FULL CIRCLE

written by

David A. Washington
FADE IN:

EXT. TYBEE BEACH - DAY

The sun in the horizon reflects in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Two lovers take a romantic stroll along the shore.

A lighthouse looms in the distance.

INT. DEVIN’S STUDIO – SAME

A hand carefully weaves a brush onto the canvas.

The artist, with paint stains on his clothing, steps back from the painting with a smile. This is DEVIN WILKES, a thirty-something, handsome stud, built for athletics.

INSERT - PAINTING

A lighthouse and the sun in the horizon over the ocean.

BACK TO SCENE

The telephone RINGS. Devin wipes his hand on an old rag, answers it.

    DEVIN
    Hello ... Speaking ... Hi, Mr. Barkley ... Yes, I finished it last night ... I think it looks great.

Devin checks his watch for time.

    DEVIN (CONT’D)
    Ten sounds good ... See you then.

Devin hangs up, shifts his attention back to the painting.

EXT. US/HWY 80 – DAY

A two-lane highway cuts through marshland. Commuters travel east/west bound.

The black and white sign on the side of the road reads: “US HWY 80 WEST”
EXT. DOWNTOWN SAVANNAH - DAY

A steady flow of heavy traffic. Businesses are aligned on both sides of the street.

Pedestrians from all walks of life make their way along the sidewalks. Some carry shopping bags, push baby strollers, window shop, enter and exit stores.

Devin, wearing slacks and a polo-style shirt, crosses the intersection with other pedestrians.

EXT. PETE'S DINER - DAY

Patrons fill the window seats. “PETE'S DINER” is written in cursive letters on the large window.

INT. PETE'S DINER - SAME

Patrons and MUSIC from the jukebox generate a BUZZ.

PETE TINSLEY, 30’s, bald, with an apron over his white T-shirt, stands behind the register at the end of the counter. Pete gives money to the CUSTOMER in front of him.

PETE
Two dollars and forty-eight cents is your change. See you tomorrow.

CUSTOMER
Have a good one.

The SOUND of COWBELLS as Devin enters. He holds the door open for Customer to walk out.

Devin takes a seat on a stool at the counter.

DEVIN
Morning, Pete.

PETE
Devin! How’s it going, man?

DEVIN
It’s going. Let me get the usual.

PETE
Coming right up.

Pete pours coffee in a Styrofoam cup.
PETE (CONT’D)
So, how did your date turn out?

DEVIN
Great, actually. We went ballroom dancing, if you can believe that.

PETE
Oh, okay... ballroom dancing. You think she could be the one?

DEVIN
Let’s not go overboard. She’s cool and everything, but...

PETE
But what?

Devin adds cream and sugar to his coffee.

DEVIN
Why do we have to do this every other day?

PETE
Because I’m your friend, and I’m concerned that you keep involving yourself in dead end relationships.

DEVIN
You don’t see me complaining about it.

PETE
Maybe not now, but one day, you’re going to wake up and find yourself alone.

DEVIN
You mean like I was when I stood at the altar waiting for the bride who forgot to show up?

Devin gives Pete a five dollar bill, makes a break for the door.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Talk to you later.

PETE
Thanksgiving dinner. Three o’clock. Don’t be late.
Devin throws up the "peace sign" on his way out. Pete shakes his head, wipes the counter clean.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

At least a dozen taxi cabs are parked along the curb. People enter and exit the terminal with carry-on bags and luggage.

INT. AIRPORT - SAME

LIZA TINSLEY, 30’s, long hair, casually dressed, watches as people walk through the white zone area. A growing smile reflects her face.

CHRISTINA CARTER, 30’s, pretty face, gorgeous body, smiles and waves.

LIZA
Christina!

CHRISTINA
Liza!

Christina and Liza share an exhausted embrace.

LIZA
It’s so good to see you!

CHRISTINA
It’s good to see you, too. How’s Pete?

LIZA
Busy. You know Pete. Look at you! You look great!

CHRISTINA
It runs in the family.

LIZA
So true. Let’s get you settled. We have a lot of catching up to do.

Christina and Liza leave the area.

CHRISTINA
I know, right? It’s been like what, yesterday since we last spoke?

LIZA
Oh, shut up. You know what I mean.
EXT. EXECUTIVE BUILDING - DAY

A towering building with many windows. A businessman enters through the door with a briefcase.

EXT. BARKLEY & BARKLEY ASSOCIATES - SAME

The writing on the window reads: “BARKLEY & BARKLEY ASSOCIATES” Devin sits in the lobby with his head buried in a magazine.

INT. BARKLEY & BARKLEY ASSOCIATES - CONTINUOUS

The SECRETARY, 20’s, blonde hair, feverishly types on the computer from behind her desk. The SOUND of a BEEP. She picks up the phone.

SECRETARY
Yes?

MR. BARKLEY (V.O.)
(filtered, over the phone)
Send Mr. Wilkes back.

SECRETARY
Right away.

Secretary hangs up the phone.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)
Mr. Wilkes? You can go back now.

Devin makes his way to the back with a large portfolio.

MR. BARKLEY’S OFFICE

MR. BARKLEY, 60’s, dressed in an expensive suit, holds an oil painting of himself. Mr. Barkley examines every detail of the painting.

An anxious Devin sits in a leather chair in front of Mr. Barkley’s desk.

MR. BARKLEY
This is just... magnificent. Extraordinary work, Devin. I’m impressed.

Devin breathes a SIGH of relief.
DEVIN
Thank you, Mr. Barkley. I’m glad you like it.

Mr. Barkley places the portrait inside of a large frame.

MR. BARKLEY
Like it? I absolutely love it. Let’s see...

Mr. Barkley hangs the painting above the mantle which holds many of his accolades.

MR. BARKLEY (CONT’D)
Perfect. What do you think?

DEVIN
I... I couldn’t have picked a better spot, sir.

Mr. Barkley goes back to his desk.

MR. BARKLEY
Let’s get down to business, shall we?

Mr. Barkley gets his checkbook from the drawer, writes a $5,000 dollar check, hands it to Devin.

DEVIN
Thank you.

MR. BARKLEY
A few of my colleagues may be in touch with you as well.

DEVIN
I can use the business.

MR. BARKLEY
I'm sure you can. I may have another project for you in the future. Maybe an oil portrait of the wife?

DEVIN
No problem. Give me a call when you’re ready.

Mr. Barkley and Devin shake hands.
MR. BARKLEY
You know, you really should be charging two, three, even four times the amount for what you do. Your work is that good.

DEVIN
I’ll keep that in mind. Take it easy, Mr. Barkley.

Devin leaves the office.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A large room with wooden floors and a white living room suit. A glass coffee table sets in front of the sofa. Christina and Liza drink from tea cups on the sofa.

CHRISTINA
It feels great being in Savannah. I kind of miss this place.

LIZA
Why don’t you move back? There’s nothing keeping you in Atlanta.

CHRISTINA
True, but I can't just up and move. My entire life is there.

LIZA
Make a life for yourself here. You can stay with us until you find a place of your own.

CHRISTINA
No, I couldn't impose.

LIZA
Don't be silly, CeCe. We’d love to have you. After what that asshole Jeff put you through, you can use a fresh start.

CHRISTINA
I don't know. I have to think about it.

LIZA
What’s there to think about? We can drive up to get the rest of your things.
CHRISTINA
But --

LIZA
-- But nothing. It’s settled. You are coming back home.

CHRISTINA
Okay, okay. Jesus... so bossy.

LIZA
I’m not bossy. I just get my way.

CHRISTINA
I can see that. Hey, let’s go out for a couple of drinks and a little dancing.

LIZA
I can’t, but you go... have a good time. There’s a place not too far from here. Upscale, nice crowd, no teeny-boppers... you’ll love it.

CHRISTINA
Sounds great.

LIZA
Be back before three.

CHRISTINA
Excuse me? Is that... are you giving me a curfew?

LIZA
I’m kidding, I’m kidding. Get your groove on, honey.

INT. CLUB ONYX - NIGHT

The SOUND of JAZZ MUSIC. Spotlights shine on the stage and members of a LIVE BAND.

Couples pack the dance floor in front of the stage.

Patrons mingle around the dimly lit room. They sit at the bar, booths and at tables.

WAITRESS, 20’s, navigates through the crowd with a tray of drinks.
DEVIN AND MIKE’S BOOTH

Devin and MIKE, 30’s, buzz cut, average build, both sharply dressed, sit at a booth near the stage and dance floor.

MIKE
Man, this club is tight.

DEVIN
I know. It’s the only place in town with a live band.

Waitress brings drinks to their booth.

WAITRESS
Fourteen dollars.

Mike pulls out a wad of cash, gives Waitress a twenty dollar bill.

MIKE
Keep the change.

WAITRESS
Thank you. Holler if you need anything else.

Waitress walks away. Devin and Mike look around the club.

MIKE
It’s some fly honeys up in here.

DEVIN
Yeah, and I’m leaving here with one of them.

Beautiful women are everywhere. Christina enters the club in a dazzling dress. She surveys her surroundings.

MIKE
Whoa! Check out what just walked in.

Christina finds a seat at a table on the other side of the club.

DEVIN
She’s hot. Nothing I haven’t seen before.

MIKE
You think you can pull that?
DEVIN
I can pull any chick in here.
Don’t confuse me with you.

MIKE
Instead of talking me to death,
show me what you’ve got.

DEVIN
Slow your roll. It’s all about
timing, my brother, and the
approach.

MIKE
Is that short for “I’m scared”?

Devin scoffs, tackles his entire drink in one gulp.

DEVIN
Watch and learn.

MIKE
All eyes on you, player.

Devin goes to the backside of the stage, says something to
the KEYBOARDIST, 50’s, who nods, “YES” and holds up his index
finger.

Devin turns to Mike with two thumbs up. Mike shrugs in a
state of confusion. Waitress brings a drink to Christina’s

KEYBOARDIST
Thank you. Please welcome to the
stage a young brother, who wants to
sing a tune for y’all. Let’s show
him some love.

Some of the patrons CLAP. A skeptical Mike leans back in his
chair with his arms folded.

STAGE

Devin takes the cordless microphone from the stand in front
of the keyboard, steps up to the front of the stage. FEED
BACK from the speakers.

DEVIN
Um... this goes out to the woman in
the red dress.

Christina looks around the club, focuses her attention to the
stage. Devin winks at her once they make eye contact.
Devin signals to the Keyboardist to PLAY. The MUSIC starts. He urbanely makes his way over to Christina's table.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
(SINGS)
“I wanna know your name. Ooh you look so good. I wanna know your name. What’s your name, baby? I’d love ya, if I could. ‘Cause, your the kind of girl that I adore. Your the kind of girl I’ve been looking for.”

Mike can’t believe his ears.

CHRISTINA'S TABLE

Devin sits at the table with Christina. She looks both stunned and embarrassed.

DEVIN
“Hey, where do you live? Where do you live, baby? I’d like to take you home. What do I have to give, to call you on the phone? ‘Cause, your the kind of girl that I adore. Your the kind of girl I’ve been looking for. Please tell me your name?”

APPLAUSE from patrons. The Band strikes up another tune -- likely Jazz. Couples take to the dance floor.

Devin reaches for Christina's hand.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Hi, I’m Devin, and you are...?

Christina throws her drink in his face. A GASP from people nearby.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Jesus! What the...? What the hell’s your problem?

CHRISTINA
Who do you think you are, embarrassing me in a room full of people?!

Devin wipes his face with a napkin.
DEVIN
Embarrassing you?! Listen, lady!
I was just trying --

CHRISTINA
-- I know what you’re trying, and it won’t work. Go work your charm on someone else.

