

ENCHANTED CHRISTMAS

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. LOS ANGELES - MORNING 1

Establishing shots of Los Angeles.

2 EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - MORNING 2

Establishing shot of a cute bungalow with cheery plants.

3 INT. LAURA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING 3

A tidy kitchen shows some of its owner's flair with strong colors and contemporary design accompanying the cheery Christmas decorations around the room. Shoving a sandwich into a baggy is LAURA TRUDEAU (30's), quick-witted and as well put-together style-wise as her home. She multi-tasks with cool efficiency, talking on the (land line) phone, making lunch for her daughter, and putting work in a messenger bag.

LAURA

Connie? Hi, it's Laura Trudeau with Pleasant Getaways? Yeah, I'm the project manager of the new Pine Ridge hotel. We have a problem with the lamps. Well, that's the problem, there are no lamps.

She covers the phone and yells over her shoulder.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Nikki! You're gonna miss the bus!
(back to phone)
I know the holidays are a busy time but the hotel is opening soon and I'd really like people to be able to, you know, see it.
(smiles)
Thank you, Connie. Bye.
(hangs up the phone)
Nikki, bus!

NIKKI (O.S.)

I'm not going to miss the bus!

LAURA

How do you know?

Dressed in a uniform, bright-eyed NIKKI (7) enters carrying a backpack and holding out her mom's smart phone.

NIKKI

Because the app says so.

LAURA

(takes the phone)

An app. What happened to standing on the corner, freezing in the snow while you wait for the bus?

NIKKI

It doesn't snow here.

LAURA

It's the principle of the thing.

NIKKI

We should go where it *does* snow for Christmas, like in the movies.

LAURA

You've seen snow. We went to Lake Arrowhead, remember?

NIKKI

Yeah, but I never saw it, you know, like falling from the sky.

LAURA

Got it. Well, maybe next year.

NIKKI

When do we get our Christmas tree?

LAURA

Honey, you know that we always get our tree two weeks before Christmas so it stays fresh. It's tradition.

NIKKI

Was waiting for the bus in the snow a tradition?

LAURA

(laughs and points)

School now.

Laura ushers Nikki toward the hallway.

4 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING 4

Contemporary exterior. PEOPLE enter and exit rotating doors.

5 INT. PLEASANT GETAWAYS RECEPTION - MORNING 5

A sign in the stylish reception area tells us these are the offices of Pleasant Getaways and there are photos on the walls of various hotels and resorts around the world, accompanied by Christmas decorations. Laura comes into the room and waves at the receptionist as she passes.

6 INT. OLIVER'S OFFICE - MORNING 6

There is quite a view of downtown Los Angeles from the window of a big, well-appointed office. OLIVER O'NEIL (50s, always a little stressed) is behind the desk when Laura comes in.

OLIVER
It's about time.

LAURA
Good morning to you too, Oliver.

OLIVER
Yeah, yeah, morning. Sit.

LAURA
You seem more stressed than usual.
What's going on?

OLIVER
We bought a new hotel over the weekend.

LAURA
It was Thanksgiving!

OLIVER
Yes, my wife told me that several times while I was on the phone making the deal. It was too good to pass up but it came with strings.

LAURA
What kind of strings?

OLIVER

They were in the middle of a renovation when they went bankrupt and now we have to finish the job.

LAURA

Hence the panicked phone calls to your lead project manager.

OLIVER

Yes, hence...

LAURA

I'm almost done with Pine Ridge so I can probably pick this up in a couple of weeks.

OLIVER

Yeah, no. I haven't told you the biggest string. It has to open on Christmas Eve for an event that's booked in there. Big deal for the city, I guess.

LAURA

That's four weeks from now! How much work is left to do?

OLIVER

About eight weeks worth.

He hands her an iPad with pictures of the interiors of a hotel with empty rooms, half-painted walls, and the like.

LAURA

Wow... that's kind of a...

OLIVER

A mess, I know.

Laura stops short when she sees the exterior of the hotel. The expression on her face falls.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

The place is called...

LAURA

The Enchanted Lodge.

OLIVER

Yes! You're from Seattle, right?

LAURA

I am, yes.

OLIVER
Serendipity. I love it.

She hands him back the iPad and stands.

LAURA
I can't go to Seattle.

OLIVER
Why not?

LAURA
Because, it's...
(looks for an excuse)
It's Christmas. I can't leave my
daughter at Christmas.

OLIVER
Take her with you. Don't you have
family there?

LAURA
Yes, my father, but...

OLIVER
Perfect! You can spend the
holidays with loved ones. I've
heard that's popular with people.

LAURA
But... there's no way we can get
all this done in four weeks.

OLIVER
I'm sure you'll find a way. It has
to be done for this thing... I have
the details here.

He looks on his desk for a piece of paper.

LAURA
It's a Christmas show.

OLIVER
(finds the paper - reads)
Right. 75th anniversary according
to this, so it's a bigger deal than
usual.

LAURA
Oliver, I...

Oliver picks up his phone - the conversation is over.

OLIVER

Anyway, get with design, put together a local crew, whatever you want, you got it. I need you there by Wednesday.

(into phone)

Hi. I need Glenn in legal.

Laura shakes her head and leaves his office.

7

INT. SCOTT'S OFFICE - MORNING

7

SCOTT SCHAEFFER (30's), chiseled good looks in a suit, is at his desk, working. Laura walks into his office and sits in a guest chair unhappily.

SCOTT

Ah. You heard about the new hotel.

LAURA

Scott, I can't go to Seattle.

SCOTT

(smiles)

Sure you can. Just jump on the 5 and head north about...

She gives him a look that could freeze water.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Not in a joking mood. Got it.

(beat)

Is this about your Dad?

LAURA

No. Maybe a little. He's never forgiven me for leaving.

Scott goes to her and sits on the arm of the chair, his arm around her.

SCOTT

Your husband had just died. I'm sure he gets how hard that was.

LAURA

You've never met my father.

SCOTT

We've only been dating for a couple of months.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

I think dragging each other into complicated family dynamics is what you get each other for your six month anniversary.

Another look.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Still not ready. Okay.

LAURA

(shakes her head)

And of course it had to be the Enchanted. And of course it has to be the Christmas Eve show!

SCOTT

You know of it?

LAURA

I... used to be in it.

SCOTT

Doing what?

LAURA

(beat - reluctant)

I danced.

SCOTT

(laughs)

You can't dance.

LAURA

(stands)

How would you know?

SCOTT

We were out at that place, second or third date, and I asked you to dance and you said you can't dance.

LAURA

I said I don't dance. Big difference.

SCOTT

(sits in the chair)

Okay, I need to know everything about this now.

She is pacing now.

LAURA
It's like I'm being forced to walk
down Memory Lane against my will.

SCOTT
(smiling)
Or dance down it maybe.

LAURA
Scott!

SCOTT
I'm sorry. Come on... Memory Lane
can be nice.

LAURA
No. It's dark and scary and has
lots and lots of potholes. You
know, it's taken me a long time to
get settled here in L.A. And it's
not easy doing all this on my own -
the job and raising Nikki. But
going back to Seattle...

Scott stands and stops her pacing, gives her a sweet kiss.

SCOTT
Maybe it won't be that bad.

LAURA
You know, what? You're right. It
won't. Because Oliver can't *make*
me do this. I'm going to march
right back in there and tell him
that I am absolutely, positively
not going to Seattle.

She heads for the door, resolute.

QUICK CUT TO:

8

EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

8

Laura is on the phone while she is packing things in her SUV.
Nikki is leaning against the vehicle unhappily.

LAURA
Nikki, go get your suitcase.

Nikki sighs and trudges off dramatically.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Dad, sorry... We'll be there
 through Christmas. And you can
 tutor Nikki while we're there?
 Okay... Dad? I gotta go. We'll
 be there tomorrow. Bye.

She disconnects the call with a deep sigh as Nikki trudges
 out of the house unhappily.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 Nikki, where is your suitcase? We
 need to get on the road.

NIKKI
 I'm not going.

LAURA
 You're not, huh?

NIKKI
 No. I'm staying here.

LAURA
 By yourself?

NIKKI
 I can stay with Sarah. She's my
 best friend. She won't mind!

LAURA
 Sarah's parents might have a
 different opinion. But I think
 your Grandpa would disappointed if
 you didn't come. You want to see
 your grandpa, right?

NIKKI
 Yeah, but why can't he come here
 like he usually does?

LAURA
 Because I have to go there.

NIKKI
 But Mom, if we're there for
 Christmas, how is Santa going to
 find us?

LAURA
 Santa is really good at finding
 people. It's that whole "Nice
 List" thing. And guess what?
 (MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)
It snows there! You said you
wanted a white Christmas.

NIKKI
Can we leave Santa a note?

LAURA
(smiles)
Sure.

Laura pulls Nikki close to her.

NIKKI
I don't want to go.

LAURA
(sighs)
I know, kiddo. Trust me, I know.
But we have to, so...

NIKKI
(sighs)
I'll go get my suitcase. I want to
stay on Santa's nice list.

Nikki walks back toward the house.

LAURA
You're going to be at the top of
the nice list.

Nikki smiles at the thought of it and goes in the house.
Laura sits on the back bumper of the SUV and exhales slowly.

DISSOLVE TO:

9 EXT. SEATTLE - DAY 9

Establishing shot of Seattle.

10 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DAY 10

In front of a modest house with a tidy yard that has a light
coating of snow. The SUV pulls in and Laura gets out of the
driver's side while Nikki gets out of the back seat.

NIKKI
(looks around)
Why isn't it snowing? I want to
see it snowing!

LAURA

It doesn't happen all the time,
sweetie. But I'm sure it will at
some point while we're here.

NIKKI

We need enough to make a snowman,
otherwise it doesn't count.

LAURA

According to whom?

NIKKI

Mother Nature.

LAURA

(smiles)

Oh. Okay. Well, she's hard to
argue with.

Laura turns to the house but doesn't move toward it yet.

NIKKI

Are we going in?

LAURA

(beat - deep breath)

Yes, we are.

They head for the front door.

11

INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

11

Laura and Nikki enter the cozy space, a living room adjacent
to a dining area and the kitchen, decorated simply.

LAURA

Hello?

MANUEL MONTOYA, a solid man in his late 50s, comes out of the
kitchen wearing an apron and wiping his hands on a towel.

MANUEL

(all smiles)

There they are.

He goes over to pick up Nikki in a hug, not exactly ignoring
Laura but certainly not paying as much attention to her.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

How is my favorite granddaughter?

NIKKI
Grandpa, I'm your only
granddaughter!

MANUEL
That doesn't make it any less true.
It's so good to see you, especially
here! You probably don't remember
this place do you?

NIKKI
(shakes her head)
Huh-uh.

MANUEL
(pointed at Laura)
You were very young when you left.
How old was she, Laura, when you
moved to Los Angeles?

LAURA
(forces a smile)
Very young. Hi, Dad.

She gives him a peck on the cheek.

MANUEL
(to Nikki)
You must be starving after that
long drive. Guess what I'm making?

NIKKI
Tamales?

MANUEL
Tamales!

LAURA
Dad, that's supposed to be for
Christmas.

MANUEL
My daughter and my granddaughter
back home? That's like Christmas
to me. Come on, Nikki. You want
to help me?

NIKKI
Yeah!

He carries Nikki toward the kitchen but can't resist one more
parting shot.

MANUEL

Laura I fixed up your old room for you and the guest room for Nikki if you want to put your stuff away. It's the second door on the right.

LAURA

I remember where my bedroom is, Dad.

MANUEL

Just making sure. It has been a long time.

He exits with Nikki and Laura hangs her head for a moment, totally not enjoying this.

12

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

12

The tamales and other accompanying dishes have been pretty well devoured.

MANUEL

So, Nikki, what do you want for Christmas?

NIKKI

Snow!

Manuel looks to Laura for explanation.

LAURA

She's underwhelmed by the amount of snow out there.

MANUEL

(to Nikki)

You don't have to shovel it.

