

GIRL ON FIRE

A girl believes she needs to be married
to have a baby. But, convincing the father
won't be so easy.

A 10-minute comedy

By Richard Fouts

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JUSTIN, male, any race, age 25-35.

RILEY, female, any race, age 25-35.

JOANNA, female, any race, any age.

TIME & PLACE

Present day

RILEY and JUSTIN's home.

(Scene opens in RILEY's living room, who is having a club soda while JOANNA is having a glass of wine.)

RILEY

I'm pregnant.

JOANNA

Congratulations?

RILEY

Very funny.

JOANNA

I'm trying to be positive.

RILEY

Already got three positives. Justin's a going to freak.

JOANNA

You sure he hasn't seen them?

RILEY

Justin won't take the trash **out**, why would he look **inside** it?

JOANNA

What do you want to do?

RILEY

Trick Justin into proposing.

JOANNA

Are you on crack?

RILEY

Oh stop it, you know how he is, if I tell him I'm pregnant, he'll do the right thing and ask me to marry him. He's so ethical that way.

JOANNA

And that's a problem because ...

RILEY

I'll be one of those girls that HAD to get married.

JOANNA

Like the girls we made fun of in high school? Get a life, we're not teenagers.

RILEY

Not helping.

JOANNA

Riley, I've seen you and Justin through plenty of ups and downs. But you always land on the same page.

RILEY

But, if we get married, I want it to be for the right reasons, not because he knocked me up.

JOANNA

Well, have you discussed ... the ball and chain?

RILEY

Oh yeah, and the conversation always ends with "We don't need a piece of paper to prove we're in love."

JOANNA

That's unfortunate.

RILEY

So what I do?

JOANNA

Ask him to marry **you!**

RILEY

Oh sure, even though I've told him a million times, that in no uncertain terms, I'm not the marrying kind.

JOANNA

Well that was dumb.

RILEY

He's a guy! I figured it's what he wanted to hear. You've got to help me!

JOANNA

Well how the hell should I know?

RILEY

You manipulate people for a living.

JOANNA

That's true.

RILEY

How?

JOANNA

Whenever I want a client to do something ... I convince them that it was *their* idea all along, they just didn't realize it. It's in my Ted Talk.

RILEY

I love it. What's the secret?

JOANNA

Reverse psychology.

RILEY

Like you use on five-year-olds?

JOANNA

Honey, men **are** five-year-olds.

RILEY

Okay, okay, I get it. I can do this.

(During this we hear keys jangling at the door and JOANNA gets up.)

RILEY

He's here. You need to leave.

(JUSTIN enters the stage, while JOANNA is exiting the stage).

JUSTIN

Joanna, how nice. Staying for dinner?

JOANNA

Wish I could, but I gotta get home to the ball-and-chain. You're so lucky you aren't married.

JUSTIN

I thought you loved matrimony.

JOANNA

Nope, big facade. Tim and I want to kill each other, almost daily. In fact, just this morning

RILEY

Nice to see you Joanna! Bye, bye now!

JOANNA

But, I have more.

RILEY

BYE BYE. KISS KISS.

(RILEY pushes JOANNA out the door
then slams it.)

JUSTIN

That was odd.

RILEY

It's actually consistent with the conversation I just had with my mother.

JUSTIN

Why, what happened?

RILEY

She said, "Now that your father's retired, I'm the one with a full-time job: taking care of HIM."

JUSTIN

Yeah? Well, get this, my dad says to me the other day, "I just asked your mother what she's burning for dinner."

RILEY

What was it?

JUSTIN

(chuckling)

His golf bag! Dad always says, "The secret to a happy marriage is obviously a secret!"

RILEY

No wonder she dumped him. MY dad says, "Maintaining open communication is me asking your mother, "Must you be a nag, ALL the time?"

(RILEY and JUSTIN start laughing.)

JUSTIN

Wait, I got one: Know why Brigham Young ended polygamy?
He had 35 mothers-in-law!

RILEY

Can you imagine? Me, with 35 of YOUR mothers? I'd rather be
buried alive.

(RILEY and JUSTIN laugh.)

JUSTIN

Babe, you're on fire today.

RILEY

Yup, burn that marriage tree to the ground!

JUSTIN

You never bug me about getting married, ever! It's why I love
you. We don't need ...

RILEY

A piece of paper!

JUSTIN

A piece of paper!

RILEY

What can i say? You live with a saint.

JUSTIN

I do, and I know that will never change. Us not getting
married won't change either.

RILEY

You know what they say ... love is a long, lovely holiday,
until it's awakened by a rude alarm clock .. *called marriage!*

JUSTIN

Marriage is divorce waiting to happen.

