

MY SON CHRISTOPHER

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As a mother who lost my son Christopher, a brave firefighter, on 9/11, I take you on a journey through his life – the joys, the challenges, the humorous moments in his life, and the sacrifice he made. Through my eyes, you will see the extraordinary young man he was, and how his legacy continues to shape my life and the lives of many others.

Written by Maureen Crethan Santora

Based on the book “My Son Christopher”

By Maureen Crethan Santora

Writers Guild of America

Registration #XXXXXXX

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Movie treatment for a dramatic feature film

Premise: A biographical film following the life of my son Christopher Santora. He truly led a heroic life; his choices of service to his community through teaching and ultimately achieving his childhood dream of becoming a firefighter reflect his generosity of spirit and inherent goodness that we all have within us. The journey of his life from a typical American boy to the man he became can show us how we can unlock our own potential. Though he was robbed of the privilege of having his own family and growing older, he touched many, many people in the short life he had. The themes in this film are unconditional love, pursuing your dreams, heroism and sacrifice. This film will not focus on 9/11, but rather celebrate Christopher's life and provide insight on his journey.

Audience: This project is dedicated to all the mothers and fathers who have lost a son or daughter. We love our children unconditionally for their entire lives. Losing a child is one of the most painful experiences in life. The primary audience for this film will be American families of all ages. Even if members of the audience haven't experienced the loss of a child, they can see themselves in Christopher's and our family's life as the Santoras are a typical American family with the same hopes and dreams as many fellow Americans. Young audiences can see Christopher as a role model that they themselves can aspire to. Older audiences will recognize the family dynamic and understand the themes we are trying to convey.

Themes:

What makes a hero? Are they born, or does their heroism emerge? Christopher's early life was a typical boyhood and there was no foreshadowing of the choices he would eventually make. As his mother, I would see his interactions with his sisters, his looking up to his father and wonder what kind of man he would grow into. Christopher's life shows that any one of us can become a hero when the moment calls for it. That is the main theme of this film: ordinary people can become extraordinary.

There are several other themes we are trying to convey in this film too. Beginning with unconditional love, the type of love a parent has for their child.

Additionally, there is the impact of loss, which many of us can relate to, whether we've lost a parent, sibling, child or other loved one who had an impact in our lives.

Finally, the importance of family, the basic unit of society which provides the continuity of generations living their lives down through the years.

Setting: The film takes place mainly in the neighborhood of Astoria and surrounding communities of Queens, NY, where Christopher grew up. Additional settings include Queens College, where he received his degree in History, and several schools where he taught as a substitute teacher before joining the NY Fire Department. For the portion of the film focusing on the final chapter of his life, this will take place in Manhattan.

Main Characters

1. **Christopher Santora:** My beloved son, whose passion, bravery, and kindness shine through in every memory I hold. This is his story showing the classical hero's journey in a real life.
2. **Maureen Santora:** A mother grieving the loss of my son, seeking to preserve his memory and find healing through my writing and advocacy for other families of 9/11 victims. I tell Christopher's story
3. **Alexander (Al) Santora:** My husband and Christopher's father. A career firefighter, Al worked his way up to Deputy Fire Chief with the New York Fire Department. Al was also Scoutmaster when Christopher joined the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Supporting Characters

1. **Jennifer Santora:** Christopher's oldest sister. He often accompanied her to concerts as they both loved music. She has many memories of her little brother, including how much of a daredevil he was.
2. **Patricia Santora:** The second oldest sister before Christopher. She and Christopher were very close; he often sought her advice on her opinion regarding girls he dated. For example, he had told a girlfriend of his Patricia's opinion on her eye makeup, which was mortifying to Patricia to find out from his girlfriend.
3. **Kathleen Santora:** Christopher's younger sister. Being younger than Christopher meant that she would be the frequent target of brotherly teasing & tormenting. One notable example is how he'd scare her about store mannequins coming to life at night and that they were going to get her. After Christopher's death, she joins the Army to fight for freedom.

