

Popular: Senior Year
"Fallen Angel" (a.k.a "The
Christmas Wish")
by
The Wild Pikachu

POPULAR: SENIOR YEAR

FALLEN ANGEL

TEASER

FADE IN:

EST. A SHOPPING MALL - AFTERNOON

SUPER: "Christmas Eve"

One of the area mega-malls, complete with packed parking lots.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL

Which is also packed.

CUT TO:

INT. A CHRISTMAS SHOP

Mike and Jane are looking at the displays of ornaments and other Christmas-y things. Meanwhile, Brooke and Harrison walk down another aisle, hand in hand, surrounded by Christmas cards.

Brooke breaks away, picks up a card and shows it to Harrison.

BROOKE
Isn't this sweet?

HARRISON
Brooke...I have a confession to make.

She puts the card away and faces him solemnly.

HARRISON (CONT'D)
I'm really...not much of a card person.

BROOKE
(echoing)
You're not a card person.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

You know that commercial where the guy picks up the card next to the cash register?

BROOKE

You're not the guy who picks up the card next to the cash register...

HARRISON

Actually, I aspire to be that guy.

Brooke, playing along, shrugs in mock fatalism.

BROOKE

I don't know, Harrison. I'm not sure I can be with a guy who's not a card person.

Before he can think of a comeback, she sidles up next to him suggestively.

BROOKE (CONT'D)

(coyly)

But, you know, you could try to convince me...

HARRISON

I swear, sometimes you're worse than Sam—

The words are out before he can stop to think, and the playful mood evaporates instantly.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

Sorry.

BROOKE

We can't just...pretend you weren't with Sam.

There is a long silence, as they continue walking down the card aisle.

HARRISON

How did the thing go? I didn't hear...

Brooke shakes her head mutely.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I thought you guys were going to talk to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BROOKE

Carmen and Natalie went over there
yesterday.

The silence stretches out again.

HARRISON

And?

BROOKE

She started screaming and threw
them out.

HARRISON

What about Lily? Why didn't she
go?

BROOKE

We all talked about it, and we
decided...you remember what Mr.
Osbourne was saying, about lines
of communication? Lily's the only
one left she'll listen to. She's
our last resort.

By this time they have worked their way to the front of the
store, where Mike and Jane wander over to meet them.

MIKE

How are you guys doing?

BROOKE

I think we got two good minutes
before Sam snuck into the
conversation.

Meanwhile, Harrison is looking at the display of ornaments.

HARRISON

Hey, that looks kind of
familiar...

He reaches out and teases a green translucent ball with an
angel inside. Jane leans in to take a closer look.

JANE

Oh, we used to have one like that.
It was blue, though.

BROOKE

What happened to it?

Jane looks away for a long moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JANE

It was Sam's. From her dad. I
guess she took it with her.

With that, the decidedly un-holiday-ish gloom around the group
deepens.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - EVENING

A sparse, foot-tall tree sits on the table, framed by the
window and the fading light beyond.

Sam walks into the tiny kitchen area, opens the refrigerator
and pulls out a beer. Meanwhile, Jaycee comes out of the
bathroom, primping her hair.

JAYCEE

Hey, thanks for letting me use
your stuff.

SAM

Sure, no problem.

JAYCEE

So, how do I look?

Sam eyes Jaycee's leather-jacket-and-minidress outfit.

SAM

The way you dance, are you sure
that's not gonna come off?

Jaycee takes the bottle out of Sam's hand, pops the top and
takes a swig before handing it back.

JAYCEE

Don't be silly—of course it's
going to come off. Eventually.

Sam just laughs, rolling her eyes.

JAYCEE (CONT'D)

Hey, last chance to come along.

SAM

(sitting down)
No...I don't feel like partying.

Jaycee considers that, and turns more serious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAYCEE

You know...no offense or
anything...I mean, I know your
home life sucks and all, but...

Sam shakes her head, looking into her beer.

SAM

I'm sure they've forgotten all
about me.

JAYCEE

Yeah, well, I know how that goes.

She reaches into her jacket pocket, pulls out a pill bottle
and sets it on the table. Sam, in turn, reaches into her bag,
retrieves a few folded bills, and hands them to Jaycee, then
pockets the bottle.

SAM

Thanks.

JAYCEE

Not a problem.

Sam gets up, beer in hand, and walks Jaycee to the door.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE SAM'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Out in the hall, Jaycee turns to face Sam.

JAYCEE

Okay...if things go, you know, and
I don't see you tomorrow, Merry
Christmas.

SAM

Merry Christmas, Jaycee.

They hug briefly, and then Jaycee is off. Sam takes a look
back into her apartment, but instead wanders away in the
opposite direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROOF OF SAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens, and Sam emerges. She finds a piece of
equipment with a flat surface, and sits down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, setting her beer down beside her momentarily, she fishes the pill bottle out of her pocket, opens it, and taps out a couple of pills. Finally, with her beer in one hand and the pills in the other, she sits and stares up at the rapidly darkening sky.

