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Hi my name is Elise, I come from the original small town in Texas. My parents are cattle people, my brothers are all cattle people, I am not cattle people.

My parents were both in there 40's when I was born, I think in a lot of ways they thought I didn't fit in. I am everything my parents are not, I am fair haired and fair skinned, I have blue eyes and fine features. My parents are both dark, in both appearance and attitude. They get up with the sun and go to bed with the sun just as they always have. When I was 8 my parents decided to send me off to boarding school, I stayed there until I started college, I would come home for the summer but then I never seemed to fit in, I found it hard to understand why they hated me. I realize now that they didn't hate me it had more to do with they didn't know how to treat me. My parents had 12 children, I am the only girl. I am a real girl, I love to get dressed up for any reason, I was a cheerleader and even won a couple of modeling competitions. When I finished college, I went home, although it didn't feel like home, it was just a place that some people I vaguely knew lived.

I stayed at home for a few months, I got a job at the local store and although it was nice to be busy, it is not what I really wanted. I wanted to be an actress, I wanted to be famous but when I tried to explain this to my parents they thought I had lost my mind. They were always reminding me of how much money they had spent on my education and that I should be doing something that would change the world with there money. So after working at the store I was able to buy a cheap car and I packed my little bomb up with all of my worldly possessions and took off for New York.

I had no plan, nowhere to stay and about \$500 in my purse, but that was ok, I knew I would be ok somehow.

Thankfully my little car made it to new jersey without breaking down, but the cost of the fuel and food had made a serious dent in my budget, I knew if I was going to find somewhere to live I needed to find a job and fast. When I arrived in New Jersey I called a friend from school, I knew she lived in the area and I hoped I would be able to camp on her floor for a little while at least until I could find a job and a flat. As luck would have it she was at home, I went to see her and I told her what I had done. Her parents thought it was hilarious; they were fabulous they told me I was welcome to stay as long as I needed. They were leaving on a big holiday in a few days and it would save them some money if I could look after the house and their little dog for 6 weeks. I was so relieved; I had somewhere safe to stay for a few weeks. When they left for holidays they made sure there was plenty of food and they even left money in case I needed it for some reason. The little dog and I became good friends, he would sleep on the bed with me and during the day he would come out in the car with me while I looked for a job.

Then one day I took the dog for a walk and got a bit lost, I found a little bakery and went in to ask for directions, the man that was behind the counter drew me a map and gave me and the dog a drink of water. I noticed that he was writing a help wanted sign, I asked him about the job, he used to run the bakery with his friend who had recently passed away and he needed some one to help serve and decorate cakes. I told him I have no experience but I was willing to learn. I walked out of the bakery with a job. Only one problem I had to be at work at 4am the next morning.

The following morning I showed up at the bakery, it was 3.45 am, it was dark and it was scary, even the dog gave me a dirty look when I got up so early. I left the dog asleep on the bed, I made sure he had plenty of water and filled his bowl with food but he wasn't interested.

My baker was already there he seemed really surprised to see me, I don't think he expected me to be on time and ready to work. We got straight to work, he taught me how to mix the icing mix and what colours to add. At about 5 am he walked back into the room I was working in, he seemed impressed by my work. I had iced almost everything he had asked me to ice, only problem was I had mixed my colours up so half were the right color the other half were something totally different, I hadn't even noticed I was so focused on getting it all done. I wanted to impress my boss. He just laughed, he thought it was funny, then he told me to come and get a fresh bun and coffee and take a break with him.

The bun was a combination of sugar and cinnamon, it was amazing, I had never had anything like it. We sat in silence and ate our buns and drank our coffee, then he finally spoke, he introduced himself, his name was Joseph, he was 50yrs old, he had never married and had no children. I told him about me, that I wanted to be an actress but I had to find a job, a place to live and save some money. I told him I was staying with a school friend and her family for the time being but if he let me keep the job I would be looking for a flat some where in the area. Joseph told me he about his faith and how he didn't work weekends, he was Jewish, I knew nothing apart from what I had learnt at school, he was very patient and offered to answer any questions I might have. Then he gave me all the paper work I needed to work for him, just the basic tax forms. I was so proud I had my first job in New Jersey I was on my way to achieving my dream.