NIKKI

I want to see it snowing like a real Christmas!

LAURA

We have had plenty of real Christmases in Los Angeles.

MANUEL

I agree with Nikki. There's nothing quite as magical as the flakes coming down, surrounded by friends and family... at home.

At this point all Laura can do is laugh.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

LAURA

It's just nice to know some things never change, Dad.

NIKKI

Why don't we have tamales at home?

LAURA

Because I can't make them as good as your grandfather does.

MANUEL

I tried to teach her when she was young but she was always too busy with her dancing.

Laura's eyes go wide at this and Nikki is practically agog.

NIKKI

Dancing?! You can dance?

LAURA

No, it was...

MANUEL

Can she dance?! Of course she can!

Manuel and goes to a sideboard in the dining room, looks in the cabinet underneath, and pulls out a photo album.

LAURA

Dad... Dad!

Manuel puts the photo album down next to Nikki and opens it, pointing to a picture of Laura from probably a dozen years ago, wearing a beautiful Salsa dance costume, and striking a pose with a handsome young man.

NIKKI

(incredulous)
That's you?

MANUEL

Yes! She was very beautiful when she danced.

Laura smiles, a little surprised. She's not used to hearing that kind of thing from her father.

NIKKI

(points at the man)
Who's that?

MANUEL

Oh, that's your mother's dance partner. What was his name?

LAURA

(beat)
Ricardo. Dad, can we get back to dinner, please?

MANUEL

Whatever happened to him?

LAURA

(shrugs)
I have no idea. The last I heard he was touring with a dance company in Europe. He's probably a million miles away from Seattle.

MUSIC CUE: An upbeat Christmas song (like "Let it Snow") starts playing as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 13 | EXT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT | 13 |
| | Establishing shot of the Seattle Dance Studio, a funky building that fits right in an artistic neighborhood. | |
| 14 | INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT | 14 |
| | The MUSIC CONTINUES as two people do a classic ballroom routine - elegant yet fun (think: Ginger & Fred). RICARDO ARCHULETA, the same man we saw in the photo dancing with Laura, has grown into a handsome, powerfully lithe man in his 30s. He is dancing with TAYLOR WALSH, 30s, leading-lady beautiful. | |
| | The song ends and they take a moment to catch their breath. | |

TAYLOR

We need to work on the lift.

(joking)

I'm happy to help you out with this, Ricardo, but not enough to let you drop me on my head.

RICARDO

(laughing)

One time, Taylor. I dropped you one time in the show in Paris and you've never let me live it down.

TAYLOR

I've told you how we can be even. Just let me drop you.

RICARDO

Except I'd still owe you for coming to Seattle to do the Christmas show.

TAYLOR

Stop. Our tour wrapped up and I didn't have anything to do for Christmas anyway, so...

RICARDO

Well, I still appreciate it. I know it's not touring in Europe but it meant a lot that they asked me to be the choreographer. Of course it's my Aunt Claudia that's in charge of the showcase this year so I kind of had an "in."

TAYLOR

You used to do these Christmas shows back in the day, right?

RICARDO

Every year. It was always such a huge part of the holiday for me. We'd do all the big celebrations with the tree lighting and the toy drive and then the big Christmas Eve show at the Enchanted Lodge.

(happily nostalgic)

This is what Christmas used to be all about. Tradition. Family. I've kind of missed that.

TAYLOR

Does it feel good to be home?

RICARDO

(shrugs)

Yeah, I guess. I don't get back often enough. At least according to my mother. But you and I, we live on the road. Home is whatever hotel we're in.

TAYLOR

There must have been something that made you want to come back. I can't imagine it was to do the Christmas show with a bunch of elementary school kids dressed up like reindeer.

RICARDO

Oh, didn't I tell you? You're going to handle that part.

TAYLOR

Uh, no. I love you like a brother, Ricardo, but I'd rather have you drop me on my head again.

RICARDO

One time!

She laughs as she restarts the music and they begin their routine again.

15 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT 15

Laura peeks into the guest bedroom of the house to check that Nikki is asleep. All is well and she closes the door.

16 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 16

Laura comes into her childhood bedroom, which hasn't changed much since she was a kid. A portion of one wall is devoted to trophies, ribbons, and photos from dance competitions she was in as a teen and young adult. She looks at them for a moment, smiling and wincing at one particular picture.

LAURA

(softly)

Why would you think wearing that was a good idea?

The same photo from the album is in a frame here - her with Ricardo next to a bubbling fountain in a courtyard. They look happy and in love.

17 EXT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT 17

Establishing shot of the studio.

18 INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT 18

Ricardo is in the studio by himself, practicing some moves when CLAUDIA DAVENPORT comes in. She is in her 50s, a matronly, no-nonsense type who always seems to have a clipboard, binder, notebook, or similar with her.

CLAUDIA

I'm here, I'm here! I'm sorry I'm so late. I had to meet with the choir director and then meet with the guy that's doing the programs and chase down the permission slips and antlers! I forgot the antlers.

RICARDO

Aunt Claudia. Breathe.

Claudia takes a breath.

CLAUDIA

"Hey Claudia, do you want to put together the show for the 75th Anniversary of the Christmas celebration? It'll be easy!"

She give him a look that says "it's SO not easy."

RICARDO

You're doing fine.

CLAUDIA

Except for the part where I was supposed to pick up the antlers for the kids' show tonight.

RICARDO

It's okay. I'm sure they'll be there tomorrow.

CLAUDIA

Tomorrow we go to the hotel to see the ballroom, which is a whole other mess.

RICARDO

I heard somebody bought the place?

CLAUDIA

Yes, some company out of L.A. They swear they're going to be able to get it all done by Christmas Eve but I don't know.

RICARDO

Maybe you should have a back-up location?

CLAUDIA

Everything is booked! This show has been done every Christmas at the Enchanted Lodge since it opened and I'm going to be the one in charge when we have to do it in the parking lot of the bowling alley.

RICARDO

Well, it is one of Seattle's nicer parking lots.

CLAUDIA

That's not funny.

RICARDO

Just keep reminding yourself it's for a good cause. We're raising money for after school programs.

CLAUDIA

It's for a good cause, it's for a good cause...

She hands him a stack of papers.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Okay. Here are the permission slips from the parents so you can start the rehearsals with the kids.

RICARDO

Got it. Now, all of them are trained in ballet, right? Because the routine I have for them is pretty hard.

CLAUDIA

(panic)

What? No! Most of them have never danced before in their lives!

RICARDO

Aunt Claudia. I'm kidding. It's basic steps for kids in reindeer costumes.

CLAUDIA

(narrow eyes)

Don't make me call your mother.

He laughs and hugs her.

19 EXT. COFFEESHOP - MORNING 19

Laura walks from her car to a coffee shop: "Red Willow Cafe."

20 INT. COFFEESHOP - MORNING 20

It's a cute coffeeshop with a few tables with customers, baristas behind the counter, and a full menu of coffee and pastries. There are currently boxes of Christmas decorations everywhere being unpacked by ALICIA LUJAN, 30s, always energetic.

Laura, wearing a nice business suit under a warm coat, enters. Laura approaches Alicia.

LAURA

Alicia...

Alicia screams excitedly and they hug warmly.

ALICIA

You're here! I can't believe you're here! I haven't seen you in a billion years.

LAURA

You were just in L.A. in July. You stayed at my house.

ALICIA

It's not the same as you being in Seattle. We grew up here together. We spent every Christmas here together!

LAURA

(looks at the boxes)

Speaking of Christmas... did it blow up in here?

ALICIA

I know. We've been using the same decorations for years and yet every year there seems to be more of it. I think it's been multiplying while it's in storage.

LAURA

Same thing happens at my house. I didn't buy ten boxes of Christmas lights but there they are.

ALICIA

Makes you wonder what else it's up to when we're not looking. Do you want something?

LAURA

Just a regular coffee to go, please.

ALICIA

It's Christmas. How about a peppermint coffee?

LAURA

Sold!

Alicia goes behind the counter to pour her a cup of coffee.

ALICIA

How's Nikki?

LAURA

Seven going on thirty-five.

ALICIA

Takes after her mother. What about you? You're re-doing the Enchanted Lodge! Oh, we used to spend so much time there, me in the choir and you dancing...

LAURA

I know. It's like... it wasn't Christmas without the Enchanted Lodge. I'm on my way there now to see it for the first time in... ten years?

ALICIA

(beat)

Do you ever hear from Ricardo?

LAURA

I haven't talked to him since he left to go do that tour.

ALICIA

I'm still mad at him for that.

LAURA

(shrugs)

Yeah. Well, in the end it all worked out. If he hadn't left I never would've met Daniel and I wouldn't have Nikki. I hope he's doing well, wherever he is.

Alicia hands her the coffee.

ALICIA

On the house.

LAURA

You don't need to do that.

ALICIA

I'm hoping to bribe you into staying and helping me with the Christmas decorations.

LAURA

There's not enough free coffee in the world. See you tonight?

She smiles as she heads for the door leaving Alicia to ponder the overwhelming Christmas decorations.

21

EXT. HOTEL - PARKING LOT - MORNING

21

Laura's SUV pulls into a parking lot and stops. She get out and stands there, looking at what is in front of her.

From her POV we see the Enchanted Lodge. It's a grand place that definitely needs some sprucing up but you can still see the character and the history.

Still, it's a powerful moment for her and she has to take a second or two to soak it all in. She snuggles into her coat against the cold (and perhaps the memories), then takes a deep breath and heads for the lobby.

22

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - MORNING

22

Laura comes into the lobby, which is in disarray. There is no furniture and the walls have been partially painted.

Still, for Laura, it might as well be ten years ago. She runs her hand along a banister fondly.

EDDIE LARSEN, a man in his early 40s wearing a tool belt comes out from a room behind the front desk.

EDDIE

Hi. You must be Laura.

Laura snaps out of her nostalgia and shakes his hand.

LAURA

Laura Trudeau, Project Manager.

EDDIE

Edward Larsen. I'm your construction foreman but since I'm going to be your new best friend for the next four weeks, you can call me Eddie.

She smiles and they shake hands.

LAURA

I will buy us matching BFF bracelets.

EDDIE

Deal. So... what do you think?

LAURA

I think it's freezing in here.

EDDIE

Yeah, fixing the furnace is definitely at the top of a very long list. Take a walk?

She nods and he leads her out of the lobby into the hotel.

23

EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - MORNING

23

They come out of the hotel into the same courtyard we saw in the photos, with Laura and Ricardo standing next to a fountain. Only now there is no fountain, just some snow and a couple of benches.

EDDIE

The good news is that most of the guest rooms are in great shape. They really just need furniture. We obviously have some work to do in the lobby. The dining room, the pool deck, and the ballroom need the most help.

Laura is distracted by the fact that there is no fountain.

LAURA

What happened to the fountain? There used to be a fountain here.

EDDIE

I don't know. Guess they got rid of it? We can get a new one.

LAURA

(disappointed)
No, that's not necessary. It wouldn't be the same.

They go back to the hotel and Laura looks back at the space where the fountain was. It's obvious how important it was to her.

24

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - MORNING

24

Ricardo, Claudia, and Taylor are walking through the grand ballroom of the hotel. It is not a disaster but it isn't ready for audiences by a long shot.

RICARDO

Okay, it's not... that bad.

CLAUDIA

It's not good!

TAYLOR

The floor is in fine shape. Probably just needs a polish.

CLAUDIA

How are they going to get all this done in time?

RICARDO

I'm sure that whoever is in charge of the renovation has got it all under control. They're supposed to be here, aren't they?

CLAUDIA

The construction guy, Eddie... He said she'd be here soon.

RICARDO

I'll go see what's going on.

He heads toward the doors of the ballroom.

25

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - MORNING

25

Laura and Eddie head toward the other side of those doors.

EDDIE

Down here is the...

LAURA

Ballroom.

EDDIE

You know this place?

LAURA

I spent a lot of time at the Enchanted. I was in the Christmas Eve show every year.

EDDIE

Really? Doing what?

LAURA

Believe it or not, I was a dancer.

