

JUST ONE LIFE

A story of love and redemption

By Dave Dvorak

CAST

Mr. Mitchell: late middle-aged, CEO of Titanic Health

Adam: 30's, VP of finance of Titanic Health

Jake: (lead male), 30ish, VP of public relations

Patricia: manager of Kensington Steak House

Abby Lynn: (lead female), late 20's, server at Kensington Steak House, artist/mural painter

Brandon: 30ish, Jake's buddy, works as a postal carrier

Clerk: middle-aged woman, works at Titanic Health

Sheila Sparks: Black woman, middle-aged, human resources/DIE leader at Titanic Health

Homeless Mystic: mysterious guy, wears a hood so we never see his face

Reporter: middle-aged woman

SCENE I

The HOMELESS MYSTIC walks across a dimly lit stage, singing.

HOMELESS MYSTIC

We've got a million choices in this world, but still we're given just one life. We've got a million choices in this world, but still we're given just one life. We've got a million choices in this world, but still we're given just one life.

Homeless Mystic walks off stage. Lights come up on Titanic Health HQ. MR. MITCHELL and ADAM are sitting at a boardroom table. There is a flip chart showing graphs and numbers.

MR. MITCHELL

Adam, my good man! I understand it's been another quarter of record earnings for us here at Titanic Health.

ADAM

Indeed, it has, Mr. Mitchell!

MR. MITCHELL

What a glorious time to be running a private health insurance corporation. Why don't you take me through the numbers.

ADAM

Stands up, walks over to flip chart.

Well boss, let's have a looksie. Titanic Health currently insures 75 million members. Last quarter we collected \$80 billion in premiums from them and get this... we only paid out \$74 billion in medical claims. That leaves \$6 billion that we collected and *didn't* spend on medical care.

MR. MITCHELL

\$6 billion that we didn't pay out in medical care! Hmm...what shall we do with it? We can't just leave \$6 billion sitting around, now, can we?

ADAM

No sir, of course not!

MR. MITCHELL

Stroking his chin pensively

Perhaps ...we should return that excess \$6 billion...to our policy holders?

A pause, then MITCHELL and ADAM burst out in laughter

MR. MITCHELL

I kid, I kid.

ADAM

Ha, I love a CEO with a sense of humor.

MR. MITCHELL

Gives thumbs up.

Profits, baby, profits! Our investors will be very pleased. Titanic Health has become the darling of Wall Street.

ADAM

Our growth is unstoppable!

JAKE walks in the room, carrying his laptop.

MR. MITCHELL

Hello, Jake. Adam and I were just discussing the happy news about our quarterly earnings. Be on the lookout for the arrival of some fat bonus checks coming to all our fine executives—and that certainly includes you, our exceptional director of public relations.

JAKE

Somewhat unenthusiastically

Hey, that's great news, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL

Act excited, boy...this is serious money in your pocket! But of course, this also makes your position at Titanic Health even more important.

JAKE

How so, boss?

MR. MITCHELL

With quarter after quarter of financial windfalls, we'll be in the hot glow of the spotlight. Those health-care-for-all activists will complain about our enormous profits, writing their letters to the editor, contacting their congresspeople.

ADAM

Calling us greedy middlemen just because we control the purse strings. Claiming we put profits before patients. They want a health care system that's (*air quotes*) "more equitable".

MR. MITCHELL

That's right. They think *everybody* should have health care. Can you imagine? But you, Jake—our director of public relations, our king of spin—you need to keep our image bright and shiny.

JAKE

Yes, sir, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL

Make them believe that patients need us. That doctors, nurses and hospitals could not possibly survive without us.

ADAM

Even though we don't actually provide health care.

MR. MITCHELL

Even though we don't actually provide health care.

JAKE

Ok. I'll prepare a press release. How about something like this?

Typing on his laptop

"The latest earnings report confirm that Titanic Health remains a valued and crucial pillar of the health care system."

MR. MITCHELL

That's beautiful, Jake! Way to spin it. Go on...

JAKE

"Our mission at Titanic Health is unwavering. We are committed to ensuring the best health of our members and their families."

MR. MITCHELL

Young man, you are a true wordsmith. What else you got?

JAKE

"Titanic Health offers more choices of plans that match your lifestyle. We have the human touch to help you thrive. Compassion you can trust. The Titanic power to heal."

ADAM

He has the silver tongue!

Exchanges high-fives with MR. MITCHELL

MR. MITCHELL

The gift of gab!

ADAM

He can talk a dog off a meat wagon!

MR. MITCHELL

He could sell refrigerators in Siberia!

ADAM and MR. MITCHELL sing "Titanic Health Song"

Titanic Health has the power to heal.

We're gonna improve the way you feel.

Don't you know your health is our mission

We're not your doctor, not your nurse

But we control the power of the purse

And of course, we'll take our commission.

Chorus

We're rolling in the dough, that's for certain

Just don't look behind the curtain

We make you believe we're all about health

But we're just a big business piling up wealth

*Trust us, we're there for you
Compassion, we care for you
Optimize your health, that's our game
Of course we'll make our tidy sum
And then we'll raise your premium
When you're sick we just might pay your claim*

Chorus

*We're sorry about your time in the hospital
Those costs can be astronomical
We feel your pain, it's such a bitter pill
But you are financially culpable
to pay your high deductible
Did you really think that we'd pick up your bill?*

Bridge

*We're not in the business of curing you, we just say we're insuring you
Jake, you've gotta protect our reputation
Justify my executive compensation*

Chorus

MR. MITCHELL

Gentleman, I believe it's time to celebrate. Let us indulge ourselves this evening at the exquisite 5-star, Kensington Steakhouse!

ADAM

Yes!!!

ADAM and MR. MITCHELL grab their coats and make for the door. JAKE is still sitting at the table.

MR. MITCHELL

Jake, are you coming?

JAKE

Hesitating

Yes. Of course, Mr. Mitchell.

SCENE 2

Kensington Steakhouse, entrance area. MR. MITCHELL, ADAM and JAKE are met at the entrance podium by the manager PATRICIA.

PATRICIA

Good evening, gentlemen. Welcome back to the Kensington Steakhouse. It's been a while.

MR. MITCHELL

Always great to see you, Patricia! We're celebrating tonight!

PATRICIA

Oh? Do tell.

MR. MITCHELL

Business has never been better.

ADAM

The money is rolling in. And that means we are ready to feast!

PATRICIA

Well, I'm happy for you, gentlemen. We've reserved your usual table by the window.

PATRICIA takes them to their table, seats them, hands them menus.

PATRICA

And here are your menus. Your server will be with you shortly. Enjoy!

MR. MITCHELL

Thank you kindly.

PATRICIA exits. The guys open their menus.

ADAM

Man, I love this place. So great to be back. I'm starved.

JAKE

Tell me about it. It's been forever since I've had a decent meal.

MR. MITCHELL

Oh yeah? Why's that?

JAKE

You know, bachelor life. Mostly frozen dinners these days. No point in cooking for just one.

ADAM

Ah, I remember those glorious bachelor days—all that freedom. So do tell us, Jake...how's the love life?