On my first day at work I got to meet most of Joseph's regular customers, I think word spread pretty quick that some one new was working at the bakery and every one wanted to come have a look at the weird southern girl. I don't mind they were all very nice to me and sales went through the roof.

After about a month of working at the bakery I had my own fans, they loved the adventurous new icing colours and some came in every day to see what I had come up with. I asked Joseph if it would be alright if I put a notice up in the

bakery that I was looking for a flat, he said it would be fine or I could just clean up the one above the bakery and move in there. I never realized there was a flat upstairs. After we had closed for the day, Joseph grabbed the keys and we went upstairs to have a look. It had a good sized one bedroom flat, I asked him what the rent would be and he said if I kept it clean and swept out the front I could have it free of charge. It turns out that the previous owner of the store had lived upstairs until he sold the building. No one had lived up there since. It needed a good clean, the bathroom was really dusty and the little kitchen looked like it could use some paint but it was a fabulous offer. So I welcomed a place to live, my friend and her family were due home in a week, so I had a week to clean it up and find some furniture. Easy.

The next day we had almost sold out by about 2 pm, so Joseph told me to go start cleaning up upstairs that he would look after it. So I went upstairs Joseph had left a bucket, vacuum and some rags, I opened up the front windows, plugged in the vacuum and started to get rid of 10 years of dust. It was really very satisfying, I could see I had made real progress by the time Jo had closed the bakery for the day. Jo and I worked until fairly late, and it looked really good. The flat was actually in really good condition the walls cleaned up really well and the carpet was in fabulous condition. Joseph suggested we get some one in to clean the carpet properly to get all the dust out. Even the marks in the kitchen cleaned up really well. I was so proud of my efforts and I think Jo was proud as well.

The next morning when I arrived at work Joseph was working hard, he told me he was going out for a little while in the afternoon so I would be alone in the bakery for a couple of hours. I told him that was fine, the afternoons were rarely busy. He also told me that he had some one coming to clean the carpet that morning, so I should be able to move in the next day. I was so excited finally a

place of my own. As people started coming in for their bread and sweet treats every one was asking what was going on upstairs, why the windows were open, so I told them that I was moving in. I told everyone I was going to go shopping for some furniture just as soon as I could make time, and I would be living above the bakery. Every one was so excited, I had one lady offer me her old couch, she said it was old but if I could arrange some one to pick it up I could have it for free, other people offered me a table and chairs and a bed, they were all so generous. When Joseph got back late in the afternoon, the bakery was closed, we had sold out by about 3pm, so I cleaned everything and locked it up.

I was upstairs admiring the clean carpet and cleaning the last little bits in the kitchen and bathroom. Joseph knocked on the open door, he told me he was back, I told him the takings were in the safe and that everything else was ready for tomorrow. I had even put the warm water on the yeast to get it started for the morning. Jo was very impressed, he told me that his mother was moving into a nursing home and because he was the only child he had to move her things and make sure she had everything she needed.

I told him about the wonderful offers I had of furniture. I had even come up with a plan on how I was going to collect them, I could ask one of the delivery men if they would do it for beer. But Joseph just smiled and told me that he had a van and if I wanted we could go and collect things the next afternoon. He also told me that there were some things at his mothers that I might like to make use of. He said if I didn't want them he would give them to charity. So that afternoon we went to his mother's home, it was full of all sorts of stuff. He has already sold the house so he needed to clean it out and tidy it up for the new owners. He only has a couple of weeks to sort it all out. I was grateful for the use of some of the furniture; his mother had some beautiful things. While we were looking we came across some beautiful old curtains in a bag, I asked if I could use them, I don't think Joseph really cared. I packed the van with everything I could, between all of this stuff and the stuff the other people had offered my little flat was going to be home in no time.