4. **Megan Santora:** Christopher's cousin who came to live with the family at age six after her mother, Maureen's sister died. He would often bribe her to do his chores for him, paying her to do his laundry and ironing. When Christopher made it into the Fire Academy, he begged her to help him iron his uniform and make creases.

Additional Characters

These characters will appear as minor characters in the story, serving to help propel the narrative:

1. **Other Firefighters:** Christopher's colleagues – his mentors and friends he meets during his firefighting career. Some who have perished with him, and others who have survived to preserve the memory of that tragic day and the heroism that was displayed by the first responders. They represent the best of the best of human aspiration.
2. **Teachers & Colleagues:** Some of Christopher's more influential teachers who helped shape his journey will have their moments of impact depicted in this biopic. Also, as Christopher becomes a teacher himself, his other faculty colleagues in the schools which he taught will have their own moments too.

Style Comment

Our intention is to start from the present day, looking back at Christopher's life. We then will present his life in chronological order, as his early life and experiences helped to shape his path. Being the middle child in a family of girls, Christopher was still a boy's boy, interested in his action figures, sports, and other typical young male pursuits. Having a father who was a firefighter gave him a role model to aspire to, and this was where his dream of becoming a firefighter himself began. Many of the events depicted in this film are from reality, but poetic license will be taken to make them fit into a dramatic structure, as many biopics do. The narrative style will be easy to follow. Instead of flashbacks, the idea is to present his life from both my point of view when he is very young and gradually shift to his own point of view as he grows up, showing how active he was in shaping his own life and making his own choices.

The Story

NOTE: I will refer to myself in the third person in the story treatment below as an actress will be portraying me. My character will frequently serve as a voiceover narrator when warranted.

We begin in the present day. Maureen Santora is in her apartment. It is quiet, tranquil. The sun beams in from a window, highlighting a mantle. She sees a framed photo. It is her son Christopher, dressed in his fire turnout gear, standing at the Fire Academy in front of a fire truck. He stands between his proud father and grandfather.

Maureen's voice over reflects on her son's life from a mother's perspective. She mentions that he barely got to experience life as a grown man, but that he still made an impact in the world. She ponders about how quickly time has flown and how she wished she could have made son's childhood last longer; it seems like he grew up in the blink of an eye.

She walks over to a bookshelf where she has his baby book and photo albums. She pulls it down and opens it up. There are his baby footprints and photos of Christopher as a newborn. This brings back a flood of memories as we enter a FLASHBACK...

Christopher is born. Young Maureen is giving birth surrounded by doctors and nurses. It is the late 1970s. Maureen pushes and we hear a newborn baby crying. The OBGyn hands Christopher to Maureen and she looks at him with joy.

Al, Maureen's husband and Christopher's father is allowed in to see his newborn son. The new parents look at their new child with love. Baby Christopher looks up at his parents and the new world. Both are proud and Al comments that it's his first boy, and the very first boy in the Santora family. They've got two girls at home already. Al mentions to Maureen that Christopher will be the first one to carry on the Santora name.

Later, Al brings Maureen and Christopher home. Young Jennifer and Patricia look at their new baby brother with excitement. Patricia, especially, since she's no longer the youngest in the family. Jennifer tells her that she's got to learn how to be a big sister now. Patricia looks at her baby brother with much curiosity. It's her first time seeing a real-life baby!

A series of vignettes with Maureen and Al being parents to a newborn. It's their third time around and they are very deft with feeding, changing and all the other things that go into caring for a newborn. Maureen lets Jennifer feed her baby brother while she shows her how to hold the bottle for him. Patricia is a little too young to feed him, but she looks on in wonder.

Soon, Christopher is already walking as a toddler. While his sisters are playing with their Barbies and other girl toys, he is playing with his Tonka trucks. His most favorite is a big Tonka fire truck with ladder. Al notices his son's interest in the truck and makes a comment to Maureen that maybe someday he'll be a firefighter too.

