

WITH BELLS ON

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BOB'S TOWING GARAGE, ENCINO, CA - AFTERNOON

Dozens of broken down, smashed-up cars sit in front of a small, dirty building. A faded, wooden sign

READS: BOB'S TOWING GARAGE, OPEN 24 HOURS

An old, beat-up Gremlin pulls into the parking lot next to the only nice vehicle in the lot-- a Harley Davison motorcycle. The car door opens, HITTING it.

BOB, 50's, short and heavy-set with a bad comb-over, tries to get out of his low-riding seat while balancing a large coffee and a box of half-eaten donuts in one hand.

INT. BOB'S TOWING GARAGE

DYLAN TAYLOR, 30, fit and ruggedly attractive, stands at an old, very out-dated desktop computer along the back wall of the cluttered shop. He nervously looks over his shoulder, then back at the monitor.

INSERT BEAT-UP, OUT-DATED COMPUTER SCREEN

READS: "No, JUST lace... what are you wearing today?-)"

Dylan looks down at his grease-covered clothes and types, "My same old--"

The person he's writing to finishes the sentence with the words: "jeans and t-shirt" before he can type it.

Dylan grins. He types: "Yeah. How'd you know?"

The person types: "You've worn the same thing ever since we started doing this 355 days ago."

Dylan types back: "Sorry, tomorrow I promise I'll wear the lace..."

The person types: "I wish I could see you in it."

Dylan types back: "I wish I could see you in anything."

The word "Really?" FLASHES over and over until Dylan types back: "Yeah!!!"

The front door OPENS, startling him. Dylan sees Bob approaching. He quickly looks back at the computer screen.

It READS: "Then why don't you come out here for Christmas?"

Dylan types back: "I'd love to, but how? You know I don't like to fly--"

The person interrupts him with: "Then drive out on your bike."

Dylan types back: "Isn't there snow out there now?"

The person answers: "Yes, but I'm sure we can find a way to melt it once you get here.-)"

Dylan grins as Bob comes up behind him.

BOB

DYLAN! Haven't you found what you want on that thing yet?

DYLAN

Yes, I think I have.

Dylan stands in front of the screen.

BOB

Well then order it and get off!
These cars don't fix themselves!

DYLAN

Okay, just a second.

He types: "I'll be there by Christmas Eve. I promise."

The other person types back: "Great, here's where I'll be waiting... 2441 W. Pine Street, York, Maine... with bells on, and not much else... -)"

Dylan grins as he hits PRINT. The computer's printer spits out the address. Dylan grabs it quickly.

DYLAN

(to Bob)
Got it. See?

Bob pushes him out of the way and looks at the screen.

It shows a screen-saver of a BEAUTIFUL GIRL sitting on top of a sports car. Bob looks at Dylan suspiciously.

BOB

I can only see that you're not gonna be worth the paper that's printed on if you don't finish up that Honda by five!

Dylan looks over at a gutted car with its engine parts scattered all over the floor. He looks at a wall clock.

READS: 3:45 PM

Dylan looks at the address in his hand, back at the parts on the floor, then towards Bob, who's sitting at the computer screen down-loading PORN as he eats two jelly donuts together like a sandwich.

DYLAN

I don't think I'll be able to do that.

Bob's eyes are glued to a picture of TWO SEXY WOMEN spraying each other with a hose.

BOB

Why's that?

DYLAN

'Cause I quit!

Bob turns toward him, shocked.

BOB

What? You can't do that!

DYLAN

I just did.

BOB

But why now? I mean, can't it wait until after the holidays-- you know how much the "Mrs." likes having me around this time of year.

He takes another bite of his donut sandwich. Jelly drips onto his chin. He uses his tongue to lick it off. Dylan stays firm.

DYLAN

Well for once in my life *I* want to enjoy a holiday instead of working on one, and that's just what I'm gonna do this Christmas!

Bob chuckles condescendingly.

BOB

How are you gonna enjoy Christmas? You've got no family to speak of to spend it with--

Dylan waves the piece of paper at him.