INSERT: THE NIGHT SKY

High above, beyond the glow of the city lights, a single point of light shines.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK

EXT. OUTSIDE - NIGHT

BLACK & WHITE

Sam, at about seven years old, perched on her father's lap, looking up at the night sky.

YOUNG SAM
(pointing)
Look, Daddy! A star!

SAM'S DAD
You're right, Sammy. Make a wish.

YOUNG SAM
Star light, star bright, first
star I see—

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROOF OF SAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

SAM
—tonight, I wish I may, I wish I
might...

She squeezes her eyes shut.

SAM (CONT'D)
...I wish, I wish, I WISH—

A noise behind her makes her jump, and when she jerks around she sees:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLARENCE
(with a loopy grin)
Hey, your wish—my command.

WHITE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. THE ROOF OF SAM'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Sam jumps up, peering at Clarence warily.

SAM
Who are you?

CLARENCE
(slightly hurt)
You don't remember me.

SAM
Am I...supposed to?

CLARENCE
(gesturing at himself)
Clarence? I was Harrison's
roommate in the hospital, when he
had leukemia?

SAM
Ohhh...
(beat)
Wait, hang on—Clarence died.

CLARENCE
Yeah, well, happens to the best of
us.

SAM
(slowly)
So...you're Clarence...who died...
a year ago?

CLARENCE
In the flesh.
(considers)
Well, not literally "in the
flesh", but...you know...

Sam shakes her head.

SAM
Whoa...I have to tell Jaycee these
new pills are way too strong for
me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLARENCE
(patiently)
No, Sam, I'm not a hallucination,
and you're not high on those
pills.

SAM
Really. And how would you know
that, Mr. Dead Person?

CLARENCE
Easy.
(gestures)
You haven't taken them yet.

Sam looks down and realizes that the pills are, in fact, still
in her hand.

SAM
Okay, so what am I hallucinating
on?

CLARENCE
(a touch less patiently)
I'm not a hallucination. I'm an
angel.

SAM
(cynically)
An angel. Great—exactly what I
need.

CLARENCE
You'd be surprised...

SAM
Look, fine, I don't if you're a
hallucination, or an angel, or
whatever. Just—go away and leave
me alone.

CLARENCE
Sorry—this is my job. You said
the magic words.

SAM
(grimacing)
Oh, please don't tell me there are
magic words.

CLARENCE
You wished three times on the
first star on Christmas Eve night.
Sometimes, that's enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Well, I don't want anything from you, so you can just go back to your lamp, or bottle, or whatever.

CLARENCE

(eyes narrowing)

I'm not a genie, I'm an angel. Try to pay attention, Sam.

(beat)

You know, when I was alive...you were a lot nicer.

SAM

(bitterly)

Yeah, well...a lot's happened.

CLARENCE

Yeah...

(beat)

Anyhoo, I can't go until you've heard out my offer.

SAM

Offer?

CLARENCE

A unique, once-in-a-lifetime, take-it-or-leave-it, absolutely-not-to-be-repeated offer.

He shivers suddenly.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

It's getting chilly up here. You mind if we talk down in your place?

Sam shrugs indifferently.

SAM

Whatever.

CLARENCE

Okay, then.

Clarence snaps his fingers, and—

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

—they are instantly in Sam's apartment. Sam looks around, momentarily startled out of her bad mood.

SAM
How'd you do that?

CLARENCE
(sighs)
Brooke asked that, too. It's just
an angel thing.

At the mention of Brooke's name, though, Sam's funk returns in spades.

SAM
Brooke?

CLARENCE
Oh, yeah, she was one of my
assignments. So was Harrison,
actually. Now, that was a tough
one.

SAM
So, what, do I fill out your quota
or something?

CLARENCE
Sam, Sam...you're not listening.
I'm here to make you an offer.

SAM
(bored)
Yeah, you said that already.

CLARENCE
An opportunity. An opportunity
that can be as wondrous as you
decide to make it.

SAM
(impatiently)
An opportunity to do what?

Clarence turns very solemn.

CLARENCE
Step into your past.
(holds up a finger)
Change one thing. Fix one
mistake, right one wrong...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shrugs slightly, and a little of the old Clarence humor returns.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 ...go back and buy a ticket with
 last weeks lotto numbers, if you
 want.

SAM
 (thinking)
 Change the past?

CLARENCE
 That's what I said.

SAM
 I can change...anything?

CLARENCE
 Well—almost anything.

Sam's eyes stray to the photo of her father sitting on the dresser.

SAM
 (hopefully)
 My dad?

Clarence tsks regretfully.

CLARENCE
 Death by natural causes—hard to
 beat that. Look at me.

He raises his finger again.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
But, any act involving free will—
 any act of yours, that is—you can
 change.

Sam takes a couple of aimless steps, as if she's going to start pacing.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
 Hey, you don't have to decide
 right away. Sit down, think about
 it, make a list...

As he's speaking, Sam turns back to him, her face very determined and very, very cold, and the sheer intensity of her expression makes him trail off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

No. I know...exactly...what I'd change.

Perhaps sensing that a momentous time has arrived, Clarence simply nods, again deadly serious.

