

BLAKE SCENE 1

BLAKE: **I love it when the airline industry works like it should.** *(holds up a little pet carrier and peers into it)* **Don't you agree, little buddy?**

CALEB: *(standing nearby)* **Hey, whatcha got in there? A kitten?**

BLAKE: **No, a bulldog.**

CALEB: **You're a funny kid.**

BLAKE: **Actually, I'm serious.**

CALEB: **You're a serious kid, or you're serious you've got a bulldog in there?**

BLAKE: **Yes.**

CALEB: **Can I hold him?** *(trying to look in the pet carrier)*

BLAKE: **No, sorry. He's only nine weeks old. He was my early Christmas present.**

CALEB: **What's his name?**

BLAKE: **Rudolph.**

CALEB: **Rudolph, the Red-nosed Bulldog.** *(laughing)* **Now, that's funny.**

BLAKE: **Shhh! He's very sensitive.**

CALEB: *(trying to look in the pet carrier)* **Oh, sorry.** *(to BLAKE)* **So... where are you taking Rudolph for Christmas... the North Pole?** *(laughs)* **No, my Grandma's house.**

BLAKE: **I think my Grandma's gonna love the surprise. Are you going to your grandma's house?**

CALEB: **Nope! I'm goin' to the Bahamas.**

BLAKE: **With your parents?**

CALEB: **Negatory. I'm goin' with my best bros.** *(leaning in)* **And really, when you think about it, *(weighing the two options)* Bahamas, parents, parents, Bahamas... I think it's a pretty obvious choice.** *(laughs)*

BLAKE: *(holding up the pet carrier and putting her ear to it)* **Rudolph says he isn't so sure.**

PAIGE AND CLARA SCENE 3

PAIGE: *(to CLARA)* Merry Christmas.

(CLARA doesn't hear her.)

PAIGE: *(louder, to CLARA, touching her shoulder)* Merry Christmas!

CLARA: Oh! Well, hello! Merry Christmas to you, too. Sorry, my ears don't hear certain frequencies these days.

PAIGE: That's okay. Some days I wish mine didn't work so well.

CLARA: Really...

PAIGE: Yeah. I keep telling my girls, "No fighting! It's Christmas!" but sometimes they're so loud they can't even hear me.

CLARA: Precious years.

PAIGE: Excuse me?

CLARA: I said, "Precious years."

PAIGE: Yeah, that's what I thought you said. But "precious" isn't the word I would use to describe these years.

CLARA: Oh, but you still have them at home. No one has flown the nest yet. Not yet. And you're married?

PAIGE: Yes, yes, that's my husband over there. Steve.

CLARA: [STEVE snoring loudly] You do have your hands full [laughs] precious years.

PAIGE: Yes, "precious years."

CLARA: Well, they do make Christmas fuller.

PAIGE: They?

CLARA: Husbands.

PAIGE: Husbands, plural. You've had more than one?

CLARA: Oh, no, not at the same time, dear.

PAIGE: Right. No, of course not. Me, neither. I mean, Steve is my second husband.

CLARA: I lost my first husband in 1986 and my second husband, Kenny, just last year. He went very quickly. Much more quickly than any of us expected.

PAIGE: I'm so sorry. That's terrible.

CLARA: **Yes, it was. It is.**

PAIGE: **I lost my first husband, too. Just... in a different way. I mean, he's still alive. But he's still... lost... um... So, where are you going for Christmas?**

STEVE AND STACY SCENE 6

STACY: **Now it finally feels like Christmas! That was beautiful.**

PAIGE: **Wasn't it? (*extends her hand*) Hi! I'm Paige.**

STACY: **I'm Stacy.**

BLAKE: **So, *you're* the voice that's been delaying our flight tonight!**

PAIGE: **Watch your tone, Blake.**

STACY: **Ah, yes. That's me. But trust me, I would much rather get you kind people to your destination this evening so I can get to mine. If you're delayed, I'm delayed. But, Christmas carols do make a delay a little nicer for all of us.**

STEVE: **(*to PAIGE*) See! She said, "nice." Why can't I say "nice?"**

MICHAEL: **Well, carols certainly bring back the memories! My wife would have loved this. She makes us sing around the piano every Christmas, whether we like it or not. But it probably won't happen this year, I'm guessing.**

CLARA: **Ah, the empty nest.**

MICHAEL: **Not exactly empty. But not exactly full, either. Of course, you do hope it will be full at Christmas.**

STEVE: **Sounds like you're one parenting stage ahead of us. Older kids?**

MICHAEL: **One daughter is in high school and one kid away at college. I guess every parenting stage has its challenges. (*sees his phone ringing*) Excuse me. (*exits*)**

PAIGE: **(*to STACY*) Stacy, do you have any children? I do! My daughter, Sophie, is 10.**

STEVE: **Well, I'm sure you can't wait to get us on our way so you can celebrate with your family.**

STACY: **Actually, Sophie is with her Dad this Christmas, so it's just me and the cat.**

CLARA: **(*to herself*) Maybe that's what I need. Maybe I need a cat.**

STEVE: **You might want to rethink that, Miss Clara. Cats are evil.**

PAIGE: **Steven! Think of a different adjective.**

STEVE: **I can't say "nice," I can't say "evil." What can I say?**

PAIGE: **(*to STACY*) I'm sorry, Stacy. I'm sure your cat is very nice.**

STEVE: **Nice?**

STACY: **He is a little temperamental.**

PAIGE: *(to STEVE)* **See, temperamental is better than “evil.”**

STEVE: *(to PAIGE)* **Means the same thing.**

STACY: **But not half as temperamental as my ex-husband.** *(catches herself and puts her hand over her mouth)* **Oh! I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said that.**

KAYLEE SCENE 7

CALEB: So let me get this straight. Your dad used to work at a church?

