

Sorry, Wrong Chimney - Q & A - About the Show

When are the performances?

Three weekends:

Fridays (7:30 pm), Saturdays (7:30 pm), Sundays (2:00 pm)

December 1, 2, 3

December 8, 9, 10

December 15, 16, 17

Are there any "extra" performances for private parties?

As of auditions, no extra performances have been scheduled.

When are rehearsals (typically)?

Sundays 2:00-5:00 PM

Mondays-Thursdays 7:00-9:00 PM

We will run only lines on Tuesday, October 31 and Thursday, November 2 when Jr Players have dress rehearsals for their show on November 3 and 4; place TBA.

We will set lights on Saturday, November 18 or November 25, after 12:30 pm

When are rehearsals scheduled during the holidays?

We will not be having rehearsals on the following dates:

Wednesday, November 22 (Day before Thanksgiving)

Thursday, November 23 (Thanksgiving Day)

We may have tech rehearsal Saturday, November 25

What if we have bad weather?

I usually try to have rehearsal and expect you to make a reasonable decision on whether it is safe for you to attend. Even if school is cancelled, sometimes the roads are better by evening. For performances "The Show Must Go On" unless Sandy Burg informs me that we are cancelling.

How will I know what's going on?

Because *Sorry, Wrong Chimney* has a small cast, I may text you with brief messages. A schedule with notes from me will be posted on RRT's website [rrtstjoe.org] or a group Facebook page. Hard copies will be available at rehearsal. You are always welcome to email me at cheryl.wood@rrtstioe.org or text/call me at 816-244-0256.

If cast, will I have to supply my own costume?

We have a costumer that builds our costumes. You will need to provide your own undergarments of course, and possibly some basic elements such as shoes. Our costumer or I will distribute written information explaining what you need to provide closer to the opening of the production.

Samantha, Natalie

8

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

which she places on coffee table; she then goes to fight switch near hall door and DIMS ROOM LIGHTS, then turns on some Christmas MUSIC on stereo. DOORBELL RINGS. She goes to door, striking romantic pose as she flings it open on:

SAMANTHA. Ho-ho-ho, baby! (NATALIE, a well-endowed woman in her 30s, enters in flamboyant dress)

NATALIE. Ho-ho-ho, yourself, Sam! You been hitting the eggnog early?

SAMANTHA. (rueful laugh) Sorry, Natalie, I thought you were David. Come in, come in! (will un-dim switch and LIGHTS COME UP FULL as she closes door)

NATALIE. Maybe I shouldn't. I mean, if you're about to pounce on David in your pajamas—?

SAMANTHA. Believe me, anything that happened would still get a G-rating! (waves her downstage a bit)

NATALIE. (moving down to sofa area.) A G-rating, with the two of you practically still on your honeymoon?

SAMANTHA. (turns music off) Not practically. Theoretically.

NATALIE. So what's this pajama bit?

SAMANTHA. (crosses to sofa, sits) The honeymoon's kind of—worn off. David's been working nights and weekends, lately. A lot. He does come home for dinner, but then he pops right out again.

NATALIE. You think red pajamas might put a little glue under his shoes?

SAMANTHA. Well, that and—maybe—decorating the tree tonight—listening to Christmas carols while we worked—and doubling the rum in the eggnog!

NATALIE. (sits beside her on sofa, on:) Well, if nothing else, you'd send him back to work jolly!

SAMANTHA. What happens to men after you marry them?!

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY! 9

NATALIE. I'm not sure. If you ever find out, let me know, and I'll figure out what's wrong with me and Bill! How long have you been married, now—five months?

SAMANTHA. Six. And already he'd rather be at the office than here with me.

NATALIE. He's got to come home to bed sometime!

SAMANTHA. Yeah. To sleep!

NATALIE. Sam, honey, you're taking this too hard. Men are ambitious. In a big company like David's, putting in extra hours is the way to advance up the ranks. Once he's a top executive, he can let somebody else put in the overtime.

SAMANTHA. But can I wait that long?

NATALIE. (strugs) What else have you got to do? Say, by the way—do you have any of that double-rum eggnog handy?

SAMANTHA. (starts to get up) I have all the ingredients ready—only take a minute to whip it up ...

NATALIE. (stops her) Ah, don't bother. Why should I get jolly when Bill is across the hall sound asleep!

SAMANTHA. Isn't it a little early for bedtime?

NATALIE. Oh, it's just a nap after work. He says listening to his patients drone on and on all day almost puts him to sleep, but he hangs on till he gets home. I'll wake him up for dinner.

