

Security in the Wedding

By, Robert Coleman

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Here I am standing at an altar holding a silver and turquoise ring waiting for my non-traditional girlfriend to do the most traditional thing we could ever do. The ring was her great-great grandmothers. Back in the small town where she lived, she had been the one to ask for his hand when he had some sort of problem asking. He was the sheriff, and she was a reporter or something. It has become a tradition for their family to wear a silver ring with topaz or turquoise. Now the wedding was as nontraditional as she could pull off. For starters, none of the groom's side was wearing pants. Despite none of us being Scottish we all wore kilts. I was in a black and red plaid while the rest wore a solid black. The red was echoed in her dress. A white dress with a crimson piping and a crimson veil. The dress also had silver beads that shimmered in the light. The bridesmaids all wore red tuxedos. Something that would feel at home in the 1970's all ruffles and bell bottoms. Funky.

A woman named Tree was the official. Yes, her legal name was Tree. She insisted she could only perform the ceremony naked. This was something I had a hard time explaining to the hall where the wedding was happening as well as the people sending out invites. We needed to warn anyone bringing children about the nudity. Luckily for us, neither of us had family that would or could attend. My parents are long out of the picture, and her father was in witness relocation. Soon so would we. Most of the people there were near family and actors. The best woman was Cindy. Yes, in keeping with the non-traditional theme I asked Cindy to be my second, and a guy named Jerrid acted as the maid-of-honor. With the exception of FBI Agent David Sampson, most of the crowd was hip. Sampson was Christina's uncle and a pain in the ass.

We stood up there waiting for Christina. A bunch of women dressed like men and a bunch of men dressed in man skirts. Following tradition, I didn't wear underwear under the kilt. It felt different having my junk all free and hanging low. I could picture Sampson back down the aisle trying to talk her out of it. Then Sampson came in and sat down. He was supposed to walk her down the aisle. A traditional version of the wedding march started. The doors opened, and

Christina came in. The white and red dress shimmered in the light. With her was a large angry looking man. Oh shit, it was her father. The two started down the aisle. She was radiant, he was angry. With every step, the music grew louder. Then the tempo changed and the unthinkable or maybe unbelievable happened. They started to dance down the aisle. A man who once killed a thug with his bare hands was dancing to what could be best described as an Uptown Funk version of the wedding march. Just picture the character Luca Brasi from the Godfather shaking his ass down the aisle. As they made their way up a thunderous clapping started. People in the seats got up and danced along in place. When they made it up to the alter he gave me her hand then told me to put the other one up. He then gave me a high five up top. He sat down next to his brother who was just shaking his head laughing. The rest of the wedding was as typical a wedding as one with a naked official and gender swapping wedding party could be. We traded rings, said vowels and kissed. To help bring us back to reality Christina then grabbed the back of my kilt and mooned the attendees.

In the last couple of weeks, I have found out some things. Christina's mother wasn't dead she just left when she was very young. She wanted to travel the country following the band Phish like there were the Grateful Dead. She just never came back home. At the reception, I could talk to her father. For a mass murderer, he turned out to be a nice guy. He said, "*if my girl likes you and my brother doesn't then you are the right one.*" Christina's father and her best friend once girlfriend danced. They knew each other from the times Cindy was a kindergartener with his daughter. She never knew about the whole contract killer thing until a few weeks ago. He never knew and may never know about Cindy and Christina's love affair. Dancing they could be father and daughter and who knows given time it could have gone that way. We both know that Cindy wasn't going to leave our lives even in witness relocation. She is a part of our family. She was moving to Vancouver fulltime with her television show being picked up for three seasons. They also promised to tone down the stereotypical lesbian role she was playing. They said by the end of season two she would look more like herself as an actual lesbian than the stereotype.

By 2 am the party was over. Christina's father was in the back sleeping or passed out while her uncle called to find out what happened to the transportation. He was to arrange our and

her father's security which included the ride from the hall. Christina changed out of the dress, but I forgot to bring a change of clothing, so I was still in the man skirt. Outside a car skidded to a stop. Sampson came running in yelling, "RUN." We made it into the back room as the gunmen opened fire into the hall. Sampson handed me his nickel-plated Smith and Wesson 38 he kept on his ankle. The gun was why he refused to wear the kilt. Good choice. As we stood by the door, Christina helped her drunk father into an elevator in the back. The hall was in a ten-story building, but most of the floors were unused. Once they were in the elevator, I gave the gun to Christina. I then told Sampson to go with them. I said, "*when you get to the top disable the elevator. I am going to make the trip up the stairs as difficult as possible.*" He shook his head yes and let the door close. The last thing I saw in the elevator was my new wife with her eyes wide and afraid.

The gunmen started on the locked and blocked doors to the back room. I grabbed a broom handle and went to the stairs breaking every light I found along the way dumping anything I could dump on the stairs from a mop bucket filled with nasty soapy water to boxes of small nails. I heard one of them slip then thump, thump, thump down the stairs. Followed by gunfire up the stairwell. On the 5th floor, I found an old IT department filled with old CRT monitors. I tossed them down the stairs. I then dumped a 5-gallon bottle of water on a platform. I cut a wire and plugged it in then carefully dropped it into the water. From there I kept breaking every light I found. From below, I heard some screaming and gunfire. I think they found the water then the lights flickered, so they definitely found the water. I reached the top to almost have my new father-in-law take my head off. He swung a fire ax as I entered missing me by about an inch. We braced the door and went to the other side of the room. Eventually, there was a slam and pop at the door. The door gave way, and two men came in. One of them said, "*which one of you did the Home Alone shit.*" Christina's father stepped out from us and said, "*you're here for me not them.*" They said, "*no we are here for all of you.*" Christina's father said, "*just give up now, and you won't be hurt.*" The first of the two thugs pulled his trigger only to see his gun was locked back and empty. The other one did the same. Agent Sampson said, "*eight to two, I like those odds.*"

About ten minutes later the FBI showed up, and the other thugs, the ones that survived the stairwell were arrested. The two that came through the door were also arrested after they woke up in the hospital a few days later. Her father was on his way to who knows, and we were on our way. He hugged Christina and just for a moment he wasn't a cold-hearted killer he was a father who might not see his daughter ever again. He took my hand and said, "*I know how to break you down without killing you so just think about that.*" He said it with a smile on his face and a certainty in his eyes that made it less a threat and more of a promise. With that, he was off to who knows where. We were going to a temporary place in Maine before a permanent relocation could be arranged. Knowing our luck, we will wind up in some sort of Stephen King nightmare.