

A CHRISTMAS TREAT

Written by

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EXT. LARGE CITY- DOWNTOWN - DAY

We're on the sidewalk of a big city. Hustle and bustle. It is clearly winter time because everyone is bundled up tight but there is no snow on the ground or anything else to indicate it might be Christmas time. The frame fills with JACK IRVING, a 50-something financial power broker. He is wearing a sharp dark suit with a dark overcoat, a dark scarf and dark leather gloves. No Christmas colors for Jack. He's all business. He's also wearing a Bluetooth piece in his ear while also holding two cell phones. He's talking and walking brusquely down the street but we do not hear him yet.

CUT TO

EXT. LARGE CITY- DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS

JACK again. At a crosswalk with a large group of people. The noise is that cacophony that is New York or Chicago or any large city. It does not matter which one, just a busy one. JACK puts one of his phones in his pocket.

JACK IRVING
(Cell phone buzzes)

JACK reaches into his pocket and pulls out a phone. Not that one. Reaches into another pocket and pulls out a second phone. Not that one. He is confused. Finally, reaches under his overcoat into his jacket and pulls out a third phone. That's the one. The light changes.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
(On the phone)
Larry? Larry! Why are you calling
me on this phone?
(Listening. Cutting off
Larry.)
You didn't call the other phone. I
swear you didn't.
(Looks at other phone)
Okay. Maybe you did. Who cares?
Talk to me about the Tokyo deal.

CUT TO

EXT. LARGE CITY- DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS

SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER ringing his bell for donations. Two people in front of JACK give and smile. The VOLUNTEER looks directly at JACK. JACK waves dismissively at the VOLUNTEER and keeps walking.

JACK IRVING

(Still on phone)

You think this is funny Larry? Try the dollar destabilizing against the Yen in 92. That was funny. Getting back to the Tokyo buyers, what are your thoughts... Larry? Larry?!

JACK stops walking and is pressing buttons on his phone trying to hear LARRY. Suddenly, while Jack is standing on this gray day in this gray city the air around JACK fills with small white specks that slowly drift down on him. Could it be? A YOUNG GIRL with her MOTHER walk by at that moment and the YOUNG GIRL stops.

YOUNG GIRL

It's snowing!

JACK looks up.

CUT TO

There are TWO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS on a platform above JACK and the YOUNG GIRL installing insulation.

JACK IRVING

It's not snow. It's polyurethane.

(to WORKERS)

Hey Moron 1 and Moron 2! You're dropping insulation on people down here.

JACK starts walking again as he wipes specks off of his overcoat.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

C'mon! This is cashmere!

(To his earpiece)

No! Not you Larry! No! You're not missing out on snow. Stop getting sentimental. Stay focused on business...

CUT TO

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

JACK's reception area is both exactly as rich and fancy yet also devoid of color and life as his clothes. The only bright spot is JILL, JACK's secretary and while they have a love/hate relationship, she is the only person left in his life that he can give it back as good as he gives it.

JILL is not only wearing Christmas colors, she is wearing an entire Elf costume, hat, ears and all. Across from JILL's spacious desk, there are several leather seats in the waiting area. Only one seat is occupied by a late 20-ish attractive girl who has her head down and is reading a book. Like JACK she is wearing sharp business clothes, but unlike him, her clothes do at least contain some festive color. Specifically, a dark green suit jacket. JILL is humming to herself when JACK enters. He is, of course, still on the phone, though no longer with Larry.

JACK IRVING

(On phone)

Brian. Just talked to Larry. It's all booked. We fly out in two days. What? That's Christmas Eve? Oh. I'm sorry. Should I put you on hold so you can call someone who cares?

(A pause. Brian pleading his case.)

JILL

(Cough)

JILL fake cough's to get JACK's attention. JILL holds up a package and JACK takes it.

JACK IRVING

Well Brian if you don't show up Christmas eve, then don't bother showing up Christmas.

(to JILL)

Hey Jill. Any messages love?

JILL

Counting death threats?

JACK suddenly notices JILL's Elf outfit.

JACK IRVING

What the... Brian. Book the flight to Tokyo. I'll call you later.

JACK hangs up phone.

JILL

You like it? It's an Elf! My two youngest kids made it for me.

JACK IRVING

Can you ask them to unmake it? Don't I pay you enough for you to not have to wear this... elf brand or whatever.

JILL

Elf is not a brand. Elves are Santa's helpers and as I said my kids made it. As for why I'm wearing it in the office, well there are not exactly a lot of people around. What with every other office in the building already off for Christmas. Speaking of which...

JACK IRVING

No! You can't leave before 5.
(Pause. They both know she will win.)
Fine. 4:30. All right. 4. Provided. Provided! You book my plane ticket like I asked you to.

JILL grabs an envelope and holds it in front of JACK.

JILL

Tokyo. First class. This evening.

JACK IRVING

And coming back December 25th? Any issues with getting that date?

JILL

Absolutely zero. Surprisingly, no one else is booking business class on Christmas.

JACK IRVING

Oh that's right. That's good. You should have asked for a discount then.

The GIRL waiting behind JACK does a snort at his discount line. JACK does a quick glance back at her.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Sorry. No matter what she told you we're not hiring.

(Slowly the recognition)

Oh. Amelia!

The quiet pretty girl is in fact AMELIA IRVING, JACK's long-suffering, too smart daughter. AMELIA gives him a hug.

AMELIA

Not hiring huh? Sure you aren't in the business of hiring a new daughter.

JACK IRVING
Honey I didn't recognize you in that jacket. You look great! . . . You're not actually looking for a job are you? I was serious about the non-hiring thing. But come on in, Sport.

JACK escorts AMELIA to his office. As he opens the door he realizes he still has the package in his hand.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Who dropped this off Jill?

JILL
My kids made you an outfit too.

JACK IRVING
Oh. That's so... uh unique. Tell them they shouldn't have.

CUT TO

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

JACK's actual office itself is all leather and glass and sharp angles. The only personal touch is the photos of himself on the walls giving lots of handshakes to other businessmen in suits. His desk is sleek and devoid of any signs of life. No computer. No paper. Just a phone which is of course, ringing and a sleek humidor, decanter and other fine things. The first thing he does when enters is throws the elf package into the trash can by his desk.

JACK IRVING (V.O.)
This is Jack Irving. Formerly of Gray and Grey. Now of Irving and Irving. I am away from my desk right now but please keep calling.

DICK IRVING (O.S.)
Irving! This is Irving. The other one. Just landed in Tokyo. We need you here stat. Our partners are having doubts about you Irving. Don't lose your edge on me. Have you talked to Brian or Jack?

JACK goes to pick up the phone. AMELIA stops him.

AMELIA

Dad. Just a couple of minutes.
That's all I ask.

DICK IRVING (O.S.)

Call me when you get this. Bye.

JACK IRVING

Course honey. I'm a little tight.
But you can have...

Picks up the elf costume package out of trash.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

This.

AMELIA

Dad. Keep that. Her kids made it
for you.

JACK IRVING

Oh! I need to get Jill's kids a
present.

(presses phone)

Jill! Remind me to have you get
your kids a present.

JILL (O.S.)

Already did. You were very generous
this year.

JACK IRVING

I hope I wasn't. We're hurting this
year. Tell Amelia. No. I'll tell
her. Amelia we're hurting this
year.

Amelia opens the humidor and takes out a large cigar and
sniff it.

AMELIA

You're obviously hurting as much as
usual but I don't in fact need a
gift from you, though that doesn't
stop me.

She slides the cigar into her pocket.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

If you haven't noticed Jack. I
haven't exactly been asking for
dough. The bakery is doing well.

JACK IRVING
I hate it when you call me Jack.

AMELIA
How about I go back to calling you
dad when you start acting like one
and come visit the bakery.

JACK IRVING
I promise. First thing after
Christmas.

AMELIA
Yeah Dad. Jack. About that. That
holiday party for my employees. The
one I told you about six months ago
and you swore up and down you'd
come to. The one I had Jill put in
slate gray on your calendar. That
one is tonight and you will be
going. It's the last time I'll be
in town before visiting mom.

JACK IRVING
Dianne. Don't call her mom.

AMELIA
She's mom and she's celebrating
Christmas this year. And after the
holiday party you should come with.

The phone rings again. JACK and AMELIA have a stare off. He
knows he should not answer it but can't help himself.

JACK IRVING
(to phone very fast.)
Whoever this is you're very
important and I'll call you back in
two seconds. Bye.

JACK returns to AMELIA. Her stare has now turned full glower.
He with a flourish opens his desk and takes out a checkbook.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
I will make a very sizable donation
to your Christmas party and be
there in spirit this year. Then I
promise. Promise next year...

AMELIA
No! This year! You said next year
last year. And the year before
that. And the year before that!

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Whatever happened to the Christmas spirit dad? As a kid you said it was the most important time of the year.

JACK IRVING

I also said swallowing gum would cause your stomach to burst. Look. I know it is important. I have a bunch of spirt. I do. It's just since me and Dianne...

AMELIA

Mom.

JACK IRVING

...Split. I don't know how to explain it but that Christmas spirit has been replaced.

AMELIA

By what? Cigars and yelling at your poor secretary. Right Jill?

JILL (O.S. ON PHONE)

I'm not listening.

JACK disconnects JILL. AMELIA has turned from glower to actually upset. She thought she could convince her dad to come to the party but she cannot and not for the first time he knows he's letting her down.

JACK IRVING

Sorry kid.

CUT TO

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

AMELIA exits JACK's office still looking down. JILL gives her a smile and AMELIA tries to match JILL's positivity.

AMELIA

Your kids are fantastically talented Jill. Please tell them.

JILL

Oh. My kids are in college now. They made this elf outfit years ago. And that package. That's actually a \$3000 suit he ordered in Italy this summer that just arrived. If he doesn't open it.

(MORE)

JILL (CONT'D)

Well I did tell him it was made
just for him.

AMELIA

You didn't?

JILL

What is he going to do? Fire me.
Again. Speaking of the gifts, thank
you for the Holland Cookies.
They're so hard to come by now.

AMELIA

I swear as a kid they were in every
store but that was probably kid
brain. Just remember, no sharing
with him.

JILL

You have my word. Not a bite.
Though he did try. I almost broke
when he kept talking about you.

AMELIA

You must mean some other daughter
he has.

JILL

He loves you Amelia. He just
doesn't know how to express it. I
know he's gruff but I think under
that outer-shell, there still is a
softie somewhere.

AMELIA

Is he seeing anyone?

JILL

He says he is. My husband and I
invited him over to dinner last
month and he assured me he was
going to bring the lady he was
seeing and we'd finally meet her.

AMELIA

That sounds promising.

JILL

Yeah. Except guess who showed up
two hours late. With no lady.

AMELIA

At least he showed.

JILL
Then two days later, I ask him
about the lady and he responds
'what lady?'

AMELIA
Poor dad. He needs someone.

JILL holds up the plane tickets for JACK.

JILL
Well flying to Tokyo over Christmas
isn't going to help.

There is a pause as both Jill and Amelia take in the sadness
of that statement. Suddenly though, Amelia smiles. She is up
to something.

AMELIA
Hey. Let me see those tickets real
quick.
(Takes tickets)
You got a printer around here?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - MOMENTS LATER

AMELIA is on the phone.

AMELIA
And just to confirm. That ticket is
cancelled and this one is booked in
its place?
(Pause)
Yes. I'm sure. Make the change.
(Pause)
No email. I'll print it myself.
Thank you so much.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

JACK is on the phone when AMELIA comes through the door.

JACK IRVING
Michael! The deal is not going to
fall through. Stop shouting! Relax!
Go to a spa for a while!
(Pause)
Oh. You're at a spa right now.

AMELIA hands JACK his tickets.

AMELIA
Your tickets dad. For Tokyo.

JACK IRVING
Thanks sweetheart. Oh! And Merry
Christmas.

AMELIA just smiles at him.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
What are you smiling at?

AMELIA
Love ya dad. See you soon.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S DOWNTOWN OFFICE RECEPTION AREA - CONTINUOUS

JILL is wrapping up work when AMELIA comes out of JACK's office. Still smiling.

JILL
Everything good?

AMELIA
Better than good. He's in for a
Christmas he'll never forget.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S LIMOUSINE - THAT SAME NIGHT

JACK is in the back of his fancy limo being driven by his calm, cool, and collected driver STANLEY to the airport. JACK is wearing the same suit and overcoat and scarf from the first scene. He's on the phone because that's obviously what his life is about. STANLEY knows his role. Speak only when necessary and make the drive smooth. STANLEY looks back.

JACK IRVING
(to phone)
I told him to go the spa. I didn't
think he'd put it on the company
credit car...

STANLEY
About 10 minutes out sir.

JACK IRVING
(to phone)
Hold on.
(to Stanley)
You get permission to drive
straight to the plane?

STANLEY
Of course sir. B32 this evening.

JACK IRVING
(confused)
They're flying to Tokyo from
terminal B?
(Back to phone)
No I'm still here. Cancel that
charge. No! I'll pay half. Cancel
half the charge. 30% of it...

CUT TO:

INT. THE PLANE - MOMENTS LATER

JACK sits down in his seat on the plane and looks around. This is definitely not his normal plane to Tokyo. He is confused. There is a HEAD-PHONES MAN seated next to JACK bopping to his music. JACK looks around once more and then finally makes eye contact with HEAD-PHONES MAN.

JACK IRVING
This is going to Tokyo right?

HEAD-PHONES MAN keeps bopping. JACK is still worried but his phone buzzer starts going off. He answers.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Mike! I'm on the plane. I'm on my
way.

MIKE is jabbering something on the phone. JACK is still not sure but what is there to do. He takes a pill out of his pocket and swallows it.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
(to phone)
I'll fix it when I'm there Mike.
Going to get some sleep. See you in
10 hours.

JACK hangs up the phone and puts in ear plugs and an eye mask and takes off his coat to be a blanket. He's going to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. THE PLANE - LATER

The lights on the plane are dark. JACK is passed out and snoring lightly on HEAD PHONES MAN who is also passed out and sleeping on JACK. Suddenly the lights on the plane turn back on and its bright. JACK is startled awake.

JACK IRVING
What's going on?

PILOT (O.S.)
Ladies and gentleman we have
started our descent into New
Holland. At this time, please
return your tray tables...

JACK IRVING
New Holland? NEW HOLLAND?
(To HEAD PHONES MAN)
I thought you said this was going
to Tokyo.

HEAD PHONES MAN is bopping again to his heads phone. JACK realizes the futility of the situation and lets out a groan.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - LATER

It is snowing and the wind is blowing hard enough that JACK's scarf is turning sideways. He's on the phone. This time with the airline.

