

When I was little and I found a little girl who I liked, I would propose to her. We would have a simple little wedding ceremony, not unlike today. I would give her a ring that I had made and then we would set about building a house together. Most of the time, I would spend the day fighting to protect her and our little home from my brother or her brothers, who couldn't understand our love. Because to me that was how you expressed how much you loved someone. You got married, you built a home together and you fought to protect it.

Many years and quite a few child brides later, when I came to terms with my sexuality, I thought I would have to give up having kids, but I still believed that I would get married someday. I never stopped believing that one day I would stand before my friends and family in a simple little ceremony and declare my love for that one special man. Which brings us to today.

As many of you know Mark proposed to me last year on my birthday as only he could. What you don't know is that that was actually the third time that he had proposed to me. The first time was after he had forgotten to get me anything for Valentines Day. Unfortunately, he did that in a way that only Mark could too. It was in the form of a beautifully written, but vague letter, which I didn't realise was a proposal until several days later.

The second time was while we were having a bath after a particularly heated argument. He used his words this time, but the timing just wasn't right. I didn't say no, but I didn't say yes. And so, he stopped asking. I couldn't blame the guy, he had tried twice. One time I think he even bought me a dime store ring.

So I waited; and when the time was right, on his birthday in a tiny little town in Cambodia, I asked him to marry me. And he said yes, in a way that only he could. We held hands all the way home in our rikshaw and when we got back to our hotel, he posted a vague Facebook status and promptly fell asleep and started snoring.

We've had our ups and downs, our hard times and our good times. We've been there for each other through sickness and health. But through it all, we have fought for this life we have built; together. There never is a right time. You either know that this is the person you want to be with or you don't.

Mark, the day I knew I wanted to spend the rest of my life with you, we were in Sitges. You came out of the water and I met you on the waters' edge and you stood so close to me that I could feel your breathe on my face and I could feel the sun on my skin, and I felt the world simply fall away. And I knew you were the one.

You are far from perfect. But you make me laugh. And you make me scream. And you make me feel. And you make me whole.

You are the Gomez to my Morticia.

The Kermit to my Piggy.

The Bert to my Ernie.

You're my man.