

~~Daphne gets her things and hugs Cruz goodbye, then she wraps her arms around Mia, catching her off-guard. Mia hugs back (Michael clocks it). Mia looks over to see Cruz giving Michael their signature fist bump.~~

~~A defeated Michael takes Daphne's hand, and they quietly leave. Just as the door is about to close, Mia calls out.~~

~~MIA
Wait!~~

~~Michael turns, hopeful.~~

~~MIA (CONT'D)
(beat)
You forgot Charlie.~~

~~Michael's face falls as he meets her halfway for the Charlie exchange. One last wistful look between them.~~

~~MIA (CONT'D)
Merry Christmas, Michael.~~

~~MICHAEL
Merry Christmas, Mia.~~

35 INT. MICHAEL'S CONDO - NIGHT 35

~~Snow falls gently outside the big windows of his modern loft as Michael quietly packs his bag and selects a nice suit for the interview. In the corner, Charlie the Christmas tree stands with its sparse branches, now fully decorated.~~

~~Disappointment crosses his face as he pulls something out of his pocket--a gold-painted feather.~~

~~Michael's phone dings with a notification: MIAMI WEATHER UPDATE: "It's going to be a very sunny Christmas Eve!" Michael lets out a big sigh, staring out at the falling snow.~~

36 EXT. STREET - MICHAEL'S CONDO - MORNING 36

Start

THUNK! The early morning air is crisp as the Uber driver TONY, 60s, loads Michael's bags into the trunk of his car. Michael looks down at his handwritten, first checklist on a post-it note: "suit, Christmas presents, toiletries." Suddenly, recognition flashes across Tony's weathered face. He stops mid-motion, studying Michael more carefully.

TONY
Wait a minute...you're Michael,
from the morning show, right?

MICHAEL
(wearily)
Yeah, that's me.

TONY
That piece you did--where they hooked you up and made you run...

MICHAEL
Ahhh, yeah, the treadmill stress test. That was a rough morning.

TONY
Yeah, but it got me thinking. I went and got my ticker checked, and it was no good. You saved my life, man.

MICHAEL
I don't think I saved your life, I mean doctors--

TONY
No--hadn't been to a doc in seven years. Got a second chance because of you.

MICHAEL
I'm...I'm so glad that story...
(realizing)
Made a difference.

TONY
More than that--I get to spend another Christmas with my grandkids.

An unexpected bear hug catches Michael completely off guard. He hugs back.

TONY (CONT'D)
It's my honor to be driving you, Michael. This ride is on me--my gift to you.

Tony continues loading bags.

MICHAEL
I really appreciate that. More than you know.
(a beat before turning toward the building)
Daphne! Let's go!

End