JACK IRVING
(to phone)
I need anything out of here. Your
airline accidentally sent me here,
you can purposefully send me away
from here. New York. Atlanta.
Cleveland! I don't care. Just some
place big. Hello? Hello? Don't hang
up on me!
(to no one)
They hung up on me!

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - LATER

This is our first shot of the town of New Holland where we will spend the rest of the story.

It is quaint and old and decorated in that way that only towns in Christmas movies are. Even the airport, while small, has decorations up. However, the chairs and furniture and the general interior is still very much a small-time two-gate airport, no matter how many strings of garland are hung up. The lights are nearly all off. It is quite late. JACK is sitting in a chair with several pamphlets in front of him. The suit jacket is off. The tie is askew. He is visibly tired and starting to lose it. We see the one he is currently holding is for a Bed & Breakfast. As always, he is on the phone.

JACK IRVING

(to phone)

I will pay 5 times your going rate.
No 10 times! No I take that back! 7
times! 7 times your rate! Final
offer!

(pause)

7 and a half?

(pause)

Well can't you at least give me a
sofa. I can split a bed!
Shakespeare split beds!

A laugh on the other end of the line and JACK realizes it is another dead end. He throws the pamphlet in a pile with many others. He is now out of pamphlets. He takes out his phone. Hesitates and puts it back. Takes it out again and scrolls.

CLOSE UP- JACK'S PHONE

JACK is scrolling through names. He lands on the name "DIANE." Further hesitation. But he presses it.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - LATER

We find JACK sleeping in the very same chair he was in while making the phone calls to the Bed & Breakfast. He is even more disheveled than he looks before. Snoring lightly with his phone dangling from his hand. He tried to hold out to the end. Walking slowly up to him is DIANNE- the former Mrs. Jack Irving. She is now in her late 40s/early 50s but still has the looks that would make you question why she ever married a guy like JACK. Not only that, but she has kept her large city sense of fashion with her boots and outfit. Her looks and wit and intellect are sharp, yet she constantly has the grin of someone who enjoys a little mischief in her life. She kicks sleeping JACK on the shin. Hard.

JACK IRVING
I'm awake!

DIANE
Let's go father time.

DIANE turns around without seeing if JACK will follow her.
JACK starts gathering all of his strewn-about belongings.

JACK IRVING
Wait...before...well...

DIANE
Use your words city slicker.

JACK IRVING
I want you to know you were my last
choice. I mean, I called you
because I really needed to. So...

DIANE
The words you're looking for are
thank you.

JACK IRVING
Yeah. Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S CAR - LATER THAT EVENING

DIANE is driving JACK back from the airport. He's no longer
in sleepy mode but back in full Jack-mode wondering about the
screw-up.

JACK IRVING
It's nearly impossible! I mean I
clearly said Tokyo! Tokyo! New
Holland! They both start with
constants. Maybe Jill mixed up the
dates.

DIANE
Or maybe Santa intervened.

JACK IRVING
Who? Oh. Very funny. And of all
towns to land. Here! Anyways, it
will all be worked out by tomorrow.
I'll be back at the airport and on
my way to Tokyo.

DIANE

Not New Holland airport you wont.
There's only one flight a week
during this season.

JACK IRVING

But the airline said I was
guaranteed a seat on the morning
flight.

DIANE

Yes but did you ask what morning?

JACK sinks in his seat.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Relax Irving. Do you still take
your heart pills?

JACK IRVING

Yeah they're in my bag. Which is in
Tokyo. No! Which is here! Because
I'm not in Tokyo.

JACK's phone rings. He picks up.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Mike! Hello? Is this Mike or Mitch?

The call drops.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

The service here is atrocious. How
do people live?

DIANE

Peacefully. Friendly.

JACK IRVING

Sounds atrocious.

(beat)

Hey. I'm starving. What's there to
eat around here these days?

DIANE

Let's see. This time of night. It's
only Eddies.

JACK IRVING

By the bakery? That dump is still
open? I'm not going there.

(pause)

I totally forgot about Eddies.

(pause)

(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Maybe I'll go there.
(another pause)
Pleassse.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIES DINER - LATER

Eddies Diner looks like a Waffle House mixed with Johnny Rockets. If its ever been updated, it has not been since at least the 1960s. The chairs and tables are linoleum and well used and everything in there, including the staff, seems from a bygone era. Still, Eddies has a charm. The staff are smiling, as are the customers. The staff is even wearing some Christmas flare and there are some minor decorations about. Eddies may be old, but it is well-loved. JACK and DIANNE sit in a booth as JACK looks over the menu.

JACK IRVING
I don't think Eddies has raised the prices since I left. It's missing out on a fortune here.

DIANE
If Eddie wanted to earn a fortune he wouldn't have opened up a greasy spoon called Eddies.

Waiter comes.

DIANE (CONT'D)
You ready?

JACK IRVING
Eddies full for me. Eggs over easy. Oh! And two coffees. Only sugar for her.

DIANE
Actually one coffee. Tea for me.

JACK IRVING
Tea?

A young energetic man in work overalls approaches the booth timidly. He takes off his hat as Diane makes eye-contact with him. It's TYLER THE WORKER from the bakery and he is quite nervous to be talking to DIANE.

TYLER THE WORKER
Hey Ms. Diane. I didn't know you eat here.

(MORE)

TYLER THE WORKER (CONT'D)
I know you said to get those documents but Peggy has been staying with her parents...

DIANE
No rush Tyler. No rush.

TYLER THE WORKER smiles and leaves.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Tyler and his wife are trying to buy their first home.

JACK IRVING
Ms. Diane eh?

DIANE
Had to do something after you left me and Amelia. Teller at the bank, led to loan officer led to marketing director led to loan manager. Maybe I did pick up something from you.

JACK'S food comes out along with the coffee and tea. JACK smiles for the first time since we have met him.

JACK IRVING
Still smells the same. Can't believe it hasn't changed. Don't mess with success right?

DIANE laughs.

DIANE
Yeah Irving. Success.
(Pause)
Don't let this fool you. The bakery usually only has one-tenth of the employees its running during high season. Ergo Eddies has only one-tenth its normal clientele and the bank only has one-tenth its customers and so on and so on.

JACK IRVING
So what do people in New Holland do?

DIANE
Exactly what you did- leave.

DIANE sips her tea.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S HOUSE STAIRCASE - LATER IN THE EVENING

DIANE is walking up the stairs and JACK is behind her. On the phone.

JACK IRVING
I'm going to be a little later than
I thought. Mike? Mike!
(Pause)
What? Gray and Grey? How do you
know about the deal.

DIANE
Your old firm?

JACK nods.

JACK IRVING
Which one is on ground? No. The one
with the E-y or the one with the A-
y? Gray with the A-y? Ugh.

JACK hangs up and follows DIANE to her room. She gives him a stare.

DIANE
Your room is over there mister.

JACK IRVING
Sorry. Habit.

JACK turns for the guest bedroom and then turns around.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Hey Diane.

She turns and looks at him. He smiles. His first genuine smile.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
I enjoyed the last hour. Thank you
for picking me up and I just...you
were always kind to me.

DIANE
Your Bedroom is still over there.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S GUEST BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JACK is in the guest bedroom which is now also functioning as a semi-storage area. It is tight quarters to say the least and while the rest of the house has been somewhat updated, this room was overlooked. JACK is unpacking his suitcase as best he can and as he puts his jacket in the little closet he notices a CARDBOARD BOX with a lid. JACK takes the lid off the box.

CLOSE UP

The box is full of old pictures of JACK and DIANE and AMELIA. There are some on vacations. Some funny. A birthday or party or two. Then he gets to several in a row of the three of them at Christmas. The camera widens back out as JACK lays on the twin guest bed and continues to take a trip down memory lane.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DIANE'S GUEST BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

JACK is on the guest bed on top of the sheets still partially in his suit. He's fast asleep and looks content for once, as if having a nice dream. There are some pictures and frames he was looking at the night before surrounding him on the bed and on his stomach. His cell phone starts to buzz and he jumps awake.

JACK IRVING

Mike! Mike! I'm up!

AUTOMATED TELEPHONE VOICE (O.S.)

As requested we are calling you
back. Your call is very important
to us. Your wait time is now
only...7 Hours and...34 minutes.

JACK lays back down on the bed dejected. He's lying there for only a couple of seconds though when his nose starts to twitch. He sniffs. Sniffs again. Yes, there is definitely a smell in the air. He follows his nose out the bedroom, down the steps.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JACK is still following his nose and there on top of the counter he sees what he was hoping to see-- an entire tray of delicious hot just-baked cookies! JACK goes straight for them. He eats one. It's delicious.

JACK IRVING

Mmmmm....

JACK grabs a second cookie. Just as good. He's going for this third when a younger man with good hair, a stylish yet well-worn plaid shirt, a utility belt, and a tape measurer in his hand walks into the kitchen. This is STEVEN and he both he and JACK look surprised to see each other.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Whoa bud. Can I help you. We're not filming This Old House here.

STEVEN

I was about to ask if I could help you. Like, maybe with a napkin.

JACK IRVING

Napkin? I've got one right here.

JACK looks around. He does not, in fact, have a napkin. So he takes his sleeve and wipes the crumbs from his mouth.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

See?! Who are you?

STEVEN

I was about to ask you the same question.

JACK IRVING

Jack. As in Jack Irving.

STEVEN looks blankly at JACK. Despite JACK's confidence STEVEN would know who he was, STEVEN clearly does not. He tries again a little more humbly.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

As in Diane's husband. Ex-husband.

JACK extends the hand he just wiped his mouth with. STEVEN takes it cautiously.

STEVEN

Steven. As in Diane's handyman.
Current handyman.

JACK IRVING
Handy or handsy? You're telling me
you're Diane's handyman.

STEVEN lifts up his tool belt to show JACK.

STEVEN
Here to leave my tools for Diane.

JACK IRVING
And what handyman leaves his tools?

STEVEN
One who is donating the tools to a
community in Central America that
was hit by a hurricane.

JACK IRVING
And you're just that generous huh?

STEVEN
No. But she is.

STEVEN nods over his shoulder as DIANE enters the kitchen.

DIANE
Steven! My knight in shining
Carhartt. So sorry I'm late.

STEVEN
I was actually running early and
figured I'd help pop the cookies in
for you.

DIANE
Thank you! And they are still
there?

STEVEN and DIANE both look at JACK.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Jack?

JACK IRVING
Don't tell me these cookies are
also going to orphans in a
hurricane.

DIANE is counting the cookies.

DIANE
...17...18. Okay. Just enough.
Steven, I see you met my ex-
husband.

JACK IRVING
Why the emphasis on the ex?

DIANE
Ex-husband and temporary visitor.
Right Jack? Temporary.

JACK IRVING
(to Steven)
Is she going to hire you to build a
bus stop around me to get me to
leave? I know when I'm not wanted.

DIANE gives JACK a look. She then turns to STEVEN and gives him a much nicer look.

DIANE
Jack can be a handful at times.
(beat)
Thank you though for the tools and
helping with the cookies.

STEVEN
Of course.

There's an awkward pause. STEVEN should be going but he is not. He's waiting around for something. DIANE smiles because she knows what he is waiting for.

DIANE
Steven. She's not here right now.

STEVEN
What? Who? What do you mean Amelia.
I mean she. Uh who?

DIANE
You know what Steven. I was just
thinking, her train gets in early
tomorrow. Maybe you should knock on
the door around 11 a.m. then.
(pause)
For a job or two around the house
of course.

STEVEN
Oh! Of course! Thank you Ms.
Fancher.

STEVEN leaves. DIANE goes to the stove to turn on the kettle of water for some tea.

JACK IRVING
Fancher?

DIANE
I don't use the name Irving
anymore.

JACK IRVING
But you never liked your maiden
name.

DIANE swivels around to see JACK going for another cookie.
Her stare dissuades him.

DIANE
They're for the festival Jack. And
I like Fancher more than I like
Irving.

JACK IRVING
Is the festival today?

DIANE ignores JACK's question.

DIANE
Is your flight rebooked?

JACK IRVING
Yeah. About that. There's not
exactly a flight today.

DIANE
I could have told you last night.
If you had let me get a word in.
But! I have good news Jack I called
the car rental place in town.
They're booked solid for the
holidays, but expecting to get one
rental back today and they said you
can have it.

DIANE pours the water for tea. This is a process of love for
her. She looks at him and then hesitates but gets a second
mug down from the cabinet and pours him water too.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Even with the roads not being
great, you can still make it back
to the city in only 9 or 10 hours.
Probably.

DIANE hands him the mug and a tea bag. JACK just smiles at
her.

DIANE (CONT'D)
What? Did you hear what I said? You
can get out of here.

JACK just smiles a sheepish smile.

DIANE (CONT'D)
Why are you being so quiet Jack
Irving?

JACK IRVING
Well Diane Fancher I kindof sortof
don't have a driver's license
anymore.

DIANE rolls her eyes.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Look. I'll just stay here a couple
more hours. 24 or so. You won't
even notice me. I promise. Quiet as
a fly.

DIANE
Flies buzz.

JACK IRVING
You get the idea.
(smiling)
C'mon. C'mon. You know we can still
get along. How awful could I be?

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL - DAY

DIANE's car comes screeching up. The Pine Hotel is a fine lodging establishment, or at least it was when the town was doing better. Built as a simple rustic place, it now appears dated yet still well tended from the outside. There is fresh snow on the ground in front of the hotel and it has been decorated in loud but tasteful manner for Christmas. There is a large sign in front of the hotel blinking "no vacancies." JACK exits DIANE's car. He opens the back door of the car to grab his suitcase when he sees the sign. He points to it.

JACK IRVING
Look no vacancies just like I...

JACK turns back around from the sign to DIANE's car and realizes she is already speeding off.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
...said.

The camera follows JACK as enters the Pine Hotel.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The lobby matches the outside as both rustic, nice, yet simple. There's a Christmas tree in the corner. As JACK enters the door a RANDOM MAN is exiting. JACK nonchalantly hands his bag to the RANDOM MAN who looks at Jack and keeps walking. The bag just drops. In the middle of the lobby are four good-sized couches arranged in a square, with a community coffee table serving all the couches. Around two of the couches are THREE YOUNG BUSINESS MEN. They look out of place on the old couches and as JACK passes them he gives them the side-eye, which one of them returns. Finally, past the couches is the check-in counter, with old mail-slots behind it. There's a bell on the counter but no hotel attendant. JACK is about to push the bell when up pops the attendant who had been crouching behind the counter. His hair is just slightly crazier than Einstein's and his nametag says DANIEL and he is holding a large key in his hand.