When we got back to the Bakery to unload there was a group of people gathered around the back, at first I thought something terrible had happened but then I realized that all of these people had shown up with furniture and house warming gifts I was so touched. By the time we had unloaded everything and put it all up stairs the little flat looked amazing, it was late for me by this time, I had been getting up early for work and although my little flat was ready to live in I still had to go home to my friends place and feed the dog and water the garden. The only problem was I was exhausted, I got in the car and realized I just really wanted a sleep, Joseph seen me and came over. He told me not to drive that he would drive me home and pick me up in the morning, I thought that was so sweet of him. When we got to my friends home there was a car in the driveway, I didn't know the car, so I asked Joseph to come in with me. It turns out that the family had arrived home a couple of days early and a friend had collected them from the airport. I introduced Joseph and told them that I had a job, a flat and that I would be getting out of their way in the next couple of days. They were very happy for me, they were even happier about the house, I had looked after it like my own, it was clean, the fridge had food and even the garden and the pool looked just like they did when they left.

Joseph excused himself and left, he wasn't interested in the big holidays stories he just wanted to go home to bed. I got to bed at about 10pm, I used to think that was early but when you get up at 3 it is really late. Joseph picked me up at 3.30 the next morning, I tried to be as quiet as I could when I left in the morning but it didn't really work, when I left everyone was up drinking milk in the kitchen. That afternoon the shop sold out by about 2pm, so we cleaned up together and closed the shop.

Then I went back to my family, packed up my things and thanked them for everything. Then I moved to my own little place, I sorted out my things, hung the curtains and made the bed. It was amazing, it was my first place of my own, I could do whatever I liked, I could move the furniture, I could hang different curtains and I could cook whatever I wanted. Only one problem, I looked in the fridge and there was nothing, I hadn't gone to the store yet. I walked down stairs to find Jo, he had ordered a bin for his mothers place but still didn't know where to start. The bin was being delivered Friday night and being collected Monday morning. I ran across the street to the store and I bought some chicken and some vegetables, I got back to the bakery and I offered to cook Jo dinner. He looked a bit shocked but accepted readily. He went down to the basement and came up with a bottle of wine, while I cooked he had a glass of wine and we talked about how to tackle him mothers home.

He told me he didn't expect my help but I know that he wanted some one to help, I cant blame him I would have wanted some one to help even if it was just to talk to me while I was working. We made a plan that the following evening being the Friday that we would work on the house all weekend until it was done. Jo looked so relieved, but also a little scared. The poor man, he had just put his mother into a nursing home, now he had to deal with her house and a pushy woman who wanted to help.

We had a delightful dinner, now I know why it is important to learn to cook in college, I became the master of the one pot meal when I was at college, I only had one pot, so every thing was cooked together I never thought of asking Jo if he liked food cooked like this, but he ate with gusto and cleaned his plate with half of a roll that I split with him. It is really a bit odd that when you work and live in a bakery that you cant get a whole roll. After that Jo went home, I finished

cleaning up after dinner, went down stairs to check that everything was locked up then locked my own door, set my alarm and went to bed. It was a bit strange at first but exhaustion eventually did its thing and I went to sleep.

I woke up a little before my alarm, I got up and had a shower, fixed myself some breakfast and was having a coffee when I heard Jo come in, I took him down a cup of coffee and we started work. It was one of those really busy days, we baked extra but everyone seemed to come in and say hello. Everyone was so excited to have a young person in the neighborhood; it was really nice to feel welcomed. Then I discovered that every one wanted a young person for one reason or the other, they all come to me to ask me what they should buy their grandkids and if it is too old fashioned to wear a hat to a wedding. Joseph loved it, every time we baked more we still sold it. The days of left over food were over.

