­­­**Watching over the Mother**

By Michael Ortiz

Cast of Characters

Samantha/Sam – a younger woman, age 20-30

Megan – Younger woman, age 20-30

Mother – Older woman

Note: Dashes at the end of dialogue indicate interruptions where appropriate

Hospital Room

A 24-hour hospital room

Nighttime

Nighttime in the modern age.

At Rise the Mother is in a bed. She is comatose. Samantha is sitting beside her.

[Samantha laments beside the Mother and appears to be tenderly at a loss. She waits a moment and pays silent respect to the Mother, then slowly reaches around the bed and suffocates the Mother with the pillow.]

MEGAN

[Megan enters the scene]

What are you doing?

[Samantha turns to face Megan and freezes in shock]

MEGAN

Samantha, what are you doing?

[Samantha is still frozen]

MEGAN

I can see you. You forget English or something?

SAMANTHA

[slowly slides off bed, as if to try and slip away inconspicuously]

MEGAN

I can see you.

SAMANTHA

[now on the floor]

Mm, no you can’t.

MEGAN

Yes, I can.

SAMANTHA

No, you can’t. You don’t have your glasses on.

MEGAN

I don’t wear glasses you shmuck.

SAMANTHA

I could’ve sworn you did.

MEGAN

In high school.

SAMANTHA

Well, shit.

[Samantha gets up.]

Sorry Megan. I thought that if I froze… you wouldn’t see me. Thinking now, that’s really fucking stupid. I just get nervous when someone sees me… adjusting… Mom’s pillow.

MEGAN

Adjusting huh? Isn’t that the nurse’s job?

SAMANTHA

I know Mom better than them, WE know Mom better than them, don’t you agree? I just think that maybe she would be more comfortable if the pillow was adjusted.

MEGAN

In front of her face?

SAMANTHA

Yup.

MEGAN

I know what you were trying to do Samantha.

SAMANTHA

No, you don’t. Stop saying I’m trying to kill Mom.

MEGAN

I’m not saying you were trying to kill Mom. You did, just now.

SAMANTHA

I did? When? I don’t remember saying that. Stop putting words in my mouth.

MEGAN

I’m not. You put the words in my mouth actually.

SAMANTHA

Why are you here? I bet you’re here to kill Mom! Holy shit Megan! You can’t just do that! That’s murder! That’s a crime. A federal crime. You could go to jail for that. Thank god I was here to stop you. You can’t do that. Mom’s life is too precious.

MEGAN

I’m not here to kill Mom. I’m here to check up on her.

SAMANTHA

Bullshit, we both know why you’re here. You’re an assassin! Hired here to kill Mom! I won’t stand for that! Where’s your weapon!?

MEGAN

I don’t have a weapon, stop trying to spin this on me!

SAMANTHA

Give me your pants.

MEGAN

What? No.

SAMANTHA

Give me your pants so I know you don’t have a weapon on you.

MEGAN

I’m not going to do that Samantha.

SAMANTHA

You could have it in your pocket! I’m not going to let you kill Mom you MURDERER!

[Samantha goes to Megan and tries to check Megan’s pockets. Megan resists. They both struggle on the ground]

MEGAN

Let go of me! -

SAMANTHA

-Never!

[they continue to awkwardly wrestle]

MEGAN

Stop or I will call security!

[Samantha frees herself from Megan with her hands up and backs away.]

Good. Now here’s what’s gonna happen. YOU are gonna stay with me. I’M going to watch over you. Because now you are my bitch.

SAMANTHA

Fuck off Megan.

MEGAN

Oh no. I won’t. And neither will you. Because you have to do what I say.

SAMANTHA

Or what?

MEGAN

Or you’re going to jail. So, sit your ass down.

[they sit]

First thing’s first: You’re gonna help me with my homework.

SAMANTHA

We’re not in school anymore Megan!

MEGAN

Not actual homework dumbass, numbers business. We gotta justify the company numbers for the Carmack deal

[Megan hands Samantha a folder for some numbers work with a pen attached.]

I hope you’re good at math.

SAMANTHA

Why are we even making deals with the Carmack’s? Mom’s business doesn’t deal with people THAT low! They’re dirty rats! I would know, I buy my coke from them.

MEGAN

Do you want to do this, or should I actually call security this time?

SAMANTHA

Fine.

[Samantha analyzes the papers for a beat.]

They must’ve changed things since I was in school. What’s this backwards “E” and the Chinese character?

[Megan takes the papers and rotates them]

Ah. I see.

[Samantha proceeds to look at the paper for a second and makes corrections with the pen.]

Finished with the first page!

MEGAN

Samantha, the first page is a balance sheet. There was nothing to correct.

