



*Tessie &
Matt*

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True love can be just around the corner, and for Matt and Tessie this was exactly the case. Though their parents were friends, Matt and Tessie were somewhat unaware of each other as they were growing up. They went to different schools and associated with different groups of people. However, as they grew older, their careers and their creative passions would bring them together.

Both would choose to pursue a career within the arts. Tessie attended school to become a jeweler and Matt, a blacksmith. Then one day, Matt's mother stepped into the jewelry shop where Tessie was working. Knowing that they would appreciate each other's line of work, his mother suggested that Tessie visit Matt's blacksmith shop, Wallace Metal Works, LLC. Tessie followed her advice.

Upon her arrival at Wallace Metal Works, LLC, Matt showed his beautiful guest around the shop. Tessie was immediately impressed with Matt's work, and soon, they were discussing their careers, their families, and their common experiences. The two easily cultivated a friendship, and in no time, their newfound friendship transformed into a romance.

After dating for about eight months, Tessie helped Matt to create

new marketing strategies for his shop. When her marketing strategies generated a significant increase in business, it seemed only natural for the two to begin working together full-time. Without hesitation, Tessie accepted Matt's invitation to direct the marketing and the welding at Wallace Metal Works, LLC.

As they worked together, their romance grew. Soon, they were engaged to be married. As they began to discuss their ideas for their wedding, they agreed that they wanted to create a wedding that would reflect their personalities. Since both appreciate subtle beauty, restful moments, and food, they decided to plan a relaxing, intimate wedding that would celebrate their profession, their creativity, and their love for each other through good food, good company, and relaxation.

To create a relaxing, intimate setting, Tessie and Matt limited their guest list to only fifty people. In addition, they decided to celebrate their wedding out of town. After searching within a five-hour radius of Charleston, West Virginia, they found Clifton, a charming inn located in Charlottesville, Virginia. After visiting Clifton, it was decided that the inn's easy charm and delicious cuisine made it the perfect location for their wedding.



Knowing that it would be difficult to bring all of their wedding plans together from a distance, Tessie and Matt decided to seek the help of an event planner. They went to The Event Company and worked with Jessica Sheffield, who was instrumental in ensuring that their wedding plans were kept organized and error free.

As the couple continued to make arrangements for their wedding, they researched a host of companies. Through a happy coincidence, they ended up hiring a number of vendors that were run by not just business partners but by family members and married couples as well. Matt and Tessie's chose Holland Photo Arts, which is run by husband and wife team Bill and Anne Holland; Pat's Floral Design, run by Pat and Sherry, a mother and daughter duo; and the Clifton chefs, who are also a husband and wife team. Since Matt and Tessie run their own business together, the couple felt a special connection with their vendors, which helped to make their wedding day all the more personal and intimate.

On the night before their wedding, Matt and Tessie's families came together for a rehearsal dinner in the Clifton Dining Room. Tessie, eager to show Matt's family her excitement at becoming a Wallace, remembered an episode of "Sex in the City" in which Charlotte wears a dress made out of plaid cloth. Tessie, following Charlotte's example, found the Wallace tartan and commissioned a local tailor to fashion a strapless, A-line dress from the fabric. Matt's family was touched by her gesture and joyously welcomed her into their family.

The next day, Clifton was decorated in an array of browns and creams, Matt and Tessie's wedding palette. They chose to use neutral, subtle colors to boost the natural splendor of the winter season at Clifton. The bridesmaids were dressed in sand colored, floor length taffeta gowns by designer Amsale from Bellarosa Bridal. The groom and the groomsmen wore classic black tuxedos with black ties. Tessie chose an ivory, raw silk gown with a pick up skirt by Monique L'hullier. A deep v-neck elegantly dipped across her chest while a sable sash accentuated her waist and matched her gown with her wedding palette. Tessie topped her look with a long, lacey veil and pearl chandelier earrings. Also on the day of the ceremony, the dining room at Clifton was recreated to serve as a chapel and was decorated using Matt and Tessie's wedding colors and candles—lots of candles. Iron trees accented with candles reflected the creativity of their work. Additional candles lined the room, creating a romantic, intimate atmosphere. The candles "[lit] up the room like a jewel box" as Tessie walked down the aisle amid smiling faces to meet Matt at the altar. As they stood together in front of their family members and close friends, there was comfort in the fact that they knew every person in the audience. The nervousness slipped away as they basked in the warmth and love of all who were present.

For the reception, Tessie and Matt had implemented personalized details within their décor. To honor their grandparents, the couple named each table after a grandparent who was unable to attend. To Matt's family, this was a touching surprise.

Based on the decision to ensure that the food that they served was entertainment in and of itself, they made the executive decision not to bring in additional entertainment. Therefore, a six-course sit down dinner (consisting of dishes such as Colorado lamb chops with roasted garlic and rosemary polenta with red wine lamb jus; sugar dusted ricotta beignets and mini 'creamsicle' panna cotta) was served. The spectacular cuisine was easily the focal point of their reception, and the dinner provided a comfortable, easy atmosphere in which to visit with guests and each other.

Finally, Tessie had a special surprise for Matt. Knowing that Matt had always dreamed of having a fancy getaway car awaiting him at the end of his wedding, she had commissioned a grooms cake that featured his favorite model of car; a 1957 BMW 507. Tessie added her own personal touch to the cake by fashioning soda cans out of clay to hang from the back of the car. Needless to say, the groom raved about the cake; this special surprise was definitely one of the highlights of their wedding.

As the reception continued into the night, the newlyweds stayed to enjoy the company of their guests and to savor their romantic wedding day together. For Tessie and Matt, settling into married life was an exercise in relaxation and love. ✦ EM

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