MR. MITCHELL

Yes. Come on. Married guys like us need to live vicariously through you.

JAKE

Honestly...not much to report guys. Single life isn't all it's cracked up to be.

MR. MITCHELL

Oh come on, now. A good-looking guy like you, pulling down a ridiculous salary, living in that sweet downtown loft. You've got the whole package, son.

ADAM

Yeah, what's wrong with you, Jake? Hot women should be falling all over themselves to date you.

JAKE

I don't know, guys. I tried online dating for a while but seems all those women just want to know what I do for a living and what kind of car I drive.

ADAM

What kind of car you drive? Dude, you drive a BMW 4 Series! That should seal the deal right there!

JAKE

I don't know. That's not why I want someone to like me. *(sighs)* Anyway, it's not a big deal. I guess it'll happen someday if it happens. I'm pretty content.

MR. MITCHELL

Content? Son, you deserve to have it all! (*pats JAKE on the back*). Patience, Jake. Things will be looking up one day soon.

JAKE

Thanks, Mr. Mitchell.

ABBY LYNN comes over to the table.

ABBY

Good evening, gentlemen. I'm Abby Lynn. I'll be your server tonight.

The guy look up and immediately ogle her.

MR. MITCHELL

Well, hello there, Abby Lynn, what a lovely server to help facilitate our celebration.

ABBY

Thank you. My pleasure.

ADAM

You realize, Abby Lynn, that tonight you are waiting on three insanely successful business executives.

ABBY

Wow, such an incredible honor. *(rolling eyes)* Would you three insanely successful business executives like to get started with some drinks?

ADAM

Yes, I thought you'd never ask...I'll have a Macallan 25-year-old Scotch on the rocks.

MR. MITCHELL

A Manhattan for me. And let's get appetizing with an order of oysters Rockefeller.

ABBY

Got it. *(writing order down. Looks up at JAKE)* And you?

JAKE

Um...I'll have a beer.

ABBY

Any particular kind of beer?

JAKE

Uh...Pilsener. A Pilsener would be great.

ABBY

Wonderful. I'll get those drinks. I'll be back to get your orders. Let me know if you have any questions about the menu.

ABBY leaves

ADAM

(to JAKE)

Dude! That's your future wife! She just doesn't know it yet.

MR. MITCHELL

She certainly seems like a lovely young lady, Jake. Perhaps you should turn on your charm.

ADAM

Yes! Get her digits. We'll be your wingmen.

JAKE

(annoyed)

Easy guys. I can fend for myself.

MR. MITCHELL

So boys, how do we intend to spend our big fat bonus checks?

ADAM

I'm gonna close the deal on this sweet boat. 40-foot cabin cruiser. 1200 horsepower. Gonna be turning some heads on Lake Minnetonka. How about you, Mr. Mitchell?

MR. MITCHELL

Well, I'm planning to put an addition on our summer home on Martha's Vineyard. I'm thinking of adding a den with a big stone fireplace. Don't know how I've gotten by without it for so long. And you, Jake?

JAKE

You know, I really haven't thought much about it.

ABBY returns with the drinks on a tray. She places them on the table.

ABBY

Here you are, gentlemen.

MR. MITCHELL

Thank you kindly, Abby Lynn.

ADAM

If we're a bit animated tonight, it's only because we're celebrating our good fortune. Boats, cars, vacations—the abundance of life.

ABBY

Is that so?

ADAM

Yes indeed. So forgive us in advance if we get a bit out of control.

ABBY

Thanks for the warning. But just so you know, the last bunch that got of line, we rounded them up and now they're washing dishes in the back. So be careful.

ADAM

Ah, a sassy one. I love it. Hey, just thought you should know that our friend Jake here is single.

JAKE glares at ADAM

ABBY

Is that so? Well good luck to you. So are we ready to order our meals?

MR. MITCHELL

Yes. I will have the New York Strip, medium rare.

ADAM

The porterhouse for me. Medium.

ABBY

Looking at Jake

And you?

JAKE

I'll...umm...I'll have the, uh...f-f-filet, medium rare.

Accidentally knocks over his water glass

Oh!

ABBY grabs a few napkins to clean up the spill

Oh my god, I'm so sorry!

ABBY

No worries. It's just water. *(dabbing up the spill)* I'll put in those dinner orders. Don't run away, gentleman...I'm just getting used to you.

ABBY leaves

ADAM

(to JAKE)

C'mon, Mr. smooth talking PR guy...where's your wit? Where's your charm? Did the cat get your silver tongue?

JAKE

Shaking his head

Oh man, I'm such a dork. I don't know what came over me.

MR. MITCHELL

She seems delightful, Jake. *(reaches in suit jacket pocket)* Here, take these tickets to tomorrow night's Timberwolves playoff game. Half-court seats, on the company. Ask her to the game. Even if she doesn't like basketball, it's a fun night out.

JAKE

Taking the tickets.

Wow, thanks, Mr. Mitchell. These just might help my cause. And Adam, I won't be needing your help, thank you very much.

MR. MITCHELL

Well, gentlemen, here's to profits, here's to the ever-lucrative business of health insurance, here's to Titanic Health!

The 3 raise glasses to a toast.

Lights cut, then come up again. There are plates with steaks, guys are eating.

Patricia comes over.

PATRICIA

Hello, gentlemen. How are your steaks? Is everything to your liking so far?

MR. MITCHELL

Fabulous as always, Patricia. Hey, I've got a question...what can you tell us about our waitress?

PATRICIA

Abby Lynn? We hired her just a few months ago. Wonderful young woman. Hard worker. Kind. And talented. This job is just a side-gig for her. By day she's an artist.

JAKE

Really? What kind of art?

PATRICIA

She paints murals. Big, bold, colorful ones on the walls of buildings. Lately she's been working on one outside of St. Martin's homeless shelter downtown.

ADAM

But...is she single? You know, our friend Jake here could really use a nice girlfriend.

PATRICIA

She was in a long-term relationship that ended about a year ago, but as far as I know she's been single ever since.

MR. MITCHELL and ADAM nudge JAKE

But...honestly, gentleman. I highly doubt that she's the type that would connect with your kind of people.

MR. MITCHELL

Our kind of people? What ever do you mean by that?

PATRICIA

Well, you might say she's unusual. Unconventional.

PATRICIA sings "Ethereal"

She don't care that your shoes are Gucci leather

*She don't care about that Rolex on your wrist
She don't care that you're dressed up in Armani
Or that new cologne you think she can't resist*

*She don't care about that Porsche in your driveway
Your Uptown crib just doesn't turn her head
Them shiny objects never will distract her
'cause Abby's eyes are looking straight ahead*

Chorus

*The kind of things that Abby wants are not material
She just floats above this world, she's so...ethereal*

*She ain't impressed by the Benjamins in your wallet
She ain't turned on by that hot tub in your yard
She ain't impressed by your speedboat at the harbor
You can't buy her love with your platinum credit card*

*'Cause all she wants is kindness and a sunset
The kind of things they say you can get for free
Forget about those bankers down on Wall Street
'cause Abby don't accept their currency*

Chorus

JAKE:

All this time I've been drifting on the ocean

I'm a sailor on the sea without a chart

I need someone to brighten my horizon

PATRICIA: Well, the only way to go is with your heart...BUT

Chorus

PATRICIA

Bon apétit, gentlemen.

