



Written by

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Adapted from a Facebook Post

by

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FADE IN

INT. CYNTHIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Spacious, classically decorated. Pictures of two young boys, hang on a wall.

A picture of two teenage boys, hangs beside them.

On a table, a family portrait: A middle-age woman, a middle-age man, and two young adult men.

CYNTHIA (58), the blue-eyed woman in the portrait, sits in the room alone. A tablet computer rests in her lap.

She swipes through the posts of a social media site. She comes upon a post with a pink Christmas tree.

She pauses, has a series of flashbacks.

BEGIN FLASHBACKS

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

A colorful display of artificial Christmas trees sits in a corner. LITTLE CINDY (3), blue eyes, light red hair, toddles up to the collection and gasps. She smiles and points to a pink tree.

LITTLE CINDY
Peeze?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
No.

The little girl slumps with disappointment.

INT. DIFFERENT DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

LITTLE CINDY (4), blue eyes, light red hair, enters a department filled with Christmas displays. She stops and gasps.

She grabs a nearby female hand and drags it to a pink Christmas tree. She looks up at the hand's owner with hope in her eyes.

LITTLE CINDY
Mommy, can we get a pink Christmas tree this year? It's pretty!

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

No.

Again, the little girl slumps with disappointment.

INT. ANOTHER DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

LITTLE CINDY (5), blue eyes, light red hair, browses through a display of Christmas decorations. She comes across something that grabs her attention and removes it from a shelf.

She turns to face a pink Christmas tree, approaches and holds the ornament up to the tree. She stands at arms length and admires the combination.

The hips of a woman stops next to the girl.

LITTLE CINDY

I think a pink Christmas tree would look perfect with this. Can we get it? Please?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

No, Cindy. Now put that back. We need to go.

The child slumps and solemnly returns the ornament.

END FLASHBACKS

Cynthia fixates on the social media post. She grimaces and releases a heavy sigh.

Little Cindy (5), the girl in the flashbacks, appears, semi-transparent. She approaches the chair, stands on her tippy-toes and cranes to look at the picture.

She looks up at Cynthia.

LITTLE CINDY

We always wanted a pink Christmas tree.

CYNTHIA

Yes we did. I think it's about time we got one.

Cynthia taps a link for a local department store, browses through various tree options.

She locks in on a pink 'pencil' tree.

She picks up a cell phone from the table next to her, dials.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

MATT (56), the middle-age man in the family photograph, sits at a desk. He hunches over a laptop, looks into the screen.

His phone rings.

He leans back into his chair, looks at his phone, answers.

MATT

What's up?

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

CYNTHIA

I'm thinking about getting a Christmas tree.

MATT

I thought we weren't going to decorate until after the new windows were installed. We didn't want anything in the way. Remember?

CYNTHIA

I know but I found something that's slender and can be pushed into a corner and out of the way. I really want to get it.

MATT

It sounds like you've already made up your mind.

CYNTHIA

Yep. Pretty much.

MATT

As long as you're sure it won't be in the way, I don't have a problem. So how's everything else?

CYNTHIA

Kevin will be staying here through the holidays. I haven't heard from Steven yet. How are you holding up?

MATT

I can't wait to be back home. Still looks like it will be a couple more days. We'll see.

CYNTHIA

I'll let you get back to what you were doing. I love you.

MATT

I love you too. Bye.

CYNTHIA

Bye.

Cynthia hangs up her phone. She looks down at Little Cindy with a smile.

CYNTHIA

(whispers)

We're going to have an exciting day tomorrow.

Little Cindy brightens and claps.

INT. LOCAL DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Cynthia strolls about, pushes an empty shopping cart. She casually inspects different items in the store.

She passes a counter of perfume samples. The Chanel No. 5 sample catches her attention. She stops.

She sprays a little on a card and takes a sniff. Her mood turns somber.

Little Cindy appears and tugs on Cynthia's coat. She points to the sample card.

Cynthia lowers her arm. Little Cindy pulls the card to her nose and sniffs. She looks up.

LITTLE CINDY

Smells just like Mommy.

Cynthia's eyes moisten. She nods.

