

Samantha

1904

Lost and Found



New York City

CHAPTER 1



New York City! Just the name was magic! As a special treat for her tenth birthday, Samantha Parkington and her grandmother, whom she called Grandmary, had taken the train from Mount Bedford to New York City. Now they were riding along the busy city streets from Grand Central Station to Uncle Gard and Aunt Cornelia's new house. Samantha leaned forward to peek out the window of the horse-drawn cab. She held on to her hat and twisted her head around, trying to see to the tops of the buildings. Everything in New York was so big! There were so many people hurrying along the sidewalks. In New York it always seemed as if something exciting was about to happen.



"I can't wait to see Agnes and Agatha," Samantha said to Grandmary. The twins were Cornelia's younger sisters. Now that Uncle Gard and Cornelia were married, Agnes and Agatha were Samantha's newest friends and favorite relatives. "They're so much fun."

"They are happy, lively girls," agreed Grandmary.

“Though they can get carried away with their ideas.”

Samantha understood what Grandmary meant about Agnes and Agatha. Sometimes their ideas were as tangled as their bouncy red curls. “They’re always thinking up new ways to do things,” Samantha went on.

“Yes,” said Grandmary. “But I’m afraid they don’t always think very carefully. Besides, they don’t realize that many times the old ways are still the best ways.”

Suddenly, the cab jerked to a stop. Grandmary and Samantha looked out the window. They were stopped at the edge of a big park. The sidewalk was so crowded that people spilled out into the street.

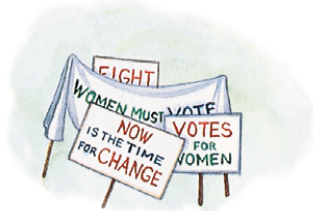
Samantha saw some women hanging large banners across the entrance to the park. One banner said “WOMEN, FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE.”

Another banner said “NOW IS THE TIME FOR CHANGE.”

“We’ll have to go another way, ma’am,” the cab driver called down to Grandmary. “These ladies seem to be blocking traffic all around Madison Square Park.”

“Very well,” Grandmary answered, sitting back. She didn’t seem to want to look at what was going on.

But Samantha pressed her nose against the window of the cab and stared. She was fascinated. “What’s happening here?” she asked Grandmary.



“Well, it appears that a group of women is having a meeting in that park,” Grandmary replied.

“Who are they?” Samantha asked.

“They’re suffragists,” Grandmary answered. “They think women should be able to vote, so they gather and make a ruckus about changing the laws.” She sat up very straight. “It’s all just newfangled notions.”

The cab turned down a quieter street and Samantha sat back. She was still very curious about the meeting in the park, but she could tell by the look on Grandmary’s face that she should not ask any more questions about it.

They rode in silence until the cab stopped in front of Uncle Gard and Aunt Cornelia’s tall, narrow brownstone house. Samantha had just hopped out onto the sidewalk when she heard voices shouting, “Samantha! Samantha!” She looked up. Agnes and Agatha were leaning out of a window high above her, waving wildly. Agnes held up Cornelia’s little, lively dog, Jip, and waved his paw. Jip barked and wriggled with joy.

“Hello!” Samantha called. She skipped and waved, already swept away by the twins’ high spirits.

“We’ll be right down!” Agatha yelled. Then she and Agnes and Jip disappeared from the window.

Cornelia smiled as she came down the front steps to greet Samantha and Grandmary. “Welcome!” she said.

Just then the twins and Jip came flying out the door and down the steps. "Hurray! You're here!" they said as they hugged Samantha.

Aunt Cornelia laughed. "Come in, come in," she said. "As you can see, we're all very glad you're here."

The twins led Samantha into the dark, cool house. Uncle Gard was waiting just inside the doorway. He blinked at Samantha and said, "There you are, Sam! I've been looking for you all week long. I can't seem to find anything in this new house."

"Do you think you could help us find some lunch?" asked Aunt Cornelia.

"Certainly," said Uncle Gard, kissing the tip of her nose. "When it comes to finding food, I never have any trouble."

"Come on, Samantha!" said Agnes and Agatha. They pulled her into the dining room and made her sit between them. Then, both at once, they began showering her with questions. "How was your train ride? Do you want to go to the park after lunch? How do you like New York City?"

"Girls!" Aunt Cornelia scolded gently as the maid began to pass the food. "You'll put Samantha in a spin with all your questions! There will be plenty of time for chatter later. I haven't even had a chance to ask Grandmary where she plans to shop today."

"I'll shop at O'Neill's, of course," replied Grandmary. "I never go any farther."

"There's a fine new shop on Fifth Avenue that's closer than O'Neill's," said Uncle Gard. "What was the name of that store, Cornelia?"

Grandmary patted his arm and smiled. "Don't trouble yourself to remember, Gardner," she said. "I shall go to O'Neill's. I've shopped there for more than thirty years. I'm too old to change my ways now."

"O'Neill's is near Madison Square Park," said Aunt Cornelia slowly. "That area may be quite crowded today. There's a meeting in the park."

"I know," said Grandmary. "We passed it on our way from the station. Those suffragists were already blocking traffic." She shook her head. "In my opinion, ladies should not gather in public places. *Especially* not to carry on about this voting nonsense."

"Nonsense?" Aunt Cornelia asked. Her voice rose ever so slightly.

"Voting is not a lady's concern," said Grandmary. It never has been. I see no reason to change things now. Those suffragists are making spectacles of themselves."

Samantha saw Agnes and Agatha look at each other with raised eyebrows and then quickly look down into their soup bowls.

Aunt Cornelia opened her mouth to say something and then shut it again.

Samantha was bursting with curiosity. “But why—?” she began to ask.

“Well, well, well,” interrupted Uncle Gard. “Well, well. The strangest thing happened to me as I was walking home from work the other day. A man came up to me and said, ‘Do you know any girls who just turned ten years old?’ And I said, ‘Why, yes, in fact I do know one.’ And he said, ‘Would you give her this large box? There’s something inside she might like.’ So I brought the box home. It’s out in the hall. Perhaps you’ll open it, Sam, and show us what’s inside.”

Samantha forgot all about her questions. She and the twins ran from the table and opened the dining room door. Jip was waiting right outside. He barked and jumped as the twins helped Samantha tear off the wrapping paper and open the box. Inside was a pram—the prettiest doll carriage Samantha had ever seen. It was deep red with shiny brass wheels. “Jiminy!” Samantha whispered. “It’s beautiful.” She ran to give Uncle Gard a big hug. “Thank you, Uncle Gard. Thank you very much!” She knew perfectly well the doll carriage was from Uncle Gard and no one else.

Uncle Gard winked. “Happy Sam Day, Bertha,” he said. “Oops! I mean, happy birthday, Samantha!”

“Let’s take the pram to Gramercy Park right now,” suggested Agnes, who was as excited as Samantha.

“That *would* be fun,” Samantha said. “May we go?”

“Certainly,” said Uncle Gard.

“Can Jip come, too?” asked Agatha. “You know how he loves the park.”

“No, I don’t think that is a good idea,” said Aunt Cornelia. “He might run away from you.”

“Oh, no, nothing like that will happen,” said Agatha quickly. “Anyway, the park has a fence all around it.”

“Please, please, please?” begged Agnes.

Aunt Cornelia thought for a moment.



"We'll only be across the street in the park," wheedled Agatha.

"And you won't go any farther than that?" asked Aunt Cornelia.

"No!" the twins promised together.

"Will you keep Jip on his leash?"

"Yes!" shouted the girls.

"Promise?"

"Absolutely!" they cried.

"Well, all right," Cornelia finally agreed. "But—"

"Hurray!" the twins interrupted. Jip began yipping in excitement.

"Please be calm for just a minute," Aunt Cornelia said seriously. "I'm going to a meeting, but I'll be back at three thirty. When I get back, we'll walk to the ice cream parlor to meet Grandmary. Don't forget."

"And don't forget to behave like young ladies," added Grandmary.

"And don't forget the rule about keeping Jip on the leash," repeated Aunt Cornelia.

"And don't forget to have a good time," said Uncle Gard, shaking his finger at them.

"We won't!" said the girls. And Jip barked to show that he agreed.

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