

THE WEDDING STORY

by JULIANNE HOMOKAY

CHARACTERS

STORYTELLER, a storyteller. A soothing presence. Male or female, doesn't matter, as long as hugs are inspired.

BRIDE, the "perfect" bride.

GROOM, the "perfect" groom

SCENE

A land where grass is always green, the sun is always shining, and fences are always white picket.

TIME

A sunny day in sunny June, the height of the perfect wedding season. In Vermont.

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THE WEDDING STORY

(Lights up on the STORYTELLER reading from a leather-bound volume with gilded pages.)

STORYTELLER

(closing the volume)

The End. Good night, sleep tight, don't let the bedbugs bite.

What? You want to hear another one? But it's a school night. Okay, okay, just this once. I'm such a pushover. What type of story shall we hear?

(ad lib. if the audience yells out suggestions)

How about a fairy tale for our times? A field of dreams fenced in by white picket, a story of the young man and woman we all hope to be someday?

Too bad, that's what you're getting.

(The STORYTELLER opens the volume back up. Lights up on BRIDE and GROOM in traditional garb standing on top of a wedding cake.)

Once upon a time there was a young woman, pretty as a day in June.

(The BRIDE does the royal wave.)

A young man stood by her side, smart as a whip and handsome as a polo horse.

(The GROOM salutes.)

They met in high school and fell in love on a merry day in May.

(The BRIDE and GROOM whisper to each other.)

Before long, the young man dropped to his knee, pulled a diamond from his pocket, and won the young woman's hand in marriage.

BRIDE

Uh, excuse us, Mr. Storyteller?

(The STORYTELLER looks back at them, confused. The BRIDE and GROOM smile and wave. The STORYTELLER waves back.)

STORYTELLER

Moving right along. With the blessings of their compatible—

BRIDE

Mr. Storyteller!

STORYTELLER

Excuse me a moment.

(to BRIDE)

Yes, what is it?

BRIDE

We didn't exactly meet in high school.

STORYTELLER

Yes you did, it says so right here.

BRIDE

We met in a bar.

GROOM

And we dated on and off for five years while she experimented with foreigners.

STORYTELLER

How nice. Well. For our purposes, let's say you met in high school, shall we?

(back to the kids)

So. With the blessings of their compatible families, the young man and woman were to be Bride and Groom.

BRIDE

(to GROOM)

Wait a minute. As I recall, you kept breaking it off.

GROOM

What?

BRIDE

Yeah. Then you'd want me back the minute I had a new boyfriend.

GROOM

You certainly didn't waste any time running into the arms of the first guy who had an accent.

STORYTELLER

(to BRIDE and GROOM)

Ssssh. Let's don't argue in front of the impressionable youngsters.

(to children)

The bride soon set in on the wedding preparations.

BRIDE

(to GROOM)

I never realized you were a racist.

GROOM

I'm not, I was fine with the fact you'd slept with black men.

BRIDE

You're assuming that "racism" automatically refers to African-Americans. Isn't that a form of racism itself?

STORYTELLER

Excuse me, ma'am, sir, firmie those bouches so I can return to the story thank you.

GROOM

By all means. Don't let anything silly like our issues get in your way.

STORYTELLER

Look, will you play along? The children will have ample opportunity to be disillusioned later, let's just have a nice bedtime story, okay? Okay.

(to the children)

AS I WAS SAYING, the preparations. They were to be married in a beautiful church—

GROOM

(under his breath)

Drive-thru chapel in Vegas.

STORYTELLER

--followed by an elegant reception at an old inn in Vermont.

BRIDE

(under her breath)

Back room at the Star Dust Lounge.

STORYTELLER

The bride put Martha Stewart to shame as she had the evening designed to the last detail—

GROOM

(to BRIDE)

Ha! That really sounds like you.

STORYTELLER

--from the linen napkins to the centerpieces of purple freesia and Italian ruscus.

BRIDE

(to GROOM)

I think he was invited to someone else's wedding.

GROOM

And why is he assuming the bride always has the taste? Does it never occur to anyone that the groom might want to participate? I worked my way through law school as a floral designer, that's how I know freesia is all wrong for a centerpiece, except maybe as an accent flower.

BRIDE

You were a floral designer?

GROOM

You need to base your arrangement on a more substantial bloom, like a lily or an orchid.

BRIDE

Brad, is there something you want to tell me?

STORYTELLER

Actually, there is something I want to tell these youngsters so they can get to bed at a decent hour. THE STORY.

BRIDE

Well huffy huff huff.

STORYTELLER

SO, they had their flawless reception for 300 guests at a turn-of-the-century inn in Vermont—

BRIDE

You know, we're not from Vermont. We've never even been to Vermont.

STORYTELLER

--at which all had a delightful time.

GROOM

(to BRIDE)

What do you mean is there something I want to tell you?

STORYTELLER

Immediately following the splendid reception—

BRIDE

I mean, is there something you haven't been honest with me about? With yourself about?

GROOM

Like what?

STORYTELLER

The bride, at the tender age of 24—

(The GROOM laughs out loud.)

WHAT? WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

GROOM

She's not even close to 24.

STORYTELLER

Now just wait a minute here, Buster Brown, whose story is this?

BRIDE/GROOM

Ours.

