FADE IN:

EXT. A CARTOON WINTER WONDERLAND - DAY

Animated snowflakes fall from the bright blue sky. Sunrays reach for the winter wonderland below.

A 4 foot tall squirrel named ACORN builds a snowman.
He wears a red hooded sweatshirt. A big black robber's eye-mask makes him seem at least a little deviant.
Acorn prepares a boulder for the snowman's head, rolling it across a long field of snow.

Smoke billows from a cabin's chimney.

A picnic table is occupied by a large 2-foot (actual) acorn resting on its surface.

Acorn adds the head onto the snowman.
He places two lumps of coal for eyes.
He adjusts a carrot into the snowman's face.
The squirrel admires his snowman. He smiles large.

ACORN
(sings)
Merry Christmas to me.

A large shadow slowly grows behind Acorn, reaching across the snowman.

ACORN (CONT.)
Merry Christmas to m--

A thunderous flapping sound draws the squirrel's attention to the ominous shadow.

Acorn slowly cranks his neck.

A large 5 foot tall CROW swoops into the valley. His wingspan must be nearly 20 feet wide.

There's a loud WHOOSH each time the enormous wings flap.

ACORN
Oh, shhhh--ugar balls.

The crow aims his talons for that large appetizing acorn.
It lands on the picnic table. It's claws embedding in the wooden surface.

ACORN
Heh, that's mine. Leave it alone.

A mischevious smile grows across the crow's long beak, as he reaches down to the ground, and prepares a large snowball.
SPLAT! Acorn is hit, square in the face by a messy snowball. The slush slides down his shocked face.

ACORN
You?

The crow points its wing to itself.

CROW
Me?

ACORN
Yeah. You...
(hesitates)
Y-You... farp.

CROW
Farp?

ACORN
Yeah. Farp: a lethal combination of burp and fart. You do both those at the same time and you die.

CROW
What?

ACORN
You die. That's what lethal means, beak for brains.

CROW
No. You can't die from... THAT? Um, can you?

ACORN
It's true. Go on. Look it up in your Funk-n-Wagnel's.

CROW
Whoah. Did you just say the F-word?

ACORN
Funk AND Wagnel's. It's a dictionary. Ever heard of those?

CROW
What do I care? I just want that nut?

Acorn, accordantly, pulls out a dictionary from some hidden compartment within his hoody.

He whips the thick book at the crow.
3.

It hits the bird in his face and falls to the picnic table.

CROW
I can't believe you just did that?

ACORN
Believe it. You hit me with snow, I hit you with knowledge... Farp.

The crow whips through the dictionary pages. He licks his feathered finger and flips some more. He finds it.

CROW
Me? A farp: a sharp expellation of gas? Through both exits?

ACORN
Exact-o-mundo.

CROW
But that's nothing like me?

ACORN
Isn't it though?

The squirrel has successfully confused the dim-witted crow. The large bird searches for a retort.

ACORN
How dare you fire upon an unarmed squirrel. But what should I expect from a big dumb thievin' bird.

CROW
Okay. I know this much. Them's fightin words.

The crow whips the book back at the squirrel.

WHIFF. Acorn ducks it.

CROW
Nice Acorn you got here. Mind if I eat it, little squirrel?

ACORN
Acorn? That's my name, don't wear it out.

The crow's proverbial jaw drops. He cowers.

CROW
(aside)
No. That name?

ACORN
So, Big Bird, if you want THAT acorn, you'll have to go through me first.
4.

Acorn tosses a snowball in his hand.

CROW
Acorn? I've heard of you. It can't be? No.

ACORN
Oh it BE. It SO be me.

Acorn whips the snowball. Crow dodges, taking to the air. He flies over to the cabin and lands on its roof. The squirrel gives chase, heading for the cabin. He throws another snowball at the crow above, but it falls short - out of his range.

The crow laughs at the little squirrel down below.

CROW
Nice arm, girly man. You're nothing like the stories. Pathetic. Let me show you how it's done.

The crow makes a big snowball and launches it. Acorn runs for protection behind the snowman. The ground is pelted by multiple snowballs, as the squirrel darts for cover.

It's like a twisted holiday version of NAM. The snow explodes around Acorn like its shrapnel from a grenade.

The crow laughs into the cold air. Smoke billows behind his large frame. Menacing.

Acorn hides behind his cover. He breathes heavily.

The crow flies off the roof and swoops back in for the acorn on the picnic table.

CROW
You're not so tough after all. Playing hide-n-go-seek behind a snowman. Coward.

He lands on the table and grabs the large acorn.

The crow looks over to the snowman. Amazement rushes across his face - his beak opens wide. Stunned.

Acorn grabs the large head off of the snowman, raises it high over his head.

ACORN
You were saying?
The squirrel WHIPS the large boulder at the crow. 

BAM! The giant snowball hits the target. 

The crow's beak sticks out of the snowman's head atop its own head. 

The acorn falls to the ground, sinking into the snow. 

RING RING. 

A phone blares in the distance. 

The squirrel looks to the sky. 

The ringing echoes, sounding very far away. 

The crow bobs its "snow-head" - saying something muffled as it looks for the ringing sound. 

RING RING. 

Acorn searches for the source of this strange sound, watching snowflakes cascade on this cartoon wonderland. 

Again, and again. RING RING. 

The snowflakes slowly loose their animated aesthetic... 

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - SUNSET (LIVE ACTION) 

...as snowflakes fall on a small subdivision of plug and play houses. 

It looks more like a Lego-set than a community. 

RING RING. 


Children build snowmen and forts on their front lawns. 

A father and son team shovel their laneway. 

INT. TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 

A frosted window looks out to the community at play. 

RING RING. 

Seated at an artist's draft table is a scruffy haired ELLIOT (early 30s). 

He draws with a professional graphite pencil on thick porous paper - it's the opening scene of Acorn and Crow in STORYBOARD format. 

He's in a trance. The persistent RINGING goes ignored.
Then, the graphite tip of his pencil SNAPS.

Elliot looks to the phone, his face scrunched in anger. Annoyed he's been interrupted.

He swipes at his phone and taps the SPEAKER button.

ELLIO T
Sir?

STEINWEIN (OS)
Elliot--

ELLIO T
I know what you're thinkin, Mr. Steinwein.

STEINWEIN (OS)
Do you? And?

ELLIO T
It's the holidays, sir.

STEINWEIN (OS)
And with your extra free time I thought I could toss you this project.

ELLIO T
But, sir?

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
A large desk dominates a boardroom-like office.

MR. STEINWEIN (mid-50s), looking dapper, adjusts his tie.

STEINWEIN
Elliot. You know how it is. The staff, they all have families, and...

He paces around his desk as he talks on the speakerphone.

STEINWEIN (CONT.)
And the holidays are busy. Stressful. And... Well.

Steinwein grabs a jacket slung over his chair. He swings it around his arms.

INTERCUT: ELLIOT'S HOUSE / STEINWEIN'S OFFICE
Elliot shakes his head. Disappointed.

He looks to the ceiling and closes his eyes.
ELLIO
(understanding)
I don't have any family.

Steinwein grabs a bottle from his desk and pours himself a glass of whiskey.

STEINWEIN
Exactly. So you understand?

ELLIO (OS)
I'd still like to have time off though.

STEINWEIN
It won't take that long. The conversion process is down to, what, hours?

Elliot sighs in frustration.

ELLIO
Right, but. It's the 23rd, sir. Christmas Eve is--

STEINWEIN (OS)
That's why we're talking now. Time's running out. Look Elliot, if you can't do this then maybe--

ELLIO
Alright, sir. Send me the files. And... I'll do my best.

