



MR. & MRS. FITCH

BY DOUGLAS CARTER BEANE



DRAMATISTS
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MR. & MRS. FITCH received its Off-Broadway premiere
on February 22, 2010 at Second Stage Theatre (Carole Rothman, Artistic Director).

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SPECIAL NOTE ON SONGS BY COLE PORTER

I GET A KICK OUT OF YOU (from *Anything Goes*)

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MISTER AND MISSUS FITCH (from *Gay Divorce*)

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NIGHT AND DAY (from *Gay Divorce*)

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For Lewis Flinn

MR. & MRS. FITCH received its Off-Broadway premiere at Second Stage in New York City, opening on February 22, 2010. It was directed by Scott Ellis; the set design was by Allen Moyer; the costume design was by Jeff Mahshie; the lighting design was by Kenneth Posner; the sound design was by Bart Fasbender; and the original music was by Lewis Flinn. The cast was as follows:

MR. FITCH John Lithgow
MRS. FITCH Jennifer Ehle

CHARACTERS

MR. FITCH

MRS. FITCH

PLACE

New York City.

TIME

The present.

MR. & MRS. FITCH

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Darkness. The jangle of keys. A door opens, a shaft of light. Two figures, one female, Mrs. Fitch, and one male, Mr. Fitch, appear in shadow on a back hallway. A bang, a crash, something has fallen, followed by hysterical laughing.

MR. FITCH. I'm following you!

MRS. FITCH. Darling. Don't follow me, I'm lost, too!

MR. FITCH. And a light on right now would scream out to you as a child in church.

MRS. FITCH. Do not punish me. *(The lights flick on. A stunning loft with a skylight, decorated with great and eccentric style. Mr. Fitch and Mrs. Fitch are discovered. They are the type of people we see in papers attending parties. We envy them, for starters.)* Dearest.

MR. FITCH. Darling.

MRS. FITCH. Dearest, darling. Promise me, vow to me, pledge to me —

MR. FITCH. If I could find a Bible I would place my hand upon it.

MRS. FITCH. *(Looking around.)* Bible, yes, but then you'll find a book that goes with every major religion on the premises. Honestly, I'm so spiritual I could just spit.

MR. FITCH. Well now.

MRS. FITCH. YES! Just swear to me on a book you hold most holy —

MR. FITCH. *(Grabs a book and looks with delight.)* Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation*.

MRS. FITCH. Mightier than the sword, darling.

MR. FITCH. (*Swearing on the book.*) I, Mr. Fitch, do hereby solemnly swear —

MRS. FITCH. To not take Mrs. Fitch to another goddamned sincere event.

MR. FITCH. To not take Mrs. Fitch to another goddamned sincere event.

MRS. FITCH. The tears, the anguish —

MR. FITCH. The tears, the anguish for the cameras.

MRS. FITCH. Oh, and of course, She-Who-Will-Not-Be-Ignored was in attendance.

MR. FITCH. Eleventh-hour addition, as always.

MRS. FITCH. With her ... entourage?

MR. FITCH. Recovery team.

MRS. FITCH. “Just a glass of ... water, please.”

MR. FITCH. Cigarette puff, cigarette puff. “Addiction is a terrible thing and I have triumphed.” Cigarette puff, cigarette puff. “And that is why I am for a drug-free America — ” cigarette puff, cigarette puff —

MRS. FITCH. Please, no, Mr. Fitch.

MR. FITCH. I shall do my best to shield you from all sincerity.

MRS. FITCH. I mean when did everything become so ... meaningful? That literacy event showed promise.

MR. FITCH. It most certainly did not. (*Putting book away.*) Sleep well, princess Susan, our work is done here. (*Back with Mrs. Fitch.*) I’m heart-wrenchingly forced to admit, though I shall do my utmost — I cannot guarantee an evening without glimpses of sincerity.

MRS. FITCH. Then I’ll show them. I won’t go out. No causes, please. No slides please. No quivering-voiced speeches. No thermometer of donations, *s’il vous plait*.

MR. FITCH. What will you do then, lazy slut?

MRS. FITCH. I will live a life, thank you. I will savor each passing millisecond, I will dance like a silly person to music when I am so moved, I shall kiss the boys who fascinate me and, so help me Susan Sontag, if they use the phrase, “a nation heals,” I’ll spit in their collective eye.

MR. FITCH. (*Typing into a PowerBook.*) What comes after “dance like a silly person”?

MRS. FITCH. Oh, uh, “kiss the boys that fascinate me” — you

cannot use that for your column tomorrow. It was heartfelt and must be dealt with accordingly.

MR. FITCH. “Kiss the boys that fascinate me” — and of course I’m using it, I’ve nothing to say. You, on the other hand, have all the earmarks of a point of view without an actual point of view, which for us, works.

MRS. FITCH. You do not have to use — (*Looking over his shoulder.*) There was a “so help me Susan Sontag” — You do not have to use my words, you are a wonderful writer and —

MR. FITCH. All the great novelists put their proper nouns in boldface.

MRS. FITCH. You pretend to be self-deprecating because it does such smashing things to your forehead.

MR. FITCH. Yes, yes, yes. My life and work are both valid. Now, who was at the parties? Which was the first? Something about a theater.

MRS. FITCH. (*Trying to place it.*) Theater? Theater?

MR. FITCH. Yes, you know, theater. That thing that movie people do when they want to announce they’re available for television.

MRS. FITCH. It’s coming back, vaguely.

MR. FITCH. Vaguely? Don’t you remember?

MRS. FITCH. Remember? Do I look like Marcel Proust?

MR. FITCH. Yes, you do, and I recommend electrolysis. The theater party. This is where they were talking about putting the “piece” into the “space.” Like saying, “we’re puttin’ on a show” would just kill them.