DANIEL

Yes? Yes?

JACK IRVING

Hi. Look. I called last night about a room but you said you didn't have any but my wife. My ex-wife. My friend. Well she called the owners and...

DANIEL

You want room?

JACK IRVING

Yes. That would be great.
Preferably close to the restaurant.
No! Not the restaurant. The spa.

DANIEL

Room in spa? Yes. Yes.

JACK IRVING

Not in spa. Look. I'll take whatever.

DANIEL

Yes.

Long pause. JACK is waiting for DANIEL to say something but DANIEL is smiling nicely.

JACK IRVING
You said you had a room?

DANIEL
Oh yes. Yes.

JACK IRVING
Can I have that room.

DANIEL
Oh yes. Definitely yes.

Another pause. JACK is sensing something off with DANIEL.
JACK reaches into his pocket for his wallet.

JACK IRVING
Okay...
(Looks at nametag.)
Daniel. Here is my credit card. You
know. To pay. For my room.

DANIEL looks at the credit card as if it is a foreign object.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Look. Nevermind. Here, what's a
room cost? \$100?

JACK takes several hundred-dollar bills out of his pocket and
lays them on the counter.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Here's five nights worth. Just give
me the key.

JACK reaches for the key and DANIEL wrenches back.

DANIEL
No reason to be rude sir. I was
just waiting for you to say what
you wanted.

JACK IRVING
(shouting)
I want a room!!

DANIEL still is staring at him. Suddenly it hits JACK.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Please.

DANIEL smiles and hands him the key.

DANIEL

Second floor. Three doors on the left.

JACK IRVING

Yeah. Thanks.

(Pause)

Hey. Daniel. Listen those three guys huddled together over there. Any idea where they're from.

JACK turns to the THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN. When he turns back DANIEL is gone. He leans over the counter but nothing. JACK shrugs and gives the THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN a last look.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is sparse but clean, well lit, and relatively modern. There is even a holiday themed quilt on the bed. The room is empty as JACK slowly turns the knob and hesitantly enters into the room. He is expecting the worst but as soon as he sees the room his mood brightens considerably.

JACK IRVING

Oh. This is not too bad at all.

A loud bomb blast and JACK dives on the floor.

CLOSE UP

JACK is laying prone on the ground, with his head down and holding his hands over his ears. Slowly he lifts up his head to see what the hell was that noise.

JACK'S POV

There is a connecting door to the room next to his and light from a tv flashing sporadically.

HISTORY CHANNEL ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

And as the bombs of August dropped on the Soldiers in the trenches, all eyes were focused on recapturing the hills of Verdun.

Another bomb blast and this one actually makes the wall shake. JACK slowly gets up as he realizes his neighbor must have the tv turned up as loud as it will go.

JACK IRVING
Yeah...no.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The doorbell goes ding dong as DIANE answers it. It is JACK and he looks ragged. However, DIANE does not invite him in.

DIANE
You haven't been gone an hour!

JACK IRVING
Dianne. I messed up. Sorry. I'll stay in the guestroom and be quiet. Not a peep. I'll do laundry. I'll wash clothes.

DIANE
Washing clothes is another word for laundry.

JACK IRVING
And I'll pay you!

JACK takes out his wallet.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
You want cash? Apparently Daniel didn't.

DIANE
Jack. No. I'm sorry but it's the week of Christmas and I've already got plans and things to do and
(looks at JACK's shoes)
Did you walk here?

JACK IRVING
It wasn't bad. Once you get over that first dozen hills it is only a couple of miles.

DIANE sighs. She is exasperated but what is she going to do with the sad lump of the man in front of her.

DIANE
Look. You can't stay here. But I will give you a ride back. I was just about to leave to go do some errands if you don't mind accompanying me.

(MORE)

DIANE (CONT'D)
(Pause)
So...

JACK IRVING
Are you serious?

DIANE
Yes. I will give you a ride.

JACK IRVING
I can't stay here?

DIANE
Jack Fielding Irving. You cannot,
under any circumstances, stay here.

JACK huffs. The trick with DANIEL hits him. He gives a sly grin.

JACK IRVING
Please?

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

JACK has his arms crossed. He is pouting.

JACK IRVING
I even said please.

DIANE
You gonna be a grouch the entire
time?

JACK IRVING
I should be working.

DIANE
Then work!

JACK IRVING
My phone's dead.

DIANE
Then charge it.

JACK gives DIANE a look. Some things never change. DIANE opens the glovebox.

DIANE (CONT'D)
There's a green cord and a red
cord.

JACK IRVING
Which one?

DIANE
Whatever one works! How do
concierges and maître-de's put up
with you?

JACK ignores her question and turns to her.

JACK IRVING
Is it normal to have out of town
visitors here the weekend of
Christmas?

DIANE
Sure. The town is beautiful right
now.

JACK IRVING
But like, business visitors.

DIANE
Explain.

JACK IRVING
There's these guys at the hotel.
Three of them. Business suits.
Talking in the lobby. Just looked
out of place. But could be a
convention or something.

DIANE laughs.

DIANE
Yep. A convention. For our huge
convention hall.

JACK IRVING
So no idea?

DIANE
Well, now that you mention it,
there hasn't been more visitors
lately per se but our visitors have
been, well, more like you. Suits.
Quiet. Usually in smallish groups.
I haven't seen any since you've
been...

JACK IRVING
Stop!!

DIANE stops the car. JACK motions her to look out. There, in the far distance, is ONE YOUNG BUSINESSMAN from earlier at the hotel. He is talking to a guy in coveralls. JACK and DIANE cannot hear them but see them shake hands.

DIANE
Huh? That is Richard. The accountant for the plant.

JACK IRVING
The cookie plant?

DIANE
Our secret nuclear factory. They teach you these questions in MBA school?

JACK IRVING
You know him?

DIANE
Sortof. He was my client at the bank but stopped using us about two months ago. Transferred all his accounts and shut everything down. Mortgage. Savings. IRAs. You name it. Thought he said he was moving.

JACK and DIANE watch RICHARD THE ACCOUNTANT and ONE YOUNG BUSINESSMAN continue to have a conversation. The ONE YOUNG BUSINESSMAN opens a briefcase.

JACK IRVING
That is some travel agent Richard must have to be carrying a real Italian briefcase.

JACK shakes his head.

DIANE
What?

JACK IRVING
It just seems so...Gray & Grey like.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

DIANE's car pulls up, just like it did earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

JACK is mashing his phone furiously while DIANE strums her fingers on the steering wheel, waiting not-so-patiently for him to get out of the car.

DIANE
I'm sure if I'm parked here long enough, the porter will carry you in.

JACK IRVING
Ha! Yes!

JACK's phone's screen lights up. He presses a button.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Only 116 missed calls?

DIANE
Get out!!

JACK's phone start to buzz.

DIANE (CONT'D)
You are not taking that in here.

JACK starts to get out of the car and is most of the way out when he checks his phone.

JACK IRVING
It's Amelia?

DIANE
Get back in the car!

JACK IRVING
You just said...ugh.

JACK slumps back in and presses the speaker button.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
This is Jack Irving.

AMELIA (O.S.)
I know who I'm calling dad.

DIANE
Hey hon. It's mom. Everything ok?

AMELIA (O.S.)
Yes! But you know how my train was supposed to arrive tomorrow?

DIANE

I have it written down. 10 a.m.
right?

AMELIA (O.S.)

Well yes. Except I took the one
today. As in. I'm here.

JACK IRVING

She's where?

DIANE

Oh honey that's great. Great! Hold
on a second honey.

DIANE takes his phone.

DIANE (CONT'D)

You have to go get her.

JACK IRVING

What?

DIANE

Amelia. She's at the train station.

JACK IRVING

I heard that. How? Take another
train to meet her train.

DIANE

By driving!

JACK IRVING

But I don't drive! You meet her.

DIANE

I was running errands to get things
for her room. As a surprise.

JACK IRVING

Well it's not a surprise now.

DIANE

She's on mute genius.

AMELIA (O.S.)

Hello? Did I lose you?

DIANE

(presses phone)

No love! Dad is coming to get you.

AMELIA
Dad? Does he drive.

JACK IRVING
I...

DIANE gives him a look.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND TRAIN STATION - MORNING

The outside of the New Holland train station makes train travel look like it is still the primary and best mode of transportation in America. The columns on the building are pristine and decorated for the holidays. There is snow on the ground but every brick walkway is perfectly clear. In the distance is the sound of the train rumbling on and AMELIA is sitting on a bench outside. She is dressed much more stylish than yesterday in JACK's office with a sharp cut navy peacoat and a beanie on her head to keep out the cold. She has her luggage besides her and is tapping her knee. Waiting. Suddenly she sees something in the distance. A mixture of confusion and unpleasantness washes over her face. AMELIA stands up.

AMELIA
What the...

Slowly. Sputtering. Starting. Stopping. Sputtering again. DIANE's car enters the frame. Finally, it stops in front of where AMELIA is standing.

CLOSE UP

JACK rolling down the window. He smiles his big smile.

JACK IRVING
Hey there stranger. Need a ride?

AMELIA
I thought mom was joking.

JACK IRVING
No. She had some errands to run.

AMELIA
I'm not getting in with you. You can't drive.

JACK IRVING
I just drove here.

AMELIA notices the front headlight. It is smashed.

AMELIA
What happened there?

JACK IRVING
Uhhhh...must have already been
there. C'mon pard'ner. Get in!

AMELIA
Dad. I'm driving.

JACK IRVING
I got this.

AMELIA
Dad!

JACK IRVING
Oh thank goodness. I was too proud
to ask.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

AMELIA is driving and JACK is scrolling his phone. There is
business-talk on the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
European markets declined today 3
percent on news of inflation in the
Turkey grain futures...

AMELIA switches the radio. Christmas music comes on. AMELIA
smiles. JACK turns it back. AMELIA turns it back again.

AMELIA
Hey Jack. Can I see your phone.

AMELIA takes JACK phone and rolls down the window and starts
to act like she is going to throw it out.

JACK IRVING
No no no no.

AMELIA
Then we keep it on Christmas music.

AMELIA flips the radio back. Hark the Herald is playing.

JACK IRVING

I should have taken that train you got off on.

AMELIA

You should have. You would be halfway to Warrensburg by now.

JACK IRVING

See! I knew there was a way to get out of here.

(pause)

But Warrensburg is the opposite way of the city?

AMELIA

You would have gotten somewhere.

JACK IRVING

Out of all the places to take a wrong flight.

AMELIA smiles a knowing smile.

AMELIA

Dad. Face it. You're stuck. Enjoy the ride. Sing along.

(singing)

Hark the Herald. Angels sing.

JACK IRVING

(trying joining in)

Harold we love you. What a...guy?

AMELIA

Close.

JACK IRVING

Glory to the newborn king. I know it. I'm not always the grinch. Daddy-mi would sing this one.

AMELIA

Grandpa?

JACK IRVING

Well. He would try to sing it. We would go caroling on our block. Close to where mom lives. I don't know how him and mama-mi did it. After the shifts they worked. But boy, did we.

AMELIA
Oh dad. You never told me that.

JACK IRVING
Hey can...can you drive through
main?

AMELIA turns the steering wheel.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND MAIN STREET - DAY

New Holland Main Street is lit up for the season. There is snow and garland and Christmas settings galore. Though no snow on the perfectly manicured sidewalks where numerous people and families are smiling and doing their Christmas shopping. In short, New Holland is main street U.S.A.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

JACK is looking at New Holland Main Street and the smiling people. The thaw is beginning to happen in his heart. Amelia, aware that something is going on, slows down and smiles at him. JACK turns to her.

JACK IRVING
Wait? What happened to Newbell's
Ice Cream? It's now an avocado
roast store?

AMELIA
Avocado toast. And yes. It's
actually owned by a guy I went to
high school with.

JACK grimaces.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
And he is a Newbell and yes, he
still serves the ice cream. It's
just...also healthy things.

JACK has moved on. Points to a toy store.

JACK IRVING
That was Mr. Johnson's tailor shop.
Got my first suit there. I went to
prom with my wife. Your mom. Diane.
Whatever in that suit.

AMELIA
I've seen the photos. You looked
very handsome and mom looked very
beautiful.

JACK IRVING
I was looking at photos last night.
You're right. She did look
beautiful.

AMELIA
Mhmmmm. I think we've arrived at
the end of your memory lane.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

DIANE's car pulls up.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

AMELIA
You sure you don't want to come
with me to pick up mom?

JACK IRVING
(hesitating)
I...sorry. I have work to do.

AMELIA
What kind of work?

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - LATER

JACK is on top of the covers of the bed still in the same
clothes as before asleep and lightly snoring. There is still
the History Channel blaring in the background but now it is
at least at a tolerable volume. Suddenly JACK bolts awake. He
sniffs. He knows immediately what that smell is.

JACK IRVING
More cookies.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

JACK comes out of the hotel and sees a large mass of people walking in the same direction. JACK looks in that direction but does not see anything. He gets YOUNG BOY of around eight-years-old attention.

JACK IRVING
Excuse me son. What is this?

YOUNG BOY
What is the cookie parade?

JACK IRVING
Ah. The cookie parade of course.

YOUNG BOY
You know by the factory.

Suddenly it hits JACK.

JACK IRVING
They still do that? Really?

YOUNG BOY gives JACK a glance and continues walking. Almost immediately after, two strong hands come up from behind JACK and place the hands on his shoulder.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
What the...

STEVEN
I thought that was you! Don't see a lot of business suits at the parade.

JACK gives him an inquisitive look. Do I know you?

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Steven. Claus. From this morning. The handyman you were so nice to.

JACK IRVING
Oh Steven! Of course. Just look different without...

STEVEN
The hat. I know. People say that a lot about my family.

JACK IRVING
Did you say your last name is Claus?

STEVEN
Want to check my driver's license?

JACK IRVING
No. No. Just you know as in...

STEVEN
As in who exactly?

JACK IRVING
You're going to make me say it
aren't you?

STEVEN
Yes.

JACK IRVING
As in Santa Claus.

STEVEN
Oh! *That* Santa Claus. Man, You're
the first to ever figure that out.

JACK IRVING
More sarcastic than your father I
see.

STEVEN
Close. Santa is not my dad.
Distant relative. Only see him
occasionally at family reunions.

JACK IRVING
Well tell the old man he needs to
do a better job of writing back to
kids. Wrote your uncle a bunch as a
kid and nothing!

STEVEN
I'll pass along the message at
once.
(pause)
What are you doing here?

JACK IRVING
I don't know. What are you doing
here?

STEVEN
C'mon. Going to the parade.