That Friday night we went to his mother's house and we started packing boxes, things that still had life we packed into boxes to go to the local charity shop, everything else went into the bin. It was not an easy task but we had made some real progress by the time we stopped for dinner. Joseph went to a local dinner and come back with food. The food was ok but the company was excellent, we talked about his mother and his childhood, he has such a fun childhood terrorizing the local cats and playing hide and seek with his dad. I told him a bit about my childhood, he seemed sad that I spent most of it at school. But then he spent a lot of his childhood at the bakery with his dad; back then the bakery was about 3 blocks from his family home. I wondered what it would be like to grow up where you could walk to work with your dad, go to school then help out in the bakery after school. I had to admit that I really enjoyed working in the bakery, I got to talk to people all day, I got to eat yummy things and I got paid. It was the perfect arrangement.

We worked on the house until we were both too tired to do any more then we both collapsed in the couch together, we woke up at about 3am, we were on the



couch cuddled together. I guess it would have looked pretty cute but we apologized to each other any way, nothing happened we were just both exhausted and went to sleep and some how ended up cuddled together. We guessed that since we were up that we might as well get an early start.

Jo made coffee and promised to go and get breakfast as soon as some one else in the neighborhood was up and at work. We were so used to getting up early and working that we made huge progress before Jo went to get some breakfast at 6am. Jo asked me to do his mothers bedroom, he went out to work on the garage. I felt a bit uncomfortable but also honored that he trusted me. I packed all of her old clothes to go to charity, all of her old shoes and underwear went to the bin and her jewelry and other precious things went in a box for Joseph to sort out.

It didn't take too long, I dragged the vacuum cleaner into the room, the bed was already gone and there was only the built in wardrobe and a couple of boxes in the room, I thought I would vacuum the wardrobe out, it was pretty dusty. After I started vacuuming I noticed that the panel in one end of the wardrobe floor was loose, so I made a note to let Joseph know so he could put a nail in it. I wandered out to the garage to see if Jo had a hammer and nail out there to fix the panel. He grabbed a couple of tools and followed me back inside. He played with the panel for a while and realized that it had never been fixed down, he pushed on one end and it flipped open. Underneath it was a little treasure trove, obviously his mum used to hide things down there. We pulled out a shoebox, and a couple of bags and an old photo album. The shoebox was full of money; obviously she had been saving money in there for a long time. Jo put it aside, he said he would have to count it and take it to the bank in the mean time he would take it back to the bakery and lock it in the safe.

The bags had beautiful jewelry in them, some things that looked real, I told Jo that perhaps they should go in the safe until he could have them valued, and the

photo album was full of photos of people he didn't know. The photos were very old and they looked vaguely like his parents, he guessed they were old family photos that his mum had never shown to him. There was also a notebook with writing that we didn't understand. Joseph said he would take it with him to the synagogue that afternoon and see if any one knew what it said. By this stage we had almost cleared the whole house there was still some stuff in the garage and a few things in the kitchen but generally it was ready for a good clean.

It was almost lunchtime, so Jo and I went back to the bakery, we got fish and chips on the way and we sat at the table and had some lunch. We decided to call it a day and that we would go back on the Sunday afternoon and clean it up and get rid of the last few things. We were so proud we had achieved so much in such a short period of time and Jo had found his mum's little hidey-hole. After lunch Joseph went home to have a shower and get ready to go to synagogue and I had a shower and a little sleep before heading out to get some groceries and have a look around my new home. I hated to admit it but I was missing the company of the little dog, but I knew it would be fine. The afternoon went really quickly and after my late night I had an early night in bed.

I woke up late the next day, the sun was already up, I had a shower, grabbed some breakfast and wandered down to find Joseph waiting for me. He had counted the money we found and had a closer look at the jewelry and had looked through the box of things I thought he might like. He was amazed he had never seen the jewelry before. He was going to take an afternoon off the following week and see a friend to see if anything was really worth much.

