



# There goes the bridegroom

It seems like the perfect wedding.

The bride and groom are waiting in front of the altar. Behind them, the church is full with their friends and family.

‘Doesn’t she look beautiful?’

‘Gorgeous! And he’s very handsome!’

‘Have they been together long?’

‘Only a few months. It’s very romantic.’

**What do you think will happen next?**

**Will it be the perfect wedding?**

**What could go wrong?**

**Write the next two paragraphs.**



## Writer's profile

Kieran McGovern has been described as "amongst the best writers of language learner materials in English". He has published over 20 readers and edits the website *ESL Reading* ([eslreading.org](http://eslreading.org)).

# There Goes the Bridegroom

Level: *Intermediate*

It seems like the perfect wedding.

The bride and bridegroom are waiting in front of the altar. Behind the happy couple, the church is full with their friends and family.

The priest stands next to the bride and groom. He has one last formality to complete. He turns to the congregation.

'Is there any reason,' he asks. 'Why these two people cannot be married?'

There is a moment's quiet. The congregation waits politely. Nobody expects an answer.

Then a door opens. Everyone turns round. A young woman is standing at the back of the church.

'Stop this wedding now!' she cries.

## Who is this woman?

The congregation stares at the woman. She has long red hair and a purple dress. She is wearing brown desert boots. She is not dressed for a wedding.

They stare at the bridegroom. He is wiping sweat from his forehead. His face is red.

The bride also stares at her fiancée.

'Robert,' she says. 'Who is this woman? Do you know her?'

Everyone hears her voice in the silent church.

Robert coughs. 'That's my old girlfriend,' he says.

'What is she doing here?'

'I don't know,' says Robert

Then the woman speaks. 'I love you, Robert,' she says. She holds up her hand to the congregation. There is a ring on her engagement finger. 'This is what you promised me,' she says. 'I want you to marry me!'

The woman looks at the priest. The priest's mouth falls open.

## This bride?

'I can't marry you and him,' he says. He points to the bride and bridegroom. 'I can only marry him and her.'

Everyone turns round again. 'How boring!' says the woman. Then she reaches

into her pocket. There is another gasp from the congregation.

What is this crazy woman going to do now? Pull out a gun?

No. She holds up two airline tickets.

'These are to take us to Las Vegas,' she says to the bridegroom. 'We can get married there tonight. Come with me! There's a taxi waiting outside.'



The bridegroom hesitates. He looks at the bride. He looks at the woman.

Then he says 'I've always wanted to go to Las Vegas.'

He walks back down the aisle into the arms of the woman.

Together they walk out of the church and into a taxi.

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## Glossary

- **Altar** - table at front of the church
- **Priest** - religious minister
- **Congregation** - people in a church for a service
- **Stare** - look at some
- **Fiancée** - person you are going to marry

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## Understanding

1. Who is standing at the altar?
2. Have the bride & groom been together for a long time?
3. What does the priest ask the congregation?
4. Who comes into the church?
5. What does she want?
6. What does the bride ask the bridegroom?
7. What does the woman want?
8. Can the priest do this? Why not?
9. Where has the bridegroom always wanted to go?
10. Who walks out of the church?