

THE GIRL I'M GONNA MARRY

A ROMANTIC COMEDY IN ONE ACT

By **Bobby Keniston**

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THE GIRL I'M GONNA MARRY

By Bobby Keniston

SYNOPSIS: When Simon's long-time friend tells him she's getting married, he's totally crushed and sets out to get her. Follow Simon through several different scenarios as he imagines real and idealized ways to stop the wedding and find true happiness! Full of equal parts humor and heart, this award-winning one-act will put a twinkle in any eye.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 MEN, 1 WOMAN)

- SIMON (m).....29. A sweet, sincere young man, in love with his best friend, Miranda. He wants to marry her and be with her every minute of every day. (134 lines)
- PHILIP (m)20s. Is Simon's male best friend. Cares about Simon, but is often sarcastic. (51 lines)
- MIRANDA (f)29. Simon's best friend and object of his affection. She is a smart, feisty woman with an independent spirit. Very devoted to Simon. (79 lines)
- BRIAN (m)38. Miranda's fiancé. He is a nice enough guy. (24 lines)
- MINISTER (m).....40s-50s. A minister of the Lord. (5 lines)

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Girl I'm Gonna Marry is made up of several short scenes. It is a play about the characters, heart, and HUMOR, and the humor works best if the play moves quickly. Hence, I would suggest keeping the sets simple, and using lights for the best transitions.

One area of the stage should be devoted to “Simon’s” space, in his living room, where the play begins. From there, the other scenes should be set on the other side of the stage: the church, the reception hall, etc., and should all be very representational with furniture and props. Simon, since he moves in and out of the “real” world and the world of the wedding, should begin wearing black pants and a white shirt, and should have a black jacket handy to slip into for the other scenes. Brief blackouts can be used in-between scenes if desired, but should not last very long—it might be more effective to use transitional lighting.

In terms of the slides: in the original productions, the slides were projected onto a screen far stage right, and the actors just looked out to the audience as if they could see them and reacted to them as such. It is possible, in accordance to your theatre’s set-up, to have the slides projected on a back curtain or cyclorama if you have one. I also know of another production that simply had small labeled photocopies of the pictures in the program of what the slides were. This is entirely up to you and your technical capabilities.

The audience should not know right away that Simon is going through different scenarios in his mind.

This is a play all about love. Simon and Miranda need to have impeccable chemistry, as they have been life-long friends. Brian is intentionally vague, as he is presented here only through Simon’s perceptions of him.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

The Girl I'm Gonna Marry was originally produced by Lakewood Theater. The play travelled to the Maine Association of Community Theater's festival, where it won the top honor. The original cast was as follows:

SIMON..... Bobby Keniston
MIRANDA Sara Nadeau
PHILIP Aaron Becker
BRIAN Jak Peters
MINISTER..... Steve Huber

Director Tracy Comeau

This play is dedicated to Tracy Comeau, my best friend, and to Tracy Sue, my other best friend. I am lucky to have such wonderful Tracys in my life.

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SCENE 1

AT RISE:

SIMON'S apartment, a couch and a screen for slides. SIMON and PHILIP are sitting on the couch with a bowl of popcorn. SIMON has a rack of slides that he is setting up. PHILIP is annoyed. SIMON finishes with the slides, then rummages around looking for a card.

NOTE: The slides can be projected behind the actors or off to the side, and the actors will look straight out to the audience, as if looking at the slides.

PHILIP: Enough, already. I swear that the popcorn is getting stale.

SIMON: One second. I know it's here somewhere.

PHILIP: Why does she send you her slides?

SIMON: *(Beaming.)* Because I'm not there with her. She wants me to know what it's like to always be with her.

PHILIP: Sweet. Maybe she'll let you sleep at the foot of her bed when she and what's his name are...

SIMON: *(Brandishing the found card.)* Here it is! Listen: *(Reading the card.)* "Dear Sweet Simon, I am having a great time in Mexico with... *(He makes a face.)* Brian. Here are some slides. Watch them carefully, and you'll find a surprise."

PHILIP: Maybe she's naked.

SIMON: Knock it off! *(Returning to card.)* "Missing you bunches. Can't wait to see you! XOXOXOXO," and there's a little smiley face and hearts.

PHILIP: Great. Why doesn't she show you her slides in person?

