

Oh, Christmas Tree

By

Marty Chartrand

The best of all gifts around any **Christmas tree**: the presence of a happy family all wrapped up in each other.

-- **Burton Hillis**

OVER BLACK:

We listen to the faint sounds of;
... Off-balanced tires, rolling along the pavement.
... An engine puttering, and,
... A transmission clunking.
... Leather slapping against metal, and,
... The steady and constant flow of wind.
Each sound, growing louder and louder,
Until we,

FADE IN:**INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY**

A **FAMILY**. Our family.

Four in total.

A **MAN**, 40s,

A **WOMAN**, 40s,

A **GIRL**, 15, and,

A **BOY**, 12.

All sit.

Each one, staring forward. Each one, looking like absolute shit.

The cold winter's wind rushes against their bodies as ... the rooftop of their car -- no longer exists.

BOY

This -- day -- blows.

The family nods in unison.

A moment passes.

BOY

Can we go home now?

GIRL
Please?

The woman nods.

WOMAN
Yes.

But the man shakes his head, back and forth.

MAN
No.

The woman turns to the man -- ready to plead her case.

WOMAN
But --

MAN
But, nothing.

The man continues to shake his head.

MAN
We are on a mission ...

The woman sighs and concedes. Back into her seat, she goes.

MAN
... And I am not going home without
a Christmas tree.

The girl and boy shiver on.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

SUPER: THE DAY BEFORE.

FADE IN:

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

Once again, our **family**.

The **GIBBONS**, in a different light.

Dressed in their Sunday's best, they drive along the
countryside.

The mood inside is somber and quiet.

ROY, 40s, handsome, yet Dad-bod content; drives. His eyes focused on the road ahead.

BETH, 40s, beautiful, inside and out, and yes, just like you, I'm wondering how Roy landed her too; sits in the passenger seat.

Beth looks at Roy then away as she struggles to find the right words to say to him.

She takes a deep breath -- thinking.

Unable to come up with the words to say, Beth gently reaches for and takes Roy's hand. Affectionately.

Roy softly squeezes Beth's hand in return and he puts on a halfhearted smile for her.

Beth pays this back with a smile of her own.

BETH

Is your mother still planning to come over tomorrow night?

Roy nods.

ROY

That's the plan.

BETH

What about tonight? Is she going to be alright being alone?

ROY

My cousin Victoria will be there.

BETH

Okay, good.

Silence reigns on as Roy isn't giving Beth much to work with.

BETH

Roy, I know it may not seem like it right now, but everything's going to be --

ROY

Fine. I know. I know.

Their two children sit in the backseat.

BREE, 15, pretty like her mother and teen-aged typical; comforts her little brother.

PETER, 12, small and handsome, sweet and innocent; who just like everyone else, is trying his hardest not to break down.

Beth takes notice to this and shies away from the conversation.

BETH

Maybe we shouldn't be talking about this right now.

And so does Roy.

ROY

I agree.

BETH

But we'll talk more about it later. Okay?

ROY

Sure.

Roy pulls into the driveway and parks.

BETH

What's your plan for the day?

ROY

I think I'm going to go into the office for a few hours. Clear my head. I'll be back later.

BETH

Do you want to eat lunch with us first?

ROY

No. I'm fine. If I get hungry, I'll grab something on the way.

BETH

Okay, hon.

Roy hops out.

BREE

Mom, I'm worried. Is Dad going to be alright?

BETH

Yeah, guys. Dad's going to be fine.
He just needs a little time to
process everything going on.

Beth watches on as,

EXT. TRUCK - DAY

Roy climbs in and drives off.

INT. OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Roy, sitting at his desk, wickedly works away crunching numbers on his computer.

Roy's boss, **MR. EDWARDS**, 60s, tall, aged yet handsome none the less; gives a quick knock on the door, before entering Roy's office.

MR. EDWARDS

Hello. Hello.

Roy stops working and looks up. Giving Mr. Edwards the utmost respect he deserves.

ROY

Hi there, Mr. Edwards.

MR. EDWARDS

Roy, I wasn't expecting to see you in the office today.

ROY

I know, Sir. Mr. Williams was hoping for the budget for next quarter so I figured today was as good as any to get started on it. I really don't want to let him down. Or you.

MR. EDWARDS

Nonsense, Roy. I can finish the budget. You shouldn't be here today.

ROY

Oh no, Sir. I couldn't --

MR. EDWARDS

Roy, not another word about the matter. I insist. Go on now.

MR. EDWARDS (CONT'D)
I want you to go home and get an
early start on the holidays. We'll
see you after the new year.

Roy nods.

Reluctantly, he packs up his belongings and heads to the
door.

ROY
Merry Christmas, Mr. Edwards.

MR. EDWARDS
Merry Christmas, Roy.

Roy, ready to walk out the door.

MR. EDWARDS
And Roy.

Roy stops.

ROY
Yes, Sir?

Mr. Edwards, finally addressing the elephant in the room.

MR. EDWARDS
I'm really sorry to hear about your
father.

ROY
Thank you, Sir.

MR. EDWARDS
He was a good man.

ROY
Yes. He was.

The two share a quick somber nod and Roy leaves.

INT./EXT. TRUCK - DAY

Roy listens to the radio as he drives home.

Andy Williams': "It's the most wonderful time of the year,"
begins to play.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on the Radio)
It's the most wonderful time of the
year ...

ANDY WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
With the kids jingle belling ...
And everyone telling you be of good
cheer ... It's the most wonderful
time of the year.

Roy cannot help but smirk at the irony of the song before,
shutting off the radio.

A moment of peace and quiet.

Roy savors it.

Until,

A loud noise comes from the engine,

POP!

Followed by a big cloud of smoke pouring out from under the
hood.

ROY
Oh, God. Now what?

EXT. AUTO SHOP - DAY

Roy's truck labors into the parking lot.

Smoke billows out of the hood.

The truck stalls out and dies -- creating its own parking
spot.

INT. AUTO SHOP, WAITING ROOM - DAY

Roy, like all of the other customers, sits impatiently
waiting for bad news and a depleted bank account.

A **MECHANIC**, 50s, though the years of manual labor and tobacco
abuse make him look much older and very much weathered;
enters the room.

The customers take notice.

Removing his cap, the mechanic takes a brief moment to wipe
the sweat from his brow.

He takes in a deep breath before placing the cap back upon
his head.

The mechanic scans the room.

MECHANIC
Who's the owner of the black, four
door pickup truck?

Roy stands up and raises his hand half-way high.

ROY
Right here. That's mine.

The mechanic nods and approaches Roy.

He wipes his hands with a rag.

Still with plenty of grease left on it, the mechanic extends
his hand to Roy.

Roy unwillingly accepts.

MECHANIC
How are you doing today, Sir?

ROY
You tell me?

The mechanic laughs it off.

MECHANIC
Okay. Fair enough. Do you want the
good news first or the bad?

Roy, not willing to play along -- not today.

ROY
Surprise me.

MECHANIC
Okay. Well the good news is we can
fix your truck. That's not a
problem at all.

Roy looks relieved by the news ...

ROY
You can fix it? That's great.

... But remembers.

ROY
So what's bad news?

MECHANIC
Well the bad news is that your
engine overheated and you cracked
the engine block.

MECHANIC (CONT'D)

Now like I said, we can fix it. But with it being the holidays and all, it's probably going to take us a couple of weeks to do so.

A blow to Roy.

We stay with him, as this new news sinks in.

EXT. AUTO SHOP - DAY - LATER

Roy sits, restlessly waiting on the curb.

He takes a quick glance at his watch before his wife's,

MINIVAN

Pulls up and stops in front of him.

INT./EXT. MINIVAN - DAY

Beth, Bree and Peter are all present inside.

Beth and Bree are up front, as Peter rides solo in the backseat.

BETH

Hi, honey. I am so sorry it took so long. You wouldn't believe the traffic off of Highland. Bumper to bumper. Absolute nightmare of a drive.

Roy stands up, gathers his belongings from the curb, and crosses in front of the minivan.

Beth unbuckles her seat belt. Ready to jump out.

BETH

Do you want to drive?

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

Not really feeling like it today.

Roy motions for Bree to move to the backseat.

BETH

Okay, hon. No problem.

Bree moves to the back as Roy hops into the passenger seat.

Beth buckles back up.

INT. MINIVAN - DAY - LATER

Beth drives.

Roy, in his own world, stares out the window.

The kids are swiping away on their phones in the backseat.

Beth looks at Roy.

BETH

A couple of weeks isn't so bad. I mean, it could be worse. Right, hon?

ROY

Yeah. I guess.

A long beat.

Silence. Too long for Beth's comfort.

Beth looks into the rear-view mirror.

BETH

Hey kids. You guys excited for winter break?

PETER

Yes.

BREE

Yeah.

Beth looks on -- wanting more.

BETH

What do you want to do?

BREE

Sleep.

BETH

That's a shocker. What about you Peter?

Peter, deep into playing the game on his phone, offers no response.

BETH

Peter?

Peter plays on.

Beth sighs.

BETH

Okay. If no one wants to talk,
we'll just listen to the radio
then.

To break up the silence, Beth turns on the radio.

We land right in the middle of the weather report.