DEVIN
Someone’s bitter. What’s the matter, sweetheart? Did a bird shit on top of your head on the way in?

CHRISTINA
What?! You have some nerve! Where do you get off --

DEVIN
-- Save it, sweetheart. I’m sorry I wasted my time. Have a bad night.

An angry Devin storms away from the table. Christina stops Waitress as she comes by.

CHRISTINA
Can I get another Martini?

Waitress nods, keeps going.

DEVIN AND MIKE’S BOOTH
Devin returns to the booth with Mike.

DEVIN
I don’t want to hear it.

MIKE
I hate to say I told you so, but...

DEVIN
That woman is nuts. She’s probably a man hater or something.

MIKE
Don’t get mad because you were rejected. It happens.
DEVIN
Not to me, it doesn’t.

MIKE
It just did.

Devin glares a warning to Mike. TRACY, late 20's, hot, wearing a tight body dress and pumps, approaches the table.

TRACY
Hi, I’m Tracy.

Tracy reaches out to shake Devin’s hand.

DEVIN
I’m Devin.

MIKE
And I’m Mike.

TRACY
(to Mike)
Um... yeah.
(to Devin)
Anyway, I just wanted you to know I thought that was really sweet.

DEVIN
Thank you. See?! At least someone gets it.

TRACY
I’ll give you my phone number... if you take me home.

Mike’s mouth drops to the floor. Devin checks Tracy out from head-to-toe. He puts twenty dollars on the table.

DEVIN
(to Mike)
I’ll see you later.

Devin and Tracy head for the exit. He glances over to Christina with a mocking smile.

Christina rolls her eyes, takes a sip of her drink.

EXT. CITY STREETS – NIGHT

Devin’s Mercedes pulls over to the curb, stops in front of an apartment building.
INT. TRACY’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Devin and Tracy roll against the walls, come out of their clothing, as they make out. They knock several items off the dresser on their way to the bed.

Tracy lands on top of him.

    DEVIN
    I like a woman who takes charge.

    TRACY
    I like a man who doesn’t mind a woman taking charge.

She kisses him all over his face and chest. Devin rolls over on top.

    DEVIN
    My turn.

Devin kisses Tracy’s neck, works his way down to her chest. HEAVY BREATHING and MOANS.

LATER

Devin and Tracy lie in bed under the covers, exhausted.

    TRACY
    Woo! That was...

    DEVIN
    Great, right?

    TRACY
    Amazing is more like it.

    DEVIN
    Yeah? Well you’re going to love round two.

    TRACY
    Round two?

    DEVIN
    I can go all-night-long.

    TRACY
    Oh really? You’re going to have to prove that.

    DEVIN
    Your wish is my command.
Devin rolls over on top of her. They go at it again. Tracy GIGGLES.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Christina lies across the sofa. Liza sits in the recliner.

CHRISTINA

What a jerk.

LIZA

I know, right? I mean, really. To sing a song to you was just... actually, it’s kind of sweet.

CHRISTINA

Then he left the club with another woman.

LIZA

You sound upset. Correct me if I’m wrong, but didn’t you blow him off?

CHRISTINA

That’s beside the point. He had the nerve to call me bitter.

LIZA

Well, you did throw a drink in his face.

CHRISTINA

He also said some very mean things.

LIZA

After you threw your drink in his face.

CHRISTINA

My head is killing me.

LIZA

There’s Tylenol in the bathroom cabinet.

CHRISTINA

I think I’ll try to sleep it off.

LIZA

All right. Hopefully, you’ll feel better by dinner time.
CHRISTINA
I’ll be fine. It’s just the drinks. See you in the morning.

LIZA
Good night.

Christina walks away.

INT. DEVIN’S BEDROOM - DAY

Devin, wearing only a towel around his waist, lays his clothes out on the bed. His cellphone RINGS. He looks at the face of his Android.

INSERT - FACE OF ANDROID - “INCOMING CALL, PETE”

BACK TO SCENE

INTERCUT - DEVIN’S BEDROOM/PETE’S LIVING ROOM

DEVIN
What’s up?

Pete sits in the living room with the TV on.

PETE
Why aren’t you here?

DEVIN
I’m getting dressed now.

PETE
Good, ’cause Liza is already asking about you.

DEVIN
Relax, man. I’m coming.

PETE
Okay. The three of us are waiting.

DEVIN
The three of you?

PETE
Yeah, Liza’s sister is in town.

DEVIN
Really? Is she sexy?

PETE
She’s Liza’s sister.
DEVIN
Great point. Give me about...
twenty, thirty minutes.

PETE
See you when you get here.

Pete hangs up the phone.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - DAY

Christina grooms herself in front of the bedroom mirror.
There is a KNOCK at the door.

CHRISTINA
Come in.

Liza comes in.

LIZA
Hey, it’s almost time for dinner.

CHRISTINA
How do I look? Does this dress make me look fat?

Christina twirls around like a ballerina.

LIZA
No! You look beautiful.

CHRISTINA
Thank you.

The doorbell RINGS.

LIZA
Can you get that? I have to check on the food.

CHRISTINA
Yeah, I got the door. Do what you have to do.

Christina and Liza leave the room.

FOYER
Christina steps into the foyer area. She opens the door, and Devin stands on the other side.
CHRISTINA
Ah, if it’s not Mr. Sing A Song To One Person And Take Another Home.

DEVIN
Ooh... jealous, are we?

LIZA
Don't flatter yourself. What are you doing here?

DEVIN
I’m definitely not here to see you. By the way, that dress makes you look... fat. Where’s Pete?

Devin barges past Christina. She tries to suck in her stomach.

DINNING ROOM
Devin walks in. Pete and Liza set food trays on the table.

DEVIN
Happy Thanksgiving, everyone!

PETE
There he is!

Devin and Pete share a brotherly hug.

LIZA
Happy Thanksgiving, Devin. Glad you could make it.

Devin leans in, kisses Liza on the cheek.

DEVIN
Thanks for inviting me.

PETE
Have a seat. We’re just about to get started.

DEVIN
Great, because I’m starved.

Christina enters the room.

LIZA
Oh, Devin, this is my sister, Christina. Christina, this is Devin.
DEVIN
Christina is it?

Devin reaches out for Christina's hand. She rolls her eyes, leaves the room.

LIZA
Christina! I'm sorry. I don't know what's gotten into her.

Liza goes after Christina. Devin and Pete eye one another.

DEVIN
Hey, all I did was sing to her.

PETE
That was you?!

KITCHEN
Christina and Liza grab the rest of the dinner trays.

LIZA
Oh my God! Christina, you don't understand.

CHRISTINA
He called me fat.

LIZA
He was just teasing. Devin's not --

CHRISTINA
-- I don't want to hear another word about that guy.

LIZA
Okay, fine. You don't like him. I get that, but he is a guest in my home, and I expect for you to be cordial.

CHRISTINA
Fine. Just keep him far away from me.

LIZA
Here. Take this in the dining room.

Liza gives Christina the pan of macaroni and cheese.
DINNING ROOM

The SOUND of eating utensils CLANKING against the plates. Devin, Pete, Liza and Christina have dinner at the table.

LIZA
So, Devin. How’s business?

DEVIN
Things are looking up. My clientele’s steadily growing.

LIZA
Wow! That’s great.

PETE
Yeah... congrats, man.

CHRISTINA
Clientele? What do you do? Sell drugs?

LIZA
He’s an artist, CeCe. That oil painting of Pete and me hanging in the living room, Devin painted it.

CHRISTINA
How nice? I hope you didn’t pay for it.

DEVIN
No, it was a gift. Is your sister always like this?

CHRISTINA
You know nothing about me!

DEVIN
I know that you like to throw drinks, which you owe me an apology for.

CHRISTINA
Don’t hold your breath.

Devin flicks a spoonful of macaroni and cheese toward Christina. It sticks to the side of her face like glue.

DEVIN
There. Now we’re even.

Liza and Pete are stunned.
An angry Christina throws a turkey bone at Devin. It smacks him in the forehead.

A food fight ensues. Food and drinks fly across the table.

Christina hurls a plate at Devin like a frisbee. He ducks out of the way, and it CRASHES against the wall.

Liza and Pete try to restore order, to no avail. The place is a mess.

KITCHEN

Christina washes the dishes. Devin comes in with broken dishes. He throws them in the trash.

**DEVIN**
All you had to do was apologize, CeCe.

**CHRISTINA**
The name is Christina to you.

**DEVIN**
Look, let’s try being friends.

**CHRISTINA**
I don’t think so.

**DEVIN**
I’m trying to be nice, but you aren’t making it easy.

**CHRISTINA**
Unlike Pete, I choose my friends more wisely.

**DEVIN**
And I’m sure Liza is thrilled to be stuck with you as a sister.

**CHRISTINA**
I don’t need your approval, and this dress does not make me look fat.

**DEVIN**
If you say so.

**CHRISTINA**
You are a jerk.
DEVIN
And you are a...

Christina gets in his face with a knife.

CHRISTINA
A what?! Say it!

DEVIN
I have too much respect for women to say it, but here’s a hint.

Devin BARKS like a dog, walks out of the room.

INT. DEVIN’S HOUSE – LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

A large flat screen TV, a DVD player, a cable box and a surround sound system are set in the corner of the room. The leather furniture matches the color of the carpet.

Devin reclines in his La-Z-Boy. Mike lounges on the sofa.

DEVIN
It was a disaster. You know the woman I sung to in the club?

MIKE
Yeah, what about her?

DEVIN
She’s Pete’s sister-in-law.

MIKE
Get out!

DEVIN
And let me tell you, she’s a real piece of work. She has this feistiness about her that I find both repulsive and irresistible.

Devin goes over to the bar. He opens the bottle of vodka, makes himself a drink.

MIKE
So you like her?

DEVIN
Maybe it’s the thrill of the chase I’m feeling. I don’t know.
MIKE
Or maybe you can’t get over the fact that she rejected you.

DEVIN
She did not reject me. She’s playing hard to get.

MIKE
That’s one way of looking at it. I think you’re wasting your time.

DEVIN
I don’t think I am. I have a feeling about this woman.

INT. PETE’S DINER - DAY
Indistinct CHATTER. MUSIC PLAYS the jukebox. Devin sits at the counter.

Christina walks from the kitchen with a pad in hand.

DEVIN
Can I get a refill?

Christina ignores him, takes care of another customer across the room.

Pete comes from the kitchen.

PETE
Is everything okay?

DEVIN
Yeah, I need some more coffee. Sorry about Thanksgiving dinner.

PETE
Liza is really pissed. You and Christina have to replace the dishes that were broken.

DEVIN
I’ll do my part.

Devin watches Christina like a hawk. Pete refills Devin’s cup with more coffee. He follows Devin’s gaze.

PETE
She is one tough cookie.
DEVIN
Yeah, well she’s not the only “tough cookie” around here. I’m time and a half for her.

PETE
You know you can get more bees with honey, than with poop, right?

Pete sets Devin’s cup in front of him, heads back to the kitchen.

Christina makes her way behind the counter.

CHRISTINA
Two eggs scrambled, with grits and sausage!

DEVIN
Check please?

CHRISTINA
Leaving so soon?

DEVIN
Yeah, I have things --

CHRISTINA
-- Spare me the details.
Four-sixty-five.

Devin gives her a five dollar bill. Christina goes to the register to complete the transaction. She walks back over to Devin.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Thirty-five cents is your change.

Devin starts to leave.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Aren’t you forgetting something?

DEVIN
You talking to me?

CHRISTINA
My tip, Mr. Cheapskate.

