

"RYDER'S CHRISTMAS COMEBACK"

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"It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas" by Michael Buble plays

OVER BLACK

THE TITLE CARD APPEARS ON THE SCREEN IN RED, GREEN, AND WHITE LETTERS

"RYDER'S CHRISTMAS COMEBACK"

RYDER (V.O.)

So...there's a lot about life that I don't get.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A man and a woman sit on a bench engaged in a conversation we cannot hear. The man gets down on one knee and brandishes a jewelry box. The woman beams with excitement and hugs the man.

JULIE BINGKERTON (30); beautiful ginger hair and stylish, walks past the couple and stops to tie her shoe. RYDER; her four-year-old (though twenty-eight in human years) Yorkshire Terrier, stops and stares at the couple.

RYDER (V.O.)

*Like, why is he on the ground? I mean, I'm on the ground because I **have** to be. And why is she so happy? All he did was give her some metal.*

EXT. STREET - DAY

A man and a woman walk down the street, holding hands.

RYDER (V.O.)

*And why do they have to hold each other? Is one of em' gonna run away? Just put em on a leash! That **always** fixes that problem.*

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Through the front window of the restaurant, we see a couple sitting at a table with their baby in a highchair.

RYDER (V.O.)

*And don't even get me started on the minis. Why do humans **make** them? They are loud. And not to*

*mention...strange. Like, they're humans but...they're not. They can't even **talk!***

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie sits on the couch, talking on the phone to someone. We can tell from her laughter and smiles that it's a pleasant conversation. Ryder lays on the couch next to her.

RYDER (V.O.)

*So, yeah. Humans are weird. But not my human. Julie is the best. She's so pretty and nice and we spend **all** of our time together.*

JULIE (ON PHONE)

(laughing)

Oh my God, Nelson! Why would you say that?!

RYDER (V.O.)

*Well, that was until "The Douche" came along. He's **always** hereeeeeee! And his stuff is everywhere! And Julie is always **sooooo** freaking happy whenever she talks to him! I don't know what that's about.*

EXT. DOGGY PARK - DAY

Dogs of all kinds run around playing with each other as well as their owners. Various dog owners sit, indulged in conversation as their fur babies enjoy the nice afternoon.

CANNON (O.S.)

*It's called **love**, Ryder. It's what they do.*

EXT. DOGGY PARK - OBSTACLE COURSE AREA - DAY

Ryder sits with his dog pal CANNON, an eight-year-old Cocker spaniel as they play with a ball together.

RYDER (V.O.)

***Love?** Julie tells **me** she loves me all the time, but we don't do any of that stuff.*

CANNON (V.O.)

*Because **that** would be illegal. Or at*

least something you would see on one of those talk shows my two dads watch.

RYDER (V.O.)

Yeah, what's up with **that**? The two dads stuff? Can they make the minis?

CANNON (V.O)

Well...no. But they **can** take care of minis. They make them part of their family. Just like us.

RYDER (V.O.)

I think **Julie** is trying to make Nelson part of our family but **I'm** not having any of that.

CANNON (V.O)

(amused)

Someone sounds jealous.

RYDER (V.O.)

I don't even know what that is. All I know is that ever since he's been around, he's been taking up all of Julie's time! And it's making me pee **a lot** more. Mostly on his stuff.

CANNON (V.O)

Ryder, let Julie find love. Don't be that dog.

RYDER (V.O.)

But he's a **douche**! And he's **always** putting his fingers on this wooden thing with strings and...making **noise** with his two skin flappers.

CANNON (V.O)

(laughs)

It's called **singing**.

RYDER (V.O.)

(thinks)

Hey...can we do that?

CANNON (V.O)

What? Sing? Oh, yeah, I'm a regular Justin Timberlake.

Cannon begins to whine loudly, showing off his "singing"

skills.

RYDER (V.O.)

Yeah, maybe you should just stick to those doggy pageants your dads put you in. But no. I meant the whole love thing? Can we do that with each other?

CANNON (V.O.)

*How do you think **we** got here?*

RYDER (V.O.)

(beat)

I just thought we liked doing it.

EXT. DOGGY PARK - BENCH - DAY

Julie sits on a bench with a folder and some photos on her lap. Next to her sits CAMERON LINK (28), handsome and professional without a hair out of place or wrinkle in his clothes.

JULIE

So, from the photos you sent me of your new place and the energy you want to establish, I brought some options for you to look over.

Julie hands Cameron a few photos, he begins to look through them.

CAMERON

Oh, this is nice for the bathroom.
Very "Bridgerton" meets...
(thinks)
Martha Stewart.

JULIE

Well, you said you wanted "modern with a touch of antique".

CAMERON

Yes. Yes, I did.
(looks at another photo)
But a canopy bed? I'm gay, not an elderly Englishwoman.

JULIE

Canopy beds are *great*. They present an image of sophistication and...elegance.

CAMERON

I've just always felt like curtains
were made for windows, not for where I
lay my head.

JULIE

Understood. So, the canopy is out.
Which is probably best if you were
ever thinking about getting a dog.
Ryder almost strangled himself playing
in mine.

CAMERON

Ryder. I love the name. Which one is
he?

Julie looks around, searching for Ryder. Her eyes find him,
jumping up and down as one of Cannon's "dads", TRENT (35),
feeds Cannon a treat.

JULIE

Ryder! Ryder, no! Stop!

RYDER (V.O.)

(excited)

Sharing is caring! Come on, gimme one!
Gimme one!

TRENT

(laughs)

It's fine! Can he...?

Trent makes a gesture towards Ryder, holding out a treat.

RYDER (V.O.)

What are you asking *her* for? I am
almost 30 years old! I can make my own
decisions!

JULIE

As long as you have enough!

TRENT

Plenty!

Trent feeds Ryder a treat and pets him on the head.

CAMERON

I wish my work schedule allowed me to
get a dog.

JULIE

I've had Ryder for almost a year now,
believe me, dogs are a *lot* of work.

CAMERON

Sweetie. I'm an almost thirty-year-old
homosexual living in New York City
working for a matchmaking service. I
know *all* about "dogs". Trust me.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

NOVEMBER 25TH, 2024 (30 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

Cameron sits at the head of a long oval table. A sheepish man, GREGORY (25) sits next to a woman, LYDIA (31). QUILL PETERSON (30), both equal parts of dashing and annoyingly arrogant, sits across from them.

CAMERON

So...as the new Head of Development
for "City Socials"...I realized we
need a re-vamp. Subscribers have gone
down, reviews are sub-par, and success
stories have dwindled. What do we
think the problem is?

GREGORY

Price?

LYDIA

App layout?

QUILL

Monogamy.

CAMERON

(to Quill)

I will never understand how you have a
job here. And you're all wrong. The
problem is our social events. They're
boring. All we do is promote speed
dating, who even does that anymore?

GREGORY

I've been...brainstorming and um, I
think that maybe we could do something
involving sports for our meetups? A
good game of dodgeball to break the
ice.

CAMERON
 (unimpressed)
 Any other...out of the closet ideas?

PHONE CHIMES

Quill looks at his phone and begins typing on it.

CAMERON
 Quill? Care to "chime" in? And I'm not referring to that Grindr message you just received.

QUILL
 Oh, this is actually *Growlr*.

CAMERON
 (sighs)
 We want to be *different* than every other matchmaking app that's out there. So, we need to ask ourselves...how do we make *our* app stand out from the rest?

LYDIA
 Bribe them with money for signing up.

GREGORY
 Start doing psych evals?

QUILL
 Allow subscribers to post nudes on their profiles. That always gets my attention.

CAMERON
 (beat)
Fun. Our subscribers are looking for love, right? Especially around Christmas. So, we need to make the search for love, fun.

GREGORY
 Jeopardy nights! Me and my mom *always* have fun playing Jeopardy.

CAMERON
 Well...let's table *that* and take the weekend to think a little more. A lot more, maybe. Let's come back with fresh minds on Monday.

Lydia and Gregory get up from the table and leave the room. Quill stays behind while Cameron gathers his belongings.

QUILL

You know, this whole boss thing looks really good on you. We should go out again...and celebrate.

CAMERON

We dated for a *week* last year and I haven't gone out with you ever again. What makes you think that'll change now that I'm your superior?

QUILL

Forbidden fruit.
(smiles)
Always taste better.

CAMERON

Then it's a good thing I'm as bitter as a Meyer lemon. Have a good weekend, Quill.

Cameron grabs his briefcase and begins to walk out of the conference room.

QUILL

Listen, Cameron, I know it sucks. You got dumped by that pilot, but shit happens. You can't let it kill your Christmas.

CAMERON

(sighs)
You're right, shit does happen. And apparently it happens on my birthday.

QUILL

That was a *month* ago. It's time to hit the field! Have a threesome! You could join mine tonight if you want. I mean, tis the season for giving and all, I don't mind.

CAMERON

You know Quill, all dogs *don't* go to Heaven. Maybe you should try *not* humping everything you see or the only thing you might be given? Is a regimen of antibiotics to clear an infection.

Cameron leaves the conference room.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Quill walks down the street, focused on his phone as he types and laughs.

CLOSE UP ON PHONE SCREEN DISPLAYING A DATING APP WITH MANY PROFILES

QUILL

The audacity of some of these guys. Do you see me, and do you see *you*? Why would you even waste your characters like this?

Quill presses a button on the phone.

QUILL

Blocked.

(presses another button)

And reported. For...

(typing)

Stu...pi..di..ty. I swear these guys need to *look* before they send a message.

Lost in his dating app, Quill doesn't notice an opening in the ground, a delivery loading bay for a nearby store. As he continues to browse profiles, Quill suddenly falls out of the frame and into the delivery bay...tumbling down its many steps!

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

NELSON

Come on, Jules! Do you know how hard it was to get these tickets?

JULIE

Nelson, I love the surprise, but I cannot go.

NELSON

Because you have to stay here with that menace on a Friday night?

Ryder is chewing on a rawhide chicken foot, his favorite chew toy.

RYDER (V.O.)

Uh, yeah! It's our night. Douche.

JULIE

My profile said, "One Friday night a month, I stay home with my dog." Did you just gloss over that?

NELSON

No! I just...didn't think you would turn down seeing your favorite band to...canine cuddle.

JULIE

(smiles)

You can cuddle with us.

RYDER (V.O.)

That'd be a hard no.

NELSON

That dog doesn't even like me.

RYDER (V.O.)

Hard yes.

JULIE

That's not true.

NELSON

How many of my t-shirts has he eaten?

JULIE

That's just how he...shows his appreciation for you.

RYDER (V.O.)

Lies.

NELSON

And how many times has he peed on my boots? My sneakers? My hats?

RYDER (V.O.)

(proudly)

Twenty-***nine***.

Julie stays quiet.

NELSON

Twenty-nine.

JULIE

(beat)

Okay. So maybe he's acting out a little. For the past year it's just been me and Ryder but now you're in my life.

NELSON

Don't sound so enthused.

JULIE

Of course, I'm enthused.

Julie gestures for Nelson to sit next to her on the couch. Nelson sits down.

JULIE

I got a dog because I wanted to come home to something every day. Something warm and inviting. Something safe.

NELSON

Safer than guys?

JULIE

And then, you show up six months ago. With your guitar and late-night serenades...

NELSON

(shyly)

My voice is shit.

JULIE

But you love to sing, and I love to hear you try.

(laughs)

Oh, and your "Do It Ourselves Taco Tuesdays"...

RYDER (V.O.)

And you don't **share** which is why you get peed on.

JULIE

And now you surprise me with tickets to see the best underground band in New York City doing holiday covers that I have been *dying* to check out...

NELSON
Ohhhh, so you *do* wanna go.

JULIE
(thinks)
I do. And I will. Lemme go change
really quick.

Julie gets off the couch and hurries to the bathroom. Nelson sits on the couch awkwardly, looking at Ryder, as Ryder looks at him.

NELSON
Just so you know...
(whispers)
I don't really like you either.

RYDER (V.O.)
*Heyyyy, we finally have something in
common. **Douche**.*

Nelson notices a ball on the floor. He picks it up to check it out. Ryder perks up.

NELSON
What is this?

RYDER (V.O.)
*It's my kibble ball. **Put...it...down.***

Ryder barks.

NELSON
Ohhhh! This is one of those things you
put dog food in that keeps you busy.
Hm.

Nelson gets up from the couch and goes over to the front closet. Ryder's instincts kick in. Nelson fills the ball with kibble and walks back over to the couch, setting the ball down on the floor. Ryder runs to it and starts to play around, moving the ball around, and dog kibble falls out little by little.

NELSON
I guess food is the way to every man's
heart.
(beat)
Damn, it's hot in here.

Nelson goes over to the window and opens it. Julie comes out

of her bedroom, dressed and ready to go.