RADIO WEATHERMAN

(on the Radio)

And don't expect this warm weather
to continue much longer as a large
cold front is creeping on in as we
speak. We can expect to see a large
wintry mix in the overnight hours.
Followed by below freezing temps.
But for now, go out and enjoy the
nice weather. Because the children
will be building snowmen by
morning.

RADIO HOST

(on the Radio)

And to continue us in the holiday
spirit, yet another Christmas
classic, comes to you, from your
friend and mine. Mr. Bing Crosby.

Bing Crosby's: "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas," begins to
play.

BING CROSBY

(on the Radio)

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas.

RADIO HOST

(on the Radio)

Looks like it's going to be a white
Christmas after all.

Beth smiles -- excited about the prospect of snow.

BETH

See. You guys hear that?

Peter starts fidgeting in his seat. Zipping down his
sweatshirt. Rolling up his sleeves.

PETER

Yeah. I wish it was snowing right now. When did it so hot in here?

Hot becomes a trigger word for Roy as he's getting uncomfortable now too.

ROY

So hot. What's going on here?

He loosens his tie and and unbuttons the top buttons of his shirt.

ROY

Do you have the heat on or something?

Beth motions towards the minivan's thermostat.

BETH

Check it. I don't think so.

Roy plays with the thermostat. Turning it all the way down to cool.

But it's not enough. Roy needs instant relief.

ROY

Come on. Let's go. Windows down everyone. Down. Down. Down.

Everyone accommodates Roy's orders and they put their windows down.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

As the minivan pulls in the driveway, the neighbors from hell, the **REAGANS**, have once again forgot to lock in their dogs in their own yard.

The entire pack is loitering in the Gibbons' driveway.

And these aren't the cute dogs you wouldn't mind having in your driveway, these are the types of dogs that even the pounds turn away.

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

From the scrutiny on each of their faces, this is becoming all too common of an occurrence for them.

BETH

The Reagan's dogs are loose again.

Bree rolls her eyes.

BREE

Shocking.

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

I thought you were going to speak to them about keeping their dogs locked up in their own yard?

BETH

I did.

ROY

Well look what good talking to them did.

Beth sighs.

BETH

I know.

ROY

What is this, the third time this week?

BETH

I know, Roy.

Roy shakes his head -- back and forth.

ROY

You know, I swear. One of these days I'm going to loose it on those people. I'm going to walk right over there, knock on their door and tell them exactly how I feel about about them and their stupid dogs.

Peter leans forward.

PETER

Chill out, Dad.

Roy shuns him away.

Peter retreats back into his seat.

Beth turns to Roy.

BETH
Don't worry about it, honey. We'll
take care of it.

Beth's ability to calm down Roy shows as his anger subsides
and he comes back down to earth.

BETH
You've had a tough day. Go take a
shower and relax. Okay?

Bree unbuckles her seat belt.

BREE
What about me? I had a tough day
too.

Peter scoffs at Bree.

PETER
Hardly.

Bree throws her bag at Peter.

BREE
Be quiet.

The bag hits him in the face.

He chucks it right back.

PETER
You be quiet.

Beth sighs.

BETH
Cut it out you two.

They stop.

But not before Peter sticks his tongue out at Bree.

BREE
Mom?

Beth turns around.

BETH
Enough.

Peter stops.

Bree smiles. Victory.

Beth reaches for the handle, ready to open the door when ...

... Roy reaches over and plants a firm hug on Beth. His first real sign of true weakness. True hurt.

But as quickly as it starts, it ends.

Roy leans back and looks at Beth.

Beth nods in acceptance. He's fighting it. She knows.

BETH

Okay, kids. Let's go round them up.

Roy, with tears in his eyes, stares on at Beth. Lovingly.

Beth gives him a smile before getting out.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

Beth, Bree and Peter get out and begin to wrangle up all of the Reagan's dogs.

Roy's the last one out.

Beth points toward the minivan.

BETH

Oh, honey. The windows.

Roy looks back and waves it off.

ROY

Ah. Forget it. I'll put them up later when I park it in the garage.

Roy walks past the rest of the family ...

Who are in the process of gathering up the Reagan's dogs, ... and into the house.

INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Roy showers.

He sticks his head under the steady flow of water as he concentrates on his breathing.

Steadily, inhaling and exhaling.

Again and again.

Teetering on the edge of a breakdown.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beth is hard at work getting dinner ready for the family.

Peter sits near her playing a game on his phone.

BETH

Peter, can you go get your sister
and have her give you a hand
setting the table?

Peter sighs before placing his phone down.

PETER

Sure, Mom.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy goes into the closet and pulls out a box full of old photographs.

He walks over to the bed, sits down and begins to go through them.

He struggles while looking through the contents, as the box contains various photos of his father throughout his life.

Roy stops on one.

He's fixated on it.

THE PHOTO

Roy, his Mother and his Father. All much younger. Happy and very much whole.

They are standing in front of an amazing Christmas tree; tall and full. Green and sturdy. Strings upon strings of lights, illuminating the room.

Roy smiles as he locks in on his mother's face. A smile that lights up the room.

That's it.

Roy has an idea.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dinner is cooked. Beth is already at work washing the dishes she used to make dinner. Bree and Peter are plating the table.

Roy walks in ...

BETH
Dinner's ready.

ROY
Sorry. No time to eat.

... and right past all of them and right out the door.

INT. HOUSE, GARAGE - NIGHT

Roy rummages through old boxes.

As Beth enters, Roy never stops working.

Beth approaches Roy. Watching as he pulls box after box from the shelves.

BETH
Not hungry?

ROY
No. You guys start without me. I'll eat later.

Roy removes strings of Christmas lights and decor from the boxes.

ROY
Hey, hon. Are these all of the lights we have?

BETH
Christmas lights? Yeah, I think so.

Roy, having gone through all of the boxes, shakes his head.

ROY
There's no where near enough. I have to go get some more before the stores close.

BETH
Now?

ROY

Yes, now.

Roy gets up to leave.

ROY

I'll be right back. You guys eat though. Don't worry about me. I'll be fine.

Beth stops him.

BETH

I am worried about you.

ROY

Don't be. I'm alright.

Beth holds onto Roy.

BETH

Come in and eat. Please. I bet you haven't eaten all day.

ROY

I can't. I'm sorry. I got to get all these lights hung before the storm hits.

Roy separates himself from Beth and gets into his convertible.

INT./EXT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Roy flips the visor and keys fall onto his lap.

Beth bends down. Looking into the window at Roy.

BETH

Honey, you're taking the convertible? Take the van. It's suppose to snow soon.

Definite. Roy turns the key and the convertible roars to life.

ROY

Relax, Beth. I'll be home before the first snowflake.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Roy drives.

The twinkling of lights from the nearby houses play off of his face.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The road is illuminated by rows of homes decorated for Christmas.

Most of the houses are already lit. Christmas trees are displayed in windows.

Roy's late to the party.

EXT. STORE, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The lot is full of cars and customers, hectically bracing for the incoming storm.

THE CONVERTIBLE

Pulls into a parking spot and screeches to a stop.

INT. STORE - NIGHT

The store is decorated for the holidays.

Customers hustle throughout the store. Last minute shopping. Last minute storm preparation.

Roy grabs a shopping cart. He scans the signs over the isles, looking for the one that reads: Lights.

He spots it.

Bingo. Isle nine.

Roy heads in that direction.

The intercom system crackles and Roy stops to have a listen.

FEMALE VOICE

(over the Intercom)

Attention all. The store will be closing in ten minutes. Please bring all of your items to the checkout lines for purchase.

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)
I repeat the store will be closing
in ten minutes. And as always,
thank you for shopping with us.

Roy hears this and ... Roy runs.

INT. STORE, CHECK OUT LINE - NIGHT

Roy is in the middle of a long line of customers anxiously waiting for their turn to check out.

Judging by their carts, most are preparing for the storm with; water, cans of food, rice, milk, typical rations.

But not Roy. Roy's carriage is stacked full of Christmas lights.

Roy keeps a close eye on the time on his watch.

With disgust, the customer in front of him takes a look at his cart before shaking her head at him.

Roy notices.

ROY
Great deal on lights.

She snarls and turns back around.

Uncomfortable, Roy smiles on.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beth, Bree and Peter are all eating dinner.

At the head of the table, a plate of food rests in front. This is Roy's.

Beth stares at it.

-- A car door slams shut.

Beth, Bree and Peter stop eating and listen.

-- A thud hits the side of the house.

And then,

-- The clinking of someone climbing a ladder.

And then,

-- Footsteps are heard scampering across the rooftop.

Without missing a beat, they continue to go back to their meals.

Beth lets out a sigh. Then shoots her kids a 'your father's crazy' smile.

EXT. HOUSE, ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The pitch of the roof is steep. Intimidating.

That doesn't stop Roy, who is stringing row after row of lights together along the rooftop.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beth, Bree and Peter are finished eating. Everyone helps to clear the table and wash the dishes.

Roy's plate rests untouched at his spot on the table.

Beth looks at it and then over to Peter who is eagerly awaiting approval from his Mother.

BETH

Alright. Fine. Go ahead and see if your father needs some help.

PETER

Really?

BETH

Yes. Go ahead. Just be safe up there.

Peter grabs his coat.

PETER

I will.

BETH

Be careful!

Peter rushes off.

PETER

I will!

Beth smiles.

EXT. HOUSE, ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Peter makes his way up on the roof.

