

Myna's Magical Christmas Cookies

Written by

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NOTE - Though this is mostly set in a small town in Michigan, but it can be shot anywhere there will be snow. That part of Michigan is not very scenic so a more scenic location may be preferred.

BLACK SCREEN

An updated peppy Holiday song plays as credits run over...

EXT. BEVERLY BOULEVARD - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: "November 24th"

The Holiday season. The stores and streets are all elaborately decorated. Eager shoppers fill the street, packages in hand.

EXT. TRENDY SHOE STORE - AFTERNOON

The door is swung open and a pretty blonde comes out. This is SAMANTHA DONNER but goes by the name Sammi D. She's in her early 20's, radiant and care-free. She has a huge smile and leaves the store almost skipping, and is carrying a few shopping bags. She stops at the next window. Shopping is her favorite pastime.

INT. EXPENSIVE PURSE STORE - AFTERNOON

The saleswoman is putting a purse in a bag as SAMANTHA hands over a Black America Express card.

INT. ANOTHER EXPENSIVE STORE - AFTERNOON

The saleswoman hands over a Black America Express card back and another shopping bag. The saleswoman is a fan and wants a selfie.

EXT. ANOTHER EXPENSIVE STORE - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA bounces out of the store carrying another bag. A fan stops her for a selfie. She happily obliges the fan and both hold up a hand with their pinkies out. This we will soon learn is her signature sign-off on her social media.

Then it happens with another fan. And another. She then continues walking down the street looking for her limo. She spots it.

Song ends.

EXT. BEVERLY BOULEVARD - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA opens the door and tosses her bags in and then climbs into the limousine.

INT. SUV - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA settles into the limousine.

SAMANTHA

One more stop. Deluscious Cookies & Milk.

The driver pulls into traffic.

DRIVER

How was the shopping?

SAMANTHA is looking out the window.

SAMANTHA

(finally relaxing)  
It ain't easy being me.

INT. SUV - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA opens the door and climbs inside with a large box of cookies. She opens the box of cookies.

DRIVER

Home?

She takes a huge bite of a cookie.

SAMANTHA

(mouthful of cookie)  
Uh-huh.

She reaches into the box and gets another cookie. Taps the driver on the shoulder.

DRIVER

Yes?

She waves the cookie in front of him. He takes the cookie.

SAMANTHA

New flavor for the holidays.

He takes a bite. Thinks for a moment.

DRIVER

Wow! This is really good.

SAMANTHA

Good? I'll have you know, good sir,  
that these are the best cookies in  
the world.

DRIVER

I have to agree.

SAMANTHA

Right!? I wish I could make  
something this good.

She takes another bite.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - AFTERNOON

Outside the mansion are numerous video taping trucks. People are running cables, moving boxes of decorations, carrying electrical supplies.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - AFTERNOON

The limo pulls into the driveway and stops in front of the door. SAMANTHA climbs out and gathers her bags and the box of cookies.

SAMANTHA

(not enthused)

That time of year again.

She walks into the mansion. One of many assistants approach her.

ASSISTANT

Can I take those bags to your room?

SAMANTHA hands the bags to her, keeping the cookies.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION

In the middle of the chaos is SAMANTHA'S mother, a beautiful actress JUDITH LOY (50's looks 40's, famous, rich) is giving orders to all the workers as SAMANTHA walks up to her. JUDITH stops giving orders and looks at SAMANTHA.

JUDITH

You said you were going to help me with the Christmas special.

SAMANTHA

Holiday.

JUDITH

What?

SAMANTHA

It's Holiday now, not Christmas. Holiday is more inclusive. And I thought it was tomorrow.

JUDITH

Christmas/Holiday same thing. The taping is tomorrow. They need a day to get all set up. You know that, it's been the same for fifteen years. And you pick today to go shopping. You need to be more responsible.

SAMANTHA

It's Black Friday. We are suppose to shop. It's practically our patriotic duty.

Judith's head tilts a little while staring at SAMANTHA.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Didn't tug any of those God Bless America heartstrings?

Judith's head tilts a little more while leaning nearer.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Amber waves of grain?

Judith is unfazed.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(admitting defeat)  
Delusious cookies.

SAMANTHA hands her the box of cookies. Judith is pleased.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Classic Three Dozen.

SAMANTHA starts walking away as Judith opens the box of cookies.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
(over her shoulder)  
Actually it's more like two dozen  
and 10.

Judith takes a bite of a cookie.

JUDITH  
Well played.

INT. SAMANTHAS BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA walks into her huge beautifully decorated bedroom. A maid is taking a basket of dirty laundry out of her room. She checks out her appearance in the mirror. Satisfied, she turns on two ring lights and sits at her desk. A few clicks later and she turns on her public persona. She starts her video.

SAMANTHA  
Good afternoon all from sunny Los Angeles! If you are in a place with cold weather and snow I'm sorry. Anyway, I did some Black Friday shopping today. I feel it's my patriotic duty to shop and keep small businesses open and thriving. Going to be a short video today. It's set-up day for my moms annual Holiday Sing-along Special. Hopefully there will be no repeat of a reindeer pooping on the carpet during Silent Night. Oh! And it's award season and I'm up for supporting actress Sunday, so watch to see if I win! Gotta go. Sammi D. Pinky out.

When she says pinky out, she brings her hand up and repeats the pinky wave gesture, repeating the gesture she did with the selfie girl. She signs out.

INT. ANDY'S PARENTS HOUSE - MORNING

Michigan. A large kitchen in a farmhouse in Michigan. A man ANDY MACAULAY, 20s, handsome, is eating breakfast. He is dressed in a service uniform with his name. A lovely woman, KATHY MACAULAY, is making breakfast. She is ANDY's mother. She is in her 50's and in good shape.

KATHY

I heard about this new dating site on the radio yesterday. Called Tender, I think. Nice name.

ANDY

Mom, it's Tinder and it's been around for a while. It's for hooking up.

KATHY

I thought Plenty of Fish was for people who like fishing? You like fishing!

ANDY

No. Tinder is for people who want casual sex.

KATHY is less than thrilled.

KATHY

Oh. Sorry. It's been a year already. And I just want to see you happy.

ANDY

I know. Just taking some time.

BOB MACAULAY, 50's, ANDY's dad comes into the kitchen. He is on the phone.

BOB (ON PHONE)

Yes Mrs. Weiss, I'll be out there in a little bit. Yes. Okay. Bye-bye.

Bob presses the phone, ending the call.

BOB (CONT'D)

Mrs. Weiss' car won't start. Probably left the headlights on again.

ANDY gets up from his seat carrying his plate.

ANDY

I'll do it dad. You eat. Take my car and I'll meet you at work.

Bob smiles.

BOB

Thanks. Take some gas too. Last time she left the car running.

ANDY

Will do.

EXT. WEISS HOUSE - MORNING

Michigan. Snow covers the ground. A tow truck is nose to nose with an old, but pristine Oldsmobile outside of a beautiful farmhouse. Both vehicles are running. The house is in good shape, but needs a little TLC. Jumper cables join the vehicles. Mrs. Weiss, 80's, comes out of the house holding her wallet and comes over to ANDY.

MRS. WEISS

Thank you so much, ANDY. How much do I owe you?

ANDY smiles at her.

ANDY

Nothing, Mrs. Weiss. I noticed you were a little low on fuel, so I put a few gallons in. Don't want the fuel lines to freeze up.

Mrs. Weiss smiles sweetly at him.

MRS. WEISS

Thank you. Nice to have you home.

INT. BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "November 26th"

The Holiday special is taping. Different camera views of beautiful people singing a song. The song ends.

DIRECTOR

Cut! Let's take five and do another one.



The pretty people mill about as JUDITH finds SAMANTHA who grabs a glass of champagne from a passing waiter.

JUDITH  
I see you have no date this year.

SAMANTHA  
Nobody made the cut.

JUDITH  
What is it with you and men?

SAMANTHA  
I don't have a problem with men.  
It's just that there are so few of  
them.

Judith looks around. She points to a very young looking man.

JUDITH  
What about him?

CLOSE ON a very young looking young man.

SAMANTHA  
He's eighteen.

JUDITH  
And has the voice of an angel.

SAMANTHA rolls her eyes. Judith points to another man.

JUDITH (CONT'D)  
What about him?

CLOSE ON ANOTHER YOUNG MAN

He's wearing a LGBTQ pin.

SAMANTHA  
See the pin mom? I'm friends with  
him. He's great but unfortunately,  
he prefers men.

JUDITH  
Did you know my third husband,  
Chad, was a homosexual?

SAMANTHA  
Yes, everyone did.

JUDITH  
 (sadly)  
 Except me.

Judith looks around. She spies another young man and points at him.

JUDITH (CONT'D)  
 And him?

CLOSE ON ANOTHER YOUNG MAN

SAMANTHA  
 Closet tweeker.

Judith looks quizzically at SAMANTHA.

JUDITH  
 He rubs his butt on people  
 secretly?

SAMANTHA laughs.

SAMANTHA  
 No, that's a twerker. (pause)  
 Drugs.

JUDITH  
 (sadly)  
 Ohhhhh.

SAMANTHA  
 Thanks for the attempt but I'll  
 find my own man.

SAMANTHA's phone rings. She looks at it. She walks away to answer the phone.

INT. KYLES CAR - EVENING

KYLE BRONSON is driving a new BMW. KYLE is a handsome, mid 30's and is a very successful agent.

KYLE  
 My favorite actress. What's going  
 on?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION.

SAMANTHA

My favorite agent. Taping my mom's  
Holiday special.

KYLE

A Christmas tradition. Watch it  
every year. (pause) The award show  
(Premier?) is Sunday. You ready?

SAMANTHA

As ready as I can be.

KYLE

Will you be bringing a date?

SAMANTHA

No. Nobody I would want to be seen  
with at this point.

KYLE

Another reason I'm calling is I  
just got off the phone with Gordon.

SAMANTHA

And what did he say?

KYLE

He wants to meet with you both so  
he can be assured that you and her  
can both work together. He's heard  
about the animosity between you two  
and wants to see you together  
before casting.

SAMANTHA

And the lead? Who get's it?

KYLE

Yet to be decided.

SAMANTHA

What do I need to do?

KYLE

Well you need show him that you are  
more than the cute, bubbly blonde  
teen actress he's seen clips of.  
His words, not mine.

SAMANTHA

Wow, I'm surprised he'd even  
consider me after hearing that.

KYLE

But he will. Meeting's on Tuesday,  
11:00 A.M. Blow him away. Surprise  
him. Let him see a side of you he's  
never seen.

SAMANTHA smiles slyly.

SAMANTHA

I intend to.

EXT. AWARD SHOW - EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE: "November 28th"

SAMANTHA arrives via limousine to an award show. The red carpet, the paparazzi, the television hosts vying for the stars attention. The biggest night in Hollywood. Stars dressed to kill, walk up the red carpet. Pushy photographs vie for position, entertainment television hosts grab celebs for impromptu interviews. SAMANTHA is lead from her limousine. SAMANTHA is as used to the attention as any woman her age could be, having grown up in the middle of it. A TV hostess beckons.

TV HOSTESS

Sammi D....Sammi D...

SAMANTHA responds and makes her way to the hostess.

TV HOSTESS (CONT'D)

Sammi, you look lovely, who are you wearing?

SAMANTHA

I'm wearing Gucci.

TV HOSTESS

You look simply marvelous.

TV HOSTESS (CONT'D)

Of course. Sammi, you are up for Best Supporting Actress for your wonderful role in Lakeside Park and Hannah Sanders is up for the film Who am I?

SAMANTHA smiles politely at the name of her rival.

TV HOSTESS (CONT'D)

I hear rumors that you are both up for a coveted lead role.

(MORE)

TV HOSTESS (CONT'D)

Since you share an agent, I'll bet things around that office are a little tense.

SAMANTHA

Of course not. Hannah and I are the best of friends I'll be happy for whoever gets the role.

A huge lie.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE - EVENING

Michigan. The front door opens and ANDY walks in. The taphouse is decorated for the holidays. An old wooden bar, covered with thousands of cigarette burns, sits on the far wall. The bar is about half full. The patrons mostly wear jeans and flannel or work uniforms. ANDY walks over to an empty seat at the bar and sits down.

The bartender, ROD, smiles and walks over. He's a pleasant looking man in his 20's.

ROD

Hey Andy. Been a while. Doing okay?

ANDY

Laying low.

ROD knows why.

ROD

Emily asks about you every time she's here. Which is almost every night. That girl is persistent.

ANDY

Tell me about it. She drives by the shop every day.

ANDY looks up at one of the TV's above the bar. The award show is playing.

EXT. AWARD SHOW - EVENING

SAMANTHA's chief competitor, HANNAH SANDERS arrives with her date, climbing out of a limo. HANNAH makes her way up the red carpet, waving smiling sweetly to the adoring crowd. The camera moves in on Hannah.

SAMANTHA walks away from the TV hostess as HANNAH arrives. They lock eyes for a brief moment. It's clear that they don't like each other.

TV HOSTESS

Hannah Sanders, how are you dear?

HANNAH smiles sweetly.

HANNAH

I'm great, and you look better every year. Who are you wearing this year?

The TV Hostess is charmed by this turn.

TV HOSTESS

Why, it's an old thing by Dior.

HANNAH

Well, it's lovely.

TV HOSTESS

Thank you, but it's now my turn. Who are you wearing darling?

HANNAH

Chanel, and I love it.

TV HOSTESS

You look beautiful. You are the odds-on favorite to win your first award here. How do you feel about your chances?

HANNAH

Oh, I don't know. Everyone was so great, Robin, Julia, Kate. I'm just honored to be mentioned in the same sentence.

TV HOSTESS

And Sammi D.

HANNAH

Of course. How could I forget.

TV HOSTESS

Well thank you dear and good luck.

HANNAH

Thank you.

HANNAH walks off.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE - EVENING

Michigan. ANDY is drinking a beer and has his back turned to the award show on the television, impatiently waiting for Rod to return. Rod appears.

ROD  
Another beer?

ANDY  
Yes please and can we turn the channel? Isn't there a football game on? Anything but this.

Rod looks up at the television. He understands something we don't.

ROD  
Ah. Got it.

Rod grabs the remote and starts to change the channel.

INT. CROWDED AUDITORIUM - LATER

The crowded auditorium is filled with Hollywood royalty. Two presenters are standing at the podium. They open an envelope.

