

# RACHEL AND RUTHIE

By Karen Sokolof Javitch

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**SYNOPSIS:** When Ruthie wanders into Rachel's room at her sorority house, it seems at first to be a random meeting. Soon, however, it becomes apparent that Ruthie may have wandered farther than she originally thought. *Rachel and Ruthie* is the poignant story of two 21 year-olds in their last year of college who discover they have much more in common than they originally thought. Each girl has something to gain from their encounter, and the experience will prove incredibly rewarding for both. This riveting show will bring tears to your eyes and inspire you to reach for your loved ones.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 females, 1 either)*

RACHEL .....21 year-old college senior. Wearing jeans with holes in them and a University of Wisconsin sweatshirt. *(94 lines)*

RUTHIE.....21 year-old college senior. Wearing clothes from 1947. Ages at the end of the show to be a youthful 81 year- -old. *(83 lines)*

RUTHIE / NONNY .....81 year-old youthful- -looking grandmother. Can be played as a separate part or by aging the young RUTHIE. *(9 lines)*

RACHEL'S FRIEND.....College-aged male or female. Funny. Punk rock hair and dress. On stage for only a few minutes. *(Non-Speaking)*

SARAH.....College-age female. Off-stage. *(3 lines)*

## SETTING

One set - - a sorority house bedroom at the University of Wisconsin. Has a bed, desk with a computer, chair and many photos and pictures to represent the year 2007.

**TIME:** The year 2007.

## MUSIC

There is one song, entitled *You Look Familiar*, written by Karen Sokolof Javitch. It is a duet between Rachel and Ruthie. They sing a reprise of the song's ending a little later in the show. An instrumental of the song is played at the very end.

A piano accompaniment would be nice. An instrumental track is also available.

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**AT RISE:** RACHEL is on the computer working on a paper for one of her college courses. She is in her room in her sorority house. The year is 2007. Another college student, RUTHIE, walks in the room. RACHEL looks up.

**RUTHIE:** Hello. *(She is a little disoriented.)*

**RACHEL:** Hi. Are you looking for someone? My roommate just left and should be - -

**RUTHIE:** I'm not sure. I was studying in my room and got up to get a drink of water and all of a sudden I'm in your room. Do I know you? I'm Ruthie.

**RACHEL:** Hi Ruthie. I'm Rachel. Where do you live?

**RUTHIE:** Well, I live at the SDT House, but somehow I don't think I'm there anymore.

**RACHEL:** This is Chi Omega. It seems like you're a little ways from home.

**RUTHIE:** I don't remember walking into this building. Do you mind if I sit down? I feel a little out of sorts.

**RACHEL:** Sure. *(RACHEL pulls out a chair for her.)* Can I get you some water? *(Grabs a bottled water.)* Here. *(Hands it to her.)*

**RUTHIE:** *(Looks at the bottle.)* Oh my goodness. Water in a bottle. What will they think of next?

**RACHEL:** *(Laughs nervously.)* Uh huh. So, I've been to the SDT house - - I have a few friends there, but I've never seen you. Where are you from?

**RUTHIE:** I'm from Omaha.

**RACHEL:** Seriously? For real?

**RUTHIE:** Yes. *(Takes a sip of water.)* You too?

**RACHEL:** Sure am. How amazing is that? Does everyone think you live on a farm?

**RUTHIE:** Yep. With cows and the whole bit. *(They laugh.)* No one knows how great it is living there.

**RACHEL:** That's so true. Especially now with the new mall out west. Have you been there?

*RUTHIE shakes her head, a little confused.*

**RACHEL:** I went to Westside High School. Where did you go?

**RUTHIE:** I went to Central. Funny, I never heard of Westside.

**RACHEL:** Huh? That's strange. What year are you?

**RUTHIE:** I'm a senior.

**RACHEL:** Me too. It will be nice to graduate and then hopefully get a job next year. What are you studying - - when you're not at the SDT house?

**RUTHIE:** Psychology, with a minor in sociology. I hope to graduate early so I can go home and get my M R S Degree. *(She says the letters M, R, S.)*

**RACHEL:** Your what?

**RUTHIE:** My M R S degree. I'm almost engaged.

**RACHEL:** Wow! That's awesome! I think.

**RUTHIE:** Yeah, awe . . . some. Does that mean swell?

**RACHEL:** Yeah, swell. Maybe that's a Central word. Who are you almost engaged to?

**RUTHIE:** My sweetheart from Omaha. He's a real intelligent and handsome fella. Four years older than me. He sings. He's about to ask me - - he just doesn't know it yet. I write him so many letters dropping him hints. I also keep telling him about all of the other guys on campus who are asking me out. To make him jealous, you know.

