

I do, don't you?

"I do!" A stentorian voice from the congregation echoed across the church. A pin-drop silence followed and was immediately broken by a glass shattering somewhere in the distance. There was a mass movement as one hundred and sixty-eight heads turned to stare at this unexpected interruption. Then there was an astonished gasp, a confused whisper and a nervous giggle. A moment later it sounded as though a swarm of bees had annexed the area and just a few yells were clearly audible.

"Who was that? What did he mean?"

"Who's marrying whom?"

"Is this a joke?"

The faces of the bride and groom at the altar represented 'Yin and Yang' – one flushed with colour, while the other drained of it. After all, what was going on?

Seven-year old Crusoe sped down the aisle in delight, jingling the canister in his right hand. He had just had the most amazing brainwave. He had been chosen as the best man for his older brother Harry's wedding and had to keep the ring safe.

"The ring is very precious to Tia and me. I want to make this a very special day for her, alright?" Harry had told him earlier that morning.

Now, with only fifteen minutes to go before Tia would walk down the aisle with her father, Crusoe has come up with a brilliant idea to surprise Harry and Tia. Looking around, he found what he needed lying in the corner.

'A nice, big balloon would be perfect!' He thought.

After filling it up with confetti, Crusoe carefully extracted the ring from the canister. The ring was a circle of shiny platinum with one heart-shaped pink diamond embedded in it. The words 'Forever True' had been etched into the metal.

Holding it over the mouth of the balloon, he dropped it into the confetti.

'Yes! Now all I have to do is fill it with air and then burst it over their heads before they say 'I do' and the ring will fall right in front of Tia. She is sure to love it!' He thought excitedly. He had been inspired by his own birthday when his parents had put the Iron Man action figure he had long-wanted along with the confetti.

Half an hour later, Harry and Tia were almost done making their vows. Tia looked radiant in her white, flowing wedding gown and its golden details made her complexion glow. Her sleek and shiny auburn hair had been pulled back into a French bun. Opposite her, looking very handsome in his tuxedo, Harry appeared to be the luckiest man in the world as his dazzling smile lit up his aquamarine eyes.

'This wedding is going to be so smooth and successful!' Harry thought to himself. Little did he know, how very wrong he was!

The moment, Crusoe knew, was seconds away. He signalled his Uncle Gerald to hold up the balloon slowly between the couple-to-be.

"Do you, Harry Bilius Nickerson, take Tia Winthrop Scott as your wife?"

Boom! Confetti rained down on the startled couple and the audience began to clap. The only person who was not clapping was little Crusoe. He could not see the ring anywhere.

"May I have the ring now?" Harry whispered to Crusoe.

Crusoe's eyes searched the floor frantically, but in vain.

"Crusoe, dear, please can I have the ring now?" Asked Harry a little impatiently.

Tears welled up in Crusoe's scared eyes and he started to cry loudly.

"What happened? What's wrong?" Harry took his younger brother into his arms.

"The ring's g... g... gone!" Sobbed poor Crusoe.

A gasp rippled through the audience and Harry felt like he'd missed a stair while walking.

"What do you mean 'gone'?" Questioned Tia, shocked.

"I put it in the balloon so that it would fall directly in front of you." Crusoe wiped his tears.

Tia slapped a hand against her forehead and Harry groaned in frustration.

Only one person seemed to be thinking straight.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we apologise for the momentary interlude. We require your assistance. Please look around to see if you can spot the ring fallen somewhere." Called Uncle Gerald.

Soon the wedding turned into a scavenger hunt. Chairs were being dragged and lifted and people were enthusiastically down on all fours. It was quite an amusing affair.

"Found it!" Screeched a freckled teenage girl.

The commotion came to a dead halt.

"Well, pass it ahead please!" Shouted Harry, relieved.

"Excuse-me?" Replied the girl, looking genuinely confused.

“The ring. We still need to get married, you know!”

“Oh! I’m so sorry. I was talking about my earring that fell off earlier.”

“Ahh.” The audience groaned and a few old, almost-toothless people chuckled.

The hunt resumed. Ten minutes later the bride was growing restless.

“How could you have let this happen, Harry?” She wailed. “Doesn’t anybody know where the ring is? Don’t you want to marry me?”

She added the last question in a small voice.

“I do!” A stentorian voice from the congregation echoed across the church. A young man in a navy blue blazer was standing at the back.

“I BEG YOUR PARDON?” Yelled Harry, mystified.

Tia felt faint. The temperature seemed to have dropped by ten degrees. A cold draught now swept the room and the tension increased ten-fold. The young man realised what he had just shouted.

“I’m s.. s.. sorry. I only meant that I’ve found the ring. Isn’t that what the bride asked?” He fumbled.

The audience erupted with laughter and soon the bride and groom joined in too. The priest shook his head in amusement and happiness and warmth engulfed the area once again.

Crusoe ran to retrieve the ring, trying to cover up for the nuisance he had caused.

“I’m sorry.” He whispered to Tia.

“That’s alright. In fact, thank you for making this day so memorable!” She smiled.

The priest blessed the couple.

“I finally pronounce you man and wife!”

The church exploded in cheers. This would be one affair to remember!