

The List Girl

“That’s the one I want,” I said as Ian peered over my shoulder at the brochure.

“White, clean lines and I love the gold decorations. What?”

Ian shook his head, sighing. “I can’t look.”

“You’re not going all superstitious on me are you?” He was never one for old wives’ tales. It’s rubbed off on me over the years – that’s why I asked him to marry me – and not on Leap Day either. Together we’ve walked under ladders, stepped on cracks in the pavement and cocked a snook at triskaidekaphobia. Perhaps we shouldn’t have been so blasé. You reap what you sow.

“It’s alright. I just want to sort out the details. I’ll make a list for you.” I smiled at his miserable expression. “Let’s go out. You look more hang dog than the mutt.”

“It’s freezing out there, Michelle.”

“I need to feel the wind on my face and besides, the dog really does need a walk.”

“What about music? Hymns and stuff.” As we walked, our fingers slotted comfortably together, like we were saying a joint prayer. We’d had lots of practice at that recently.

“It’s up to you.” I could tell he wanted to say “It’s your day,” but he stopped himself. Months ago, Ian would have laughed, seen the dark side, enjoyed his black faux-pas, but today the icy wind hid his cursing.

I clucked my tongue. “No, you’ve got to have some input. I like the idea of a mix of modern and traditional. I’ve always been a sucker for ‘Amazing Grace’ but you know how much I love James Blunt too.”

The List Girl

“You’re beautiful,” Ian whispered. He was never romantic but he certainly knows how to use words in the right order.

“I know!” I kissed his tight mouth.

“Are you struggling tonight?” Ian asked later, putting a warm, blanketing arm around my shoulder. I drew my legs up, furiously making lists in my head. We sat watching the midnight stars lose their fight against swirling clouds.

“I think it might snow,” I whispered, my words frosting the glass. Ian drew a love heart around the shape that my breath had left. I think, if he could, he would have had it set in stone and framed.

“It’s warm enough,” he replied.

“Funny that, isn’t it? That it gets warmer when it snows.”

“Hysterical,” he sobbed.

“What about flowers?” Ian asked,

“Check the list on the fridge. You won’t have to do a thing.”

“Donations.” Ian read, rubbing a shaky hand over his stubble.

“Like I said, it’s all organised. I can rest in peace.”

“Don’t.” His voice wobbled, as he gently checked the dressing on my IV tube.

I have always been the organiser in this outfit. The list girl. I couldn’t live without my lists. I’ve made my last one now. All organised. Ian was always happy to go with the flow. The only thing I can’t be sure of now, is that Ian will be able to flow without me.