

Marry Mitch?

A short play

By Rodrigo Baumgartner Ayres

rodrigo@directorayes.com

CAST OF CHARACTERS

SALLY (29), a rich English (or Australian) veterinarian from a prominent family. She's in love with Mitch, but faces a dilemma when marriage time arrives. (English (or Australian) accent).

MITCH (39), hardworking middle class man owner of a small shoemaking company. Wants to settle down and have children as soon as possible.

GRETA (32), Sally's sister. A house wife and socialite married to a millionaire. (Slight English (or Australian) accent).

ELIZABETH (60), Sally and Greta's mother. Rich English (or Australian) woman - English (or Australian) accent).

GEORGE (60), Sally and Greta's father. Rich English (or Australian) man - English (or Australian) accent).

SETTINGS

1 - A modest restaurant. (Two chairs and a table with a modest table cloth + respective modest glassware/silverware).

2 - A first class rooftop. (Two chairs and table with a fancy table cloth + respective fancy glassware/silverware).

3 - A couch to one side (London); Sally sitting on the floor on the other side (indeterminate location).

4 - A picnic at a park.

MARRY MITCH?

(SALLY and MITCH sit at a restaurant table opposite each other.)

MITCH

Sally.

SALLY

Yes Mitch?

MITCH

I'm almost forty. I'm ready to settle down, have a wife and kids, and I need to know if that's what you're looking for as well. I don't mean to put you under any kind of pressure...

SALLY

All right.

MITCH

And...

SALLY

Hm?

MITCH

We've been dating for a year, right? And... don't get me wrong, I absolutely adore you. But... Ahm, I'm just concerned-

SALLY

I want what you want Mitch. All right?

MITCH

You see? That's the problem?

SALLY

What?

MITCH

Your smile.

SALLY

What?

MITCH

The way you make me feel, it's like I'm drugged-

SALLY

Mitch, you're not making any sense. Can't you just say whatever it is you want to say?

MITCH

You're a mermaid luring me to my slow death and I go drown myself with a smile.

SALLY

Ok... that's not funny anymore.

MITCH

The elephant in the room?

SALLY

What?

MITCH

That... I'm poor and you're rich?

SALLY

What?

MITCH

I would definitely be marrying up as they say.

SALLY

Are you serious?

MITCH

I'm very serious.

SALLY

All right... Ahm-

MITCH

Listen... This year, as much fun as we had, I can't help but to feel insecure about our finances. Just coming out to a place like this every few days tears big holes in my pockets. I appreciate that you split the bill with me, but still, it's not enough, and-

SALLY

I understand you're insecure about that.

MITCH

Well...

SALLY

But honestly, it's not a big deal-

MITCH

You paying for my dinner is not a big deal?

SALLY

No. It's trivial.

MITCH

All the time, for the rest of our lives?

SALLY

Who knows what's gonna happen? What matters is that we love each other, right?

MITCH

I do love you.

SALLY

So why does it matter if my parents are rich?

MITCH

Because I'll never have the means to provide you the same level of comfort. Where are we gonna live? I can't afford an apartment like yours. You would have to move in with me into a shitty place that probably doesn't even allow pets. Have you thought about that?

SALLY

Yes. I mean, not necessarily, but we can manage, can't we?

MITCH

You haven't thought this through. At all... But I have. And I need to know if you will really be happy, because if you're not, then I won't be either.

SALLY

Of course I'm gonna be happy.

MITCH

Love dies, Sally.

SALLY

What?

MITCH

Think about it, we won't even be able to travel to England all the time to see your parents unless they pay for my ticket. Rather they'll have to come see us. How many times are they willing to do that? How angry are they gonna get when you decide you're not gonna see them under some excuse, thinking they won't know it's about money and that you're trying to spare me the embarrassment, but they'll know. Right now it works because we are just dating, you have your apartment, I have mine, they extend donations to me for your sake. But with marriage, all that changes.

SALLY

You're over thinking this.

