

MVP

A playboy trader takes a vow of celibacy to help annul his shotgun marriage and finds himself falling for his divorce lawyer.

Once upon a time there was a princess. The princess was drunk, and horny, and more than willing to fool around in the middle of Adrian Hotchkiss' wedding reception. After all, nobody is immune to Gareth Grafton's sexual charms, and Jamie Fletcher is no exception.

Only Gareth is no Prince Charming. His fling with Jamie is fleeting, and a few weeks later he wakes up in a Las Vegas hotel room with a wedding ring, a mystery girl, and a big problem. He's married, his lizard is shedding, and it's Logan's Wild West on the Hotchkiss-Fraser trading desk – where it doesn't matter how much you win, so long as the other side loses.

Determined to fix his problem quietly, Gareth seeks help from Adrian, who promises to hook him up with a divorce lawyer friend from college. In the meantime, his latest trip to the bar yields an unexpected bonus – a return of Jamie, who is once again helpless to the seductive powers of Gareth "Double G" Grafton.

His sexual appetite sated, Gareth heads to the law office to handle his marriage and is in for an unpleasant surprise. Jamie Fletcher is the best divorce lawyer in town, and she's none too happy to see him - even if she was, she couldn't take his case. With no divorce lawyer and no hope, Gareth hits the strip club with Tanner, who is preparing for a wedding of his own. With his outlook on life becoming bleaker by the minute, Gareth takes a stripper's advice to heart.

He needs Jesus.

Gareth heads to church. As he kneels down on the pews, attempting to rekindle his relationship with God, Gareth swears he'll do anything to get out of the marriage. And God is pretty quick with his answer: celibacy.

Gareth's brother Emmett is incredulous. After all, Gareth does have a painting of naked breasts hanging on his living room wall. No wonder the rainstorm outside is bringing a plague of frogs. He heads to bed, where he gets a chance to talk to Jesus himself. The news is not good: Jesus informs Gareth that the only good thing he's ever done is star in his high school performance of *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Unless he evens the score, his sports teams will be doomed to lose, and Gareth himself will never again be able to see unmarried bliss. Fortunately, Emmett's girlfriend Gretchen has some experience in divorce court.

Gareth goes back to Jamie and presses his argument. Since they hooked up at Adrian's wedding, they technically have a pre-existing relationship, meaning Jamie is free to take his case. She's still not biting, until Gareth discovers Jamie's weak spot: she's horny, and while she might want to hook up with guys like Gareth, her current options are less than bland. Unable to offer up his own services, Gareth promises to hook Jamie up with some of his friends.

She agrees to take the case, and Gareth gets Jamie a sex-kitten makeover and a trip to his favorite club. Gareth's underground bar for degenerate traders is nothing but the best kind of debauchery,

and he's got all the right tips – like flipping your hair around, or sucking on a maraschino cherry or...well, that might be little too much for sex-starved G. He introduces Jamie to some of his friends instead, but it doesn't go well. They escape to a nearby strip club, and all is well until he brings her home drunk and frisky. And Jamie isn't shy about what she wants – a Double-G sundae with a cherry on top.

His willpower is frazzled, but Gareth must resist Jamie's advances if he wants to keep his promise to Jesus. Naturally, he turns to the office's least sexy inhabitants – the quants. Together, they come up with a plan to keep her libido at bay. Gareth will need some geriatric new clothes, flatulent new menu options, and a little help with the music: nothing kills the mood quicker than 'Taps'.

Only it doesn't work. Not only is Gareth still fantasizing about Jamie, he's also increasingly jealous of other guys. None of this is more apparent than at Tanner's Halloween party, where Gareth makes it his duty to scare off potential suitors and Jamie demands some explanations. Facing sexual attraction too powerful for even Jesus to withstand, Gareth caves to his baser urges and kisses her, finally admitting his dilemma.

For her part, Jamie is just confused that he didn't tell her sooner. After all, she's an awfully good lawyer, and his bargain with Jesus has a couple of loopholes – which Gareth and Jamie head home to take advantage of.

Meanwhile, Jamie tries to persuade Gareth that it's cheaper to settle his case. He's having none of it, and would rather take things to the judge – after all, it doesn't matter how much he wins, so long as the other side loses. Luckily for him, when it's time to go to court, Jamie makes sure his case is a winner. Freed from his vow, he and Jamie speed home for a marathon weekend of sex, where Gareth admits his reservations about marriage come from his parent's brutal divorce and realizes he might want them to be more than friends. They spend the holidays together, including a repeat performance of his role as Joseph over the Thanksgiving dinner table, and it looks like Gareth Grafton has done the unthinkable: fallen in love.

Back at the office, Gareth is helping junior trader Clifton make his first big trade when he gets a call from Jamie. It's bad news. Courtney is appealing the case, and she has new evidence: photos from the strip club, where Jamie is pictured stuffing chicken fingers into her bra. It's bad, not just for Gareth but also for Jamie, whose reputation as a ball-busting lawyer could be hurt if the evidence gets out. Besides, the settlement they're offering is less than the additional court costs. Couldn't Gareth just take the offer?

Not if he wants to win – and he does. But needing to win costs him Jamie, who suggests he get another lawyer. Peeved, Gareth goes back to the office to find out that Clifton screwed up the trade. He snaps at Clifton, pissing off Adrian and getting himself sent home.

Gareth wallows on the couch, refusing to call Jamie back, accept the settlement, or do anything but eat cheeseburgers. In his dreams, he is visited by Cal Kittings, who has won many divorce cases in his 135 years. Only cost him 70 million bucks...but it was worth it, wasn't it? Gareth wakes up a changed man. Determined not to be like Cal, he returns to the office and the law firm

with a new plan. He'll take the settlement, and if she'll have him, he wants Jamie to represent him.

Jamie accepts. In the settlement room, Gareth makes things right with Courtney, who agrees to annul the marriage. The two of them sign their documents, peacefully agreeing and humming the song from *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat* they performed together in high school. Floored by this new display of maturity, Jamie invites him out for dinner.

Now all that's left for him to do is fulfill his duties as a best man, getting Tanner over his pre-wedding jitters and reminding him that good speeches come from the heart. Tanner and Claudia get married at a Wet Surprise themed ceremony and Gareth gives a speech of his own. Looking back on the lessons he's learned, Gareth realizes that love is bigger than your mistakes – and sometimes you have to lose to see what's really worth fighting for.

MVP is the third and final installment in the Hotchkiss Capital trilogy.