EDDIE

That's great. Do you still do it?

LAURA

No. That was a long time ago.

They have reached the doors. He puts his hand on the knob.

EDDIE

Well... are you ready for a blast from your past?

LAURA

(smiles)

Sure.

Eddie opens the door to the ballroom just as Ricardo has reached it. They come face to face and the shock for both of them is evident.

RICARDO
Laura?

LAURA
Ricardo?!

They can only look at one another, agape.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

26

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY

26

Picking up right where we left off.

LAURA

What are you doing here?

RICARDO

I'm doing the Christmas Eve show.
What are you doing here?

LAURA

I work for the company that bought
the hotel.

RICARDO

I can't believe this. Hi...

They hug, a bit awkwardly.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

You remember my Aunt Claudia?
She's producing the show. And this
is my partner Taylor.

LAURA

Hi, I'm Laura Trudeau.

RICARDO

Laura and I used to...

LAURA

Be partners.

There is a beat of uncomfortable silence.

CLAUDIA

So.... the ballroom?

LAURA

Sure! Eddie?

EDDIE

It's not as bad as it looks.

Laura and Ricardo steal glances at one another.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

We'll need to paint, obviously, and
redo the floor.

CLAUDIA
And get chairs, hopefully?

LAURA
Yes. The furniture arrives on the 20th. Uh... Eddie, do you want to show them the backstage? I need to go make a quick call.

EDDIE
Sure. This way...

Laura forces a smile and heads to the doors while Eddie leads the others toward the backstage area.

27

EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

27

Laura comes out into the courtyard and takes a deep breath to steady herself. Ricardo comes out a moment later.

RICARDO
I can't believe you're here.

LAURA
I'm getting that a lot today.

RICARDO
How long are you in town?

LAURA
Just until the hotel opens. You?

RICARDO
I'll probably be going back out on tour in January.

LAURA
(beat)
That's great.

RICARDO
(notices)
The fountain is gone.

LAURA
Yeah. A lot's changed.
(beat)
Listen, I need to make that call.

RICARDO
Right. Sure. I'll uh... I should go catch up to Claudia. You're going to be around? The hotel?

LAURA
I'll be here.

RICARDO
Okay. I'll see you.

He smiles and goes back inside. She sits heavily on a bench.

28

INT. STORE - NIGHT

28

Laura and Alicia are walking through a Christmas store looking at decorations, wreaths, and more. Occasionally throughout, Laura will pick something up and Alicia will take it from her, shake her head, and put it back down.

ALICIA
So wait... Ricardo, who was the guy that you were madly in love with...

LAURA
I wasn't madly...

ALICIA
Ricardo is back here, now, doing a show in the hotel that you are in charge of? This is like fate. It's like kismet. It's like...

LAURA
It's like I'm dating someone.

ALICIA
You are?

LAURA
I am. Scott.

ALICIA
Is it serious?

LAURA
It's... new. It could be. And you should have seen Ricardo's partner.

ALICIA
Are they dating or just dancing?

LAURA
I don't know. Probably both.

ALICIA
Well, you need to find out.

LAURA

Why? It's none of my business.

ALICIA

What if the two of you are remembering the good old days...

LAURA

We won't. When he left... I knew that coming back to Seattle was a bad idea.

ALICIA

What are you going to do?

LAURA

There's nothing to do. We were... whatever we were and it was a long time ago. He left, I got married, I had Nikki... I can't go back.

Alicia puts her arm around Laura as they continue shopping.

29 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - NIGHT 29

Establishing shot of the Montoya house.

30 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 30

Manuel and Nikki are at the table as he pours sand into a paper bag from a bowl.

MANUEL

And then we put some sand in it.
And a candle, like so.

He puts a small tea light in the bag and it lights up.

NIKKI

Pretty.

MANUEL

And that's how you make *farolitos*.
We'll put them along the path in front of the house.

Laura comes into the room, taking off her coat.

LAURA

Hey. What's all this?

NIKKI
Hi, Mom. We're making fair-a...

MANUEL
Farolitos.

LAURA
Very nice. So what did you learn
from your school work today?

Nikki looks at Manuel for help.

MANUEL
We didn't quite get through all of
the assignments the school sent.

LAURA
What did you do?

NIKKI
We went to go look at Christmas
decorations and I told grandpa some
of the things I put on my list for
Santa and...

LAURA
Nikki, will you go wash up, please?

Nikki senses trouble so she's eager to leave.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Dad?

MANUEL
I haven't seen her in a year. Can
you blame me for wanting to spoil
her a little? Spend some quality
time together?

LAURA
(beat)
Okay. I get it. But I don't want
her to fall behind, so...

MANUEL
I understand.

LAURA
You know, why don't you guys come
down to the hotel and study there?
There's plenty of room. That way I
can get some quality time, too.

MANUEL

Are you sure it's not because you want to keep an eye on me? You can trust me, you know.

LAURA

I'll say the same thing you said to me when I wanted to go to a concert in Portland with Alicia when we were sixteen. "Never trust anyone who says trust me."

Laura walks out of the room.

MANUEL

(to himself)

I didn't think she actually listened to me.

He shakes his head and goes to the kitchen.

31 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

31

Laura, wearing her PJs, comes into the dining room quietly, carrying her phone. She goes for the photo album, pulls it out, and sets it on the table but then doesn't open it. She pauses for a moment and then sends a text to Scott.

"Just checking in. Call me when you get a chance. xxoo"

She sits there for a moment and then opens the photo album to the picture of her and Ricardo at the fountain in the courtyard, which is decorated for Christmas.

32 INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

32

Ricardo is in the studio collecting his stuff at the end of rehearsal. When he's sure nobody is looking, he takes out his wallet and looks through it then pulls out a picture. It is the same shot of him and Laura by the fountain in the hotel. He looks at it wistfully.

33 EXT. HOTEL - DAY

33

Establishing shot of the hotel, which now has people working on the outside of it.

34 INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

34

Work has begun in earnest in the lobby, where several people are busy painting, sanding, hammering, and generally fixing the place up. Laura is walking through the lobby with Eddie, referring to sketches on a clipboard she is carrying.

EDDIE

Where does the Christmas tree go?

LAURA

Over there by the front door.
Lights, garland, a big wreath.
(glances at watch)
Can you give me a minute. I need
to go check on Nikki.

Laura walks down the hall out of the lobby.

35 INT. HOTEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

35

A small conference room in the hotel has some assorted junk in it, but a portion has been set up as the work area for Manuel and Nikki. He is helping her with a worksheet that has shapes divided into fractions.

MANUEL

And this one here. If I said I
wanted one half of the parts
colored in, how many would you do?

NIKKI

One, two, three... four?

MANUEL

Very good.

The door opens and Laura walks in.

NIKKI

Hi, Mom! We're doing fractions!

LAURA

Wonderful!

Laura goes to see what Nikki is doing.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Oh, that's very good work. Do you
know the answer to this one?

While Nikki looks at the problem, we hear jaunty Christmas music start playing from somewhere in the hotel.

NIKKI
What is that?

LAURA
I think it's the show rehearsal.

NIKKI
What show?

LAURA
It's the big Christmas Eve showcase here at the hotel. They have a choir and dancers...

NIKKI
Can we go see?

LAURA
I don't think they like people watching while they practice.

Ricardo is walking by, hears this, and stops in the doorway.

RICARDO
Oh, I'm sure we could arrange a preview for a special guest

LAURA
Ricardo!

RICARDO
Hi. I was just coming to tell you we brought the kids in to get them used to the space, but I'm guessing the Christmas music gave us away.

LAURA
A little bit.

Manuel stands.

RICARDO
Mr. Montoya! It's good to see you sir. Ricardo Archuleta.

MANUEL
(obviously not a fan)
Yes, I remember.

LAURA
(steps in)
And this is my daughter, Nikki. Nikki, this is Ricardo. He's... an old friend.

RICARDO
Hello, Nikki. Nice to meet you.
Would you like to go watch a little
bit of the rehearsal?

NIKKI
Yes, please.

RICARDO
(looks at Laura)
If it's okay with your mom?

LAURA
(beat)
Just for a few minutes, then it's
back to fractions.

Nikki jumps up and they all walk toward the door.

36

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY

36

Taylor is leading a group of about a dozen young kids (7-10),
in a relatively simple routine set to a Christmas tune.
Think: jazz hands and "Jingle Bell Rock."

Laura, Ricardo, Nikki, and Manuel enter and stand off to the
side to watch.

TAYLOR
And one, two, three, four and turn,
step together and hands! Good job!

Claudia comes out with the box of reindeer antlers.

CLAUDIA
Let's do it with the antlers.

The kids all cheer and crowd Claudia to get their antlers.

NIKKI
(to Laura)
Can I have some antlers?

LAURA
Those are just for the dancers.

RICARDO
Well, she could *be* a dancer. She
hasn't missed too much...

NIKKI
I could be in the show?

RICARDO

Sure.

LAURA

Whoa! No, Nikki, I'm sorry.

NIKKI

Why not?

LAURA

Because...

Laura struggles for a good reason that is more rational than her not wanting Nikki to get involved in dance and possibly end up getting hurt the same way she did.

LAURA (CONT'D)

(brainstorm)

...you have school work.

RICARDO

(points to the other kids)

So do they. We're only rehearsing for an hour a few times a week.

LAURA

That's very kind of you to offer, but I don't think...

NIKKI

But, Mom!

LAURA

Nikki, I said no.

Laura looks at Manuel who sees she means business.

MANUEL

Come on, Nikki. Those fractions won't divide themselves.

He takes a very unhappy Nikki by the hand and leads her out of the ballroom. Laura shakes her head and goes to follow them but Ricardo stops her.

RICARDO

Laura, it's just a kid's dance.

LAURA

(not angry - melancholy)

Yeah... that's how I started, too. And look how that turned out.

She turns and walks out of the ballroom leaving Ricardo a bit flummoxed over what just happened.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

37

EXT. CHRISTMAS TREE LOT - DAY

37

Laura, Nikki, and Manuel are wandering through a Christmas tree lot. Laura points out a big tree.

LAURA

What about that one? That would look good in the lobby, right?

MANUEL

You already picked one for the lobby.

LAURA

No, that was for the ballroom.

MANUEL

How many trees are you getting?

LAURA

Three. Lobby, courtyard, ballroom. Nikki, what do you think?

NIKKI

(shrugs)
It's okay.

LAURA

(tries to be cheery)
Oh, come on, sweetie. You love picking out Christmas trees.

NIKKI

For our house. These are for the hotel.

LAURA

You can help decorate these, too.

NIKKI

I can do that but I can't be in the show?

Laura looks to Manuel for help.

MANUEL

Nikki, I'm sure that if your mother doesn't want you to be in the show she has a good reason.

(to Laura)

You do have a good reason?

LAURA

(beat)

You know, as long as we're here,
why don't we go ahead and pick out
a tree for grandpa's house.

MANUEL

We don't do that until two weeks
before Christmas so it stays fresh.

Laura is pleasantly surprised to realize that she does the
same thing at home. She smiles.

LAURA

You're right. It's a tradition.

They continue on looking at the trees.

38 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 38

Establishing shot of the hotel - work is progressing.

39 INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY 39

As workers continue making progress in the lobby, Laura is at
the front desk doing paperwork. Ricardo approaches.

RICARDO

Hi.

LAURA

(taken off guard)

Oh. Hey.

RICARDO

We keep missing each other.

LAURA

I know. Sorry. Just crazy busy.

She starts walking away. He follows.

RICARDO

I just wanted to say I'm really
sorry if I overstepped with Nikki
the other day.

LAURA

It's okay. She'll be fine.

He gently stops her by taking her arm.

RICARDO
Laura, wait.

LAURA
Ricardo, I really need to...

RICARDO
Can we get together and talk?
Catch up on old times?

LAURA
(beat)
I don't think that's a good idea.

RICARDO
Why not?

LAURA
Because... Ricardo, our old times
didn't end very well.

RICARDO
You're still angry that I left.

