

Taxi!

Short Play (Comedy)

by

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After the divorce, two best friends, an ex-husband and no damn taxis!

CHARACTERS:

KATE: Female, 30s, Sam's ex-wife, struggling artist, insecure and frequently fueled by champagne

PAULA: Female, 30s, Kate's best friend, award-winning fashion designer, flirtatious and assertive man-eater

SAM: Male: 30s / 40s, Kate's ex-husband, sales executive, egocentric womanizer

SETTING: City street

TIME: The present

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KATE is on a city street trying to hail a taxi, while her best friend, PAULA, is trying to talk to her.

KATE: Taxi!

KATE watches the taxi as it zooms past.

PAULA: I didn't mean 'fun', not in the usual sense of, wow, this is fantastic, I'm having a great time kind of fun.

KATE: What other meaning is there?

PAULA: It's more the 'let's just make the most of a bad situation' kind of fun.

KATE: It wasn't fun, it was shit!

PAULA: Only twelve minutes of shit, you can't complain about that! It could have been a lot worse. Imagine if you and Sam had kids and money to fight over? As far as divorces go, it was almost painless, don't you think?

KATE: Paula, you're my best friend and I'm really glad that you're here to support me, but what would you know about divorce, you haven't even been married?

PAULA: Divorce is everywhere - movies, magazines, Facebook, Twitter. Everyone's getting into it - Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner, Gwen Stefani and whatshisname. Even Uncle Terry and Aunt Pam, and they've been married for thirty years. What about Lyn and Brett next door -

KATE: Taxi!

KATE misses out on another taxi. SAM enters from the other direction, loosening his tie. He doesn't look happy.

SAM: That was short, sharp, almost painless, don't you think?

PAULA: *(Looks at KATE)* No, it was shit. But now it's time to party!

SAM: I've never been invited to a divorce party.

PAULA: You still haven't.

KATE: I wouldn't exactly call it a party.

PAULA: Of course it's a party! Divorce is another milestone in your lives. Just like your 21st birthday or your wedding day.
(pause) Shit!

KATE: You promised you wouldn't mention the wedding.

SAM: How many brides do you think pass out on their wedding night?

PAULA: You'd be surprised.

KATE: You've never forgiven me, have you? After five years! How many times do I have to tell you? I couldn't help it. I was nervous and I drink too much when I'm nervous. It was our wedding for God's sake! You're supposed to drink champagne at your own wedding.

SAM: Enough to pass out?

KATE: I don't have to explain myself to you anymore. We just got divorced. Taxi! *(tries to hail a taxi)* Damn it! Come on Paula, let's walk.

KATE grabs PAULA's arm and starts walking.

PAULA: What, in these heels?

SAM: Looks like you'll be late for your pathetic little party. If it wasn't for you, Kate and I might still be together.

PAULA stops and faces SAM.

PAULA: What did I do?

KATE: This has nothing to do with Paula.

SAM: Then why is she here?

KATE: She's my best friend.

SAM: Best friend?

KATE: Yes, best friend.

KATE puts her arm around PAULA.

PAULA: Where are *your* friends, Sam? Oh that's right, they're pissed off because you've been bonking their wives and girlfriends!

SAM: All consenting adults, which is more than I can say for your latest toy-boy.

KATE: Taxi!

KATE tries to hail another taxi.

Damn it!

PAULA: How many notches are there on that belt of yours Sam? Twenty? Thirty? Forty?

SAM: Your timeframe being?

KATE: You bastard!

SAM: For God's sake Kate! How many times do I have to tell you? It meant nothing, it was just sex.

KATE: 'Just...sex!' Do you mean 'just sex' - no conversation, no romantic dinner, just sex? Or do you mean - 'just... sex' - ordinary, boring, let's get it over and done with, just sex?

SAM: Is that a multiple choice question?

KATE: Five years! It took you five years to work out that we were having ordinary, boring old sex?

PAULA: Sounds like an addiction to me.

SAM: Stay out of this Paula.

PAULA: No I won't stay out of this. Kate's my best friend.

SAM: Best friends...hmmm...best friends tell each other everything, right? (*Pause*) You're not a natural blond, are you?

PAULA: You can be a real jerk, you know that?

SAM: You didn't tell her, did you?

KATE: Big deal, Paula dyes her hair! Everyone knows that.

PAULA tries to hail a taxi.

PAULA: Taxi!

SAM: Come on Paula. It's a bit late, but better late than never. If you won't tell her I will.

KATE: Tell me what?

PAULA: It was ages ago. You and Sam weren't even married.

KATE: What was ages ago?

SAM: Paula and I...you know...

KATE: You and Paula?

SAM: Yep, me and Paula. The first time...was a bit ordinary, the second time, a bit better. But three months! What was I thinking?