NELSON

Is that the "Guys Who Play" band tee I got you?

JULIE

Couldn't think of a better time to wear it.

Julie kisses Nelson lightly on the lips. She goes over to Ryder and bends down, petting him lovingly.

JULIE

I will be back before you know it. I love you, Ryder.

RYDER (V.O.)

Hey, where ya going? You got on "leave me" clothes.

Julie and Nelson walk out of the apartment and into the hallway.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Julie remembers something.

JULIE

Oh, could you take his kibble ball off the floor? He usually doesn't eat it all and it'll be like, a land mine of dog food when we get back.

Julie begins to walk toward the elevator.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nelson hurries back into the apartment, seeing Ryder moving his kibble around and pellets of kibble on the floor.

NELSON

Sorry, buddy...

Nelson grabs the kibble ball. Ryder begins to bark.

RYDER (V.O.)

*What are you doing?! Oh, there's gonna be some **peeing** tonight, buddy!*

NELSON

Blame your mom, not me.

Nelson places the kibble ball on the sofa seat in front of the open window that leads to the fire escape. He leaves the apartment, closing the door behind him. Ryder looks at the door for a moment...the realization setting in.

RYDER (V.O.)

(sadly)

He...he made her...leave. Julie never leaves me on our night.

(angry)

*Alright. What can we pee on tonight? Actually...I **think** we should up our game.*

(beat)

But I'm gonna need to eat.

Ryder looks up at his kibble ball on the sofa seat. He walks over to his doggy stairs and steps up, reaching the sofa seat and his prized possession.

Ryder starts playing with the kibble ball, moving it around along the sofa seat. As Ryder continues pushing the ball, it falls out the window and rolls onto the fire escape.

RYDER (V.O.)

No, no, no!

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

As the kibble ball continues to roll, Ryder's instincts kick in and he hurriedly follows the kibble ball as it rolls...and rolls...and rolls...

RYDER (V.O.)

Come back! You're an important part of my revenge plot!

The kibble ball rolls toward the edge...toward the spaced-out metal bars of the fire escape.

RYDER (V.O.)

*Andddd...**gotcha!***

Ryder dives for the kibble ball as it falls over the edge...

SLAM CUT TO WHITE:

OUTSIDE OF SPACE AND TIME - PET AFTERLIFE - THE RAINBOW
BRIDGE

The kibble ball rolls across the colorful ground. Ryder comes into the frame, following it. A stiletto heel steps on the ball, stopping its momentum, as well as Ryder's. Ryder looks up, following the leg of the person, until we rest on SERENA, a gorgeous angelic goddess.

RYDER (V.O.)

(amazed)

*Whoa...you're like...**glowing**.*

Actually...everything is glowing.

(beat)

*What the **hell** was in that kibble?*

SERENA

Do you know where you are, Mr.
Adorable?

RYDER (V.O.)

*Uh...actually, no. But can you take me
back home? I got a revenge plot to
carry out aimed at "The Douche".*

SERENA

Um...I'm sorry, Ryder. But that *isn't*
going to be possible.

RYDER (V.O.)

*Well, I mean, you don't gotta take me
yourself, I can walk, I'm good at
walking.*

SERENA

Ryder...you can't go home because
you're kinda, sorta...not...living
anymore.

RYDER (V.O.)

*Ah, come onnnnn, what are you talking
about pretty lady?*

SERENA

(beat)

You're dead, sweetness.

Ryder rolls over in shock, "playing dead".

RYDER (V.O.)

*You gotta be **kidding** me! **WHAT?!***

SERENA

You took a pretty nasty fall chasing that kibble ball.

RYDER (V.O.)

*I wasn't chasing it! I just moved at a **very** fast pace and followed it **right** over the edge of the...*

(realizes)

*Ohhhhh, KIBBLE BITS! I'm **dead**?!*

SERENA

If it's any comfort, you look very good for being very dead.

RYDER (V.O.)

*No, no, no I can't be dead. I'm **four**! There's a lot of stuff I haven't even done yet! I haven't even broken up Julie and The Douche yet, I can't go to Heaven, I--I--I **need** to go **back**!*

SERENA

Well, you're jumping the gun. This *isn't* Heaven, sweetness.

RYDER (V.O.)

Really? But everything is all...wait.

(curious)

What are these?

Ryder taps his paw on the colorful ground.

SERENA

They're called colors. And this? Is The Rainbow Bridge.

RYDER (V.O.)

(shocked)

***Colors**? You mean there's more than just black, gray, and yellow?!*

SERENA

Uh-huh.

RYDER (V.O.)

Well, that's cool. And what's a...Rainbow Bridge?

SERENA

It's like...a waiting area. Between

Puppy Paradise and...the *other* place.

RYDER (V.O.)

The other place?

SERENA

Well, that's for *bad* pets. And let's just say you wouldn't need that very cute and warm puffy jacket Julie brought for you if you ended up there.

RYDER (V.O.)

A puffy jacket? She never got me that.

SERENA

Well...it was gonna be a Christmas gift.

RYDER (V.O.)

How...how is Julie? I mean...how long have I been...ya know...

SERENA

(beat)

Why don't you see for yourself?

Serena snaps her fingers, and a small bubble appears in the middle of the room out of thin air, showing Julie sitting on her couch, holding Ryder's kibble ball. Nelson sits next to her.

The camera zooms in.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nelson and Julie sit in silence as Julie holds Ryder's kibble ball in her hands.

NELSON

Jules...it's been a week. You *gotta* get outta the house.

JULIE

I'm sorry, am I not *grieving* fast enough for you?

NELSON

I'm not saying that. Listen, I know you really loved Ryder, and you miss him...

JULIE

Why are you acting like you care?

NELSON

What? Julie, I care about you, you know that.

JULIE

And you *hated* my dog.

NELSON

I didn't *hate* Ryder, I just felt like you--were maybe too attached to him.

JULIE

Too attached? That's what happens when people get pets, Nelson. We *bond* with them, we--we connect with them. The same way we do with people.

NELSON

(under his breath)

It seemed like you wanted to connect with a dog more than me.

JULIE

What did you say?

NELSON

Nothing. You know what, I think you need some space, so I'm just gonna...

Nelson gets up from the couch, readying himself to leave.

JULIE

Nelson, wait.

Nelson stops walking and turns around, looking at Julie with a hopeful expression.

JULIE

You're right. I do need space.

(beat)

Don't come back here.

NELSON

What? Julie, you're not serious.

JULIE

I am. I *cannot*...look at the man who left the window open and allowed Ryder

to...I just...I can't.
 (beat)
 This is over.

Nelson's eyes narrow, wondering if Julie is serious. After a few moments of silence, he leaves the apartment. Julie stares at the door for a moment. She curls into the couch, crying at the second loss she's experienced.

The camera zooms out.

OUTSIDE OF SPACE AND TIME - PET AFTERLIFE - THE RAINBOW
 BRIDGE

RYDER (V.O.)
No, no, no, Julie don't cry!
 (to Serena)
Pretty lady, look...

SERENA
 Though I do like the nickname, you can call me Serena.

RYDER (V.O.)
*Listen, I...I **have** to help Julie. She needs me.*

SERENA
 Hm. I *do* sympathize with your plight. And you *do* need to earn your place in Puppy Paradise so...maybe there is something we can arrange.

RYDER (V.O.)
Okay, name it, name it, I--I--I am very good at learning stuff! I got that "play dead" thing down pretty quick, right? What do I have to do?

SERENA
 (beat)
 I will send you back.
 (thinks)
 And if you can make two people fall in love by Christmas, you will be able to enter an eternity of kibble balls, treats, and countless numbers of trees to relieve yourself on.

RYDER (V.O.)
What?! How the hell am I gonna do

*that?! I am a **dog**, Serena! A four-legged ball of companionship, **not** that fat baby I'm always seeing who assaults people with arrows.*

SERENA

(smiles)

Not for long, Mr. Adorable.

Serena snaps her fingers.

PRE-LAP

GASPS!

INT. HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

NOVEMBER 30TH, 2024 (25 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

Ryder's eyes open, his vision blurry as he stares up at the ceiling.

MALE VOICE

Oh my God. You're awake.

Ryder turns his head, hearing the voice faintly as his senses recalibrate, taking everything in.

RYDER

Wow. I'm really back.

Ryder sees a man sitting in a chair next to him. The sounds of hospital equipment beep softly.

RYDER

Who...who are you?

CAMERON

Oh no. You have amnesia.

RYDER

A-whatta?

CAMERON

I'm gonna get the doctor.

Cameron gets up from his seat.

RYDER

Wait, wait!

(beat)

Whoa.

Ryder finally realizes something is different.

RYDER
(shocked)
I can *talk*!

CAMERON
It's a blessing you can do anything
after that fall.

Ryder raises his hands, seeing that he now has human
appendages!

RYDER
(panicking)
Oh my God.

CAMERON
I'm gonna go...

RYDER
Wait!

Ryder grabs Cameron's hand. Cameron looks back at him,
sensing something odd about the man in front of him but he
can't put his finger on it.

RYDER
(shocked)
I can grab stuff. I don't have to use
my mouth anymore.

CAMERON
Quill...

RYDER
Quill?

CAMERON
Um, yeah. That's your name. Quill
Peterson.

Ryder looks very confused. What is happening?

RYDER
Can you...can you show me...what I
look like?

CAMERON

Uh...yeah, sure.

Cameron takes out his phone and opens the camera, facing it towards Ryder so he can see himself.

RYDER SCREAMS IN SHOCK!

Ryder no longer sees the cute puppy he once was. What's looking back at him is the face of Quill Peterson, a human man!

CAMERON

(worried)

Okay, okay, *don't* freak out, I will be right back, okay? I will be *right* back.

Cameron scurries out the room.

RYDER/QUILL

What...is happening to me?

SERENA (O.S.)

(excited)

Don't you look great?

Ryder/Quill snaps his head toward the sound of the familiar voice. He sees Serena standing near the window with a big smile on her face.

RYDER/QUILL

You...you took my four legs!

SERENA

Don't worry, *this* guy has two *really* good ones, he goes to the gym like four times a week.

RYDER/QUILL

Serena...*why* am I human?

SERENA

Well, you really can't complete your task the way you were. I mean, you said so yourself.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, but I wasn't thinking *this*!

SERENA

Look, it is *not* permanent, alright?

RYDER/QUILL

It's not?

SERENA

Have you ever seen Cinderella? Or The Little Mermaid?

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

I'm a dog.

SERENA

Oh, right. Listen, you have until Christmas to make two unsuspecting people fall for each other and *then* you'll be back in your own body. Well, your ethereal body, with all the other doggy angels.

RYDER/QUILL

But...what happens if I can't do it?

SERENA

Well then...you'll live out your afterlife on that *really* colorful bridge we were on. All alone.

(sadly)

Just you and a perpetual reel of memories from your physical time on Earth.

RYDER/QUILL

Well, that's shitty.

SERENA

But you can do this! I know you can. I have faith. Like, *literally*. Because I'm an angel. We're made out of the stuff.

Cameron walks back into the room accompanied by a doctor.

DOCTOR

Mr. Peterson, you're awake. You've been uh, in a coma for five days.

(beat)

How are you feeling?

Ryder/Quill looks over, seeing that Serena has vanished.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

Like a...*whole* new human.

(swallows hard)

Literally.

INT. QUILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The front door opens. Cameron walks in first, followed by Ryder/Quill. Cameron closes the door and Ryder/Quill walks inside, checking out his surroundings.

RYDER/QUILL

Wow. Look at this place.

Cameron follows behind Ryder/Quill, also checking out the apartment. Cameron seems slightly impressed at the decor.

CAMERON

Amazed at your own decorating skills?

Nice to know your vanity is still
intact.

Ryder/Quill sees the couch, his eyes fixated on the pillows. He runs over to the couch and picks up a pillow with his teeth, thrashing it around.

CAMERON

(confused)

What are you doing?

Ryder/Quill stops, realizing once again that he's human.

RYDER/QUILL

I am...testing out the *softness* of
these...pillows. I *really* love
pillows.

CAMERON

You do enough laying in the bed so
that makes sense.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh, my old bed was top of the line
stuff.

Ryder/Quill looks at the couch for a moment and then jumps onto it excitedly.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh yeah! I think I'm good.

Ryder/Quill stands up on the couch and begins to jump up and down on it.

RYDER/QUILL

I am gonna have a *great* time with this!

(excited)

Come! Jump with me.

Cameron is extremely confused by "Quill's" behavior. Though, he can't help but be amused.

CAMERON

I'm gonna pass.

RYDER/QUILL

Come on, this is exercise! When you can't go out for a walk cause of the rain, I've found this is *really* good for the legs. And fun!