LAURA
I wasn't angry.

RICARDO
I remember a lot of yelling.

LAURA
(beat)
I was a little angry.

RICARDO
I think you threw something at me.
Did you throw something at me?

LAURA
(beat)
It was an ornament from a Christmas
tree. The one they had by the
fountain in the courtyard?

RICARDO
Right. We had just had our picture
taken there and...

LAURA
And for the record, I didn't throw
it at you, I just... threw it and
you kind of got in the way.

RICARDO
 (smiles)
 Thank you for the clarification.

LAURA
 Okay, I was a lot angry... but I'm not anymore. And I guess that's kind of my point. So much has happened since then. We're not the same people we were and I just don't know what dredging up the past would accomplish.

She starts to walk again. He follows again.

RICARDO
 Laura...

She stops and turns back to him.

LAURA
 Ricardo. Let's just... I need to focus on the future. I need to concentrate on getting the hotel done and you need to concentrate on the Christmas show. Let's just leave it at that, okay?

Ricardo nods and she nods, then walks away.

40

INT. HOTEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

40

Manuel and Nikki are focused on school work, or at least Manuel is trying to keep her focused.

MANUEL
 What part of the equation is this?

NIKKI
 Mom used to be in the Christmas show, right?

MANUEL
 Nikki, pay attention.

NIKKI
 Was she good?

MANUEL
 (beat)
 Yes, she was very good. She was... remarkable.
 (MORE)

MANUEL (CONT'D)

(beat - focuses)

Now, in this problem, you take...

NIKKI

Why did she stop?

MANUEL

Because she realized that math was more important.

NIKKI

Grandpa!

MANUEL

Nikki, Christmas is about much more than all that. It's about spending time with your family and being with the people you love, right?

NIKKI

Sure.

MANUEL

Well, that's what your mother wanted to do. She wanted to spend Christmas with the people she loved. Like you.

NIKKI

(beat - thinks)

Santa named a reindeer dancer. So if it's okay with Santa, why can't I be in the Christmas show?

Manuel is at a bit of a loss so he taps on the worksheet in front of her.

MANUEL

What part of the equation is this?

Nikki studies the equation on the worksheet and Manuel tries not to think too much about that conversation.

41 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - NIGHT 41

Establishing the Montoya house.

42 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 42

Laura is once again at the dining room table looking through the photo album when Manuel comes in. Laura tries to close the album so her father doesn't see.

LAURA
What are you doing up?

MANUEL
Getting some water. You?

LAURA
Nothing. I was...

Manuel sits and opens the album. He points to a picture.

MANUEL
You were very pretty in that dress.

LAURA
(beat)
It was my favorite.

MANUEL
Dancing was so important to you. I think it really helped you after your mother died.

LAURA
I do, too.

MANUEL
You would look forward to every performance like it was the biggest thing in the whole world.

LAURA
It was at the time.

MANUEL
I guess little girls need something to look forward to...

LAURA
(shakes her head - smiles)
Well-played, Dad.

He kisses Laura on the forehead and then goes to the kitchen to get her glass of water. She looks at the picture again.

Establishing shot of the Enchanted Lodge.

44 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY

44

The kids are rehearsing again with Ricardo leading the charge this time. He queues Taylor to start the Christmas music and she turns on the portable stereo.

RICARDO

Okay. Ready? Big smiles everyone!

The kids start dancing and... well, it needs some work... but they are energetic and determined.

Laura slips into the back of the ballroom and watches for a moment. She can't help but smile and then heads for the door. Ricardo sees her leave.

45 EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

45

Laura slips on her coat as she comes outside sits on a bench, the Christmas music echoing in the background. Ricardo comes out to join her on the bench.

RICARDO

I kind of figured you'd be out here. This was our favorite spot.

LAURA

I remember. We would sit out here before the Christmas Eve show and pitch pennies into the fountain, making wishes about our future.

RICARDO

If they had saved all those pennies you could buy a new fountain.

LAURA

(laughs)

You're probably right. We had a lot of dreams back then.

RICARDO

(beat)

So how are you? How have you been? Is that okay for me to ask?

LAURA

(laughs)

Yes. It's fine. I'm good. I have a great job. A nice little house in L.A.

RICARDO

I heard that you moved away after Daniel... I'm very sorry. I didn't even know you'd gotten married when my mother told me he had passed.

LAURA

We met about six months after you left. He was... I loved him and we just knew. So we got married, we had Nikki, and then...

(beat)

But what about you? I can't believe you came back to do the Christmas show.

RICARDO

I kind of can't believe it myself. But it's nice, you know? Being home for Christmas. Being here at the Enchanted...

LAURA

This was Christmas.

RICARDO

Exactly. Everybody that we knew and loved was here. I guess I missed that a little.

LAURA

So listen... is there still room in the show for Nikki?

RICARDO

(surprised)

Really?

LAURA

(shrugs)

I think she needs a little bit of fun right now.

RICARDO

Of course there's still room. But what about you?

LAURA

What about me?

RICARDO

Doesn't seeing that ballroom make you want to do the Christmas show again?

LAURA
(laughs)
Not even a little bit.

RICARDO
Oh, come on!

He stands up and offers her his hand. She smiles, takes his hand, and stands but then turns it as if she's going to shake it instead.

LAURA
I'll make you a deal. You make sure that Nikki has fun and I'll make sure my father doesn't find out that you're trying to get me to be in the Christmas show again.

RICARDO
(wide eyed)
Deal.

They shake on it. Claudia comes out of the hotel.

CLAUDIA
Ricardo! The kids are ready to learn the next part.

RICARDO
Okay. But we have a last minute addition to the group.

He and Laura head toward the doors.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

46 EXT. COFFEESHOP - DAY 46

Establishing shot of the coffeeshop.

47 INT. COFFEESHOP - LATER 47

Alicia sets a fancy coffee drink in front of Laura.

ALICIA
I call it the Christmas Present.

LAURA
What's in it?

ALICIA
You have to open it to find out.

LAURA
(sips - grimace)
I hope you kept the receipt.

Alicia takes the drink back and tries again.

ALICIA
So what made you change your mind
about letting Nikki do the
Christmas show?

LAURA
My dad. He's... persuasive. I'm
just hoping that when we get back
to L.A., Nikki will forget all
about this like it was a dream.

ALICIA
Speaking of dreamy, how's Ricardo?

LAURA
Have I mentioned the guy I have
back in L.A.?

ALICIA
Right. Steve.

LAURA
Scott.

ALICIA
Right. What does he think about
you and the former flame?

Laura looks at the ceiling.

ALICIA (CONT'D)
You haven't told him?

LAURA
I've been busy. And he's busy. We haven't had a chance to catch up.

ALICIA
Uh-huh. And what did Ricardo say when you told him about Steve?

LAURA
Scott! And we haven't really talked about stuff like that.

ALICIA
What have you talked about?

LAURA
Not much, really. We talked about the fountain... the big fight we had at the fountain... We talked about Daniel, a little.

ALICIA
(beat)
He was a good guy.

LAURA
(smiles)
Yeah, he was. I didn't think I'd ever get over losing him.

ALICIA
You didn't think you'd ever get over losing Ricardo, either. I know it's different but... you don't always get second chances.

She puts another wild drink on the counter in front of Laura. Laura tastes it and grimaces.

LAURA
Are these presents for people you don't like?

Laura pushes the coffee away from her and walks away. Alicia takes a sip of it and at first has a "that's not bad" reaction but it quickly sours to "oh yes it is."

48 INT. SUV - DAY 48

Laura gets in her SUV and calls Scott, getting his voicemail.

LAURA
Hi, Scott, it's me again. I know
you're busy, but call me.

She disconnects the call and sighs.

49 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 49

Establishing shot of the hotel.

50 INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 50

Laura is coming down the hallway by the conference room and sees Ricardo and Manuel outside of the doors, talking

LAURA
Hey. What's going on?

RICARDO
We have a little problem.

Manuel points at the conference room and she peeks her head inside. Nikki is sitting in there, arms folded across her chest, obviously unhappy. Laura pulls back into the hall.

LAURA
What happened?

RICARDO
She's frustrated that the other
kids are a little ahead of her
because she joined late. I think
she's... a bit competitive.

Manuel chuckles. Laura looks at him.

MANUEL
What's that phrase about the acorn
and the tree?

LAURA
(scowls)
Is it too hard for her?

RICARDO
It's simple stuff, it's just the
other kids have been doing it for a
few days longer.

LAURA
I'll go talk to her.

RICARDO
Maybe I should do it.

MANUEL
Step aside. I've had a little
experience with this problem.

He goes into the conference room as Laura and Ricardo crowd
up to the door to listen in.

51 INT. HOTEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

51

Manuel comes into the conference room to find Nikki sitting
on a chair, arms folded. He pulls up a chair next to her.

MANUEL
What is her name?

NIKKI
Who?

MANUEL
The girl in the dance group that
thinks she's better than you are.

NIKKI
(beat)
Danielle. She knows the steps
better than me.

MANUEL
Is the dance too hard?

NIKKI
No.

MANUEL
So it's just that Danielle *is*
better.

NIKKI
No! I'm as good as her.

MANUEL
But everyone else will think she's
better than you.

NIKKI
They will?

MANUEL

Until you go back in there and
prove her wrong.

Nikki thinks about it for a moment and then stands and
marches toward the door.

52

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY

52

Laura and Ricardo see her coming and back away from the door,
trying to act like they haven't just been listening in.
Nikki comes out and grabs Ricardo by the hand.

NIKKI

(to Ricardo)

Come on, we got to go practice!

She pulls him toward the ballroom. Ricardo smiles at Laura.

RICARDO

This brings back a lot of memories.

Laura swats at him as he goes with Nikki. Manuel comes out
of the conference room.

LAURA

I'm pretty sure you gave me that
exact same speech when I was ten.

MANUEL

You can't argue with the classics.

He walks off as Laura smiles.

53

EXT. SEATTLE STREET - NIGHT

53

A commercial street is all done up for Christmas, with lights
adorning the trees, and more. Laura comes out of an art
gallery and heads down the sidewalk, which is filled with
other shoppers.

Ricardo comes up from behind her.

RICARDO

Hey.

LAURA

Ricardo. Hi. I'm just on my way
back to the hotel.

RICARDO
Me, too. Taylor and I are
practicing. Can I walk with you?

LAURA
Sure.

He does a sweeping "after you" gesture and they walk.

LAURA (CONT'D)
So how's the big finale with you
and Taylor coming along?

RICARDO
It's good. Not as good as when you
and I were partners...

LAURA
(laughs)
Oh, of course not!

RICARDO
But Taylor and I have been together
for years so...

LAURA
(carefully)
Together?

RICARDO
(smile)
Professionally. We were both
dating other people when we got
paired on the tour. We started as
friends and that's how it stayed.
(beat)
What about you?

LAURA
There's a guy. Scott.

RICARDO
Scott. Good solid name.

LAURA
Yes, it is.

RICARDO
(beat - changes topic)
So I see progress in the ballroom
but how's the rest of the hotel?

LAURA
Good. It's getting there.

RICARDO

Well, if you need any help, I have basically lived in hotels for the last ten years. I'm somewhat of an expert.

LAURA

Are you? So, what would be your number one complaint about them?

RICARDO

(thinks)

Hangars.

LAURA

Not what I was expecting, but okay. Enlighten me.

RICARDO

There are never enough hangers. And don't get me started about the type that are on the metal thing that won't come off the bar!

LAURA

Oh, I hate those!

RICARDO

Thank you! Oh, and you know what else I hate? Soap.

LAURA

You hate soap?

RICARDO

In hotels, I do. They're always these teeny, tiny things and you can never get a good lather.

LAURA

Okay, now we're getting somewhere. Hangars and soap. What else?

RICARDO

Oh, this makes me crazy!

The two of them walk off down the street laughing about the things that Ricardo doesn't like in hotels.

54

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

54

Laura and Ricardo walk into the empty lobby, which is still a work in progress. She puts her stuff, including her phone, down on the front desk.