PATRICIA leaves

ADAM

Wow, that Abby sounds pretty weird and messed up to me. Doesn't care about cars or boats or fine jewelry? What a freak. Sounds like a chick to avoid after all, Jake.

MR. MITCHELL

Ah, Jake, she's easy on the eyes, but honestly, my son, how much could one have in common with someone like that? Probably best not to waste your time.

JAKE

Yeah, maybe you guys are right. Who am I kidding?

Lights cut, then come back up. The 3 guys are at the podium, donning their overcoats, saying goodbye to PATRICIA.

PATRICIA

So how was everything?

MR. MITCHELL

Exceptional, as always, Patricia.

PATRICIA

Do come back and dine with us again, gentlemen.

ADAM

Oh, you know we will. Probably after our next earnings report.

The 3 guys walk out the door.

MR. MITCHELL

Have a good night, guys. See you back at the office in the morning.

ADAM

Thanks, boss, for the amazing dinner.

JAKE

Thank you, Mr. Mitchell.

HOMELESS MYSTIC is sitting by the doorway with an overturned hat.

ADAM

Hey buddy, get a job!

MR. MITCHELL and ADAM walk away into the darkness. JAKE puts a dollar in the HOMELESS MYSTIC's hat. He walks back to the door, pauses, takes the basketball tickets out of his coat pocket, looks at them, puts them back in his pocket, then goes back into the restaurant. He heads back to the table, where ABBY is clearing the dishes. ABBY looks up.

ABBY

Hi. Did you leave something behind?

JAKE

Hey. Um, no. I was wondering if, um...I just wanted to say, uh, I'm happy you were our searcher...our surfer...our server, tonight. And I was wondering if, um....um... *(long pause)* Well, just thanks. It was a really good dinner.

ABBY

(pauses, smiles) Of course. Thanks for coming. Have a good night.

ABBY walks away. JAKE stands alone; takes the basketball tickets out of his pocket, looks down at them, hangs his head, sighs. Puts them back in his pocket. Lights cut.

SCENE 3

JAKE and his buddy BRANDON are eating popcorn, drinking beer at the Timberwolves game, side-by-side in chairs.

BRANDON

Wow, these are amazing seats, Jake! Thanks so much for the last-minute invite. You know how much I love the Timberwolves.

JAKE

Glad you could join me, Brandon.

BRANDON

You know there's no way I could ever afford half-court seats like. These days, we postal carriers hardly make enough to sit up there in the nosebleed section.

JAKE

Well, don't thank me...thank Titanic Health. Company perk.

They stand up and cheer for the game. Sit back down.

BRANDON

Well, then thank you, Titanic Health! So how's work going, anyway?

JAKE

On the one hand, it's a great gig. Hefty salary, benefits, fat bonuses. But honestly, I don't feel like I deserve the money they pay me.

BRANDON

What? Why not?

JAKE

It feels kind of empty. I go to a bunch of meetings. Write some press releases. Hold a press conference here and there. Keep average people feeling all warm and fuzzy about our humungous corporation, when all we do is handle their health care money and keep a huge chunk of it for ourselves.

BRANDON

Sounds like a pretty sweet job to me. But what do I know? I'm just a mailman.

JAKE

Some days I envy your job. Delivering mail to people's houses has actual value. It's something *real*.

BRANDON

Dude, you wouldn't want my job in the sweltering heat of August, or when the snow flies in January. But to your point, I do like my job most days. I get fresh air and plenty of exercise. I get to chat up people on my route—kids, little old ladies.

JAKE

See, that's what I'm saying. Real people.

They stand up and cheer for the action, exchange high fives. Sit back down.

JAKE

I could really use a vacation right now. I'd love to just go on a long road trip and get away from things for a while.

BRANDON

A road trip? Where to?

JAKE

I'd love to drive out west. Eventually make it to the Grand Canyon. One of the most spectacular places on earth. And I've never been there.

BRANDON

Why don't you just do it?

JAKE

Are you kidding me? They'd never give me that kind of time off. The company is way too busy these days.

BRANDON

Busy making all that bank.

JAKE

Pretty much.

BRANDON

Well, maybe someday. Last I checked, the Grand Canyon's not going anywhere.

JAKE

Yeah, maybe someday. So, no offense, Brandon, but I was hoping to bring someone else to this game.

BRANDON

Oh, fine...I get it. I'm just your *backup* friend. So who was your first choice?

JAKE

Well...so last night we had a company dinner at the Kensington, and we had this amazing server. She seemed really smart, really funny. Her smile totally lit up the place.

BRANDON

And?

JAKE

Apparently, she's also an artist, paints big murals on buildings in the city.

BRANDON

What's her name?

JAKE

Abby Lynn.

BRANDON

Abby Lynn. So you asked her to go to the game?

JAKE

Well, I tried.

BRANDON

What do you mean, you tried?

JAKE

I knew exactly what I was going to say. But when I tried to ask her out, to go to the game, I suddenly just froze up. I couldn't find my words. I went blank.

BRANDON

You? The communications major, the smooth PR guy? The human thesaurus? Don't they pay you to talk?

JAKE

Yeah, imagine that. I felt like a complete idiot. A verbal klutz. I felt so.... clumsy.

JAKE sings "Clumsy"

*I found myself right next to her and got a whiff of her sweet perfume
My knees they got so shaky and my heart did somersaults and it went—boom!
My tongue got tied up in a knot, my face turned red, my palms they got wet
And all the lines that I rehearsed so many times I managed to forget*

Chorus

*I was a circus clown, just a fool when I opened up my mouth
And all my plans to ask her out they suddenly went south
Because I'm clumsy
When I tried to talk to her I was clumsy*

*I can usually talk so eloquent to everyone from vagabonds to kings
I can be so charming, be so smooth, can dialogue on just about anything
But I was paralyzed by stage fright the moment that she walked into the room
And all the words that crossed my lips came crashing down like a lead balloon*

Chorus

Bridge

*I'm a dunce, I'm a dope, for words I grope
It's a slippery slope, I just can't cope
That girl's got me on the ropes 'cause I'm clumsy*

*I'm a fool, I'm a flake, there's so much at stake
Got desire for her, it makes me ache
I try to be cool but I just can't fake 'cause I'm clumsy*

*I'm clumsy 'round that child
My mind is running wild
Give me just a little while
I'll show her I got style
Style by the mile it's gonna make her smile
But meanwhile I'm clumsy*

Chorus

Crowd yells, "Sit down!", throws beer cups at JAKE. He sits back down.

BRANDON

Well Jake, if she's amazing as you say, maybe you should give it another try. Dude, don't be a wuss...what do you have to lose?

JAKE

Yeah, maybe you're right.

Lights cut

SCENE 4

At the Titanic Health office, CLERK on the phone. JAKE sits nearby, working on his laptop. PATIENT's voice on the other line.