MITCH

That's the point, isn't it? Marriage is very serious.

SALLY

I'm the one who's bloody rich. If you divorce me you get alimony.

MITCH

But I don't get the kids. And I want kids. And I'm running out of time. I don't want to be a grandfather to my own children.

SALLY

Wow. Ok. And I thought women were the ones supposed to make the storm in the teacup. Do you really think I would keep our children away from you?

MITCH

No, of course not-

SALLY

For Pete's sake. If you had just asked me I would have said yes, instead you decided to freak the shit out.

MITCH

And I would propose to you here then? And you would tell your parents that I proposed to you at Sergio's?

SALLY

I don't know. I didn't think it would be an actual proposal.

MITCH

What?

SALLY

I thought you were just gonna ask me and I would say yes. You know? In the moment-

MITCH

You see?

SALLY

What?

MITCH

It would be an actual proposal. How the fuck wouldn't it be an actual proposal?

SALLY

I don't know, I guess it would be an actual proposal. I don't know. I thought you were just gonna ask me, but with no ring.

MITCH

I see.

SALLY

Just in the moment.

MITCH

And we become engaged? With no ring?

SALLY

Because you're making sure I'll say yes when you actually propose.

MITCH

Because you were thinking that I would ask your parents to help me buy the ring for you.

SALLY

No, you're terribly mistaken.

MITCH

Unconsciously you were. Because you want to have a beautiful ring like your mother's and your sister's.

SALLY

I wasn't thinking anything, all right?

MITCH

You're meeting your sister for brunch tomorrow, right? At that beautiful rooftop at the plaza, which we won't be able to afford by the way once we're married.

SALLY

Do you have a point?

MITCH

I just want you to look at her ring-

SALLY

Wow...

MITCH

Real hard, because that ring costs a hundred thousand dollars and you're not gonna get one of those. You're gonna get a much cheaper and smaller one. I'm sorry, I know I said I didn't want to put you in any kind of pressure, but... Please, just take this opportunity tomorrow to talk to your sister. Ask her advice, what does she think of you possibly marrying me and having a kid with me.

SALLY

All right... I will. Since when Greta owns the monopoly of the truth that I couldn't possibly tell, but I'll ask her. You're really way more insecure than I thought.

MITCH

I'm rational. I think ahead so that we can both make the right decision and be happy.

SALLY

Splendid...

MITCH

Just open up to her. She'll help you find what you really want. Observe if she's happy and how happy, and how much of that happiness is due to her wealth and the possibilities it brings her. As long as you're honest with yourself, whatever you decide, even if you break up with me, I won't be hurt.

(Light change, Mitch leaves, Greta occupies his chair. New table cloth/glassware. GRETA and Sally are at a rooftop and wear sunglasses.) New scene:

GRETA

Ugh... I've grown bored of this particular venue. Look at that new skyscraper completely warding us from our view of the park. I fancied it much better when we could observe the entire city around us, did you not?

SALLY

Right, yeah...

GRETA

Whatever, Gary assured me they'll have a rooftop as well, and when it's done we can upgrade even further up!

SALLY

That will be grand.

GRETA

I know!

SALLY

But, I fancy it here though... I mean, must we always be at the tallest building?

GRETA

Hm?

SALLY

I mean, we know what the park looks like...

GRETA

The park?

Greta... SALLY

Are you all right? GRETA

Should I marry Mitch? SALLY

Sorry? GRETA

Should I marry Mitch... What do you reckon? SALLY

That's a weird question, isn't it? Did something happen? GRETA

No... I don't know... It's just... SALLY

What's going on? GRETA

I have been wondering... SALLY

Has he proposed? GRETA

No, but I suppose he will. SALLY

And when is that? GRETA

I don't know. SALLY

Do you know where? Did he make a reservation? GRETA

I'm afraid he did not. SALLY

GRETA

Ugh. So will he propose to you at your flat? Or in a park or some pub?

SALLY

I don't know.

GRETA

Hm.

