

THE SIEGEL

BY
MICHAEL MITNICK



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

THE SIEGEL
Copyright © 2018, Michael Mitnick

All Rights Reserved

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that performance of THE SIEGEL is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth), and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission for which must be secured from the Author's agent in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for THE SIEGEL are controlled exclusively by Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance the written permission of Dramatists Play Service, Inc., and paying the requisite fee.

Inquiries concerning all other rights should be addressed to William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, LLC, 11 Madison Avenue, 18th floor, New York NY 10010. Attn: Derek Zasky.

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce THE SIEGEL is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears, including printed or digital materials for advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. Please see your production license for font size and typeface requirements.

Be advised that there may be additional credits required in all programs and promotional material. Such language will be listed under the "Additional Billing" section of production licenses. It is the licensee's responsibility to ensure any and all required billing is included in the requisite places, per the terms of the license.

SPECIAL NOTE ON SONGS AND RECORDINGS

Dramatists Play Service, Inc. neither holds the rights to nor grants permission to use any songs or recordings mentioned in the Play. Permission for performances of copyrighted songs, arrangements or recordings mentioned in this Play is not included in our license agreement. The permission of the copyright owner(s) must be obtained for any such use. For any songs and/or recordings mentioned in the Play, other songs, arrangements, or recordings may be substituted provided permission from the copyright owner(s) of such songs, arrangements or recordings is obtained; or songs, arrangements or recordings in the public domain may be substituted.

For Somebody

THE SIEGEL was originally produced by South Coast Repertory (Marc Masterson, Artistic Director; Paula Tomei, Managing Director) on March 24, 2017. It was directed by Casey Stangl, the scenic design was by Michael B. Raiford, the costume design was by David Kay Mickelsen, the lighting design was by Elizabeth Harper, the sound design was by Cricket S. Myers, the dramaturg was Jerry Patch, and the stage manager was Roxana Khan. The cast was as follows:

ETHAN Ben Feldman
ALICE Mamie Gummer
NELSON Dominique Worsley
DEBORAH Amy Aquino
RON Matthew Arkin
JORDAN Devon Sorvari

THE SIEGEL was originally commissioned by Washington Ensemble Theatre (Samie Spring Detzer, Artistic Director; Jeffrey Azevedo, Managing Director) in Seattle, Washington.

CHARACTERS

ETHAN—early 30s

ALICE—early 30s

NELSON—early 30s

DEBORAH—early 60s

RON—early 60s

ONE MORE

TIME and PLACE

Now, springtime.

A city.

A NOTE

Everything should go fast. If this play lasts over 90 minutes, then something is wrong.

TREPLEV. *There you have a moonlight night before your eyes, but I speak of the shimmering light, the twinkling stars, the distant sounds of a piano melting into the still and scented air, and the result is abominable.*

—Anthony Check-off (?),
from *something*—TK

NOTE TO SELF: Google and fix this A.S.A.P.

NOTE TO SELF 2: Spell Check Check-off

NOTE TO SELF 3: Remember to remove Notes to Self

GRANDPA. *Penny, why don't you write a play about Ism-Mania?*

PENNY. *Ism-Mania?*

GRANDPA. *Yeah, sure, you know, Communism, Fascism, Voodoo-ism, everybody's got an -ism these days.*

PENNY. *(Laughs.) Oh. I thought it was some kind of itch or something.*

GRANDPA. *Well, it's just as catching. When things go a little bad nowadays, you go out, get yourself an -ism and you're in business.*

—Kaufman and Hart,
You Can't Take It with You

This is a play about love-ism.
(And a few other more relevant things...)

THE SIEGEL

Scene One.

Evening.

Deborah and Ron have a pretty nice living room.

Ethan has arrived unannounced.

ETHAN. I'm sorry for just showing up out of the blue.

DEBORAH. Ethan, what are—

ETHAN. I mean, if I called ahead, it would have telegraphed what I'm—

DEBORAH. Are you all right—

ETHAN. It's about Alice.

RON. Is she OK?

ETHAN. I'm here to plead my case.

DEBORAH. Wait—

ETHAN. Deborah.

Ron.

Alice is everything. She's absolutely everything for me, for you, for anyone who meets her. But it wouldn't have been right for me to ask Alice before I asked you so.

Let me begin.

I want to marry Alice.

DEBORAH. Oh my God, Ron look what's happening.

ETHAN. I am asking for your consideration. For your approval. For your permission to marry your daughter. If you give me the honor, the deep, true honor of marrying Alice (if she says yes—which I'm pretty sure she will) then Alice will never *want*.

DEBORAH. Oh—

ETHAN. Alice is a very forward-thinking, independent person and I really like that about her—hell it's one of her eighty-four best qualities.

DEBORAH. Eighty-four?

ETHAN. I made a list. Do you want to see it?

DEBORAH. No. I really don't.

ETHAN. I also support *her* ambitions, her goals, pretty much everything except one or two things she thinks that are dead wrong but that doesn't matter because I swear to God I will murder myself before I stand in her way which means I'll be dead and then she can just walk right over my corpse to her wildest dreams.

RON. I lost you.

ETHAN. Ron, *I* lost me. The point is, I will love your daughter as though she were my own.

RON and DEBORAH. Huh?

ETHAN. Wife. Daughter. Both. They're both equal. They *have* to be. I love her as much as you do, not that it's a contest.

So whaddaya say? May I please have Alice's hand in holy (agnostic) matrimony?

Silence.

DEBORAH. Ethan. You and Alice broke up over two years ago.

Silence.

ETHAN. That's true.

DEBORAH. So why would you get married?

ETHAN. Um. Because I love her?

