

Tell Me You Love Me

By Jack Karp

(It is completely dark. We cannot see anything on-stage, but we can hear the sounds of a man and a woman making love – labored breathing, stifled moaning, the rhythmic movement of bodies on a bed. These sounds continue for a moment. Then we hear a man’s voice, breathless.)

JONATHAN
Does that hurt?

SAMANTHA
No.

JONATHAN
How is it?

SAMANTHA
It’s good.

JONATHAN
Tell me how good.

SAMANTHA
Good. It’s good.

JONATHAN
Tell me you like it.

SAMANTHA
I... I like it.

JONATHAN
Tell me you want it.

SAMANTHA
I... I want it.

JONATHAN
Tell me how.

(She doesn’t answer.)

Tell me!

(As the pace and rhythm of their lovemaking increases...)

Harder... SAMANTHA

That's it. JONATHAN

... I want it harder. SAMANTHA

Keep going. JONATHAN

(Their lovemaking builds to a crescendo.)

Don't stop!... Don't stop!... Don't stop!... Don't... all right, stop. SAMANTHA

(The sounds of their lovemaking suddenly stop.)

What? JONATHAN

Stop. SAMANTHA

Why? Did you...? JONATHAN

No. SAMANTHA

Then how come we're... JONATHAN

(SAMANTHA turns on the light, revealing a bedroom. There is a bed center-stage with a lamp beside it and a radiator coil upstage with some tools on the floor nearby. There are clothes and other household detritus scattered messily all over the floor – old newspapers, empty boxes of cereal, empty containers of milk. SAMANTHA and JONATHAN are together in bed, naked and out of breath. JONATHAN'S arm is in a sling. SAMANTHA gets out of bed and begins picking her clothes up from the floor and getting dressed.)

... Hey, where are you going?

Where do you think I'm going?
SAMANTHA

You can't just leave.
JONATHAN

Face it, Jonathan, it's not going to happen.
SAMANTHA

Were you even close this time?
JONATHAN

Not really.
SAMANTHA

Are you sure? It seemed like maybe when you...
JONATHAN

I think I would know.
SAMANTHA

The talking dirty didn't help?
JONATHAN

Actually, it was kind of distracting.
SAMANTHA

Oh.
JONATHAN

(Brief pause.)

We can try a different position.

We've tried different positions.
SAMANTHA

What if I go down on you?
JONATHAN

We've tried that, too.
SAMANTHA

I could always tie you up. We've never tried that.
JONATHAN

SAMANTHA
There's a reason we've never tried that.

JONATHAN
Come on, it could be fun.

SAMANTHA
I am not letting you tie me up.

JONATHAN
Why not?

SAMANTHA
Because I have to go to work. You do remember work, don't you? Big building downtown, lots of computers, fluorescent lights.

JONATHAN
It's not ringing any bells.

SAMANTHA
Stock options, health insurance, 401K.

JONATHAN
Oh, that work.

SAMANTHA
Yes, that work.

JONATHAN
Go in late.

SAMANTHA
I am late.

JONATHAN
Call in sick.

SAMANTHA
I'm not sick.

JONATHAN
Lie.

SAMANTHA
I am not going to lie.

JONATHAN

Okay then, tell them the truth.

SAMANTHA

Yes, Jonathan, I'm going to call and say, "Hi. This is Samantha. I'm just letting you know I won't be in today because I'm having trouble orgasming. But if my husband can make me come, I should be in tomorrow."

JONATHAN

Come on, it's been forever.

SAMANTHA

It has not been forever.

JONATHAN

It has too. I never see you anymore. You leave early, you stay late, you work weekends.

SAMANTHA

I told you, this is a great opportunity. All of a sudden, the whole market's turned around. No one cares about instant messenger or personal email anymore. They all want instant radiation detectors and personal gas masks. People are spending millions of dollars, and if I get in now and play things right I can –

JONATHAN

(Simultaneously.)

... get in now and play things right I can... blah, blah, blah.

SAMANTHA

Don't complain. I'm making us a fortune.

JONATHAN

Yeah, that's what you said about the dot-com thing.

SAMANTHA

One of us has to go to work and it obviously isn't going to be you.

JONATHAN

I can't go to work. My office was destroyed.

SAMANTHA

They set up a new office more than a month ago. You can go back whenever you want.

JONATHAN

I'm not ready.

SAMANTHA

When exactly do you think you might be ready?

JONATHAN

Eventually.

SAMANTHA

You can't keep doing this, Jonathan. Sooner or later you're going to have to go back.

JONATHAN

Why? It's not like we need the money.

SAMANTHA

It's not about the... it's not healthy to sit around by yourself watching television all day. You haven't left the apartment in three months. You need to go out and do something.

