



## 'Til Death Do We Part:

*How we did our wedding our way*

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KAMBRIEL

**Throughout my life**, if you were to have asked me what my top ten goals were, getting married wouldn't have even hit goal number fifty. I've never been afraid of being alone or felt like I needed to be in a relationship at all times. Of course, I never seemed to be without a date, but unlike most women it seemed, if you mentioned any type of a long term commitment, I'd hit the road before I could steal another beer from your fridge. We're talking about a woman whose biggest commitment was to the same bottle of wine in a night. Even when I met my husband and I knew all those toads I kissed and wasted the best scotch and perfume on, had finally resulted in my Prince Charming, marriage never crossed the horizon. Here was a man who is actually responsible for saving my life and I knew there would never be another like him, but neither one of us really saw just why marriage was necessary. A piece of paper didn't prove anything that we both didn't already know; we were madly in love with each other and had remained that way for eleven years.

It wasn't until the second life saving trip to the ER and a late night proposal witnessed by doctors and nurses and a lot of morphine (that's another article), that marriage or more excitedly, a wedding became a reality for me. I never thought I'd get that excited about floral arrangements or custom dyed napkins but here I was collecting bridal mags like ex boyfriends (which is to say a lot).

Early on, my husband and I decided this wedding would be done our way or it wouldn't be done. I don't make compromises in my life; I saw no reason to start now with something that should be all about the couple. Why tone yourself down for the sake of grandmother's sensibilities? My family was quite use to me acting as if the world was my stage, part of his family was use to it as well. Those that weren't, would find a way to deal on my big day. This was our money; they could drink our free booze and shut their trap.

We didn't want cheese; no Vegas styled vampires popping out of coffins or a tired zombie theme with a ton of fake blood. Nor did we want some starched white boring event. We didn't focus on the overall picture at the beginning; we started by choosing elements we really liked and felt needed to be involved somehow and let the entire wedding evolve from a few seeds.



PopTart & Damion after the ceremony in a Victorian horse carriage





Curse, Kambriel, PopTart & Damion  
Historical village, Ohio Historical Society

Within just a few weeks, I was ready to pull every single strand of hair out of my head and being a Greek, that's a lot of hair! I thought invitations would be the easiest thing to tackle, but it left us both somewhat crippled as we leafed through bridal mags, searched online and even ventured out to a few stores. Every night ended the same way, a bottle of wine and two six packs of beer. And a wedding with no invites. Nothing excited me tremendously and most things bored him. The ones that garnered a few sparks from us were so far out of our price range; they were starting to cost more than my dress. In a fit of frustration, I figured since we were doing everything else ourselves, why not invitations? I'm an artist, I have graphic design experience, I know printers! In an afternoon I designed the most beautiful invitations that really captured our personalities, and saved us a ton of money by taking our invites to a traditional printer, not ones that specialize in letting people personalize their invites. In deep sepia tones I concocted a carnival inspired non traditional invite by forgoing the standard card with multiple inserts and used more of an oversized postcard so it looked like a handbill that would be passed out, back when such was actually done. We saved paper and money by asking people to electronically RSVP or by phone. Included in each invite were "tickets" which were the size of a business card done in the same sepia toned stripes, on the back were directions to our venue. I even designed matching envelopes to pull together a really one-of-a-kind look. Guests told us when they received a striped envelope in the mail; they knew it had to be from us.

Before invitations could be designed though, we had to fight with where to host this epic wedding. Hotels bored me, the art museum wanted



PopTart's mom, Marilou, with PopTart  
before the wedding

too much money for too little space, and country clubs all had the same vibe that I didn't like. I only liked really old buildings with 200 year old marble floors that wanted your first born for payment. Even the conservatory, with all its green beauty, was just too much for me to justify. On a whim, I contacted the local history museum. You need to understand something about this place, it's where we visit every Halloween's Eve, and it's a most enchanting venue. It's not the museum itself; it's their 1890's replica village that harbors everything a small town needs; town hall, church, coffin and furniture maker, stables, the doctor's office, and a small smattering of various stores. Every Halloween they

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recreate what an old fashion Halloween from the 1860's would be. It's always quite the romantic stroll in moonlight with fortune tellers and an actual funeral procession, which ends in a telling of *Sleepy Hollow* complete with the Headless Horseman galloping through on his black steed. The price to rent the town hall (which I preferred over the church for the ceremony because it looked identical to the church in Tim Burton's *Sleepy Hollow*) and the Victorian hotel for the reception nearly caused us both to fall on the ground. Shockingly cheap didn't even describe it. The Ohio Historical Society became the perfect place for our wedding, not just due to their low cost, but for the romantic significance their historical village had for us. It suited our style as well. And that's when life became a bit easier, thanks to Sherri Wilburn, the OHS's event coordinator who had done her fair share of weddings and organized things I had never even thought of. She made sure everything ran like clockwork on the big day.

And what a day it was. There are not enough pages to express everything that I felt or that happened leading up to and on that day. The largest part of our budget went to catering and Cameron Mitchell was worth every penny and then some. We kept to a buffet style service that was full of appetizers and hors d'oeuvre with a Mediterranean flair because of my ancestry. I heard the food was delicious, but I think I was too busy and too nervous to even grab a bite. Our cake was almost exactly as I had designed it, with *Corpse Bride* cake toppers that were finally found last minute on eBay. It tasted even better than it looked. Sugar Ducks Bakery made lime iced sugar cookies dyed custom green to match our colors and red velvet cake cookies that we used as favors; luckily we had plenty, for our guests were going back for more. I understand we had the best food anyone had at a wedding.

Luckily the venue was so beautiful it needed little in the way of decoration. Our centerpieces were apothecary jars holding miniature still-life's of sea shells, turquoise and green flowers and of course, the occasional skull. Paper fans were made available in our chosen colors, since we were being married in the evening of the August heat, we made them personal with jewels and each one had a small skull bead carved from bone. Many barely recognized upon first glance. The town hall featured rustic "Hitchcock chairs" which we made ribbon banners for, taking full advantage of Martha Stewart's spider web ribbon and the early release of her Halloween line.

Although we had decided against a bridal party, we spared no expense on the actual wedding ensembles and had our dear mate, Kambriel, craft them with only just a few ideas we had in mind. The end results were stunning and I found the best way to prepare my mom for my dress was to ask her to imagine if Tim Burton had redone *Gone With the Wind*. Crowned with a custom black and white top hat designed by Kim Brown-Dye of Topsy Turvy Designs, the final look was stunning if I say so myself. Not too mention my mom adored it.

We recited poems from Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Lord Byron, but lightened the mood with some extremely hilarious wedding vows that had our guests laughing amongst the tears. Our event was perfectly scored by a well executed soundtrack that included everything from Vivaldi (I chose as my wedding march) to Etta James and Dean Martin to Siouxsie and the Misfits with the most appropriate last song to be Journey's



"Don't Stop Believing." If you don't get why this is perfect, you don't get me. The late night was divinely punctuated by a full moon and the kiss of my beloved.

It was truthfully a whirlwind of excitement and non stop activity, not to mention photo flashes. Never has it become so apparent that I was indeed a model when I noticed so many of our guests were photographers who had brought their camera.

But what mattered most of all that day was I married my dark and handsome Prince Charming and we were the rock-n-roll couple that did it our way. ♦

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