PRESENTERS  
And the award goes to  
(dramatic pause)  
Hannah Sanders for Who am I!

The audience cheers and applauds politely. She may not have been their choice. The camera cuts to SAMANTHA who is clapping but a little disappointed in losing. HANNAH takes her time walking to the podium where she is greeted by the two presenters and given the coveted award.

HANNAH  
I'm shocked...I don't even have a speech prepared.

ON SAMANTHA

SAMANTHA rolls her eyes as HANNAH rambles on.

INT. KYLES OFFICE - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "November 30th"

Inside the huge office, KYLE and SAMANTHA sit in comfy chairs with director/producer GORDON WINSTON sitting on a couch. They aren't talking, checking phones, obviously waiting on someone. HANNAH opens the door looking like she's been up all night, clutching a vape pen and a Starbucks coffee in one hand and her award in the other. She makes a show of putting it in the coffee table in front of GORDON then takes a seat next to him.

GORDON

Thank you for coming ladies. I realize this is a bit unorthodox, but it has to be done. I believe in authenticity in films. I've seen all of your films and I'm very impressed.

KYLE takes over.

KYLE

We all know why we are here. Dana. The most coveted female role in years. We all know the book and the character. And I'm lucky enough to represent the two ladies that are up for the leading role.

GORDON

The role of Dana's sister Melissa is a smaller, supporting role, but is a demanding role, that in some ways will test the actress more than the lead.

KYLE

Gordon wants to test each of you in both roles, then see who fits best in which role. Does that sound good?

HANNAH is visibly upset. She points to her award.

HANNAH

See that award? Do you want to know what its saying? It's telling me that I shouldn't have to audition.

HANNAH blows vape smoke in SAMANTHA's direction. SAMANTHA fakes a cough.



SAMANTHA

It tells me that you got a great script and slept with the director to get the role.

An evil glare from Hannah.

KYLE

Julia still auditions.

HANNAH will hear none of this.

HANNAH

I will not play a supporting role to her. I don't care if she is Hollywood royalty. I've earned this. I've lived Dana. The closest she's come to adversity and pain was when she had to drive herself to Rodeo Drive and broke a nail.

(To SAMANTHA)

And I never slept with him, even though he begged.

SAMANTHA

I have no problem auditioning for the roles.

(To Hannah)

And I have had to overcome adversity and pain, thank you very much.

KYLE tries to intervene.

KYLE

(almost pleading)

Hannah, just a screen test.

HANNAH

I've lived the role, I don't need to test. She needs to test. She's not even a grown up. She's never had to support herself. Her mother got her into this business. She still lives with her mother. She couldn't live the role of Dana, she couldn't even live the life of a regular woman.

(To SAMANTHA)

Have you ever fixed yourself dinner or done your own laundry?

Not really. Not at all.

SAMANTHA

I won't even bother to answer those  
idiotic questions.

She hasn't done those things.

HANNAH

Because the answer is no. You  
haven't. I grew up taking care of  
two brothers while my mother worked  
two jobs to put food on the table.  
I cooked, I cleaned. Everything.

SAMANTHA

To play a role doesn't require a  
person to actually have lived that  
role. That's why it's called  
acting.

It's quiet in the room.

GORDON

Hannah, you say Samantha hasn't  
lived the role so she doesn't  
deserve it.  
What if she does live it? Will you  
audition then?

HANNAH laughs at the suggestion.

HANNAH

Sure. If she lives it, I'll do a  
screen test.

SAMANTHA

What would I have to do?

KYLE is winging this. He wants both women in the movie.

KYLE

What if she has to live as a normal  
twenty-something woman? That means  
no limousines, no expensive  
dinners, no laundry service. An  
actual job.

GORDON

I like this idea.

HANNAH is skeptical.

SAMANTHA

For how long?

GORDON  
For a month?

HANNAH likes this idea but wants it more challenging.

HANNAH  
Two months.

SAMANTHA  
Three weeks?

GORDON  
I don't want her to miss the  
holidays, so leave this week and  
back by Christmas.

KYLE is concerned. Can she do it?

HANNAH  
Fine with me. But I have a few  
conditions. Nobody can know who she  
is. She has to get a real job, her  
own place and actually pay her  
bills. No credit cards. And I want  
to see pictures. And it has to be  
somewhere nobody knows her. She  
can't have anyone help her.

SAMANTHA thinks a moment.

SAMANTHA  
Maybe San Diego. San Francisco.

HANNAH shakes her head.

HANNAH  
She needs to be further away,  
someplace far away from LA and she  
can't let anyone know who she is.  
If anyone finds out who she is, I  
get the role. If she doesn't make  
it the full time, I get the role.  
No screen test.

GORDON  
I'm fine with those conditions.  
Kyle?

KYLE is deep in thought.

KYLE  
I know a place you can go. It's  
perfect.

SAMANTHA  
Somewhere warm?

KYLE  
Ummm, no. Pack for snow.

SAMANTHA frowns. HANNAH laughs.

HANNAH  
Perfect. But I want pictures every day. Where you are sleeping, where you work, the town where you're staying. And no social media.

SAMANTHA shifts uncomfortably.

SAMANTHA  
Fine.

KYLE claps his hands.

KYLE  
I guess we have a deal.

SAMANTHA and HANNAH look at each other with skepticism and bitterness.

SAMANTHA  
I'll need a couple weeks to get my things in order.

GORDON  
We need to start as soon as possible. Casting is set for December 26th.

KYLE  
Two days give you enough time to get ready?

Nods all around. SAMANTHA isn't happy but agrees. This is all happening all so fast.

ON SOUND

Same updated peppy Holiday song plays

INT. SUV - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 1st"

SAMANTHA is in the backseat. She is makeup-free. Still pretty, but different.

EXT. HAIR SALON - MORNING

The SUV pulls up to a upscale hair salon. SAMANTHA exits the vehicle and walks into the salon.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Hair cut, style and color.
- Leaving the salon, shorter brown hair.
- Trying on outfits in a dressing room.
- Different outfit, winter coat.
- Different outfit, jeans.
- Different outfit, business casual outfit.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - LATER

SAMANTHA is satisfied with the business casual outfit. She reaches into her purse and pulls out a pair of glasses and a hair tie. She puts her hair in a bun and puts on the glasses.

Song fades.

SAMANTHA  
(smiling)

Perfect.

INT. SAMANTHAS BEDROOM - EVENING

SAMANTHA is packing suitcases with clothes and shoes. Judith is walking by Samantha's room and stops to watch.

JUDITH  
I don't think you'll need that many  
pair of heels. Winter boots maybe,  
definitely not heels.

SAMANTHA takes some of the shoes out. Boots go in.

SAMANTHA  
I hate snow.

JUDITH  
You love Sundance.

SAMANTHA  
That's different, it's work. Do you  
think I'm doing the right thing?

JUDITH  
Do you think you are?

SAMANTHA  
You know I hate it when you answer  
a question with a question.

JUDITH  
It's a chance to grow. Then you'll  
be home for Christmas then our  
annual New Years in Hawaii. A week  
of pampering. You'll probably need  
it. I'm leaving early for Hawaii so  
you'll have to fly commercial.

SAMANTHA  
Great.

SAMANTHA frowns.

INT. KYLES OFFICE - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 2nd."

Inside the office GORDON and HANNAH sit in chairs. KYLE sits  
behind his desk.

HANNAH  
(Irritated)  
Where is she?

KYLE  
She's on her way.

HANNAH  
Did her limo break down?

The office door opens and Kyle's assistant walks into the  
office.

ASSISTANT  
Samantha will be here shortly.

A woman slips in behind her. The assistant leaves and the  
woman speaks.

SAMANTHA

Can I get anyone anything?

Her voice is a bit different from the bubbly social media/movie voice she uses.

All three turn and give her rapid answers at the same time.

HANNAH

Triple espresso, two Splenda.

GORDON

Black coffee.

KYLE

Black, one sugar.

SAMANTHA in the business casual outfit has her head down and appears to be writing down their orders.

SAMANTHA

O.K., Blondie, fake boobs triple espresso, two Splenda.

HANNAH gasps.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Guy with ugly tie, Black, one sugar.

KYLE looking at his tie.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Handsome guy..

She gets cut off by KYLE.

KYLE

(pissed off)  
Who are you?

SAMANTHA

Mary. I'm temping for the day.

KYLE

Not anymore. Get out!

SAMANTHA sets the paper and pen down, then takes her hair down. She lifts her head and removes glasses then smiles at them.

ON THE OTHER THREE

HANNAH sneering, KYLE with a wry smile and GORDON with a big smile.

KYLE (CONT'D)  
Impressive transformation.

SAMANTHA  
Thank you.

She puts her glasses back on and curtsies. She will be in glasses from now until she leaves Caro.

KYLE  
Everything's set?

SAMANTHA  
Yep, all set. Packed and ready.

KYLE hands her some things.

KYLE  
In the envelope is a \$150 pre-paid Mastercard and \$200 in cash. Do you have your drivers license and social security card?

SAMANTHA  
Got 'em.

GORDON gets up.

GORDON  
I've got another meeting. Good luck. You look great. See you on the 26th.

GORDON kisses her cheek. HANNAH is right behind GORDON.

HANNAH  
(to SAMANTHA)  
Let the mustache grow in. Help with the disguise.

SAMANTHA self-consciously brings her hand up to touch her upper lip. GORDON and HANNAH walk out the door. That leaves SAMANTHA and KYLE.

SAMANTHA  
Where am I going? You said pack for cold weather.

KYLE  
Caro, Michigan. My dad was born there. Small town.  
(MORE)



KYLE (CONT'D)

You'll get use to it. I have all the confidence in you.

SAMANTHA

What am I going to do there?

KYLE

What do most twenty-something women do for jobs?

SAMANTHA

(optimistic)

I don't know. I can be a designer, or writer, you know write commercials or something.

KYLE is uncomfortable, trying her expectations.

KYLE

It's a really small town. You should probably set your sights a little lower.

She's a little disappointed.

KYLE (CONT'D)

As a cover story, you are going on a trip abroad for some role research. I'm the only one who knows where you are really going.

He pulls out a large manila envelope.

KYLE (CONT'D)

I'll need all your money and credit cards.

She opens her wallet and takes out some cash and about 15 credit cards and hands them to KYLE.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Cell phone?

She is upset about giving up her phone.

SAMANTHA

I can't keep mine?

KYLE holds up a phone.

KYLE

I got you this one. No social media posts.

She gives him her phone and takes the other.

KYLE (CONT'D)

This way you won't be distracted by all the calls and texts while you're away.

She looks at the phone.

SAMANTHA

This isn't even an Iphone. How will I know what's going on?

KYLE

If there's anything important that I think you should know about, I will call you. You are flying Delta. Airfare and rental car are paid and booked under your legal name, Mary Donner. You fly back Christmas Eve.

He looks into the manila envelope and reaches inside. He pulls out her Black Amex and hands it to her.

KYLE (CONT'D)

For emergencies only.

SAMANTHA is thrilled and relived.

SAMANTHA

Thank you.

EXT. SMALL OLDER HOME - DAY

Michigan. The house is in disrepair. It has a "For Sale" sign in front. ANDY's tow truck and a four-door sedan are parked in the snow covered driveway.

INT. SMALL OLDER HOME - DAY

ANDY and KATHY are walking around the nearly empty house. A

KATHY

Think it's big enough?

ANDY

Big enough for what? I'm one person.

KATHY  
(hopeful)  
For now. You never know.

ANDY opens a bedroom door and walks inside.

ANDY  
I remember doing sleep overs in  
this room.

They continue the other rooms.

KATHY  
It's a shame what happened to the  
Gibb's. Losing the house and  
everything. They were such a nice  
family.

ANDY  
I feel guilty just thinking about  
buying it.

They walk to the living room with a big fireplace. ANDY  
shines a flashlight up the fireplace.

KATHY  
If you decide to buy it, honor them  
by filling it with love and  
memories.

She looks at him with a sad smile.

INT. LAX - NOON

SAMANTHA looks around. She's been to many airports but never  
had to do anything other than go through the TSA checkpoint.  
Tickets are provided, bags are checked for her. She is having  
trouble managing the three suitcases. She finds the Delta  
area and stands in the long line with her three suitcases.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Waiting in line, moving closer.

-- Waiting in line, moving closer.

-- Waiting in line, she's next.

SAMANTHA  
I need to check these.

AIRLINE WORKER  
I'll need to see your ticket,  
please.

SAMANTHA  
I thought I got my ticket here?

AIRLINE WORKER  
You need to get your ticket at a  
kiosk. Then I can check your bags.

SAMANTHA looks over at the kiosks and long line. She sighs.

INT. LAX KIOSK - DAY

SAMANTHA is trying to figure out how to use the kiosk.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- License upside down, error.

-- Name typed incorrectly, error.

-- On kiosk screen "Two extra bags - \$100". She goes to put the black AMEX card through the card reader then changes her mind. She pulls out the pre-paid Mastercard and uses that one. Her ticket is finally printed.

INT. LAX - MINUTES LATER

SAMANTHA stands once again in the long line with her three suitcases.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Waiting in line, moving closer.

-- Waiting in line, she's next.

SAMANTHA  
I need to check these. Here is my  
ticket.

SAMANTHA hands her the ticket.

AIRLINE WORKER  
I'll need to see your license or  
passport also, please.

SAMANTHA digs through her purse and hands her drivers license. The airline worker types on her keyboard and prints out the luggage tags.

AIRLINE WORKER (CONT'D)  
I have these, you better hurry, TSA  
line is pretty long.

SAMANTHA looks around.

AIRLINE WORKER (POINTING) (CONT'D)  
It's that way.

SAMANTHA  
Thank you.

SAMANTHA rushes off.

INT. LAX TSA CHECKPOINT - MINUTES LATER

SAMANTHA stands in yet another line.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Waiting in line, moving closer.
- Waiting in line, she's next.
- Forgot to take off her shoes.
- Gathering her belongings.
- Rushing to the gate.

INT. LAX GATE - MINUTES LATER

SAMANTHA rushes to the gate as the last flyers are checking in. The gate attendant smiles while taking SAMANTHA's ticket and scanning the ticket.

GATE AGENT  
Just made it. Have a nice flight,  
Mary.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

SAMANTHA steps in the airplane then at her ticket. 33B. Back of the plane.

