

**FIGMENT WITH A CAPITAL F**

by Kris Thompson

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### Cast of Characters

JESSIE: Early 30s female. Gay, busy, serious, struggling with relationship with her Mother.

KELLY: Early 20s female imaginary friend from Jessie's childhood. Very childlike, sassy, silly, comical. Lots of childlike mannerisms and physical humor.

### Place

Jessie's Extremely Modest Apartment

### Time

Weekend, Early Afternoon

ACT I  
Scene 1

Setting:       Jessie's modest apartment living room.

At Rise:        Jessie is on a passionate cell phone conversation with her Mother.

JESSIE

No. (pause) No Mom! (pause) Mom, please. (pause) Because I don't want to (long pause) Listen, Mom, you have to stop trying to set me up with random guys. (pause) No I'm not lonely.

(KELLY appears at the word "lonely" and is listening intently, in the line of sight of but invisible to JESSIE and carries an inflated light beach ball.)

KELLY

Did I hear the word lonely?

JESSIE

(pause) OK well maybe I am lonely-

KELLY (excited)

She's lonely! I'm back on the job!

(Puts down ball, comically follows JESSIE around trying to listen in and uses comic physical gestures to empathize with oblivious JESSIE.)

JESSIE

-sometimes. But that's not the end of the world Mom. (pause) No I don't need a man in my life. (pause) Again? Well good for her guess. (pause) Well Kimberly wanted to get married and have a (sarcastic) brood of children by the age of 30. (pause) That's not fair. You know I love her. She's my baby sister. And I love being an Auntie. I just- (pause) No, Mom. She did but I don't. I don't know why Mom! Maybe because we're not the same person? (pause) I just don't and I'm really, really tired of this subject. (pause) Look, I'll call you next week, ok? Kiss Dad for me.

(JESSIE hangs up. Folds her arms, lost in thought. Comically, KELLY, standing next to JESSIE, mimics her pose.)

JESSIE (annoyed)

Mothers.

KELLY (mimicking)

Mothers! (long pause) OK! Enough of this doom and gloom! Let's play!

(Retrieves the ball and throws ball to JESSIE, it hits her, but JESSIE remains lost in thought, oblivious to KELLY throughout the following.)

KELLY (Cont.)

Oh...you missed that one. Here. I'll get it.

(Retrieves and throws ball to JESSIE, it hits her, but she is oblivious.)

(annoyed) Umm...hey you missed that one too.

(Retrieves the ball positions herself straight ahead of JESSIE.)

OK...Eyes on the ball!

(Throws ball to JESSIE, it hits her in the face, but she remains oblivious.)

(confused) What the heck?

(Goes to JESSIE, snaps her fingers in front of her face to no response.)

Hmmm...Nothin. This must be serious.

(Looking at her own watch, she take's JESSIE'S pulse.)

JESSIE (oblivious to KELLY)

I need to tell her soon.

KELLY (relieved)

Whew. OK. Wow. You really had me worried there. Now...Tell who what?

JESSIE (oblivious to KELLY)

Maybe tomorrow.

(JESSIE puts the phone on the table. KELLY picks up the phone, looks at it curiously as she's only seen corded phones before today, puts it down.)

KELLY

Well, you know what we always say...

JESSIE (wistful)

If it ain't PLAY, put it off till another day!

KELLY (cheerful)

If it ain't PLAY, put it off till another day!

(JESSIE abruptly becomes aware of KELLY'S presence.)

JESSIE (startled)

Holy Shit!

KELLY (worriedly looking around)

Ohhh....you better hope your Mom didn't hear you say that!

JESSIE (confused)

My Mom? What? Who? (pause) What the fuck is going on?

KELLY

Oh. My. God. You said the F word. (pause) Out loud!

JESSIE

Who the hell are you? What the hell are you doing in my apartment?!?

KELLY (amazed)

Your apartment? Wow Jess. I've been gone longer than I thought! Not exactly what I would have expected, but still. 'Member how we used to make plans for an apartment? And we'd invite Zack and Slater to come over and-

JESSIE (angering)

Zack? Slater? What is this? Candid Camera's "Saved by the Bell" episode? Who are you?

KELLY (sassy)

I'm K.K. of course. (waiting for recognition) Sometimes you call me Kapow! (waiting for recognition) Short for Kelly Kapowski? (pause) Don't look at me like that. You're the one who named me. (long pause) Wait a second, hold the phone...

(Takes JESSIE'S face in her hands and looks deeply into her eyes.)

KELLY (sadly)

Has it really been too long? Don't you remember me?

JESSIE (shocked)

Oh. My. God. K.K. my imaginary friend-

KELLY (happy)

Oh, thank goodness! You remember me! I was literally about to freak out.