CLERK

Hello, Titanic Health customer service. How can I help you?

PATIENT

Hello. I had surgery last week for appendicitis, and just got my bill in the mail. There's a \$3800 anesthesiologist bill that you haven't paid. What's that all about?

CLERK

I'm sorry, ma'am, but we aren't able to pay that claim. You used an out-of-network provider.

PATIENT

Out-of-network? What do you mean? I had appendicitis and I went to Mercy Hospital—that's an *in-network* hospital according to my Titanic Health plan.

CLERK

Yes, I realize that—the hospital you chose is in-network, your surgeon is in-network, but regrettably, your anesthesiologist is *out* of network for your plan. Therefore we are unable to pay her fees and you are fully responsible for them.

PATIENT

You have got to be kidding me! I had an emergency condition. I went to the hospital I was supposed to! How was I supposed to know that that the anesthesiologist was out of network?

CLERK

I'm deeply sorry for your troubles, ma'am, but those are the terms of your health plan.

PATIENT

I'm a single mom! I don't have \$3800 sitting around.

CLERK

I'm sorry for your difficulties. I do wish you a good recovery from your surgery. Thank you for calling Titanic Health. Have a wonderful day. Goodbye!

*JAKE has intermittently been listening to the conversation while working on his laptop.
ADAM enters.*

ADAM

Hey Jake, want to get some lunch? New bistro down the street. I hear they've got a killer lobster bisque.

JAKE

Thanks, Adam. Gonna pass. I've gotta run an errand over the lunch hour.

ADAM

Okay, buddy. Another time.

ADAM leaves. JAKE looks both ways, closes his laptop and walks out the door. Walks down the street, looking at his phone's map app.

JAKE

St. Martin's shelter... St. Martin's shelter...

JAKE comes upon HOMELESS MYSTIC who is sitting on the sidewalk.

Do you know how to get to St. Martin's shelter?

HOMELESS MYSTIC points down the street.

Thanks!

JAKE walks up on ABBY. She's wearing a painting mask, overalls, spray paint can in hand, painting the side of a wall.

JAKE

Hi.

ABBY

Hi.

JAKE

Impressive mural. A lot going on there. I love the bold colors. Tell me about it.

ABBY

Thanks. Well, I'm hoping to convey the power of community to come together to address our societal challenges—poverty, homelessness, systemic racism...hey, do I know you? (*Takes off her painting mask.*)

JAKE

Um...well, I had dinner at the Kensington the other night. You were our server. And first off, I want to apologize for my jackass co-workers.

ABBY

Oh yeah. *You* guys. Apology accepted.

JAKE

And...I'm the guy who spilled my water. Like a toddler that shouldn't be taken to a nice restaurant.

ABBY

Ha! Oh yeah, I remember that.

JAKE

My name is Jake, by the way.

ABBY

Hi, Jake By the Way. I'm Abby Lynn. What brings you to these parts? This doesn't seem like your kind of neighborhood.

JAKE

I'm on lunchbreak. Just thought I'd take a stroll and check out a different part of town.

ABBY

Liar.

JAKE

OK, busted. Your manager mentioned you were an artist and that you were working on this mural, so I figured I'd come here to check it out.

ABBY

(Playfully)

Ahh, so you're stalking me.

JAKE

Just seeking some cultural enlightenment. And I wanted to catch you before you became famous.

ABBY

Smooth.

JAKE

In any case, that's some really compelling work. And here I thought you only trafficked in New York strip steaks and prime rib.

ABBY

Nah, I just picked up the server gig to help pay off some debt. Had some bad luck.

JAKE

Bad luck?

ABBY

I had a health issue last year, got slammed with some big medical bills. Lost my savings, had to sell my car. Typical artist sob story.

JAKE

I'm sorry to hear that.

ABBY

On the plus side—I walk a lot more now. I love to walk. I pay attention to what's around me—the neighborhoods, birds, trees, people. Clears my heads. Good for my soul.

How about you, Mr. Big Business guy...what's your story?

JAKE

Well, I do corporate communications. Public relations. So I guess you might say I paint pictures, only with words.

ABBY

Interesting metaphor.

JAKE

I assure you, my pictures aren't beautiful. It's basically spin. Propaganda. Putting lipstick on a pig. Putting a shine on a turd.

ABBY

(laughing) More interesting metaphors. *(looking down)* Oooh, I'm so sorry. I got some paint on your dress shoes.

JAKE

No worries. Really. Speckles of gold on black wingtips. I'll be the coolest guy in the office. Well, maybe not. *(takes out handkerchief, kneels down to wipe off paint)* Wow, look at *your* shoes, all the paint splatters. All those colors. Very original!

ABBY

Thanks. I didn't plan the paint scheme. But they're super comfy. They get me just about everywhere I need to go.

JAKE

Comfy is good.

ABBY

Function before fashion. You won't ever catch me in high heels. I prefer...*sensible* shoes.

JAKE

Sensible indeed. So, what got you into painting big murals like this?

ABBY

I guess I've always wanted my art to help people see the world differently. To bring some healing to all the division and hate. To bring hope to people who struggle. We're talking some really big problems out there, so I figured I needed a really big canvas to paint on. And the biggest canvas I know of is the walls of buildings.

JAKE

Big problems, big murals.

ABBY

I don't claim to be solving the world's problems with a can of spray paint. But I do believe every little bit helps.

Abby sings "100 Hands"

I wish I had one hundred hands
To fix what's broken in this land
Peace and justice I'd pursue
I'd build a better world for you

But there's so much I don't understand
There's so much that this life demands
You need one hundred hands

If I had one thousand feet
I'd walk down every city street
I'd get to know my neighbors there
The beggars and the millionaires
All those people that I'd meet
All these fences can't compete
With one thousand feet

Bridge

But all I've only got is just one heart
It's only one, but hey, it's a start
When the chips are down and life gets tough
I'm hoping this heart's big enough
Just for you

And if I had ten thousand eyes
I'd see the truth behind the lies
Visions so miraculous
And what the future holds for us
We'd see beyond the distant skies

We just might be mesmerized

Ten thousand eyes

I wish I had one hundred hands

To fix what's broken in this land

Peace and justice I'd pursue

I'd build a better world

I'd build a better world

I'd build a better world

End of Scene

SCENE 5

JAKE and Brandon playing pickle ball

BRANDON

I can't believe you've got me playing pickle ball.

JAKE

C'mon, Brandon. They say it's the fastest growing sport out there. Everyone is doing it.

BRANDON

Yeah, everyone living in retirement homes. We should be playing tennis—like we used to, like self-respecting non-octogenarians.

JAKE

You realize that's a very age-ist comment, Brandon.

BRANDON

Whatever...Hey, so anything new with that waitress you were all hot and bothered about?

JAKE

As a matter of fact, yes. I tracked down Abby Lynn and took another swing at the plate. Just like you told me to.

BRANDON

And?

JAKE

And we talked. It went quite well. And...I asked her if she wanted to hang out sometime.

BRANDON

And?

JAKE

And she said yes!

BRANDON

Sweet!

JAKE

She's so cool. A super talented artist. And she's really idealistic. Wants to change the world through her art.

