



The Mystery of the Missing Necklace

Characters: Samantha; Gertrude, the housekeeper; Nellie; Bertha, the new maid; Aunt Cornelia; Narrator

Narrator: I present “The Mystery of the Missing Necklace—A Samantha Mini Mystery.” Samantha and Nellie have just come home from school on a wintry December afternoon. They are talking with Aunt Cornelia in the parlor of their New York City brownstone, where a cheerful fire crackles in the fireplace.

Aunt Cornelia (holding up an envelope): Look, girls—an invitation from Grandmary arrived in the mail this morning! She would like us to come to New Bedford for the holidays. We’ll have a lovely Christmas all together.

Samantha: Hurray! I’ll be so happy to see Grandmary and the Admiral again.

Aunt Cornelia: And on New Year’s Day, Grandmary is having a special candlelight dinner for her family and friends. It’s going to be a very elegant affair.

Samantha (looking at Nellie): Imagine if we could go!

Nellie: But I’m sure a dinner like that is not for children.

Aunt Cornelia: You know, girls, Bridget and Jenny are still too young to enjoy such a formal occasion. They’ll be happier playing upstairs during Grandmary’s dinner. But you two have become lovely young ladies. I know Grandmary would be proud to have you join her dinner guests. Would you like that?

Samantha and Nellie (together): Oh, yes!

Aunt Cornelia (smiling): I thought so! And you may wear your new velvet Christmas dresses to the dinner.

Samantha: Oh, Aunt Cornelia, that would be perfect! I love the red velvet I chose for my dress.

Nellie: And I love the dark blue velvet I chose for mine. Oh, Samantha, won’t we feel grown-up and elegant?

Aunt Cornelia (standing up and looking very pleased with herself): I have an idea, girls. Come upstairs with me—I

know what would set off those dresses perfectly for such a special occasion.

Narrator: As Samantha and Nellie follow Aunt Cornelia up the stairs, they meet the housekeeper, Gertrude, and the new maid, Bertha, who are coming downstairs with feather dusters in their hands.

Aunt Cornelia: Good afternoon, Gertrude and Bertha.

Gertrude: Good afternoon, Mrs. Edwards.

Bertha: Good afternoon, ma’am.

Narrator: Aunt Cornelia leads the girls into her dressing room and seats them by her dressing table.

Aunt Cornelia (softly): My grandmother left some of her favorite jewels to me. I loved my grandmother very much, and I would like nothing more than to see my own dear girls wear her jewels.

Narrator: Aunt Cornelia opens her jewelry box, takes something out, and turns back to the girls.

Aunt Cornelia: Here, Samantha, I’ve always loved this pearl and ruby necklace. It’s so delicate, isn’t it? It will be beautiful against your red velvet dress.

Samantha (whispering): It’s perfect, Aunt Cornelia!

Aunt Cornelia: And now for you, Nellie. A sparkling green emerald would be just the thing against your blue velvet, don’t you think?

Nellie: Oh, Aunt Cornelia—an emerald necklace! I never in my life imagined that I would wear jewels.

Aunt Cornelia: Well, my dear, you most certainly shall! Here, let me show you.

Narrator: She looks through the jewelry box once, then again.

Aunt Cornelia: Oh, my...I don’t understand. The emerald



Samantha Parkington



necklace was here this morning. But it doesn't seem to be here now! Help me look, girls.

Samantha: Here's your string of pearls, and your diamond earrings from Uncle Gard...

Nellie: And your sapphire bracelet, and your amethyst ring ...

Aunt Cornelia: And my tortoiseshell hair comb, and Grandmother's topaz earrings...

Samantha: And here's your garnet brooch. Aunt Cornelia, that's the last thing. There's nothing else in your jewelry box!

Aunt Cornelia (near tears): The emerald necklace can't have disappeared into thin air. Hmm, the upstairs rooms were cleaned this afternoon—perhaps Gertrude or Bertha saw it somewhere.

Narrator: Aunt Cornelia goes to the top of the stairs and calls.

Aunt Cornelia: Gertrude? Bertha? Would you join us in my dressing room for a moment, please?

Gertrude (appearing in the doorway a moment later): You called, Mrs. Edwards?

Bertha (curtsying): Ma'am?

Aunt Cornelia: Something very strange has happened. I was just looking for two of my favorite necklaces. They were both in my jewelry box earlier today, but now only the ruby and pearl necklace is there. I wondered if perhaps one of you had straightened my dresser and placed the other necklace in a drawer. Or perhaps you noticed it somewhere in my room?

Gertrude: I'm sorry, Mrs. Edwards, I didn't. Why, just this morning, I polished your diamond earrings and your sapphire bracelet. I put them back in your jewelry box as soon as I was finished. Everything seemed to be in order then. I specifically remember rearranging the string of pearls so everything would fit.

Bertha (shaking her head): I'm afraid I didn't see the emerald necklace, either, ma'am. What a terrible shame to lose such a lovely thing. It must be here somewhere.

Nellie: Was anyone else working up here this afternoon, Gertrude? Perhaps someone else noticed it.

Gertrude: Well, Dorothy finished the ironing this afternoon, and she put the clothes in the bedroom closets just an hour or two ago.

Bertha: And Mildred was cleaning ashes from the bedroom fireplaces this afternoon, too.

Gertrude: Oh, yes—I did see her walking down the hall with her bucket and a big pile of cleaning rags. I'll ask Mildred and Dorothy if either of them happened to notice the necklace while they were working up here, Mrs. Edwards.

Aunt Cornelia (worriedly): Thank you, Gertrude.

Gertrude: Bertha, come along. We should go downstairs now.

Narrator: Gertrude and Bertha turn and walk down the hall.

Aunt Cornelia: Nellie, I'm so sorry that your surprise was spoiled. But I'm sure the necklace will turn up soon.

Samantha (urgently): Aunt Cornelia, I hate to tell you this, but the necklace was stolen! And I know exactly who took it!

Narrator (to audience):
Who stole the necklace?
And how does Samantha know?

