

"TEN PAGES"

Written by

Bruce Kane

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[bk@kaneprod.com](mailto:bk@kaneprod.com)

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(LIGHTS UP)

*SAMANTHA is sound asleep at her desk, her head resting on her laptop keyboard. After a few moments she awakens and is startled to see a MAN sitting across from her.*

SAMANTHA

Who the hell are you?

SAM

(calmly)

I'm Sam.

SAMANTHA

What are you doing here, Sam?

SAM

I'm always here.

SAMANTHA

No, I'm always here and I don't remember seeing you.

SAM

When I say I'm always here, I mean here.

*(He taps her forehead)*

SAMANTHA

(points at her own head)

Here?

SAM

That's right. In your subconscious.

SAMANTHA

You're part of my..?

SAM

Subconscious.

SAMANTHA

This is a dream right? I'm having a dream. A very weird dream.

SAM

I wouldn't call it a dream. More like a... a conversation?

SAMANTHA

A conversation? With my subconscious?

SAM

Perhaps, more of an internal dialogue.

SAMANTHA

It's happened. I's finally happened. It was bound to happen. All the signs were there.

SAM

What was bound to happen?

SAMANTHA

Bananas. I've gone bananas. Completely around the bend.

SAM

No, no, no... At least no more so than any other person who writes scripts for a living.

SAMANTHA

Hardly a ringing endorsement.

SAM

You haven't gone around the bend.

SAMANTHA

I'm talking to myself. What would you call it?

SAM

It's part of your creative process.

SAMANTHA

I don't have a creative process.

SAM

All writers have a creative process.

SAMANTHA

A process implies something logical... Planned... Organized. I, on the other hand, operate out of total chaos bordering on panic and terror resulting in hysteria.

SAM

There you go. That's your process.

SAMANTHA

None of this makes any sense.

SAM

Maybe I can clear things up.

SAMANTHA

I sincerely doubt that.

SAM

When I said I was part of your subconscious I was referring to something very specific. I'm your muse.

SAMANTHA

I have a muse?

SAM

You have a muse. And I'm your muse.

SAMANTHA

My muse?

SAM

Your muse.

SAMANTHA

But, you're a guy.

SAM

This is the way you conjured me up.

SAMANTHA

Why would I conjure up a male muse?

SAM

That's something you'll have to take up with your therapist.

SAMANTHA

Wait a minute... Hold on here. If I remember my Greek mythology, muses were always hot babes in sheets.

SAM

That's because all the writers back then were men. That's what inspired them. We're in the twenty first century now.

SAMANTHA

No, you can't be my muse. To be my muse you would have to know my brain works. And it's a proven fact that the male brain has never understood how the female brain works.

SAM

Well, if you want to get down to basics, nobody has ever figured out how the female brain works.

SAMANTHA

Alright, I'll give you that one. Like they say... whoever they are... in for a dime, in for a dollar... I can't believe I'm actually asking this, but what is it you do as my muse?

SAM

I inspire.

SAMANTHA

Inspire?

SAM

Inspire. That's what muses do. We inspire.

SAMANTHA

How come this is the first time you're showing up?

SAM

I've been here all the time. Working in the background.

SAMANTHA

In the background. What background?

SAM

Let's see ... Uh... Remember when that actor dumped you for the blonde with the mile long legs?

SAMANTHA

The lying bastard wasn't an actor. He was an A.D. She was a redhead and she stood five feet two in three inch heels.

SAM

(defensively)

Okay, okay, that's not the point.

SAMANTHA

What is the point?

SAM

You turned that complete and totally humiliating moment into a wonderful play. What was it you called it?

SAMANTHA

"The Lying Bastard."

SAM

That was it.

SAMANTHA

Once again, what's your point?

SAM

You were stuck for an ending. You must have tried fifteen or twenty and none of them worked. Then... in the middle of the night you popped up from a deep sleep and there it was?

SAMANTHA

So?

SAM

That was me.

SAMANTHA

You?

SAM

Working in the background. And then there was the basketball player...

SAMANTHA

Tennis player...

SAM

Who dumped you at the altar...

SAMANTHA

The lying s.o.b. never even called.

SAM

And ran off with that black jack dealer from the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

SAMANTHA

Reno... And she was a cashier at Harrah's.

SAM

(defensively)

Whatever. Again, you took a crushing public embarrassment that would have destroyed most women and spun it into gold.

SAMANTHA

What gold? I couldn't get out of bed for a month.

SAM

But then you wrote that very well reviewed two act play... with that great title?

SAMANTHA

"The Lying S.O.B."

SAM

But when you were writing it, you couldn't figure out the scene transitions. You struggled for months to make that work.

SAMANTHA

I remember.

SAM

And then one afternoon, you're in Starbucks ordering a latte and boom, there it was. The solution. The movers. I'll use the movers.

SAMANTHA

And that was you?

SAM

Working in the background.

SAMANTHA

You know I'm not buying any of this.