Christina holds out her hand.
DEVIN
Okay, here’s a tip for you. You should try providing service with a smile. Then maybe, you might get more than a dime. Have a nice day.

Devin drops a dime on the counter. It bounces around as he walks out.

EXT./INT. STREET/CAR – DAY
A blue sedan travels along the thoroughfare in moderate traffic.
Liza drives and Christina sits next to her.

CHRISTINA
I have to find another job A.S.A.P. I can’t deal with seeing him every day.

LIZA
I don’t know why you keep letting Devin get under your skin.

CHRISTINA
Seeing him drives me completely insane. I feel like I’m going to have a breakdown.

LIZA
We can’t have that. Listen, the safe shelter is sponsoring a carnival. Why don’t you come with me?

CHRISTINA
I don’t know. I had a long day. Besides, I’m tired.

LIZA
Come on. It’ll be fun, and it’ll help take your mind off of things.

CHRISTINA
A carnival, huh?

The sedan changes lanes, passes a line of cars.
EXT. FORSYTH PARK - DAY

Carnival rides, games and food vendors are set up all over the park. Locals mingle around, enjoy the festivities.

Christina and Liza walk with cotton candy and soda through a maze of people.

CHRISTINA
This is nice. The children are really enjoying themselves.

Two young children chase each other around.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Speaking of children, when are you and Pete going to make an aunt out of me?

LIZA
Soon, I hope. It’s not like we haven’t been trying.

CHRISTINA
Have you considered adoption?

LIZA
Pete is indifferent about the idea. It’s like a last resort thing with him, you know?

CHRISTINA
Oh. I hope things work out. I’m not getting any younger.

LIZA
Whatever. Come on. I have to pay the water bill.

DUNK TANK

People gather around the dunk tank. A line of Poly Jon portables are located next to the dunk tank area.

Devin, dressed as a clown, sits inside the cage on a pedestal that hovers above the water tank.

A man with thick glasses throws a baseball at the target next to the cage. He misses.
DEVIN
Come on, man. Your glasses are thick like a magnifying glass. You can’t do better than that?

The man throws another ball. He misses again.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Aww... man, you suck. Hey, Ray Charles! I’m over here!

Devin waves his hand, shakes the target. Onlookers LAUGH. The man throws another ball, misses again.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Oh well! Better luck next time.

The man flips Devin off as he walks away.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Yeah, yeah. See you around, loser! High and dry!

Christina and Liza approach the dunk tank.

CHRISTINA
Wait a minute. I know that voice. Is that...?

LIZA
Yes, it’s him. Let’s go this way before he sees us.

Devin notices Christina and Liza as they walk behind the crowd.

DEVIN
Ah, if it ain’t the pretty lady and her pet whale. Hey, fat girl! Yeah, I’m talking to you. Care to put down that cotton candy and soda long enough to try your luck?

Christina makes eye contact with Devin.

LIZA
Come on, girl. Don’t pay him any attention.

DEVIN
(sings)
Fat Girl... Bdddd stick’em! Ha-ha-ha stick’em!
Devin beat boxes over the microphone.

CHRISTINA
No, you go on. I can handle him.

LIZA
Are you sure?

CHRISTINA
Yeah, I’ve got this.

Liza heads for the Poly Jon.

Christina’s eyes narrow with resolve. She approaches the DUNK TANK ATTENDANT, a twenty-something male with long hair and sideburns.

DEVIN
That’s what I’m talking about. If you manage to knock me in, I might take you to an all you can eat buffet.

CHRISTINA
How much?

DUNK TANK ATTENDANT
It’s two dollars for five balls, ma’am.

CHRISTINA
Let me get ten balls.

Christina hands the Attendant five dollars, and he gives her back a dollar. She steps into position.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
This is going to be fun.

DEVIN
All right. Here we go, folks. Fatty Watty here is going to try to dunk me in the water.

LAUGHTER from some in the crowd. Christina throws the first ball and misses badly.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Strike one. You know, you look like the type of girl that picks food off her date’s plate.

She throws the ball. It ricochets off the cage.
DEVIN (CONT’D)
Whoa! Hey, you’re suppose to hit the target, not the cage. I bet you’d hit the target if it was a hamburger.

Anger reflects Christina’s face.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Uh-oh. She’s a mad cow... I mean, mad now. I’m in trouble...

She hurls another ball, another ball and another. Miss, after miss, after miss. Christina grows angrier.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Got to give you credit. You throw hard. When the last time you got laid? Prom night?

Christina throws another ball, hits the target, but nothing happens.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Oh! Almost. It almost snowed last night, but it was too hot, so it rained.

Christina is down to her last ball. She winds up, heaves the ball as hard as she can.

Another miss.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Aww! You know, if we were a couple we’d be a perfect ten. I’m slim like a one, and you’re fat and round like a zero.

Devin LAUGHS.

CHRISTINA
That’s it!

A crazed Christina jumps over the barricade, runs toward the dunk tank.

DEVIN
Oh! Here we go, folks. A lunatic on the loose. All right. Look at her go.

She climbs over the barrier in front of the dunk tank, pushes the target with both hands.
Devin falls into the tank of water.

    CHRISTINA
    Take that, you jerk! Who’s laughing now?

The Attendant escorts Christina away from the tank, as she points and LAUGHS at Devin.

Devin is stunned with silence. Onlookers both CHEER and JEER. Devin cracks a small smile.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Christina, Liza and Pete are at the table.

    CHRISTINA
    (laughing)
    You should have seen the look on his face. It was priceless.

    LIZA
    Sounds like you enjoyed yourself.

    CHRISTINA
    I did. Hey Pete, I will be a little late this week. I need to fill out applications.

    PETE
    Sure, no problem.

    CHRISTINA
    I really appreciate what you and Liza are doing for me.

    PETE
    Think nothing of it. You’re family, and that’s what families do.

    CHRISTINA
    Well, I think I’m gonna hit the sack. I have a long day ahead of me.

    LIZA
    Have a good rest, hon.

    PETE
    Good night, Christina.
CHRISTINA
Good night.

Christina leaves the kitchen.

PETE
That girl is a mess.

LIZA
I know. I can’t believe she’s letting Devin get to her like this.

PETE
I think she likes him, and it’s scaring the you know what out of her.

LIZA
I don’t see it. I mean, all they do is argue.

PETE
That is called foreplay. Remember how we were when we first met?

LIZA
But we weren’t that bad.

PETE
True, but it did take a while for us to warm up to one another.

LIZA
Speaking of warming up, what do you say we turn in early and um...?

She gives Pete the eye.

PETE
Last one in the room has to do all the work.

Pete and Liza bolt out of the room.

EXT. CITY STREETS – DAY

A heavy flow of traffic. Passengers load a transit bus at the bus stop.

Shopping plazas, car lots and restaurants are aligned on both sides of the street.
EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Vehicles are parked on both sides of the long, wide building. A woman, dressed in a nurse’s scrub, sits at the picnic table with an elderly woman in a wheelchair.

Shrubbery girds the walkway, leading to the glass doors.

INT. NURSING HOME - OFFICE - SAME

HALEY FLETCHER, 30’s, professionally dressed, scans over documents. The name plate on top of her desk bares the name: “HALEY FLETCHER, RN, DIRECTOR”

Christina is seated in a chair across from Haley’s desk.

    HALEY
    Impressive... very impressive. I see you have extensive experience, Ms. Carter, and...

Haley checks the plastic device on her desk.

    HALEY (CONT’D)
    ... your drug test came back negative. Which means the job is yours. Welcome aboard.

Haley and Christina shake hands.

    CHRISTINA
    Thank you... thank you so much. I promise I won’t let you down.

    HALEY
    I have a feeling you won’t. Now, come with me.

Christina and Haley leave the office.

HALLWAY

Residents move about in wheelchairs and walkers. A few stand in the doorway of their rooms.

    HALEY
    There are four halls. You will be responsible for one while you’re on duty. Of course if there’s an emergency, all of that goes out the window.
Haley and Christina pass the nurses’ station. A C.N.A. jots something in a patient’s chart.

HALEY (CONT’D)
This is one of two stations. You’ll find patients’ charts on the shelves. Any questions so far?

Christina shakes her head, “NO.”

HALEY (CONT’D)
Good.

ACTIVITY ROOM

Haley and Christina enter the room.

An elderly woman plays “12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS” on the piano. Residents sit at long and round tables playing checkers, chess and cards.

HALEY
This is where the residents come to socialize, play games, watch movies and for other activities.

An employee and two residents decorate the Christmas tree at the back of the room.

HALEY (CONT’D)
Can you start tomorrow?

CHRISTINA
Sure. What shift will I be working?

HALEY
The only shift available right now, is the morning shift. Is that okay with you?

CHRISTINA
Yes, that will be great.

HALEY
Any questions?

CHRISTINA
I think we covered everything.

HALEY
Okay, I guess I’ll see you tomorrow at seven.
Christina and Haley shake on it.

EXT. PETE’S CAFE` - DAY

Christina and Pete are behind the counter.

PETE
That’s wonderful! I hope things work out.

CHRISTINA
Thanks. I am a little nervous, though. I’m used to working at hospitals. Working at a nursing home can be very challenging.

PETE
I’m sure you can handle it. Can I ask you something?

CHRISTINA
Yeah, shoot.

PETE
What’s up with you and Devin?

CHRISTINA
Nothing... absolutely nothing.

PETE
Seems like a little more than nothing to me. He’s really a nice guy, you know?

CHRISTINA
Come on, Pete. Not you, too.

PETE
Okay... sorry. I just think the two of you are perfect for each other.

CHRISTINA
You know, I’m so sick of everyone telling me what a great guy he is, like he’s the frickin’ Pope. Am I the only one who can see through his shit?
PETE
Possibly, but maybe, just maybe, your issues with Devin have a lot more to do with your past than with him.

CHRISTINA
What is that supposed to mean?

PETE
It means, you can’t move on until you let go.

Pete walks away. Christina wipes down the counter.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT
A bowling ball travels down the lane, CRASHES into the pins. Strike.

Pete and Devin celebrate with high fives.

DEVIN
That a boy, Pete. Show no mercy.

CHRISTINA
You guys are just lucky.

DEVIN
Luck is a loser’s excuse for a winner’s position.

Devin makes the “L” sign with his hand. Christina rolls her eyes.

Liza steps up for her turn. She approaches the line, releases the ball.

The ball travels down the lane, KNOCKS all of the pins down.

LIZA
Right back at you.

Christina and Liza both leap into the air for a chest bump.

DEVIN
Good job, Liza. Too bad you’re handicapped with a sorry partner.

LIZA
That’s not nice.
CHRISTINA
Whatever! Let’s see what you can do.

Devin grabs his ball, steps into position. He makes his approach, releases the ball. He turns, walks back to his seat.

DEVIN
Are you convinced now?

The ball travels along the edge of the lane, curves toward the middle pin, KNOCKS them all down.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Let’s see what you do, big mouth.

Christina takes her turn, rolls a gutter ball. She takes a seat in shame.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Don’t feel bad. You lived up to expectations.

CHRISTINA
Screw you.

DEVIN
What’aya say we catch a movie later?

CHRISTINA
Not even if you were the last person in the entire galaxy.

Devin notices SARAH, 30′s, nice looking, as she smiles and checks him out from the bar.

DEVIN
That’s okay.

Christina watches as Devin goes over to the bar, takes a seat next to Sarah.

LIZA
He is wrong for that. We came here together.

CHRISTINA
And you say he’s a nice guy.

Devin and Sarah make their way over to his friends.
PETE
What are you doing, man?