JESSIE (stunned)

My imaginary friend...from my childhood.

KELLY

You're repeating yourself.

JESSIE (stunned)

And you're here. In my living room.

KELLY

Yea...I've been here for a while now. Got anything to eat? Got any candy.

JESSIE

I don't eat candy. Why are you here?

KELLY (sarcastic)

Yea right you don't eat candy. (snort) Wait. Are you serious? I thought you looked skinnier.

JESSIE

Why are you here?

KELLY

You're asking me? I don't know how it works. You're the one who called me.

JESSIE (curious)

I called you?

KELLY

Well not on the phone but sort of like sent me a signal? By the way, this is a phone, right?

(Picks up phone starts walking to different points on stage.)

It's sooo small. And no cord! I can walk anywhere to talk. Here and here and here and here.

JESSIE (chastising)

K.K.!

KELLY

Oh. Sorry. Umm...I think I just come when you need me. Seems like you haven't needed me for a really, really long time. I used to come when you were lonely or sad or super anxious about something. Like doing bad in school, or if you had a fight with your Mom or Dad or your stupid sister Kimberly. Did you have a fight with stupid Kimberly?

JESSIE

No. She's too busy having babies to have time for a fight with me.

KELLY (shocked)

Babies! OMG! Are you serious? (whispering) Does your Mom know?

JESSIE

She's married. She has three kids. Just found out she's pregnant with her fourth.

KELLY

Pregnant. Gross. (pause) Married...well that's romantic at least. Are you married?

JESSIE

No.

KELLY

So, Slater's still a chauvinistic pig, huh?

JESSIE (annoyed)

You **do** realize those are fictional characters from a TV show I...we...whatever...used to watch?

KELLY (embarrassed)

Oh...yea...right. Sure, I do. Of course, I know that.

JESSIE

Besides. Slater wouldn't be my first choice.

KELLY

No? Why not? You always said-

JESSIE

Because I'm gay.

KELLY

You're what?

JESSIE

I'm gay. (waiting for understanding) A lesbian. You know?

KELLY

You're GAY?

JESSIE

Somehow, I think you should have known.

KELLY

Wait...does this mean I'm gay too?

JESSIE

I think so. I'm not sure...Wait. What are we talking about??? What does it matter if you're gay?

KELLY

I think it would be a whole new ballgame for me. Rethink my wardrobe, maybe get myself a-

JESSIE

You're imaginary!!!

KELLY (hurt)

Oh...yea.

JESSIE (regretful)

Look. I'm sorry. I just...I'm super uncomfortable being 34 years old and still talking to my imaginary friend. Perhaps Mom was right about needing some therapy...

KELLY (astounded)

OH! MY! GOD!!!! You're 34 years old? That's like...that's so old! Really, really old.

JESSIE

You know what? Forget it. Just...just go away. Whatever you're doing here...it's not helping.

KELLY (hopping up and down)

No, no, no! Please, PLEASE don't send me away! Please. I can help. Really, I can. We'll figure things out together. Just like we used to. (more serious) OK...so you didn't have a fight with stupid Kimberly 'cause she's preggers, right?

JESSIE

Close enough.

KELLY

Did you make a bad grade on a test?

JESSIE

I don't go to school anymore.

KELLY

That's right...'cause you're really old.

(JESSIE gives KELLY the stink eye.)

KELLY (Cont.)

Sorry. So...what do you do since you're too old...since you're not going to school? Got a job? Are you a singer? A songwriter? An actress or something?

JESSIE (sarcastic)

Yea right...entertainment. That is no way to live. I'm a Computer Systems Analyst.

KELLY

A what?

JESSIE

A Computer Systems Analyst. (waiting for understanding) I study computer systems and company procedures and then I design information systems solutions to help companies operate more efficiently and effectively.

KELLY (bored)

I'm sorry. What did you say? I think I fell asleep.

JESSIE

Really funny. Not helping.

KELLY

Maybe the problem is you're bored out of your mind at your job.

JESSIE

I'm not. Plus, I make over a hundred thousand dollars a year.

KELLY

Every year? For real? You're like...rich! Why you livin' in this dump?

JESSIE

I'm frugal.

KELLY

You're what?

JESSIE

Frugal. Careful with money?

KELLY

Ahh...Tight.

JESSIE

Yes, well. That term means something different now. Can we get back to it?

KELLY

Um, you're a rich old gay lady with a boring job and a dumpy apartment? I think I figured it out.

JESSIE

34 is not old! I like being gay. I like my job. I like my apartment. And I'm comfortable, not rich.

KELLY

Ok, ok. Hmm...Well...Do you have a girlfriend?

JESSIE

No. We broke up.

KELLY

Well then there you go! Breakup crisis!

