

A MARRIAGE'S STORY

Written by

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INT. UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - MORNING

JASMYN (21) is sitting 3 rows behind JUSTIN (21) during class. Jasmyn writes on a piece of paper: "Lunch?" She passes the paper to Justin. Justin receives the note, looks back at her over his shoulder, and smiles. He turns back around.

Jasmyn gets a message back on the same piece of paper: "Time and place? :)"

Jasmyn looks up and smiles.

I/E. BEGIN MONTAGE

We see a sequence of memories that bring Justin and Jasmyn together. Annie's Song by Bob Dylan plays in the background.

We start at a public microwave, their first date, where Jasmyn is eating her burrito and Justin's is in the microwave. He is leaning against it and chatting with her. He opens the microwave and reaches to grab his burrito.

We are at a park. Justin throws a frisbee with the same hand he used to reach into the microwave. We see Jasmyn catch it and throw it back, laughing.

We now see Jasmyn laughing on a blanket, in a park, watching clouds with Justin. Justin points up to a cloud.

Justin points the remote at the TV in his apartment. The movie starts. Their fingers slowly creep towards each other.

They are now clinking glasses together at a New Year's Eve Party. Jasmyn surprises Justin with a kiss, presumably their first. He blushes as she dances away. He looks on after her.

Justin is now on a bike, looking off at Jasmyn in amazement. We see Jasmyn doing a goofy bike trick. She turns around to look at him and laughs.

Jasmyn is laughing at Justin from the window of her car. He is in his own car right behind her. He sticks his phone out the window and tries to catch a quick picture of her. He waves to get her attention.

A professional photographer is now waving trying to get the attention of their subjects. Justin and Jasmyn are taking graduation photos! They look at each other smiling.

Justin and Jasmyn are in a deep conversation in a parked car. The mood is different. Heavier. Jasmyn is in the driver's seat. We see Justin get out of the car and shut his door.

An apartment door swings open to reveal Justin on the porch, flowers and card in hand. Jasmyn exits to him and they hug.

We see a montage of hugs at every location Jasmine and Justin have been together. Time is moving forward, their relationship is moving forward, we see this in changing of clothing or hair styles. The cuts progressively speed up until we arrive back to the microwave- where we will hold. When they come out of the final microwave hug, Justin opens the microwave to reveal a ring box. Justin grabs it and gets down on one knee. He proposes.

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN TABLE - NIGHT

Jasmyn is reading on her laptop. Justin enters from outside and takes notice of her as he removes his jacket.

JUSTIN

Hey Jaz.

Jasmyn stares thoughtfully at the screen as Justin approaches her.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

What are you reading?

JASMYN

Ohh... you know...

A suspicious smile crosses her face.

JUSTIN

Is that the "Get your marriage today" people?

JASMYN

Yeah.

JUSTIN

How do you feel about it?

Justin takes a seat next to her.

JASMYN

I'm not opposed to looking into it...

Jasmyn looks into Justin's eyes searching.

JUSTIN

No. We don't need them.

JASMYN

It's just an extra layer that ensures we stay together--

JUSTIN

Jaz, I'm in this. And unless you have some news for me, I know you're in it too. Come on, I love you. And I know you love me.

JASMYN

I do love you. I know you love me too, I just want to be sure nothing changes between us.

Jasmyn grabs Justin's hand.

JASMYN (CONT'D)

I think it's really interesting. I mean, their track record's amazing. Not a single couple who has gotten married through them has divorced.

JUSTIN

I just think we can do that without them.

JASMYN

Maybe...

INT. MARRIAGE OFFICE, FRONT DESK - MORNING

Jasmyn and Justin are almost at the counter, waiting to be helped by HANNAH (35). We see the couple in front of them give their appreciation, and they walk away hand in hand.

HANNAH

Of course! Thanks for stopping by.

Hannah sees Jasmyn and Justin as they approach.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Hi! How can I help you?

JASMYN

We scheduled an appointment for a tour at 11:00am.

HANNAH

You must be Jasmyn and Justin! Welcome! I will be your guide and fill you in on everything you need to know.

JASMYN

Uh, sure!

HANNAH

Right this way.

Hannah grabs her office keys and rises from her chair.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

My name is Hannah, by the way, it's nice to meet you.

INT. MARRIAGE HALLWAY - MORNING

The three are walking down a hallway, as Hannah orients them to the facilities.

HANNAH

As you may have heard, we currently stand at a 100% success rate and don't expect to see that score drop anytime soon.

JUSTIN

Yes, it's... impressive.

HANNAH

All of our marriages have agreed to full participation, and you can even meet them if you'd like!

Justin and Jasmyrn exchange a quick glance.

JASMYN

Are they comfortable with that?

HANNAH

Yes! They're used to it.

JUSTIN

Sure...

They arrive at their first door. The door of IGNACIO (51).

HANNAH

This is Ignacio. He was our first marriage ever. He represents the union of Gary and Gil. They believed that they would have more to fight for and be less likely to split if their relationship was embodied in a person.

