

GHOSTS AT A NARCAN TRAINING

A ten-minute play
by Rebecca Kane

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Cast of Characters

MOLLY: Woman in her 20s-early 30s
ANDREW: Man in his 20s-early 30s
PAT: Any gender, anywhere from 20s-60s

Synopsis:

All Andy wanted was to attend this training he heard might be useful. Unfortunately for him, he arrives and learns that all Molly wanted was closure.

Place:

A bleak room of some kind in an office or medical building, like a spare conference room now being used for storage too

Time:

Early evening, 2019

CONTENT WARNING:

This play comes with a content warning for mentions of drug use, including overdoses, addiction, and death.

[MOLLY sits in a plain plastic chair. She isn't quite tense, but definitely ready for something. ANDY opens the door, recognizes her, and turns back around immediately. She saw someone come in, but not that it was him. He mills around just outside.]

MOLLY:

Hello? Are you here for Narcan training?

[He is, so he's caught.]

ANDY:

Yeah, I'm—*[faking it]* Heyyy! Mollyyyy!

MOLLY:

Andrew? Are you kidding me?

ANDY:

Nah, I'm... it's... nah, it's me. I'm here.

MOLLY:

Are you fucking kidding me?

ANDY:

You know what, I think they do this on Thursdays too, and I can just switch shifts—

MOLLY:

No. Oh no. Come on in. Have a seat.

ANDY:

Listen—

MOLLY:

Oh, I'm listening. I'm ready to listen. I've been ready to listen for six months.

ANDY:

I'll just come a different night, and I promise, like I PROMISE I will reach out to you and explain everything—

MOLLY:

Just like you PROMISED not to up and ghost me as soon as things got even remotely serious?

ANDY:

You're right to be mad—

MOLLY:
THANKS I really needed your PERMISSION

ANDY:
Now is obviously not the time to talk about it.

[She's about to really let him have it. Andy braces himself. At the last moment, she holds back and takes a deep breath.]

MOLLY:
It didn't seem like it was ever going to be the time to talk about it. Am I wrong in assuming that?

ANDY *[cautiously optimistic]*:
No.

MOLLY:
I didn't want to assume things. But you gave me no other choice.

ANDY:
I understand.

MOLLY:
And what else?

[He's confused. After a moment of trying to read her, it dawns on him.]

ANDY:
Duh, yeah, I'm sorry. I am. Sorry.

MOLLY *[a concession]*:
They told me we should just have a seat and wait for the instructor. We're early, so.

ANDY:
Not anymore.

MOLLY:
Oh... really?

ANDY:
Yeah, it's like gotta be past 6:30... let me check... yeah, 6:33.
[She's laughing.] What?

MOLLY:
Nothing.

ANDY:
Come on, what?

MOLLY:

Just that I thought you'd ever be on time.

[This was said to hurt his feelings. It worked.]

ANDY:

See, this is exactly why I was avoiding talking to you when I wanted out. *[All laughter leaves her face. She maintains eye contact with him, silent.]* Yeah? We're just gonna wait for the instructor then?

MOLLY *[mocking his tone]*:

Yeah. We're just gonna wait for the instructor then.

ANDY:

So. What brings you here?

MOLLY:

I thought we were gonna wait in silence.

ANDY:

I can't stand sitting here just not talking.

MOLLY:

That's ironic, considering.

ANDY *[getting up]*:

I'll come a different day.

[PAT enters, having expertly opened the door with no hands free. She is two parts overworked, and one part at peace with this. She carries in her arms a clipboard, a clicker for a PowerPoint presentation, a handful of flyers, and three kits about the size of lunchboxes. She thinks Andy is up to help and hands him the clipboard and starts setting up. Andy, feeling too awkward to leave now, just sits down.]

PAT:

Thanks, bud. You're both here for the naloxone training? Make sure to initial on the sign-in sheet.

MOLLY:

Oh-no. I'm here for Narcan dispensal training. Uh-oh.

PAT:

It's the same thing. *[checking her paper]* Molly?

MOLLY:

Oh. Yes.

PAT:

Andrew?

ANDY:

Andy is good. [to MOLLY] It's okay. I didn't know they were the same thing either.

MOLLY:

I KNOW it's okay.

ANDY:

Okay. Well. I didn't know it was okay.

PAT [*picking up on tension*]:

I'll take a guess and say we're all feeling 'okay' today? [No answer.] Thanks for coming out tonight. Who here knows someone—well, you know what? Let's not use that language. Small class, so I'll adjust this to make it just a conversation, between the three of us. Do either of you know someone who's addicted to opiates?

[Molly raises her hand, then lowers it immediately, embarrassed at this reflex. Andy is surprised at her answer.]

PAT:

Not you, Andy?

MOLLY:

Everyone knows someone.

ANDY:

I don't mean anything by it, I just don't know anyone personally.

MOLLY:

You know people who are pretty good at hiding it.

PAT:

For the time being.

ANDY:

I really don't think I do. Not that I would judge.

PAT:

Statistically speaking, you do. It's very common around here. Every seven hours someone in New York dies of an overdose.

[Andy is visibly floored by that statistic. Molly doesn't like to hear it, but isn't shocked.]

PAT:

It's very likely someone you care about is struggling right now. And you guys are taking a very important step to learn how you can help them out in an overdose, so—

MOLLY:

Wait, I'm sorry. It's gonna bother me. I just have a question.

