

FINDING CHRISTMAS

Screenplay by: Donna Douglas Walchle/donnadhere@gmail.com

LOGLINE: A billionaire widower, who's not celebrated Christmas since his wife died, gains immeasurable insights into giving and receiving what money can't buy.

CHARACTER TYPES:

Sam: Harry Connick, Jr.; Tim Mc Graw; Jon Bon Jovi; Garth Brooks; Matthew Broderick;
SSV: Delroy Lindo; Cuba Gooding Jr.; Richard T. Jones; Willie C. Carpenter; BeBe Winans;
Marianna: Elisabeth Shue; Faith Hill; Callie Thorne; Sarah Jessica Parker; Trisha Yearwood;
Diann: Jaci Valesquez, Jennifer Nettles; Lee Anne Larkin; Jennifer Hudson;
Janee: Shonda Wilson; Ce Ce Winans; Jill Scott;
Aunt Ginny: Lynn Cohen; Rita Moreno;

SYNOPSIS:

Several years after his wife's death, Sam Waters, a youthful-looking, mid-fifties, billionaire, finds that he's lost his drive for business, his interest in life and any desire to celebrate Christmas. It was Becca's favorite time of year. Any reminder is too painful. Becca always told Sam that they needed to do much more with their fortune than to live lavishly. She was a joyful and enthusiastic giver all year long. However, at Christmas those efforts got magnified.

Early one morning while visiting Becca's grave, Sam is startled when a man wearing warm winter clothing and a hat with the initials, SSV, approaches him. When Sam inquires what the initials stand for he is taken aback when the friendly stranger discloses that the letters are short for his name, the Still Small Voice. SSV tells Sam that his only job is to guide and direct him and that it is always Sam's choice to embrace or discard any suggestions. Sam resists with unrestrained skepticism and unloads his displeasure in large explosive doses. Unfazed, SSV patiently endures Sam's rejection and outburst until he is willing to listen. After SSV easily overviews the highlights of Sam's entire life so far along with a few hints of what the future may hold if Sam doesn't make some adjustments, Sam elects to hear him out.

SSV suggests that Sam begin reintegrating himself into the land of the living. A good starting place might be championing Becca's life-long mission by taking a walk through town to get a sense of the people and needs in his community. SSV serves as his tour guide and points out a variety of people and situations that could use some attention. Observers are somewhat taken aback when it appears that Sam is talking to himself and gesturing a lot.

SSV also underscores that Sam has completely lost touch with his adult children. Robert is married with two children and lives a life of luxury mostly due to a generous trust fund rather than hard work. His daughter, Callie was dismissed by Sam when she married a pastor whose earning potential didn't meet up to his expectations for his treasured princess. Sam is shocked to learn that Callie and Pastor Jack have a spunky little five-year-old disabled daughter named Megan that Sam has never met.

Marianna, Sam's personal assistant, has always been like a second mom to Callie and was Becca's best friend since they were seven years old. Marianna has never married and although open to it, says that so far, no one has ridden up on a white horse and swept her off of her feet. For the first time since Becca's passing, Sam allows his home to be decorated for Christmas. Marianna coaxes Sam into helping her decorate the big tree in the family room, a tradition that she and Becca enjoyed. Spending this personal time together causes Sam to see her in a way that he never has before. SSV encourages pursuing the possibilities.

When everyone gathers for the much- anticipated Christmas program at church, Sam's family occupies an entire pew. As the service concludes, an answer to the prayers of many in attendance comes walking through the back door of the church. It's nothing short of an absolute Christmas miracle!

On his way back to finding Christmas, Sam rediscovers the things that comprise life at its best and most meaningful. He understands first hand that being rich in life has little to do with money or social status. Although his generosity changes a lot of lives the life most changed is his. It all started with one idea: Love well and pass it on; a reality that for any opened heart changes everything.