RICARDO

Thanks for the walk.

LAURA

No, thank you. I have a whole list of things to work on now. See you tomorrow?

RICARDO

I'll be here.

He starts to walk away then stops and turns back.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a question?

LAURA

Sure.

RICARDO

If the fountain was still out there... what would your Christmas wish be?

LAURA

Hmmm... well, that my daughter be happy, number one. That we get the hotel done on time. That's a big one right now. Maybe falling in love again someday...

(beat)

What about you?

RICARDO

(smiles)

Hangars and soap.

They laugh and then it fades to them looking at each other meaningfully. Then her phone rings. They look at it - the caller ID says "Scott."

LAURA

Oh. Uh...

RICARDO

Yeah. You better get that.

He walks away and Laura answers the phone.

LAURA

Hey...

55

INT. SCOTT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

55

Scott is at his desk and we begin INTERCUTTING between them.

SCOTT

Hi. We've been missing each other.

LAURA

That's okay. It's good to hear your voice.

SCOTT

Well, you might not think so when you hear what I have to say.

LAURA

What do you mean?

SCOTT

Oliver reviewed your progress reports and he's not happy.

LAURA

Not happy, how?

SCOTT

He doesn't think there's enough progress in the progress reports. He's worried about the deadline.

LAURA

When have I ever not met a deadline? And why isn't he calling me to tell me this?

SCOTT

Because he thought it would be easier to hear coming from me.

LAURA

Well, tell him that we are on schedule and on budget and if that's not good enough for him he can come out and run the project himself. I didn't want to do this in the first place.

SCOTT

You really want me to tell him that?

LAURA

(beat)

No. I don't feel like getting
fired today.

From off we hear raised voices. Laura, concerned, heads
toward the sound.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Listen, I will call Oliver tomorrow
and walk him through the progress
report one on one.

SCOTT

That's okay. I'll talk him down
off the ledge. Sorry for this.

LAURA

No, don't worry about it. It
actually was easier hearing it from
you. Listen, I gotta run... I'll
call you later.

She heads down the hallway toward the raised voices.

56

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

56

Laura comes into the ballroom where Ricardo, Taylor, and
Claudia are the source of the raised voices.

CLAUDIA

That's it! We're sunk.

TAYLOR

Why can't you do it without us?

RICARDO

Because we're the grand finale!
This is the 75th anniversary of the
Christmas show and its part of the
tradition.

LAURA

What's going on?

RICARDO

(sighs)

Taylor got an audition for a new
European tour.

TAYLOR

I got both of us an audition.

RICARDO

But I can't go, because I committed
to doing this.

CLAUDIA

And we have been selling tickets
because of it! He's a local
legend; the boy who went off and
made it big. If he's not in the
show people will want their money
back.

TAYLOR

I'm sorry, but this is too big to
say no to.

CLAUDIA

Can't you just go do the audition
and come back?

TAYLOR

It's in London in three days. If I
drop out now, it'll give you a
chance to find someone else to do
it. You've still got two weeks.

RICARDO

Who am I going to find to do this
on such short notice?

Claudia is the first one to look at Laura. Then Ricardo.
Then Taylor. They all smile.

LAURA

Why is everyone looking at me?

We leave that hanging.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

57 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 57

Establishing shot of the hotel.

58 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY 58

Laura, wearing dance heels and a simple, flowing skirt, is on the dance floor with Ricardo.

LAURA

I can't believe I'm doing this.

RICARDO

I can't either, to be honest.

LAURA

The show needs be great. If it isn't, people will be unhappy and if they're unhappy that will reflect badly on the hotel and, by extension, me. My boss is already not happy so... the show must go on, right?

RICARDO

Right. Are you ready?

LAURA

No.

RICARDO

Come on. We did the Christmas show every year.

LAURA

Yeah, but we were never the grand finale! This is a big deal!

RICARDO

(smiles)

You were always nervous before our shows... until the music started playing...

He goes to the stereo and turns on the upbeat Christmas music we heard when Ricardo and Taylor were practicing.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Now, we're not doing Salsa like we used to do.

(MORE)

RICARDO (CONT'D)

This is the traditional Foxtrot
with a few bells and whistles
added.

LAURA

(worried)

I was never great at the Foxtrot.

RICARDO

It's okay. Let's start with some
basic moves and see where we're at.

LAURA

You mean see how rusty I am.

RICARDO

It's like riding a bike.

LAURA

A rusty bike.

RICARDO

Laura?

LAURA

Yes?

RICARDO

Just dance.

Ricardo and Laura come together and start dancing. It's tentative at first but not terrible.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Hey. See? Not bad.

Laura manages a bit of a smile and Ricardo tries to get a little bit more adventurous with a spin. It goes off the rails and Laura and he wind up crashing into each other.

LAURA

Sorry. Sorry!

RICARDO

Are you okay?

LAURA

I'm good.

RICARDO

Again?

He holds out his arms and she takes a deep breath and steps over to him.

59 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - NIGHT 59

Establishing shot of the Montoya house.

60 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 60

Laura, Nikki, Manuel, and Alicia are all in the living room decorating the Christmas tree. Laura is obviously very sore as she reaches to hang an ornament on a high branch.

LAURA

Ow. Ow. Ow.

ALICIA

The joys of being a dancer, huh?

LAURA

I'm using muscles I forgot existed.

NIKKI

How do you forget muscles?

LAURA

You sit at a desk for too long.

ALICIA

Well, I am happy that you are back doing what you love.

LAURA

Used to love. Used to be good at.

Alicia takes an ornament out of a box. Laura sees it and her face lights up.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Oh, I remember that ornament! We got it at that little place... where was that?

ALICIA

Portland. Remember we snuck down there to get to that concert and they had that freak snowstorm and we...

Alicia sees that Manuel is looking at her, eyebrow raised.

ALICIA (CONT'D)

...sat quietly in our room and went to bed early.

MANUEL

Mmm-hmmmm.

Alicia and Laura laugh conspiratorially.

NIKKI

So it snows there but not here?

MANUEL

It will snow here, Nikki.

NIKKI

Grandpa, I'm skeptical.

LAURA

(laughs)

Where did you learn that word?

NIKKI

Grandpa said it when Ricardo told him you wouldn't get hurt dancing. He told me what it meant.

Everyone looks at Manuel. Manuel looks at the ceiling.

LAURA
He did, huh?

NIKKI
Uh-huh. Grandpa, did I use it
right?

MANUEL
Yes, you did. Nice work.

LAURA
Dad, can I talk to you?

MANUEL
We have to get the tree done.

LAURA
I'm sure they can handle it.

Manuel reluctantly heads to the kitchen and Laura follows.

61

INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

61

Manuel and Laura enter the kitchen and talk in hushed tones.

LAURA
Why are you talking to Ricardo?

MANUEL
I am not allowed to talk to him?

LAURA
Not about me!

MANUEL
I don't like you with him again.

LAURA
I'm not with him, Dad, I'm just
doing the Christmas show. And I'm
being careful. I won't get hurt.
A little sore, maybe...

MANUEL
I did not mean that kind of hurt.

Laura's annoyance at him dissipates.

LAURA
(beat)
We're going to have an amazing
Christmas. All of us together,
you, me, Nikki...
(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

at the Enchanted where we spent all of those other amazing Christmases we had. And then I go back to my life in L.A. and he will go back to his life in Europe or Asia or wherever he's going to go. I'm being careful.

She kisses him on the cheek and goes back into the living room. Manuel still seems skeptical.

62 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 62

Establishing shot of the hotel.

63 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY 63

The kids are wearing antlers *and* red noses. Ricardo is overseeing the action as Claudia watches from the sidelines. Laura comes in and watches from the back.

We see Nikki, determined as ever, and keeping up with the other kids. The music ends and the kids do a big flourish.

RICARDO

And hands! Yes! Very nice!

He goes around and gives all the kids high fives. Claudia stands and raises her hand.

CLAUDIA

Who's ready for Christmas cookies and hot chocolate?

All of the kids raise their hands.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

Follow me.

She gathers all of the kids off to the side where a table is set up with treats and decorations. Laura watches as Nikki goes up to Ricardo and tug on his sleeve.

NIKKI

Ricardo?

RICARDO

Yes, Nikki?

NIKKI

I always forget the part that comes after when we're in the big circle.

RICARDO

That's okay. We just have to find a way for you to remember it. Let's see... name three things you like about Christmas.

NIKKI

(thinks)

Presents! Christmas cookies! Santa!

RICARDO

Perfect. Okay. So what happens after you come out of the big circle is...

(he demonstrates)

...you step forward with your arms out, turn all the way around, and step back, pulling your arms in.

NIKKI

(unsure)

Okay...

RICARDO

But that's hard to remember so instead, we're going to give those parts names. So the step forward part, that's Christmas presents. It's like when you see the tree you want to run toward it with your arms out, right?

NIKKI

Yeah!

RICARDO

And then the turn around part is Santa. Because...

(making it up as he goes along)

...that's how he sometimes has to come down the chimney.

He looks over and sees Laura, who gives him a thumbs up.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Now, the last part where you step back and pull your arms in, that's Christmas cookies, because you're taking the cookies and stepping back from the table, right?

NIKKI

Right!

RICARDO

Okay, so do you want to try it together?

Nikki nods and they do it.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

So it's Christmas presents,
Santa... and Christmas cookies!

He leans over and puts up his hand for a kid height appropriate high five. Laura is beyond charmed.

NIKKI

Thanks. I think I got it!

RICARDO

Anytime. Now, go get your hot chocolate.

Nikki runs off to to join the other kids at the table and Laura joins Ricardo.

LAURA

Thank you.

RICARDO

Just doing my job.

LAURA

I never really pictured you as a kid kind of guy.

RICARDO

When you knew me I was a kid. We grew up.

LAURA

Says the man who just labeled his choreography as presents, Santa, and cookies.

RICARDO

(smiles)

It's a different way of looking at things. Sometimes you have to use a different part of your brain to get the result you want.

LAURA

I don't know that I have enough brain to come anywhere close to the result I want.

RICARDO

You're being too hard on yourself.

LAURA

Do you think I'm doing okay?

RICARDO

I think you're doing great. It's just going to take some time.

LAURA

The show is in two weeks.

RICARDO

You just need to relax and find a different way of looking at things.

He has an idea.

RICARDO (CONT'D)

Hey... what say we mix things up a bit for rehearsal tonight?

LAURA

Mix things up how?

RICARDO

I have an idea. Meet me here at seven. And bring Nikki!

Ricardo rushes off, leaving Laura, intrigued.

64

INT. ICE SKATING RINK - DAY

64

And indoor ice skating rink is all done up for Christmas and Christmas tunes are playing to accompany the handful of skaters that are on the rink. Laura and Ricardo make their way onto the ice in their skates carefully.

LAURA

I can't believe you remembered this place. We used to go here...

RICARDO

...When we were having problems with a routine. It always seemed to free things up for us.

LAURA

It's been a long time since I've
been on ice skates.

RICARDO

Me too. Hopefully we won't make
total fools of ourselves.

Nikki goes gliding by like an expert.

NIKKI

Come on you guys! Catch up!!

Laura and Ricardo laugh and try to catch up to Nikki.

We see them having fun - looking more and more like a couple
and a family with every trip around the rink. Laura and
Ricardo go into a spin together on the ice and we:

DISSOLVE TO:

65

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

65

Laura and Ricardo on the dance floor rehearsing. They are
much more in tune with each other now and they end the bit of
the routine we are watching with flair.

The start laughing and high-fiving one another.

END ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

66 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - NIGHT 66

Establishing shot of the Montoya house.

67 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 67

Manuel, Alicia, and Nikki are in the kitchen making Christmas cookies. Laura comes in to join them, taking off her coat.

LAURA

You started without me!

MANUEL

We waited as long as we could.

LAURA

(kisses Nikki on the head)
Hello, sweetheart.

NIKKI

Hi, Mom.

LAURA

Alicia. Are you living here now?

ALICIA

If your father keeps giving me
cookies, yes.