BRANDON

Sounds different than all the high-maintenance women you've dated in the past.

JAKE

Way different. Abby Lynn is creative. Really down to earth. And...she was wearing these very cool shoes. They were splattered with all different colors of paint. And yet...

BRANDON

And yet, what?

JAKE

And yet her shoes weren't flashy. They were practical...because she walks a lot. Her shoes were very... sensible.

JAKE sings "Sensible Shoes"

Abby she don't wear high heels

Abby does whatever she feels

Knows how to cure those walking blues

Abby she wears sensible shoes

Chorus:

Cowboy boots, stilettos and platform shoes, they ain't her style

The best defense is common sense for walking all those miles

She just smiles

Don't try to put her in a box

'cause Abby she's a paradox

Sometimes she's got radical views

But Abby she wears sensible shoes

Always cool, she ain't no snob

If she applies, she'll get the job

Sail right through those interviews

'Cause they're looking down at her sensible shoes

Chorus

So much charm, so much grace

I ain't fit to tie her lace

Enough to make me blow my fuse

When I saw her in those sensible shoes

My devotion never lacks

I will follow in her tracks

Tell her that my love is true

It's the only sensible thing to do

SCENE 6

Titanic Health conference room. JAKE, ADAM and CLERK are sitting in chairs. MR. MITCHELL and SHEILA SPARKS (the HR director) are standing at the front of room. The flip chart has the letters "DEI" on it

MR. MITCHELL

Thank you all for coming to this meeting. I'd like to welcome Sheila Sparks from Human Resources to discuss our new culture of DEI.

ADAM

DEI?

SHEILA

Yes, sir. DEI. Diversity-Equity-Inclusion. I'm happy to share with you that Titanic Health has committed to embracing the values of DEI in the workplace.

CLERK

What does that mean?

SHEILA

It's a commitment to the fair treatment and full participation of employees from all walks of life. Supporting those who have historically been underrepresented due to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, neurodiversity. This involves more equity in our hiring practices, promotions, and raises.

MR. MITCHELL

This is very important for our corporate image, and it seems to poll well with our shareholders. It will burnish our reputation as good corporate citizens. Jake, I want you to issue a press release to make sure the public knows.

JAKE

Yes sir.

ADAM

(quietly, to JAKE)

Can you believe this crap? What a bullshit waste of time.

SHEILA

I'm sorry, sir. Did you have a question?

ADAM

No, ma'am.

SHEILA

By striving to be an inclusive workplace, Titanic Health will ultimately be a stronger corporation. Now I want you to pair up and discuss where you believe the company has fallen short of these objectives.

ADAM pairs off with JAKE

ADAM

This is what's wrong with America. Everybody is so goddamn sensitive. Microaggressions. Safe spaces. It goes on and on.

JAKE

Adam, this is the trend with all big corporations these days. Seems like a reasonable initiative.

ADAM

Jake, these people are destroying our country. Woke culture. Diversity. All those immigrants working in the IT department—do they even shower? First it was the gays. Now it's transgenders all worked up about *pronouns*. Here's the only pronoun I need: You!

JAKE

You?

ADAM

Yes, you! As in “*You*, go work for another company”. “*You*, get out of my country”. “*You*, stop taxing me for all your social programs”.

JAKE

Visibly uncomfortable

Wow.

ADAM

The only thing my tax dollars should be going towards is a strong military. God bless the armed forces. Honor and sacrifice.

JAKE

Did you serve in the military, Adam?

ADAM

No, but I support the troops. I'm a patriot, and I believe in freedom. I fly my flag proudly. Red white and blue. Those colors don't bleed.

ADAM dons a red baseball cap, sings "Patriot".

Gonna put a bumper sticker on my car

Before the ballgame starts, I'll put my hand on my heart

Red white & blue I won't break a sweat

But I'm gonna call myself a patriot

When you hear me talking about liberty

It's got nothing to do with nobody but me

Freedom means every man for himself

You got a problem with that, go live somewhere else

So you're down and out, well ain't that a shame

I guess you've only got yourself to blame

I'm gonna poke a few holes in your safety net

Then I'm gonna call myself a patriot

Gonna bang my drum when we start a war

And the blood is spilled, I won't ask what for

My leader's lying, my flag is flying

As long as somebody else is doing the dying

I noticed you don't look like me

You don't dress like me, you don't pray like me

Better heed my threat, better pay respect

'cause you're looking at a red-blooded patriot

Gonna put a bumper sticker on my car

Before the ballgame starts, I'll put my hand on my heart

Red white & blue I won't break a sweat

But I'm gonna call myself a patriot

End of scene

SCENE 7

JAKE and ABBY are on a date; they're walking through a city park.

ABBY

Thank you for dinner, Jake. That was wonderful.

JAKE

Of course. Glad we've got a chance to walk it off. Man, this is a beautiful park.

ABBY

It's one of my favorite places in the city. All the lush trees. I love this tulip garden. Such brilliant colors. And check out the pond over there. Oh, look at those cute little ducklings!

JAKE

Wow, how sweet. I think I would've walked right by without even seeing them.

ABBY

And look, the lilacs are hitting full bloom. Smell. *(holds a blossom to JAKE's nose; they both smile)*

JAKE

Wow, that's intoxicating. You'd pay a lot of money for perfume like that at Bloomingdales.

ABBY

Yeah, so many little miracles in nature.

JAKE

I think I spend way too much time staring at my computer screen at work.

ABBY

Oh Jake, there's so much beauty in this city. If only we can slow down and open our eyes to it.

Abby sings "Sense of Wonder"

So much traffic in this town, another work commute it brings you down

Same routine most every day, your life it feels like one big cliché

It's feeling like all your hopes and dreams are torn asunder

But darling please don't you ever lose your sense of wonder

Chorus

So many stars in the summer night and the rustling of the trees that you've been missing

The breeze is blowin like the breath of God and it whispers in your ear if you listen, if you listen

Those cats on Madison Avenue, they want to separate your money from you

We let their billboards block the sky, do you ever stop to wonder why?

The pressure to conform it's got your name, it tries to pull you under

But darling please don't you ever lose your sense of wonder

Chorus

Check out the way that bluebird sings, see the flutter of a butterfly's wings

Watch the sun setting in the west, see a mother draw her baby to her breast

Watch the bolts of lightning pierce the sky, listen to the thunder

Darling please don't you ever lose your sense of wonder

Your sense of wonder...

JAKE

Wow, that's so beautiful, Abby. I need to get out more.

ABBY

It's the greatest show on earth, Jake. And admission is free.

JAKE

And right here in the middle of the city.

ABBY

That's not to say there aren't other places I'd like to see.

JAKE

Like where?

ABBY

Top on my list would be the Grand Canyon. I've wanted to go there since I was a little girl.

JAKE

No way! The Grand Canyon?

ABBY

For sure. The most awe-inspiring place on the planet. Kind of hard to get out there since I don't have a car these days. But it's on my bucket list, for sure.

JAKE's phone pings; he checks his phone

JAKE

Sorry, just a quick text from my boss. This will just take a second.

