

Some Things That Are True (and a Few That Aren't)

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A 10-minute play

By Kailee Isham

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Samantha:

Female, twenty-something.

Roger:

Male, twenty-something.

## SETTING

In this theater, right now.

## SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP on an empty stage. Save, that is, for SAMANTHA and ROGER. They stand facing the audience, with a few feet between them.

They're allegedly talking to the audience, but this is clearly only a thinly veiled way of talking to each other. They constantly have to shift away from each other and back towards the audience, as they find themselves facing each other and just talking time and time again.

ROGER

Thank you all for coming out tonight. Just so you know, Samantha and I are really just here to tell you a list.

SAMANTHA

A list of things that are true. We're just gonna be talking to you all, if that's alright, because, true: I really don't even want to look at Roger right now.

Roger sighs.

ROGER

I guess we're starting *now*. Okay, then. True: Samantha and I broke up last night.

SAMANTHA

True: I broke up with Roger last night.

ROGER

True: I didn't know it was going to happen.

SAMANTHA

True: I guess I kind of saw it coming.

ROGER

True: we probably should have broken up a long time ago.

SAMANTHA

True: we haven't been much good for each other for a long time.

ROGER

True: she was always "too busy" for me.

SAMANTHA

True: he was always there. I could never have a moment alone.

ROGER

True: she constantly nagged me about things that didn't even matter.

SAMANTHA

True: he never cared about putting effort in when I wanted him to.

ROGER

True: whenever she told me she loved me, I was never quite sure it was true.

SAMANTHA

True: whenever I told him I loved him, I was scared by how true it was.

ROGER

True: I was *always* the first to say "I love you."

SAMANTHA

True: his "I love you's" came so easy that I still don't know if he ever life-partner-loved me or if he just great-ice-cream-loved me.

ROGER

True: Samantha was always antagonizing me.

SAMANTHA

True: Roger never complained when I teased him--he only ever laughed, until he didn't.

Roger takes a step towards her.

ROGER

I don't understand how you could've missed my obvious hurt when you said that I was "frighteningly overbearing."

SAMANTHA

We're only supposed to be talking to the audience.

ROGER

Yeah, that's true.

He steps back into place.

(beat)

True: during the breakup, *Samantha* said that I "doused her fire," and I still haven't figured out what that was supposed to mean.

SAMANTHA

No, that's false. You know *exactly* what I meant.

ROGER

"We're only supposed to be talking to the audience."

SAMANTHA

(beat)

True: Roger knew *exactly* what I was talking about because *right* before I said that, he told me that I just "didn't have the same fire I used to have when we were young and in love." He said "*when* we were in love." Past tense.

ROGER

(beat)

True: that didn't come out the way I meant it.

SAMANTHA

True: it's a little late for clarification, isn't it?

ROGER

True: if we can't address each other, I don't think we can ask questions, either.

SAMANTHA

True: I think you're--*Roger* is right. I think we can only make statements.

ROGER

(beat)

True: I don't know how me leaving my coffee grounds in the sink played such a large part in our breakup conversation. And true: calling our breakup a "conversation" actually seems a bit generous to both of us.

SAMANTHA

True: the coffee grounds were really more of a symbolic issue than anything. It was just one of the many things I told Roger that mattered to me and he completely ignored.

ROGER

True: I wasn't trying to ignore the things that mattered to Samantha, I just have such a hard time remembering things sometimes.

SAMANTHA

True: forgetfulness is a thin excuse at a certain point, and Roger and I both know it.

ROGER

True: it's hard to remember *every little thing* someone wants from you.

SAMANTHA

You could have at least tried, Roger!

ROGER

You think I didn't try? You think I didn't--you think I wasn't trying as hard as I could? You wanted me to get a job, I was looking for one constantly.

SAMANTHA

"Constantly," is that the word we're using?

ROGER

Yes, constantly, I spent all day, every day applying for things online and no one ever got back with me!

SAMANTHA

Because they never saw you face-to-face, you have to make an impression when your experience is limited!

ROGER

I can't believe this--I tried going in places, they all just told me to apply online. You know this.

SAMANTHA

I know you always have an excuse for everything, and I know we're getting off the subject again. Or, getting off the format, at least.

(above it all)

True: Roger needs to stop talking to me directly. We're sticking to the format because it's unprofessional to say we're going to tell these people a story and then just bicker in front of them.

ROGER

Oh, the audience wants a story? True: for the last three months of our relationship, Samantha never once came home before seven. In fact, seven was early for her. She just came home, took a shower, and went to bed, avoiding me like she was going to catch unemployment.

SAMANTHA

I wasn't--!

(beat)

True: I did not avoid Roger, we talked every night before bed.

ROGER

True: I wouldn't call "How was your day, mine was fine, how was yours, oh it was okay" talking, I'd call it subway formalities.

SAMANTHA

True: if Roger wanted to have more interesting conversations, he should have done more interesting things.

