

SuperTrue by Karen Hartman

Janelle--a city person--and her husband Martin have rented a summer cabin to try to relax and get pregnant. It's not working. Now Janelle is alone, talking to a child who appeared in the woods the night before. This child is portrayed by a puppet, but to Janelle she is real.

JANELLE

Do you know the story of Hannah? Samuel, chapter one?

Hannah's mouth could not make the words for what she wanted.

Hannah came to the temple and she curled in a little ball on the ground, and she tried to say, I am love, I am unbounded love, my name means grace – allow me a child to love.

She tried to say, my parents are dead and my sister is far. I must increase love.

She tried to say, I am empty, I am open, I am a vessel. Lend me someone who needs me.

But she was so tangled, her yearning so vast, that the sound for baby came out fucked up, maybe like:

A BAAAYAH

And love was something like:

A LAYYYA

And maybe kindness and need and her missing sister were:

AAIII

A MEEEEEEENA

Abkadlo go rono man mamamamamamamamaKILIBAKAMIII

Until even the nonsense tangled in her chest, and snot ran down her face, and Hannah blubbered into the mucus, “let me love.”

And the priest threw her in the drunk tank, this crazy lady who ditched her niece's first birthday party, who walks a block out of her way to avoid a playground, this lady who took a prenatal yoga class because her doctor said being near pregnant women stimulates hormones, but then at the end of the class the mommies all sang to the babies inside them, and said how many weeks, and she yelled, “seven,” and ran out the building and down the block and hailed a taxi to a neighborhood where nobody knew her, and got drunk at a bar in the middle of the day. And might have kissed a man who was not her husband. And considered sleeping with this man, but did not.

Because even in her reverse grief for the unspooled future, Hannah knew that loving more includes loving well. That she could not break her bond.

Hannah festered. She bargained. “Give me this child and I will raise him to serve you.”

Meaning, I will not hoard love.

The bargain worked. She birthed a boy and kept her word. Samuel became a great leader, a righteous person, and a judge. And Hannah rejoiced even though the boy lived at the monastery because when she read her bible at night when her husband couldn't see, and

came to the part where God promises Abraham to number his descendants like the stars in the sky, Hannah knew one of those stars was for her.
All Hannah wanted was to shine with the rest of the sky.

(Pause)

So now I use a clothesline. I eat low on the food chain. I bicycle to the market with sacks on my back. Because I don't yet know the terms of my bargain. But I am ready. To break with habit. To consume less and give more.
You picked the right house.

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You are welcome to perform this monologue for free! You can read this play free of charge through the New Play Exchange:

<https://newplayexchange.org/users/2887/karen-hartman>

You may CUT but you may not CHANGE the words. Please introduce the monologue with title of play and author's name (this is a monologue from Leah's Train by Karen Hartman).

Feel free to send a video link to yourself performing the monologue through the Contact page, and let me know if I may share! Thanks and be well, KH

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