

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



**Samoa Sam** by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | July 2017

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by Mike Bozart

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Samantha Wevanski, a 25-year-old, Polynesian-Caucasian, athletically fit, dark-brown-haired, tan-skinned, avid bicyclist, who now just liked to be called Sam, began her Saturday trek on a mostly cloudy, misty yet mild, May morning in 2016. Her starting point was her adoptive Caucasian parents' home on Vance Avenue in the small North Coast community of Samoa (CA, USA). Per her usual semi-weekly regimen, she was wearing no makeup, but still looked patently feminine in her elastane cycling attire.

As Sam passed forlorn Cutten Street on her left and began a short climb up a large sand mound, she thought about the dilapidated storefronts. *Wonder when someone can make a go of it down there. Should I try to open a shop? Call it 'Boutique Nautique'? Just sell ocean-themed souvenirs? No, I'm sure that it would soon end up underwater. Tourists just don't come over to this part of the northern spit that much. Only the fire station seems to do well. That almost sounds like a comedy line. This corner place must have been a thriving garage and fuel station eons ago. A much different time back then. Maybe a tougher time. In so many ways.*

She mounted the rise with ease. Soon Sam was passing by barren sandy terrain where it appeared that structures had been razed. *Still looks the same as when we moved here. [2009] Wonder why everything was scraped off this former dirigible mooring site. Because airship use by the [United States] Navy declined after World War II? Are they planning to sell this parcel? Some great ocean-view real estate. Probably would fetch a pretty penny. Should ask dad about it later. Oh, I'll probably forget.*

Then, just before a bend to the right in the old asphalt road, she glanced at the tall stacks of de-limbed tree trunks in the lumber mill yard. Sam quickly looked back at the pavement, a second before she crossed over some old railroad tracks at a 45-degree angle on her three-speed. *When did I crash on these tracks? Was it 2012? Or, was it that wet morning in 2013? No, it was way back in October of 2011. 2011, 2012, 2013 – all now just quickly-passed-over four-digit numbers, sunk in the quicksand of the past. A whole year of human doings – and undoings [sic] – whispered away in a second. Like 1916. A hundred years ago. World War I was going at full throttle, but no American involvement yet. Phosgene. Chlorine. Mustard gas. Such a 'fragrant' flagrant trio. Wonder if any of those entrenched soldiers wondered about life in*

2016. Wonder if any of them thought that the best thing about life is that it ends – hopefully painlessly and quickly. Whew! I sure seem to have the darkest thoughts now. Enough of war. Think about something else, girl.

Soon Sam was passing a large, metal-sided, teal-painted industrial building on her right. A mid-30-ish, somewhat husky, dirty-blonde-haired, flannel-shirted white guy inside the perimeter fence waved to her, just like he did whenever he saw her approaching. He then winked. She just stoically half-smiled. *I'd love to nail Miss Fitness some fine day. Ram it right through her Spandex. Have her screaming in ecstasy. Oh, hell yeah! / I can tell that big boy would like to date me. I bet that he fantasizes about having sex with me. He wants to do me right there in the warehouse yard and unload all over my boobs, just like he sees on his porn sites. Sex. It sure leads to a lot of division, suspicion, double-talk, fear, shame and hostility. Sex. So craved. So desired. And yet, so derided. Please specify your sex. Please state how you sex. Are you an untamed – and completely unrestrained – wild animal during sex? If not, why not? If so, how dare you! Sex. Why are there even two sexes? I bet that sex one hundred years from now would freak out 80% of the adults of today – these neo-Victorians. I would bet that it will be normal for couples to have sex robots in the future. [the focus of the short story 'A Novella Idea'] Probably marriage savers. I bet bisexuality will be quite commonplace. Though, I myself seem to be sinking into asexuality. I'm done with dating, male and female. I guess I was cut from a different cloth – a solitary fabric. A lonely life awaits. Well, maybe just alone, but not so lonely. I wonder how my biological parents met in American Samoa. Was my real dad a higher-up in the United States government? Was my real mom just a menial laborer in his office who bent over to dust his desk? Wham-bam! Or, was she in some higher position herself? Was it a situation in which keeping me would have brought untold embarrassment onto both of them? Or, maybe worse – divorce(s)? Do they ever think of me? Do they think I'm still alive? Do they ever wonder whom I became? What have I become? Just a clerk at a vegan grocery store in Eureka [4 miles (6.4 km) southeast] with a useless associate degree in history. And, still living with my folks. Yeah, I really became something alright. Should I have just stayed in Shelter Cove [90 miles (145 km) south] with that living-in-a-rusting-shipping-container poet? No way! That dude was genuinely*