CLARENCE

(gesturing)

Then step through the door.

Sam's eyes follow Clarence's gesture, to the front door.

SAM

That's all?

CLARENCE

(nods)

That's all.

Sam walks to the door, opens it, and sees only the bare hallway. She looks back at Clarence.

SAM

There's nothing out there.

CLARENCE

(sagely)

Take another step.

She turns back to the door, takes a breath, and steps through—

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sam's old bedroom, in her old house, where Sam suddenly finds herself. Just as she's orienting herself, Jane rushes in.

JANE

Sam—!

She pulls up short when she sees Sam standing there.

JANE (CONT'D)

Oh, you're up. Good.

SAM

Yeah...I'm up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANE
 (fretting)
 I don't know what I was thinking,
 planning a cruise... I'm not
 going.

Jane turns and rushes back out, with Sam following on her heels.

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane's suitcase is sitting on the bed, ready to go. She tosses the sweater she's holding on top of it carelessly.

SAM
 Mom...?

Jane turns to face her expectantly. Sam opens her mouth, but nothing comes out for a moment. Then she plunges ahead:

SAM (CONT'D)
 Maybe...you shouldn't go.

Jane looks very surprised.

JANE
 What?

SAM
 (temporizing)
 I know, I've really been pushing
 you to go on this cruise, but...
 you know, if you're not ready...I
 don't want you to be miserable.

She walks over to the suitcase, and pulls out the photograph of her and her parents—where, of course, she already knew it would be.

SAM (CONT'D)
 It's only been two years, Mom. I
 know Dad would want you to move
 on...but not if you're not ready
 to.

JANE
 (wavering)
 Wow...I have to admit, I wasn't
 expecting to hear this from you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Mom...do you trust me?

Jane pauses, and considers.

JANE

Well, you're smarter than I am.
You've been telling me that since
fourth grade.

Sam takes a deep breath.

SAM

Then I say...don't go.

For a long moment, everything hangs in the balance. Then:

JANE

You know what? You're absolutely
right. I'm not going. I'm
calling the travel agent and
cancelling the whole thing.

SAM

(nodding)

You can always do something else,
later. Something less...radical.
One step at a time.

JANE

I know how much you wanted to have
the house to yourself for a week.

Sam dismisses that notion with a wave of her hand.

SAM

We'll do something fun. Just the
two of us.

JANE

(nods)

You got it.

(clapping her hands)

Come on. I'm going to go make the
call. You still have to get ready
for school.

As Jane walks out of the bedroom and down the stairs, Sam just stands there, open-mouthed, awestruck at the enormity of what she's just done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam walks into her room, still slightly dazed.

SAM

(to herself)

I did it...I did it! Mom's not going on the cruise, she'll never meet Mike, they won't fall in love...Brooke will never be a part of my life!

(beat)

Hang on...does this mean I have to live the past two and a half years all over again?

And suddenly Clarence at her side.

CLARENCE

Uh-uh, Sam. This was just a quick trip.

(points)

Just walk through the doorway, and you'll be back in the present.

Sam follows his finger, then looks back dubiously.

SAM

I just came through that door.

Clarence doesn't reply, but just looks at her with a pained expression on his face.

SAM (CONT'D)

(sighs)

All right...

She turns and walks back out through her bedroom door, and—

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

—right back into her bedroom. She looks around, annoyed.

SAM

(looking up)

Clarence! It didn't work!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When she brings her eyes back down from the ceiling, he is standing in front of her.

CLARENCE
Sure it did.

SAM
Hello? I'm exactly where I was before.

CLARENCE
Not...exactly.

She looks around the room, and notices that things have subtly changed.

SAM
(thinking)
Wait a minute...this is my room?
This is my room! We never moved,
and this is still my room!
(laughing)
I love it!

She runs out of the room, with Clarence following.

CUT TO:

INT. MCPHERSON BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam waltzes in, arms spread.

SAM
Hello, bathroom that I don't share
with a preening blonde prima
donna!

She looks around critically.

SAM **(CONT'D)**
It's smaller than I remembered.

A thought occurs to her, and she rushes out again.

CUT TO:

INT. MCPHERSON UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sam runs into Clarence in the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

Hey, Clarence—how come I still remember the way everything was?

CLARENCE

(making a dismissive gesture)
Oh, don't worry, that's just a technicality.

SAM

(eyes narrowing)
A technicality? Whoa...is there a catch you didn't tell me about?

CLARENCE

(reassuring)
There's no catch.

SAM

You're sure? I didn't just sell my soul or something?

CLARENCE

Sam, that's the other side. This was a straight-up offer, guaranteed.

SAM

(pressing)
No glitches? Nothing that can go wrong?

CLARENCE

No glitches.
(beat)
Okay, the change doesn't become permanent-permanent until dawn, but like I said, that's just a technicality.

SAM

(nodding along)
And what about my memory? I don't wanna look like a spaz because I can't remember the last two and a half years.

CLARENCE

By morning, you won't remember that things were ever any different. In fact, you won't even remember I was here. This'll just be the way it always was.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM
(murmuring)
I still can't believe it...

