

SECOND CHANCE

10 minute play

by Kathy Petrakis

Contact: Kathy.petrakis@gmail.com

CAST:

Paula – young frumpy girl, about 22

Kelly – pretty, slim, young girl about 22

Jenny – good-looking, young woman between 24 and 30

SCENE: Two girls in different rooms in their own apartments but are talking on the phone.

KELLY is in a pretty room, frilly, pink, large, tv, and PAULA is in a cramped small room.

They line up pills and KELLY is holding a bottle of alcohol.

KELLY: Are we really going to do this?

PAULA: I don't know KELLY. I mean there's still stuff I want to do.

KELLY: Like what?

(Pause)

PAULA: I want to know what it's like to fall in love

KELLY: I'm telling you it sux. It's like someone rips out your heart and shoves it down a garbage chute.

PAULA: It wasn't always like that for you. I mean for a while, you were really happy. You had someone who thought you were great, someone to hold at night.

KELLY: You mean I lived in a fantasy world.

(Pause)

PAULA: What about your parents?

KELLY: They don't care. They'll just make sure the funeral is perfect with the right type of food and the right people making an appearance. *(laughs)* They'll probably even pay to have the autopsy report changed so they wouldn't live with the shame.

PAULA: I wish I *had* parents to give me a funeral.

(Pause)

PAULA: Why all this fuss over a guy anyway? I know it hurts now but surely it will get better.

KELLY: No. It's been 3 months. I can still barely get out of bed. I've failed this semester at college. I've put on 5 kilos. I just can't do this anymore. I don't want to be here anymore.

PAULA: Kelly, you're the prettiest girl I know. You'll meet someone else. Just give it time.

(Pause)

KELLY: Bastard gave me HIV

(Pause)

PAULA: You can get medication for that now. You can even have children.

KELLY: No one's going to want me now. I'm finished.

(Pause)

PAULA: No one wants me anyway.

KELLY: I want you. I want you to come with me into the afterlife.

PAULA: Life sucks right now but I'm not ready to give up on it right now.

KELLY: You promised you would stick by me no matter what. You promised!

PAULA: I think you're feeling sorry for yourself. I will stay on this phone as long as you need me to but I won't support you killing yourself.

KELLY: What do you know? My life may look perfect but it's not.

PAULA: No one's life is, but hang in there is all I'm saying.

KELLY: Stay on the phone okay.?

PAULA: Not if you keep up this pity party.

KELLY: You're the one person in my life I've always relied on. Always.

PAULA: *(sighs)* I know but..

PAULA is surprised by an intruder. Can be implied through surprise and defensive stance.

PAULA: *(to intruder)* No.

KELLY: Please... *(playing with tablets.)*

PAULA surprised by a visitor who strangles her. Visitor does not need to be visible but Paul can imitate act of dying.

PAULA: Aaaagh *(screams and then black out)*

KELLY: Paula? Paula? *(Calls her back but phone not answering.)* Fine. Everyone leaves me. *(Takes pills and downs them. Black out.)*

Two spotlights on the girls.

PAULA: What happened?

KELLY: You? I thought you ditched me.

PAULA: No.

KELLY: Why'd you hang up on me?

PAULA: There was.. a ..man in my room. I think he killed me. I'm not sure. It all went black after that.

(Pause)

KELLY: What?

PAULA: I can't believe you did it.

(Light on KELLY's side of room in hospital with machines beeping. Lots of flowers and balloons)

PAULA: So I guess we're both dead. I can't believe it! I thought we're supposed to go into some light.

KELLY: Where's the ghost whisperer when you need her?

PAULA: Wait! Look. *(Pointing to KELLY in hospital bed)* You're still beeping on the machine.

PAULA nudges KELLY.

PAULA: You're not dead – it's only a coma. You've got another chance take it.

KELLY: I don't want to go back.

PAULA: What? Are you crazy? Don't you regret it now?

KELLY shakes her head.

PAULA: You know what Kelly? I'm 22. I wanted to do things. And I got murdered. You have family who love you, friends, looks, brains, money. You have the world at your feet and you throw it away. That really pisses me off.