MRS. FITCH. Exactly right. It’s coming back to me now. He was there — that complete unknown hanger-on, diminutive in stature. Currently working as a male prostitute catering exclusively to right-wing politicians. But no one knows it. Himself-the-Elf, we shall term him, he was there. Wait, was Himself-the-Elf there?

MR. FITCH. Who cares? This is a nobody, hardly worthy of a blind item name!

MRS. FITCH. Yes, but if we create a blind item name, people will immediately think it is someone much more famous and before you ask if our lives are that tragic, that we have to do that, the answer is yes, so just do it.

MR. FITCH. Right, right. Himself-the-Elf was there. A male prostitute catering to right-wing politicians. That little boy is sitting on a gold mine. Now. Who else?

MRS. FITCH. His Impoverished Lordship.
MR. and MRS. FITCH. (*In exaggerated Etonian accent.*) I will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today.
MR. FITCH. Who else, who else?
MRS. FITCH. Oh. And the next sound you hear will be my body retching, Generalissimo de la Horror Show.
MR. FITCH. You're just being hard on Generalissimo de la Horror Show because he tortures and murders dissenting voices in his homeland, and now gets the finest tables in our finest bistros.
MRS. FITCH. Dissenti — a priest and three nuns?
MR. FITCH. It was the early '80s, it was Central America, they were Catholic clergy. It was all very much of the moment.
MRS. FITCH. And I do admit it is fun see him stroll into any bistro here and watch the busboys scatter. Now, we have a column. Let's disrobe down to our high-end undergarments and hold one another 'til the inevitable tears arrive and depart.
MR. FITCH. (*Suddenly very vicious.*) This is hardly a column, you idiotic whore. This is drivel involving theater folk. (*They stare at one another, then chuckle.*)
MRS. FITCH. They laugh, it's a shared moment. It's clear they've learned to love one another.
MR. FITCH. Now after the theater party, and the dinner was —
MRS. FITCH. Art party, severe yawn, bring a book.
MR. FITCH. This is on the verge of becoming a column. Now, who was the pretty I saw you making out with?
MRS. FITCH. Oh, THAT'S why the painting was thrown at me! That was the — oh — him, you know — one of those last names that is a brand-name type.
MR. FITCH. Kenmore? Kenny Kenmore?
MRS. FITCH. I've forgotten.
MR. FITCH. Bosco? Bobby Bosco, Timmy and Tammy Tampon.
MRS. FITCH. You turned the corner, saw us and threw art at me. I didn't know you cared.
MR. FITCH. I don't care, I'm just jealous. And after that was the — what?
MRS. FITCH. The parade of particularly heinous gowns. He calls himself a designer! I walked up to him, I threw a drink in his face.
MR. FITCH. You threw a drink ticket in his face, hardly the same thing. Who was — I've got a press release here, some — who was there?

MRS. FITCH. You've psychologically suppressed it like an abused child. You need a hug to unleash the stunted emotion. *(She hugs him. She then finds a piece of paper and places it before Mr. Fitch. He looks at it for a moment, then looks away for a second. Then looks back, a bit confused.)*

MR. FITCH. Was this tonight? *(She looks at it for a moment.)*

MRS. FITCH. Don't you remember?

MR. FITCH. *(Looks at it again for a moment.)* Oh. Right. All these people. How depressing. *(He starts to type from the press release.)*

MRS. FITCH. I remember — *(She trails off; he types for a moment.)* I remember when I was a little girl in New Jersey.

MR. FITCH. Was this before the big war between the states?

MRS. FITCH. Just type. And I would read columns in magazines and newspapers and —

MR. FITCH. This was before the Internet.

MRS. FITCH. Just after Herr Gutenberg started doing exciting things with typeset. And I thought to live in Manhattan, for one night, to see these places, these places. Just one magical night. To dance in the moonlight, to hear the music. To behold these faces. Enwrapped in the specialness of being with the chosen. To be separated once and for all from the ordinary. And now, to know what a thudding bore it all really is. And somehow I do go on. I have copious doggie bags in dire need of refrigeration. *(She places many doggie bags in the fridge as she speaks.)* You will hold me tonight, won't you, darling? I mean with the possibility of some earnest lovemaking? Just planting a seed for you, and perhaps you shall likewise for me.

MR. FITCH. Still not enough. We need more.

MRS. FITCH. Oh, you know, says who?

MR. FITCH. Says Such Norman.

MRS. FITCH. Hate him.

MR. FITCH. *(Imitating Such Norman.)* Fitchie, there's competition out there."

MRS. FITCH. From whom?

MR. FITCH. Oh, you know everyone but everyone loves getting their latest from ... the *(Emphasizing the "blah.")* blogs.

MRS. FITCH. I thought we might just get through one day without hearing about the — *(Emphasizing the "blah;" they both will from now on.)* blogs.

MR. FITCH. Do you read my blog?

MR. & MRS. FITCH

by Douglas Carter Beane

1M, 1W

Meet gossip columnists Mr. and Mrs. Fitch. When the social circuit no longer provides juicy morsels, when the pressure to create news in our never-ending news cycle becomes just a bit much, it's time to toss back the martinis, toss around the bon mots and realize that great celebrity can just appear out of thin air. This wicked, urbane comedy is a scathing look at who is in, who is out and who may not even exist at all.

"Mr. Beane is the American theater's best living exponent of the exploding epigram."
—**The New York Times**

"A riotous deep dive into the shallow waters of gossip. Media-savvy urbanites will savor every crazy morsel."
—**Entertainment Weekly**

"Extremely funny! Wickedly entertaining!"
—**The Bergen County Record**

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AS BEES IN HONEY DROWN
THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED
MUSIC FROM A SPARKLING PLANET
and others

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