*nuts, and getting nuttier with each rainy winter day. Also, his inheritance was quickly dwindling away. Though, I'll always be thankful to flipped-out Phillip for introducing me to Sara Teasdale. [an American poet popular a century ago] Ah, if only I could go back in time and meet her. Say, 1915 – the year that poignantly defiant poem [I Shall Not Care] was published. What a fearless poet she was. I need to start writing poetry again. It just may be therapeutic. Need an outlet for these starved-for-expression thoughts. Maybe something worthwhile becomes of it. Maybe.*

Sam pedaled past LP Drive on her right, a short paved connector to New Navy Base Road, a highway that was best avoided, as she was almost run over by a not-paying-attention/too-busy-texting semi driver in 2015. *No, not taking that road again.*

Soon she was passing a sea-salt factory on her left. *Sea salt is all the rage now. Probably quite profitable. Just let the seawater evaporate. Another nice crop. Bag it. Box it. Ship it! Cha-ching! Maybe oversimplified.*

She kept pedaling, passing the old pipeline docking facility and a deserted Bay Street. At the T-intersection with Comet Street (on her left), the road changed names; Sam was now on Bendixsen Street. It looked about the same: still an old asphalt road splitting the swells of sand covered by short vegetation, interspersed with assorted tangible-product businesses.

When a soft right emerged, she took it. Sam was now on Lincoln Avenue, passing through another small residential area known as Fairhaven. There was no traffic, though. *Another pleasant northern peninsula Saturday, here in non-status-symbol land. Yes, this is definitely not a place that is about putting on airs. I do like that about this elongated sandbar. So atypical of coastal California. Nothing like Venice. [CA]*

Lincoln Avenue soon came to an intersection with the no-longer-avoidable New Navy Base Road; though, traffic was virtually nonexistent here. Sam turned left at the STOP sign, as she didn't want to go to the Samoa Drag Strip or Samoa Field Airport. *Dad sure loves those NHRA [National Hot Rod Association] drag races.*

Soon Sam was pedaling away with the North Bay Channel on her immediate left. *Good, no whitecaps.*

Next, she would pass the Samoa Boat Ramp, which only had one vehicle and boat trailer in the lot. *Wonder where the usual crowd of fishermen are today. Is it a bad tide?*

Then the road got rougher with more potholes to watch out for. Sam then forked to the right, leaving New Navy Base Road, which led directly to a gated entrance to the Humboldt Bay Coast Guard Station. *Wonder how long dad will work today. I bet he's home by noon.*

The unnamed paved road looped around the Coast Guard property, and then tied back into New Navy Base Road. At a just-up-ahead wooded picnic area on her left, Sam stopped and dismounted her bike. She then walked over to a thin slab of concrete next to a pool of rainwater. She slid the 28" x 28" (.5-square-meter) top off of a void. *Yes! It's still here!*

Sam extracted the deflated rubber lifeboat that her father had given her. It had become an expendable asset to the Coast Guard. Though the smallest size, it was still plenty big for her and her folding bike.

She then walked her bike, with the lifesaving raft and related apparatus on the seat, over to the north jetty. Sam noticed her bicycle's trip odometer hit 5.05 miles (8.13 km) as she maneuvered it up and over the riprap seawall. She looked across the channel towards the south spit. *Water looks pretty calm. 9:38. [AM] Just six minutes before slack tide. Not much – if any – current now. Maybe a slight current coming in when I return. Better than an ebb tide going out to sea. I should be ok. Hopefully not infamous last thoughts.*

Sam then deployed the canister of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>); the vulcanized rubber vessel was filled in just four seconds. The plastic oars easily snapped together. After removing a cotter pin in the hinged frame, lowering her seat, and turning and dropping the handlebars, her bike was compacted to one-fourth of its normal size. She carefully placed it in the craft with the CO<sub>2</sub> canister and stepped aboard. *Here we go.*

Sam quickly got a good rowing cadence going. She would make the 1,900-foot-long (579 meters) transit in 11 minutes. The crossing was surprising uneventful. A large fishing boat passed her midway, but the wake wasn't that bad; no water got in her salvaged life raft.

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