SIMON: We're busy people, you know. It's not as if we can spend every second of the day together.

PHILIP: Not that you'd object.

SIMON: Not that I'd object. Scoot over. *(He starts the slide projector, sits down next to PHILIP.)* I'm excited.

PHILIP: Rah, rah.

SIMON: I'm going to tell her how I feel next time I see her.

PHILIP: What? And break your vow of silence?

SIMON: I'm warning you...

PHILIP: Mr. Unrequited Love Monk.

SIMON: Stop...

PHILIP: At least you've got the celibacy thing down. That's the hardest part.

SIMON: How many times do I have to tell you?

PHILIP: I know. You're saving yourself for Miranda.

SIMON: She's the first person I slept with.

PHILIP: When you were eight.

SIMON: There is something intimate about sleeping with someone and not having sex with them. She still sleeps over sometimes. Just to talk. I could talk to her forever. We never run out of things to say.

PHILIP: And if you did, there are always her slides. Let's get going, huh? I haven't got all night.

SIMON hits the button. SLIDE: BRIAN and MIRANDA on a beach, presumably in Mexico, building a sand castle and smiling.

SIMON: That's the prettiest sandcastle I've ever seen.

PHILIP: Not a bad bathing suit, either. Boy, she sure looks happy with him.

SIMON: She just wants to make the slide more interesting.

PHILIP: Sure. Take your Prozac. Next!

SIMON hits the button. SLIDE: BRIAN and MIRANDA at a restaurant. BRIAN is opening a bottle of champagne. MIRANDA is not in the photo.

PHILIP: I hope they avoided the tap water. Or maybe Miranda had to make a bathroom run, who knows?

SIMON: There's the door, Philip.

PHILIP: See the humor in life, Simon. That's the only way to save yourself from the big hurt.

SIMON hits the button. SLIDE: BRIAN and MIRANDA at a nightclub, both dressed to the nines.

SIMON: Wow. She looks so pretty.

PHILIP: (*Pretending it's a cough.*) Big hurt! Big hurt!

SIMON hits the button. SLIDE: BRIAN and MIRANDA at their table, still at the nightclub. BRIAN is holding something out to MIRANDA. She is covering her face in joy and shock.

SIMON: What the hell is that?

SLIDE: Close-up of MIRANDA'S hand. It is adorned with an expensive engagement ring.

PHILIP: Let's shut this off, huh? Maybe we can catch a late show somewhere.

SLIDE: BRIAN and MIRANDA kissing.

PHILIP: Come on, Simon. Let's go. Enough already, huh? You look a little pale. I think you need some air. And alcohol.

SLIDE: Picture of a wedding invitation. It reads: "To the Other Man in my life, You are cordially invited to my wedding! Can you believe it? I love you. Give me a call, Miranda." PHILIP rises and unplugs the slide projector. He sits back down. SIMON stares off into space, crushed.

PHILIP: You okay?

SIMON: She's just kidding around. She loves practical jokes.

PHILIP: She's almost thirty. Women don't joke about marriage at that age.

SIMON: You don't know her like I do.

PHILIP: Yeah. Looks like Brian went to a lot of trouble to help her out with the joke, huh? Or does DeBeers have a practical joke rental program?

SIMON: It can't be.

PHILIP: Simon...

SIMON: I was going to tell her. I waited too long.

PHILIP: It's over. Look, don't worry about it. This doesn't mean anything in the long run, except maybe you'll finally start dating.

SIMON: Maybe it's not too late. Maybe if...

PHILIP: Let's go out. Have you ever been to a singles' bar? They're not as bad as all that...

SIMON: Maybe if I play the timing right...

PHILIP: There is no "maybe if." You don't live a life in "maybe ifs." Not even "probably ifs."

SIMON: Nothing is over yet. Just wait...the wedding day...I can see it. Everything can still work out.

PHILIP: Oh, yes! Just think of the possibilities! Last-minute wedding day turnaround. Lovely. Always the best opportunity for love.

SIMON: The possibilities. Yes. The possibilities...

Fade out.

SCENE 2

The wedding day. MIRANDA'S area of the church. MIRANDA is in her wedding dress, pacing a bit, looking in the mirror, adjusting her hair. SIMON enters, now in a black jacket.

NOTE: to keep the action moving, have MIRANDA enter her area of the stage when Scene One ends, and SIMON can put on his coat in his area and flow right into this scene without a blackout.