She's only flown first class or on private jets so this is new to her. She waits while people store their carry-ons in the overhead storage. She finally finds her seat. The women in the window and aisle seats apparently know each other and are happily chatting.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me, I'm in the middle seat.  
Do either of you want to change  
seats?

WINDOW WOMAN

No, I prefer the window.

AISLE WOMAN

(Getting up to let SAMANTHA sit)  
And I prefer the aisle.

SAMANTHA sighs and settles in her seat. A flight attendant nears. She raises her arm to get the flight attendant's attention.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

What can I do for you?

SAMANTHA

I'd like my glass of champagne.

The flight attendant is confused.

FIGHT ATTENDANT

I'm sorry ma'am, we can't serve  
drinks before takeoff. You are able  
to purchase a glass of white wine  
for seven dollars after the plane  
gets to cruising altitude.

SAMANTHA

Purchase?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Yes, credit or debit. No cash.

SAMANTHA is now confused. The flight attendant smiles and walks away.

INT. DETROIT AIRPORT - DAY

SAMANTHA deplanes and looks around, unsure of where to go or what to do.

She looks at the signs then walks toward the baggage claim. She looks out the window and sees that it's snowing pretty hard.

SAMANTHA  
 (reassuring herself)  
 I can do this.

INT. - AIRPORT BAGGAGE CLAIM - MOMENTS LATER

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- Pulling suitcases off the baggage carousel.  
 -- Approaches a porter who points to a luggage cart.  
 -- Loading the cart and suitcases falling off.  
 -- Pushing the cart, she hits people, knocks over a trash can.

INT. CAR RENTAL COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

SAMANTHA arrives at the counter.

SAMANTHA  
 I have a reservation, Sa...um Mary  
 Donner.

The rental agent types in the information.

RENTAL AGENT  
 I see that you've prepaid so I'll  
 just need your drivers license.

SAMANTHA hands him her license. A few more clicks on the keyboard. The rental agent reaches under the counter and hands her the keys.

RENTAL AGENT (CONT'D)  
 The car has a half tank of gas so  
 you'll have to return it in with a  
 half tank. The shuttle comes around  
 about every fifteen minutes. You'll  
 see the signs outside.

SAMANTHA  
 The car isn't here?

RENTAL AGENT

They are at an off-site location.  
And I'd put a coat on, it's twenty  
three degrees out there.

SAMANTHA looks outside.

SAMANTHA

Yea, right. Good call.

EXT. DETROIT AIRPORT - EVENING

Now wearing a winter coat, SAMANTHA is sitting on a bench waiting for the shuttle bus. She's tired. It's been a long, stressful day already, especially for a woman who's not used to doing much of anything for herself. The shuttle bus finally pulls up.

INT. SHUTTLE BUS - EVENING

SAMANTHA is sitting alone in front of the shuttle bus as it takes her to her rental car. The bus stops at her car.  
(Casting note: I think a sassy woman would work best here)

SHUTTLE BUS DRIVER

This is you.

SAMANTHA stands up and looks out at the car. It's covered in snow. She looks at the driver.

SAMANTHA

It's covered with snow.

SHUTTLE BUS DRIVER

It's snowing.

SAMANTHA

Don't you clean it off?

SHUTTLE BUS DRIVER

Nope. Don't leave the seat the  
whole shift. Even eat my lunch  
here.

The driver point to her lunch.

SAMANTHA

What if you have to pee?



SHUTTLE BUS DRIVER  
(flat)

Depends.

They lock eyes. SAMANTHA's confusion turns to shock. SAMANTHA looks down then back up. (Does she break the fourth wall and look at the camera? Up to the director)

EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - EVENING

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- SAMANTHA driving badly.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- SAMANTHA putting luggage in the car.

-- Cleaning off the car.

-- Figuring out the cars buttons

INT. RURAL GAS STATION - NIGHT

On a two-lane road well north of the Detroit, SAMANTHA pulls into a gas station. She pulls along side a pump and waits. And waits. People pull in and get gas and leave. She is all alone. Finally after about 10 minutes, the cashier comes out and over to her window.

CASHIER  
Is there something wrong?

SAMANTHA  
Well, I have been waiting for a long time for someone to put gas in this thing.

CASHIER  
This is self-serve. It means you have to put the gas in yourself.

This is a surprise to her.

SAMANTHA  
Oh. Okay.

He turns and walks away. SAMANTHA gets out of the car, unsure of what to do. She walks to the pump and reads it. She can apparently follow directions because she lifts the nozzle out and goes in search of the gas cap. She finds it on the opposite side of the pump. She pulls the fuel door. She tries pulling it from the other side, only to have nozzle slip out of her hands and bounce across the trunk. The cashier inside can't help but to laugh at her. The intercom crackles to life.

CASHIER ON INTERCOM

If you pull your car around to the other side it will be much easier. And there is a button inside that will release the fuel door.

She stops and thinks about it. Sighs heavily.

INT. RENTAL CAR - EVENING

It's getting dark and SAMANTHA is driving through the snow-covered fields. An app on her phone notifies her.

APP VOICE

Your destination in fifty feet.

SAMANTHA sees the motel sign and pulls into the motel parking lot.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

She opens the car door. Snow is piled high. She walks in the door. A sleepy clerk gets off his chair and greets her.

CLERK

Hello, can I help you?

SAMANTHA

I would like a room.

CLERK

One room?

SAMANTHA

(exhausted)

Yea, just me.

CLERK

There is a single room for forty-five dollars a night. How many nights?

SAMANTHA

I'm not sure. Is room service still available?

The clerk looks blankly into her eyes.

CLERK

(deadpan)

I'm afraid our chef has gone home for the evening.

SAMANTHA

Sarcasm. I get it.

She reaches in her purse and gives him the Mastercard. He runs the card.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Is there a place open around here that I can get something to eat?

The clerk thinks.

CLERK

There's a Seven-Eleven about a mile up the road. They are open all night.

He hands her the room key.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Room seven, fourth on the right. I think they have a good hot dog and Slurpy deal going right now. All beef.

SAMANTHA grimaces..

SAMANTHA

Great.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

SAMANTHA is in the room eating a hot dog and drinking a seltzer. She is texting. The texts are on the screen.

SAM: Hi mom, made it

A few seconds later

MOM: Glad you made it. I was getting worried. How is it?

SAM: Lots of snow. its like everywhere a lot

MOM: Safe?

SAM: Strange. but I feel safe

MOM: (heart emoji)

SAM: Exhausted. Going to bed. Text you tomorrow. Luv u

MOM: Don't I deserve a few more letters? Don't be stingy with the vowels and consonants.

SAM: LOVE YOU

MOM: Luv u 2. LOL!!!!!!

SAMANTHA smiles. Next text. To KYLE.

SAM: Economy? Really?

A few seconds later.

KYLE: Only seat available. You there?

SAM: Yep accommodations are lacking.

KYLE: I understand. Not what you're use to.

SAM: Thats an understatement. I had a hot dog and a slurpee for dinner.

KYLE: You're flying first class on the flight home

SAM: (thumbs up emoji)

KYLE: Take pictures and send them. Part of the deal.

SAM: Will do. Tired. Going to bed.

KYLE: Okay, good night.

SAM: Night.

She gets off the bed and takes a selfie of her and the room. She posts it to the group chat.

SAM: My room. Day one.

A few seconds later

KYLE: (thumbs up emoji)

GORD: Looks cozy.

HAN: LOL! Enjoy the bedbugs.

She opens another beverage and switches channels on the TV. Nothing on. She keeps clicking.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 3rd"

SAMANTHA looks a little rough, driving the rental car. She's drinking bitter motel coffee and hates it.

SAMANTHA

I would pay a hundred dollars for a Starbucks non-fat Latte right now.

She passes snow-covered fields and finally a sign on the road that says "2 Miles to Caro".

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

She drives up on an Amish family in a horse-drawn carriage plotting along the road. She tries to pass them, but cars keep coming the other way.

INT. RENTAL CAR - MOMENTS LATER

She's getting upset. Finally she is able to pass them and yells out the window at them.

SAMANTHA

(yelling)

HEY!! GET A CAR!!

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

The Amish family look at each other and shake their heads at her.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Driving down the road, the rental car hits an icy patch. The car spins around ending up partly off the road, partly in a snow bank.

SAMANTHA

Oh crap.

She tries to open her door. It's against the snow.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You've got to be kidding me.

She rests her head against the steering wheel then picks up her phone and dials. Not going through. No service. The Amish buggy comes to a stop next to her car. SAMANTHA lifts her head and smiles and waves sheepishly at them.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

The Amish buggy continues down the road with an unhappy SAMANTHA riding in the back.

EXT. CARO SERVICE - DAY

The Amish buggy comes to a stop in front of a busy auto repair facility. SAMANTHA hops off the back and walks to the front of the buggy.

SAMANTHA

Thank you.

AMISH DAD

You're welcome. Drive careful.

INT. CARO SERVICE - DAY

SAMANTHA walks into Caro Auto Service center, a small neat auto repair facility located not far from town. A bell announces her arrival. ANDY walks up to the counter. His work uniform is neat and clean. He is smiling.

ANDY

Hi. How can I help you?

SAMANTHA

I need some help. My car is sort of  
in a snow bank.

ANDY

Sort of?

SAMANTHA shrugs her shoulders.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Okay....Where is it?

SAMANTHA

It's on a road. Not sure of the  
name.

She looks outside to orient herself. She points to the left..

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

That way.

ANDY has to laugh. She turns around again. Reorienting  
herself once again.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Then that way.

She points straight ahead.

ANDY

Good start. Coming from the south?

SAMANTHA

Yes. I'm almost positive.

ANDY

I'd say it's on M24. How far out of  
town?

SAMANTHA

I'd say about 15 minutes by single  
horse powered buggy.

He chuckles.

ANDY

Okay. What is the make and model?

SAMANTHA

Not sure. It's blue.

ANDY smiles writes that down.

ANDY  
That's a start. Let's go.

EXT. ROAD - LATER

ANDY and SAMANTHA ride in the tow truck.

ANDY  
I'm Andy.

SAMANTHA  
Saw the name tag. Mary.

ANDY  
Nice to meet you. You just driving  
through?

SAMANTHA  
Not really sure.

ANDY  
Not sure?

SAMANTHA  
Just trying to get away for a  
while.

ANDY  
Relationship troubles? Arrest  
warrant? Drug deal gone bad?

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA  
Something like that. It seems nice  
here. Quiet I'm assuming.

ANDY  
Too quiet for some folks. Just  
right for others.

SAMANTHA  
Any jobs in the area?

ANDY  
Well I heard Bigmart is hiring. But  
that's about 10 miles out of town.

They pull up to her car.



ANDY (CONT'D)

That must be you. I can tell  
because it's the only blue car,  
make and model unknown, in a  
snowbank, on the side of the road.

He smiles at her. She is a bit charmed.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

ANDY is hooking up a winch to pull her out. ANDY uses the winch to pull the car out. SAMANTHA smiles. He gets out of the tow truck and over to her.

SAMANTHA

(wincing)

What are the damages?

ANDY

Usually it's about fifty dollars an  
hour but I'll just count this as my  
lunch hour.

SAMANTHA

My hero.

ANDY

I'll be right back with the bill.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

SAMANTHA waits in her car, dreading the bill. ANDY walks back and hands her the bill. She looks at the bill and then back at him.

SAMANTHA

Ten dollars?

She can't believe it.

ANDY

Have to put something on the books.  
Too much?

SAMANTHA

No, it's perfect. Thank you.

ANDY is genuine and honest.

ANDY

If you don't have it, you can drop it off tomorrow. The address is on the bill.

SAMANTHA

Can I at least buy you a drink?

ANDY smiles.

ANDY

It's a little too early for a drink and I have to go back to work, but thanks.

Wow, a guy who doesn't want to pick her up.

SAMANTHA

Well then I'll buy you one and drink it myself. Anywhere you would recommend?

ANDY

Caro Taphouse. Nice little place in town.

(pointing at her)

And no more drifting on public roads.

SAMANTHA smiles and reaches into her purse and pulls out a \$10. She hands it to him.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'll be right back with your receipt.

SAMANTHA

I don't need a receipt.

ANDY

Okay. I have to get back to the shop. If you're going to be in town for a while, I'm sure we will run into each other. Enjoy that drink for me but use Uber. I don't want to do this again.

He smiles.

SAMANTHA

I will. Thanks.

ANDY slowly walks to his tow truck. SAMANTHA watches him walk away in her side view mirror.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
(softly to herself)  
Nice.

INT. RENTAL CAR - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA drives along and passes a sign.

Welcome to Caro

It's a cute small town, full of charm but secluded enough that almost every teenager there dreams of getting out.

INT. BIGMART - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA walks into the Bigmart and is greeted by the greeter.

GREETER  
Good afternoon. Welcome to Bigmart.  
How can I help you today?

SAMANTHA  
Yes, where is the place where they  
hire people?

GREETER  
Human resources? Go down past the  
bathrooms and go in the door that  
says Human Resources.

SAMANTHA  
Thank you.

INT. BIGMART HR ROOM - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA walks into the human resources department. A woman sits behind a desk.

SAMANTHA  
Hi, I'm here for a job.

HR WOMAN  
We have openings for cashier,  
greeter or overnight stocking.  
Which would you prefer?

SAMANTHA

Any of them. Except the overnight thing.

HR WOMAN

So either cashier or greeter?

SAMANTHA

Yes.

HR WOMAN

Sit at the computer and fill out the on-line application.

She points to a computer off to the side. SAMANTHA moves over and begins filling out the application.

INT. BIGMART HR DEPARTMENT - LATER

The HR woman is looking at a paper copy of SAMANTHA's application.

HR WOMAN

You haven't filled out any previous employment. Haven't you ever had a job?

SAMANTHA

About that...

HR WOMAN

Without any verifiable work experience I can't hire you. I need to do a background check, check references. Can't you provide me anything?

SAMANTHA

Not really.

HR WOMAN

I'm sorry.

They sit looking at each other.

SAMANTHA

Really? For a job here?

HR WOMAN

Yes. Really.

SAMANTHA stands up and walks out of the room.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- SAMANTHA in an small office. A woman shaking her head.

-- SAMANTHA in a store. A man shaking his head.

-- SAMANTHA in another store. A woman shaking his head.