JAKE types on his phone. ABBY rolls her eyes.

ABBY

Something more important than that gorgeous sunset? *(points to the horizon)*

JAKE

Sorry. I'm shutting off my phone now.

JAKE puts his phone back in his pocket. They sit down on a park bench.

ABBY

So you said you were a corporate PR guy. You never told me, what kind of company?

JAKE

Big health insurance company. Titanic Health.

ABBY

Health insurance?

JAKE

Yeah. Exciting stuff, huh? Listen Abby, I know I'm not creating beauty in the world like you. But it's a really solid job. The kind of job my parents always wanted me to have.

ABBY

Why are you working a job your parents want you to have? Aren't you the one going to work every day?

JAKE

Well, my dream was always to become a novelist. From the time I was a kid, I was a really good writer. I loved to read, and I loved to write.

ABBY

What happened to that dream?

JAKE

Parental pressure. My folks pushed me to succeed in the usual ways—money, social status, material trappings. And succeed I have. Now I use my wonderful language skills in this top-level, high-paying corporate job.

ABBY

Are your parents happy with you?

JAKE

I think so. They sure like to brag about me.

ABBY

Are you happy?

JAKE

(pauses) I guess I'm reasonably content.

ABBY

But are you happy?

JAKE

Honestly, not really. I'm pretty uninspired. I don't have anything in common with my coworkers. I feel there's so much more to life than what I signed up for. But Abby, you remind me that there's a big open beautiful world that I forgot was out there.

ABBY

Just doing my part.

JAKE

But meanwhile, I'm that guy I swore I'd never become.

JAKE sings "That Guy"

Don't wanna be that guy who checks his phone in the middle of a conversation

Don't wanna be that guy who just can't seem to find his destination

Don't wanna be that guy who makes mistakes but never seems to learn

Don't wanna be that guy, everything he cooks just seems to burn

You say you want to get to know me, well honey I can't lie

Don't put me on a pedestal 'cause sometimes I'm that guy

Looking for a girl whose kindness like a river will baptize me

Looking for a girl who'll take me as I am won't analyze me

Looking for a girl who looks at life through her kaleidoscope

Looking for a girl who'll take this orphan soul and bring it hope

Who pirouettes across the floor, throws her arms around the world

The more I see of you the more I know, that you're that girl

I wanna be that guy who wins your love and holds you in his arms

I wanna be that guy who surrenders to the mystery of your charms

I wanna be that guy who orbits 'round your heart like a satellite

I wanna be that guy who after all this time finally gets it right

Who lights up when he sees you just like a firefly

Who wears his love upon his sleeve 'cause baby I wanna be that guy

I wanna be that guy 'cause you're that girl...

ABBY

Hey, Jake, we're all works in progress. I can tell you've got a really good heart. You're all right by me.

ABBY and JAKE kiss. End of scene

SCENE 8

Titanic Health headquarters. JAKE is at his desk, daydreaming. He sings "Smitten"

*I want this day to matter, but all I hear is chatter on the radio
Restlessness it's in my bones, been living my life in sepia tones
But sometimes when you least expect, all the pieces of your life connect
and you come alive
I can't explain the way I feel, but this ocean of desire is so real*

*Cupid's taking aim, he's drawing back his bow
He can go ahead and let that arrow fly*

*Because I'm smitten with you
Yeah, I'm smitten with you
Love everything you do, just wanna be there with you
I'm smitten with you*

*I'm wondering if you feel it too, when I see you on the avenue
And you smile my way
We keep our conversation light, but my mind explodes just like dynamite
You're Christmas day in every sense, you're the bird that sings atop my fence
You're the key that opens every lock, you're the prize inside my Cracker Jack box*

*Cupid's taking aim, he's drawing back his bow
He can go ahead and let that arrow fly*

*Because I'm smitten with you
Yeah, I'm smitten with you
Can't wait to see you tonight, it's gonna feel so right
I'm smitten with you*

*You can say that I'm just being reckless
You can call me crazy as a loon
But if I can't have you baby I'll go homeless
I might as well be living on the moon*

*Cupid's taking aim, he's drawing back his bow
He can go ahead and let that arrow fly*

*Because I'm smitten with you
Yeah, I'm smitten with you
Love everything you do, just wanna be there with you
I'm smitten with you*

*Hey hey I'm smitten
You can say I'm smitten
I ain't got nothin to hide, just wanna be by your side*

ADAM bursts in the office.

ADAM

Jake! Boss needs us in his office right now. Some serious shit is going down!

JAKE

What's happening?

ADAM

Come on!

JAKE and ADAM hurry into MR. MITCHELL's office

MR. MITCHELL

Sit down, gentleman. We have a real crisis on our hands.

JAKE

What kind of crisis, Mr. Mitchell?

MR. MITCHELL

It's the national media. CNN. They want to do a story on us. And I don't think it's going to be flattering.

JAKE

Why? What's this all about?

MR. MITCHELL

It's about a recent case involving one of our policy holders. Six-year-old boy with leukemia. Had a relapse in his cancer, and doctors wanted to do a bone marrow transplant. And we denied coverage for the procedure.

JAKE

Why did we deny coverage?

MR. MITCHELL

We informed the boy's parents that their policy didn't cover "experimental treatments". And we decided that the bone marrow transplant was experimental. The family and the doctors insisted otherwise but we held our ground. For god's sake it would have cost our company damn near a half-million dollars!

JAKE

How's the boy doing?

MR. MITCHELL

The boy ended up dying a week after we denied coverage.

JAKE

Oh man, that's terrible!

MR. MITCHELL

Here's what's terrible. The boy's family is up in arms. They've gone to the media, and now this CNN reporter wants to talk to us. She wants to know why we allowed this boy to die.

ADAM

Holy shit! What's our plan?

MR. MITCHELL

Jake, this is why we pay you the big bucks. We'll need you to do an interview with the reporter. We need some serious damage control. Contain this crisis. Spin it, my boy! Spin it!

ADAM

We're counting on you, Jake!

Jake is looking down, head in his hands.

MR. MITCHELL

Jake?

JAKE

Yes, Mr. Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL

I said, spin it!

MR. MITCHELL and ADAM sing "Spin It" song to a jungle drum beat

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

CNN is calling

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Keep the sky from falling

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

A crisis situation

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Protect our reputation!

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Tell 'em that we care

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Extend our thoughts and prayers

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Those charming words you say

Spin it, Jake, spin it Jake

Make this go away!

Spin it Jake!

JAKE

I'll get on it, sir.

JAKE starts typing on his laptop, typing away but clearly conflicted.

Cut to Kensington Steakhouse, PATRICIA is watching the TV. ABBY walks over.

PATRICIA

Abby, check this out! Big story on this six-year-old boy with leukemia. Needed a bone marrow transplant and the insurance company refused to pay for it. And he ended up dying.

ABBY

What? That sounds horrific.

PATRICIA

No kidding. Look, they're interviewing a guy from the company. Wonder what he's got to say about it.

PATRICIA and ABBY intently stare at the TV screen.

ABBY

Oh my god, it's Jake!

Cut to JAKE and REPORTER.