LITTLE CINDY

We miss her, don't we.

Cynthia employs the sadness in her eyes as her answer. She sniffs the card again.

CYNTHIA
It's amazing how twenty-two years ago
can seem like yesterday.

Cynthia grimaces with determination.

CYNTHIA (cont'd)
That tree just got really important.

She looks down at Little Cindy.

CYNTHIA (cont'd)
Let's go get our tree and cheer
ourselves up.

Little Cindy brightens with excitement.

Cynthia resumes her walk.

She comes upon a display of slender artificial trees of various colors. She approaches a pink pencil tree and examines the price posted on a sign.

Little Cindy walks up beside her and gasps.

LITTLE CINDY
It's perfect! Are we going to get it?
It's not too much money, is it?

Cynthia looks down at her younger self and smiles.

CYNTHIA
It's not, because some things are too
important.

Little Cindy hops with glee.

Cynthia approaches a nearby female SALES ASSOCIATE (28).

CYNTHIA
Excuse me. I'd like a pink tree,
please.

SALES ASSOCIATE
I'm sorry, were all out of pink.

CYNTHIA
How about the floor model?

SALES ASSOCIATE
I'm sorry but we can't sell the floor
model. It's against store policy.

CYNTHIA

Is there a manager I can talk to?

SALES ASSOCIATE

I'm the manager. I'm sorry. I really would like to help you but I can't.

CYNTHIA

Can't you make an exception?

SALES ASSOCIATE

No. I'm really very sorry.

Cynthia looks over at the tree.

Little Cindy stands by it, slumped with the weight of a broken heart.

LITTLE CINDY

(under her breath)

Maybe next year.

Cynthia kneels down to tie her shoe lace.

She glances at her younger self, looks into the girl's eyes.

CYNTHIA

We can make this work. Trust me. We just need to make a stop on the way home.

Cynthia stands, turns to the sales associate.

CYNTHIA

I'll take a white tree.

SALES ASSOCIATE

Okay.

The sales associate leaves.

The little girl smiles with hope.

Cynthia browses through some nearby decorations and places them into the shopping cart.

A TEENAGE MALE arrives with a box on a hand truck, stands next to the checkout counter.

The sales associate calls out to Cynthia.

SALES ASSOCIATE

Ma'am, your tree?

Cynthia steps up to the register. She places the shopping cart contents onto the counter.

The sales associate rings up the sale, takes Cynthia's credit card. She hands it back with the receipt.

CYNTHIA
(gestures to the cart)
I think we can fit the box in here.

SALES ASSOCIATE
Oh, no. He'll bring it to your car.
Merry Christmas.

CYNTHIA
Thank you. Merry Christmas to you,
too.

MONTAGE BEGINS

INT. CRAFT STORE - DAY

Cynthia browses through an aisle of ribbon spools and tulle.

INT. CYNTHIA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

She takes boxes of decorations and lights from a closet.

LIVING ROOM

Cynthia assembles and decorates the white pencil tree. She adds lights and decorations.

END MONTAGE

LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cynthia sits in a chair, browses through social media posts on her tablet. She pauses to glance up at her tree.

Strips of Pink tulle are woven through the branches. Ornaments accented with bows of pink ribbon adorn the tree. It radiates a pink glow.

She turns out the lamp next to her, leaves the room lighted by the tree.

Little Cindy enters and runs up to the tree.

LITTLE CINDY
It's beautiful!

She turns and looks back at Cynthia.

LITTLE CINDY
Thank you.

CYNTHIA
You're welcome.

Little Cindy returns her gaze to the tree.

LITTLE CINDY
I love it.

Cynthia turns off her tablet, places it on the table. She walks to the door and places her hand on the light switch.

She looks back at the tree and her younger self.

Little Cindy stands and stares at the tree, wide-eyed and beaming with a smile.

CYNTHIA
Good night.

Little Cindy turns to face Cynthia, opens and closes her hand in the way that young children wave. She returns her attention to the tree.

Cynthia gives the tree and her younger self a final look.

She removes her hand from the light switch, leaves the tree lights on.

She exits the room.

FADE OUT

THE END