Roy notices.

ROY
Hey, Son. It's getting late. What
are you doing up here?

PETER
Mom said I could help.

Roy smiles.

ROY
She did?

Peter nods.

PETER
Yep. She did.

ROY
Well, okay then. Go ahead and grab
some lights.

Peter does.

ROY
But --

PETER
Be careful. I know. Why does
everyone keep saying that?

Roy smiles.

EXT. HOUSE, ROOFTOP - NIGHT - LATER

Roy and Peter, father and son, work hand in hand stringing
lights together.

Peter holds up an arms full of lights, still yet to be hung.
He looks exhausted.

Roy on the other hand, does not.

PETER
Dad. Are we going to hang all of
these lights too?

ROY
You bet we are.

Ugh.

Peter drops the lights.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth and Bree are sitting on the couch. Each one reading a book.

Beth continues to check her watch for the time.

EXT. HOUSE, ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Roy and Peter let out a big sigh of relief as they have just stapled down the final string of lights.

Roy gets up and gives Peter a hug.

ROY
That's it. We're done. That was the last set of lights.

PETER
Thank God.

ROY
Okay, Son. Are you ready for all eight thousand, seven hundred and twenty-two bulbs, simultaneously shining as one?

PETER
Yeah. Let's do it.

They both head toward the ladder.

EXT. HOUSE, YARD - NIGHT

Roy and Peter climb down the ladder.

ROY
Go ahead and grab that cord over by the garage for me.

Peter does.

Roy and Peter meet in the middle of the yard. Each one holding an the end of an extension cord in hand.

Roy grabs Peters.

Roy, ready to plug them in together, stops and shakes his head.

ROY

No. You know what, Peter? Why don't you go ahead and take the honors on this one.

Roy hands the two extension cords over to Peter, who reluctantly takes them.

PETER

Are you sure, Dad?

ROY

Absolutely. Go ahead and light up the sky.

Peter, all smiles now, plugs the extension cords together and all of the lights on the roof, the house, and in the yard light up.

It looks glorious.

Roy puts his arm around Peter.

PETER

Holy smokes. It looks so awesome, Dad.

Roy nods in agreement.

ROY

It sure does.

Roy smiles.

ROY

You did good, Son.

Peter smiles.

PETER

Thanks, Dad.

Roy and Peter stand back and stare at all of the lights in awe of what they have just accomplished.

A slight snowfall begins.

Roy and Peter take notice.

ROY
Is that perfect timing or what?
Come on, let's get inside.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Snowflakes fall upon the van ...
... still parked in the driveway.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth and Bree asleep on the couch, are awoken when Roy and Peter enter.

Beth sits up.

BETH
What time is it?

ROY
Late.

Bree gets up and moves toward the doorway.

BREE
I'm going to bed.

Peter follows behind.

PETER
Me too.

ROY
Okay but before that. Come back and sit. I need everyone's attention.

Bree and Peter take a seat on the couch next to Beth.

ROY
I spoke with Grandma earlier and she will now be coming to spend Christmas Eve as well as Christmas with us.

PETER
Yes!

The kids are happy with the news.

ROY

This is a tough time right now for all of us. Especially for Grandma. You understand that don't you?

They do.

ROY

So that is why we are going to give Grandma the absolute greatest Christmas she has ever had. We are going to make it extra special this year. Okay? Does that sound good?

They all nod in agreement.

ROY

So tomorrow, bright and early, we get up and we go out and we find her the greatest Christmas tree ever imaginable.

Bree sits up straight.

BREE

Dad, can you define bright and early?

ROY

Seven A.M.

Peter sits up straight.

PETER

What?

And with that response, Roy is off and up the stairs.

The kids turn their protest to their mother.

BREE

No way. This is totally unfair.

PETER

Dad's gone crazy.

BETH

No he hasn't.

BREE

Yes he has. Seven A.M.? On school break? Mom, we're on school break!

BETH
I know that honey. But it's just
one morning. And besides, it's for
Grandma. Right?

Bree and Peter sign.

BREE
Right.

PETER
Right. For Grandma.

Beth sends a sympathetic smiles towards her children.

BETH
Okay now. Come on, time for bed.

They all head upstairs.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy and Beth are in bed.

Beth is fast asleep.

Roy is not.

Roy is sitting up with his nightstand light on, as he reads:
"The Ultimate Tree Lighting Guidebook."

He finishes the page he is on and closes the book.

Roy gets up and sets the alarm on the alarm clock to read:
6:00 AM.

Roy shuts the light off and joins Beth in bed.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Snow is falling down hard.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOMS - NIGHT

All of the members of the family are now asleep.

Each one, nice and warm, snuggled up under their covers.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The severity of the storm is now in full effect.
The wind blows hard, swaying the trees back and forth.
The trees creaking, ready to crack at any moment.

EXT. HOUSE, POWER LINES - NIGHT

The snow rushes down heavily, as a,
BRANCH
Full of ice and snow, dances up and down on the power lines.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The alarm clock reads: 5:00 AM.
Until,
-- It goes black.
But just for a split second, as it,
-- Turns right back on.
Only this time, the display reads: a flashing, 12:00 AM.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - DAY

Roy is awoken by the blinding light that has found its way through the blinds.
Roy turns his head and peaks at the alarm clock. It reads: a flashing, 4:00 AM.
Confused. Roy stares on at the flashing clock.
He takes a moment to processes it.
Until,
He realizes something.

ROY

Honey?

Beth stirs. Eventually waking up from her deep sleep.

BETH
Yeah? What is it?

ROY
Can you check the time on your
phone?

Beth reaches over, feeling around for her phone.
She finds it and reads off the time.

BETH
Eight.

Uh-oh. They've overslept.
Roy gulps.

ROY
Come again?

BETH
It's eight.

Roy yells out.

ROY
Everyone up!

Scaring Beth half to death.

INT. HOUSE, VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

Roy rushes around the house trying to get ready.

ROY
Move it. Move it. We got to beat
the early morning rush.

Everyone else is taking their precious time, moving at half
the speed Roy is.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Roy, with his keys in hand taps away on the counter top as he
impatiently waits for the rest of his family.

ROY
Come on. Come on. We've got to get
a move on. We've got a full day
ahead of us.

Beth, Bree and Peter pass him one by one as he motions for them to go out the door.

Roy follows them out.

INT. HOUSE, GARAGE - DAY

The convertible is parked next to piles of empty light boxes from the night before.

Beth looks around confused.

BETH
Ah, honey?

ROY
Yeah?

BETH
Where's the minivan?

Roy gasps, his eyes lighting up with alarm.

ROY
Oh, God.

Roy hits the garage door opener.

The door slowly begins to open.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

Fresh snowfall has covered the driveway.

INT. HOUSE, GARAGE - DAY

The door opens fully.

The family stands there with shock and awe on all of their faces.

BREE
Oh. My. God.

PETER
Wow. You don't see that everyday,
do you?

They overhear snickering coming from nearby.

The family turns their attention to their yuppie, asshole neighbors across the driveway.

EXT. THE REAGAN'S FRONT PORCH - DAY

MR. and **MRS. REAGAN**, 60's; laugh and point at the Gibbons' expense before returning back into their home.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY

We finally get a glimpse of what all of the excitement is about,

THE MINIVAN

Packed entirely to the roof with snow ...

... all because, the windows were left down.

Bree's face scrunches up as she tries her best not to laugh.

BETH

Roy?

Roy stares on at the minivan.

ROY

Yeah, dear?

Beth stares on as well.

BETH

I thought you were going to park it in the garage?

ROY

I forgot.

Peter laughs as he takes pictures of the minivan on his camera phone.

PETER

Oh, wow. This is too perfect. Do you think anyone else has ever had this happen to them?

Roy's daze fades away.

ROY

Cut it out, Peter.

PETER

No way, Dad. My friends will never believe me without some evidence.

When Peter finally realizes that no one else is sharing in his own enthusiasm, he stops.

BETH

Okay, well great. The truck is in the shop so now what are we going to do?

Roy thinks for a moment.

Then, with a smile on his face.

ROY

Peter. Do you remember those chains hanging in the shed?

PETER

Yeah?

ROY

Go grab them for me.

Beth frowns and shakes her head, knowing exactly where Roy is going with this.

BETH

Oh, no.

Roy smiles big and nods his head.

ROY

Oh, yes.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - DAY - LATER

THE CONVERTIBLE,

Freshly fitted in snow chains ...

... drives out of the half-assed, shoveled driveway and onto the snow covered road.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Beth, Bree and Peter, full of fright, eyes closed tightly, hang on for dear life.

BETH
Hold on kids. Hold on.

Bree cries out.

BREE
We're going to die!

Roy, heart pounding, brows sweating, pretends to have complete control over the vehicle.

ROY
No, we're not. I got this.

His eyes light up as he hits a patch of snow and the convertible swerves but Roy quickly recovers.

ROY
Really, guys. The roads aren't that bad.

Beth stares on at Roy.

He gives her an 'I'm scared to death' smile before she shakes her head.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The snow sits untouched, virgin to any plow truck.

THE CONVERTIBLE

Slips and slides, up and down the road,

Until,

It reaches Percy's Tree Farm.

EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, PARKING LOT - DAY

THE CONVERTIBLE

Pulls into an open spot and slides to a stop.

EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Still in one piece, they all get out.