SAMANTHA. And then, I'll bet, you get terribly romantic, don't you!

NATALIE. Well—I do, for all the good it does me.

SAMANTHA. Bill's not in the mood, either? Just like David?

NATALIE. Not while there's anything running in prime time. Oh, he cuddles nicely on the sofa, but I can't get it to go much farther than that—nothing that involves his taking his eyes off the TV screen, anyhow.

SAMANTHA. I'm so glad!

NATALIE. You're *what*?
 SAMANTHA. Oh, I mean, so glad that David's not the only unromantic husband in the building. At least your Bill is *home* with you nights, and not out with—I mean—not out ...

NATALIE. Say, you *do* have a problem! You're not being silly enough to imagine David has—how can I put it?—something "on the side?"

SAMANTHA. Oh, if only I were sure I was imagining! NATALIE. But honey—David is *bananas* about you! You're all he thinks about, all he talks about!

SAMANTHA. (*a little frown*) How do you know so much about what David thinks and talks about?

NATALIE. Sam, I meet your husband almost every day!

SAMANTHA. Natalie, what are you saying?!

NATALIE. Relax, Samantha, relax! I don't mean I *meet* David daily—I mean, almost every day, I *meet* David. There's a difference.

SAMANTHA. It—it does sound better with the different stress ...

NATALIE. Look, honey, this apartment building has hallways, and mailboxes in the lobby, and a pool and Jacuzzi out back, and a newsstand on the corner, and—it's not too unlikely for me and David to run into one another now and again, is it?

SAMANTHA. I—I guess not.

NATALIE. Good. And when we meet, as friendly neighbors, we talk. And when David talks, he talks about *you*! Oh, I talk, too, mostly about Bill—but all *my* comments are complaints. David's are nothing but compliments.

SAMANTHA. You're just saying that to make me feel better.

End

NATALIE. True. But also because it's a fact. (*stands*) There, now do you feel better?

SAMANTHA. ~~You know I *do*, much better. (*stands*) Thanks, Natalie. (*starts with her, toward door*) Your visit has done me a world of good.~~

NATALIE. (*stops*) Oh! Silly me! I almost forgot the reason for the visit! The sight of you in those romantic pajamas must have startled it right out of my head.

SAMANTHA. This wasn't just a social call!

NATALIE. More a *very* call, as friend and neighbor. Honey—now don't get upset or anything, but—have you heard about the Santa Claus burglar?

SAMANTHA. Of *course* I have. Nothing *else* in the news lately!

NATALIE. But did you hear he's been seen not two blocks from here?

SAMANTHA. No! That I didn't know. Oh, dear, now I'm more worried than ever about David being out nights!

NATALIE. Now-now, it's perfectly safe if you keep your door locked—unless that fireplace has a wide chimney—?

SAMANTHA. (*looks that way*) Not—*not* very wide ... unless—just how *big* is this burglar, anyhow?

NATALIE. Hard to tell a guy's build in a Santa suit. Could be all fluff and padding around a body skinny as a snake. Maybe the best course is to keep a *fire* going all night long.

SAMANTHA. It's really a shame. Spoils the Christmas spirit, kind of, a guy dressed like Santa breaking into people's apartments. He must be sick.

NATALIE. I know. Just my luck, he'd pop into *our* place and my heroic Bill would lie him down and start analyzing him!

SAMANTHA. (*laughs*) That's what psychiatrists are for, Natalie.

David, Samantha

12

~~SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!~~

~~NATALIE. Personally, I'd just as soon cure him of his criminal tendencies the speedier way—with a baseball bat!~~

~~SAMANTHA. Bill's way would be better—you could charge him for the curb!~~

~~NATALIE. Hmm, never thought of that! Well, either way, Bill and I are ready for him, and he'll get what he deserves.~~

~~SAMANTHA. What a person like that deserves is a lump of coal for Christmas!~~

~~NATALIE. In his stocking?~~

~~SAMANTHA. Upside of his head! (BOTH laugh; then.)~~

~~NATALIE. Well, honey, you just keep this door locked tight, and if you hear anything in the night when David's not here, just give a holler and I'll charge right over with that baseball bat—I can't really expect Bill to charge over tonight the couch!~~

~~SAMANTHA. (laughs, opening door) Thanks, Natalie, I'll keep it in mind. And Natalie—thanks.~~