She focuses on him.

SAM (CONT'D)
Well, since I'm going to forget
you, I guess I'd better say thanks
right now. This is...
(grinning)
...the best Christmas present I've
ever gotten.

Curiously, Clarence doesn't react to that.

CLARENCE
I'll be around tonight to help out
with things you don't remember
yet.

SAM
Okay.
(beat)
Oh! What if my mom sees you?

CLARENCE
(shakes his head)
You're the only one who can see
me, or hear me. Oh, and, Sam?

SAM
Hmm?

CLARENCE
Try to keep that in mind, okay?
You know all those movies where
people talk to ghosts and stuff,
and everyone else thinks they're
crazy?

Sam makes an "oh" expression, then nods in understanding,
clamps her lips shut and flashes him a silent thumbs up.

CUT TO:

INT. MCPHERSON LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam comes down the stairs.

SAM
Mom? Moo-om!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The living room is silent. In the corner is a Christmas tree with presents underneath. Sam wanders around, reacquainting herself with her old home. Finally she notices that the answering machine is blinking, and bends down to press the "Play" button.

JANE (V.O.)

(on the answering machine)

Hi, honey, it's me, I'm going to be working late at the office tonight, so just order pizza for yourself, okay? And don't open any presents without me.

Sam turns to Clarence, who is lounging at the foot of the stairs.

SAM

Okay, A, Mom has an office? And B, she's working on Christmas Eve?

CLARENCE

She works in the real estate division of a big corporation downtown. And she pretty much works all the time now.

SAM

(confused)

No...that's not right. Mom was never into big business.

CLARENCE

Well, she is now. For one thing, she had to make enough money to support the two of you.

Sam immediately turns indignant.

SAM

What?! Mom made plenty of money!

CLARENCE

(shrugs)

She felt she needed more. Besides, she doesn't have much else.

Sam's face darkens.

SAM

Oh, come on. It's not like Mike's the only guy in the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She goes and sits on the sofa.

SAM (CONT'D)

You know what? I'll help Mom find a boyfriend. I can do that. Someone nice. Someone not named McQueen.

She picks up the phone and dials a number from memory.

OPERATOR RECORDING (V.O.)

(on the phone)

We're sorry, the number you have dialed is not in service. Please hang up, and try your call again.

Frowning, Sam hangs up the phone.

CLARENCE

If you're trying to call Lily, you'll find her with her mother.

Sam throws him a disturbed glance, and picks up the phone again. After another dial and a couple of rings:

LILY (V.O.)

(on the phone)

Hello?

SAM

Lily! It's Sam.

LILY

(immediately concerned)

Are you all right? Did something happen?

SAM

(off-balance)

Ah...no. I'm—I'm fine.

LILY

(relieved)

Good. I was afraid, because of, well, you know. Plus, the anniversary's coming up...

The expression on Sam's face makes it plain that she has no idea what Lily is talking about. So she decides to ignore it:

SAM

No...I was just calling to see how you were.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LILY
Me? I'm...doing all right.

SAM
Good, good...how's Josh?

LILY
(puzzled)
Josh? Josh who?

Sam's mouth drops open again.

SAM
Ah...hang on, Lily, okay?

She pulls the phone away and cups her hand over the mouthpiece, then looks up at Clarence expectantly.

SAM (CONT'D)
Lily and Josh?

CLARENCE
(shaking his head)
The only reason they ever got together was the "experiment" that Nicole messed with, remember? It's just a random event that never happened.

Subdued, Sam takes a moment to think, then brings the phone back to her ear.

SAM
Uh, never mind, Lily, I was just a little mixed-up. So, um, you're all right? Christmas plans coming along?

LILY
Yeah, Sam... Hey, you're still coming over tomorrow, right?

SAM
(improvising)
Oh, ah, yeah, right. Wouldn't miss it.

LILY
Great. Well, Merry Christmas, Sam.

SAM
(flat)
Merry Christmas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She hangs up the phone and stands up, trying to think her way through the situation, talking half to herself and half to Clarence.

SAM (CONT'D)

Okay...there's no Josh and Lily.
Okay, I can fix this. They fell
in love once—I can get them
together, and they'll fall in love
again.

CLARENCE

Ah, I think you're going to have a
hard time with that, Sam.

SAM

(annoyed)

Why?

CLARENCE

When Josh's mom moved away a few
months ago, Josh went with her.
There was no reason for him not
to.

Sam rubs her hands over her face in frustration.

SAM

Why didn't you tell me about this?

CLARENCE

(sadly)

I could only make you the offer.
I couldn't control what you did
with it.

Sam is still trying to think when something else occurs to her.

SAM

Hey, what's this "anniversary"
Lily was talking about?

Clarence opens his mouth to answer, but before he can, the doorbell rings.

Sam turns and walks to the front door, looking through the peephole.

INSERT: THE FRONT STOOP - PEEPHOLE POV

A forty-ish man in a dark suit is standing there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SAM (CONT'D)

Who is it?

RICHARD (O.S.)