As he grows a little older and starts talking, Al begins talking to him, saying "Hi, Guy!" Little Christopher picks the phrase up and repeats it back. This becomes his new nickname.

Young Christopher watches his sisters go off to school and asks his mom Maureen why he can't go too. She thinks for a moment and tells him that though he's not quite ready to go to big kids' school, there is a special school that would be just right for him.

Act Two

We break into the second act with three-year-old Christopher's first day at nursery school. He meets his teacher and she introduces him to the other children. He's excited to have his own school to attend. He enjoys playing with the other kids and the activities that the teachers lead them in.

At home, he's surrounded by "girl things;" his sisters' toys and other stuff. But he prefers his "boy things" like Star Wars action figures, wrestling figures and He-Man toys. He enjoys playing and having fun in preschool.

He enters elementary school, where he struggles with the structure and rules, like learning to raise his hand and patiently wait to talk. He finds the traditional school environment boring. He laments that he wants to play and have fun. Al mentions to Maureen that Christopher should become a lawyer because he has the "gift of gab."

Christopher looks up to his father Al. One day he witnesses his father going out on a call responding to a fire. He gets to see his father at work with the

other firemen putting out the fire and rescuing people from the burning building. Seeing his dad in his turnout gear being a hero amazes him. It's at this moment that he knows that he wants to become a firefighter.

In school, he's restless. He goofs off a little, but is still a good student. His first-grade teacher is a little exasperated from his restlessness, wanting to rein him in. Christopher has a natural sense of humor though, and the teacher quickly realizes that she needs to get creative to help him pay more attention in class. She introduces him to some exciting fiction books with great adventures, many of them taking place in America's past. This is where he begins to develop a love for history.

Jennifer and Patricia enroll in dance school. Maureen buys them tap shoes for their class. Al takes Christopher to pick his daughters up from dance class one day. They see the kids finishing up their tap class, and Christopher looks on in amazement at all the kids tapping along. He asks Al if he can enroll in dance class too. Al looks a bit concerned as there are only a couple of boys in the tap class, but makes no judgement and talks to the teacher after the class.

While Al is speaking to the teacher, Christopher is watching his big sisters tapping their shoes on the wooden floor. Al comes back with the teacher who says that it would be okay for Christopher to join the class. He's very happy and asks his dad if they could get his dance shoes now. The teacher says they need to be put on special order and it would be a few classes before he can get them.

We see a few scenes of Christopher taking classes with his big sisters, trying to keep up with them. Maureen and Al intermittently pick the kids up after class. On one of these chauffeured trips driving through the city, Maureen gets a little lost, missing a turn on a specific street. The three kids sit in the back seat, the girls enthusiastically gabbing with each other, and Christopher looking out the window. He notices his mom missed the last turn and mentions that to her. She tells him she's bad with directions. Chris tells his mom that he's going to get her a KITT car, just like the one in the TV show *Knight Rider*, so the car will tell her which way to drive. They have a good laugh about it.

Finally, a package arrives at the house. It's Christopher's tap shoes! Excited, he rips open the package, grabs them and runs to the bathroom, shutting the door behind him. After a moment, a *tap-tap-tap* sound on the tiled bathroom floor comes from behind the door. Al and Maureen look at each other, Al mentions that he must really be into tap dancing. Finally, Christopher emerges from the bathroom to announce that he doesn't want to go to dance class any more. Confused, Maureen asks why and he answers because he only likes the

shoes! He then goes back into the bathroom to tap loudly on the floor some more.

As he gets older, his mother Maureen is expecting another child. Christopher prays for a baby brother so that he can have someone like him as a sibling. But he has another sister, Kathleen. He's disappointed, until Maureen shows him how to care for his baby sister, much like she taught Jennifer about caring for him when he was a baby.

The Santora kids get older. Kathleen is old enough for Christopher to start teasing. There is a scene where he's sliding his sock-clad feet across the carpet back and forth, building up a static charge. He goes up to his little sister and touches her nose, shocking her.