DEVIN
Sarah and I are going to grab a bite to eat, maybe catch a late night movie. Dates are hard to come by around here.

Devin and Sarah walk away together. Christina watches until they disappear from sight.

INT. NURSING HOME - HALLWAY - DAY
The place is BUZZING. Residents make their way up and down the hallway.

Christina works from her medicine cart. She dumps pills into of a small plastic cup, jots something down in a patient’s file.

MR. JENKINS’ ROOM

MR. JENKINS, 60-ish, wearing purple pants, a hospital gown and a purple pimp-style hat, lies across the bed playing Blues on a guitar.

MR. JENKINS
(SING)
“I was born a pimp, and that’s how I’m gonna die. You haters can’t see me, no matter hard how you try. ‘Cause I’m a pimp, baby. The greatest pimp in the world...”

The KNOCK at the door interrupts Mr. Jenkins. The door OPENS, and Christina enters the room.

CHRISTINA
Hi, Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS
Well, well, well. Fresh meat.

CHRISTINA
Excuse me?

MR. JENKINS
You’re new.
CHRISTINA
Yes, I am. My name is Christina, and I’m your nurse for today.

Mr. Jenkins sets the guitar down by the side of the bed.

MR. JENKINS
That’s a pretty name. You wanna come over here and teach an old dog a new trick?

CHRISTINA
Okay... it’s time for your medication.

Christina walks over to check Mr. Jenkins’ water container. The container is empty. She takes it to the bathroom.

Mr. Jenkins lies on his back, stares at the ceiling. The sound of water splashing against the sink.

MR. JENKINS
I bet you taste as good as Tilapia fish, too.

LAUGHTER from the bathroom. The water stops. Christina brings the water container back to Mr. Jenkins.

CHRISTINA
You are a dirty old man, you know that?

MR. JENKINS
Come on over here, and I’ll show you how dirty I can get.

Mr. Jenkins strikes a pose in bed, bats his eyelids.

CHRISTINA
What am I going to do with you?

MR. JENKINS
Anything you want, baby girl... anything you want, but be gentle. I ain’t young like I used to be. I used to go all-night-long, but now, you better get yours before I get mine.

CHRISTINA
Here. Take these.

She gives Mr. Jenkins the small plastic cup.
Mr. Jenkins dumps the pills into his mouth, drinks them down with water from the container.

MR. JENKINS
See? All gone.

Mr. Jenkins opens his mouth. Nothing is in his mouth, except for the few teeth he has left.

CHRISTINA
Good. I’ll come back to check on you a little later.

MR. JENKINS
I’ll be waiting.

Christina leaves the room.

MR. JENKINS (CONT’D)
(sotto)
Mmm-mmm! If I was a few years younger, I’d tap that ass.

Mr. Jenkins picks up his guitar, PLAYS more of the Blues.

MR. JENKINS (CONT’D)
"’Cause I’m pimp, baby..."

COMMUNITY ROOM

Lights on the Christmas tree flicker. Residents paint at several tables. Devin walks around to see their work. He stops to check out MRS. KELLY’S, 60’s, with silver hair, painting.

DEVIN
Not bad, Mrs. Kelly. I’m seeing some improvements.

Mrs. Kelly steadily paints away.

MRS. KELLY
Thank you.

Christina walks into the room with a small plastic cup and a cup of water. She frowns at the sight of Devin.

DEVIN
No, thank you for participating. Spending time with you guys is the highlight of my week.
MRS. KELLY
Baby, if it wasn’t for you and this class, I’d be wasting away in bed.

Christina looks surprised.

DEVIN
Don’t your sons come to visit you?

MRS. KELLY
Not anymore... not since Clarence died.

Devin’s face reflects empathy. He notices Christina by the door. She comes over to the table.

Devin moves on to another table.

CHRISTINA
It’s time for your medication, Mrs. Kelly.

Christina looks at Devin out of the corner of her eyes.

BREAK ROOM

Devin eats a homemade lunch at the table.

Christina enters the room with a small container of food. She rolls her eyes, takes the container to the microwave to warm it up. Devin clears his throat.

CHRISTINA
Everywhere I turn, I see you.

DEVIN
Excuse me?

CHRISTINA
Are you stalking me?

DEVIN
Yeah, I am. You see, I can’t get enough of your glowing personality.

CHRISTINA
You’re so funny.

DEVIN
So, you’re a nurse. Interesting. Do you mistreat your patients?
CHRISTINA
No, I love my patients. You, I can’t stand.

DING! The microwave shuts off. Christina retrieves her container, sits down at the other table.

DEVIN
How’s your first day going?

CHRISTINA
Will you leave me alone?

DEVIN
I’m only trying to make small talk.

CHRISTINA
Look, I don’t have the energy, so please? Go away!

DEVIN
Okay... fine! I won’t bother you any more.

CHRISTINA
Thank you.

Devin wraps his sandwich, grabs his soda can and leaves.

INT. SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

The cue ball CRASHES into the freshly racked pool balls. The balls scatter everywhere. One of the solid balls drops in the side pocket.

Devin holds the cue stick. Mike stands off to the side with a cue stick in one hand and a bottle of beer in the other.

DEVIN
I’m done. I tried being nice. Nothing seems to work.

Devin sets up behind the cue ball for his next shot.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
I have a lot going for myself. I’m successful, I’m not bad looking, and I’m a good guy, right? I don’t have to take her abuse.

MIKE
What happened this time?
I don’t want to talk about it.

Devin sinks another solid ball into the pocket.

It’s hard believe that a woman so pretty can be so ugly.

Come on, man. She can’t be that bad.

I said, I didn’t want to talk about.

Then stop bringing it up.

Devin misses the next shot. Mike surveys the table. He sets up behind the white ball for a shot.

I should just stick to my guns. No relationships, lots of meaningless sex. It’s less complicated.

You know what your problem is?

Enlighten me, ole’ wise one.

You’ve never gotten over Lacy. You, my friend, might need therapy.

What?! Get the hell outta here! I’m not crazy!

I didn’t say you were, but I’m telling you, if you want to have a full and happy life, you might need to talk to someone.

Devin stares in deep thought.
INT. DR. PACE’S OFFICE – DAY

Books fill the shelves along the walls of a small room. Devin lies on a couch.

DR. PACE, 40’s, leisurely dressed, with his glasses on the tip of his nose, sits in a chair with his legs crossed with a pad and pen in hand.

DR. PACE
So, Mr. Wilkes.

DEVIN
Devin... you can call me Devin.

DR. PACE
Okay, Devin. What brings you here?

DEVIN
My friend seems to think I have issues I need to talk out.

DR. PACE
What kind of issues?

DEVIN
That’s the problem. I don’t have any.

DR. PACE
Okay... then why are you here?

DEVIN
Great question. I’ll just leave now.

Devin heads for the door, stops short.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Here’s the thing. Eight years ago, I was left at the altar by a woman who I thought loved me. Since then, I don’t do relationships and I have meaningless sex with women.

Dr. Pace takes notes.

DR. PACE
Why have you chosen this path?

DEVIN
Because it’s safe, and I don’t have to worry about being disappointed.
DR. PACE
Does this make you happy?

DEVIN
Sex with no strings attached? Who wouldn’t be?

Dr. Pace takes more notes.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
So, Dr. Pace, what’s the verdict? Am I crazy?

DR. PACE
Other than the question of morality, there’s nothing wrong with sleeping around. People do it all the time.

DEVIN
Thank you. That’s what I’ve been telling my friend.

DR. PACE
However, the motivation behind your sleeping around is where the problem lies, and you are motivated by fear... an unhealthy fear.

Devin’s cellphone RINGS. He pulls out of his pants pocket, looks at the face.

DEVIN
Give me a second.
(into phone)
Hello?

INT. PETE & LIZA’S BEDROOM - DAY

A WAILING Pete clutches his back in bed. A concerned Liza, Christina and Devin stand over him.

DEVIN
Are you all right, man?

PETE
No, I’m not all right! Will someone get the heating pad?! Oh God!

CHRISTINA
Where is it?
LIZA
Over there in the top drawer of the dresser. I’m calling the paramedics.

Christina scrambles to the dresser. Liza picks up the cordless phone from the night stand.

LIZA (CONT’D)
Hello, nine, one, one? We need the paramedics.

Christina comes back with the heating pad. Liza continues an inaudible conversation on the phone.

DEVIN
Give it here. I’ll do it.

CHRISTINA
No, I’ll do it. I’m the professional here.

PETE
Guys! Please! I’m in pain here!

DEVIN
By all means.

Devin motions for Christina to proceed.

Christina plugs the cord of the heating pad into the socket behind the night stand. She places the pad behind Pete. Liza hangs up the phone.

LIZA
The paramedics are on the way.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF PETE & LIZA’S HOUSE – LATER
The siren BLARES as the ambulance drives away.

EXT. PETE & LIZA’S FRONT YARD – CONTINUOUS
Christina, Devin and Liza stand in the front yard.

LIZA
I’m going to the hospital to be with Pete.

DEVIN
Is there anything you need me to do?
LIZA
Yes, I need you to take my sister to Atlanta to get the rest of her belongings.

DEVIN
I don’t know if that’s a good idea.

CHRISTINA
For once, we agree. I’ll just wait for Pete to get better.

LIZA
CeCe, it’ll be a while before Pete can do any heavy lifting.

CHRISTINA
I’d rather pay a moving company.

LIZA
Don’t let your pride get in the way. Devin’s here, and he’ll do it.

DEVIN
How are you going to volunteer me like that?

LIZA
Come on, Devin. Please?

DEVIN
All right, I’ll do it, but only if she asks nicely.

Christina shakes her head, “NO.” Liza gives her the eye.

CHRISTINA
Okay! Will you drive me to Atlanta and help me get the rest of my things?

DEVIN
You didn’t say please.

CHRISTINA
Please?!

DEVIN
Okay, let me check to see if I have anything better to do.

Christina angrily folds her arms.
DEVIN (CONT’D)
I’m kidding. Geez, can’t you take a joke? Go ahead, Liza. She’s in good hands.

LIZA
Try not to kill each other.

EXT./INT. HIGHWAY/UHAUL TRUCK - NIGHT

A UHaul Mack truck travels along the lonely, four-lane highway.

Old school R&B MUSIC PLAYS on the radio. Devin drives, and Christina sits next to him with her arms folded and lips tight.

Christina changes the station to modern R&B MUSIC.

Devin looks at Christina like she is crazy.

DEVIN
What are you doing? I was listening to that.

He quickly changes it back.

Christina glares at him.

CHRISTINA
Well, I don’t like this song.

She changes the station again.

DEVIN
That’s too bad. When in Egypt, be an Egyptian.

Devin changes back to the old school station.

CHRISTINA
Turn it back!

Christina changes the station.

They change the station back and forth. Devin turns the radio off, pulls the knobs and tosses them out the window.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
You idiot! Now what are we going to listen to?
DEVIN
The tires against the pavement.

Devin focuses on the road. He SINGS an old school R&B slow song.

CHRISTINA
I don’t believe this.

Devin SINGS LOUDER to aggravate Christina. She curls up in the seat, stares out of the window.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Asshole.

The green signs above the highway reads: “I-75 SOUTH VALDOSTA, I-75 NORTH ATLANTA.” The UHaul truck veers toward Atlanta.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Two-story, four-unit apartment buildings are on both sides of a narrow, winding road. Vehicles are parked on the side of the apartment buildings.

EXT. CHRISTINA’S APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME

The UHaul truck backs into the driveway of the apartment building at the end of the road.

Devin and Christina get out of the truck. Devin carries a duffel bag over his shoulder.

