

# GAMES AND PUZZLES

by Gail Phaneuf

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*A Drama Duet*

by **Gail Phaneuf**

**SYNOPSIS:** Ted and Kelly are in the midst of a painful separation. Ted has returned, at Kelly's request, to help clean out the basement and take his "stuff". A puzzle with two missing pieces becomes a metaphor for their life together as they struggle to understand their love and their marriage.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1 female, 1 male)*

TED (m).....43 years old married to Kelly. *(62 lines)*

KELLY (f).....41 years old married to Ted. *(63 lines)*

**TIME:** Present day.

**SETTING:** The action takes place in the basement of the couple's home.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This is extremely painful for Kelly because she still has strong feelings for Zac. They have been separated for several months, and Zac has started seeing another woman. Zac thinks they just completely burned out their marriage trying to have a child. Kelly feels defeated, but she is certainly not being vindictive or nasty and she is not whining. She really wants to explore if there is hope left for the relationship or her future.

**PROPS**

- Lava lamp
- Packing boxes labeled “games and puzzles”, “kitchen stuff”, “misc”, “office files” etc. The boxes are all labeled. (i.e. “kitchen gadgets”, “office files”, “games and puzzles” etc..)
- Wedding photo album – unfinished.
- Packages of wedding pictures
- Twister Game
- Scrabble Game
- Cell Phone
- Puppy (or kittens) puzzle labeled with 2 missing pieces. (*needs to have actual puzzle pieces in it so they may be dumped out by Kelly.*)

**AT RISE:** *TED and KELLY are in their basement surrounded by boxes and junk cluttering the room.*

**TED:** Do we have to do this today?

**KELLY:** Yes!

**TED:** But I told my friend that I would let-

**KELLY:** I know you're in a big rush to leave the scene of the crime and see your friend, but you're not leaving me alone with all of this to sort out!

**TED:** I'll come back when you're not so upset-

**KELLY:** I have to live here and I'll thank you to take your clutter with you. *(Beat.)* Besides...you'll never come back.

**TED:** We haven't looked in these boxes for eight years. Just leave them and I'll pick them up when I can—

**KELLY:** I'm not going to leave them Ted, and neither are you. If I ever have the room—

**TED:** Kelly, take my word for it – we don't need to go through this.

**KELLY:** I do.

**TED:** Well then I can come back after you're done—

**KELLY:** With you.

**TED:** Alright – for heaven's sake. It's a beautiful day and you want to spend it down here in the dust and mold.

**KELLY:** It seems fitting to spend today wiping away the mold.

**TED:** Where should I start?

**KELLY:** You packed almost every one of these boxes, you tell me.

**TED:** Kelly, that was a million years ago. I don't remember-

**KELLY:** Oh come on Ted – you meticulously labeled them all.

**TED:** So if they're meticulously labeled, then we can just assume we know what's in each box. Right?

**KELLY:** I said you labeled them – I have no clue what's in here.

**TED:** Just keep it all – I don't want anything.

**KELLY:** Oh no – you're not getting off that easy. One by one here we go.

**TED:** Kelly, I need to make a call.

**KELLY:** This is important!

**TED:** OK, OK!

**KELLY:** Here, *(Reads the box label.)* "games and puzzles".

**TED:** You can have those.

**KELLY:** (*Opening the games and puzzles box.*) Let's see what you packed in here.

**TED:** (*Opening another box.*) Hey – here's my old lava lamp. I might keep this. It inspired many deep thoughts – when we were in college – remember? (*Picks up the lava lamp.*)

**KELLY:** (*Looking through the box.*) Take it. I didn't know it meant that much to you. If I had known it would evoke deep thoughts, I would have left it in the living room.

**TED:** Please, let's not bicker.

**KELLY:** What's this? (*Holds up a puzzle box.*)

**TED:** Looks like a puzzle.

**KELLY:** It is, but you've written on it – there are two missing pieces.

**TED:** That's a good thing to know.

**KELLY:** Why didn't you throw it away?

**TED:** You used to like that one. With the puppies on it. It's a good puzzle.

**KELLY:** With two missing pieces?

**TED:** Yes.

**KELLY:** Then it's trash!

**TED:** Why?

**KELLY:** Do you realize how frustrating it is to work on a puzzle that has missing pieces? It means you can never finish it.

**TED:** But if you know there are two missing pieces – you can just keep that in the back of your mind and work around them.

**KELLY:** But you don't know which pieces are missing. It will drive you crazy!

**TED:** Well, I like to think I could be content putting it together knowing that there were two missing pieces.

*Beat.*

**KELLY:** Just because you know something is missing, doesn't mean that you can ignore the fact that you can't finish the puzzle.

**TED:** I didn't think I should throw it out!

**KELLY:** Well, here – you can keep it for posterity.

*KELLY holds the box out to TED.*

**TED:** I don't have a lot of storage space in my new apartment-

**KELLY:** But you can surely find a place for this priceless puzzle!

*KELLY makes TED take the puzzle.*

**TED:** I don't think this is a good use of our time here.

**KELLY:** What else is in here? Twister. Do you want that?

**TED:** No.

**KELLY:** I'll keep that. It'll remind me that I could once actually do a backbend.

**TED:** You always won by doing a one-handed backbend!

**KELLY:** My gymnastics training paid off for something.

**TED:** Is the Scrabble game in there?

**KELLY:** You hate Scrabble.

**TED:** That's because you cheat.

**KELLY:** I do not cheat!

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