JACK IRVING
Not much of a parade guy. Used to
do this when I was a kid.

STEVEN

Oh. Okay. Then I gotta go. I don't want to miss the cookie contest.

JACK IRVING

Wait! Is that *that* smell?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

New Holland square is indeed bustling with people, all in winter and festive garb. There is a raised stage at the front of the square with four long tables lined up and plates of cookies on each table and a podium and microphone in the middle of the tables. There are several serious people milling on the stage talking in hushed terms wearing yellow badges that say "Judge." The cookie judges. To the side of the stage is a large ornate chair that is Santa's chair. There is a red rug and a rope for children to line up to talk to Santa. Some children are standing in line but the chair is empty. JACK and STEVEN walk up to the square.

JACK IRVING

...and can you believe it, it turned out to be Mr. Gray himself. The one with the a in his name. I didn't know it until after the interview. But even though he interviewed me, I ended up working for Mr. Grey, with the e, and the rest is history. Used to be great. Until Gray's horrible son ruined it. Would never return now. That's Gray with the a by...

STEVEN is looking for any excuse to get away from JACK and his story.

STEVEN

Diane! Please someone! Anyone! Save me!

AMELIA comes up to STEVEN.

AMELIA

Hello there.

STEVEN

(voice cracks)
Amelia!

(Purposefully lower)
I mean. Amelia.

AMELIA
Steven. How are you?

STEVEN
Great.
(Looks at JACK)
Okay to great. I didn't know you
were in town.

AMELIA
You didn't? My mom said she told
you.

AMELIA nods over to DIANE who is at the large chair. DIANE
waves.

DIANE
(from far away)
Steven! Thank goodness! The chair
is wobbly.

JACK IRVING
You two know each other?

STEVEN
Did Diane mention you? Must have
slipped my mind.

JACK IRVING
She mentioned it this morning. You
asked!

AMELIA
Dad!

JACK IRVING
I assume you two don't need a
chaperone. I'm going on stage to
try those cookies.

AMELIA
You can't go on stage. That's
judges only. Besides Mr. Holland is
about to give his speech.

An old man taps the microphone. It is MR. HOLLAND. While
elderly and not physically imposing, he is the opposite of
frail. He commands the podium not with raw power like JACK,
but with warmth. More so, he has retained in his smile and
composure that glimmer of mischievous all truly happy old
people have. In other words, he is still a believer at heart
in the good of mankind and the spirit of Christmas.

MR. HOLLAND

Can you all hear me? You can? Well,
I'm sorry for you then. Boys and
girls.

(he waives to the kids
waiting by the empty
chair)

And all of you ladies and gentlemen
who used to be boys and girls
waiting your turn as well, I want
to say welcome. This is the 115th
Holland family and New Holland town
cookie contest. Uninterrupted by
wars and depressions and illnesses
and famine. Yes, it has changed a
bit from when Grandma and Grandpa
Holland started it. You may not
notice it, but I have changed a bit
too. Yet, each year, no matter what
happens to the world, in New
Holland, we can appreciate the
simple joys of Christmas as
expressed through that favorite
food of Santa- the Christmas
cookie. So I'm very exited to
announce we have 80 candidates this
year. And as always, the top prize
by the judges, will be turned into
a cookie made right here, in our
own factory, by you fine folk. So
merry Christmas. And judges, on
your milk, get ready! Go!

There's a bang as the crowd cheers and the cookie competition
is on. STEVEN smacks his hand on his head and pulls out a
yellow badge.

STEVEN

I forgot! I'm a judge this year.

AMELIA

You are? Pick my cookie.

STEVEN

Which one?

AMELIA

I can't tell you. That's cheating.

STEVEN

How about I just pick the best
tasting one. That's gotta be yours.

STEVEN leaves. DIANE comes up with a tray of cookies.

JACK IRVING
Nice guy. You like don't you?

AMELIA
Dad!

DIANE
She likes who?

JACK IRVING
That guy. He looks at her the way I
always looked at you.

DIANE
If only you ever looked at me like
you're looking at these cookies.
(Pulls them away)
Nope Judges only.
(pause)
But then leftovers are fair game.

A very uptight woman with a walkie-talkie in one hand, and a clipboard in the other hand comes up to DIANE. This is the EVENT ORGANIZER.

EVENT ORGANIZER
Diane. We have a slight issue.

DIANE
How slight?

EVENT ORGANIZER
(nodding to empty chair)
The talent is sick.

DIANE
Oh that's not good.

JACK IRVING
Which talent?

DIANE
The "Big Guy" talent.

The EVENT ORGANIZER looks almost sick with worry. The kids are lined up even deeper waiting for Santa now. It is grim.

EVENT ORGANIZER
Any ideas?

DIANE looks at JACK. Slowly it dawns on JACK what she is thinking.

JACK IRVING
 Oh no no. I'm not *that* kind of talent.
 (Pause as Diane continues to stare)
 Diane. I'm not doing *that*. Besides the chair is wobbly. I can't.
 (Now event organizer and Amelia also looking at him.)
 I CAN'T!!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - LATER

STEVEN, judge badge still on, is tightening the back leg of the big chair, as a man in a big red suit and white beard approaches looking quite unhappy. It is in fact JACK dressed as Santa Claus.

STEVEN
 Chair is good to go big guy.

JACK IRVING
 Big guy?

JACK/SANTA sits down in the chair with a resigned sigh. He looks at the now very long line of children.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
 C'mon darling. Tell Santa what you want.

A YOUNG GIRL WITH PIGTAILS approaches confidently and plops down on JACK/SANTA's lap. She whispers in his ear.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
 You want that phone?! I get it's the latest, but it's going to be outdated in six months. With the supply chains running 24/7, I can get you a quicker processor and a better screen halfway around the globe tomorrow. What about liquid assets?

The YOUNG GIRL WITH PIGTAILS just stares at him, not as confident anymore.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
 I'll take the phone under advisement.

(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

I mean, I, as in Santa, will consider it.

(Pause. What is he saying?)

Yes! I'll get it for you. Happy?

The YOUNG GIRL WITH PIGTAILS smiles again. Jumps off his lap.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

No promises! That's not a binding contract.

(pause)

Next!

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK IN SANTA CHAIR MONTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Several kids sit in JACK's lap as parents take photos. Even one teen sits in his lap and JACK shoos him away. It is clear that as JACK gets more comfortable with the kids, he starts to enjoy himself more. The montage ends. LITTLE BOY TOMMY is sitting on JACK's lap with a clearly shy girl next in line.

LITTLE BOY TOMMY

I want a stuffed reindeer.

JACK IRVING

You do? Hold on. I think your old man wants us to look up.

JACK looks at the parents who give a thumbs up. Mom takes a picture.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

(shouting so parents can hear)

SANTA HEARD YOU LOUD AND CLEAR. A STUFFED RUDOLPH DOLL.

LITTLE BOY TOMMY

Not a doll. And not Rudolph. I want Dixen.

JACK IRVING

Well, hopefully Santa has a good return policy this year. Get along Tommy. Be a good boy this year.

LITTLE BOY TOMMY

Hey! You finally got my name right Santa!

LITTLE BOY TOMMY jumps down and his parents take him away.
The YOUNG SHY GIRL next in line does not want to go up to
JACK/SANTA. JACK sees her and he cannot help but smile.

JACK IRVING
Hey there! Do you know who I am?

The YOUNG SHY GIRL nods her head. She is still not budging.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Well I really want to know what you
want for Christmas, but you know,
I'm a little old now. I can't hear
you from over there.

The YOUNG SHY GIRL is considering it.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Ah! I almost forgot.
(reaches into coat and
pulls out a candy cane)
Santa got this just for you.

The YOUNG SHY GIRL crawls slowly on his lap and takes the
candy cane.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
And what is your name dear?

The YOUNG SHY GIRL takes a second and then whispers to him.

YOUNG SHY GIRL
Camilla.

JACK IRVING
Now that is a very fine name
Camilla. And what can Santa get for
you this Christmas?
(no answer)
Camilla?
(no answer)
Camilla? Santa is waiting to snap
his fingers and grant your wish.

CAMILLA
(whispering)
A thousand dollars.

JACK IRVING
(laughing)
Now now Camilla. That's quite a
gift. I don't usually deal in hard
currency.

CAMILLA just stares at him. JACK cannot tell if she is about to cry or runaway, but she looks uncomfortable asking for the money. JACK begins to sense something is wrong.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
I mean Camilla. A thousand dollars
could buy a lot of ponies. Wouldn't
one pony do?

CAMILLA
It's not for me.
(She hesitates and then
whispers very quietly
into Santa's ear)
It's for my dad.

JACK IRVING
Oh.

CAMILLA
(still whispering)
He keeps praying for that. Saying
just one thousand dollars would
help. I want to give it to him.

JACK IRVING
Is your dad here?

CAMILLA shakes her head.

CAMILLA
He is looking for a job today in
Danville.

JACK IRVING
Oh wow. That's like 100 miles away.

CAMILLA just stares at him.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Camilla. When did your dad's
prayers start?

CAMILLA
At the infant light.

JACK IRVING
The infant light?

JACK looks around. Spots AMELIA. Mouths the infant light to her. AMELIA comes over.

CAMILLA
The infant light.

AMELIA fakes a smile and then side-whispers to JACK.

AMELIA
She means the indefinite
realignment dad.

JACK gives AMELIA a look. AMELIA makes cut-throat gesture and nods. JACK finally gets it.

JACK IRVING
Oh! Your dad used to work at the
cookie factory.

CAMILLA nods.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Oh Camilla. Well I'm sorry but I
don't know if I have a thousand
dollars right now but I'm sure
things will be okay.

CAMILLA gets off his lap. She didn't think SANTA would come through and he just confirmed it.

CAMILLA
Thank you Santa. Bye.

CAMILLA walks to her mom and CAMILLA shakes her head. JACK stares. He wants to do the right thing. He needs to do the right thing. But before he can another boy sits in his lap.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - LATER

JACK is behind the stage and pageantry, trying to be out of sight of the public but not fully. He is still wearing the Santa outfit. In his hand is his cell-phone. He is dialing someone. Impatiently waiting for them to pick up. Waiting. Waiting. Finally they do.

JACK IRVING
Jill!

CUT TO:

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

JILL is waiting for a table in the lobby of a restaurant. She is dressed to the nines, even a fur around her shoulders. She is smiling. She likes to keep Jack waiting.

JILL
It is tomorrow at 7 p.m. From New
Holland private to D.C. From D.C.
straight to Tokyo.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

JACK IRVING
Tomorrow that is too long!

CUT TO:

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

A wonderfully dressed man and woman come up to Jill. She
kisses them both on the cheek.

JILL
One moment loves. Talking to the
devil incarnate.
(to phone sternly)
Take it or leave it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

JACK IRVING
The devil incarnate? That's a bit
harsh.

JACK feels a tug. He looks down. It is CAMILLA.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Oh Camilla! I was looking for you!
Sorry! Santa is talking to the
uhhh...North Pole.

JILL (O.S.)
North Pole?

JACK IRVING
Will you give Santa just a sec...

JILL (O.S.)
You want me to book you through the
North Pole?

CAMILLA
I forgot to give you this Santa.

CAMILLA gives him a hug. She then runs off. JACK is speechless.

CUT TO:

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

JILL
Yes or no to Tokyo tomorrow Jack?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

JACK is looking at CAMILLA running back into the crowd. He hears JILL but cannot answer. He is hesitating. Finally he pulls himself together. Takes off the beard and hat. He is back to stern businessman JACK.

JACK IRVING
Book it.

JACK hangs up his phone. He looks like he is at a funeral. There is an announcement happening in the distance.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
To announce the cookie winners
let's get Santa on-stage!

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

JACK enters the lobby. He is back in his normal clothes but he is holding a shopping bag and Santa's hat is poking out. As he walks by the lobby couches the THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMAN are there again, now with their ties loosened and highballs in hand. They are having a merry old time and JACK's curiosity gets the best of him. He takes a seat on the unoccupied couch and picks up a random magazine and pretends to read as he eavesdrops.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 1
That was you in Milan last year?
I'm surprised you're not in jail.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 2

(laughing)

Jail? I was afraid it was going to be an Italian grave. Those last holdouts had some family with "connections." Got out of there within an hour of us announcing the factory's closing and even that was cutting it close.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 1

My closest call with rioting employees was Canada. Mining town. Somewhere small. Heck, don't even remember what they were mining for.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 3

Not Christmas cookies!

Hearty laugh by all.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 1

What was that town Schotch-a-hoon. Something like that. Small just like this place.

(large sip of whiskey)

Except those people. At least they knew the factory was closing. Did you see these people at that festival today. No idea.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 2

Until we drop the bomb.

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN 3

A Christmas treat!

Another laugh interrupted by JACK's shock.

JACK IRVING

What?!

The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN all turn and notice JACK for the first time, who realizes he expressed his amazement out loud. He looks for an excuse and then looking at the magazine holds it up.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Cruises in Iceland.

The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN continue to stare. This guy?!

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Always wanted to go. Good deal.

The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN realize they do not really care about JACK or his answer and go back to their bull session.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S KITCHEN - LATER

DIANE is finally alone at her kitchen table. The table is a mess of papers and her computer and shopping lists but she does not care. This is her time. She pours some nice hot tea and has one of those cookies she made earlier on a plate next to her. Just as DIANE is about to bite into the cookie, there is a KNOCK. She looks at the door irritated but then goes back to the cookie. A LOUDER KNOCK. Now DIANE looks really irritated. Then the third LOUDEST knock. DIANE sighs.

DIANE

It's open Jack.

Without even looking to confirm it is JACK, DIANE takes the bite of cookie as finally JACK, nearly out of breath, enters. He stumbles confused inside. He has snow on his coat and hat. He has been in the elements for a moment to get here.

JACK IRVING

How did you...

DIANE

You are the only person in the world who knocks that annoyingly. That's how.

JACK IRVING

Well, I didn't know if you were asleep or not and this is important and I ran over here as soon as I found out.

DIANE looks at his shoes. They confirm he did run over. She is a little impressed but tries not to show it.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

But you're going to want to sit down for this.

DIANE

I am sitting down.

JACK IRVING

Well...then I will sit down for this.

JACK sits down and goes for the cookie on the plate. DIANE pulls it back. He gives her a stare but backs down.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Those businessmen I was talking
about. At the motel. Well I just
heard them talking about Holland's
factory.

DIANE
They're going to shut it down.

JACK is taken aback. How did she know?