**RACHEL:** Is it working? That's so romantic that you are writing him letters. Maybe I ought to try that.

**RUTHIE:** You don't write letters ?

**RACHEL:** Only to one person - - I have a friend who's in Iraq, so I write to him. Do you have any friends in the service?

**RUTHIE:** My brother enlisted, but then the war ended. Where's Iraq?

**RACHEL:** What? Oh, yeah - - hah - - like you don't know.

**RUTHIE:** *(Ignores RACHEL's comment because she doesn't understand it.)* How do you communicate with your family then, if you don't write letters?

**RACHEL:** Oh, you know - - my cell phone.

**RUTHIE:** *(Doesn't understand.)* Oh, of course: cell . . . phone. Sometimes I call home, but it's expensive - - long distance, you know.

**RACHEL:** *(Only half-listening.)* Oh, sure. I email, too.

**RUTHIE:** E . . . mail.

**RACHEL:** Do you have a laptop?

**RUTHIE:** *(Looks at her lap.)* Well, yeah. Don't you?

**RACHEL:** No, I just use my desktop - - over there. *(Points to her desktop computer.)*

**RUTHIE:** Your what?

**RACHEL:** My computer. Over there. I was typing on it when you walked in.

**RUTHIE:** (*Puts her hands to her head, like she doesn't feel well.*)  
This is getting spooky. Maybe I'd better go. But I don't know where to go. Frankly, I'm not sure how to get home. (*Pause.*)  
This room. These photos. Email, laptop, Iraq - - I don't understand. You know, you look like someone I should know - - or that I have known - - somewhere, but I don't know how exactly. You look familiar, but somehow this place is not right.

**RACHEL:** I know. You showing up kind of out of nowhere - - this situation - - it's so strange.

**SONG #1: YOU LOOK FAMILIAR  
(RUTHIE AND RACHEL)**

**BOTH:**

YOU LOOK FAMILIAR,  
LIKE I'VE SEEN YOU IN SOME LONG-LOST PLACE.  
WHEN YOU SMILE YOUR SMILE,  
I KNOW YOUR FACE.  
WE'RE CONNECTED SOMEHOW, I DON'T KNOW.

**RACHEL:**

YOU LOOK FAMILIAR,  
LIKE I'VE DREAMT OF YOU OR FELT YOUR HUG.  
LIKE I FELT YOUR WARMTH AND FELT YOUR LOVE.

**BOTH:**

WE'RE CONNECTED SOMEHOW. I DON'T KNOW.

**RUTHIE:**

MAYBE IT'S THE WAY YOU LAUGH, YOUR GIGGLE.

*RACHEL giggles.*

**RACHEL:**

THE WAY YOUR HAIR FALLS DOWN THE MIDDLE.

**RUTHIE:**

YOUR NOSE, YOUR TEETH,

**RACHEL:**  
YOUR CLOTHES, YOUR CHEEKS.

**BOTH:**  
WHO KNOWS?

**RUTHIE:**  
MAYBE IT'S THE WAY YOU WALK, YOU WADDLE!

**RACHEL:**  
THE WAY YOU MOVE LIKE A MODEL.

*Both laugh as RACHEL moves like a model.*

**BOTH:**  
YOUR SPARKLING EYES, WHO KNOWS FROM WHERE WE CAME?

**RUTHIE:**  
IT'S JUST THAT NOW WE'VE FOUND EACH OTHER

**BOTH:**  
AND

**RACHEL:**  
SOMEHOW WE KNOW WE KNOW EACH OTHER

**BOTH:**  
AND SOMEHOW WE KNOW WE KNOW WE'LL NEVER BE APART.

*End of song is a nice moment together. They are standing next to each other with one arm around each other.*

**RUTHIE:** Well, what do we do now?

**RACHEL:** Figure out how to get you home, I guess. Want to use my cell phone?

*RACHEL gives her cell phone.*

**RUTHIE:** (*Her mood changes. She gets upset.*) I don't want to use your cell phone! (*Drops it on RACHEL's bed.*) I don't even know what a "cell phone" is. I just want to use a regular phone that's on the wall with regular numbers on it that you dial. And all of these things in your room look so, so . . . strange. (*Exasperated.*) I have a headache - - do you have some Bufferin or something, and why are you wearing a University of Wisconsin sweatshirt, anyway? Where's your Indiana University sweatshirt?

**RACHEL:** Okay, slow down. Why should I have an Indiana sweatshirt on? This is so surreal. You're not from around here, are you?

**RUTHIE:** No, I told you I live in the SDT house. On Jordan Avenue.

**RACHEL:** But we don't have a Jordan Avenue here. (*Pause*) Ruthie, can I ask you something? Do my clothes look different to you?

