

SUTHERBEE'S BY THE SEA

by

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(Opening Scenes of Pilot Episode)

SUTHERBEE'S BY THE SEA

Teaser

FADE IN:

EXT. BOONBAY HARBOR, MAINE - MAY, EARLY DAWN

Establishing shot of the small, picturesque seaport town.

Big, expensive summer homes line the coastline and modest houses scatter the landscape.

Booncrest, an exclusive country club resort, spans from the seashore to the mountains.

Main Street looks like a Norman Rockwell painting with lots of country shops, Victorian style bed and breakfasts, and seafood restaurants.

EXT. BOONBAY HARBOR BOAT DOCK

Fishermen get their boats ready for the day.

THOMAS SUTHERBEE, an overweight, weathered man in his sixties who still has a twinkle in his eye, hauls a large lobster trap toward the Lady Sutherbee with difficulty. He lets out a grunt as he lifts it up onto the edge of the boat and pushes it onto the deck. It falls with a bang.

STEPHEN SMITH, an attractive, rugged man in his early twenties, rushes out from the bridge.

STEPHEN

Tom-- you know I was comin' back
for the rest.

Stephen picks the trap up easily and throws it toward the bow.

THOMAS

I figured lifting just one wouldn't
kill me.

STEPHEN

Doc said you could only come back
if you let me do all the heavy
lifting.

THOMAS

And you will--

He holds out his pudgy hand.

THOMAS
Now help me aboard.

Stephen does. Thomas takes a good, deep breath of sea air.

THOMAS
I never thought I'd say this, but I
sure missed the smell of dead fish.

He looks out at the sea lovingly.

THOMAS
There's nothing better than this,
Stephen.

A gruff voice comes from below the deck.

HOWIE (O.S.)
I can think of somethin'...

HOWIE O'LEARY, a scruffy man in his fifties, approaches them.

HOWIE
A toast to your return, capt'n!

He takes a swig out of a rusty flask. Nothing comes out.

HOWIE
Guess I already did that while you
was laid up.

THOMAS
That's okay Howie, I came prepared.

Thomas hands Howie a fifth of whiskey. Howie fills his flask and swigs from it, then realizes he forgot about them.

HOWIE
Sorry...

He offers Thomas and Stephen the rusty flask.

HOWIE
Want some?

THOMAS
No, you just keep it all for
yourself. I figure it's the least
I owe you for helping Stephen out
while I was laid up all this time.

STEPHEN
 (mutters)
 The very least.

HOWIE
 I heard that!

Stephen ignores him as he goes on with his work.

HANNAH (O.S.)
 Thomas-- wait! You forgot your
 lunch!

The men look up the dock.

HANNAH SUTHERBEE, a cultured, attractive, and fit woman in her early fifties, walks briskly toward them with a large bag. Sutherbee's by the Sea, a nice seafood restaurant, sits at the end of the dock in the b.g.

Howie quickly goes to the side of the boat to take the bag. It's obvious he has a big crush on this woman.

HOWIE
 Thank you kindly, Hannah. Your
 cookin' is always a delight after a
 hard mornin' of workin'.

STEPHEN
 (mutters)
 How would you know?

HANNAH
 Well you just make sure Thomas eats
 the special delights I made for
 him--
 (whispers)
 And don't let him sneak any of your
 whiskey. Lord knows after what his
 heart's been through it can't take
 any more of that stuff.

Thomas walks over to them, slowly.

THOMAS
 For God sake's Hannah! It's not
 like I can't hear what you're
 tellin' him. I'm right here you
 know.

HANNAH

And that's just where I want to keep you. Stephen, you're in charge of his pills.

STEPHEN

I know.

THOMAS

(mutters)

I should have just stayed in bed.

HANNAH

That's what Doc and I said, but you couldn't--

THOMAS

Live without you watching over me!

Thomas leans over the side and kisses her cheek. She tries to stay stern, but can't. She touches his arm, lovingly.

HANNAH

Be careful.

THOMAS

I will.

Thomas squeezes her hand, then walks to the bridge. He turns the boat on. It stutters a bit before kicking in. Stephen and Howie tie off from the dock. Thomas steers them out to sea as he waves to Hannah.

Hannah watches him fondly.

HANNAH

(whispers)

I guess you were right about needing the sea air back in those lungs to really feel alive... but you're still an old fool!

She walks back up the dock, smiling all the way up to the restaurant's large, wraparound porch.

STEPHEN (O.S.)

(yells)

Hannah! Quick! Get Doc Warden!

Hannah looks back towards the sea with concern.

HANNAH

Thomas! No!

She runs into the restaurant.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER.

ACT ONE

INT. DOWNTOWN OFFICE IN CHICAGO - LATER THAT DAY

A man's voice is heard while we scan the inside of a well-furnished office.

ANDREW (O.S.)

Your last quarter records show a significant increase in the amount of doctor invoices filed per policy holder...

