**FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL**

*Four Weddings and a Funeral* was written by Richard Curtis and directed by Mike Newell. A hit comedy released in 1994, it has made Hugh Grant a megastar.

**EXTRACT 1**

Charles (Hugh Grant) keeps being invited to weddings, but he himself is very reluctant to tie the knot although Henrietta has been asking him to do so for years. The following scene takes place in an exclusive London hotel where a party of people are spending the night after the second wedding in the movie. Charles shuts the door behind him, he turns and bumps straight into Henrietta.

HENRIETTA: Charles, we must talk.
CHARLES: *(Trapped, but kindly)* Right, right.
HENRIETTA: The thing is, Charlie, I’ve spoken to lots of people about you.
CHARLES: *O God.*
HENRIETTA: ... and everyone agrees – you’re in real trouble, Charles...
CHARLES: Am I?
HENRIETTA: You see, you’re turning into a sort of serial monogamist – one girlfriend after another – yet you’ll really never love anyone, because you never let them near you.
CHARLES: On the contrary, Hen...
HENRIETTA: You’re affectionate to them, and sweet to them ... you were even sweet to me although you thought I was an idiot.
CHARLES: I did not
HENRIETTA: You did. I thought U2 was a type of submarine.
CHARLES: Well, in a way you were right – their music has a very naval quality to it.
HENRIETTA: Be serious Charles! You must give people a chance. You don’t have to think, “I must get married” – but you mustn’t start every relationship thinking, “I mustn’t get married.”
CHARLES: Hen, you know me – most of the time I don’t think at all – I just potter along.
HENRIETTA: O Charlie – *(she suddenly puts her arms around him – O God – the way you used to look at me. I just misread it, that’s all – all the time I thought you were going to propose – but all the time you were just working out how to leave – O God.; this is ridiculous.*

Richard Curtis, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, 1993

**ANALYSIS**

1. Describe the situation: where? who?
2. Present the characters and sum up their relationship. (What is the trouble with Charles? What is the trouble with Henrietta?)
3. Explain: “You’re turning into a sort of serial monogamist”. What does it mean? Explain how the spectator should react on hearing this, and why. What is Henrietta's purpose when she says this to Charles?
5. Give a title to the scene and explain your choice.
6. Branching out:
   a. Do you think men and women have a different approach to love and commitment (lasting relationships, marriage)?
   b. Do you know people like Charles and / or Henrietta?
   c. Do you think you might be a “serial monogamist”?
   d. If you have seen the film, what did you think of it? If you haven’t seen it, would you like to see it now? Explain.
Charles (Hugh Grant), a confirmed British bachelor, arrives, late as usual, at a friend’s wedding. Here, he meets a beautiful American woman, Carrie (Andie MacDowell) and immediately falls in love with her. That evening they sleep together, but Charles’s hopes of romance are dashed when Carrie announces that she must return to America the following morning. Time passes and Charles runs into Carrie again at a second wedding only to discover that she is engaged to be married. There will be another wedding (Carrie’s) and a funeral along the way until Charles, frustrated by the loss of the woman of his dreams, eventually decides to marry an old girlfriend. But when his wedding day (with Henrietta) arrives, a recently divorced Carrie shows up unexpectedly. David, his brother, who is dumb, asks him in sign language if he is marrying the right person. Charles suddenly stops the ceremony and announces that he loves someone else, which obviously causes a real shock in the congregation. They are now at home.

SCARLETT: Blimey!
TOM: At least it’s one we won't forget. I mean a lot of weddings just blend into each other, don’t they?
FIONA: Oh, for God’s sake!
TOM: But this is one that will really stick out in the memory.

MATTHEW: For not actually including a wedding service.
FIONA: Poor girl. No, I mean it! Poor girl! I mean, she’s not my favourite person in the world, but I think that may have been an unforgivable thing that you did today.
CHARLES: I can’t bear to think about it. Poor Hen...
TOM: Though... Let’s face facts.
CHARLES: I’m sorry. I’m sorry.
TOM: If you weren’t sure you wanted to marry her today of all days, i.e. your wedding day, then it must be the right decision, mustn’t it?
FIONA: Quite right, Tom.
SCARLETT: It was a lovely dress. I’m sure she’ll find it useful for parties.

DAVID: (using sign language)…
MATTHEW: What did he say, Charles?
CHARLES: Says he blames himself.
TOM: Oh. Absolutely not.
MATTHEW: No, you mustn’t, David.

CHARLES: (in sign language) They all blame you too.
The doorbell rings. Someone offers to go and open the door.
CHARLES: No, no, no. If there’s music to be faced, I should be facing it.

Charles opens his door. There in front of him is Carrie – very wet. It is still pouring with rain.

