

LOVE MARRIAGE

by
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FADE IN

ROLL OPENING CREDITS OVER MONTAGE OF WEDDING VIDEOS -

A SUMPTUOUS, BUOYANT TRIBUTE TO THE UNION OF MAN AND WOMAN THROUGH A COLLAGE OF HOME MOVIES AND NEWS FOOTAGE - YOUNG COUPLES, OLD COUPLES, FAMOUS, ANONYMOUS, WEDDINGS OF EVERY DESIGN, SCALE, RACE, CULTURE, STATUS. LET OUR HEARTS SWELL WITH THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LOVE...

FADE TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

MANAV (V.O.)

Will you marry me?

FADE IN TO

INT. MANAV AND ASH'S APARTMENT - MANHATTAN - DAY

ASHTON CLARKE-SMITH, 28, eyes closed as he sleeps, a ray of sunlight giving his pale skin and blond hair a warm glow.

He doesn't open his eyes.

ASH

Not today.

MANAV (V.O.)

Why.

ASH

Because your brother is getting married in two hours and I don't want to be the product of jealous inspiration.

MANAV (V.O.)

That's a terrible reason. Give me another or I'll ask again.

ASH

I can't marry you, Manav. You're too immature to be a husband.

MANAV (V.O.)

I can't be immature. I went to Harvard.

Ash's eyes flutter open -

COME FACE TO FACE WITH A LOLLIPOP RING ON A BED PILLOW -

He laughs, his eyes drift up, to...

MANAV MOHINDAR, 27, clean-cut, handsome Indian man, wearing a CRIMSON MASK around his eyes and a COLORFUL, COURTLY BALLET COSTUME - he looks like a medieval court jester -

Ash's eyes widen with horror -

ASH

Oh my God, that's a \$2000 costume!

Ash lunges for him -

Manav dodges him, jumps up and down on the bed -

ASH (CONT'D)

Manav, if you don't take it off right now

-

Manav avoids his sideswipe, dances back, keeps jumping -

MANAV

You won't marry me?

ASH

I'll get fired!

Ash tackles im.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY

Manav's in a tuxedo, speedwalks through the cavernous station lobby, followed by Ash who tries to keep up.

ASH

I've never been outside the house with your parents before - what are the rules?

Manav doesn't slow down.

MANAV

Rules? What rules?

ASH

Am I your 'roommate,' do we stay 10 feet from each other, do we touch each other on the dance floor -

MANAV

Well I think everyone would prefer it if you stayed away from the dance floor completely.

Ash stops.

ASH
Manav I'm serious.

Manav stops. Turns. They're separated by ten feet.

ASH (CONT'D)
It's your brother's wedding. There will be Indians there, and you're bringing a boy. There have to be rules.

MANAV
My family's different, Ash.

Ash deliberates.

ASH
How they are inside the house with us will be different from how they are outside.

Manav thinks about this - WALKS TOWARDS HIM AS HE SPEAKS -

MANAV
What in your experience with my parents leads you to think that they would ever care what people think?

Manav puts his arms around Ash's waist -

MANAV (CONT'D)
And what in your experience with my parents would ever give you the impression that they wouldn't handle this in the most mature, adult manner possible.

Ash looks back at him.

INT. MOHINDAR HOME - NEW JERSEY - DAY

CLOSE on SHALU MOHINDAR, 51, face covered in a clay mask, mouth open to let loose a glass-breaking SCREAM -

SHALU
EYYIIIII!

SABRINA MOHINDAR, 24, stands in the hallway in front of her, wearing the most UGLY DRESS WE'VE EVER SEEN - she looks like a Goth milkmaid.

SHALU (CONT'D)
You look like a *kachrewali*! (=garbage lady)

SABRINA

What's that? Is that bad?

Booming voice from down the hall -

ASHOKE (O.S.)

SHALU!

SHALU

Coming!

Shalu breezes by Sabrina - FOLLOW HER AS SHE WALKS -

SHALU (CONT'D)

This is not the time for your personal
fashion - wear the pink ghagra -

SABRINA

That shows my stomach!

Shalu turns the corner, runs into RAVI MOHINDAR, 30,
sweetly scruffy, hypersensitive - he's shirtless in
boxers.

RAVI

Mom, can I talk to you?

SHALU

Ravi, you're getting married in an hour -
now is not the time for deep conversation-

RAVI

Mom, *please* -

ASHOKE (O.S.)

SHALU!

SHALU

EK MINUTE ASHOKE! (=one minute)

Shalu hurries ahead through the open hallway looking over
the banister into the sunlit foyer of her modest middle-
class home. She looks down to the first floor, sees
TWELVE YELLOW GROCERY BAGS in front of the door, a few
tipped over so coconuts, tomatoes, oranges have rolled
onto the carpet.

SHALU (CONT'D)

*Yelba! Por que la groceria todavia estas
alli!* (Why is the grocery still there?)

On the first floor, YELBA, 60, squat Nicaraguan built
like a fire hydrant, waddles out into the foyer -

YELBA (O.S.)
*Por que tu dejistela alli y no tengo
 bastidor!* (Because you left it there and
 I don't have wings!)

Shalu gets to the end of the hall, throws the door open -

The tall, sturdy man in the tuxedo at the mirror turns around slowly, revealing ASHOKE MOHINDAR, 59. He is regally handsome, a man who we cannot ever imagine was young.

He holds out his cummerbund as if it were a dead rat.

ASHOKE
 What to do with this?

INT. TRAIN CAFE CAR - DAY

Ash gnaws a pencil, studying a nearly-complete Sudoku box-
 Manav watches, sucks from a straw poked into an OJ carton-

MANAV
 Are you going to design our wedding
 kurtas?

Ash ignores him, tries three last numbers in the puzzle -
 Manav sucks through the last of the juice.

MANAV (CONT'D)
 Good, then it's agreed. I'll wear white,
 since I'm the groom. You wear red, since
 you're the bride.

Ash erases his numbers, studies harder.

Finally Manav cracks. He grabs the puzzle, and the pencil, scrawls three numbers, shoves the book back at Ash.

Ash looks at the numbers for a moment. Then slowly closes the book, puts it in his backpack.

A thought strikes him. He looks up at Manav.

ASH
 You want an *Indian* wedding?