Christopher joins the Cub Scouts and Al becomes the Scoutmaster, hosting den meetings at their home and running the Cub Scout pack. They do the Pinewood Derby, carving and racing their own pine wood cars on a large track at the scout meeting, and they also do the Rocket Derby, building balsa wood rockets with rubber band driven propellers to race on fishing wire at another scout meeting.

Christopher asks his father about firefighting. Al takes him down to the fire station so he can see the rigs and gear and meet the other firefighters. He watches as the men fold the hoses and wash down the truck. Al tells his son that they must always have their gear and equipment ready to go at a moment's notice. Al can see that his son is very interested, even in the mundane things that the firemen do around the station house.

Christopher's cousin Megan comes to live with them after her mother, Maureen's sister passes away. Megan is six and immediately bonds with the other children, who help raise her as another sister, though technically a cousin.

At home, Christopher sees his older sisters with their old broken Barbie dolls missing their heads. They're scaring little Kathleen with them. He laughs and joins in tormenting his little sister. Maureen admonishes them to stop harassing their younger sibling.

One day, the family is shopping for back-to-school clothes. Chris teases Kathleen about the store mannequins, warning her that they come to life when the lights are all out and if she doesn't behave, they'll come and get her. He starts singing "The mannequins are gonna get you..." She has a little freak out and Maureen scolds him.

We follow Chris as he enters middle school. He's very bright, but disruptive in class, often questioning and challenging his teachers. While in middle school, he develops a love for music, learning to play the clarinet.

Chris goes into the Boy Scouts and Al continues being the Scoutmaster. There is an incident where the troop goes on a camping trip in Alpine, New Jersey. Al leads the boys on a hike and they get lost. Though they have good compass skills, they're not sure of the destination they're trying to find. Only Chris seems to suspect that his Dad has gotten them lost but helps him play it off to the other fathers accompanying their boys on the trip. They eventually find their way back and Chris and Al have a good laugh about it.

Chris starts playing sports. He loves basketball and practices every day after school. Though he lacks the height of other boys in school, he makes up for it in speed. As he moves into high school, he joins the band and orchestra, continuing his musical pursuits. He's a very active student and takes up tennis along with his basketball, and swimming.

He becomes an honor student, earning the respect of his teachers. His favorite subject is American History and he tells his parents that he wants to major in History in college. He enrolls in Queens college where he works on earning his degree.

Christopher takes a summer job as a lifeguard. He quickly learns how to get tips by giving the best service to the adult guests, giving them towels and such along with his lifeguard duties. He also serves as a kind of chauffeur to his little sister Megan, driving her to her school dances. At home, he bribes her to do his chores for him, paying her to do his laundry and ironing for him.

As he finishes his education, he ponders his career path. He knows he wants to be a firefighter, but also knows how important it is to earn his degree. He rings in the turn of the Millennium, excited for the brand-new century and all its promise. He graduates with his degree in history and begins to work as a substitute teacher.

Christopher wastes no time in applying to the Fire Academy. We see him study and train for the test to get into the Academy. His studies and training are provided by FDNY to prepare candidates for the exams. As he trains hard, he teaches his favorite subject, History, in several schools. His lessons are interesting and he incorporates sports into historical events. We see Chris take the test for the Fire Academy -- it is grueling, but his study and training pay off as he gets perfect scores in both written and physical exams.

Chris takes another substitute teaching job at a middle school. One lesson he gives to a group of enraptured students is on the Civil War, and he ties it in to the Super Bowl. The school administrators are impressed and offer him a permanent position on the faculty to begin in the fall of 2000.

Chris is conflicted. He loves teaching the students, but realizes his true passion lies with firefighting. There are a few scenes where he debates taking the job. He has a long talk with his father Al, who tells him to follow his dreams. His father tells that he himself was fortunate to do what he loved and that too many people settle for the safe bet and don't dream big. Christopher is fortunate that he's had a dream for most of his life, and he should chase it. The next academy selection will be in early 2001, so he won't have to wait too long to get into the Fire Academy.