Cameron shakes his head; he has no idea what's transpiring. Cameron sighs and goes over to the couch, beginning to jump on it with Ryder/Quill.

RYDER/QUILL

Woo-hoo!

CAMERON

(laughs)

I haven't done this since I was a kid.

RYDER/QUILL

I haven't done it since I...

Ryder/Quill stops jumping, sadly remembering the last time he jumped on a couch was at Julie's place. Ryder/Quill sits down on the couch, Cameron looks down at him for a few seconds, and then he sits next to him.

CAMERON

Are you okay?

RYDER/QUILL

I was just...thinking about someone. My best friend.

(beat)

It feels like I haven't seen her in

forever.

Cameron finds himself very taken aback by this new, quirky, sentimental version of his usually crass co-worker.

CAMERON

Well...it is the holidays. People spending time together is pretty much a staple for this time of year so...maybe you should go see her.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

I will. She's just gonna be very surprised to see me.

CAMERON

Well, you won't have to deal with that at work. I texted everyone and told them you're well and you were cleared to come back to the office.

RYDER/QUILL

Office?

CAMERON

Yes. Your job. I didn't fire you for being out the past five days, comas are a legitimate reason for missing work.

RYDER/QUILL

I have to go to *work*?

CAMERON

Only if you feel up to it. I mean, you may be a nymphomaniac but...you're also pretty good at coming up with marketing strategies.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

Then I guess I'll see you at work. Tomorrow. The place where we...*work*...together.

CAMERON

Great.

Cameron gets up from the couch and starts wading to the door.

CAMERON

I would say get some rest, but you've been sleeping for almost a week.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh, I'm used to it. I sleep for like twelve hours a day normally.

Cameron just nods, still feeling that something is off about "Quill". Cameron leaves. Ryder/Quill looks around the apartment.

RYDER/QUILL

Okay, Ryder. You can do this. You can be human, and you can make two humans fall in love. And you can see Julie again.

(sadly)

I wonder how she's doing.

EXT. PET STORE - DAY

Julie stands in front of a pet store, staring sadly at the puppies in the window playing with each other while a few others scratch at the window.

SERENA (O.S.)

Aren't they just the most precious little things?

Julie looks over, seeing Serena standing next to her.

JULIE

They're the best. I, um...I got my dog from this store.

SERENA

Oh, what's their name?

JULIE

His name is...was...Ryder. He...he died a week ago.

SERENA

I am so sorry. That has to be horrible for you.

JULIE

You have no idea. I came here because I was thinking about getting a puppy but...

SERENA

You can't replace one dog with another.

JULIE

Just like you can't replace people.

(beat)

Would you tell me I'm crazy if I told you something...crazy?

SERENA

I could probably tell you something unbelievable as well so, no. I wouldn't.

JULIE

I don't...feel like...Ryder is...gone. Like, it feels as though he's still here somehow. Which is the crazy part because I don't even know if dogs have souls or spirits...

SERENA

Oh, every living creature has a spirit. An *essence* that makes them *who* and *what* they are.

JULIE

So, you're saying my dog's spirit could just be...hanging around my apartment?

SERENA

I'm saying that...even though it seems like we may lose something, sometimes we get it back. Just in a different form.

Julie thinks about that for a moment. She then bends down, touching the window to play with one of the puppies.

JULIE

Well, maybe one day I'll try this again, little guy. Do you have a dog?

Julie looks over, expecting to see Serena but the woman has simply vanished.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Ryder/Quill walks down the hall, passing by his colleagues as they stare at his very Christmas focused wardrobe. He walks

into the conference room.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Cameron, Gregory, and Lydia turn toward the door, staring at Ryder/Quill and his colorful ensemble.

LYDIA

Did you wake up as an elf?

RYDER/QUILL

(oblivious)

What?

GREGORY

I...I...like it. It's very festive.

LYDIA

More like infested.

RYDER/QUILL

Hey! I got rid of that flea situation a long time ago, okay?

LYDIA

Infested with Christmas *spirit*.

CAMERON

Uh, Quill, please come sit down.

Ryder/Quill sits in a chair, spinning it around. He does it again and again as his three colleagues just stare at him in a stupor.

CAMERON

Um, okay. So, I've been looking over your emails about the different social events we can put together and...I have some questions.

GREGORY

(excited)

And I can't wait to answer.

CAMERON

How'd you know my first question was for you?

GREGORY

Well, I don't wanna blow my own harmonica but...

LYDIA

And you will *not* be blowing your harmonica at the office Christmas party like you did last year. I will Van Gogh myself.

CAMERON

Gregory, um, so..."Grand Central Mason" speed dating. How does that tie into our subscribers finding love?

RYDER/QUILL

(shocked; in his head)
Finding love? Is that this guy's job?

GREGORY

Well, because instead of dating three to four people for a few minutes at a time, you match up with *one* person, and the date is making the perfect holiday *mason jar* for your grandparents.

LYDIA

A lot of people's grandparents are dead.

Gregory stays silent. He never thought of that.

GREGORY

I'll...keep brainstorming.

CAMERON

Good idea. And Lydia..."Sex-O-Vision Board" speed dating. I'm...lost.

LYDIA

Oh, it's simple. You bring a mini vision board of all the things you wanna try *sexually* to the speed dating event. You put them on a table, and people can choose their dates based off their kinks.

CAMERON

(flabbergasted)
Uhhhhh...

LYDIA

Too much?

RYDER/QUILL

Hey! So, from what I'm getting, we...put humans together, right? Uh, like pair em' up so they can hold hands and walk each other and eventually make mini humans?

CAMERON

That's an odd way to describe a matchmaking service but...yeah.

RYDER/QUILL

Christmas scavenger hunt!

CAMERON

(intrigued)

Go on.

RYDER/QUILL

So last Christmas, my owner...

Cameron, Lydia, and Gregory give "Quill" odd looks.

RYDER/QUILL

When I say owner...I mean my mom. She put stuff that I like all around the house for me to find like toys and treats, and it was just *crazy* fun.

CAMERON

I'm just not understanding the correlation between *that* and...finding love.

RYDER/QUILL

Well, two *people* can do that together. And instead of hiding toys and treats, we can hide Christmas stuff that they can do...together.

Lydia and Gregory both look at each other, surprised, and then look at Cameron, who is also surprised at "Quill's" idea but also impressed.

CAMERON

I'm...really into that idea, Quill.

LYDIA

Looks like somebody came out of their slumber with a new perspective.

RYDER/QUILL

You can say that. I'm...seeing the world with brand new eyes.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - BATHROOM - DAY

Ryder/Quill walks into the bathroom, he stops and looks around. This is all very new to him.

RYDER/QUILL

Okay, so...Julie always says she's going to the bathroom and then she goes into a room with a toilet. But where's the toilet?

A male colleague finishes using the urinal, flushes it, and then goes over to the sink to wash his hands.

RYDER/QUILL

Hey man, mind if I use your spot? I don't really see any other places to go in here.

MALE COLLEAGUE

(confused)

It's a...bathroom, Quill. There's plenty of places to go.

RYDER/QUILL

But you already claimed that one. You peed on it.

MALE COLLEAGUE

Yeah, but I don't...own it. It's a urinal.

RYDER/QUILL

Really?! So, I can just like...pee right where you pee? Seems kinda intimate.

MALE COLLEAGUE

Are you...did you get brain damage from your fall?

RYDER/QUILL

No! I was just being polite! But I'm gonna just...go...

Ryder/Quill walks over to the urinal and stands in front of it, trying to figure out how this all works. He puts one foot

on the urinal, unzips his pants, and begins to pee.

RYDER/QUILL

Hm. This is...this is pretty easy.
Don't gotta walk around for ten
minutes to get the juices flowing, no
smelling stuff beforehand.

Ryder/Quill puts his hands on his hips, looking over at his
male colleague, smiling proudly.

RYDER/QUILL

Ha! I still got it! Great stream.

The male colleague just stares at Ryder/Quill as he walks out
of the bathroom...extremely confused.

RYDER/QUILL

(confused)

What was his problem?

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

DECEMBER 2ND, 2024 (23 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

Julie comes out of her building and stops when she sees
Nelson standing outside holding something she can't believe.
It's a dog, the cutest Beagle you've ever seen.

NELSON

Somebody wants to say hi.

Julie sighs, shaking her head, and walks past him. Nelson
follows her.

NELSON

Come on, Julie, I'm *trying* here.

JULIE

By doing what?

NELSON

I got him for you.

Julie stops, annoyed.

JULIE

Ryder's ashes aren't even cold yet and
you think you can just show up here
with a new dog and everything goes
back to normal?

NELSON

How many times do I have to apologize?
Julie, I am sorry.

(beat)

And I miss you. I just thought maybe
this would...make things a little
easier for you.

JULIE

How long were we dating?

NELSON

Six months.

JULIE

And how much do you "miss" me?

NELSON

A hell of a whole lot.

JULIE

And have you started dating someone
else?

NELSON

Of course, not.

JULIE

Okay. I had Ryder for a year. Do you
think that *any* dog is going to change
the way I feel about losing him?

Nelson lets out a deep breath, taking in Julie's words and realizing his misjudgment of the situation.

NELSON

Just tell me what I can do to make
this right.

JULIE

(beat)

Bring Ryder back to life.

Julie turns around and walks away from Nelson as he watches her leave, downtrodden. He then looks at the puppy in his arms.

NELSON

What the hell am I supposed to do with
you now?

The dog starts licking Nelson lovingly. Nelson grimaces.

EXT. DOGGY PARK - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill sits on a bench, watching the dogs, somewhat sadly, playing with one another and their owners.

JULIE (V.O.)

Come on, Ryder! Come on, go get it, go get it!...good boy! Who's a good boy?!

Ryder/Quill smiles to himself, he misses Julie terribly.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Whew!

Someone sits down next to him, it's Trent, one of the men who owns Cannon, Ryder's best friend.

TRENT

I thought the weather would make him wanna stay inside but my dog seems to love the winter.

Ryder/Quill looks over, recognizing Trent.

RYDER/QUILL

Hey. I...I know you. You're Cannon's dad.

TRENT

You know Cannon? I don't think I've ever seen you at the park before.

RYDER/QUILL

Um...yeah, yeah, I do. I uh, I used to come here all the time. Until my dog...died.

TRENT

Oh. I'm sorry to hear that. You know, it's crazy how some people don't understand that losing a dog is like losing a family member.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, Cannon used to talk about his family all the time.

TRENT

You...*talk*...to Cannon?

RYDER/QUILL

All the time! We're like besties.

TRENT

Oh. Okay. Um, I have to run to the bathroom; would you mind keeping an eye on him for just a few minutes?

RYDER/QUILL

Cannon's not going anywhere.

Ryder/Quill looks over at Cannon as he plays tug of war with a rope that's attached to a metal pole.

RYDER/QUILL

He has a vendetta with that rope. It's *definitely* personal at this point.

Trent goes in his pocket and takes out a bag of treats.

RYDER/QUILL

(eyes wide)

Oh my God. Those...those are the things! The--the--little bites of meaty goodness!

TRENT

Yeah, they're Cannon's favorite.

RYDER/QUILL

Would you mind if I...

Ryder/Quill gestures towards Cannon.

RYDER/QUILL

Tug-of-war really works up his appetite.

TRENT

Sure.

Trent looks at Ryder/Quill for a moment quizzically, and then hands Ryder/Quill the bag of treats.

TRENT

I'll be right back.

Trent gets up from the bench and walks away. Ryder/Quill gets up from the bench and walks over to Cannon while the dog continues to play tug of war with himself and the rope.

RYDER/QUILL

We could never get that thing off. The stupid silver thing always wins.

Cannon ignores Ryder/Quill as he continues to play with the rope.

RYDER/QUILL

(sighs)

How am I gonna do this, Cannon? Make two of these humans do that love thing? I don't even know the first thing about it.

Cannon continues to ignore Ryder/Quill.

RYDER/QUILL

Like, why do they even want it? And how do they *fall* into it? Is it like, a hole or something? Cause I'm good at digging holes, so *that* would be easy.

Cannon continues playing with the rope. Ryder/Quill bends down and takes a treat out of the bag, finally grabbing Cannon's attention. He feeds one to Cannon.

RYDER/QUILL

You can't understand me, can you? You probably don't even know who I am.

(beat)

I'm trying to...figure that out myself now too.

Ryder/Quill feeds Cannon another treat.

RYDER/QUILL

It's like being inside this guy, some things are just...automatic. Like, I just *know* them. Others...not so much.

(beat)

I wish you could tell me what to do. You and Julie, you were...the closest people to me. I love you guys.

Cannon whimpers slightly, tilting his head. Ryder/Quill feeds Cannon another treat, then nonchalantly eats one himself. Ryder/Quill looks at the bag, reading the label.