(through the door)

It's Richard!

SAM

(confused again)

Who??

RICHARD (O.S.)

Very funny. Open the door and let
me in.

Sam throws a glance back at Clarence, who is sitting at the bottom of the stairs.

CLARENCE

(quietly)

I wouldn't do that...

But Sam, making sure the chain is latched, is already opening the door—and the moment it is cracked, a hand slams it open, snapping the chain and sending Sam stumbling backwards with a yelp. Before she can recover, the man rushes through the door, catching Sam by the throat and driving her backwards until she slams into the wall. There he holds her, leering closely at her panic-stricken face.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. MCPHERSON LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard presses up close to Sam, a gleam in his eyes that's somewhere between mean and insane, while keeping his hold on her throat.

RICHARD
That wasn't very nice, Sammy,
trying to keep me out.

Sam is gasping for air and futilely trying to pry his hand away. Finally she manages to get a hand up and into his face; he responds by slamming her head back against the wall, dazing her again.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Still a little firebrand, aren't
you? I think it's time we taught
you some manners.

He grabs her by the hair and drags her across the room, throwing her over the coffee table and onto the sofa. He advances on her menacingly, slapping his hands together.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I think by the time Jane gets home
I'll have smacked some sense into
you.

As he leans over her, she tries to kick him in the groin, but only manages to graze his leg. Growling, he backhands her across the face as she's trying to squirm her way off the sofa.

SAM
(looking back towards the stairs)
HELP!!! CLARENCE!!!

Startled by the notion of someone else in the house, Richard looks up at the stairs himself. He doesn't see anyone; but Sam takes advantage of the momentary distraction to grab the lamp off of the endtable and smash it over his head, sending him tumbling to the floor, unconscious.

As Sam lays on the sofa, gasping and shuddering in shock, Clarence comes over to her.

CLARENCE
I think you should call the
police.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a moment, Sam nods dazedly, and reaches for the phone.

CUT TO:

EST. MCPHERSON HOUSE - LATER

Two police cars with lights flashing are parked at the curb.

CUT TO:

INT. MCPHERSON LIVING ROOM

One police officer has Richard upright, his hands cuffed behind his back, while another has his wallet in his hands. Meanwhile, Sam is standing off to the side, still shaken.

POLICE OFFICER #1

Now, then, Mr...Jenkins, is it?

Richard struggles in the grasp of the second officer.

RICHARD

(belligerent)

Get your hands off me! I have a right to be here!

POLICE OFFICER #1

We'll see about that. Miss McPherson?

And Clarence is standing—unseen by everyone else—behind Sam.

CLARENCE

(over Sam's shoulder)

Psst. Endtable drawer.

SAM

(glancing back)

What?

The police officer, of course, thinks she's talking to him.

POLICE OFFICER #1

I said, do you know this man?

Instead of answering, Sam hurries over to the endtable and opens the drawer. Inside she finds a thick, folded packet of papers. Without looking at them, she hands them to the officer. Richard, meanwhile, has decided to try to placate the officers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARD
 (hastily)
 Look, this is all just a
 misunderstanding. I'm sure we can
 work it out...

POLICE OFFICER #1
 (reading the papers)
 Uh-huh...this is a restraining
 order, prohibiting Richard
 Jenkins—that would be you—from
 approaching within five hundred
 feet of Jane McPherson, or her
 daughter, Samantha.

He takes a pointed look at the distance between Richard and Sam.

POLICE OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 So...I guess this was just an
 accounting error.

Richard glares past the police officer, at Sam.

RICHARD
 (growling)
 You! You'd better look scared,
 you little bitch! You can't keep
 me away!

POLICE OFFICER #1
 (irritated)
 Now you're making threats in front
 of the police? How dumb are you?

He gestures to his companion.

POLICE OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 Get him out of here.

As Richard gets escorted out, the officer turns back to Sam and hands the papers back to her.

POLICE OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)
 I know tomorrow's Christmas—but
 if you could come down to the
 precinct house and give a
 statement...

SAM
 (numbly)
 Oh...sure...

He reaches out and pats her shoulder reassuringly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

POLICE OFFICER #1
 Don't worry about him, Miss.
 We'll keep him locked up.
 (beat)
 If you'd like, I can stay until
 your mother gets here...?

SAM
 (shaking her head numbly)
 No...it's all right...

POLICE OFFICER #1
 (reluctantly)
 All right. But you stay safe,
 okay?

Sam does her best to nod and even smile a bit. She walks the officer to the door, and makes sure it's locked behind him. Then, shaking again, she collapses onto the sofa. Clarence sits carefully on the armrest.

CLARENCE
 Maybe you should call your mother.

Sam buries her face in her hands.

SAM
 (shakily)
 I can't deal with her.

She looks up at him.

SAM (CONT'D)
 Who was that?!

CLARENCE
 That...was your mother's ex-
 boyfriend.

Sam throws her hands down, frustrated.

SAM
 You're trying to tell me that just
 because she doesn't end up with
 Mike, she starts dating psychos?!
 That's not fair!

