# BENJAMIN SCROOGE

Treatment by

Kevin Lewis

mail@kevinlewis.com

SCROOGE FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

But not the Scrooge you know. Instead, this is the home of STANLEY and MARY SCROOGE (both 38). They comment on the nonexistence of Santa Claus, not knowing their son BENJAMIN (8) woke up and was standing behind them to ask for a drink. Upon hearing the truth about Santa, Ben proceeds to run around the house (inside and out) tearing down decorations. Stanley and Mary acknowledge they have to be careful of what they say around Ben -- that Ben doesn't do well with unwanted truths.

FINANCIAL DISTRICT IN ANY CHRISTMASTOWN, USA - LATE AFTERNOON

A typical business suite, decorated with Christmas ornaments, lights, garland, and a big Christmas tree with presents underneath. An office within the suite has a door sign with the name BENJAMIN SCROOGE. Inside the office is BEN SCROOGE (30), mostly average but dressed sharply in expensive business attire. He sits at a computer, the monitor displaying stock charts and financials. His assistant ANDREW (30), handsome and muscular, wearing less expensive clothing than Ben, looks over Ben's shoulder panicked, begging Ben to sell. Cool and collected, and ignoring the risks of what could go wrong with the trade, Ben waits. He cites a bunch of numbers and financial statistics that seem impossible for a human to remember. Finally, Ben sells the stock, and the office celebrates a $1.5 million gain on a day trade. He lets everyone in the office know about his successful trade and offers to pay for drinks later for "Happy Ben Hour." Co-workers go only because he's treating.

Walking with co-workers to the local bar, Ben makes sure they all see him place a $100 bill in the Salvation Army bucket. When the group is no longer watching, Ben asks the Salvation Army Santa for a receipt.

In the bar, Ben's boss makes a toast to everyone, and Ben jumps in to acknowledge his earlier successful trade. JILLIAN (25), Ben's bikini-model-like fiancé, comes in and congratulates Ben with a kiss. Shortly after, she congratulates other men with kisses -- even those not in their group. Ben ignores it, even when his boss asks if he's bothered by it.

After leaving the bar, Ben walks up the street with Andrew and Jillian. Looking down at his phone, Ben bumps an old man exiting an office building. The old man yells at him, and Ben apologizes for not paying attention to where he was going. The man sarcastically barks, "Yeh, well ignorance isn't always bliss now, is it?" Ben apologizes again and wishes the man a Merry Christmas. The old man replies, "Christmas? Humbug!" and walks off angrily. Ben mocks the man's funny choice of words: "Humbug?"

Ben has one more stop to make -- his life-long friend Katie and her family. Jillian rolls her eyes at this and responds by saying she has other things to do. Andrew offers to walk Jillian to her car, and the two leave. Ben continues on alone.

NEIGHBORING RESIDENTIAL AREA - EVENING

Ben walks up the walkway to a modest house. There's a mess of uncleaned snow still, so Ben grabs the shovel off near the door and cleans all the snow.

An older woman (60) opens the door and happily welcomes Ben inside. She thanks Ben for cleaning the walkway. Ben tells her next time to call him instead -- he'll send his guy over to do it. KATIE (30), plain but cute, enters from another room with a wrapped gift. She hugs Ben as they exchange Merry Christmases. Then Ben gives her a Christmas card -- inside an all-expenses-paid trip for two to a local mountain getaway. He tells her she can go with her mom or sister. Katie reminds him of the time their families went their together, but Ben becomes awkward and dismisses the topic. Katie then gives Ben her gift. She watches him with googly eyes as he opens it. It's a black and white photo of the two of them opening Christmas presents together when they were kids, set in a homemade frame.

BEN'S MANSION - NIGHT

After leaving Katie's house, Ben walks up the walkway to his own house -- a mansion that's far too big for one person. As he swipes his phone across the electronic door lock, a subtle reflection of a face appears on the metal plate. "Scrooge!" Ben jumps back. Again, we hear "Scrooge!" And again, "Scrooge!" Finally, one more "HEY SCROOGE!" Ben turns back, and the UPS driver has a letter package for him.