He told me that he really appreciated my help and that if I didn't want to come today that he was fine with that. But once I start something I like to finish it. We went back to the house and cleaned it so it shone. I was amazed how much dust we chased out of the house, we took the curtains outside and beat them to get the dust out, and I don't think we got it all but we did do our best. We vacuumed,

dusted and cleaned and polished until we couldn't do it any more. It looked amazing, Joseph had cleaned out the garage and given it a good sweep and the garden got a tidy up. I am guessing from the comments of the neighbors that it looked better than it had in a very long time.

On the way back to the bakery with the last few bits and pieces we stopped to get food, it was late afternoon, we hadn't thought to stop for lunch we are used to eating late in the bakery. When we got back to the bakery we sat and ate our food, Jo was telling me about what his family home was like when he was little, it sounded so fun. I wished my family were more like that but then I am the only girl so I was always left out. When I was little my brothers all had dogs and cows to look after but as the only girl I got to look after the house cat, then I went away to school and when the cat died, they didn't bother getting another one.

I told Jo that I missed my friends little dog, I would really like to get a dog but living above the bakery it would just have to wait. I would have to take the dog in and out through the kitchen and I didn't want to be worried about hair and health inspectors. Jo laughed, he told me I was a very odd young lady. He was always so sweet to me nothing was too hard, when my little car broke down a few weeks later, he had a look at it and declared it to be dead. We took it to the mechanic but the mechanic said the same thing, it would cost way more than it is worth to fix it. I was a little sad, she was a good little car, we had come a long way together but I sold her off for scrap.

When I first moved into the bakery I sent my parents a letter, just to let them know that I was alive and well that I had a job and a place to live and that I was hoping to stay here for a while. I got a letter back, that thanked me for the notice, that dad had a heart attack and that my parents were leaving the farm to my brothers and moving closer to town. I was worried about my dad, so I went to the pay phone and called my mom. She said he was fine but the doctor had told him to give up heavy farm work. She told me they had plenty of savings and that they

had bought a nice house about a mile out of town. My brothers and their wives all lived on or near the farm so they were going to take over the day to day running of the place and dad would still run the stud books. I felt a lot better after our talk; I gave her the number of the bakery in case she needed to reach me urgently. I went back to the bakery and told Joseph about my dad. He offered to pay my airfares to go back and see my folks, but as sweet as that was, I knew they didn't really care if I came or not.

Over the next three or four weeks something started to change between Joseph and I, it was a bit strange because it happened so gradually I didn't really notice. We went out for an early dinner a few times, I knew the old ladies in the town were talking about it but I didn't care, we were just friends. It was nice to have some one to talk to, some one to walk arm in arm with down the street. The weather was cooling down fall was almost here. My little flat was proving to be cold during the night; I asked Joseph if he could check the old fireplace, so I could light a fire when it got really cold. He had a good look at it one afternoon and decided that it was too dangerous to use, so he got some people out to install a gas fire that looked like a log fire. I couldn't stop laughing when I seen it, what a terribly extravagant thing to do. I was always taught that Jewish people were tight with their money but Joseph never seemed to worry about it. I was beginning to think that everything my small town had taught me was crap. I don't think any of the people I had met fitted into any of the stereotypes I had been taught. I was actually really happy about that. I knew that the world had more to offer than that little town and I was so right.

The night the fire was installed, I invited Jo upstairs to have dinner with me in front of the new fire, it was hilarious because it was the warmest night we had experienced in a few weeks, but we sat in short sleeved tops eating our dinner in front of the heater. It really was very sweet of him to go to the expense of putting in a heater for me.

After dinner we were sitting on the couch talking about all of the things we wanted in life and I was cuddled into him, he was so soft and warm, then he kissed me on the forehead, I had not expected it, up until then I thought of him as a father figure not as a man. But that one little kiss made me see him as something else. I kissed his lips, he kissed back, and he was a really good kisser, way better than the guy my parents had hoped I would marry back in Texas. I guess that my parents wanted different things from a son in law, in Texas you want your daughter to marry a good family. Some one with a lot of cattle and good breeding stock, then they wanted you to make like cattle and produce lots of offspring to run the farm one day. Just like my folks were doing with my brothers. After our kiss, Joseph left. I was a little confused, he seemed a bit upset by the whole event, and I thought maybe I had upset him by kissing him. I really didn't understand what was going on.

