

Final Exam Destination

A comedy in one act

by James Rayfield

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STORY OF THE PLAY

It is final exam time—again!—at Standardized Testing Senior High School, and Christie is feeling less than solid about her English final. Her friends, Bobby – a snack-o-holic, and Val, her BFF, are much less concerned until Christie’s vision of the horrible outcome of the test (shown in a slow-motion action sequence which uses “unseen” black clad stagehands) causes her to flee, taking her friends with her. Unfortunately, that is just the beginning. Can you really escape your destiny, or as the creepy school custodian warns “Testiny”? Bobby and Val struggle with their own exams, and then the entire school is faced with another state mandated final exam. Will anyone survive? And who really controls our destiny? About 30 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 m, 5 w, 2 offstage voices and an ensemble group of Black Clads. Optional extra students.)

CHRISTIE: High school senior. Bright and determined to do well.

BOBBY: High school senior, a friend of Christie's. Very serious about finding a snack.

VAL: Christie's BFF. Not all that serious and anxious to just get on with life.

MS. CHANDLER: English teacher. Outgoing, but tough underneath it all.

MS. MONROE: Guidance counselor. She needs some guidance of her own.

LUIS: The school custodian. A little creepy.

PATSY: A student from English class.

PRINCIPAL'S VOICE (flex): An offstage Principal with a strong, imposing voice.

VOICE OF CHRISTIE'S MOTHER: An offstage presence.

THE BLACK CLADS: A group of stagehands dressed in black – much like ninjas. They are always onstage to move scenery and manipulate objects throughout.

OTHER STUDENTS: For the classroom scenes.

PLACE

The action takes place at Standardized Testing Senior High School in any town in the country. The action covers a single school day.

FURNITURE and PROPS

Sofa, chair, classroom door on wheels, student desks, each of which has a sealed exam booklet on top, pencil, red marker, teacher desk with dish of wrapped candies inside, wastepaper basket, chairs, filing cabinet, a padded chair typical of the eye doctor's office, and large cards with eye exam letters, Chinese characters, and emoticons.

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(AT RISE: The stage is bare except for a door on wheels that can be quickly rolled away by Black Clads. Outside the door stands CHRISTIE holding some books. At the moment she is frightened.)

CHRISTIE: That door – beyond that door lies disaster, tragedy, multiple choices, and an essay on Shakespeare’s use of blood imagery.

(VAL walks on carrying some books or backpack.)

VAL: What are you doing, Christie?

CHRISTIE: Narrating my inner fears. I read it’s how you get rid of them.

VAL: Oh, well, go right on. Don’t let me stop you.

CHRISTIE: *(Resumes narrative.)* Beyond that door lies disaster, tragedy, multiple choices, essays, number two pencils, and horror – bone-crushing horror.

VAL: Yeah, that English final is going to be a major disaster.

CHRISTIE: Right – final exam – final, the end, the last, cataclysmic, awfulness. My English final examination.

VAL: You studied, right?

CHRISTIE: No. Bobby came over.

(BLACK CLADS quickly set up a sofa and chair to become CHRISTIE’S home. BOBBY enters.)

BOBBY: Hey, girl, your mom cook supper tonight?

CHRISTIE: Leftovers.

BOBBY: *(Calling offstage.)* Hey, Ms. Gluckman.

VOICE OF CHRISTIE’S MOTHER: I didn’t cook tonight, Bobby, sorry. Leftovers.

BOBBY: That’s okay, Ms. Gluckman, I already ate over at Tony’s. His mom made lasagna. Actually Stouffers made lasagna, Tony’s mother nuked it.

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CHRISTIE: Listen, Bobby, I have got to study for that final exam in English, so maybe you should—

BOBBY: Oh, I know, what's that all about? Is it going to be hard or what?

CHRISTIE: Bobby, we've been reviewing for a week now. Where have you been?

BOBBY: Playing games. I hollowed out my textbook and put my iPhone in there. Been playing Zombie Motorcross Mayhem; it's awesome. I'm at level thirty-seven.

CHRISTIE: Now there's an accomplishment, Bobby, but what are you going to do about the English final exam?

BOBBY: Fail it. I figure that's my destiny. And you can't fight destiny, can you?

CHRISTIE: You could try.

BOBBY: Have you got, like, a snack? Chips?

CHRISTIE: Bobby, I have got to study. If I don't ace this exam, my GPA could drop and even my backup college won't take me.

BOBBY: You know what my backup is?

CHRISTIE: No, but tell me and let me get to—

BOBBY: The Army.

CHRISTIE: Bobby, you in the Army? That's a ten on the laugh meter.

BOBBY: What are you talking about? Three squares a day, a place to sleep—

CHRISTIE: You're thinking of prison: three squares a day and a place to sleep.

BOBBY: Oh, shucks, I think you're right. Maybe I should study for that exam.

(BLACK CLADS whisk off the living room furniture, return the classroom door and we are back to the present.)

CHRISTIE: He would not leave – wanted me to teach him everything we've studied this entire semester. It was hopeless. He told me he thinks an "expository" essay is one that used to be "pository" but changed. You know, EX-pository. I tried not to laugh at him.

VAL: That's always hard, but oops, look who's here.

End of Freeview

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