Inside his home, Ben settles down. He calls his mother and assures her that he will be there tomorrow for Christmas...he promises he won't miss it this year. He then tries to call Jillian, but he gets her voice mail. During these calls Ben opens his letter package, and it's a generic holiday greeting card, with a preprinted "from the office" signature. The card contains an obligatory Amazon gift card. He sets the greeting card on a counter -- next to one other generic holiday card.

Ben sits in front of the TV in the smaller of his TV rooms. The picture gift he just received from Katie sits next to an elegant studio photograph of Ben and Jillian. A few other pictures are of Ben ALONE -- a couple childhood pictures of him at an amusement park, a picture holding an award. A fire burns in the fireplace.

Suddenly, the TV turns off. Ben is unable to turn it back on. Then, windows, furniture, and other items in the room rattle and the chandelier swings -- an earthquake maybe? Not in Any Christmastown, USA. Then the fire in the fireplace explodes into a contained inferno.

Through the fireplace comes the ghost of an older man, JACOB MARLEY (60ish), bound in chains. “Scrooooge!”, Marley calls. When Ben finally realizes that this is really happening, he runs for the door, screaming. But the door slams shut! He makes a break for the other door. It too slams shut! A small armchair slides across the room and knocks Ben into it. Ben tries to get up, but hands rise out of the chair’s arms and hold him in place. Marley walks slowly to Ben, dragging cement blocks attached to his chains. He calls “Scrooooge! as he walks. Ben is frozen in fear. Now standing in front of Ben, Marley looks him over closely. Impressed, Marley says, “Scrooge, you haven’t aged one bit!” A long beat, then -- BEN SCREAMS AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS!

Ben calms down, but he’s still trapped in the chair. Constantly referring to Ben as “Scrooge,” Marley talks to him about his contempt toward Christmas and his hateful and miserly ways. Ben doesn’t understand. He’s not hateful. He loves Christmas. And he’s not miserly. “In fact,” Ben says, “I just gave a Salvation Army Santa a hundred bucks!”

Finally, Marley addresses Ben by the wrong name “Ebenezer.” Now Ben is more confused. Who the hell is Ebenezer? There’s some back and forth conversation, and then finally it dons on Marley -- he has the wrong Scrooge! Marley replies to Ben, “Yes. It seems like I do have the wrong Scrooge. Well...you’re not gonna like what I have to tell you next.”

A short while has passed. Ben is no longer scared. He’s pissed! What do you mean THREE MORE GHOSTS?! To do WHAT?! Marley apologizes for the mistake but tells Ben there is no way to recall the ghosts once the visitation order has been submitted -- “in fact,” he tells Ben, “two of the ghosts aren’t even dead yet,” a statement that confuses Ben.

After Marley leaves, Ben calls Jillian again. This time she answers...annoyed. Ben tries to tell her what just happened, but she scolds him for wasting her time with drunk nonsense. After Jillian hangs up, Ben calls Katie. She’s in disbelief, but she doesn’t show it to Ben. Instead she calms Ben down and offers to come over if he’s scared. He declines the offer, telling her Jillian probably wouldn’t like that.

Ben goes to bed, unsure what to make of what just happened. He tries to fall asleep with the TV on. A news show announces that it’s 1:00 AM. Just then, the TV turns off. Frightened, Ben pulls his blanket up to his neck. Then --

The first of the three ghosts Marley warned of arrives: the ghost of Christmas past. Her name is NELLIE (60s), a heavy-set grandmotherly type. Ben tries to talk her out of the journey. He tells her of the mistake -- proves it to her. But she can't leave without taking him to see his past. He asks what would happen if he refuses to go. She says he can do what he wants...she can't force him. "BUT," she adds, "the ghosts will never leave until you see your life for what it is." So Ben goes to Christmas past.