DYLAN

I have a girlfriend in Maine who's waiting to spend it with me, with bells on!

BOB

Maine? Where the heck's that?

He looks up at a map of the San Fernando Valley on the wall.

DYLAN

(annoyed)

It's outside the valley!

BOB

Oh.

He looks at another map of the Los Angeles area. Dylan grabs his coat and leaves.

INT. UPSCALE OFFICE BUILDING, BRENTWOOD, CA

A classic holiday song PLAYS while professional BUSINESS TYPES mingle around a Christmas tree in the stylish lobby.

"FAIRBANKS LAW" is engraved on the wall. The festive afternoon gathering is coming to an end...

A male HINDU OFFICE WORKER, 30's, passes SONIA, 20's, one of his pretty Hispanic co-workers, a flute of champagne. She takes a sip as she watches people leave. She looks down the hall, worried. He notices.

HINDU OFFICE WORKER

Did you think she would actually stop working long enough to attend this little get together?

Sonia sighs.

SONIA

She has to at some point-- I told her it was mostly in their honor.

She goes under a wedding banner which

READS: GOOD LUCK AMANDA & TAD!

And walks down a long hallway.

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE

AMANDA FAIRBANKS, 30, attractive, intelligent, and stylish, places some legal papers in front of CHIP MURRAY, a bratty, spoiled, 10-year-old boy.

AMANDA

Do you agree to these terms?

CHIP

Do I have any other options?

AMANDA

Not until you turn eighteen.

He skims through the papers as his wimpy-looking PARENTS, 40's, watch nervously.

After a purposely well-drawn-out moment of suspense, he signs the bottom of the last one, reluctantly. His parents look relieved.

AMANDA

Good. Well then, Mr. and Mrs. Murray, you're entitled to live in the house with your son under the "presumed" conditions that you're still his legal guardians until his eighteenth birthday. But after that he has the right to terminate your lease whenever he chooses to do so, just like any other landlord.

They all stand. Chip heads for the door, annoyed.

MRS. MURRAY

Thank you. And we're sorry it had to come down to this, but the house was originally my mother's before he talked her into letting his studio buy it--

Chip stops at the doorway, interrupting her.

CHIP

Could you spare her the family history, Mom? She knows this was strictly a business dispute-- not a personal one, right hotlegs?

Amanda gives him a dirty look.

AMANDA

Right. But if you keep that up I'll be suing you in court about a personal one soon.

He smiles to his father, not getting what she really meant.

CHIP

See? I told you she'd want to see me again!

Amanda lets it go as his parents follow him out the door.

Amanda's phone RINGS. She puts on a cordless phone headset.

AMANDA

(into phone)

Fairbanks Law--

INT. STYLISH DEN, BOSTON, MA

MR. FAIRBANKS, 60's, a distinguished but very controlling type, sits in a ridiculously high-backed, winged arm chair speaking into a phone as a MAID, 40's, makes him a drink.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone)

Did you pack last year's expense accounts?

INTERCUT.

AMANDA

(into phone, annoyed)

Yes, and the year before's. Don't worry Dad, I have everything under control...

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone, sarcastic)

I'm sure you do, just like when you thought you had everything under control the first time you went away to prep camp and then realized you were "supposed" to pack underwear.

AMANDA

(into phone)

I was only six! I'd like to think I've gotten more responsible in the last twenty-four years.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone)

I'd like to think so too, but with you abruptly deciding to resign from a firm you started--

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE

Amanda picks up a framed picture of her and her father standing in front of an office building in Boston. "FAIRBANKS LAW" is engraved on the bricks above them.

AMANDA

(into phone, interrupting)

That we started Dad, and be fair-- you knew from the start I didn't want to stay out here once I got it going.

She puts the picture in a box along with the rest of her office belongings.

INT. STYLISH DEN

A BUTLER lights a fine cigar, then hands it to Mr. Fairbanks.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone)

Well I also didn't think it would do so well so soon-- I mean, who knew there'd be so many adolescents out there in need of their own counselors?

