

**LAST CALL FOREVER** by Leonard Melfi

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Five smalltown young people encounter each other for the first time and face the same problem—the death of a loved one. Their youth has left them unprepared for their loss.

MELLOW LEGS, a pretty blonde in her early twenties, has led a privileged life. She explains how this has sheltered her from reality, causing her to live a life of fantasies, like this one.

**SCENE:** A bar in upstate New York.

**TIME:** The present. Two-something in the morning.

MELLOW: It's not civilized! "Last Call"... "Last Call"... "Last Call"...! I was never so disappointed in my whole life when I found out what it actually meant! I mean I just simply spent the worst day of my life today! I went to my shrink's funeral this morning. Yes, my shrink's sad little funeral right here in the middle of town. Oh, did I ever love him ... he was the best in the city ... as far as I'm concerned: the best doctor-shrink anywhere! You couldn't top Dr. Maze! What a dream he was! I'd been going to him for over five years now. Mommy and Daddy took care of the bills from Dr. Maze. I never had to worry about anything. He was so handsome. A real dream-of-a-guy. I used to wish and pray that he'd get a divorce, but it never happened. He died of a sudden heart attack, without any warning. When I saw him lying there in his coffin in his light blue suit, and his light blue shirt, and his cream-colored necktie, well, I almost just wanted to jump in there with him, right on top of him, and then whisper into his right ear, whisper to him to move over so that I could be lying side-by-side instead, like in some hotel room on our honeymoon, maybe in the middle of Europe somewhere. I went to school in Florence, Italy for awhile. Maybe in Florence: that would be a lovely place for our honeymoon together, don't you think? Oh, God, I wish I had had the nerve to jump on top of him for a second or two, not caring what people would think! But I didn't ... I held back as usual... just like my whole life, always holding

back! *(A pause.)* I couldn't cry when I first saw him lying there in his gleaming silver coffin. I didn't cry at the funeral either. The only time I cried was when I first read about his death in the obituaries in the newspapers. I guess the reason I haven't cried since is because I must be in a state of shock or I don't believe it, or both. *(A pause.)* Do you know what I went and did? *(Whispering now.)* Well, I'll tell you people, but please don't tell anyone else. You've got to keep it a secret, otherwise, if it gets around, they'll lock me up in a mental ward for good and throw away the key, too! I slipped a little box of condoms inside of Dr. Mark Maze's coffin, right underneath where his right elbow was, sort of pushing the little box of condoms down in the yellow satin of the coffin without anybody even noticing... !

I thought that Dr. Maze would get the biggest kick out of it. He had an absolutely wonderful sense of humor. He knew exactly how to deal with me, no matter what. Right now, I can just hear him. "Mellow Legs," he would say to me. "Why did you go and do that?" "Why did I go and do what, Dr. Maze?" I would say back to him very innocent-like. "Why did you slip that little box of condoms inside of my coffin with me, Mellow Legs?" he would say back to me. "Well, now, Dr. Maze," I would say back to him, batting my eyelashes every so often. "I believe in life after death, and, well, now that you're gone, who knows what's going to happen to me ... except that I may have to join you ... and, well, in this day and age, during these really screwed-up times, we just simply have to play it safe, whether we're dead or alive, Dr. Maze!" *(A pause.)* Now this is really a secret! Please, everybody?! Well, there were a number of times when Dr. Maze looked like he was going to be the one who would finally end my virgin state of being. It was always my fault that it didn't happen, I'm now very sad and sorry to say. But his sense of humor, his deep, sexy laugh ... they were enough for me at that time. Once, he asked me what I was going to have engraved on my tombstone. I thought for a second or two, and then I said to him: "It'll say: 'Who said you can't take it with you?'" Well, he just laughed and laughed ... he couldn't stop his laughing for the rest of the day, or any time he ever thought of it after that. *(A pause.)* I loved him! I ... loved ... him! *(A pause.)* I love him more right now than I ever did when he was alive and well and kicking around all over the place! *(A pause.)* I guess I'll be suffering now for the rest of my life.