CHRISTINA
Where are you’re going?

DEVIN
I thought we were going inside.

CHRISTINA
Did I say that you could come inside?

DEVIN
You expect me to stay out here?

CHRISTINA
I don’t care where you stay, but it won’t be in my apartment.

Devin watches as Christina heads up the stairs and goes inside of her apartment. Her apartment door SHUTS.
DEVIN

You have got to be kidding me.

Devin gets back inside the truck.

INT. UHAUL TRUCK - LATER

Devin tries to find a comfortable position. He mumbles to himself, peers out the window.

A figure moves around from behind the curtains in the upstairs window of Christina’s apartment.

DEVIN

Oh, hell no. I am not going out like this.

Devin jumps out of the truck with his duffel bag, SLAMS the door.

DEVIN (CONT’D)

Enough of this shit.

INT. CHRISTINA’S BEDROOM - SAME

Christina takes her outfits from out the closet, lays them down across the bed. There are repeated KNOCKS at the door.

She ignores them, puts all of her shoes inside of a large trash bag. The doorbell RINGS CONTINUOUSLY. She leaves the room.

CHRISTINA’S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bell RINGS with no end in sight. Christina opens the door, and Devin stands on the other side.

CHRISTINA

What do you want?

Devin brushes her aside as he makes his way inside.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)

Who do you think you are?

DEVIN

A person who’s had it up to here with your... funky attitude. I’m doing you a favor.

Devin sits down on the couch.
CHRISTINA
Get out. I said get out!

DEVIN
I’m not going anywhere. You go sleep in the truck.

Christina SHUTS the door.

CHRISTINA
Fine. Just stay out of my way.

DEVIN
My pleasure. Where’s your bathroom? I need a shower.

Christina leaves out of the room.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
I need a blanket and a pillow, too.

A door SLAMS.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
(sotto)
What a kook.

CHRISTINA’S BATHROOM
Devin stands under the shower hose. The water rinses the suds from his body.

CHRISTINA’S BEDROOM
Christina empties out the drawers of her dresser. She pulls two suitcases from the shelf inside the closet, drops them on the bed. The doorbell RINGS.

CHRISTINA
What now?!

CHRISTINA’S LIVING ROOM
Christina opens the door. Her eyes stretch wide.

CHRISTINA
Jeff! What are you doing here?

JEFF, 40’s, handsome, black and gray hair, stands in the doorway with menacing eyes.
JEFF
Hello, Christina. May I come in?
Good.

Jeff barges in, looks around the room.

CHRISTINA
What do you want?

JEFF
What’s up with the UHaul? Going somewhere?

CHRISTINA
Yes, I’m moving back home. Why?

JEFF
I can’t let you do that.

CHRISTINA
You don’t have a say.

Jeff grabs Christina by the arms, jacks her up against the wall.

JEFF
I don’t think you understand. You belong here with me. You’re not going nowhere.

CHRISTINA
Let me go! You’re hurting me!

CHRISTINA’S BATHROOM
Devin dries his hair in front of mirror. He hears the commotion going on in the other room.

DEVIN
What the...?

CHRISTINA’S LIVING ROOM
Jeff has Christina up against the wall with her feet dangling.

JEFF
You think this is a game?! You take me for a joke?! I’m not playing with you, woman!
CHRISTINA
Leave me alone!

Devin slips in unnoticed, charges toward Jeff and Christina. Jeff raises his hand to slap Christina. Devin grabs Jeff’s hand just in time.

DEVIN
Get off her!

He shoves Jeff into the door.

JEFF
Who the hell is this?!

DEVIN
I suggest you get out of here.

JEFF
Are you going to make me, Tough Guy?!

Devin throws a punch. Jeff ducks, counters with a right hook to the jaw that drops Devin to the floor.

CHRISTINA
Why did you do that?!

JEFF
Lover Boy here swung first.

CHRISTINA
Get out!

JEFF
You will never get rid of me... never! No matter where you go, I’ll find you.

CHRISTINA
I said leave, or I’ll call the police.

JEFF
Remember what I said.

Jeff throws both hands in the air and leaves. Christina SLAMS the door behind him.

Devin lies on the ground, massaging his jaw. Christina looks down at him with contempt.
CHRISTINA
You should’ve minded your own business. Get up. You’re in the way.

Christina steps over Devin, leaves the room. She goes to her room.

DEVIN
I was only trying to help!

Devin groggily sits up on the floor.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
(sotto)
I can’t win for losing.

Devin attempts to get up. He lies down on his back.

EXT. BACK OF THE UHAUL - DAY

Christina’s bedroom furniture, living room furniture and her other belongings are neatly packed on the back of the UHaul truck.

Devin loads the mattress onto the truck, leans it against the box spring and bed posts along the side wall. He ties them together to the wall with a rope.

Devin stands at the edge of the back of the truck, wipes the sweat from his brow.

Christina approaches the truck with a glass of water.

CHRISTINA
Here. You look thirsty.

Devin stands in shock. He takes the glass of water.

DEVIN
Thank you. You’re being nice to me.

CHRISTINA
No, it’s hot, and I can’t have you passing out. I can’t drive this thing.

Christina walks away. Devin watches as she makes her way up the stairs. She glances at him as she enters her apartment.

Devin drinks it all in one gulp.
EXT. RESTAURANT PARKING LOT - DAY

Cars scatter over the lot. The UHaul truck is parked in front of the building.

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME

Devin eats alone at a table. He uses a knife to cut through the T-bone steak in front of him.

Christina sits at the adjacent table with a salad. They trade glances when the other is not looking.

CHRISTINA
Thank you.

DEVIN
Excuse me? Did you say something?

CHRISTINA
I said, thank you.

DEVIN
For what?

CHRISTINA
For helping me get my things and for sticking up for me.

DEVIN
Don’t mention it.

Devin slices another piece of steak.

CHRISTINA
I’m sorry about that night at the club, and for everything else.

DEVIN
It’s okay. If I’d gone through what you’ve been through, I’d probably be hostile, too.

CHRISTINA
I am not hostile.

Devin stares at Christina in disbelief.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Okay, so I’m a little hostile.

DEVIN
No, you’re a lot hostile.
CHRISTINA
Fair enough.

DEVIN
Sorry about the Thanksgiving dinner debacle. Not one of my proudest moments.

CHRISTINA
Same here. It was kind of fun, though.

DEVIN
Replacing all of the dishes we broke won’t be fun.

CHRISTINA
I know, and Liza wants new dishes sooner rather than later.

DEVIN
I got my half.

CHRISTINA
Well, I don’t receive my first check until next week.

DEVIN
I’m sure your sister can wait.

CHRISTINA
Do you mind if we start over?

DEVIN
I’d like that. I’m Devin, and you are...?

CHRISTINA
Christina, but my friends call me CeCe.

Devin smiles.

LATER
Christina and Devin chat over lunch. He says something to make her laugh.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY
Vehicles turn off the busy street and onto the hospital campus.
INT. PETE’S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Pete sits in a wheelchair with a hospital bag in his lap. Liza stands behind him.

LIZA
You heard what the doctor said.

PETE
What about the diner?

LIZA
That’s why you have a wife, moron.
(looks towards the doorway)
Oh, hey guys! You’re back... in one piece!

DEVIN
Shocking, isn’t it? Pete! You’re okay now, my brother?

PETE
It was nothing serious. All the test came back negative.

CHRISTINA
That’s great news.

DEVIN
Yeah, good to here. Take it easy on him next time, Liza.

LIZA
You’ve got jokes. Oh my God, Devin! What happened to your face?

CHRISTINA
Devin had the pleasure of meeting Jeff.

PETE
You let Jeff beat you up?

DEVIN
I... he caught me off guard.

LIZA
We were just about to leave. Pete’s been discharged.

Pete checks his watch.
PETE
Oh, it’s five-thirty.
(to Devin)
What’aya say we chug a few beers
and watch the fight? I’ve got pills.

Pete waves the prescription paper in the air. Liza snatches it from him.

DEVIN
Cool, but I have to go by and check
on the house first.
(to Christina)
Are you riding with me or with them?

CHRISTINA
With you.

Liza and Pete eye one another in shock.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
That is unless Liza or Pete needs me for anything.

LIZA
No, no... you two go on. We can manage.

DEVIN
Ready?

Christina nods, “YES.” They leave.

PETE
I told you. Foreplay.

LIZA
Well, he better not break my sister’s heart. Let’s get out of here.

Liza rolls Pete out of the room.

INT. DEVIN’S LIVING ROOM – DAY

Devin tosses his keys on the bar. Christina checks out the living room.

CHRISTINA
This is nice.
Thanks. The remote is over there on the coffee table. It controls everything... make yourself at home.

Devin leaves the room. Christina focuses on an oil portrait of a beautiful woman that hangs on the wall. She goes over for a closer look.

She’s pretty.

Christina inspect Devin’s collection of CDs -- variety of jazz and old school R&B artist.

She pulls Donna Summers’ CD from the collection and looks it over with a smile. She puts it back in its place, shifts her attention to...

The collection of DVDs -- a compilation of action, comedy and horror films.

Devin slips in unnoticed.

Nice collection, huh?

(startled)
Oh! Yeah, didn’t hear you come in. I see you have a great selection of music too.

You know me. I love my old school and jazz.

I see.

Christina goes over to the window, pulls back the curtains.

Wow! You can see the beach.

Wanna go for a walk?

What about Pete and the fight?
DEVIN
(checks his watch)
The main event is at least two hours away. We’ve got time.

EXT. TYBEE BEACH - NIGHT
The moonlight cascades over the waters. Lights flicker from ships out to sea.

PIER
Christina and Devin take a stroll along the pier.

CHRISTINA
I almost forgot how beautiful it is out here at night.

DEVIN
Yeah, it’s definitely something to see. When was the last time were you out here at night?

CHRISTINA
Prom night.

DEVIN
That long, huh?

They both chuckle.

CHRISTINA
Who’s the woman in the portrait?

DEVIN
That would be Lacy, my first and only love.

CHRISTINA
May I ask what happened? I hope I’m not prying.

DEVIN
No, it’s okay. Let’s see. Well...

They come to the end of the pier. Christina and Devin stare out across the ocean.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
And that about sums it up.
CHRISTINA
Sorry to hear that. How long has it been?

DEVIN
Eight years.

CHRISTINA
And you still have her portrait on your wall?

DEVIN
Never thought to take it down, I guess.

CHRISTINA
Don’t you think it’s time that you do?

DEVIN
Maybe. Come on. Don’t want to keep Pete waiting.

Devin walks away. Christina follows him with a look of admiration.

CHRISTINA
So, who are you rooting for?

EXT. PETE & LIZA’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Christmas lights and decorations along the structure and front yard of the house. A lit Christmas tree stands in front of the window. Devin’s Mercedes is parked in the driveway.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Christina, Devin, Liza and Pete gather around the flat screen TV with beer bottles in their hands.

PETE
Man, Mayweather is a beast.
Probably the best champion of all times.

DEVIN
Please. Not when he’s ducking Pacquiao.
PETE
He is not ducking Pacquiao. They just can’t agree on the terms of the fight.

DEVIN
That’s a load of crap. Everybody knows Mayweather is scared of Pacquiao.

PETE
You’re crazy.

Something on the TV catches Pete’s attention.

PETE (CONT’D)
See what I’m talking about?!

TV SCREEN
A woozy boxer lies on the canvas. Floyd Mayweather bounces around in his corner as the referee counts.

Pete jumps to his feet.

PETE
Eight, nine, ten! Ding! Ding! Ding! It’s over, baby! Mayweather does it again!