EXT. CARO MAIN STREET - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 4th"

SAMANTHA is walking down the main drag in Caro. The town beautifully decorated for Christmas. She sees a hand made help wanted sign posted at small market. She opens the old door and steps onto the ageless wooden floors. Except for the type of merchandise, the store could have come straight out of the 50's. She walks around looking, almost stumbling on an older woman stocking the lower shelves.

SAMANTHA

I'm sorry, I didn't see you.

MYNA

Excuse me, dear.

SAMANTHA is taken aback by her. MYNA EMERY is 78 years old and very spry. Myna easily pops up.

SAMANTHA

Wow!

MYNA

Hard work keeps you young. Well youngish. How can I help you?

SAMANTHA

I saw the sign. Help wanted?

MYNA

Then you can talk to me. I'm Myna.

She offers a hand then a surprisingly strong handshake.

MYNA (CONT'D)

You aren't going to quit and go to work at that other place are you? The last girl did. And the one before her.

SAMANTHA  
Not planning on it.

MYNA

Good.

SAMANTHA  
BigMart?

Myna puts her finger to her lips.

MYNA  
Please don't say that. George's  
blood pressure rises every time he  
hears that name.

SAMANTHA  
Who's George?

MYNA  
The store owner and my husband of  
fifty-seven years.

SAMANTHA is shocked and impressed. Most marriages in  
Hollywood don't last fifty-seven weeks.

SAMANTHA  
Wow, that must be some sort of  
record.

MYNA  
Not even in my the family. George's  
parents were together sixty-six  
years. Let's get you an  
application.

They walk to the counter. Myna pulls out a one page  
application. GEORGE EMERY, 81, walks slowly from the back  
room.

MYNA (CONT'D)  
(to SAMANTHA)  
Just put your name, address and  
social security number on it. I  
don't need the rest of that stuff.  
(to George)  
George, this is Mary. She's here  
for the job.

GEORGE  
Your name is Mary?

SAMANTHA

Yes.

GEORGE

Good name. Not many young ladies named Mary these days. Lots of Emilys, Ashleys and Hannahs though.

SAMANTHA

I coundn't agree more. Wayyyyyy too many Hannahs.

As George walks away, SAMANTHA has filled out the application and hands it to MYNA who examines the application.

MYNA

Okay Mary, have you ever worked a cash register?

SAMANTHA

No.

MYNA

Have you ever stocked shelves?

SAMANTHA

No, but I can empty them pretty fast.

Myna ignores the joke and smiles at her.

MYNA

Are you trustworthy? Have you ever stolen anything?

SAMANTHA

Yes. No. That was two questions right?

Myna nods. An ashamed, SAMANTHA confesses.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Actually, when I was twelve, I stole a bracelet from a store.

A \$500 bracelet from Tiffanys.

MYNA

Did you get caught?

SAMANTHA

Not by the store. Worse. My mom.

MYNA

What did she do?

SAMANTHA

She made me take it back and apologize to the store owner. And I had to pay for it out of my allowance.

MYNA

Well your mother did the right thing. You're hired. It's only minimum wage though. And a half-hour lunch break.

SAMANTHA smiles at Myna.

SAMANTHA

That's fine. I just really need a paycheck. When do I start?

MYNA

Tomorrow morning alright? But I need to tell you, we are trying to sell the business so I can't promise you a job if we are successful in finding a new owner.

SAMANTHA

That's okay. I understand.

She can't promise she'll be here long anyway.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

SAMANTHA is watching TV. One of her movies is on TV. A scene where she is a waitress serving two men dinner. One of the men takes out a gun and shoots the other. She is the waitress who drops the plates of food after one man shoots another man. The waitress screams and drops the plate. Her phone indicates a text message. The texts are on the screen.

MOM: Hey kid, how was your day?

SAM: Eventful, lots of snow. It's like everywhere.

MOM: Drive careful in the snow. It's slippery.

SAM: Great advice. Thanks mom.

SAM: Btw I got a job!



MOM: Wonderful! Tell me more!

SAMANTHA continues texting.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - NEXT DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 5th."

SAMANTHA walks through the front door of Emery's market.

MYNA  
Good morning Mary.

SAMANTHA  
Good morning.

Myna looks at the clock.

MYNA  
Right on time good way to start.

SAMANTHA yawns, tired from lack of sleep.

SAMANTHA  
I like to pride myself on being  
punctual.

MYNA  
Let's get to work.

Myna leads SAMANTHA to the back of the store.

INT. EMERYS MARKET OFFICE - MORNING

George sits doing paperwork in his office. There are shelves of ledgers with the years on spines. He looks up at her.

GEORGE  
Good morning.

SAMANTHA  
Good morning.

GEORGE  
Ready to work?

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA

I am.

Myna hands her an apron with "Emery's Market" printed on the front and a button that says "Mary".

MYNA

Now you are.

SAMANTHA

(trying to be excited)  
Right!

SAMANTHA puts on the apron. Takes a selfie. Sends it. George and Myna look on quizzically.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- SAMANTHA learning to use the cash register. Mistakes.

-- SAMANTHA learning to use the lottery machine. Mistakes.

-- She scans a soda and a can of soup and presses a button. Myna shakes her head no.

-- Try again. She rings up a soda and a can of soup and presses a different button. Myna shakes her head no.

-- Try again. She rings up a soda and a can of soup and presses a different button. Myna shakes her head yes. Finally.

-- SAMANTHA ringing up customers. Patient people smiling politely.

MYNA

And be sure to I.D. everyone under thirty trying to buy alcohol.

SAMANTHA

Got it.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - EVENING

SAMANTHA is standing next to the register in the empty market.

MYNA

You did well today. I think you'll work out.

SAMANTHA

Thank you. Are we done?

George comes walking up holding a broom. He hands SAMANTHA the broom.

GEORGE

Almost.

SAMANTHA takes the broom and starts sweeping. The lights start turning off one by one.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 6th."

SAMANTHA, Myna and George are getting the store ready to open at 8:00 A.M. ANDY's tow truck pulls up outside the store. Myna sees the truck and goes to unlock the door. ANDY reaches the front door which is opened by Myna.

MYNA

Good morning ANDY.

He enters and removes his hat. SAMANTHA notices.

ANDY

Good morning Mrs. Emery, Mr. Emery.

ANDY sees SAMANTHA.

GEORGE

Good morning Andrew.

ANDY

(Looking at SAMANTHA, pretending not to remember her name)  
And..

MYNA

Andy, this is Mary.

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA

We've met. He pulled my car out of a snow-filled ditch a few days ago. Thank you again.

ANDY has an embarrassed smile on his face.

ANDY  
(to SAMANTHA)  
You're welcome.  
(to George)  
Is tomorrow evening good for me to  
put up the lights, Mr. Emery?

GEORGE  
That would great Andrew. Boxes are  
in the barn just where you left  
them.

ANDY's cellphone rings.

ANDY  
I better get this call. I'll be by  
after work tomorrow.

GEORGE  
Thanks Andrew.

ANDY exits the store as he answers his phone. SAMANTHA  
watches him.

MYNA  
He's a good boy. Known him his  
whole life.

GEORGE  
He puts up our Christmas lights  
every year. Has since high school.

MYNA  
Even when he was away for college  
and working the first thing he  
would do after getting home was  
coming over to put up our lights.

SAMANTHA is confused. ANDY went to college? Why is working at  
a garage?

GEORGE  
That boy would do anything for  
Myna's Magical Christmas cookies.

INT EMERY'S MARKET - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 7th"

SAMANTHA is leaning on the counter drinking a Red Bull. Myna approaches her.

SAMANTHA  
(re. Red Bull)  
I paid for it. Have the receipt.

She holds up the receipt.

MYNA  
I trust you. You look a little  
tired, dear.

SAMANTHA  
A little. Didn't sleep well. Smelly  
motel, bad bed.

MYNA  
You're staying in a motel?

SAMANTHA  
Yea. Not exactly the four seasons.

MYNA  
I know a place for you to live.  
It's about two miles from here and  
cheap.

INT. EMERYS OFFICE

SAMANTHA and Myna are walking toward the office.

SAMANTHA  
How cheap?

MYNA  
How does fifty dollars a week  
sound?

SAMANTHA  
Wow. Sounds good. Where is it?

MYNA  
It's above our garage. Small  
apartment. It's nice and roomy,  
your own kitchen, bathroom, heat  
and cable.

SAMANTHA  
That sounds perfect.

EXT. EMERY HOUSE - EVENING

The couple pulls up in their farmhouse. ANDY's tow truck is already there. He is on a ladder hanging lights near the house. SAMANTHA pulls in behind them and looks at the house and the surrounding farmland. They all get out of the vehicles.

SAMANTHA

I haven't seen anything like this except in the movies.

GEORGE

You should have seen it in the fifties. We had over five hundred acres, growing the best crops in the county.

They walk toward the door.

MYNA

George's vegetables were winners every year at the Tuscola County Fair.

GEORGE

You won a few yourself, with your animals and your peach pies.

ON ANDY

ANDY continues putting up the lights near the porch.

ANDY

Don't forget about the Magic Christmas cookies. World class.

MYNA

Thank you ANDY, I got your cookies baked last night.

ANDY smiles.

ANDY

Staying for a great home-cooked dinner Mary?

SAMANTHA

Moving in, actually.

George unlocks the door while SAMANTHA and ANDY continue to gaze at each other.

INT. EMERY HOUSE - EVENING

They enter the house. Everything is nice, but at least 50 years old with the exception of the avocado range and refrigerator, and a microwave oven. SAMANTHA wanders around looking at the pictures.

INT. EMERYS KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

They both go about starting dinner.

MYNA

Dinner is included. Breakfast too,  
and served at seven.

SAMANTHA

Seven A.M.?

GEORGE

Hope you like a big breakfast,  
Mary.

SAMANTHA

Well, usually I just have a coffee  
and a biscuit or cookie.

MYNA

That's why you're so skinny, honey.  
You need some breakfast to get you  
going and to get those things to  
grow.

(referring to SAMANTHA's  
chest)

An embarrassed SAMANTHA looks at her chest. Really?

MYNA (CONT'D)

Oh, thanks for saying cookie, I  
have to get ANDY's box of cookies  
ready.

INT. SAMANTHAS APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The efficiency apartment is larger than she expected. It could use some work, but is livable. The carpet is red. There is a bathroom, but the bed is out in the main living area along with a couch. SAMANTHA walks over to the closet and opens the door. A vacuum. Some old flannel shirts hang in the closet.

MYNA

I need to finish dinner now. George is on a strict schedule. If you need anything, we are only fifty feet away.

SAMANTHA

Thank you.

Myna smiles.

MYNA

Dinner will be ready in a half-hour, if you're hungry.

Myna leaves SAMANTHA's apartment.

SAMANTHA

(looking around)

We're not in LA anymore, Toto.

EXT. SAMS APARTMENT - EVENING

SAMANTHA is pulling a heavy suitcase from the trunk. She sets it on the ground then goes for another.

ON ANDY

He is carrying another bundle of lights. He sees SAMANTHA getting the suitcase out of the trunk and sets the lights on the ground. He walks to the car.

ANDY

Need a hand?

She smiles.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

ANDY and SAMANTHA carry the suitcases into her apartment. She speak to him as though he is one of the staff.

SAMANTHA

(authoritative)

Just put them over in the corner.

They are both surprised at the ease and tone of her order. SAMANTHA quickly covers her mouth.



SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Oh my gosh! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to sound that way!

ANDY sets the suitcases down as ordered.

ANDY

That rolled off the tongue rather easily.

SAMANTHA

(almost pleading)

I know, I'm sorry. Travel. Hotels. Valets. (pause) Extreme exhaustion?

ANDY smiles.

ANDY

Apology accepted. I have to go finish the lights. Earn my cookies.

SAMANTHA

They must be some good cookies.

ANDY

Like I said, world class. See you around.

Andy walks out the door. SAMANTHA looks around. Lots of work to do.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 8th."

The alarm on SAMANTHA's phone goes off. She sits up, still in her clothes from last night. She turns off the alarm and smiles. All of her things are put away and she place looks better. She takes a picture of her new room and sends a group text. "New place".

INT. EMERYS DINING ROOM - MORNING

Myna is cooking a big breakfast, eggs, bacon, hash browns. George is reading the paper, drinking a cup of coffee. A familiar scene that has been repeating itself for decades. They hear a knock on the door.

MYNA

Come in.

The door opens and a refreshed SAMANTHA walks in to the dining room.

SAMANTHA  
Good morning.

MYNA  
You must be starving this morning.  
You didn't join us for dinner.

GEORGE  
You missed a mighty good pepper  
steak.

SAMANTHA  
After unpacking I was so tired, I  
fell asleep in my clothes.

GEORGE  
Would you like some coffee?

A fresh pot of coffee sits in a percolator.

SAMANTHA  
I would love one. Is there a  
Starbucks near here?

SAMANTHA pulls out her phone and starts typing.

MYNA  
That fancy coffee place? I don't  
know.

SAMANTHA  
I don't know about fancy. Fifteen  
thousand locations and the closest  
one is eight miles?

GEORGE  
Fifteen thousand locations? For  
coffee, a beverage that is just hot  
water poured through ground up  
beans.  
(to Myna)  
Honey, we started the wrong  
business.

MYNA pours a hot cup of her coffee and hands it to SAMANTHA.

MYNA  
Here, dear. It's free. Cream and  
sugar are on the table.

SAMANTHA adds cream and sugar in and takes a sip. It's great.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS

-- SAMANTHA is arranging some cans in an artsy display. She stands back to admire her effort. The cans come crashing down.

-- SAMANTHA is stocking shelves. She uses a knife to cut open a box. She cuts the top of the box off then reaches in to pull out a box of cereal. She tips the box of cereal a little and cereal falls out on the floor.

Myna comes out from the back room.

MYNA

Mary, I'm going to take George home. He's not feeling well. Will you be okay here for a bit?

SAMANTHA

Yes, sure. I'll be fine. Is he okay?

MYNA

Just tired, dear.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SAMANTHA is eating cookies out of a box while ringing a customer up.

SAMANTHA

Thanks, have a good day.

The customer walks away. Before the customer exits, two young ladies enter. They are EMILY, 20s, and ASHLEY also 20s. They are the best-looking girls this small town has to offer and they know it.

ASHLEY

So what's up with ANDY? Any progress?