(MORE)

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Together they founded our company
"Syndicat." As you can see, they
are still happily together!

Hannah smiles warmly at Ignacio. Ignacio looks extremely happy. He is reading a great book in his room. He sees the three of them at his window and offers a friendly wave.

JASMYN

How can you tell? That Gary and Gil
are still doing well?

HANNAH

That's a good question. The answer
is: Ignacio. When a couple gets
married here, their 'marriage'
becomes emotionally attached to
them. For Gary and Gil, their
marriage IS Ignacio. When the
marriage is doing well, you can
see, the 'marriage', is doing well.

JASMYN

Fascinating.

They keep walking and pass other marriages. We get a sneak
peak into each room as they pass and keep talking.

JUSTIN

Where do these... marriages... come
from?

HANNAH

As you can imagine, emotionally
binding a human being to another
couple raises some ethical
eyebrows, so these marriages all
came straight from death row - with
permission from the courts, and
with consent from the individual,
of course.

JUSTIN

It was their way out of it?

HANNAH

Exactly. But as you can see, they
chose a pretty decent life.

JASMYN

Given their options...

HANNAH

So if you two decide to get married here, you get to come back and pick your marriage from who we have available.

JUSTIN

I don't understand... Why is this method of marriage so much more effective?

HANNAH

Because your marriage will be physically manifested in another person. At any time, you can come check out how your marriage is doing- literally. We also send daily stats: vitals and live video feed to access from home...

HANNAH (CONT'D)

If you're still unsure, some of our top candidates are eager to meet couples.

Hannah and Justin look at each other.

INT. INTERVIEW TABLE - SAME DAY

Justin and Jasmyn are at a table side by side. There is a vacant seat across from them. They are visibly nervous to meet 'future marriages'.

As the first person approaches - a massive burly MAN (60) with a big beard - Justin looks up at him and fakes a smile. When the man sits, we enter a quick montage of different interviewees. They are a very diverse bunch. With each interview, Justin and Jasmyn grow increasingly tired.

A young woman takes the seat. Jasmyn looks up from her exhausted position.

JUSTIN

What's your name?

BAILEY

Bailey.

Jasmyn perks up.

JUSTIN

Hi Bailey, my name's Justin, and-

JASMYN

I'm Jasmyn. It's nice to meet you.
Justin and I are hoping to get
married, and are potentially
searching for a marriage.

Bailey looks between the two of them and gently smiles.

BAILEY

That's nice.

JUSTIN

What do you enjoy doing?

BAILEY

I... I like music.

JASMYN

Who's your favorite artist?

BAILEY

Bob Dylan.

JUSTIN

Favorite Bob Dylan album?
(with an eyebrow)

BAILEY

Is there a wrong answer?

Dialogue fades on happy faces and Justin and Jasmyn hold hands under the table.

INT. MARRIAGE OFFICE, FRONT DESK - THE FOLLOWING WEEK

Jasmyn and Justin stand at Hannah's counter, having just shared with her their decision.

HANNAH

Bailey? That's wonderful! How
exciting! Well great, we'll get the
paperwork squared away for you and
then you can do the deed as soon as
you'd like!

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON - THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Families are gathered. Hannah is there. It's an exciting and happy time. Justin and Jasmyn kiss under the arch as everyone cheers.

INT. THE "MARRIAGE" ROOM

Bailey is laying on a white cloth covered table and is in medical garb. Two electrodes are attached to her forehead and one to her clavicle. She is relaxed. Justin and Jasmyn stand over Bailey holding hands. The couple is also hooked up to electrodes. The two of them look slightly worried, beads of sweat glisten on their faces. They have been there for a while. Suddenly, we see Bailey's expression shift to a smile.

HANNAH

You're all done! Relax! It was a successful attachment. Very nice job you two.

The couple looks relieved. They hug each other, then invite Hannah to join them in their hug.

INT. MARRIAGE HALLWAY - EVENING

Justin and Jasmyn are looking through the window of a door into Bailey's room. Bailey is lying down, sleeping soundly—a soft smile on her face.

JASMYN

She looks good.

I/E. BEGIN MONTAGE OF BAILEY'S ATTACHMENT REACTIONS

Jasmyn and Justin are cooking dinner. They start throwing flour and teasing each other. After dinner, they slink away together to their bedroom.

Bailey is lying in bed, sleeping peacefully. She stirs slightly. Her smile grows bigger, and bigger, and bigger. The montage picks up speed.

We see a variety of happy memories being made. Gift giving, riding scooters, being romantic, etc. Between each of these moments, we see Justin and Jasmyn looking in on Bailey's room. Bailey is well.

We then see Justin and Jasmyn dancing at a party. In turn, we see Bailey dancing with headphones in her room.

Hannah watches Bailey dance through the window and giggles at the sight.

A montage of Jasmyn leaving early for work commences. At first the goodbyes between Jasmyn and Justin are passionate, and we see Bailey full of love and longing in her room.

Gradually, the goodbyes become more and more mundane, and Bailey is seen sitting in her bed, looking more neutral, time is passing.