**RUTHIE:** Well, yes, but I didn't want to be rude. I thought maybe you were in a play or something. I don't have any pants that look like that - -

**RACHEL:** You mean jeans, with holes in them?

**RUTHIE:** Yeah, that too.

**RACHEL:** Ruthie, how old are you?

**RUTHIE:** I just turned twenty-one. How about you?

**RACHEL:** The same. What year were you born in?

**RUTHIE:** Are you kidding? You know what year - -

**RACHEL:** Come on, Ruthie, tell me. What year were you born in?

**RUTHIE:** 1925. The same year you were born in.

**RACHEL:** Holy cow!

**RUTHIE:** What? WHAT?

**RACHEL:** Ruthie. Guess when I was born?

**RUTHIE:** Not 1925? When then?

**RACHEL:** 1984! 1984!

**RUTHIE:** But that's impossible. (*Fast-paced as if trying to get it all out.*) Just a minute ago I was in my sorority room studying psychology. I was so tired of studying, and I got up to get a drink of water and walked into the hallway. (*Now slower and pensive.*) But it was really quiet - - so I walked into my friends' room - - and there you were.

**RACHEL:** Were you thinking anything unusual? Doing anything unusual?

**RUTHIE:** No, I had just written my boyfriend, Phil, another letter - - my sixth this week, and of course he hasn't written back. What were you doing?

**RACHEL:** I was writing a paper. A paper on someone who I most admired in my family.

**RUTHIE:** Who were you writing about?

**RACHEL:** My Grandma, Ruthieeeeeeeeeeee!

*They both look at each other and abruptly separate.*

**RUTHIE:** (*Goes over in her head.*) Oh, gosh, I just wrote a letter to Phil and started studying and then got up to . . . oh, God!

**RACHEL:** What? WHAT?

**RUTHIE:** I need a cigarette! You do have one, don't you?

**RACHEL:** Nope. Don't smoke. But maybe I'll start.

**RUTHIE:** No, no. This is too bizarre. This can't be. I'm not even going to think about it.

*She sits on the bed, in a daze, not listening to RACHEL.*

**RACHEL:** (*Mutters to herself as she walks around.*) Of course, I always wanted to know my grandma because she died before I was born and Mom always talked about her and she was so close to her but . . .

**RUTHIE:** I can't be your . . . grandma. Even though you're so cute and adorable, and of course, I would love to be a grandma when I'm older - - but now I'm only 21 and it's 1947.

**RACHEL:** (*Checking out her computer.*) Did you say 1947? (*RUTHIE nods.*) OMG! (*Using the initials.*)

*RUTHIE reacts to that comment.*

**RUTHIE:** What now?

**RACHEL:** And your boyfriend's name is - - Phil?

**RUTHIE:** Yes. Why? Do you know him? (*RACHEL nods her head with a very knowing yes.*) No. He's not . . . oh, no . . . your grandfather? (*RACHEL nods her head again.*) This is so - - what was it you said? OMG? And your grandfather is Phil? (*Brightening up immensely.*) Yes! Oh my! So he does ask me to marry him! Oh, thank you, Rachel. I've been so worried that he doesn't love me, but he does!

*She hugs RACHEL. RACHEL puts her hand up for a high five and Ruth doesn't know what she is doing. RACHEL shows her how to do it and they laugh.*

**RUTHIE:** OMG! I'm not sure what that means but I'm sure it's appropriate. Are you sure you don't have a cigarette?

**RACHEL:** I don't smoke. Some girls do. I don't. It makes me cough.

**RUTHIE:** Yeah? That's too bad. Calms my nerves.

**RACHEL:** But it's really not very good for you. I guess you don't know that yet.

**RUTHIE:** No. Anyway, let's put our heads together and think. The year now is - - let's see - - 2007? Boy, isn't that something. It's sixty years later. And we're still here.

**RACHEL:** What do you mean?

**RUTHIE:** Well, World War II ended two years ago. We got rid of Hitler and the Nazis. Thank God!

**RACHEL:** Yeah, thank God. Now we have terrorists and a guy named Osama.

**RUTHIE:** Who's that?

**RACHEL:** I think we will save that for another time.

*RACHEL'S FRIEND walks in with wild unnaturally colored hair, ear piercings, an ipod with ear plugs, torn jeans, tattoos and loudly singing or rapping. Makes a very funny appearance singing and dancing. Then walks out.*

**RUTHIE:** What was that?

**RACHEL:** A friend. Came to say hi.

**RUTHIE:** I take it Bing Crosby died?

**RACHEL:** Who's that? Here. I'll shut the door.

*RACHEL starts dancing on her way back.*

**RUTHIE:** Are you . . . dancing?

*RACHEL is dancing. RUTHIE tries to imitate her. They start laughing.*

**RACHEL:** Sure. I'm shakin' my bootie! (*RUTHIE tries to shake.*)

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