it back across the floor.

MR. STONE  
You play chess, Mr. Vaughan?

He aggressively pulls on Donna.

MR. STONE  
This is a checkmate. You  
lose. You're gonna turn over the  
evidence and sign over the  
property. Otherwise, somebody  
won't be home for Christmas.

Donna shudders and tries to pull away, but Mr. Stone's grip is too firm.

Mr. Shaw makes a feeble attempt at sitting up, looking around in a daze.

Buck continues filming from behind the pallets.

The Thugs step up, each one grabbing Vaughan by an arm.

Vaughan's eyes never leave Donna. His rage builds. Then explodes.

Shaking off the thugs' holds, Vaughan grabs hold of a FROZEN HAM and bashes it into both thugs one by one.

Mr. Stone darts out the back door into the alley, dragging Donna along with him.

Buck comes from behind the pallets and nails one of the thugs to help Vaughan finish him off.

Vaughan notices Stone and Donna are gone.

VAUGHAN  
Where'd they go?

Buck points to the door and they dart off.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Vaughan and Buck reach the end of the alley and spot Stone rushing up the stairs to the elevated train platform.

They race to the stairs as a train pulls into the station.

EXT. ELEVATED TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Several people carrying grocery bags pause to watch Santa-suited Vaughan and Buck, camera in hand, scale the steps skipping as many as they can along the way.

They reach the platform just in time to see Stone heading for the front of the train.

Vaughan hits the turnstile and is stopped, nearly falling over head first. They see Stone running off.

A TICKET AGENT in a booth won't buzz them through without paying. Vaughan searches the suit, no money.

Buck scrambles to the booth, filming with one hand and fishing for cash in his pocket with the other.

He produces a \$20 and shoves it under the ticket booth glass.

BUCK  
Merry Christmas!

The ticket agent stares in disbelief.

Through the turnstile. They reach the platform as Stone enters one of the leading cars. With seconds to spare they rush, falling into the last car's closing door.

Several passengers are startled by the scene.

Vaughan lifts Buck and gathers himself. Buck resumes filming.

Through the train cars they go. One by one.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - GARAGE - NIGHT

Mr. Shaw sits up against the lift, tries to collect his thoughts as Troy kneels beside him.

TROY  
Where's Nathan?

MR. SHAW  
I... I don't know. I blacked out. I think... Wait! There was a woman. Someone named Donna. Stone took her and they're after him.

Troy sits on the floor with Shaw, confused.

Absentmindedly, Mr. Shaw fumbles in his coat pockets. He looks quizzically at a card he pulls out. It's Buck's.

He hands the card to Troy.

MR. SHAW  
I think Buck was filming.

Troy ignites with energy. He leaps to his feet and darts off toward the party.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

The party is in full swing. A DJ bobs up and down behind his turntables as many of the dozens of party goers dance to a modern pop version of JINGLE BELLS.

Troy rushes to where Lilly is sitting at one of the new computers and quickly lifts her over the top of the chair, smiling to her as he sets her down in front of Jean.

TROY

Just a second, Honey. We need to see something important here.

Troy logs into the computer and pulls Buck's card out. He enters the address into the prompt and is instantly on the site. He clicks a link and a video feed appears.

People gather around Troy to watch, making a crowd. The Judge appears to watch as well.

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN

A blurry image comes into focus as a Santa pulls open a sliding metal train door. The rushing wind blows his beard off his face as he darts along.

BACK TO SCENE

The crowd moves in closer to get a better look.

JUDGE

Is that Mr. Vaughan?

She pulls her phone out and dials.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Vaughan enters the car, spots Stone, who has nowhere to run.

The train picks up speed.

Vaughan is drawing the eyes of the few passengers. Buck follows closely, camera shouldered, looking in the eyepiece.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

The entire crowd at the party is silent, now gathered around the computer display. It shows Vaughan from behind, approaching Mr. Stone. Donna tries to squirm free.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Donna pulls away, slips, but is quickly grabbed. Vaughan makes a move but is blocked by Mr. Stone using Donna as a shield.

Vaughan pulls back a bit giving Stone some room. The train begins to slow as it pulls into a station. Buck is side by side with Vaughan.

Mr. Stone pulls Donna towards the door.

The train slows to a crawl.

MR. STONE

Now's the time for a deal Mr. Vaughan. Forget about the land. Easy come, easy go. Tell him to shut down the camera and hand over the tape.

Buck moves his eye away from the viewfinder, looks quizzically at Vaughan.

Vaughan LAUGHS.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

Troy sits, staring motionless at the computer monitor with Jean at his side. On the monitor Vaughan LAUGHS.

TROY

Tape? What's he talking about?

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Vaughan and Buck both smile. The train is grinding down.

Mr. Stone eyes the outside platform, then back to Vaughan.

BUCK

Tape? What are you talking about? Seriously, Dude?

MR. STONE

I said hand over the tape and she's free. The offer ends when this door opens.

Vaughan steps forward, Mr. Stone hunkers in.

VAUGHAN

There's no tape, you idiot! This is live entertainment.

BUCK

Smile for the camera, fool!

The train stops. The doors open with a WHOOSH, sending most of the frightened passengers fleeing.

Mr. Stone holds his place as the doorway is free.

MR. STONE

No, Mr. Vaughan you're the fool.

VAUGHAN

Think again. This is on the web  
right now. You got nowhere to run.  
How's that for a deal?