CHRISTMAS PAST

All the way back they go, approximately 30 years, to the night Ben was born. But this is not the past Nellie was supposed to show. So while she knows how to get to places, she has no idea what will happen because she hasn't researched it. Ben and Nellie watch a young woman (20ish) in a hospital bed cry as she holds a newborn baby. Nellie asks Ben if the baby is him, doing a cootchie coo toward the baby. But Ben's confused. It's not his mother. He tries to ask the woman who she is, but Nellie tells him the people in the vision can't see or hear him. Ben's parents (30) enter with an older woman. Ben tears up a little..."Dad?" The older woman takes the baby and hands him to Ben's parents as the mother continues to cry in bed. The older woman comforts the mother. Ben watches in shock as his parents leave with the baby..."I was adopted?!"

Ben doesn't handle it well, ranting about how unfair this is to HIM. Nellie tries to ask, "To YOU? What about your poor birth mother?" But Ben ignores her. He's upset and continues his rant, so Nellie takes him to another time.

To move through time and locations, Nellie (as well as all of the ghosts) "swipe" through the air as if swiping on a phone app or website.

They are swept away into the cold outdoors (which is not cold for them). Ben recognizes that a woman huddled up under an alley overhang is his birth mother. When a well-to-do man walks by her, she runs to him to ask for spare change. He pushes her away and walks on. Ben yells at the man for not helping. But when he looks back at his mother, she is holding a wallet she pickpocketed from the man. Ben and Nellie then shift to inside Ben's birth mother's run-down apartment. They watch as she throws several wallets on the table and begins taking cash out of them.

Next they watch 10-year-old Ben the day after Christmas. Life with his parents is happy and filled with love. His family celebrates belated Christmas with Katie's family.

Young Ben opens Christmas presents with 10-year-old Katie -- the same scene from the framed photo gift that Katie gave to Ben earlier. Ben tells Nellie that their families had a tradition of celebrating Christmas together the day after since Katie's family traveled on Christmas day. Young Katie runs out of presents to open, so Ben gives her one of his unopened gifts, earning him a kiss on the cheek.

Ben and Nellie travel to a time when Ben is 17 and his and Katie's families are away together at a mountain lodge. Teenage Ben and Katie steal their mother's drinks from the bar and take off somewhere private. Teenage Ben asks Katie if she accepted someone's invite to the prom -- she did. Teenage Ben doesn't tell her he was dumped for the prom. Real Ben then shows Nellie how he was dumped -- the girl he was seeing didn't think he was spending enough money on her for the prom. She wanted to go in a limo and not his beaten-up car. So she dumps him and gives him back a mix CD he gave her. Teenage Ben then throws a temper when no one is watching.

But Ben tells Nellie the teenage breakup gave him the "kick" he needed. They travel to when Ben is 27 and becoming a Wall Street phenom. Young Ben meets Young Jillian, a 22-year-old administrative assistant in his office. He's immediately taken by her good looks. But she pays no attention to him. Young Ben then makes a million-dollar stellar trade while citing ridiculous numbers and financial data. Nellie asks Ben how he could possibly know all that jibber-jabber without looking up the data. Ben tells her, "I don't forget numbers." After everyone in the office makes a big deal about Young Ben's successful trade, Young Jillian introduces herself to Young Ben (even though they already met). Real Ben gloats about his financial success, but Nellie tries to teach him that this is not a real success -- it's superficial. Ben takes exception to this and insults Nellie about not being as successful as him.

Nellie tells Ben she will show him what real success and takes him to a home Ben is not familiar with. They watch as a young boy and girl play together on Christmas morning. Then the children's mother enters and Nellie begins to cry. These are Nellie's daughter and grandchildren. She tells Ben that she (Nellie) died of cancer and wrote a long letter to her daughter while she was sick. But she died before she could give it to her, and the letter was under a false drawer bottom in a desk -- in Nellie's daughter's home, right under her nose. Nellie tells Ben that her spirit will never rest because she was never able to give her daughter the letter.