ROGER

You didn't exactly contribute much excitement either, Samantha.

SAMANTHA

Oh, that's just *rich*, coming from--

(beat)

You know what? It doesn't even matter anymore. I don't know why we're doing this.

ROGER

(beat)

True: I've been throwing away my grounds since we broke up. Seeing them in the sink makes me nauseous.

SAMANTHA

True: I'm not sure that one thing really would have made a difference.

(beat)

I think Roger and I both said some really *bad* things.

Once again, Roger is facing Samantha.

ROGER

I think the highlight might have been your unironic appropriation of the phrase "cotton-headed ninny muggins" as a serious insult. You said it with so much conviction and malice that I was actually offended. That was so ridiculous.

They both laugh a bit, softly.

SAMANTHA

(without malice)

Roger, the format, remember?

ROGER

This whole thing is ridiculous.

SAMANTHA

This conversation, or--?

ROGER

No--I mean the breakup.

(beat)

True: I don't understand why Samantha and I weren't able to work things out.

SAMANTHA

Roger--

ROGER

True: Samantha is forgetting the format.

SAMANTHA

True: I think Roger is *trying* to get me to break from the format.

Roger shrugs, half a grin on his face.

ROGER

True: I don't think we should have broken up.

Samantha tries to filter her response through the format, but it comes out weird.

SAMANTHA

True: I'm not sure that that *is* true, Roger.

ROGER

I'd be fine with adding things that might be true?

SAMANTHA

Too complicated. Maybe we can add things that are false?

ROGER

I think I get what you mean--like, "False: I understand why we're presenting our feelings and relationship problems to a bunch of strangers."

SAMANTHA

You've got the idea.

ROGER

Okay, um, false: since we broke up, my heart feels lighter than air!

SAMANTHA

False: since we broke up, I've really enjoyed all my alone time!

ROGER

False: I was emotionally prepared for the breakup way in advance.



SAMANTHA

False: I wanted to end things going into the conversation.

ROGER

False: I totally realized that we were having a serious conversation before Samantha started crying.

SAMANTHA

False: I also realized we were having a serious conversation before I burst into tears.

ROGER

False: I was glad when Samantha left.

SAMANTHA

False: I was happy to walk out the door and I never looked back.

ROGER

False: I changed the locks so Samantha could never come back.

SAMANTHA

False: I blocked Roger on everything so I'd never have to talk to him again.

ROGER

False: I think boredom and crappy communication are perfectly good reasons for ending a relationship that used to be so wonderful.

SAMANTHA

I don't know what else we could've done after a fight like that.

ROGER

When you left, I cried so hard that I thought I was going to pass out from lack of air.

SAMANTHA

I didn't even make it to my car before I started sobbing again. The ten-minute commute to my friend's place took me an hour because I had to keep pulling over to cry.

ROGER

After I had calmed down enough to breathe properly, I went to start drinking, but all that was left was the bottle of champagne I had gotten to celebrate our anniversary.

SAMANTHA

(beat)

False: I don't love you any more.

ROGER

(beat)

False: I know exactly what to do with that information.

SAMANTHA

(beat)

False: same.

ROGER

(beat)

True: I think this is the first time you've ever been the first to say "I love you," and you said it in kind of a wild way.

SAMANTHA

True: our communication is garbage, so you really shouldn't be surprised.

ROGER

True. And true: I still love you, even though I don't know if I still want to.

SAMANTHA

(beat)

True: I don't know what we're supposed to do now.

ROGER

True: I don't know if we're still good together.

SAMANTHA

True: I don't know if we ever were. This is the clearest communication we've ever had, and it's being facilitated by this group of strangers who, for some reason, are fine with just watching us hash this out.

ROGER

True: they must be nosy.

SAMANTHA

That might be true.

ROGER

True: I'm really tired of talking like this; can I please just talk to you?

Samantha turns to him.

SAMANTHA

(with care)

Sure.

ROGER

So, we might have blown things out of proportion.

SAMANTHA

Maybe.

ROGER

Probably.

The two laugh, moving a bit closer to each other.

SAMANTHA

I don't know if we have a future together, or if we ever did...but I hate that things ended the way they did, like we didn't even matter. For all you were to me, you deserved better.

ROGER

We deserve a better ending than coffee grounds and obscenities thrown at each other from across our living room.

SAMANTHA

Oh geez, did I really throw coffee grounds at you?

ROGER

Yeah, you did.

SAMANTHA

Oh, *geez*. That whole fight, it's...

ROGER

It's a blur, yeah.

SAMANTHA

You know, there are so few things in life that are clear, but I don't want anything about us to be blurrier than it has to be.

Roger offers Samantha his hand.

ROGER

Well, want to grab coffee and clear things up?

A beat. A hand taken.

SAMANTHA

I'd like that.

(to the audience)

Um, so we're gonna go, if that's okay? Sorry for using you all as a sounding board--you all seem lovely.

They both wave awkwardly at the audience and leave.

**FIN**