Liza looks concerned.

LIZA
Pete, if you don’t sit your butt down.

DEVIN
Yeah, before you break something.

Pete sits down.

PETE
Another victory for Mayweather.

DEVIN
Like I said, tell him to stop running from Pacquiao.

Christina and Liza gather up the beer bottles, take them out of the room.
PETE
Whatever. Hey, what’s going on between you and CeCe?

DEVIN
Nothing’s going on.

PETE
Yeah right! First you’re at each other’s throat, and now, you’re all lovey-dovey.

DEVIN
We’re not “lovey-dovey.” We’re cool, that’s all.

PETE
Yeah? Well, I’m not buying it.

PETE & LIZA’S KITCHEN

Christina and Liza stand in front of the counter.

CHRISTINA
So, he’s not the bad guy I thought he was.

LIZA
What was that? Is CeCe actually admitting that she was wrong?

CHRISTINA
Shut up! I can admit when I’m wrong. Even though it’s rare.

LIZA
Let you tell it. You like him, don’t you?

CHRISTINA
I am done with this conversation.

Christina turns to leave.

LIZA
Christina! I’m your sister.

CHRISTINA (O.S.)
I know, and I love you.

Liza watches as Christina walks out.
INT. NURSING HOME - COMMUNITY ROOM - NIGHT

Residents, their families and employees fill the room. They all SING, “JOY TO THE WORLD.”

Christina stands with the other nurses. She spots Devin on the other side of the room, mingling.

The song ends to a round of APPLAUSE.

LATER

A female resident PLAYS Christmas music on the piano. Residents and guest mingle and enjoy the food.

Christina serves refreshments from behind the table. Something catches her eye. Her mouth drops to the floor.

Mr. Jenkins and MS. SALLY, 60’s, silver hair, who still looks great for her age, sit at the round table. Mr. Jenkins has his arms around Ms. Sally, whispering in her ear.

Christina marches over to Mr. Jenkins and Ms. Sally.

CHRISTINA
Excuse me? What are you two doing?

MR. JENKINS
What do you think?

CHRISTINA
Shame on you, Mr. Jenkins, and I am surprised at you, Ms. Sally.

MS. SALLY
I don’t know why. I might be old, but I’m still a woman.

CHRISTINA
I can’t believe you two.

MS. SALLY
You better believe it, honey. Come on, Jenkins. You ready to dust my cobwebs?

MR. JENKINS
Call me the Cobweb Duster.

MS. SALLY
Well come on, then. I ain’t got all night.
Mr. Jenkins and Ms. Sally head out the room. Christina shakes her head.

LATER

Christina and Devin supervise things from underneath the large doorway.

   DEVIN
   It’s Christmas. Let them have fun.

   CHRISTINA
   Is that even allowed?

   DEVIN
   Can you stop them? They are adults. I would hate to be the fly on the wall in that room, though.

Christina shivers at the thought. Mrs. Kelly rolls up in her wheelchair.

   DEVIN (CONT’D)
   Hi, Mrs. Kelly? How are you tonight?

   MRS. KELLY
   I’m fine. What are y’all waiting for?

   CHRISTINA
   What do you mean?

Mrs. Kelly points up. Christina and Devin look up.

A mistletoe hangs above them.

   MRS. KELLY
   Hey, Everybody! Devin and the new nurse are under the mistletoe!

Everyone stops what they are doing, focuses on Christina and Devin.

   MRS. KELLY (CONT’D)
   Kiss the girl, Devin.

   DEVIN
   I... I don’t know.

Everyone in the room CHANTS, “KISS HER, KISS HER.” A nervous Christina and Devin eye one another.
MRS. KELLY
Come on. It’s just a kiss.

DEVIN
You know they won’t stop until we
do, right?

CHRISTINA
Okay, let’s just get it over with.

DEVIN
Are you ready?

CHRISTINA
Just do it.

Devin leans in and they bump foreheads. Christina and Devin both “APOLOGIZE.”

A careful Christina and Devin kiss each other on the lips. It grows into a relaxed, more passionate kiss. They take a step back from one another, unable to look away or breathe.

Christina bolts out the room. Devin goes after her.

HALLWAY

Christina race walks down the hallway. Devin strides right behind her.

DEVIN
Christina! Wait up! Will you wait
a minute?!

INT. BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christina rushes in, takes a seat. She covers her face with both hands. Devin enters, sits across from her.

DEVIN
Are you all right?

She doesn’t respond.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Christina?

CHRISTINA
I need time to think.
DEVIN
Think about what? It was just a kiss, right?

CHRISTINA
See, that’s the problem. It didn’t feel like, “just a kiss.”

DEVIN
I know what you mean.

An awkward silence. Devin taps his fingers on the table.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Do you think that maybe we should go out?

CHRISTINA
You mean like a date?

Devin nods, “YES.” Christina stares long and hard.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
Okay. I’ll go on a date with you.

Devin breathes a SIGH of relief. A growing smile reflect their faces.

MONTAGE - CHRISTINA AND DEVIN DATE/HANGOUT

-- Christina and Devin eat dinner at a fine restaurant.

-- Christina and Devin at the movies with a bucket of popcorn.

-- Christina and Devin have a picnic in the park.

-- Christina and Devin take a romantic stroll along the beach. She kicks water on him, takes off running. Devin gives chase, catches up to her, embraces her with a kiss.

-- Devin snaps several photos of Christina.

-- Devin takes the painting of Lacy down. He puts the painting in the trash receptacle on the side of the house.

-- Devin strokes the canvas with a brush. A blown up photo of Christina sets on the easel next to the canvas.

END OF MONTAGE
Dozens of Christmas trees are set up in several rows. People browse the lot.

Christina and a disinterested Devin navigate their way through the maze of trees.

DEVIN
I really don’t want a Christmas tree.

CHRISTINA
Don’t be such a Scrooge. Take a deep breath. Do you smell that?

DEVIN
Yeah, it smells really... pine-y.

Christina spots a tree she likes.

CHRISTINA
There it is. Come on.

Christina drags Devin to the tree. A look of skepticism reflects his face.

DEVIN
Don’t you think it’s a little... I don’t know, big?

CHRISTINA
No, it’s perfect.

DEVIN
Looks kind of big to me.

CHRISTINA
It’s full, like a Christmas tree is supposed to be.

DEVIN
How are we going to get it in my car?

Christina examines the tree, gives Devin the eye.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Traffic moves at a snail’s pace. The Christmas tree is tied to the roof of Devin’s Mercedes.
EXT./INT. DEVIN’S FRONT PORCH/FOYER – DAY

Christina stands on the front porch with the Christmas tree stuck in the door.

Devin has his hands on his hip in the foyer.

    DEVIN
    What now, genius? We’ll never get this tree inside. Let’s take it back.

    CHRISTINA
    We can make this work. All it needs is a little... extra... push.

Christina forces the tree inside with a strong push.

Caught off guard, Devin loses his balance and falls. The tree lands on top of him.

Christina rushes in.

    CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
    Devin! Are you okay?

Devin makes muffled SOUNDS. Christina pulls the tree off of him. A small piece of a broken branch is stuck up his nose.

    DEVIN
    I think I’ve stabbed my brain.

Devin pulls the branch from his nose, and blood trickles down to his lips.

INT. DEVIN’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Old school, Christmas music PLAYS over the sound system. Devin, with tissue up his nose, places an ornament on the tree.

Christina gives him a star. He places the star on top of the tree, steps off the ladder to admire his handy work.

    DEVIN
    You think it’s too much?

    CHRISTINA
    Turn on the lights, let’s see what we’re working with.

    DEVIN
    Hit the switch.
Devin plugs the cord into the wall socket, as Christina turns off the room light. The lights from the tree cast a glow around the room. The star on top of the tree shines bright.

Christina and Devin marvel at the tree.

CHRISTINA
It’s... it’s beautiful.

DEVIN
Yeah, it is. Wait right here.

Devin leaves the room. Christina takes a seat on the sofa.

Devin comes back with two glasses, filled with a creamy substance. He gives one of the glasses to Christina, sits down next to her.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Eggnog... without the alcohol.

CHRISTINA
I love eggnog. Want to hear something weird?

Christina has Devin’s undivided attention.

CHRISTINA (CONT’D)
I drink eggnog all year round.

DEVIN
That is weird. If it makes you feel better, I eat cereal for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

CHRISTINA
God, you’re weirder than me.

DEVIN
I don’t know. I think more people eat cereal at different times of the day, than drink eggnog all year long.

Christina and Devin enjoy the lights and their drinks.

CHRISTINA
You know, if someone would’ve told me three weeks ago that you and I would be right here, right now, I would’ve laughed in their face.
DEVIN
Yeah, funny how a week can change everything.

CHRISTINA
What happened with that woman from the club and the other woman from the bowling alley? Did you sleep with them? I don’t mean to put you on the spot or anything.

DEVIN
Well you did. What do you think?

CHRISTINA
I think you were just trying to make me jealous.

DEVIN
You’ve got me. Guilty as charged.

Christina responds with a smile. Devin gazes into her eyes, takes her drink, sets it on top of the coffee table along with his drink.

Devin strokes the side of her face. Christina swallows the lump in her throat as he leans in for a soft kiss. They make out.

Devin raises his arms. Christina pulls his shirt over his head.

Devin unbuttons Christina’s blouse, massages her breast as they kiss. They fall off the sofa and onto the floor. THUMP! Christina GIGGLES.

INT. PETE’S DINNER - DAY

The SOUND of COWBELLS as Devin enters. He makes his way to his favorite stool with a beaming smile. Pete pours coffee in a large Styrofoam cup.

PETE
I see you have an extra bounce to your step this morning.

DEVIN
That’s because for the first time in years, I woke up feeling it.

PETE
It? What exactly is it?
DEVIN
You know... that feeling in the pit of your stomach.

Pete gives the Styrofoam cup of coffee to Devin. Devin pours cream, adds sugar to his coffee.

PETE
Word of advice. You better not hurt my sister-in-law.

DEVIN
My intentions are pure. Don’t worry.

PETE
It better be. Or you’ll have to deal with Liza... and me.

DEVIN
Ooh, and we wouldn’t want that now, would we?

PETE
No, you wouldn’t. Liza is unstable and has a perplexity for violence.

DEVIN
I’ll keep that in mind, and it’s propensity... a propensity for violence.

PETE
Whatever. What are you? The wrong choice of words police?

DEVIN
I have to get going.

Devin heads for the door.

PETE
Wait a minute. You forgot to pay.

DEVIN
Put it on my tab.

Devin turns for the door.

PETE
I’m running a business here, not a soup kitchen.

Devin waves on the way out. Liza enters as he leaves.
DEVIN
Hey, Liza. Bye, Liza.

Liza looks confused. She goes over to Pete with a handful of brochures.

PETE
Hey, honey. What do you have there?

LIZA
Pete, I think we should adopt.

PETE
I thought we’ve already discussed this.

LIZA
We have, but I’m tired of trying and waiting. I want to be a mother. See, there’s a lot of information...

An excited Liza shows him the brochures.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

People from all walks of life fill the room, with their iPads and lap tops.

Devin and Mike sit at a table with their lattes.

DEVIN
Mission accomplished.

MIKE
You are one bad dude. I had my doubts, but you pulled it off.

DEVIN
I told you, no one rejects me.

Devin and Mike exchange high fives.

MIKE
Okay, you’ve managed to get the girl. Now what?

DEVIN
I don’t know. I think she may be the one.
MIKE
Am I hearing you right? Is Devin, the greatest player of all times, finally going to turn in his player’s card and settle down?