Ben and Nellie travel to a hospital. Ben asks if this is when Nellie was sick. Nellie tells him this is his past again, not hers. Ben then recognizes it and says he wants to leave. But Nellie can't because she is reaching the end of her visit. Ben then sees his 28-year-old self and family.

It is the night his father was rushed in with a heart attack. Katie comes in and goes to Young Ben as they await news. Katie asks where Jillian is, and Young Ben says she had other plans -- something Real Ben immediately becomes ashamed of. A doctor comes in and tells the family Ben's dad died. Young Ben sobs uncontrollably. He holds onto Katie as she comforts him. Ben and Nellie stand silent and somber as they watch.

Then, everyone disappears and Ben and Nellie are in the hospital alone. Nellie says she has to leave. Ben doesn't want her to leave. He asks her to remain the ghost for all three visits. Now that he knows her, it would be easier on him. Nellie tells him that the visits aren't intended to be easy and that everything isn't about him. As she walks off, Ben asks her now what.

Ben stands alone in the empty hospital, uncertain and scared. Then he hears, "You Ebenezer?" Ben spins around to see the next ghost: the ghost of Christmas present. Her name is BLAZE (30s), fit, beautiful, and a little punk. Ben simply says "Call me Ben," not in the mood to explain the mistaken identity. When she introduces herself, Ben questions her unique name. All she says is that it was a name she used in an old job and now she wears it as a badge of honor. Blaze is brand new to this ghost job, but she understands what she's there to do.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

They go out to the street, where it's the exact same weather as when Ben was out celebrating earlier. Blaze is confused. She tells him that they're supposed to see something else (from Ebenezer Scrooge's present). Ben finally explains the mistake. As they continue watching the vision, they see Ben's birth mother on the street. Still picking pockets, but having a harder time because no one carries cash anymore. Blaze comments that she can relate to the woman. Ben complains about how she ABANDONED HIM as a baby. Blaze is blunt, "Dude, get over yourself!" and comments that he seems pretty OK now. She asks if he wants to go see his adoptive mother instead. But he answers NO. He's too angry at her right now.

Instead, Ben wants to see Katie, so they go. Ben and Blaze watch Katie as she celebrates Christmas Eve with her family. Ben explains to Blaze who Katie is. Then Katie's sister asks her about Ben and if she's "talked" with him yet. Katie says he's engaged and it wouldn't be appropriate. Her sister tells her he should know how she feels about him. Blaze is psyched for Ben, exclaiming "Daaawg!" She tries a fist bump, but it doesn't work because she's an apparition. Ben suddenly feels like a voyeur and wants to leave. He should be with his fiancé instead. So that's where they head.

At home in her kitchen, Jillian is looking extraordinarily sexy, drinking from a juice bottle in only her underwear. Blaze is impressed and lets Ben know. Ben pretends to be modest. Jillian goes into her bedroom, but Ben and Blaze talk for a little while on Jillian's balcony. They bond, joking and laughing with each other. They discuss their family's, and Ben says he wishes he had a sister growing up -- he thinks Blaze feels like a sister figure. Blaze talks about missed goals as a human. She would have loved to start a no-kill shelter for animals. They also discuss favorite Christmas songs and shows. "Little Drummer Boy" has always been Blaze's favorite. As they talk, Blaze peeks into the bedroom and then finishes her conversation with Ben. She tells Ben she thinks Katie is better for him, but Ben disagrees saying "you just told me how hot Jillian is." Blaze then takes Ben to Jillian's bedroom, where Jillian is having sex with Andrew (Ben's assistant from earlier). Ben stands quiet for a moment, humiliated and hurt. He asks Blaze, "Why would you want to show me this?" Blaze replies, "Why would you want me not to?"