JAKE

Thank you for your interest in this case. First I want to say that we at Titanic Health extend our deepest condolences to the family of this boy who has sadly passed. To all of his loved ones, we send our heartfelt thoughts and prayers.

REPORTER

Can you explain what happened? Why did your company deny coverage? Why did this six-year-old boy have to die?

JAKE

Your viewers need to know that we took this situation very seriously. After review of the facts of the case, we determined that the medical procedure in question was an experimental treatment. We did not feel it was appropriate to go through with a procedure that very well may have been unsuccessful, and only led to prolonged suffering of this boy and his loved ones.

REPORTER

Some would question whether financial motives of your company played a role in your decision.

JAKE

Our mission at Titanic Health is to ensure that our members have quality, affordable coverage. We will always strive to be good stewards of their health care dollars, while helping them live their best, healthy lives. Titanic Health is, and always has been, committed to the business of caring. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to clarify the situation. I wish you a good day.

JAKE walks away from the camera, MR. MITCHELL and ADAM shake his hand, slap him on the back.

MR. MITCHELL

Great job, Jake!

ADAM

You rocked it, dude!

ABBY and PATRICIA share a sad glance. ABBY hangs her head.

PATRICIA

Is that the same Jake you said you're dating?

ABBY

Was dating.

PATRICIA

What do you mean, *was* dating?

ABBY

Patricia, a little boy lost his life! All while that insurance company rakes in their record profits. And Jake's out there making it all look okay. I can't believe what I just heard. It's like he's an accomplice to a crime.

PATRICIA

Puts her arm around ABBY

I'm so sorry, Abby.

ABBY

I guess he's not the guy I thought he was. I should've known better.

ABBY walks away. Her phone rings.

ABBY

Hello.

JAKE

Abby, I just want to say I'm thinking about you. I can't want to see you tonight.

ABBY

Jake, I don't think I can. I've made other plans.

JAKE

What's wrong, Abby?

ABBY

I saw your big CNN interview. Seriously, what is wrong with you?

JAKE

Abby, you've got to realize what a big deal this was. National media...this is a major crisis. My company is counting on me to get them through this.

ABBY

Jake, it's not okay.

JAKE

Abby, this isn't easy for me. I'm just caught in the middle of it all.

ABBY

Jake, it's not okay!

JAKE

Abby, I'm so, so sorry I've let you down! I care about you so much.

ABBY

I need to go. Goodbye, Jake.

ABBY hangs up. JAKE looks at his phone, hangs his head.

SCENE 9

In JAKE's condo. It's mostly dark. He's in bed tossing and turning. Finally, he sits up on the side of the bed, picks up his phone and dials. He gets ABBY's voicemail.

ABBY's voice

Hi this is Abby, I can't take your call, leave a message.

JAKE

Abby, it's Jake. I know I let you down. And there's nothing more important to me in the whole world than you. I'll show you I'm so much better than this. Just give me a chance!

JAKE hangs up. He gets up, walks over to a bookshelf, takes out a book, pages through it briefly, puts it back on the shelf.

JAKE calls ABBY again, gets her voicemail again, hangs up. Takes another book off the shelf, opens it.

JAKE sings "Better Man", while replacing book, leaving apartment, wandering into the darkness.

These self-help books don't help me much

I'm limping through my life with a broken crutch

Wish things were different but it just ain't so

Got a monkey on my back and he won't let go

Chorus

Can you cool my fever, can you heal my soul

Can you pick up my pieces, can you make me whole

Can you grant me absolution, I'll do anything I can

Give me just one chance and I'll be a better man

It's funny how the weight of the world expands

When you've got too much time on your idle hands

You can calculate the mounting cost

Of the many ways that a man gets lost

So I'm walking blind into the night

Think about my dreams, how they slipped from sight

Can't remember when my life went so astray

And all my better angels, they just walked away

Chorus

Bridge

For all the times I've fallen, baby now I come crawlin' to you

I know that you're the one, but these things that I have done I can't undo

Now there's three folks who won't stay away from here

Their names are Shame, Regret, and Fear

They came for a visit in my dreams tonight

They stayed for quite a while and they had that right

If only I could feel that grace

If only I could see your face

If only I could be with you

Just maybe I could start anew

Chorus

These self-help books, they don't help me much

But I sure don't want to live this broken life as such

And I know damn sure if I can feel your loving touch

If you believe in me, then I'll be

A better man

JAKE walks up on the HOMELESS MYSTIC, who is warming his hands over a trash can fire

JAKE

Blowing on his hands

Mind if I warm up here?

HOMELESS MYSTIC

Not at all. Step into my office.

JAKE

I'm glad your office has heat. You look familiar...who are you?

MYSTIC

Just a local businessman...of sorts.

JAKE

Umm...what kind of business?

MYSTIC

Your business. My business. Everybody's business. But my business is open only when the night is darkest. Say, young man, what brings you to these parts in the middle of the night?

JAKE

I just had to get out for a walk. I can't sleep. I've been up most the night.

MYSTIC

Ah, the curse of insomnia...the sign of a troubled mind.

JAKE

Yes, I've got so many thoughts racing in my head right now.

MYSTIC

Tell me more.

JAKE

My life has gone off the tracks. I always thought I had my shit together. Good job, money, prestige. But somehow I've lost myself. I don't even know who I am anymore.

MYSTIC

Sounds like you're paying a steep price for your choices.

JAKE

You don't know the half of it. I finally found the woman I truly love...but now I've lost her. I realize I've been striving for all the wrong things.

MYSTIC

I get it. I've heard this story countless times, often from people who are close to death. But in every moment there is a gift.

JAKE

A gift? What kind of gift?

MYSTIC

An opportunity to change, to begin again. To reclaim your one precious life.

Mystic sings "Just One Life"

You want to be cool, trying to make the scene

You're looking for answers on your cell phone screen

But you're just another rat running in the race

Ain't there more to life than increasing its pace?

Watch out, 'cause they're spreading a virus known as greed

We've got everything we want but we don't know what we need

They're trying to sell us more and more stuff

When we gonna realize that we've got enough?

Chorus

There's gotta be another way

You feel it when it cuts you like a knife

We've got a million choices in this world

But still we're given just one life

Just one life

There's people out there building walls

Their egos are big but their hearts are kind of small

Demagogues in power again

They're stirring up the hate and the people all shout "Amen".

They're blaming our neighbors with the darker skin

Say they all gotta leave if we're ever gonna win

But maybe there's a chance we can rise above

Trade out that fear for a little love

Chorus

Bridge

You say you want to build a better land

Unclench your fist and open your hand

It ain't that hard to understand

So take your bad habits, put 'em on a shelf

Take a little time to get over yourself

Take off your watch, forget about time

See how this world can be so sublime

Try to make a life and not just a living

Take a look around, do a little giving

Don't matter at all what's the weather

I think we all can get through this together

Chorus

MYSTIC

It's your life, and your life alone. What are you going to do with it?

JAKE

I tell you what I'm going to do. I'm gonna , I'm gonna...

JAKE turns around. The MYSTIC has vanished.

