

MAGIC 9 BALL

by Kamron Klitgaard

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A Comedic Duet

by Kamron Klitgaard

SYNOPSIS: Two friends, Alex and Riley, stumble upon a toy ball from a forgotten time. To their astonishment, the ball has the power to answer yes or no questions with absolute accuracy. But there's a catch: They must abide by the answers without question, or the magic will be lost. When the novelty wears off, they realize that they have an incredible opportunity to ask a question that could benefit all of humanity. But every time they attempt to frame a profound question, they end up asking something trivial. Eventually, they come up with a question they think is important, only to realize it leads them back to their own lives and the everyday choices they make.

TIME: A sidewalk.

SETTING: A random setting.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 either gender)

ALEX (m/f)..... Witty, level-headed. *(46 lines)*

HARPER (m/f)..... Loveably flawed, Scheming,
Neurotic. *(48 lines)*

SET: Bare stage.

COSTUMING: Casual attire.

PROPS: A ball about the size of a Magic 8 Ball, 4 dollar bills.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES: The ball should be about the size of a Magic 8 Ball found in toy stores. It should look like a Magic 8 Ball knock-off. It could be any color and made of any material. It doesn't need the window where they read the answers. The actors can pretend to see it.

SETTING: *A bare stage with a ball sitting in the center of the floor.*

AT START: *ALEX and RILEY enter together.*

HARPER: Who do you think would win in a fight between us?

ALEX: A verbal fight or like a real knock-down drag-out fight?

HARPER: A full-on melee.

ALEX: *(Confident.)* Well, I think that's pretty obvious.

HARPER: *(Confident.)* Yeah, me too.

ALEX: Wait, you think you'd win?

HARPER: No question.

ALEX: Why?

HARPER: I pull hair.

ALEX: Harper, pulling hair isn't an automatic winner.

HARPER: I scratch, bite, poke eyes, you know; no rules for me.

ALEX: I can see that. *(Sees the ball.)* Hey, look. What's that?

HARPER: *(Looks to the ball and walks over to it, followed by ALEX.)*

It's just a ball.

ALEX: *(Picks up the ball.)* Oh! This isn't just a ball! It's a Magic 9 Ball!

HARPER: What's a Magic 9 Ball?

ALEX: Remember the Magic 8 Ball that looked like an over-sized eight ball for billiards?

HARPER: Does it come with an over-sized pool table?

ALEX: No, you numbskull! It's a plastic ball that has a window in it.

You ask it a question, shake it and then the answer appears in the window.

HARPER: Numbskull? You called me a numbskull? That's like from 80 years ago.

ALEX: I hear it's making a comeback.

HARPER: I can see that. So, what exactly is this?

ALEX: I told you! This is the Magic 9 Ball. It's a cheap knock off of the Magic 8 Ball.

HARPER: It doesn't look like a billiard nine ball. The nine ball is striped.

ALEX: That's probably why it never caught on. I think it was one of those "as seen on T.V." toys.

HARPER: Probably made in China.

ALEX: *(Lifts the ball up and looks at it.)* I think the Magic 8 Ball is, too.

HARPER: Well, let's see if it works. (*Puts mouth next to the ball.*)
What's 326 times 623?

ALEX: That's no good.

HARPER: Why not? You said you're supposed to ask it a question. I asked what's 326 times 623.

ALEX: Not a math question! You're supposed to ask it a question about you.

HARPER: Oh, it's like a fortune teller! (*Puts mouth next to ball.*) Where will I live in ten years?

ALEX: That's better. Now we shake it. (*Shakes the ball. Then stops and lowers it.*) Wait a second. That's not right either. Now I remember. It has to be a yes or no question. Any question at all as long as it's a yes or no question.

HARPER: Got it; any question, yes or no.

ALEX: For example, (*Lifts ball.*) Is it going to rain today? (*Shakes ball then looks down at it.*) See? And the answer appears.