Blaze takes Ben away and says she'll share something private about herself with him. They end up in a cemetery. Ben's not sure he wants to see any type of vision in a cemetery. But Blaze continues walking until they finally stop at a headstone. It has the name SAMANTHA ANDERSON and the years indicate she was 35 years old. Blaze tells Ben that Sam died last Christmas Eve, hit by a drunk driver. They were together for 10 years, married for 5. She says Sam was the only friend she had and then she was all alone after Sam died. Everyone else in her life had previously rejected her because of her life choices. After Sam died, Blaze spiraled out of control as she gave up on life. Then, when she quickly went bankrupt, she reverted back to her "old ways" to make a buck. Blaze says she just couldn't take another Christmas without Sam, and then...

Ben and Blaze are in the hospital E.R., watching doctors try to revive Blaze's human body. Her body has an IV and a blood bag running into her arm. Her wrists are wrapped in blood-soaked bandages and ice packs. A doctor defibrillates Human Blaze, and Blaze's apparition disappears. As the monitor flatlines again, her apparition reappears. Ben walks over to Human Blaze. He's sad, almost angry. He yells at the doctors to save her. Ghost Blaze yells at them to stop. The doctors try once more. Blaze's apparition disappears again. Then, everyone in the room disappears.

Ben calls out for Blaze, but no one is there. Then the ghost of Christmas future arrives. He's a tall, ominous Shadow Figure in a black hooded cape that is empty with only the shape of a person inside, like an empty being waiting for its human to arrive. He's bound in chains like Marley was.

Ben jumps when he first sees the Shadow Figure, then acknowledges the apparition as the ghost of Christmas Future.

CHRISTMAS FUTURE

Shadow Figure first brings Ben to a cemetery -- to a headstone that says EBENEZER SCROOGE. Ben is relieved. He laughs and begins to explain the mistake. Shadow Figure then brings Ben to a house he doesn't recognize. It's a mansion, but it hardly looks lived in. Shadow Figure walks Ben into another room, where the old man Ben bumped into earlier sits alone in front of a small TV. Ben sees the man is lonely and miserable. An ASPCA commercial comes on the television, and the old man responds out loud that they should go out and arrest the abusers before begging him for a handout. Ben is confused at first. He has a flashback to Marley's visit when he told Ben that two of the ghosts aren't even dead yet. Ben echoes what he recalls, "Two of the ghosts aren't even dead yet. Blaze...and you. You're a ghost of the future. His ghost when he dies." Shadow Figure nods. Ben takes pity and promises to pray for him when he returns.

Shadow Figure takes Ben on a few quick trips -- much faster than the previous ones. First to see his birth mother on the street, frozen to death. Then they go to a run-down home where 50-year-old Katie lives with an abusive husband. Ben is in denial. He asks Shadow Figure how Katie could have ended up with a man like this? So Shadow Figure brings Ben to a local brewpub that Ben recognizes. He comments that it hasn't changed a bit. Shadow Figure points to the bar, where 30-year-old Katie sits alone. At around 8:00 PM, a younger version of Katie's future husband approaches her and asks if he can buy her a drink. She accepts. Later, the two are laughing together and having fun. Ben looks at the TV above the bar. It shows the drawing of that night's lottery with the banner SUPERMILLIONS LOTTERY: DECEMBER 26, $1 MILLION JACKPOT, followed by the winning numbers. Ben then comments to Shadow Figure that this is tomorrow night. When Ben turns back to look at Katie, she is kissing the man at the bar. Ben asks Shadow Figure what happened that Ben wasn't with Katie the day after Christmas. Shadow Figure crosses his arms and cocks his head as if to say, "Really?!" So they travel a short way to 7:10 PM that same night. Now they are practically on top of Katie, where we can see her reading a text message FROM BEN that says SORRY, HARD TIME GETTING THERE. Katie is disappointed. Ben buries his face in his hands repeating "This can't be happening" until...

BEN'S MANSION - EARLY MORNING

Ben wakes up in his bed at home. He lays in bed and processes everything that's just happened.