CLARENCE
 It's—not exactly a direct
 connection, Sam. It's just the
 way it worked out.

Sam gets up suddenly, pacing back and forth in front of the sofa and running her hands through her hair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

I need to get out of here.

Clarence hops up.

CLARENCE

Oh, I can handle that. Friendly
Angel-slash-Travel Guide. Where
do you want to go?

The thought of instant travel seems to make Sam slightly
queasy, though.

SAM

I don't know. Can we just...walk?

Without waiting for an answer, Sam heads in the general
direction of the front door. Clarence obediently follows, as
she opens the door of the coat closet and pulls out a jacket.

CLARENCE

Sure, if you don't mind walking
down the street talking to the
empty air.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCPHERSON HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The front door opens, and Sam steps out—only to stop short at
the sight of a shiny compact car sitting in the driveway.
Clarence appears at her side.

CLARENCE

Or, you could drive.

Sam pokes a thumb at the car.

SAM

My car?

CLARENCE

(nods)
Sweet, isn't it?

Sam's expression indicates that she's not quite as thrilled
about it as she might have been before.

CUT TO:

EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET - LATER

Sam's car cruises along the deserted, darkened street.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S CAR - MOVING

Sam and Clarence are driving along in silence.

SAM
Clarence?

CLARENCE
Yeah?

SAM
I'm sorry you died.

CLARENCE
(shrugs)
Like I said, happens to the best
of us. But look at the radical
job I got now. And it's for all
eternity.

Sam throws him a dubious look.

SAM
"Radical"?

Clarence does a quick mental calculation.

CLARENCE
Sorry, wrong decade. You know,
when your perspective is forever,
it can be hard to keep the slang
straight.

Sam decides to move on.

SAM
So...you're an angel.

CLARENCE
Yep. Wings and everything. Well,
I'm a junior angel—the
probationary period is five
thousand years. Then I'll get
real wings.

Sam lets that digest for a few moments.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
What's heaven like?

CLARENCE
(considers)
It's not bad. Weather's always nice. You can eat whatever you want.

SAM
No lie?

CLARENCE
(reproachfully)
Angels never lie, Sam. It's against the rules.

CUT TO:

EXT. A SHOPPING MALL - LATER

The mall is dark and deserted, the parking lots empty as Sam's car passes by.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S CAR - MOVING

Sam looks out through the side window at the empty lots.

SAM
The mall's closed.

CLARENCE
It's Christmas Eve. Everything's closed.

Sam thinks for a moment.

SAM
Oh—I know what's open. There's a Christmas Eve Midnight Movie at the multiplex.

Then she treats Clarence to a suspicious glare.

SAM (CONT'D)
There is still a Christmas Eve Midnight Movie at the multiplex, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLARENCE
(shrugs)
As far as I know.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MULTIPLEX PARKING LOT - MIDNIGHT

There are indeed bunches of cars in the theater's parking lot. Sam pulls in and parks her car.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MULTIPLEX - CONTINUOUS

There are a couple of dozen people milling around the front of the theater complex as Sam makes her way through the parking lot. She stops, though, when she spots a familiar face: George is standing by the theater doors. She is about to wave—but then Brooke appears, and as Sam looks on, shocked, she wraps her arms around George and kisses him.

Then, from behind her:

CARMEN
Sickening, isn't it?

Sam spins around to see Carmen, standing there, seemingly the same as she ever was.

SAM
Carm!

Impulsively, she hugs Carmen, who seems a bit overwhelmed by the greeting.

CARMEN
Hey...are you okay?

Sam backs off a little.

SAM
Sure...fine.

CARMEN
You sure? I mean, I know you've been stressed and all, and it's almost been a year since...you know.

Sam doesn't know; she's starting to get lost again. But she does her best to cover it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
I'm all right, really.

Just then, though, Carmen catches sight of the deepening bruise on Sam's cheek, and reaches out for it.

CARMEN
(shocked)
Sam! What happened?!

SAM
Oh...um...

She drags the name up from the depths of her memory.

SAM (CONT'D)
...Richard.

CARMEN
He did this to you? When?! How?!

SAM
He...got in the house.

CARMEN
Oh, my God.

Sam takes hold of Carmen's hands reassuringly.

SAM
It's all right. The police got him. He's in jail.

CARMEN
Well, good. He always gave me the creeps.

Then Carmen refocuses her attention over Sam's shoulder. By the time Sam turns back around, Nicole has appeared, with another jock-type on her arm. They form a group with George and Brooke.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
(sighs)
The quarterback and the head cheerleader. You know, it's amazing. Josh Ford quits the team, and George Austin steps right in. He even inherited the girlfriend.
(shaking her head)
Some things never change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam just shakes her head in confusion as she watches the foursome enter the theater.

SAM
But—but, George isn't like that!

CARMEN
Huh?

SAM
(backtracking)
Uh, I mean...it doesn't seem like George would be like that.

CARMEN
(laughs)
Are you kidding? With that article you wrote last year, about the shallowness of athletes? There was enough venom in that to drop half the school!

By this time, Sam is completely out-of-sorts again.