LAURA

Dad, she is your responsibility.

MANUEL

Me? What did I do?

LAURA

You got her all sugared up on
Christmas cookie dough. Did we
learn nothing from the Christmas
when we were twelve?

Alicia laughs and Manuel groans.

NIKKI

What was that Christmas?

ALICIA

Let's just say that I proved the
old saying that you *can* have too
much of a good thing.

LAURA

Way too much!

Manuel takes the bowl of cookie dough away from Alicia and puts it on the other side of the counter. They all laugh.

ALICIA

Fine. Okay, now I need to be entertained. Laura, how was rehearsal?

LAURA

It was good. Hard. I'm not used to this style.

MANUEL

And the hotel? You aren't forgetting about your job, are you?

LAURA

No, Dad. The hotel is during the day, rehearsal in the evening.

MANUEL

And what about Christmas?

LAURA

(beat)

I'm here now. Let's make cookies!

NIKKI

Yay! We need more tree shapes.

LAURA

I can do tree shapes.

She looks for the appropriate cookie cutter and then her phone rings. Everyone looks at her. She hesitates for a moment and then reaches over to send the call to voice mail.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Whatever it is, it can wait.

Manuel nods and they dive excitedly into cookie making.

Establishing shot of the hotel.

Work is still going on in the lobby as Laura enters. Eddie sees her and rushes over.

EDDIE

Where have you been? I left you a voice mail last night.

LAURA

Oh... I forgot to check it. We were making cookies...

EDDIE

We have a huge problem. The moving company called and said one of their vans is out of commission and they're behind on everything. They can't deliver the furniture until the 28th.

LAURA

But we're opening on the 24th.

EDDIE

I told them that.

LAURA

The 28th is *after* the 24th.

EDDIE

In most cultures, yes.

LAURA

So we're not going to have furniture for the first four days?

EDDIE

It seems that way.

LAURA

That's unacceptable.

EDDIE

I told them that, too.

LAURA

And what did they say?

EDDIE

See you on the 28th.

LAURA
 Okay... no, it's okay. We can
 figure this out.

She heads toward the front desk, Eddie close behind.

70

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY

70

A children's choir is practicing on the main floor, singing a traditional Christmas carol.

Off to the side, some of the kids in the dance group are in the room, waiting for their turn to rehearse while Ricardo and Claudia confer.

One of the little girls in the class, the infamous DANIELLE (7, adorable), is practicing a step but seems to be having trouble. Nikki approaches her.

NIKKI
 What's wrong, Danielle?

DANIELLE
 I can't get this one part right. I
 keep forgetting how it goes.

Danielle does an easy twirling motion.

NIKKI
 (thinks)
 Oh! That's candy cane.

DANIELLE
 What?

NIKKI
 It's how I remember the steps.
 See, you go like this and then
 this... it's like the stripes on a
 candy cane. Here, I'll do it with
 you.

The two of them do the step.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
 See? Candy cane.

DANIELLE
 Cool! Thanks, Nikki!

NIKKI

Sure. I don't have names for everything yet. You want to do it together?

DANIELLE

Yeah!

The girls run off past Ricardo and Claudia who are reviewing plans for the show.

CLAUDIA

We still need more Christmas decorations for around the room but we don't have much left in the budget. It needs to be super merry but not super expensive.

RICARDO

Hmmm... You know I think I saw some big boxes backstage. We could dress them up like Christmas presents?

CLAUDIA

I love it! I have tons of wrapping paper at home.

RICARDO

I'll go look.

He heads backstage.

71

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - DAY

71

Ricardo comes backstage where there is plenty of junk lying around including, as he thought, some boxes and crates that would make really good Christmas presents.

He moves a couple of them off to the side and in doing so reveals something covered with a drop cloth.

Ricardo removes the drop cloth and while we don't see what was underneath it, he does and it surprises him.

RICARDO

Well, how about that?

He smiles.

72 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT 72

Establishing shot of the hotel.

73 INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT 73

All of the workers have gone, leaving Laura and Eddie on opposite sides of the front desk where piles of papers and post-its are spread out like a crazed matrix.

LAURA

Okay. So... we will buy an overpriced sideboard from the antique guy who will get tickets to the big football game for the paint guy who will lend his extra truck and crew to the moving company who will deliver the furniture here on the 22nd and we can open on the 24th.

(beat)

Did I forget anything? Is someone supposed to get magic beans?

EDDIE

No, I think we did it.

They whoop and celebrate with high fives.

LAURA

Eddie, thank you so much. Now if we hurry, we can still make the tree lighting ceremony.

EDDIE

I'll see you there.

He waves as he heads out the door. She starts cleaning up the mess but is interrupted by Ricardo.

RICARDO

Your father told me about the furniture crisis.

LAURA

I think we have it figured out, finally. I'm sorry I had to miss our rehearsal.

RICARDO

It's okay. I found something to keep me busy. You want to see?

LAURA
 (looks at watch)
 The tree lighting ceremony is...

RICARDO
 Five minutes, I promise.

He motions for her to follow him and she does.

74

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

74

Through the windows, we see twinkle lights in the trees as they walk down the hall.

RICARDO
 You know, I really appreciate you helping out with the show.

LAURA
 I think the jury is still out on whether or not I'm helping.

RICARDO
 Well, I think you are. And if I'm being totally honest, I have to admit it's making me glad that I decided to come back.

LAURA
 Why did you come back?

RICARDO
 I told you. Aunt Claudia and my mom would've hunted me across Europe if I hadn't.

LAURA
 No, come on. You could've made up an excuse. You could have been hired on another tour by now. But instead, you came here... to do a Christmas show with a bunch of amateurs.

They stop walking, standing in front of the doors to the courtyard, through which we can see twinkling lights.

RICARDO
 (beat)
 I've gone around the world. Literally. I've gone around the entire globe, more than once.
 (MORE)

RICARDO (CONT'D)

I've seen amazing things and experienced the most wonderful places and met incredible people. But, it's like when you go on vacation, you know? When you get to the end of a long trip, no matter how fantastic it was... you're ready to come home.

LAURA

You got homesick.

RICARDO

I guess so. What about you?

LAURA

My boss made me.

RICARDO

Yeah, but... isn't there a little part of you that was ready to come home, too?

LAURA

(beat)

I don't know. But sometimes I guess you have to be ready, even when you're not.

RICARDO

(nods)

I get it. Well, I hope you're ready for this.

He opens the door to the courtyard.

75

EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

75

They come out into the courtyard and sitting in the middle of it is the fountain. It's a little beat up and there is no water flowing - but it's there and Laura is astonished.

LAURA

Where did you... How did you...

RICARDO

I found it under a tarp backstage. They must have planned to put it back at some point but never got around to it.

LAURA

I can't believe it's here.

She walks around the fountain, touching it lightly.

RICARDO

This fountain was... we took a picture by it every year before the Christmas Eve show. We tossed pennies in it to make our Christmas wishes. And then we had that fight by it... when I told you I was leaving.

(beat)

I just didn't want our last memory of it to be a bad one.

Laura is all smiles and maybe a bit choked up. She looks at Ricardo.

LAURA

So I told you what my Christmas wish for the future would be. What's yours. Other than hangars and soap, of course.

RICARDO

Well, those things are very important, but... I think I've hit that point in my life where I'm ready to buy my own hangars and soap. And hopefully have someone to share them with.

(beat)

Someone to dance with on Christmas Eve.

He steps forward, stands up straight, and puts his arms out in a classic closed hold position as if inviting her to dance.

She goes to join him and they start moving - a slow dance - a sweet one.

He twirls her, then pulls her in and dips her deeply. Their eyes lock and, the dance forgotten for a moment, it seems as if this could lead to a kiss.

Then the door to the courtyard opens and Scott walks in.

SCOTT

Laura?

LAURA

Scott?

She looks, upside down, at him and obviously in doing so, messes with the physics of the dip, and her and Ricardo go tumbling to the ground.

Scott comes into the courtyard and stands over them as they try to extricate themselves from one another.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Hi honey.

A weak smile is the best she can do.

END ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

76

EXT. PLAZA - NIGHT

76

A crowd has gathered in a plaza to watch the lighting of the big Christmas tree. Among them are Nikki, Manuel, and Alicia in one clump with Scott and Laura a few feet away trying to have a hushed conversation. Ricardo and Claudia are nearby but not right next to them.

As the following takes place, there are speeches being given on a dais by the tree and occasional applause that act as background noise.

SCOTT

It's freezing! Aren't you cold?

LAURA

I guess I'm getting used to it.

SCOTT

We need to get you back to L.A.

LAURA

Scott, you still haven't explained what you're doing here.

SCOTT

I told you. I wanted to see you.

LAURA

And this has nothing to do with Oliver being worried about the hotel?

SCOTT

(a little too
enthusiastic)

No!

LAURA

Good, because it's under control.

SCOTT

I'm sure it is. But as long as I'm here, I can help. I mean, I don't exactly understand why you want to do this show, but...

LAURA

Ricardo is old friend who needed a favor.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

Besides, if the show doesn't happen, the hotel doesn't get a big opening night.

SCOTT

If the hotel isn't finished it doesn't get a big opening night.

LAURA

I thought you said you believed I had it all under control.

SCOTT

I do! I just want to make sure you're not... distracted.

He glances over at Ricardo.

LAURA

I'm not. I can do both.

She looks over at her family.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I can do it all.

The Christmas tree lights up and the crowd cheers. On that we go in tight on Laura's determination and an upbeat, traditional Christmas song starts playing and continues through the quick scenes that follow.

77

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

77

Laura is in full on combat mode, walking through the lobby with Eddie while Scott trails along trying to "help."

LAURA

The concierge system came online last night so we need to get the tablet computers at the front desk.

SCOTT

I changed them to touch-screens.

LAURA

But with tablets, they could be...

SCOTT

Trust me. It's better.

Laura obviously doesn't think so.

78 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 78

Manuel and Nikki are decorating stockings when Laura rushes in, taking off her coat and joining them.

Manuel glances at his watch, pointedly. Laura tries to ignore him.

79 INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT 79

Laura and Ricardo are working on a lift.

LAURA
Wait! I can't...

RICARDO
Laura, we have to get this.

Laura nods and they get into position to try again.

80 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 80

Laura comes into the room and sits on the bed, exhausted.

81 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 81

Laura, Scott, and Eddie are walking along the outside of the hotel, looking at its progress. Scott is looking at a clipboard.

SCOTT
What is this invoice for?

Eddie looks at it.

EDDIE
Oh, we changed the order on the in-room amenities.

SCOTT
What in-room amenities?

LAURA
(smiles)
More hangars and better soap.

Scott doesn't quite understand that but he shrugs and they continue walking.

82 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - NIGHT 82

Manuel, Nikki, Alicia, and Laura are lighting *farolitos* and lining the walkway in front of the house with them.

This time it's Laura who is glancing at her watch and Manuel catches her, giving her a disapproving glance.

83 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT 83

Laura and Ricardo are practicing again. They are still having problems but at least seem to be having fun, laughing all the way. They don't notice that Scott is watching from the doorway.

84 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 84

Laura sits on the bed, exhausted again, then falls back.

85 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY 85

The kids are practicing today led by Ricardo with Taylor and Claudia watching on one side of the room and Laura and Manuel on the other. They have just reached the end of their number.

RICARDO

Very good! Very good everyone.

Laura sees Nikki laughing and talking with Danielle. She leans over to Manuel.

LAURA

Who is Nikki talking to?

MANUEL

That would be Danielle.

LAURA

I thought they didn't like each other.

MANUEL

That was last week. Now, apparently, they are best friends forever times infinity.

LAURA

(laughs)
Good to know.

Nikki seems to be having a great time.

86 INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

86

Furniture is being carried in through the lobby by the moving company workers. Laura is at the front desk, trying not to fall asleep when Scott comes up to her.

SCOTT

Laura.

LAURA

(jolts awake)

Yes. Hi.

SCOTT

Do we think that color is right for those chairs?