KAYLEE: Yeah.

CALEB: Like, a pastor?

KAYLEE: Kind of like that.

CALEB: And he left your mom for somebody else?

KAYLEE: Pretty much.

CALEB: Wow, that's serious. I'm really sorry. So I guess your dad doesn't work at the church anymore.

KAYLEE: No, he works at a tech store. Just a regular job. I don't even know if he goes to church anymore. If he does, he shouldn't.

CALEB: Why not?

KAYLEE: Like the church needs one more hypocrite.

CALEB: I know, right? Then again, it's the sick people who need a doctor.

KALEE: You preachin' at me?

CALEB: Not tryin' to. *(pointing to PAIGE)* So that's your real mom, right?

KAYLEE: Right. She married Steve when I was thirteen.

CALEB: So where are you going for Christmas?

KAYLEE: Steve's mom's house. She's not even my real grandma. But she loves me. I take whatever good I can find in my family these days, even if we aren't exactly related.

So you're headed home, right?

CALEB: Nope. I'm headed to the Bahamas. A little sand, surf, and Santa. It's gonna be awesome.

KAYLEE: Sounds like it. What do your parents think?

CALEB: About what?

KAYLEE: About you not going home for Christmas?

CALEB: I already told you. My dad's a workaholic. So I have two words to answer your question: *(holding up two 2 fingers)* Don't know. *(flips fingers over)* Don't care.

KAYLEE: **I think that's sad. Maybe we both need to review Christmas?**

CALEB: **What does that mean?**
Look, I should get to my gate. (*exits*)

CALEB AND MICHAEL SCENE 8

CALEB: That's so weird. That guy looks so much like my... DAD? Dad, what are you...

(MICHAEL turns around but is still on his phone.)

CALEB: Of course he's on his phone. He can't even hear me.

MICHAEL: *(pulling phone away from his ear)* Caleb!? What are you doing here? I thought you were on your way to the Bahamas.

CALEB: *(FIRMLY)* I was. And I still am. My flight leaves out of Gate 36 tomorrow. What are you doing here?

MICHAEL: I've been working on a project for a client here in town this week.

CALEB: *(bitterly)* Well, then, you'd better go talk to your client.

MICHAEL: This isn't my client. It's your mom. *(puts phone back up to his ear)* Honey, Caleb is here! *(pause)* Right in front of me in this airport. *(pause)* Of course. *(hands phone to CALEB)*

CALEB: Mom, hi. *(pause)* Yeah, um... Merry Christmas to you, too. *(pause)* No, one of my connecting flights got canceled because of the snow. I'll head there tomorrow. *(pause)* I know. *(pause)* Ah, Mom, don't cry. Please. It's gonna be okay. *(pause)* Love you, too. *(hands phone back to MICHAEL)*

MICHAEL: *(on phone)* I'll call you back. Bye.

CALEB: Why does Mom always have to cry about everything?

MICHAEL: She's just been missing you. I've been missing you, too.

CALEB: You? You aren't even home! You're working on Christmas Eve, Dad.

MICHAEL: You're right. I know. And believe me, I don't like it either. Today I actually left the project and told the guys I just need to be home with my family.

CALEB: Better late than never.

MICHAEL: Caleb, I'm sorry. I know I've had to be gone a lot with my job these last few years. And I know I've hurt you. Can we talk about this? Please?

CALEB: I don't know. I have to think about it.

KAYLEE: Really? You'll have to think about it? Do you know how many years I've waited for an apology from my dad, and you have to think about it? You say God sent His Son at Christmas to forgive us, to restore a relationship with us, and you can't even talk and forgive each other!

CALEB: Are you calling me a hypocrite? Yes, I am.

CALEB: I'm not trying to be a hypocrite. I just want to... be loved by you, Dad. To have you see me, hear me, know me.

MICHAEL: I see you, son. And I hear you. The truth is, I took this job where I have to travel because it pays more. It was the only way we could afford your college tuition. College isn't cheap, you know, but I guess we should have been in communication about it.

CALEB: Wait. You've been working so much... for me? So I could go to college? *(pause)* Oh, Dad, why didn't you say something? For real? Oh man. Thank you!

MICHAEL: Let's talk about it now. Will you forgive me?

CALEB: Of course. But I'm sorry too. Let's just start moving forward.

MICHAEL: Yes, I love you son.

CALEB: I love you too.