It's with somewhat of a heavy heart that Christopher turns down the teaching offer from the intermediate school. He explains that he'll be selected in early 2001 and he doesn't want to leave the kids halfway through the school year. The principal is disappointed, but understanding. He mentions that firefighting is a noble profession and that Chris is the type of person who will bring a lot of good to the vocation. They shake hands and he wishes Chris good luck.

Christopher is selected for the Fire Academy. We follow him on his 18-week training program as he learns everything about being a firefighter. There is a moment where his father Al and grandfather visit him at the academy and they pose for the picture that was seen at the beginning of the film. It is challenging, but Chris makes friends with his fellow cadets and his humor and joyful outlook helps him get along with them and the trainers too. Some of the cadets aren't up to the challenge and a few drop out early in the program. Chris encourages others to stay mentally tough and that they can handle it if they want it bad enough.

He and his fellow cadets enter "Hell Week" at the academy, where their trainers inform them that this will be the most challenging thing they've ever faced. This stage of the training is designed to test their limits and push them past their perceived "breaking point." Not only is Hell Week designed to simulate the real-life stresses of the job, but it is meant to be much harder than anything they can expect to face. If they can survive this week which is halfway through their academy training, they can confidently expect to pass the program.

Hell Week begins. It is brutal. One of the tests the candidates go through is a simulated high-rise fire. The cadets must drag hoses up many flights of stairs, while wearing full turnout gear and gas masks with SCBA (Self-Contained

Breathing Apparatus) tanks. The simulation structure is set on fire through controlled pipes that blow flames and smoke through several floors.

The cadets start at the bottom of a stairwell. As they climb higher, the smoke and visibility gets worse. A few of the candidates aren't in good enough shape and almost pass out from trying to lug the heavy hoses up. One candidate in front of Chris drops to his knees, dropping his hose, ready to give up. He rips his face mask off to dry heave. Chris grabs him on the back and lifts him to his feet, putting his mask back on, telling him to keep going and keep breathing clean air instead of smoke. Chris takes the extra hose and fights his way up the steep staircase, towards the flames at the top. He feels the exhaustion in his legs. We see flashbacks of Christopher training heavy at the gym, doing deep squats and yelling through the burn. Slowly, he makes his way up to the flames. He and his teammates turn on the water and put out the fire.

The ordeal has finished. Christopher and the other cadets are spent, sitting around on the ground outside the training building, masks off, gulping fresh air. One of the instructors yells at them to get on their feet for a nice jog around the facility. The candidates all groan and get up slowly, following along on the run.

The rest of Hell Week is challenging as well. We see the cadets have lack of sleep, simulating late night fire calls, emergency medical response training and other high-stress aspects of the job. Finally, Chris and a reduced number of cadets pass Hell Week and continue their training, with classroom instruction, EMT training and more firefighting skills.

Christopher's class graduates from the Fire Academy in a ceremony where they are all sworn in as probationary firefighters. Chris' family and his close friends are all there to see him graduate. He receives his certificate and celebrates with his family.

Chris gets his assignment to Engine Company 54 in Manhattan. There's a moment with his father Al who expresses how proud he is and that he would have been proud even if Christopher had wanted to become a teacher. Chris tells his father that ever since he was a little boy and saw his dad fighting that fire, he knew he wanted to follow in his footsteps. Firefighters are real heroes who save lives, and Chris hopes he can do something heroic.

Al tells him that it's the little moments that count; to just do your best to be a good member of the team, to have each other's back so that everyone returns safe and sound from a call. That was what he felt during his career and hopes to pass on some of that wisdom to Chris. Al tells him that he'll always be there to

answer any questions and give him insight into the profession. Though the technology is a little different, there are certain principles that hold true.