SCENE 10

At Titanic Health headquarters. MR. MITCHELL is pacing anxiously. ADAM is standing, arms crossed.

MR. MITCHELL

Things are going from bad to worse. Look out the window, Adam. Look at all those TV cameras! Look at all those protestors!

ADAM

Who knew this case would blow up like this. Geez, don't these people have anything else to do?

MR. MITCHELL

This story isn't going away. It's out of control. Just think what all this could do to our stock price.

ADAM

C'mon people, it was just one kid. Just one life. Get over it!

JAKE walks in.

MR. MITCHELL

Jake, where the hell have you been? The biggest PR crisis in our company's history, and you show up for work late!

JAKE

I'm sorry I'm late, Mr. Mitchell. I didn't sleep much last night.

MR. MITCHELL

That protest out there is growing by the minute; look at those crowds!

ADAM

Dude, we've got a major shit show on our hands.

MR. MITCHELL

Our lobby downstairs is swamped with reporters: New York Times, Washington Post, CNN, FoxNews. Jake, we need you to hold a press conference. You've got to whitewash the hell out of what happened. Damage control, more than ever! You need to make this go away!

ADAM

Time to bring your A-game, buddy. This is your moment to shine!

MR. MITCHELL

You know what to do, Jake. Are you prepared to talk to them?

JAKE

Yessir. I believe I am.

MR. MITCHELL

Good. You know what you have to do.

JAKE

Yes. I know what I have to do.

JAKE walks out in front of cameras, MR. MITCHELL and ADAM hanging back in the shadows. JAKE steps up to the podium.

JAKE

Good morning. Thank you all for being here. We at Titanic Health are aware of the enormous amount of public interest this case has generated. So it's time to set the record straight.

MR. MITCHELL and ADAM nod in approval.

The death of this six-year-old boy was very unfortunate. It was tragic. And it didn't have to happen. Let me tell you why. You see, Titanic Health is a business. And like any business, our number one goal is profit. Sure, we spin our platitudes to make you believe that your good health is our top priority. Frankly, that's my job. And we put up colorful billboards and run our TV ads with feel-good slogans to tell you just how much we care.

But, and this is a big but...we have no role whatsoever in your health care. We're just middlemen, money changers. And when you get sick, the cost of your medical care comes from our bottom line. So we will use any mechanism, any loophole, any technicality to avoid paying your medical expenses. When you get denied coverage for those hospital charges, or that expensive medication or procedure, that's us—keeping that money in our coffers. That's our profits, our salaries, our stock options. The interests of our shareholders will always come before patients.

This country long ago decided that health care should be a business, not a basic right. What we do at Titanic Health is perfectly legal. So as long as we can keep doing this, we will.

That is, until all of us rise up and demand that things change. Thank you all for your interest.

JAKE walks out through the crowd of reporters. MR. MITCHELL runs after him.

MR. MITCHELL

What is wrong with you, boy? Have you gone mad? Have you lost all sense of direction?

JAKE

Have I lost my sense of direction? No, sir. I believe I've found it.

MR. MITCHELL

I want you to meet me in HR this afternoon. We need to seriously reconsider your future with Titanic Health.

JAKE

Save yourself the trouble. I no longer work here.

JAKE removes his badge, hands it to MR. MITCHELL and walks out the door.

SCENE 11

JAKE is walking through the city streets, singing "Abby Lynn".

Once upon a time I held the world's most precious diamond in my hand

But I wandered and I squandered, things didn't work out quite the way I planned

Now I'm feeling shame, I've left the game, I'll take the blame for the mess that I create

Abby Lynn forgive my sins, I'll win you back, I hope it's not too late

Chorus

I stumbled, I got humbled now I'm beggin you to accept my apologies

I fell with force from my high horse, now all I can do is get down on my knees...Abby please

*The prodigal son was on the run, he had a ton of fun, but his world came crashin down, down,
down*

So he crawled on back to his daddy's shack, feeling like a hack, the biggest loser in the town

But his daddy just smiled when he saw his child, things got wild, he planned a big old feast

*He said, Boy, I know you've strayed, don't be afraid cause you know my love for you has never
ceased*

Chorus

Once upon a time I held the world's most precious diamond in my hand

But I wandered and I squandered, things didn't work out quite the way I planned

I'll give you time to make up your mind, I understand if you should hesitate

Abby Lynn forgive my sins, I'll win you back, I hope it's not too late

On the final line JAKE walks up on ABBY, who is working on the mural.

ABBY

Hi.

JAKE

Hi.

ABBY

I saw your press conference on TV. You really stirred things up over there.

JAKE

Yeah, I guess so.

ABBY

How do you feel?

JAKE

I feel unemployed.

ABBY

I figured you didn't get named employee of the month.

JAKE

But I feel free. Free from the heaviness. Free from those golden handcuffs. And I feel like I just might be able to get to know myself again.

ABBY

What are you gonna do now?

JAKE

I think I need to get out of town for a while. Road trip. Clear my head. Find a new direction in life.

ABBY

Maybe it's time to start writing that novel.

JAKE

My thoughts exactly. How about you? Looks like you're just about finished on that mural. What's next?

ABBY

Yeah, I should be wrapping it up today. My next commission doesn't start until next month.

JAKE

And in the meantime?

ABBY

Well, I wish I could take a road trip like you. One problem.

JAKE

What's that?

ABBY

No car. Those health care bills, remember?

JAKE

Oh yeah. Well...I've got a car. And it happens to have a passenger seat. Just saying.

ABBY

Hmm, very interesting. Have you ever been to the Grand Canyon?

JAKE

No. You?

ABBY

Not yet.

ABBY and JAKE sing "Road Trip".

There's this great big beautiful world just outside your window pane

A faraway voice, it's getting louder, can't you hear it, it's calling our name

Don't you think it's time that you and I should hit the trail

Like a couple of prisoners we've done our time, we're bustin' out of this jail

We can pull this off without a snag, let's run right home and pack up our bags

Together we can shake this daily coil, I'll fill up the tank and I'll check the oil

Chorus

Come on, come on, come on let's take a road trip (x 3)

'cause there's so many places that you and I can go

Just roll down your window, turn up the radio

We'll watch those city limits fade away in our rearview mirror

Like all of our troubles they'll just get smaller and soon they disappear

So let your hair down, buckle right up, kick off your shoes

Forests and fields, mountains and plains, let's enjoy those views

There's no traffic in sight, we're on cruise control, ain't no sign of the state patrol

This highway stretches to infinity like my happiness when you're next to me

Chorus

Bridge

*But it's been so long since I've seen you smile
It's been far too long time since I've seen you smile
Such a very long time since I've seen you smile
But that's gonna change fast, let's hit the gas*

*Billboards and motorcycles, truckers in the passing lane
Cows and barns and farmers' fields and all those fast food chains
Taverns, churches, meeting halls in them little towns
We'll keep on driving into the horizon til that big old sun goes down
And when our car wheels cease to spin, we'll spend the night at a roadside inn
Sleep in late, check out by ten, we'll grab some hot coffee hit the road again*

a capella:

C'mon, c'mon let's take a road trip

Chorus

-THE END-