LAURA

I hope so. They're delivering two hundred of them right now.

Scott doesn't seem convinced but he wanders away. She shakes herself awake and gets up to go take care of business.

87 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

87

Ricardo and Laura are practicing things are still rocky but they look determined. The ballroom now has chairs around the dance floor.

88 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LAURA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

88

Laura practically falls into bed.

89 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

89

Laura and Ricardo practicing again but they just can't seem to find their footing.

LAURA

I'm sorry. I don't know why I can't get this.

RICARDO

It's just different than what we're used to doing.

LAURA

Leave it to me to ruin a 75 year old tradition.

RICARDO
(beat - thinks)
You know... maybe it's time for a
new tradition. I have an idea...

Ricardo smiles. Laura is intrigued.

90 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT 90

This time Laura is already asleep, curled up with Nikki in her bed. The Christmas song score comes to an end.

91 EXT. HOTEL - DAY 91

The sign in front of the hotel - which looks great - says that the Enchanted Lodge will be opening in "2 Days!"

92

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

92

Although not done, the hotel lobby looks great with most of the furniture in place and a lot of the Christmas decor now installed. Laura, Eddie, and Scott are walking through the space covering a check list.

LAURA

Room service menu is approved...
people to cook what's on the room
service menu have been trained...
WiFi is working... I think we're in
the home stretch!

SCOTT

Great team effort, right?

Scott walks away, giving high fives to workers in the lobby.

EDDIE

Now, exactly what position did he
play on the team?

Laura just smiles and he walks away. She stands there for a moment, and has a well-deserved moment of pride.

Manuel comes into the lobby and walks over to her.

LAURA

Dad? What are you doing here?

MANUEL

We need to talk.

LAURA

Where's Nikki?

MANUEL

She's with Alicia. Come on.

Manuel walks off and Laura follows him.

93

INT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

93

Manuel and Laura come out into the courtyard, which now has a tree and lots of Christmas decorations.

LAURA

Dad, what's going on?

Manuel sees the fountain, which still hasn't been fixed up.

MANUEL

What happened to the fountain?

LAURA

It's... a long story. We just haven't gotten around to cleaning it up yet.

MANUEL

Yes, there, that would be my point.

He folds his arms as if he has explained everything.

LAURA

The fountain is the point?

MANUEL

No, the fountain is a symbol of the point.

LAURA

Ohhhh.... Nope. No idea what you're talking about.

MANUEL

I'm talking about you and your commitments and how you are not living up to them.

LAURA

What do you mean? The hotel is in great shape. The show looks fantastic. I have been helping with all of the Christmas family stuff. We made cookies, we hung stockings, we wrapped presents... I was there for all of it.

MANUEL

You were there but you weren't there.

LAURA

Dad, I am exhausted and have way too much work to do. I can't have this argument with you right now.

She starts to walk back to the hotel.

MANUEL

You need to decide what's important to you.

She turns around to face him.

LAURA

Why can't it all be important to me? Why can't I want to do a good job and be there for my kid?

MANUEL

And do the show, also?

LAURA

I know you never liked me doing the show.

MANUEL

No. I loved it. I was so proud of you. And then Ricardo left and you... you just quit. You gave up. Like it never mattered. Well, it mattered to me. You matter to me.

LAURA

Dad...

MANUEL

I love you, Laura, but you always act like you can do everything by yourself. Even when Daniel died, you had to do that on your own... in a different city! But you can't do everything by yourself. No one can do everything by themselves. If you try...

He points at the fountain.

MANUEL (CONT'D)

Something always get left behind.

He goes to her, kisses her on the forehead, and then leaves the courtyard. Laura sits on the bench to think about everything he has just said.

94 EXT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT 94

Establishing shot of the dance studio.

95 INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT 95

Ricardo is reviewing some papers when Taylor walks in.

TAYLOR

Hi.

RICARDO

Taylor?

TAYLOR

Yeah. Can I come in?

RICARDO

Of course. What are you doing here?

TAYLOR

I have some news.

RICARDO

Did you get the tour?

TAYLOR

I did... sort of.

RICARDO

What do you mean?

TAYLOR

Well, I went to the audition and it turns out that the producer had seen us when we were in Berlin last year. He thought we were amazing and he offered me the job on the spot.

RICARDO

(sincere)

That's great! Congratulations!

TAYLOR

But only if you come with me.

RICARDO

Wow. That's... incredible.

TAYLOR

It is?

RICARDO

Of course it is. I would love to do that tour with you.

TAYLOR

Really? I was so worried that you were mad at me.

RICARDO

No, I got it. I knew that this was important to you.

TAYLOR
Exactly. And they'll understand
with you, too.

RICARDO
Understand what?

TAYLOR
(beat)
We have to leave for London day
after tomorrow.

RICARDO
That's Christmas Eve.

TAYLOR
I know. They want us to do a
preview performance on New Year's
Eve. It only gives us a week to
learn the choreography.

RICARDO
I can't, Taylor. I've got the
Christmas show.

TAYLOR
Ricardo, they are offering us
leading roles on a two-year, global
tour. This is the kind of thing we
have been dreaming about.

RICARDO
Taylor...

TAYLOR
Don't say no. Just think about it.

We end on Ricardo's stunned reaction to this news.

END ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

96 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DAY 96

Establishing shot of the Montoya house.

97 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY 97

Laura and Nikki are sitting at the dining room table making a Christmas tree ornament.

NIKKI

You think grandpa will like this?

LAURA

I think he'll love it. Every year he'll put it on the tree and think of his favorite granddaughter.

NIKKI

Only granddaughter!

Laura looks at Nikki.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

(smiles - parrots grandpa)

It doesn't make it any less true.

LAURA

Exactly. Hey, we haven't talked about your wish list for Santa.

NIKKI

I already gave it to you! You sent it, didn't you?

LAURA

Absolutely. I just wanted to make sure there weren't any last minute changes. Anything you want to add?

NIKKI

Well... do you think Santa could make it snow? It hasn't snowed once since we got here!

LAURA

Hmmm... I don't know. That's mostly Mother Nature's domain.

NIKKI

He can talk to her, right?

LAURA
I'm sure he can.

NIKKI
(beat)
Will Grandpa be lonely when we
leave?

LAURA
Lonely? I don't think he'll be
lonely. He'll miss us, I'm sure.

NIKKI
Then maybe we should stay.

LAURA
Stay here in Seattle? You didn't
even want to come.

NIKKI
I know. But I like it here now.

LAURA
What about our home in Los Angeles?
And your school and your friends?

NIKKI
Uh-huh... I'll miss them. But if
we leave I'll miss my friends here.
And Grandpa, too. And I think he
will miss us.

LAURA
I don't know, sweetie. How about
we visit more often?

NIKKI
(beat)
Can we ask Mother Nature when we
can come so we can see it snow?

Laura laughs and hugs Nikki.

Establishing shot of the hotel.

99

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

99

Other than some minor work going on here and there, the lobby is done and decked out for Christmas. Scott is behind the front desk on the phone and Laura comes into the lobby from the hallway but stops when she hears what Scott is saying.

SCOTT
(into phone)
Oliver, the hotel looks great.

Laura smiles when she hears that.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
No, you were right to send me out here. Laura was pretty seriously behind until I pitched in.

Laura's smile disappears.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I'd be happy to take the lead on the Boston property. Yes! Okay... I'll see you here tomorrow. Bye.

He disconnects the call and turns around to see Laura. His face falls when he realizes he has been caught.

100

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - DAY

100

Laura comes into the empty ballroom, fuming. Scott follows.

SCOTT
Laura, it's not what you think.

LAURA
Really? Because I think you lied to me. And I think you just bad-mouthed me to our boss! How is that not what I think?

SCOTT
Oliver was worried and he wasn't going to listen to me or you. I had to do something drastic. Trust me, this was for your own good.

LAURA
Never trust...
(laughs)
My father was right about so much stuff, it's almost scary. Never trust someone who says trust me.

SCOTT
 Laura, I'm sorry.

LAURA
 Okay. Then fix it.

SCOTT
 What?

LAURA
 If you're actually sorry, tell
 Oliver the truth.

Scott doesn't reply. Laura heads for the door.

SCOTT
 Laura.

She leaves without saying another word.

101 INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 101
 Laura comes out of the ballroom and almost runs into Ricardo.

RICARDO
 Hey. I've been looking for you.
 Can we talk?

LAURA
 Not right now, Ricardo. I need to
 get some air.

RICARDO
 Are you okay?

LAURA
 Yeah. I'm fine... I just...

She walks off and he can do nothing but watch her go.

102 EXT. COFFEESHOP - DAY 102
 Establishing shot of the coffeeshop.

103 INT. COFFEESHOP - DAY 103
 Alicia and the coffeeshop are in full holiday mode. She is
 sitting with Laura at a table loaded with Christmas cookies.

ALICIA

Are you okay? I can get more cookies.

LAURA

I'm fine.

ALICIA

You are? Because I'm furious.

LAURA

It's not going to do me any good to be mad about it.

ALICIA

Look at you being all grown up.

LAURA

Right?

ALICIA

So I guess you're not dating Scott anymore.

LAURA

No. That is definitely over. And please don't say that this clears the way for Ricardo.

ALICIA

I wasn't going to say anything!

LAURA

Yes, you were. You were going to say he's single, I'm single. And we're dancing together again and it's Christmas and...

ALICIA

And then you'd say, but I'm still going home to L.A. and he's going to get a job and leave... again.

LAURA

Exactly. And then you'd say... you'd say chances like this don't come along very often....

(beat - realizing)

Maybe it's time to make another wish at the Enchanted Fountain.

ALICIA

Wow, I'm pretty eloquent, aren't I?

LAURA
 (smiles)
 Yes, you are.

Laura puts her hand on Alicia's.

104 EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT 104
 Establishing shot of the hotel.

105 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT 105
 Ricardo comes into the ballroom looking for Laura.

RICARDO
 Laura? Laura?

Taylor comes out from the backstage area.

TAYLOR
 Hi.

RICARDO
 Hey. Have you seen Laura?

TAYLOR
 No.

RICARDO
 She ran out of here... I've been
 trying to call her.

TAYLOR
 Well, I've been trying to call you.
 We have to catch the flight
 tomorrow, Ricardo.

RICARDO
 I can't go until I talk to Laura.

TAYLOR
 But you are going to go?

RICARDO
 (beat)
 I don't know. You're right, it's
 an amazing opportunity but...

TAYLOR
 You need to talk to Laura.

RICARDO

Yes.

She walks over to him and hands him a plane ticket.

TAYLOR

I'll be at the airport. I hope you
will be, too.

She leaves and Ricardo looks at the plane ticket.

106

EXT. PLAZA - NIGHT

106

The big toy drive is underway, with people dropping off donations. Manuel is at a table sorting items into bins. Ricardo brings up a box with a toy in it.

RICARDO

Hey, Mr. Montoya. How are you?

MANUEL

Doing good work makes you feel
good. Remember that.

RICARDO

I will. Have you seen Laura?

MANUEL

Not since this morning. Why is
there a problem?

RICARDO

May I ask you a question?

MANUEL

Of course.

RICARDO

Have you ever had to make a choice
that, no matter what you did,
somebody was going to get hurt?

MANUEL

(beat)

Do you remember your senior prom?

RICARDO

Random, but okay I'll go with it.
Uh... I think so, yes.

MANUEL

You and Laura had been dating for
awhile and I didn't approve.

RICARDO

I definitely remember that.

MANUEL

I thought you were too... you always had your head in the clouds. You were always thinking about some big future and not appreciating what you had in the present. But that night you came to the door wearing your tuxedo and holding a corsage for Laura. Do you remember what you said to me?

RICARDO

I don't.

MANUEL

You said, "Mr. Montoya, I'm going to marry your daughter one day. And I'm going to make her happy. It's the most important thing in the world to me. Even more important than dancing."

RICARDO

I do remember that.

MANUEL

I liked that young man. I approved of that young man.

RICARDO

You never said anything.

MANUEL

I didn't chase you off with a pitchfork, did I?