DIANE (CONT'D)
Jack. You've been here 24 hours.
I've been here 24 years. In a bank.
Seeing the financials day in and
day out. They're not horrible,
but...Holland Cookies aren't what
they used to be. I've tried to get
you interested before. Those cards
those letters.

JACK IRVING
You should have called.

DIANE
Those phone calls. You were always
too busy someplace in some town,
doing the same thing those guys are
going to do to our factory.

JACK IRVING
Not like this.

DIANE gives him that look. Really JACK?

DIANE
Richard, the Holland employee we
saw earlier. While you were picking
up Amelia I went to the bank and
looked at the accounts he
transferred out.

DIANE grabs the laptop on the table and opens it and types a
couple lines. Shows the screen to JACK.

DIANE (CONT'D)
He didn't move it to some
retirement account. He didn't move
it to an account at all, but a
corporation. Look familiar?

JACK IRVING
Gray and Grey.

DIANE

Where you got your start.

JACK IRVING

Where we got our start.

DIANE

Your start. I never condoned their tactics. Shutting down factories just because the parts could be sold for more at auctions or scrap.

JACK IRVING

You don't think...

DIANE gives him another look. JACK buckles up.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

All right lemme think. Lemme think. When will these guys strike. The problem is I don't know Gray and Grey anymore.

DIANE

All right. When would you close it down??

JACK IRVING

Well that's easy. The factory's most profitable days are leading up to Christmas but that's only seven days before January, which brings a new year, new bills, and another month of overhead. No. I'd want to get in there the moment the Christmas rush was done and start taking it down.

JACK realizes as he is talking he is seeing the plan of what is going to happen. He looks ashen. DIANE slides her tea over and he gulps it like it is whiskey. He looks DIANE dead in the eyes.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Does the state still require seven-days notification for termination of over 10 employees?

DIANE

That's your lane.

JACK IRVING

Yes it does. Or it did last year
when I shut down that factory in
Plaxton.

(Another look)

Yes. I know how that sounds. Don't
judge. I'm thinking.

DIANE gets up to go to the teapot and picks up her phone.

DIANE

You continue to think and I'll
continue to judge.

JACK IRVING

So gotta get everybody gone by
December 31. So 31 minus seven is .
. .Christmas Eve!

JACK looks at DIANE who is dialing her phone.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

They're going to tell everyone
tomorrow?

DIANE speaking to the telephone.

DIANE (ON PHONE)

Hey Tyler. Diane. Ms. Fancher.

(Listening)

No, nothing to be worried about
with the home inspection documents.
I was calling for a different
reason. You said the factory is
having a meeting tomorrow about
bonuses.

(Listening)

Well do you know it's about bonuses
or is that just what everyone
assumes.

(Listening)

Oh. Okay that's helpful. So
everyone is just guessing. Thanks.

(Listening)

Yeah, no worries. Don't know
either. And yes you can bring them
by next week. Merry Christmas.

DIANE hangs up.

DIANE (CONT'D)

Well Jack. You've destroyed enough companies. Let's see if you can save one.

CUT TO:

INT. FANCY HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A MAN dressed very similarly to how JACK dresses is sleeping on top of the covers of the bed, similar to JACK. In fact, if JACK was still 30-years-old and had blonde hair, it could be him, but it is in fact QUINN, one of his employees. QUINN's cell phone starts vibrating and he searches for it, before finding it and groggily answering.

QUINN

Quinn Meyers here. Oh hey Jack.

(Listening)

Uhuh. Uhuh. Gray and Gray did what?

Let me grab a pen.

(grabs pen on nightstand)

Go ahead. Uh huh. Uh huh. No!

That's terrible. You think tomorrow on Christmas eve? They wouldn't do that. Uh huh. And you're sure.

(listening)

Okay yeah. I'll help. I'm in. Talk soon bye.

QUINN yawns some more and lies back down and dials a number on his phone.

CUT TO:

EXT. TROPICAL BEACH - CONTINUOUS

An elderly man, maybe 15 years JACK's senior is wearing a tropical hat is sitting underneath an umbrella in a lounge chair. There are palm trees in the background and blue sky. This man is definitely not in New Holland. Despite being in paradise his facial expression says he is miserable. SERVER ONE approaches with a bowl and a spoon. The man takes the bowl and one slurp of the soup.

OLD MAN

Too cold! Too cold! Warm it up.

As if on cue, SERVER TWO approaches from the opposite side holding another bowl and spoon. The OLD MAN takes it and does not even bother with the spoon but slurps the bowl.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Ah! Now that is proper temperature soup.

A telephone ringing. SERVER ONE, who is now holding the too-cold soup in one hand, reaches into his pocket with his free hand and seamlessly answers the phone and puts it up to the OLD MAN's ear. This is clearly a routine.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Quinn. You just heard what from Jack Irving? Are you sure he mentioned that it was a Christmas Cookie Factory? And he's there in person.

(listening)

Oh don't tell me you're buying the line about family stuff. He's intent on making the deal before we do! Don't say any more. If Jack Irving is there in person then I'm coming too! That's right. Tell your young team they are about to meet Aaron Gray in person! Got it!

There is a pause as SERVER ONE is about to take the phone away from the OLD MAN who is actually business magnate AARON GRAY. Right before the server hangs up the phone, AARON GRAY motions to put it back up to his ear.

AARON GRAY

And where is place again?

(listening)

Got it thanks.

SERVER ONE hangs up the phone. AARON GRAY takes a sip of his soup and scowls.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)

And now it's gone cold!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

It is dark and NEW HOLLAND's folks are nestled into their beds after the big Christmas cookie contest. Except for AMELIA. She is walking on the sidewalk observing the well-stocked stores, all closed for the evening. She pauses in front of the Avocado Toast place she mentioned to JACK earlier and peers in. Suddenly there is a noise of a person mimicking a camera snapping.

STEVEN (O.C.)

Snap snap.

AMELIA turns around and sees a smiling STEVEN, who is holding up his hands like they are a camera and he just took a picture of her. AMELIA smiles at his playfulness.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

There she is folks. In the wild!
Amongst us mere mortals. The winner
of the New Holland Cookie Contest
herself! Yay!!

STEVEN applauds wildly as AMELIA rolls her eyes. STEVEN stops applauding and looks into the Avocado Toast place himself.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

So are casing the joint? I figure
there's got to be at least 4.35
million dollars in there.

AMELIA

That's a very oddly specific
figure.

STEVEN

Well enough to pay off the debt New
Holland Cookies owes.

AMELIA

It owes what?

STEVEN

4 million dollars and change. But
with the money left over I think we
could afford a little trip to the
Bahamas.

AMELIA

Are you a secret accountant?

STEVEN

Nope. Still only world's best
handyman. You see, it's not the
accountant part. It's the secret
part. There's no such thing in a
town like New Holland.

(AMELIA looks worried)

I don't think it's that bad.
They're still planning to give the
annual bonus tomorrow.

AMELIA

Well it doesn't sound too good.

AMELIA takes one final look at the Avocado Toast place and starts walking as before, only this time STEVEN tags along.

STEVEN

People don't like Christmas cookies the way they used too. Too many options. Too many diets. Too little time to buy. Too little . . .

AMELIA

Christmas spirit.

STEVEN

(Tries to put a good spin on it)

The town is adjusting. As long as the factory is still around, people will make due.

(Long pause as they walk)

So uh...you gonna tell me what you are actually doing out here? I mean, I'm all for a life of hard crime but I left my Al Capone hat at home.

There is a broom on the sidewalk and STEVEN trips over it. AMELIA tries not to laugh but she can't hide it as she pulls him up.

AMELIA

Less Al Capone than Keystone Cops. C'mon. Get up. I got you.

STEVEN dusts himself off. They keep walking.

STEVEN

Thanks. That broom came out of nowhere.

AMELIA

Just a vicious broom. One moment it is cleaning flurries off the sidewalk. The next, it is attacking you. That's why I was out here. A vigilante keeping an eye out on nefarious cleaning items.

(Pause as she gets somber)

That or I was just walking the streets. Remembering.

STEVEN picks up that the tone has changed.

STEVEN

No better time of year.

AMELIA

I moved away from here to the city to be near my dad. You two met.

STEVEN

I think I would move away from the city if he was there.

AMELIA

Well, I didn't want to but I thought being closer to him would make us closer. The kicker was he offered to fund my bakery. Said he'd visit every week. That it would be the start of a franchise. And well. . . here I am two years later and I'm looking in closed restaurants for inspiration because he's never visited. There's no franchise. No weekly visits. It is finally making good money and yet I can't help but think it should be here. And so should he.

STEVEN

But he is here.

AMELIA

Cause I tricked him! Switched his plane ticket. And you wanna know why? It wasn't even for him. It was for my mom.

STEVEN

I don't follow.

AMELIA

Can you keep a secret?

STEVEN

As long as it's below 4 million.

AMELIA

Well I actually tricked him to show mom. Diane. That she shouldn't move. Oh she denies it but I know she's been looking at moving. But by bringing Jack errr dad here, I could show her how shallow the big city has made him.

STEVEN

That is even more complicated than a heist.

AMELIA

And its been 24-hours and he's still here, and I think the only person that's learned a lesson is me. That maybe it should have been me booking the one way ticket and staying here.

STEVEN

I can always use a helper.

AMELIA smiles. They walk in silence.

AMELIA

Steven the handyman. Steven and Amelia. The handy...people? How did I not know you in high school?

STEVEN

Because I didn't go to high school in New Holland. Moved here from up north after school.

AMELIA

For the factory?

STEVEN

For the people.

AMELIA

That's a good reason.

(Suspicious pause)

Wait. Was it for the people. Or for one certain person. Like a . . .

STEVEN

A girlfriend? No. Haven't had one of those for a while. Waiting.

AMELIA

For what?

They stop walking and STEVEN looks AMELIA deep in the eyes.

STEVEN

For a girl to sweep me off my feet obviously.

STEVEN grabs her shoulders.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Hey Amelia. . .

Is STEVEN going for the kiss? AMELIA closes her eyes in anticipation. The moment is right. And then STEVEN looks over AMELIA's shoulder.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
 . . .is that your dad?

The moment between STEVEN and AMELIA is ruined by a car swerving down the street and driving over the curb, nearly hitting a mailbox, before passing STEVEN and AMELIA. Braking hard and then reversing back to them. It is DIANE's car. The car window rolls down and STEVEN and AMELIA both peer in, partially horrified at what they will see. Sure enough, the horrible driver is JACK.

JACK IRVING
 (impatient)
 Well...you two getting in or not?

AMELIA
 To where?

JACK IRVING
 Still trying to figure that out.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

JACK is trying to drive and dial the phone and it is going about as well as to be expected from someone who does not drive or multitask. STEVEN and AMELIA are bundled in the back seat, looking less like willing passengers, than hostages. JACK gives up on the phone and shouts to STEVEN.

JACK IRVING
 Get me Richard Boyd.

There is a pause as STEVEN looks confused at AMELIA.

STEVEN
 Excuse me?

AMELIA
 He thinks you're on the phone.
 (taps JACK's shoulder)
 You're not on a call dad. He is in the back seat.

STEVEN
 Richard Boyd? As in the accountant at the Holland Cookie Factory?

JACK IRVING
You know where he is?

STEVEN
Uh. I'm going to guess the cookie
factory. Wait.
(Checks watch.)
Try Eddies. Those guys usually hang
out there around this time.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIES DINER - LATER

RICHARD BOYD, the man from earlier, is sitting at the very
same table JACK and DIANE sat at. He is nonchalant sipping a
cup of coffee and looking at pamphlets for tropical resorts.

RICHARD BOYD
(to himself)
Oh that's a good one.

JACK enters with AMELIA and STEVEN trailing behind him. JACK
scans Eddies for a second, spots RICHARD BOYD and goes up to
RICHARD's table. RICHARD looks at him quizzically. Can I help
you? JACK slides into the booth across from RICHARD. JACK
then looks at AMELIA and STEVEN waiting for them to join him.
They hesitate. The booth is really small. JACK gives AMELIA a
'you better' stare and AMELIA sits. Now it's just STEVEN
standing. There is only a couple of inches of booth space
left but he cannot just stand there. STEVEN shrugs and
squeezes in. Now the three of them are all packed like
sardines across from RICHARD who has watched this entire
charade happen at his table and is quite perplexed. RICHARD
looks around at all the empty seats surrounding them at
Eddies, makes sure he is not daydreaming, and then looks back
at JACK, AMELIA, and STEVEN. Oh STEVEN! He recognizes STEVEN.

RICHARD BOYD (CONT'D)
STEVEN. You know these two?

STEVEN
Mind if I answer that question
after I see how the next 10 minutes
or so goes.

JACK IRVING
Cut the small talk Boyd. My name is
Jack Irving. As in Gerald Irving's
son.

There is a pregnant pause. RICHARD trying to remember a
Gerald Irving.

RICHARD BOYD
Gerald Irving?

JACK IRVING
(simmering)
He worked for Holland cookies for
40 years before retiring.

RICHARD BOYD
Oh. That does ring a very small
bell. And how can I help you?

JACK IRVING
I know what you and your cronies
have planned for tomorrow.

RICHARD BOYD
Oh really?

JACK IRVING
And I'm here to tell you it won't
work and I'm giving you 12 hours to
call Gray and Grey and call it off.

JACK slides over his cell phone.

RICHARD BOYD
(laughing)
Is this a third-grade threat? Are
you going to steal my lunch money
if I don't.

JACK IRVING
No. My wife.

AMELIA
Ex-wife.

JACK IRVING
My ex-wife Diane Irving.

AMELIA
Fancher.

JACK IRVING
Diane Fancher who you do know is
right now at her office going
through every single statement of
yours looking for any tiny
inconsistency. My top assistant
Quinn calling deal makers around
the world. Once we find a way to
stop you...
(Pounds table)

RICHARD BOYD

Yes?

JACK IRVING

Well then you won't be able to go
to your fancy beaches there.

RICHARD takes a sip of his coffee and looks back at his
pamphlet. He went from amused to annoyed.

RICHARD BOYD

That. Is. The. Dumbest. Plan. I
have ever heard.

(to Steven)

This is Jack Irving?

JACK IRVING

Gerald Irving's son!

RICHARD BOYD

Gerald Irving. Gerald Irving. It
took me a second to remember that
name.

JACK IRVING

He retired after 38 years.

RICHARD BOYD

At what age? Hold on. Let me guess.
Started working at Holland at 18 or
19 years old. Add 38 years, so left
at 57 or 58 years old.

JACK IRVING

(Trying to calculate
himself)

Yes. So?

RICHARD BOYD

So not the retirement age of 60 or
after 40 years.

(smirks as he drinks
coffee)

But yes you can call it retirement.
I do believe I did tell some of the
old-timers that line myself.

