

**Film Title and Release Date:** *The Phone Call* (2013)

**Length of Film in Minutes:** 22 minutes

**Film Genre:** Drama/Short

**Reviewer's Name and Grade:** Benjamin W., 9<sup>th</sup> grade

**Date Reviewed:** December 28, 2020

One day, Heather, a shy woman who volunteers as a crisis center hotline operator, receives a mysterious call from a man called Stan. Stan is unwilling to fully explain the nature of his problem and is only willing to let out that he feels scared about an event that happened two years ago. As the call goes on, Heather finds out that it was two years ago that Stan lost his wife and that since then, he has felt so desperate. Additionally, she finds out that Stan has been taking a lot of anti-depressant pills. As Heather tries to convince Stan to let her call an ambulance, Stan tells her that he has already given up on life. He just wants her to be with him when he dies. Heather tries to keep Stan talking by asking about his family but things don't turn out well. She learns just how sad Stan's life has been and can't cheer him up. She tries to get all the help Stan needs but Stan says that it's already too late for him. The film ends with Stan still on the line, however not talking or breathing. Heather sends an ambulance to his house and they find him dead, having committed suicide.

Now, I will answer some questions about the film:

*How did you find the film on Kanopy (by title search, subject search, casual browsing, etc.)?* - I found this film through subject search. I wanted to watch a drama and *The Phone Call* was in the most popular section.

*Did the plot keep you interested?* - This plot kept me interested. The plot involved no action but the conversation over the phone really pulled me in. As more of the plot was revealed, the suspense grew and grew. It just made me want to know how the film would end.

*Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?* - I think the pace of this film was just right. The plot required a not so fast pace so the slow and suspenseful pace fit well. This film consisted of only a phone call so the length of the film was perfect. Any longer and the film would've seemed to stretched out.

*What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?* - I think this film is appropriate for kids in grades 8-12. This film deals with issues such as drug abuse, depression, and suicide so this film wouldn't be appropriate for younger kids. Older kids would understand the plot better making it more interesting for them.

I would rate this film *4 stars*. This film contained a basic plot but the actor and actress playing Stan and Heather did a really good job of portraying the situation. The plot really pulled me in and everything was clear. This film had a good educational message in it and it has won the Oscar-award for short films.

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Connor M., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Date Reviewed:** March 7, 2022

This movie plot is in an emergency crisis call center and Heather and another man are the main characters. While working at the crisis center Heather gets a call from a man that is depressed and wants to take his life. She tries to talk him out of it while getting to know the man better, she also introduces herself and who she is. At the beginning of the conversation the man is hesitant to share any information about himself and is not confident that she can help him. After talking for a bit he shares with her that he lost his wife 2 years ago as well as his daughter, because of this he is unsure about what to do with his life and is lost. Heather asks the man what he enjoyed doing, the man enjoyed playing jazz music and performing. Heather shares with the man that she played a bit of jazz on the piano and that she wanted to perform but was too shy. Heather and the man find that they actually have a lot in common and really changes Heather's life. The man agrees to let Heather send over an ambulance to help him out and they eventually go out on a date.

*How did you find this film on Kanopy?*

I found it by casually browsing.

*Did the movie keep you interested?*

It really kept me interested especially when they were talking as you didn't know what to expect.

*Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow or just right?*

I felt that it was a bit slow at times especially when the two characters were talking.

*What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?*

This film is appropriate for 7-12, there are some things in the movie that younger viewers wouldn't understand.

*Rating 4 stars: I really enjoyed the movie and the storyline was amazing, overall it was a great short film.*

The movie was very enjoyable and quite unpredictable, although some parts were a bit slow and boring but the good parts of the movie really made up for it and tied the whole thing together.

**Reviewer Name: Marwan G.**

**Date Reviewed: April 4, 2022**

nice to see an artist who's unafraid to play with tragedy and find a way to make it transform into a bittersweet glimmer of hope. There's a fine line in doing so, one that can easily consume the goal into a trite abyss trying too hard to stay afloat within the melodrama. I can see Mat Kirkby and James Lucas' *The Phone Call* proving just as unsuccessful to some as it was touching to me. I wouldn't say it's a resounding triumph considering its finale inherently carries with it a grain of salt you must take, but it definitely hit me with enough force to feel some tears welling along with a smile forming for the two characters engaging in a conversation based purely on empathy and compassion despite the futility to do anything else but talk.

It takes a special kind of person to work as a crisis hotline member, especially when you're not allowed to trace any calls or set up measures to ensure the scared party on the other end of the phone remains safe. It has to be a lonely life-what you can keep trapped in your own mind to face the darkness you want to brighten, but you can see everything you can I know This is Heather (Sally Hawkins). She is a shy woman who clumsily greets her colleague (Edward Hogg) who is busy with her own caller, but she is busy not looking back on the need for clumsy love she shares. Not too much. His conversation seems less than alive and dead, but that's exactly what the guy ringing her phone (Jim Broadbent) is that exactly that. There's a beautiful simplicity to what Kirby and Lucas bring to life, one saying much through its performances despite our not seeing more than a single vantage point. They eventually bring us into Stanley's home, but it isn't to meet or humanize or pity him. No, we enter his domain to see and hear the clock ticking on his mantle just as one does on Heather's office wall and the watch she holds. Time is the constant—it's flux between too much and too little moving back and forth depending on mood, ambition, or defeat. The act of her giving solace is what we latch onto, but his yearning to accept it as nothing more than a friend holding his hand might be even more resonate. We all want to live. Few people are confident that they will not.

Broadbent provides a moving depiction of a man who agrees with the potentially irreversible acts he committed in the name of loneliness and love, but what we see is Hawkins. She is astounding in her role, shifting from her stock checklist questions to real concerns and heartbreaking helplessness. She works hard, leaving her caller anonymous for each of her dead ends, and never stops getting stronger when she just wants to scream with her frustration. You can't save everyone, and if he's too far away, at least she can comfort him in his last few minutes. For Stan, love is worth dying, and the darkness that such emotions bring is painful, but there is something to feel passionate enough to look back on one's life. After all, it may be Stanley to save Heather.

This movie deserves a 5 star because I'm really glad I watched this film; it was awesome!, And it will fit the people who like to watch drama films and also it's a children short film