SALLY

Are you happy with Gary?

GRETA

Of course I'm happy with Gary. What sort of question is that?

SALLY

Why?

GRETA

Why? Isn't that obvious? He's older, but not by much, he's filthy rich, he's handsome, we think alike, sex is grand.

SALLY

Splendid...

GRETA

He has his life, his job, I do whatever I like. Mother and father fancy him. I've never been more cheerful.

SALLY

Do you love him?

GRETA

I most certainly do. What's not to love?

SALLY

But do you really love him?

GRETA

Oh Sally...

SALLY

What?

GRETA

You're in love with Mitch.

SALLY

I think so.

GRETA

But you think you can do better.

SALLY

No.

GRETA

You most certainly do.

SALLY

Oh god...

GRETA

If that's the case you shouldn't marry him.

SALLY

Why not?

GRETA

Because... Love is just a part of it. Marriage is about life, you know? What you do on a daily basis that makes you happy, and Mitch can't provide you that. I wish I could tell you 'listen to your heart' or some crap, but... I don't want to fool you.

SALLY

Mitch said... That... our marriage wouldn't last... Or something the like...

GRETA

You're so young. It's unfair for Mitch to put you in this position. If you're not positive, you have the right to consider and it's not his business to rush you.

SALLY

Help me Greta.

GRETA

Oh Sally, you're frazzled. You mustn't.

SALLY

He might break up with me.

GRETA

You do what you must, but in your own time.

SALLY

All right...

GRETA

Trust me. There's an entire world out there for you. If things don't work out with Mitch, that's his mistake. Don't get me wrong, I fancy the chap, I do, but if you're not comfortable, if you don't feel safe... Do you want my honest counsel?

SALLY

Yes please.

GRETA

This is not a fairy tale, this is real life. Love comes second, or fifth or even tenth. Your happiness is first, always. Because if you're not happy, then I can't be happy either, and neither can mum and dad. This is how we were raised, it's been our life since we were little, and we love it. So if you want your real life to become like a fairy tale, Gary has many wonderful pals in his industry who would love to make your acquaintance and I'm positive would love you for who you really are.

(Light change, Greta leaves. Liz sits on the floor to one side. GEORGE and ELIZABETH occupy a couch to the other. They speak on the phone.)

ELIZABETH

Hello?

SALLY

Hello mother.

ELIZABETH

Sally my dear. What a delight. How are you?

SALLY

Grand. I just-

ELIZABETH

How is your sister?

SALLY

She's all right, we had brunch together earlier-

ELIZABETH

Will you tell her to give her mother a ring, dear? I miss my little darlings so much. And so does your father.

SALLY

Mum?

ELIZABETH

When are you coming to London?

SALLY

Ahm-

ELIZABETH

We've already started preparations for the holidays this year...

SALLY

Mum-

ELIZABETH

The season is absolutely marvelous. I can't wait to gather our family together...

SALLY

Mother, will you listen?

ELIZABETH

Over a cup of tea with biscuits by the fire-

SALLY

I need your advice-

ELIZABETH

Guess who's agreed to dress as father Christmas this year?

Mother- SALLY

Your father! (Laughs) ELIZABETH

Should I marry Mitch? SALLY

Marriage? Did I hear that correctly? ELIZABETH

Yes. SALLY

Oh my god!!! ELIZABETH

No. Mother! Hello? SALLY

Sally is getting married. ELIZABETH

To whom? GEORGE

Oh bullocks... SALLY

What do you mean, to whom? To Mitch! Her boyfriend. ELIZABETH

The American shoemaker? GEORGE

Well absolutely. Is there another? ELIZABETH

Should I get married then? SALLY

When is the wedding? ELIZABETH

GEORGE

(takes the phone) Did I hear that correctly my dear? You're getting married to the shoemaker?

SALLY

Well, I was asking mother how she fancied the idea.

GEORGE

Your mother couldn't possibly wait a second longer to have grandchildren, you should absolutely not marry the first wanker in sight just because she tells you to.