STEINWEIN
I know you will.

ELLIO
Of course. I know what kids like.

STEINWEIN
Exactly. That's why you're perfect for this.

ELLIO
Right. Um. Mr. Steinwein... Since I have you on the phone. And since you said you'd listen to--

STEINWEIN
Is this about your cartoon, son?

Elliot looks to his drawing table. His animated storyboards with the squirrel names Acorn.

ELLIO
Well. Yes. Sir.
STEINWEIN
I told you. I'll look at... Through the proper channels.

ELLIOT
But, sir, you just said yourself, I know what kids like.

STEINWEIN
You-- You're right, Elliot. You're doing me a favour, so I'll return one. Hit me with it.

ELLIOT
Okay. So. It's called Acorn.

STEINWEIN
Called what?

Elliot circles his drawing room, walking past tacked up pictures of Acorn from throughout the years.

ELLIOT
(quickly, manic)
Acorn. He's this lil' squirrel who's always getting into trouble. He's got this burglar mask, cuz he's always stealin' nuts and stuff. He's quick too. Oh. And his arch nemesis is this big Crow who keeps taking his food on him and--

STEINWEIN
Elliot. Slow down. So it's like Tweety Bird or Road Runner or something, right?

ELLIOT
Um. I guess. Ya. I loved those growin up.

STEINWEIN
Been done before.

Steinwise slams down the rest of his drink and rises from his chair.

ELLIOT
What hasn't? You're the one bringin back 80s cartoons.

Steinwein puts on his jacket. Ready to leave.

STEINWEIN
Elliot, now don't get smart.

ELLIOT
It's important to me, sir.
Steinwein thinks on this a moment. He sits back down.

STEINWEIN
Okay. What inspired you?

ELLiot
Well... How do I put this? M--My best friend, Kevin, died when I was 10.

STEINWEIN
What?

ELLiot
The squirrel is him.

STEINWEIN
I know I said make it quick, but you can't just hit me with something like that and not explain. Yeesh.

Steinwein gets comfortable and pours another glass.

STEINWEIN (CONT.)
So it's a passion project, huh, Elliot? Tell me about it. Acorn? Tell me about Acorn.

Elliot looks out to the small children throwing snowballs at each other outside his window.

ELLiot
Rewind to Christmas Eve, like 20 years ago. It's me, and it's Kevin...

Elliot stares at his reflection in the window.

ELLiot (CONT.)
...my best friend ever.

The reflection of himself SHIMMERS as a TRANSITION...

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Two 10 year old boys build a fort.

They add more and more snow to it. It's gigantic, over 6 feet tall.

KEVIN smiles through his freckles as he builds up the inner walls, packing snow hard into the surface.

Elliot rolls a boulder, making it larger with each rotation.
ELLIOT (VO)
I was tryin' to stay up all night.
You know, wait for Santa. I was
sure he was real. Kevin? Not so
much. I Walkee Talkeed him to come
over. See, he just lived next door.

Kevin refines a shelf of snowballs, ready to fire.

ELLIOT (VO, CONT.)
So he came over. And we went back
and forth debating the existence of
Santa Claus. I thought I was
winnin' that battle.

Elliot smooths over the roof of their fort. He hops down to
the ground and enters the fort.

ELLiot
Looks good. I'm gonna get the
lantern so Santa can see the
runway.

KEVIN
You Farp. If Santa's real, do you
really think he can see one lousy
lantern from outer space?

ELLiot
Um... Maybe?

A BIT LATER...

The boys running up the laneway holding as many lanterns as
they can manage. 4 or 5.

The lanterns are semi-transparent canvas bags, with a candle
inside (an old tradition).

The kids line them up on the fort's roof.

They stand back and admire their fort.

ELLiot
Is it midnight yet?

Kevin scrunches up his mitts to see his calculator watch.

KEVIN
Not yet. You really think he shows
up at midnight exactly?

ELLiot
Duh. Who's the farp now?

KEVIN
(scratches his head)
Is that midnight eastern standard
time or--
ELLiot
Doofus. Don't ruin Christmas.

KEVIN
No really is it like midnight for your house and like twelve-oh-three for my house. Cuz then Tommy will get his gifts at like twelve twenty. And then--

ELLiot
Kevin. It's Santa. And Santa is magic. It doesn't work like that.

KEVIN
Oh, so how's it work, Elly? Santa just touches his nose and it's midnight everywhere.

ELLiot
Somethin like that.

KEVIN
Okay, you wait out here. I'm gonna add to the fort. You know, do somethin produc-ta-tive.

ELLiot
Come on, Kev. Wait with me. What if I'm right?

KEVIN
If you are I owe you a Lick-A-Maid. Okay? Now, I'll be inside the fort. If you see Rudolph's nose gimme a holler.

ELLiot
Just wait. You'll see.

KEVIN
(scratches his head)
Rrrright? Well, in case that wait is a while, I'll be inside... Farp.

Kevin retreats back inside the fort.

Elliot climbs the roof and looks to the sky. He scans the stars looking for Santa.

ELLiot
You know, Kev. Sometimes. You just need to be a kid.

INTERCUT: INT. / EXT. FORT

Kevin goes about carving a window in the snow walls, gripping a long sharp icicle.
KEVIN
(sarcastic)
Yeah. Be a kid. By, like, building
a FORT or sumthin.

ELLIO T
Quit it. You're always makin fun of
me. The Holidays are the only time
of the year that everyone gets to
be kids.

KEVIN
Who told you that, your Uncle Mike?

ELLIO T
So what?

KEVIN
He just wants to play with your
toys.

ELLIO T
No. He gets it. He told me he
misses being a kid. He told me to
never stop being a kid.

KEVIN
What a nerd. You ARE a kid.

ELLIO T
Yeah but that's not what he means.
He says Santa's real.

KEVIN
They all do. It's like this secret
code grown-ups have.

ELLIO T
No, he said he had proof.

KEVIN
Proof? Ya right. Did they even have
cameras invented back then?

ELLIO T
He says he saw Santa.

KEVIN
And you believe him?

ELLIO T
Well, it's like, do you have any
proof he ISN'T real?

KEVIN
(scratches head)
Um. Well.
Elliot still scans the stars. He loosens his long scarf so he can turn his head easier.

**ELLIO**
See. So at midnight, we're gonna see him up there. And he's gonna see our landing strip. And he's gonna---

**KEVIN**
What? Stop in and say Hi? He'll be pretty ticked off when he sees we don't have cookies and carrots.

**ELLIO**
Yeah. Maybe. And if he does, you'll be down there. And you'll never know.

**KEVIN**
Yeah. But the fort will be way better.

Elliot stares at the stars. Smoke starts to furl up towards his field of vision.

He looks down and sees his scarf burning on an open lantern flame. He yells.

**KEVIN**
What? Santa? Yeah right. Like I'm gonna fall for that... You farp.

Elliot keeps yelling. He starts to stomp on his scarf. It falls off his shoulders. He keeps stomping.

Kevin looks up to the ceiling of the fort. His smile fades. Snow dust tumbles down from the impact of Elliot.

Elliot does one final stomp. The roof caves in.

Kevin scrambles for the exit. Too late. The ceiling heaves and crumbles onto his small body.

Elliot's snow-pants have caught fire. He rolls around in the snow, trying to stamp out the flames.

A light comes on from an upstairs window of the house. Elliot's mother looks out the window. She covers her mouth, in shock.