RICARDO

(laughs)

Well... it's easy to say things like that when you're young and foolish and have your head in the clouds, right?

MANUEL

We always have choices. The ones we make when we are young and foolish can be forgiven. But the ones we make later... those are the ones that really count.

Manuel pats Ricardo on the back and walks away, leaving Ricardo to absorb that conversation.

107 EXT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY 107

Establishing shot of the dance studio.

108 INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY 108

Laura comes into the dance studio. Taylor is there, putting some things into a bag.

LAURA

Taylor? When did you get back?

TAYLOR

I take it you haven't talked to Ricardo?

LAURA

We've been trading voice mails. I thought he might be here. How did the audition go?

TAYLOR

(beat)

Good. They offered me the job.

LAURA

That's great!

TAYLOR

Yeah. Except... They offered Ricardo a job, too. Sort of a package deal.

LAURA

(crestfallen)

That's why he wanted to talk to me. He's going to take it.

TAYLOR

To be honest, I don't know. I'm on my way to the airport. I'm not sure if he's going to be there.

LAURA

(beat)

It's a good opportunity?

TAYLOR

Did you ever make a wish at Christmas?

LAURA

Of course. Every Christmas Eve Ricardo and I would pitch pennies into the fountain at the Enchanted and... make a wish.

TAYLOR

This opportunity? It's like that Christmas wish coming true. I just don't know if he knows that.

Taylor heads to the door.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas, Laura.

Taylor exits, leaving Laura alone in the studio. Laura goes to the door as well.

109 EXT. STREET - DAY

109

Laura is walking down the snowy street, lost in thought. A group of carolers comes toward her singing a classic Christmas song. After they pass, she pulls out her phone.

110 EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

110

Ricardo steps over to the bench, wiping his brow, as he picks up his coat. From this angle we can't see the fountain. He checks the pocket and pulls out the phone, seeing that there's a voice mail.

RICARDO

No. Not again.

He calls to listen to the voice mail.

LAURA (V.O.)

Ricardo, it's Laura. I just talked to Taylor and... you have to take the job. I don't want to be the one who gets in the way of your dream. I tried to do that ten years ago and blamed you for not letting me. You weren't supposed to stay then... Nikki is proof of that. And you're not supposed to stay now, either.

(MORE)

LAURA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Don't worry about the Christmas show. I've been rehearsing with Nikki, so I can take care of the kids and don't worry about me... You being happy... That's my Christmas wish... goodbye, Ricardo.

The call ends. Ricardo stands there, heartbroken.

111 INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY 111

Laura comes into the bustling lobby as Eddie is heading out.

EDDIE

Laura. Where have you been? We're opening in a few hours.

LAURA

It's a long story.

EDDIE

Ricardo was here a little while ago. Out in the courtyard.

LAURA

But he left?

EDDIE

He said he was going to the airport.

Laura nods and pats Eddie on the shoulder.

LAURA

Opening day.

She heads toward the hallway.

112 EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - NIGHT 112

Laura comes out of the hotel and stops, trying to hold back tears.

We PULL BACK to reveal that Ricardo fixed the fountain... it is now lit up and water is bubbling.

END ACT EIGHT

ACT NINE

113 EXT. MONTOYA HOUSE - DAY 113

Establishing shot of the Montoya house.

114 INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 114

Laura is talking to Nikki by the Christmas tree while Manuel watches from the doorway.

NIKKI

I don't want to do the Christmas show if you're not!

LAURA

Why not?

NIKKI

Won't it hurt your feelings?

LAURA

(tries to be cheery)
I'm fine with the whole thing. Besides, now I get to help you guys with your part of the Christmas show. That's a big honor.

NIKKI

It's not fair.

LAURA

It is... it's just not easy. But sometimes doing the right thing isn't the easiest thing.

NIKKI

(nods)
Okay.

LAURA

Okay. Go get your stuff. We have to get to the hotel.

Laura kisses Nikki as she runs out of the room. Manuel goes to Laura.

MANUEL

You're fine with the whole thing?

LAURA

I will be.

MANUEL

I guess they were right. History repeats itself.

LAURA

(shakes her head)

This time is different. This time it was my choice.

MANUEL

But then you're going to go back to L.A. Back to doing everything on your own.

LAURA

I need to go home sometime, Dad.

MANUEL

Friends. Family. A place to be with people who love you at Christmas.

(beat)

That is home.

That's a big revelation for Laura. She absorbs it for a moment and then kisses him on the cheek.

LAURA

Thanks, Dad.

Laura heads toward the bedrooms.

115

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

115

The lobby is gorgeous, fully decorated for Christmas and populated by guests who are appreciating the beautiful room. Manuel, Alicia, and Nikki are admiring the big Christmas tree and elsewhere in the crowd are Oliver, Scott, and Eddie who all look pleased.

Laura is talking to Claudia by the front desk.

CLAUDIA

I can't believe we're not going to have a grand finale in the Christmas show.

LAURA

We'll just have a different one. We can bring the kids back out for an encore. People will love that.

CLAUDIA

I swear, when I get my hands on
Ricardo...

LAURA

You'll give him a big hug...
because he couldn't have said no to
this chance... and because he's
family.

CLAUDIA

Are you going to be okay?

LAURA

(smiles)

I am.

Claudia gives her a squeeze and heads for the ballroom.

Over by the tree, Scott has walked up to admire it and
doesn't notice Nikki until she tugs on his coat sleeve.

NIKKI

Do you like the tree?

SCOTT

I do, very much.

NIKKI

I helped pick it out.

SCOTT

You did?

NIKKI

Uh-huh. I didn't want to at first
but Mom was, like, super busy so I
helped.

SCOTT

(uncomfortable)

Right. That was very nice of you.

NIKKI

Well... Mom said, doing the right
thing isn't easy.

Scott lets that sink in.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Are you coming to the show?

SCOTT

I am.

NIKKI

Cool. I'll wave at you. Merry Christmas!

She runs off to join Manuel and Alicia. Laura comes over and Nikki hugs her. Scott sighs and shakes his head then walks a few feet over to Oliver.

SCOTT

Oliver.

OLIVER

Scott! You have done amazing work here. The place looks beautiful.

SCOTT

Yeah... about that...

He puts his arm around Oliver and guides him away.

116

EXT. HOTEL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

116

There are a few people out admiring the fountain and the holiday decorations as Laura comes out. She stands by it, smiling, and then digs into her coat pocket.

Laura takes out a penny, closes her eyes, takes a deep breath, and pitches the penny into the fountain.

Oliver comes out of the hotel behind her.

OLIVER

Laura. I've been looking for you.

LAURA

Hi, Oliver. I figured you'd want to chat at some point.

OLIVER

You've done some incredible work here. You should be very proud.

LAURA

(surprised)

Thank you. It was a team effort. Eddie was a great foreman.

OLIVER

A great team needs a great captain.
I can't wait to get you on your
next project.

LAURA

My next... you're not firing me?

OLIVER

Why would I fire you?

LAURA

Well, Scott...

OLIVER

Scott. Yes, him, I fired.

LAURA

You did?

OLIVER

He had an attack of conscience and
told me about how he wasn't exactly
being honest with either one of us.
Call it a Christmas miracle I
guess.

(beat)

Now, you know I'm not the type to
say I'm sorry.

LAURA

(beat)

But...

OLIVER

No, that was it. Let's talk about
your next assignment. The hotel in
Dallas could use some help.

LAURA

Actually, Oliver... I have a
different idea about what my next
assignment should be.

Oliver is intrigued.

117

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

117

Establishing shot of the hotel. Over this we hear the sound
of applause.

118 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

118

The ballroom is packed with people sitting in chairs around the dance floor. Among them are Manuel, Alicia, Oliver, and Eddie. They are applauding as a spotlight comes up and Laura walks out into it.

LAURA

Merry Christmas. Welcome to the grand opening of the Enchanted Lodge!

More applause.

LAURA (CONT'D)

My name is Laura Trudeau, and I am so pleased to be presenting tonight's entertainment, the 75th annual Christmas Eve Showcase!

Another round of applause.

119 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

119

The performers are all massed backstage, including Nikki and the other kids and Claudia who is running things. They are listening to Laura's introduction.

120 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

120

Back to Laura.

LAURA

All of the money raised tonight will go to after-school programs including some that focus on the performing arts like music and dance. I was a dancer myself when I was young and it really changed my life. When you work with a group like this, they become an extension of your family and the last few weeks here have reminded me how important family is, especially during the holidays.

Manuel smiles warmly in the audience.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You are all a part of our family and I promise our doors will always be open to you.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

I'll make sure of it, since I'm going to be sticking around as the new General Manager of the Enchanted Lodge.

More applause, especially from Manuel.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Thank you again for coming. Merry Christmas to everyone and please... enjoy the show.

She steps off the dance floor as the lights come down. She heads backstage as the choir is coming out to perform

121 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - NIGHT 121

The choir is singing on stage as Laura comes back to gather the kids.

LAURA

(quietly)

Okay. Is everyone ready?

They all quietly indicate that they are.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're going to be great. Just remember the most important thing is to have fun, okay?

They all nod, eager to get on with the fun.

122 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT 122

The choir finishes up to a great round of applause. The kids come out in their reindeer costumes to do their routine. It's adorable and the crowd eats it up, especially the very proud Manuel.

123 INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - NIGHT 123

Laura is watching from the back and when the kids end their number, she cheers. They come off stage as a string quartet is going on.

LAURA

You guys were fantastic!

Nikki hugs her mom.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Did you have fun?

NIKKI
Yes! I want to do it again!

LAURA
Next year, I promise.

NIKKI
Okay. Can Ricardo help next year?

LAURA
Oh, honey... I think Ricardo is going to be busy.

NIKKI
(looks behind Laura)
Please? We really need your help, Ricardo.

Laura's eyes get wide. She stands and we see Ricardo standing behind her.

RICARDO
Well... My schedule is a lot lighter than I expected.

Nikki cheers and runs to go tell the other kids. Laura turns to face Ricardo.

LAURA
You went to the airport.

RICARDO
I did. To tell Taylor that I was staying.

LAURA
Ricardo... you can't give up an opportunity like that for me.

RICARDO
I'm not.
(beat)
Okay, I am a little. I'm not going to lie, you're a part of it. But it's so much more than that. The long trip is over... and I'm ready to come home.

LAURA
But your dream...

RICARDO

I had my dream. Now I've got a new one. Laura, I don't know what's going to happen with us... I don't know if we can get back what we had, but I know that I want to stick around to find out.

LAURA

We can't go back. We're not those people anymore.

Ricardo's face falls a little.

LAURA (CONT'D)

But I like who we are now. And we can go forward.

Ricardo smiles as Claudia comes over to them.

CLAUDIA

Okay, I'm really sorry to interrupt this very touching moment but are you guys going to dance, or what?

Ricardo and Laura smile.

RICARDO

Are you ready to start that new tradition?

LAURA

Let's show them what a real grand finale looks like.

Ricardo takes her hand and they head to the dance floor.

124

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - NIGHT

124

The lights come up on Laura on the dance floor, alone in a dramatic pose. An upbeat Christmas song starts that has just a touch of Salsa feeling to it.

All of our main characters in the audience are excited and surprised to see her out there.

Ricardo comes out, taking her by the hand, and they start to dance, but the traditional Foxtrot we have seen them rehearsing - instead, it's a Salsa, what they have always been great at. It's incredible and it ends with them in an embrace that leads to a sweet and tender kiss.

There is a standing ovation.

125

INT. MONTOYA HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

125

As jaunty Christmas music plays, we see the extended family celebrating Christmas morning - Laura, Manuel, Nikki, and Alicia with the opening of presents and much merriment.

There's a knock on the door and Laura goes to answer it.

Ricardo is there and he waves for the group to come outside.

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They all come outside to find that it is snowing. Nikki is beyond thrilled and immediately starts to dance around in it. Everyone hugs and enjoys the scene, and we end with Laura and Ricardo, kissing as the snow falls around them.

THE END