SAMANTHA

Oh, screw that! Math is my strong suit; I was good at it in high school. I could’ve been the next Einstein!

MEGAN

-You’re a custodian.

SAMANTHA

And a damn fine one! Custodians do good work! Don’t take us for granted. You don’t know what kind of power us trash people have at our disposal.

MEGAN

Like what? You gonna summon an army of rats to attack me? You gonna bury me under a pile of garbage bags? Or you gonna throw me in a trash compactor?

SAMANTHA

Yeah I might!

MEGAN

Please, you couldn’t even take care of a turtle-

SAMANTHA

-YOU DON’T GET TO BRING UP TONY

MEGAN

Yeesh, I’m just joking. You’re very sensitive. Turtles are lame anyway; I don’t get why anybody would want turtles as pets.

SAMANTHA

You wouldn’t understand. You’re not on the upper echelon of turtle appreciation. If you had a pet, you would know turtles are at the top of the animal hierarchy.

MEGAN

You don’t know the first thing about turtles!

SAMANTHA

How can you even say that to me? Tony was the best thing that ever happened in my life! He was the best reptile to ever live.

MEGAN

Turtles aren’t even reptiles!

SAMANTHA

How are they not reptiles Megan?

MEGAN

They swim dumbass! That’s makes them a fish!

[beat]

SAMANTHA

Only bad people bring up dead pets.

MEGAN

You’re one to talk. You just tried to kill mom.

SAMANTHA

I didn’t try to kill Mom, I failed to kill Mom. As a famous man once said, “Do or do not there is no try.”

MEGAN

Which famous man said that?

SAMANTHA

Gandhi, I think.

MEGAN

Speaking of trying to kill mom…

SAMANTHA

Yeah what about it?

MEGAN

I think I know why you did it, but… tell me anyway.

SAMANTHA

What are you, a cop? I don’t have to tell you shit.

MEGAN

I don’t think you understand the nature of our relationship-

SAMANTHA

-You’re my sister?-

MEGAN

-I’m you’re blackmailer. You don’t get to argue. Now tell me why you tried to kill mom.

SAMANTHA

[Sigh] I saw the will. And I saw that in the event that mom died, I would inherit some of her company.

MEGAN

And I would get half.

SAMANTHA

How do you know?

MEGAN

I wrote the damn thing! And when did you get a chance to see Mom’s will? I SPECIFICALLY put it in the safe after I was done writing it!

SAMANTHA

I was in Mom’s office that day, and the safe was open-

MEGAN

-Why were you in Mom’s office?

SAMANTHA

I’m the custodian. I clean places. You and mom both interviewed me for the position.

MEGAN

Ah shit, that’s right. But I could’ve sworn I closed the safe-

SAMANTHA

-Well it was open when I got there. Anyways, you should help me kill her! We both stand to gain!

MEGAN

No way. When she wakes up, I’m making her sign off on a different will, one where I inherit her whole company.

SAMANTHA

And you’d screw me out huh? That’s typical.

MEGAN

Let’s be honest here Samantha. You’re a custodian. I’m a business executive at the company. Who would run it better, you or me?

SAMANTHA

I try my best in everything I do; I think that alone qualifies me for the inheritance!

MEGAN

Who’s the one who put tinfoil in the microwave in the staffroom?

SAMANTHA

Me, but that’s because-

MEGAN

Who’s the one who replaced the water in the fish tank with coffee to “Wake them up?”

SAMANTHA

Well, me but they looked tired-

MEGAN

Who’s the one who let in a wild bear into the office facilities and then try to pass it off as a seeing eye dog?

SAMANTHA

That was also me, but it was cold outside and she looked like she needed to warm up a little…

MEGAN

Do you sense a pattern here Samantha?

SAMANTHA

I may be a fuck up, but you’re dishonest and cruel. I saw the numbers on the balance sheet. I know they don’t add up. I guess you figured a little skimming off the top never hurt nobody

MEGAN

And does it? I don’t think so.

SAMANTHA

And what about the Carmack deal? I know mom wouldn’t approve of a deal like this! She hated them!

MEGAN

I know, but they’re such a lucrative partner, so I might as well expedite the process while mom is asleep. Besides, they can’t be too horrible, I buy my coke from them. [beat] I can’t even imagine how clumsy she must’ve been to have a file cabinet fall on her.

SAMANTHA

(nervously) yeah, what an idiot.

MEGAN

Oh don’t tell me.

SAMANTHA

What?

MEGAN

That was you?

SAMATHA

Well it was supposed to kill her, but it accidentally put her in a coma and, well, here we are. Hopefully third time’s the charm.

MEGAN

So, the file cabinet that fell on her-

SAMANTHA

-That was me. I was the file cabinet – I mean, I PUSHED the file cabinet- but yeah.