On a table sits a scale model of the Lady Sutherbee with two framed pictures beside it. One is of three children; two brothers, twelve and seven, and their three-year-old sister, all fishing off the side of the Lady Sutherbee. The other is a portrait of Hannah and Thomas.

On the big cherry wood desk is a framed print of a beautiful young woman, CHLOE SUTHERBEE, in her wedding gown, and another picture of an eight-year-old boy, THOMAS, and his five-year-old sister, ANNA.

ANDREW SUTHERBEE, the twelve-year-old from the fishing photo who's now a distinguished man in his mid-thirties, sits behind the desk. A Japanese BUSINESSMAN sits in front of him.

BUSINESSMAN

What should I do? Make it against company policy to get sick?

ANDREW

Of course not, but--

His phone buzzes. He ignores it.

ANDREW

You could build a fitness center on site that would--

It buzzes again. He gestures for the man to wait while he hits the speaker button.

ANDREW

(continuing; into speaker)
Bill, I asked you hold all my calls.

BILL (V.O.)

I know Mr. Sutherbee, but it's your mother... she said it's urgent.

Andrew looks concerned.

INT. COMMUNITY THEATRE, SAN FRANCISCO - MOMENTS LATER

ERIC SUTHERBEE, the seven-year-old boy from the fishing photo who's now a very handsome and stylishly dressed man in his late twenties, stands on stage with a dozen eight-year-olds dressed like characters from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

He takes a half-eaten apple out of Snow White's hand while she bounces up and down.

ERIC

The apple had poison in it, not sugar!

SNOW WHITE

I know-- but I don't want to lay down. I'm not sleepy.

ERIC

You don't have to really be sleepy, you just have to pretend to be.

She stomps her foot.

SNOW WHITE

NO!

She continues to bounce. The dwarfs giggle. SCOTT PATTERSON, a fit, gay, African-American man in his early twenties, approaches Eric.

ERIC

Would you like to play Snow White this weekend?

SCOTT

I'd love to...
(whispers)
But I don't do drag anymore.

ERIC

Well we've got to find someone who can without an attitude or else this production is gonna be worse than the last one.

SCOTT

Oh God no-- believe me, nothing could ever become worse than that again!

Off Eric's look.

SCOTT
 Except this... our present
 financier is on line one.

ERIC
 Great. We haven't even opened and
 he already wants to know what he's
 grossed.

He points to the still-bouncing Snow White.

ERIC
 (continuing; whispers)
 Try and get some emotion other than
bitchy out of her.

Scott forces out a smile.

Eric walks up the aisle towards the lobby.

INT. BOX OFFICE

Several show posters advertising classic plays and musicals
 from theatres in New York and Chicago line the walls of the
 cluttered office. All say "Directed by Eric Sutherbee."

Eric enters and searches for the phone under a pile of loose
 costume pieces. He gets stabbed by a pin.

ERIC
 Ow!

He grabs a piece of cloth to wrap around his finger as it
 bleeds and finds the phone under it. He picks it up.

ERIC
 (continuing; into phone)
 Hey Andrew, how's it going?

INT. LUXURY TOWNCAR

Andrew sits in the back of a towncar with a DRIVER dressed in
 a business suit driving. He's clearly still in business
 mode, or just plain disbelief.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
 This isn't a social call, Eric...
 and I don't really know how to say
 this either--

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
Then just spit it out cause I have
a room full of eight-year-olds who
are about to become animals if I
leave them alone much longer--

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Eric, Dad died.

INT. BOX OFFICE

The cloth drops from Eric's finger.

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
What? Oh my God-- how? What
happened?

INTERCUT.

Andrew tries not to choke up.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
He had another heart attack this
morning, on the boat.

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
He went back out already? I
thought he was supposed to stay in
bed another two weeks.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Yeah, well, you know how well he
listens to doctors... and Mom.

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
How is she?

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Not good. She's acting like he's
just taking a nap.

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
I wish he were.

A beat.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Look, Julie's trying to make all
the arrangements and I want to be
able to help her, so Chloe and the
kids and I are taking the next
flight out of O'Hare. Can you make
it home by tonight?

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
Yeah, sure.

The towncar comes to a stop in front of a large brownstone home. There's an uneasy silence between them.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Do you need any money?

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
No-- thanks for the offer, but I
can manage.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
Eric, this is no time to be proud.
Mom needs us--

ERIC (INTO PHONE)
I said I can handle it, okay? I
just have to tell Scott to cover
the show over the weekend and then
I'll be out of here...

He looks toward the stage. The kids have Scott tied up to a tree on the set.

ERIC (CONT'D, INTO PHONE)
As soon as possible.

The door of the towncar opens.

ANDREW (INTO CELL PHONE)
The sooner the better.

Eric hangs up, stares blankly ahead, and cries.

END OF SAMPLE PAGES