SIMON: Oh my God. I can't believe it. You look so beautiful.

MIRANDA: You don't look so bad yourself, sweetie. Give the bride a kiss. *(They peck on the lips.)* Do I really look okay?

SIMON: Mmmmm. No. I was lying. White just doesn't suit you.

MIRANDA: Shut up.

SIMON: Okay, that's it. Last time I come to one of your weddings. *(They both laugh.)* I just can't believe it.

MIRANDA: I know.

SIMON: Nervous?

MIRANDA: I'm getting pit stains on my gown.

SIMON: Like Mr. Buck.

MIRANDA: Exactly. *(Beat.)* Trying to teach a bunch of ninth graders the importance of Dickens with leaky armpits.

SIMON: Best of times, worst of times...

MIRANDA: Sweat pouring off of him.

SIMON: Right! (*They laugh.*) I think you know me better than anyone.

MIRANDA: Of course I do. I could write a book about you, if anyone but me were interested. I'd write seven volumes about you. Seven's your lucky number.

SIMON: So you say.

MIRANDA: So I know.

SIMON: Remember the apple game? You know the one. Twisting the stem, saying the letters of the alphabet, you know.

MIRANDA: And the letter the stem comes out on, that's the letter of the first name of THE person you're going to marry.

SIMON: Right. Well, when we were in seventh grade, I did that once, and the stem came out at "M." Ever since then, whenever I do it, the stem comes out at "M." I thought for awhile that maybe I was somehow willing it to happen because of feelings I couldn't admit. But I don't think that's the case. I really don't. Everybody has to believe in something, right? Higher powers and all. That's what they tell alcoholics, anyway, and even though I'm not a drunk... well, I am addicted to something. You. Your company. You. I tried to figure out the number of minutes and seconds that we've spent together, but that would take a computer or something. The number of glances, the number of laughs, the number of not-quite-short enough pauses as we stared at each other. I do believe in fate. I believe that we were born in the same hospital nine minutes apart for a reason. I believe that apple stem came out at "M" all those times for a reason. I can't control it, you know? Sometimes I wish I could. And sometimes, I wish that you had the same feeling. But who knows? Maybe you do, and I just never asked. So I'm asking you now. Did your stem ever come out at "S"?

Long pause. MIRANDA is speechless. SIMON looks at her almost pleading. Finally:

MIRANDA: This is my wedding day, Simon. You know that I love you.

SIMON: (*Crestfallen.*) Yeah. Of course.

MIRANDA: (*Softly.*) Maybe you should get your seat. I kind of want to be alone right now.

SIMON: *(After a beat.)* 'Kay. *(False cheer.)* But...you know, I was just joking. I mean.

MIRANDA: Simon. Please. Maybe we can talk about this later, but I'm about to get married. Why don't you go sit down now?

SIMON: Yeah. *(Pause.)* Right. *(Pause.)* I, uh, brought you a gift.

He takes a little wrapped gift out of his coat pocket and sets it on her table. BLACKOUT.

SCENE 3

SIMON'S apartment, continuous from Scene 1. SIMON sits with PHILIP, picking up the action. He is not wearing his black suit coat. Again, for fluidity, he can remove his coat and enter right back into this scene with some lighting transition.

SIMON: Dammit. That's a real downer.

PHILIP: This is pointless.

SIMON: No. That's not what's going to happen. Not at all, a'tall, my friend. No way. Let me think...

Fade out.

SCENE 4

A space on the stage outside of MIRANDA'S room at the church. SIMON is standing there, anxious, wearing his black suit jacket. PHILIP approaches him. PHILIP is now dressed in a black suit jacket as well.

SIMON: Is everything in order?

PHILIP: I am going to Hell for this.

SIMON: You're a real friend. I mean it. A real buddy.

PHILIP: I hate you.

SIMON: Yeah, yeah, but you did everything? There's no way that Brian can get here?

PHILIP: Flat tire, sugar in the gas tank, no battery in the cell phone...

SIMON: What about the roofies?

PHILIP: Yes, yes, yes. He will wake up from his bachelor party wondering where he is, and then realize he's 150 miles away from where he needs to be. Don't you have any scruples?

SIMON: I'm a man in love. What can I say?

PHILIP: You're a stupid man. That's what I say.

