

ADVICE TO THE HAPPY COUPLE

by Jeremy Sony

Casting: 1 M, 1 W

WILLIAM M. 30s. A guy's guy. Likeable, only an asshole if pushed. Does not love being at weddings. Married.

MICHELLE W. 30s. Will's wife. Enjoying herself, despite Will's mood. Friend of the bride. Fierce, in a good way.

Dramatic-Comedy. Run-time: 5 min

What's the key to a happy marriage? Michelle says there are a few. Her husband, Will, says there's one. Okay two...maybe three. At their friends' wedding, the advice-cam has found them and going on record for their newlywed pals might just test every theory they have.

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AT RISE: WILLIAM and MICHELLE stand together. SHE's facing the audience. HE's looking off-stage. They each have a drink in their hand. Dressed for a wedding reception.

MICHELLE

Hi Justine, hi Gabe! Welcome back from your honeymoon, Mr. and Mrs. Hunter! Will, say congratulations.

WILLIAM

What? Oh, shit, are you recording?

MICHELLE

Can we start over?

(LIGHTS FADE.)

(LIGHTS RISE. THEY are both aware of the camera now and face the audience.)

MICHELLE (cont'd)

You guys looked amazing today, Justine -- the dress, the music, it's all so beautiful. Gabe, you've got a special girl there, take good care. Congratulations!

WILLIAM

There's no point to this. I mean, why are we talkin' into a camera? We're AT the reception. I can see them.

MICHELLE

Because they hired -- Steve, right? Yeah? -- because Steve's recording the guests offering congratulations...

WILLIAM

...and advice to the happy couple. Ohhh, right.

(Dead serious)

Run, Gabe. Fucking run and don't look back.

MICHELLE

Wow. That's why I love my husband. Look at that, my funnybone? Completely tickled.

WILLIAM

Hey, I didn't want to be here. I "forever held my peace" at the ceremony.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)

Gabe's happy, God bless, but I am not gonna go on record endorsing him marrying that evil bitch.

MICHELLE

Justine is my friend and her only flaw, that I can see, is a horrid taste in flowers. So Steve? We're going to try this again, and Will, the word 'congratulations' better pass through your lips, or you won't be tickling ANY of this --

(gestures to herself)

-- got that, sweetie?

(Beat, then to camera)

Can we start over?

(LIGHTS FADE.)

(LIGHTS RISE.)

WILLIAM

Gabe! My man! Sláinte on the nuptials! And Justine, Justine, what can I say, you --

MICHELLE

-- look ravishing. Everything is just perfect --

WILLIAM

Especially the flowers, don't you just love the flowers?

MICHELLE

The flowers are so... you, they are, they're just... you know, we're so glad we could share in your special day --

WILLIAM

Fuckin' thrilled.

MICHELLE

(letting that go)

I bet the honeymoon was amazing. Pictures, okay?

WILLIAM

Back from the honeymoon, you guys are gonna want some advice, for the record. That's why we're spouting into a camera, am I right?

MICHELLE

Right, yes. How about the secret to a happy marriage?

WILLIAM

Why hold back?

MICHELLE

I'd say there are a few key things --

WILLIAM

-- I think there's probably just one.

MICHELLE

Just one?

WILLIAM

Well, two really. Okay three. One is: communication is the glue that holds a marriage together.

MICHELLE

That's pretty much one of my key notes, so I think we all agree on communicating.

WILLIAM

Number two is don't marry an evil bitch --

MICHELLE

William! ...Okay, Steve? Yeah, can we just -- cut --

WILLIAM

No, no, keep rolling -- that's common knowledge, not marrying an evil bitch. It's like saying the world is round.

MICHELLE

Okay, whatever THIS is, you, not my sweet husband Will, left field is that way and you can go right back where you came from.

WILLIAM

Yeah, well if Gabe knew what I know, then he'd know that I'm justified in using the "evil bitch" moniker.

MICHELLE

And what exactly do you think you know?

WILLIAM

(Pause)

Glue is precarious. You don't put enough glue in, things dry up -- get brittle -- they break apart. No glue. Center can't hold. Flip that. Too much glue. Pouring in, drowning the marriage. It overflows and gets sticky.

MICHELLE

Steve, are you getting all this? I have no idea what he's saying.

WILLIAM

I'm saying it's about to get sticky. Michelle -- I didn't want to do this here, this is why I didn't want to come to this farce of wedding --

MICHELLE

Do what?

WILLIAM

Michelle. We need to talk.

MICHELLE

If you're about to drop the D word, I swear to God --

WILLIAM

No, no! No. I'm not -- I don't want... Michelle, I love you, I do. This is about Justine. Please don't be mad.

MICHELLE

You've already called her an evil bitch, what's left?

WILLIAM

She's a two-timing skank who spent her engagement year bouncing from man to man.

MICHELLE

And you know this how?

WILLIAM

I told you it was about to get sticky.

MICHELLE

Okay... whoa... wait. Did you bounce with that bitch?

(Pause.)

WILLIAM

(to MICHELLE)

I'm sorry, can we start over?

(MICHELLE exits, pissed. WILLIAM looks back at the audience.)

WILLIAM (cont'd)

She, um...yeah, alright. So... Gabe. Justine. Can't tell you what a pleasure it's been. Justine, you know. Um... how about I'll leave you two with this triforme of advice: Don't marry an evil bitch. Don't fuck around. And you know, the glue thing. Gabe, since you broke that first one and Justine obliterated the second, with me... I guess that just leaves communication.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (cont'd)

(beat)

And this recording.

(beat)

Steve... do me a favor. Don't edit any of this.

(beat)

Gabe. Justine. Hope you had a great honeymoon. Welcome to your marriage. Oh, and uh... congratulations.

(WILLIAM exits.)

(LIGHTS FADE.)

END OF PLAY