RYDER/QUILL

Duck?! Oh, your dads are *fancy*.

Ryder/Quill eats another treat and pets Cannon on the head. He then looks over, seeing that Trent and his partner have been watching him the entire time, stunned.

RYDER/QUILL

Uh...sharing is caring, right?!

TRENT'S HUSBAND

Who is that guy? He seems to be really good with Cannon.

TRENT

I never got his name but...I feel like I know him.

TRENT'S HUSBAND

(beat)

We haven't slept with him, have we?

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie sits on the couch, looking at some photos spread across the coffee table. Cameron comes out of the kitchen with two glasses of wine. He hands one to Julie and then sits down on the couch.

JULIE

Ugh, thank you, this was very much needed.

CAMERON

Am I driving you that crazy with my indecisiveness? My ex used to complain about it all the time.

JULIE

Oh no, not at all. You're actually a welcome distraction.

CAMERON

It sounds like there's tea *with* the wine.

JULIE

Nothing you'd wanna hear, I'm sure.

CAMERON

What do you mean? The gays love tea. Especially when it's about someone we're getting to know. So, spill.

JULIE

(sighs)

It's my ex.

CAMERON

Trying to come back around for the holidays?

JULIE

We broke up recently. Um...my dog. He died.

CAMERON

Oh my God. That cute little dog you had with you at the park?

JULIE

The very one. My ex never really took to him. And if I'm being honest, Ryder never really warmed up to Nelson either.

CAMERON

Well, from what I know about dogs, they can become very territorial over their owners.

JULIE

Definitely. There was an accident and...I don't know, I just...I've been holding Nelson responsible because I feel like in some way, he wanted Ryder to be gone. And...he got his wish.

CAMERON

Well...and I *don't* wanna overstep.

JULIE

I unloaded on *you*, so the floodgates are open.

CAMERON

(beat)

Do you think maybe you're...projecting your anger at the universe for taking Ryder, at your ex?

JULIE

(thinks)

I don't think he left that window open on purpose. And he has been trying to

make up for what he did but I don't know...I feel like being with him would be...a disservice to Ryder's memory.

CAMERON

So, you're just gonna spend Christmas alone?

JULIE

Aren't you? I mean, I don't see a guy here.

CAMERON

That's because I am currently jaded and also hating men.

JULIE

Spill.

CAMERON

Long story short, I was dating this guy for a few months and he invited me to his family's house for my birthday and let's just say I wasn't the only one "blowing" things out.

(beat)

Caught him with his "best friend".

JULIE

Ouch. I'm sorry.

CAMERON

Don't be. It's given me more time to focus on work and to decorate my place. Which is coming out really good thanks to you.

JULIE

So, there's no other prospects?

CAMERON

(beat)

No.

JULIE

I'm an interior decorator. I know when people are lying to me. You're lying to me.

CAMERON

There isn't a guy! I mean...

(shrugs)

I mean, there *is* a guy but he's not a guy for *me*. Does that make sense?

JULIE

If you were to elaborate.

CAMERON

(beat)

It's a co-worker of mine. His name is Quill. He...fell, and then he went into a coma for a week, and he came out a whole...different person.

JULIE

Different how?

CAMERON

Well...

(sighs)

The Quill I knew was...raunchy. Closed off. Abrasive. The king of casual sex. But now, he's...lighter. Quirky. Kind of...sentimental.

JULIE

So, post-coma Quill is more endearing than pre-coma Quill?

CAMERON

Off the record? Slightly. But that's neither here nor there because I'm sure his change in personality is probably just some fluke of the coma.

JULIE

(quickly)

Uh-huh. Sure.

Julie sips her wine.

CAMERON

I *hired* you. I *can* fire you.

JULIE

Oh, sweetie...

Julie looks around the apartment.

JULIE

I'm not going anywhere. You need all the help you can get in here.

Julie and Cameron laugh together, sipping their wine.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Julie is knocked out sleep after her night of drinking and talking with Cameron.

DOORBELL RINGS

Julie doesn't move.

DOORBELL RINGS

Julie pops up, hearing the doorbell this time. She turns over and picks up her phone, checking the time.

CLOSE UP ON PHONE SCREEN. TIME READS 10:11 A.M.

JULIE

This is why you *don't* drink on the job, Julie.

DOORBELL RINGS

JULIE

(huffs)

Nelson...I am going to *kill* you.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Julie walks slowly towards the front door, her feet practically dragging from the hangover she's currently experiencing. She reaches the front door and opens it, expecting to see Nelson. However, she sees a man she's never seen before.

JULIE

Hi. Can I help you?

The man standing there is Ryder/Quill, a bright smile on his face. Though, his smile fades when he notices Julie's disheveled appearance.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

Oh, I know that look. You're never fun when you have that look.

JULIE

I'm sorry. Do I know you?

RYDER/QUILL

(nervous)

Um...kinda sorta. Well, I mean, I know you!

(sighs)

It's really good to see you, Julie.

JULIE

Um...okay. I've never seen you a day in my life so...I'm gonna...close the door now. Merry Christmas!

Julie starts to close the door, Ryder/Quill starts to panic. He can't let this happen.

RYDER/QUILL

My name is Ryder!

The mention of her dog's name stops Julie in her tracks. She holds the door open slightly, cracked just a little so she can still see the man on the other side.

JULIE

What did you say?

RYDER/QUILL

I said...my name is Ryder. And um...there's no easy way to say this but...

(beat)

Julie, it's me! I'm...your dog. I'm...Ryder.

Julie just stares at the man for a few long moments, processing his words. After a few more seconds, she speaks.

JULIE

I'm calling the cops.

Julie closes the door and locks it.

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

RYDER/QUILL

Julie! Julie, please! I know this sounds crazy but it's true! I wish I could explain it but...listen, I...

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Julie stands with her back against the door. Scared.
Confused.

JULIE

Look, I don't *who* you are or *why*
you're doing this but go away!

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

RYDER/QUILL

Trust me, I know this is hard to
believe but...I can convince you! Um,
um, um, uh, you...you love to dance
while you're cooking! And you,
um...you *never* let me come into the
bathroom when you're taking a shower!
Oh! And my kibble ball!

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Julie's expression changes to one of intrigue hearing the
words "kibble ball".

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

RYDER/QUILL

Julie...I'm sorry.

(beat)

I should've never chased that ball.
And I should've never tried to...chase
Nelson away.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Julie sighs, shaking her head, she realizes what's going on
now.

JULIE

Nelson.

Julie opens the door, facing Ryder/Quill again.

JULIE

Look. I know it's the holidays and you
probably need the money but tell
Nelson that this? Is *cruel*.

RYDER/QUILL

Julie...

JULIE

No, no! He sends someone here pretending to be what? Possessed by my dead dog? And the fact that you even went along with something like this...

RYDER/QUILL

I would *never* work with The Douche! I mean, Nelson. Julie, I am telling you the *truth*. I'm Ryder.

JULIE

(beat)

You're *sick*. And if you ever come back here again, I swear to God I *will* call the cops.

RYDER/QUILL

Jul...

Julie slams the door and locks it again. Ryder/Quill stands there for a moment, dejected and defeated.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

Julie stands at the door for a moment, angry, but also confused after her encounter with this apparently crazy stranger. She goes over to a photo on the mantle of her fireplace and picks it up.

CLOSE UP ON PHOTO OF JULIE SMILING AND HOLDING RYDER

Julie caresses the frame, fondly, thinking about the man's claims. It may be the grief but the tiniest part of her, somewhere deep down...wants to believe the things he said. After a few moments, Julie's emotions flip back to anger. She picks up her phone and begins writing a text.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - TABLE - DAY

Ryder/Quill sits at a table by himself, mulling over what to do about Julie. He takes a sip of the beverage in his cup.

RYDER/QUILL

That's *chocolate*?! Why can't we have that?! It's amazing. Hm, maybe this human thing has its perks.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, um...

Ryder/Quill looks up, a handsome male barista stands in front of him.

BARISTA

You've got...something on your nose.

Ryder/Quill touches his nose, feeling the remnants of whip cream that was left from his hot chocolate.

RYDER/QUILL

(laughs slightly)

Thank you. I'm normally able to just lick that stuff off. Benefits of having a long tongue.

BARISTA

Hm. Maybe...

The barista takes out a pen and writes something down on a napkin that's on the table.

BARISTA

I could try that out some time.

The barista winks at Ryder/Quill and then walks away. Unsure of what just transpired, Ryder/Quill picks up the napkin, seeing a phone number on it.

RYDER/QUILL

Wow. This guy wants a lot of hot chocolates.

(takes a sip)

And I really can't blame him. This is life changing.

NOTIFICATION PINGS ON PHONE

Ryder/Quill looks at the phone and opens the notification.

NO GAG REFLEX #3 (TEXT)

GONNA BE AT FOXXXY'S TONIGHT. COME OUT FOR A "DRINK".

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CAMERON'S OFFICE - DAY

Cameron sits at his desk on a phone call as he puts items into a box.

CAMERON

Okay. That's amazing. Thank you so much. "City Socials" appreciates your

hospitality. Happy holidays.

Cameron hangs up the phone. He picks up a stuffed animal from his desk, looking at it. Grabbing a pair of scissors, he cuts the head off and throws it in the box.

LYDIA (O.S.)

Yikes. Somebody's yuletide is *definitely* not gay this year.

Cameron turns his head, seeing Lydia standing in the doorway.

CAMERON

It's not easy saying "happy holidays" when there is in fact, *nothing*...happy about the holidays.

LYDIA

How did everything go with Radio City?

CAMERON

They agreed to sponsor two free tickets to The Rockettes for our Christmas Scavenger Hunt.

LYDIA

Well, that's something to be thankful for.

CAMERON

I guess. Were you able to secure Bryant Park?

LYDIA

Still going back and forth with the guy in their corporate office. You know, it's really hard to get men to give you free stuff when you're not sleeping with them.

(thinks)

Maybe we should put Quill on this one.

CAMERON

Put his "talents" to good use, huh?

LYDIA

Or...you could put his talents to good use.

CAMERON

What are you talking about?

LYDIA

I saw the way you were looking at him the other day after he came up with this genius idea. Seems like someone's thawing.

CAMERON

I am not...*thawing*. I'm wearing layers. Multiple.

LYDIA

A therapist would call those "walls". Walls that I think you should let Quill break. Shatter. Stretch out.

CAMERON

Lydia!

LYDIA

What?! I'm just saying. Quill seems to be...different now. Maybe you should take advantage before he reverts to form.

CAMERON

Hard pass.

LYDIA

Well...no one likes it soft.

INT. FOXXXY'S - NIGHT

"Underneath the Tree" by Kelly Clarkson plays over the speakers

Christmas music plays as the attendees at the bar enjoy the evening. Dancing. Having drinks and conversation. Making out under mistletoe. Ryder/Quill walks inside, followed by Cameron. Ryder/Quill looks around, taking in the scene.

RYDER/QUILL

It's a...party.

CAMERON

It's a weeknight at a gay bar which means it's *always* a party. You should know that.

RYDER/QUILL

Right, right!

(beat)

Thanks for uh, coming with me by the way.

CAMERON

Well...thanks for inviting me. I needed a break from work and this whole decorating my apartment thing.

RYDER/QUILL

So...what do we do now?

CAMERON

(thinks)

Drinks.

Cameron and Ryder/Quill make their way to the bar and sit down. The manager of the bar and sometimes bartender, MATEO "TEO" FELIZ (28); handsome, Hispanic, and wearing a bright smile that hides the sadness behind his eyes, comes over to them.

NOTE: Mateo "Teo" Feliz is one of the lead characters from another queer holiday romantic comedy of mine titled, "**Can I Keep You?**". Yes! I am creating a "**Rom-Com Cinematic Universe**"...the **RCCU**, if you will.

TEO

Quill! Hey man, it's good to see you.

RYDER/QUILL

Uh...you too, man!

TEO

So, I got this new drink, it's been pretty popular. Could I get one for you and your date?

CAMERON

Oh, noooo, this is *not* a date. We are co-workers.

RYDER/QUILL

Hey! I think we're...friends.

(to Teo)

And yeah, that's fine.

TEO

Gotchu'.

Teo leaves the two and begins making their drinks. Cameron looks behind him, seeing a couple kissing under mistletoe.

CAMERON

(sighs)

I should've ordered a shot of the strongest thing they have.

RYDER/QUILL

I'd recommend whatever they give you at the doctor's office when they're cutting your sack off. Cannon told me it knocks you *right* out.

CAMERON

(shocked)

A friend of yours had testicular cancer?

RYDER/QUILL

Nah, he was just *really* horny. Couldn't stop humping everything.

