

Acting Edition

I'll Never Love Again

by Clare Barron

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|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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I'LL NEVER LOVE AGAIN received its world premiere at The Bushwick Starr (Noel Allain, Artistic Director; Sue Kessler, Executive Director) in New York City with an opening night of February 24, 2016. The production was directed by Michael Leibenluft and the Composer and Music Supervisor was Orion S. Johnstone. The set design was by Carolyn Mraz with costume design by Karen Boyer, sound design by Gareth Hobbs, and lighting design by Mary Ellen Stebbins. The Music Director was Kailey Marshall. The Production Manager was Ann Marie Dorr, the Technical Director was Jen Medina-Gray, and the Producer was John Del Gaudio. The Production Stage Manager was Taylor Wilkerson, and the Assistant Stage Manager and Dramaturge was Sophie Weisskoff. The Assistant Director was Emily Moler. The cast was as follows:

ONE/AMANDA Kate Benson
TWO/JACKSON Peter Mills Weiss
THREE Mia Katigbak
FOUR/CLARE (Lawyer Scene) Nana Mensah
CLARE (Sex Scene) Clare Barron
GUY Paul Cameron Hardy
ROGER Richard Toth
OONA Oona Montandon
CHOIR Joie Bauer, Amanda Phelan, Jeremy Rafal,
Maggie Robinson, Brittane Rowe,
Shawn Shafner, & Kailey Marshall

CHARACTERS

ONE/AMANDA

TWO/JACKSON

THREE

FOUR/CLARE – (lawyer scene)

CLARE – (sex scene)

GUY

ROGER

OONA

CHOIR A-G

AUTHOR'S NOTES

This piece is to be performed by a diverse ensemble of all ages. All genders, all races, all backgrounds, all bodies, all sexualities, all souls.

The performers labeled **ONE**, **TWO**, **THREE**, and **FOUR** are our main ensemble who will lead us through the show. They are part of a twelve-person choir, and they emerge slowly from the choir over the course of the piece.

The characters of **CLARE** and **GUY** in the sex scene are played by members of the choir. (And in the premiere production, the character of **CLARE** in the sex scene was played by the “historical” Clare, i.e., me.)

The character of **CLARE** in the office scene is played by the performer playing **FOUR**. The character of **AMANDA** in the office scene is played by the performer playing **ONE**. And the character of **JACKSON** in the office scene is played by the performer playing **TWO**.

ROGER and **OONA** are new actors, not in the choir, who appear for the first time in the office scene. **OONA** should be played by a real thirteen-year-old.

In Acts One–Three (the choral section), capitalized text is sung.

Text in Acts One–Three is taken from my actual teenage diary (circa 2000–2004)

NOTE ON MUSIC

Sheet music for the songs “Loch Lomond”, “Why Are You Not With Me?”, “Have You Ever?”, “The Hurt”, and “Wayfaring Stranger (Apocalypse Version)”, composed and arranged by Orion S. Johnstone, is required for production. Sheet music for “Angels We Have Heard On High” is not included, however licensees may use any arrangement that is in the public domain. Please refer to your performance license for important credit requirements and more information.

The lights are up. The house lights are on. We see people in choir robes ambling and then scurrying to get into place backstage.

The show's about to start!

The lights go dim. Then black.

Someone enters. They're wearing a beautiful, ancient, purple-and-gold choir robe.

They begin. Very thoughtful and simple.

THREE. I no longer think it's disgusting to think about kissing him. When did that happen? I don't know. I used to think I liked him. And then I would close my eyes and I would think about kissing him. And it would gross me out. So I thought: Okay. I must not like him. One time we lay on the carpet and touched each other's fingers. And that was nice. But any thoughts about his lips. Or us being lip-to-lip. Or his face that close to my face...

They make a face.

I don't know. I just find it disgusting. Like his mouth on my mouth? *His mouth on my mouth?* Joshua Wilson's mouth on my mouth?

They shrug.

[illegible]

THREE. Or... I guess I *found* it revolting. I now find it *slightly* less revolting. Which is not to say that I *want* to kiss him. Just that I have woken up from several dreams where he was holding me in his arms, and I felt quite comfortable and safe. And now when I close my eyes and think about kissing him. It's slightly less gross.

They close their eyes. They think about kissing Josh...

A whole army of people enter. They parade onto the risers, surrounding speaker THREE. They're all in choir robes. They are all playing "CLARE."

They all close their eyes. They think about kissing Josh...

...

...

...

Opening their eyes...

THREE. Yup. Slightly less gross.

The CHOIR breathes, focuses, gets very quiet...

The concert begins.

[MUSIC NO. 01 – LOCH LOMOND]

ALL.

