

Anja & David Wedding — Ceremony Script

Setting

- On the dais: Mark, parents, aunts, others?
- DJ in place
- PA system functional

1. Processional:

1. Cue music
2. Children of the bubbles
3. David & Anja walk in together, holding hands
4. Anja & David take their place of honor on the dais, facing each other.
5. Music fade-out

2. Remarks from Mark

Welcome! Thank you so much for being here.

Turns out, as you might guess, it's kinda a big deal to be asked to officiate a wedding ceremony.

After David asked me to do this, I really had no idea where to start. I began bringing it up with various people in my life to try to get a sense of what is required here. And that resulted in some better, and some worse, advice on what makes a good wedding. But maybe the best advice I got was from Aunt Linda who passed on advice she received about her own wedding, which was that you need to remember that this is a kind of a show: this is the Anja and David show — And it needs to be planned and executed like a show, with a narrative arc, rising action, and of course a climax.

This idea appealed to me because if we think of the wedding as a show, it puts the focus on the audience. A show is FOR the audience after all, in this case, that is you. The whole point of this wedding venture, I think, is to do it in front of people who matter to David and Anja. That means YOU have all the power here. Most especially

Grandma. YOU are the witnesses who affirm the marriage. And take the significance of the ceremony with you. And there's really no power vested in me as an individual even though I'm standing up here; the power of this thing is really vested in YOU, the audience.

Conveniently, this really lets me off the hook for what at first seemed like a tremendously grave responsibility.

Not entirely, of course. If it's a show we're putting on, then I'm still stuck with the role of narrator, or maybe story-teller. And I sort of struggled with that — here's the problem: the first rule of telling a good story or putting on a good show is to NOT give away the ending. You have to pique the curiosity of the audience, give them a bunch of clues, and only slowly reveal the significance of the clues. That's where the pleasure of hearing a story comes from: the hints of mystery, the audience's desire to find out what is going to happen.

Well, you might begin to see the problem here: at a wedding, the ending is already given away. We all KNOW what's going to happen! There's no plot twists here, no jump scares, no surprises. Hopefully.

And then I thought: maybe that's what a good wedding needs: more mystery, more tension, more clues — something like that part of the movie Jaws where the camera is half in the water, and sneaking slowly up on a swimmer, and the music is really slow (duh nun, duh nuh) because the tension is only just starting to build... who could ever turn away at a moment like that — you just GOTTA find out what's going to happen. Wouldn't it be awesome to be at a wedding that had that same power to give you the sense that something dramatic is going to happen?

So that made me wonder: how can I make this wedding be more like Jaws?

But then, Jaws is a movie that is almost 50 years old now. I have no memory of the first time I saw it. But I still love that movie. David and I have probably seen it a hundred times each, but I'll watch it again with any one of you any time you like. And no matter how good the tension-building effects — the music, the camera angles, the slow reveal of the shark — no matter how good the experience is for someone who is seeing it for the first time, there's gotta be something more to that movie. Something that makes it special enough that you can watch it 50 times and still enjoy it.

This is something we do in our family: we watch the movies we like over and over again. So like, even though we know every line in “Star Trek II: Wrath of Khan” every camera angle, every reaction shot — we’ll still want to watch it at least once a year. And I realized: well, that’s just a different kind of indicator of a good story — even when you know a story so well that there’s no mystery or curiosity left, there’s a pleasure in the anticipation of the familiar, don’t you think? You enjoy it BECAUSE you know what’s coming rather than because you don’t know what’s coming. You look for your favorite parts, and you feel satisfaction to find out it’s just as good as the previous 50 times you saw it. Maybe, in some way, better, because you’re affirming that your favorite movie wasn’t just some passing fancy — you weren’t just a victim of the latest special effects or topical jokes — your favorite movie is one that has stood the test of time. The movie is timeless. And is there anything more reassuring in life than the quality of timelessness?

And I thought: well if it works for Jaws, maybe that’s how a wedding works too: we all get the satisfaction of a familiar story told over again. We know what the good parts are and that they are inevitably coming to us. We’re all sitting here in anticipation... anticipation that absolutely nothing unexpected will happen. And I don’t think there are going to be any surprises today — though if there are, then rather than blaming me, I just encourage you to enjoy the unexpected plot twist!

But maybe we can push this idea even further — though forgive me this if it’s going too far. Maybe this idea applies to more than just the wedding ceremony; maybe a lot of the best marriages are founded on that kind of anticipation of the familiar. After all, if you are still finding anticipation, satisfaction, and reassurance in the same person after decades, what more could you ask from a relationship? So I hope you find that in your marriage Anja and David.

But I can’t leave it at that. The story-teller part of me also hopes that your marriage is more like your experience when you first read Lord of the Rings: a super-long, exciting, page-turner of epic proportions. Like maybe this is just the beginning of the story, and you are just reading the first couple of pages here at this wedding. You’re just getting to know these characters David and Anja. And, really, they are just getting to know each other. Then there is a whole lifetime

ahead of them to get the rest of the story arc down. I hope it will be one full of twists and turns and surprises. And seriously: not all good ones. If people have to overcome adversity, it makes for a better story, right? Though I still hope you never have to deal with a giant shark. But putting aside some of the more experimental fiction in the world, mostly we want to see the characters we love successfully overcome the obstacles and navigate the plot twists and come out on top.

So that's what I wish for you David and Anja... both a really good story with lots of excitement and surprises. And also a story that you keep coming back to and finding comfort in. That, I think, is kinda everything a marriage ever could be. I hope it's yours.

3. A few short readings

1. Monika
2. Becci
3. Ted LOTR

4. I dos

1. Mark Says: *And now, let's get to some rising action. Are you both ready?*
2. *Do you, Anja, take David to be your husband?*
 - Anja: *I do*
3. *Do you David, take Anja to be your wife?*
 - David: *I do*

5. Exchange of rings + vows

1. Mark says: *As I'm sure you are all expecting, we'll move on to the vows as the plot continues to thicken. Do we have the rings?*
2. Anja places the ring on David's finger and says her vows/nice words.
 - And then again in German

3. David places the ring on Anja's finger and says his vows/nice words.

- And then again in German

6. Fisherman's knot

1. Mark says: *David and Anja have decided that a fitting symbol of their marriage will be an attempt to literally tie the knot. The knot they will be attempting is known as a 'fisherman's knot' which has the characteristic that the more you pull on the ends, the tighter it gets. Get it? It's a metaphor for marriage...*
2. David and Anja hopefully don't make a fool of themselves tying a big knot.

7. The Smooch

- David and Anja continue to hold the knot in their hands.
1. Mark says: *And now the climax — what you've all been anticipating: the smooches! Anja and David, you may smooch*
 2. David and Anja smooch.
 3. Applause

The pronouncement and presentation

1. Music starts: love keeps lifting me higher
2. Mark says: *I get to say now that Anja and David, you are husband and wife!*
3. They kiss again or whatever.
4. Mark says: *And the denouement: It is my great pleasure to present to you the married couple: David and Anja!*

Recessional

1. music continues to play, louder.
2. David and Anja walk out together (what does everyone else do?)

3. 2nd, chiller, song ready for long run-out.
4. Pops takes the mic to guide people to the champagne toast.