SAM
Ah, well...maybe I was...hasty.

CARMEN
(curious)
This isn't like you, Sam. Are you sure you're okay?

Sam tries to be reassuring.

SAM
Oh...yeah.

Carmen makes a move towards the theater, expecting Sam to follow. When she doesn't, Carmen stops and looks back.

CARMEN
Coming? The movie's gonna start.

Sam makes another decision.

SAM
Um...no. You go on. I think... I'm going to see Harrison.

At the mention of Harrison's name, Carmen's expression instantly turns to concern again.

CARMEN
Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SAM
(puzzled)
What—you think it's too late?

CARMEN
(covering)
No...no. It's just, sometimes I
worry about you.
(laughing it off)
You know me, Miss Worry-wort.

SAM
You wanna come with?

Carmen smiles, a curiously sad little smile, and shakes her head.

CARMEN
I know you like to be alone when
you're with Harrison.
(beat)
So I'll see you tomorrow, right?
At Lily's?

SAM
Yeah...sure.

CARMEN
Okay.

With that, Carmen turns and heads for the theater, while Sam walks back towards her car.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Sam gets back into her car, where Clarence is still sitting. She looks over at him.

SAM
I like to be alone when I'm with
Harrison. Now that's more like
it.

She starts the car.

SAM (CONT'D)
If I have Harrison...this'll all
be worth it.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOHN HOUSE - LATER

Sam's car pulls up to the curb, and Sam climbs out and starts up the walk. Even in the darkness, though, she senses that something is wrong, and she cuts across the yard to one of the front windows, all of which are curtained. Pressing her face up next to the glass, she finds a crack in the curtains and looks through.

INSERT: THE HOUSE INTERIOR - SAM'S POV

From somewhere within a light is on. Even in the dimness, though, Sam can see that the house is completely empty, vacant.

For a few long moments Sam just stands there, looking in, seemingly paralyzed. Then, finally, with nothing else to do, she hikes back across the front yard to her car, where Clarence is standing on the sidewalk next to the passenger door.

SAM

All right, why is no one living in
Harrison's house? Did they move,
too?

Clarence ponders that silently, apparently unsure of exactly how to respond.

SAM (CONT'D)

Come on! You said angels don't
lie—so, where is Harrison?!
Don't tell me he's living with
Mary Cherry, or something totally
weird like that.

Clarence just shakes his head mutely. But his reticence, the strange mood and all of the previous events of the evening are finally pushing Sam towards her breaking point.

SAM (CONT'D)

Fine, then, just do your angel
thing, and take me to Harrison!

CLARENCE

Sam, maybe we should talk—

SAM

(on edge)

I want to see Harrison now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Finally, Clarence hangs his head, and without any fanfare at all, snaps his fingers.

CUT TO:

EXT. A CEMETARY - CONTINUOUS

Clarence and Sam are standing on a low rise, surrounded by headstones.

It only takes Sam a moment or two to register her surroundings; and she looks back at him, a horrified expression sweeping across her face.

SAM
(choking up)
No. No, no, NO!!!

She begins to blindly run away; yet somehow she runs in the right direction, for after a few steps she trips over her own feet and goes sprawling to the ground—face-to-face with Harrison's gravestone.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. THE CEMETARY - CONTINUOUS

Sam, still down on the ground, looks up at Clarence, who is now standing a respectful distance away. With tears streaming down her face, she finally manages to choke out:

SAM

Why?

Clarence bows his head, his hands clasped; he looks as if he's in mourning himself.

CLARENCE

(gently)

Leukemia. Remember? Just like me.

Sam keeps shaking her head in denial, seemingly having to force her brain to work.

SAM

But...but...but he didn't die...he got better...he went...into remission...

Clarence closes his eyes for a moment before going on, picking his words carefully.

CLARENCE

(sadly)

The only reason he recovered was the bone-marrow transplant.

Sam is still just barely hanging on to the ability to think.

SAM

...from Nicole...

CLARENCE

Without the relationship between you and Brooke...the interaction between your circles...there was no reason for Nicole to even think of being tested.

After several long moments, Sam pulls herself to her feet and squares off against Clarence, standing defiantly. She's still crying, but now she's angry as well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
Okay. I get it.

That gets no reaction from Clarence at all.

SAM (CONT'D)
I said, I get it! The moral, or lesson, or whatever the hell I'm supposed to learn! You can't change the past, it'd just be worse, you shouldn't wish for things to be different, you should just be happy with what you have—I get it, okay?! You can change everything back now!

Meanwhile, Clarence is shaking his head mournfully.

CLARENCE
You don't understand.

SAM
(yelling)
I just said, I understood! So snap your fingers and undo everything!

He looks at her with infinite sadness in his eyes.

CLARENCE
No, Sam, you don't understand. It's done. I can't undo it. This is the way things are, now.

With that pronouncement, Sam begins to slide rapidly back towards hysteria, pacing aimlessly.

SAM
No...no...there has to be...

She remembers something and pounces on it, rounding on him.

SAM (CONT'D)
You said—you said it wasn't permanent until morning. T-that's what you said.