Chris reports to Engine Company 54. He meets his Captain and the other firefighters who welcome the new “probie” to the company. He’s given orientation on the firehouse and its operations and assigned chores that he and his firefighter brothers do. Christopher eagerly tackles his assignments with enthusiasm while he learns more and more about being a firefighter.

He goes on a few calls where not much goes on – no fires. The Captain keeps a close eye on Chris’ progress, letting him take on more responsibilities as he shows a strong aptitude to the job. Months go by on the calendar, days crossed out with red “X” s as the year and Christopher’s experience progresses.

When Chris is off duty, he returns to his family home with his parents and sisters. He excitedly talks “shop” at dinner with his father and jokes with his sisters that it’s nice to be around “more testosterone” at work. He’s been learning a lot and excelling on the job.

It’s late summer. The evening of September 10, 2001. Christopher is on duty, having swapped shifts with another firefighter. Chris and the others on shift go to sleep. All seems routine. There’s a moment where he lies awake in his bed looking up at the ceiling, smiling, knowing that this is the best time in his life. All his dreams have come true.

Act Three

The next morning, a call comes in. There was an accident at the World Trade Center and multiple units are responding. The fire company quickly dons their gear and the fire trucks race from the house to the scene. On the way, Chris looks out to see the first tower on fire near the top of the building. He mentions to another crewmate that it’s going to be tough getting hoses all the way up there.

At the same time, his parents get a call from the Fire Lieutenant, telling them to have Chris report to duty. They mention that he never came home from the night shift. Another phone call is from their son-in-law John who tells them about the World Trade Center. They turn on the TV and see the tower burning. They look out the window across the water where they can see the World Trade Center and the smoke and flames.

Chris' Engine Company arrives at the scene. There is chaos, paper littering the area between the two towers, debris slowly raining down as fire units begin to arrive and stage in the lobby of the North Tower. Chris follows his team in where the Fire Chief briefs the Captain on the status. Chris' Captain directs his men to begin hauling up gear to connect to the building's standpipes to begin fighting the fire, and rescue and evacuation of the people in the building.

Chris and his team grab hoses and equipment and begin lugging it up the stairwell. Chris looks up the stairs and is reminded of his "Hell Week" ordeal. He says to himself "you got this..." and powers up the stairs behind his team. They are slowed down on the narrow staircase by office workers descending and evacuating. Chris and the firefighters often pause to let people pass and go down. When it's clear, they continue their journey up.

Finally, exhausted, they reach the flames. Smoke fills the stairwell. They can feel the heat. They connect hoses to the standpipes and begin spraying the fire with water. Chris is ordered to go back down and help evacuate the occupants as his veteran teammates have the hoses under control there.

Chris heads back down the stairs a few flights and runs into a frightened worker who is disoriented and coughing from the smoke and not sure where to go. He puts his face mask on her and tells her to go down, to hang on and follow him. He takes her arm and guides her a few flights, easing her fears by joking a little, saying "this is why we have no smoking rules in office buildings," which relaxes her. They reach a point where the air has cleared enough and she gives him back his breathing mask. She joins other people entering the stairwell and begins to descend. Chris watches them evacuate when suddenly there is a loud rumble and the building shakes slightly as if there was an earthquake.

The frightened people shriek for a moment and freeze in their tracks. Chris' walkie talkie squawks with an announcement that the South Tower was just hit. The group of people have heard it too and look to Chris, unsure of what to do. Chris stays calm. He tells them to keep going down and tell anyone that they meet to keep going down all the way to the ground. They nod and quickly descend.

Chris pauses for a moment. He looks up towards the smoke. He looks down to see groups of people making their way downstairs. He then enters the offices on that floor and makes a sweep around, looking for any stragglers. The ceiling has caved in partially. He hears someone calling out for help – they can't get past the debris. Chris warns them to stand back. He takes the axe he's carrying and smashes through the rubble to clear an opening where the stranded

office worker can climb through. He thanks Chris, who escorts him back to the stairwell exit and the man descends to escape.

