

High-Intermediate 1
Unit 5 Reading
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A Marriage Made on the Internet?

How many Americans have ever considered asking friends or relatives to select their future spouse for them? Not very many, apparently. Yet this is exactly what David Weinlick did.

select = choose

spouse = a husband or a wife

apparently = seemingly, as it seems

yet = but

Weinlick had apparently been considering marriage and had known for a long time that he was going to get married on June 13, 1998. Where the wedding would take place and who would be invited he already knew. He just didn't know who he would be marrying. You see, he hadn't met his bride yet.

June 13 = June Thirteenth

bride ≠ groom

It all started four years ago. Friends would repeatedly ask Weinlick, an anthropology student at the University of Minnesota, when he was going to tie the knot.

anthropology = the scientific study of people and their culture

tie the knot = get married, walk down the aisle

He got tired of these questions, so he just picked a date out of the blue: June 13, 1998. As this date kept getting closer and closer, Weinlick, twenty-eight, knew he had to do something. His friend Steve Fletcher came up with the idea of a democratic selection process. Weinlick liked the idea, so he advertised for a bride on the Internet on a Bridal Nomination Committee Web site.

out of the blue = suddenly, all of a sudden

as = while, when

nomination = the act of officially suggesting or choosing someone or something for a job, position, or prize

He devised an application form and asked friends and relatives to interview the candidates and select the winner. They did this at a "bridal candidate mixer" before the ceremony on the day of the wedding. Weinlick's friends and relatives took the request quite seriously.

devise = make, create

mixer (American English) = party, get-together

Though Weinlick wasn't sure who his bride would be, he did want to get married. He said he thinks commitment is important and that people have to work at relationships to make them successful. Weinlick's sister, Wenonah Wilms, said she thought that all of the candidates were nice but that she was looking for someone really special. Wilms added that it was important for her brother to marry someone who would fit into family celebrations like at Christmas.

commitment = responsibility, obligation

commitment = willingness to give your time and energy to a job, activity, or something that you believe in

So who won the election? It was Elizabeth Runze, a pharmacy student at the University of Minnesota. Runze hadn't met Weinlick before she picked up a candidate survey on the Monday before the wedding. They talked more when Runze turned in the survey about her career plans and hobbies the next day. After her selection, Runze said the day was the most incredible she had ever experienced. Weinlick was happy, too. After the selection the groom said the plan turned out almost exactly as he had hoped.

pharmacy = the scientific study of drugs

turn in = submit

incredible = unbelievable

By the time the wedding day rolled around, Weinlick had prepared everything: the rings, the musicians, his tuxedo, and the reception afterwards. The two took their vows at the Mall of America in Minneapolis while about 2,000 shoppers looked on from the upper levels of the mall.

reception = the party held at a hotel or a hall after getting married in a church

take one's vows = make serious promises

Weinlick and Runze's union qualifies as an "arranged marriage," a phenomenon which has never had much currency in America. Arranged marriages are common in many other parts of the world, though, or at least they used to be.

qualify = be considered

phenomenon = event, happening, incident

phenomenon (singular) ⇒ phenomena (plural)

currency = being common or usual

at least ≠ at (the) most

Runze's parents support the marriage. Runze's mother said her daughter was taking the whole event seriously. She predicted the couple's marriage would be long-term. Weinlick's father

wasn't so positive. He said he admired his son's independence and wished him well but wasn't really happy about the wedding, adding that he thought it was a case of treating a serious step too lightly.

positive = sure, certain

admire = praise, appreciate



Full Text:

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He got tired of these questions, so he just picked a date out of the blue: June 13, 1998. As this date kept getting closer and closer, Weinlick, twenty-eight, knew he had to do something. His friend Steve Fletcher came up with the idea of a democratic selection process. Weinlick liked the idea, so he advertised for a bride on the Internet on a Bridal Nomination Committee Web site.

He devised an application form and asked friends and relatives to interview the candidates and select the winner. They did this at a "bridal candidate mixer" before the ceremony on the day of the wedding. Weinlick's friends and relatives took the request quite seriously.

Though Weinlick wasn't sure who his bride would be, he did want to get married. He said he thinks commitment is important and that people have to work at relationships to make them successful. Weinlick's sister, Wenonah Wilms, said she thought that all of the candidates were nice but that she was looking for someone really special. Wilms added that it was important for her brother to marry someone who would fit into family celebrations like at Christmas.

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Runze's parents support the marriage. Runze's mother said her daughter was taking the whole event seriously. She predicted the couple's marriage would be long-term. Weinlick's father wasn't so positive. He said he admired his son's independence and wished him well but wasn't

really happy about the wedding, adding that he thought it was a case of treating a serious step too lightly.

Sample Summary:

David Weinlick, an anthropology student at the University of Minnesota, decided to let his friends and family choose his bride. He had set his wedding date for June 13, 1998, but didn't know who he would marry. Tired of being asked about his marriage plans, he picked a date and advertised for a bride on the Internet. His friends and relatives interviewed candidates and selected Elizabeth Runze, a pharmacy student. They married at the Mall of America in front of 2,000 shoppers. While Runze's parents supported the marriage, Weinlick's father was less enthusiastic, feeling the decision was made too lightly.

Source:

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