~~NATALIE. (smiles) What are friends for? (exits; SAMANTHA closes door after her, SAMANTHA sits and starts going through boxes, looking at ornaments and decorations. One of the boxes she opens has Santa costume in it. She opens it just as DAVID enters. She just gets a quick glimpse of it, and his presence doesn't register. DAVID is a handsome young executive in his mid-twenties. He wears overcoat as he enters. He is wearing suit and tie under. SAMANTHA rushes to him, knocking over boxes as she does, and embraces him. In midst of embrace, DAVID spots Santa suit which was spilled with rest of decorations. He breaks free, almost knocking SAMANTHA over as he does. He rushes to Santa costume and quickly stuffs it back into box.)~~

~~DAVID. (almost breathless) Well, Sam, what's going on? (nonchalantly hiding box behind back)~~

13

~~SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!~~

~~SAMANTHA. (crossing to him) I thought we could have a romantic evening. Just the two of us decorating the tree and the apartment.~~

~~DAVID. Oh, honey, that sounds—just wonderful!~~

~~But—SAMANTHA. David, please don't tell me you have to go back to the office tonight!~~

~~DAVID. Sam, if I don't tell you that—how will I explain when I go out?~~

~~SAMANTHA. Awww, David!~~

~~DAVID. (backing toward door, box still hidden) I know, I know, and I promise you, soon as Christmas is over, I'll be the most romantic husband in this apartment building!~~

~~SAMANTHA. From what I've heard, that's not saying much! (starts to cry, rushes into bedroom, slams door)~~

~~DAVID. (lame) Hon-ee ...? (stumps) Oh, hell. (shakes head, swings box around to hold it in front of him, now, turns and opens front door, then steps back in panic as NATALIE steps in; he whips box behind his back from her, instantly, forces a smile, and) Why—Natalie! How nice!~~

~~NATALIE. If you really think it's nice, you should tell the sweat glands on your forehead.~~

~~DAVID. (wipes cut across brow) Hot. Very hot in this apartment. Like an oven.~~

~~NATALIE. David, what are you being so nervous about?~~

~~DAVID. Wh—what m—makes you think I'm b—being nervous? (sneaks an unconvincing laugh)~~

~~NATALIE. You don't always talk like Mel Tillis.~~

~~DAVID. Like m—m—m—m—m—?~~

~~NATALIE. You said it! Or tried to, anyhow.~~

~~DAVID. (mastering himself) Just the heat. Heat always makes me stutter.~~

End

Begin

David, Natalie

14

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

NATALIE. You must have a hell of a time in Hawaii!
... Where the humahuanukanuka-apuakua goes swimming by?

DAVID. L-look, was there something you wanted? I'm in a kind of hurry.

NATALIE. More overtime money for Christmas?

DAVID. Damn, I wish they paid executives overtime! That'd simplify everything!

NATALIE. You mean all these late hours of yours are for nothing?

DAVID. Look, only clerical people get overtime pay. Executives get the same money if they work fifteen hours a day or none. Sometimes I wish I weren't in the corporate ladder—!

NATALIE. Then why knock yourself out this way? You can't be an inefficient executive, can you?

DAVID. Of course not!

NATALIE. So how come you can't get your work done by quitting time?

DAVID. Natalie, is there some reason you're asking so many questions about my personal business?

NATALIE. (looks around, sees they're alone, draws him a bit into the room, speaks conspiratorially:) Darn right there is! David, as a friend, I should tell you something—something important.

DAVID. (at sea) This—this isn't about my deodorant, is it?

NATALIE. You smell just dandy. A little sweaty, but dandy. No, it's about Sam.

DAVID. (glances toward bedroom) She's—all right, isn't she?

NATALIE. Haven't you seen her tonight?

DAVID. Just briefly. She seemed—upset.

NATALIE. David, she is upset. Listen—(lowers her voice even more:) I'm only telling you this because I think

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

15

the two of you are such a swell couple, and I wouldn't want anything to change that.

DAVID. Telling me what—? (has unconsciously lowered his own voice to her conspiratorial level)

NATALIE. Samantha thinks—or is on the brink of thinking—that there's—well—maybe another woman!

DAVID. (normal volume:) WHAT?!

NATALIE. Ssssh! (pulls him farther into center of room) Keep your voice down! It's these late night hours of yours, and no romance on the home front. It's a bit extreme, but I can't exactly blame her. You are really working nights, aren't you—?

DAVID. Scout's honor, yes! (glances at bedroom door; then:) Except—

NATALIE. Except what?

DAVID. (very low-voiced:) I'm not working at my office!

NATALIE. (normal volume:) WHAT?!