KATE: Three months! Where was I? On the moon?

SAM: In Noumea, at that artist-in-residence thingy.

KATE: We were engaged!

PAULA: You never told me that! I wouldn't have done it if I knew you were engaged.

KATE: You wouldn't have done *it*? You screwed Sam for three months. That's a hell of a lot of *its*!

PAULA: It wasn't like that!

SAM: Yes it was.

KATE: How could you?

PAULA: We were drunk. One thing led to another...you know how it is? Kate, we didn't know if you were coming back. Besides you were there with ...whatshisname.

SAM: Ah Philippe! Yes, let's talk about Philippe.

KATE: How many times do I have to tell you? Nothing happened!
Get over it Sam.

SAM: I'll get over it when you get over it.

PAULA: Why are you both dredging up the past? You just got
divorced for God's sake!

KATE: I'm...I'm not feeling well. I ...

KATE faints and SAM catches her as she falls towards the footpath.

SAM: Shit! Kate, wake up!

PAULA: She's not asleep, she fainted. Lie her down.

SAM: On the ground?

PAULA: No, on the fucking chaise lounge next to the 'no parking'
sign!

*SAM lowers KATE on to the ground then PAULA crouches down and feels
KATE'S pulse. SAM stands up and looks around.*

SAM: Taxi!

PAULA: She doesn't need a taxi! I'll call an ambulance.

*PAULA stands and presses buttons on her mobile phone. SAM crouches down
next to KATE.*

SAM: I'll give her mouth-to-mouth.

*SAM starts giving KATE mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. After two breaths, KATE
comes to.*

KATE: Aaah!

SAM: That worked well.

KATE: Get off me!

KATE pushes SAM. PAULA hangs up the phone.

PAULA: It's OK Kate, Sam was just –

KATE: Did you kiss me?

SAM: No, I gave you mouth-to-mouth-

KATE: Aaaahhh, that's worse!

KATE wipes her mouth. She tries to get up then stumbles. SAM tries to help her.

KATE: Piss off!

SAM: You know something Kate? I never stopped loving you, the whole five years.

KATE: Give me a break!

SAM: I made a mistake. OK, lots of mistakes. I accept that. But didn't you ever want to fool around?

KATE: No.

SAM: What about Philippe?

KATE: He was gay.

PAULA: That's not what you told me.

KATE: Nothing happened!

PAULA: You told me he hit on you.

KATE: He did, and I knocked him back. I kept telling myself - keep it professional, keep it platonic.

SAM: How do you do that? I don't know how to say no. *(Looks at PAULA)* Especially when a woman tries every trick in the book to seduce me. Isn't that right, Paula?

PAULA: That is total bullshit.

KATE: Did you seduce Sam?

PAULA: He's trying to drive a wedge between us, can't you see that?

KATE: What do you mean 'every trick in the book'?

SAM: I'm talking Kama Sutra.

KATE: I get it! You use the *Kama Sutra* with your girlfriends and the old second-hand copy of *The Joy of Sex* with me?

SAM: We didn't need any sex manual to tell us what to do.

KATE: *(To PAULA)* How could you? We were best friends!

PAULA: We still are!

KATE: Not any more. Taxi!

KATE runs after a taxi and exits.

PAULA: Kate, come back! I'm sorry!

PAULA steps back and SAM pulls her towards him, hugging her from behind. They start doing a slow dance.

SAM: Is everything still OK for our date tonight? I'll have the lights dimmed, soft music playing, the champagne on ice. Do you think Kate suspects anything?

KATE enters running. She is barefoot and carrying her stilettos. She stops abruptly. PAULA steps away from SAM. KATE drops her stilettos on the ground.

KATE: What's going on?

PAULA: Nothing's going on.

There's an uncomfortable silence.

KATE: Still best friends?

PAULA: Absolutely. Still best friends.

KATE and PAULA put their arms around each other.

SAM: What about me? What am I? Chopped liver?

KATE: You know Sam, we're not so different after all. You had sex with lots of other women, I fantasized about other men.

SAM: You fantasized? About who? How many times?

KATE: Every time. There were actors, artists, rock stars...the plumber!

SAM: That bastard, I knew he was too cheap!

KATE puts on her stilettos.

KATE: Sam, it's over! Divorced. Finished. Caput. *(pause)* Now I'm ready to party!

PAULA: Let's go girlfriend!

SAM: What about our date tonight?

PAULA: Do you really think that I'd go out with you on the night you get divorced from my best friend?

SAM: Yes.

KATE: You don't give up do you?

KATE and PAULA exit. SAM looks at his watch.

SAM: I'd better get home - chill the champagne, dim the lights, put on some music...just in case one of them changes their mind. Taxi!

SAM hails a taxi then freezes as he opens the car door.