

## The Last Swan

---

Alan S Austin

Arizona Performing Arts Theatre  
2641 E.Beekman Place,  
Phoenix,  
Arizona 85016

## CAST

Girl -20's

Boy -20's

*The stage is empty except for a mound of straw stage right. Enter girl who is dressed simply, with a short skirt and tights. She glances over her shoulder first to the left, then to the right. She takes four paces toward the mound, stops, goes back, looks backstage left and backstage right. Comes down to mound and begins to move the straw.*

BOY  
(Off-stage)

Odette

*Pause. She hesitates.*

Odette

*She puts straw back as it was.*

GIRL

I'm here.

*She stands cutely, centre stage.  
(Enter Boy)*

BOY

What are you doing?

*Odette shrugs*

We're not allowed in this area. You know that.

GIRL

I....

BOY

Come. We must get back. It'll be curfew soon.

GIRL

No.

BOY

If the elders find us here, we'll be in trouble.

GIRL

I don't care.

*She starts crying*

BOY

I'm looking out for us. We're the last. You know that.

GIRL

I know... I'm doing my best.

BOY

We need to get back.

GIRL

No... not yet.

BOY

Why?

GIRL

I want to show you something.

BOY

What?

GIRL

I found it. After the last migration.

BOY

You went to one of their houses? That's not allowed in case they come back.

GIRL

I know but I couldn't resist. It was my teacher's house. I think she wanted me to have it.

*Odette removes the straw to reveal an antique wind-up gramophone.*

It was hers. She used it to play the music.

BOY

Wow. I've never seen anything like it.

GIRL

And I took the records. Look. Oh, I forgot to tell you. I saw a bird this morning.

BOY

That's impossible. Birds all died off in the last extinction.

GIRL

No... I saw it. It had wings. It was flying. It was a bird. I know it was. I'll take you to where I saw it...

BOY

Okay. Okay... but what are you going to do with this?

GIRL

Play it. My teacher taught me to dance to it. Look it's turning and you put the needle thing on...

*The gramophone starts playing the waltz from Act I of Swan Lake and Girl starts to dance and talk as she does so.*

I can't dance very well. I've forgotten how to but oh, it's so much fun. It's about a beautiful princess who's been turned into a swan and then a boy tries to shoot her and she turns back into a princess and he falls in love with her...

*The mainspring on the gramophone unwinds and the music fades.*

BOY

Wow... you dance so beautifully.

GIRL

I saw her winding it up... yes.... It's going round again. Perhaps you have to wind it up more...

*The music starts up again.*

Dance with me... please...

BOY

But I don't know how.

GIRL

Just move. Like this. That's right. Stand behind me and put your hands on my waist. Follow me. That's it.....

*The dance as the music moves to a crescendo.*

This is wonderful. You can dance.

BOY

I feel like an idiot.

GIRL

Turn... go on.... Now hold my hand. Let me jump.

BOY

Wow....hey... Woops

*They fall in a heap laughing. Suddenly there's a beeping.*

BOY

Your radiation button is beeping.

GIRL

I don't care. I'm having too much fun.

BOY

*He turns off the gramophone*

You have to care. It means you've been out here too long.

*He looks at the button.*

It's orange. We'll have to get you underground in half an hour.

GIRL

What if I don't go?

BOY

You have to go ... We're the last hope... you're now the only one who can have a child.

GIRL

I don't want a child and I don't want to have to stay underground.

There's no choice. The ozone's layer's almost gone and the radiation is destroying the vegetation. It can make you infertile. We have to get back underground.

GIRL

I don't feel any different.

BOY

You can't see it.

GIRL

What's wrong with the ozone layer? Why can't they fix it? I just want to dance... I want to be... free.

BOY

Hundreds of years ago they released all sorts of chemicals into the atmosphere. I guess they didn't know the extent of the damage they would cause future generations.

GIRL

Well, that's not my fault.

BOY

Of course it isn't but we have to adapt so we can procreate.

GIRL

Can we dance again? I love dancing. Then I'll take you to where I saw the bird.

BOY

You are such a dreamer. You don't listen but...you're beautiful.

GIRL

You never called me beautiful before.

BOY

No, I didn't.

GIRL

Well, you better be careful or I may be transformed into a beautiful bird and then fly away.

*She puts the gramophone on again. Opening to Act 2 of Swan Lake. They dance .*

It's the end of the world.

BOY

No.

GIRL

Yes.

BOY

There's hope.

GIRL

Let's just dance.

BOY

Don't you understand? We're the last. All the rest, your parents, my parents left on the migrations.

GIRL

Then let us dance as if we are the last and then I will show you my bird.

BOY

For the last time, all the birds are dead.

GIRL

Not all of them.

BOY

We must survive.

*He sits. She dances on her own. He watches until she falls exhausted. He picks her up, cradles and kisses her.*

GIRL

Oh... that was a nice surprise. Perhaps we will have to survive. Hold me. Kiss me again.

*The music moves to a crescendo. A loud klaxon goes off.*

BOY

They're searching for us... quick... we have to get back.

GIRL  
My gramophone... my music...

BOY  
Leave it, we haven't time.

GIRL  
No.

BOY  
Come.

GIRL  
One last dance.

*She dances one last time as beautifully as she can. The klaxon goes off again.*

BOY  
Come.

GIRL  
I will be changed into a bird. The last bird on the planet. Look there... the bird... It's the bird.

BOY  
We must go.

GIRL  
I love you.

*They leave hand in hand while the music mounts to a climax of Swan Lake's Act 4. She stops. Goes back to the gramophone and covers it with straw.*

I will be back.

*Curtain.*