Elliot stands up. He searches for Kevin. He sees the fallen lanterns, some still burning in the rubble of their fort.

**ELLIO**
(crying)
Kevin?! Kevin!
Elliot scrambles about the snow. He digs quickly with his hands. He cries as he tries to unbury his friend.

ELLiot NARRATION
I never stopped hating myself for that night. It was weeks later when my Uncle introduced me to drawing that it all got better for me. He said it would help get the emotions out. So I made up ACORN. The squirrel. He's Kevin. He acts the same. Thinks the same.

Mom & Dad run from the front door, in housecoats and boots.

Elliot digs through the snow. Crying and yelling.

ELLiot NARRATION
Whenever I get sad and miss him, I just sit down and draw. And there I am. Hangin' out with Kev like I'm 10 years old again. See, Mr. Steinwein, Acorn IS Kevin. And I wanna share HIM with the world.

Elliot uncovers something blue. A mitten - Kevin's lifeless mitten reaching out through the snow.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. APT - NIGHT

Elliot lays on his elbows, looking at a drawing of Acorn resting on his drawing table.

ELLiot
So... whadda ya think?... Sir?... Hello? You still there?

INTERCUT: OFFICE

Steinwein stares at the speaker phone. He clears his throat.

STEINWEIN
Um. Ya. I'm here.

ELLiot
Well?

STEINWEIN
Kid, that's so blinkin' sad. And this is for children to watch?

ELLiot
Maybe you didn't hear me right. It's not about THAT night. Kevin is the inspiration for the squirrel.
STEINWEIN
(obnoxious)
Riiiiight.

ELLIOT
It's fun. Maybe that didn't come across. Can't you just watch it and see what you think?

STEINWEIN
Watch it? You mean I don't have to read it?

ELLIOT
I made a short, years ago. Tell you what, I'll convert your cartoons, if I can convert mine. Then we'll see what you think.

STEINWEIN
Let me think on it, Elliot. First, convert those cartoons.

ELLIOT
(rolls his eyes)
You're right. I'll send the 3D files over to the main server once I'm done.

STEINWEIN
Thanks, El. You're a real life saver.

ELLIOT
Ummm. Right. Bad choice of words there--

STEINWEIN
Happy holidays.

With that, Mr. Steinwein hangs up.

Elliot stares at the phone. He picks up the phone likes going to throw it at the window. He stops himself though.

Outside the window he can see children playing - building a fort for the holidays.

FADE:

MONTAGE:

Elliot sits at his COMPUTER workstation converting an old 1980s cartoon called M*A*S*K.

His task is to set layers for the 3D effect. He selects which are the foreground and background. And which are extremely close to make the "audience jump back" 3D effect.
While he works at the station he gobbles up snack foods and chugs energy drinks.

He paces the room while the conversion completion bar grows from 75% to 100%.

Elliot sits in his living room watching the cartoon with 3D glasses on. He snacks on some popcorn.

Another cartoon, THE GUMMI BEARS, undergoes the same process as the night sky outside becomes the MORNING sky.

The conversion completes as Elliot rustles in his bed, taking an afternoon nap.

Elliot paces his drawing room. He looks at drawings of Acorn, the robber squirrel, and the crow villain.

His phone beeps with a message:

" u comin over for drinks - the girl next door "

He swipes the message away.

He thinks about it a second.

He looks to his phone. It shows the date: DECEMBER 24.

The conversion process continues as the NIGHT sky returns.

Elliot rips a drawing off of the wall. It's ACORN.

He opens a cigar box. It's empty, except for a shiny USB thumb-drive. He smiles, then reaches in and grabs it.

The USB inserts into the 3D conversion drive.

The computer mouse icon scrolls across to the folder labelled ACORN.

He clicks the folder open and drags the movie file into the 3D conversion program.

The title screen for ACORN is modified to LEAP OUT in 3D.

Elliot smiles large, illuminated by the glow of the computer.

Snowflakes begin to fall outside his window. He looks out the winter wonderland, through the frosted glass of his window.

ELLIOT
(sighs)
I miss you, Kev.

The mouse icon drags across the time: 11:59.
And it continues across the screen. The icon reaches a confirmation box.

CLICK OK TO BEGIN CONVERSION. The mouse clicks on OK.

The time shifts from 11:59 to 12:00.

Elliot rises from his work station and walks to the window. He stares up to the snowy sky. The stars. The snowflakes.

Elliot slides under the covers of his bed. He stares at the ceiling and closes his eyes.

The workstation. The conversion device. It pulses with light from within. Green and red, alternating bursts. The light shines through the heat vents.

The floor near the workstation is littered with a few crumpled pieces of paper. One is a drawing of Acorn, the squirrel.

WHAM! A large 2 foot acorn drops onto the floor. It's the same acorn from the earlier animated segment.

Except, it's NOT animated now. It's REAL - somehow existing in three dimensions.

FADE:

EXT. TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

Snow falls on Christmas morning. The streets are empty. But every house is full of life. Decorated for the holidays, and shining bright full of lights.

INT. TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Elliot is asleep in his bed.

    VOICE
    Ho ho ho.

Elliot groggily opens one eye. He looks to the frosted window. Snow falls outside.

    VOICE
    Ho ho ho.

Elliot looks around his room. His eyes snap wide. His jaw drops. He curls his knees into his chest.

    VOICE
    Ho ho ho.

At the end of his bed stands a 4 foot tall squirrel, with a robber's mask and a red hooded sweatshirt.

    ACORN (CONT.)

Merry Christmas.
Elliot goes to make a sound. Nothing comes out. He sheepishly makes an EEP sound as he stumbles for words.

ELLiot
A-a-a- Acorn?

ACORN
That's my name don't wear it out.

ELLiot
You're... You're real?

ACORN
(scratches his head)
I'm 3D, bro. In living colour.

ELLiot
But... What?

ACORN
Do you see what I see?

ELLiot
Um. What?

ACORN
(sings)
Do you see what IIII seeee?

Elliot shakes his head from the dream. Wait. It's real.

Acorn keeps singing. Elliot rubs his eyes. Still real.

The squirrel points out the window to the falling snow.

ACORN
It's snowing on Christmas. How perfect is THAT?

ELLiot
(perplexed)
Yeah. "That".

Acorn hops onto Elliot's bed. He brings his snout really close to the cowering Elliot.

He sniffs and SNIFFS. Loudly.

ACORN
Well, you're real too. Holy holiday ornaments, it's you. Elliot?
(smirks, chuckles)
You... Farp.

ELLiot
(realizing)
Um. Kevin?
ACORN  
(nods)  
You still believe in holiday miracles, El?  

ELLIOT  
You mean--  

ACORN  
Get over it, buddy. I'm real. Maybe the one holiday wish that gets to come true each year was yours this time?  

ELLIOT  
(sarcastic)  
Maybe?  

ACORN  
You're right. It for sure was your's.  

ELLIOT  
This is... This is--  

ACORN  
(scratches his head)  
Nuts?  

ELLIOT  
(smirks)  
Nuts.  

ACORN  
What can I say? First thing that came to mind. Say, where can I roast this giant acorn?  

Acorn pulls a giant acorn from behind his back.  

ELLIOT  
No way.  

ACORN  
Yes way.  

Acorn smirks. He tosses the nut in the air and catches it.  

EXT. HALLWAY - MORNING  

Elliot pulls his bathrobe tight as he rushes down the hallway. Acorn, the squirrel, quickly follows dragging the large acorn.  

ACORN  
Where we goin, El?
ELLIOT
I gotta check something.

ACORN
Oh, are we building a snowman?

