

A Simple Explanation

by Lauren Becker

You are one who likes weddings and wants his own. I am the bridesmaid standing outside the reception. In the movies, I would be smoking. I have no excuse. You think I am sad because I want my own three-tiered cake and honeymoon. I am intriguing in my unflattering dress. You mistake my melancholy for beauty.

You shouldn't feel bad when it happens. It does and it will, so really, don't feel bad. When you said hi, I pictured the end. You will change your mind more quickly than you will understand. When you realize that the fact that you've never met anyone like me is not such a good thing. When it becomes clear that I'll use my intelligence and wit to push you. I'll give you my number. Just know you won't keep it for long.

You marvel aloud at your luck in meeting me. I like you and want to warn you, but it's really your own fault. Don't envision a history with me. Just take me home tonight and don't call tomorrow. I will cry and think “always” and “never” and it will feel right to me.

You will disappoint me. Perhaps you must. I don't know otherwise and will be confused at the absence of disappointment. You are just another and I am only me. I give you full permission to be everything I don't want you to be. In fact, I insist. And you don't need my permission. It will only impel you to do the opposite and the opposite would be distressing to us both.

You smile at me now. You bring me champagne. You use words like compelling and captivating, They are precursors to difficult and irrational. The words are the same. If you look at me that way now, you will dislike me more. I am not complex. I am simply incapable.

You should talk to another bridesmaid. She will be simple and want this wedding. She will not captivate. She will not cry or rage. She will allow you to not disappoint her. And you won't.

You will go to Hawaii on your honeymoon. You will snorkel and attend a luau. She'll talk of how you met. You might think of me for

Available online at «<http://fictionaut.com/stories/lauren-becker/a-simple-explanation>»

Copyright © 2009 Lauren Becker. All rights reserved.

a moment and wonder what it would be like if you had refused to listen to me. You might attach a different ending to this conversation for that moment. Even as I talk you out of me, I am doing the same.