EMILY

Working on it. Eventually he's going to want to leave again and I'll be with him.

They walk to the beverage section and pick up some seltzers.

ASHLEY

He won't say anything more than Hi to you. Doesn't even respond to your texts.

EMILY

He's playing hard to get. He'll come around. I'm his best option in this boring town.

ASHLEY

It's not that bad.

EMILY

It is bad. It's boring here.

They walk up to the register. EMILY puts her seltzers on the counter.

SAMANTHA

I'll need your I.D.

EMILY

(Aghast)

What?

The girls turn and look at each other. Who is she?

EMILY (CONT'D)

Who are you?

SAMANTHA

Mary, see here. (points to the button on her apron) Mary. You're under thirty. I have to check. Bosses order.

A furious EMILY is digging through her purse looking for her I.D.

EMILY

I know the owners. I use to have your job.

EMILY provides her I.D. SAMANTHA takes a little longer than necessary to look at the I.D.

EMILY (CONT'D)

You can use your fingers for my year of birth if it helps.

SAMANTHA glares at EMILY and hands the I.D. back. Scans the seltzers.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
On to bigger things now. Fifteen  
dollars an hour.

SAMANTHA  
(mock surprise)  
Wow. Fifteen dollars an hour.

EMILY scowls.

EMILY  
Plus benefits.

SAMANTHA has trouble biting her tongue. She wants to tell her  
that she pays her personal assistant thirty five dollars an  
hour. Plus benefits. Emily looks her over a bit closer.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
You look familiar.

SAMANTHA is a bit panicked.

SAMANTHA  
I do?

ASHLEY  
Owendale?

SAMANTHA  
I don't owe Dale anything.

ASHLEY  
Owendale. It's a school and a town  
about twenty miles from here.

SAMANTHA  
I'm not from around here.

EMILY  
So what are you doing here?

SAMANTHA  
The fact that I am behind the cash  
register would indicate, to most  
people, that I am employed at this  
establishment.

EMILY looks at her like "Who the hell do you think you are?"

EMILY  
The town.

SAMANTHA looks around the market then leans in toward the  
girls. They also lean in.

SAMANTHA  
(whispering)  
The government put me here. Witness  
protection.

ASHLEY gasps. EMILY looks on skeptically. This may be the most exciting thing that's happen to this town in... well they don't know much of anything exciting that's happened.

ASHLEY  
What did you do?

SAMANTHA looks around. She leans in once again.

SAMANTHA  
I saw a mob guy kill another mob  
guy.

ASHLEY stares with an open mouth.

EMILY  
(Trying not to look  
impressed)  
So what happened?

SAMANTHA has no idea. She has to make something up.

SAMANTHA  
I was a waitress in an Italian  
place. I was getting ready to serve  
some guy his ravioli, extra parm,  
when the guy he was eating dinner  
with pulls out a 45 magnum and  
shoots the other guy in the head.

SAMANTHA gets the caliber wrong and it's the scene from the movie she was in on TV at the motel.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
I dropped his food on the floor.

ASHLEY  
Holy crap!!

EMILY looks on skeptically.

EMILY  
So why didn't he shoot you?

SAMANTHA  
I don't know, they have a code  
about that sort of thing.

ASHLEY nods.

ASHLEY  
I heard about that.

EMILY glares at Ashley.

EMILY  
When have you heard about anything  
about the mob?

ASHLEY  
I've heard things.

EMILY turns to SAMANTHA.

EMILY  
So the government put you here to  
hide?

SAMANTHA  
Just until the trial, then I'll go  
back to testify.

ASHLEY  
Aren't you scared?

SAMANTHA  
Sure, a little. But they say I'm  
safe here as long as I don't tell  
anyone. You guys can keep a secret  
can't you?

They can. But they won't. The whole town will know by dinner  
time.

EMILY  
Sure, we can keep it to ourselves.

SAMANTHA  
Thanks. I appreciate that.

She motions to the seltzers.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
Did you want to pay cash or card?

EXT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

EMILY and ASHLEY stop outside the store.

EMILY

There is something about her that's  
a little familiar and a little  
weird. I think she's full of crap.

INT. SAMANTHAS APARTMENT - EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 9th"

SAMANTHA can't find anything to watch on the TV. It's too quiet. She decides to go out.

INT. SAMANTHAS APARTMENT BATHROOM - EVENING

SAMANTHA is fixing her makeup in the cramped bathroom. The light isn't very good. She's looking through her closet for something appropriate for going out to the bar. She's wearing jeans that cost more than a week's wages in these parts, an expensive T-shirt and expensive shoes. Way too dressed up for this town. Satisfied with her appearance she gets on her phone and we see her press the Uber app on her phone.

EXT. CARO TAPHOUSE - EVENING

From the outside the bar appears to be nothing special. The vehicles parked in the gravel parking lot outside are mainly pickup trucks. She looks around the parking lot and the neon signs advertising various beers. She gets out of the Uber.

SAMANTHA

(psyching herself up)  
Fit in. You can do it.

She walks toward the door, stumbling in her high heels on the gravel.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The front door opens and SAMANTHA walks inside and takes a seat at the bar. The bartender, Rod, smiles and walks over.

ROD

Hi, what can I get you?



SAMANTHA  
I'll have a Grey Goose  
Cosmo.

ROD  
Nice choice.

ROD goes to get her drink. SAMANTHA turns to look around the bar. Half of the bar is looking at her. Some turn away when she sees them. ROD returns with her drink.

SAMANTHA  
(re: the people looking at  
her)  
What did I do?

ROD  
You're new and you walked in here.  
That will be three seventy-five.

SAMANTHA hands him a twenty. ROD leaves to get her the change. She has a sip. Perfect.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

The front door opens. EMILY and ASHLEY walk in the bar. Men and women greet them by name as they walk through the bar. They walk to a table on the other side of the bar from SAMANTHA.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR

ROD comes back to SAMANTHA.

ROD  
You'd fit in better drinking the  
beer. Not many locals drinking  
Cosmopolitans.

SAMANTHA  
You can tell I'm not local?

ROD  
That outfit kind of gives you away.  
And I know almost everyone in this  
town.

SAMANTHA looks around at the patrons in the bar.

ROD (CONT'D)

By the way. How long until the trial?

ROD chuckles and walks away when SAMANTHA feels a tap on her shoulder. It's EMILY. She's not happy, looking over SAMANTHA's choice of clothing.

EMILY

Well, if it isn't the mafia princess. Do any good murders lately?

SAMANTHA laughs at this.

SAMANTHA

Witness. I said I was a witness.

EMILY has to say something to save face. Anything. Looking at SAMANTHA's outfit once again.

EMILY

Where did you get those ugly shoes? Payless? And that shirt. I'm sure I saw it on the discount rack at Bigmart.

SAMANTHA looks down at her \$1720 Christian Louboutin shoes, \$980 Fendi Jeans, and her \$430 GIVENCHY T-Shirt. Should she tell her? Yep.

SAMANTHA

These are Christian Louboutin shoes.

EMILY looks at her. So? Like that name means anything to her.

EMILY

Like that's a real designer. I need to get back to my table. My friends are waiting. I notice you don't have any friends. I wonder why?

EMILY turns and walks away.

SAMANTHA

Good-bye Sweetie.

After seeing that scene ROD returns.

ROD

You'll have to excuse her. She's not a good representation of this town. Bitter from unrequited love.

SAMANTHA laughs.

SAMANTHA

I'm so glad they could keep a secret.

ROD

Small town. Word travels fast. Mary.

ROD knows her name.

ROD (CONT'D)

Christian Louboutin shoes. Please. You aren't from Ohio.

ROD starts walking away.

ROD (CONT'D)

(over his shoulder)  
You could be an actress.

SAMANTHA watches him walk away thinking: Does he know?  
SAMANTHA'S phone beeps. She picks up her phone and checks the message. Text on screen.

KYLE: Check out TMZ

SAMANTHA checks the site. The headline is "Where's Sammi D? Rumor is Rehab" Texts on screen.

SAM: One guess who planted that.

KYLE: We don't know that for sure. Working on it. Will be in contact.

SAMANTHA puts her phone down.

SAMANTHA

Great. Rehab.

SAMANTHA picks up her phone. Texts on screen.

SAM: Planting fake stories because you're afraid I'll win?

HAN: ?? No idea what you are talking about.

SAM: Sure you don't know.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 12th"

SAMANTHA and MYNA are making boxes for the cookies.

SAMANTHA

So you make these every year?

MYNA

Yes, every year.

SAMANTHA

How long have you been doing it?

Myna pauses to think.

MYNA

Almost sixty years. George's mother started making them during the depression. Some folks couldn't even afford to buy their children presents so she wanted to do something for them. She'd spend days baking cookies then they would drive around Christmas Eve to deliver the cookies to them.

SAMANTHA is genuinely touched.

SAMANTHA

That's wonderful.

MYNA

After she passed, I thought it was my duty to carry on the tradition. Of course now we need to charge folks for the cookies.

SAMANTHA

How many do you make?

MYNA

Only fifty boxes this year. I use to make a hundred boxes but had cut it down this year. I just don't have the energy.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SAMANTHA is helping a customer. The customer exits as Myna comes up to the counter.

SAMANTHA  
Myna, is it okay to take my lunch  
break?

MYNA  
Yes, dear. Go ahead.

SAMANTHA takes off her apron.

SAMANTHA  
Thanks. I'm going to the diner to  
grab a salad. Do you want anything?

MYNA  
No, thank you.

SAMANTHA walks to the office.

INT. EMERYS MARKET OFFICE - DAY

George is in his office working on his ledgers.

SAMANTHA  
George, anything I can get you from  
the diner?

SAMANTHA puts on her coat. Looking at the ledgers.

GEORGE  
No, thank you.

SAMANTHA  
Why do you still do all this by  
hand? You have a computer.

GEORGE  
I do use the computer for ordering,  
but that's about it. I like the  
ledgers, they're like a diary for  
the store. Each one has lots of  
stories, some good, some not so  
good.

SAMANTHA takes this in for a moment then smiles and turns to leave.

EXT. DINER - DAY

SAMANTHA is walking toward the door just as ROD appears, walking to the same door. SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA  
There's a familiar face. Here for  
lunch?

ROD smiles back.

ROD  
Breakfast actually.

They both enter the diner.

INT. DINER - DAY

Rod looks around the crowded diner.

ROD  
Pretty crowded. Want to share a  
booth?

SAMANTHA  
Sure.

INT. DINER BOOTH - DAY

SAMANTHA and ROD are seated in a booth. Samantha is looking at a menu. ROD waves to someone in the diner. This catches SAMANTHA'S eye. She looks up to see ANDY waving. ANDY is at the counter picking up multiple bags of food. SAMANTHA waves back, catching ROD'S eye.

ROD  
You know Andy?

SAMANTHA  
I do. He pulled my car out of a  
snowbank last week.

ROD  
He's a good guy. You met his ex-,  
ex-girlfriend the other night. She  
wasn't happy with you. Legendary  
stalker.

SAMANTHA

The feeling is mutual. What did he see in her?

ROD

Not many options in a small town. He broke up with her before leaving for college. Got a job. Every year he came back for a couple weeks for Christmas. Then got his heart broken. He moved back to work for his dad at the family business about a year ago. Not many guys driving tow trucks that have Ivy League educations. Emily has her fantasies that he came home for her.

SAMANTHA

Did he?

ROD

You met her. Would you come back for her?

SAMANTHA

She's wasn't the one who broke his heart?

Rod laughs.

ROD

No. Got time for a story?

SAMANTHA nods eagerly.

EXT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT BUILDING IN NYC - AFTERNOON

A modern Holiday song starts playing.

SUPERIMPOSE: "November 24th, last year"

A BMW sedan pulls in front of the high rise apartment. The well-dressed driver, ANDY, steps out as a valet arrives at the vehicle. He gets his briefcase and flowers from the backseat and walks to the door. A doorman opens the door for him.

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT LOBBY - AFTERNOON

ANDY strolls confidently through the lobby toward the elevator. He presses the UP button.

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT ELEVATOR - AFTERNOON

ANDY presses the floor button. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small box. He opens the box and smiles. He opens the box to reveal an engagement ring.

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

ANDY walks into the beautifully decorated apartment. He puts the flowers and ring down on a table and takes off his coat.

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

ANDY walks down the hallway toward the partially open door, ring in one hand, flowers in the other. He pushes the door open and sees his beautiful blonde would-be fiance in bed with another man.

The screen freezes and the song scratches to an end.

INT. DINER - DAY

ROD

She's an actress. He was her co-star in an off-Broadway play.

SAMANTHA

(sadly)

I hate cheaters.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA is behind the register putting a customer's purchase in a bag. She hands it to the customer.

SAMANTHA

Thank you, have a good afternoon.



The customer leaves.

GEORGE (O.S.)  
Mary, can I see you in the office?

SAMANTHA thinks: What did I do?

INT. EMERYS MARKET OFFICE - AFTERNOON

George turns around in his chair as she enters. He smiles.

GEORGE  
You've done well here.

He holds out her a paycheck.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Thank you for your hard work.

SAMANTHA takes the check.

SAMANTHA  
Thank you.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

It's nearly a full house. A karaoke contest is happening. Emily belts out a bad Karaoke song.

CUT TO

SAMANTHA is seated at the bar takes a picture of her paycheck. Hands it to Rod who is wearing a Santa hat. She sends off a group text.

Text on screen

SAM: My first paycheck!

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

A tap on her shoulder from behind shocks her. She turns and it's ANDY. SAMANTHA is delighted after getting over her shock.

SAMANTHA  
Hey, my hero. Going to let me buy you that beer now?

He holds up a full beer.

ANDY

Not yet.

SAMANTHA is a bit tipsy.

SAMANTHA

OK, after that one. On me. We're celebrating.

ANDY

Celebrating what?

ROD

Her first paycheck.

ROD sets down the money from her first paycheck.

ANDY

Congratulations!

SAMANTHA

Thanks!

SAMANTHA puts the money in her purse.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(to ANDY)

You know, your ex-girlfriend doesn't really care for me.

ANDY

She doesn't make good first impressions.

SAMANTHA

And she can't sing.

ANDY won't speak badly of her out of respect.

ANDY

We were together all of high school. Prom king and queen.

SAMANTHA

I can totally see that. Football star too?