ELLIOT
No. You haven't seen anyone else in here have you?

ACORN
Whadda ya mean?

ELLIOT
You're the only thing, uh, brought into real 3D right? No Gummi Bears or transforming vehicles?

ACORN
Now, that's nuts. Just me, El. What are you thinking?

ELLIOT
I don't know how holiday magic works. Is it the 3D converter that brought you, um, here?

ACORN
It was you buddy. All you. Well, and some weird science.

ELLIOT
But that's--

ACORN
It is what is. Now I don't know how long I got here. But there's something I got to do.

ELLIOT
What?

ACORN
It's of the upmost importance. A matter of urgency. I must find... Christmas pancakes.

The squirrel smiles large.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Acorn goes about messily making pancakes.

Puffs of flour explode into the air. Milk is spilt across the counter.

The manic squirrel bounces all around the kitchen, as he makes his pancakes. Elliot just watches in amazement.
A black feather floats down in front of Elliot's face. He follows it to the ground, as it lands next to an eggshell.

Elliot
Crow!

Acorn snaps his gaze towards Elliot. A giant shadow of huge wings crosses his face.

Acorn
Crow!

Elliot runs around the kitchen, chased by the large crow.

Acorn
Holy 3D Christmas, Batman.

The squirrel food-fights the crow, throwing eggs and slabs of butter at it. The crow dodges.

Elliot grabs a frying pan and swipes at the large crow.

Acorn gets an idea. He points his finger to the air. An actual large light bulb appears over his head with a DING!

Elliot continues to chase and be chased by the crow.

Acorn smears peanut butter across the silver toaster. He pops down some bread. He whistles.

The crow whips his attention to the squirrel. And flies off.

Acorn jumps up the cupboards and lands on top of the fridge.

The crow lands on the counter and investigates the toaster.

It sniffs with its beak and backs off from the warmth. It spies the red coils heating up within the toaster.

Acorn watches from on top of the fridge. He holds a silver butter knife.

The crow cautiously licks the peanut butter on the toaster.

Elliot pats some flour off his head. He notices the squirrel and the crow. He puts out his hands.

Elliot
No. Acorn. Don't.

The crow looks to Elliot, looks to Acorn.

Acorn holds the shiny knife.

Acorn
Asta la pasta, basta'.

He drops the knife into the toaster. It explodes with a flash of electricity.
The crow is ZAPPED. His skeleton shines through his feathers for a moment. X-RAYED. And POOF he disappears.

A black shadow is cast on the cupboards. A gunpowder like scorch of the crow. A lone black feather floats down.

ELLIO T
What... was that?

ACORN
(scratches his head)
Genius? I just saved your life, farp head.

ELLIO T
You just exploded a giant bird in my kitchen.

ACORN
(sarcastic)
And? I just saved your life, El. You think you'd be thankful or sumthin'.

Elliot searches for a response. He stutters. He looks to the carnage in his kitchen.

ACORN
(shrugs)
He wanted my nuts.

Elliot folds his arms, unimpressed. He looks to Acorn. He can't hold it. Elliot laughs. So does Acorn.

FADE:

EXT. STREET - MORNING

A few children play outside in front of their houses.

A dad peeks out his front door, bundled in a large housecoat with a steaming coffee. He watches his children play with fond eyes.

Another house, another father - this one shoveling the driveway. Another house, a mother builds a snowman with her children.

There is a snowball fight in progress, one little girl takes on two boys by herself.

She's handling herself quite well, smiling as she pelts the boys with snowballs.

EXT. ELLIOT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mittens mold the perfect snowball.
Elliot readies himself for an attack. He pops up behind a mound of snow, in his backyard.

He spots a squirrel tail peeking over a trench wall.

Elliot winds up his arm, ready to throw.

Acorn pops up over the trench wall. SMUCK! He's hit right in the face.

Elliot cheers from the opposite end of the back yard.

ELLIO
Who's the farp now?

Acorn just laughs and laughs. He points at Elliot, whose excitement fades quickly.

ELLIO
What's so funny?

ACOR
That word... Sounds super-weird when you say it.

ELLIO
Whatever. I got you.

Acorn keeps laughing until Elliot joins in.

A large shadow grows over Acorn. Large wings. The CROW.

Acorn points to the sky.

ACOR
B-b-baad.

ELLIO
(sings)
"Bad to the bone."

ACOR
No. Bad guy... Look.

The crow lands on Elliot's roof. Right above Elliot.

Snow shifts on the roof, and slides down. Some falls right into Elliot's collar, down his neck.

ELLIO
Ahhh, not the neck.

Elliot reacts to the cold.

Meanwhile, Acorn reacts to the crow. He quickly leaps over his snowy trench and runs over to Elliot.

ACOR
El. That crow. He's dangerous.
ELLIO
Yeah. Duh. I made him. I know all
about him.

ACORN
True. So what's the plan.

ELLIO
Plan?

ACORN
Yeah. He's back from the toaster
gave.

ELLIO
How is that possible?

ACORN
Really? You're wondering how THAT'S
possible?

ELLIO
Well, he kinda, like, exploded in
my kitchen.

ACORN
He's an animated villain - he can't
die. Those are the rules.

ELLIO
Rules?

ACORN
Yeah. Rules. You know what those
are right.

ELLIO
It means we can't stop him.

The crow caws loudly from the roof. It takes to flight. It
climbs high into the sky, then carves downwards fast.

Acorn peeks out from under the roof's protection. His jaw
drops. The crow's large shadow grows over his face.

The crow dives, fast, down into Elliot's backyard.

ACORN
We gotta move. Fast.

ELLIO
What?

ACORN
Do I need to repeat everything? The
crow is flocking this way.

ELLIO
What?
ACORN
So, let's get the flock out of here.

WHAM! A giant bloom of powdery snow flies at Acorn and Elliot. The crow has landed.

It's large head peaks through the whirlwind of snow. His beak smiles.

CROW
Boo!

Elliot cowers in fear. He steps back and stumbles.

The crow's large talon takes a step forward. It's large frame ducks under the overhanging roof.

Elliot is grabbed by the Crow's large wing.

Acorn scurries over. He dodges a swipe from the other wing.

He leaps, and bounces off the large feathery surface. He lands near the crow's feet. And bites an ankle.

The crow screams in pain, and drops Elliot from its grasp.

The large bird cranks its neck and glares at the small squirrel - Acorn gulps.

The crow takes to flight, with Acorn holding onto its ankle.

ELLiot
Acorn. No!

Acorn looks down, he's already too high to jump.

ACORN
El! Go! Get that nut!

The crow flies over the house, higher and higher.

Elliot watches in fear. He composes himself and bolts for the back door to his house.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Acorn looks to the street far below. He hangs on tight.

The crow notices Acorn, still on its ankle. It tries to shake him loose.

Acorn looks down to a large fort in someone's front yard.

The crow's large shadow is cast on three children near the fort. They are in the middle of a snowball fight.

A little girl notices the shadow and looks up.
She sees Acorn falling from the sky - he's yelling the whole way down.

POOF! Acorn lands on the snowfort. It collapses, breaking his fall.

The little girl turns to her friends.

An angry boy points to her.

BOY
Emily just broke our fort. Get her.

EMILY
It wasn't me. Didn't you see him? Flying in the air?

BOY
Santa? Yeah right, do you think Santa Claus likes to break--

CAFFF! Acorn pops out of the fort, coughing.

The boy's anger shifts to awe.

The three children stare at the squirrel.

Acorn pats some snow off of his head. He forces a smile.

Emily smiles back. The boys are still shocked.

