

Script notes: each section within the fiction film (labelled as "film" in the scene headings) take place in the same location. The colour of the text corresponds with the style of filming and which version of Petra we see in the fictional film:

Age 7. Lots of bright colours and cheerful music (think Home Alone)

Age 17. Darker, overly depressing and angsty music

Age 37. More subtle colours, orchestral music

FADE IN:

EXT. CHILDHOOD HOUSE. DAY.

We see a row of standard non-descript houses. A small number of Christmas lights are visible on the inside of the windows. One of the houses has a "Santa Stop Here" sign planted out front. A gust of wind blows it over as we move to the inside of the house.

INT. CHILDHOOD HOUSE KITCHEN. DAY.

GAIL (33) looks stressed out at a dinner table. Standing near her is CHRIS (34). She's reading a letter as he stands there. There's a tense silence between the two, broken by PETRA (7), walking in. Petra has a joyful innocence to her.

PETRA
Mummy? Daddy?

Chris leaves the room. Gail looks shocked.

GAIL
What is it, honey?

PETRA
I heard shouting.

GAIL
It's fine, dear. It's fine.

PETRA
I don't like you shouting at each other.

Gail lets out a small laugh to herself, covering it up with a cough.

PETRA (CONT'D)

You shouldn't shout, it's not very Christmas!

Gail stands up and walks over to Petra, she kneels down then starts cradling Petras face in her hand.

GAIL

I promise, you will not hear us shout at each other all Christmas.

PETRA

Pinky promise?

We hear footsteps, the front door opening and then slamming shut.

GAIL

Pinky promise.

They raise their pinky fingers at each other and lightly hit them against the other persons. A wave of sadness washes over Gails face.

GAIL (CONT'D)

So, are you excited for Santa tomorrow?

Petra nods.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Have you been good this year?

She nods again.

GAIL (CONT'D)

I knew that. Santa does too. He actually said that because you've been SUCH a good girl this year, he sent you an early present. Do you want to see what it is?

Again, a nod. Gail reaches into a bag and brings out a video: Home For Christmas. The cover is incredibly saccharine and notably devoid of positive blurbs and reviews. Petra looks amazed.

PETRA

A video! But mum, we don't have a video player.

GAIL

Of course not. Foolish Santa. I did tell him that.

PETRA
You know Santa?

GAIL
All mothers do. So I talked to him,
and he said he'll see what his
elves can do. Say, have you been in
the front room yet?

Petra shakes her head.

GAIL (CONT'D)
(relieved)
Good. Wait, what's that?

She fakes hearing something.

GAIL (CONT'D)
I think it was Santas elves leaving
a VCR and hooking it up to the big
TV.

PETRA
You can hear that?

GAIL
Of course I can, mum powers. Come
on, let's go. Lets just go there,
and we can sit down and watch
movies all day.

INT. CHILDHOOD HOUSE LOUNGE. DAY.

Gail, now ten years older walks into the room.

GAIL
Petra McMichael, you can not just
sit there watching films all day.

Sitting on the chair is a teenage Petra, her youthful
happiness and exuberance replaced by cynicism and teenage
depression. She has a clunky mobile phone in her hand.

PETRA
Might go to the fridge later, I
dunno.

GAIL
Why aren't you out with Miche and
that lot?

PETRA
We're not talking.

GAIL
Oh no, why not?

PETRA
Well you know that guy Logan? She told him I knit my own socks.

GAIL
And just for that he dumped you?

PETRA
I don't want to talk about it.

GAIL
Fine.

They watch the TV.

GAIL (CONT'D)
What channel is this?

PETRA
Fifteen.

Gail grabs a TV guide out of a magazine rack.

GAIL
"Poppy Blooms. A former mass murderer is forced to make video diaries in a mental institution". That sounds horrible. And you don't want someone like that idolised it's disgusting. It's just a young woman being mentally tortured and abused, I don't want to see that.

PETRA
Well put something else on.

GAIL
Well, there's "Tinsel Town", a dark neo-noir detecti-okay not that. "Holly And Ivy", two young nubi-nope. Surprised they allowed that before the watershed, go Channel Nine I guess. Ohhhhhh "Home For Christmas", you used to love that. You used to make us watch it every year.

PETRA
Whatever.

Gail turns the television on.

GAIL
Eugh, adverts.

INT. FLAT. DAY.

An adult Petra (37) enters the room, carrying a bag of shopping. The room is almost empty, on a table is a single framed photo of her as a child with her mother. Other than that the room is devoid of personality and warmth. A few cardboard boxes are dotted around the room. She puts her bag down and gets her phone out.

PETRA
Hey, you rang?

She starts looking annoyed.

PETRA (CONT'D)
What do you mean you can't bring her? You've had too much to drink? Well that doesn't happen by accident does it, does it? Not as though you were kidnapped and had drink forced down you.

She listens angrily.

PETRA (CONT'D)
Please, I need this. I.....I can't be alone, not this week. Please. No I don't want you driving here drunk. Of course not. Just.....just keep an eye on her okay.

She hangs up the phone.

PETRA (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Thirty seven years on this planet and what has it led to? Alone at Christmas, probably alone at New Years.

She phones someone.

PETRA (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Please still work, please still work.

Answerphone.

PETRA (CONT'D)

Hi Mum, it's me, Petra. I hope
wherever you are you're doing well.
I miss you, and I love you. It's
just....

She starts crying.

PETRA (CONT'D)

It's so hard since you've been
gone. I know you can't hear this,
and I know you never will, but I
can't not do it. I need you.
Christmas was our time. I love you.

She hangs up then sits on a disgusting-looking chair then
gets her laptop out. Flicking through streaming service she
finds "Home For Christmas". She pauses, composing herself and
breathing heavily.

PETRA (CONT'D)

(to herself)
It's tradition.

We get a split screen of all three Petra's staring at the
screen as the film starts.

EXT. HOUSE ENTRANCE. DAY. (FILM).

A rap cover of Silver Bells plays over the scene (think more
Grandmaster Flash than Jaz-Z) as we zoom in slowly. We see a
quaint-looking house, white picket fence, snow covering the
ground, people walking through the snow somehow showing no
danger of falling over.