

The Wedding Dress

Standing impartially at a service desk stood a middle aged woman named Clarise. "Excuse me! Is there anybody here? I've been standing here for such a long time, I'll probably be married before I get service... Hello!" she started grabbing her cell to call the store but she noticed a man coming out of the back room.

"Hello... My name is. . ." She was cut off by the gentleman. "Miss Clarise Benoit I presume?"

"That's me and who might you be?" asked Clarise.

"My name is Jeffrey Basseu. Are you here to purchase a dress or try one on?"

"That depends on your service and the quality of the dress of course. I want nothing but 'perfectness' on the day of my wedding. It'll be my special day where I'm the center of attention so I want the finest dress anyone's saw in years, no decades"

"Is this visit going to end like the last two times you were here or are you actually interested in purchasing one of our dresses?" said Jeffrey

"What do you mean?" asked Clarise

"I was told by some of my associates about... Your need to try on a dozen dresses, taking up hours of our time... Just to leave without even a thought to purchase"

"Excuse me! Do you know who I am? I happen to be a very wealthy woman and my husband will want to see me in your finest dress. If you cannot help me please send me someone who can and let's get started" Clarise lifted her head up proud.

"I am all the help you can have here because you've already worked with everyone else... I believe I can sell you the dress you're looking for if in fact you actually want one"

"What about Wilma I want to see her, is she around?"

"She isn't around... Honestly I believe even if she was in today she wouldn't see you, she's more of a... How shall I say this without sounding too rude? Never mind she just wouldn't see you. Is there a certain dress you're interested in or are we going to have to find one for you?"

"My husband said it's imparitive that I get my dress from here. Let's take a stroll around your store because there has to be something here that'll help me look the way he wants to see me... He described it so well" She started staring into space, almost daydreaming as she continued. "He wants a long white dress, tied with velvet ribbons that matched the flowers that filled the hall; He always said I matched the beauty of Mother Nature and said I should reflect that. It's important that the veil has a giant white bow attached and a long tail that had be carried by a dozen people. I see this dress everytime I close my eyes so I hope that you can help me see it in reality with my eyes... Can you do that Jeffrey?"

"Well I'm not magic but we can defintely try to find something you'd find acceptable but I think you may have high expectations, like you're Cinderella trapped in a fairytale or something... But... It's your special day so we'll find you your dream dress"

"Thank you so much... He always called me his princess but now he would like me to be the queen he's always imagined"

"He sounds like a knight or prince charming" said Jeffrey in a sarcastic undertone.

"Derek is the greatest guy I've ever met"

"How did you two meet?"

"He saved my life, it was amazing. He pulled me out of a fire and was able to save my cat too... He is my hero and I owe my life to him"

"That truly is wonderful he sounds like a keeper"

"We have been together ever since. I don't want to wake up a single morning without him and I know he feels the same about me"

"How about this dress Miss Clarise?"

"That's a very wonderful dress, it looks like it will be the perfect fit. Let's try it on. . . No. . . that doesn't look like a long enough tail though, how about this one how much is this?"

"That'll be a little out of your price range but I'm. . ." Clarise cut him off.

"You don't even know what my price range is like I said my husband-to-be is a very wealthy man I can afford anything in this store"

"Well then Clarise that will be ninety-five hundred dollars"

"I think I want it... But... I'm not sure yet can we put it in the maybe pile"

"Sure Miss Benoit, is there any other dresses that interest you?"

She looked around picking from many different dresses but seemed to always find something wrong with them. Jeffrey was getting irritated and even though he said nice things the sarcasm was definitely noticeable.

"Finally I think I've found the dress from my visions, let me take a picture"
She didn't give him enough time to react she just pulled out her phone, took a picture and started texting away.

"Next time ask before you take a picture, there are sensitive materials in some of these dresses. They can be harmed by flashes or heat... I know you claim you're a wealthy woman but there are some pieces in this store that have the same price as a house"

"I understand... But... I didn't use flash. I'm interested in seeing the dresses that you're speaking of, the one worth the price of a house"

"You have to make a special reservation to see that gallery Miss Clarise... I'm sorry but you will have to speak with Wilma about that"

"Okay, shall I make an appointment with her and then come back? Daryl said for me to find the best dress money could buy"

"I am sorry Miss Benoit but. . ."

"It's soon to be Mrs. Kingsley, I can't wait for the day I can call myself

that and know it's true... But... I guess for now that'll do"

"I'm sorry Mrs Kingsley, Benoit, or whatever you want to call yourself. I don't think you'll be able to see that collection"

"Why is that?"

"Because I don't think you're going to buy any dress today let alone the most expensive ones. We have been looking at dresses for almost two hours now and all you have is one maybe. How many dresses do you need to try on before you find the one you like?"

"I am rather offended by your comments right now"

"Think about it, this is your third time coming to this store and trying on all the dresses. The other two times you've had some excuse why you couldn't buy one. Yet here you are again and I have the feeling you don't want any today either, am I right?"

"I am getting married in a month to the best man in the world. If he were here right now he would demand that you treat me with a little bit of respect. I haven't bought one because I don't see the perfect dress yet and I don't think I want a dress from here anymore, even if my husband had his heart set to here"

"Well, I assure you if you could provide your husbands number or have him come in with you, we could help find you a dress. I'm under the impression that you can't make up your mind so I'm afraid we cannot do business with you today"

"Good idea I'm calling him and when I tell him how you're treating me, he might even shut this place shut down"

She whipped out her phone and started dialing frantically while pacing around.