Mr. Stone, enraged, loses grip on Donna. She makes a break out the door. Mr. Stone turns to grab her but is driven through the door and tackled to the platform floor by Vaughan as he dives after him.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

The two men struggle to their feet.

Donna suddenly stops to watch. Buck, camera in hand, nearly falls over her when she stops.

Vaughan head-locks Stone, but Stone turns it around, giving Vaughan a shot to the gut. Vaughan drops to one knee.

Stone circles, yanks the Santa hat from Vaughan's head.

Vaughan GASPS for air.

Mr. Stone gives Vaughan a kick to the mid-section. Vaughan drops his second knee and lurches forward holding his gut.

MR. STONE

Now, look at you. Mr. Money Bags.  
You don't look too merry now  
Santa. You should have just  
dropped a buck in the pot when you  
had the chance. It's not like it  
would have helped those people  
anyway. They're hopeless!

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

The crowd JEERS and BOOS Mr. Stone's on-air rant.

Jean grips Troy harder, they share a worried look.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

Mr. Stone menacingly approaches Vaughan, leans over him, tapping him on the head. Vaughan steadies himself waiting to be hit.

MR. STONE  
And so are you.

Vaughan, cringing in pain, begins to LAUGH.

MR. STONE  
I'm glad you're having a good time.  
Tis the season, Santa!

VAUGHAN  
Do you know what Santa's favorite  
song is?

Mr. Stone's face changes to curiosity.

MR. STONE  
No, I can't imagine.

Vaughan unleashes a lightning fast uppercut to Mr. Stone's groin, buckling him instantly.

Mr. Stone hits the platform hard.

VAUGHAN  
Jingle Bells! What else?

Vaughan struggles to his feet, hovers over Mr. Stone.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

The crowd erupts in CHEERS. Troy stands, hugging Jean. Cornelius hangs his arm around Troy smiling.

Dawn covers Lilly's eyes.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - NIGHT

Donna runs to join Vaughan, hugging him tightly. Vaughan lifts her off her feet, spinning her.

Buck circles around filming their embrace.

Police rush down the stairs toward Mr. Stone.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - NIGHT

Overjoyed partyers jump and SHOUT. Troy and Jean include the twins in their embrace.

Cornelius dances around with Maggie as she shows off her new HIKING BOOTS.

Susan watches the computer monitor showing Vaughan and Donna's embrace as police race by.

Sahried dances, unaware that two young INDIAN WOMEN approach him from behind. He turns. He freezes and is embraced by his two smiling daughters. He CRIES out in joy.

EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL - NIGHT

The night is illuminated by the thousands of lights that adorn the massive Christmas tree on Liberty Plaza.

Vaughan and Donna hold their embrace, the holiday lights shining behind them.

Buck grins, still filming them.

VAUGHAN  
Want to make a wish?

DONNA  
Oh, my wish has been granted.

Vaughan smiles, nuzzles her neck.

DONNA  
What about you? I've always wondered what Santa wishes for.

VAUGHAN  
That's a good question. I think I can come up with something.

EXT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Troy's BMW pulls up to the Center on a clear, sunny day.

His casual shoes step out, and move quickly, lightly across the sidewalk to the Center door.

As he reaches for the Center door, Maggie walks out strutting along in her hiking boots.

Troy smiles and sidesteps her as he enters the Center, carrying a large envelope under his arm.

INT. KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Troy crosses the room and knocks on an office door with "Center Director" engraved on the name plate.

CORNELIUS (O.S.)  
Come on in, it's open!

Cornelius is sitting behind the desk, dressed in a neatly pressed collared shirt.

CORNELIUS  
 Welcome, Son! Nice to see  
 you. Have a seat?

He gestures to the chair.

TROY  
 Sorry I can't, I gotta make it  
 quick. Jean and I are taking the  
 girls to the zoo.

CORNELIUS  
 You don't know how glad I am to  
 hear that.

Troy tosses the folder on the desk in front of Cornelius.

Cornelius studies the folder quizzically. He picks it up  
 and opens it.

CORNELIUS  
 What's this all this about, Troy?

TROY  
 It's a belated gift from Santa to  
 make your New Year even happier.

Cornelius's eyes widen as he reads the contents. He  
 GASPS. Troy smiles at his reaction, and walks away.

Past the computer center and across the main room Troy  
 continues to walk. From the office Cornelius SHOUTS with  
 joy.

Troy exits, grinning.

EXT. KENSINGTON AVENUE - DAY

Troy exits the Center, walks to his car past several  
 CONSTRUCTION WORKERS setting up a scaffold as others install  
 new windows. Even more WORKERS paint the exterior of the  
 building.

The beautiful spring day is jumping with activity.

Lilly and Dawn both wave at Troy from the back seat of his  
 car. Jean smiles from the front seat.

Troy gets in and Jean smooches his cheek. The girls GIGGLE.  
 He starts the car and drives off, spooking several birds,  
 who fly up high above the Elevated Train.

The birds fly higher and higher, above a construction project that spans many blocks in the Kensington neighborhood.

EXT. PAT'S KING OF STEAKS - NIGHT

The brightly-lit neon glows in the night. The steak shop is hopping with customers, coming and going.

Traffic on Passyunk Ave is packed, tons of people come from all directions to jump in line.

Standing in line not far from the counter is Vaughan and Donna, laughing and talking.

FADE OUT