

The Last Dance

by Morna Pearson

Danny Krass 0:00

Hi, my name's Danny Krass. Welcome to Earwig. This is a sonic theatre podcast specifically designed for listening on headphones. Today's episode is The Last Dance by Morna Pearson. Performances by Danielle Jam and Jack McCreadie, directed by Finn den Hertog, with original music and sound design by me Danny Krass. A little extra special language warning on this one, with strong language from the start. So here it is- The Last Dance by Morna Pearson.

Her 0:37

Fuck. Fuck. His message came earlier the night. Completely out the blue. We hadna been in touch for years. Nae since we were at the high school.

Him 0:53

Hey. I'm back hame for Christmas. Heard y'er back in toon. A bunch e' us are in Joanna's nightclub. Ironically of course. Come doon.

Her 1:04

Fuck. Ye see, we had a 'will they won't they' all through secondary. And we sort of did get together on the night of the prom. And that was on day one, with a dance to the last song. Euphoria was the feeling. Wow- this is it! But it didna last long. Ah legged it, blocked his calls. Shite. I thought he was the one. What the hell was I even- I didna have the words to explain what went wrong. So I legged it, as I said. Packed my bags and drove tae Edinburgh. Studied music, stacked shelves, smoked and drank like a-. Met all types of guys. What was I thinking?

Oh aye, I make mistakes in threes. So I went celibate an' soothed ma sell wi' drugs and ma fair share of chips and cheese.

Man 2:04

Salt an' sauce, aye? Ohh, too late.

Her 2:09

The city nearly broke me. So lonely an' so cold. These narrow streets swallowed me up, almost ate me whole. Started on in the taxi queue, 'cause the drunk wine didna like ma hair. Then that man, he thought he owned me, 'cause my skirt went up tae there. I made some friends. I lost some friends and I lost myself an' aw. Thought I'd find love and in it, find myself, but that's nae how it works, that ah. The funny thing is -nae that funny- he's been on my mind this whole time. I've been obsessive, aggressive and hamesick for a place ah'll never find. I closely followed his band online, analyzing line after line after line after line. I'm nae being big-headed but I could swear this one song was mine. I mean it's nae exactly flatterin', but that's by the by.

Her 3:11

Back tae his message. So I replied- "Hey stranger." Cringe. "Long time no see." Double- no- triple cringe. I'm off the drink right now but I'll happily watch yous binge. He replied.

Him 3:31

Great, amazing. I'll see you on the dance floor.

Her 3:35

Butterflies started dancing in ma belly as ah heeded for the door. Jesus his overfamiliarity was a bit lost on me. Is he actually taking the piss? Is he plotting for revenge, or plottin' for a sweet heavenly kiss? I checked my glove compartment for Wrigley's Extra, just in case. We could fall heed-over-heels in love at our first minty embrace.

Him 4:05

D'ya wan' a drink?

Her 4:07

No, ta, I'm off the drink and I'm drivin' so-

Him 4:12

Borin'. G'wan. Sambucca.

Her 4:14

Okay.

Five sambuccas later, ah ran to my car without thinking. But my drinking. It's all startin' to sink in.

Therapist 4:27

Would you say you've replaced one compulsion with another?

Her 4:31

I think- I think so.

Therapist 4:34

Are there times when you consider hurting yourself? Take your time.

Her 4:40

Sometimes, I dinny care whit happens tae me.

Therapist 4:44

Okay. I think you need more sessions.

Her 4:48

I can't afford more sessions. Having him in the car made my heart swell. It felt so right. Of course he made fun of my Magic Tree. "Well, that smells like shite". Balls. Ah fancy the pants off him. Ah can hardly concentrate. Ah blush. Ah go silent. He says, "I'm single, you ken. Are you, Kate?" And then- Fuck! And then-

it was all going so well, like a postmodern Ross and Rachel fae Friends. So the car was going about 50, heeded towards a right sharp bend.

Tyres screech. Ultra-slow heartbeat. Tinnitus soundtrack on repeat. A life flashed backwards. In full beam it glows. Regurgitated memories. Hit like a torpedo. Gravity and violent waves. Vibratin'. Suffocating. Dreams of the future explode. His pupils dialatin'. Something in ma neck pops. Windowpane shatters. Suddenly the penny drops. We're shaped by dark matter. He saw the bend before me. I'd got lost in his bloody grey eyes. Slow motion, car wraps roon' the tree. Through the glass, he flies. So now I'm here in rainbow sequins and his blood on my lips. His blood is on my hands and fingertips as I shake my hips to the beat. To the beat. To the beat. To the beat. Lost ma train of thought. So numb. Ah canna feel my feet. Feet.

Him 6:50
[scream]

Her 6:54
Dinna look down.

Him 6:54
What?

Her 6:57
You're bleedin'.

Her 7:01
Perhaps we were meant to meet in another time. Another place. In my dreams I'll be haunted by his cute decapitated face. Gallway Girl comes on the radio. I think, as I stare into the abyss- oh hell no, I'd rather die than die listenin' ti this.

Him 7:24
I wrote a song about ye'.

Her 7:15

Aye, I thought so.

Him 7:30

Cold.

Her 7:34

That's the sirens.

Him 7:35

Am ah goin' ti die?

Her 7:35

No. Couldn't say for sure. He looks pretty close to the- and me- oh fuck. That was my last breath.

The Last Dance by Morna Pearson, © Morna Pearson 2021.
This transcript is published by arrangement with Morna
Pearson. All rights reserved.