The crow swoops down to the street.

ACORN
Run!

The children look to the sky - the crow gets closer and closer. They run.

The boys run home, down opposite ends of the street.

Emily runs to her own fort, nearby.

Elliot pops out of his front door. He surveills the scene. He spots Acorn and the kids. And the crow.

He looks down to the large acorn in his arms.

ELLiot
(to himself)
This is nuts.

He whistles loud to get the crow's attention.

ELLiot
Yo. Big Bird. Over here.

Acorn whips his attention to Elliot. His friend runs down the street with the nut in his arms.
The crow flies over to Elliot instead.

Elliot notices the bird coming fast. He skids to a stop on the snowy street. He turns and runs the other way.

ACORN
Elliot, run!

ELLIOIT
No kidding.

The crow chases Elliot - like that large plane chasing Jimmy Stewart in NORTH BY NORTHWEST.

Acorn looks for an idea. Emily pops up from her fort. She tosses a snowball in her hands.

She stands at a whole rack of pre-made snowballs.

EMILY
I'm ready.

Acorn points to the bird like an army general.

ACORN
Cover fire!

Acorn whips a snowball at the bird. Emily follows suit.

Elliot keeps running, as the large Crow gets pelted.

The snowball attack doesn't seem to phase him too much.

The crow gets closer and closer to Elliot.

Emily chases the large bird, throwing snowballs.

Acorn takes to a telephone pole and runs along the wires. He is so agile, moving amazingly quick.

ACORN
Elliot. Toss it to me.

ELLIOIT
You're too far.

ACORN
Quite being a wuss. Just do it.

The crow is just a few feet away from Elliot now.

Elliot stops. And whips the acorn high into the air.

It spins as it arcs high into the sky.

TIME SLOWS TO A CRAWL...

The crow watches as it passes him in the air.
It quickly turns on a dime, and tries to catch the nut as it goes by.

The large bird just misses.

The nut rockets by the Crow, high up towards Acorn, standing on a wire, ready to catch it.

Emily watches in awe, cheering.

The crow finishes its mid-air pivot.

Elliot watches in anticipation.

The nut arcs towards Acorn's waiting grasp.

It's going to fall short. He reaches out on his tippy-toes.

The acorn get closer. The crow gets closer.

Acorn's foot leaves the wire. He catches the nut, just before the Crow reaches it.

TIME RETURNS TO NORMAL...

As Acorn catches the nut in mid-air, his tail gains a prehinsile capability and latches onto the wire.

Acorn spins back up onto the wire, as the Crow is within inches. The squirrel lands on the taught wire with a TWANG.

Then, Acorn immediately jumps backwards off the wire.

TIME SLOWS BACK DOWN...

The crow will fly into the electric cables.

Its eyes snap alert.

Acorn, with the nut in one arm, jumping backwards, raises his other hand, makes a gun with his fingers and makes a P-CHOO P-CHOO shooting sound.

The crow tangles up into the wires. And get's electrified.

TIME RETURNS TO NORMAL...

Elliot watches from the street. He smiles.

Emily cheers and runs towards Acorn.

Blue-white electricity forks around the large Crow until it disappears in an instance.

Acorn lands in soft snowbank. He is swallowed up, leaving behind a perfect imprint of his body.

Elliot rushes over to the snowbank, alongside Emily. He's worried.
Then... up pops a thumb's up. It's Acorn.

Elliot pulls him out of the snow.

EMILY
Are you okay, little guy?

ACORN
Who's little?

ELLIOT
Wow. I can't believe that happened.

ACORN
Me neither.

ELLIOT
So what do we do now?

ACORN
Get this kid to sign a confidentiality agreement.

EMILY
Con-fee-dee- what?

ELLIOT
You won't tell anyone what you saw will you?

EMILY
Yeah. It's the best thing ever. I'm gonna Tweet this. It'll go viral.

ACORN
Tweet? What the-- I think this kid's crazy.

ELLIOT
It's to do with the Internet.

ACORN
The Inter-what?

EMILY
Is he... "special" or sumthin'?

ACORN
Why I oughta--

ELLIOT
Emily. He is really special.

EMILY
Are you gonna tell my mom?

ELLIOT
No. This is a secret.
ACORN
I'm a Christmas wish come true. You can't tell anyone else.

ELLiot
Yeah. What he said.

EMILY
Oh. Okay. But you're so cool.

ELLiot
Emily?

EMILY
Don't worry Mister Avery, I got your back.

ACORN
Mister Avery?

ELLiot
Yeah, I'm a mister now. Problem?

ACORN
(laughs)
No. No problemo, Seniore.

EMILY
Are you sure he's not special?

ACORN
I can hear you, you know?

ELLiot
We'll talk about this later, Em. You better go home. Your mom will be worried.

EMILY
But--

ACORN
Keep your eyes peeled. That crow will probably be back any second.

ELLiot
We've got to unplug the machine.

EMILY
Machine?

Emily's mom calls her inside from the front porch. Acorn places a finger up to his lips. "Shhh."

EMILY
I will... But, what's your name?

Acorn looks up to Elliot for reassurance.
He nods in agreement.

ACORN
My name's Kevin. Pleased to meet you Emily.

Mom continues to call.

EMILY
Come get me if you need back up, Kevin.

He nods and they shake (little) hands in agreement.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The 3D conversion machine rests on the desk. The green ON light is glowing. Nothing unusual here.

ACORN
So how long do we have to wait for that Crow to come back?

ELLIOIT
I'm not sure how it all works. When did you know... Um, get here?

ACORN
It was still dark. But I was confused. It took me a while to figure out what happened.

ELLIOIT
Well, I guess we just stand guard.

ACORN
Why don't we just unplug it?

ELLIOIT
What if you disappear or something?

ACORN
If I disappear so does the Crow. We save the town. Easy PeeZee.

ELLIOIT
Yeah, but...

ACORN
Don't be selfish, El. It's the holidays, remember.

ELLIOIT
You're right.

Acorn hops on the desk. He hops into Elliot's arms. And they hug. Innocent. Beautiful.
ELLIO
T
I love you, Kev.

Then Acorn reaches out with his tail and pulls out the plug.
He closes his eyes.
BLACKNESS... A moment.
Then Acorn opens his eyes to see Elliot, teary eyed.

ACORN
Are you crying?

ELLIO
T
You're still here.

ACORN
Apparently... And you said I love you too. Holy cow, you grew up to be so emotional. You wuss.

ELLIO
T
Shut up... So if you're still here.

ACORN
The Crow will reappear.

ELLIO
T
That's what I fear.

ACORN
Whoah, that totally all rhymed.

ELLIO
T
Kevin! The light's still on?!

ACORN
And that's what suprises you about this magical machine?

ELLIO
T
But that means--

ACORN
I got it... Weapons.

ELLIO
T
What? You said it yourself. He's a cartoon villain, he can't die.

ACORN
Well, we can still defend ourselves.

ELLIO
T
What else can we do though? There's got to be something?
I got it. Just draw up a new scene where we totally kick some crow butt. Then we'll turn it into real life with the magic machine here.

Do you know how long that would take?

What?

It takes twenty four drawings just to make one second of a cartoon. So that's like what's twenty-four times sixty.

Eleven-ty billion.

That's not even a real number.

Yet.

I got it. We just need one picture. We don't need a scene.

Bingo bango, let's do the fandango.

CUE MONTAGE:

MONTAGE: INT. OFFICE

Elliot draws up some basic weapons: a slingshot, a bow and arrow, a big net, a bear trap.