Thunder suddenly rolls across the clear night sky, and Clarence casts a brief, worried glance upward.

CLARENCE
(murmuring)
I think maybe I shouldn't have said that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sam desperately grasps at the straw she sees.

SAM

There—there has to be some way to
fix it before then, right?
Right?!

CLARENCE

Sam, I wasn't lying. I can't
change it back.

But something in the way he says that makes her stop and think.

SAM

You can't change it—can I change
it? Clarence?? Can I change it
back??

He doesn't answer, but the look he gives her makes her think that she's on the right track.

SAM (CONT'D)

(pleading)
How??? Tell me how...

The thunder rumbles again, louder and longer this time, and Clarence suddenly becomes very nervous.

CLARENCE

Uh-oh...I'm definitely in trouble.

He holds his hands out in front of him, and seems surprised to see himself fading away.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

(looking up at Sam)
I think I have to go now.

SAM

(shrieking)
NO!!!

She lunges at him, arms outstretched to grab him, but he has faded completely away before she gets there, and she goes tumbling to the ground. Sprawled out on the grass, she looks skyward, sobbing again.

SAM (CONT'D)

NO!! CLARENCE!!! COME BACK!!!
COME BACK!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Finally she collapses completely, pounding her fists weakly on the ground in abject frustration and anguish.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CEMETARY - EARLY MORNING

The cemetery is bathed in the dimness of the pre-dawn light; to the east is a gathering orange glow where the sun will soon rise. Sam is curled up against Harrison's headstone, her arms draped over the granite, utterly defeated. Tears are still flowing freely down her cheeks, and her body is wracked by great, heaving sobs.

SAM
(choking)
...I'm sorry...I'm so sorry...I
never meant to hurt you, not
ever...I don't care...I don't care
if you're with Brooke...I just
can't...I can't...live...not
without you...

She lifts her eyes to the sky, where the sun is about to crack the horizon, and fresh desperation overtakes her.

SAM (CONT'D)
(plaintively)
...Nooooo...no no no no no...
please...someone...help me...

As the glow on the horizon grows ever brighter, she wraps her arms around the headstone tightly, rocking desperately and squeezing her eyes shut against the approaching dawn.

SAM (CONT'D)
...oh, God, please...make it go
away...I'm sorry...I'm sorry I
wished...I take it back...I take
it back, I take it back, I TAKE IT
BACK—

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MORNING

—and Sam jerks upright in her own bed, screaming.

For several moments she can only sit there in bed, heaving uncontrollably. At last, she slowly swings her legs out and onto the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM
(wearily)
Ohh...whoa...

Her cell phone rings, making her jump. Shakily, she reaches out to the bedside table and picks up the phone, opening it and putting it to her ear.

SAM (CONT'D)
Hello?

CLARENCE (V.O.)
(on the phone)
I'm glad you were able to fix things, Sam. I really was rooting for you.

The phone falls to the floor as Sam is overcome by a serious case of the shakes.

CUT TO:

INT. MCQUEEN LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The coffee table in the living room is piled high with wads of discarded wrapping paper. Harrison and his mother are there, sitting with Brooke on the sofa. While Jane tears the wrapping off of one of her presents, Brooke stretches and stands up.

BROOKE
Can I get you more coffee, Mrs. John?

Harrison's mother smiles and covers the mug she's holding.

MRS. JOHN
I'm fine, Brooke.

As Brooke steps over people's legs and clutter and heads for the kitchen, Jane opens her present—and pulls out an envelope. Giving Mike a curious glance, she opens it and takes out the paper inside.

JANE
(reading)
It's a gift certificate for two for a week-long retreat at the Palm Springs Desert Resort and Spa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. JOHN
 Oh, how thoughtful.
 (to Mike)
 That's for the two of you?

Mike holds out his hands in protest.

MIKE
 I'm not really into mud baths.
 (to Jane)
 I thought you could take Brooke.

JANE
 (calling)
 Brooke?!

BROOKE (O.S.)
 (from the kitchen)
 It's a date!

The doorbell rings, and everyone's eyes turn to the front door. Jane gets up.

JANE
 I'll get it.

Jane walks to the door, takes a look through the peephole, and then gives everyone a quizzical glance before opening the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCQUEEN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens, and Jane looks out, but there is no one outside. Mike appears at her shoulder a moment later.

MIKE
 Honey?

Jane looks down, and spots a tiny, plain cardboard box sitting on the stoop. She bends down, picks it up, and opens it—and, with a gasp, lifts out a blue-tinted ornamental ball with an angel inside.

JANE
 Sam...

She looks up and outward urgently.

JANE (CONT'D)
 Sam? SAM!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jane runs out onto the walk, looking left and right frantically.

But the street is empty.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A CEMETARY - DAY

Sam is walking pensively through the cemetery, carrying a small bouquet of flowers with her. Finally she stops at a particular grave.

INSERT: CLARENCE'S HEADSTONE

as Sam lays the flowers at its base.

She rests her hand on the stone for a moment, perhaps saying a prayer, before walking softly away.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END