DEVIN
I don’t know. But what I do know is, she’s a keeper.

MIKE
Can I have your black book? You know, since you won’t be needing it anymore?

DEVIN
I don’t have a black book. Just my Android.

MIKE
Well, can I have that?

DEVIN
I’m not giving you my Android.

MIKE
You’re so selfish.

DEVIN
Yeah, yeah... get your own.

INT. NURSING HOME - NURSES STATION - DAY
Christina stands at the station along with ROSE, late-20’s, great hair, and a body like a model. Christina writes something in a patient’s file, looks at Rose.

CHRISTINA
I think it looks great.

ROSE
Thanks. I hope Terrell likes it.

CHRISTINA
Hard to say. Men can be assholes at times. Especially when it comes to spending money.

ROSE
You ain’t never lied. By the way, the new lady in one-twenty-one A is something else.
CHRISTINA
Oh no. What’s her name?

ROSE
Mrs. Dillon. Never did go to sleep, and stayed on the bell all night.

CHRISTINA
I hope she’s better during the day.

ROSE
And her granddaughter is a real bitch. All she did was complain. I don’t know who was worse.

CHRISTINA
I guess I better go check on her to make sure she’s okay.

Christina leaves the station.

INT. MRS. DILLON’S ROOM - SAME

MRS. DILLON, 70’s, hair covered with a stocking cap, tosses and turns in the bed. Tracy sits in the chair next to the bed with her head in a book.

MRS. DILLON
I can’t seem to get... comfortable.

TRACY
You want me to call for the nurse to see if she can help you?

MRS. DILLON
I don’t want to be burden.

TRACY
It’s their job, Grammy.

There is a KNOCK at the DOOR.

TRACY (CONT’D)
That’s probably the nurse right there. Come in.

Christina comes through the door, gives Tracy a strange look.

CHRISTINA
Hello. My name is Christina, and I’ll be your nurse for today.
TRACY
Hey, I was just about to ring for you. Grammy’s having trouble getting comfortable.

CHRISTINA
Mrs. Dillon, is there a particular way you’d like to be positioned?

MRS. DILLON
It don’t matter which position I’m in. I can’t seem to get settled.

CHRISTINA
It’s probably anxiety... fairly common the first couple of days as she adjusts to her new environment.

TRACY
Well, can you can give her a pill or something?

CHRISTINA
I’ll see what I can do.

TRACY
Is there a snack machine around?

CHRISTINA
In the break room located on the back hall.

TRACY
I’ll be back, Grammy. I’m gonna get some chips and a soda.

Tracy walks out of the room.

BREAK ROOM

Devin eats a TV dinner, plays with his Android.

DEVIN
(sotto)
Don’t need this number anymore... or this one... gonna miss this one... I’ll keep this one just in case.

Tracy comes into the room, heads straight for the snack machine. Devin sets his Android on the table, focuses on the food in front of him.
She buys potato chips, goes to the soda machine for a cola. She heads for the door when she sees Devin.

**TRACY**
Devin? Is that you?

**DEVIN**
Tracy! What are you doing here?

**TRACY**
Visiting my great grandmother.

**HALLWAY**

Christina digs inside of her scrub pocket, pulls out a dollar. She stops by the break room door, eavesdrop on Devin and Tracy’s conversation.

**TRACY (O.S.)**
I haven’t heard from you since that night. Why haven’t you called?

**CHRISTINA**
(sotto)
I knew she looked familiar.

**BREAK ROOM**

Tracy stands in front of Devin.

**DEVIN**
Oh... um... well... it slipped my mind, I guess.

**TRACY**
Really? We had sex all-night-long, and you can’t even call me?

**DEVIN**
It’s not like that.

**TRACY**
Then how is it?

**CHRISTINA**
Yes, please explain yourself, Devin? I’m all ears.

Christina enters the room, stops next to Tracy with her arms folded and eyes squint.
DEVIN
Christina.

CHRISTINA
You lied to me.

DEVIN
No, I didn’t lie to you. I never said I didn’t sleep with her.

CHRISTINA
No, you just allowed me to believe that you didn’t. Same difference.

DEVIN
It happened after you rejected me, so what’s the big deal?

CHRISTINA
The big deal is that you lied about it. You’re probably lying about the woman in the bowling alley, too.

DEVIN
No, no... I really didn’t sleep with her.

TRACY
I can’t believe you.

DEVIN
Look, I’m sorry. I made a mistake.

CHRISTINA
You sure did. I was right about you all along. You are a liar and a cheat!

DEVIN
I’ve never cheated on you, and I only lied once.

CHRISTINA
Everything that’s ever come out of your mouth has probably been a lie.

DEVIN
Come on, Christina, you know that’s not true.

CHRISTINA
It doesn’t matter anymore, because we’re done. You can have him.
Christina storms out.

DEVIN
Wait a minute. Christina!

TRACY
Don’t look at me. I don’t want your tired ass either.

Tracy leaves the room.

DEVIN
This is just great. Damn! So stupid!

Devin thumps himself in the head with the palm of his hand. He stares into the distance.

INT. DEVIN’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Devin makes a stiff drink at the bar -- no ice, no chaser. Mike sits on the sofa.

DEVIN
It’s over, man. I absolutely blew it.

MIKE
Why did you lie to her?

DEVIN
I don’t know. I didn’t think she would find out, and I definitely didn’t think I would ever see Tracy again. This is the worst.

Devin paces back-and-forth.

MIKE
It really sucks to be you, right now.

DEVIN
What am I going to do?

MIKE
Give it some time. Let things blow over.

DEVIN
I’m suppose to go over there tomorrow for Christmas dinner. How can I face them?
MIKE
Like a man. So you made a mistake.
You’re human. What’s important now is how you handle it.

EXT. PETE’S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Devin waits at the door with presents. The door opens, and Liza stands in the doorway.

DEVIN
Merry Christmas.

She rolls her eyes, walks away.

LIZA
Pete! Your friend is here.

INT. PETE’S LIVING ROOM CONTINUOUS

An awkward silence fills the room. Christina, Liza and Pete all give Devin the evil eye.

DEVIN
I don’t know what to say. I screwed up. I screwed up bad. I never meant to hurt you, Christina.

Devin meanders around the room.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
I know should’ve told you the truth, but I didn’t, and now I have to live with that.

Devin reaches for the bag filled with presents.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Anyway, here’s your present, Liza.

He gives Liza her present.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Here’s yours, Pete.

He gives Pete a square box.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
This is for you.
He offers Christina a large item -- the size of a frame. She looks the other way. Devin leans it against the side of the sofa.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Okay, that’s my cue. Merry Christmas.

Devin makes his exit. Christina, Liza and Pete eye one another. A door SHUTS in the another room.

CHRISTINA
You can throw that in the garbage. I don’t want it.

Christina leaves the room.

INT. DEVIN’S KITCHEN - DAY
Devin goes over to check the refrigerator.

Left over Chinese food, milk, eggs and a few other items are inside. Devin reaches for the milk.

Devin pulls a box of Rice Crispy from the cabinet and a bowl from the cupboard.

Devin eats cereal at the table.

INT. PETE & LIZA’S LIVING ROOM - SAME
Pete opens his present. Inside the box, a white chef’s hat with the name, “PETE” embroidered on it.

PETE
Would you look at this? A chef’s hat... with my name on it.

Pete tries it on.

PETE (CONT’D)
What do you think?

LIZA
It looks great.

Liza takes the wrapping off her present.

PETE
What did he get you?

Liza eyes widen when sees the platinum gold silverware set.
LIZA
Silverware... and it looks expensive.

PETE
Is that platinum gold?

LIZA
I think it is.

INT. DEVIN’S STUDIO - DAY
A desponded Devin paints on the canvas in front of him. He uses the sleeve of his shirt to wipe the sweat from his brow, takes sip of bottled water, stares out the window.

MONTAGE - DEVIN & CHRISTINA APART
-- A gloomy Christina gives medicine to a patient.
-- Devin goes fishing on his boat in the middle of the ocean with a cooler of beer.
-- Devin has the phone to his ear.
-- Christina brushes her hair in front of the mirror. She looks down at the face of her phone. It reads: “INCOMING CALL, DEVIN” She ignores it.
-- Devin walks in to the break room at the nursing home. Christina rolls her eyes and leaves.
-- Devin mopes along the shore. He glances at a couple making out on a blanket as he passes by.
-- A sad Christina walks down the street with her arms folded.
-- Christina leans her present against the wall next to her bed, leaves the room.
-- Devin tells Dr. Pace all about it.
-- Devin and Mike sit in a sports bar. Devin sulks as Mike tries to cheer him up.
-- Liza tries to cheer Christina up with ice cream.
-- Devin lies in bed with the lights out, focused on the ceiling.
-- Christina lies in the dark, staring at her gift.
INT. DEVIN’S FOYER – DAY

Devin peeps through the peephole and opens the door. WALTER SCOTT, a sixty-something, African-American male, stands in the doorway.

DEVIN
Come in, Mr. Scott.

LIVING ROOM

Walter sits on the sofa as he examines a framed oil painting. Devin leans against the bar with a drink in his hand.

INSERT – PAINTING

An oil painting of the group, The Whispers.

BACK TO SCENE

WALTER
Man, this is awesome. I can’t thank you enough.

Walter shakes Devin’s hand.

DEVIN
You don’t have to thank me. You guys are my favorite group of all time.

WALTER
That’s nice to hear. Wallace and the guys are going to love this. How much do we owe you?

DEVIN
Nothing. I was honored that you guys chose me to do this. Consider it a gift from me to you.

WALTER
Come on. It has to be something that we can do for you. You have our number. If there is ever anything, and I mean anything, that we can do for you, let us know.
DEVIN
I’ll do that.

Devin stares into the distance.

INT. NURSING HOME - MR. JENKINS’ ROOM - DAY

Mr. Jenkins listens to the PLAY-BY-PLAY ANNOUNCER of a baseball game on the radio.

MR. JENKINS
Come on! Don’t fail me now!

PLAY-BY-PLAY ANNOUNCER
The stretch, and the pitch. It’s a high fly ball, deep right field, back to the wall goes Taylor, and this ball is... gone! A grand slam!

MR. JENKINS
Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!

Mr. Jenkins dances a jig next to his bed. There’s a KNOCK at the door. Christina comes in.

Mr. Jenkins calms down. He turns off the radio, takes a seat on the side of his bed.

CHRISTINA
It’s time for your meds.

MR. JENKINS
Y’all trying to kill old people off with these pills.

CHRISTINA
What makes you think that?

MR. JENKINS
When I came here, I was only taking heart medication. Now I take heart medication, kidney medication, liver medication... before you know it, all of my major organs will be shot to shit. It’s them damn pills, I tell ya.

CHRISTINA
You can always refuse care.

MR. JENKINS
I’ll take’em.
She gives Mr. Jenkins the small plastic cup. He dumps the pills into his mouth, drinks it down with water from the water container.

**MR. JENKINS (CONT’D)**
Done. Wanna see?

Mr. Jenkins opens his mouth.

**CHRISTINA**
No, I’ll take your word for it.

**MR. JENKINS**
What’s wrong? You look like you just lost your best friend.

**CHRISTINA**
It’s a long story.

**MR. JENKINS**
It’s got something to do with that art teacher.

Christina’s silence speaks volumes.

**MR. JENKINS (CONT’D)**
Yeah, that’s it. He’s been moping around, too. What did he do? Cheat?

**CHRISTINA**
He lied to me.

**MR. JENKINS**
Oh, the nasty “L” word. You know, I was in love once. Her name was Betty, ole’ Betty Jones, the most beautiful woman I ever laid eyes on.