MEGAN

So you’re the reason we’re both here now, watching over mom in her coma?

SAMANTHA

Well now you’re making me feel bad.

MEGAN

What do you need ownership of the company for anyway? I don’t think you have a mortgage to pay off or something.

SAMANTHA

Well, for your information I was going to get a new turtle. If I was an owner, I would get a bigger pay increase and be able to buy a new turtle with the tank and everything.

MEGAN

Yeesh, enough about the turtle already! You keep trying to replace Tony-

SAMANTHA

You can’t replace Tony!

MEGAN

Stop talking about your fucking turtle! He wasn’t special!

SAMANTHA

I’m gonna make you eat those words!

[They start to tussle, when the mother springs up from her bed.]

THE MOTHER

I ARRISE!

SAMANTHA

What the Fuck?!

MEGAN

What the hell?

SAMANTHA

Have you been awake the whole time?

THE MOTHER

I HAVE COME BACK!

MEGAN

Mom what the fuck?

SAMANTHA

Mom? Are you a zombie?

THE MOTHER

I AM YOUR MOTHER!

MEGAN

So yes.

THE MOTHER

No. I am not a zombie. I am your mother, and I have awoken from my coma!

MEGAN

She’s a vampire!

THE MOTHER

No I’m not a vampire you idiot! I merely FAKED my coma.

SAMANTHA

Ah Jesus our family is fucked up. We got a thief-

MEGAN

-Hey! I’m a CEO-

SAMANTHA

-A lousy one at that, we also have someone who faked a coma-

THE MOTHER

-I’m your mother-

SAMANTHA AND MEGAN

-WE KNOW!

MEGAN

And a murderer!

SAMANTHA

I mean, more like attempted murderer, and even that is a bit a stretch now that we know she’s alive and faked the coma… I think?

THE MOTHER

I was observing your behavior in my slumber, silently, judging you all.

SAMANTHA

You already do that!

THE MOTHER

But this time I was in a coma.

MEGAN

So everything you just heard…

THE MOTHER

Yes, I am aware of ALL your motivations…

SAMANTHA

So now I have 2 people who have blackmail over me.

MEGAN

Mom, I didn’t mean to make a deal with the Carmacks!

THE MOTHER

Megan, I know when you are lying. The Carmacks are our rivals in business. Not our compatriots.

MEGAN

But mom, the money to be made from the deal-

THE MOTHER

What, so you could skim more money from the top? No, I dare say not! Those Carmacks are vile people, the dirt underneath our shoe. I would know, I buy my coke from them.

MEGAN

This isn’t fair! I’m a CEO of the company! I *deserve* to make more money! You keep it all to yourself! I only get paid half a million dollars a year! I should make *at least a million!*

SAMANTHA

I only make minimum wage.

MEGAN

[leans closer to the Mother] You are a horrible mother! I swear you’re only a husk of a woman who shits on others to empower yourself! You miserable, old, pathetic-

[the Mother grabs the pillow behind her and grabs Megan to suffocate her. She puts the pillow over her head, and kills Megan.]

SAMANTHA

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH

THE MOTHER

Quiet you, or you’re next.

SAMANTHA

B-B-B BUT MA

THE MOTHER

What? Do you have something to say?

SAMANTHA

How could you kill Megan like that? [exaggerated crying ensues]

THE MOTHER

Easy. The pillow makes it hard for her to breath. As for *why* I did it, she had made one too many mistakes.

SAMANTHA

Like, steal from the company?

THE MOTHER

Yes precisely, and the Carmack deal. That was unacceptable. I was going to fire her and disavow her from the family, but once I caught wind of that operation, I knew she was too far gone.

SAMANTHA

But I tried to kill you! How can you kill her but not me?!

THE MOTHER

I had anticipated your every move. I knew that our company ownership was too opportune to pass up to the likes of someone like you. You had the GUTS to try and claim what’s rightfully yours. Who do you think left the safe open?

SAMANTHA

You wanted me to go and get what I wanted?

THE MOTHER

Yes, my child. I only wanted to see you succeed in this world. I love all my children equally!

[The Mother and Samantha both stare at Megan’s corpse.]

I love *you*, my child. I bequeath the inheritance of my company solely to you, my daughter. You have shown the ambition to do what must be done, and you have shown good judgement.

SAMANTHA

T-Thanks?

THE MOTHER

You won’t be a custodian anymore now. Now, you will serve as my understudy, as I will show you the knowledge to succeed me.

SAMANTHA

I’m so lost…

THE MOTHER

Do not fret my child. I shall guide you.

SAMANTHA

Before we go, I need one thing.

THE MOTHER

What would that be, my dear?

SAMANTHA

Can I have a turtle?

END