BREE
Well that wasn't scary at all.

ROY
Relax. I had her the whole time.

Roy takes in a deep breath of air.

ROY
You guys smell that?

Beth, Bree and Peter take in a big whiff.

Then, they shake their heads.

BREE
Nope.

PETER
Nothing.

BETH
Too cold to smell, dear.

EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, TREE LOT - DAY

The family searches up and down the nearly bare aisles of trees in hopes to find that perfect one to take home.

Nothing is popping out to any of them.

BETH
You see anything you like, hon?

ROY
No. Nothing yet. But there's bound to be a good one somewhere around here.

Roy scans the lot.

ROY
I hope.

Wishful thinking, as nearly all of the good trees have already been sold.

Roy moves onward.

ROY
Come on. Lets keep looking.

Beth, Bree and Peter follow.

EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, TREE LOT - DAY - LATER

The family is still scowring the rows of misfit trees.

The minutes pass as Beth, Bree and Peter pick up a few trees to show Roy.

Each one not to Roy's liking.

... Beth holds up a little tree.

BETH

Hon. What do you think about this one?

ROY

No. Too small.

... Bree holds up a thin tree.

BREE

Well, how about this one?

ROY

No. Too skinny.

... Peter holds up a different tree.

PETER

What do you think, Dad?

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

Not green enough.

Roy walks off.

Defeated and hurt, Peter drops the tree.

Beth and Bree head over to give Peter some encouragement.

Beth wraps her arms around Peter.

BETH

It was a nice try Peter.

BREE

If it makes you feel any better, I thought yours was the best.

Peter nods and smiles.

Beth gives Bree a thankful smile.

BETH
Come on. Let's go find your Father.

INT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, BARN - DAY

Roy spots the owner, **MR. PERCY**, 70s, sweet and very much frail; sweeping up fallen pine needles.

ROY
Say, Mr. Percy, don't you have any large trees?

MR. PERCY
I'm afraid that what you see is what you get this close to the holidays.

Beth, Bree and Peter, just entering the barn, overhear this and are demoralized.

Something seems to catch Mr Percy's attention. He grins.

MR. PERCY
But look. That one over there isn't so bad.

Mr. Percy fetches the tree and returns.

It's an average Christmas tree. Probably the best you can get this late into the season.

PETER
It doesn't look so bad. Right, Dad?

ROY
That thing?

BETH
I think it looks nice.

Mr. Percy leans the tree over to Roy so he can take a better look.

Roy wants nothing of it.

ROY
It looks nice? I'm not looking for nice, Beth. I'm looking for a great big, exceptionally grand tree. The type of tree you put on a postcard not on a "Charlie Brown" special.

BREE

It's a nice tree, Dad. Lets just get it so we can go home.

BETH

I agree with Bree. Let's have a vote.

BREE

Okay. I vote for this tree.

PETER

Yeah. Me too, Dad.

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

No. No vote. Listen, maybe last year. Maybe even next year. But oh, no. Not this year. This year we are in search of the greatest Christmas tree ever. And I don't care if it takes all day to find it.

Roy leans the tree back over to Mr. Percy.

ROY

I'm sorry, Mr. Percy, but this tree is just nowhere near good enough.

Roy walks off.

BETH

Roy?

Beth shakes her head in disgust. She turns to Mr. Percy.

BETH

I'm so sorry, Mr. Percy.

BREE

It's really a nice tree.

The rest of the family walk off.

MR. PERCY

Okay well, I'll put it over here to the side in case you change your mind.

Mr. Percy opens up a stall door and ...

... places the tree down inside of it.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

They drive.

Heated. Beth decides to let Roy have it.

BETH

That was a rude thing to say to, Mr. Percy, Roy. He's a sweet old man who doesn't deserve to be treated like that.

PETER

Yeah. That wasn't cool, Dad.

Roy shrugs.

He's not having it right now. He's too hellbent on his mission to find a tree.

BETH

You know how he gets around the holidays. Sad and all alone. He loves those trees and you go out and insult them like that.

ROY

What can I say? I want a big tree this year.

BETH

At the expense of Mr. Percy's feelings? Roy, you're a better man than that.

Roy nods as he takes in Beth's words.

ROY

You're right. You're right. After Christmas, I'll go back over there and apologize to him.

No response from Beth.

ROY

Okay?

BETH

Okay.

Eager to get past this moment, Roy pulls out a compact disc, pops it in and hits play.

Andy Williams': "It's the most wonderful time of the year," plays on.

Sighs and groans erupt from the backseat.

BREE

Do we have to listen to this right now?

PETER

Yeah, come on Dad. They've been playing Christmas music at the mall since November first. I'm sick of it.

ROY

Come on everybody. What's a better way for us to get into the holiday spirit than the sweet sounds of Andy Williams singing "It's the most wonderful time of the year?"

BETH

I agree with your father. Sit back and enjoy.

Beth turns the radio up a little louder.

Roy and Beth smile and hum along to the tune of the song.

Bree and Peter turn to each other and groan.

The song continues to play.

And they listen.

And listen.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY - LATER

And listen.

Until,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," finishes.

And, without missing a beat,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year" begins to play ...

... again.

PETER

Um, Dad?

Roy notices it too.

ROY

I know Peter. I'll take care of it.

Roy reaches for the radio.

ROY

There must be some kind of --

Roy hits the eject button,

Nothing.

BREE

Make it stop.

Roy, motioning for Beth to take over with the radio.

ROY

Honey would you --

Beth pushes and pulls on knobs, trying to shut the radio off,

Nothing.

ROY

Try the volume.

Beth hits another button.

BETH

I'm trying, honey. Nothing is working.

Beth tugs hard on one of the knobs. She yanks it.

It pops right off.

Roy sees the knob resting in Beth's hand.

ROY

Oh good one. Now look at what you did!

Beth laughs.

BETH

I'm sorry.

ROY

You should be. Do you have any idea
how much this is going to cost me?

Beth continues to laugh.

Roy does not.

BETH

Oh, relax. It's only a radio.

Roy continues to pout.

Beth gives up and sits back.

A moment passes.

ROY

Okay, well. This isn't so bad. At
least it's a good song. Right?

Bree slams her hand down on the leather seat.

BREE

This is great. No really. This is
exactly the way I imaged the first
day of my break going.

BETH

Honey, settle down. It's not the
end of the world.

Peter, sulks as he slams his head back into the headrest.

PETER

This stinks, Dad.

Roy looks in the Rear-view mirror at his children.

ROY

Kids, I can guarantee you, by the
end of the day. You will all love
this song.

Bree sits back. Her arms folded.

BREE

Unlikely.

Roy drives -- slightly tapping away on the steering wheel.
Causally whistling along the way.

ROY

Good song. Good song.

Beth, Bree and Peter continue to pay him no attention.

ROY
Definitely a decent song.

A moment of silence as the family lets the song sink back in.

EXT. PARKER'S TREE FARM - DAY

The lot has been picked dry.

Zero trees are left. Only the slightest reminiscence of left over needles and branches remain.

The family turns around and leaves.

EXT. RAY'S TREE STAND - DAY

An employee shakes her head, "no" at the Gibbons standing before her.

The family drop their heads, turn around, and leave.

EXT. CALHOUN'S TREE FARM - DAY

A sign reads: Closed for the Holidays. We'll see you all next season.

The convertible pulls up to the sign and its brake lights turn on.

A moment passes.

The brake lights cut out and the convertible turns around and drives off.

EXT. SHEPHERD'S TREE STAND - DAY

The family sighs as they stare at a sign that reads: Sold out.

Beth, Bree and Peter turn around to leave.

Roy, overcome with anger, lets out his frustration, as he smashes the sign to pieces.

A crowd of onlookers begins to gather and watch Roy's fit of rage.

Beth, embarrassed, collects her children and walks them away from the scene.

BETH

Okay, kids. Come on. Time to go.
Your father has finally gone crazy.

Roy, as he continues to smash, shouts out.

ROY

Sold out? Buy some more trees next
year. You stupid son of a --

INT. SHEPHERD'S TREE STAND, BARN - DAY

Roy hands a check over to **MR. SHEPHERD**, 60s, sporting grey hair and glasses; the owner of the stand and the sign Roy just smashed.

Twenty years ago Mr. Shepherd would have popped Roy one, but today, he simply shakes his head at Roy in disgust.

Beth stands behind Roy, cross-armed.

Roy mouths the word, "sorry", and leaves.

Beth and the kids follow Roy out.

EXT. LUCKY'S TREE FARM, PARKING LOT - DAY

The convertible pulls into the parking lot.

The blinker turns on, signaling a turn and it begins to pull into a spot when, out of nowhere ...

... a big ass pickup truck comes barreling in, stealing the spot from the Gibbons.

The convertible slams to a stop.

INT./EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Roy is livid. Barking at the driver through gritted teeth.

Beth looks at Roy.

BETH

Roy, calm down.

Roy turns to Beth.

ROY

Calm down? Beth, that was our spot. We were here first. I put my blinker on. I did the right thing and this jerk comes barreling in out of nowhere and swipes it from us? Oh, no. Not today.

BETH

Honey look.

Beth points out to the distance.

BETH

There's plenty of parking across the street.

Roy shakes his head ...

ROY

I'm not parking across the street.

... and grips the steering wheel. Tightly.