JACK IRVING

What are you saying? That you fired
my dad? You couldn't have. Holland
Cookies is employee-owned.

RICHARD BOYD

Was employee owned. Jack Irving.
Jack Irving? Jack Irving! Yes. I
knew we had met before. Now if I am
not mistaken and you are in fact
Diane's ex-husband, we talked over
the telephone on how to change from
employee to privately owned.

JACK IRVING

No we didn't.

RICHARD BOYD

In fact you told me it was not a
problem at all and asked why I had
not done it years before.

JACK IRVING

I would never have blessed off on
that.

RICHARD BOYD

Would you even have noticed in all
the deals you do.

JACK IRVING

(losing steam)

That's not poss...

JACK realizes it is possible as RICHARD takes a victor's sip
of coffee.

AMELIA

What are you saying Mr. Boyd?

RICHARD BOYD

Why don't I let your father
explain.

JACK IRVING

By going private, he could
involuntarily buy out employees
shares and force them to retire.

RICHARD BOYD

And I could have never done it
without you Jack-a-roo!

STEVEN

What about tomorrow? What about
Holland Christmas cookies? The ones
that cheers people up throughout
the world.

RICHARD BOYD

It is a shame because they are such good cookies but I'll let you in on a little secret Steven. Those 100-year-old stainless steel machines that the cookies are made on. They are worth far far more than any little cookie.

JACK IRVING

(to himself)

I helped fire my own dad.

RICHARD BOYD

Businessman to businessman Jack. You should see this deal I worked out with Gray and Grey. 20 percent of the final sale of those machines! 20!

WAITER comes.

RICHARD BOYD (CONT'D)

(Giving check to JACK)

You got this right Jack?

(to the three)

See you at the bonus tomorrow.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - LATER

JACK is sitting on a stool nursing a drink in the lobby. It appears to be the hotel bar but as the camera pulls back, JACK has in fact, just pulled a stool up to the front desk. DANIEL is working in his normal place behind the desk. JACK is talking to DANIEL but really, he is talking to himself.

JACK IRVING

...Fired. Laid off. Indefinitely realigned. That's a good one.

DANIEL

Yes. Yes. Yes.

JACK IRVING

Either way, it means goodbye to a paycheck. Goodbye to the factory. Goodbye to this town.

DANIEL

Yes. Yes. Yes.

JACK IRVING

Of course. I said goodbye years ago. I didn't want. I couldn't. Follow in my dad's footsteps. And why? You know what he did?

DANIEL

Of course. Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

STEVEN is standing over a counter with his hands over his eyes. AMELIA has a sheet of cookies she has just taken out of the oven. AMELIA places them in front of STEVEN and he uncovers his eyes and looks happily surprised.

CUT TO

STEVEN and AMELIA with a bunch of half-eaten cookies in front of them writing down notes.

JACK IRVING (V.O.)

He made Christmas cookies. Probably millions of cookies over his 40 years. That's millions of people. All smiling whenever they opened his life's work. Imagine knowing that-- that everything you make will bring a smile to a kid's face, or a busy parent, or a grandpa who gets it from his grandkids.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

DIANE is cleaning up the kitchen table with all the documents on it from before. There is a folder at the very bottom and she opens it and some photos fall out. DIANE picks up the photo on the very top. It is JACK and DIANE on their wedding day. Behind them is a cookie tower.

JACK IRVING (V.O.)

Did you know my dad? Ah. Course not. You're too young. Gerald Irving. Proud to tell people he worked at Holland Christmas cookie factory. Always the entire thing-- Holland Christmas Cookie Factory.

(MORE)

JACK IRVING (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Especially kids. He would tell children he managed the elves. He told me that too. Even when I wasn't a kid he still gave me cookies. In fact. You know what my dad's gift was for our wedding? A Christmas cookie tower. Each cookie signed and made by a different one of my dad's buddies. All of his buddies worked at Holland Cookies. They were probably let go too.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

AARON GRAY is sitting at the head of a table looking at some pieces of paper and laughing at toying with people's lives. QUINN is seated to his right, trying to force a smile. SERVER THREE brings soup and AARON GRAY tries it, shakes his head "no" and slides it to QUINN, who just sits there. AARON GRAY gives QUINN a look and QUINN stands up taking the soup with him. AARON GRAY goes back to laughing at people's misery.

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
I had no problem following my dad's work ethic. That part came naturally. But what really made Gerald Irving a great man wasn't his work ethic-- it was that sense that Christmas was bigger than just a holiday or gifts. Christmas was about the people we love.

PHONE RINGING O.S.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The ringing phone has snapped JACK's train of thought. He picks it up without looking. Hoping. Praying.

JACK IRVING
Diane???

ROBOTIC PHONE VOICE
This is to confirm your seat for a flight tomorrow at...6 p.m. with service to...Tokyo.

JACK hangs up the phone disappointed and swallows the last of the liquid. Stands up and pounds the top of the desk.

JACK IRVING

Until tomorrow Daniel. Put it on my bill.

DANIEL gives a smile. As the camera pans out, it shows that during JACK's long soliloquy, a YOUNG COUPLE was waiting to check in. The YOUNG COUPLE looks at JACK as if he is crazy.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND DOWNTOWN - THE NEXT MORNING

It is very early and the town of New Holland is still. The downtown street has a fresh unblemished layer of snow on it. The town Christmas tree is large and glorious. All of the houses have decorations out and look so cozy and comfy inside. It really is the perfect small town.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Pine Hotel is not stirring either. Except there is one window open and a person pacing back and forth.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACK, wearing Christmas pajamas, is talking on the room's landline phone. He doesn't sound his usual confidence self.

JACK IRVING

No Michael. I'm not near Tokyo.

(listening)

No. Not near the airport either. If you must know I am still in New Holland in a hotel room dialing on a landline at who knows how much per minute while wearing some old PJ's I found at my wife's house.

(Listening)

Ex-wife Michael. No. I'm not in Vegas getting married.

JACK takes the phone cord and falls into the bed.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Slow down Mike. How bad?

JACK stands up in the bed. It is bad.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE A BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL, who could be QUINN's twin with a different hair color, is talking in hushed tones and looking worried.

MICHAEL
Irving is saying he is going to
sign the deal without Jack. He said
he's tired of waiting. The owners
are tired of waiting.

MICHAEL looks back. Unlike QUINN, he actually is in JACK's corner and realizes he is giving him information that might hurt his own career.

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
Tell Dick Irving that Jack Irving
will haunt him forever.

MICHAEL
I held off D.I. as long as
possible. And Mr. Irving. Jack. You
didn't hear this from me. But Dick
has been whispering about you. If
your heart is still in it. He's
even said if he can do it without
you that he would...
(Looks around very scared)
You know....

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACK is looking very concerned. He knows how cutthroat his own firm is. He listens for a moment as MICHAEL lays out all the ways DICK IRVING will fire him.

JACK IRVING
Yep. Yep. I understand Mike. Thanks
Mike.
(pause)
Oh and Mike. I mean this. Merry
Christmas. Call your family.
(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
 (Phone buzzes)
 Mike, got another call.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS

JILL, looking incredibly elegant, is shopping and casually picking up random shirts and frilly looking expensive things.

JILL
 I had to ask the front desk to put me through to you. What happened to the extra charger I packed?

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACK IRVING
 You put an extra charger in my bag?

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUOUS

JILL
 I assume you were calling to confirm your flight, and yes. You are still good for 7 p.m.

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
 Sort of. How hard would it be to move?

JILL
 Very. Just put up with the town for another 10 hours. Also is Quinn joining you?

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
 I wasn't asking to move it up. I meant...wait. Why are you asking about Quinn?

JILL touches an expensive looking sweater. It feels so nice.

JILL
 He called yesterday. Asking about a Gray and Grey deal in New Holland. I thought you had spoken.

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
We did but I didn't mention Gray
and Grey to him.

JILL
The intrigue. I didn't tell him
much because I've never felt I
could trust him.

JACK IRVING (O.S.)
I have to trust him. He's the only
person I have. Except you.

JILL
Nice save. That line still cost you
a new sweater.
(picks up the sweater)
Anyways, for Quinn I don't work
Christmas eve. But for you however.
If/when Diane helps you figure out
how to see your email, you'll see
every file we have related to New
Holland Christmas Cookie factory.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JACK jumps off the bed.

JACK IRVING
Jill! You're a life saver! How did
you know I'd need those files.

JILL (O.S.)
Because I know the real you. Merry
Christmas Jack.

CUT TO:

EXT. PINE HOTEL ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

JACK exits the Pine Hotel with a large stack of folders and documents under his arm and walks out of frame. Right after JACK has left, a large limousine pulls up and from the back door exits AARON GRAY. Right behind AARON GRAY is QUINN.

QUINN
I don't know if he is still here
Mr. Gray.

AARON GRAY takes a deep breath of the cool air in.

AARON GRAY
Oh he's here all right.

There is a natural pause where the scene should end but it does not. AARON GRAY gives a disgusted look at QUINN.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)
Why are my bags still in the car?
You didn't get Jack Irving's bags?
C'mon. Chop. Chop.

QUINN
I'm not a...fine.

AARON GRAY
Then on to our triumph.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOME IN NEW HOLLAND - MORNING

On a quiet street there is beautiful smallish but very tidy Craftsman home decorated with tasteful Christmas decorations. Not a creature is stirring. Until tires screech.

DIANE (O.S.)
Hold on. It's right here. Slow
down. Not up! Down!

Sure enough, the side of the tires screeching is DIANE's car with her in the passenger seat and JACK driving. JACK pulls up in front of the house and quickly gets out.

JACK IRVING
Hold on.

JACK goes around to the passenger side of the car and opens the door. DIANE looks at him suspiciously.

DIANE
Since when do you hold doors for
ladies?

JACK IRVING
Since always.

DIANE
As in our first date. That was it.

JACK IRVING
(ignoring her comment)
So this is it?

DIANE
If he's home.

CUT TO CLOSE UP OF THE FRONT DOOR

JACK and DIANE are ringing the door bell.

JACK IRVING
He looked good yesterday for a
hundred.

DIANE
Jack.

JACK IRVING
What? He's got to be close.

The door swings open and it is MR. HOLLAND from the cookie
contest yesterday. He is not 100, but he is old.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Mr. Holland. Hello. I was Santa
yesterday but my name is...

MR. HOLLAND
Come on in Jonathan. Come on in.

JACK is shocked MR. HOLLAND knows his name. DIANE just
shrugs. They enter.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. HOLLAND'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Just like the outside, the inside is cozy and small but very
well maintained. MR. HOLLAND is walking towards the kitchen
with JACK and DIANE following him.

MR. HOLLAND
I just made some cookies. The
original recipe ones. Of course, my
oven is not as good. Or the baker
is not as good. But let's blame the
oven. Coffee?

JACK IRVING
Yes please. Two sugars...

MR. HOLLAND
...And no cream.

JACK IRVING
How did you know?

MR. HOLLAND
My manners. Take a seat! Please.

MR. HOLLAND prepares coffee for himself and JACK and a mug of tea and brings them over to JACK and DIANE who have indeed taken a seat.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)
Your coffee. And Diane, your tea.

DIANE takes the tea. She is just as confused as JACK.

DIANE
Thanks Mr. Holland. Mr. Holland...

MR. HOLLAND
Tom.

DIANE
Tom. Were you expecting us?

MR. HOLLAND smiles wide.

MR. HOLLAND
For a very long time. Too long! I'd nearly given up. Nearly! Wait!

MR. HOLLAND Gets up slowly, leaves room and comes back with a pile of papers.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)
These were Gerald's. I had thought about putting them away. That's what I meant by giving up. But I didn't, you see. There was no one who loved Christmas more.

JACK IRVING
(taking the papers)
Than dad?

MR. HOLLAND
(chuckles)
No. Not Gerald.

JACK and DIANE look at each other. Has MR. HOLLAND lost his marbles. He sees their confusion.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)
Than you Jonathan! Look.

CLOSE UP OF BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO OF TWO STERN MEN AND A YOUNG HAPPY CHILD.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)
That was taken right after I took over the factory and your dad had started working for me.

JACK IRVING
That's me?

DIANE
I mean. That is you.

JACK IRVING
I don't recognize myself.

MR. HOLLAND
I do. I do.

MR. HOLLAND shows off another photograph.

CUT TO PHOTO OF SAME BOY ON SANTA'S LAP. SANTA IS OR COULD BE JACK.

JACK IRVING
Dad?

DIANE
Wow! That looks just like you yesterday.

MR. HOLLAND
(smiling)
That's what Holland Factory was about. The people. People like your father.

JACK IRVING
Well now it makes sense. I used to write Santa every year asking him for a bright green wooden race car. With the black wheels and pointed nose.

MR. HOLLAND
I know the type. Every kid your age wanted one.

JACK IRVING
And the entire time, the problem was I wasn't asking the real Santa. I was asking my dad!

MR. HOLLAND

Now now Johnathan. Maybe the problem wasn't that Santa didn't hear you. Maybe it's because you didn't make the nice list.

JACK IRVING

Mr. Holland. I have a confession. New Holland cookies is going to be closed tonight and the financial company that helped start the deal to sell it...is my old company.

MR. HOLLAND is quiet.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

I helped sell the factory. Your factory! And a firm called Gray and Grey that bought it. They are going to close it down.

Still no response from MR. HOLLAND

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Your factory is shutting Mr. Holland!

MR. HOLLAND

(sips his coffee)

And I have a confession too. The factory would have shut down years ago. But by selling to outsiders, I raised enough money to keep it open. To keep people in the town making cookies, and to keep kids like this one...

(points to photo of Young JACK)

...happy. Yes, the factory has been through tough times before but it always comes through.

MR. HOLLAND finishes his coffee. Gets up and walks to sink.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)

And my word?! Why am I keeping you. You only have a few hours left!

MR. HOLLAND pats JACK and DIANE on the back.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)

I believe in you two.

JACK IRVING
If only it were that simple.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL ROOM - LATER

JACK packing his suitcase. He looks somber. There is a knock on the door.

DIANE
Jack. It's time.

CUT TO:

INT. DIANNE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

DIANE is now driving and JACK is in the passenger seat looking morose.

JACK IRVING
Wait! I have it! What if...
(Pause)
I don't have it.

DIANE
I will say this Jack Irving. You've tried. Which is...

JACK IRVING
Words Diane.

DIANE
...I'm glad you came. Which is more than I would have said two days ago.

JACK IRVING
Does this mean...

DIANE
Nooooope. Still the hotel next time.

JACK looks out the window contemplating whether to do the right thing or the wrong one.