ANDY

Soccer. She's a nice girl. Once you get to know her.

SAMANTHA

I had a feeling you were going to say that. By the way, how were the cookies?

ANDY

Really, really good.

Rod is mock angry.

ROD

You got yours already?

SAMANTHA

Yep, he put up their lights for them. Gets you first in line apparently.

ANDY looks at Rod and shrugs. Emily's song ends. There is a smattering of applause from the audience.

KARAOKE HOST (O.S.)

Thank you Emily! Next up, Mary!

ANDY and Rod both look at SAMANTHA who then stands up.

SAMANTHA

She's really not going to like me after this.

SAMANTHA points to Rods hat.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

May I?

Rod tosses the Santa hat to SAMANTHA who turns to walk to the stage.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE STAGE - NIGHT

SAMANTHA, wearing the Santa hat, steps on the stage and takes the microphone from the host. The music starts.

SAMANTHA (SINGING)

Santa Baby, just slip a sable under the tree, For me. Been an awful good girl, Santa baby, So hurry down the chimney tonight. Santa baby, a 54 convertible too, Light blue.

SAMANTHA is great. Sultry, flirting with the patrons. Emily is very unhappy.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

ANDY and Rod are amazed.

ANDY

Wow!

ROD

She's great!

SAMANTHA continues.

SAMANTHA (SINGING)

Next year I could be just as good,  
If you'll check off my Christmas  
list. Santa baby, I want a yacht,  
and really that's not. A lot.  
Been an angel all year,  
Santa baby, so hurry down the  
chimney tonight.

Having seen enough, Emily gets up and leaves the bar.

SAMANTHA (SINGING) (CONT'D)

Santa honey, one little thing I  
really need,  
The deed  
To a platinum mine,  
Santa baby, so hurry down the  
chimney tonight.

The bar patrons love her.

SAMANTHA (SINGING) (CONT'D)

Santa cutie, and fill my stocking  
with a duplex, And checks.  
Sign your 'X' on the line,  
Santa cutie, and hurry down the  
chimney tonight.

The bar patrons clap heartily for her. She smiles to them and gives a little wave.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 13th"

SAMANTHA is a little hungover and stocking candy. Myna is on the corded phone.

MYNA

I'm sorry, only two boxes of cookies per person, dear. (pause)  
Yes, Christmas Eve at three.  
(pause) Good-bye.

Myna hangs up the phone and writes something down on a piece of paper.

MYNA (CONT'D)

That's forty-eight spoken for.

SAMANTHA

Out of fifty, right?

MYNA

Right.

SAMANTHA

I'll take the last two. Can't wait to taste Mynas Magical Christmas cookies.

Myna writes her name done.

MYNA

Officially sold out.

They smile at each other.

INT. LAUNDRY MAT - NIGHT

SAMANTHA walks into a laundromat carrying two bags of dirty laundry. She looks around, unsure if what to do. The attendant, an older man, merely looks up from watching a basketball game and nods. She walks over to an empty machine and reads the directions on the lid. She puts her quarters in the slots and starts the washer. An older woman sitting near smiles at her. SAMANTHA dumps one bag of clothes in the washer and closes the lid.

OLDER WOMAN

Aren't you going to use soap, dear?  
You need soap.

SAMANTHA

Thank you. I can't believe I forgot it.

OLDER WOMAN

They have some over there in the dispenser.

SAMANTHA walks to the dispenser and inserts more quarters. Out pops a small bag of detergent that is good for four loads of clothing. SAMANTHA goes over to the washer and dumps the entire opened bag into the washer. The old woman shakes her head in disgust. SAMANTHA sits in a chair and picks up her phone.

Gets up and takes a selfie. Sends it. Text on screen.

SAM: Doing laundry

Slowly bubbles start to emerge from the washing machine.

SAMANTHA still on her phone.

The woman looking at the washing machine, eyes wide open.

Back to the washer, more bubbles emerging.

SAMANTHA reading.

Older woman. Still watching.

Bubbles are now overflowing on the ground.

The older woman slowly gets up and starts walking over to talk to SAMANTHA. The camera focuses on her feet, treading slowly on the soapy wet floor. Then it happens. She loses her footing and crashes to the floor in a painful thud.

EXT. LAUNDRY MAT - NIGHT

Two EMT's are loading the old woman in the back of an ambulance.

SAMANTHA

I'm so sorry!

SAMANTHA is almost crying while the attendant is attempting to comfort her. He puts his arm around her.

ATTENDANT

Don't worry, lots of women her age break their hips every day.

EXT. EMERYS MARKET - EVENING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 14th"

MYNA is on the phone at the front counter.

MYNA

I'm glad she's doing better. Bye-  
bye.

MYNA hangs up the phone.

MYNA (CONT'D)

(to SAMANTHA)  
Mrs. Williams is doing better.

A pained look on SAMANTHA'S face.

MYNA (CONT'D)

She should be home in time for  
Christmas.

SAMANTHA feels even worse. The door to the market open and  
ANDY walks in.

ANDY

Are we all set for tonight, Mrs.  
Emery?

MYNA

Yes, Andy. What time?

ANDY

(to MYNA)

I'll be there to pick you up at  
7:30.

(to SAMANTHA)

Will you be joining us tonight?

SAMANTHA is a bit confused. It's the first she's heard about  
something going on.

MYNA

Lighting of the town Christmas tree  
and then we sing Christmas carols.

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA

Sounds great!

ANDY smiles back at her.

INT. SAMANTHAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

SAMANTHA is getting ready for the night. She hears a car outside. She puts on her coat.

EXT. EMERYS DRIVEWAY - EVENING

ANDY is helping MYNA into his nice BMW. GEORGE is walking around to the other side of the car. SAMANTHA is surprised at his car.

SAMANTHA  
(impressed)  
Nice ride.

ANDY  
Did you think I drove the tow truck everywhere?

SAMANTHA  
I guess I kinda did.

SAMANTHA opens the car door.

EXT. CARO TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

A crowd is gathered around a large unlit Christmas tree in the center of town.

CLOSE ON:

SAMANTHA, ANDY, MYNA and GEORGE as the entire crowd counts down.

CROWD  
5...4...3...2...1!

The tree lights to great fanfare. A P.A. system starts playing a traditional Christmas song and everyone joins along.

INT. CARO DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

ANDY and SAMANTHA milling around the tree.

SAMANTHA  
This happens every year?



ANDY

Yep, every year. Enjoying your time here?

SAMANTHA

Yes, I do. The Emery's are so sweet.

ANDY

They are good people.

SAMANTHA

They use to have a pretty big farm they said.

ANDY

Yea, I heard it was pretty good size back in the 40's and 50's. Just about everyone here worked for them one time or another.

SAMANTHA

At the market?

ANDY

There, at the farm. Times get tough, they would hire people even if they didn't need the help just so the people could pay their mortgages and put food on the table.

SAMANTHA is amazed at their generosity.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Up until a few years ago, they would leave the store unlocked all night, so if someone needed something, they could get it.

SAMANTHA

And no one stole anything?

ANDY

Don't know. If they did, the Emery's never said anything.

SAMANTHA

Any children?

ANDY

They never had any. Don't know why. They always loved having kids around.

(MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)

Think it was probably some medical reason. Can't imagine people like that not wanting children to love.

SAMANTHA wants to cry. These wonderful people, full of love, couldn't have children.

ANDY (CONT'D)

They gave their love to the town. Sounds kind of silly. You'll never find better people. Anywhere.

SAMANTHA

I found that out.

ANDY

It's a shame that they are losing so much business to that big place.

SAMANTHA

Where your ex-girlfriend works?

ANDY smiles.

ANDY

Yea, that place. I see it ruining this town.

He turns to her.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'd like to do this again.

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA

A proper first date?

ANDY

Of course.

They continue walking until they come back to the Emerys who are busily chatting with old friends. MYNA gets closer to ANDY and whispers.

MYNA

Can you take us home? I don't think George is feeling well.

ANDY

Of course.

INT. EMERYS LIVING ROOM - LATER

A very happy SAMANTHA enters the living room and finds Myna looking through photo albums. She sits next to Myna.

SAMANTHA

How is he?

Myna looks up.

MYNA

He's feeling a little better.

SAMANTHA

Good.

MYNA looks at the photo album again. MYNA points out a picture of George in an Army uniform. SAMANTHA sits next to her.

MYNA

He was so handsome. Went off the next day to fight in the war.

MYNA points to a picture.

MYNA (CONT'D)

This is him.

SAMANTHA

Did you know him before he left?

MYNA

For one night. That's all. He took me to a movie and held my hand. Was so much of a gentleman, he didn't even try and kiss me.

SAMANTHA

Wow. Some of my dates --

SAMANTHA stops, knowing saying anything more would be very inappropriate.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Men like George are hard to find.

MYNA

I didn't see him for over three years. He wrote me a letter every week. I waited by the mailbox every day.

MYNA reaches into a box next to her and pulls out a bundle of envelopes and cards.

MYNA (CONT'D)

I saved every one of them. Every letter that arrived let me know he made it through another week. Some weren't so lucky. My brother was one of them.

SAMANTHA doesn't know what to say. MYNA senses her discomfort. She pats her leg.

MYNA (CONT'D)

That's alright, dear. What can you say when someone says that?

SAMANTHA

It must have been hard for you.

MYNA

It was hard for everyone. George was the one who lived through the hardest part. He never told me what he went through and I never asked. I think it was bad.

SAMANTHA

You got married after he got home?

MYNA

Three days after. My parents were against it, but sometimes you just know these things.

SAMANTHA

Why didn't they want you to marry him?

MYNA

They thought he was just a poor farmer from a little town. Didn't think he would amount to much. I didn't care.

SAMANTHA thought they both were from here.

SAMANTHA

Where did you grow up?

MYNA

Detroit. My father was a lawyer there. Lived in a big house.

(MORE)

MYNA (CONT'D)

He even knew Henry Ford. I'm a city girl.

They both smile at the thought.

SAMANTHA

What did you think when you first got here?

MYNA

I didn't know what to think. I was scared of animals, scared of everything. Most of all, scared of being without him.

SAMANTHA smiles at her.

SAMANTHA

Can I ask you something personal?

MYNA

Anything dear.

SAMANTHA pauses.

SAMANTHA

Why didn't you have children.

MYNA smiles sadly at her.

MYNA

The good lord just didn't see fit to bless us with children.

SAMANTHA

I'm so sorry.

MYNA

There are other things in life, others to care for.

SAMANTHA tears up a little.

EXT. ICE FISHING SHANTY - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 16th"

ANDY has taken SAMANTHA out for some ice fishing.

SAMANTHA

(teasing)

I want to state this for the record  
that this is not my idea of a  
proper first date.

ANDY

You'll have fun.

SAMANTHA

No. I don't think I will.

They enter the fishing shanty.

INT. ICE FISHING SHANTY - AFTERNOON

ANDY hands SAMANTHA an ice fishing rod with a jig on the end  
of the line. She takes the small rod and looks quizzically at  
the rig.

SAMANTHA

This is the shortest fishing rod  
I've ever seen.

ANDY

Well you don't have to cast a lure  
out. You just let out the line down  
the hole in the ice.

ANDY opens the bail and the jig drops down the hole. He hands  
the rod to SAMANTHA.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Lift the rod up and down every few  
seconds. The fluttering jig will  
hopefully catch a fishes attention.

SAMANTHA does as ANDY instructed. ANDY pulls out his phone  
and takes her picture. She just looks at ANDY and smiles. She  
looks so beautiful. ANDY takes that time to kiss her, which  
she returns. They break the kiss.

SAMANTHA

I'm starting to have fun.

Suddenly a fish hits the jig. SAMANTHA starts reeling in the  
fish. She's excited. The fish comes through the hole in the  
ice. ANDY grabs the fish and removes the hooks from the  
fishes mouth. He hands the fish to SAMANTHA who has no idea  
what to do with it.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

What now?

ANDY

Now you have to gut and clean it.

SAMANTHA tosses the fish back down the hole in the ice.

SAMANTHA

Oops.

SAMANTHA smiles sweetly at ANDY.

EXT. OUTDOORS - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - Christmas music plays over:

-- SAMANTHA and ANDY doing outdoor activities.

-- Cross-country skiing. She falls.

-- Ice skating

-- Inside ANDY's new house

They are falling in love.

INT. ANDY'S PARENTS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 18th"

The door bell rings inside ANDY's parents farmhouse. ANDY opens the door. SAMANTHA is standing there. ANDY ushers her in. An undecorated Christmas tree stands in the corner.

ANDY

Come on in. Nervous?

Almost shaking.

SAMANTHA

Does it show?

ANDY rubs her shoulders.

ANDY

Just a little. You'll be fine.

KATHY comes into the room.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Mom, this is Mary. Mary, Kathy  
Macaulay.

They reach to shake hands.

SAMANTHA  
Nice to meet you, Kathy.

KATHY  
It's nice to meet you, Mary. Andy's  
been a little secretive about you.

SAMANTHA looks at ANDY.

SAMANTHA  
He likes to keep quiet about his  
many women?

ANDY smiles shyly. KATHY looks at him.

KATHY  
Just the ones he likes.

SAMANTHA smiles.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
Go show her around. See the  
animals.

SAMANTHA  
Animals?

ANDY  
Horses, cows, chickens, goats.  
Missing anything these days  
Mom?

KATHY  
Three cats and two dogs.

SAMANTHA  
I think I'll pass on the nature  
walk. Animals scare me.

ANDY takes her hand.

ANDY  
Come on. You just need to see them  
up close. Nothing to be scared of.

A mans voice comes from the kitchen.



BOB (O.C)

Except last year when that girl,  
what's her name? The one who lost  
her fingers to Glory Bell?

BOB comes into the living room from the kitchen. He's wearing  
a frilly apron.

ANDY

Mary, my dad, Bob Macaulay.

SAMANTHA smiles and shakes Bob's hand.

SAMANTHA

I like your apron. Nice to meet  
you.

BOB

Pleasure is all mine. Excuse me, I  
better get to my pies.

EXT. BARN - DAY

ANDY is gently pulling a reluctant SAMANTHA toward the small  
animal barn.

SAMANTHA

I'm not going to get bit?

ANDY

No. Of course not. You've never  
seen a horse up close?

SAMANTHA

Just a pony ride for my birthday  
party when I was a kid.

ANDY

Did you complain as much that time?