BY YON BONNIE BANKS AN' BY YON BONNIE BRAES
 WHAUR THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT ON LOCH LOMON'
 WHAUR ME AN' MY TRUE LOVE WILL NE'ER MEET AGAIN
 ON THE BONNIE, BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH LOMON'.
 O YE'LL TAK' THE HIGH ROAD, AN' I'LL TAK' THE LOW ROAD
 AND AH'LL BE IN SCOTLAND AFORE YE
 FIR ME AN' MY TRUE LOVE WILL NE'ER MEET AGAIN

ON THE BONNIE, BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH LOMON'.
 'T'WAS THERE THAT WE PERTED IN YON SHADY GLEN
 ON THE STEEP, STEEP SIDES O' BEN LOMON'
 WHAUR IN (SOFT) PURPLE HUE,
 THE HIELAN HILLS WE VIEW
 AN' THE MOON COMIN' OOT IN THE GLOAMIN'.
 O YE'LL TAK' THE HIGH ROAD, AN' I'LL TAK' THE LOW
 ROAD
 AND AH'LL BE IN SCOTLAND AFORE YE
 FIR ME AN' MY TRUE LOVE WILL NE'ER MEET AGAIN
 ON THE BONNIE, BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH LOMON'.

The following is underscored by music...

ONE.

... I saw him at the choir concert. He's in the
 ... senior choir. I'm in the sophomore choir. It's
 ... embarrassing to be in the sophomore choir
 ... because we're not that good. The senior
 ... choir gets to wear gowns and tuxedos. We
 ... have to wear robes. Like we're in church.
 ...

... Anyway, Josh was sitting in the audience
 ... in his tuxedo and I was onstage in my robe
 ... and I looked out and I saw him sitting with
 ... *my coat on his lap.*
 ...

... (WHAT THE FUCK!!!!!!)
 ...

... And I almost forgot all the words to the song
 ...

... And then afterwards he came up to me and
 ... told me good job and handed me my coat
 ... and said that I'd left it backstage. And *then*
 ... he said:

... *(Trying hard to remember his exact*
 ... *words/slightly still in disbelief that*
 ... *he actually said this.)*

ONE.

... I could smell your smell on your coat so it
 ... was almost like... I was sitting *right next to*
 ... *you* at the concert.

...
 ... (HOLY SHIT!!!!!!)

... And then he handed me back the coat and
 ... kind of kind of touched me on my side like
 ... this...

... (They all touch themselves on
 ... their sides and remember that
 ... touch...)

... And said:

ALL.

... How are you doing, Clare?

ONE.

... And when he touched me like that on my
 ... side it was like roots sprung up out of the
 ... ground and grew up both my legs and
 ... through my whole body and then a tree
 ... came out of my head and exploded into a
 ... lightning bolt.

CHOIR A.

THE WEE BIRDIES SING AN' THE WILD FLOWERS SPRING
 AN' IN SUNSHINE THE WATERS ARE SLEEPIN'
 BUT THE BROKEN HEART IT KENS, NAE SECOND SPRING
 AGAIN
 THO' THE WAEFUL MAY CEASE FRAE THEIR WEEPIN'...

...

CHOIR B.

... The next time I interacted with him was at
... the sophomore Valentine's Day dance. We
... danced around a pole and he handed me a
... paper heart from the decorations.

... He was dating Aly at that time. She was the
... nicest and prettiest girl at school. I was at
... the dance grooving with Beka, and I look
... over and I see him bouncing straight up
... and down, over-and-over again, and with
... each bounce he's saying my name: Clare!
... Clare! Clare! Clare! He wanted to dance
... with me. I was shy-slash-embarrassed, and
... asked Aly if it would be okay. She laughed.
... I danced with him and the mixture of his
... sweat and cologne gave me a rash on my
... forearm.

...

CHOIR C.

... Six weeks later Aly had broken up with him
... and he was heartbroken. I ran into him at
... the Spring Fling. My hair was cut short
... and shaggy and I was slightly broken out
... and self-conscious. He literally *grabbed*
... *me* by the arm and *physically moved* me
... while Seth held Beka back. He told me
... that the Valentine's Day dance was his
... favorite dance he'd ever been to and it was
... because he had danced with me. I laughed
... and awkwardly said "Thank you" and gave
... him a hug and turned and ran the opposite
... direction. I've kicked myself a thousand
... times for that one.

...

... I thought it meant that he would ask me to
... Prom...

...

... **CHOIR B.**

... Too late. Phoebe asked him a week before
... the dance (the night of the soccer game
... when I touched his scar).
...

... **ONE.**

... The day of Prom really sucked. Audrey told
... me that her aunt had attempted suicide
... the night before, my French teacher had a
... personal emergency, I forgot my planner
... at home, I got a lot of homework, I didn't
... understand the math, I found out Mr.
... Lorensen scheduled our final bio test for
... the last day of school, Mr. Jackson told
... me that I had to miss ballet for the choir
... concert, they want to take me out of the
... coolest dance sequence in the musical
... because I have to change my costume, and
... nobody asked me to Prom so I'm not going.
...

...
... I was depressed and Josh kept asking me
... what was wrong and to tell "Uncle Josh"
... and I wanted to scream at him that he's not
... my uncle!!!!

ALL. (*The big finale.*)

O YE'LL TAK' THE HIGH ROAD, AND AH'LL
TAK' THE LOW ROAD
AN' I'LL BE IN SCOTLAND AFORE YE
FIR ME AN' MY TRUE LOVE WILL NE'ER
MEET AGAIN
ON THE BONNIE, BONNIE BANKS O' LOCH
LOMON'!

Applause. They beam out at the audience.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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