Cameron laughs, he wasn't expecting that joke from "Quill".

CAMERON

I appreciate your attempt to make me laugh.

(beat)

It's not really easy seeing all this holiday love when you don't have any of your own.

Ryder/Quill senses Cameron's sadness. Teo comes back over to them with two beverages in his hands, he places them down.

TEO

Two *enhanced* pineapple mojitos.

Cameron tastes the drink. He's pleasantly pleased.

CAMERON

This is *really* good.

TEO

Thank you. A friend of mine...helped me out with the idea.

Ryder/Quill tastes the beverage and makes a sour face, tasting alcohol for the first time. As it settles in, his expression changes.

RYDER/QUILL

Humans have *really* good stuff to

drink! Water gets so boring after a while.

CAMERON

Well, tell your friend this is a homerun.

TEO

I would but...we're actually in a...weird place right now.

RYDER/QUILL

You ain't the only one.

Ryder/Quill takes another gulp of his beverage.

TEO

Hey, um...could I ask you guys a little bit of advice? Uh...guy to guy about...guy on guy...stuff?

CAMERON

Sure.

TEO

(beat)

How do you know...when you're in love?

Cameron looks over at Ryder/Quill, who happens to be in the middle of finishing his drink.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh, don't look at me, I have *no* idea.

CAMERON

I'm not surprised.

(to Teo)

I think it's different for everybody. But for me...comfortability. When you can be completely yourself in front of that person without worrying, that's a sign.

Ryder/Quill listens to Cameron's words...thinking about Julie and the last time he saw her with Nelson.

JULIE (V.O.)

And then, you show up. With your guitar and late-night serenades...

NELSON (V.O.)

(shyly)

My voice is shit.

JULIE (V.O.)

But you love to sing and I love to hear you try.

CAMERON

And nervousness. Your palms get sweaty when you're around them because you always wanna say the right thing.

TEO

Is *that* why my hands are always wet when I'm around...my friend?

CAMERON

(laughs slightly)

Possibly. Oh! And you're always thinking about what can bring a smile to their face. *Their* happiness is *your* priority.

Ryder/Quill continues to think of Julie and Nelson.

JULIE (V.O.)

And you surprise me with tickets to see the best underground band in New York City doing holiday covers that I have been dying to check out...

Ryder/Quill's eyes go wide as a realization hits him.

RYDER/QUILL

Hey, Drink Guy...

TEO

Or...just Teo.

RYDER/QUILL

Where's the bathroom?

Teo points toward an opening at the back of the bar.

RYDER/QUILL

I'll be right back.

Ryder/Quill leaves his seat hastily, leaving Cameron and Teo confused.

INT. FOXXXY'S - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill leans on the sink, looking in the mirror at his reflection.

RYDER/QUILL

Julie was in love.

(shakes head)

Turns out, you're the actual douche,
Ryder.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Well, well, well...

Ryder/Quill turns around, seeing an attractive man standing near one of the stalls with a mischievous grin on his face.

NO GAG REFLEX #3

Look who *finally* arrived.

RYDER/QUILL

(confused)

Oh, I already claimed mine at work.
You can have that one.

NO GAG REFLEX #3

Come here, you.

The man walks up to Ryder/Quill and kisses him. Though, Ryder/Quill just stands there with his eyes open, shocked and unengaged. The man pulls back.

NO GAG REFLEX #3

What's the matter?

RYDER/QUILL

What are you doing?

NO GAG REFLEX #3

Oh, you wanna get right to doing *it*? I
like that.

RYDER/QUILL

Doing it?! No, no, no we can't do
that.

The man takes Ryder/Quill by the hand, leading him to a bathroom stall. The front door to the bathroom opens and Cameron walks in, he stops when he sees "Quill" and the man in the stall.

CAMERON
 (scoffs)
 Why am I not surprised?

RYDER/QUILL
 Cam!

Ryder/Quill breaks away from the man and moves quickly over to Cam, putting his arm around Cameron.

RYDER/QUILL
 (to No Gag Reflex #3)
 You see, you and I *can't...do it...because...I'm gonna do it...with him.*

CAMERON
What?!

RYDER/QUILL
 Yup. Come on, let's go. We're gonna do it.

Ryder/Quill takes Cameron by the hand and leaves the bathroom.

NO GAG REFLEX #3
 What was *that* about? Quill is always down for a little "stall crawl".
 (checks watch)
 Well, the night is young. I'm sure somebody else will be in here.

INT. FOXXXY'S - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

"True Love" by Ariana Grande plays over the speakers

As Ryder/Quill pulls Cameron by the hand through the crowd of people slow dancing, Cameron stops. Ryder/Quill turns around.

CAMERON
 Okay, stop. Quill, what the hell was that?

RYDER/QUILL
 (beat; whispers)
 That guy wanted to...he wanted to *do me in there!*

CAMERON
 Uh, okay. Isn't that what you're all

about?

RYDER/QUILL
What would make you think that?

CAMERON
Because I know you.

RYDER/QUILL
Oh, really?

Ryder/Quill looks around, seeing guys slow dancing with each other. He grabs Cameron by the hand, spins him around, and then pulls him close, taking Cameron's other hand and begins to move slowly to the music.

RYDER/QUILL
Bet ya didn't know I was gonna do that.

CAMERON
(beat)
No. No, I didn't.

Though he's unsure of "Quill's" sudden actions, Cameron doesn't move away. They dance slowly for a few moments, quietly.

RYDER/QUILL
Can I ask you something?

CAMERON
Yeah.

RYDER/QUILL
Have you ever been, ya know...in that love thing?

CAMERON
Not really.
(beat)
Have you?

RYDER/QUILL
(beat)
No. Honestly, I never really knew what it was until I heard you talking about it.

CAMERON
That explains your beeline to the

bathroom. Scared ya, huh?

RYDER/QUILL

Remember my best friend I told you about?

CAMERON

Uh-huh.

RYDER/QUILL

I realized that I um...I may have messed things up for her and the person she was in love with. My friend Cannon said I was...jealous because she wasn't spending as much time with me anymore.

CAMERON

Well, I mean, that's a natural human feeling sometimes.

RYDER/QUILL

It was just that she was all I ever really had. Until she came into my life, I was always just...alone. In my own little cage just...waiting to be someone's companion.

(beat)

But I guess she was...doing the same thing.

Cameron looks into "Quill's" eyes. Seeing him in a new light after this deep and intimate exchange.

CAMERON

We're...all looking for love, Quill. Even if some of us have given up on finding it.

RYDER/QUILL

Given up? Why? You don't seem like a hard person to love.

CAMERON

(touched)

Thanks.

(beat)

And if this is the *real* Quill that you've been hiding all this time...maybe there's hope for you yet.

As they continue to dance, looking into each other's eyes, Ryder/Quill and Cameron connect.

A spark is lit.

Cameron leans into "Quill", going for a kiss, but Ryder/Quill pulls back.

RYDER/QUILL

Uh, Cam...

CAMERON

(embarrassed)

I'm sorry. That was...that was *stupid*.
Listen, I'm gonna go but um...thanks
for the dance.

Cameron walks away, feeling like a dunce for his actions. Ryder/Quill watches him leave.

Then his eyes go wide, hit with another realization.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh my God. *Cam...likes Quill.*

(thinks)

And if *I* can make *Cam* fall in love
with *Quill*...then it's goodbye two
legs and hello four-legged Heaven.

(thinks)

But first...another pineapple water.
Definitely need more of that.

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Julie is standing outside of her apartment building, bundled up with her arms crossed, waiting for someone. She looks to her left, seeing Nelson walking up the street. Julie walks down the stairs as Nelson walks up to her.

NELSON

Hey Jules. I was so glad to get your
text yesterday.

Julie slaps Nelson across the face.

NELSON

Not glad to get *that*. What the hell
was that for?!

JULIE

You have gone too far.

NELSON

Julie, I am sorry bringing you the dog, okay?!

JULIE

This is not about the dog. Well, not *that* dog. *This* is about the guy you sent to my apartment the other day.

NELSON

(confused)

Guy?

JULIE

You know, most people would send flowers, candy, maybe even some...*goddamned* singing Christmas elves! But sending someone to *pretend* they're my reincarnated *dead* dog? What is *wrong* with you?!

RYDER/QUILL (O.S.)

There's nothing *wrong* with him, Julie!

Nelson and Julie turn their attention to the voice coming from behind Julie. They see Ryder/Quill standing there.

RYDER/QUILL

I mean, I *thought* there was, but it turns out...*I*...was the problem.

JULIE

I told you I would call the cops if I ever saw you again, stalker.

NELSON

This is the guy bothering you?

Immediately, Nelson goes up to Ryder/Quill, grabbing him by the shirt.

NELSON

What's your problem, dude? Why would you do something like that to her? Who the hell are you?

RYDER/QUILL

I--I peed on your stuff twenty-nine times!

This triggers Nelson because the guy is right about how many

times Ryder urinated on his belongings. However, Nelson still holds him tightly by the shirt.

RYDER/QUILL

And the last time I saw you, you were taking Julie to a concert. "The Guys Who Play".

This triggers Julie.

RYDER/QUILL

(to Julie)

You wore a t-shirt Nelson gave you. Of the band. You left us alone to take a shower...

Nelson lets go of Ryder/Quill, listening intently as he continues to speak.

RYDER/QUILL

And Nelson gave me my kibble ball.

(beat)

I loved that ball.

(beat)

And I would've loved that puffy jacket you were gonna give me too.

Julie looks at Nelson, shocked.

JULIE

I never told you I brought that jacket for Ryder.

Julie looks at Ryder/Quill in amazement, awe, and shock.

JULIE

It...*can't* be.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

I miss our one night a month.

Julie gasps, her hands going to her mouth! After a few moments, she throws her arms around Ryder/Quill and he hugs her back tightly. Nelson watches the "reunion" in front of him, trying to process everything.

NELSON

(frantic)

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?!

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ryder/Quill and Julie sit on the couch, Nelson sits on the loveseat.

JULIE
This is unbelievable.

NELSON
I need a drink.

RYDER/QUILL
Oh, drinks! Another thing you guys have that I love. Have you ever had hot chocolate? It's wowwwww!

JULIE
(smiling)
It is...so amazing to see you again. Even like this.

RYDER/QUILL
(smiles)
I feel the same way. But...it isn't permanent. I mean, this guy, Quill? He has a life and um...I'm gonna have to give it back to him so I can...have my afterlife.

NELSON
And *that* only happens if you make two people fall in love.

RYDER/QUILL
Exactly. The way that you guys are.

Julie and Nelson look at each other awkwardly.

JULIE
We've *never* said that to each other.

NELSON
Yeah, I mean, we--we're not even together right now.

RYDER/QUILL
But you should be!
(to Julie)
Julie, what happened to me *isn't* Nelson's fault. That night, I went after the kibble ball because I wanted

to...take a crap on Nelson's wooden
noise maker.

(beat)

I thought it would make him go away.

NELSON

You were gonna crap on my guitar?!

RYDER/QUILL

Have you ever heard your two skin
flappers make the noise?

JULIE

(laughs)

I think it's cute.

RYDER/QUILL

And see? *That's* why you're in love.

(beat)

And I need you guys' help to make
Cameron feel that way about me. Well,
about Quill.

NELSON

Who's Cameron?

JULIE

You're not talking about...Cameron
Link, are you?

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, that's him. Do you know him?

JULIE

He's actually one of my clients. I'm
designing his new apartment.

RYDER/QUILL

This is *perfect*!

NELSON

This is *crazy*.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, that too but also...*doable*. Last
night, I got the feeling that Cam is
into Quill. Now I just need you guys
to teach me how to...get him to like
me more. I mean, Quill, more.

(swallows hard)

By Christmas.

Julie and Nelson exchange glances.

NELSON

Ryder...

(thinks)

Cannot believe I just said that.

(beat)

Christmas is in like, three weeks.

People *don't* fall in love that fast.

JULIE

Not if you don't believe in Christmas miracles.

Julie reaches out and grips Ryder's hand lovingly.

JULIE

And I got my miracle. So...we're going to do everything we can to make sure you get yours.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CAMERON'S OFFICE - DAY

DECEMBER 5TH, 2024 (20 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

Cameron is sitting at his desk, typing an e-mail.

JULIE (V.O.)

The best way to show a person you like them is the simplest way...spend time with them.

NELSON (V.O.)

Yeah, nothing says, "Hey, I like you" more than quality time.

Ryder/Quill comes into the doorway, holding a tray with two cups. He knocks on the wall, getting Cameron's attention.

RYDER/QUILL

So, I spoke with that cooking school, and they agreed to give us a free holiday cookie making class for the scavenger hunt.

CAMERON

Oh Quill, that's great!

RYDER/QUILL

I know, right?!