SAMANTHA

Kicked and screamed the whole way  
there. Still have the tape.

They get to the barn door. SAMANTHA scrunches up her nose.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

It kinda smells

ANDY

What were you expecting?

SAMANTHA

I was expecting to stay in the house.

A cow moos. SAMANTHA edges back a little bit.

ANDY

It's just a cow.

SAMANTHA

Yea, a mad cow.

ANDY tugs her through the door.

EXT. BARN - DAY

They walk through the straw-covered barn to the first stall. A small old horse greets ANDY at the stall.

ANDY

Hey, girl.

He strokes her mane.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Mary, this is Glory Bell.

SAMANTHA moves closer.

ANDY (CONT'D)

You can touch her.

SAMANTHA moves her hand closer. Closer. Glory Bell lifts her head up to sniff SAMANTHA's hand. SAMANTHA freaks out and turns to run but trips and falls flat on her face. She lifts her dirty and straw-covered face. ANDY can't help but to laugh at her.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Now you look like a farm girl.

INT. ANDYS PARENTS HOUSE - EVENING

Christmas music plays in the background. SAMANTHA and ANDY are putting decorations on the tree. SAMANTHA is very happy.

SAMANTHA

This is very cool.

ANDY

What is?

SAMANTHA

Decorating the tree. I've never really done it.

ANDY

Why? Are you Jewish?

SAMANTHA

(laughing)

No. Mom always has decorators do them.

ANDY

Another clue into the enigma that is Mary.

SAMANTHA

I promise I'll tell you everything. Just not yet.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 21st"

SAMANTHA and MYNA are finishing making cookie boxes. Finally they are done.

SAMANTHA

Fifty!

MYNA

Now the fun part. The baking.

Sam is excited.

SAMANTHA

Can I help?

MYNA

(smiling)

I was hoping you would ask.

SAMANTHA is excited.

SAMANTHA

When do we begin, Obi-wan?

Myna looks at her, pauses and smiles.

MYNA  
 (mock serious)  
 You have much to learn tonight  
 young Skywalker.

SAMANTHA is shocked that Myna gets this reference and starts laughing uproariously.

INT. EMERYS KITCHEN - NIGHT

SAMANTHA and MYNA are in aprons and rolling cookie dough into balls.

MYNA  
 The first thing to know is that the  
 most important things are the  
 temperature and the cooking time.  
 If those aren't right you end up  
 with inferior cookies.

SERIES OF SHOTS - Christmas music plays over:

- Looking at recipes (maybe recipes run over the scenes)
- Mixing the dough in an old mixer
- Rolling the dough balls in powdered sugar
- Putting cookies in the oven, setting a timer
- Taking cookies out of the oven
- Putting the cookies on cooling racks

SAMANTHA points to a cookie. MYNA nods her head. SAMANTHA takes a bite of the warm cookie. Her eyes light up.

SAMANTHA  
 This is the best cookie I've ever  
 had. They are magical.

- Rolling out dough
- Cut-out cookies
- Icing the cut-out cookies
- Boxing the cookies

SAMANTHA and MYNA are putting the cookies on the boxes and bows on the boxes of cookies.

MYNA

Fifteen boxes done. Good start.  
Thirty-five to go.

SAMANTHA

(exhausted)

I can't believe you do this every  
year.

MYNA

It will probably be my last year. I  
don't think we can afford to keep  
the market open another year.

SAMANTHA is heartbroken hearing this.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 22nd"

SAMANTHA is getting ready for work when she hears the wail of  
an ambulance getting closer. And closer. She rushes to the  
window to see the ambulance pull up.

INT. EMERY HOUSE - MORNING

SAMANTHA rushes into the house.

SAMANTHA

Myna! Myna!

SAMANTHA sees the paramedics examining GEORGE, who is laying  
on the living room. SAMANTHA rushes over to a crying MYNA and  
hugs her tightly.

EXT. EMERY HOUSE - MORNING

The EMT's wheel George out of the house, MYNA and SAMANTHA  
close behind.

SAMANTHA

Where are they taking him?

MYNA

Saginaw General. They said that  
would be the best place for him.  
They think it was a stroke.

SAMANTHA

Do you want me to come with you?

MYNA

No dear.

MYNA hands SAMANTHA a set of keys.

MYNA (CONT'D)

Would you lock up the house and  
open the market today?

SAMANTHA wants to do more.

SAMANTHA

(trying not to cry)

Yes. Anything else I can do?

MYNA

Just pray dear.

They load GEORGE into the back of the ambulance. Myna is helped inside. SAMANTHA watches the ambulance pulls away. She texts a message on her phone.

INT. EMERYS MARKET - MORNING

SAMANTHA is restocking the market when ANDY comes in.

ANDY

Have you heard anything?

SAMANTHA

No. I've called the hospital five  
times. I'm not a family member,  
they won't tell me anything.

ANDY

Hear from Myna?

SAMANTHA

She called a little while ago.  
George's sister lives not far from  
the hospital. Myna is going to stay  
with her while George is there. I'm  
going to pack her a bag with some  
clothes after work.

ANDY

I'll drive you. I want to go too.

SAMANTHA starts crying and they hug.

SAMANTHA  
(through tears)  
Thank you.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

SAMANTHA and ANDY walk through the halls of the hospital. SAMANTHA is carrying an old suitcase and goes to the nurses station.

SAMANTHA  
Can you tell me which room George  
Emery is in?

Nurse #1 looks on the chart.

NURSE #1  
He's in 204. But you can't go in  
there. Mrs. Emery is in the ICU  
waiting room.

INT. ICU WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Myna is sitting alone in the ICU waiting room. She is looking through a pile of paperwork. She looks up as SAMANTHA and ANDY enter the waiting room.

MYNA  
Thank you dear.

SAMANTHA sets the suitcase next to her.

SAMANTHA  
What are the doctors saying? I  
called but they wouldn't give me  
any information.

MYNA  
They said it was a stroke and it  
affected the entire right side of  
his body.

SAMANTHA  
But he'll be okay?

Myna looks at her and shrugs.

MYNA

They don't know. It was bad enough that they say he may never walk again.

The three of them are silent.

MYNA (CONT'D)

Andy, can you look over all these. I don't understand all of the paperwork they gave me?

ANDY takes the pile of paperwork.

ANDY

Of course.

MYNA

Thank you dear. George did all the banking and finances. I'm afraid I don't know what to make of it.

SAMANTHA

Just be here for him. I'll take care of the store.

MYNA

Thank you. Pray for him dear.

ANDY and SAMANTHA get up and start toward the door.

MYNA (CONT'D)

Can you do something else for us?

INT. EMERYS MARKET - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 23rd"

SAMANTHA is texting. Text on screen.

SAM: Sorry mom, won't be home for Christmas.

MOM: (sad face emoji)Are you ok?

SAM: I'm fine, just something I need to do here. Explain later.

SAMANTHA sends the text

SAMANTHA is texting again. Text on screen.



SAM: Don't think I'll be able to make it to the meeting. Give the part to Hannah.

KYLE: Are you sure? Are you ok?

SAM: I'm fine. Explain later.

SAMANTHA sends the text and walks into the office.

INT. EMERYS MARKET OFFICE - AFTERNOON

ANDY is sitting in George's chair going through the ledgers. SAMANTHA walks up behind him.

SAMANTHA  
Any good news?

ANDY  
Afraid not. They are broke and owe the bank over a hundred thousand on the house.

SAMANTHA  
How?

ANDY  
George took a mortgage it a a few years ago to keep the market open. He should have sold it or just closed.

SAMANTHA  
Oh no!

ANDY  
It get worse. They don't have the money to cover the deductibles.

SAMANTHA  
What does that mean?

ANDY  
That means that if they can't afford the deductibles, he won't be able to get the rehab he needs to fully recover.

SAMANTHA  
(sadly)  
What can we do?

ANDY

I'm still digging through all of this. Hoping I'll find something. George kept immaculate ledgers. Just amazing.

ANDY picks a random ledger from the shelf and opens a random page from the ledger.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Amazing and incredibly generous. Look here.

ON THE LEDGER - He points to a column in the ledger. It's marked "Credit Extended". There are numerous entries of family names and the amounts. At the end of the rows are the words "Forgiven" or "Paid in full".

ANDY (CONT'D)

They were giving people free food when they were in need.

SAMANTHA is quiet while she thinks.

SAMANTHA

I have an idea.

She starts putting on her coat.

ANDY

Where are you going?

SAMANTHA (O.C.)

I have cookies to bake.

Samantha is ready to go.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

What are you waiting for?

INT. EMERYS KITCHEN - EVENING

SAMANTHA and ANDY are in the kitchen. SAMANTHA is looking in cupboards. She pulls out a frilly apron.

SAMANTHA

Oh yes. This is definitely you.

SAMANTHA tosses the apron to ANDY.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Myna's rule not mine. Put it on.

As ANDY is putting on the apron, SAMANTHA is getting her phone. ANDY finishes tying the apron and looks up as SAMANTHA takes his picture.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Now that's one for the scrapbook.

INT. EMERYS KITCHEN - EVENING

SAMANTHA and ANDY are at the oven.

SAMANTHA

The first thing to know is that the most important things are the temperature and the cooking time. If those aren't right you end up with inferior cookies.

SERIES OF SHOTS - Modern Christmas music plays over:

- Looking at recipes (maybe recipes run over the scenes)
- Mixing the dough in an old mixer
- Rolling the dough balls in powdered sugar
- Putting cookies in the oven, setting a timer
- Taking cookies out of the oven
- Putting the cookies on cooling racks

ANDY points to a cookie. SAMANTHA shakes her head. ANDY takes a bite anyway. SAMANTHA frowns.

- Rolling out dough
- Cut-out cookies
- Icing the cut-out cookies
- Boxing the cookies

SAMANTHA and ANDY are putting the cookies on the boxes and trying bows on the boxes. SAMANTHA looks at the bow ANDY has just tied.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Your bows kinds suck.

ANDY frowns. The timer goes off. SAMANTHA gets up to take the cookies out of the oven.

INT. EMERYS LIVING ROOM - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 24th Christmas Eve"

ANDY and SAMANTHA wake up entwined but fully-clothed on the couch. They did it. All of the cookie boxes have been filled.

ANDY  
(looking at all the boxes)  
I can't believe we made that many  
cookies.

SAMANTHA  
I can't believe you ate so many  
cookies.

ANDY  
Quality control.

SAMANTHA smiles at him.

SAMANTHA  
(hopeful)  
Is your day like really, really  
busy?

INT. EMERYS MARKET - MORNING

SAMANTHA tapes a sign on the door. "Due to emergency circumstances Mynas Magical Christmas Cookies will be sold at Caro Taproom starting at 3:00 p.m."

INT. EMILYS LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

EMILY is eating from a bowl of popcorn she's holding and changing channels on the TV. She stops on a movie.

ON TV

SERVER (SAMANTHA)  
And you have the veal parm, extra  
parm.

Suddenly the man who didn't order the veal parm reaches into his coat and pulls out a gun. He shoots the veal parm, extra parm, aficionado in the chest. The server screams and drops the plates of food.

ON EMILY

EMILY frowns and grabs the remote and replays the scene. She pauses on a shot that shows SAMANTHA very clearly. EMILY screams in elation, something unintelligible that may be what an old miner in the gold rush days screams after finding a rich vein of gold. EMILY throws her arms up and popcorn goes everywhere.

EXT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA and ROD are taking boxes of cookies out of Samantha's car and carrying them into the bar.

EXT. EMERYS MARKET - AFTERNOON

EMILY pulls her car up and goes to the door of the market. She sees the sign. She goes back to her car and drives off.

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - AFTERNOON

The bar is crowded with cookie buyers. They are a bit impatient with the delay but still eager to get their cookies and going home to their families. ANDY and SAMANTHA step onto the karaoke stage.

ANDY

I don't know if you have all heard,  
but George Emery has suffered a  
stroke.

Some in attendance react.

ANDY (CONT'D)

The Emery's have been a staple in  
this town forever. They watched us  
grow up. They were always there for  
us and now we need to be there for  
them. They need anything extra you  
can give to help George.

The crowd applauds.

ON EMILY

EMILY walks into the bar.

ON SAMANTHA

SAMANTHA

Please. Give what you can. I bought  
two boxes and I'll start.

SAMANTHA drops a hundred dollar bill into the clear empty  
container.

ON EMILY

EMILY

(shouting)

Come on! You can do better than  
that!

SAMANTHA looks at EMILY and pulls more money out and drops  
in.

ON EMILY

EMILY (CONT'D)

Oh, I know you can do much better.  
Much better. Sammi D, according to  
celebritynetworth.com, you are  
worth about eight million dollars.

The crowd whispers amongst themselves.

EMILY (CONT'D)

And you live with your mom, Judith  
Loy, in a quote, multi-million  
dollar mansion, with maids, cooks  
and drivers whom cater to your  
every whim. Unquote. Care to  
explain?

EMILY looks around to the crowd and smiles smugly.

The crowd gasps. SAMANTHA looks at ANDY who has now put  
everything together. He is not happy.

EXT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - AFTERNOON

A crushed ANDY leaves the bar. SAMANTHA follows him out to  
the parking lot trying to explain.

SAMANTHA

I never lied to you.

ANDY

Maybe you never lied but you sure  
never told me the truth.

SAMANTHA  
I couldn't.

ANDY  
Why?

She hesitates.

SAMANTHA  
It's complicated.

ANDY  
Please tell me. Is this some stupid  
reality show? Am I going to look  
like a fool in front of the entire  
country? Are there cameras in the  
trees?

SAMANTHA  
No, it's not a reality show. I  
would never do that.

ANDY reaches the tow truck. He gets in and starts the truck.  
He drives off. SAMANTHA watches the tow truck pull out of the  
parking lot. ROD walks up to her. She turns to ROD.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to hurt  
anyone.

ROD  
It's okay. I knew.

SAMANTHA  
You did? When?

ROD  
The first time you came into the  
bar.

SAMANTHA  
Why didn't you say anything?

ROD  
I didn't want you breaking  
character.

INT. EMERYS KITCHEN - NIGHT

SAMANTHA is doing dishes and cleaning the kitchen. She looks  
at the clock.

ON CLOCK

12:05

SAMANTHA picks up her phone. Text on screen.

SAM: Merry Christmas.

SAMANTHA holds the phone expecting a quick return message. Nothing. She sets the phone down.