SIMON: I love you, Philip.

PHILIP: *(After a slight pause.)* I just hope you get what you wanted.

PHILIP exits. SIMON moves into MIRANDA'S room of the church. She is sitting there in her wedding dress, depressed. She looks up at SIMON with hope in her eyes.

MIRANDA: Any sign of him yet?

SIMON: I'm afraid not, sweetie. I'm sure he's just stuck somewhere. There's got to be a logical explanation.

MIRANDA: How could he do this to me? This is the most important day of my life! Are the guests still here?

SIMON: Mr. and Mrs. Buck are waiting around for free cake, I think.

MIRANDA: Oh my God! How could I have been so stupid? I loved him! I thought this time...**FINALLY**...a Mr. Right, you know? That for once in my life...

She cries.

SIMON: I know, angel, I know. Hey, it's okay. Everything is going to be okay. I promise. Why don't we get out of here, huh?

MIRANDA: Okay. You're right. *(Beat.)* Can I still wear my wedding gown?

SIMON: Of course you can.

There is a brief blackout or transitional lighting, as SIMON and MIRANDA move to SIMON'S apartment area. MIRANDA sits on the couch, and as the lights resume, she has obviously a great deal to drink and is now quite tipsy.

MIRANDA: I swear, Simon, baby, you are the only man in my life that I can trust.

SIMON: That's not true.

MIRANDA: Yes, it is. Ever since Dad died. Oh my God. (*A little sniffle.*) Yeah. Ever since that. You're the only man who's always been there for me. You've taken better care of me than anyone else in my whole life. (*She cries a little, and SIMON looks guilty.*) Screw Brian! He's not even worth it. Wanna know why?

SIMON: Why?

MIRANDA: Because he's not even a man! He's just a little piggy like all the rest! (*She oinks like a pig, and then laughs, obviously drunk.*) Looks like it's still just you and me, Simey. You won't ever leave me, huh? Will you?

SIMON: No. Of course not, baby.

MIRANDA: You won't ever lie and cheat and hurt me...no, skip that... I already know the answer. You're the best friend that I've ever had.

SIMON: (*With some guilt.*) Listen, sweetie: maybe there's a perfectly logical explanation for standing someone up at the altar... I mean, Brian seemed like he was very nice. Although, I didn't really know him, to be honest. But, hey, he took you to Mexico, right? You guys had fun, right?

MIRANDA: Yes. He took me to... (*She is overcome and cries again.*) Why did he do this to me? (*She wipes her eyes.*) No. No. That's enough. I'm not going to cry anymore. No more crying. (*Beat. She takes SIMON'S hand.*) We should get married.

SIMON: What?

MIRANDA: You're the only man that I trust. And I love you, and have ever since we were kids. We should get married. How 'bout it? It would be fun.

SIMON: Well, we were engaged once. Do you remember?

MIRANDA: Whaaa? (*Pause.*) Oh my God! That's right.

SIMON: When we were in college. Aaron and I were roommates...

MIRANDA: You poor boy.

SIMON: Hey, admit it: he's grown on you.

MIRANDA: Like a fungus you get used to, but go on.

SIMON: Thank you. It was that night we went grocery shopping because we were sick of dining hall food, and so we were at the grocery store, and it had one of those little quarter vending machines...

MIRANDA: With the plastic rings! You know, they're like fifty cents now...

SIMON: Yup. And right there in the store...

MIRANDA: In the dairy aisle. I remember 'cause it was cold and smelled like yogurt...

SIMON: I got down on one knee, and I proposed to you. I asked you to spend the rest of your life with me.

MIRANDA: And you promised to love me always and forever.

SIMON: Yes. A and F.

MIRANDA: And I said yes!

SIMON: That's right. *(Beat.)* But we never set a date. *(Beat.)* We should have set a date right when you said yes.

MIRANDA: I know, right? *(They both laugh.)* Oh, Simon! There was always a part of my mind that thought you looked serious when you proposed, but I just figured...well, you used to act in high school, and you always committed to your jokes...

SIMON: It wasn't a joke. It might have been the first time I was completely honest about my feelings to you. Were you joking when you said yes?

MIRANDA: *(Softly.)* Not completely. Part of me...I don't know...part of me was saying yes.

SIMON: I love you, Miranda. And I've been IN love with you for a long time, too. I know the timing stinks...