SAM

Okay then. How about that movie you sold based on that guy who lived next door that you had a one night...

SAMANTHA

Okay...Okay... I get it. I'm a loser. I'm a big fat loser.

SAM

But a big fat loser who's turned disasters that would have crushed the self esteem of any other woman and turned them into a very nice career. What are you working on now?

SAMANTHA

A ten minute play. A friend is doing an evening of short plays and they asked me to contribute.

SAM

What do you have so far?

SAMANTHA

(looks at her  
computer)

So far... Let's see... Lights up.

SAM

That's a good start.

SAMANTHA

Every play begins with lights up, otherwise the audience couldn't see the actors.

SAM

With some of the stuff they're putting up these days, that might be a blessing.

SAMANTHA

What are you, a critic now?

SAM

I wasn't talking about you. I like your stuff.

SAMANTHA

Thank you.

SAM

For the most part. How long is a ten minute play?

SAMANTHA

Oh, I don't know. Give or take... ten minutes.

SAM

I mean, how many pages?

SAMANTHA

Rule of thumb about one page per minute.

SAM

So that would be... uh... uh...

*(Samantha waits, then...)*

SAMANTHA

Ten pages.

SAM

Right, ten pages. That doesn't seem like much.

SAMANTHA

Only if you've already written nine pages. Okay, Mr. Inspiration. As long as you're here, do your stuff.

SAM

What stuff?

SAMANTHA

Characters... A plot... Action... Dialogue... And jokes. Lots of jokes. Did I mention they want a comedy?

SAM

No, no... I don't think I made myself clear.

SAMANTHA

No, no, no, no, no. No backing out now. Come on. Lay it on me. Let's hear what you got.

SAM

As your muse, I don't actually....



SAMANTHA

You don't actually, what?

SAM

Write. I don't actually write.

SAMANTHA

You don't write.

SAM

You write. I inspire.

SAMANTHA

So, essentially you contribute absolutely nothing to my so called creative process.

SAM

The spark. I contribute the spark. You might say, I light the fire.

SAMANTHA

Okay, then... Come on baby, light my fire.

SAM

What is it that writers always say?

SAMANTHA

Where's the check?

SAM

Write what you know.

SAMANTHA

I've written everything I know. I don't know anything more. If I did I would write it. As of now, I'm reduced to just making stuff up.

SAM

There must be something in your life you could mine.

SAMANTHA

Sorry, I wish I could help but some lying prick hasn't dumped on me recently. But give me five minutes and who knows.

SAM

You must have done something.

SAMANTHA

I ordered some bras on line.

SAM

Anything in that?

SAMANTHA

Only if the Amazon guy holds me hostage for three days.  
Otherwise, I got nothing.

SAM

Will you listen to yourself.

SAMANTHA

I'd rather not. My life is depressing enough.

SAM

You keep throwing up these barriers.

SAMANTHA

Barriers?

SAM

Yes... Yes... Barriers. You need to open up.

SAMANTHA

Open up.

SAM

Let the ideas flow.

SAMANTHA

Let the ideas flow.

SAM

Free associate.

SAMANTHA

Free associate.

SAM

Let the sun shine in.

SAMANTHA

I'm trying to write ten pages, not disinfect a wound.

SAM

You have to tear down those road blocks. Throw open the  
doors to your creativity.

SAMANTHA

You realize, of course, that you're well on your way to  
establishing a new world's record for meaningless cliches.

SAM

Let me suggest something then.

SAMANTHA  
Oh, I can't wait.

SAM  
Sleep on it.

SAMANTHA  
Sleep on it?

SAM  
Sleep on it.

SAMANTHA  
That's all you got. Sleep on it?

SAM  
In a nutshell.

SAMANTHA  
An apt description if I ever heard one.

SAM  
Trust yourself. It'll be there. I guarantee it. It always is.

*(Sam exits)*

SAMANTHA  
*(angrily)*  
Wait... Wait... Where are you going? That's it? You're walking out? Ohmygod... This is new low even for me. Dumped by my own muse... Go... Walk out... Like every other guy I've ever known. Inspiration, my ass.

*(Samantha yawns and lays her head down on her computer just as we found her when the scene began. A moment or two later she awakens, sits up, looks around as though expecting to see some one. When she realizes she's alone, she glances down at her computer.)*

SAMANTHA  
Mmmmmmm...Maybe... It's a an idea... Could work. Who knows?  
*(speaks as she types) )*  
Ten Pages by Samantha Bright. Lights up on Julia, a very attractive young writer with a devastating smile... Think a young Julia Roberts... She has fallen asleep on her computer keyboard. Slowly she awakens to find a very handsome man sitting across from her. Think a young George Clooney. Julia... Flirtatiously... Well hello there. George...  
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (cont'd)

Hello... Julia... And whose eyes do I have the pleasure of gazing into? ... George... I'm George... I'm your muse...

*(Lights down)*

THE END