He laughs to himself, happy that none of it was real. Then he turns his bedroom TV on to CNBC “Squawk Box.” Ben watches for a moment. Then he’s puzzled. Why would “Squawk Box” be on Christmas morning when the markets are closed? He looks at his phone, and it says DECEMBER 26. But he has no text messages or phone calls from the day before. He assumes he missed Christmas and everyone was too mad at him for blowing them off.

Ben begins to call Jillian, but then thinks better of it and stops. He thinks for a moment and then goes into his home office and digs up his birth certificate. He stares at it for a few seconds. Then he gets dressed and leaves the house.

PLACES AROUND ANY CHRISTMASTOWN, USA - DAY

Ben storms into his mother’s house upset. His mother MARY (60) greets him. Ben immediately says he doesn’t want to talk about missing Christmas, which confuses Mary. Ben demands to know if he’s adopted. Mary can’t dodge the question so she tries to explain. Ben doesn’t want to hear it. Not happy with Ben’s attitude, Mary tells him to leave.

Ben recalls the location where the ghosts showed him his birth mother. He goes there and looks around for her. He finds her and explains who he is. The woman denies being his birth mother. But Ben persists. Finally, she admits to it. But she rejects him. She’s mad at his parents for telling him. There’s a reason she put him up for adoption...”Don’t ever try to find me again!” Upset and rejected, Ben leaves. After he leaves, we see her truth. She cries for having to lie about her feelings. She says out loud to herself that she had to do it because she loved him so much.

Ben goes to the only place he can rely on -- his office. He’s the only one there because it’s holiday break. The stock market is open, so he performs his day-trader magic and invests his entire cash balance -- $1.5 million -- on a stock purchase. But he’s distracted because of earlier events as he makes this trade.

PLACES AROUND ANY CHRISTMASTOWN, USA - NIGHT

Ben is at a bar getting drunk. He realizes he wasn’t paying attention to his stock trade. When he looks at the stock on his app, he sees the company has filed for bankruptcy and the stock is worth almost nothing. Ben responds by getting drunker.

Later, on the bar TV, he sees the SUPERMILLIONS LOTTERY: DECEMBER 26, $1 MILLION JACKPOT, followed by the winning numbers play out. Then he remembers...Katie!

He leaves the bar and heads to the brewpub from his vision. He stumbles in drunk and sees her at the bar with the same man from his vision. She's having a great time with him. Ben interrupts. He tells her that this guy is an asshole wife beater and tries to pull Katie away from him. The guy is going to punch Ben, but Katie wants to handle it. She yells at Ben that this isn't how friends treat each other. "Then I guess you're not really my friend," he replies. He leaves, and heads to Jillian's place with a bottle of J.D. in hand.

At Jillian's door, Ben RINGS the bell repeatedly. She answers in a bathrobe and is mad at Ben when she sees how drunk he is. She tells Ben to leave...she was going to bed. Ben walks into her place and then starts asking her where "he" is. She doesn't know what he's talking about. Ben accuses Jillian of cheating on him. She denies it. He heads to her bedroom, but she won't let him open the door. Finally, the bedroom door opens from the other side, and Ben's boss comes out half naked. Ben's livid, "Andrew's not enough, you have to fuck my boss too?" His boss tries to calm Ben down. But Ben punches him in the face. And then does it again until his boss is on the floor bleeding. Jillian screams at Ben to stop. Ben's boss grabs his phone to call the cops. As Ben heads for the door, his boss yells at him to never come back to the office again.

Ben staggers down a dark and empty street, as he drinks from his J.D. bottle. He gets to a pedestrian bridge and keeps walking. Like a child, he yells "I'll show them!" as he climbs over the bridge railing to the dangerous side. But as soon as he looks down, he realizes he's not doing this. He clumsily grabs at the rail to climb back to the safe side and almost slips. He finally grabs hold of the rail...he feels safe. Then he starts to climb back over.