DAVID. Ssssh! (pulls her farther into room) Keep your voice down!

NATALIE. Sorry.

DAVID. (extends box) This is what I've been doing nights! At Carmichael's Department Store!

NATALIE. (peeks into box, reacts) You've been playing Santa?!

DAVID. I want to get Sam a present—a terrific present—her very first Christmas present from me since our wedding! And—I can't afford it!

NATALIE. On an executive's salary?

DAVID. Don't let the title fool you. I'm still on the Entry Level. I make peanuts compared to the big bosses. And what with gas for the car, keeping my suits cleaned and pressed, the rent on this apartment, not to mention food bills, and—

End

Samantha, William

18

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

~~SAMANTHA. How sweet of you to even notice!
(hastily grabs up cap and replaces it on her head, angrily,
on.)~~

~~DAVID. But it's not even past dinner time yet.
SAMANTHA. I got sleepy! Okay?~~

~~DAVID. (teasing from view) Okay-okay-okay. 'Night,
honey. (shuts door and is gone.)~~

~~SAMANTHA. (to closed door.) "Honey!" (sighs on
ornament etc. boxes) And as for you—! (Picks up nearest
box, raises it overhead, almost dashes it to the floor, then
stops). No. Grandma's glass vee-loop ornament's in there.
(sighs, lowers box) I'd better just put these things away.
(starts to stack boxes on sofa, looks around in puzzlement,
then behind sofa, etc.) That's funny—where in the world
did—? ... It was here just a moment ago ...? (looks toward
front door again, frowns in puzzlement, thinks a moment;
then, coming to a decision, she goes to phone and dials;
waits; then gets her party, and:) Bill? ... Samantha Tuttle
... I did? I'm sorry. But isn't it a bit early to be in bed? ...
No-no, don't get Natalie, it's you I want to talk to! ... No,
not on the phone. Over here ... Well, get dressed, then! ...
She what? ... Well, of course she went out? you idiot, or
why would I bother to call you! ... No, I am not proposing
a tryst, you numbskull! ... Oh, look, just get over here,
will you? ... Okay, get dressed and get over here! ... Fine
... See you then! (hangs up phone; stands uncertainly;
clasps and unclasps her hands; paces; after maybe thirty
seconds, a KNOCK at door; she opens it and DR.
WILLIAM WELDON, a tallish owlish man with slightly
uncombed hair and heavy-rimmed eyeglasses, garbed in
pajamas, slippers, and a bathrobe, steps into room slightly;
she impatiently pushes him even farther into room, shuts
door swiftly, leaning back against it as if to prevent further
intrusion from outside; he looks her up and down, and
then.)~~

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

19

WILLIAM. Are you *sure* this isn't a tryst?
SAMANTHA. (*annoyed*) What do you take me for!

WILLIAM. A pretty woman in red pajamas.

SAMANTHA. Now, really, Bill—! (*takes step toward
him*)

WILLIAM. (*takes backstep*) A pretty woman in red
pajamas who just finished yelling at me that it was a bit
early to be in bed!

SAMANTHA. Bill, we are *not* going to bed!

WILLIAM. Try telling that to the next person who
walks in here!

SAMANTHA. Bill, I just want to *talk* to you.
Professionally. Any harm in that?

WILLIAM. Depends what profession you have in mind.

SAMANTHA. Yours, of course!

WILLIAM. (*a bit coolly*) If you're waiting for me to
ask you to lie on the couch, forget it!

SAMANTHA. I am *not* seeing you as a *patient*!
(*shoves him so he sits abruptly on sofa*)

WILLIAM. Then—as *what*?

SAMANTHA. (*sits beside him*) A loving friend!

WILLIAM. (*stands up*) That's what I'm *afraid* of!

SAMANTHA. *Will* you sit *down*?!

WILLIAM. (*started, sits beside her again*) All right.
Let's be professional. How long have you felt these urges
for me?

SAMANTHA. *What* urges?

WILLIAM. Well, you're *certainly* not dressed for a
chummy *chat*!

SAMANTHA. Well, *neither* are you!

WILLIAM. That's only because you sounded so *urgent*
on the phone! I didn't wait to dress. Maybe I should have.
(*starts to stand again, but cannot because she grabs him
with both arms*)

SAMANTHA. Will you *stop* imagining I have these mad desires about you?

WILLIAM. (*looks at her arms embracing him; then:*) I'll try—but you're not helping much ...!

SAMANTHA. Oh, don't be ridiculous! (*releases him*) That was just to keep you from popping up and down!