ROY

I'm parking here.

Peter eggs his father on.

PETER

Heck yes. Smash him, Dad.

Bree rolls her eyes at Peter.

BREE

Grow up.

Beth turns back around to address Peter.

BETH

Peter, stop it. Don't give your father any ideas.

Beth turns back to Roy.

BETH

And you, Roy. Don't do anything stupid.

Roy turns to Beth.

ROY

Relax. I'm not hitting anyone. I'm just going to have a word with this guy.

The truck door flings open and out pops,

A LITTLE OLD LADY

70s, tiny in stature, enormous in sass; jumps down and begins to make her way by the convertible.

Her back hunched. Taking the tiniest of steps. She moves slowly.

Very slowly.

Roy flags her down.

She stops.

Standing parallel to Roy's window, the little old lady peeks in and gives the family a smile.

ROY

Ma'am. I think there was a mistake. That spot you took. That was our spot. We were here first.

Her smiles fades.

LITTLE OLD LADY

Oh, you were?

Roy nods.

LITTLE OLD LADY

Oops.

She moves past the convertible and on with her day.

ROY

Oops?

Roy sticks his head out of the window.

ROY

Hey! That was our spot!

The little old lady, never turning back around, gives Roy the finger as she walks on.

Beth pulls Roy back into the vehicle.

BETH

Are you out of your mind, Roy? Get back in here. She's a little old lady.

Roy sighs.

Defeated.

Roy drives off and parks across the street.

EXT. LUCKY'S TREE FARM, TREE LOT - DAY

The family is scavenging through what little amount of trees the farm has left to offer.

Just when they are all about to through in the towel, Peter spots one.

PETER

Dad, look.

Peter points toward the tree.

PETER

That one. Over there.

Leaning up against the fence is a tall, sturdy, fully matured, deep green, Douglas Fir.

Beautiful.

Roy's eyes light up.

ROY

Jackpot.

The family gives the tree a look over -- taking in the size and the natural beauty of it.

The tree, even more perfect up front than from a distance.

BETH

It's perfect, hon.

Roy, with a big smile on his face, nods.

ROY

It's the one.

Roy, elated, flags down a nearby WORKER.

WORKER
How can I help you, Sir?

Roy points over to the tree of his choice.

ROY
We'll take that one over there.

WORKER
The big one?

Roy pulls out his wallet.

ROY
Yes. The big one.

WORKER
Oh, I'm sorry, Sir. I'm afraid that one has been claimed.

The family gasps.

BETH
Are you serious?

The worker nods.

WORKER
Yes, ma'am. I'm afraid so. Moments ago actually.

ROY
By whom, I'd like to buy it from them?

The worker points over Roy's shoulder.

WORKER
You see that lady over there?

Roy turns around and takes a look.

In the distance we see,

The little old lady from the parking lot.

Roy's eyes fill with rage, as he trembles with anger. He shakes his head.

ROY
No. Anyone but her.

THE LITTLE OLD LADY

With her shit eating grin, nods her head "oh yes" and blows a kiss in Roy's direction.

Roy begins pulling out cash from his wallet. Lots and lots of cash.

EXT. LUCKY'S TREE FARM, PARKING LOT - DAY

A **HELPER**, 20s, small in size. Helpful and kind; gives Roy a hand carrying the tree out of the lot.

EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The helper and Roy struggle with loading the gigantic tree onto the tiny surface of the convertible's rooftop.

Beth, Bree, and Peter, stand back, and grimace at the sight of the branches scraping against the paint -- leaving marks.

ROY

Watch the paint. Watch the paint.

The weight of the tree caves in the leather of the rooftop.

BETH

Ah, honey? The roof.

Roy struggles with the tree.

ROY

It's fine. Don't worry about it.

Too late. She is.

Beth closes her eyes.

BETH

Okay, hon.

Just then,

While fanning through her new wad of cash, the little old woman walks past the convertible.

Behind her, another helper carries out a different tree. Not as large but still very nice.

She takes a peek over at Roy struggling with tree, shakes her head and continues to move along.

EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY - LATER

The tree is finally up on top of the roof.

It's a ridiculous sight to see.

ROY

Okay. Great. It's up there.

The helper steps back and stares at the sight of a Christmas tree on top of the roof of a convertible.

HELPER

Okay, wow. Not exactly the type of vehicle you normally bring a tree home in.

Roy nods in agreement.

ROY

Tell me about it.

Roy grabs some rope and calls out to Peter.

ROY

Peter. Give me a hand here, Son.

Peter, eager to help his father, springs into action.

Roy and Peter begin to tie down their respective sides.

The helper watches on as Roy and Peter are having a hard time tying the tree down.

HELPER

Are you guys sure you don't want me to give you a hand?

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

No, thank you.

Roy continues to fumble with his knot.

The helper, checks out the knot, or should I say, the lack-there of a knot.

HELPER

Really. I don't mind. It's Christmas Eve after all.

Roy full of pride -- smiles on.

ROY
No thank you. We've got it from
here.

BETH
Honey, are you sure?

ROY
Yes, dear. We can manage.

BETH
If you're not sure. This man wants
to --

Roy, frustrated -- looks toward Beth.

ROY
Let it go, Beth. We can handle
this.

Roy sends an 'I got this' smile toward the helper.

ROY
Thank you anyway.

The helper backs away from the vehicle.

HELPER
Okay. Not a problem. Merry
Christmas all.

ROY
Merry Christmas.

The helper walks past Beth as she offers him a smile.

BETH
Merry Christmas.

Peter finishes tying his knot.

PETER
Hey, Dad. How does this look?

Roy keeps his attention on his own knot.

ROY
Looks great, Son.

Roy finishes his knot.

ROY
Come on, get in.

Roy gets in the convertible.

Peter gives the knot one final glance before climbing in.

THE KNOT

Loose. Unprofessional. The product of a twelve year old boy trying to tie his first knot.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The family is driving along the countryside.

They all breathe a sigh of relief. Finally optimistic that their terrible day is now over.

Momentarily forgetting that they are still listening to that damn song,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year."

They drive.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY - LATER

And drive.

We hear, faint thuds coming from the roof above.

Beth, Bree and Peter exchange bewildered looks at one another. Each of them trying to figure out if anyone else is hearing the same thing.

Roy keeps his eyes on the road in front of him.

For a split second, Roy glances up ever so slightly, then back on the road again.

BREE

Dad, what's that noise?

Roy shrugs it off.

ROY

Probably just the rope hitting the rooftop, dear.

Beth looks at Roy. She's not convinced.

BETH

Are you sure?

Roy looks back at Beth.

ROY

Yes.

BETH

Well, I think we should pull over
and check it out.

Not happening.

ROY

Don't be foolish, Beth. I know what
I hear. There's nothing to be
alarmed about.

BETH

I'm just saying, what if the rope
is coming lose?

Roy takes a quick glance over to Beth before he returns his
sights back to the road.

ROY

Nonsense. A knot coming undone? Ha!
Peter and I tied it ourselves.

Roy looks in the rear-view mirror at Peter. They lock eyes.

ROY

Right, Peter?

Peter squirms down deeper into his seat.

PETER

Sure, Dad. No problem.

Roy grins.

ROY

See. Did you hear your son? No
problem. So there's nothing to
worry about.

Just then,

EXT. CONVERTIBLE, ROOFTOP - DAY

THE KNOT

Loosens as the convertible approaches the overpass.

No longer fully bound, the knot unravels and the rope slips.
The tree flings upwards, as the convertible reaches the
overpass.

THE TREE

... Smashes into the overpass,
... Sending needles and mulch flying in all directions.
The tree, along with the rooftop, are,
... Ripped off of the convertible, and,
... Sent flying through the air before,
... Crashing down onto the road.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The family screaming all the while.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The rooftop and the tree, lie on the road.
The tree is split in half. Now rendered useless.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The family, catching their breath and trying to get over the
shock of what just happened ... stare back at their tree and
their rooftop -- broken in pieces in the middle of the road.

BETH

See, Roy, I told you that we should
have --

Roy shakes his head -- his hopes dashed.

ROY

Don't. Not today.

Roy, buries his head into the steering wheel.

INT. TRUCK STOP, DINER - DAY

A packed diner, full of tired and hungry truckers taking in
their meals.

They all stop, mid bite and stare out the windows in awe of, the sight of, a topless, convertible speeding past them.

A moment passes and the truckers shrug it off and go back to eating.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Roy drives.

Beth stares out her window.

Bree and Peter sit in the back seat all wrapped up in a blanket as the wind blows against their near shivering faces.

Clearly, they are miserable.

All would be silent if that goddamn song,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year", would just stop playing.

Beth turns to Roy. She's finally had it.

BETH

It's time to go home, Roy.

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

No. It isn't. Not yet at least.

BETH

Yes. Yes it is. It's time, Roy.
Let's go home. Now.

Roy continues his gaze on the road ahead.

ROY

We can't go home now, honey. We are
on a mission to give my mother --

EVERYONE

The greatest Christmas ever.

Roy glances over at Beth.

BETH

We know, Roy. We know. But at what
expense? Look at your kids, Roy.

Glancing in the rear-view, Roy does.

BETH
They're exhausted and cold.

BREE AND PETER

Huddled together. Still trying to stay warm. Still trying to stay positive -- tremble and shake.

BETH
They've had enough. I've had enough.