STORYTELLER

Wrong. This is a fairy tale, I'm going for prototypes.

BRIDE

But I'm 35.

STORYTELLER

In this story, you're 24. The average American woman gets married at 24.

BRIDE

How old's that make him?

STORYTELLER

27. Why, how old is he really?

GROOM

I'm the one that's 24.

STORYTELLER

Isn't that a little young to be getting married?

BRIDE

How come 24's okay for me but not for him?

STORYTELLER

You're the woman. You're supposed to be younger.

BRIDE

Jesus.

STORYTELLER

Now, before I was interrupted for the umpteenth time, boys and girls, I was saying that after the reception, the 24-year-old bride was whisked away in a horse-drawn carriage by her 27-year-old Prince Charming.

BRIDE

Whisked away where?

STORYTELLER

I don't know. To... the... airport.

BRIDE

Which one?

STORYTELLER

The Airport of... Vermont.

BRIDE

There's one in Burlington and one in Montpelier.

GROOM

How did you know that?

BRIDE

I majored in geography.

GROOM

You did?

BRIDE

(to STORYTELLER)

So Mr. Fancy Pants, which one was it?

STORYTELLER

The one where you caught your flight to Hawaii for your honeymoon.

BRIDE

This whole fairy tale is completely out of hand. Anyone knows there's no flights from Vermont to Hawaii. You have to fly through Logan or LAX. Or both. And anyway, I highly doubt they'd let the horses in the terminal.

STORYTELLER

Oh, for God's sake, what's the big deal in telling the children a nice little story?

BRIDE

No one's life turns out like that. How many of those kids will live up to your version of the story? None! They can't, it's too much pressure. It's like why Catholic women are all messed up, you can't be a virgin AND be a mother. And Brad, I probably shouldn't have married you to begin with.

GROOM

Shayna, how can you say that?

BRIDE

You're probably gay.

GROOM

What?

BRIDE

Oh c'mon, how many straight male floral designers do you know?

GROOM

That's what you thought I needed to be honest about?

BRIDE

You didn't even know I majored in Geography! Listen, if we're talking averages here, most people don't get married in Vermont. They get married in their one-horse hometowns that have WalMarts and bad zoning.

STORYTELLER

What's wrong with that?

BRIDE

NOTHING. THAT'S MY POINT. MOST people do get married in their hometowns. MOST people cheat on their spouses or end up in counseling or sell everything they own to get into a lousy nursing home. Put that in your fairy tale and smoke it.

STORYTELLER

No one's smoking anything. There are children present.

BRIDE

And God forbid we tell them what life is really like.

GROOM

She's got a point there. You're opening yourself up for multiple class-action suits, Mister.

STORYTELLER

Fine. I've had it. You want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the whole enchilada, the proverbial hook, line, and sinker? Well far be it from me to give these little souls something to which to aspire.

BRIDE/GROOM

Do it! Do it! (*ad lib.*)

STORYTELLER

I'm warning you, it won't be pretty.

BRIDE/GROOM

We stand warned.

STORYTELLER

I'm such a pushover.

(opens the volume back up)

Once upon a time in a trailer park not so far away, there lived a woman approaching middle age who drank a lot of bourbon, smoked a pack a day, hung out in places where they throw peanut shells on the floor—

BRIDE

All right already.

STORYTELLER

--and a young, slightly effeminate man who took it up the ass once from a fellow Eagle Scout, but since it only happened once when he was 17 and drunk on Kahlua, he still considered himself straight.

GROOM

Hey hey hey.

STORYTELLER

The woman and the man met in a bar one night where they got drunk and slept together afterwards at her place. Since the woman felt guilty about the one-night stand, she felt she needed to make a legitimate relationship out of the encounter to justify the sex, even though she really prefers black men. To stay deep in the dark closet, the man proposed to the woman, and since she's 35 and, let's face it, not getting any younger, she accepted his pathetic offer because it was a real ego boost to have snagged a hot stud eleven years younger than she, even if he does have the occasional problem getting a stiffy with her because he's really gay. Although the man offered to plan the entire wedding with his best friend Steve, the woman insisted they hire a horse-drawn carriage to drop them off at the Airport of Vermont, from which they took six connecting flights to Las Vegas to get married by an Elvis impersonator. To celebrate, they showed up at the Star Dust Lounge, at which they bought all the bar patrons cheeseballs and Budweiser. When they arrived back home in Weehawken, New Jersey, the Groom, unable to suppress his inner self for a moment longer, took up with a drag queen from SoHo, and the Bride, realizing she'd never be a mother, consoled herself with vodka and Xanax and died of a somewhat accidental overdose three years later. The Groom, now 27, took up wearing cowboy hats and chaps, and made the unfortunate mistake of traveling to Wyoming on business where he was

STORYTELLER, cont.

dragged to his death behind a 4x4 by a bunch of homophobic rednecks. The drag queen wrote a show about the three of them in which he played all the parts, won a Genius Grant, and landed his own talk show on New York City cable access.

(shuts book, exits)

I bid you good night and sweet dreams, children. The End.

BRIDE/GROOM

(ad lib., following the STORYTELLER off)

Uh, Mr. Storyteller, wait, it's okay, you can tell the other version, etc.

(lights down.)

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