Acorn straps himself with a belt full of acorns, like they were bullets or something.

Elliot grabs a slingshot.

Acorn grabs a chainsaw.

Elliot grabs a pack of arrows.

Acorn turns on the chainsaw.

Elliot drapes a bow around his shoulders.

Acorn puts the chainsaw on his arm, like it was his hand.

"Groovy."
MONTAGE: EXT. BACKYARD

Elliot and Acorn fight the large crow.
It flies over the yard and they slingshot snowballs at it.
Acorn draws an arrow, he pulls it back.

ACORN
"Rambo".

Elliot has his own arrow drawn and ready to shoot.

ELLIOI'T
"Katniss."

They let loose their arrows.
The piercing tips fly for the crow.
The friends cheer in success. They high five.

ELLIOI'T
You know he'll just come back in
like five minutes. This is hopeless.

ACORN
Maybe we can pay him off? Bad guys
like money right. That's all they
care about.

ELLIOI'T
We need to go to a bank then and
take out some money.

ACORN
We'll just draw some up.

MONTAGE: INT. OFFICE

A stack of green money. It looks so fake.

ELLIOI'T
This won't work.

ACORN
Let me try.

MINUTES LATER...

A stack of gold coins. Elliot picks one up. So does Acorn.

ELLIOI'T
Are these real?

Acorn bites into one. It's chocolate, covered in gold foil.
ACORN
Mmm. I've been craving these.

ELLIOT
Darn. The machine works off our intentions too.

ACORN
Let's try a booby trap.

ELLIOT
(laughs)
You said booby.

The two "kids" laugh it up.

MONTAGE: EXT. STREET
Another attack from the Crow.
Emily watches from her window next door.
Nuts are laid up and down the street.
The crow hops along eating the trail of food.
A large net collapses around him, and strings him up to a large tree.

MONTAGE: INT. OFFICE
Acorn stares at Elliot drawing at his artist desk.

ACORN
Lemme see.

Elliot shows him the paper.

ACORN
Here I come to save the day.

ELLIOT
Looks good.

ACORN
Yeah. Superhero time. If he can't save us, nothing can.

MINUTES LATER...

A fog filled office.
The swirling mist parts as a blur of blue and red flies through. It bursts through the roof and flies into the sky.

ACORN
I guess there are some bigger problems in the world today.
ELLIO'T
Some superhero.

ACORN
Well, yeah. When you think about it.

ELLIO'T
I'm running out of ideas.

ACORN
Not yet. We can't fight him out in the open.

MONTAGE: INT. HOUSE
Another attack from the Crow on the stairwell.
The crow opens its wings, but there isn't enough space.
Acorn yawns and slingshots a giant nut at the Crow's face.

MONTAGE: INT. OFFICE
The friends are huddled over the computer.

ELLIO'T
It's hopeless. How do we beat him?

ACORN
Nothing's hopeless. You should know that, El. We just gotta think.

ELLIO'T
We can look up pictures on the computer.

ACORN
Computer?

ELLIO'T
Yeah. We can use the Internet.

ACORN
Wait a tick... We need someone else to help. It's WEIRD SCIENCE time.

ELLIO'T
No way.

ACORN
Yes way.

CUT TO:
Elliot and Acorn with bras on their head.
ACORN
She helped out those nerds. She can do anything.

ELLIOIT
Let's just hope she knows how to take care of giant cartoon birds.

ACORN
It's Kelly LeBrock. She can do anything. We just need a picture of her.

ELLIOIT
We'll check the Internet.

ACORN
Internet? That's what Emily said. What is it?

ELLIOIT
It's kinda like a library. With every book or every movie or every--

ACORN
Whoah. What? Sounds like you'd never turn it off.

ELLIOIT
Some of us don't.

ACORN
Well, let me type it in. Let's see. Hot girl.

ELLIOIT
No no no, don't type that. The Internet isn't for kids. You'll get-- Well, you'll see--

ACORN
Boobies? Like that time we found that magazine in the woods?

ELLIOIT
Um. Yeah. Something like that. So. Let me.

CUT TO:

The office fills with thin mist. As KELLY LeBROCK from the 80s movie WEIRD SCIENCE actually appears.

Elliot's jaw drops in awe.

KELLY
Boys. How can I be of service?
ELLIO
Service?

ACORN
You'll have to excuse my friend.
He's holidazed and confused...
Plus, he doesn't get out much.

KELLY
I can handle that. Is that all you require of me?

ELLIO
Um. We seem to have a little bit of an infestation problem.

KELLY
I see. Do you wish me to rid you of this vermin?

ELLIO
The squirrel? No, no. It's a whole different kind of vermin.

ACORN
Heh, watch who you're calling vermin.

MONTAGE: EXT. BACKYARD
The crow lands. Kelly whistles. He hops over. She points to the living room.

There sits a female crow with a pink bow on her head. She bats her eyelashes at the Crow.

SECONDS LATER...
The two crows fly away over the horizon of this small town.

MONTAGE: INT. KITCHEN
Kelly LeBrock makes the boys some lunch.

Elliot just stares at her bare mid-drift and her cut off t-shirt. His dream girl from long ago.

ACORN
You need a bib?

Elliot snaps to. Acorn laughs at him. They both laugh.

ACORN
Okay. Ready for a road trip.

END MONTAGE:
EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Elliot carries a cardboard box out to his modest Sedan.

His neighbour is shoveling her driveway. Emily has her own small pink shovel, as she helps her mom.

She notices Elliot.

EMILY
Mister Avery?

ELLiot
Oh, hi Emily. Merry Christmas.

Emily's mother, HANNAH (30s), turns around, she lifts her toque slightly.

HANNAH
Merry Christmas, Elliot.

ELLiot
Happy Holidays.

HANNAH
Did you get my message?

ELLiot
Oh. About that. Sorry. I was swamped by work. Like super busy.

HANNAH
On Christmas Eve? You could have just said no, Elliot. I'd understand.

ELLiot
No? No. It's not like that. Hannah, I... I--

HANNAH
What's in the box?

ELLiot
Um. It's. It's--

EMILY
A Holiday surprise. Don't ruin it mommy.

HANNAH
What's that?

EMILY
It's a gift.

ELLiot
Yeah. For Goodwill.
HANNAH
Oh. We should come with. I have a whole--

ELLiot
Well, that--

EMILY
Awww. But mom you said we could play inside after we shoveled the driveway.

HANNAH
Emily. Listen good. There are others out there on Christmas who are less fortunate. And we--

ELLiot
Hannah. I'll take your stuff for you. No worries.

HANNAH
Really?

ELLiot
Really.

HANNAH
Thanks. One second. You finish up your side, you lil' devil you.

Hannah pops into her garage. Emily steps towards Elliot.

EMILY
(whispers)
Told you. I got your back, guys.

Acorn pops up from the box. He winks at her.

Emily winks back.

Elliot sets the box inside his car. He walks down the driveway, to help Hannah next door.

Acorn peeks out even more and waves Emily over.

She gleefully climbs the snowbank and heads for Elliot's car. She looks back to make sure no one's watching.

Elliot walks up her driveway. He smiles at Emily.

ELLiot
Hannah. Let me give you a hand.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Acorn's head peers out of the cardboard box.
ACORN
Emily. I need you to do something for me.

EMILY
What is it, Kevin?

ACORN
What do you think about Elliot?

EMILY
He's cool. Why?

ACORN
Does he seem sad to you?

EMILY
My mom says it's cuz he lost a friend when he was little like me.

Acorn watches Emily, as he struggles to hide his emotions.