PAT:

No, no worries. Go ahead. We'll probably end early.

MOLLY:

Andrew, if you're so sure you don't know anyone with this problem, then why are you here?

PAT:

I thought you meant a question for me. That's not really--

ANDY:

I just wanted to help.

MOLLY:

OBVIOUSLY SO DO I, but who could you possibly want to help if you're so sure it doesn't affect you?

ANDY:

Whose life are you out here saving, then?

MOLLY:

None of your business.

ANDY:

Exactly, so why is mine any of yours?

MOLLY:

Good point. Okay.

ANDY:

Okay.

PAT:

Okay! *[Clicker in hand, they gesture from here on out to a PowerPoint presentation off stage.]* I've already shared that pretty shocking stat with you, and that's even fluctuated between an overdose death every six and seven hours over the last few years. Now you might be asking—what exactly is an opioid?

MOLLY:

I'm not.

ANDY:

Painkillers, right?

PAT:

Pretty much. Opioids are prescription medicines that can be used to treat pain. Opioids work by attaching to structures in your brain called "receptors" and send signals that block pain, slow breathing, and calm the body down.

ANDY:

Vibe.

MOLLY:

Shut up.

ANDY:

I just mean, I get why people use it. Stress relief, pain relief. Who doesn't need that?

MOLLY [to Pat]:

Oh. So woke. [to Pat] You know he used to make fun of my name?

ANDY:

It's FUNNY, you LAUGHED

MOLLY:

It gets less funny when you say you're rolling on molly every single time you come to my house.

ANDY:

"Every single time" So all three times. Total.

MOLLY:

Fuck you.

PAT:

You know, guys, there's a Thursday night class. It's pretty popular, usually at least ten people there. Maybe one of you--

MOLLY:

I want to stay and learn this now.

ANDY:

Well, me too.

MOLLY:

I think it means more to me to stay.

PAT:

This is meaningful for everyone.

MOLLY:

Fine, but. He doesn't even have a personal connection.

ANDY:

I know just as much as you do.

MOLLY:

Oh, please. Is that a dig at the Narcan-naloxone thing?

PAT:

About that—it really is the same thing. Naloxone is just the generic version of that drug.

MOLLY:

I get it. It's just an acronym.

ANDY:

Not an acronym, really.

MOLLY:

Yes it is.

ANDY:

No it's not. It's the brand name. COULD be an acronym. But not necessarily.

MOLLY:

Hey, Andrew. Did it ever occur to you? Ever? Even once? That you don't know everything about this?

ANDY:

YES. I just want to help people. Is that so wrong? I heard about this from a subway ad. I looked it up on my phone. It said you could reverse an overdose by just learning how to give someone this drug and I thought, you know what? I've never gone out and learned how to help anyone do anything. I've never contributed shit to my city. Certainly not back home in Jacksonville. And look at that place now. But no, I don't know anyone who O.D.ed. Not any friends, I mean. I don't even know for sure if any my friends use that stuff but what if they do? They probably do. I just want to be able to help if I'm there at the time. Big "if", yeah, but now that I hear that crazy-ass every-seven-hours thing, I mean, damn. Maybe I'll just walk the streets with a kit. Worst that happens is I help somebody. Why not? Okay?

MOLLY [*her turn to be floored*]:

Okay.

[*Pat considers doing anything else, but just decides to move forward with the slides.*]

PAT:

Thank you for sharing, Andy. Your city will appreciate you taking this initiative. I know I do. So, let's talk about how you can help. Often, people taking opioids to manage their pain are unaware of the potential adverse reactions, including overdose. Now we're going to go over some of the signs of overdose.

MOLLY:

Can we not?

PAT:

As in... can we skip this section? I'm afraid not.

MOLLY:

It's just that it might be. Kind of triggering. For people.

ANDY:

We don't have to. I'll just google it.

PAT:

For you to be legally certified to administer this, we do. I need to go over it.

ANDY:

What's the legal part of the certification matter anyway? I don't need to put it on my resume or anything.

PAT:

Sure, but if you don't complete the training and go on to administer naloxone, you could be liable for what happens to that person in certain ways. This could mean a manslaughter suit if they don't make it. Or if they do, they might sue you for ruining their high. [*Molly and Andy's faces are incredulous.*] Both would be credible cases. I've seen them win before.

MOLLY:

... Oh.

ANDY:

... Yeah?

PAT:

Oh, yeah.

MOLLY:

My sister. Had a problem. She could have really used this. That's all I'm gonna say. *[She waits only a couple seconds for a response.]* I'm being ridiculous. I know you have to do the slide with the signs of O.D. It's fine. I'm fine. I'm okay.

[She's visibly forcing being okay. As he extends his hand, Andy says this:]

ANDY:

You don't have to. But if you want to. I don't mean it to be, like, a thing. Just if you need someone. To hold your hand.

MOLLY:

No, Andy. But thank you. Really.

ANDY:

Thanks for calling me Andy again.

PAT *[handing them both kits]:*

Those belong to you now.

ANDY:

Ours? Really? Oh.

MOLLY:

Yeah. It's smaller than I thought.

PAT:

You don't need much more than that kit to save a life. And just a little bit more training. Want to open them up and see what's inside?

[Molly and Andy open their kits and look inside. Then they both peer at the other's, as if making sure they're the same.]

End of play.]