WILLIAM. Oh. Then—this *is* just a friendly chat? Even if you're wearing red pajamas?

SAMANTHA. Yes! Now will you *forget* my pajamas?!

WILLIAM. I'll—I'll try. (*after a pause*) Are those silk or nylon?

SAMANTHA. (*shrugs*) Who cares! My pajamas are not the issue here.

WILLIAM. So you say! What do you *think* the issue is, Samantha ...?

SAMANTHA. Stop treating me like a *patient*!

WILLIAM. You *said* you wanted me to act professional!

SAMANTHA. Not act professional—be professional! I want to talk to you about David. And Natalie.

WILLIAM. Natalie's gone out.

SAMANTHA. Of course she has! That's just my *point*! She's gone—and David's gone! Now do you see why I asked you to come over?

WILLIAM. Absolutely! (*jumps to his feet, starts for door at a run*) I'll send you my bill!

SAMANTHA. I am *not* in love with you!

WILLIAM. (*stops with hand on doorknob, frowns; then:*) You're not?

SAMANTHA. Not even slightly.

WILLIAM. (*releases knob*) Why? What's wrong with me?

SAMANTHA. (*patiently*) Not a thing, Bill. You're handsome, you're charming, you're intelligent and you make lots and lots of money.

WILLIAM. But you don't love me.

SAMANTHA. But I don't love you.

WILLIAM. (*returns to where she still sits on sofa, looks down at her; then:*) Maybe you do need professional help!

SAMANTHA. Where should I start? This is all so difficult.

WILLIAM. Well, we've established, without a doubt, that you're not in love with me. (*sits beside her.*)

SAMANTHA. Right.—How's Natalie?

WILLIAM. Fine. (*stands*) That was easy.

SAMANTHA. (*grabs his arm and pulls him back onto sofa*) I mean *how* is Natalie?

WILLIAM. Are you trying to tell me something?

SAMANTHA. Where is Natalie right now?

WILLIAM. She said she was going shopping.

SAMANTHA. And you believed her?

WILLIAM. Maybe you're right. (*dryly*) Going shopping around Christmas is very suspicious!

SAMANTHA. Don't you think it's also very strange that David isn't here?

WILLIAM. (*putting her on*) Do you think that—maybe he's out shopping too? And at Christmas!

SAMANTHA. No, David says he's at work. But, you know what I found before David came home?

WILLIAM. What? A charge card? A Christmas list? Oh, what a tangled web!

SAMANTHA. Will you stop that? I'm serious. I found a—Santa outfit!

WILLIAM. (*holding back the laughter*) And, at Christmas time. Some people!

SAMANTHA. But it disappeared. Don't you think that's strange?

WILLIAM. (*finally laughing out loud*) Maybe David's the Santa burglar.

End

Kris, William

34

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

KRIS. Sheila? ... Kris ... Yeah, everything's going just fine. I'm at the final apartment right now, you know where it's at? ... Good. Bring the car around front in about ten minutes ... Naw, no problem. I'll pick up what I can, then be out of here fast ... See you in about ten minutes, honey ... Merry Christmas! *(hangs up phone, brings out plastic bag, identical to the one DAVID is carrying his costume in, from inside jacket, tiptoes offstage into kitchen. Then WILLIAM enters from bedroom, still empty-handed, and still mismatched of clothing; he looks about, frowning, then sights on ornament-box near tree, hurries over and lifts out sparkling ornament from box, dangling from its hook, holds it up to light, nods and—)*

WILLIAM. Perfect! *(then he reacts as KRIS comes out of kitchen, the bag now containing something heavy which clinks a lot [the silverware, of course]; KRIS sees him and freezes)* David, why are you dressed in that Santa suit?

KRIS. *(in deep Santa-like voice)* What's wrong with this outfit? It looks a heck of a lot better than yours!

WILLIAM. Mine? *(looks down at himself, reacts)* Oh, damn! I can explain!

KRIS. But why should you?

WILLIAM. Wait, maybe I won't have to! *(deep, soothing voice.)* Look! Look into the pretty ornament, David! *(dangles it before KRIS's eyes)*

KRIS. Cute as hell. Well, if you'll excuse me—*(tries to move toward hall door)*

WILLIAM. Where are you going? Didn't Sam tell you to come up here and stay?

KRIS. Who's Sam?

WILLIAM. Oh, David, this is worse than I even suspected! Denial of even *knowing* the woman you love above all others! I'd better take action fast! Sit down on the sofa.

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

35

KRIS. Why should I?