JESSIE

That's not it. It wasn't super emotional or anything and it was a year ago. We're still friends.

KELLY (epiphany)

That's it! You're lonely! You said so when I first got here. I'm sure that's why you called me.

JESSIE (thinking)

I guess it could be that. I didn't really think so. I'm not lonely, (air quotes) depressed lonely. I've got friends, my job. I have my family. Like I told my Mom earlier, I love being an Auntie.

KELLY (remembering)

You were having an argument with your Mom when I got here! What were you fighting about?

JESSIE

(heavy sigh) She keeps trying to set me up with random guys. Her friend's sons, people she meets at the grocery store, telemarketers-

KELLY

I'm confused. If you're gay, why is your Mom trying to set you up with guys? (long pause) Jess?

JESSIE (quietly)

I haven't told her yet.

KELLY

Ah ha! Now this is making sense. You're 34 years old and you're hiding the fact that you're gay!

JESSIE

Just from my parents. It's not a big deal. I'm going to tell them. (pause) When the time's right.

KELLY (sarcastic)

When the time's right?

JESSIE (incredulous)

I will.

KELLY

As I recall your precise words were, "I need to tell her. I need to tell her soon."

JESSIE

I said I will.

KELLY (sarcastic)

When? (air quotes) Maybe tomorrow.

JESSIE (sheepish)

If it ain't PLAY, put it off till another day?

KELLY

(Picks up the phone and holds out to JESSIE who ignores.)

Not this time Jess. What are you afraid of?

JESSIE (pacing)

Dad will be fine. He'll be ok with it. He's a rock. And Kim has known for years. But Mom...

KELLY

What? You think she won't love you anymore?

JESSIE

No. Of course she'll still love me.

KELLY

You think she'll judge you.

JESSIE

Yes. I think she will most definitely judge me.

KELLY

Doesn't she already judge you? I'll bet she judged you on what college you went to and probably your job. Didn't she want you to be a doctor or dentist or something?

JESSIE

Orthodontist.

KELLY

And I'll bet she hates this apartment.

JESSIE

True.

KELLY

She's that kind of Mom, isn't she? She judges you for all your choices, all you do and don't do.

JESSIE

Exactly! That's exactly what I'm saying.

KELLY

So...why should being gay be any different? She'll judge you because that's what she does.

KELLY (Cont.)

She'll love you because she's your Mom. It will be fine. Just stop worrying about it and do it. Call her. Tell her. NOW.

(KELLY holds phone out to JESSIE who takes phone, takes a deep breath, and dials. KELLY is behind her with a comforting hand on her shoulder.)

JESSIE

Hi Mom. No. Nothing's wrong. We didn't finish our conversation on a positive note and wanted to tell you that I love you. (pause) I know you do. (pause) Nope. That's it. That's all I called for.

(KELLY punches JESSIE in the arm, motions to continue talking.)

JESSIE (Cont.)

Listen, Mom, I've got to tell you something. Something important. I- (pause) No I...I don't have breast cancer. (pause) Yes, I know it runs in the family. (pause) Yes, I do that in the shower. (pause) I will. When I'm 35. (pause) I know that's just next year Mom. (pause) No I don't have ovarian cancer either. Mom! I don't have any kind of cancer ok? I just wanted to tell you... (deep breath) Mom...I'm gay. (long pause) Mom? Mom? (to KELLY) I think she hung up. Oh, wait I hear her. I think she's crying. (to Mom) Mom? Oh Mom...please don't cry. (pause) What? (pause) Oh...it's a happy cry? (confused) You're so happy I'm gay that you're crying?

(JESSIE and KELLY look at each other with a funny identical shrug.)

JESSIE (Cont.)

Oh (understanding)...you're happy I don't have cancer. (to KELLY) She's happy I don't have cancer. (to Mom) Me too. (pause) No Mom, I'm not talking to my gay lover in the background.

(JESSIE mouths to KELLY "what?" who smiles and then, during dialogue, drifts away, listening, smiling sadly, and retrieves ball.)

JESSIE (Cont.)

How long? As long as I can remember. (pause) Yes, I'm sure, Mom. (pause) 100 percent. (long pause) I don't know, Mom. I was waiting for the right time. Yes, Kim knows. (pause) No! Dad doesn't know. You think he could have kept that from you? He's terrible with secrets. (pause) Who? (pause) No, I don't know Mrs. Ackerman's daughter Abigail. (long pause) Mom! You've known I was gay for what...two minutes...and you're already trying to set me up? (pause)

(KELLY takes one sad look at JESSIE and drifts off stage with her ball.)

JESSIE (Cont.)

OK Mom...tell me about Mrs. Ackerman's daughter if you must. Is she cute?

**BLACKOUT**