EXT. ANDYS PARENTS HOUSE - CHRISTMAS MORNING

SAMANTHA walks into the front door. ANDY answers the door before she can knock.

SAMANTHA  
(hopeful)  
Merry Christmas?

ANDY  
(irritated)  
I'm a little busy. Christmas and  
all.

SAMANTHA  
I know. I don't want to bother you  
but I'm leaving tomorrow.

ANDY walks outside and closes the door.

ANDY  
It always bothered me a little why  
you looked familiar.

SAMANTHA  
It doesn't have to be this way.

ANDY  
What way?

SAMANTHA  
Why I'm here, why I did it. I was  
learning to be myself.

ANDY  
What?

SAMANTHA  
You went to college right?



ANDY

Yes, you know that. Your point?

SAMANTHA

I never did. I never got to have that experience. To be on my own.

ANDY

So you came here to grow up?

SAMANTHA

I guess. In a sense.

ANDY

And you come here because you needed to grow up.

SAMANTHA

Not at first but that's what it became. I've always had people doing everything for me. I never had to struggle. I never learned to be, well, an adult.

ANDY

Please spare me the poor-little-rich girl act.

SAMANTHA

It's not an act.

She starts to cry.

ANDY

She can even cry on demand. You're good.

She stops crying long enough to say...

SAMANTHA

Apparently, you haven't been back here long enough to get all of that pain out of your system.

ANDY

And she can ad-lib.

SAMANTHA

I do care about you and I never lied to you.

ANDY isn't buying this.

ANDY

There has to be more to this little charade. Tell me the whole truth. I'm sure I will hear it eventually.

SAMANTHA

It's for a stupid role, okay? One I'm not sure I want anymore anyway.

ANDY laughs.

ANDY

So what have you learned here in our fair little town? Going to portray us as backward hicks, uneducated and unsophisticated?

SAMANTHA

No. Because that's not what you are.

ANDY

What are we? Props for you to use? People grew to know and love you or whoever you are pretending to be.

SAMANTHA

This is me. How can I make you believe me?

ANDY

You can't. Stop trying. Go back to your mansion and maids.

SAMANTHA turns to hide her tears and starts walking out. But she's not done yet. She turns to him.

SAMANTHA

I know you were hurt. I've felt that soul-crushing pain.

ANDY

When have you ever felt that?

SAMANTHA composes herself.

SAMANTHA

I watched my father die in front of me. I was ten. I adored him, he was my world. My mom was busy making movies all over the world so it was me and him. And one day he just fell over while we were watching a movie.

Tears are streaming down her face.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

The paramedics had to pull me off him. I wouldn't let go of him. So don't tell me I don't know pain.

That said, she turns and walks away.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAYS - DAY

SAMANTHA is walking down the hallway looking for the billing office.

INT. BILLING OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

SAMANTHA walks into the billing office.

BILLING MANAGER

How can I help you?

SAMANTHA

It's about George Emery.

BILLING MANAGER

Okay. And what is your relation to the patient?

SAMANTHA

I'm not related to George.

BILLING MANAGER

If you're not related to him --

SAMANTHA

I'm his employee.

BILLING MANAGER

I see. In any case, I'm sorry but I can't give you any information on him without Myna or Georges consent. It's the law. I wish I could help you.

SAMANTHA

What if his wife gives consent?

INT. BILLING OFFICE - LATER

SAMANTHA is looking at some papers.

SAMANTHA

What about the possibility of George getting this treatment at home. I know he doesn't like hospitals and would be more comfortable at home.

BILLING MANAGER

I can assure you that George will get the best available treatment here. The rehab he will need will be very expensive.

SAMANTHA

I don't care what it costs.

BILLING MANAGER

You really should.

SAMANTHA takes out her black Amex card. She hands it to the doctor.

BILLING MANAGER (CONT'D)

It's going to be quite costly. Are you sure you want to do this?

SAMANTHA

It's what family does.

She hands him a business card.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Here's my accountants card, he will be taking care of the finances. And can we please keep this confidential?

BILLING MANAGER

Of course.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

SAMANTHA walks into Georges hospital room. Myna is sitting there holding Georges hand. He is sleeping.

SAMANTHA

How's George today?

MYNA  
About the same, I'm afraid.

Myna notices her red eyes.

MYNA (CONT'D)  
You've been crying, dear.

SAMANTHA has to say it quick and get out before she loses it.

SAMANTHA  
I have to go, my family needs me  
back as soon as possible. I'm so  
sorry.

Myna smiles.

MYNA  
You go. Family is important.

SAMANTHA pulls a cellphone and charging cord out of a bag.

SAMANTHA  
I got you a cellphone. It's all set  
up.

She shows Myna the screen.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
When the phone rings press this  
button. When you need to make a  
call press this button and a  
dialpad will come up. I put me and  
Andy as contacts. All you have to  
do is press on the name of person  
you want to call.

Myna is touched by the gesture.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
I'll call every day.

MYNA  
We liked having you around. You  
were the daughter we never had.

SAMANTHA gets up and hugs Myna.

SAMANTHA  
I love you both.

MYNA  
We love you too dear.

INT. AIRPLANE - AFTERNOON

SAMANTHA settles herself into the first class seat on her flight home. She has her two boxes of cookies. The flight attendant arrives.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Can I get you something to drink?

SAMANTHA

Yes, please. Can I have a glass of champagne?

FIGHT ATTENDANT

Yes. I will get you a glass.

SAMANTHA thinks about it.

SAMANTHA

Excuse me. Can I have a beer instead?

EXT. JUDITH'S BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - EVENING

A limousine pulls into the driveway of the mansion.

INT. JUDITH'S BEVERLY HILLS MANSION - EVENING

SAMANTHA walk into the mansion with the driver carrying her suitcases. JUDITH also has her own suitcases in stacked up by the door. They hug. SAMANTHA presents up a box of cookies to JUDITH.

JUDITH

Cookies! Yum! Should we get carry-out first? The Boiling Crab?

SAMANTHA

Not tonight. It's been a rough few days. I just want to sleep. I'll explain everything in Hawaii.

JUDITH notices the cookies.

JUDITH

(pointing to the cookies)  
May I?

SAMANTHA nods yes. JUDITH takes a cookie out and takes a bite.

JUDITH (CONT'D)  
So good! Deluscious?

SAMANTHA shakes her head.

JUDITH (CONT'D)  
Sprinkles?

SAMANTHA shakes her head again.

JUDITH (CONT'D)  
Tell me!

SAMANTHA  
Myna's Magical Christmas Cookies.

JUDITH is impressed.

JUDITH  
Myna is a cookie savant. These are terrific.

SAMANTHA  
Myna is terrific. But I baked them.

JUDITH is genuinely surprised.

JUDITH  
You baked them?

SAMANTHA  
Yes. Like I said. I'll explain in Hawaii. I just need some sleep.

JUDITH hugs her.

JUDITH  
When you're ready.

INT. SAMANTHAS LA BEDROOM - DAY - INTERCUT CALL

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 26th."

She dials a number on her cell phone. An answer. She smiles.

SAMANTHA  
Rod, what's up?

ROD  
Everything's good here Sammi, you?

SAMANTHA  
Pretty good. Missing things.

ROD  
You're a popular person here.  
People love that you're are helping  
George. Lots of donations.

SAMANTHA  
How is he?

ROD  
George?

SAMANTHA  
Rod.

ROD knows she means ANDY.

ROD  
Well he hasn't been in here. I'm  
sure he misses you.

SAMANTHA smiles.

SAMANTHA  
Really? He doesn't pick up when I  
call.

ROD  
He's a bit hurt.

SAMANTHA  
I know.

INT. SAMANTHAS LA BEDROOM - LATER - INTERCUT CALL

SAMANTHA dials a number on her cell phone. An answer. She  
smiles.

SAMANTHA  
Hi Myna, it's Mary.

MYNA  
Oh! Hello dear.

SAMANTHA  
How is George?



MYNA

He's moving his arm. Speech is getting better.

SAMANTHA

I'm glad. Myna, Do you need anything?

MYNA

No. Everything is good here. Everyone is so nice.

SAMANTHA

I'll be there when I can. I have a few things to do here.

MYNA

Don't worry about us. Live your life. Don't have any regrets.

SAMANTHA

Do you?

MYNA

None one.

SAMANTHA

Give him a kiss for me.

MYNA

As soon as Andy gets here, I will be sure to give him a kiss for you.

SAMANTHA starts laughing and crying at the same time.

SAMANTHA

George'll be jealous.

MYNA

He'll get over it.

SAMANTHA

I'll let you go Myna. You take care.

MYNA

You too, dear.

SAMANTHA

Bye.

MYNA

Good-Bye.

A moment later SAMANTHA's phone beeps.

She presses the message button. The texts are on the screen.

MYNA: Hi, Mary. The nurses are teaching me how to text message. Candy Crush also. Fun!

SAM: LOL! Thats wonderful!

INT. CARO TAPHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 27th."

ANDY walks into the bar and sits at the bar. Rod approaches him.

ROD  
Beer?

ANDY nods. ROD pulls a cold one and sets it in front of ANDY.

ANDY  
Thanks.

ROD  
You okay?

ANDY takes a huge swig of the cold beer.

ANDY  
Yea, sure, you?

ROD  
Yea. I'm good. Talk to her recently?

ANDY pauses. Looks at ROD.

ANDY  
Why did you tell her? It wasn't your place.

ROD  
Were you going to?

ANDY  
No.

ROD

Seriously, she cares about you. Cares about the Emery's and this town. She didn't meant to hurt anyone. Especially you. She doesn't want you to know this but she's paying Georges bills. All of them. Rehab. Bought the market.

ANDY is a little impressed but doesn't want to show it.

ANDY

Why?

ROD

Because that's who she is. She's doing it because they made her feel like family.

ANDY is quiet.

ROD (CONT'D)

She's a pretty amazing lady.

ANDY smirks.

ANDY

I'm suppose to feel bad because I got lied to?

ROD

No, you should feel bad because you didn't give her a chance to explain.

Rod wipes down the bar.

INT. AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: "December 29th."

SAMANTHA is wearing sunglasses walking through the airport. She has a carry-on bag. Nobody recognizes her. She walks slowly almost in a daze. She looks up to the flight board, searching for her flight to Hawaii. She finds it. It's delayed. Right below the flight to Hawaii is a flight to Detroit. Delayed.

INT. PLANE - MORNING

The plane is beginning to fill as SAMANTHA walks down the aisle. She is not use to walking that far for her seat. She's sitting in coach. She finds her seat next to a large middle-age man. She smiles.

INT. PLANE - LATER

The man is showing pictures of his kids.

LARGE MAN

This is Andrew. We call him A.J.

The flight attendant reaches their seats.

FIGHT ATTENDANT

Something to drink?

LARGE MAN

Orange juice for me please.

SAMANTHA thinks.

SAMANTHA

I think I'll have a beer, please.

EXT. REALTOR OFFICE IN MICHIGAN - DAY

Sam walks into the office.

CUT TO - SAMANTHA walking out with keys and paperwork.

INT. WILTSES BAR - DAY

Sam walks in and sits at the bar. Rod greets her.

ROD

Hey beautiful. What brings a famous Hollywood starlet to our little town once again?

SAM

You are such a flatterer.

ROD

Just my nature.

SAM  
I have an idea.

SAMANTHA puts the keys and paperwork on the bar.

EXT. CARO 7-11 - DAY

SAMANTHA pulls into the 7-11. She stops her car. She goes inside.

EXT. CARO 7-11 - DAY

The excited teenage female cashier recognizes her.

CASHIER  
Sammi D! Here in my store! I  
thought you left?

SAMANTHA  
I left something here that I really  
want. Can you do a favor for me?

The girl smiles.

EXT. ROAD - LATER

ANDY's tow truck pulls up next to the rental car. He gets out and walk towards the rental car. SAMANTHA rolls down the window. There is an awkward pause.

ANDY  
That was a very nice thing you did.

SAM  
How could I not? Are you happy to  
see me?

ANDY  
I am.

She smiles sweetly at him.

SUPERIMPOSE: "ONE YEAR LATER"

INT. CHURCH PEW - AFTERNOON

Mrs. Emery is sitting alone in an pew, wiping tears from her eyes. She is holding a bible. People come by and touch and whisper to her. A priest comes to her.

PRIEST

He looks good.

Myna nods to him and smiles. Suddenly the organ starts, it's the WEDDING MARCH. This isn't a funeral for George, it's a wedding!

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

ANDY stands proudly with the priest, his best man and groomsmen. They are dressed in traditional tuxedos.

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

The wedding march continues from the organ. All eyes are on the rear of the church. SAMANTHA comes through the door holding the arm of a now healthy GEORGE. He is walking her down the aisle and looks great.

SUPERIMPOSE: "TWO YEARS LATER"

INT. ANDY AND SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

SAMANTHA and ANDY are sitting on a couch with the baby. A Christmas tree is in the corner.

ON TV

ACTRESS (V.O.)

The award for Best Actress goes  
to...

A dramatic pause while she opens the envelope.

ACTRESS (V.O.)

Samantha Macaulay!!

The audience applauds.

ON SAMANTHA AND ANDY

ANDY hugs her and the baby.

ANDY  
(to their baby)  
Mommy won an award.

SAM  
(indicating the baby)  
But this is my prize.

ON TV

ACTRESS (V.O.)  
Samantha could not make it tonight.  
She's happily playing mommy in an  
undisclosed location.

CLOSE ON SAM AND ANDY - on the couch.

SAMANTHA holding their baby, ANDY's arms around them both.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CARO - NIGHT

Drone footage shows the town all decorated for the holidays then closes in on the Emery Market. As it gets closer, we see that the store has changed. It now has a new sign. "Myna's Magical Christmas Cookies".

FADE TO BLACK.

Credits start to roll.

After a minute or two...

INT. ANDY AND SAMANTHA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: "FOUR YEARS LATER"

A cute four-year-old girl is watching a Christmas show on TV. SAMANTHA comes into the room.

SAMANTHA  
Time for lunch, Missy.

MISSY turns to SAMANTHA.

MISSY

It's almost Christmas. Why don't we  
have decorations up?

SAMANTHA smiles mischievously.

SAMANTHA

Because we are going to Grandmas  
for Christmas!

FADE OUT.

Credits roll. For good this time.

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