INTERCUT.

AMANDA

(into phone, sarcastic)

And most who need it in more ways than we could ever provide.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone, missing her point)

Well of course not if you're not going to be out there to oversee generating them as clients!

AMANDA

(into phone)

Uncle William is perfectly capable of doing just as good a job as I have--

MR. FAIRBANKS
(into phone)
If he stays sober.

AMANDA
(into phone)
I don't think he'd let you down.

MR. FAIRBANKS
(into phone)
Like you're doing?

Amanda winces-- he hit her last nerve on this topic.

AMANDA
(into phone, purposely
changing the topic)
So-- what does Nana want for her
birthday?

MR. FAIRBANKS
(into phone)
Only that she gets to spend some
quality time with her only
granddaughter before she dies.

AMANDA
(into phone)
Dad, I told you-- I'll be there.

MR. FAIRBANKS
(into phone)
You'd better be. You wouldn't want
to have to live with the guilt of
not getting the chance to say
good-bye when you were warned she
could go at any minute.

AMANDA
(into phone)
Well tell her Tad and I are leaving
first thing in the morning to make
sure we're there in plenty of time
for the big party.

MR. FAIRBANKS
(into phone, not pleased)
Oh. *He's* still coming?

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE

Amanda looks at the beautiful diamond engagement ring on her
finger.

AMANDA
 (into phone)
 Yes, and remember, you promised to
 give him a chance.

INT. STYLISH DEN

Mr. Fairbanks has the Butler crush his cigar out in a crystal
 ashtray.

MR. FAIRBANKS
 (into phone)
 Okay, but I can't control the rest
 of the family.

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE

There's a KNOCK on the door.

AMANDA
 (into phone)
 Hold on.
 (toward door)
 Come in!

Sonia enters.

SONIA
 People are beginning to think you
 left without saying good-bye.

AMANDA
 (suddenly remembers)
 Oh my God-- the party!
 (into phone)
 Sorry Dad, I've gotta go. I'm
 missing your company's Christmas
 party--

INTERCUT.

MR. FAIRBANKS
 (into phone)
 Our company's, dear.

Amanda smiles.

AMANDA
 (into phone, happily)
 Not anymore.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone)

Will you please just promise to think about going back? I mean, what are you going to do if your not running our law firm in L.A.?

Sonia taps her watch. Amanda nods.

AMANDA

(into phone)

I don't know, but I promise we'll figure it out next week--

INT. STYLISH DEN

A fashionably dressed MRS. FAIRBANKS, 60's, has the Maid get Mr. Fairbanks' attention for her.

MR. FAIRBANKS

(into phone)

Wait-- your mother wants to know if you got your "trip tix."

INT. AMANDA'S OFFICE

Amanda looks at an overnight FedEx package on her desk showing contents from the American Auto Association.

AMANDA

(into phone)

Yes, and have Tina thank her for me-

Sonia motions for her to hurry up.

AMANDA

(into phone)

I really have to go. Bye.

Amanda takes off the head set and looks at Sonia appreciatively.

AMANDA

I swear I don't know what I'm gonna do without you to keep my head on straight. Are you sure you don't want to move to Boston?

Sonia opens the door as they exit.

SONIA

Only if your father lets me start up my own firm.

HALLWAY

They walk briskly down the corridor.

AMANDA

At least it would be by your choice
to be controlled like one of his
puppets then-- oh no!

She stops short at a reception area with openings to two
other hallways.

SONIA

What?

AMANDA

The Christmas bonuses!

SONIA

Tad said he'd take care of them for
you.

Amanda smiles fondly.

AMANDA

I should have known. He just loves
playing Santa this time of year!

She hurries down one of the other hallways.

INT. TAD'S OFFICE

TAD GOLDEN, 30's, a handsome business-type, makes-out in his
office with SARA, 20's, his sexy Asian receptionist. Tad
wears a Santa hat.

SARA

(teases)
Oh, *Santa!*

END OF SAMPLE PAGES