I had a terrible nights sleep, I tossed and turned all night wondering if I had made a huge mistake and was soon to be jobless and homeless. I got up really early no point staying in bed if you cant sleep, when Jo arrived I had started warming the ovens and had most of the early morning stuff started. There were something's I couldn't do until Jo arrived but for some reason Joseph arriving scared me. I didn't hear him pull up; I was too busy filling little cake pans with mix to go into the oven. He came up along side of me and scared me half to death. But he was smiling, he said he was sorry he had reacted the way he did. That he got scared, he had not been in a relationship in a long time and that kiss was a little too perfect. I kissed him, I didn't even think about it, we both looked at each other afterwards and laughed. We were indeed the odd couple but it all felt so right.

We had a lot to do to get ready for the day ahead, so we both agreed to talk about it later, we both went to work then because I had an early start we were finished really early. We sat down for coffee and a snack while we waited for the ovens to let us know that the last batch of bread was done. We still had about 30

minutes before the bakery opened. So we sat and chatted. He was worried how the local community would see us if we did get into a serious relationship, he had lived in or near the town his whole life, I didn't think it was going to be that big of an issue. I think the local people already knew we were sweet on each other it just took us a while to figure it out. But we agreed to keep it quiet for a while and see how individuals took the news before it became common knowledge. The first person he wanted me to meet was his mother that very afternoon he took me to the nursing home and we sat and chatted for a while. She was a dear sweet old thing; she seemed more concerned that I was so skinny than that I was dating her son. I promised that I would visit her on the weekend and that I would bring a particular photo album, so she could tell me about her Joseph. It sounded like fun; I don't think Jo was so excited though.

Over the next few months our relationship was the worst kept secret, within a few days every one knew that there was something going on. But for the sake of the appearances we kept it very quiet to the outside world. It was strange because the people who we seen everyday knew that it was more than we were letting on but we wanted to ease into it.

Before I knew it winter was over and spring was making everyone a bit nutty, not just the squirrels. So Jo and I started to spend more time in public together going for picnics on Sunday afternoon with the other young lovers down in the park. By the middle of July we both decided to make it more formal, so he asked me to marry him. It was weird because although we had discussed marriage and everything else, I didn't think he would do it. Apparently he called my parents to ask their permission, he discussed it with his mother and every one else seemed to know what was happening except me. Joseph had given me a signet ring for my birthday that I had resized to fit, when I was baking I always put it up on the shelf so I knew where it was and so I knew it wouldn't end up in someone's sweet snack. Then one day after work I went to get it and it was gone. I looked all over for it thinking maybe in my morning haze I had left it upstairs or put it

somewhere else. Jo helped me look for it but I found out later that he had borrowed it to have it sized. He took it to his cousin who worked for a jeweler and had the size checked then that afternoon he came back to the bakery and gave me my ring. He told me he found it in his car, that the previous night when we went out that I must have dropped it in the car. We both laughed about it. I was so tired the night before that anything is possible. I couldn't remember taking it off or putting it on.

A couple of weeks later we closed early on a Friday, we had a very busy day, we seemed to run all morning but by early afternoon it was sold out. So we cleaned up the shop and locked up for the weekend. I was really looking forward to the weekend, there was a big local dance that Joseph was taking me to and I had borrowed a beautiful old time dress to wear and everything. Joseph suggested I go upstairs and have a nap, I had a few days were I was very tired, I just put it down to working hard and getting up so early. We had also had some late nights recently, so the offer of a nap was one I couldn't resist. I woke up a couple of hours later to find Joseph asleep alongside of me. It was so nice to wake up to some one so close. I looked at the clock and it was almost 5pm, I got out of bed and went to have a shower and get ready to go out. I seen Jo suit hanging next to the door, obviously he was getting changed here, that was fine, it would be nice to play house together.

