

THE LAST TIME

by Shawn Deal

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THE LAST TIME*A Dramatic Monologue***by Shawn Deal**

SYNOPSIS: A teenage boy tries to come to terms with the sudden death of another student, wishing they could redo the last time they saw them.

TIME: Present

SETTING: Anywhere

CAST OF CHARACTERS*(1 either)*

NARRATOR (m/f) Teenager.

SET: Bare stage

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: This can be done very simply: No costuming and no props. Where this monologue is not set in any one location, you can choose a location and work your set and props from there. This is a very introspective monologue, one of those coming-of-age moments. The teenager is having an experience with life that they are trying to learn from.

DEDICATION

For Meah.

NARRATOR: I'm going to do it this time. I really am. I promise. I swear on anything you want to name; a long dead relative, any kind of deity, something I should never do again, just anything—name it.

What I'm not going to do is say a bad word. Not that kind of swearing. No. No. No. Not going to do that. Although they say that people who swear a lot are highly intelligent. FYI... just putting it out there.

I'm not going to try and prove my intelligence by rattling off every bad word I know. I would like to think that I'm even more intelligent to know I can say those words but choose not to.

Anyway, back to my point, this is not going to be like the last time. I'm totally going to go through with it this time.

I'm going to ask Mia out.

Don't look at me that way. I know I totally fumbled it last time.

I can't tell you what a fiasco that was.

She was standing by her locker, which was at the end of G Hall, a quiet hall for the most part. It only has three classrooms down there: one for choir, music and theater.

Not like the other halls that have like 8 to 10 classrooms and are all off main hall.

No one goes down G hall. Okay, obviously not no one, but still not many, and they are all artsy students, not that there is anything wrong with them. They tend to be the most interesting students in the whole school.

So there Mia was, standing in front of her locker, at the end of G Hall, getting this enormous textbook out of it, must have been for chemistry. She was all alone, none of her friends were around, and I was luckily right there. I had a couple of friends, Lee and Norm, at the other end of the hall, rooting me on and backing me up.

Conditions were nearly perfect, almost too perfect, they were never going to be more perfect. So, after some coaxing by my wingmen, I started walking down the hallway to Mia.

I fully intended to ask her out on a date. I was vaguely thinking of taking her to a movie. The fact that I had no idea what movies were showing or how we would get there, because I didn't have my license, or money to treat, were all out of my mind. That was all the little stuff. As the saying goes: "Don't sweat the little stuff."

It's the big stuff that you have to sweat, and for me, the only priority was Mia simply saying "yes."

So, there I was, walking down the hallway straight at her. She hadn't seen me yet. And I was trying not to get nervous.

I wasn't making the classic mistake. The mistake of never knowing the girl. Never saying a word to the girl until I asked her out. I knew Mia. A little bit, not well, mind you, but some, kind of, at least, more than a tiny bit.

I sat by her in English Lit. It was assigned seats. We didn't talk much, but enough to share our disdain for both *Ethan Frome* and *O'Pioneers*, the two novels we were forced to read that year.

I hated those novels. Talk about emotional damage. Wow. Nothing compares. And I mean nothing.

I'm walking down the hallway, she puts her chemistry book in her backpack and shuts her locker door. She looks my way and smiles, and... and... I inexplicably fall to bended knee and try to tie my shoe that doesn't need to be tied.

Not my most shining moment. Believe me, I know. That moment will haunt me for a long time, as I didn't realize then that that moment would be a last time.

Mia ended up walking past me, as I pretended to tie my shoe for an uncomfortably long time. She said "hello" because she's a nice, sweet person, which of course, is why I wanted to ask her out.

I mumbled something unintelligible because I'm a total insecure geek.

My friends made so much fun of me, never letting me live that moment down, which is totally deserved. I don't even complain about how often they tease me about it.

It was because of all their teasing that I had the courage to try again. Just to get them off my back was enough motivation for me to try again. I also knew I would go through with it, because if I didn't, I would never hear the end of it from my friends. Simply put, if I didn't go through with it, I would regret it. I knew I would regret it for the rest of my life. I didn't want to live with a regret like that.

So, after being razzed by my friends over the next two weeks, I told them that I would make amends and truly ask Mia out this time.

This was a swear I made in front of my bros. This is something not to be taken lightly. When you swear to do something in front of your two best friends, you better back it up, otherwise, you lose something in their eyes. A bit of respect maybe, a tiny bit of friendship, some of your own pride, but you lose something. I wasn't going to let that happen.

A moment of rejection, if it came to that, was better than losing that something in front of your two best friends.

Friday was going to be the day. A cowardly day to ask someone out, I have to admit. The question can really be answered in less than the fifteen seconds. Do you want to go out on a date? A moment of pause to process the question and then answer a yes or a no. However, in high school, it can take quite a bit longer, especially on the first date, as parental permission is often involved and often required. And since, I was planning to ask her on a Friday, she may not get back to me until the Monday, when I saw her back in English lit. So, me asking her on Friday was more a stalling tactic for me, rather than anything else. I could live all weekend with the possibility that she would give me a 'yes' before having to face the reality come Monday. Where the answer could easily be a 'no'.

I went into that Friday committed to asking this time around. This would be my last time for many things.

The last time I would be shy.

The last time I would not act as my heart directed.

The last time I would let my insecurities take over all rational thought.

This would be the time I asked Mia out.

I was going to ask Mia out in our English lit class, which was 4th period, right after lunch.

Okay, I wasn't really going to *ask* her out. I was going to pass her a note. In my own defense, we weren't supposed to be talking in class. I had already prewritten the note. It was just a matter of slipping it to her unnoticed by the teacher. This was something I had done successfully many times, so I really wasn't too worried about it. I just didn't realize then that the last time I could have passed her a note would have been the day before.

Mia did not show up at class that Friday. She had gotten sick during lunch. Stomach flu was going around the school, and nearly 5% of the students were out sick with it. Mia started vomiting during lunch and got sent home.

No worries. I was resolved. I would ask her out Monday or Tuesday next week, whenever she made it back to school. I honestly was a little bit relieved to put it off a few more days, being the secret coward that I was. I feel bad about that now.

Mia threw up three times at lunch and that was the last time anyone at school would see her again.

After her mom picked her up and got her to bed, Mia fell right asleep. Unfortunately, that was the last time anyone was able to talk to Mia.

When her mom went to check on her about an hour later, with a tray of clear soda water, some crackers, a thermometer, and a cold rag, Mia could not be awakened.

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