**CHRISTINA**
What happened?

**MR. JENKINS**
One day, I asked her a question, and you know what she did? She told me the truth.

**CHRISTINA**
That’s a good thing, right?
Mr. Jenkins
Not all the time, because the truth caused me to look at her in a different way. If she would’ve told me it was none of my business or even lied, we’d still be together.

Christina
But you can’t build a relationship on a lie.

Mr. Jenkins
Yep, that’s true, but some questions should never be asked and, some things are better left unsaid.

INT. DEVIN’S LIVING ROOM - DAY
Devin reclines in his La-Z-Boy with a bottle of liquor in hand. Pete stands with a large plastic bag.

Pete
I came to bring the Christmas gifts you left behind.

Devin
Thank you. Just put them over there.

Devin indicates the sofa. Pete sets them there, sits down on the sofa.

Pete
Thanks for the chef’s hat, and the silverware. Platinum Gold?

Devin
Only the best for my friends.

Devin holds up his bottle of Vodka in toast, takes huge swig.

Pete
I also came to ask for a favor... a huge favor. Liza wants... Liza and I want to adopt a child, and we were wondering if we use you as a reference.
DEVIN
Of course you can! And not because you are my best friends, but because I know that the two of you would make great parents.

PETE
Thanks, man. I gotta be honest. I’m nervous as shit about the thought of having a baby around.

DEVIN
You’ll do fine. The both of you will.

Devin takes another swig.

PETE
We understand why you didn’t tell Christina the truth.

DEVIN
Yeah? How do I get Christina to understand?

PETE
That’s the sixty-million dollar question, my friend. I’m sure you’ll figure it out.

DEVIN
She won’t answer my calls.

PETE
We’re going to Club Onyx to bring in the new year. You’re welcome to join us.

DEVIN
No, I’m just going to stay home.

PETE
You were right about Mayweather being afraid to fight Pacquiao.

DEVIN
So you finally see the light. Good for you.

PETE
Yeah, I “see the light,” and you know what? You’re acting just like Mayweather... afraid.
Pete walks out.

INT. CHRISTINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Christina, wearing a tight dress, checks herself in the mirror. She sees the reflection of her present.

Christina rushes over, rips the wrapping off of her present.

It’s an oil portrait of herself. A small smile crosses her face. A horn HONKS from outside.

INT. CLUB ONYX - NIGHT

Old School music BLASTS over the speakers. New Year decorations are everywhere.

Wall-to-wall patrons, decked out in costumes and fine apparel, dance, mingle and drink merrily -- mostly champagne.

CHRISTINA, LIZA & PETE’S BOOTH

Christina, Liza and Pete sit at a booth with several bottles of champagne on the table.

PETE
Here’s to a new year of excitement, great things and to most of all, leaving behind the pains of the past.

CHRISTINA
I’ll drink to that.

They CLINK their glasses together before they drink. Christina chugs her glass of champaign down like a sailor.

INT. DEVIN’S FOYER - NIGHT

Devin opens the door. Dr. Pace stands on the other side.

DEVIN
Thanks for stopping by, Doc.
Please, come in.

Dr. Pace walks through the doorway.
LIVING ROOM

Devin enters the room after Dr. Pace.

DR. PACE
You sounded like you were in distress over the phone. Is everything okay?

DEVIN
The total opposite of okay.

DR. PACE
What’s the problem?

INT. CLUB ONYX - NIGHT

Christina, Liza and Pete drinks more champaign. Christina finishes off another glass.

CHRISTINA
Woo! Is it me, or is it getting a little warm in here?

LIZA
A little of both.

CHRISTINA
Oh. Fill me up.

LIZA
Why don’t you come with me? I have to pay the water bill.

CHRISTINA
You always say that. Can’t you say I have to pee, piss or urinate like everyone else?

LIZA
You’re drunk.

CHRISTINA
I am? I had no idea.

Christina staggers from her seat. Liza ushers her away by the arm.

LIZA
This way.
INT. DEVIN’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Devin paces the floor. Dr. Pace sits on the sofa.

DEVIN
I don’t know what to do. What if she rejects me?

DR. PACE
What if she doesn’t?

DEVIN
What if I get hurt?

DR. PACE
You probably will. Only the people in our lives that we care about the most have the ability to hurt us, Devin.

DEVIN
Is that it? Is that all you have to say? What kind of quack are you?

DR. PACE
Are you a gambling man, Devin?

DEVIN
It depends on the odds and risk, but what does that have to do with my situation?

DR. PACE
Is this woman worth the risk? When you’ve answered that question, things will become clear.

Devin stares into the distance.

QUICK FLASHES - DEVIN’S MOMENTS WITH CHRISTINA

-- Devin reaches out for Christina’s hand. She throws her drink in his face.

-- Christina in Devin’s face with a knife as they argue.

-- Christina pushes the target to the dunk tank. Devin falls into the water. Christina points and laugh as the Dunk Attendant drags her away.

-- Christina and Devin share smiles in the restaurant.
-- Christina and Devin’s kiss at the Christmas party.
-- Christina with a beautiful smile.

END OF QUICK FLASHES

DEVIN
I gotta go. Thanks, Doc.

DR. PACE
No problem. Consider this a friendly visit.

INT. CLUB ONYX - NIGHT

Christina and Liza navigate their way through the crowd of revelers.

CHRISTINA, LIZA & PETE’S BOOTH

Christina and Liza return to their seats at the table with Pete.

PETE
You guys took long enough.

LIZA
We had a little problem.

Liza indicates Christina.

CHRISTINA
I’m all better now.

PETE
Good. Ten minutes away, ladies. More champagne?

CHRISTINA
No... no more for me.

LIZA
I’ll take some.

EXT./INT. CITY STREETS/DEVIN’S MERCEDES – NIGHT

Moderate traffic along the thoroughfare. Devin Mercedes changes lanes to pass cars.
MERCEDES

A sense of urgency reflects in Devin’s eyes. He looks at the clock.

INSERT - CLOCK - “11:53”

BACK TO SCENE

Devin whips the wheel right and left.

DEVIN
Come on! Move it!

Devin’s Mercedes passes the last car, pulls away from the rest of the vehicles.

INT. CLUB ONYX - NIGHT

Patrons pack the dance floor. Waitress moves through the crowd with a tray of drinks.

CHRISTINA, LIZA & PETE’S BOOTH

Liza and Pete embrace and kiss. Christina stares with a blank face.

ENTRANCE OF CLUB ONYX

Devin enters the club, spots Christina, Liza and Pete’s booth. He shifts his focus to the stage, sees the Keyboardist. A smile reflects Devin’s face.

CHRISTINA, LIZA & PETE’S BOOTH

Christina grabs her purse. Liza and Pete rub noses.

CHRISTINA
Guys, I think I’m going to go home.

LIZA
You can’t leave now.

CHRISTINA
Why not?
LIZA
Because the new year hasn’t come in yet, and it’s bad luck to leave a New Year’s Eve party before the new year begins.

CHRISTINA
That’s the most ridiculous thing I’ve ever heard. I’ll see you guys at home.

Christina leaves the table, turns to walk away. The MUSIC STOPS. FEEDBACK from the speakers.

DEVIN (O.S)
Christina, wait!

Christina stops, turns around.

Devin stands on the stage with the microphone. Some of the PATRONS BOO and HOWL.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Sorry guys, but this will only take a minute.

One PATRON yells out.

PATRON #1
You suck!

Another PATRON chimes in.

PATRON #2
Yeah, kill yourself, asshole!

DEVIN
Yes, you’re right. I am an asshole. You see, I hurt someone that I really care about.

Christina and Devin’s eyes are locked.

Devin steps off the stage. The crowd parts like the Red Sea. Devin makes his way to Christina.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Christina, I’m sorry that I lied to you. I don’t expect for you to forgive me. I’m only hoping that you will.

Christina and Devin stand face-to-face.
DEVIN (CONT’D)
I used to think that meaningless relationship and sleeping with random women every other night were all I wanted and needed out of life.

Pete nods in agreement with a smile.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Then I met you. For a long time, I’ve been living my life in fear. In fear that if I allowed anyone to get close to me that I’d end up hurt.

Devin takes Christina by the hand.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
I’m tired living in fear. I know I’m not the perfect guy, and you’re not the perfect woman, but I’m okay with that, because... you’re perfect for me.

Christina’s eyes tear up.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
I’m not going to lie and say that I can’t live without you. I can, but I don’t want to, because I think I’ve fallen in love with you.

Christina stands in shock.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
So, what do you say? Wanna give this a chance to see where it leads?

A tear streaks down Christina cheek. Devin wipes it away with his thumb.

Liza and Pete embrace one another.

Christina gazes into Devin’s eyes, gets close to his face.

CHRISTINA
On one condition.

DEVIN
Anything... anything at all... just name it.
CHRISTINA
Take me home.

Devin leans in, passionately kisses Christina on the lips. Patrons in the bar CHEER and APPLAUD. The music CRANKS up.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

SUPER - "ONE YEAR LATER"

Spectators fill the pews in the sanctuary.

Devin and Christina, wearing wedding attire, stand before the PREACHER, 50’s, chubby with balding hair.

PREACHER
Dearly Beloved, we are gathered here today to celebrate the union of Devin Wilkes and Christina Carter. What God has put together, let no man put asunder. If there is anyone here who doesn’t think these two should be joined together in marriage, speak now or forever hold your peace.

Jeff bursts through the doors of the church. A GASP from spectators.

JEFF
Stop!

CHRISTINA
Jeff?! What are you doing here?

JEFF
You can’t do this to me... to us! I won’t allow it.

Jeff makes his way to the front of the church. Devin, Mike and Pete all eye one another.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Devin, Mike and Pete drag Jeff out of the church, toss him down the steps.

Jeff tumbles all the way down to the sidewalk, where he lies unconscious.
DEVIN
Come on. My wife is waiting for me.

They go inside.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Christina and Devin stand before the Preacher.

DEVIN
Sorry about that. Where were we?

PREACHER
Do you, Devin Wilkes, take Christina...

INT. RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

Colorful balloons and other decorations are on every table. Caters work behind the line of food.

Devin stands in front of his chair at head table, where Christina, Pete, Liza, Mike and Tracy are all seated.

DEVIN
I also want to thank my best friends, Pete, and his lovely wife, Liza. If it weren’t for them, I would never met my wife. We are officially family. How awesome is that?

Spectators CLAP, including Dr. Pace.

Christina glows with a smile from ear-to-ear. Pete raises his glass. Liza smiles as she feeds the baby a bottle of milk.

DEVIN (CONT’D)
Right now, I would like to welcome some very special guests. They’re here to perform a song for my first dance with my wife. Please join me in welcoming, The Whispers.

Everyone in the room is stunned. Walter and THE WHISPERS enter from the back door to APPLAUSE.

Christina covers her mouth in disbelief. Devin takes her hand, leads her to the floor.
The music PLAYS... The Whispers PERFORM.

Christina and Devin dance.

CHRISTINA
You are full of surprises. How you were able to pull this off?

DEVIN
All I had to do was ask. They are really nice guys.

CHRISTINA
Devin?

DEVIN
And they owed me a favor.

A CHORUS of glasses CLINK.

CHRISTINA
This is the happiest day of my life. I love you, Mr. Wilkes.

DEVIN
I love you, too, Mrs. Wilkes.

CHRISTINA
Mrs. Carter-Wilkes. Just kidding.

DEVIN
You better be.

They kiss. Mike and Tracy join them on the floor. Pete dances with Liza and the baby.

THE END

FADE OUT.