JONATHAN

I do stuff.

SAMANTHA

Watching CNN does not count.

JONATHAN

I don't just watch CNN.

SAMANTHA

No? What else do you do?

JONATHAN

I watch *Oprah*.

SAMANTHA

At least get out of bed, go outside, take a walk.

JONATHAN

It's freezing outside.

SAMANTHA

Wear a coat.

JONATHAN

It's raining.

SAMANTHA

It's water. You're not going to melt.

JONATHAN

Did you hear what they're saying about the air outside now? It's supposed to be poisoned from all the burning jet fuel and plastic.

SAMANTHA

I'm sure it isn't any worse than what comes out of the Lincoln Tunnel or those refineries in Jersey.

JONATHAN

Have you ever smelled what comes out of those refineries in Jersey?

SAMANTHA

Then go sit inside somewhere, get something to eat. There isn't a single bite of food left in this whole apartment.

JONATHAN

There is too food.

SAMANTHA

You can't keep eating Frosted Flakes three meals a day.

JONATHAN

I like Frosted Flakes.

SAMANTHA

Then go to Starbucks, get some coffee.

JONATHAN

Are you kidding? Do you have any idea how bad Starbucks coffee is for you? Just yesterday they were saying –

SAMANTHA

Fine, if you're not going to go out, can you at least try cleaning up in here? This place is a disaster area.

JONATHAN

It reflects the state of my inner psyche.

SAMANTHA

Did you get that from *Oprah* or CNN?

JONATHAN

You know, you shouldn't be giving me a hard time. I'm in an emotionally fragile state right now. I've been a victim of international terrorism, and it's going to take me a while to recover.

SAMANTHA

You weren't even hurt.

JONATHAN

I hurt my shoulder.

SAMANTHA

In high school.

JONATHAN

Well, the attacks aggravated it. I was almost killed.

SAMANTHA

You worked on the fourth floor.

JONATHAN

People I know died.

SAMANTHA

You didn't know any of those people.

JONATHAN

I saw them in the elevator.

SAMANTHA

Only because you were too lazy to take the stairs. Howard was there, too. You don't see him hiding in his apartment.

JONATHAN

His apartment is a shit-hole. Besides, he wasn't in the building. It's not the same. All those people barreling down the stairs like that, pushing and screaming, everyone trying to get out before the building came down on top of us. It was very traumatic. Every time I open my eyes, I still see those two towers collapsing.

SAMANTHA

That's because every time you open your eyes, you're sitting in front of the T.V.

JONATHAN

What do you know about it? You weren't even here. You were off in Dubuque or Des Moines or Det –

SAMANTHA

It was Chicago.

JONATHAN

– leaving me here by myself, at a time like that.

SAMANTHA

I was meeting with investors.

JONATHAN

You're always meeting with investors.

SAMANTHA

These people have a lot of money. When they call me, I go.

JONATHAN

You could've come back.

SAMANTHA

All the flights were cancelled.

JONATHAN

They have trains, you know, and cars, and those stupid Segue things now that don't use any gas.

SAMANTHA

You're being a baby.

JONATHAN

And you're just jealous because terrorists didn't fly an airplane into your building and you still have to go to work.

SAMANTHA

That is the dumbest thing I have ever heard you say.

JONATHAN

Okay, go if you want, but you're just letting them win.

SAMANTHA

How exactly am I doing that?

JONATHAN

Don't you see, this is what they want. It's all part of their secret evil plan to get us so distracted and busy repairing the economic damage they've done, that we don't even have time for sex. And if we don't have sex, we can't reproduce, and if we can't reproduce then all they have to do is sit around and wait for us to die off and then they can take over the world!

SAMANTHA

I changed my mind. That is the dumbest thing I have ever heard you say.

(JONATHAN takes SAMANTHA'S jacket from the floor and wraps it around his head like a turban. Then, in a fake Middle Eastern accent he says...)

JONATHAN

In the name of Allah, I vow at long last to put an end to the ceaseless orgasms of the infidels!

SAMANTHA

Jonathan, stop that.

JONATHAN

They are not worthy of procreation.

SAMANTHA

Someone's going to hear you...

JONATHAN

Their genes are rife with the contamination of McDonalds and Coca Cola...

SAMANTHA

... and think you're a terrorist.

JONATHAN

... and the accursed music of Britney Spears!

SAMANTHA

Jonathan! That's not funny.

JONATHAN

(In his normal voice.)
Then why are you laughing?

SAMANTHA

Because you look like an idiot.

JONATHAN

(In his Middle Eastern accent.)
I will thank you not to make fun of my faith.