Chris goes back up the stairs to where his fellow company is still fighting the flames. They tell him to go back down and assist with a group from their company trying to rescue people trapped in the elevators. Chris heads back down the stairs. He calls on his walkie-talkie to rendezvous with the other firefighters who've gathered on one of the lower floors. Catching up with them, they split up into teams to search the floors for anyone trapped in elevators.

They find an elevator bank and can hear people pounding and calling for help. One of the other firefighters brings the jaws of life to pry the doors open, freeing the people who climb up and out from the car that is stuck between floors. Chris and his team help them out.

As they are rescuing the people, a thunderous roar can be heard and the building shakes. The firefighters' radios squawk with alerts that the South Tower is collapsing. The order is given to pull back and evacuate the North Tower. There's a lot of static from interference. The fire crew quickly helps the people find the stairwell and go down. Chris asks one in his company if they think that their brothers up by the fire heard the order. His teammate says it's not likely because of all the radio interference that's been interfering.

Chris tells his teammate that he'll go back up to make sure the others know. His teammate says that he and the others will quickly sweep each floor on the way down to make sure they got everyone out. Chris goes up the stairs as the teammate follows the others down.

Exhausted, he reaches his other teammates fighting the blaze. He tells them that there was an order to evacuate. One of them responds that there are still people trapped above the fire. The thick black smoke obscures their ability to see. There is a moment where Christopher pauses to look at his exhausted brothers, then immediately he picks up the hose to help.

DISSOLVE TO:

Ground Zero. A year later. There is a ceremony honoring the fallen. Al and Maureen are there, along with Christopher's sisters as well as the families of the fallen first responders and other victims. Maureen's voice over narrates how Christopher never came back that day, but that his memory lives on in all their hearts.

We see a montage where both Maureen and Al are keeping his memory alive:

A public-school PS 222Q being dedicated and named after Christopher.

His sister Kathleen joining the Army and being sworn in wearing her uniform.

A scholarship fund set up in Christopher's name.
Then...

We flash forward to the 15th Anniversary in 2016. Al and Maureen are driving towards the firehouse. Al mentions that it's going to be tough finding a parking space. Maureen remembers the moment when Chris told her he'd get her a KITT car to help her find her way. She says a little prayer for him to help them find a parking spot and then she'd know he was there with them.

Almost miraculously, a car pulls out from the curb ahead of them. Al shouts "Hey! What do you know?" -- and quickly pulls in to grab the spot. They get out and walk down the block towards the firehouse, where they meet up with their daughters who are there waiting for them. A memorial is there at the firehouse and they are greeted warmly by the firefighters stationed there, most of them young and who would have been children in 2001. The bell is rung fifteen times to honor each of the fifteen members of Engine Company 54. As the tolls ring out, Maureen looks up, feeling her son's presence.

DISSOLVE TO:

Present day. Maureen closes Christopher's baby book and places it back on the shelf. We take another look around the room at the real family photos and Christopher's memorabilia. It is more familiar now -- the faces of the kids growing up... a close-knit loving family, just like any other American family. We hear Maureen's words:

"How can we honor all the victims? We can remember that hatred is a terrible thing. We can work hard not to hate anyone ourselves. We can remember all the fun we had with these heroes. In this way, all the 'Christophers' who died on that horrible day will be special like my son Christopher who will be special forever in my heart and in my soul."

"My Son Christopher"

END

Conclusion

While there was nothing extraordinary about Christopher's early life and childhood, his extraordinary character and bravery were always a part of him. In our lives, sometimes there are moments where we are called to bravely face circumstances. These aren't always life or death choices, but the sacrifice can be great. I want my son's life to inspire audiences to cultivate courage in their own lives, while preserving his memory for those living and the next generations. To the young generation, always remember that your parents will love you no matter what. They set rules to help you be successful in life. That's their job; to love and take care of you.

Parents, never forget to tell your children that you love them each day. Let them know how much you care about them. Time flies before you know it and they will be grown. Though I will always miss my son, I feel blessed that God let us be with him for the time we all had together.