ELIZABETH

George!

SALLY

All right...

GEORGE

Has he proposed?

SALLY

Not yet.

GEORGE

Good. Don't accord with anything without giving it a thought first.

SALLY

What do I do father?

GEORGE

It's a money trap, Sally. He most certainly doesn't love you.

SALLY

Sorry?

GEORGE

He's too old for you, he's desperate.

ELIZABETH

Oh my god. Sally never got along with boys her age. (Takes the phone) Sally, do you love the chap?

SALLY

...Yes...

ELIZABETH

Then you should marry him.

GEORGE

But you love to travel dear! How can you settle in America? What about us?

ELIZABETH

You must both come to London then! George will gladly yield Mitch some job at the company.

GEORGE

That's a fine idea. Or even better, just come to London alone and marry an Englishman, how it's regarded to be.

ELIZABETH

That's preposterous. Don't mind this silly old man.

SALLY

All right. As a matter of fact, I've got this...

ELIZABETH

Follow your heart dear.

GEORGE

Follow reason!

SALLY

I must go now... Love you!

(Set change. Mitch enters and sits with Sally on a picnic blanket. They drink wine.) New scene:

MITCH

...Sally?

SALLY

Yes Mitch.

MITCH

I love you... Ever since I first met you everything just felt right and you made me happier than I ever thought I could be. That's why I need you in my life until the day I die. I have a proposition for you.

SALLY

Oh my god.

MITCH

I want to break up with you romantically so that we can remain friends-

SALLY

...For Pete's sake...

MITCH

Forever-

SALLY

There's a billion thoughts going through my mind at this moment, but... by all means... proceed...

MITCH

Do you like how you feel when you're with me?

SALLY

Sure...

MITCH

I can't be with a woman who's clearly out of my league. I would just be too busy all the time trying to protect my ego and make us both miserable.

SALLY

Just say whatever the fuck you want to say Mitch.

MITCH

I can't have kids with you. I can't allow you to have a shitty life because of me. But if we remove sex from the equation-

SALLY

No.

MITCH

What?

SALLY

I won't be one of your stupid friends.

MITCH

Sally...

SALLY

You're exactly my type of man. You're attractive, brilliant, perfect height, kind personality. If I can't date you I will be miserable when I'm around you. Sorry if I can't prophesy the bloody future like you, but that much I know.

MITCH

Why don't you get a boyfriend?

SALLY

Have you gone mad?

MITCH

I like being friends with girls who are already fulfilled sexually, the stakes are so much lower.

SALLY

I must have gone mad myself.

MITCH

Ideally she's in a happy marriage with kids and we can just be friends in a non-sexual way. When I'm with you is like I'm already having little orgasms anyway. Because I love your brain and the things that you say, we don't have to bump pees, you know?

SALLY

Bugger off Mitch.

(Sally stands.)

MITCH

We are both too brainwashed to make this work. There's too much media, too many opinions on how people should interact.

SALLY

Please don't come near me again. I'm deleting your number and blocking you on social media.

MITCH

Why me? Sally?

SALLY

Because you... used to make me happy. But now you're breaking my heart.

MITCH

I love you. I can't lose you. But if we have sex eventually you're gonna leave me and ruin my life. And I'll never meet anybody like you again. I will look for you in every person I meet. Please be my friend.

SALLY

I couldn't possibly have another lover if you were still in my life. Good bye Mitch.

(Sally turns away to leave.)

MITCH

Sally?

(Sally doesn't turn.)

SALLY

Yes Mitch...

MITCH

Will you marry me?

(Mitch produces a ring. Sally doesn't turn.)

SALLY

Just like that, huh?

MITCH

If you're happy then I promise I'll be happy too.

SALLY

I can't predict the future...

MITCH

Just in the moment.

SALLY

Is this an actual proposal? Or-

MITCH

How the fuck wouldn't it be an actual proposal?

(Sally turns and sees the ring. She
smiles.)

END PLAY