Ryder/Quill walks into the office and sits down across from Cameron, putting a cup on his table.

RYDER/QUILL
Figured you could use some company
while you work. Hot chocolate?

CAMERON
Uh...yeah sure. Why not?

RYDER/QUILL
Whatcha' working on?

CAMERON
The biggest thing we need for this
scavenger hunt. Trying to get
Rockefeller Center to host a private
dinner in front of the tree.

RYDER/QUILL
Oh, I love that tree! Let me help.

Ryder/Quill goes over to Cameron, leaning over his shoulder.

RYDER/QUILL
Alright, so...

Their closeness puts Cameron on edge...but in a good way.

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

NELSON (V.O.)
*Always make sure they know you're
thinking about them.*

JULIE (V.O.)
*Yeah. People like to feel wanted.
Desired. There's nothing better than
knowing you're on someone's mind when
they could be thinking about countless
other things.*

Cameron walks into his living room from the kitchen, sitting on the couch. He un-pauses the television and settles in with a cup of hot chocolate.

CAMERON'S PHONE PINGS

Cameron picks up his phone from the table and checks it. He laughs when he sees it's a message from "Quill" with a picture attached; he's wearing a Santa hat, holding out a cup

of hot chocolate.

RYDER/QUILL (TEXT)
**I'D BET YOU DINNER YOU'RE DRINKING
 THIS RIGHT NOW.**

Cameron smiles and writes back.

CAMERON (TEXT)
ARE YOU ASKING ME OUT ON A DATE?

INT. QUILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill looks at his phone in confusion.

RYDER/QUILL
 (beat)
 What the heck is a date?

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

NELSON (V.O.)
*A date means it's time to seal the
 deal.*

JULIE (V.O.)
And solidify all your hard work.

Cameron and Ryder/Quill are sitting down at a table, talking. The waiter comes over with their steak dinners. Cameron picks up his utensils and starts cutting into his steak.

Ryder/Quill picks up his steak and starts biting into it, all of the steak juices on his face. Cameron looks at him awkwardly.

RYDER/QUILL
 What?

CAMERON
 I'm guessing a knife and fork are too
 much work.

RYDER/QUILL
 Those things just get in the way. I
 mean, look at this beautiful piece of
 meat, it was meant to be eaten, not
 taken care of.

(beat)
 Try it my way. Trust me, it tastes a
 whole lot better.

CAMERON

I think I'll just do it the humane way.

RYDER/QUILL

Live a little, Cam, come on! Life is short. Believe me...I know.

Cameron sighs, thinking. After a moment or two, he picks up the steak with his hands and takes a bite. Then he smiles.

CAMERON

I don't know how...but it *does* taste better.

RYDER/QUILL

Because you're being free! You know, some of the best times for dogs are when they're able to go off-leash and just be...free. It makes the world feel different. Like...you're more connected to it. And even though it can be scary sometimes, they're always comfortable letting go...because they know they have someone to go back to.

(beat)

Someone who's always gonna be there for them.

For a few moments, Cameron is stunned into silence by "Quill's" words.

CAMERON

(impressed)

That coma really brought something outta you.

(beat; smiles)

And I think that maybe...I'd like to see more of it.

Ryder/Quill smiles brightly...his plan seems to be working.

MONTAGE BEGINS ("Mistletoe" by Justin Bieber plays)

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Ryder/Quill and Cameron are having a snowball fight. Cameron hits Ryder/Quill in the face with a snowball, Ryder/Quill falls to the floor. Cameron looks concerned and runs over to him, bending down to check on him.

Ryder/Quill surprises Cameron with a snowball to the face and Cameron gasps in shock! He then jumps on top of Ryder/Quill and the two begin to wrestle in the snow.

EXT. HERALD SQUARE - NIGHT

Cameron and Ryder/Quill are standing with a crowd, looking at the Christmas displays that are set up in the front windows of Macys.

Ryder/Quill looks amazed, pointing excitedly, experiencing this for the first time with human eyes. Cameron looks over at him, smiling at "Quill's" child-like joy.

CLOSE UP ON CAMERON AND RYDER/QUILL'S HANDS

Slowly, Cameron grabs Ryder/Quill's hand, interlocking their fingers together.

Ryder/Quill looks over at Cameron, surprised at the gesture...then he smiles.

INT. QUILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill is sitting on the couch and watching a movie, thoroughly entertained. He laughs and then looks down, expecting to see Cameron laughing as well. However, Cameron's head lies on Ryder/Quill's lap, somewhere between sleep and bliss.

Ryder/Quill looks at him for a moment and then pets his head, caressing Cameron's hair.

EXT. CHRISTMAS VILLAGE - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill and Cameron walk hand in hand, talking, as they make their way through a Christmas village filled with holiday themed stores and other visitors.

Cameron stops. Ryder/Quill looks confused. Cameron gets a twinkle in his eye and looks up.

CLOSE UP ON MISTLETOE HANGING FROM TREE

Ryder/Quill looks up, not understanding the meaning of the little Christmas trinket. He looks over and sees a couple a few feet away from them, standing under mistletoe and kissing.

Ryder/Quill looks back at Cameron...he understands now.

And he's nervous. But also, excited. Leaning down, he plants a kiss on Cameron's lips...his first kiss. Cameron returns the kiss, placing a hand on the side of Ryder/Quill's face.

The camera pulls back slowly as they continue to kiss...and the rest of the world falls away.

INT. QUILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door opens. Ryder/Quill comes in cheery and happy after his night with Cameron.

RYDER/QUILL
(singing)
"Have yourself a merry little
Christmas, make the yuletide..."

Ryder/Quill turns on the light in the living room.

SERENA (O.S.)
Gay?

RYDER/QUILL SCREAMS!

Serena is sitting on the couch, her legs crossed comfortably.

RYDER/QUILL
Serena! Dogs can have heart attacks too, ya know.

SERENA
That's my bad.

RYDER/QUILL
What are you doing here?

SERENA
Just checking up on you. I see you've made some progress with Julie...and Cameron.
(excited)
How was your first kiss?

RYDER/QUILL
Um...way different than licking. But it was like...
(sighs)
The first time Julie let me try a cheeseburger.
(smiles)
It was the best thing ever.

SERENA

So, your plan is working?

RYDER/QUILL

It is.

A sadness comes over Ryder/Quill as he tries to find the courage to ask a question that's been on his mind.

RYDER/QUILL

Serena...what if I wanted to stay?

SERENA

Oh, Ryder...

RYDER/QUILL

Wait. Hear me out. From what I've heard about Quill? He was a douche. But me? I am *not* a douche. And Julie is so happy that I'm back and Cam...he's just...he's amazing.

SERENA

Is *Cam* part of the reason you wanna ditch eternal bliss?

Ryder/Quill sighs and sits on the couch next to Serena. So many thoughts running through his mind.

RYDER/QUILL

When dogs find their human we just sort of...imprint on them. We love them instantly, almost by default, because they take care of us.

(beat)

I never really knew it was the same way with people. They care about each other because...they take care of each other.

(smiles slightly)

You know, Cam was the first person I saw when you sent me back.

SERENA

He was there for *Quill*.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah but...now I'm here for him. And...he seems to be here for me.

(beat)

And it feels good! I don't think I

wanna leave him just yet.

SERENA

As much as I would love to let you stay...that isn't how this works, Ryder. You have a task and once it's completed...

RYDER/QUILL

I have to leave.

Serena touches Ryder's leg, trying to offer some comfort.

SERENA

Emotions are a *sucky* part of being human. I'm sorry, Mr. Adorable.

Ryder/Quill looks over to say something to Serena, but she has vanished. Defeated, Ryder/Quill slumps onto the couch.

PRE-LAP

JULIE

So, that's it?

EXT. STREET - DAY

DECEMBER 20TH, 2024 (5 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

Julie and Ryder/Quill walk slowly down the street, cups of hot chocolate in their hands.

JULIE

I can't believe I only have five more days with you. I *literally* just got you back.

RYDER/QUILL

Tell me about it.

(beat)

Do you...miss the way that I used to be?

JULIE

(thinks)

At first? Of course. I missed cuddling with you on the couch. I missed the way you would get excited whenever I brought home a new bag of treats. But...having you back...I've realized that I just missed you. Ryder.

RYDER/QUILL

So, if you had to choose...which me
would you prefer?

JULIE

I can't really say because...you're
just *you*. Whether you have two legs or
four...you're just Ryder. Full of love
with a zest for life.

Julie touches Ryder/Quill's hair.

JULIE

(laughs)

And you *still* have the softest hair.

RYDER/QUILL

(sadly)

Thanks. But it's not mine. It's
Quill's.

(frustrated)

And *that* is who Cameron wants. It's
his body. *His* voice...

Julie senses that Ryder has started to have feelings for
Cameron.

JULIE

But it's *your* heart, Ryder. You're the
one making Cameron happy, *not* Quill.
And we don't have as much time in this
life as we think so...enjoy the
experience while you can.

Ryder/Quill digests Julie's words.

RYDER/QUILL

I think Nelson would like to hear that
too.

(beat)

Don't you?

Julie takes a moment, thinking about her words and how they
apply to her own life.

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron sits on the couch on his laptop, finishing off some
work. Ryder/Quill stands in front of the window, looking
outside at the balcony and into the New York City skyline.

CAMERON

That's good...that's great...and that is...done.

(closes the laptop)

We really did it. In two days, we will be hosting the most romantic Christmas event New York has ever seen.

Cameron looks over, seeing "Quill" staring off into space.

CAMERON

You're not gonna be able to spot Santa or his reindeer for another couple nights.

Cameron walks over to "Quill", wrapping his arms around his waist from behind.

CAMERON

You're a God send, you know that. This whole thing would never have happened if it wasn't for you.

Ryder/Quill turns around to face Cameron, trying to hide his proud smile.

RYDER/QUILL

Give yourself a little more credit than that. I only helped a bit.

CAMERON

You helped a lot.

(beat)

I wasn't really looking forward to any holiday festivities but...now things are different.

(beat)

You're different.

Ryder/Quill can't help but to feel guilty.

RYDER/QUILL

Cam...I...need to tell you something.

CAMERON

Tell me what?

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

I'm *not*...who you think I am.

CAMERON

I know.

RYDER/QUILL

(surprised)

You do?

CAMERON

Yeah.

(beat)

You're *everything*...that I thought you weren't.

Cameron kisses Ryder/Quill, passionately. Ryder/Quill kisses him back, unable to help himself and his now human instincts. Cameron takes off Ryder/Quill's shirt, things starting to get more intense.

Ryder/Quill feels something happening in his nether regions...he knows what's about to happen...but he can't let it happen. Not like this. Ryder/Quill pulls back.

RYDER/QUILL

Okay, wait, wait, stop, stop!

CAMERON

Stop?! Uh, Simon says go!

Cameron goes to kiss Ryder/Quill again, but Ryder/Quill stops him.

RYDER/QUILL

I'm--I'm--I'm a dog!

CAMERON

No, you *used* to be a "dawg" and *now* you're a good guy who I really care about and *really* wanna throw on that couch.

RYDER/QUILL

No, no, Cameron, I am...a *dog*. Well, I'm the *spirit*...of a dog...inside of a human.

Cameron stares at "Quill", processing his words.

CAMERON

You're making absolutely no sense.

RYDER/QUILL

Believe me, I *know* it sounds crazy...

CAMERON

No, it sounds like you were *actually* starting to feel something real and now you're scared and talking like you just escaped an insane asylum.

RYDER/QUILL

I just needed to be honest with you before we...

CAMERON

Before what? Before I start to fall for you? It's a little late for that.

RYDER/QUILL

I know! I know! It wasn't supposed to happen like this! You were supposed to like *Quill*, not me, and I definitely wasn't supposed to like you...

CAMERON

Wow, real sweet talker.

RYDER/QUILL

Cam, listen to me, I really...this is all...new to me. More than you can ever possibly imagine and I just...I don't wanna be a douche. I don't wanna take advantage of you.

Cameron shakes his head as he becomes angry at himself.

CAMERON

I should've known this was gonna happen. I should've known *this* was too good to be true.

RYDER/QUILL

Cameron, everything I feel for you is true.

CAMERON

If that was the case you wouldn't make up this *ludicrous* lie just to push me away, but you know what, it *worked*.

(beat)

Go home, Quill.

RYDER/QUILL

Cam...

CAMERON

Get out!

Ryder/Quill wants to say more but can't find the words. He grabs his shirt off the floor and puts it on, followed by his jacket which he grabs from the sofa. Ryder/Quill walks to the door and puts his hand on the knob though he stops, turning around to look at Cam one more time before he leaves.

RYDER/QUILL

When I said you weren't hard to love...I meant that. And no matter what happens to me...*this* was worth it.