EMILY (OS, CONT.)
I think that's why he doesn't have a wife or little kids or anything.

Tears build up, as the little squirrel fights them back.

EMILY (OS, CONT.)
He just can't forget what happened. Cuz it was his bestest friend ever.

Emily pets Acorn on the head.

EMILY
Don't you be sad. It's just, well, it makes Mister Avery upset cuz his friend isn't here to play with anymore. But, I shouldn't say too much. She says I'm not a-posed to talk about it.

ACORN
(choked up)
Oh.

EMILY
It's like when my daddy got sick. You just don't talk about that stuff.

ACORN
I'm sorry.

EMILY
It's okay. My mom is more sad about it. Why do you wanna know so much?
ACORN
I just wanted to make sure... Your mom? Will you give her something for me?

EMILY
What is it? A Christmas present?

ACORN
Yeah. Something like that.

Acorn pulls out an envelope. It says "The Girl Nextdoor" on the front.

EMILY
"The girl nextdoor"? Is that for me?

ACORN
No. It's just a saying. It means like Winnie Cooper.

EMILY
Winnie who?

ACORN
That isn't important. This is to help make them not sad anymore.

EMILY
Really? What is it?

ACORN
A secret.

EMILY
You can tell me. 'member, I got your back.

ACORN
It's grown-up stuff.

EMILY
Oh. Okay.

ACORN
Just... Can you give it to her once we drive away?

Emily looks at the envelope. She takes it from Acorn. Then nods affirmative.

EMILY
Then, when you come back. Can we play outside?

ACORN
Emily? I don't know if I will be back.
EMILY
What?

ACORN
It's Holiday Magic, and I don't--

HANNAH (OS)
There you are. Whatcha doin' Emily?

Acorn zips back into the box. Hidden.

Emily turns with a smile, the envelope held behind her back.

EMILY
Just helping.

Acorn peeks through a crack in the box. He smiles.

FADE:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A family sedan races down the empty winter road.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Elliot drives. Christmas tunes play on the radio.

Acorn sits in the passenger seat. He takes off his robber
mask. He looks out the window, watching the winter
wonderland race by.

ACORN
Will they remember me?

ELLIO T
If I can see through it. So can
they.

ACORN
(holds up paws)
It's not like I, uh, look the same.

ELLIO T
Yeah. But you are. You're Kevin.
When you were 10. You act the exact
same.

ACORN
Ya. I feel the same too. But this
whole, I'm a squirrel thing. How
will they-- I don't know what--

ELLIO T
Sure. It will hurt their brains a
bit. But it'll be worth it, Kev.

ACORN
How long can I stay?
ELLIOOT
As long as you like. If they believe all this... Well, you'll be home buddy. That's gotta be the best Christmas gift I'll ever give. Like, ever.

ACORN
But... It's... Well, I didn't even recognize YOU.

ELLIOOT
Things change. But we figured it out, didn't we. Listen, it's the holidays, maybe they'll just go with it. We all need something to believe in... Sometimes.

ACORN
Yeah. But this? This is--

ELLIOOT & ACORN
Nuts.

EXT. CAR - CONTINOUS
Laughter comes from the car as they continue down the long road.

FADE:

EXT. HOUSE - DAY
A perfect suburban family home. Decorated full of lights. A snowman on the front lawn.

In the driveway, stands Elliot. He looks back to the parked car. Acorn looks out, his paws pressed against the window.

INT. CAR - CONTINOUS
Acorn watches Elliot approach the front door.

The door opens and it's Kevin's sister, KATHERINE. 30 now. She looks puzzled by Elliot's arrival.

Acorn can't hear what they say, but he's got a good idea. His eyes well up with tears as he watches them hug.

Headlights come from behind Acorn. The car pulls into his sister's driveway.

He starts to cry, even though a smile grows large.

His parents (in their 60s) ease their way out of their car. The squirrel cries.
In the side mirror is his reflection (with the message: "OBJECTS ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR"), showing the small 10 year old Kevin - freckles and all.

INT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The large Christmas tree towers over the presents below. The tree is full of ornaments, and tinsel, and lights.

There are three small children at play. Katherine watches them fondly.

She looks to a photo with a younger family. It's her kids, 2 years ago. And her husband with his arm around her.

Elliot sits on the couch with a steaming mug of cider. He is all smiles watching the family around them.

He looks to Katherine. He notices that she is looking at the photo. He follows her gaze.

There is another photo that shows her husband. It's frame is etched: "R.I.P. 1980-2011".

Acorn sits on the couch next to his greying parents. They hold hands, their eyes full of tears, and smiling sweetly.

Katherine hands Acorn a large present with a bow.

Acorn takes it. He shakes it.

She takes a picture with her digital camera. He poses with a cheesy smile. He continues to shake the gift.

ACORN
(scratches head)
Let see. It's not underwear... It's not a Sega Genesis. That's old fashioned now... Let's see... Holy farp.

MOM
(scolds)
Kevin.

DAD
You know your mother hates that word.

Katherine looks to the camera screen, at the photo she just took. Acorn is a blur. She taps the screen. It ZOOMS in.

It's like there are 2 images together: one human, one squirrel - blurred and nearly indistinguishable.

She looks up, perplexed. She looks to Elliot. They share a smile. Elliot nods towards Acorn.

Acorn opens the present. It's a large acorn.
He smiles large.

ACORN
Who gave me this? Mom?

Mom and Dad shrug.

ACORN
El? Of course.

ELLIOT
Not me. Check the name tag. Maybe it was Santa, Kev?

Acorn checks the torn wrapping paper. The tag says: "TO KEVIN, FROM SANTA".

ACORN
But Santa--

ELLIOT
Holiday miracles are real, Kev. Don't ruin it now.

The squirrel looks around to his smiling family.

They all surrender to the holiday magic.

Acorn scratches his head again. MAGICALLY, he shimmers into human form. A 10 year old boy. Kevin.

KEVIN
You're right... I think the pumpkin chariot comes by at midnight, so let's celebrate the holidays the right way while we still can.

Elliot nods. Kevin turns to his parents. They cry, holding their small boy.

Elliot looks around. The Christmas tree. All the presents. The smiling kids playing with toys.

He looks to Katherine. They share a smile.

Elliot walks over to her. They clink mugs.

ELLIOT
They're so happy.

KATHERINE
Thank you, Elliot. We needed this. We've been through so much as a family.

ELLIOT
Katherine... I'm sorry. For--
KATHERINE
I know. But, you'll never know how much this means to us. Even if it's just today. It means the world.

Elliot and Katherine share a moment.

ELLIOT
To me too.

They hug each other. A nice warm genuine hug.

Katherine looks to Elliot. Face to face.

They share a soft smile. Are they about to kiss?

She laughs to herself.

ELLIOT
What?

KATHERINE
Elliot? You sure you can't stay for a while?

Elliot laughs. Awkward.

He looks to the couch.

Kevin's parents hold him tightly.

ELLIOT
No. I think it's best if you guys spend some time alone. Um, together. I mean, as a family.

Elliot and Kevin share a look. A moment. They nod to one another. And smile.

KATHERINE
You sure?

ELLIOT
I just wanted give you guys--

Kevin interrupts, running over to Elliot's side.

KEVIN
Wait. Open my present first.

ELLIOIt
Present?

KEVIN
Duh. It's Christmas, you farp. Of course I got you a present.

ELLIOIt
But I didn't get you one.
Kevin leads Elliot towards the tree. A long box is wrapped.

KEVIN
You're kidding right. You brought us all together.

Elliot nods. He starts to open the wrapping paper.