CARRIE: (outside, in the street) Hello!
CHARLES: (on the doorstep) Hi! You’re soaking. Come in.
CARRIE: No, no, I’m fine, I’m fine. Comes a point when you’re so wet you can’t get any wetter.
CHARLES: OK. I’ll come out.

He steps into the rain. Within seconds he is soaking too.
CARRIE: No, please don’t. I just wanted to check you’re OK. Not busy killing yourself or anything, but you’re fine... So. I shouldn’t have come to the church this morning, I’m sorry.

She walks away. He follows her.

CHARLES: No, no, wait. It was all my fault. I mean, I’m the bastard here. And it definitely sorted out one thing. Marriage and me were very clearly not meant for one another. It sorted out another big thing as well. There I was... standing there in the church and for the first time in my whole life, I realised I... totally and utterly loved one person. And it wasn’t the person standing next to me in the veil. It’s... the person standing opposite me now, in the rain.
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Pause. He’s done it. At last he has said that he loves her.
CHARLES: The truth of it is, I’ve loved you from the first second I met you. You’re not suddenly going to go away again, are you?
CARRIE: No. I might drown. But otherwise, no.
CHARLES: OK, OK, we’ll go in.

Turns to take her in. They walk a few paces, but then...
CHARLES: First let… let me ask you one thing. Do you think…
She watches him.
CHARLES: … after we’ve dried off, after we’ve spent lots more time together, you might agree (pause) not to marry me? And do you think (pause) not being married to me might maybe be something you could consider doing for the rest of your life?
She looks at him.
CHARLES: Do you?
CARRIE: I do.
They kiss. The camera moves into the stormy skies above London and a thunderbolt lights the sky.

Richard Curtis, Four Weddings and a Funeral, 1993

ANALYSIS

1. Explain who the characters are, how they met and why they parted until this reunion?
2. How would you react if you were:
   a) Charles?
   b) Henrietta?
   c) a member of the congregation?
   d) the priest?
3. In the first part (l.1-22), what are the expressions of surprise, reproach and compassion? What are the characters doing?
4. Match the characters with their opinions:
   a) Scarlett
   b) Tom
   c) Fiona
   1. does not like habits
   2. blames the groom for what he did
   3. has a practical reaction

Justify your answers.
5. What do the characters’ reactions reveal about:
   a) Their feelings for the bride?
   b) Their personality?
6. How would you put into words David’s sign language? Why is he an essential character?
7. Analyze Tom’s and Matthew’s reactions.
8. How does Carrie feel (down to line 29)?
9. In Charles’ reply (lines 31-35), pick out the three things he is now aware of.
11. What do you find romantic in this scene?
12. Give this scene a title.
13. Compare this scene to the former one.

TRANSLATION OF “SE”

Translate.

a) Henrietta et Charles se connaissaient depuis longtemps, s’entendaient bien mais la cérémonie du mariage prouvait qu’ils ne s’aimaient pas vraiment.
b) Charles décida de se séparer d’Henrietta.
c) Tom apprécia l’idée car il trouvait que tous les mariages se ressemblaient.
d) David s’en voulut d’avoir conseillé son frère.
e) Charles ne voulait pas se marier avec Carrie.
f) Ils avaient le sentiment de se comprendre.
g) Ils se firent confiance et s’embrassèrent passionnément à la fin du film.

REPORTED SPEECH

Turn the sentences into reported speech. Use different introductory verbs in the past tense.

1. At least, it’s one we won’t forget.
   Tom...
2. It must be the right decision.
   He...
3. I’ve loved you from the first second I met you.
   Charles...
4. Do you think you might agree not to marry me?
   He...
5. I do.
   Carrie...

APOLOGIZING

A. Match the following to make sentences:

1. I’m afraid a. for being so thoughtless.
2. I’m sorry about b. not talk about that if you don’t mind.
3. I’m terribly sorry for what happened. c. it was all my fault.
4. I really apologize d. what I’ve done to Henrietta.
5. I’d rather e. I promise I won’t marry again.

B. You are invited to a party with three friends. None of you wants to go and you are trying to find excuses. Imagine the conversation.

THE HISTORY OF MARRIAGE

Right or wrong? Justify using http://marriage.about.com/od/historyofmarriage/.

a) Women introduced the notion of romance into the marriage relationship.
b) The engagement ring can be dated back to the ancient Romans.
c) The roundness of the ring stands for love.
d) In 1563, the Council of Trent decreed that marriages should be celebrated in the presence of a priest and two witnesses.
e) Pope Leo VIII declared a marriage would be void without the couple’s consent.

WRITING

Do you think marriage is an outdated institution? Justify your point of view. (200 words)