

# ONE LAST TRICK

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A short dramedy by  
Anne G'Fellers-Mason

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

SYD, a 17-year-old junior, confident in most things, except Claire.

CLAIRE, a 17-year-old junior, confident in all things now.

Magic can't fix everything.

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*(An open field. A box and a single chair sit beside a table strewn with various magic tricks.)*

*(SYD leads CLAIRE on slowly. She is blindfolded. He's dressed in a formal suit, she is dressed far more casually.)*

**CLAIRE:** Where are you taking me?

**SYD:** Just a little further.

**CLAIRE:** We've walked like three miles.

**SYD:** Like three feet. Oh, watch your step there.

*(She freezes.)*

You gotta trust me.

*(She takes a comically large step.)*

Was that so hard?

**CLAIRE:** Excruciatingly.

**SYD:** Pullin' out the fancy SAT words.

*(He leads her to the chair.)*

Have a seat, m'lady.

*(She cautiously feels behind her before sitting.)*

**CLAIRE:** Can I take this off now?

**SYD:** Not yet. Gimme one second.

**CLAIRE:** Oh my god!

**SYD:** Wait for it...wait for it...

*(He checks the table quickly to make sure everything's in place. He pulls his phone from his pocket, selects a song, and then re-pockets it. He hurries off.)*

**CLAIRE:** Now?!

**SYD:** Now!

*(Claire takes off the blindfold and looks around.)*

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What in the—

*(Pachelbel's Canon in D begins to play. Syd walks on slowly, making sure his feet touch each time before he moves again.)*

**CLAIRE:** Oh no!

**SYD:** It's coming back to you, right? The field, the music, the magic?

*(He pulls a deck of cards out of nowhere.)*

**CLAIRE:** Oh no!

**SYD:** The creepy smile, the classical music, the step touch?

*(Syd slowly makes his way to the table.)*

**CLAIRE:** Oh, god. The horrors of my eighth birthday party. I worked hard to forget this. This is years of therapy undone.

*(Syd begins to perform various magic tricks. He's not that good, but his cheesy grin remains.)*

It was so bad. Stop smiling! Stop it! You're freaking me out. Oh, the Pachelbel Magician. I bet he's a serial killer today.

**SYD:** Don't forget the rhyming.

**CLAIRE:** No, please, I beg you!

**SYD:** *(As he performs a trick:)* "Take a card from my deck. Go ahead, give it a check. Put it back, and count to three."

**CLAIRE:** Worst—birthday—ever.

**SYD:** "Blink your eyes. Can it be? The card you picked, here on top, for all to see!"

**CLAIRE:** You brought me out here to relive my nightmares? 'Cause we have this on home video.

**SYD:** You're gonna love this next trick, I promise.

**CLAIRE:** The one where he got in the box and disappeared? That was my favorite, yes.

**SYD:** No, this one!

*(Syd pulls flowers out of his sleeve with a note attached to the end. He drops to one knee before Claire. She tentatively accepts the note.)*

**CLAIRE:** "Dearest Claire, will you go to prom with me? I promise all the fun of your eighth birthday, without the creepy magician, only creepy classmates, and hopefully no *Pachelbel's Canon in D*." *(Laughing:)* Yes, a definite yes. I mean, how can anyone resist such a sweet, psychotic smile?

**SYD:** But wait, there's more.

**CLAIRE:** More?

*(Syd leaves her side and returns to the box. Claire fondly touches the flowers and note.)*

You put a lot of thought in this promposal. I hate I missed prom.

**SYD:** I gotta remember to return that video to your mom.

**CLAIRE:** You did not?!

**SYD:** Research, darling.

*(He produces a corsage.)*

I, uh, picked this out for you. I think it would've gone with that dress you liked.

**CLAIRE:** Syd, it's beautiful.

*(He puts it on her wrist.)*

**SYD:** *(Clearing his throat:)* We'd meet Marcus and Kate for dinner. The menu, Italian, because it's not prom unless you have the absolute dread of getting sauce on your clothes.

**CLAIRE:** Yum! What would we order?

**SYD:** Uh, the lady would like the manicotti and I, the chicken parmesan, but you'd make me switch with you.

**CLAIRE:** Um, yeah, it's what I do.

**SYD:** Which brings us to, prom!

*(He changes the song on his phone to an upbeat dance number. Claire looks out at the field like it's been transformed.)*

**CLAIRE:** Oh, it's beautiful, look at all the carefully crafted papier-mâché decorations.

**SYD:** First comes the picture.

**CLAIRE:** Right.

*(They strike various poses.)*

**SYD:** I can only afford one, though.

**CLAIRE:** Cheapskate.

**SYD:** You're the one who said yes. Next, the awkward fast dancing.

*(They dance for a minute, doing various, uncoordinated moves.)*

Don't forget the awkward cringing at the dirty dancing couples.

*(They cringe in various directions.)*

**CLAIRE:** Someone's gonna be pregnant at graduation. Let's guess who.

**SYD & CLAIRE:** Valerie!

**CLAIRE:** Who's the father?

**SYD & CLAIRE:** Paul!

**CLAIRE:** Ewwwwwww.

**SYD:** Then the King and Queen are announced.

*(They clap sarcastically.)*

**CLAIRE:** What a shocker.

**SYD:** Super shocked.



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**CLAIRE:** Don't worry, high school's almost over, and the real world is harsh and cold.

**SYD:** I take comfort in that every night.

**CLAIRE:** Now what?

*(The music switches over to a slow song.)*

**SYD:** Slow songs, you know.

*(He fidgets, and she smiles, extending her hand. He accepts her hand, and she pulls him close. They sway, a million unsaid things passing between them.)*

**CLAIRE:** Prom seems like fun. You should go for real next year. You should've gone this year.

**SYD:** Marcus said it was lame.

**CLAIRE:** Marcus thinks everything is lame.

**SYD:** I was studying anyhow – SAT.

**CLAIRE:** Now *you're* lame.

*(They continue to dance.)*

Promise me you'll go next year.

**SYD:** Claire –

**CLAIRE:** You'll be a senior, you have to go to your senior prom. You should take Stephanie, she thinks you're cute.

**SYD:** No, I –

**CLAIRE:** You'll need a whole new promposal, though. Can't do that magician shtick for Stephanie – she'll call the cops.

*(Syd stops dancing and takes a step back.)*

**SYD:** *(Exploding:)* I don't wanna go to prom with Stephanie! I wanna go to prom with you! I wanted to last year, and I – I want –

**CLAIRE:** I know.

**SYD:** I was gonna ask you, you know, after the dance, to be my girlfriend, because I love you. I've always loved you, Claire.

**CLAIRE:** Since we were kids, yeah. You're the only one who stayed through the whole magic show fiasco. And that's love, even an eight-year-old knows that.

**SYD:** I saw how sad you were that day, how disappointed, and I knew then I never wanted to see you sad again. I only wanted to make you smile.

**CLAIRE:** Hey, I loved my magician promposal. When you do it, it's endearing.

**SYD:** It wasn't supposed to be this way. We're seventeen! We're supposed to have years!

**CLAIRE:** Syd –

**SYD:** (*Brokenly:*) We're young, you were young, that stupid car...

**CLAIRE:** Syd, stop!

**SYD:** It's not fair!

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