JACK IRVING
We've been racking our brains and nothing.

DIANE

I'm sure you'll figure it out the moment you land in Tokyo.

JACK IRVING

Which by then will be too late.
Wait! I have it now!

DIANE puts car in park. They are in front of another nice, cute, smallish home. A little less nice than Mr. Holland's but similar Craftsman style.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Actually. Was kindof hoping me saying wait excitedly would lead to me coming up with an idea.

DIANE

Jack. It really is okay.

DIANE leans over and gives him a peck on the cheek. Not a romantic one, but a conciliatory 'until next time' one.

DIANE (CONT'D)

C'mon. Let's say goodbye to Amelia.

JACK IRVING

Is this what's his face's house?

DIANE

Steven Claus.

JACK IRVING

Still can't believe his name is Claus. It's like elves built him in a factory. Which, actually would explain why he's so good-looking.

DIANE

Very good-looking. Very nice. Very handy too. But, he lives very, very, very, far away from Amelia.

JACK opens the car door and starts to get out, and then pauses. The IDEA! Has finally struck.

JACK IRVING

Wait a second. Factory. Elves.
Clause. Factory. Elves. Clause.
Factory. Elves. Clause!

DIANE

Jack?

JACK closes the car door and buckles back up.

JACK IRVING
Factory elves clause! That's it!
Drive!

DIANE
To the airport!

JACK pauses dramatically.

JACK IRVING
No! To. My. COMPUTER!

CUT TO:

EXT. STEVEN CLAUS'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

JACK and DIANE are standing outside of her car with a computer open on the trunk. They have not actually moved since the last dramatic scene and are bickering like the old married couple they used to be.

JACK IRVING
It definitely starts with C.

DIANE
Capital C or lower-case C?

JACK IRVING
Does that make a difference?

DIANE
Does that make...It makes all the difference!

JACK IRVING
I'm calling Jill.

DIANE
No you're not. Leave that poor woman alone.

AMELIA, wearing an apron with lots of flour on it, opens the door. She heard the ruckus and came out to see what it was.

AMELIA
What are you two doing?

DIANE
Your dad can't figure out his password.

JACK IRVING
I can figure it...

AMELIA
Its CookieCrumbs100. All one word.
The Cs are capitalized.

JACK plugs it in.

JACK IRVING
Ha! That works! Told you I knew it!

AMELIA
Why are you out here?

STEVEN walks up behind AMELIA.

STEVEN
Hi Diane!

DIANE
Hi Steven.

JACK IRVING
(mocking)
Oh hi Steven.

AMELIA
Why are you two just standing and
arguing over a computer in front of
Steven's house?

STEVEN
Do you two want to come in?

AMELIA
No they don't.

JACK IRVING AND DIANE (TOGETHER)
Yes.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The cookies that AMELIA and STEVEN made the night before in the montage are still on the counter. Other than that, the kitchen is of course, spotless, and rustic. There are a couple of stools and JACK, carrying the computer and the stack of paper JILL sent him, heaves all of it on the kitchen counter and then sits on the stool triumphantly.

JACK IRVING

So we were over at Mr. Holland's house. And your boyfriend.

AMELIA

Don't have a boyfriend.

JACK IRVING

Almost boyfriend. C'mon. This Claus guy. Anyways, I said Steven that you looked like you were built in a factory made by elves. Get it?

STEVEN

Uhhh...yeah Mr. Irving?

STEVEN looks around for help and gets none.

AMELIA

Dad. I think you need some rest.

DIANE

You're going to miss your flight. Now it's been nearly an hour of you repeating this and I still am no clearer what you mean.

JACK IRVING

Diane. Look what you found.

JACK hands DIANE some sheets off the top of his pile.

AMELIA

What is that?

DIANE

A contract. Actually a couple of them. When Mr. Holland sold the company, the transaction went through our bank to a Chicago bank to a New York bank to a...

(flips page over)

Miami bank. I don't remember why it went to so many places, but I looked through it and it's the most boilerplate language ever. Look. They didn't even bother to type the names. Just filled them out in ink. That's how standard these are.

STEVEN

And what is he looking for?

DIANE
Amelia's dad is looking for a
miracle.

There is a long pause as JACK and AMELIA both look at DIANE.

DIANE (CONT'D)
What did I say?

AMELIA
You called dad 'dad.'

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND FACTORY ENTRANCE - LATER

RICHARD BOYD is standing outside the entrance dressed in a smart black suit. The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN are behind him. RICHARD is greeting the workers filing in, many with families and overalls. RICHARD nods to one employee in overalls.

RICHARD BOYD
Tom. How are you?

OVERALLS WORKER
Not even close to my name.

RICHARD BOYD
Good to hear. Good to hear.

RICHARD continues to scan the crowd until a limousine pulls up. Once it does RICHARD nods his head to dispatch the THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN to open the door. Before they can reach it. QUINN pops out the door.

AARON GRAY (O.S.)
Keep it open! Did Jack Irving not
even teach you basic manners?

QUINN keeps the door open as AARON GRAY exits the limousine. RICHARD BOYD turns on a fake smile and puts out his hand.

RICHARD BOYD
Ah! Mr. Gray so nice to finally...

AARON GRAY
Where is it?

RICHARD BOYD
Where's what?

AARON GRAY
The main factory. Where is it?

RICHARD BOYD
(confused)
I'm sorry. This is the main
factory.

AARON GRAY stares down RICHARD BOYD.

RICHARD BOYD (CONT'D)
(still confused)
Would you like a tour now?

AARON GRAY
I don't buy it.

RICHARD BOYD
But you did. Literally. Buy it.

AARON GRAY
I mean Jack Irving being here.
QUINN!

QUINN is standing right next to him.

QUINN
I'm right here Mr. Gray.

AARON GRAY
You lied to me Quinn! Jack Irving
is not here for this dump. I should
have trusted my sources that he is
in Tokyo. Closing on a factory. A
REAL factory. You set me up!

QUINN
Mr. Gray. I did not set you up. I
swear. 100 percent.

AARON GRAY gives a long stare.

AARON GRAY
The Gray and Grey standard is 110
percent.
(to RICHARD BOYD)
Well what are you waiting for? The
tour!

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JACK is sitting on the stool at the computer and DIANE and
AMELIA are hunched over his shoulder.

JACK IRVING
I'm zooming out!

DIANE
You're pressing the wrong button.

JACK IRVING
You said zoom.

AMELIA
That's changing pages.

JACK IRVING
It says zoom.

DIANE
Gimme me the keyboard!

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND COOKIE FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

AARON GRAY, RICHARD BOYD, The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN are walking amongst the machinery as MR. GRAY examines a spread sheet. QUINN is behind him struggling with a heavy briefcase.

AARON GRAY
I take back what I said about Jack
Irving losing his marbles. Very
impressive machines.
(rubs his hand on a
machine)
Very impressive.
(looking at spreadsheet)
And we closed for that number?

RICHARD BOYD
Actually 10 percent less.

AARON GRAY
Well merry Christmas. To our
shareholders.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JACK is going through the papers. DIANE, AMELIA, and STEVEN all look tired.

JACK IRVING
I know it's here somewhere. Ah!
Look! Found it!

AMELIA takes the piece of paper he is holding.

AMELIA
A receipt for a \$500 backscratcher?

JACK IRVING
Underneath.

AMELIA
(reading)
The enforceable lifetime fiat
clause.

DIANE
E-L-F.

JACK IRVING
Elf!

DIANE
In a contract, one party can sell a
house or a car or land or a
factory, and include language over
who that other person can then sell
it too. Like you want to sell a
dairy farm but you think the area
should have fresh milk. You can
include they keep the cows as a
condition of the sale and if they
refuse it goes to another person,
at least in theory, if the original
owner ever enforces it.

JACK IRVING
And the lifetime here is...
(smacks the piece of
paper)

STEVEN
Mr. Holland. Clause to be named
later.

DIANE
Which is placeholder text. It
didn't name who Mr. Holland would
sell it otherwise too.

JACK IRVING
Yes it does.

JACK points at STEVEN. Points at contract. Points at STEVEN.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

See!

The entire room gets it.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - LATER

JACK is exiting DIANE's car. He turns back around.

JACK IRVING

So you got the language down right?

DIANE

I came up with the language! Do a song and dance. You'll send some of your people. You get your deal, we get this one. Poof.

JACK IRVING

Poof. And with it just being that Richard guy and three empty suits they'll panic when you throw this wrench in the plans. Delay them until after Christmas at least.

DIANE

At least.

JACK IRVING

When I can get back.

DIANE gets out of car. Helps JACK with his suitcase. So this is goodbye.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

I know I didn't want to come and it was stupid that I came. But I had fun. But...

DIANE

Now that you solved the problem you gotta run.

JACK IRVING

It's just this Tokyo deal. Years in the making. Kindof bet my whole career on closing this one.

DIANE
I get it.

JACK IRVING
Diane. You are wonderful.

JACK smiles and then DIANE smiles before catching herself. She has been down this road before with him. She knows what happens for falling for JACK. So she shrugs and gives him another peck on the cheek.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Bye Diane.

JACK stares at her the same way STEVEN stared at AMELIA earlier. DIANE takes a moment to collect herself. By the time DIANE responds though, JACK has already turned and gone through the doors. She just stands for a moment.

DIANE
(to no one)
Bye Jack.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

AARON GRAY is sitting around the lobby and is eating soup. QUINN to his right looks exasperated and is taking large gulps of what appears to be whiskey. The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN are all hunched at computers typing furiously.

AARON GRAY
Why haven't you found anything?

QUINN
They've been looking for two days
Mr. Gray.

AARON GRAY
Look harder.

QUINN
Yes sir.

AARON GRAY
(to QUINN)
Not you.
(hands him soup)
Go warm this up. And add more
noodles.

QUINN takes a very large gulp of whiskey and gets up and goes off screen.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)
I should have bought a soup
factory.
(shouting to QUINN)
QUINN! LOOK UP SOUP FACTORIES FOR
SALE!

CUT TO:

EXT. MR. HOLLAND'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

AMELIA and STEVEN are at MR. HOLLAND's front door, right where JACK and DIANE were earlier in the day.

AMELIA
You think he'll participate?

STEVEN
I know he will.

AMELIA
And you are good to participate?

STEVEN
Well, for a small payment.

AMELIA
What's the price?

STEVEN kisses AMELIA right as MR. HOLLAND answers.

MR. HOLLAND
Oh my.

AMELIA
(flustered but happy)
Mr. Holland, we have a favor to ask
of you.

MR. HOLLAND
Do I get the same payment?

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND COOKIE FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

DIANE is in front of the same machinery AARON GRAY was admiring before. DIANE spots a FACTORY WORKER.

DIANE
(whispering)
Pssst. You.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

JACK is sitting in the same seat where he started his journey to New Holland. JACK is holding his phone and its buzzing and the name says "DICK IRVING." JACK declines the call. Then the phone buzzes again and this time it says MIKE. Again, he declines. JACK is trying to decide what to do.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Now AARON GRAY is drinking whiskey and laughing with the THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN. QUINN comes and sits down next to AARON GRAY who immediately gives QUINN a look. QUINN stands up and AARON GRAY goes back to telling stories and laughing.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. HOLLAND'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

MR. HOLLAND has on a suit jacket and is in front of a mirror. He is putting on a tie. MR. HOLLAND picks up a picture. The picture is the black and white photo he showed JACK and DIANE earlier. MR. HOLLAND smiles and finishes tying the tie. It is the same tie from the photo.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND COOKIE FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

DIANE is explaining something to the FACTORY WORKER.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

AMELIA is furiously packing all the cookies she was making the night before. STEVEN is helping but cannot help himself and leans over and gives her a kiss on the cheek.

CUT TO:

INT. PINE HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

QUINN is trying to smile but is afraid of AARON GRAY biting his head off. Finally, he goes up to AARON GRAY.

QUINN
Sir. It's time.

CUT TO:

EXT. MR. HOLLAND'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

MR. HOLLAND is leaving his house wearing his sports jacket and tie. His neighbors, a bundled up MAN and WOMAN are also exiting their home with their CHILD wearing an overly large parka and hood.

MR. HOLLAND
Evening Frank. Evening JoAnne.

FRANK
Evening Mr. Holland. You headed over this early?

MR. HOLLAND
I am. Decided to walk there and really let the night sink in. What about you?

FRANK
Well, don't catch cold. We'll see you there. Gotta stop by grandma's first to drop off the kiddo.
(to CHILD)
Say hi to Mr. Holland.

FRANK removes the CHILD's parka. It is CAMILLA. She waves at Mr. Holland.

MR. HOLLAND
Oh that reminds me! Camilla I almost forgot your present.

CAMILLA comes over to MR. HOLLAND and he turns his and CAMILLA's back to her parents. MR. HOLLAND takes a large decorative envelope out of his inner breast pocket and whispers something to CAMILLA. CAMILLA smiles and nods. She understands. CAMILLA takes the envelope and goes back to FRANK and JOANNE.

FRANK
You spoil her Mr. Holland. I hope it's not too big.

MR. HOLLAND
Not big enough.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

JACK is no longer sitting in the seat.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND COOKIE FACTORY MAIN FLOOR - LATER

The factory has installed a raised stage that looks to be identical to the one used during the cookie making contest. At the podium is RICHARD BOYD, in his formless all black suit. In contrast, all the factory workers filling in and starting mill about are dressed in Christmas gear. There is a festive vibe. On the stage behind RICHARD BOYD there are several seats with AARON GRAY sitting in one and QUINN sitting two chairs over. Both have arms crossed and dour look on their faces. The THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN stand behind him trying to impersonate his imposing style. The room is now very full. Nearly last DIANE sneaks in the back. Her Christmas gear is an extremely sharp pencil dress, blazer, and green shoes. Its Christmas all right but its also business look. Finally, RICHARD BOYD taps on the microphone and the crowd noise dies down.

RICHARD BOYD
Is this thing on? Hello. Thank you
for com...

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE (O.S.)
It's not on!

RICHARD BOYD switches the microphone button and there is a loud feedback noise. The audience groans. RICHARD does not acknowledge the audience but looks down at his script.

RICHARD BOYD
(microphone works but
softly)
As I was saying. Thank you...

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE (O.S.)
We can't hear you!

AARON GRAY stands up and pushes RICHARD from the podium and rips the microphone from the podium. He goes to the middle of the stage. He is angry and about to be very unpopular therefore he is in his element.

AARON GRAY

Oh let's just get this done. Hello
workers of
(Looks back at QUINN who
mouths "NEW HOLLAND")
New Hopeman Factory. You are here
for your annual bonus. Or at least
that's what the smiles on your face
seem to show

Those audience smiles are disappearing. Who is this guy?