As Ben climbs over, the SHADOW FIGURE (GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE) APPEARS in front of him. Ben looks up at him shocked. Ben yells at Shadow Figure that they never even gave him a chance to change and get it right in his life. Then a strong and cold wind blows Ben -- right over the side of the bridge. Ben screams as he falls until...

BEN'S MANSION - EARLY MORNING

Ben lands in his bed. He jolts awake, as if from a bad dream. But he's safe in his bed. Ben turns on his TV, and a re-run of CNBC "The Profit" is airing. He calls out to Siri to tell him what day it is. Siri replies "Today is Christmas day...December twenty-fifth." They did it all in one night. Ben is excited to be back home on Christmas morning. He plays Christmas songs as he gets ready for the day, exaggerating his voice as he sings. On the TV in the background is a commercial for ASPCA that shows dogs shivering in the snow.

Ben stops, calls the number, and makes a $10,000 donation. When they ask whose name to put on their website acknowledgement, Ben says EBENEZER Scrooge.

MARY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ben, carrying a stack of presents, cautiously approaches his mother's house. When Mary answers, Ben is nervous about where their relationship stands. But she welcomes him joyously -- the argument never happened. They celebrate Christmas day with a small gathering of relatives. Later on, Ben takes his mother aside and ensures her that if there is anything she ever wants to tell him, he will always be there to listen and understand. She immediately knows he knows about his adoption. She explains apologetically that she wanted to tell him but she also wanted to respect the wishes of his birth mother. She tells Ben what she knows of his birth mother, how difficult life was for her, and that she didn't want that for Ben. Ben addresses how difficult that must have been for his birth mother and is thankful that she did this for him. Ben's mother says she will support him if he wants to find her and get to know her. He answers that he wants to honor his birth mother's request for privacy and tells Mary, "You're the only mom I need."

JILLIAN'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Ben arrives at Jillian's house, empty handed. He RINGS her doorbell, and she answers by only popping her head through the door. She tells him she thought he was spending the day with his family. She shoos him away, but Ben steps inside anyway. She's nervous as Ben walks around the room talking. He asks her about their relationship. She assures him she loves him and can't wait for him to be her husband -- now leave. Then Ben opens her bedroom door. Andrew sits at the corner of the bed half naked. As Andrew apologizes, Ben asks him sincerely if Jillian makes him happy. Andrew says yes and confesses to always having feelings for her. Ben smiles and tells him it's OK. Then he tells Jillian she should be happy and deserves an honest relationship. But when he asks for the engagement ring back, she resists. It's worth a ton of money! He tries to remove it, but Jillian climbs on Ben trying to stop him from pulling the ring off. He finally does, and makes his way to the door. She asks him if she can at least keep the Mercedes. His says yes -- but the lease expires the end of the month.

CHURCH - MORNING

It's the day after Christmas, and Ben kneels in a pew at the back of a church, praying softly but out loud.

We hear him praying for forgiveness for Ebenezer and Marley who are “OLD and LONELY and only MISERABLE to people because he’s lost his way...please help him find his way back.” When he finishes praying, we hear the sound of chains hitting the floor.

NELLIE’S DAUGHTER’S HOUSE - MORNING

Ben now arrives, unsure of himself, and RINGS the doorbell. When Nellie’s daughter opens the door, Ben tries clumsily to convince her to look for the letter. She doesn’t know him or what she wants, so she threatens to call the cops. He pleads with her to just check the desk drawer for a false bottom. She tells him to “wait here” as she goes inside and closes the door. Ben is not sure what she is doing as hears the sound of a POLICE SIREN. But the SIREN passes by, and Nellie’s daughter comes to the door -- holding the letter. She invites him in for coffee.

When Ben leaves, a cardinal lands on a tree branch right next to him. He addresses the cardinal as if it’s Nellie, saying “I gotcha back, Nellie. You can rest now.” The cardinal chirps and flies away.