WILLIAM. You surely don't expect me to let you leave here, do you?

KRIS. I guess it was a forlorn hope. *(shuffles to sofa)* I suppose now you're going to call the cops?

WILLIAM. Why would I do *that*? Now sit. *(pushes KRIS down)* What are friends for? No one has to know about this.

KRIS. *(confused)* They don't?

WILLIAM. *(sits beside KRIS)* Why should we tell anybody about this? It'll be a secret between you ... Sam ... and me!

KRIS. Fair enough! *(tries to stand)* I really have to go now.

WILLIAM. *(pulls him back onto sofa)* I'm not through with you yet!

KRIS. You're not?

WILLIAM. *(sits on sofa facing KRIS, dangles ornament before his eyes)* I want you to take a close look at this bauble! I want you to watch it—carefully. *(begins to move ornament from side to side; KRIS follows motion with eyes and head)*

KRIS. Carefully.

WILLIAM. Side to side.

KRIS. Side to side.

WILLIAM. You are getting sleepy—sleepy.

KRIS. *(sleepily)* Sleepy. *(closes eyes)*

WILLIAM. Relax. Listen only to my voice.

KRIS. Only to your voice.

WILLIAM. Now, open your eyes slowly. *(KRIS opens his eyes. He is in a trance. WILLIAM puts ornament aside)*

I want you to listen to my voice and follow my directions. You are in love with Samantha. Only Samantha.

KRIS. *(trancelike)* Samantha who?

WILLIAM. Samantha Tuttle, your loving wife.

End

Sheila, William, Samantha, David, Natalie, Kris

42

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

DAVID. What the hell goes on in this place when I'm away at work?!

SAMANTHA. Ha! Don't give me that! I know you weren't at work tonight!

NATALIE. Of course not—he's home!

WILLIAM. (singing of the circular passage) Hey, I've got an idea! (ALL GASP)

OTHERS. What?

WILLIAM. Let's run the other way! (ALL immediately reverse, so that now KRIS is chasing WILLIAM, WILLIAM is chasing NATALIE, NATALIE is chasing DAVID, and DAVID is chasing SAMANTHA, during)

SAMANTHA. Don't run away from him, Bill—hypnotize him!

WILLIAM. (as WILLIAM continues, ALL FIVE runners slow little-by-little until ALL are moving like the slow-motion runners in a dream, during:) Your eyelids are getting heavy, oh-so-heavy ... you can hear nothing but the sound of my voice ... I am going to count backwards from five, and when I reach zero, you will be asleep ... five ... four ... three ... two ... one ... zero! (ALL but WILLIAM sag gently to the floor, eyes closed, smiling happily; he stares in confusion, then belatedly reacts) Oops, I overdid it!

SHEILA. (appears in still-open hall doorway) Kris! What have they done to you?!

WILLIAM. Who the hell are you?

SHEILA. (producing pistol from purse) None of your business! Stick 'em up!

WILLIAM. (raising hands) That seems fair enough.

SHEILA. (shuts door behind her, rushes to KRIS, still keeping pistol pointed at WILLIAM) What's the matter with him? What have you done to him?

WILLIAM. He's just asleep! Honest!

SHEILA. (shaking KRIS) So why doesn't he wake up?

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

43

WILLIAM. He can't until I tell him to!

SHEILA. So tell him to!

WILLIAM. Wake up! Please wake up! (KRIS—and

OTHERS, of course—abruptly come to their feet)

SHEILA. Kris, are you all right?

SAMANTHA. Who's she?

NATALIE. What's going on?

DAVID. Why is she pointing that pistol?

KRIS. Who's Kris?

SHEILA. I thought you were! (pulls away his beard) And you are!

KRIS. Keep your distance, lady!

SHEILA. Kris, are you nuts?! Come on, we've got to get out of here! (grabs his arm)

KRIS. (pulls free) Lady, who are you?!

SHEILA. I'm Sheila! Honey, don't you know me? When you didn't come down to the car after ten minutes, I got panicky and came up here to help you!

KRIS. What car? Why are you calling me "honey"?

SAMANTHA. (to DAVID) Oh, David, I was so

scared—! (embraces him)

KRIS. You take your hands off my wife!

SHEILA. Your wife?! She can't be your wife!

NATALIE. Why not?

SHEILA. Because I'm his fiancée!

KRIS. (embracing SAMANTHA, even if she's in

DAVID's embrace, too) It's a lie!

SHEILA. Who's that woman you're hugging?

KRIS. Samantha Tuttle, the only woman I will ever love!