Roy nods. He knows today has been tough.

ROY
I know but we still have the farm off of Chestnut. If we hurry we can still make it before they close.

Nothing.

ROY
Beth please?

Beth rolls her eyes and lounges back into her seat.

BETH
And what if they don't have what your looking for?

ROY
I'm just asking you for a little more time.

Beth turns her body away and returns her gaze to her window.

Roy turns around to the kids. Taking his eyes off of the road every couple of seconds.

ROY
Guys. Hey. Listen here for a second. Now, I know you're cold. And I know your tired. But is a little bit longer too much to ask for? To make Grandma feel better? To make Grandma smile and be happy on Christmas?

Peter and Bree feel bad now.

BREE
No. I guess it's not too much to ask.

PETER

Yeah. Anything for Grandma.

Roy is relieved and for a moment, he forgets he is driving.

ROY

Good. I'm glad. I was just about to say. There's no way that this day could get any ...

Roy's eyes have been off the road. Far to long for comfort.

BREE

Um, Dad.

ROY

... Worse.

Roy, eyes still off the road.

PETER

Dad?

ROY

Yeah, bud?

Peter points towards the road ahead.

PETER

Is that a ...

Roy turns around and just in time to spot,

A DEER

Standing right in the middle of the road.

Roy yells out.

ROY

Oh, sh--

Roy, reactionary, jerks the wheel to the left ... narrowly missing the deer but -- sending the convertible into a tailspin.

Not good.

The family screams on.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The convertible twists and turns, as three thousand plus pounds are sent -- barreling out of control.

Not good at all.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The screams continue as they hold on and brace for imminent impact.

Bree shakes her head.

BREE

This isn't happening. This isn't
happening.

Beth screams louder as she reaches for a handle to grab a hold of.

Roy closes his eyes, and, tightens his grip upon the steering wheel.

This is it.

ROY

Hold on.

EXT. ROAD, DITCH - DAY

The convertible spins out -- circling around and around,

Until,

It finally comes to a complete stop -- landing in the nearby ditch.

EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

They hop out. Checking their extremities and thanking God that they are still alive.

ROY

Alright. We're here.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A beautiful winter landscape.

The family treks through the knee deep snow.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

The family finally comes up upon the greatest tree in all of the forest.

A large, beautiful tree -- nearly as wide as it is tall.

The ice has frosted over and covered the tips of the branches, and now, the needles are like twinkling stars, covering every inch of the tree.

Roy is ecstatic.

Finally.

ROY

There it is. That's it. That's the one right there.

Roy circles around the tree -- sizing up it's natural beauty.

ROY

Wow. Isn't she perfect, guys?

The rest of the family looks on at this towering tree. In awe of it's size.

PETER

It looks great, Dad.

A beat and Peter taps Roy's shoulder.

PETER

Hey, Dad?

Roy admires the tree. He grins from ear to ear.

ROY

Yeah, bud?

PETER

I was thinking about something in the car, a while back there. I guess I probably should of mentioned it to you.

Roy, fixated on this glorious tree that stands in front of him.

ROY

Yeah. What's that, Peter?

PETER

We went out to buy a tree. Right?

Roy nods in agreement.

ROY

That we did, Peter.

PETER

So how are we going to get this one down?

Roy's eyes light up. Stupidly, he forgot to bring something to cut a tree down.

Roy turns back around and starts, trudging back through the snow.

ROY

Come on. Quickly. Quickly. Let's go.

And the family is off, following just a few paces behind Roy.

High-stepping back through the snow.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

Roy, followed by the others, continue to make their way back through the snow.

It's getting colder by the minute. The fresh powder quickly turning to ice.

Beth, blows into her hands. Trying hard to warm up them up.

BETH

It's freezing, Roy.

Roy nods in agreement.

ROY

I noticed, dear.

Bree and Peter are slowing down, but, continue to lumber on.

BREE

Oh my God. How much further is it, Dad?

Roy, totally unsure, however, trying to not let anyone else know that -- points out in a vague direction.

ROY
I think it's just around the corner
there.

Bree stops.

BREE
You said that last corner.

The rest of the family stop as well.

Beth studies the landscape.

BETH
Where, Roy? What corner?

Roy, trying his best to completely bullshit his way out of
this -- points.

ROY
That one. Over there.

BETH
I think we just came from there.

Bree shakes her head.

BREE
We're not walking around in a
circle are we?

Roy laughs.

ROY
A circle? Really Bree, a circle?
Ha! Don't be crazy. Follow me.

They walk on.

And on.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

And on.

Roy's laugh subsides.

PETER
Dad, are we lost?

Roy's a little more panicked now.

ROY
Don't be silly.

BETH
Are we, Roy?

Roy nods.

ROY
Yep.

Frustrated.

They all stop.

BREE
Great. We're going to die out here.

PETER
No were not. Dad will get us out of
here. Right, Dad?

Roy offers no response. He looks around out into the
distance.

BREE
See. I told you. We're dead.

PETER
Dad?

Beth looks at Roy -- shakes her head.

BETH
Roy, do not scare the children.

Roy scans the backdrop.

ROY
I'm just playing, kids. I know
exactly where I parked the car.

Roy turns and continues to survey the land -- searching to
find if anything at all looks familiar.

ROY
It's right over ...

Success.

Roy spots the convertible through a clearing between two sets
of trees.

ROY
... there. There it is.

PETER
Good eye, Dad.

BREE
Thank, God.

BETH
Lets go. It's freezing out here.

They lumber on.

ROY
Ha! See I told you. Trust in your
old man would you?

EXT. ROAD, DITCH - DAY

Huffing and puffing, the family is back to the convertible.
Finally.

EXT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

The convertible pulls up to the curb and comes to a
screeching stop as it parks.

Roy, not bothering with shutting off the car, quickly exits.
He's on a mission.

INT./EXT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Roy reaches for the handle, but, before he can pull on it,

THE OWNER

50s, chubby and rough around the edges; appears and locks the
door.

ROY
Excuse me. This is the emergency.

The owner points down to the sign on the door. It reads:
Christmas Eve. Hours 8-4.

Roy checks the time on his watch.

His brows rise. Eyes light up.

ROY

You're not serious are you? Two minutes. You're going to stiff me over a measly two minutes? Come on, where's your holiday spirit?

The owner once more points to the sign on the door.

ROY

Please, I'm begging you. I'll pay you double. Triple even.

The owner having heard enough, walks away.

ROY

No. Don't go. Please. Oh, come on.

With the owner out of view, Roy gives up. It's no use, he's not coming back.

Irate.

Roy leans his face front against the door and holds up both middle fingers against it.

ROY

Merry Christmas to you too.

Defeated.

Roy walks away and back into the convertible.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Roy, down on his luck, sinks into the driver's seat.

Beth turns to him.

BETH

You have an ax at home. Why don't we just go home and get it and come back?

ROY

It'll be dark soon. We'll never find it at night.

BETH

So what do we do then?

Determined to not let this moment get the best of him, Roy turns to Beth.

ROY
 I'll tell you what we're going to
 do. I'll rip that damn tree down
 with my bare hands if I have to.

Angry.

Roy slams the car into gear and drives off.

EXT. ROAD, DITCH - DAY

Somebody cue the Deliverance music as ...

... a big, old, beat to shit, I'm a "redneck" styled, lifted
 pickup truck is now parked where the convertible once was.

The convertible pulls over and parks next to it.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Much to the their surprise, as the family reaches the spot of
 the tree, there is already another couple there.

Even more importantly, they are right in the middle of
 cutting down the Gibbon's tree.

Roy, panicked, runs over to it as,

A VERY LARGE MAN

Chops away at the tree.

ROY
 Nope. Sorry. This one's ours. Find
 yourselves another tree.

The very large man is named **BRUISER**. Of course he is.

Bruiser, 40s, six foot, six inches tall and two hundred and
 eighty-four pounds of pure man.

Bruiser stops chopping and stands up in the direction of Roy.
 He looks down at Roy.

Way down.

BRUISER
 Yours? I don't see your name on it.

Bruiser takes a step toward the family.

Beth, Bree and Peter take a large step backward.

Roy does not.

ROY

We were here, then we had to leave. You see, I'm an idiot and I forgot to bring something to cut it down with. So we left to go to the hardware store and buy an ax but they were closed. For Christmas. So we came back and now we would like to just cut our tree down and get on home. It's been one heck of a day, let me tell you.

BRUISER

Well that's a nice story and all. But you see that little lady over there?

Bruiser points towards her.

Roy looks and sees,

A WOMAN

Sitting on a nearby log.

She's not little. Maybe not even a lady.

He smiles and waves to her.

She does not wave back.

This is **MUFFIN**, 40s, truck stop gorgeous.

BRUISER

She wants this tree. And whatever Muffin wants. Muffin gets. And luckily for me. I brought an ax.

ROY

Listen, pal.

Bruiser puffs out his chest.

BRUISER

Bruiser.

Roy corrects himself.

ROY

Sorry. Bruiser.

Roy, mimicking Bruiser, puffs out his middle-aged man bod chest to the best of his ability.

ROY
Listen, Bruiser. We had this tree
first.

Roy straightens his back -- trying to gain any inch he can.

ROY
So scram.

Beth, Bree and Peter gasp and take another step backward.

And another -- just to be safe.