RILEY

And divorce just proves which mother was right all along.

(Both laugh, then RILEY turns
serious.)

But, you know Justin? There is something a few of our older
married friends have, that makes me a tad jealous.

JUSTIN

Okay, I admit I get jealous sometimes, but jealousy has NEVER been your thing.

RILEY

I said, just a tad.

JUSTIN

Hey, when our newlywed friends are happy, we **know** why. But, when our older married friends are happy? We wonder what drugs they're taking.

RILEY

I know, I know ...

JUSTIN

So, what's this thing you envy, even if just a tad?

RILEY

On second thought, it's stupid. Forget I mentioned it.

JUSTIN

I know that trick. You're dying to tell me. What?

RILEY

It might sound even sillier when I say it out loud.

JUSTIN

Babe, it's me. I've seen you in plenty of silly situations.

RILEY

Okay, I had a dream, where you said, "You know what would make me happier than a marriage license? Having a baby, with you."

JUSTIN

Wait, what? Babe, that wasn't a dream, it was a nightmare.

RILEY

I KNOW. It's so not us.

JUSTIN

Well, hold on a minute. Would it make YOU happy?

RILEY

Hey, I was in the delivery room when my sister had her kid. God, what a mess.

JUSTIN

Don't deflect the question. What's going on?

RILEY

Oh all right ... I **might** like the idea of a little Justin running around. But it's silly, right?

JUSTIN

I can be silly too, you know.

RILEY

Like you are with my nephews? I bet you're so grateful when I take them home.

JUSTIN

Truthfully, I'm always a little sad when they let out that long, gruesome groan, after you announce it's time to go home.

RILEY

Okay, what have you done with my boyfriend? Kidnapping is a federal offense, where is he?

JUSTIN

Ha ha, but after you all leave, I actually **don't** enjoy the quiet as much as I thought I would. And I like how they crawl all over me. It feels good to be a kid again. You should try it sometime.

RILEY

Hey, someone has to be the mom, I mean, the adult.

JUSTIN

Okay, next time you play the kid, I'll play the dad.

RILEY

Deal. Wanna hear something wild? Last time I drove the kids home, they said, "When will we see you and Uncle Justin again?"

JUSTIN

They did? Uh oh.

RILEY

Not to worry, I reminded them you are NOT their real uncle.

JUSTIN

Although, I envy that YOU are their real auntie.

RILEY

Jealousy is a terrible thing.

JUSTIN

Okay, how's this for silly? I wouldn't mind having a baby with you. Would you mind having a baby with me?

RILEY

Wait. What?

JUSTIN

I said, I wouldn't mind having a baby with you, would you ...

RILEY

...no, no, I heard what you said.

JUSTIN

And?

RILEY

And ... have you lost your fucking mind?

JUSTIN

You're deflecting the question, again! It's not complicated. Yes or no?

RILEY

Okay ... I might ... have a baby with you.

JUSTIN

Really?

RILEY

Down boy, I said *might*.

JUSTIN

Okay, who am I?

RILEY

You're my one-and-only. I've told you that a million times.

JUSTIN

And you've been my girl since I was 16 years old.

RILEY

We met when we were 14.

JUSTIN

Okay, I'm a little slow. Think of it this way, maybe we'd be blessed with a little girl that looks just like you.

RILEY

Or a little boy that looks just like you?

JUSTIN

Then you'd consider it?

RILEY

A baby crying in the middle of the night?

JUSTIN

Music to my ears.

RILEY

Changing dirty diapers?

JUSTIN

Piece of cake.

RILEY

Car pools, playdates, scraped knees, doctor appointments?

JUSTIN

I'll quit my job, take care of all that.

RILEY

Wow, I think that makes you the perfect "I never want to be a husband" boyfriend.

RILEY

Living with his perfect, "I never want to be a wife" girlfriend.

JUSTIN

We'll need grown-up titles if we ... actually do this. Perhaps we re-visit the ball and chain?

RILEY

Mister and Missus? Now who's having a nightmare?

JUSTIN

Touché.

RILEY

Justin, this talk has convinced me more than ever, that I don't need a piece of paper to prove how much I love you. But if marriage is something you want ...

JUSTIN

I could picture being married to you, could you ...

RILEY

Let's not .. do that again. But, yes I could picture it, especially if we add another member to our family.

JUSTIN

So this means

RILEY

... that we landed on the same page, like we always do. You know, this has been the best day ever.

JUSTIN

Because?

RILEY

I have something to tell you.

(As lights fade to black, RILEY
whispers in JUSTIN's ear.)

JUSTIN

Are you serious? I'm going to be a dad? I'm going to be a dad!

END OF PLAY