NATALIE. (to WILLIAM) William Weldon, what have you done?!

WILLIAM. I might ask you the same question!

SAMANTHA. He was just trying to save my marriage, Natalie!

DAVID. By giving you another husband?
SHEILA. Husband? Kris, what's he talking about?
KRIS. Stop calling me "Kris!" My name is David Tuttle!

DAVID. Impossible! My name is David Tuttle!
SHEILA. Exclusively?
DAVID. Uh—well, no, but—
NATALIE. Bill, will you get him out of your magic spell before Sheila shoots us all?
WILLIAM. I'll try! (to SHEILA) With your permission, of course—?
SHEILA. Yes, yes, anything!
WILLIAM. You can still hear only my voice, David!
Your real name is— (to SHEILA) What is his real name?

SAMANTHA. "Kris Kreigle!"
WILLIAM. Your real name is "Kris Kreigle," and when I snap my fingers you will awaken and no longer think you are David Tuttle! You do not love Samantha! You love—
SHEILA. Sheila!
WILLIAM. Sheila! (snaps fingers) There!
DAVID. (rushing into SHEILA's arms) Darling! You came back to me!

SAMANTHA. Oh, great, now he's got a new identity!
WILLIAM. Oops!
SHEILA. I want my Kris back!
DAVID. You got him, babe! (tries to smother SHEILA with kisses and hugs. She drops gun to floor.)
SHEILA. Wait a minute! (takes off running toward kitchen with DAVID chasing her. KRIS starts looking longingly at SAMANTHA)
SAMANTHA. Don't you start that again! (she takes off running with KRIS chasing after her. They loop around the sofa and head out front door)

NATALIE. You've really done it this time! During the chase ad-libs from group such as "I love you," "help,"

End

Begin

screams, etc. SHEILA and DAVID run out of kitchen as SAMANTHA and KRIS run in from front door. They all begin looping around sofa. One group runs clockwise, the other runs counter-clockwise. After a couple of laps the men switch chasing ladies. After two laps they realize that this is like watching a figure-eight stock car race.

SHEILA. Help! (she heads out front door with DAVID hot on her heels)
SAMANTHA. Bill! (she heads out front door with KRIS hot on her heels)
NATALIE. Bill, what on earth have you done? You told me hypnosis should only be used in a controlled clinical situation!
WILLIAM. (shrugs) Well, this proves I was right!
NATALIE. (crosses to door) Shouldn't we go after them?

WILLIAM. They'll be back.
NATALIE. What makes you so sure?
WILLIAM. This is their home! But while we're waiting—What have you and David been up to? There's something strange going on here, and I demand to know what it is!
NATALIE. You hypnotize David and this Kris character into chasing each other's women, and I'm supposed to explain the strange goings-on?

WILLIAM. I mean the other strange thing going on! Between you and David! Samantha overheard you two planning a Christmas surprise! What surprise?
NATALIE. (hedging) If I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise! (sees gun and picks it up) Right? (points it at him for emphasis)
WILLIAM. Don't shoot! I don't need to know about the surprise!

End

Policeman and all other characters

52

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

SHEILA. Your reindeer ~~won't~~ recognize you in that bathrobe! ~~(by the way, KRIS still wears his Santa beard, if nothing else of his original outfit)~~

KRIS. They'll surely recognize my voice!

SHEILA. But what if they don't?

POLICEMAN. (off) Open this door, in the name of the law!

KRIS. (starts for chimney again) Excuse me!

WILLIAM. Kris, you have nothing to fear from the police! You're Santa Claus, remember?

KRIS. The police don't believe in Santa Claus!

POLICEMAN. (off, pounding on door) Open up, or I'll shoot the lock off!

DAVID. I'd better open up!

NATALIE. But what will you tell the policeman?

SAMANTHA. We haven't broken any laws, Natalie—have we?

POLICEMAN. (off) I'm going to count to three! One ... two ...!

DAVID. I'm coming, I'm coming!

SHEILA. You won't turn Kris in, will you?

WILLIAM. He's perfectly safe not wearing his Santa suit!

SAMANTHA. If the policeman doesn't ask him his name!

POLICEMAN. ...three!

DAVID. Hold it! (yanks open door. OFFICER enters, gun in one hand, large gift-wrapped box under his other arm) Can we help you, Officer?

POLICEMAN. There's been a complaint!

SAMANTHA. Not from us!

POLICEMAN. From your neighbors! They heard shooting in here!

SORRY! WRONG CHIMNEY!