At about 6pm Jo was still asleep, so I woke him up, he was so cute, he was all sleepy and it took him a few moment to realize where he was. He apologized for falling asleep, we had been dating for almost a year and he was worried about falling asleep along side of me. I started laughing and so did he; I think he realized how silly he sounded. I had an ulterior motive for waking him up; I needed help to do up the dress. It was a beautiful dress, it was on loan from the lady across the road, when the flyers first went up every one asked if Joseph and I would go. I said I would love to but I couldn't afford a dress that would do it

justice, so she offered me the use of her dresses. She used to work as a publicist in Los Angeles and she had wardrobes of fabulous dresses that she no longer wore. I found the perfect dress it was so beautiful. When I tried it on it was the perfect fit, I couldn't believe my luck, she also dug out the matching purse and wrap but the shoes were long gone. I took the bag to the shoe shop and they recovered an old pair of shoes I had to almost match. I only hoped that the light was low so no one would notice the shoes didn't quite match.

After I was in the dress I returned to the bathroom to finish my make up, when I came out Joseph was dressed and ready to leave, the battle of the sexes has never addressed that. Why does it take us hours and men take a few minutes? Ah well that is another story. Joseph was very impressed with the dress, he told me I looked so beautiful and then he went to the fridge and took out a small box, I wondered what he was doing, it looked like a cake slice box. Inside was the most perfect orchid corsage; it was complete with the frill band to go onto my wrist. It was the perfect accompaniment to the dress. I am guessing he peaked at the dress upstairs or the lady across the road picked it out for him, I didn't really care, I knew this was going to be a great night.

When we arrived at the ball, I felt so special I was definitely the bell of the ball; it was so nice to feel so beautiful. Most of the people there only ever see me covered in flour and running around like an idiot. The meal was interesting it was very plain but everyone had plenty and really enjoyed it. After the meal the band really got going and Jo asked me to dance. We were waltzing around the room, every one was smiling and happy, at the end of the first song, Joseph knelt down in front of me, it started out like a bow but he kept going, he asked me to marry him in front of everyone, I said yes of course, it was so romantic, I felt light like a princess. He presented a ring to me, it was similar to his mothers ring but with a slightly modern twist. It was beautiful; he told me if I didn't like it I could choose



another one. I thought it was perfect and I told him so. If I was going to pick something it would have been something like this.

After that the night flew past, I was on such a high, everyone was congratulating us, it was so much fun, Joseph took me home fairly late, I fell into bed and was probably asleep before he even locked the doors. He being the gentleman that he was helped me out of the dress, after the problems I had getting into it, it was surprisingly easy to get out of. Jo said he would come back in the morning and we could talk about everything then. I woke just as the sun rose the next morning, I got up and checked my hand, and the ring was still there, so it wasn't all a dream. I noticed that the lady across the road was moving around, so I carefully put the dress back into it's bag and grabbed all of the other stuff she had loaned me. I called in to drop off all the accessories and to drop the dress in to the cleaners. She told me not to worry about having it cleaned, I hadn't got anything on it, and so it didn't need cleaning. She doubted it would ever be worn again anyway. She asked me if we had picked a date for the wedding, I hadn't even thought about it. She pulled out a couple of stunning dresses and offered them to me as a wedding gift. I thanked her for her offer but told her we needed to discuss when the wedding was going to be and what sort of wedding it would be.

I ran back to the Bakery to find Joseph sitting at the table with coffee and the paper. I laughed, I had seen him do this so many times I never really noticed it until that very moment. I told him about the offer of the dress, he said I had better choose a date quickly before all the old ladies started dumping their old wedding dresses on the doorstep. I remembered at that point that I hadn't told my parents yet. I picked up the phone and called, my dad answered the phone, he seemed pleased that his youngest child and only daughter was getting married finally. He updated me on the rest of my family, I have 11 brothers, they are all married and they all have at least 2 children. I could see that it was going to be a big wedding at that was just my family. Then Dad put mom on, she was wandering

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