KELLY: My parents barely notice my existence. They just throw money at me.

PAULA: I wish I had someone to throw money at me.

KELLY: I'm sorry.

PAULA: One idiot breaks your heart and you think it's the end of the world.

KELLY: He didn't just break my heart – he infected me – forever.

PAULA: You're not ruined! Don't get me wrong –he betrayed you in an awful way. I would be hurt too. But it's not over. *(Pause).*

You know what hurts? Being abandoned by your dad. So does losing your mum to cancer. So does living in a shit apartment and working two jobs to get through college. So does having a best friend who is ten times more gorgeous than you and does nothing but feel sorry for herself.

KELLY: *(looking at her body)* But if I go back, you won't be there.

(Pause)

PAULA: But everyone else will be. And I promise to look over you.

KELLY: I don't know. How will I face everyone?

PAULA: You know, if you don't want it, I'll go.

KELLY: Go where?

PAULA: Into your body.

KELLY: You can't have my body!

PAULA: Why not? If you don't want it....

KELLY: No!

PAULA: I want to live and you don't. Sounds perfectly fair to me!

PAULA heading for hospital and KELLY trying to stop her. Bit of tussle.

PAULA: Look, do you want your life back or not? I don't want to be dead, so if you're not going back, I am.

KELLY, indecisive.

KELLY: Alright, alright.

PAULA: Don't do me any favors – I got nothing to lose.

PAULA backs down and then makes a dash for it but KELLY jumps in first and gasps as she comes alive. Touches her body to check she is still there. Notices flowers and balloons.

KELLY: Paula? Paula?

Silence. Phone rings.

KELLY: Yes? Officer? Yes I knew her. Is she okay? (Pause) Oh. Dead. Yes. Her name is Paula. Was it around eleven last night? We were kind of talking when it happened and then I've been in hospital. I wasn't sure if it was a dream...thank you officer. Bye.

Looking guilty

KELLY: *(to heaven)* I'm really sorry Paula. Even when you tried to do the right thing, you got the bad deal.

A young looking female doctor walks in.

JENNY: Hi Ms Johnson. I'm Jenny, the hospital's psychiatrist. Hospital policy you know in these um...situations.

KELLY continues to look away.

JENNY sits by bed and stares at KELLY

JENNY: So?

KELLY: Yes?

JENNY: You have another chance to live. Does this change anything?

KELLY: My best friend was murdered.

JENNY: That's terrible. I'm sure she'd want you to live for the both of you.

KELLY: She was the fun one. She thought I was the lucky one but I would have swapped my life for her confidence any day.

JENNY: Maybe you can learn from her wisdom and her tragedy. Don't you think she'd want that?

KELLY shrugs.

JENNY: Unbelievable!

KELLY: What?

JENNY: You get your life back and you're still complaining?

KELLY: Hang on a second.....

JENNY: Have you learnt nothing?

KELLY confused

JENNY: The thing about Paula was that she would've given anything to live.

KELLY: Well, she's dead so.....

JENNY: Take another look. In my eyes.

KELLY searching her eyes.

JENNY: Ta da.

KELLY: Paula?

JENNY: In the flesh. In this gorgeous flesh.

KELLY: Ha?

JENNY: Turns out there were other nutters like you who gave up their body in time for me to jump back in!

KELLY: Paula! I'm so glad you're back.

JENNY: Thing is, I'm going to make the most of my life. So, there are going to be changes.

KELLY: Absolutely. Whatever you want.

JENNY: Starting with, you get a new best friend. Jenny or I should say *I*, apparently have a hot boyfriend and a great apartment and a family. I finally got everything I wanted, so really, why would I want a whiner like you in my life?

KELLY: You can't take someone's life!

JENNY: Watch me. Someone else's trash is my treasure. Bye.

KELLY: Wait! We can still be friends!

JENNY: (*hesitates at door and looks back*) I don't think Jenny and Kelly would be friends. Jenny is such a positive person.

KELLY: That's cheating. I want a new life too.

JENNY: I think the point was you should have been happy with the one you had while you had it. I didn't give mine away, it was taken.

KELLY: But you got a better one!

JENNY shakes her head and walks away.