

Andy Danford's Last Tape

A short play

By Mark Chrisler

Presented free for use by non-profit
and/or educational groups.
Please credit "Mark Chrisler" as
author in promotional materials and
programs.

For professional presentation rights
or questions...

Contact:

Mark Chrisler

markchrisler@gmail.com

www.markchrisler.com

ANDY DANFORD'S LAST TAPE

26, 27 and 28 sit next to one another. 29 crosses over, stands behind 26 who rises and speaks.

26

Twenty six years old today.

29 makes a motion, 26 sits. 29 moves to 27 who stands and begins to speak. This convention follows throughout the play.

27

Twenty seven today. Don't know what I'm supposed to say...

26

First take at a little experiment. Lauren's idea. To keep a record of myself for... for what?

27

Went to the humane society this afternoon. Terrible idea. Lauren's idea. Finally done with that.

28

Twenty eight today. Spent the last few hours listening to my "old selves." Idiots both. If you're listening to this, I have some advice: turn it off. Ragging on about, of all things, posterity! Can you believe it?

(28 and 29 both laugh)

And worse still, change!

(29 stops laughing, 28 continues)

This is the end of this little experiment.

26

For what? Posterity! And to show... through that posterity... how I change. That I change.

27

She said "let's go look at the puppies." But we don't have time for a puppy, or space for a puppy--I told her--and do they even have puppies at the humane society? All good arguments--not to credit myself too highly--but she took my cool hand in her warm one. With her heat osmosing into me; all my well rationed reluctances sterilized and fell away--as they always have--like dry corn husks.

(silence. 27 & 29 both contemplate)

26

There is change. To give me something--or you, you being the many future mes-- something to look back on.

28

Failed experiment. Listening back, laughing at those fools. How could I ever have been so stupid?

(29 begins laughing, continues)

“Finally done with that.” Then; a revelation: we don’t change at all.

(29 stops laughing abruptly. Silence.)

27

And that once, she was right: puppies. Terrible idea. Her idea. Done with that now. Her now. Of course she wanted to adopt one. I did too, if I’m honest. A warm puppy on your cold lap... hard to say no. But space. And time. I told her no. She argued. But I was resolute. In spite of the old insults, the old seductions.

26

It was Lauren’s idea, these tapes. At first I didn’t buy in, but she took my hand in that way of hers and I... re-evaluated. Amazing how she does it.

(pause)

Sometimes I hate her.

28

If you’re still listening: turn it off. Don’t waste your time with this twaddle ever again. This is my last recording. Good riddance.

27

Tomorrow I’m calling it off. Take her by the hand and tell her. In my mind it’s already over. Just need to catch her up. A puppy? Never.

28

Lauren won’t like it, but I’m done. Done with these recordings and done with her. For real this time.

29

(after a long pause, sits down at the next chair)

Twenty nine today. Been listening to the old tapes. Idiots. Finally free of all that, thankfully. I’m done listening.

(a moment, he rises, goes back to 27)

27

...but she took my cool hand in her warm one. With her heat osmosing into me; all my well rationed reluctances sterilized and fell away--as they always have--like dry corn husk...

29

(returns to his seat)

I'm throwing them away tomorrow. That's how I'll do it. I'm calling it off with Lauren tomorrow; and I'll shove these tapes right in her face... That'll do the trick. Take her hand in mine and tell her "it's over, here are the dumb tapes you told me to make." Yeah. That'll do the trick. Tomorrow: change.

(pause)

I'd better go let the dog out.

End of play.