MIRANDA: Simon. Sweet Simon.

SHE moves to him, leans in to kiss him, when... A loud knock is heard on the door, offstage. MIRANDA and SIMON pull back. We hear BRIAN's voice offstage.

BRIAN: *(Offstage.)* Simon! Simon! Are you home? Have you seen Miranda? Simon! Simon!

MIRANDA: *(Loud whisper.)* I'm not here. Tell him I'm not here!

SIMON: I don't know...

BRIAN: *(Offstage.)* I hear you in there, Simon! Is Miranda with you? Miranda! Miranda!

MIRANDA: That's it!

SHE storms offstage, opening the door, and storms back in the room. BRIAN follows. He is 38 and has red-rimmed eyes and looks very disheveled and foggy. He wears jeans and a t-shirt.

MIRANDA: Well, well, well. Lookee who's here.

BRIAN: (*Pleading.*) Baby, I swear I don't know what happened. I woke up this morning in New York City! I have no idea what happened last night!

MIRANDA: Save your excuses, Mr. Fella, I don't want to hear them.

SIMON: Miranda...

BRIAN: Please, baby... I swear to God this wasn't my fault. I don't know what happened. I think I was drugged. My head hurts.

MIRANDA: Oh, of course. I forgot. The Iranians are in town, drugging unsuspecting grooms all over the goddamn neighborhood and taking them to New York. Why didn't I put two and two together?

BRIAN: Please! You've got to believe me, Miranda! You know me.

MIRANDA: No. I really don't. Come to think of it, I don't know you at all.

BRIAN: Why would I hurt you?

MIRANDA: I don't know, but you did. It doesn't matter though. I don't need you anymore. I'll have you know that Simon and I are getting married as soon as possible. Maybe today, even. There's still wedding cake.

BRIAN: What? I thought he was gay...

MIRANDA: I told you that so you wouldn't be jealous of how much I love him. But no, he's very straight, if you know what I mean.

SIMON: Miranda, I think you should...wait, you told him I was gay?

MIRANDA: Let's talk about that later, sweetie. (*To BRIAN.*) I think I've loved Simon all along. Forever. You were just a fluke, Bri, a distraction. So why don't you stop distracting now, so Simon and I can get down to the business of our nuptials and honeymoon.

BRIAN: Miranda. Please. Talk to me.

MIRANDA starts pushing him off, to the door.

MIRANDA: Goodbye, Brian.

We hear the door close, and MIRANDA returns.

BRIAN: *(Offstage.)* Simon! Please! Can you talk to her for me?
Please!

Pause. Footsteps are heard walking away, retreating.

MIRANDA: Now where were we?

MIRANDA kisses SIMON. He looks a little guilty, but receives the kiss. They kiss for a long moment before SIMON pulls away.

SIMON: I can't do this.

MIRANDA: Come on. I bet you'll like it.

SIMON: I'm sure I would. It's what I've wanted my entire life. *(Beat.)*
Always. Forever.

MIRANDA: Well, your wait is over. I'm all yours. We can start walking through this world together, hand in hand. Looks like we both got our wish today, only I didn't know it before.

SIMON: I've always told you everything, right?

MIRANDA: Yeah.

SIMON: Well, now I have to tell you about the worst thing I've ever done.

MIRANDA: I already know about Mrs. Baker's cat, Simon. Tainted catnip is not your fault.

SIMON: No, this is worse.

MIRANDA: Worse than poisoning a defenseless kitty?

SIMON: That wasn't my fault! *(Pause.)* And yes, this is worse. And it is my fault.

MIRANDA: What is it?

SIMON: It was my fault that Brian didn't show up for the wedding.

MIRANDA: Don't sacrifice yourself for that bastard, Simon. He's not worth it.

SIMON: Would you listen, please? This is hard to say. *(Beat.)* You love me, right? *(MIRANDA nods, SIMON takes a deep breath. He speaks very quickly.)* I had Brian drugged and taken off to New York. Had his tires slashed, gas tank ruined. It was all me. And I don't even have anything against him. In fact, I don't even know him at all. I guess he just had something that I could never have and always wanted. You. And so I was jealous. That jealousy inspired temporary insanity, and I did something that I never should have done and still can't really believe that I actually did. And now, I need to get on my knees and beg your forgiveness. And his.

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