

'my sister's keeper' by nick cassavetes essay sample

[Literature](#), [Drama](#)



My Sister's Keeper is a Drama film directed by Nick Cassavetes released in 2009. The film takes place in Long Island, deals with the illness of 16-year old Kate (Sofia Vassilieva), who has suffered from leukemia most of her life. Trying to save their daughter, Kate's parents, Sara (Cameron Diaz) and Brian (Jason Patric), decide to have another baby whom they name Anna. She is a perfect combination of genetic material matched with the genetics of her sister. The parents use Anna's umbilical cord to provide the life support needed to keep Kate alive. Unfortunately, this one procedure is not enough to save Kate. Over the course of the next 13 years, Anna is forced to undergo many medical procedures to help keep her sister alive. She donates blood, bone marrow and other bodily parts to keep her sister from dying. During these tough times, Anna's older brother Jesse grows angry about all the attention being paid to Kate and he begins to act out and distances himself from his family.

As she gets older and starts to think on her own, Anna believes she is being used. She wants to make her own decisions about helping her sister. The conflict rests in Kate's desire to take control over her own body, but at the same time manage her concern about losing her sister if she does not cooperate. Anna loves Kate, and does not want her to die but at the same time does not want to be "her sister's keeper." Therefore, Anna enlists the help of an attorney Campbell Alexander (Alec Baldwin) to sue her parents for the rights to her own body.

Themes

Death-The theme of death is spoken about throughout the film for example when Anna and Kate were both laying outside talking about Kate's death, anna ask kate if she afraid of dying and she responses " I dont mind my disease killing me, but its killing my family too". In the book death is represented by Anna dying after getting killed by drunk driver, In the movie death is represented by Kate dying after years of suffering from leukemia. Taylor's death also serves as another reminder of the life Kate might have had if she didn't have leukemia. After Taylor dies, Sara sees Kate looking at pictures of the family and herself when she was younger, before she had cancer.

Illness-In the Film Kate who diagnosed by a rare childhood leukemia. The illness impact on her life and also on her family. At the beginning, the parents seek more typical solutions to extend their Kate's life. Kate's parent Decide to have another child, who is a perfect genetic match for their sick child, represents a major issue.

Individuality- The other major theme deals with individuality. Anna especially, wants very much to be her own person. She wants to be free to act on her own and not always be a part of her sister's life. She does not want to live in her sister's shadow and not enjoy a normal life because of her sister's illness. She wants to make her own decisions even if it hurts others. She does not want people to take advantage of her just because she has the right genes. She wants to be valued for her own self, not for being a donor. Jesse also wants attention. He wants people to appreciate him for who he is. He tries so very hard to gain attention by completely secluding himself from

his family. He winds up sleeping above the garage, as if he is a stranger.

Characters left behind-Family Memembers

Denial- One of the characters showing most of her concern for Kate is her mother, Sara. Sara is going through denial in the Kubler-Ross cycle. Sara is willing to do anything and everything to save Kate from dying even if she has to ignore and use her other two children Anna and Jesse. She is in denial as she forgets about everything in her life like her job, hobbies, and the rest of her family, to see Kate survive or at least live longer. Sara feels that if Kate is her top priority and main focus then Kate will have all of the support she needs to go on with life even if it includes relying on Anna to provide Kate with necessary body parts.

Anger-In the Kubler-Ross cycle Jesse is going through the " anger" stage. In the film, Jesse's usually forgotten or overlooked by his parents. Feeling ignored and nonessential to anyone, Jesse does acts that are troublesome which can make his parents worry about them in some way. . Jesse shows he's angry during Kate's suffering and death because he doesn't know how he can stop himself from making destructive decisions throughout the neighbourhood and within himself. Some of the acts include secretly burning down areas within the neighbourhood and breaking the law by doing things like using drugs. His parents didn't know at the time that Jesse burned these places down, but Jesse liked that he was getting attention whether his parents knew or not.

Bargaining- Anna is in the third stage or the bargaining stage of grief. She wants desperately to be free of the burden of both her life and Kate's, but at the same time, Anna loves Kate and does not want her to die. In the chapter titled Thursday, Anna fantasizes about a life where Kate is dead Depression- Brian is going through the Kubler-Ross' stage of depression in the cycle. He sees everyone dealing with the grief in their own harsh ways. Brian tries to help, but he feels that he really has no impact on how anyone can feel. He is barely involve in any of the family activities unless it involves Kate. Knowing that Sara only will focus only on Kate, Brian feels lonelier and therefore keeps his feelings to himself. He feels that sharing his feelings would only make matters worse as the home would more miserable or his feelings will be ignored just as they have been ever since Kate has gotten sick.

Acceptance- The main character, Anna Fitzgerald, shows her acceptance of the Kubler-Ross cycle. Anna hates to admit that her sister will die regardless of what the family tries to do. Therefore, she tries to save herself and Kate from any more suffering by gaining legal rights to do what she wants to do with her body despite what her parents tell her. Anna knows that her parents, especially her mother, Sara, will go to any extremes to make Kate win the battle against cancer or at least live longer. Anna feels like winning the case will make her parents realize that Anna, too, has a right to live a normal life with a normal childhood. She's accepted that Kate will soon die and doesn't want to see Kate suffer any longer. Anna also feels that she's doing Kate a favor by no longer suffering in a life where Kate has zero to

little chance of surviving. Anna doesn't tell her parents, but Kate wants to die and save the family from any more grief.

Character who is dying _kate

Denial-

Anger-

Bargaining

Depression

Accetpence

The book's title, *My Sister's Keeper*, is a reference to Genesis 4: 9. When Julia requests information about Anna's whereabouts, Jesse asks if he is his sister's keeper. A cancer patient wears a shirt sporting the words: Jesus saves. Chemo scores. The story of Adam and Eve is referred to as a load of crap. Accusing Sara of playing the martyr, Sara's sister asks if she wants to take her crown of thorns out of her suitcase. Anna wonders what age she will be in heaven. Campbell sues the Diocese of Providence on behalf of a child who is denied controversial treatment on religious grounds. Anna misunderstands a newspaper headline and thinks he sued God. Julia's parents are Catholic.

Bibliography

Cast names, quotes <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1078588/> (accessed 07/07/14)

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