Bruiser bends down and smiles at Roy.

BRUISER
Finders keepers, losers weepers.

ROY
That's funny. Funny guy. Are we
rhyming now? Listen. It's getting
late and I'm afraid we don't have
time for this so if you'd just
kindly move out of the way.

Roy tries to move the man out of the way. No way that's going to happen.

Bruiser doesn't budge.

ROY
I will gladly cut down this tree
and we will be on our way.

Roy finally ducks down under him and places himself between Bruiser and the tree.

BRUISER
Say, genius. How do you think you
are going to cut it down anyway?

ROY
Yeah. About that ...

Roy points to the ax that Bruiser is holding in his hand.

ROY
Can I borrow that?

Bruiser laughs.

BRUISER
I'll hand it to you, bud. You got
some guts.

ROY
So. I'll take that as a no then?

Bruiser moves back toward the tree.

BRUISER
That's a no.

Roy intervenes again.

ROY
I'll pay you.

BRUISER
It's not for sale.

Bruiser moves forward.

ROY
Wait, no.

Roy stops the man's advancement once more.

BRUISER
Move.

ROY
No.

Bruiser steps in close to Roy and bends over to get to eye
level with Roy.

BRUISER
Listen, man. Call it the holiday
spirit if you'd like. Call it
whatever you want. I'm giving you a
chance right now. Turn around and
go find yourself a new tree. I
don't want to have to hit you on
Christmas Eve in front of your
family and all.

Roy gulps.

ROY
Good. I really appreciate that
Bruiser. But there is no way I am
leaving this forest without this
tree ...

From the sideline, Muffin eggs Bruiser on.

MUFFIN

I want that tree, Bruiser. Get me that tree.

ROY

... So you just go on and do what you have to do. But make it count. Because when I get up. I'm taking this tree home with me.

Roy grabs a hold of the tree and shakes his head "no."

Bruiser drops his ax and takes a big step forward. He sighs, as he, shrugs his shoulders.

BRUISER

Okay.

Bruiser cocks back his arm.

BRUISER

I'm sorry little buddy. But like I said. What ever Muffin wants ...

Roy knows what's coming and braces for impact as, Bruiser swings his arm forward ...

ROY

... Muffin gets.

... and lays his fist upon the side of Roy's face. It's lights out for Roy.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

Roy is face first in the snow.

Peter shakes him back and forth.

PETER

Dad? Come on, Dad. Get up.

Roy starts to groan and move.

PETER

Holy cow, Dad. Are you alright?

BETH

Oh, thank God. You're alive.

The family is relieved when Roy finally comes to and sits up.

ROY
I'm okay. I'm alright.

Beth, Bree and Peter give Roy hugs and help him back up to his feet.

BETH
Careful, honey. We've got you.

Roy struggles to get his footing and bearings back.

ROY
Where am I? Are we still in the forest?

Roy's legs wobble.

Peter tries to steady his father.

PETER
Whoa, Dad. You sure can take a punch.

'You bet your ass' proud -- Roy smiles.

ROY
Thanks, Son.

Roy looks back to where the tree once was, only to spot, the stub of what's left of it.

ROY
Where is it? Where's the tree?

BREE
Bruiser and Muffin took it.

Roy cocks his head back and lets out a groan.

PETER
We tried to stop them. Kind of. Sorry, Dad.

BREE
Yeah. Sorry, Dad.

ROY
I can't believe you just let them up and take it.

BETH
I know, honey, and we're sorry.

Roy covers his face in his hands and shakes his head.

BETH
They did let us borrow their ax
though.

Roy perks up. He's intrigued.

ROY
Oh yeah? Where's the new beauty at?

Beth, Bree and Peter reluctantly point to this, dinky little tree on the ground.

Roy forces a smile for them.

EXT. FOREST - DAY - LATER

The rest of the family lead the way for Roy, as he, drags the tree through the snow.

A trail of needles from the tree follows behind them.

The sun is fading and so are the Gibbons.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

A sight to see to believe.

The family holds down the tree with their hands in place of rope and where their rooftop once was.

Wind rushes upon their sun-kissed faces. They are cold, exhausted, and defeated.

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," continues to play.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on the Radio)
It's the most wonderful time of the
year ...

Beth's patience is dwindling down to none. She starts to fidget in her seat.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on the Radio)
... With the kids jingle belling.
And everyone telling you be of good
cheer ...

She cannot take it any longer.

With her eyes never coming off the road, Beth, calm and gentle, tries to shut the radio off.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on the Radio)
... It's the most wonderful time of
the year.

When the soft approach doesn't work, Beth begins to beat the living shit out of it.

BETH
I am so sick and tired of this
stupid song.

Beth smashes the radio with her hands, feet, purse. Anything and everything that is not bolted down to the car.

BETH
Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!

Until,

The music shuts off.

Roy and Beth turn to one another and they share a smile.

Silence. Success.

Cheers explode from the backseat.

BREE
Alright, mom!

PETER
Yes. Thank you.

Their brief moment of freedom from the song fades away when,

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," continues to play.

Only this time, the song plays in the most distorted and demonic sounding version possible.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on the Radio)
It's the most wonderful time of the
year.

The family sighs.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Lights and decorations are in full swing.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

The family looks on jealously at the perfectly lit and decorated Christmas trees displayed in the windows of passing by homes.

All the while, wishing and wanting for one of those spectacles to be theirs.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The convertible pulls into the driveway.

Unattended and uninvited. The Reagan's dogs are once again loose, wandering their driveway.

Only this time, when the family exits the convertible, no one seems to mind. No one tries to wrangle them up.

They just walk right past them paying the dogs no attention.

Once more, snickers come from the Reagan's front porch.

Roy stops. He takes in a deep breath.

ROY

Hey, Reagan's, you know what ...

He calmly bends down,

-- Scoops up a handful of snow,

ROY

... why don't you both ...

-- Continues to pack it into a ball, nice and tight,

ROY

... shut the hell up ...

And then,

-- Unloads it right towards the Reagan's.

EXT. THE REAGAN'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

The snowball barely misses the Reagans as it smashes against their house.

The two gasp, horrified and in disbelief.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Roy returns to retrieve the tree from the convertible as he hollers back toward the Reagans.

ROY
... and for the last time. Keep
your dogs in your own yard.

Roy grabs the tree and takes it off of the convertible.

Whatever needles that survived the drag through the snow, did not survive the long car ride home.

PETER
Dad, you need a hand with that?

Roy, as a response, shoots back a look to Peter before, they all, enter the house.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The tree is now standing up on it's stand.

The Gibbons stare at it and much to their disbelief, it looks even more shitty than anyone could have imagined.

All but Roy try to play it off as acceptable.

Beth tips her head to the side in order to take in a different view of it.

BETH
I don't know, Roy. It doesn't look
so bad.

Yes. It really does. Beth knows it. The kids know it. And certainly Roy does.

Roy sends Beth a look.

She notices.

BETH
 No really. I kind of like it. It's
 you know, rustic.

Roy shakes his head -- less than thrilled at Beth's depiction
 of the tree.

ROY
 I'll be upstairs.

Roy walks off, leaving Beth and the kids to deal with this
 step-child of a tree.

BETH
 No really. Much better than I
 thought it would be. Right, kids?

Beth nudges their arms.

Bree and Peter play along.

BREE
 Oh, right.

PETER
 Yeah. It looks great, Dad.

BREE
 Totally great.

No use. Roy is long gone.

INT. HOUSE, SHOWER - NIGHT

Roy, so overcome with the emotions of his tough day, his
 tough week, can no longer hold it all together.

He gently weeps into his hands.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In a vast attempt to paint a turd gold, Beth, Bree and Peter
 try to decorate the tree.

It's not working out so well for them.

... Beth's tinsel doesn't do the trick.

... Bree cannot get the star to stand up straight.

... And as Peter hangs an ornament, the branch snaps and the
 glass bulb crashes down to the floor.

Peter looks down at the pieces of the bulb and then over toward his mother.

PETER

Mom?

Beth pays no attention to the newly broken bulb on the floor. She keeps pushing along with the decorations.

BETH

Keep trying for your father, dear.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy sits on his bed, staring at the photo of his mother, father and himself from earlier.

ROY

I let you down, Pop. I'm sorry.

The doorbell rings.

PETER (O.S)

Grandma's here.

GRANDMA MAE (O.S.)

Hi, kids. Hi, Beth. How are you all? Where's Roy?

Roy's face cringes, as he tries to choke down the pain of disappointing his mother.

Roy yells down to them.

ROY

I'll be right down.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Roy enters the room as,

GRANDMA MAE, 70s, not one ounce of mean or hate on her little, old body; is gathered around the tree with Beth, Bree and Peter.

Grandma Mae breaks away from the others and welcomes Roy with a warm and gentle hug.

GRANDMA MAE

Hi, honey. How are you holding up?

ROY

Me? I'm okay. How are you?

GRANDMA MAE

Good. Surprisingly. Beth and the kids were just showing me the tree.

Roy frowns and glances toward the tree.

ROY

I know. I'm sorry about the tree, Mom.

Grandma Mae, could not any care less.

GRANDMA MAE

Sorry. Why? It's a fine tree.

Roy knows it's not.

ROY

No it's not. You deserve a better tree than this.

GRANDMA MAE

Honey, really. It's a nice tree.