At the end of our montage, Bailey sits up in bed. She looks stressed. After a moment of stillness (a break from our montage) we start seeing weeks pass. A 'one picture a week' kind of sequence is displayed before us, and gradually speeds up. With each cut, we notice Bailey is looking worse and worse. While a few smile shots can be seen in the beginning, they become less and less frequent until a whole string of shots just show Bailey looking awful, blank eyes. We hold on the last shot. Seasons have passed. Years have gone by.

Justin looks in from the window, sunken.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Justin is sitting and Jasmyn is standing, leaning against a counter. They've been talking about their marriage.

JUSTIN

Did you see Bailey's vitals report today? Pretty low...

JASMYN

Since when have you cared?

Justin breathes as he takes in that comment. He carefully chooses his next words.

JUSTIN

When's the last time you actually checked her live feed--

JASMYN

This isn't about Bailey.

JUSTIN

She's our marriage.

JASMYN

She's not a part of this.

JUSTIN

She IS this!

Jasmyn stares at the ground.

JASMYN

I'm done 'checking' on her.

JUSTIN
Are you done fighting for her?

JASMYN
Yes! I am! I have before and you
didn't seem to do a thing about it.
I don't know why all of sudden--

Justin gets up.

JUSTIN
Look... I know, for the past while,
I haven't been everything you
deserve... and, I haven't helped
you feel like much of a priority--

JASMYN
"Feel" like a priority...

JUSTIN
I mean you are a priority. I just
recognize that, sometimes, I fail
to *communicate* that--

JASMYN
"*Sometimes.*" Yeah you've
communicated plenty.

JUSTIN
Well we can't just 'move on'.

JASMYN
Yes, we can. I know exactly how to
do it.

JUSTIN
I just visited Bailey--

JASMYN
Forget about Bailey! She's done!

Justin is defeated and sits back down.

JUSTIN
Go. Get it over with. I guess it's
the path we're heading down
anyways.

Jasmyne leaves.

INT. BAILEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bailey sits in her bed, she's staring up at the ceiling. Quietly, she starts to cry.

INT. MARRIAGE OFFICE, FRONT DESK - MORNING

Hannah is working behind her desk when Jasmyn walks in.

HANNAH

Jasmyn! It's been so long! I was wondering when you might show up.

JASMYN

I want to divorce.

Hannah puts her smile away. She says the following according to procedure.

HANNAH

Have you been experiencing any forms of physical and/or verbal abuse?

JASMYN

No, it's nothing like that... it's just... we're not... working, anymore.

Hannah takes this in.

HANNAH

... Follow me.

Hannah grabs a dark case, and walks out towards the door leading to the hallway of marriage rooms. Jasmyn, quietly, and hesitantly, follows Hannah.

INT. MARRIAGE HALLWAY - MORNING

Hannah stands waiting outside of Bailey's room. Jasmyn finally meets her there. Hannah gives Jasmyn the case. Jasmyn opens the case to reveal a syringe neatly tucked inside. Jasmyn looks up at Hannah.

HANNAH

It's your marriage. If you are going to end it, then--

JASMYN

I know.

Jasmyn looks back down at the syringe, then out to Bailey. Bailey is sitting on her bed, listening to music. She is obviously unwell. Bailey looks at Jasmyn. Jasmyn quickly looks away before they lock eyes. Jasmyn breathes, then pulls the syringe out and holds it behind her back. She pushes the door into Bailey's room open. With Jasmyn's free hand still on the doorknob, she slowly raises her eyes and meets Bailey's. Bailey removes an earbud, and walks toward Jasmyn. Jasmyn lets the syringe come to her side. Bailey, ignores the syringe and puts the free earbud in Jasmyn's ear. She presses play. Annie's Song by Bob Dylan plays. The women stare into each other's eyes. The syringe is still in Jasmyn's hand.

INT. BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Justin stirs from his sleep. He opens his eyes and wakes up to being alone. We see Jasmyn's empty side of the bed.

Slowly, he gets up. There's a knock at the door. He moves toward the door confused. He looks through the peep hole, still unsure, he cautiously opens the door.

A BOY (11) is standing at the doorway with a single flower in his hand and a small folded piece of paper. Awkwardly, he extends them out to Justin, who hesitantly takes them. He unfolds the note.

"Lunch?" is written - in Jasmyn's handwriting. He unfolds it more to reveal: "Time and place? :)" written beneath it in Justin's own handwriting.

Justin looks up, and the boy is walking away, leaving Justin alone.

INT. MICROWAVE - NOON

Jasmyn leans awkwardly against the wall next to the microwave, waiting for Justin to show up. When he does, a moment of silence passes between them.

JASMYN

I want to try again.

She looks into Justin's eyes. He is quiet.

JASMYN (CONT'D)

Do you?

Justin stays quiet.

INT. BAILEY'S ROOM

Bailey, looking as she did, tilts her head. She marvels at something. Hannah is seen staring anxiously in from the window. Bailey looks at Hannah, and a soft smile starts to form.

END