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)

Well I do have good news-- there
are bonuses. Giant ones. Ones in
the million this year.

Now the audience is confused. Bonuses in the millions?

Oh but there's also a bit of bad
news, well, you're all on Santa's
naughty list, and those bonuses
aren't for you. No, you get no
bonuses.

The first boos come from the audience. AARON GRAY hears them
and tells the audience to settle down.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)

I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Not about
the bonuses but about that being
the bad news. No, I've got another
surprise in my stocking for you. I
just bought the factory and as the
owner I have only one holiday
message- you're fired.

(Leaves microphone. Comes
back)

All of you.

(Leaves microphone again
before returning.)

Oh! Almost forgot. You have 10
minutes to leave the factory and
its premises before I have you
arrested for trespassing. And now
here is...

(to RICHARD BOYD)

This guy again.

The audience is now fully booing. RICHARD BOYD clearly does
NOT want the microphone but AARON GRAY hands it to him. The
booing starts turning to pandemonium. RICHARD BOYD looks
clueless as to what to do. He goes back to the podium.

RICHARD BOYD
 (reading from his script)
 Thank you for coming. As part of
 the restructuring of assets across
 platforms we have come to the
 difficult...

VOICES FROM AUDIENCE (OVERLAPPING)
 Who are you? / Who is this guy? You
 can't fire us / IT'S CHRISTMAS EVE!

LARGE SHOUT FROM AUDIENCE
 Where's Mr. Holland?

VOICES FROM AUDIENCE (OVERLAPPING)
 Yeah where is Mr. Holland/ What
 happened to Mr. Holland/ Mr.
 Holland! We need you!

Suddenly there is a very loud hailing-a-taxi whistle from the
 back. The crowd goes silent and parts. It is DIANE with MR.
 HOLLAND now standing next to her.

DIANE
 Mr. Holland is right here and you
 are going to have to go through him
 Aaron Gray!

MR. HOLLAND leans in very closely to DIANE.

MR. HOLLAND
 (whispering confused)
 Who is the first gentleman? I
 thought you said it was only
 dealing with Richard?

DIANE
 I know. It was supposed to be.
 We'll try to make it still work.

RICHARD BOYD looks at the back of the room.

RICHARD BOYD
 Diane? Is that you? What did you
 say?

Suddenly, JACK appears!

JACK IRVING
 She said-- MR. HOLLAND IS RIGHT
 HERE!

JACK goes onto the opposite side of MR. HOLLAND as DIANE. Together, the three of them walk towards the stage, and then onto the stage. AARON GRAY, now back in his seat, starts applauding. The battle is on.

AARON GRAY
(to QUINN)
Ah! So I was right. He is here.

AARON GRAY stands up and gives JACK a smile deep enough to bury a knife six-inches into his back.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)
Jack Irving. A pleasure.

JACK IRVING
I'm afraid the pleasure is all yours. I recommend you hold onto that pleasure. It's the only thing you're taking from New Holland.

AARON GRAY
You're too late Jack and besides I've kind of already taken something of yours.

AARON GRAY nods to QUINN who cannot even make eye contact with JACK. JACK looks crestfallen at QUINN. This was not the way JACK thought it would go.

JACK IRVING
Q-Q-Quinn.

AARON GRAY
Cat got your tongue Jack. Or Gray got your Quinn. But please.

AARON GRAY is thoroughly enjoying JACK's displeasure. An idea strikes and he goes back up to the microphone.

AARON GRAY (CONT'D)
Excuse me folks. Yes. All of you toothless, penniless, and skillless. But, I repeat myself. Now, I know you're all in shock because you don't have a job but to make you feel better, I am not starting the 10-minute clock yet as I found someone who is also going to get rich off this deal who wants to talk to you. Jack Irving everyone!
(Hands microphone to JACK)
Good luck.

The audience is silent. They love and know DIANE and MR. HOLLAND but they do not know JACK. JACK looks at QUINN and looks unsure. JACK is about to leave but DIANE gives him a look. She still believes in him and that is enough.

JACK IRVING

So hi everyone. I'm not good in large crowds. My thing is one on one. That's where I thrive as a businessman. In deals like the one this guy just made.

AARON GRAY cannot hide his excitement. He not only has beat JACK but JACK is giving him compliments.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

In fact, this guy and I have worked on several deals together over the years and he's right. When Aaron Gray says as the new owner of the factory he has fired you, that is the truth. Except. . .

Now it is JACK's turn to look back and start enjoying this.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

Except he doesn't own the factory. Mr. Holland here does.

AARON GRAY gives a sarcastic clap.

AARON GRAY

Okay. Let's give the confused old man his moment in the sun.

JACK IRVING

You see, while I am not good on this whole talking thing, my old man was. A lot of you knew my dad Gerald Irving. He worked here on the very floor where you stand for 38 years. I found out today, the reason he didn't make it to 40, was a corporation bought Mr. Holland's shares and took over day to day operations of the factory and this corporation realized it was cheaper to fire him then let my dad retire in two years.

(sounding out the words)

Indefinite realignment. I believe Camilla said that is what it ended up being called.

(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

That corporation that did the realignment was Gray and Grey. One with an 'e' and one with an 'a' and...well anyways. I used to work at Gray and Grey and so I realized today, it wasn't this guy behind me who started this entire thing in motion. It was me. I fired Gerry Irving.

AARON GRAY

Get on it with it Jack. I've got dumpster trucks coming in 15!

JACK IRVING

But as I said, Aaron Gray is wrong about being the owner and he is wrong about my business making millions off this deal because I don't have a business. I just told my company I quit.

DIANE looks at him shocked.

DIANE

You did what?

AARON GRAY

This is rich.

JACK looks at DIANE and then at MR. HOLLAND and then back to the crowd. The big reveal. JACK takes the contract from his suit pocket.

JACK IRVING

But I told my company before I quit, I had to do one thing. You see, in the deal when I bought New Holland Cookie Company, it contained an enforceable lifetime clause or an ELF for short. Very appropriate on this day. Except, that as I do in all my contracts, I had a few misspellings.

(Gives contract to MR.

HOLLAND)

And wouldn't you know it, in the original contract that you signed Mr. Holland, it says the Enforceable Lifetime is for a Claus to be named later.

MR. HOLLAND

Yes. But you misspelled "Claus" here without an 'e.'

JACK IRVING

So I did. So I guess if you know a person named Claus, you could enforce the contract.

AARON GRAY

Here comes the big guy with a beard! Like they found a person named Claus.

MR. HOLLAND

Well I happen to know Steven Claus.

JACK looks back and smiles at AARON GRAY. The trap is tightening.

JACK IRVING

You do? But he wouldn't possibly be here today would he?

STEVEN (O.S.)

I'm right here!

STEVEN jumps on stage. He is wearing a business jacket and looks very dapper.

MR. HOLLAND

Why that's Steven Claus.

AARON GRAY

I'm gonna need to see some i.d. Quinn!

JACK already has STEVEN's driver's license in his pocket and seamlessly hands it to QUINN.

JACK IRVING

We also have his passport, student i.d., public swimming pool pass, and third...

STEVEN

Fourth

JACK IRVING

Fourth grade camp counselor nametag.

QUINN looks at the driver's license and shrugs to AARON GRAY as JACK continues.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
Well it appears we do have a Claus
after all. Now, Mr. Holland, when
you signed this deal, did you have
a certain Claus in mind for the
lifetime enforcement?

MR. HOLLAND
Why. Steven of course.

AARON GRAY
This is ridiculous. This wouldn't
hold up in traffic court!

JACK IRVING
(deadly serious to AARON
GRAY)
Read this you bag of coal.

AARON GRAY
Injunction against Grey & Gray due
to inconsistencies in Cookie
Factory contract.

JACK IRVING
You're right. Not traffic court.
Federal court. And it may hold up.
It may not. But...
(turning over page)
The judge who just happened to know
my father said her first date she
has for a trial is not until
December 24th of next year which is
(looks at watch)
Exactly one year of the factory
staying open.

The audience starts cheering. AARON GRAY huddles with QUINN
and the THREE BUSINESSMEN. AARON GRAY comes to the microphone
looking solemn and then smiles.

AARON GRAY
Mr. Holland. I am willing to
present you a check for 1 million
dollars right now to waive this
clause or
(turning to STEVEN)
This Claus or whatever.

MR. HOLLAND
Well that's a lot of money but I'm
afraid I don't own the rights
anymore. I gave them away.

AARON GRAY

To who?

MR. HOLLAND

Well, it will cost you \$1,000 to find the answer.

AARON GRAY nods at one of the YOUNG BUSINESSMEN who present a check to MR. HOLLAND.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)

Well, here name is Camilla and she is not here and she is five years old. But I'm sure she and her family will appreciate the check.

AARON GRAY

What kind of weird deals are going on here?

(to audience)

Even if I can't find this Camilla person, some other tyrant will. Don't think Jack Irving is a hero folks. He is just like me and within a year this factory will be gone. And if not him, one of the thousands others like him from the big city.

The crowd is tense. People squeeze each other's hands. They want to trust JACK but there emotions have been toyed with.

JACK IRVING

(to audience)

He's right. I do want to buy this company. TO START A NEW COOKIE LINE! Amelia, pass them out!

AMELIA appears from the back and starts handing out the cookies she has been working on for the last two days. As people start tasting them, they are amazed. AMELIA goes to the stage and gives MR. HOLLAND and even AARON GRAY a cookie.

AARON GRAY

Okay. That's pretty good.

JACK IRVING

(After taking a cookie, to MR. HOLLAND and audience)

(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
MR. HOLLAND, will you please inform
this Camilla that while I do not
have millions of dollars, I would
like to invest a sizable chunk of
money to buy this factory, and
expand it to make this new line of
Holland Factory Cookies.

There are cheers from the audience.

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
But with you all being fired, I
have no workers. So I guess, I have
to offer you your old bonus, plus a
new one to come back to work.

Louder cheers. Is this guy serious?

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)
So do we have a deal Mr. Holland?

MR. HOLLAND
(peering out)
I see Camilla's father and mother
giving the thumbs up. So that just
leaves Steven. He is the Claus
after all.

They all look around. STEVEN has left.

AMELIA
(taking microphone)
He said he had some family business
so had to leave. But I can speak
for him.
(She holds up her hand. A
ring!)
You know, Claus family and all.

MR. HOLLAND
Then we have a deal!

JACK and MR. HOLLAND shake hands as the crowd goes wild. The
microphone is turned off as the rest of the action takes
place between the people on the stage.

AARON GRAY
Expanding! You're on your own Jack
Irving.
(pause)
Gimme another cookie real quick.
I'm leaving and never coming back.
Quinn!

QUINN looks at JACK and then looks back at AARON GRAY and then back at JACK.

QUINN

(to JACK)

Would you per chance being hiring new people? Maybe even if they can only pick up trash or clean dishes.

JACK IRVING

If I can come around Quinn, so can you.

AARON GRAY

Quinn don't do this.

QUINN pulls away from AARON GRAY, RICHARD BOYD comes out from under the podium. He had been hiding there, scared and waiting to see what would happen.

RICHARD BOYD

What about me?

Even the new kinder JACK cannot accept RICHARD. DIANE saves the day. She puts her hand on RICHARD's shoulder.

DIANE

Well Richard, with Jack here hiring extra workers, Eddies probably needs some bodies too.

RICHARD shakes his head in disgust as FRANK and JOANNE comes up to MR. HOLLAND.

JOANNE

We can't thank you enough Mr. Holland. If Frank gets his job back here, he won't have to travel and can start going to Camilla's soccer games again.

MR. HOLLAND

Oh. She already has his offer of employment. Along with this.

MR. HOLLAND gives FRANK the check.

MR. HOLLAND (CONT'D)

And I put a little extra special bonus in there for her. Merry Christmas.

AARON GRAY has had enough of all this Christmas spirit. He finishes his cookie, grabs another one, and gives an order to THREE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN

AARON GRAY
Clear those wastrels out of my way.
(to JACK and DIANE,
chuckling)
Until never. Expanding! You'll
never make your return on
investment.

DIANE moves in front of AARON GRAY blocking his way off stage.

DIANE
Hey Mr. Gray.

AARON GRAY
What's up buttercup?

DIANE punches AARON GRAY right in the kisser. His cookie goes flying.

DIANE
Oh. And how's this for a return on
investment.

DIANE takes JACK's shoulder and turns it towards her and kisses him. At first he is surprised, but then he kisses back. It is a long one. One 20 years and three days in the making. She pulls back.

DIANE (CONT'D)
For all those years I spent hating
you Jack Irving, you showed me
tonight while I still loved you in
the first place.

JACK IRVING
You mean that?! You know we can do
a lot with this. . .

DIANE
Shhh. Don't ruin it!

DIANE kisses JACK again as the party goes wild.

DISSOLVE TO:

SCENE TITLE: "SIX MONTHS LATER"

CUT TO:

INT. NEW HOLLAND COOKIE FACTORY MAIN FLOOR - DAY

JACK is working on the factory floor wearing an apron. It is very busy.

JACK IRVING
Get moving on the D line.

OVERALLS WORKER
These Camilla Cookies are too popular. We can't keep up.

JACK IRVING
Well looks like we may have to expand again.
(pats OVERALLS WORKER on shoulder)
How would you like to be manager of a new shift Tony?

TONY smiles and walks away. DIANE comes over carrying a wrapped box and a card. She gives JACK a big kiss.

DIANE
Guess who sent us a souvenir from their honeymoon.

JACK opens the card on top.

JACK IRVING
(Reading)
"Dear mom and dad. Hello. I know it's a bit unusual to travel so far north for a honeymoon but we couldn't be any happier. Our cookies have been a hit in every town. If you're serious, I think we found the perfect spot for a second factory. Love Amelia and Steven."

DIANE gives him a look.

DIANE
Are we serious about a second location?

JACK shrugs his shoulders. Maybe.

JACK IRVING
Jill would make an excellent boss.
(Looking back at letter)
Oh and there is a P.S. to me from Steven.
(Reading)
(MORE)

JACK IRVING (CONT'D)

"P.S. Jack. You know those letters you said you used to write to my Uncle. Well, I asked him and he said that even though you spent several years on the naughty list, your actions this past year made up for it. He sends his regards and says to enjoy."

DIANE

Whose his uncle?

JACK IRVING

I don't know. I guess I should open the box though.

JACK opens up the box. It's the wooden bright green race car he asked Santa for all those years in a row. JACK looks at DIANE and he has tears in his eyes. STEVEN actually is related to the big man.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END