HARPER: (*Reads.*) "It is highly unlikely." (*Looks up to the sky.*) Huh. It's right. Pretty cool. Let me ask it one. Let's see. I got it. Who would win... wait... that's not a yes or no... um... Would I win in a fight between Alex and me?

ALEX: That's your question?

HARPER: Shake it. (*ALEX shakes it and they both look at the answer.*)
What's it say?

ALEX: (*Reads the answer.*) "I think that's pretty obvious."

HARPER and ALEX: (*Look at each other.*) It's two for two!

HARPER: Let's ask it a hard one.

ALEX: (*Points to somewhere on the ball.*) Hey, look at this.

HARPER: It's an inscription on the side.

ALEX: I can't read it.

HARPER: It's probably in Chinese.

ALEX: No, it's just too small.

HARPER: Let me see that. (*Grabs the ball and squints to read.*) It says, "The Magic 9 Ball is never wrong as long as you abide by its answer, please."

ALEX: (*Takes the ball and squints to re-read.*) "The Magic 9 Ball is never wrong as long as you abide by its answer, please." Why would it say please?

HARPER: You know what this is? This was written in Chinese and then translated into English. Remember that table I ordered from China, and we had to put it together? The instructions had all these pleases in it.

ALEX: “Please insert wood dowel into hole. Please turn screw one quarter turn.” Chinese instructions translated into English.

HARPER: Exactly. I should work for the Chinese as a translator. I’d get rid of all those pleases.

ALEX: You wouldn’t last one minute in China.

HARPER: Why not?!

ALEX: Your manners are not up to their standards. They say “please” all the time.

HARPER: That’s true. So, in English, this says, “The Magic 9 Ball is never wrong if you always abide by its answer” period.

ALEX: Duh. Everyone knows that.

HARPER: How do you abide by a Yes or No answer?

ALEX: It depends on the question. Sometimes you don’t have to do anything. But other times...

HARPER: Okay, let’s say we’re in a casino, and I ask it, “Which slot machine will pay out?”

ALEX: Not a Yes or No question.

HARPER: Oh, right. I stand in front of a slot machine and I ask, “Should I play this machine?”

ALEX: If it says “Yes,” you better play that machine or you will lose the magic.

HARPER: Magic? I don’t believe in magic.

ALEX: It’s called the “Magic” 9 Ball.

HARPER: You’re saying as long as I do what the ball says, it will always be right.

ALEX: Don’t ask me, ask the Magic 9 Ball.

HARPER: *(Looks down at ball.)* Are you always right? *(Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.)* “It is decidedly so.” Okay, but that was just a 50/50 chance. If I ask again, there’s a 50 percent chance it will say “no.”

ALEX: Go ahead.

HARPER: *(Looks down at ball.)* Are you always right? *(Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.)* “Yes.” Dang it. Are you always right? *(Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.)* “Yes.” Dang it.

Are you always right? (*Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.*) "Yes." Dang it. Are you always right? (*Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.*) "Yes." Dang it. Are you always right? (*Shakes the ball and then reads the answer.*) "Yes." Ahhhhhhh! Wait a minute! I'll give it a trick question.

ALEX: Like what?

HARPER: I'll pretend we're in a casino. (*Stepping up to an imaginary slot machine.*) Should I play this machine? (*Smiles at ALEX, then shakes ball and reads answer.*) "Better not tell you now." It's right. It can't tell me now, because there is no slot machine. This thing really works! We have to abide by its answers or we'll lose the magic.

ALEX: I told you.

HARPER: We need to think of a good question; an important question; something that could benefit all of humanity.

ALEX: I got one. (*Takes the ball from ALEX, who stares off, thinking of a question.*) Should I pinch Harper? (*Shakes the ball and reads the answer.*) "Definitely." (*Reaches over and pinches HARPER on the arm.*)

HARPER: Ouch! What was that for?

ALEX: (*Holds up the ball.*) It told me to. And we have to abide by the answer.

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