53

NATALIE. (improvising) You know, so did we! Somebody up on the roof was pumping bullets through the ceiling!

WILLIAM. (jumping on this handy bandwagon) We're all lucky to be alive.

SAMANTHA. (catching on, points ceilingward) Look for yourself!

POLICEMAN. (looks up) Those are bullet holes! Who's up on that roof?!

KRIS. (starts flitting names off on his fingers:) Dasher, Dancer, Prancer—

SHEILA. (improvising) It's all right, Grandfather, the little sleigh has gone away now! (behind KRIS' s back, makes forefinger-twirl at temple to clue policeman in)

KRIS. With no driver?

NATALIE. (desperately) Now-now, Grandfather, they know the way home.

POLICEMAN. What's going on here, anyhow?

KRIS. (like a person reporting a crime, right to OFFICER) Someone's been shooting my reindeer in the feet!

POLICEMAN. I thought the shots came from outside?

SHEILA. (desperately) Well, sec, at that time, the reindeer were inside!

POLICEMAN. Now, just a minute—!

WILLIAM. (quickly) Officer, I assure you, it's all right! I'm a licensed psychiatrist, treating this gentleman, so everything's fine, and you can take my word for it!

POLICEMAN. (looks him up and down; then:) In that outfit?

SHEILA. Say, what's that package, anyhow?

DAVID. (gloomily) Probably gift-wrapped handcuffs!

POLICEMAN. No, this was leaning against the door across the hall. Looked expensive, so I thought I'd better take charge of it before somebody swiped it.

SAMANTHA. (*looks at package*) Natalie, have you been shopping at Bergdorf-Goodman?!

WILLIAM. Ye gods, I hope not!

POLICEMAN. What's this package got to do with you?

WILLIAM. We live across the hall, officer.

NATALIE. (*reaches*) So if you'll just give me the package—

POLICEMAN. Not till I see some I.D.!

WILLIAM. Don't look at me, these aren't my clothes!

POLICEMAN. Well, that's one point in your favor!

DAVID. I resent that!

POLICEMAN. Why?

DAVID. Because they're my clothes!

POLICEMAN. Why is your neighbor wearing your clothes?

DAVID. (*turns to SAMANTHA*) Your turn.

SAMANTHA. Uh. There's a very good reason!

NATALIE. (*as if that cleared things up*) Now may I have my package?

POLICEMAN. (*pulling back from her*) Not so fast! I'd better look inside this to make sure it belongs to you!

DAVID. (*panic-stricken*) No, don't!

SAMANTHA. David, why shouldn't he look inside that box?

DAVID. (*Inanely*) Oh—no special reason ...

POLICEMAN. (*has wrapping off, and opens box, now, lifts out gorgeous sable stole*) Wow! This must cost a fortune!

DAVID. (*without thinking*) You're telling me! (*with thinking, to SAMANTHA:*) Otherwise, I'd have no way of knowing!

WILLIAM. (*picks up card which fell from box as fur came out*) Look, it's a card!

NATALIE. (*desperately, suspecting what DAVID's done*) Oh, Bill, you darling! To not only give me a fur stole, but to enclose a love-note, too!

WILLIAM. Huh?

POLICEMAN. (*takes card*) Let me see that! (*looks at card, read aloud:*) "To the most wonderful woman on the face of the earth with all the love in all my heart!"

SAMANTHA. Oh, Bill, how wonderfully romantic of you!

POLICEMAN. His name is "Bill?" Then why is this signed "David?"

OTHERS except DAVID. "David?!"

DAVID. (*feebly*) So many people at Bergdorf-Goodman can't spell "Bill!"

SAMANTHA. David! You bought a fur stole for Natalie!

DAVID. Only to keep till Christmas.

NATALIE. Indian-giver!

WILLIAM. How dare you buy my wife a fur—and then expect to get it back, besides!

DAVID. It was to keep for Samantha!

SAMANTHA. Why can't I keep my own fur? You think I'm incompetent or something?!

POLICEMAN. If I might interrupt for a moment—

OTHERS. Shut up!

DAVID. Sam, the fur was a surprise for you!

SAMANTHA. (*hurr*) It certainly was.

DAVID. I mean, I wanted to watch your eyes light up on Christmas morning!

KRIS. Sounds like he planned to plug her into the tree!

SHEILA. Well, that'd certainly be a surprise!

POLICEMAN. If you people will just calm down for a moment—

OTHERS. Shut up!

DAVID. ~~Sam, I bought the fur for you!~~

End