Roy, heading for a breakdown in,

... 3 ...

ROY

Dad would have never let you not have a nice tree.

GRANDMA MAE

Roy. Is that what this is about?

... 2 ...

ROY

I just wanted to give you the greatest Christmas you've ever had. For Dad. Because he can't anymore.

GRANDMA MAE

Oh, Roy.

... 1 ...

ROY

But I failed. I failed him and I failed you. I ruined Christmas for everyone.

GRANDMA MAE

Roy. Honey.

Eminence full breakdown.

ROY

I'm going to go to bed. I'm sorry again, everyone. Today was a terrible day. I just want it to end.

Roy leaves the room.

GRANDMA MAE

Roy don't go. Please.

Grandma Mae starts to follow after Roy.

Beth stops her.

BETH

Just let him go sleep it off. He'll be okay.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy turns off the lights and climbs into bed.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Grandma Mae, Beth, Bree and Peter sit on the couch, as the television plays on in the background.

GRANDMA MAE

I just feel terrible. There has to be something we can do to make him feel better.

Beth turns her attention to the tree.

The wheels are turning in her mind.

She's got it.

Beth smiles.

BETH

Kids, get your coats. I have an idea.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Beth, Bree, Peter and Grandma Mae, all bundled up in their warmest winter gear, stand in the driveway.

But something is wrong.

Beth turns to Grandma Mae.

BETH

Mae, where's your car?

GRANDMA MAE

Victoria dropped me off. She said she didn't want me to drive in the snow.

Depleted.

Beth thinks for a moment.

Then she looks at the convertible sitting in the driveway ...

A moment passes.

... and so does Bree,

... and Peter,

... and Grandma Mae.

Beth's looking for approval.

Peter nods.

PETER

Come on, Mom. For Dad.

Bree and Grandma Mae nod in agreement.

Beth smiles.

BETH

Okay. Here goes nothing.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

THE CONVERTIBLE

Drifts and turns, up and down the slippery road.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Beth is at the wheel, trying to tame the convertible's eagerness to spin out in the snow.

Grandma Mae is in the passenger seat, grinning from ear to ear.

Bree and Peter are in the backseat, smiling and laughing with one another.

Cold wind blows on all of their faces.

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," continues to play.

They could care less.

This ones for Roy.

INT./EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, HOUSE - NIGHT

The family is frantic as they repeatedly knock on the door.

PETER

Mr. Percy.

BETH

Oh, Mr. Percy, please open up.

The slender shadow of a slow moving man, approaches the door's window.

MR. PERCY

Nine o'clock on Christmas Eve. Ever the nerve.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

Until,

Mr. Percy, less than trilled to have visitors, opens the door.

MR. PERCY

Yes? Can I help you?

BETH

Mr. Percy, we have a favor to ask of you.

EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, TREE LOT - NIGHT

Each one of them look over the lot for a tree. Hoping to find something, anything decent.

They are coming up short in their search.

BETH

Mr. Percy, don't you have anything left at all?

Mr. Percy stops and shakes his head.

MR. PERCY

It doesn't appear so. I'm sorry, Beth.

BREE

What are we going to do, Mom?

Beth wraps her arms around Bree -- consoling her.

BETH

We'll have to just keep looking, honey. That's all.

PETER

We could go back into the forest?

BETH

It's too late, Peter. Too cold and too dark. We'll just have to make due with something here.

Mr. Percy feels terrible. Hopelessly wanting to help.

BETH

Let's check the barn next.

Light bulb.

Mr. Percy suddenly remembers something.

MR. PERCY

Oh, yes. How could I have forgot? Silly me.

Mr. Percy scampers off towards the direction of the barn.

MR. PERCY

Come everybody. Follow me.

INT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, BARN - NIGHT

Mr. Percy reaches into a stall and produces,

A CHRISTMAS TREE

The very same tree from earlier today.

Everyone smiles and everyone is full of excitement at the sheer sight of this completely average, run of the mill, Christmas tree.

BETH

Oh, Mr. Percy. It's perfect.

INT./EXT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

The tree is loaded on top.

Once more, the family holds it down with their hands.

Beth stands with Mr. Percy.

MR. PERCY

Are you sure I can't tie that tree down for you?

BETH

No thank you, Mr. Percy. We've got it from here.

MR. PERCY

Okay.

BETH

And you're going to make sure you come over and join us for Christmas dinner?

MR. PERCY

Yes, I will. Thank you.

Beth, full of thanks and gratitude, gives Mr. Percy a hug and a peck on the cheek before, climbing into the convertible.

BREE

Merry Christmas, Mr. Percy.

MR. PERCY

Merry Christmas to you all.

EXT. PERCY'S TREE FARM, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Mr. Percy smiles, as he watches the convertible drive away. Its tail lights fading in the distance.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth, Bree and Peter in the new tree. They knock over the old one in the process. No one blinks an eye.

Peter and Bree grab a hold of the old tree and carry it out.

EXT. HOUSE, DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Peter and Bree chuck the old tree up and over the fence and into the Reagan's backyard.

They spot the Reagans spying on them through their blinds.

BREE AND PETER

Raise their arms up and let the Reagans know exactly how they feel about them, as they, flip them the birds.

Then they turn around and return back inside their home, leaving the Reagans mortified.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth, Grandma Mae and the kids stare at the blank canvas of the tree that stands before them.

BETH

It's going to be a long night.

Not taking their eyes off of the tree, they all nod.

GRANDMA MAE

I'll start the coffee.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy, all nestled in his bed, peacefully sleeps the night away.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The tree is being decorated. Every member having a part in it's creation.

... The star sits upon the top of the tree, perfectly straight and centered.

... Hands are applying tinsel over the freshly laid lights.

... Ornaments are meticulously scattered in a perfect array.

It's coming along quite well.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Beth is crawling under the tree trying to maneuver her way towards the outlet.

Grandma Mae places one last ornament upon the tree.

PETER

Okay, plug it in, Mom.

Beth does.

BREE

Whoa.

Bree, Peter and Grandma Mae step back and smile at their creation.

Beth moves back out from under the tree.

BETH

How does it look?

GRANDMA MAE

Oh, Beth. It's amazing.

Beth joins the others as they stare at the tree in amazement.

BETH

Whoa.

NOTE: We never see the entirety of the tree. Only the lights playing off of their faces as they smile on with pride.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth crawls into bed with Roy, and, wraps her arms softly around him and plants a soft kiss upon his forehead.

Though deep in sleep, Roy smiles.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOMS - NIGHT - LATER

All sleeping.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A light snow begins to fall down ever so gently, playing a perfect duet with the sparking display of Christmas lights.

Postcard perfect.

INT. HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roy wakes. He reaches over for a drink of water.

Empty. Roy sighs.

He gets out of bed and makes his way out of the room.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Roy walks past the living room on his way toward the kitchen. He stops and turns around.

He checks his eyes, wondering if this is all just a dream.

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Roy walks into the room and is now an arm's length away from the tree.

NOTE: This is when we finally get to see the tree for the first time, along with Roy, and it is ... Perfect.

Roy stares at it with childish wonder.

Until,

He gets the courage to gently touch it.

Roy takes a deep breath and begins to sob. Tears of pure joy and gratitude stream down his face.

Beth, Bree, Peter and Grandma Mae, woken from their sleep, enter one by one.

The family gathers around Roy and they all embrace him with tender hugs and kisses.

Roy thanks each and everyone of them with a hug of his own.

ROY
You guys did this for me?

They nod.

ROY
After everything yesterday. Why?

They circle Roy with a hug.

Beth grabs Roy's face and looks him dead in the eyes.

BETH
Listen, honey. Yesterday was a terrible day. There's no denying that. But today is a new day. And today is Christmas. And we all have a funny feeling it may just be the greatest one of all.

The family hugs on to each other just a little bit tighter now.

Bree breaks free from the group.

BREE
Wait. This will be perfect. I promise.

Bree takes out her phone from her pocket.

BREE
I can't believe I'm doing this but here it goes.

Eek.

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," begins to play.

ANDY WILLIAMS
(on Bree's Phone)
It's the most wonderful time of the year.

Everyone smiles and share a laugh.

ROY
Didn't I tell you it would be your favorite song by the end of the day?

Suddenly, their warm embrace is cut short when,

-- The power cuts out and the house goes, **black.**

OVER BLACK:

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," continues to play through Bree's phone.

All of the groans from the family fade when,

FADE IN:**INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

A candle lights and the small flame illuminates the face of Grandma Mae.

GRANDMA MAE
(singing)
And hearts will be glowing. When
loved ones are near.

Another candle lights. Illuminating the face of Beth.

BETH
(singing)
It's the most wonderful time.

Three more candles are lit and handed out to Bree, Peter, and lastly Roy.

Unified, the soft glows of the candles help to brighten the room.

BREE
(singing)
Yes the most wonderful time.

They turn to Roy.

PETER
Dad?

BREE
Come on, Dad. You know the words.

Nothing from Roy.

BETH
Roy?

Roy chuckles and shakes his head.

ROY
I don't sing.

GRANDMA MAE

Oh, come on, honey. For your
father.

That's all Roy had to hear.

ROY

Oh, what the heck.
(singing)
Oh the most wonderful time.

EVERYONE

(singing)
Of the year.

It certainly is.

Merry Christmas.

FADE OUT:

THE END.