IN AND OUT OF CONVENIENCE STORES - AFTERNOON

Ben walks familiar streets looking for his birth mother. He finally finds her but doesn’t approach her. Instead, he goes inside a convenience store. He plays a SUPERMILLIONS lottery ticket with the numbers he saw in his vision from Christmas future. He then follows his birth mother for a little bit, waiting for an opportunity. He follows her into another convenience store, where she plays the SUPERMILLIONS lottery but CAN’T afford to buy the sandwich she wants. Ben gives the clerk the money for the sandwich. She thanks Ben and then walks away. He stops her. When she turns back, he hands her his lottery ticket and says, “It looks like you might have dropped this.” Then he leaves.

HOSPITAL - LATE AFTERNOON

Ben carries a bouquet of flowers as he walks through the hospital, talking to nurses at different desks. Finally, a nurse confirms the patient he’s looking for. The nurse is apprehensive to allow him to visit, but she says no one has come to visit her and it would be good for her to see a friend. The nurse isn’t afraid to bend the rules.

Ben enters a room with the nurse, and we see Blaze in a bed. An IV is in her arm, her wrists wrapped, and restraints holding her arms to the bed.

Blaze is conscious and alert and looks at Ben like “who the hell are you?” Ben looks at her restraints and tells the nurse those won’t be necessary while he’s there. The nurse agrees to remove one of them and then leaves Ben and Blaze alone.

Ben asks Blaze if she remembers him. With an attitude, Blaze says no. He tells her that the two once met after Sam passed away. He uses what he learned about her aspirations for building a no-kill shelter from the vision of Christmas present to convince Blaze that she can trust him.

Blaze softens, and the two begin talking like old friends. They order a pizza, and Ben helps her eat it with her one unrestrained arm. The nurse checks in and sees Blaze laughing with Ben. The nurse looks around to make sure no one is watching and then removes Blaze’s second restraint.

The two now simply sit in silence, but comfortably so. Blaze tells Ben that he must have somewhere more important to be. He says no. She smiles. Then Ben says he wants to give her something. He then gives her the engagement ring, telling her he wants her to use it to start her no-kill shelter. He tells her the ring means nothing to him but that she could use it to make it mean something. And he can help her find the money needed to continue growing the shelter. And there’s one more thing. He pulls out his phone and loads up “Little Drummer Boy.” She asks how he could possibly know. When she shows interest in watching it, Ben says he just needs to text someone, which he does. At that moment, we see Katie in the Brewpub receiving a text message at 7:10 from Ben, canceling. Katie is disappointed...”Friggin’ Jillian.”

After the show ends, Blaze thanks Ben for the movie. She adds, “It’s like a poem or a CD mix, but for a sister.” Once this registers, Ben asks why should would say that. She answers that she thought he just told her about that about an hour ago.

Ben has to leave for his day-after-Christmas get together with Katie. He asks Blaze if he can come back tomorrow. She smiles and says she would like that. Ben runs off.

But Ben runs into obstacles leaving the hospital, including his car being blocked by a parked ambulance. He tries to get to her -- Uber, running. Ben makes his way as fast as he can through town. We see clocks inching closer and closer to 8:00 PM.

BREWPUB - NIGHT

Finally, a couple minutes late, Ben runs into the brewpub from his visions of Christmas future.

He looks at the bar and sees Katie. The man from his visions has already approached her and offered to buy a drink. Katie smiles, about to say yes...but Ben calls out to her. Katie challenges Ben on being late, to which Ben confesses his feelings about her and that he broke up with Jillian. He tells her that December 26 is his favorite day of the year -- that he wants every day to be December 26. He tells her he's been so ignorant about their relationship, but that changes now.

Katie's would-be-future husband is still there and begins to show his true colors as he grows aggressive with wanting to buy Katie a drink. He punches Ben in the face, and then Katie punches the man in the face.

Katie then sits with Ben and helps him tend to his bloody lip. During this, and from a distance behind, we see on the TV, the SUPERMILLIONS LOTTERY: DECEMBER 26, $1 MILLION JACKPOT and winning numbers. Katie toys with Ben, and then finally they kiss.

THE END