"Luckily for you, there's no answer on his cell phone so I'll call his work to make sure he knows of your ignorance".

She started dialing frantically again.

"Hello, may I speak with Darren Kingsley please? It's very important... It's Clarise" She put her hand over the phone and started to talk to Jeffrey.

"Once my husband gets on the phone be prepared to get a call from your boss, because he or she received a call from their boss, complaining about how you're treating me"

"You can cut it out now, I know what you're up to. There is no one on that phone... You were never talking to anyone. I bet you don't even have a boyfriend. Is one of your best friends getting married or something? Maybe a mid life crisis? Either way here is not the place to have one. I'm sorry but you're going to have to leave." said Jeffrey in a snobby tone of voice.

"Excuse me! Who are you to be saying that I don't have a boyfriend, or that I'm not getting married why else would I be trying on wedding dresses?"

"Are you going to make me explain? Don't you think it'd be best to just walk out now and spare yourself the humiliation?"

"I don't know what you're talking about... For real, what are you talking about?"

"I know with a hundred percent certainty, your husband doesn't exist or that you're not getting married"

"I should sue you for your false accusations"

You said your husbands name was Derek, then Daryl. Then when you were on the phone you said Darren. Please spare us the time and leave Miss Benoit, if that's even your real name."

Clarise just stared at him for a few seconds and didn't know what to say, she stood motionless until Jeffrey broke the silence.

"Now should I call security or can you show yourself out?"

Clarise opened the doors and took off down the road. She quickly got soaked but it was hard to tell whether it was the rain or the tears that made her more we. Obviously it was the rain but I wanted to emphasize how badly she was crying right now. Her best friend was in fact getting married, better yet all of her friends were one-by-one. She couldn't even find a boyfriend. All of her family has been long since deceased so sometimes she tries on wedding dresses to feel like the bride for once... If even for a few minutes.

In her mind she'd been walking for but in reality it was only a few hours since she left the store. It was getting dark and she was still crying. Clarise saw a picnic bench under a gazebo across the street and went to cross. She didn't look before going on the road and a car came out of nowhere. The car swirved closer and Clarise screamed as she cowered down. The car hit her hard enough to knock her down and she hit her head.

Clarise was lying on the ground blinded by the bright headlights as a figure came closer. She couldn't move and when she tried to she blacked out.

When Clarise awoke she was in the passenger seat of a car and driving really fast. She could feel a bandage wrapped around her head but no matter how hard she tried she couldn't fully see the person in the drivers seat. Clarise tried to move her arm and it spiratically jumped up. Clarise scared the elderly woman driving and she lost control of her vehicle. They went into the ditch and smashed into a car on the other side of the road. The old lady was unconcious and Clarise couldn't move her legs, she noticed that no one in the other car was moving or making any sounds. As if her day couldn't get any worse, she heard and saw the flicker of a flame start up on the ground outside the car. Before she knew it there was fire everywhere.

Clarise prayed with everything she had for someone, or something, to help get her out of the car, or at least put out the fire. She lost hope when the flame crawled into the backseat and then the drivers side door. She

closed her eyes and all she could hear was the sound of the flame eating the car slowly. She heard a loud bang outside the door and was followed by another.

Someone was screaming but to Clarise it sounded like whispering, the next thing she knew she was being lifted. She fainted before seeing the outside of the car and awoke in the hospital and saw a man asleep in the chair across the room. She made a sound and startled him.

"Are you the one who saved me?"

"Yes... I was passing by and saw the wreck, I am afraid to tell you that you were the only one to survive"

"You're my hero, I thought I was going to die. How can I ever repay you?"

"just saving a girl as beautiful as you, is payment enough. I am glad to see you awake, the doctor said you should make a full recovery with some rest. I don't want to bother you now that I know you're alive. My name is Vincent DelMonte and it was a pleasure to meet you miss. . .?"

"My name is Clarise Benoit and you may be the nicest man I've ever met, is there anyway I can see you again?... Maybe buy you dinner or something. It's the least I can do for saving me."

She didn't even get the chance to hear his reply because when she sat up she got so dizzy she fainted again. When she awoke this time he was gone. As-soon-as a nurse came in Clarise asked a dozen questions about what had happened. The nurse replied that she had been unconscious for a day-and-a-half which surprised her. Clarise asked about Vincent and she found out he had left yesterday.

Clarise was very upset because she had met a very nice man and she couldn't even remember his name. Even though she was just waking up she was still so very tired and decided to go to sleep since she would be released in the morning. When she opened her eyes there were roses accompanied by a card on the table beside the bed.

It read "Dearest Clarise, if you still wanted to meet me for dinner I'd be happy if you joined me, I haven't been able to stop thinking about you" He left his phone number at the bottom.

They got together the next day and really hit it off, after a year of dating they were ready to get married. He offered her the most expensive, exotic locations they could wed but she chose to say their vows on the side of the road where he saved her life. He tried to buy her a really expensive dress but she returned it and bought a cheap one instead. Clarise was just excited to be the bride and not a bridesmaid, to be finally wearing the one dress she's always wanted to wear. The dresses value meant nothing to her anymore just what it represented... Instead of trying them on she was finally wearing the wedding dress of her dreams. As they said "I do" she became the happiest person in the world, Miss Clarise DelMonte.