KEVIN (CONT.)
I'm not gonna get all mushy like you. But you gave us the best gift ever. Now it's your turn. Open it.

Elliot laughs so hard. A genuine belly laugh.

ELLIOT
Is that what I think it is?

KEVIN
So you DO remember? A promise is a promise.

The unwrapped present is a long wooden crate with "FRAGILE" stenciled on the side.

ELLIOT & KEVIN
"Fra-gee-lay... Must be Italian."

The two friends laugh even harder.

ELLIOT
You said it didn't exist. We made a bet. A long time ago.

KEVIN
Well, I found one... I think I drew it pretty well too.

KATHERINE
Drew?

KEVIN
Duh. Weren't you paying attention earlier.

KATHERINE
The machine?

KEVIN
Exactomundo.

KATHERINE
Well, what is it? Open it.

KEVIN
Not with little kids around.

Elliot and Kevin laugh again.
ELLIO T
Thanks, buddy.

KEVIN
Thank you.

They hug for a moment. A genuine happy moment.

KEVIN
Now get outta here, you big wuss.

Mom and Dad watch their little son with Elliot. So happy.

Katherine plays with her children.

Elliot puts his coat on at the front door. Kevin hands him his gloves.

ELLIO T
Well, I guess this is good-bye.

KEVIN
Don't say that.

ELLIO T
But the machine? I don't know how this magic stuff works.

KEVIN
Who cares? Don't think about that. What happens will happen. For now. I'm here... Because of you.

ELLIO T
I missed you, Kev.

KEVIN
I know, El... That's why. When you get back home... You forget about me.

ELLIO T
What?

KEVIN
(sad)
You heard me...
(smirks)
Do I need to repeat everything?

ELLIO T
But I can't--

KEVIN
The girl next door, El. She's waiting for you.

ELLIO T
Hannah? Emily's mom.
KEVIN
Elliot? It's time to move on.

Kevin hugs Elliot. They hold each other tight.

They separate. A soft smile. Elliot nods.

ELLIO
See ya later, Kev.

KEVIN
That's the spirit.

EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Elliot walks to his car, carrying the large wooden crate.

He looks back to the house.

The Christmas tree shines bright in the large front window.

He sees Kevin's family inside.

Kevin runs to his parents on the couch.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Katherine plays with her children at a toy race track.

Kevin sits on the couch. He nestles into his parents.

He looks up to them. One at a time.

KEVIN
I love you, guys. Sooo much...
You'll never know.

MOM
(soft)
Oh. We know.

MOM & DAD
I love you.

They look to each other and share the most beautiful moment.

KEVIN
Merry Christmas.

EXT. HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Snowflakes softly float past the large bay window.

The family inside laughs and hugs each other.

There is no squirrel in sight - just the regular 10 year old
Kevin and his family.
Kevin races cars with the other kids on a retro racetrack that curves up on the wall.

Kevin's dad walks over to his mom at the window.

They both wave goodbye to Elliot in the driveway.

Elliot waves back, and enters his car.

Mom and dad turn and watch the kids play.

They share a warm embrace, as snow continues to fall on the winter wonderland.

FADE:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Elliot drives down the snowy street.

All the houses are lit with holiday decorations.

He stares out his car window as he drives.

Christmas lights reflect and bounce off the clear surface, dancing over his face.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Elliot pulls parks in his laneway.

He steps outside, and cranks his neck skyward.

He watches the snowflakes fall.

HANNAH (OS)
You ready for that drink, Elliot?

Elliot turns to see Hannah at her front door.

ELLIO'T
Hannah?

HANNAH
Looks like Santa's playing matchmaker with us.

She holds an envelope in one hand, a letter in the other.

ELLIO'T
Santa?

Emily pops out of the door behind her mother.

EMILY
Yeah. It's a holiday wish come true.
ELLiot
(laughs)
Come on over, guys.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The front hallway is a mess from earlier attacks with the crow. There are arrows stuck in the wall, and broken furniture strewn about.

ELLiot
You'll hafta excuse the mess.

EMILY
Don't worry, Mister Avery, she knows all about it.

ELLiot
She-- You do?

HANNAH
Uh, yeah. The letter. Only now I'm starting to believe it a whole lot more.

KELLY (OS)
Dinner's ready.

Elliot whips his attention to the kitchen.

Kelly LeBrock stands there, scantily clad.

ELLiot
It's not what you think. Um, THAT I can explain... Sort of.

The conversation fades in volume as Elliot leads Hannah and Emily down the long hallway.

KELLY
It's getting cold.

ELLiot
Um, right this way.

HANNAH
I imagine this is a nice place. Normally.

ELLiot
We'll talk about it over dinner.

HANNAH
Why do I recognize her? Do I know who she is?
They enter the kitchen.

MONTAGE: KITCHEN

It looks amazing. The kitchen has been completely decorated for the Holidays.

There is a steaming turkey resting on the table.

Elliot smiles large.

Kelly cuts the turkey and serves them all.

They enjoy Christmas dinner. Smiles and laughter.

Kelly stands at the kitchen entrance, watching them.

She holds a packed suitcase. She turns and leaves without saying her goodbyes.

They continue their feast.

Elliot laughs with Hannah.

Emily seems to be re-enacting the snowball attack earlier. She pretends to jump back in slow-motion firing her fingers like they were guns.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Snowflakes fall on the Winter Wonderland.

There is a wooden crate cracked open and resting at the end of the driveway. It's marked "FRAGILE".

Elliot's front window glows with decorations. Red and green lights blink on and off.

Instead of a Christmas tree taking up the main window, it is a long female leg in stockings, with a lampshade as a skirt.

Emily bursts out of the front door, dressed for outside.

She is quickly followed by a chuckling Hannah and Elliot.

They have a snowball fight in the front yard.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Most of the houses along the street have their lights off. Even the outdoor decorations.

Elliot and Hannah's houses are the only ones with all the lights on.
An upstairs light goes out across the street.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Emily throws a snowball.

It hits Elliot in the face. The slush drips down.

Emily laughs. Then Elliot and Hannah join in.

Hannah wipes away some slush.

    HANNAH
    There's a lil' something on your face.

    ELLIOT
    Tell me about it.

They share a moment, looking into one another's eyes.

They smile.

    EMILY
    Eww. You're not gonna smooch now are you?

They laugh.

    ELLIOT
    One thing at a time, right.

    HANNAH
    Right. We have time.

A black feather floats down between them.

    EMILY
    Look.

Emily points to the sky.

Elliot notices the feather. Fear sinks in. His smile fades.

He cranks his neck skyward.

The two giant crows are back...

...they fly in a circle. Together. Happy.

    EMILY
    Look. Love birds.

    HANNAH
    Emily.

    EMILY
    What? That was funny. Um, right?
HANNAH
More like cheesy.

ELLIO T
Say, what time is it?

EMILY
It's way past my bed time.

ELLIO T
That's what I was thinking.

HANNAH
What is it?

ELLIO T
No, no. Nothing.

HANNAH
You alright?

ELLIO T
Yeah. I will be. Once I get revenge for that slush-ball to the face.

EMILY
Noooo.

Emily runs away.
Elliot chases her around the yard, with snow in his hand.
Hannah watches with a smile. Then she joins in.
Emily leads them in circles, until Hannah crashes into Elliot. They fall to the ground, laughing.
They stare up at the snowflakes falling down on them.
Emily plops onto the ground in between them.
Snow falls on this happy moment, as all three watch the night sky - the twinkling stars and cascading snowflakes.
FADE OUT: