

THE CHOICE

24-DE04-W21

LOGLINE SUMMARY OF THE STORY

An budding actress has just booked the acting job of a lifetime, which will lead to more money and opportunities, but how much of her morals will she have to give up in the process.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY SKYLINE BACKDROP - DAY

Tons of money floating around slowly from the sky.

MALE V.O.

Money has a perplexing affect on
the human conscious. It can bring
out the light or darkness in
people.

Close up of the back of one of the Dollars.

MALE V.O. (CONT'D)

Take the American Dollar for
instance. On the back on the
dollar we see "In God We Trust"

Begin Montage: Array of news articles about people committing
crimes, pictures of rich people, pictures of people living on
the street.

MALE V.O. (CONT'D)

But, *Can God Trust in Us?*
Can someone stay in the light of
Christ when money is involved?

INT. CASTING OFFICE-DAY

EMMA, a biracial woman around 25 with long curly hair and a
bohemian look, is walking inside of casting room for a
popular Network show audition.

3 CASTING DIRECTORS sit behind a long table in a small room.

FEMALE CD 1

You must be Emma.

Emma nods.

FEMALE CD 1 (CONT'D)

Please stand over there on the X.

Emma puts her coat and purse on the table in the back, picks
up a script, and stands on the X.

FEMALE CD 2

Okay, you are reading Samantha's
part. Lets start from when Marc
says, "Are you leaving me?"

EMMA.

We just don't work. I am a free spirit that follows the wind. You keep trying to catch me so you can put me in a cage. But, my soul will die like that. My freedom is on the other side of that door and I can't wait to find it again. Bye Marc.

The casting directors glance at each other and nod approvingly. Emma misses their action.

FEMALE CD 2

Thanks. We'll be in touch.

Emma halfway smiles then grabs her stuff walks out of the office. She has heard this before from casting directors.

INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Emma sits looking at her laptop and scrolling through all of her failed auditions. Then, an envelope is slipped under her door. It reads EVICTION NOTICE in red large print. She sighs.

EMMA

Not again.

Emma pulls up her bank account on her computer. There's only \$15 in it. Emma calls her sister, CHRISTINE, a conservative, successful lawyer around 30 who runs a small law firm.

INT. CHRISTINE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Christine is in her office over going over paperwork. Her office is average. She picks up the phone and sees Emma is calling.

CHRISTINE

What's wrong this time, Em?

EMMA

Why does something have to be wrong? I could just be calling to say hi.

CHRISTINE

Nice try. I'm an attorney, remember?

EMMA
I'm evicted...

CHRISTINE
You can come stay with me until you get back up on your feet. But, you are going to need to get a real job. I might have something at my firm. Oh wait there might be something at my church you could do.

EMMA
Thanks. It won't be long. I just had a audition today.

CHRISTINE
A Real Job! Em!

Christine slams the phone on the table.

INT. EMMA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Emma looks at her phone, then her vision board--pictures of movie stars, studios, etc. Her eyes get blurry as the vision board seems to be getting farther and farther away. She grabs a suitcase to start packing but drops it on the floor as she slumps down on the bed.

EMMA
(mumbles)
Maybe I should.

Emma falls asleep. Time passes. She is awakened by her phone. Her AGENT, SALLY, older woman in her 50's is on the phone.

EMMA (CONT'D)
Hello?

AGENT
Emma! YOU GOT IT!

EMMA
Got what?

AGENT
The Lead, silly. You got the Lead in the movie, Adorable Me. I need you to come to my office first thing tomorrow and we will go over your contract.

Emma jumps. Looks at her vision board. She sees it clearly this time.

EMMA
 Finally. Thank you God! I will
 make your proud. Promise!

INT. STUDIO- MORNING - TWO WEEKS LATER

Emma is shown to her dressing room by an ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, a young man early to late 20's dressed in jeans and a T-Shirt. He has a clipboard in his arms. She pauses when she sees the star and her name on the door. Production staff are running about. Wardrobe racks are moving back and forth with urgency.

A.D.
 This one's yours. Your script and
 wardrobe are already inside. Hair
 and make up will be in shortly. 30
 minutes to set time.

Emma smiles and enters her dressing room but stops to take a selfie first. She opens the door slowly and takes everything in until she see's something that resembles a short tight dress with the sides cut out.

EMMA.
 This must be a mistake. Samantha is
 earthy. She would not wear this.

Emma takes the dress to wardrobe.

EMMA
 Ugh. I think someone put my trailer
 by mistake.

WORDROBE PERSON
 Emma right. You are the Samantha,
 right. Nope no mistake.

Confused. Emma walks to her trailer.

EMMA
 I can't wear this!

WORDROBE PERSON
 Sorry, this what the production
 company sent over for you.

WORDROBE PERSON, A young lady around 23, hands Emma a photo of a woman labeled as her Character wearing the dress.

WORDROBE PERSON (CONT'D)

If you have an issue, maybe you should call your agent or director.

Emma walks back to her dressing room and calls her Agent.

AGENT'S V.O

Emma?

EMMA

Hey, they gave me this scantily clad outfit. I can't do this.

AGENT'S V.O

Emma, productions make changes all the time. Just wear the dress. You want the money, right?

EMMA

Yeah, but....

AGENT'S V.O

Sorry, I have an appointment. Just do what they say and it will be alright.

Agent hangs up.

Emma dressed in the very short dress stares at herself in the mirror.

EMMA

This is not me.

Emma comes out of her dressing room and timidly walks to set past the craft services table. A man named HENRY, older African American male sits behind the table. He wears a cross. His T-Shirt reads, "God First!" There is a Bible in open front of him.

HENRY

Keep your head high young lady. God is by your side if you let him in.

Emma thinks is a sign from God that everything will work out. She straightens up and walks to set.

MALE V.O.

And so it begins. Emma's morals start slipping.

Time Passes. Emma's wardrobe is more and more provocative.

MONTAGE: INT. TV STUDIO - DAY

Emma comes out of her Trailer in daisy dukes shorts and high heels and a mid drift top.

Emma comes out of her Trailer with a Beyonce type body suit.

Emma comes out of her Trailer with a low cut mini dress and thigh high boots. She is becoming more and more comfortable with the outfits.

END MONTAGE

INT. CHRISTINE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Christine is at the counter drinking coffee with her robe on. Her daughter, Johanna, 5 yr old with curly hair is finishing her cereal at the table.

The front door opens. Emma comes in dressed in a skimpy outfit and starts to walk into the kitchen.

Christine sets her coffee down and waves her off. Christine's HUSBAND, ALAN, (30's, in a suit, unassuming but good looking}, comes in the kitchen through a back way. He grabs his keys, looks up and see's Emma standing in the other kitchen doorway. He knows Christiane is upset, so he picks Johanna up and rushes to get her out of there

ALAN

Come on squirt. Time for School

Alan goes out the back way with Johanna. Feeling it is safe to talk now. Emma walks towards Christine and stands by the island on the opposite side of her sister.

EMMA

Christine, I'm sorry. The cast...

CHRISTINE

No!

EMMA

I had to...

CHRISTINE

Nope. You are not going to do this in my house. I agreed to take you in. But, *not* this replica of a Beyonce/Swifty clone. I don't know who you are anymore.

EMMA

I thought you would be happy that I was finally making money.

CHRISTINE

Your morals have gone dark. We are a God fearing household. Mom and Dan must be turning over in their grave.

Christine points at Emma.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You. If you can't get yourself together, you need to leave. Johanna looks up to you and I just can't expose her to this.

EMMA

Fine, I'll be gone by the time you get home tonight. I can afford my own place now.

Christine walks out of the kitchen leaving Emma still standing at the counter.

EXT. EMMA'S TRAILER - NEXT DAY

Emma walks in her dressing and sees a bra and panty hanging on the rack for her next scene. She looks in the mirror and flashes back when she sees her mother for the last time before she died.

Flashback. INT. Emma's Mother's Bedroom - EVENING.

Younger Emma walks slowly in her mother's bedroom. Her FATHER, middle aged distinguished gentleman stands in the doorway and closes the door slowly.

Younger Emma stands by her MOTHER's bed. Her mother is weak and breathless.

MOTHER

Emma, I want to give you something.

Emma's mother tries to get up but is too weak and falls back down.

EMMA

Momma, you're too weak. What do you want me to get.

MOTHER

In my night stand, top drawer,
there is a small box. Take it out.

Emma's mother points to the a night stand by her.

Emma looks at the night stand and gets the box.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Open It.

Emma opens the box and sees it is the cross necklace that her
Grandma gave to her mother. Her mother always kept it with
her but now it was in her hands.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I want you to take that and keep it
close. It always reminded me of
what is important in life. I hope
it does the same to you.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EMMA'S TRAILER - EVENING

Emma stares at herself in the mirror. She is wearing that
cross and she take her hand and holds it gently as a tear
falls from her eye. We can see the Bra and Panty hanging the
background.

EMMA

I would never do anything
to dishonor God the
Father.

Emma storms on set to confront the A.D. with the bra and
panty. The A. D. Is rushing around but when she spots him.
She closes in on him.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I'm not wearing this.

The A.D. is halfway listening to her and what is going on in
his earpiece. It seems someone just gave him new
instructions.

A.D.

No, you're not. The Director
doesn't want both. Just the
panties for this scene.

The A.D. walks off hurriedly.

Emma starts to walk to her Trailer to get her stuff. She passes the Crafty Table. Henry is packing up.

EMMA
Are you leaving?

HENRY
These people do not respect God so
I can't be here.

EMMA
Agreed. I am right behind you!

Emma walks away.

INT. EMMA'S NEW LIVINGROOM - LATE NIGHT

Emma sits in her nicely decorated livingroom staring at her vision board. She decides to take it down. She throws all the pictures in the trash can and breaks the board in half.

The phone rings. Emma slowly picks it and see's it is her Agent. She Answers.

EMMA
Hello.

AGENT
Have you lost your mind.

EMMA
To the contrary. I found it.

AGENT
You have 24 hours to get back on
set or you are Fired!
(beat)
A-lister's can't even get away with
stuff like this. Did you forget
about your contract?

EMMA
I am a Christian first. I almost
lost sight of that. As I child of
God, I know all the money in the
world is not worth me degrading
myself anymore.

AGENT
You will be blacklisted.

EMMA

I am not afraid.

AGENT

Well you should be. They are going want all of that money back. You will be financially ruined.

EMMA

I don't expect you to understand. This is bigger than you know.

AGENT

Oh, I give up!

Hard click off of the phone from the Agent.

Emma walks over to the Mirror and for the first time sees herself the way she was again.

INT. RESTURANT - DAY

Emma sits at a table with her sister, Christine. She is back in regular clothes. Jeans and a T-Shirt.

EMMA

They are probably going to sue me

CHRISTINE

Your sister is also an attorney. God and I have your back.

(beat)

You walked away from all of that money. I am so proud of you Sis.

EMMA

Do you still have that job available?

CHRISTINE

I got you. Maybe you can help some of my more timid attorneys with their Trial skills. You are an actress after all.

Both Sisters giggle then stop and put their hands together and pray.

CHRISTINE

God, please enlighten us on this next journey to stay focus and spread your light in every way we can. We ask this through your son, Jesus.

EMMA

Amen.

EXT. SOME TIME LATER - NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCH - DAY.

Emma stands outside of a church looking at a flyer that reads, "The Treasure of God's Ministry is looking for a director to oversee their Christian Theatre production of the Parables of Christ. All applicants can inquire inside the Church Office." Emma nods, smiles and walks anxiously inside.

INT. EMMA'S NEW EFFICIENCY - WEEKEND DAY

EMMA put us her new Treasure Board. On the board are words, My Treasure Heart. We see all the jobs that she can do to spread the light of Jesus, working at a mission, writing a book on faith, directing a drama ministry at church, and maybe acting in a Christian movie. Emma walks a few steps back still gazing at her new board. She puts her hands on her hips and smiles proudly

CUT TO:

INT. EMMA'S NEW EFFICIENCY - DAY

Emma sits at a table reading the Bible and taking it in.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH AUTORIUM - AFTERNOON

Emma is directing a Christian play rehearsal . She is talking to Four actors.

EMMA

The whole point of this parable is to double the gifts that God gives you so you can spread his light and his word.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPICE - AFTERNOON

Emma holding a the hand of a TERMINALLY ILL PATIENT and praying with him or her.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Emma is reading a Christian children's book to a bunch of students. Her niece, Johanna sits up front smiling at her aunt adoringly.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Emma in church with her Sister and Husband. They are listening to a choir but standing with their hands up in praise. Johanna stands beside Emma looking up at her with pride. A Few pews back, we see Henry.

MALE V.O.

Sometimes God sends an Angel to
watch over you and sometimes guide
you back to the light.

Henry smiles and winks at the camera.

EXT. BUSY CITY STREET. - DAY.

People walking back and forth down the street. Office people, casual people etc.

MALE V.O.

Emma was tempted by the dollar but
find her way back to what really
matters. You could say the heart of
her treasure was moved from
darkness to light!

(beat)

Now getting back to my original
question. In You, Can God Trust?

One person drops money as he is walking. Someone behind him picks it up. The scene freezes.

FADE TO BLACK.