(beat)

You...were worth it, Cameron.

Cameron fights back tears as he watches Ryder/Quill open the front door and leave the apartment.

EXT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ryder/Quill sits on the steps of Julie's apartment building, deep in thought. Suddenly, the cute Beagle that Nelson brought for Julie walks up to him and stops. Ryder/Quill follows the leash, seeing Nelson holding it, standing in front of him.

NELSON

Hey, what's up. I got your message.

Ryder/Quill's face lights up, seeing the dog.

RYDER/QUILL

Oh my God...*Duncan*?! I haven't seen you in forever!

Nelson sits down on the steps next to Ryder/Quill.

NELSON

I call him "Dunk" now. Since it's my favorite brand of sneakers, kinda just felt right.

RYDER/QUILL

He came into the store right before Julie got me. Pretty chill guy. You got a good one.

NELSON

Well...I got him for Julie. To make up for...ya know...

RYDER/QUILL

(sighs)

That's why I um...called you, Nelson. I wanted to say I'm sorry for the way I acted when you started dating Julie.

(beat)

Now that I know what it's like to be with somebody and lose them...

NELSON

Yeah, Julie told me, you told *her* what happened between you and Cameron last night. Sorry, man.

RYDER/QUILL

I guess it'll just be and my kibble ball on the Rainbow Bridge very soon.

NELSON

Sounds like you're giving up.

RYDER/QUILL

What else am I supposed to do? Cameron doesn't wanna see me, he hasn't answered any of my text things. I didn't even bother going into work because I know he doesn't wanna see my face.

NELSON

Julie didn't wanna see *my* face but that hasn't stopped me from trying to win her back.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, Nelson but you and Julie...you're *people*. I'm a...

NELSON

Person? Ryder, you have ten fingers and ten toes. Last time I checked, that makes you one of us. And you know what *people* do?

RYDER/QUILL

No.

NELSON

We fight for what we love. We don't just let it slip through our fingers. Not if it means something. And I'm pretty sure that Cameron? Means something to you.

Ryder/Quill ponders Nelson's words. Cameron does mean something to him but what can he do to make things right before Christmas?

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron walks around his apartment in awe, which is now fully furnished and has been completely decorated. Julie stands in the living room with him, the expression on her face tense.

CAMERON

You...are a *magician*. Julie, this is incredible.

JULIE

I'm really glad you like it.

CAMERON

Like it? Don't downplay your work, I love it.

(beat)

It'll be a great place to spend Christmas alone, I mean, that firepit on the balcony will really keep me cozy.

JULIE

Well, that doesn't sound fun.

CAMERON

Wasn't the way I had it planned in my head either.

(sighs)

Remember that guy I told you about, who wasn't "a guy for me"?

JULIE

Uh-huh.

CAMERON

Well, I gave him a chance...gave us a chance and...it blew up in my face.

JULIE

How?

CAMERON

The same thing that always happens with men. He got scared of our growing emotional proximity and made up the dumbest, but I will say, the most creative, excuse to break it off.

JULIE

Um...what did he say?

CAMERON

(beat)

That he *isn't* Quill Peterson and that he is *actually* the spirit of a dog. Which is ironic because all I seem to attract in life are, wait for it..."dawgs".

Julie bites her lip, torn between keeping her mouth shut and trying to help Ryder. After a few seconds, she makes a decision.

JULIE

He's telling the truth!

Cameron can't believe what he's hearing.

CAMERON

Julie. I like you. And I don't have a lot of friends.

JULIE

And Ryder doesn't have a lot of time.

CAMERON

Ryder? You mean, *your* dog. Who *died*.

JULIE

And who came back to me as your co-worker. Quill.

CAMERON

Okay. I don't know how you and Quill know each other but this is ridiculous.

JULIE

I didn't wanna believe it either but,

Cameron, you said yourself it's almost like Quill is an entirely different person and that's because he *is*.

(smiling)

He's what *Ryder* would've been like...if he was a person.

Cameron's head is spinning. Why would Julie and "Quill" be saying the same impossible things? Shaking his head, he goes to the front door and opens it.

CAMERON

(speaking fast)

Thank you for services, you won't be getting a good review from me on Yelp, but I appreciate all you've done. Now please leave.

Julie just nods her head in compliance. She walks to the door but stops before walking out. Julie goes into her shoulder bag and takes out a photo, she hands it to Cameron.

CLOSE UP ON PHOTO OF RYDER AS A DOG DRESSED UP IN CHRISTMAS DOGGY CLOTHES

JULIE

I could've sworn he was crying in that picture because I made him wear that stuff.

(sighs)

You know what really made me believe him? His eyes. I looked into those eyes and I just...knew.

(beat)

Ryder was given the gift of experiencing life in the most beautiful way. And I think you were given a gift too. You just have to let yourself see it.

Julie leaves the apartment and Cameron closes the door. He just stares at the photo in his hands.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

DECEMBER 22ND, 2024 (3 DAYS UNTIL CHRISTMAS)

A group of people stand in front of the "City Socials" headquarters, bundled up and anxious for the games to begin. Cameron, Lydia, Gregory, and Ryder/Quill stand in front of them. Among them are Cannon's "dads", Trent and his husband.

CAMERON

Alright, so now that we have our established couples *and* our speed daters who've been paired up based on the online questionnaire, we can go right into what you all came here for.

RYDER/QUILL

Which is..."The Cupid Kringle Scavenger Hunt".

LYDIA

Everyone has the same six sets of clues. Whoever finds the prize first will get to do that activity with their partner.

GREGORY

And whoever finds the *most* prizes first, will get the grand prize.

CAMERON

A private candlelit dinner at Rockefeller Center on Christmas night.

GREGORY

And if your partner is unable to attend, *mothers* are allowed in their place. That was my little addition. Who doesn't love spending time with their mother, right?!

The crowd stays silent.

CAMERON

Okay, so...let the games...

Cameron stops speaking when he sees Julie and Nelson join the crowd.

CAMERON

Begin.

The pairs of romantic partners begin looking over their clues, talking and formulating plans. Gregory walks up to Julie and Nelson, happily.

GREGORY

Came to join the fun?

JULIE

We're...here to support a friend.

GREGORY

Well, the more the "merrier" a
Christmas! Here are your clues.

Gregory hands Julie an envelope.

CAMERON

(to Ryder/Quill)

So, you invited your accomplice? Nice.

RYDER/QUILL

Julie just wanted to support our
cause.

CAMERON

Right. Because she'll do *anything* for
her "dog". Excuse me.

Cameron goes into the building, followed by Lydia and
Gregory. Ryder/Quill walks up to Julie and Nelson.

RYDER/QUILL

You guys should get a move on. You
don't wanna miss your chance at all
the prizes.

JULIE

We said we came here to support a
friend.

NELSON

And *that's* what we're gonna do.

RYDER/QUILL

What do you mean?

JULIE

If these are the last couple of days
we have together? I'm not gonna
squander them.

(smiles)

Here. I got you something.

Julie holds out a brown bag and Ryder/Quill takes it. He goes
into the bag and pulls out a black puffy coat.

RYDER/QUILL

(touched)

It's the jacket you brought for me.

JULIE

But in *human* size. If you want, you can still wear the other one as like, a hat or something.

Ryder laughs.

NELSON

So, what do you say? You wanna make the best of your last days standing upright?

Ryder/Quill nods his head in agreement and smiles, with his time on Earth coming to an end and losing Cameron, he can't think of a better way to spend his last three days as a human than spending them with Julie.

MONTAGE BEGINS ("Please Come Home For Christmas" by Ryland James plays)

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Julie throws a frisbee at Ryder/Quill but it lands short. Nelson runs to pick it up and goes back to Julie, handing it to her.

He stands behind her, steadying her and holding her hand, showing her how to throw it properly. Julie looks back at him, enjoying their impromptu close moment.

She throws the frisbee better this time and Ryder/Quill catches it! The three of them jump up and down, celebrating.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Cameron sits alone in the conference room, staring at the chair "Quill" would normally be sitting in. He envisions "Quill" in his "infested Christmas outfit" spinning around in the chair.

Cameron smiles to himself slightly.

EXT. DOGGY PARK - DAY

Julie, Nelson, and Ryder/Quill play with Nelson's Beagle, Dunk. Cannon comes over and starts playing with Ryder/Quill, jumping on him and showering him with licks. Julie smiles,

her heart warmed at the sight.

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cameron finishes up making a cup of hot chocolate. He puts a few tiny marshmallows on top and tops the beverage with whip cream.

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Settling onto the couch, he turns the television on and sits back, trying to keep his mind off of "Quill". Though, he thinks back to the time when he fell asleep on "Quill's" lap at his apartment.

A memory he can't seem to let go of.

INT. FOXXXY'S - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill, Julie, and Nelson dance together, enjoying the music and holiday vibes. Julie notices two guys coming out of a photobooth in the corner.

She points at it excitedly.

INT. PHOTOBOOTH - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill and Julie hop into the photobooth, readying themselves for the flash.

The camera snaps photos of them in various poses.

Suddenly, Nelson pops his head into the booth, photobombing their photos. The camera snaps more photos of the three of them making funny faces. The camera lingers on the last photo.

A picture-perfect moment of just Julie and Ryder/Quill with Julie kissing him on the cheek and Ryder/Quill smiling brightly.

INT. JULIE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP ON RYDER/QUILL ASLEEP ON THE COUCH WITH NELSON'S DOG, DUNK, ASLEEP ON TOP OF HIM

Julie stands over him, just watching.

JULIE

Looks like we tired him out.

Nelson comes out of the kitchen with two glasses of wine, handing one to Julie.

NELSON

Both of them, actually.

JULIE

I have to say...Dunk *is*...a very cute addition to your life.

Nelson sighs, looking at his dog. He's grateful for his new little pal.

NELSON

You know...it was easy for me to downplay your connection to Ryder. I never had a dog growing up but having Dunk now, I uh...I get it.

(beat)

He is a good addition to my life.

JULIE

(beat)

Do you...think there's room for one more?

Nelson looks over at Julie, surprised. Is she saying what he thinks she's saying?

NELSON

Really?

JULIE

Getting Ryder back after losing him, it just put a lot of things into perspective. I mean, I am so grateful for the past three weeks but tomorrow...I'm gonna lose him again.

(beat)

I don't wanna lose you too.

A small smile creeps onto Nelson's face. He feels for Julie but he's also happy about her change of heart. He looks at the clock seeing that it's midnight. Nelson leans over and kisses Julie lightly on the lips.

NELSON

Merry Christmas.

JULIE

(smiles)

Merry Christmas. It's definitely the best one yet.

(beat)

I wish we could just say the same thing for Ryder and Cam.

JULIE'S PHONE PINGS

Julie picks up her phone off the table, looking at a text.

JULIE

Aw, it's from Trent. He and his husband won the scavenger hunt.

Suddenly, Nelson gets an idea.

NELSON

Ryder still has twenty-four hours to finish this assignment, right?

JULIE

Yeah, he has until the end of Christmas night tomorrow.

NELSON

I *think* I might have an idea.

(beat)

We're just gonna have to rely on some...Christmas magic.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CAMERON'S OFFICE - DAY

DECEMBER 25TH, 2024 (CHRISTMAS DAY)

Cameron sits at his desk, staring at the photo of Ryder that Julie gave him. Thoughts run through his mind.

RYDER/QUILL (V.O.)

We were more like...best friends. And it feels like I haven't seen her in forever.

JULIE (V.O.)

He's telling the truth!

RYDER/QUILL (V.O.)

No, no, Cameron, I am...a dog. Well, I'm the spirit...of a dog...inside of a human.

LYDIA (V.O.)
*What?! I'm just saying. Quill
 is...different now.*

JULIE (V.O.)
*He's what Ryder would've been like as
 a person.*

DOCTOR (V.O.)
How are you feeling?

RYDER/QUILL (V.O.)
 (beat)
Like a...whole new human. Literally.

Cameron continues to mull over all of the odd things that have happened with Ryder/Quill. He shakes off the feeling.

CAMERON
 No. No, Cameron, this is...
 (sighs)
 This is insane.

LYDIA (O.S.)
 Tell me about!

Cameron looks up, seeing Lydia standing in the doorway.

CAMERON
 What?

Lydia comes in and sits down across from Cameron.

LYDIA
 We lost the couple who won The
 Rockefeller Center dinner.

CAMERON
 What? Why?

LYDIA
 Something about a sex toy experiment
 gone wrong, I don't know.

CAMERON
 We needed them for the photo ops and
 the article on the app. Ugh, okay,
 um...let's just get the second runner
 ups.

LYDIA

Already tried. Everyone who participated in the scavenger hunt has plans tonight.