DEBORAH. But you two broke up.

ETHAN. Yes we did.

RON. Ethan, when was the last time you spoke with Alice?

ETHAN. Hard to say.

RON. Ballpark.

ETHAN. Oh I don't know. About. More or less two years ago.

RON. See, and there it is. Why are you asking us for permission to marry our daughter when you haven't been in a relationship with her?

ETHAN. I was in a relationship. A four-year relationship. But then we broke up. Now I wanna marry her. Tell me right now, honestly, is that crazy?

DEBORAH and RON. Yes.

ETHAN. Relationship. Marry. Break-up. All those things can happen, but why not now in just a different order? Relationship. Break-up. *Marry*.

RON. Because sometimes order matters.

DEBORAH. The order matters here.

RON. Honestly, the campaign left Alice in a pretty bad place.

ETHAN. That was a year ago, no one cares anymore what the president does, gimme a break...

DEBORAH. I care very much what the president does. A lot of people do.

ETHAN. Nah, they don't or they'd never let any of this happen. But who cares? Love transcends politics.

RON. *Alice* can't transcend politics right now. She's trying to figure things out and I think it's best to leave her alone at the moment.

ETHAN. Cool I think you're right. So do I have your permission to marry her?

RON. Ethan—

DEBORAH. OF COURSE NOT ARE YOU ON DRUGS?

ETHAN. Deborah, let Ron finish.

RON. Noooooooooooo.

Silence.

ETHAN. I'm surprised. I thought you liked me.

DEBORAH. We liked you. Two years ago.

ETHAN. I'm surprised. I'm really surprised.

Silence.

You can't close a door that can't close.

Silence.

Well I tried. I'm gonna go ask her anyway.

Scene Two.

A bit later.

Alice has a pretty nice living room.

Ethan has arrived unannounced.

ETHAN. They RUINED IT?!

ALICE. They warned me.

ETHAN. They RUINED my proposal. Just because they're not endorsing me doesn't mean they get to blow up my campaign.

ALICE. "Campaign"? Really? That's the kind of language you want to use.

ETHAN. Look, I'm sorry you lost, but you need to know it was only partially your fault and by this point, people have pretty much accepted that they're going to live in a tube of shit for at least three years, so let's go to PARIS!

ALICE. Dude, seriously, can you take the circus elsewhere? I have to be up early.

ETHAN. Why?

ALICE. I volunteer now.

ETHAN. Oooooo. I work for free too.

ALICE. Yeah, but not by choice.

Ethan loops around her and goes back into the room and gets down on his knee.

ETHAN. Alice...

ALICE. You better be down there because you dropped something.

ETHAN. The Ancient Aztecs had a beautiful word for the union of two people called: "Ne-ne-pa-no—[lizt-li]."

ALICE. I'm not going to marry you.

ETHAN. (*Standing.*) Are you out of your mind?

Why?

ALICE. Because I'm not dating you right now?

ETHAN. That's the reason?

Shouldn't the reason be that you don't love me anymore?

ALICE. I don't love you anymore.

ETHAN. You don't love me anymore?

ALICE. I did once. But not now.

ETHAN. See, no offense, but I think you're a little mixed up.

ALICE. You don't even know me anymore.

ETHAN. What's changed? It's only been two years.

ALICE. What changes in two years? The whole world changes.

ETHAN. But *we* don't.

ALICE. Two years ago we were on a path...

ETHAN. I know!

ALICE. No. I mean. "We." The country. All of us.

ETHAN. *Some* of us. That's why I think you didn't win.

ALICE. People. Change. I'm not the same person I was when we were together.

ETHAN. Oh yeah. You're a whole new person. What's new?

ALICE. What's new? I'm an adult. I'm financially independent. I held a position on the senior staff of a pretty significant presidential campaign.

ETHAN. Until recently, but now your June is completely clear. Perfect!

ALICE. I'm different.

ETHAN. I am exactly the same!

ALICE. And I encourage you to seek help for that. But you know what I'm talking about. We evolve. We try new things. Travel...

ETHAN. Where?

ALICE. Where?

ETHAN. Where did you travel?

ALICE. Well... Last year I went to Eastern Europe—

ETHAN. What does Eastern Europe have to do with evolution—

ALICE. I don't know Ethan. I saw things.

ETHAN. What? The Lithuanian Zoo?

ALICE. You know what? I did see the Lithuanian Zoo and it was very nice.

THE SIEGEL

by Michael Mitnick

3 men, 3 women

Ethan Siegel is in love. Tonight he's going to ask Alice's parents for permission to marry her. There's just one hitch. Ethan and Alice broke up two years ago—and she's in a serious relationship with someone else. But Ethan is undaunted. An irresistible comedy about modern love and the need to go back in order to move forward.

"The dialogue is spirited and wacky, with a distinctively millennial edge. ...[Mitnick] has a keen ear for the rhythms of his generation's speech—unfiltered, sarcastic, both jaded and needy..." —**Los Angeles Times**

"THE SIEGEL blasts us with laughs aimed at its characters, yet those laughs have a way of deflecting our thoughts back to our own lives. ... refreshingly original... Mitnick's primary themes...are fraught with heft and nuance, revolving around the compromises we make in life and the bargains we make with ourselves along the way."

—**The Orange County Register (CA)**

"...incredibly funny... a sustainably fresh, surprisingly plausible, and audaciously charming [play]... witty, entertaining, and even thought-provoking... as hilarious as it is poignant." —**BroadwayWorld.com**

"THE SIEGEL is as sharp as the pop of a whip, entertaining and endearing."
—**OC Weekly (CA)**

ISBN 978-0-8222-3758-7



DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, INC.

9 780822 237587