CAMERON

We *need* two people to be at this dinner in front of that stupid tree. This has been our biggest promotional event, how are we supposed to sell people "finding love" through City Socials if we can't even provide the evidence?

LYDIA

Well...why don't you and...Quill do it?

RYDER/QUILL (O.S.)

Do what?

Cameron and Lydia both turn their attention to the doorway, seeing "Quill" standing there.

LYDIA

Help save our reputation.

(to Cameron)

Listen, I get it. Whatever you two had going on didn't work out. However, an article about colleagues who found love while trying to help *other* people find love would be an *amazing* success story for the app.

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

I'm in.

CAMERON

Sane. You're insane.

LYDIA

And *you're* the boss. I think you're gonna have to take the "L" on this one so we can get the "W".

Cameron groans, putting his head in his hands.

EXT. DOGGY PARK - DAY

Julie is sitting with Trent and his husband, talking.

JULIE

Thank you so much for doing this for me.

TRENT

Well, I believe in doing good deeds for my fellow dog parents.

TRENT'S HUSBAND

And I believe in free interior designing, I cannot wait! You *did* say you have connections at West Elm, right?

JULIE

Yes. Yes, I do.

TRENT

It wasn't easy to convince him, honestly.

TRENT'S HUSBAND

Well, you know how much I love that tree!

TRENT

But you never wanna go to the tree lighting.

TRENT'S HUSBAND

Because I *love* the tree, I do not love tourists. They're annoying.

TRENT

So, are you and your boyfriend going to be taking our place?

JULIE

No. This is something I'm doing for someone very close to me. I just hope it works.

TRENT

Well, it's Christmas. There are...miracles in the air.

JULIE

Yeah.

(beat)

And we're gonna need all the miracles we can get.

INT. QUILL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nelson helps Ryder/Quill put on a tie. Ryder/Quill looks in the mirror at his reflection as Nelson continues his work.

RYDER/QUILL

My friend Cannon told me that his two
dads can't ya know, make the minis,
but...they can be in love?

NELSON

Anybody can be in love, Ryder.

RYDER/QUILL

But *everybody* can't make minis?

NELSON

(laughs)

They're called babies, man. And yeah,
guys and girls can make em' together
but in my opinion, not everybody
should have em'.

RYDER/QUILL

But everybody *should* have love.

NELSON

That's the way I see it.

Nelson finishes Ryder/Quill's tie.

NELSON

Gotta say, this Quill guy has some
really nice threads.

RYDER/QUILL

Yeah, he does.

(sadly)

I'm actually gonna miss em'.

(beat)

I'm gonna miss a lot. Especially Cam.

NELSON

Well, I mean, if we pull this off then
maybe you could just...watch over him.
From doggy Heaven?

RYDER/QUILL

That's the thing. I don't really *feel*
like...*that's* my life anymore. I don't
feel like "man's best friend", I just

feel like..."man".

NELSON

Well, from what I've seen...you
would've made a pretty damn good one.

Nelson holds out his hand towards Ryder/Quill, waiting for him to shake it. However, Ryder/Quill puts his arms around Nelson, hugging him.

RYDER/QUILL

(teary)

Please take care of Julie.

Nelson puts his arms around Ryder/Quill, hugging him back.

NELSON

You know I will.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

"I'll Be Home For Christmas" by Jordin Sparks plays

The city is buzzing on a cold Christmas night though the warmth of the holiday and the spirit of Kris Kringle keeps everyone in good cheer as they walk the streets.

EXT. ROCKEFELLER CENTER - NIGHT

Ryder/Quill sits at a table, looking around nervously. Julie and Nelson stand on the sidelines, they share Ryder/Quill's nervous expression.

Ryder/Quill sees Cameron walking into the private area that's been set up for them. Cameron stops, locking eyes with Ryder/Quill. After a moment, he walks up to the table and sits down.

CAMERON

Alright, let's get this over with.

RYDER/QUILL

Could we at least act like we're happy
to be here?

CAMERON

(deadpan)

Sure. Turn around.

Cameron flashes a bright smile. Ryder/Quill turns his head around, seeing a photographer holding a camera. He smiles and

the photographer snaps a photo. Cameron begins eating in silence.

Ryder/Quill wants to say something, but he decides to just eat his steak...using a knife and fork, which Cameron notices.

CAMERON

Don't *dogs* eat with their mouths?

RYDER/QUILL

(sighs)

Yes. They do. But *people*...we eat with our hands. Well, we use our hands to...hold these things. Still very boring if you ask me.

CAMERON

Yeah. We also *lie* to get out of relationships.

RYDER/QUILL

I'm *not* lying, Camer...

CAMERON

You know what I don't get, Quill? Out of everything you could make up to end things between us, why this? And how did you get Julie in on it?

RYDER/QUILL

Because Julie *loves* me. And she wants me to be happy.

(beat)

And I thought coming back to her is what would make me happy. And it does. But *you*...are the reason I wanna stay. *Here*.

Ryder/Quill turns around, looking at Julie and Nelson. He turns back around to look at Cameron.

RYDER/QUILL

With the people I love.

Hearing "Quill's" words touches Cameron.

CAMERON

Stay? Where are you going?

RYDER/QUILL

(beat)

Somewhere you can't be.

CAMERON

Quill...if you *love* someone than you should just...tell them. You *don't* have to be afraid of it.

RYDER/QUILL

It's not *that*.

(wipes tears)

I'm afraid of *saying* it and...not ever...being able to say it again.

Suddenly and slowly, something begins to click inside of Cameron as he stares deeply at "Quill" crying...almost as if he's looking into Ryder/Quill's soul.

Cameron continues to stare at "Quill". He remembers one of the last things Julie said to him.

JULIE (V.O.)

You know what really made me believe him? His eyes. I looked into those eyes and I just...knew.

Cameron goes into his pocket and takes out the picture of Ryder that Julie gave to him. He looks at the photo of Ryder as a dog, looking at his eyes. Cameron looks back at Ryder/Quill.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Ryder/Quill gets up from the table.

RYDER/QUILL

I'm sorry, Cam.

Ryder/Quill begins to walk away.

CAMERON

(beat)

Ryder! Wait!

Ryder/Quill stops, hearing Cameron call him by his true name. He turns around slowly.

RYDER/QUILL

Did you just...call me...*Ryder*?

Cameron gets up from the table.

CAMERON
That's your name. Isn't it?

RYDER/QUILL
(astonished)
You...you believe me?

Cameron walks over to Ryder/Quill, standing in front of him.

CAMERON
I can't *believe* I'm gonna say this
but...I do. I mean...
(laughs)
It would explain a *lot!*

Ryder/Quill and Cameron both laugh.

CAMERON
You know, I've...called men "dogs"
plenty of times but I've never...loved
one before.

Ryder/Quill's eyes go wide. Did he hear correctly?

RYDER/QUILL
You love me?

CAMERON
I am probably going to need *years* of
therapy but...yeah. I...I love you.
(takes a deep breath)
Ryder.

Ryder/Quill looks at Cameron with a blank expression for a few moments, the disbelief at what's happening still lingering. Slowly, a smile creeps onto his face and he grabs Cameron, kissing him passionately.

Julie and Nelson cheer them on from the sidelines, clapping. Ryder/Quill and Cameron pull back from the kiss, looking into each other's eyes.

RYDER/QUILL
I love you too, Cameron.

Suddenly, Ryder/Quill sees someone over Cameron's shoulder, standing a few feet away. It's Serena, seemingly only visible to Ryder. She has a sad smile on her face and Ryder knows why.

SERENA

It's time, Mr. Adorable.

Tears well up in Ryder/Quill's eyes, but he nods his head, understanding that his time is up.

RYDER/QUILL

I'll never forget you, Cam.

CAMERON

(beat)

And I won't forget you either..."man's best...boyfriend".

Ryder/Quill embraces Cameron, tightly, reveling in this magical moment. Unseen to the naked eye, a glowing sparkly essence leaves Quill's body and floats up...up...and away into the ether. The two break the hug.

QUILL

(confused)

Uhhhh...what the hell am I doing here?

CAMERON

Quill?

QUILL

Yeah.

CAMERON

You don't remember anything?

QUILL

It's all very furry. I mean...fuzzy.

(beat)

Oh! I do remember *one* very important thing.

CAMERON

(hopeful)

What's that?

Quill pulls out his phone, starting to write a text.

QUILL

I wonder if that threesome is still on the table.

Cameron sighs sadly.

Quill has most definitely returned.

OUTSIDE OF SPACE AND TIME - PET AFTERLIFE - THE RAINBOW
BRIDGE

Ryder, now back in his Yorkshire Terrier form, stands on the colorful bridge with Serena.

SERENA

Well...you did it.

RYDER (V.O.)

(downtrodden)

*Yeah, I know. Time for the eternal
doggy treats, yayyyy.*

SERENA

Not so fast. Your job was to make two people fall in love. And you not only made Julie and Nelson realize *their* love for each other...you found love of your own with Cameron. So that makes four. And I *think* extra credit work deserves a lot more than a gold star.

RYDER (V.O.)

(curious)

Really? Like what?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOGGY PARK - DAY

Cameron and Julie sit on a bench, holding cups of hot chocolate.

JULIE

So, the doctor told Quill he's suffering from...

CAMERON

Selective amnesia. Apparently, it's very common for people who go into comas.

JULIE

Wow. Well, it's probably better he doesn't remember the last few weeks. But I'm glad that we get to.

CAMERON

So am I.

JULIE

So, the fact we share this very, weird secret...that sort of...bonds us for life, huh?

CAMERON

Oh, most definitely, you ain't going nowhere.

Julie and Cameron laugh, thankful for their new friendship.

NELSON (O.S.)

Jules!

Julie looks over, seeing Nelson playing with Dunk.

NELSON

I think Dunk wants his treats!

JULIE

(to Cameron)

I'll be right back.

Julie goes over to Nelson and Dunk; she begins to play with the dog and feeding him treats. Cameron looks at them fondly.

A ball rolls and hits Cameron's foot. A handsome man with dark black hair comes up to him and grabs it from the ground

HANDSOME STRANGER

I am *so* sorry about that. My dog gets a little carried away with fetch.

Cameron is immediately attracted to the man, but he tries to hide it.

CAMERON

It's...okay.

HANDSOME STRANGER

Nice shoes. Good taste.

CAMERON

Thank you. I, um...I like your jacket. Looks warm.

The handsome man looks at the **black puffy jacket** he's wearing, and then shrugs.

HANDSOME STRANGER

Eh, it's alright. Um, listen...I was

about go get some hot chocolate.
You...care to join me?

CAMERON
(looks at his cup)
I actually do need a refill. So, I
will take you up on that offer.

Cameron gets up from the bench. He and the handsome stranger
start walking slowly.

HANDSOME STRANGER
So, what's your name? I don't wanna
just call you "Mr. Nice Shoes".

CAMERON
I'm Cameron. How about you?

RYDER
Oh, I'm Ryder.

Ryder extends his hand to Cameron. Cameron is floored into
silence at the sound of the man's name. Could it be? He
stares at Ryder for a few moments in amazement and then
accepts Ryder's handshake.

CAMERON
I'm...I'm Cameron.

RYDER
It's nice to meet you, Cam. Or do you
prefer Cameron?

CAMERON
Uh...Cam is...fine. It's nice to meet
you too...Ryder.

The two men continue walking in silence for a moment.

RYDER
I gotta say...and this is probably
gonna sound really odd and trust me,
it is *not* a pickup line, but...it
feels like...like I've met you before.

CAMERON
(smiles)
It's possible.
(beat)
Maybe...we met in another life.

Ryder stops walking and stares at Cameron for a moment, trying to place his face in his memory bank.

RYDER

Yeah.

(beat)

Maybe.

"Make It To Christmas" by Alessia Cara plays

Ryder and Cameron smile at each other. They begin walking again. As the two walk through the doggy park and get acquainted, Ryder's dog runs up to him and walks beside them.

They walk past a woman sitting on a bench, reading a book. Her attire is different than everyone else's winter clothing, almost as if she isn't fazed by the cold December weather.

The woman lowers the book from her face, and we see that it's Serena! She smiles as she watches Cameron and Ryder, newly re-incarnated into his own human life, as they start a new journey together.

Serena turns her head and looks directly into the camera.

SERENA

(to Viewers)

Yeah, yeah, I know what I said about him *not* being able to come back, blah, blah, blah...sue me! And besides...

(smiles)

What is Christmas...without a little magic?

Serena winks at the audience...and then snaps her fingers.

SLAM CUT TO BLACK:

THE TITLE CARD SLOWLY APPEARS ON THE SCREEN IN GREEN, RED, AND WHITE LETTERS.

"RYDER'S CHRISTMAS COMEBACK"

THE END.